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Courtney's House
EMBRACING THE CHILD HURT IN SEX TRAFFICKING

www.iofa.org

Youth Sex Trafficking Fact Sheets

INTRODUCTION

The International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA), with Courtney's House, is launching a series of fact sheets on topics related to youth sex trafficking as part of the Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Cooperative Agreement with the United States Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women (OVW).

IOFA's goal is to provide a wide range of information and resources on sex trafficking of youth in order to: 1) prevent sex trafficking; 2) identify potential survivors of sex trafficking or those at high risk among the youth you serve; 3) provide trauma-informed services for youth who are survivors of sex trafficking; and 4) refer sex trafficked youth for appropriate services and resources.

Varied topics intersect with promising practices in the identification, and service provision of youth survivors of sex trafficking. The following Fact Sheets can also be found on the IOFA website Youth Sex Trafficking Knowledge Center at http://iofa.org/resources/

If you have questions or would like to request training or technical assistance, please contact IOFA directly at: info@iofa.org.

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About IOFA and Courtney's House

Founded in 1999, IOFA is one of the first and most experienced non-governmental organization addressing trafficking of children and youth and has provided training, technical assistance and organizational capacity building to a multitude of sectors addressing child and youth trafficking in more than 12 countries, including across the U.S. Courtney's House is an award-winning, survivor-led, direct services organization serving youth since they opened their first drop-in center in 2008.

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Youth Sex Trafficking Fact Sheets

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RED FLAGS OF YOUTH SEX TRAFFICKING

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Understanding the indicators or "red flags" of youth sex trafficking is essential in identifying victims so that they may receive the services that they need and deserve. This is especially vital for professionals working with youth as they may unknowingly be working with victims and survivors in need of comprehensive and trauma-informed services.

It is important to note that the presence of one or more red flags does not necessarily indicate youth sex trafficking on its own, but may be indicative of other issues, such as sexual assault or abuse. Often, youth do not see themselves as victims, or may blame themselves for being in a sex trafficking situation. Using a trauma-informed approach can help develop rapport with youth to determine the reality of their experiences. Please note that there are various types of control in youth sex trafficking and each incident of youth sex trafficking is unique, as is the youth themselves. The indicators included here are common, but not comprehensive. All, many, or none of the following indicators may be exhibited by a youth who is a victim of youth sex trafficking.

1 BEHAVIORAL RED FLAGS

- Leaves home frequently and/or for significant periods of time or has a history of running away from child welfare placements
- Uses slang trafficking terms such as "The Life" or "The Game"
- Has contact with strangers on the internet or sexual risk taking on social media or websites
- Has a significantly older romantic and/or sexual partner and may refer to this person as "Daddy"
- Spends a lot of time with a person or older adult who controls the youth's capacity to speak freely, schedule, communications with friends and family, and/or money
- Displays a pattern of staying in the homes of friends or lives in housing provided by an older person
- Youth outfits may be more revealing, or a change in clothes to exhibit certain colors may exhibit gang involvement
- Displays large amounts of money, a cell phone, hotel keys or others items the youth normally does not have resources to afford and cannot account for
- Has suspicious tattoos or burn marks (branding)
- If foreign born, is vague or unwilling to disclose information about how or why they immigrated to the US
- Lies about age, carries a fake form of identification, or does not have access to their identification or passport
- Retells the same story in the same way many times or retells the same story as other youth
- Is frequently absent from school
- Gets into cars with unknown adults
- When asked about whereabouts, their responses are secretive, vague, or becomes defensive
- Exhibits overtly sexualized behavior
- Significantly reduces contact with family, friends, or other support networks
- Parent(s) exhibit overt control over older youth's behaviors by speaking for youth, controlling all communication with youth and blaming the youth, not allowing to have friends

