

DIGITAL DANGER ZONES

TAP8  8
tap out dating violence

Understanding Online
Threats, Exploitation, and
Trafficking Risks for Teens

WE ARE DVAC



DVAC works to end domestic violence through legal services, advocacy, education, and social change. Founded in 1990, DVAC provides comprehensive, culturally responsive support to survivors across Hawai'i. Through direct services and community partnerships, DVAC promotes safety, dignity, and self-sufficiency.



TAP808 promotes healthy relationships and prevents teen dating violence through education and advocacy. We empower Hawai'i's youth to feel safe, respected, and confident in their relationships while centering inclusivity and equality. TAP808 serves youth ages 12–21 with workshops, outreach, and individualized support.

WHY THIS TOPIC MATTERS :

- **Exploitation exists on a spectrum**
- **Trafficking often begins online**
- **Teens are uniquely vulnerable in digital spaces**
- **Pathways to exploitation are often subtle and gradual**
- **Without spreading accurate information, myths about trafficking continue to persist**

SESSION

GOALS:

DISCLAIMER:

This is not
investigative
training.

~~RECOGNIZE THE~~

- ~~Understand online recruitment~~
~~tactics~~

- ~~Respond using trauma-informed~~
~~strategies~~

- ~~Set expectations~~

- ~~Focus on awareness, early~~
~~identification, and response~~

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- ★ Recognize digital red flags
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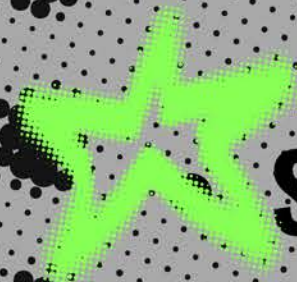
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**DEFINITIONS
TO KNOW:**

Digital Threat Assessment

Online Grooming

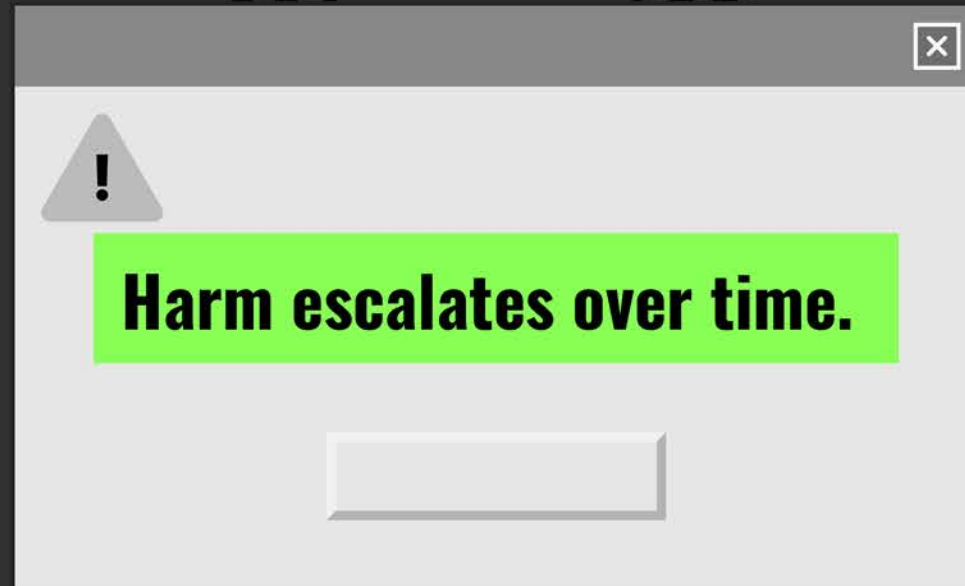
Digital Coercion

Human Trafficking

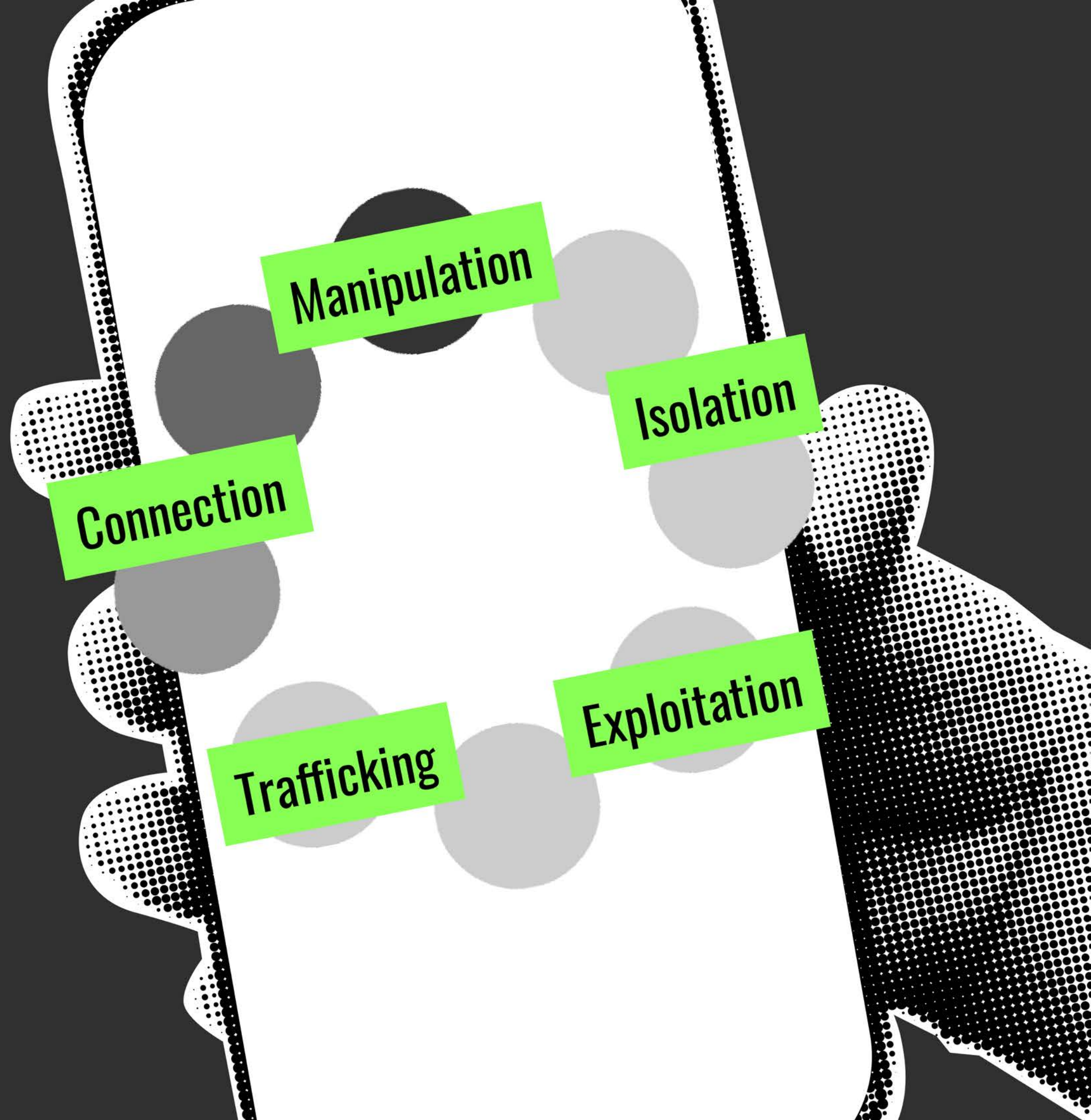
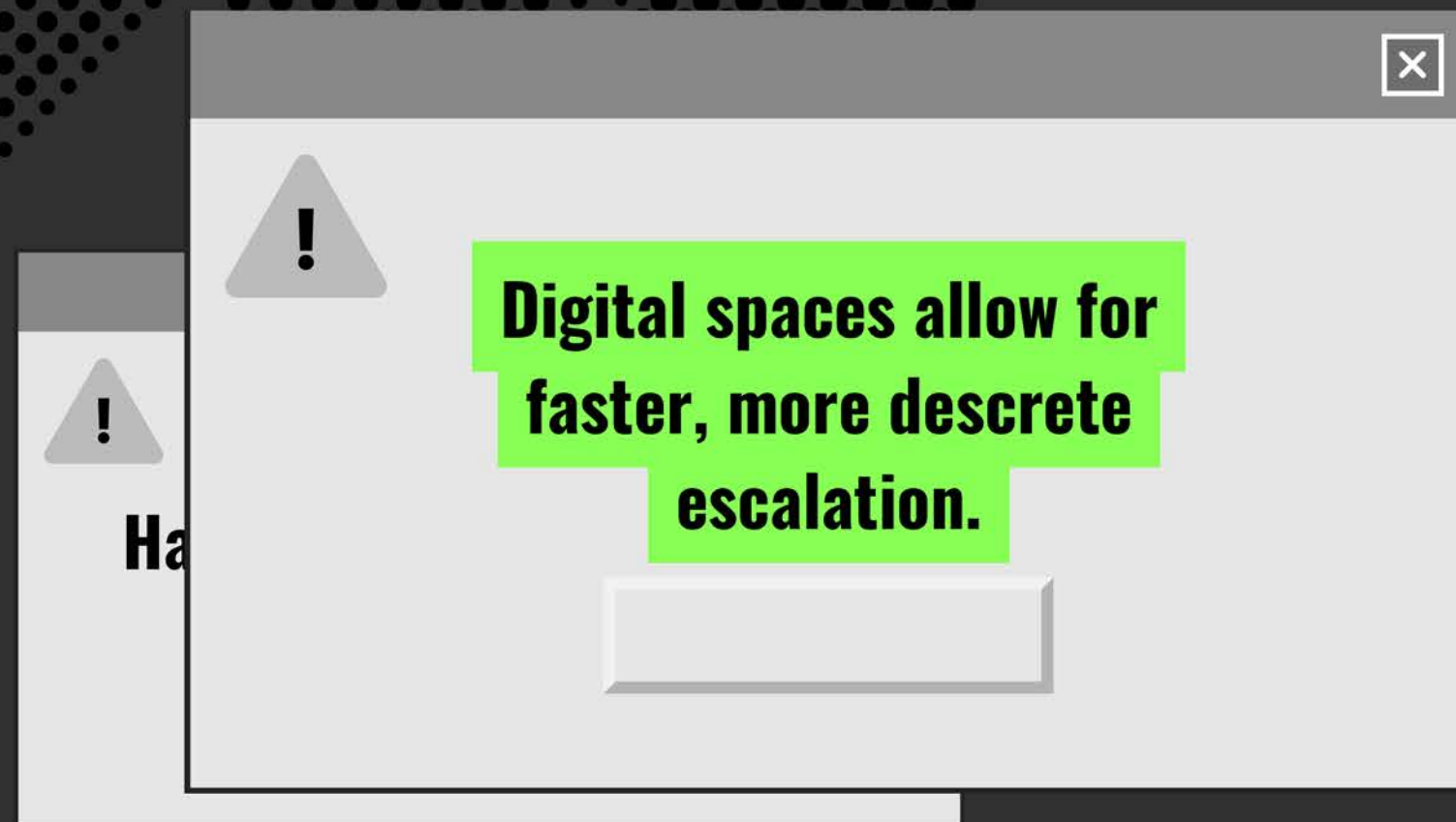
CONTINUUM OF HARM



