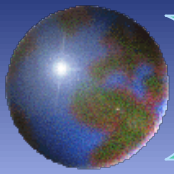


Lost in Cyberspace

Raising the Professional's Awareness

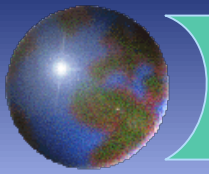


Presented by
Francine Donnorummo
SVU Chief, Office of the State Attorney
Thomas Kontinos
Private Investigator



How sex predators adapt to evolving tech to lure child victims





Apps in the news

- ✦ Social media apps and website have become a tool for online predators and human traffickers to target their victims. Here are some of the apps mentioned by local-law enforcement and victims' advocates.

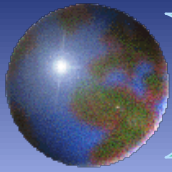
Snapchat: It is a picture-messaging app where messages disappear after a few seconds. Officials warn that images can still be saved.

Instagram: It is a photo-sharing app that allows the users to share photos and videos across a number of social media platforms. Photos and videos are public by default. Officials encourage use to set their accounts to private to limit who can see posts.

Kik: It is an instant message service that also allows photo sharing. The app has had issues with sex and porn spammers, officials said.

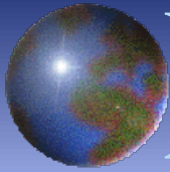
Tango: It is a messaging app where users can make video or audio calls. A Tango profile can be visible to strangers if the account is not set to private.

Musical.ly: It is a free social media app that allows users to watch, create and share videos, often to set to music. There have been reports of the app being used by predators to target children.



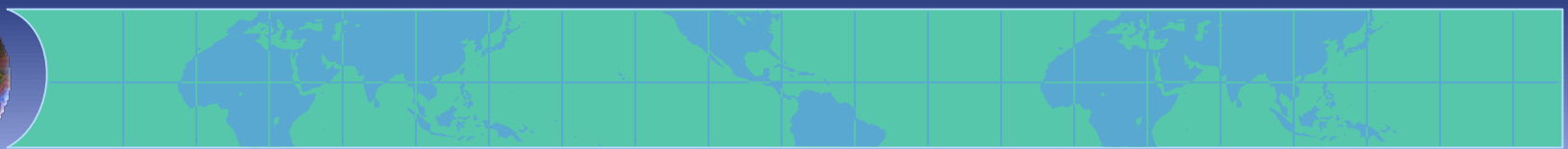
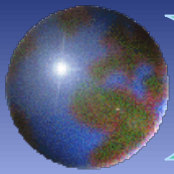
Worldwide Statistics

- ✦ Each day Facebook users spend 10.5 billion minutes (almost 20,000 years) online, on the social network.
- ✦ There are approximately 58 million Tweets sent per day.
- ✦ About 350 million photos are uploaded to Facebook each day.
- ✦ 95% of teens ages 12-17 are using internet. 26% are using twitter, and 11% are on instagram.
- ✦ Students who used social networking sites while studying scored 20% lower on tests and students who used social media had an average GPA of 3.06 versus non-users who had an average GPA of 3.82.



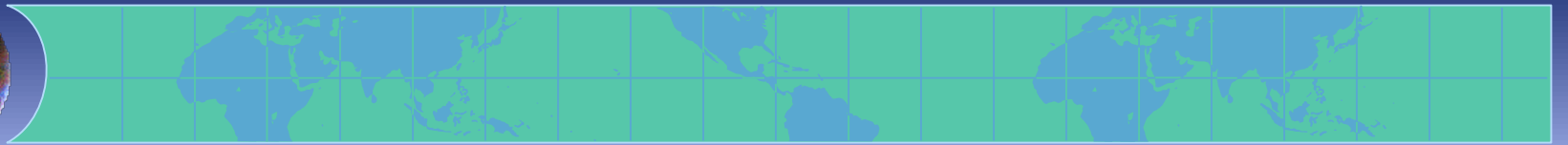
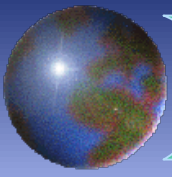
Cyberbullying

- ✦ Cyberbullying is deliberately using digital media to communicate false, embarrassing, hurtful, harmful or hostile information about another person.
- ✦ 50% of teens have reported being cyberbullied.
- ✦ Simply visiting a website that bashes a student is considered cyberbullying.
- ✦ Only 1 in 10 teens will tell a parent if they have been cyberbullied.
- ✦ 70% of teens have witnessed cyberbullying.
- ✦ Over 20% of cyberbullying victims and 15% of "sexting" victims have contemplated suicide.