2 PSYCHOLOGICAL AND HEALTH RELATED RED FLAGS

- Chronic use of alcohol and/or drugs or other extreme forms of self-medicating
- Exhibits evidence of sexual abuse and/or engages in sexual activity before the age of 13
- Has heightened sense of fear or distrust of authority
- Has extreme anxiety surrounding consequences for seemingly minor infractions (for example, being late or not answering a phone call)
- Has had multiple sexually transmitted infections and/or urinary tract infections, or has other untreated injuries and/or illnesses
- Explanations for injuries are inconsistent with their severity
- Has a heightened sense of fear and displays an anxious, fearful, depressed, submissive, hyper vigilant, paranoid, and nervous behavior

Identifying "red flags" is the first step in determining if a youth may be a victim or survivor of sex trafficking. Based on these observations, professionals can determine if the youth should be assessed for sex trafficking by an agency that specializes in forensic interviewing, such as a local Child Advocacy Center. Youth should be provided with immediate needs, such as shelter, food, and safety. For referral services in your area, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888. If a youth is in immediate danger, please call 9-1-1.

To learn about red flags associated with specific forms of control of youth sex trafficking, such as "Pimp Control," "Gang Control," and "Familial Control," please visit the International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA) webpage for more information: www.iofa.org.

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SEX TRAFFICKING [1] OF YOUNG MEN AND BOYS

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Although women and girls remain the focus of human trafficking awareness and service provision, young men and boys can also become victims of sex trafficking and exploitation. The International Labor Organization estimates that 2% of the 4.8 million people forced into sex trafficking worldwide are boys.[2] Although girls still make up the vast majority of victims, this leaves 96,000 young men and boys in need of intervention and services. Various factors along with gender biases often leave boys overlooked in these provisions, which only simultaneously increases their vulnerabilities.

Many young men and boys are forced into sex trafficking situations as a means of survival. Homelessness is the primary risk factor cited for young men and boys who are involved in sex trafficking. Male minors most frequently become homeless due to family dysfunction.[3] Once on the streets, many boys and young men are forced to engage in sex in exchange for basic needs such as food and shelter.[4] Although this form of sexual exploitation is commonly referred to as "survival sex," this concept should not apply to minors forced to have sex with adults, as it gives a connotation of agency. LGBTQ [5] youth are especially vulnerable to sex trafficking as they are more susceptible to leaving home as a result of their family not accepting their identity. This not only leaves these youth at increased risk of homelessness but also leaves them susceptible to exploitative recruiting which brings young men to large cities to engage in the commercial sex industry.

What does sex trafficking of young men and boys look like?

- Forced to exchange sex for meeting their basic needs
  - Also applies to being forced to exchange sex for the needs of a partner or child
- Forced to engage in sex with men, or "gay for pay" regardless of their own sexual identity and preferences. Neither male nor female survivors can choose their clients, and it is believed that the majority of male survivors are heterosexual [6]
  - Youth join the group in promises of participating in dance competitions. However, the young men are then brought to perform at strip clubs and subsequently brought to larger cities to engage in commercial sex
- Transgender youth may be exploited in exchange forhormone shots which may be too expensive or unavailable to youth without adult consent
- Typically exploited within communities where all members of the community are expected to pool money together collectively for everyone to live from
  - Live with a "family" in homes referred to as "House of Divas" or "House of Love"
  - The "family" is usually headed by a "Mama" or "Godmama" who trafficks youth
- May "work chat lines" which involves being forced to solicit sexual conversations with individuals via telephone services
- Just as with female victims of sex trafficking, male victims may also be exploited through escort services, street solicitation, internet solicitation, or within dance clubs
  - Male victims can be exploited through all the same forms of control as female victims including by pimps, families, or gangs

[1] Sex Trafficking is inclusive of Child Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Survival Sex
[2] International Labor Organization (2012). http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_181961/lang--it/index.htm
[3] Quintana, et al., 2010; Walls and Bell, 2011.
[4] Meredith Dank (2015). Surviving the Street of New York. Urban Institute.
[5] This includes individuals who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer identifying individuals; also encompasses transexual, transgender, genderqueer/gender nonconforming, cisgender, intersex, pansexual, asexual and two-spirit
[6] Friedman, S. (2013). And boys too: An ECPAT-USA discussion paper about the lack of recognition of the commercial sexual exploitation of boys in the United States.

