

RISE UP.

Discussion Guide



About this Series

Human trafficking and child exploitation affect communities across the United States and around the world. The Our Rescue *Rise Up* docu-series explores the realities behind these crimes, challenges common misconceptions, and highlights the roles that survivors, law enforcement, families, communities, and advocates all play to end human trafficking and empower survivors to reclaim their lives and thrive on their healing journey.

Series Outline

1. **Rise Up_For Freedom:** Understanding the issue
2. **Rise Up_For Survivors:** The journey to healing
3. **Rise Up_For Protectors:** Support for the front lines
4. **Rise Up_For Prevention:** Recognize warning signs and vulnerability
5. **Rise Up_Together:** Become the hero

Discussion Questions

1. Rise Up_For Freedom

Understanding the Issue

- What surprised you most about how human trafficking actually occurs?
- How did this challenge common misconceptions or stereotypes?
- Why do you think these crimes are often described as "hiding in plain sight"?

2. Rise Up_For Survivors

From Crisis to Healing

- What does it mean that "rescue is only the beginning"?
- Why is trauma-informed, survivor-centered care so important?
- What can individuals and communities do to support survivors with dignity and respect?

3. Rise Up_For Protectors

Support for the Front Lines

- What challenges do law enforcement and frontline professionals face in this work?
- How can communities and nonprofits better support those working to protect children and vulnerable individuals?
- What does it mean that "the protectors need protecting, too"?

4. Rise Up_For Prevention

Stopping Exploitation Before It Starts

- How has technology changed the way children experience risk today?
- What role do parents, educators, and trusted adults play in prevention?
- Why is open communication so important when discussing online safety and exploitation?

5. Rise Up_Together

Everyone Has a Role to Play

- How did Sonny's story of trauma, survival, and resilience shape your understanding of child exploitation and its lifelong impact?
- What themes connect all five episodes?
- What is one action you can take to help protect children, support survivors, or raise awareness in your community?

Key Takeaways

Human trafficking is not always what we expect.

It can involve force, fraud, or coercion, and often occurs within trusted relationships, families, communities, or online environments.

Supporting Protectors Strengthens the Fight

Law enforcement and frontline professionals work every day to identify victims, hold offenders accountable, and protect children. Training, technology, mental health resources, and community partnerships are essential as these crimes continue to evolve and grow.

Survivors deserve dignity, choice, and long-term support.

Rescue is only the beginning. Recovery is a journey, not a single moment. Every survivor's experience is different, and healing takes time and requires trauma-informed, survivor-centered care.

Prevention starts with awareness.

We cannot arrest our way out of Human Trafficking. Education, open conversations, and recognizing vulnerabilities can help stop exploitation before it begins.

We Rise Up Together.

No single person, organization, community or even country can end human trafficking alone. Lasting change happens when communities choose not to look away and work together to protect the vulnerable.