

# What do you do if you suspect that a child is being trafficked and/or sexually exploited?

If you believe a child is in immediate danger, promptly call 9-1-1

Contact the Child Advocacy Center at (631) 439-0480 for assistance and referrals to services within Suffolk County.

If you suspect the child's parent or guardian is involved in the trafficking or is aware and failing to protect the child, call

New York State Central Register for Child Abuse & Maltreatment at 1-800-342-3720.

If you need additional support or services call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) at 1-888-373-7888 for assistance and referrals.

Text INFO or HELP to BeFree (233733) for assistance.



EAC Network is a not-for-profit human service agency with 70 programs throughout Long Island & the New York metro area and has been providing human service programs in the fields of aging, youth, families, education, and criminal justice since 1969.

Tania Peterson Chandler, Esq.  
Interim President & CEO /  
Vice President of Operations

Andrea Ramos-Topper, LMSW  
Division Director



The Safe Harbour Program is administered by EAC Network in partnership with NYS Office of Children and Family Services, Suffolk County Executive Steven Bellone and the Suffolk County Department of Social Services.

## **SAFE HARBOUR CONTACT INFORMATION**

The Suffolk County Child Advocacy Center at the Pat & Mary Bagnato Place for Kids  
84 Wheeler Road Central Islip, NY 11722  
[www.eacinc.org](http://www.eacinc.org)

Laura Zappia  
Safe Harbour Supervisor  
[Laura.Zappia@EAC-Network.org](mailto:Laura.Zappia@EAC-Network.org)  
Phone (631) 439-0480  
Fax (631) 512-4237



# SAFE HARBOUR

*Advocating for and supporting children that have been, or are at risk of human trafficking and sexual exploitation in Suffolk County, NY.*



# The Safe Harbour Act

The Safe Harbour Act of 2008 guaranteed that sexually exploited children would be treated as child victims and be offered services that could reduce trauma, hasten rehabilitation and pave the way for better outcomes. Prior to the enactment of the Safe Harbour Act, sexually exploited youth did not receive the protection of family court and were instead prosecuted criminally, which did little more than further traumatize the victims.

## *“Sexually exploited child”*

The NYS Safe Harbour Act for Exploited Children defines a “sexually exploited child” as any person under the age of 18 who has been subject to sexual exploitation because he or she has engaged or offered to engage in sexual acts for a fee (prostitution), has loitered or solicited for the purpose of engaging in a sexual act, is a victim of the crime of compelling prostitution or is a victim of the crime of sex trafficking & has been provided with drugs or alcohol to impair their judgment, been physically assaulted or threatened, had their freedom of movement restricted, or has otherwise been coerced into engaging in sexual acts.

## Who is at risk?

### **ALL YOUTH ARE AT RISK.**

Populations with high-risk include:

- Homeless/Runaway youth
- Children with history of abuse
- Children with history of out-of-home placements
- Children with disabilities
- LGBTQ youth
- Refugees, immigrants, & non-english speaking children
- Females

# How to Identify a Victim of Child Sexual Exploitation and / or Trafficking? “Red Flags”

- A victim of child sexual exploitation / trafficking can show these signs:
- Chronically runs away from home
- Demonstrates an inability to attend school on a regular basis and/ or has unexplained absences or lateness
- Makes references to frequent travel
- Exhibits bruises or other physical trauma, withdrawn behavior, depression, fear or hyper-awareness
- Cannot produce identification documents
- Appears to be hungry or malnourished
- Shows signs of alcohol or drug addiction
- Has excess amounts of cash or goods without obvious means or a plausible explanation
- Possession of hotel keys
- Lying about age
- Inconsistencies in story
- Mention of a pimp or “daddy” or being in “the life”
- Known to be engaging in prostitution
- Has HIV, STDs or a history or multiple pregnancies or miscarriages
- Hangs around strip clubs, hotels, or other known hotspots or recruiting grounds
- Makes references to sexual situations beyond age-specific norms
- Has knowledge of sexually oriented internet sites such as Facebook, Backpage, Craigslist, Zoosk
- Has a boyfriend that is noticeably older
- Appears to be afraid or under the control of another person who speaks on the child’s behalf
- Association with gangs or neighborhood groups
- Works excessively long hours; is physically exhausted
- Eats or sleeps separately from “family”
- Provides child or elder care or performs chores beyond the norm based on age

*NOTE: A child who has been a victim of sexual exploitation / trafficking may not show any of these signs. The presence of these indicators does not necessarily mean the child is a victim of sexual exploitation/ trafficking. These indicators serve as clues to help assess the situation along with other information provided.*

*Our goal is to provide the education, skills & support needed for children to lead safe and meaningful lives.*

## **SAFE HARBOUR SERVICES**

### **CASE MANAGEMENT**

- Medical and Mental health assessments
- Crisis intervention
- Service planning, through goal setting
- Safety planning
- Advocacy and accompaniment
- Referrals for residential placement and counseling

### **COMMUNITY-BASED**

- Community-based case management and visits
- Outreach and education
- Transition into Safe Harbour Mentoring program
- Other community-based services

### **THE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER**

The Child Advocacy Center provides a safe, child-focused setting for interviewing and examining child victims of sexual exploitation / trafficking.

Bilingual staff to assist Spanish-speaking families