FAST FACTS: SEX TRAFFICKING OF YOUNG MEN AND BOYS

Identifying and Assessing Male Victims and Survivors

- Provide a safe and affirming space for assessment
- Familiarize yourself with the language and slang used specific for male
- Recognize that boys and young men may talk about their exploitation in the third person (as if it happened to someone else).[7] This is a common defense mechanism to cope with traumatic experiences and the shame that may feel
- Acknowledge that young men and boys may struggle with identifying themselves as victims due to gender biases of sexuality and sexual abuse
    - Young men and boys may feel that they were acting responsibility to fulfill their own needs or the needs of a partner or child rather than being victimized

What kinds of services should be provided to young male survivors?

- Prioritized provisions to meet the individuals basic needs
- Mental health services that meet the specialized needs of young men and boys
- Appropriate services that meet people where they are
- Male-specific shelters and transitional housing that includes programming to address the specific needs, challenges, and traumas they've experienced prior to, during, or after being involved in sex trafficking [8]
- Family reunification services, only if the young men or boys are interested
- Educational opportunities, including vocational training, job placement and retention services, and life skills
- Mentors and other programs that provide a positive male influence[9]

Organizations providing services to victims and survivors of human trafficking need to ensure that they are providing equal access to services for all individuals regardless of gender identity. Young men and boys deserve an opportunity to leave the silence and begin on a path to healing. Preventative efforts also need to be in place to protect young men and boys from discrimination and family conflict as a result of their identity. As society becomes more educated and open to the multitude of individual identities, hopefully more young people can feel accepted by their families and communities. This acceptance would ensure youth have access to support systems which can protect them from homelessness and the risks of exploitation.

[7] *Procopio, S. (2014, November). The commercial sexual exploitation of boys and adolescent males. Male Survivor 14th International Conference.*
[8] *Bastedo, 2014.*
[9] *Bastedo, 2014.*

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LGBTQ YOUTH AND SEX TRAFFICKING

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Traffickers often exploit vulnerabilities of youth to compel them into sex trafficking.[1] LGBTQ[2] youth without a strong support system are trafficked at a higher rate than their straight peers.[3] LGBTQ youth are more vulnerable as they are more likely to leave or be forced to leave home as a result of a family not understanding their gender identity or sexual orientation. Transgender and other gender nonconforming youth have additional issues receiving access to shelters separated by binary gender making them even more vulnerable to trafficking.

LGBTQ HAVE INCREASED VULNERABILITIES. SOME INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Lack of familial and social supports
- Homelessness (one report found that 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ)[4]
- Discrimination and misconception by family members, peers, community, social service agencies, and law enforcement
- Higher rates of abuse and sexual violence (LGBTQ youth are 7.4 times more likely to experience acts of sexual violence)[5]
- Feelings of hopelessness or shame
- Lack of safe shelter and fewer resources/employment opportunities
- Difficulty or fear in reaching out for assistance due to concerns that they will be mistreated or not believed
- Need for hormone treatments that youth cannot afford on their own or before they reach the legal age of 18 (Traffickers may offer to provide youth with these treatments)

Traffickers seek to meet the youth's needs and offer a sense of family protection or love to build rapport and loyalty, potentially preventing the youth from speaking out. Accordingly, it is also important to acknowl-edge that LGBTQ youth may be trafficked in circumstances different than traditional pimp-controlled 6 or gang-controlled 7 sex trafficking. Some LGBTQ youth report being coerced into commercial sex or labor trafficking under the control of a house parent (i.e. "Mama" or "Godmama") or engaging in sexual acts in exchange for place to stay and other basic needs.

[1] Sex trafficking is the "recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act" for remuneration in the form of money, food, shelter, or another valued entity. Evidence of force, fraud, or coercion is not a necessary for youth under the age of 18. Youth under the age of 18 who trade a sex act for something of value is automatically considered a victim of a crime under the U.S. Federal Trafficking of Victims Protection Act of 2000.

