

Red Flags for Commercial Exploitation

Red Flags	Child Sex Trafficking (CSEC)	Exploiting a Child's Labor	Involving a Child in Criminal Activity	Red Flags	Child Sex Trafficking (CSEC)	Exploiting a Child's Labor	Involving a Child in Criminal Activity
Spends time in area associated with commercial sexual exploitation	X			Explanation of work situation doesn't make sense, seems scripted		X	X
Provocative, sexualized clothing	X			Describes long work hours; exhausted; hungry	x	X	X
Sexually explicit images/text posted on social media	X			Owes a debt to employer (may be a family member or informal employer)	x	X	X
Youth exchanging sex for food, shelter, drugs, clothing, basic needs (aka "survival sex")	X			Can't move freely, not allowed to come and go at will	X	X	X
Glamorizing pimping/the commercial sex industry	X			Living with or accompanied by people who are not their parents or guardians	X	X	X
Use the slang referencing exploitation (e.g. "the life")	X			Someone else who speaks for them	X	X	X
Frequent or multiple Sexually Transmitted infections or Sexually Transmitted diseases	X			Unsure of day, month or year as developmentally appropriate	X	X	X
Possession of many condoms	X			Attachment/dependence on cell phones	X	X	X
Unplanned pregnancies	X			Frequent changing of social media accounts	X	X	X
Possessing multiple cell phones or unexplained sums of money	X		X	Not permitted to use phone or other communications, especially if restricted from contacting family	X	X	X
Tattoos or branding	X		X	Unexplained bruises or other physical trauma	X	X	X
Unexplained travel or non-consent travel	X		X	Chronic runaway behavior from home/placement	X	X	X
Ties to criminal street gangs, drugs or criminal activity, especially if it does not seem developmentally appropriate	X		X	Someone else that may control their transportation	X	X	X
History of, or currently has, substance use disorder	X		X	Romantic/inappropriate relationships with older adults	X	X	X
Arrested for or history of criminal activity for crimes such as staling or drug sales, and money goes to third party	X		X	Experiences frequent moves or uncertainty of address	X	X	X
Secrecy regarding intimate partners, friends, associates	X	X	X	Substance abuse issues that interfere with their functioning	X	X	X
Fearful of employer or exploiter or boyfriend	X	X	X	Seems afraid to answer questions	X	X	X
Shows other signs of abuse or neglect	X	X	X	Describes unusual living/work space	X	X	X
Wears the same clothes daily, or routinely wears clothes not in season	X	X	X	Has someone else controlling their money or collects their earnings	X	X	X
Not in control of personal identification	X	X	X				

*Red Flags Chart developed by [Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking Project](#), Child and Family Policy Institute of California (2021) and included indicators from the following sources: [Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking](#), [Minnesota Department of Human Services' Identifying and Responding to Labor Trafficking](#), [WestCoast Children's Clinic Commercial Sexual Exploitation Tool \(cse-it\)](#).