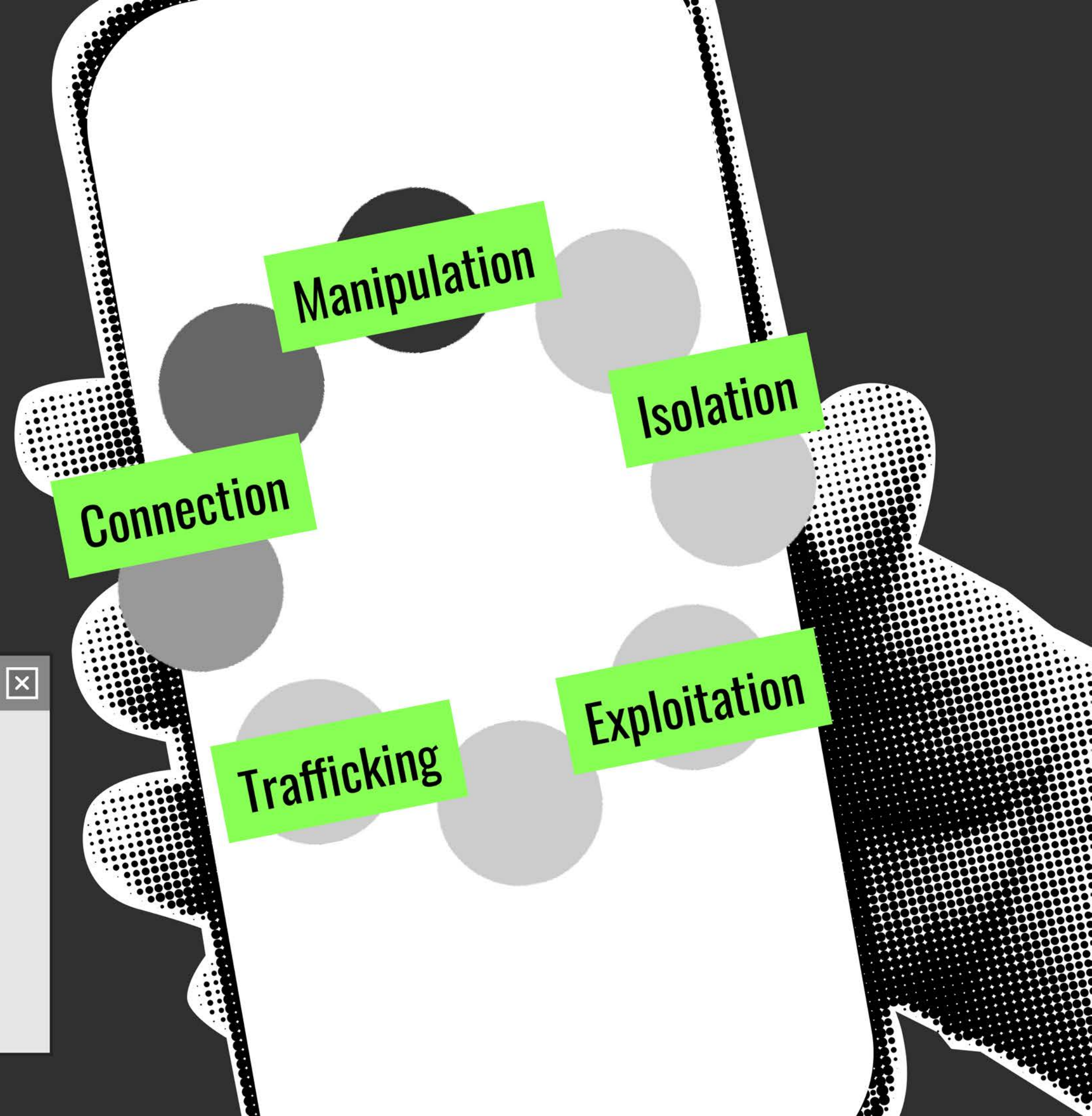
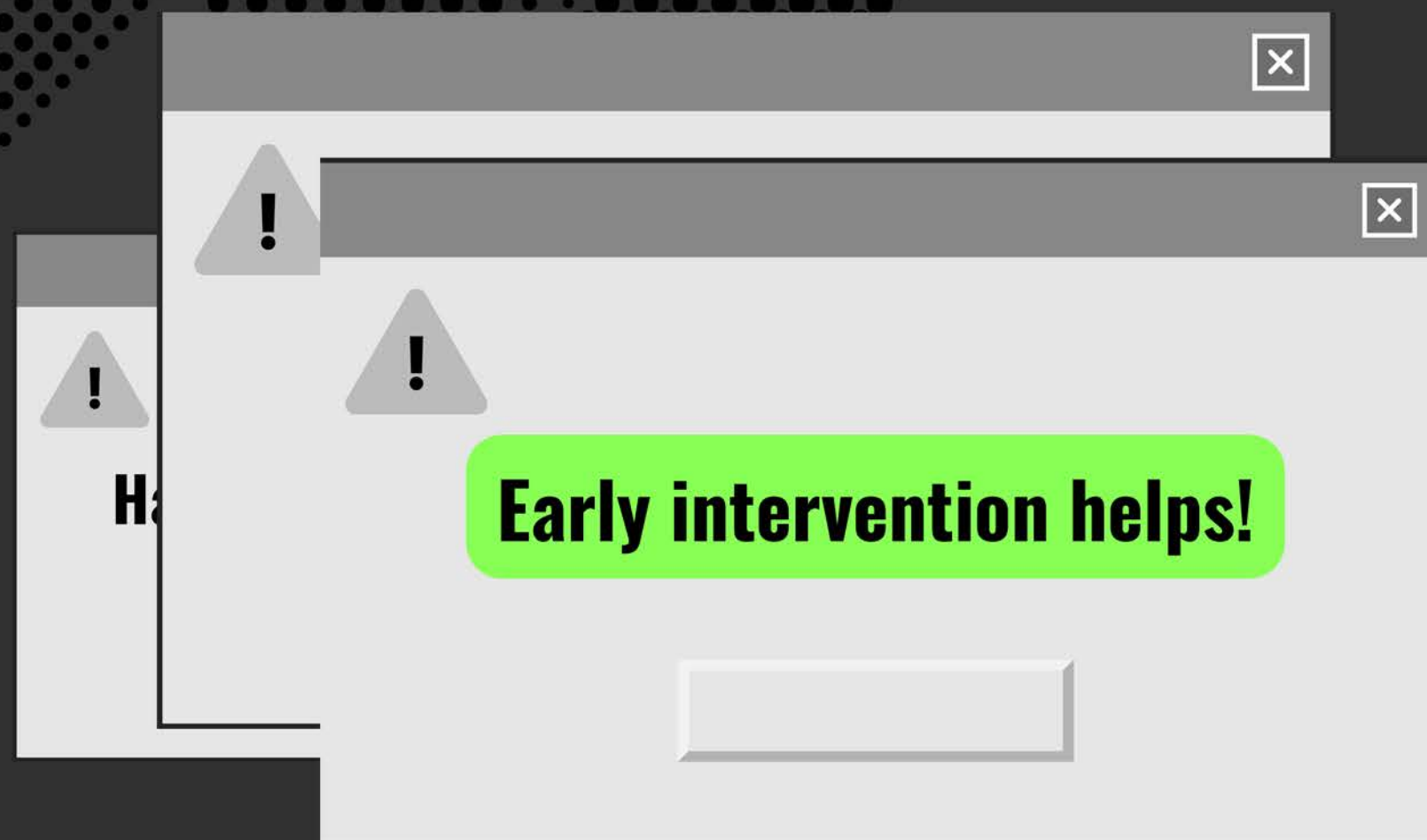
CONTINUUM OF HARM

