

EXPLICIT
MOVEMENT

FIVE POINT PLAN

**PROTECT YOUR YOUTH
FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**



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Protect Your Youth from Sexual Exploitation

Note: This Five Point plan will help give you a practical framework for mentoring your child/youth on sex-trafficking. For a more thorough, complete presentation for your church or group, please contact Susanna Wesley Community Center at info@susannahwesley.org or (808)721-9614.

1. Build up child's self-esteem and morals

Developing a strong emotional connection with your child is crucial so you can be that safe person your child will naturally want to go to for questions and counsel. Knowing you love him/her unconditionally and will be there for them no matter what, will enable your child to trust you with their heart and struggles.

- a. **Relationship:** Seek ways to build a positive emotional connection with your child by spending quality 1:1 time with him/her and by being a good listener. Practice active listening and seek to validate their feelings first before giving them advice. Foster positive and fun conversations during meal times with your child (for example by showing interest in how their day went). Avoid 'correcting' or arguing.
- b. **Activities:** Have your children get involved in extracurricular activities such as sports, art, dance, or music ideally according to their interests.

Make time for FUN activities with your child (it could be going out on an ice-cream date, play a board game, go to a movie, see the sunset at the beach, go out for a meal 1:1 etc.)- never underestimate the power of having fun moments with your child in building a positive connection with them. This will foster their desire to spend more time with you.

- c. **Personal Faith:** Get involved as a family in a loving church community and find ways to encourage and mentor your children to grow in their personal faith. Explore with your children which services/church activities they want to get involved in (i.e. praise and worship, mission work, etc.) and support them in joining. Pray with and for your child regularly.
- d. **Affirmations:** Affirm your child with positive words of love, affirmation and value. Make positive 'deposits into your child's life by investing quality time, blessing them with gifts (it doesn't have to be expensive as it could be their favorite candy bar), giving them hugs, and doing something kind to serve them. Discover the way your child receives love the best and seek to show love to them in that way as much as possible.
- e. **Teach your Children and Youth:** Engage in heart to heart conversations with your children and youth regarding what is right and wrong. Show them empathy and teach them ways to express empathy to others. Share your life experiences vulnerably with your child in age-appropriate ways to connect heart to heart and to mentor them in life issues.

2. CREATE A SAFE SPACE FOR DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

It's important to have an *ongoing*, open, and honest dialogue with your children about these issues - it's not a one-time conversation, and you don't have to talk about everything at once. You don't want to evoke great fear in them, but you do want them to be aware and gain wisdom. Listen more than you speak.

As adults we want to keep our children safe, but we can't be with them all the time. Children need information about the realities of abuse and trafficking, so they are aware of their personal safety and know what to do if they sense something just doesn't 'feel right.' As adults, we can communicate our care and be a safe person to come to for questions or if something happens.

Children also need information about what is healthy regarding personal boundaries, consent, relationships, and sexuality. Help your child identify their feelings and indicators of healthy relationships. Help them to recognize when someone is not honoring their boundaries and wishes (use age-appropriate examples they can relate to). Remind them that if someone does harm them, it is never their fault and you will believe them.

Assure your child that it is ok to say, "No."

Tell your child to tell you immediately if something happens. Assure them to not be fearful of getting in trouble - even if they made bad choices! Remind them you are *for* them and want to be there to support and love them through any circumstance!

Elicit the help of Pacific Survivor Center (PSC) to conduct their Sex Trafficking Outreach Prevention Program (STOPP) presentation at your child's school or youth group. PSC can be contacted at info@pschawaii.org.

a. **Encourage your youth to talk with you or a caring adult about their questions, and/or troubling or confusing circumstances.**

Help your child/youth identify loving, wise, trustworthy adults in their life who they can turn to for support in addition to parents.

