



OCTOBER 2023

PATH EDUCATION

You may have heard about the recent [multi-state lawsuit](#) against META regarding its potential violation of consumer protection and child safety laws by developing platforms which create addictive behavior among young people. There are articles which say Congress didn't do its job when it had the opportunity to pass stricter online safety laws. Because of that fact, states have acted on their own by bringing this lawsuit.

One of the main points in this lawsuit is that META's platforms are addictive and are purposefully developed to lure teens and young people in. There are plenty of research articles which point to the use of social media by youth and its effect on self-esteem which may lead to depression, anxiety, and [mental health issues](#) including a [report](#) released by the US Attorney General in 2023.

The pandemic brought mental health issues for all to the forefront as we spent much more time alone and indoors. But, arguably, the stress on our school age children was multiplied on all fronts and they turned to social media as a way to cope and stay connected.

So the current [lawsuit](#) is focused on the platform design to keep youth online longer. How does this tie into what we know about social media and trafficking?

According to the [Polaris Project](#), social media has been used by traffickers to recruit victims, to proliferate their trafficking operations, and to control victims through restricting their social media access, impersonating the victim, or spreading lies and rumors online.

The National Human Trafficking Hotline has recorded recruitment in all types of both sex and labor trafficking on mainstream social media platforms including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Kik, Meetme.com, WhatsApp, and dating sites/apps like Plenty of Fish, Tinder, and Grindr.

[Socialmediavictims.org](#) brings to light the relationship between social media, particularly Facebook, and trafficking.

Facebook's Knowledge of Human Trafficking

Some of the most critical questions asked in recent months have been about the extent to which online social media platforms are responsible for the fate of

trafficking victims. As an article in [Psychology Today](#) documented, social media accounts provide a significant opportunity for grooming potential victims. A criminal may create fake social media accounts specifically to interact with school-aged children in this process. They may use the fake profiles to dialog online for months, pretending to have common interests and building trust. An article on [CBS News](#) indicates that more than half of all online recruiting occurs on Facebook. By establishing an online relationship with the victim first, the traffickers can get people to walk into situations they would not usually accept with strangers. Unfortunately for advocates of victims' rights, Facebook appeared to have [ignored its role](#) in enabling child trafficking. For this reason, many activists wish to hold the popular social media site accountable for its failure to protect trafficking victims.

And perhaps one of the more recent repercussions of the social media hold on youth is sextortion which can also lead to trafficking. Per [ICE](#), extortion — the act of threatening to share nude or explicit images — is more common than you may think, and cases affecting young children, teens and adults have increased exponentially in the past two years. In fact, Homeland Security Investigations received over 3,000 sextortion tips in fiscal year 2022.

One current sextortion trend targets boys between 14 and 17 years old. Adult predators pretending to be young girls feign romantic interest in the boys on gaming platforms, apps and social media sites.

For those of us focused on educating about human trafficking, we need to be vigilant and aware. Aware of the lawsuits that are out there and how they will effect the youth we know, support and care for. Aware of the statistics surrounding social media and trafficking. Aware of the ways technology is changing and how it will effect the youth in our lives. Aware of what the youth in our lives are engaged in and how we can help them be self aware.

PATH offers a digital safety 101 class. If you are interested please visit our [WEBSITE](#) to request this valuable session.

Recent articles regarding sextortion:

<https://www.wlky.com/article/fbi-teens-targeted-online-sextortion/42288232>

https://www.wdrb.com/news/crime-reports/fbi-warning-students-in-kentucky-about-the-dangers-of-sextortion-online-blackmail/article_13c7dab8-c42e-11ed-b762-87a747f73059.html

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/teens-death-small-michigan-town-led-fbi-police-online-sexual-extortion-rcna120556>



PATH IN THE FIELD



PATH is in preliminary conversations to participate in Meeting Professional International's (MPI) World Education Congress (WEC) to be held in Louisville,

May 2024. MPI is an organization consisting of meeting planners from all over the world and the WEC is it's annual educational conference. Over 1700 meeting planners will come to Louisville to learn about the latest and greatest in meeting planning tips, tricks, technology, and resources.

MPI is dedicated to fighting trafficking and has an established anti-trafficking committee who reached out to PATH to partner on an educational submission for the Louisville WEC. Visit its website [HERE](#).

Stay tuned for more information.

PATH IN THE BOARDROOM



Many thanks to PATH board members, Sr. Carol Curtis, OSU and Sr. Jacquie Aceto, SCN who attended the 10th Annual Alliance to End Human Trafficking conference at the end of September. The conference is sponsored by U.S. Catholic Sisters. Sr. Carol and Sr. Jacquie will be sharing the education and resources they received at our next board meeting. We thank them for their dedication to PATH and to the Alliance to End Human Trafficking.

PATH AND YOU

Visit [PATH's website to schedule your FREE training today!](#)

GIVING
TUESDAY

If you need an end of year charitable donation, PATH would be honored to be the recipient of your generosity. Giving Tuesday is a national day of giving held the Tuesday after Thanksgiving each year. This year, Giving Tuesday will be Nov. 28. Bookmark this link and donate [HERE](#).

Know anyone who should be receiving this monthly email? Help us expand our reach! Forward this link and have them sign up today: [PATH newsletter](#)

[Be sure to Like and Follow us on Facebook](#)

Is the PATH newsletter going to your spam folder? Be sure to add Constant Contact to your approved list of contacts so that this newsletter finds its way to your inbox on the first try.

PATH Coalition of Kentucky | [Website](#)

People Against Trafficking Humans PATH | 3814 Washington Square, Louisville, KY 40207

[Unsubscribe theresahayden@hotmail.com](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by info@pathcoalitionofky.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!