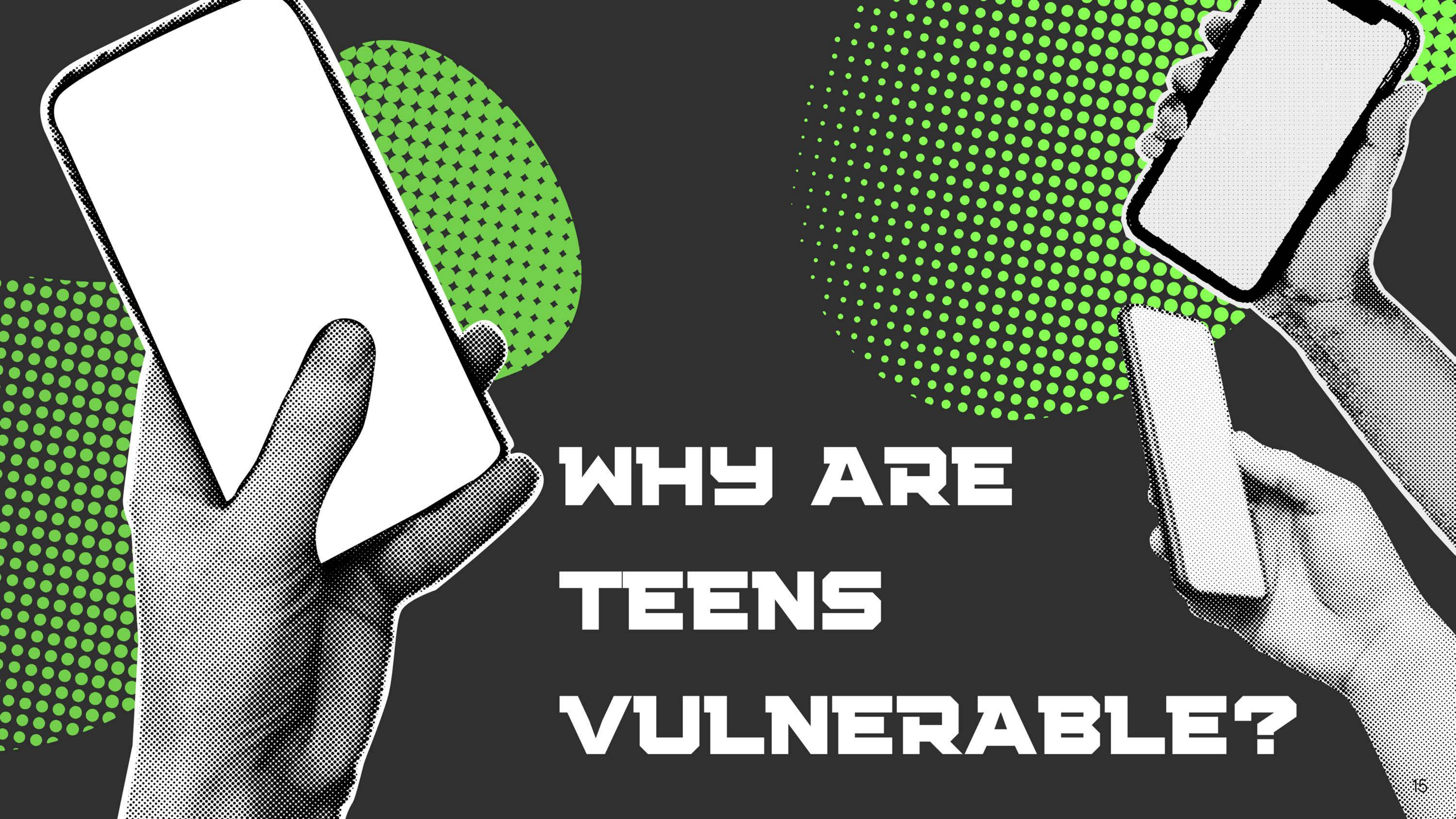


CONTINUUM OF HARM



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WHY ARE TEENS VULNERABLE?

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Developmental Stages

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Developmental stages

Desire for connection

WHY ARE TEENS VULNERABLE?