Learn ways to foster a shame-free culture in your family where your home is a safe place to talk about anything without being judged - if you don't know the answers, you can discover answers together!

b. **Start discussing human sexuality and other relevant topics early and frequently in age appropriate ways.** Discuss topics such as sex, abuse, drugs, suicide and sex trafficking. Take courage to bring up these topics and enjoy the interactions - these should not be a 'dreaded' conversations! Stay calm, composed and as natural as can be. You want your child to come to *you* for questions they have on any subject!

Find resources to help you to discuss these topics with your child. If you don't mentor you child/youth in sexuality, their friends or our culture will.

Discuss topics briefly with your child in 'teachable moments' in addition to planned discussion times. Teachable moments happen unexpectedly such as after watching a movie scene, while watching a news story, or experiencing a certain situation together.

c. **How to respond if/when your child/youth discloses that they were trafficked (or about *anything* that would be troubling to you):**

-Know that even though you teach your child and youth on what is safe and unsafe behavior and what is right and wrong, there are NO guarantees they will always make right choices! Instead, listen and seek to understand.

-Stay calm. Don't act shocked or horrified. Refrain from exploding in anger (even though you are feeling it!) because you want your child to feel that they can come to you with their struggles. Watch your language and refrain from name calling and put downs such as, "What's the matter with you?" or "That was so stupid!" or "Didn't I teach you better?!" If your child was trafficked, you don't want your child to run back to the trafficker because they feel no grace or forgiveness from you.

-In such difficult conversations, communicate to your child/youth that you love them unconditionally - that no matter what wrong choices they made, you love them, are always there for them, and willing to forgive them and help them.

-Mentally remind yourself that abuse was common in biblical days and is not just a current issue.

-Refer to the Empathy Statements sheet on the last page of this Five Point Plan as a general guide for what empathetic *words* you can say when your child or anyone shares with you vulnerably *about anything*. Practice validating feelings. It takes great courage for your child to come to you and confess. You can affirm them on that point and appreciate that they came to you.

3. EDUCATE THEM ON PREDATORY GROOMING TACTICS (refer to Charming Chart)

Recruiting can happen through friends and acquaintances in school, or such places as the mall, beach, or after school programs. Be aware of adults or older teens approaching you who attempt to get you to go with them somewhere. Never get into a car with someone you do not know well.

Know that a recruiter can 'groom' a victim over varied time frames. Some victims are lured within hours or days, while others are lured over many months by becoming a good friend or boyfriend.

- a. **Charming Behavior (grooming)** - (Child or Adult) A person's words and actions can seem too good to be true. The recruiter's words initially make you feel special and cause you to believe they are there for you.

Recruiters may say things like the following to build trust and connection with you:

"Tell me everything about you. I want to know everything!"

(This is a common statement used to elicit deep and dark secrets from victims to later blackmailing them.)

"I've never met anyone like you. I feel like I can trust you with anything. I have told you things I have never told anyone else."

This serves to rope in the victims, so they are made to feel responsible for the mental health and wellbeing of the trafficker. When the victim is ready to leave, the guilt of leaving someone who trusted them with everything often prevents them from leaving.

"You are so beautiful! I love you!"

Traffickers often target a person who is often overlooked by the general public and who is especially hungry for love and affirmation due to their family/peer experiences. For example, if two girls are walking down the street and one of the girls is obviously more attractive than the other, the trafficker will approach the less attractive friend, the one who probably receives less attention from others, and disregard the more attractive person. If the more attractive friend later tries to intervene when she sees her friend being mistreated or lured into exploitation, the trafficker probably would accuse the friend of being jealous because she is used to getting more attention due to her attractive looks. Afraid to lose the one person who view her as beautiful, would naturally not heed her friend's warnings and becomes exploited.

"You are too hot to be wearing those shoes! You need to get with me so I can upgrade you!"

This comment serves to make victims feel good, and then immediately the trafficker would often belittle them, causing them greater vulnerability. Traffickers and recruiters utilize this tactic to capture a victim's attention with flattery, but also embarrasses them by pointing out their low-quality clothes or accessory. The recruiter gives the victim an opportunity to elevate their status by giving the victim promises of 'upgrading,' which is purchasing them new shoes, clothes or other items they want or need. This also increases the victim's sense of obligation to the recruiter.