[2] This includes Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer identifying individuals; also encompasses transexual, transgender, genderqueer/gender non-conforming, cisgender, intersex, pansexual, asexual and two-spirit identifying individuals

[3] Polaris, "Breaking Barriers: Improving Services for LGBTQ Human Trafficking Victims." 2015

[4] The Palette Fund, True Colors Fund, and the Williams Institute, "The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Homeless Youth Provider Survey", 2012

[5] Sutter Health Palo Alto Medical Foundation, "High Risk of Homelessness," 2016

[6] Reference Pimp-Control Sex Trafficking Fact Sheet

[7] Reference Youth Sex Trafficking and Gangs Fact Sheet

Furthermore, traffickers do not care about a victim's sexual orientation or identity, and may force youth to perform sexual acts outside of the youth's sexual preferences. This may cause an additional level of shame for the youth.

WORKING WITH LGBTQ WHO MAY HAVE BEEN TRAFFICKED FOR SEX

- Do not assume that all youth identify as cis-gender and heterosexual
- Ask all youth which pronouns they prefer to use for themselves
- Understand that youth may have differing levels of comfort in disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity
- Do not assume that youth's sexual practices in the "life" match their sexual orientation and preferences outside the "life" (i.e. do not assume that a male who had sexual encounters with other men identifies as gay)
- Do not assume that LGBTQ youth are identifiable by stereotypical habits, mannerisms, or behaviors
- Build rapport and provide continued support
- Convey a consistently non-judgmental attitude
- If a youth does disclose their identity, review confidentiality and case tracking procedures to ensure that the individual feels safe and comfortable
- Respect the privacy pertaining to their gender identity or sexual orientation as this may have not been disclosed to a parent or primary caretakers
- Create safety plans 8 for youth that accommodate to the youth's specialized needs
- Offer the youth support to meet specialized needs and/or referrals to vetted LGBTQ resources and organizations in the community

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[8] *Reference IOFA and Courtney's House Safety Planning and Youth Sex Trafficking Fact Sheet*

ENGAGING YOUTH SURVIVORS OF SEX TRAFFICKING [1]

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Establishing physical, emotional, and psychological safety is critical in building a successful relationship with trafficked and exploited children and youth. If you suspect a child or youth has been trafficked or exploited, these tips can help build rapport and provide a safe, comfortable environment for youth while gathering necessary information.

NOTE: Carefully examine your motives in gathering information about a sex trafficking situation before engaging in the conversation. Do not ask potential survivors about their experience(s) unless the questions relate directly to your service provision or providing a referral. Allow professionals trained in forensic interviewing to interview children and youth for the details of their experience.

Before Starting the Conversation

- Make sure the youth's basic needs are met (food, safety, clothing, medical care, providing time to sleep, etc.)
- Always use a trauma-informed approach when working with potential survivors of trafficking
- When possible, allow the survivor to choose which staff person they speak with
- Clearly identify yourself and your role
- Explain the limits of confidentiality and mandatory reporting

Providing a Safe and Comfortable Environment

- Ask the youth for permission to talk to them, for permission to speak alone, for permission to sit down next to them, etc. If permission is not granted, do not continue with that step
- When given permission, try to speak with youth alone, in a private space where you will not be overheard or interrupted. Be sure the space is non-threatening and comfortable for the individual
- Make available tissues, regular breaks, and a place where the youth can regain their composure if the conversation causes distress. If a youth is distressed, stop the conversation immediately and help the youth to de-escalate. Clearly identify yourself and your role
- Never discuss sensitive subjects with a survivor within sight of a potential trafficker. If the survivor arrives with a person (including a friend, family member, or interpreter) who exhibits controlling behavior, this person may be a trafficker
- Be relaxed, use empathic listening, maintain normal, comfortable eye contact, add physical distance, and use an approachable tone, demeanor, and body language

DO:

- Start by believing the youth
- Normalize their feelings
- Be very aware of your body language and facial expressions
- Acknowledge that sometimes the options available seem bad
- Offer access to law enforcement
- Support their decisions
- Acknowledge that they have the right to make their own decisions and life choices
- Offer services that are available and accessible
- Validate, validate, validate!