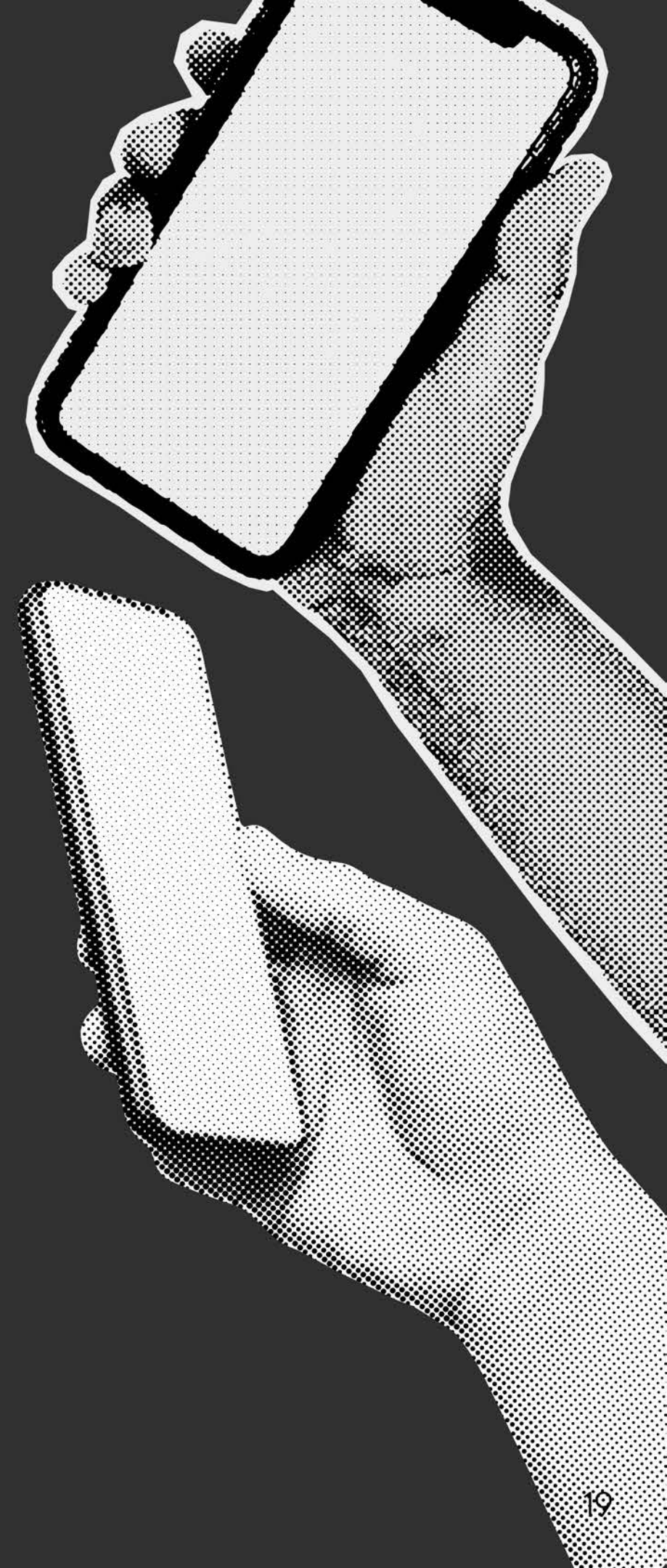
Developmental stages

Desire for connection

Limited risk assessment



WHY ARE TEENS VULNERABLE?





**WHERE DOES
RECRUITMENT
HAPPEN?**



Social Media

Livestreams

Messaging Apps

Forums

**WHERE DOES
RECRUITMENT
HAPPEN?**

Recruiters blend in

No single “Dangerous App”

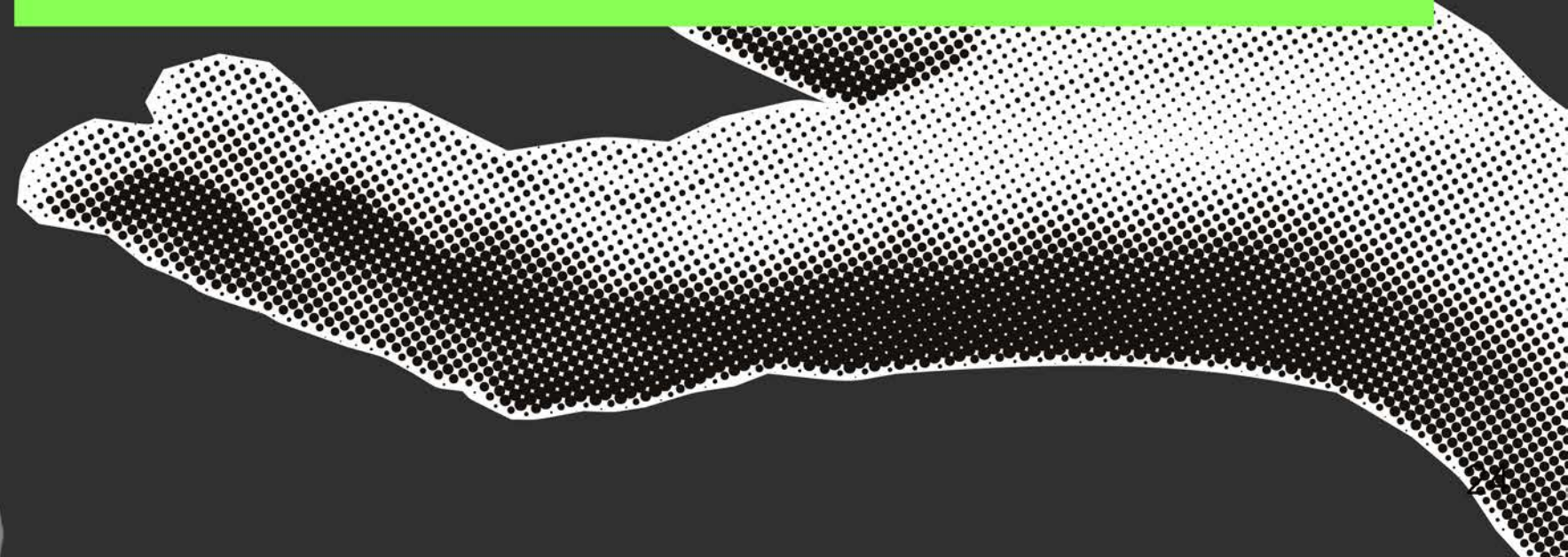
**WHERE DOES
RECRUITMENT
HAPPEN?**



HOW TRAFFICKERS TARGET YOUTH:

HOW TRAFFICKERS TARGET YOUTH:

Look for unmet needs



HOW TRAFFICKERS TARGET YOUTH:



Emotional Vulnerability

Financial Stress

Family Conflict

Desire to Escape



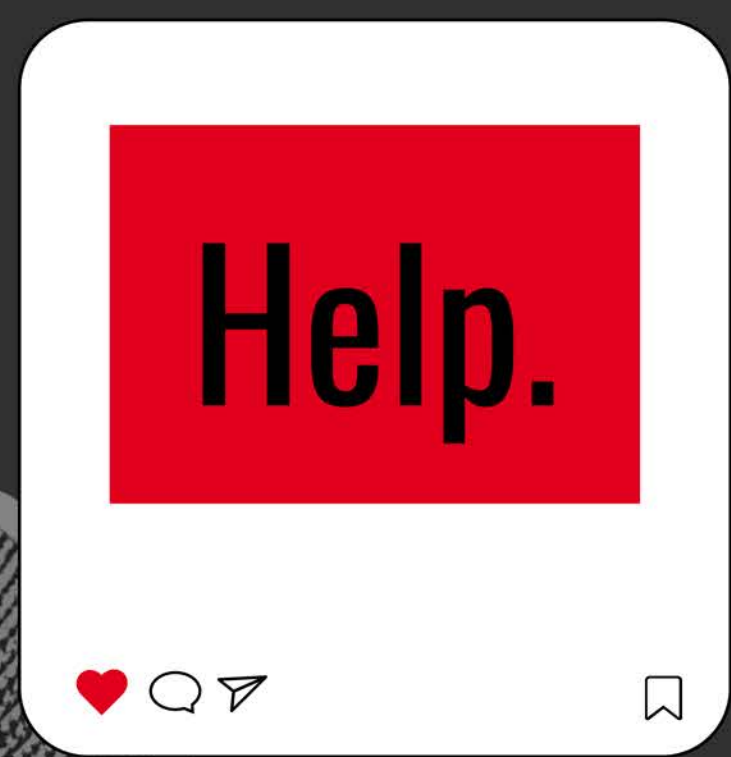
HOW TRAFFICKERS TARGET YOUTH:

Emotional Vulnerability

Financial Stress

Family Conflict

Desire to Escape



Help.