The person may attempt to establish a sexual relationship with you to further bond you to them. Children raised in Christian households often fail to disclose to their parents when they lose control of the relationship for fear they will disappoint, "get in trouble", be admonished, or be judged for engaging in premarital sex. This failure to report often results in Christian children being exploited for longer periods than their same age peers

The person may encourage you to take drugs and drink.

- b. **Luring** - A person makes promises that seem too good to be true. The following are some lines that recruiters may use to lure victims:

“You want to make some money? I can show you how you can make a lot of money!”

This lures in victims who come from impoverished backgrounds. Victims never make money; they may be given small amounts of money in the beginning to gain trust or earn some wages by being ‘bottoms’ or ‘recruiters,’ but nowhere near what their trafficker makes. Money given to victims is often taken back at later time.

“You may as well make money for what someone is taking from you anyway.”

Because traffickers often target youth with a history of molestation, they often use this line, which seems to make sense to someone who is actively being victimized at home.

Pay attention to your ‘sensing’ or ‘feeling’ - if you feel something is not ‘quite right’ or is making you feel uncomfortable, fearful, or ‘strange’, *pay attention* to those ‘red flags’ and leave the situation.

*If someone is bothering and/or following you in public by constantly trying to talk with you, get another adult involved. For example, if at a mall, go to a store employee and say something like, “This person keeps following me. Please help me.”

- c. **Isolating** - A person who often uses shame and control to keep you away from friends and family.
- d. **Dependency** - A person tries to get you to think he/she is the only one who will take care of you to get you to depend on them.

A person may attempt to learn your biggest wants and needs so they can manipulate you slowly into becoming dependent on them as a close friend. They may make promises to you that they will fulfill your dreams.

4. ADDRESS PAST TRAUMA WITH A QUALIFIED TRAUMA INFORMED CLINICIAN

Discuss with your child what a ‘trauma’ is and examples of traumas that people experience. Being sensitive to what is age appropriate, share traumas you have experienced in life and what you went through. Ask your child if they have past traumas. You may not be aware about all events or how it continues to affect them, so it is important to get professional help and support.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse happens more often than we realize. Sexual abuse, molestation, inappropriate touch can happen through child to child interactions, adult to child interactions, as well as through exposure to pornography.

Early sexualization

Understand that if a child becomes sexually active or exposed to pornography early, this often can lead to re-enactment of activity experienced or witnessed. Youth often become overly sexualized which is displayed as promiscuity, inappropriate dress, stronger sexual

urges, lower boundaries, and multiple sexual partners. Note that the average age of first exposure to pornography is 8 years old according to research stated by Focus on the Family.

Child abuse

Child abuse can be experienced through neglect, verbal abuse, and physical harm. Abuse leads to trauma, and trauma leads to re-enactment of the activities experienced or witnessed.

5. MONITOR YOUR YOUTH'S INTERNET AND GAMING USAGE

Because children can be groomed and recruited through ways such as social media and gaming relationships, it is important to be involved in creating safe boundaries for your child regarding their smartphone and internet usage. Attend educational trainings for online safety, filtering, and parental control apps. There is constantly new information for parents to learn. Know what your children are doing on the internet and talk to them regularly about their online life. Ongoing 'tech talks' can help lower the chances of your child getting involved with an online predator.

a. Phones & tablets

- b. Games & YouTube videos and YouTube live:** People on games are still strangers - do not meet up with anyone your met online. ****Note that the Very Young Girls Pimp Tactics video does contain some profanity***

The following are YouTube links shown at the LISTEN event that you can share with your youth and others that can springboard teachable moments/conversations:

Coby Person. (2015, August 10). *The Dangers of Social Media (Child Predator Experiment)* [video file]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/6jMhMVEjEQg>.

Coby Person. (2017, November 13). *The Dangers of Snapchat (Child Predator Experiment)* [video file]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/fg-LhgZLB8M>.

