

WORKSHOP SCENARIO FOR STUDENTS OF POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Child trafficking

Workshop's goal: the workshop will introduce various mechanisms employed by people engaged in child trafficking for commercial exploitation. The participants will learn how they can defend themselves against manipulation, and what help opportunities there are for teenagers at risk of becoming victims of human trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation can take advantage.

Duration: 45 minutes

Target group: The workshop is intended for youth between 13 and 18 years old. It can be conducted at school – in such situation the group size is defined by class population. The workshop can also be carried out outside of school, for a group of people who don't know each other. In such situations, it is recommended that the age-wise homogeneous groups count no more than 20-25 participants.

Place: school class, day room, training room.

Materials needed: provided DVD (option)

Equipment required: laptop, projector, projection screen or TV set (if using the DVD).

Conducting person/facilitator: the facilitators best suited for the proposed workshop are people who work with youth on a daily basis, who can run a facilitated discussion, and have at least basic knowledge of child trafficking. We encourage you to run the workshop with two facilitators. This should ease up the discussions that will follow each exercise, and ensure comfort during the workshop.

Workshop type and kinds of work involved: experiment, lecture, presentation, discussion.

The workshop combines elements of a lecture on child trafficking and a discussion with teenagers on mechanisms employed by its perpetrators. The content of the workshop and types of work involved can be difficult or poignant to the participants. Before starting the workshop, it is advisable to acquaint oneself with the "Commercial sexual exploitation of children Q&A" and "Child trafficking problem in Poland and globally" available at www.stopwykorzystywaniu.fdn.pl.

We have prepared two ways of presenting the story of young people who fell victim to child trafficking for commercial exploitation. You can either read the story out loud or show the provided educational DVD.

Workshop completion/evaluation form: We kindly ask you to fill in an evaluation form for the conducted prevention workshop. Your opinion will greatly help us create further educational materials. Once you have filled in the form, you will have the possibility to obtain a workshop certificate. The form is available at www.edukacja.fdn.pl.

1. Introduction

Duration: 3 minutes

The facilitator informs the participants that, in the course of the workshop, they will learn about mechanisms of exerting influence and manipulation that are often employed, among others, by people engaged in human trafficking for commercial exploitation. The facilitator should propose to set and write down a few rules, to which all participants shall comply throughout the workshop, e.g.:

- I listen when others speak.
- I don't judge other participants.
- In discussions and exercises, I refer to the story presented during the workshop.
- I treat with respect and discretion the information and opinions disclosed by other participants.
- I maximally engage in the workshop.

2. Exercise: "I always have on me..."

Type of work: Experiment

Duration: 7 minutes

At the beginning, the facilitator asks all the participants to take out of their bags or backpacks the things they always keep on themselves – e.g. wallet, mobile phone. Next, the facilitator asks everybody to imagine a situation where these objects fall into the hands of a person (or people) who wants to force the participants to perform certain actions or behaviours.

Facilitator: *Think what these objects, their content (documents, pictures, contact lists, call history, text messages), can reveal about you and your life. How can this information be used to manipulate you, maliciously approach you or make you do something you don't want to do?*

Examples: The person wanting to manipulate or blackmail me might know:

- What I like (gym card, loyalty card to the cinema, etc.)
- Who is important to me (pictures in the wallet/mobile phone)
- Where I live and how old I am (documents)
- What the phone numbers of people important to me are, what applications I use, with whom and why I talk, etc.

The facilitator now informs that perpetrators of sexual exploitation, including commercial exploitation and child trafficking, employ manipulation techniques – they try to approach their potential victims, gain their trust, simulate that they care for them and show them a friendly attitude. They might go as far as to use blackmail, which is a form of manipulation as well.

3. Presentation: Paula's story/Peter's story

Type of work: presentation

Materials needed: if the story is presented in the form of a video: the DVD enclosed to the scenario, laptop, projector, projection screen or TV set

Duration: 5 minutes

Lesson scenario contains two histories – one of a boy and one of a girl. The facilitator should decide which of the stories will serve as a base for the further lesson. The educational content in both stories is the same.

The facilitator encourages everybody to listen to the story and says that the situation it describes will serve as material for further discussion. Next he/she reads out loud the story or plays the video.

Paula

Maybe I was unlucky... I met John at the party. It all happened last year, in July. I was 15. He used to hang around with me, he never swore. He seemed nice and well-mannered. He was completely different than my friends from school, who were childish and often just boorish. He told me he lived in England with his parents, and came to Poland with his uncle just for holiday. I felt really good around him, he was so confident and good-looking... so I gave him my phone number.

Soon we became friends and then started seeing each other. We would meet every day. I even met his uncle, who was so charming and smart. I had such a good laugh... In my family, things were much different – my mother was depressed, we never had enough money...

I was so happy I found a boyfriend who was so interested in me, who wanted to spend time together. I thought I found my soul mate. I couldn't imagine that he would leave, disappear from my life. I thought he felt the same.