ONLINE GROOMING TACTICS



EXCESSIVE ATTENTION





EXCESSIVE ATTENTION

**BOUNDARY
TESTING**



EXCESSIVE ATTENTION

**BOUNDARY
TESTING**

US V. THEM



MIRRORS

ABUSIVE

RELATIONSHIPS

EXCESSIVE ATTENTION

BOUNDARY

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**MIRRORS ABUSIVE
RELATIONSHIPS**

EXCESSIVE ATTENTION

**TRUST IS
WEAPONIZED**

**BOUNDARY
TESTING**

US V. THEM



**MIRRORS ABUSIVE
RELATIONSHIPS**

EXCESSIVE ATTENTION

**INCREASED
SECRECY**

TRUST IS WEAPONIZED

**BOUNDARY
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US V. THEM



SEXTORTION AND DIGITAL COERCION

**PRESSURE
THREATS
FEAR BASED
COMPLIANCE**

**SEXTORTION AND
DIGITAL
COERCION**

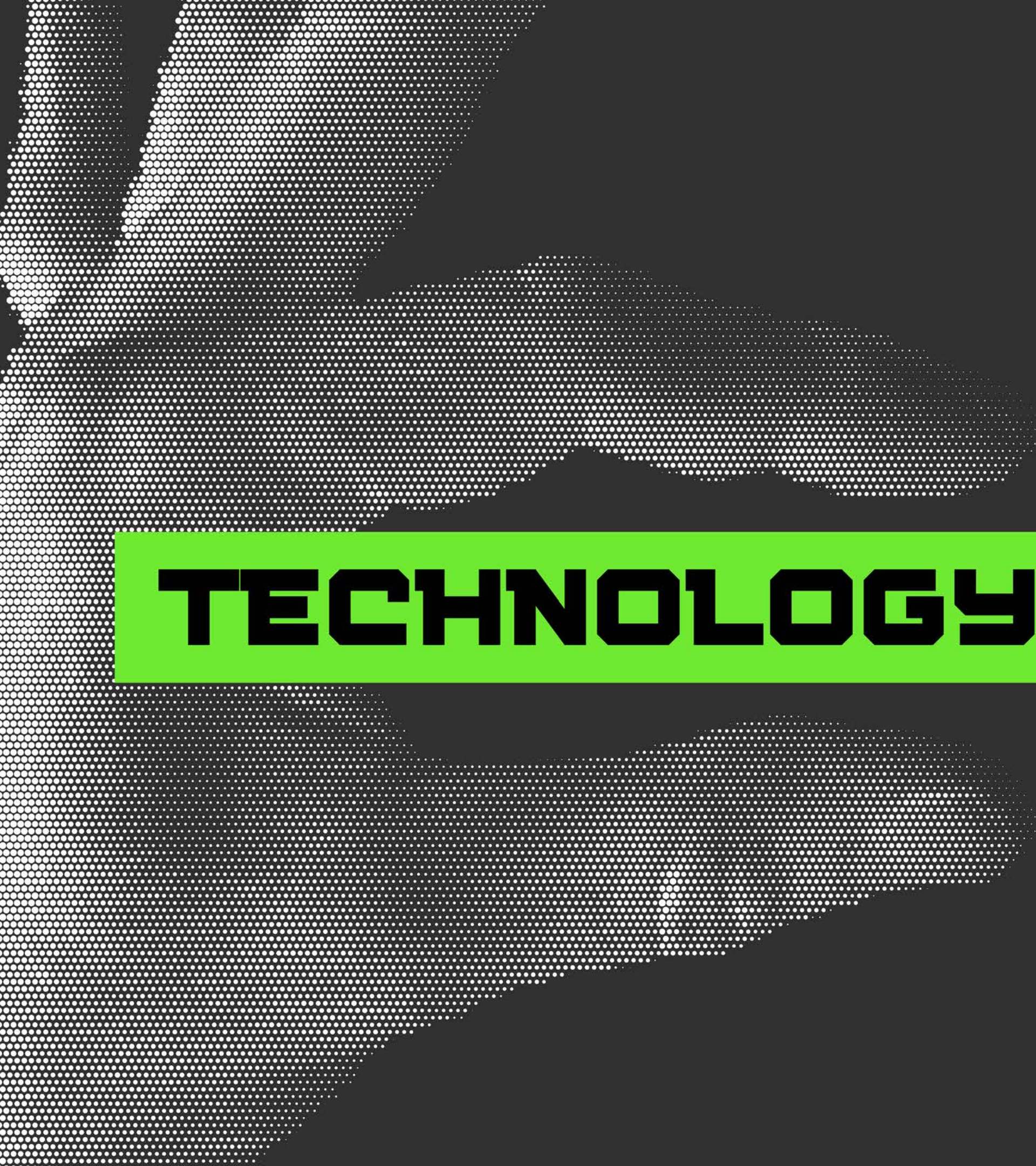


**PRESSURE
THREATS
FEAR BASED
COMPLIANCE**

**MOST COMMON ENTRY
POINT
NOT CONSENSUAL
IMAGES USED AS TOOLS**

**SEXTORTION AND
DIGITAL
COERCION**





TECHNOLOGY AS CONTROL



Location Tracking

Account Monitoring

Constant Access

Isolation



DIGITAL RED FLAGS

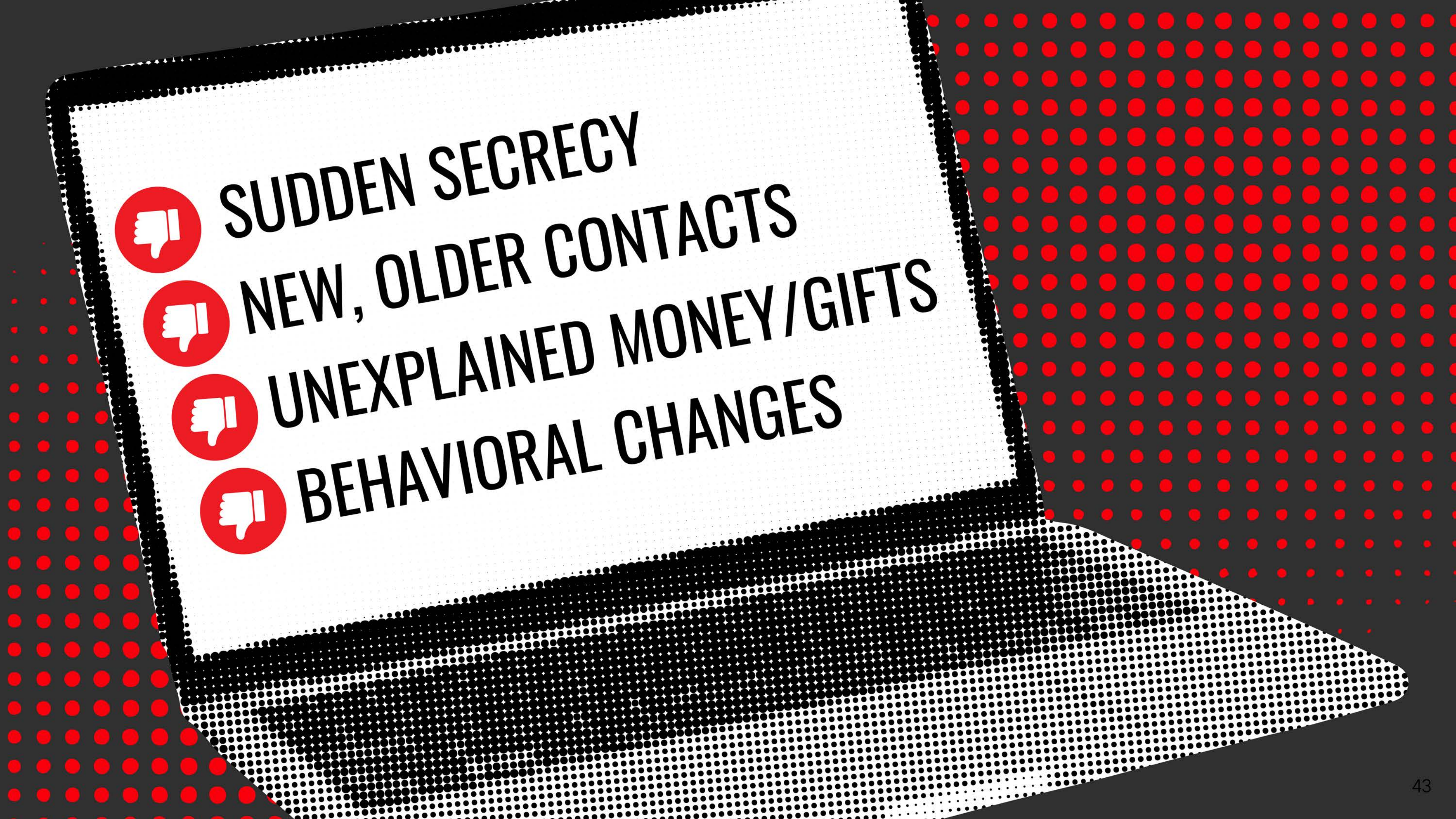
SUDDEN SECRECY



SUDDEN SECRECY NEW, OLDER CONTACTS



-  **SUDDEN SECRECY**
-  **NEW, OLDER CONTACTS**
-  **UNEXPLAINED MONEY/GIFTS**
-  

- 
-  **SUDDEN SECRECY**
 -  **NEW, OLDER CONTACTS**
 -  **UNEXPLAINED MONEY/GIFTS**
 -  **BEHAVIORAL CHANGES**

