

# Spot the Signs

*Not everything here means the person is being trafficked or exploited. But any red flags, within the context of a bigger picture, can provide warning signs. If you have a reasonable suspicion that something may be happening, please report it to the authorities so an investigation can be done.*

## SEX TRAFFICKING

### Some things to look for:

- Restrictions on their freedom
- Works excessively long hours, disappears overnight, teens missing school
- Fearful, anxious, depressed, tense, scared, checked out, doesn't make eye contact
- Drug addiction
- No access to money and no financial records
- No I.D.
- Signs of abuse or STDs
- Secretive about cell phone communication
- Always being watched/guarded, someone speaks for them
- Malnourished, dehydrated, exhausted
- Dressed inappropriately for the weather
- Few or no personal possessions
- Don't know where they are, no sense of time, or can't explain why they are where they are

## CHILD EXPLOITATION

### Some things to look for:

- Mood swings including anger, depression, withdrawn
- Lack of interest in previous activities or friends
- Multiple cell phones
- Signs of abuse or STDs
- Being secretive about device use, phone conversations, hiding what they are doing
- Inappropriate sexualized behaviour
- Dressed inappropriately for their age
- Disappearing overnight without a given reason, history of running away
- Skipping school or falling asleep in school
- Having gifts, beauty treatments, cell phones, cash they can't explain
- Older boyfriend/girlfriend

## LABOR TRAFFICKING

### Some things to look for:

- Restrictions on their freedom and someone always accompanies them
- Picked up and dropped off, usually in a group
- Works excessively long hours, may sleep at place of employment, unsafe conditions
- Lacks appropriate clothing or training for job
- Fearful, anxious, depressed, tense, scared
- No access to money and no financial records
- No I.D.
- Signs of physical health issues: headaches, back problems
- Signs of abuse: burns, bruises
- Malnourished, dehydrated, exhausted
- Few or no personal possessions
- Are being threatened if they want to quit
- Isolated
- Have to work to pay off large debt

## ONLINE EXPLOITATION

### Some things to look for:

- **Secrecy about online activity** – Hiding screens, quickly switching tabs, or being defensive when asked about their internet use.
- **Sudden withdrawal or mood swings** – Anxiety, depression, aggression, or fear that seems out of place.
- **Unexplained gifts or money** – Receiving items like gaming credits, new clothes, or devices without a clear explanation.
- **Spending excessive time online, especially at night** – May be engaging with someone in a different time zone or at times when they feel they won't be monitored.
- **Avoiding friends or social situations** – A sudden loss of interest in hobbies or social interactions