John asked me to spend the last week of summer at his place, abroad. He told me how much he wanted me to meet his family and friends, and to show me the place he lived in. I knew I had to go, but my mother was so reluctant to let me leave. She said it would be such a long journey... Finally, John's uncle managed to convince her, he promised to take care of me.

On the day of our departure, it turned out it was only me and John who were going, because his uncle decided to stay in Poland a few days longer than expected. He gave John his car keys and wished us a safe journey.

The trip was very long, and I thought it would be so romantic – just me and my boyfriend... But when we arrived at the place, suddenly everything changed. John was no longer a nice guy. He took my cell phone and left me completely alone. Then three men came into the room. One of them told me that from now on I had to work for them. Then he slapped my face and dragged me into another room where I saw more girls who were just like me...

Peter

Even now... after all this time, my hands start to shake when I think of it... I was looking for a summer job. Back at home, there was often too little money even for the basics, not to mention fancy clothes or a cellphone. I thought if I worked through the summer I could save up to buy some books for me and my brother, and maybe even something extra. I browsed the offers online and offline but everywhere I asked, they declined, saying they needed someone experienced or that young people are untrustworthy. The fact that nobody wanted to treat me seriously drove me mad.

A month before the end of the school year, a friend told me that good jobs were available abroad . He said that nobody really asked your age there, all you had to do was pull your weight and all would be ok. Just like with this friend's brother – he went to work abroad during winter break and came back with a laptop, a new cellphone and some money on top of that. I decided to try my luck. I browsed a number of offers but it turned out that either I didn't have the qualifications, or the pay was low, or they did after all mind that I was 16. At last, I found an offer where everything was ok. I set up a meeting with the agent.

The offer was really awesome. The agent, Mr. White, said I was perfect for the job because the hiring company needed young people. Unfortunately, it turned out that the combined cost of travel, insurance and something else was very high. I didn't have the money so I apologized to the agent and left.

The next day, Mr. White called me. He said he didn't usually do this but he decided to help me since I was so determined to help my parents. He offered me another job: in a hotel restaurant for which he has been recruiting employees for a couple of years. A place has just been vacated and he thought of me for the job. He talked about the fantastic environment and the additional money from tips. The thing was, I had to decide really fast because just in two days he was leaving for the hotel with a group of new employees – using his private car to cut on the costs. I would have to pay him back for the travel costs from my first paycheck. I was overwhelmed – I finally found a job!

At the meeting point, I got to know two more people – an older girl and a lady my mother's age. All the way we talked about what we would buy with all that earned money. We got there in the middle of the night. We started unpacking from the car as Mr. White took our documents to settle things with the hotel manager. We waited for a long time. At last another man appeared and said he would take us to our quarters.

I can't believe we got in that car, that we didn't worry about our documents. We arrived at some sort of a barrack and were told we would have to work to pay back the travel and agent's expenses. Everything turned into a nightmare-like move: working 14 hours a day, threats, abuse... I didn't know what to do... I fell victim to forced labor.

4. Lecture

Type of work: lecture

Duration: 5 minutes

The facilitator, using Paula's/Peter's story as an example, presents to the participants a few methods employed by perpetrators of child trafficking. The stories show a tactic frequently used by perpetrators – starting with winning the trust of a victim, then addressing his/her needs, and then proposing an unforgettable adventure.

Using Paula's story, adhere to the example provided: John got really close to her, they became friends, then a couple. He offered her vacation abroad – a great adventure, a window to the world. Such treatment from newly acquainted people makes us less cautious and wary; we assume the person is honest and friendly.

Using Peter's story adhere to the example provided: Mr. White made an attractive offer – Peter could loan the money from him to get a job abroad and help his parents. In order to gain the boy's trust, the agent gave him a "trusted" and attractive job offer. The boy had very little time to make up his mind

People who exploit others for commercial purposes (forced work, forced prostitution) often use physical violence. Victims of human trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation may also be blackmailed – the perpetrators threaten that they will expose compromising information (true or fabricated) to the victim's family, that they will harm people close or important to the victim. They try to persuade their victim that escape is either dangerous or impossible – should anyone learn about it, the victims will be punished (e.g. will go to jail).

Paula/Peter succumbed to influence, manipulation and pressure. These are not isolated cases. As the data from the Ministry of Justice shows, between 2001 and 2013, more than 3700 people were aggrieved as a result of human trafficking. How many cases remained undiscovered by the Police or undisclosed by the victims one can only wonder.

Both, children and adults, fall victims to manipulation. There isn't one, effective behaviour pattern that could protect you from the influence of people with malicious intents – submitting to influences is natural. Our sense of security can be reinforced, though, by knowledge and ability to identify threats.

5. Discussion: mechanisms of succumbing to influence

Type of work: discussion

Duration: 20 minutes

The facilitator should emphasize that perpetrators of sexual exploitation or child trafficking approach their victims with ease because they act purposefully and with a clear-set goal. They employ psychological theories of exerting influence, so it's advisable to take a closer look at these theories.

After presenting each of the techniques employed by perpetrators, the facilitator should encourage the participants to discuss it.

