

WHAT IS COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN?

Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) occurs when an individual offers, buys, trades, or sells sexual acts with a child under the age of 18. Child sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining a child for the purposes of sexual acts. Victims can be any gender, and LGBTQ+ youth are at a higher risk. Exchange does not always mean money; it can include anything of value to the child. Examples of CSEC include:

- Direct/in person sexual acts
- Gang based trafficking
- Escort services/private parties/stripping
- Online photos of videos of a child engaging in sexual acts
- Self-produced sexually explicit images

The **average**
age of sexual
exploitation is
12-14
years old

SOURCES: MISSINGKIDS.COM
AND HOPE4JUSTICE.ORG

1 **IN** **3**

TEENS

will be sexually exploited
within 48 hours of running
away from home

Minor victims are
SOLD FOR SEX
an average of

10 **TO** **15**
TIMES A DAY
6 days a week

What to look for:

- Changes in appearance, mental health, personal interests, vocabulary, and attitude
- Luxury items like manicures and designer clothes without an explainable source of income
- Low or no school attendance, or significant loss of interest
- Associating with significantly older friend group or adults
- Receiving calls, texts, or online messages from adults
- Possession of hotel keys
- Possession of vapes or substances with no means of access
- Multiple phone or social media accounts
- Missing from care or missing for long periods of time

What do you do if you suspect a child is being commercially sexually exploited?

If you suspect a child, under the age of 18, is a potential victim report it immediately to the local police department or the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF). You do not need to know who may be responsible or have confirmed evidence exploitation is occurring – only a reasonable suspicion. If you do have a reasonable suspicion, please call the Child-at-Risk Hotline at 800.792.5200.

If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

Children's Cove provides a coordinated and victim-centered response to all victims of child sexual exploitation and trafficking in partnership with state agencies and community providers. All services are free of charge. To learn more about commercially sexually exploited children and how it impacts our community, please contact Children's Cove.



508.375.0410 • [childrenscove.org](https://www.childrenscove.org)

Individuals pictured are models and are used for illustrative purposes only.