[1] Sex trafficking is the "recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act" for remuneration in the form of money, food, shelter, or another valued entity. Evidence of force, fraud, or coercion is not a necessary for youth under the age of 18. Youth under the age of 18 who trade a sex act for something of value is automatically considered a victim of a crime under the U.S. Federal Trafficking of Victims Protection Act of 2000.

Using Appropriate Language

- If there is any doubt whether the youth understands you, secure the services of an interpreter. Do not use family members or friends of the youth as an interpreter
- Do not immediately identify the client as a "victim" or a "survivor." Youth sex trafficking survivors often do not recognize that they are victims of a crime
- Use simple, non-technical language
- Use terms and language that the survivor uses, unless they may be considered offensive

Using Active Listening Skills

- Receiving: Listen to the message communicated to you
- Decoding: Decipher what has been communicated
- Recording: Think about and process the message
- Responding: Provide feedback to the youth using language that reflects what the youth uses

DON'T:

- Show shock, disgust, pity
- Blame the youth
- Give advice
- Try to rescue the youth
- Feel sorry for the youth
- Lecture or try to take control
- Make them feel responsible for other people's saftey
- Make promised you cannot keep
- Use guilt to manipulate them into making a decision that you think is right.

Gathering Information about Trafficking Experiences

- Scrutinize your own motives in gathering such information
- Clarify the purpose of the conversation
- Understand that the youth may disclose information that is graphic, violent, and/or sexual in nature. Ensure that you can hear this information without projecting shock or disgust. If not, find another staff who is better able to speak to the youth
- Ask open-ended questions
- Reassure the youth that there are no right or wrong answers
- Validate the youth's responses
- Don't ask repetitive questions
- Understand that the youth may not be ready to tell you everything at one time

Why Youth May Not Disclose

- Some youth may be concerned about being 'outed' to family/friends/employers
- Youth may blame themselves or fear others blaming them
- Fear of being forced to stop working
- Fear of people's reactions and judgments
- Lack of resources available at point of disclosure

Concluding the Conversation

Close the conversation in a way that assures the youth that they have done well and can continue to discuss the subject with you in the future, if desired. It may be difficult in the initial conversation to obtain enough information to determine conclusively if the person is in fact, a survivor of trafficking. Ongoing engagement and rapport-building is important in case management with youth survivors.

Adapted from the IOFA/New York State OCFS Handbook "Responding to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth"

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TRAUMA-INFORMED LANGUAGE TO USE WHEN WORKING WITH SURVIVORS OF YOUTH SEX TRAFFICKING

When working with vulnerable youth it is important to be empathic and use empowering trauma-informed language. Language and terms should mirror the youth's language. The information below can be used as a guide for conversations within your agency while working with youth potentially trafficked for sex.

AGENCY GENERAL LANGUAGE – When working with other professionals within your organization, it's important to model language that empowers the youth receiving services.

DON'T SAY	INSTEAD SAY	WHY?
Child/Teen Prostitute	Survivor of Trafficking	Child and teen prostitutes don't exist - what exists are survivors of trafficking and sexual exploitation. Referring to survivors as prostitutes implies that a youth choses a criminal lifestyle, as opposed to the reality that a minor is a victim of a sex crime.
Victim	Survivor	No one wants to be a victim. Referring to someone as a survivor empowers them by recognizing their resiliency to overcome extreme hardship and trauma.
We rescue victims	Survivors need supportive providers as they leave their situations on their own terms and in a way that is safe for them.	People cannot be rescued – they can be empowered. Much like survivors of domestic violence, survivors of human trafficking need to be informed of what services are available to support them, and what exactly each service provides. If we force a "rescue" the person will return to the trafficker as soon as they are able.
Survival Sex	Sex Trafficking	Under U.S. federal law, when a minor engages a sex act with an adult in exchange for basic needs, like food or housing, this is a trafficking situation.