-  SUDDEN SECRECY
-  NEW, OLDER CONTACTS
-  UNEXPLAINED MONEY/GIFTS
-  BEHAVIORAL CHANGES

**TRUST
YOUR
INSTINCTS!**

The background features a dark gray field with a light gray halftone dot pattern. A large, irregular, torn-edge shape in the upper left is filled with a dense black halftone pattern. A horizontal red banner with a black border spans the middle of the image, containing the title text. In the lower center, there is a smaller, irregular shape with a black halftone pattern, appearing to be a torn piece of paper or a shadow.

BARRIERS TO DISCLOSURES



FEAR OF PUNISHMENT

LOSS OF ACCESS

SHAME

NOT BEING BELIEVED



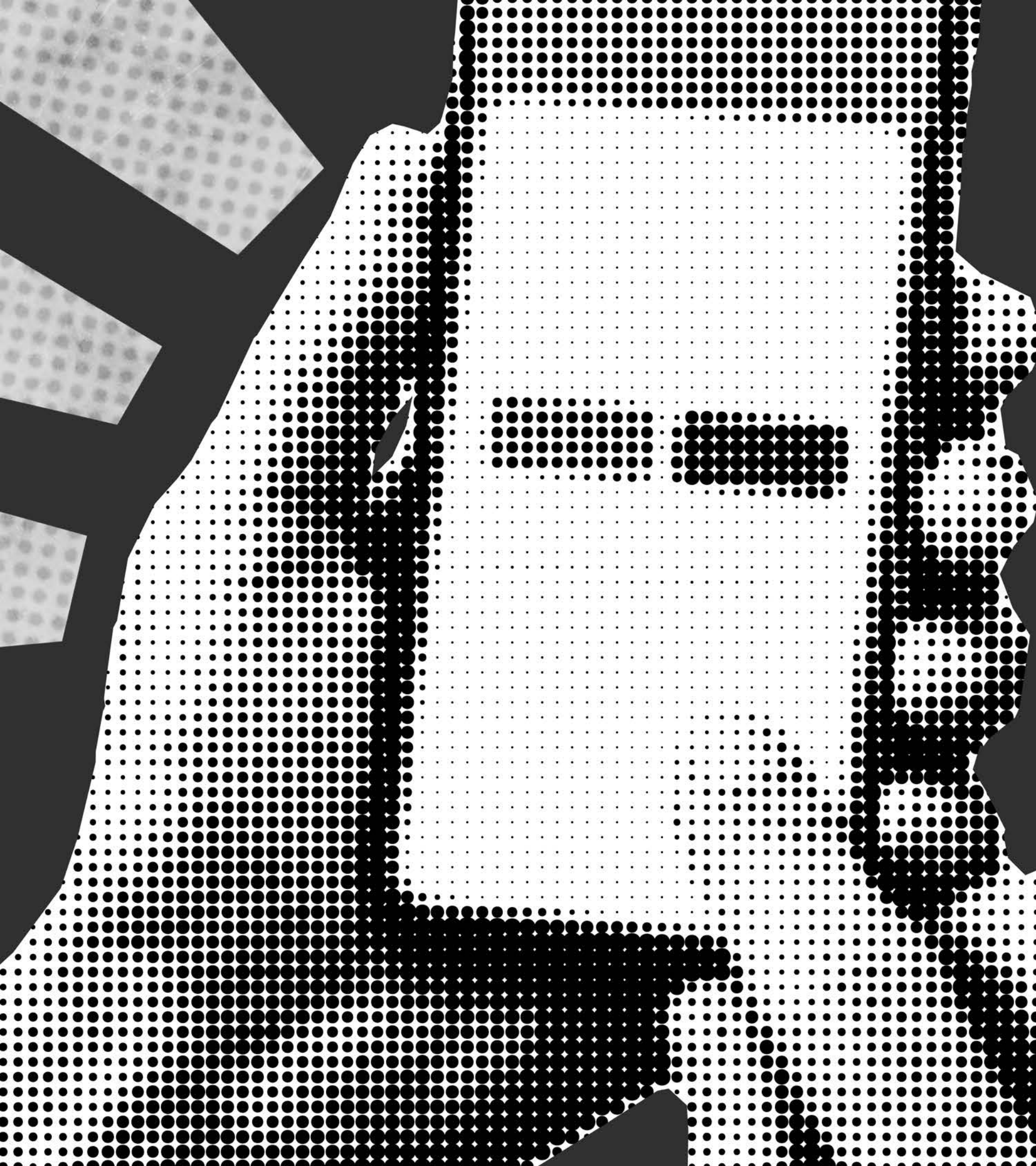
FEAR OF PUNISHMENT

LOSS OF ACCESS

SHAME

NOT BEING BELIEVED

**YOUTH FEAR
ADULTS REACTION
MORE THAN THE
CONSEQUENCES**



TRAUMA INFORMED RESPONSE

- **BELIEVE**
- **VALIDATE**
- **PRIORITIZE SAFETY**
- **AVOID BLAME**



**FOCUS ON
SUPPORT**



The image features a dark grey background with several bright blue shapes. A central blue speech bubble contains the text "WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD:". Surrounding this central bubble are four other blue shapes: two circles at the top and two rounded rectangles at the bottom, all of which are empty.