PERPETRATORS USUALLY EMPLOY TECHNIQUES SUCH AS:

a) Pretending friendship and winning trust

It is natural for everybody to do more for a friend or a trusted person, or believe in their good intentions. They are our friends after all!

Using Paula's story, adhere to the example provided: *It is obvious in Paula's story. John was always by her side, he wooed her. He talked about himself and his life. He introduced her to his uncle, who was very nice as well. John showed her he cared for her. Paula agreed to the trip because she trusted him.*

Using Peter's story, adhere to the example provided: Mr. White seemed to be caring for Peter and his family.

Questions for discussion: Have you ever done something you did not entirely accept but you gave in to a friend's request? Maybe you've heard of such a situation.

b) Consequence and engagement

The more engaged we are in a given situation, the more positive our attitude towards that situation is. The longer we're engaged into a certain activity or the more effort we put into it, the harder it becomes for us to pull out from it. As an effect of the consequent keeping to once made decisions, we no longer ponder over the choice we've made. We do not engage into analysing all the pros and cons emerging from the incoming information, so we have no ground for a potential change of mind.

Questions for discussion: Does this ring a bell? Have you or (any of your friends) ever been in such a situation? Or maybe you know a similar story from a movie? How did it play down in Paula's/Peter's case?

Using Paula's story, it is important to emphasize that Paula spent with John nearly the entire holidays. Had he offered her the trip at the beginning of their acquaintance, she would have probably taken a longer time to consider it.

Using Peter's story it is important to draw participants' attention to the fact that Peter felt he really needed to earn some money. He put a lot of time and effort into job hunting. When he finally found it, it was difficult not to accept the offer

c) The reciprocity rule

It is often difficult to say 'no' to a person who did us a favour, gave us a present, or made some concessions for us. It is also more difficult to decline a person who invited us to a coffee or to a cinema, or who helped us with something.

Questions for discussion:

Using Paula's story, ask: *Can you see how this mechanism has been employed by John towards Paula?*

If the participants can't see the mechanism, the facilitator should show how John used it: he did not give Paula presents, but he addressed her needs, made her feel special.

Using Peter's story, ask: *Can you see how this mechanism has been employed by Mr. White towards Peter?*

Peter was offered a very attractive job: adjustable loan repayment rate and a profitable position. The offer was made only to Peter, although many would be more than interested in it. This made Peter feel as if Mr. White had done him a favor. In such a situation, even if Peter had some doubts about the offer, it would be very difficult for him to back out from it.

d) The halo effect

It is important to remember that we trust people who are pretty and attractive more easily than others. These positive features 'lend' some of their shine to other characteristics of this person. This can lead to a dangerous thinking that a good-looking person is indeed a good person. A newly acquainted person, whom we find attractive (physically or otherwise), does not necessarily want our good.

Questions for discussion: What could make a newly acquainted person seem more attractive to us? Characteristics such as physical appearance, financial status, gadgets owned, being fashionable, as well as: being a foreigner, living abroad, etc.

e) The scarcity effect

The availability of something we desire plays an important role in our decision making. If for example, we have very limited time for taking advantage of a given offer, we tend to see it in a more positive light than we would if we had time to think it over in peace. We make the decision under pressure – mainly time pressure. On this mechanism sales in shops and last minute offers in travel agencies are based.

Using Paula's story as an example: Paula made the decision to go with John because, on one hand, holidays were about to end and she couldn't take advantage of the offer later, on the other hand – they were going to be separated for a longer time after the holidays.

Using Peter's story as an example: Peter had a really short time to decide whether to go or not. On one hand, he really wanted to go to work abroad, on the other hand, he didn't make much time to make up his mind. If he hadn't taken advantage of it somebody else would have.

Questions for discussion: Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you had little time to make a decision? What were the consequences of making such decisions?

The facilitator should emphasize that every day we all are subject to various types of social influence. We do need to remember, however, that perpetrators (of sexual exploitation and child trafficking among them) use many techniques of exerting influence on their victims. They manipulate to gain as much as possible for themselves – not for us.

The facilitator now informs the participants that both – child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation – are serious crimes, prosecuted by the Polish law and various international acts. Victims

of such crimes are often transported abroad, so the international cooperation of enforcement agencies from around the world is constantly being developed.

6. Conclusion: “This will never happen to me”

Duration: 5 minutes

The facilitator reminds everybody the story of Paula/Peter. Maybe some of them are thinking “this will never happen to me”. It’s a very misleading line of reasoning that may dull our alertness. We deny thoughts of threat, which makes us all the more vulnerable to it. The facilitator now asks the participants if they had ever had such thoughts before and encourages them to answer this question only to themselves – in their own mind.

The facilitator should emphasize that, the sooner we identify the threat, the better the chances of avoiding it are. Although discussing difficult situations is never easy, it is worth engaging in such discussions – with parents, teachers, friends. It is sometimes difficult to talk openly with people close to us – we need anonymous help and support. At times like this you can turn to many places – among them to the Helpline for Children and Youth, which operates under the toll-free 116 111 number. Sometimes writing might be easier than talking. Via the www.116111.pl website you can send an anonymous message and receive help.