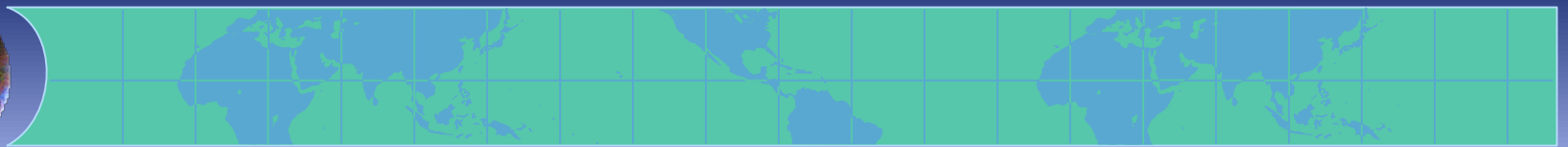
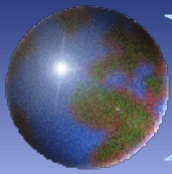
Cyberstalk F.S. 784.048

- ❖ To engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose



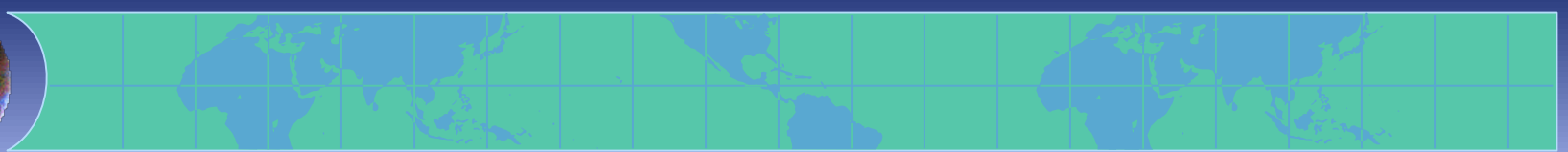
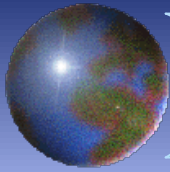
SEXTING





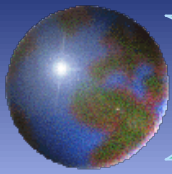
SEXTING

- ✦ F.S. 847.0141 847.0141 Sexting; prohibited acts;
- ✦ (1) A minor commits the offense of sexting if he or she knowingly:
 - (a) Uses a computer, or any other device capable of electronic data transmission or distribution, to transmit or distribute to another minor any photograph or video of any person



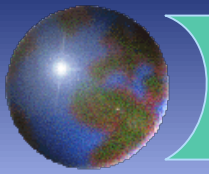
The Dangers of Sexting

- ❖ Sexting can have serious, and in some cases, disastrous consequences. Reputations, social lives, future academics, and careers can be ruined as a result of nude pictures going public. There can also be serious implications for the victim's mental health. Victims may feel humiliation, low self esteem, and in **some instances, suicide has been attributed directly to sexting.**
- ❖ Many teens are embarrassed and feel regret once they realize what they have done during a momentary lapse in judgment. Once the image has been posted and starts circulating there is no telling where it will end up. **And, there is no way to "take it back" or delete it.**



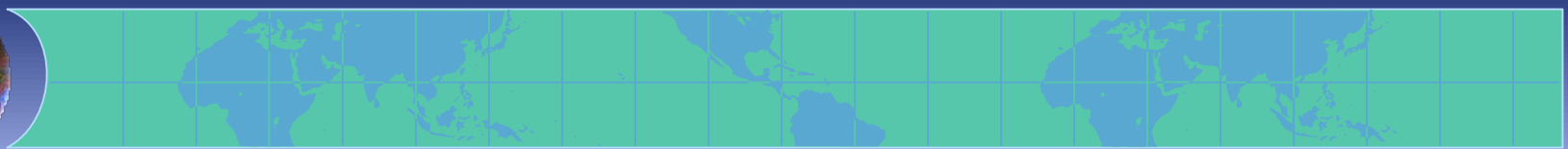
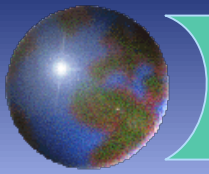
Online Predators

