Indicators of Sex Trafficking

Sub-Culture

 Items purchased by traffickers that could establish a link between traffickers and

victims, such as clothing provided by the trafficker that could demonstrate the minor

is being actively prostituted.

 Cell phone usages or purchases link a victim to a trafficker. Chirps and walkietalkies are popular in some enclaves.

 Gang signals.

 Language and terminology used by the minors’ sub-culture.

 Information about locations which minors used as housing or as locations for

commercial sexual exploitation.

 Names and nicknames of people with whom minors are familiar.

 Tattoos which are sometimes used to establish control or ownership over victims,

particularly tattoos around the neck and wrist.

 Addresses or building descriptions, street locations, and other information associated

with trafficking.

Living Conditions

 The minors work where they live.

 The minors’ personal freedom or movement is restricted.

 The minors’ addresses change frequently.

 The minors cannot identify their home addresses.

 The minors possess hotel keys.

 The minors frequently run away from home.

 The minors live with other unrelated youths, and the heads of the minors’

households are unrelated adults.

 The minors receive gifts or clothing from unrelated youths or adults.

 The minors lack of personal space or share living space with multiple people.

 The minors return to an unsafe living situation despite intervention.

School Experiences

 The minors have significant, especially unexplained, gaps in school attendance.

 The minors display severe exhaustion during the school day.

 The minors do not participate in or show interest in after-school activities.

 The minors are not enrolled in school.

Adults in the Minor’s Life

 The minors have much older boyfriends or girlfriends, “friends,” adults in the role of

friend, or male or female authority figures.

 The minors do not live with their parent(s) or know the whereabouts of their

parent(s).

 The minors receive money from unrelated adults in the minors’ lives.

Medical/Physical Condition

 The minors have been treated frequently for symptoms of physical abuse.

 The minors lack an adequate medical history.

 The minors are malnourished.

 The minors show signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, including physical restraint,

confinement, or injuries from actual torture.

 The minors have infections from unsanitary tattooing.

 The minors have dental injuries, including broken or missing teeth, and mouth and

gum disease.

 The minors have bed bug bites.

 The minors have infections or mutilations caused by inappropriate but nominally

medical treatment.

 The minors have contracted sexually transmitted diseases.

 The minors have reproductive problems caused by unsafe abortions.

 The minors have physical injuries related to sexual activity, such as pelvic pain and

urinary tract infections.

 The minors have substance abuse problems.

Financial/Employment Coercion

 The minors have to work but do not indicate where they work.

 The minors have little or no access to earnings and no bank account.

 The minors have an unusually large amount of money on their persons.

 The minors are indebted to adults.

 The minors report working in a strip club, night club, bar, or massage parlor.

 The minors work excessively long or unusual hours.

 The minors are not allowed breaks or suffer under unusual restrictions at work.

 The minors were recruited through false promises concerning the nature and

conditions of their work.

 The minors are not in control of their own identification documents.

Psychological Indicators

 Minors who are obviously troubled do not self-identify as victims of any abuses or

problems.

 The minors tell inconsistent stories or stories lacking in significant details.

 The minor gives deceptive responses to questions.

 The minor avoids eye contact with responders.

 The minors have symptoms of post-traumatic stress, including anxiety, depression,

addictions, panic attacks, phobias, paranoia or hyper-vigilance, or apathy.

 The minors have developmental delays, enuresis, or fecal incontinence.

 The minors experience cultural shock from finding themselves in strange countries

or communities.

 The minors are not allowed or able to speak for themselves, especially when a third

party insists on being present or translating.

Environmental Indicators

 Large amounts of cash and condoms are present where minors are found.

 The minors’ environments contain sparsely furnished rooms with no, or few,

personal possessions.

 Sex advertisements are found in the minors’ living spaces.

 The minors’ living spaces contain multiple televisions and pornographic movies.

 The minors’ living spaces contain timers, which may be used to time sexual services.

 The minors’ living spaces contain tinted windows, buzz-in entrances, video cameras,

or other external security devices.

 There is unusual security within the minors’ living spaces, such as barred or locked

windows, locked doors, covert video security, or guards.

Indicators of Labor Trafficking

Common Work and Living Conditions

 The minors are not free to leave or come and go as they wish.

 The minors are unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips.

 The minors work excessively long and/or unusual hours.

 The minors are not allowed breaks or suffer under unusual restrictions at work.

 The minors owe large debts and are unable to pay them off.

 The minors were recruited through false promises concerning the nature and

conditions of their work.

 High security measures exist in the work and/or living locations, such as opaque

windows, boarded up windows, bars on windows, barbed wire, or security cameras.

Poor Mental Health or Abnormal Behavior

 The minor is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, or paranoid.

 The minor exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behavior when discussions mention

law enforcement.

 The minors avoid eye contact.

Poor Physical Health

 The minors lack health care.

 The minors appear malnourished.

 The minors show signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, including physical restraint,

confinement, or injuries from actual torture.

Lack of Control

 The minors have few or no personal possessions.

 The minors are not in control of their own money or have no financial records or

bank accounts.

 The minors are not in control of their own identification documents, whether

passports or other documents.

 The minors are not allowed or able to speak for themselves, especially when a third

party insists on being present and translating.

 The minors claim to be just visiting and are unable to clarify where they are staying

or provide an address.

 The minors lack knowledge of their whereabouts and/or do not know what city they

are in.

 The minors have lost their sense of time.

 The minors have numerous inconsistencies in their stories.