NCJFCJ. (2014, November 17). *Very Young Girls Pimp Tactics* [video file]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/6G3pJPPDVXo>.

c. Sharing Photos - such as nude or immodest photos

d. Apps - dating, messaging

- e. Social Media Monitoring:** Set social media settings to private and do not give personal information to anyone online. Do not meet up with anyone you met on social media (they are strangers).

In his videos, Coby Person recommends considering the MSPY app that allows you as a parent to see/monitor conversations on your child's phone.

Empathetic Responses

By Vicky Wong, MSCP, LMFT, LMHC, NCC

It is not always easy to know what to say when someone tells you something very vulnerable and personal. There is power in words which can encourage and uplift or hurt and condemn. Careless words keep people isolated and silent for years. Supportive words bring healing, restoration, and courage to talk about their burden or their experiences. Here are some tips *on what to say vs what not to say* through a person's healing process.

Note: after someone shares something heavy and vulnerable, it can be very hurtful to not say anything, quickly change the subject, or make a joke/comment to lighten the mood. When appropriate, a hand on shoulder, a hand squeeze or a hug also can communicate comfort and empathy. ***Don't start immediately sharing your experience that is similar. This time is not about you. It is about listening to them eye to eye. Giving advice and encouraging words comes later after they feel validated and heard, and you sense they are ready for that.**

Vulnerability + Empathy = Breaks Shame

WHAT NOT TO SAY:

You just need to let go and move on.
Other people have it worse than you.
You're making too much of a big deal of this.
You just need to trust God and pray harder.
Are you just trying to get attention?
I can't believe this really happened.
Tell me every detail and don't leave anything out.
How come you just can't forgive?
You are sinning if you just can't forgive and forget!
Did you enjoy it? (the abuse)
What are you going to do about it now?
At least.... (minimizing issue)

WHAT TO SAY:

Sounds like you are feeling really (angry, sad, excited, shocked etc.) by what happened.
I don't know exactly what to say right now except that I'm here for you.
I'm so sorry that happened to you.
This must be so tough for you.
You are very brave and courageous to talk about what happened.
It took a lot of courage to talk about this, and I'm proud of you.
I am here to help you through your sadness.
I care about you. I am here to listen and help you in any way.
I am so glad you are sharing this with me.
You are not alone.
I believe in you!
I'm so sorry that awful thing happened to you.
You didn't deserve this (abuse, hurtful situation)
You are not to blame. This is not your fault. (if they were a victim of abuse)
Healing is possible!
You can be whole again.
Forgiveness for such a deep hurt is a process and will happen over time.
What I hear you saying is...(reflect back what they said/reflect back what you sense they are feeling)

Charming Chart into The Game

Targeting Stage

- Hanging out in popular young people areas - schools, parks, shopping malls.
- DM via social media/internet (PoF, Kik, FB, IG, SC)
- Befriending- giving gifts, caring, giving compliments, etc
- Learning their biggest wants & needs
- Building trust with family & friends
- Directing a recruiter to befriend them

Friendship Stage (recruiter)

- Being their best friend
- Spending time together
- Listening & keeping secrets
- 'Being there' for them
- Making young people feel special
- Showing 'benefits' from being in 'the game' (eg, expensive gifts)

Loving Stage (Romeo/Finesse pimp)

- Offering safety & protection
- Establishing a sexual relationship
- Giving expensive clothing / accessories
- Normalizing abnormal sexual behavior – watching porn
- Encouraging forbidden activities – clubbing, drinking, taking drugs
- Subtly introducing the concept of exchanging things for sex
- Fast-tracking the relationship (moving in, marriage talk)
- Promises of fulfilling dreams – travel, career, fame, wealth
- Giving drugs – cocaine to keep them slim, hypersexual & alert

Abusive Stage (Guerilla pimp/trafficker)