- ✦ Online predators are individuals who primarily collect and trade child-pornographic images, while others seek face-to-face meetings with children.
- ✦ Be aware of the fact that **your children may be at potential risk of encountering online predators**. This is especially true for those times when kids use social media in order to “meet new friends,” and it’s not always easy for them to tell when “new friends” have bad intentions.
- ✦ **Anonymity** is the main characteristic of predators. Anyone can very easily take on a false identity and pretend to be someone else. **Having anonymity can facilitate a sense of intimacy but can also serve to hide the true identity of an online predator**. Someone posing as a 15 year old teenager can in actuality be a 37 year old male. Online predators take advantage of this to build trust and intimacy and to develop online relationships with innocent young boys and girls of all ages.



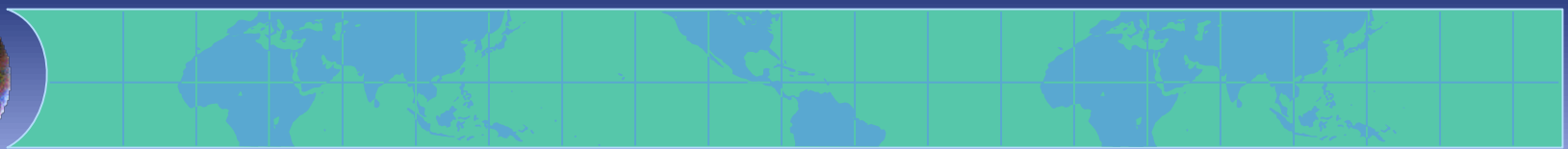
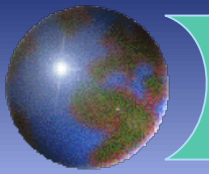
How Online Predators Operate

- ✦ **Find kids** on social media after using it to learn about the child's interests, friends, school, family
- ✦ **Are familiar with the latest music, hobbies, fashion, etc.** that are likely to interest kids, and may impersonate other youths in order to convince minors to meet with them.
- ✦ **Intentionally move their communications with the child from one online platform to another** (e.g., moving from social media to private video chat or messaging apps)
- ✦ **Using multiple online identities** to contact a child
- ✦ **Use tactics to coerce a child, including:** Reciprocation, offer child money or drugs in exchange for sexually explicit photos/videos
- ✦ **Pretending to be younger** and/or a member of the opposite sex
- ✦ **Pretend to work for a modeling agency** to obtain sexually explicit images
- ✦ **Look for children that are emotionally vulnerable** due to problems at school or home. Develop a bond with the child by establishing a friendship/romantic relationship



Sextortion

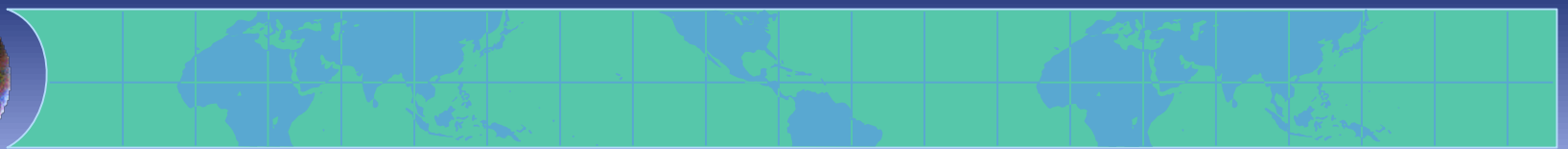
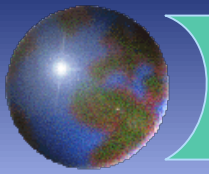
- ❖ **Gradually introduce sexual content** into conversations or show sexually explicit material that may even involve children engaging in sexual activity – in order to convince kids that this type of behavior is acceptable.
- ❖ **If the victim tries to cut off communication, predators scare the victim into continuing the relationship** by convincing them that they will tell their parents what they have been doing online and that they have viewed pornographic pictures, etc.