LANGUAGE TIPS FOR WORKING DIRECTLY WITH POTENTIALLY SEX TRAFFICKED OR COMMERCIALLY SEXUALLY EXPLOITED CHILDREN/YOUTH – When working directly with youth, it's important to use trauma-informed language. Focus on safety, transparency, support, collaboration, respect, and empowerment in the words you use. Use gender neutral pronouns unless the youth has told you the pronouns they use.

DON'T SAY	INSTEAD SAY	WHY?
That's so awful, I can't/don't believe it!	I believe you and it's not your fault.	Well-meaning people might say they can't believe something happened not because they are expressing disbelief but because they are surprised or horrified. This conveys to survivors that 1) they are not believed and 2) their experience is so shameful they can't talk about it or shouldn't seek help.
You/they don't have to do that anymore.	What happened to you wasn't your fault.	Stating that someone doesn't need to do something anymore implies that the survivor consented to be trafficked.
I feel sorry for you.	What you're feeling is okay, and you have the right to express your feelings any way you feel is right.	Stating that you feel sorry for someone puts a focus on you instead of the survivor. The survivor may feel uncomfortable opening up because they don't want to make the professional feel sad or burdened. It's important to make sure that a survivor feels that their feelings are validated.
You poor thing. Are you okay?	You are not alone.	Although it may seem that one is showing concern, it may feel patronizing to show pity. Show support to a survivor through both words and actions.
But you are so smart!	You had to do X - did you know that's a skill? You could do Y!	Saying that a survivor is smart (or has another positive attribute) might seem like a compliment. It can be very frustrating for a survivor to hear nice things about them without support to use that asset to better their life. Instead of saying a compliment explain how the asset can be used to help the survivor in actionable terms.
You are safe now.	We will do everything we can to keep you safe.	Your definition of safety may vary from theirs. You cannot guarantee that they will be safe, and a broken promise can negatively affect your relationship.
We can fix your problems.	We are here because we want to help you. We will do our best to meet your needs.	You may not be able to meet the needs of the survivor, so don't make promises you can't keep. You may report the crime, and nothing may come of it. You may not have the capacity to provide services for all the need they identify It is important to be transparent about your role, what you can do and what you can't do.*
You are a victim, not a criminal.	The people who hurt you violated your rights; you did not deserve what happened to you.	It is not helpful to label the individual. They may not identify as a victim. They may have been treated or labeled as a criminal in the past, so this can be confusing. It is important to explain what happened to them in a rights-based manner.*
You can trust me.	Trust my actions, not my words.	Survivors of trafficking have been lied to many times. It might be hard for them to know who can be trusted. To demonstrate that you can be trusted, be consistent, keep their information confidential, and be clear and honest about expectations and your capacity.*
We want to make sure what happened to you does not happen to anyone else.	Is there anyone you know who might need help?	Rather than cause a survivor to feel responsible for the potential victimization of others, ask them if they know other youth who may need services. Survivors should not be manipulated to provide information when they are unwilling to do so.*

* Adapted from the Cook County Task Force Train-the-Trainer manual.

FRAMEWORKS TO HOLD WHILE WORKING WITH SURVIVORS

Anti-Oppressive

- Consideration of how people's identities, experiences, and the way they move through the world are impacted by systems of oppression
- Acknowledgment of how our own privilege and power might impact the survivor relationship

Harm-Reduction

- Respecting survivor choices; meeting patients where they are
- Supporting survivors' agency in decision making while exploring consequences of behavior and offering strategies to increase safety

Informed Consent

- Communication of the potential risks and benefits of an appointment, procedure, etc.
- Consent is requested in every component of treatment - ongoing, fluid
- Uplift the power of no

