

# COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF YOUTH

## WHAT IS COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION?

Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) or youth happens when a person buys, trades, or sells sexual acts with a youth under the age of 18. Commercial sexual exploitation of youth is illegal based on federal statutes. For children and youth, there is no need to demonstrate or prove “force, fraud or coercion” as they cannot consent to commercial sex acts.

A commercial sex act is classified as **any sex act that is in exchange for anything of value**. This can be money, goods, in-kind favors, or any other kind of benefit.

## EXAMPLES OF COMMERCIAL SEX:

- Prostitution
- Pornography
- Survival Sex
- Exotic dancing/stripping
- Webcam sexual services
- Gang-based prostitution

## WHO ARE VICTIMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION?

Youth of all genders, cultures, and socioeconomic backgrounds can be exploited. Youth that are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation include those that:

- Have a history of emotional, physical, or sexual abuse
- Have a history of running away or are currently on the run
- Have a history of substance use and/or a current drug addiction
- Are gang involved
- Are involved in the child welfare system (such as child protective services, foster care, etc.)

## SIGNS A YOUTH MAY BE COMMERCIAL SEXUALLY EXPLOITED

- Chronic truancy, homelessness, or on the run
- Possession of large amounts of cash
- Possession of expensive items: clothing, new electronic devices, gifts
- Lying about age and use of falsified documents
- Behavior changes around a new significant other or lack of engagement with school, sports, etc.



### SOURCES

Boyer, D. (2008). Who pays the price? Assessment of youth involvement in prostitution in Seattle. City of Seattle Human Services Department Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Division.  
Auburn Youth Resources, Friends of Youth, Organization for Prostitution Survivors, & YouthCare. (2016). Bridge Collaboration data: April 2014-March 2016.  
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. (2015). NCMEC in communities.

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## LET'S WORK TOGETHER

Seneca's Outreach Specialist partners with schools and community organizations to identify and engage with youth at-risk of or engaged in commercial sexual exploitation. We are eager to collaborate with schools and community organizations who are interested in helping to identify and connect these youth to protective outlets.

The goal of Seneca's outreach services are to:

- Partner with schools and other community organizations to equip staff, students, and families with knowledge about commercial sexual exploitation, and how to identify and engage at-risk or exploited youth
- Help to connect youth who are at-risk of or engaged in commercial sexual exploitation to the appropriate resources
- Ensure protective outlets and options for at-risk or exploited youth through community collaborations and on-site supports



## SENECA SERVICES

Seneca's Outreach Specialist can offer your team a menu of services that include immediate assistance for youth as well as supports which develop the capacity of your school or organization to help youth that are at-risk or currently exploited.

Services available to your school or organization, free of charge, include:

- Hands on assistance and consult for youth, families, and staff, including assistance in connecting youth to long-term, specialized supports
- CSEC awareness and prevention-related trainings for staff, youth, and parents
- Evaluation of current processes and/or design of new methods for identifying youth in need of additional support
- Training and coaching on how to engage with youth who are at-risk, currently exploited, or engaged in other risky behaviors
- Ongoing consult and support for those that care for youth that are suspected of being at-risk or engaged in commercial sexual exploitation

Interested in learning more about how you can partner in this effort? **Contact:**  
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