- Becomes unloving/ raw sex
- Inconsistent affection & 'love'
- Berates & name calling
- Creates dependency & isolation
- Tricks & manipulates – 'you owe me',
- Plays on feelings of guilt & shame
- Threatening –
 - 'Accidentally' shows gun
 - Threatens to kill victim/ loved ones/ self
 - Discusses how to kill & hide bodies
- Physical & sexual assaults (incl. forcing sex with others)
- Employs others to constantly watch them
- Plays mind games- hides things & tells them (& others) they're losing their mind
- Encourages illegal activities to later blackmail
- Impregnates, uses children against her
- Takes away ID cards
- Says 'shelters will not take prostitutes'
- Makes examples of victims who try to leave
- Convinces victim it was their choice
- Empty promises with fake tears

ADDRESSING SEX TRAFFICKING WITH YOUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

LEADERSHIP AND VOLUNTEERS CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider having your leaders go through the course *Mending the Soul* by Steven Tracy (www.mendingthesoul.org). It is very important and helpful to have your leaders and volunteers deal with their own issues of trauma and abuse, before becoming involved in this area - not to say they have to be completely healed, as healing is a process, but at least they are aware of and working on their healing. This course is highly recommending by the speakers.
- Assess your readiness and the readiness of volunteers. Helpful questions:
Have you dealt with/begun to deal with your own issues of trauma?
How are your relationships with your family members (marriage and relationship with your children/teens)? For example, if you are considering having your home become a safe house for a trafficked youth, is your home life stable and usually peaceful?
Open your heart to God honestly and know what you are not willing or able to do and what you are willing or able to do.
Know serving in this area of need is a blessing and don't let fear stop you. God can use you to be part of someone's miracle!

TRAFFICKING DISCLOSURES IN YOUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

What to do if a person discloses that they are being abused or trafficked in a small group situation:

- 1) **Redirect the conversation** by saying something like, "Thank you for sharing! That was courageous to share that. I want to hear more later from you. It is good for all of us to realize that abuse is common and our loved ones or ourselves have likely experienced it."
- 2) **Make time when you and another safe adult can meet privately with the youth or adult to hear their story.**

When meeting privately, it is best for the person disclosing their situation to meet with two safe adults - either with 2 females, one male *and* one female, or two males, never with solo male leader.

- 3) **Understand that the victim's story may be disclosed in parts or chunks that is not one complete picture shared in one sitting.** Their sharing may not even be linear in nature.

Know that initially, a victim will typically share only a *small* fraction of what they went through. They will share more as more trust is built. Certain conversations may trigger certain memories.

Make sure to refer the victim to a professional because unknowingly, you can do more emotionally harm even though you mean well.

- 4) **Affirm and care for the victim.** Do not act shocked or communicate disbelief.

Ask yourself, “What is the most important thing the victim needs right now?” For example, maybe they are in need of food or medical care. Once their immediate needs are taken care of, then they are more ready to share.

- 5) **Do not make promises.** Refrain from making promises that, in reality, you may not be able to keep. Broken promises can devastate victims emotionally.

Do not promise they will be safe, or you will keep them safe. You do not have complete control over their lives. You do not know the future. Instead, you can say, “I will stand with you!”

Do not promise you won’t tell anyone what they share with you. If you are a church leader, you are a mandated reporter. If you suspect someone is being sex trafficked, you must report it. You can report it anonymously. If the child is in danger, then this a promise you cannot keep.

NOTE: Child Welfare Services does NOT get involved if the abuse is: sibling to sibling, peer to peer, or a non-custodial adult (like a stranger or a neighbor). Note that families can also opt not to receive services.

ACCESS FOR SAFETY WHEN TALKING WITH A VICTIM

You can ask the following questions to gain understanding:

Who has been hurting you?

When did the abuse begin?

Who do you think knows about the situation?

What would happen if you refused?

Are you concerned about yourself or others getting hurt?

Does the (abuser) monitor your phone? Your location? Your activities?

Have they ever threatened you?

When did you last see (the abuser)?