Trauma-Informed

- Understanding widespread impact of trauma (individual, community, and system level)
- No "right way" to experience trauma
- Focus on safety, transparency, support, collaboration, and empowerment

Survivor-Centered

- Survivor's wishes, needs, safety, and well-being take priority in all matters and procedures
- Survivors are the experts; focus on empowerment
- Survivors determine what healing looks like

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MAKING APPROPRIATE REFERRALS FOR SURVIVORS OF YOUTH SEX TRAFFICKING

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Youth survivors of sex trafficking need comprehensive services to assist with everything from immediate and emergency needs, to ongoing and long-term needs. Not every organization or program can meet every need of every survivor. Understanding various needs for youth and building inter-agency connections can help youth survivors have access to, and to receive comprehensive care and services.

RESOURCES THAT CAN BE USEFUL FOR SURVIVORS OF YOUTH SEX TRAFFICKING TO CONNECT WITH INCLUDE:

- Local organizations specialized in services for survivors of human trafficking, domestic violence, and sexual assault
- Immigrant and refugee organizations
- Health services (general practice, reproductive health, hospital services, etc.)
- Mental health services (inpatient, outpatient, and crisis stabilization)
- Counseling services and trauma-focused therapy
- Housing (short term, long term, and transitional)
- Child Advocacy Centers (CACs)
- Legal services
- Immigration services
- Services provided by home country's embassy
- Translation services
- Faith-based community support
- Educational and/or vocational training
- Social service navigators and advocates
- Peer support groups
- LGBTQ services
- Disability services

When a referral needs to be made, practitioners should first consider the particular expertise of other agencies in the community, and their understanding of trauma and youth sex trafficking. Youth survivors will need to trust that this new agency will be able to meet their needs in a trauma-informed and culturally appropriate way. In order to prevent causing more harm to youth it is important to vet other agencies before making a referral.

FACTORS THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED INCLUDE THE AGENCY'S:

- Awareness and experience around commercial sexual exploitation and domestic minor sex trafficking
- Level of professionalism and quality of care
- Non-discrimination policies
- Cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Confidentiality policies
- Procedures for obtaining informed consent
- Security and safety of the agency location and premises
- Language capacity
- Experience with trauma-informed care
- LGBTQ services
- Location and accessibility

YOUTH HESITATION

If a youth seems hesitant about a particular referral, explore this. It may be that the youth is fearful about the location of the service provider or has transportation issues. Perhaps the youth has received services from this provider before and it didn't go well, or maybe they have **heard rumors about this provider. Allow youth the space to explore these concerns rather than forcing** them **into accepting a referral.**

When a referral is in the best interest of a youth, take the following steps:

- Identify those client needs that cannot be met through your agency or would be better met through specialized service provision elsewhere.
- Find trauma-informed, culturally appropriate services by reaching out to local anti-trafficking task forces and coalitions who provide services to survivors of youth sex trafficking;
- Ask new contacts for details about their experience and service options. Contact the provider in the presence of the youth so that they can ask questions.
- Discuss each referral option with your client. Weigh each option with the youth, giving consideration to any potential risks to safety.
- Establish contact with a representative from the agency chosen by your client who has familiarity with trauma and youth sex trafficking.
- Provide information on the youth's need, special considerations in relation to the trauma they have already experienced, and any relevant paperwork that the service provider will require to offer services. Do not share details with outside providers without the informed consent of the survivor.
- Visit the agency with your client before arranging services. This is called a "warm hand-off."
- Continue to escort the youth to appointments if desired by the youth.

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center operates a National Contacts Referral Database, which contains more than 3,000 unique contacts for anti-trafficking practitioners and organizations in the field. Call 1-888-373-7888 or text "INFO" to BeFree (233733) for direct assistance from an NHTRC representative.[2]

If the referral is not in the best interest of the youth at this time:

- Maximize your impact on the survivor at each encounter. Offer empathetic support and aim to meet their basic needs (food, shelter, clothing, safety) whenever possible.
- Provide information about the crime of trafficking, available support services, including hotline numbers, and information on whom to call in the future should the youth decide to access services later.[3,4]

[1] New York State Office of Children and Family Services (2016) Responding to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth: A Handbook for Child Serving Professionals, 26.

