What we need to know:

- Trafficking usually begins with a family member. Traffickers can be a parent, grandparents, cousin, aunt, uncle, etc.

- Many commercial sexually exploited children in the United States have been sexually abused in a family situation.

- Males are just as likely as females to be trafficked by their family.

- Most kids who are sex trafficked don’t consider themselves victims, many of them have been conditioned to normalize their situation.

- Although 14-16 is a common age for victims to be trafficked, with familial victims typically the abuse starts at a much younger age.

- Often emotional, psychological, physical, and relational isolation is a hallmark factor to familial trafficking.

- Children come from many backgrounds: there is no standard socioeconomic situation, race, gender, creed or religious indicator to predict who will be trafficked over another child in a family situation.

What we need to look for:

- Poor mental health, abnormal behaviors, and lack of control.

- May be fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid.

- Tries to please adults or get inappropriate attention from them.

- Tries to act older than peers or mental age.

- Inconsistent behavior, frequent mood swings.

- Behaviors that appear to be sexually promiscuous.

- May have vague answers; have been taught to hide secrets.

- May have non-evident injuries that affect physical activity.

- Isolated and does not socialize normally with peers; poor communication skills.

- Appears tired and unable to keep up in studies.

- Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating during school meetings, medical appointments, church, etc.).

- Constant cover up for abuser, self-shaming/blaming.

- Lack of understanding and education about bodily functions, rape, incest, sexual abuse.

- May have poor hygiene, be unaware of body odor or common practices.