

Not Alone: Working Together in the Fight Against Human Trafficking

What is the role of social media?

Sophia Strother - Sex Trafficking Survivor and Advocate:

Social media is a catch-22.

[soft music]

Daniella Alvarado Pérez - Senior Prevention Advisory Specialist - Love 146:

Social media to youth, is something that they've always grown up with. It's a part of their everyday life and culture. Traffickers know this.

Sophia Strother: So they'll come in and start kind of DM-ing them things that help build up their self-esteem and make them fall for them.

Kathy McGibbon-Givens - Sex Trafficking Survivor and Advocate:

The trafficker will literally just engage with you and try to become your friend.

Daniella Alvarado Pérez: Gift-giving, praise, or even offering a relationship.

Sophia Strother: "Hey, just meet me here." "I would love to give you this."

Kristen Abrams - Senior Director of Human Trafficking - The McCain Institute:

On a labor trafficking side you can see social media and technology used to advertise what could be a fraudulent employment opportunity.

Daniella Alvarado Pérez: We use social media a lot in our conversations with youth. We empower them to use these tools like reporting or taking screenshots or sharing with their friends and their community. Particularly when they see things that are dangerous.

Sophia Strother: Advocates can definitely utilize social media to counteract it being weaponized in human trafficking.

Evelyn Chumbow - Labor Trafficking Survivor and Advocate:

Those girls that were trafficked in Kuwait, they saw my number, they called me and I was able to make that connection, I was able to do that. I felt good.

Allison Franklin - Sex Trafficking Survivor and Advocate:

Individuals, wherever they're at in their journey, their healing journey, can find people like them.

Sophia Strother: One of my good friends that is also a survivor is Toni McKinley who found me on Facebook.

Allison Franklin: Those critical relationships are the key, right? To turn back all this trauma.

Toni McKinley - Sex Trafficking Survivor and Advocate:

We can use social media and Instagram to put up memes or gifs, to talk about red flags. Parents have actually learned through me by searching the internet or Googling for my name They want to learn more to be able to protect their children.

Daniella Alvarado Pérez: So social media can be used as a way to recognize that this is happening and we should be doing something about it.