WAYS TO AFFIRM THE VICTIM

- Express to the victim that you believe him/her.
- Assume that the abuse claims are true until proven otherwise.
- Don't minimize their situation and stay away from well meaning phrases that can leave the victim feeling blamed. Refrain from saying things such as "What doesn't kill you will make you stronger."
- Thank the person for sharing with you ("Thank you for telling me.")
- What is most important to you right now?
- Have direct conversations and ask victim open ended questions:
"Do you need anything?"
"I've noticed _____ and am concerned about you."
"Can I grab some food for you?"
"Do you have a safe place to sleep/live?"

CREATE A PLAN ON HOW YOU WILL PREVENT AND HANDLE SEX TRAFFICKING SITUATIONS IN YOUR CHURCH

Church is usually seen as a safe place. A known victim, recruiter, or perpetrator may go to church for help. Statistically speaking, research has shown that they are victims and perpetrators in churches.

Victims can be females or males.

Children re-enact what they see or experience. If the perpetrator is a child, they may also be a victim.

- Do background checks on children and youth workers.
- Put age limits and # of people limits in relationship to certain activities for safety reasons.
- Discuss with your leadership team about the seriousness of confidentiality. You don't want rumors to spread throughout the church. Even a leader's spouse is not to be told information about a victim that is shared confidentially.
- Recognize other potential victims or likely recruiters if applicable.

- Create a safety plan on how to protect people. Form protocols and policies on how you will handle potential situations regarding trafficking and abuse.

What would you do if a trafficker, abuser, or affiliates show up?

What would be your safety responses?

Helpful Questions to ask your leadership team:

What is the plan if the perpetrator is in the church?

How do you protect victim identity?

How is perpetrator information communicated throughout church changes and transitions?

Is this information going to be shared to sister churches?

Do churches need a place to share dangerous information?

How do you minister to a perpetrator and keep others safe?

How are your children being taught sexuality development?

HELPFUL BOUNDARY CONSIDERATIONS

- **Create safety guidelines for children and youth ministries including when and how older youth/children minister to younger youth/children.** Create clear guidelines. In reality, abuse can happen peer to peer or older peer to younger peer.

Create guidelines on games to play that won't put children or youth in a situation where they could be abused or inappropriately touched (for example refrain from games played in the dark.)

(Note: A church family we know of in Canada, made a decision among all the families that nobody would have sleep overs since sexual abuse has happened commonly during sleep overs. The parents may be safe people, but older siblings can abuse younger children/youth.)

Abuse happens to males as well.

Children and youth will often re-enact what they see or have experienced themselves, including porn. The average age of porn exposure is now 8 years old according to Focus on the Family.

- **Consider making guidelines such as leaders should never alone with a youth in a private place.** (for example: Do not allow a leader alone in a car with a youth - even when giving car rides or doing pick-ups.)

JOINING THE FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING

Be open to God for creative ideas! Do not discount little ideas. Explore those ideas you have that can bring awareness and support.

Some Ideas:

- **Through My Eyes Coffee Hours:** Susanna Wesley Foundation together with the speakers are open to exploring having small group 'coffee times' where they can share about trafficking and have an interactive discussion with a small group (or large group.) You can organize such a time!
- **Contact organizations as Susanna Wesley Community Cener and others to volunteer!**
- **FOSTER CARE: Get involved in becoming a foster parent or support foster parents.** Numerous children and youth in the foster care system get trafficked - many have been sexually abused and traumatized, making them even more vulnerable to being trafficked.

There are currently 1500 kids in foster care in Hawaii.

DHS is asking for faith-based homes because they have discovered that faith communities have a community that can support and resource families so they can be successful!

You can support a foster family by providing meals, babysitting, shopping, emotional and spiritual support, transportation, house cleaning, and much more!

ACCESS YOUR READINESS

Ask yourself the following questions to access your readiness.

Why do you want to join the fight against trafficking?

How ready are you?

Have you dealt with your past traumas? (Or at least on your healing journey actively pursuing your healing?)

Is your family in a place where this is safe?

Are you learning to do something outside of your comfort zone?

Have you spent time in prayer asking God how you should fight? Are you listening for the answer?