Computer Pornography

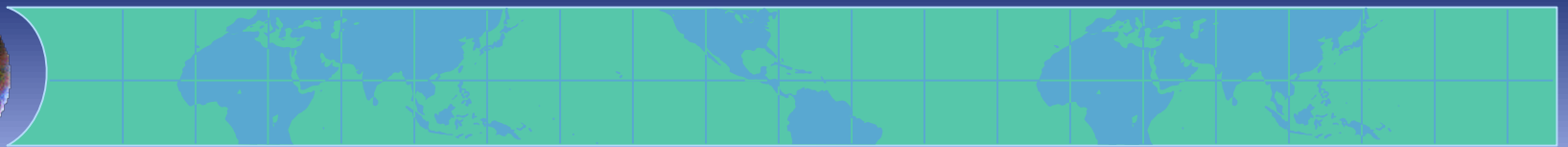
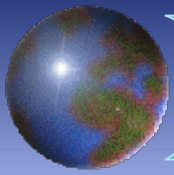
F.S. 847.0135(3)

- ❖ To seduce or lure a child , the defendant's computer messages do not have to explicitly discuss sex. The court will review the nature and the tenor of the conversation to determine whether the discussion could reasonably be construed as aimed at physical seduction



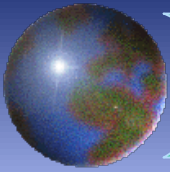
F.S. 847.0138

- ❖ Transmission of Material Harmful to Minors to a Minor by Electronic Device
- ❖ Frequently the suspect on line will forward a lewd picture of either himself or others at some point during the conversation with the believed minor



Warning Signs





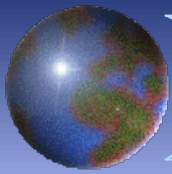
Signs Your Child Could be in Contact with an Online Predator

- ✦ Children who spend a lot of time online are at the greatest risk during the evening hours. While offenders are online around the clock, most work during the day and spend their evenings online trying to locate and lure children or seeking pornography.
- ✦ Finding pornographic materials on the computer - child pornography may be used to show the victim that sex between children and adults is "normal."
- ✦ Receives phone calls, mail, gifts from people you do not know
- ✦ Withdraws from normal activity
- ✦ Switches screen quickly when you approach, or turns the monitor off
- ✦ Uses other accounts for email or Instant Messaging

If your kids do meet an online predator, don't blame them.

It's always the offender's responsibility.

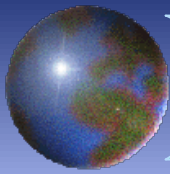
Take decisive action to stop your child from any further contact with this person.



Could Your Child be a Victim?

Warning Signs

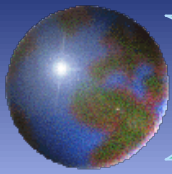
- ✦ Not wanting to be involved in family or school activities
- ✦ Exhibiting unusual mood swings (nervous, jumpy)
- ✦ Shows a decline in homework or grades
- ✦ Trouble sleeping
- ✦ Unexpectedly stops or is reluctant to use the computer
- ✦ Quickly switches screens or closes programs when an adult is present (secretive of their digital life)
- ✦ Unusual interest in self-harm or suicide
- ✦ Displays unusual anger, sadness, depression, and/or a decrease in self-esteem
- ✦ May discuss revenge
- ✦ Change in appetite



PIMPS/TRAFFICKERS OFTEN EXHIBIT THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIORS OR CHARACTERISTICS

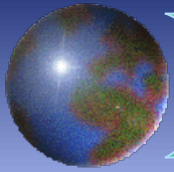
Who are your child's friends?

- ⊕ Jealous, controlling and violent
- ⊕ Significantly older than female companions
- ⊕ Promise things that seem too good to be true
- ⊕ Encourage victims to engage in illegal activities to achieve their goals and dreams
- ⊕ Buys expensive gifts or owns expensive items
- ⊕ Is vague about his/her profession
- ⊕ Pushy or demanding about sex
- ⊕ Encourages inappropriate sexual behavior
- ⊕ Makes the victim feel responsible for his/her financial stability. Very open about financial matters.