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD:



I'M GLAD YOU TOLD ME.

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD:



I'M GLAD YOU TOLD ME.

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD:

THIS ISN'T YOUR FAULT.

I'M GLAD YOU TOLD ME.

WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD:

THIS ISN'T YOUR FAULT.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

REPORTING AND RESOURCES

National Human Trafficking Hotline:
1-888-373-7888

DVAC HelpLine:
808-531-3771

CyberTipline:
1-800-843-5678

REPORTING AND RESOURCES

Explain options, avoid force

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REPORTING AND RESOURCES

Explain options, avoid force

Collaboration matters

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**PREVENTION
STARTS EARLY**

Normalize discussions about online behavior

Build skills before crisis

Understand digital consent

Set healthy boundaries

Identify trusted adults

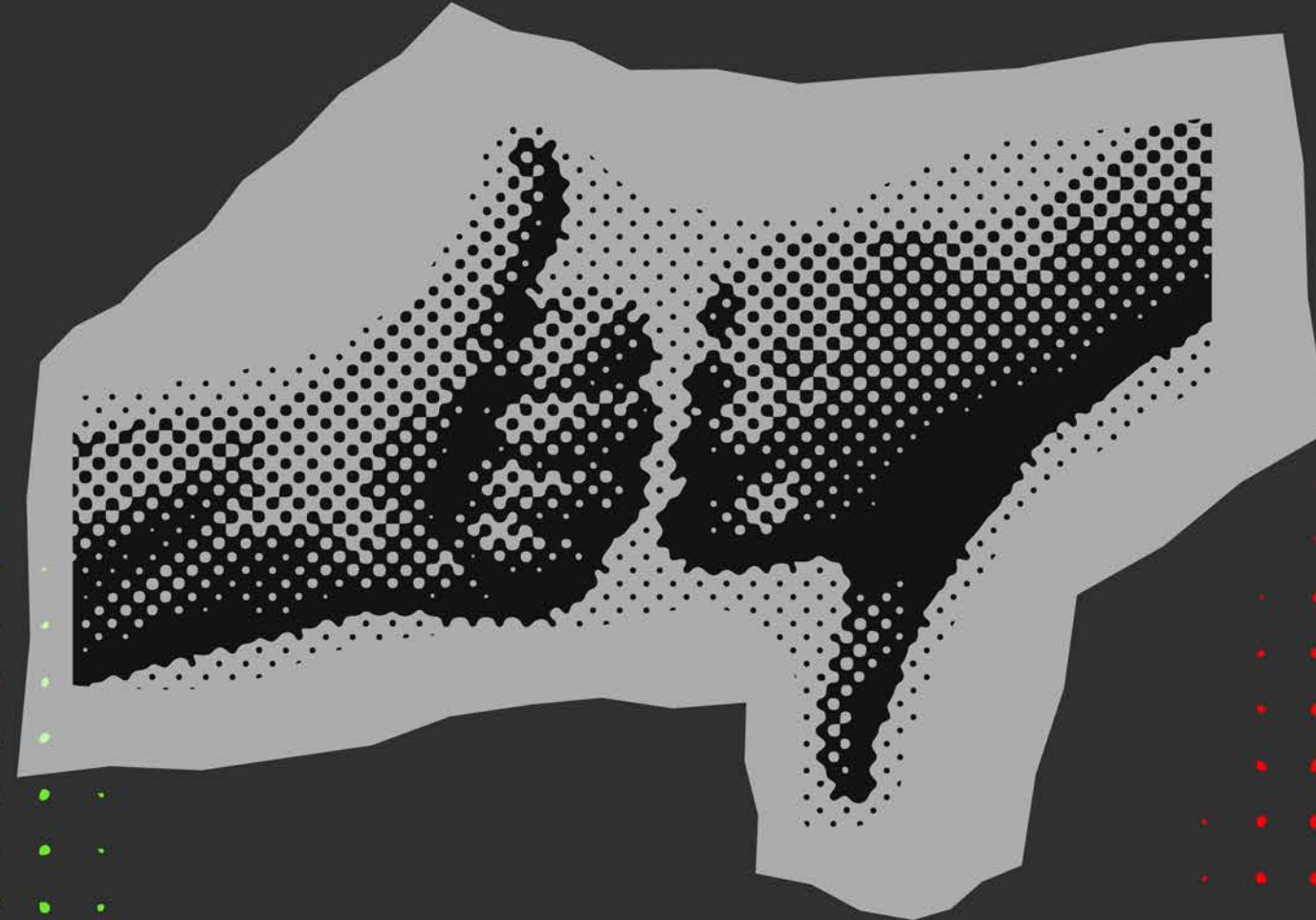
PREVENTION STARTS EARLY



EMPOWERMENT

OVER FEAR

Education



Scare tactics

Communication



Control



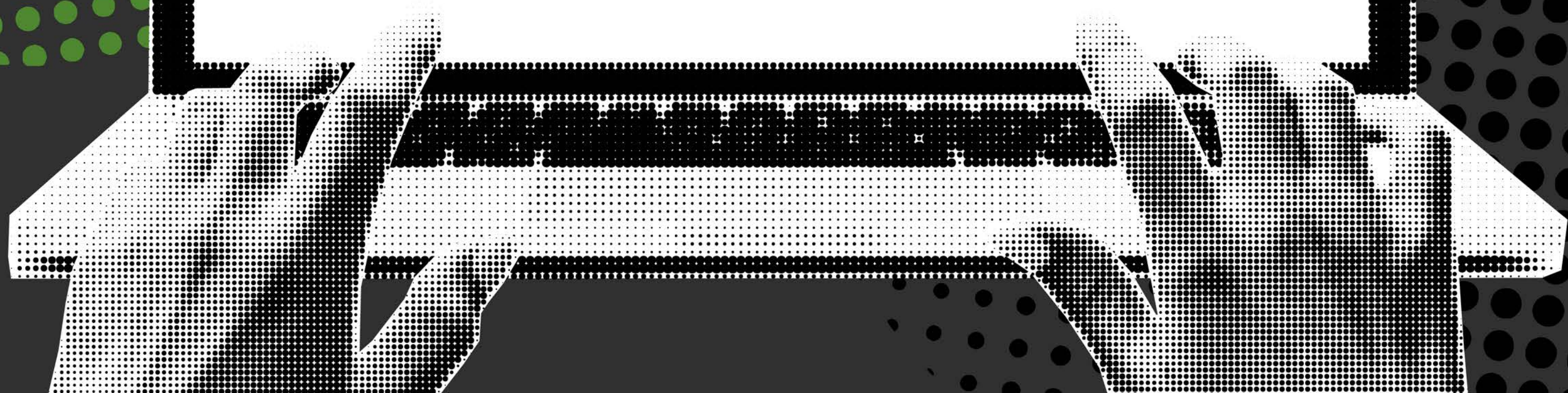


