

# Sugar Dating



**Stolen Youth**  
prevent. connect. empower.

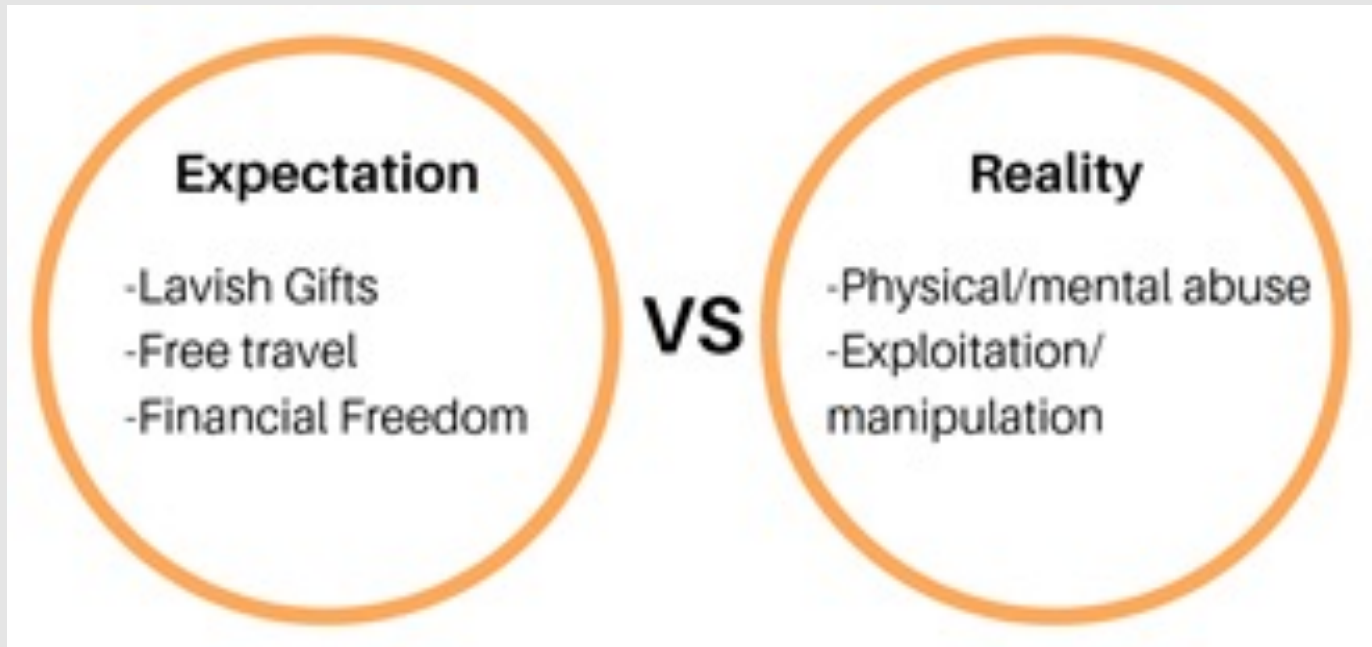
# What is Sugaring?

“Sugaring” or “Sugar Dating” is an exploitative practice where going on dates or having sex is exchanged for gifts and payments. Often, wealthy, older males (“sugardaddies”) and sometimes females (“sugarmamas”) proposition younger, low-income girls, women and men (“sugarbabies”) promising luxury gifts, rent, tuition or cash.

[KOMO News Segment 1](#)

- 33% of sugarbabies are students (over 1.4 million)
- 48% of sugarbabies are ages 18-22
- 42% of sugardaddies are between 40-50 years old and 36% between 50-60 years old
- 40% of sugardaddies are married

# Expectation vs. Reality



Sugaring language is normalized in pop culture, including movies, music and social media. Glamorizing the sugardaddy and sugarbaby language makes sugaring seem normal and acceptable, when in fact it isn't and it's a fast path to sex trafficking and abuse.

# Why is Sugar Dating Prostitution?

The role technology plays in sugar dating can be understood as the modernization of prostitution, making it easier for customers to find a supply for their insatiable demand.

While advertised as a unique dating experience with mutual benefits, these relationships are transactional wherein men are able to buy sex or sexual favors through cash or luxury gifts.

Sugar dating is often targeted towards vulnerable women, who are not only young, but are also financially vulnerable as well.

Much like prostitution, there is very little protection available to women who enter into these arrangements.



# How can Sugar Dating become Trafficking?



*“When I met my first trafficker, I had been sugaring a couple of months at that time, and I disclosed to him that is what I was doing at the time to pay my bills. And so from there, there was really no grooming process. That boundary of engaging in commercial sex acts had already been violated. So for him, it was just establishing that trauma bond and then taking over my money. That happens commonly.”*

*-Megan Lundstrom, Avery Center for Research & Services and sugaring survivor*

# Project: SugarFree

## What is Project: SugarFree?

After DNA, a Seattle advertising agency, inadvertently came across tens of thousands of online solicitations for sugarbabies, and becoming aware of the rapid growth of sugaring on college campuses, and seeing the mass normalization of sugaring language, they saw the opportunity to use their data analytics tools and automated AI technology to intersect, educate and help dissuade potential victims and suppress abusers.

[KOMO News Segment 2](#)

## Goals:

- Use facts and data to dissuade vulnerable populations from entering into sugaring relationships, which have been proven to be dangerous and an on-ramp to sex trafficking
- Report and remove abusers and potential criminals from the Twitter platform
- Put an end to the normalization and glamorization of prostitution, act as a counterbalance for Seeking's, and other similar sites, efforts



# Sample Posts

Victim:



**Project: SugarFree**  
@SugarFree

**The word 'Sugaring' is just a candy-coated version of prostitution.**

The exchange of sex for money is not explicitly stated but, the expectation is always clear. They will 'spoil you' in exchange for sexual conduct. Don't be fooled.

#sugarfree **Project: SugarFree**

Exploiter:



**Project: SugarFree**  
@SugarFree

**Did you know that a minor can not legally consent to be a 'SugarBaby'?**

Even if they voluntarily meet up with you, it's illegal in the state of WA to exchange ANYTHING of value for sexual conduct with a minor.

Save yourself the humiliation of becoming a registered sex offender and jail time.

#sugarfree **Project: SugarFree**

# Results

**Our goal is to disrupt sugaring before it happens, report abusers and stop sugaring language normalization. We'll track our success against a series of performance metrics:**

- Total Replies
- Reply Tweet Engagement
- Total Tweets Found
- Tracked Accounts Removed
- Reported Accounts Removed

## Project: **SugarFree**

Impact Report  
February  
2021

Project: SugarFree uses analytics tools and AI technology to intersect, educate and help dissuade potential victims and suppress exploiters of online sex trafficking.



**3,846** Tweets Reported

**966** Tweets Removed



**8** Exploiters De-platformed

Results represent actions taken since December 2020 on Twitter in Washington State

Stolen Youth

**DNA**



# What can you do to help?

- Educate your friends and family about the dangers of sugar dating.
- Contact your school leadership to bring awareness and change.
- Never reply to a stranger on social media.
- Report anything suspicious you see on social media and comment #projectsugarfree
- Write, or ask StolenYouth for, an article for your school newspaper.
- Invite StolenYouth to speak to your friends, family, and networks.
- Know the laws – patronizing a prostitute is illegal in WA state

For resources and to learn more visit  
[www.StolenYouth.org](http://www.StolenYouth.org)



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