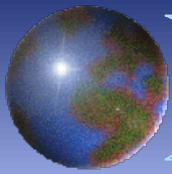
Let Your Teen Know

- ✦ That you have the right to check their laptop, phone, etc..
- ✦ What apps/media are okay and what are not
- ✦ Cell phone tracking can help locate your child's phone and keep you notified of their location
- ✦ Major wireless service providers offer locator packages that able track all cell phones on your plan if cell phone has GPS capabilities
- ✦ That you need to know their passwords
- ✦ What their online responsibilities are:
 - Protecting their privacy
 - Not engaging in cyber bullying



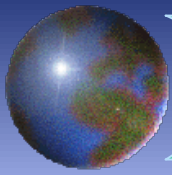
Prevention

- Before giving children wireless devices, parents should learn how to limit or restrict the products and services.
- Tell children to think before posting.
- Always set and check privacy settings.
- Children should not have a computer in their bedroom and should always be visible to parents while they are online.
- Review your child's list of friends.
- Don't assume anything you post will remain private.



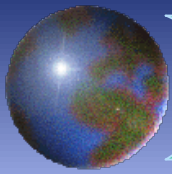
Prevention Continued...

- ✦ Never open unidentified or unsolicited messages.
- ✦ Remember to log out of online accounts.
- ✦ When not in use, make sure webcams are shut off to prevent spying/hacking.
- ✦ Do not share personal information online (phone number, address, social security number, or school information).
- ✦ Check for pornography, sexual communication, or any other inappropriate content on your child's computer.
- ✦ You can ultimately be held liable for any misuse of your social media accounts committed by a third party.
- ✦ **Teach children to trust their instincts if they feel something is wrong.**



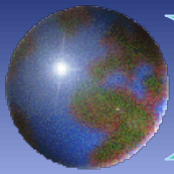
Best Response to Victimization





How to Respond to Victimization

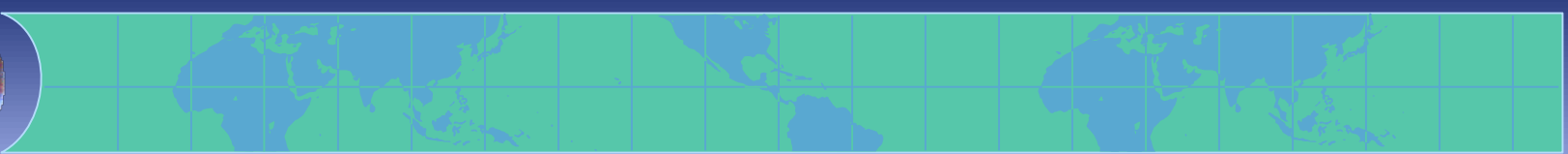
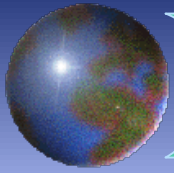
- ✦ Do not reply to sender and save the evidence.
- ✦ Write down child's password
- ✦ Seize your child's phone
- ✦ Put phone in airplane mode so it cannot be deleted remotely.
- ✦ If it is not child porn, you can screen shot it with your phone.
- ✦ Block offending email addresses, cell phone numbers, or change your child's phone number and email address.



Possession of Child Pornography

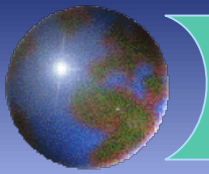
FS 827.071

- ✦ It is a crime to possess images of child pornography. A child is defined as under the age of 18yrs.
- ✦ If you find child pornography, any naked pictures of teenagers, you should take the child's phone. Place it in airplane mode and call the police. Do not have them send it to your phone.



