COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN (CSEC)

UNDERSTANDING THE TERMS

**CONSENT** Consent is when someone agrees, gives permission, or says “yes” to sexual activity with others. Consent is always freely given. All people in a sexual situation must feel that they are able to say “yes” or “no” or stop the sexual activity at any point.

**MANIPULATE** To control or influence (a person or situation) cleverly or unfairly.

**EXPLOITATION/EXPLOIT** The unfair treatment or manipulation of someone to benefit yourself.

**TRAFFIC/TRAFFICKING** To deal or trade in something illegal.

**SEX TRAFFICKING** Sex trafficking is a form of trafficking. Sex trafficking occurs when someone is forced to sell sex.

**CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING** Child sex trafficking is a form of trafficking. It occurs when the person being forced to sell sex is under the age of 18.

*(Legal Definition):* The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person under the age of 18 for the purpose of a commercial sex act. Child Sex Trafficking is a form of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC). It is also known as Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST).

**TRAFFICKER** A person who exploits another person sexually for financial gain. A more accurate term for “pimp”.

**PERPETRATOR** A person who purchases sex from children or otherwise exploits them. A more accurate term for “john”.

**GROOMING** Grooming is a method of building trust with a child and adults around the child in an effort to gain access to and time alone with her/him. However, in extreme cases, offenders may use threats and physical force to sexually assault or abuse a child. More common, though, are subtle approaches designed to build relationships with families. The offender may assume a caring role, befriend the child, or even exploit their position of trust and authority to groom the child and/or the child’s family. These individuals intentionally build relationships with the adults around a child or seek out a child who may have fewer adults in her/his life. This increases the likelihood that the offender’s time with the child is welcomed and encouraged.

The purpose of grooming is:
- To reduce the likelihood of a disclosure.
- To reduce the likelihood of the child being believed.
- To reduce the likelihood of being detected.
- To manipulate the perceptions of other adults around the child.
- To manipulate the child into becoming a cooperating participant which reduces the likelihood of a disclosure and increases the likelihood that the child will repeatedly return to the offender.

**STOCKHOLM SYNDROME/TRAUMA BONDING** A strong emotional attachment between an abused person and their abuser, formed as a result of the cycle of violence.

**VICTIM-BLAMING** When the victim of a crime or any wrongful act is held entirely or partially responsible for the harm they experienced.

**SEXTORTION** Sextortion is a criminal act that happens—usually online—when an offender uses coercion to obtain photographs and/or videos that are sexual in nature.

**GENERALIZATION** A general or broad statement made by inferring from specific cases.

**STEREOTYPE** The application of an exaggerated or oversimplified image to every person in a cultural group; or, a misinformed belief about members of a cultural group being applied to an individual member.

**Bystander Effect** Occurs when people do not offer any help to a victim when other people are present. Research shows that the more people that are present, the less likely someone will step in and help.

**Active Bystander** An active bystander is someone who not only witnesses a situation, but takes steps to speak up or step in to keep a situation from escalating or to disrupt a problematic situation.