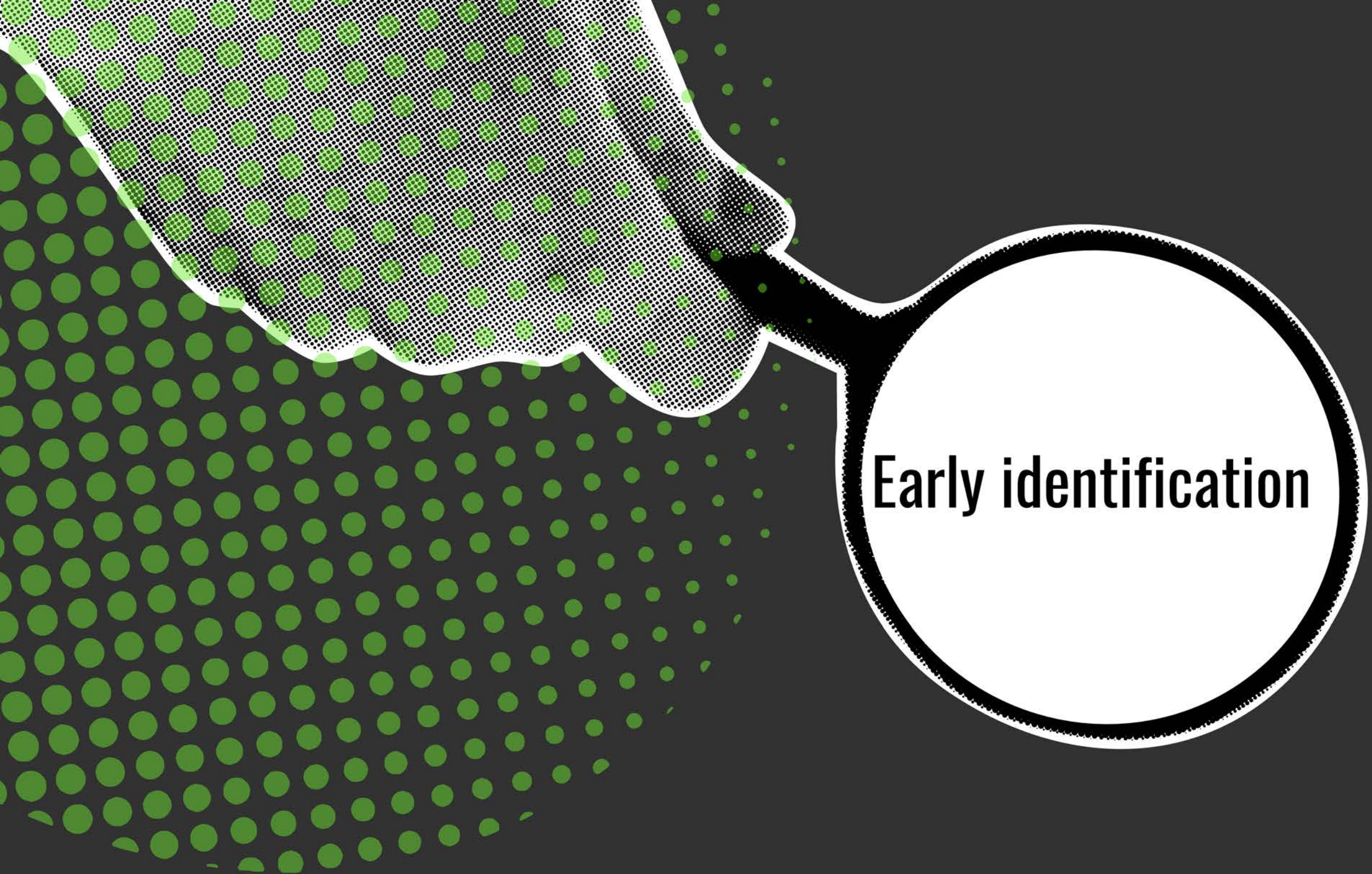
Trust your instincts

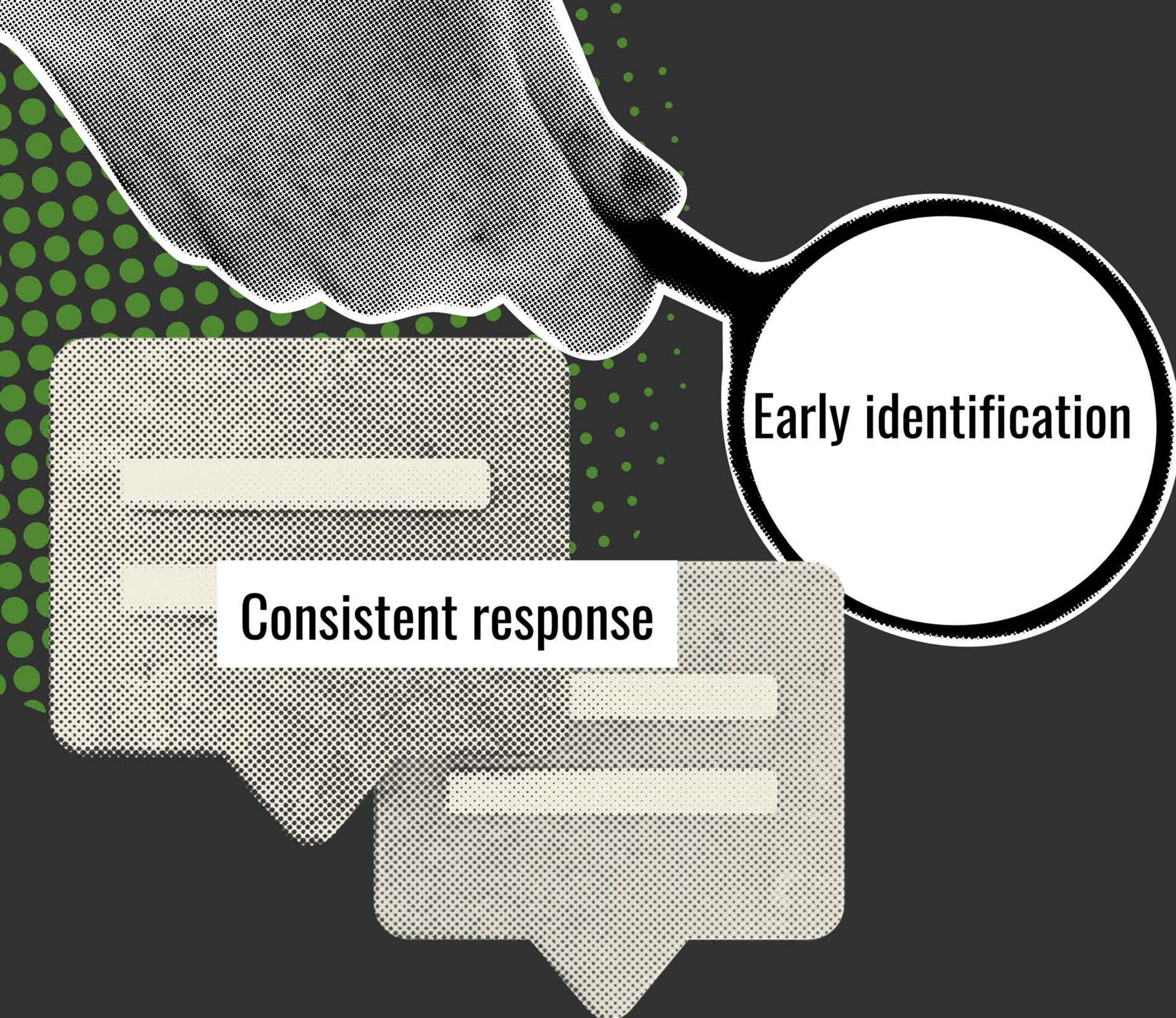
Ask for help

Set boundaries

ROLE OF PROFESSIONALS





A hand holding a magnifying glass over a document. The magnifying glass is positioned over the text 'Consistent response'. The background of the slide is dark grey with a pattern of green dots of varying sizes. The hand and the magnifying glass are rendered in a halftone dot pattern.

Early identification

Consistent response

Early identification

Consistent response

**Cross-agency
collaboration**

REFLECTION:

**What message do you
want youth to hear?**

**SCAN
HERE TO
TAKE A
QUICK
SURVEY:**





THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

Jordan Renfrow:

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teen@stoptheviolence.org

TAP808: 808-927-2434

Citations

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) 2025

Pew Research Center, August 2022, “Teens, Social Media and Technology 2022”

Our Rescue: <https://ourrescue.org/resources/news-media/our-perspectives/children-at-risk-a-sharp-rise-in-2025-reports-of-online-exploitation>