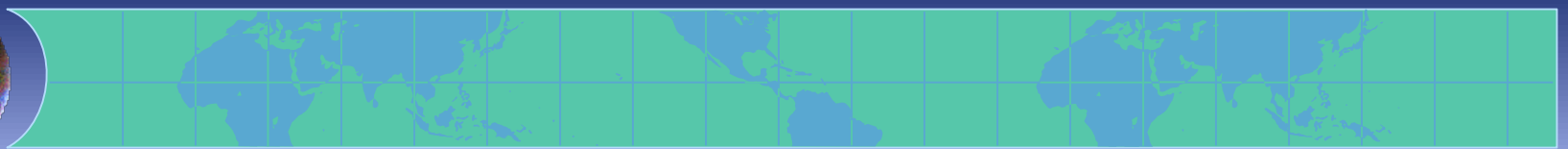
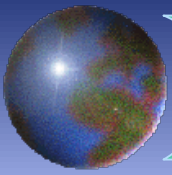
Do not attempt to handle the matter yourself!

- ✚ Report incidents and file complaints with communication services, schools, and law enforcement.
- ✚ Get legal advice



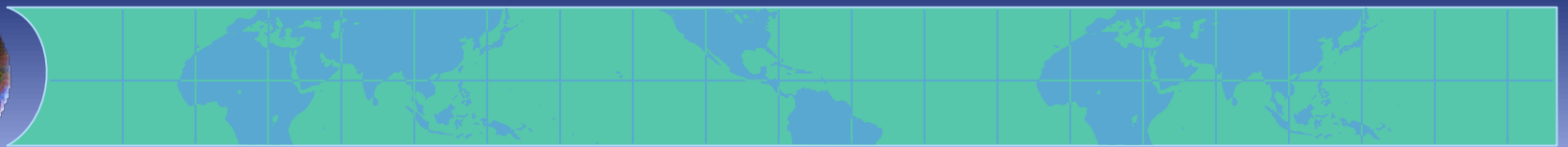
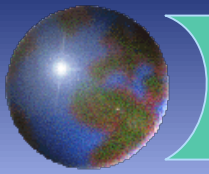
Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Abandonment

- ☛ Everyone, including professionally mandatory reporters, **MUST** contact Florida Abuse Hotline when they know or have reasonable cause to suspect that a child or a vulnerable adult has been abused, abandoned, neglected, or exploited.
- ☛ Call 1-800-962-2873
- ☛ Fax 1-800-914-0004
- ☛ <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us>



Resources

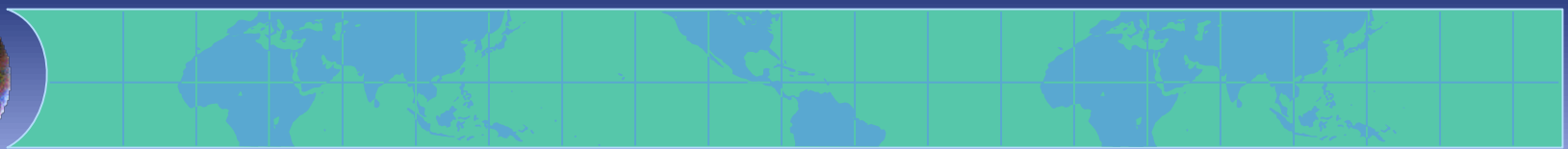
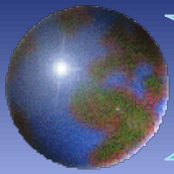
- ✚ [National Center for Missing & Exploited Children](#)
- ✚ <http://www.missingkids.com/home>
- ✚ Children's Advocacy Center- they offer counseling and conduct forensic interviews – 239-939-2808
- ✚ Office of the State Attorney, 20th Judicial Circuit
- ✚ fdonnorummo@sao.cjis20.org



Human Trafficking Hotline

1-888-373-7888

- ✦ It's not just happening in other countries, it's hiding in plain sight in our own country, it has been noted that in the last five years, there has been a tremendous increase in child sex trafficking reports at the same time the crime has moved "from the streets to the Internet."
- ✦ "People can order up little girls to a hotel room as easy as they could takeout," she said.
- ✦ Backpage may be down, but others have emerged



National Human Trafficking Hotline

- ✦ A national, toll-free hotline, available to answer calls, texts, and live chats from anywhere in the United States, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in more than 200 languages. The National Hotline's mission is to connect human trafficking victims and survivors to critical support and services to get help and stay safe, and to equip the anti-trafficking community with the tools to effectively combat all forms of human trafficking. The National Hotline offers round-the-clock access to a safe space to report tips, seek services, and ask for help.