[2] Accessed at The National Human Trafficking Resource Center at https://humantraffickinghotline.org/

[3] National Association of Case Management (NACM). (2014). NACM definition of case management and service coordination.

[4] Zimmerman, C. & Watts, C. (2003). WHO ethical and safety recommendations for interviewing trafficked women. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization.

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CASE MANAGEMENT WITH SURVIVORS OF YOUTH SEX TRAFFICKING

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Case management for youth sex trafficking survivors is similar to other forms of case management in that the provider and client partner to:

- Assess the client's needs
- Define desired outcomes
- Obtain necessary services, treatments and supports
- Manage crises

In addition to the case management you already provide, the following additional elements should be incorporated when working with survivors of youth sex trafficking[1]

- Establish a trusting relationship with the youth
- Educate the survivor about their rights as a victim of crime
- Liaise with law enforcement as necessary
- Establish safety plans for the survivor and staff
- Explain the legal protections and entitlements available to youth survivors of trafficking

Although important in all case management relationship, the following are especially critical when working with young survivors of trafficking:

- Consider power dynamics (gender, age, race, profession, etc.)
- Introduce yourself, explain what you do and your relationship to the client, including what you can and cannot do
- Explain the limits of confidentiality and the role of mandated reporting
- Avoid victim-blaming attitudes, statements, and body language
- Avoid reactions that convey judgment, disdain, or disgust
- Be a consistent source of support throughout the process of recovery, despite possible setbacks that may occur
- Maintain cultural humility by educating yourself about the culture and beliefs of clients and displaying a willingness to learn more

THE IMPORTANCE OF SURVIVOR-INFORMED SERVICES

A number of survivors of sex trafficking have gone on to create or inform service provision for other survivors. Service providers should partner with local survivor-led or survivor-informed organizations when developing their internal response to youth sex trafficking.

ABOVE ALL, THE NEED FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE SUPERSEDES

Whether or not specialized services for survivors of youth sex trafficking are available, staff should adhere to the standards of trauma-informed care to allow for survivor self-determination and choice in their healing and recovery.

[1] *National Association of Case Management. (2014). NACM Definition of Case Management & Service Coordination. Retrieved from http://www.yournacm.com/membership/what_cm_sc.html*

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ADDRESSING YOUTH WHO LEAVE/RUN AWAY FROM CHILD WELFARE PLACEMENTS

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Youth who leave/run away from their child welfare placement are at high risk of becoming victims of trafficking . One study indicated that about 50 percent of youth in foster care[1] placement will run away while they are in care. In New York City, the Administration of Children's Services average 4,000 youth run away from their placement per year.[2] From the research that exists, as well as from the expert advice from direct care workers, we are learning what some of the push/pull factors are when youth make the determination to leave care.[3]

FOLLOWING FACTORS ARE KNOWN TO CONTRIBUTE TO YOUTH'S DECISION TO RUN AWAY FROM PLACEMENT[4,5,6]

Separation of youth from their siblings and/or their own children

Overly restrictive placements

o The more restrictive and punitive an individual placement is, the more likely it is that a youth will run away from it compared to a similar program with more flexibility. While professionals often place youth in more restrictive settings to protect them, youth frequently experience new trauma as a result of being moved to a more restrictive setting.

Substance Misuse

o Substance misuse is another common coping mechanism youth use to deal with trauma. When we remove one coping mechanism from a youth (like substance use) they may adopt new ones (like running away).

Need for a healthy coping mechanism

o Some youth have learned that leaving home is the best way for them to respond to a negative situation. When youth are used to leaving home they will need support from staff to develop safer and healthier coping mechanisms while in care.

Frustration in their lack of involvement or control over an assigned placement

o In some states, youth are to provide input in their placement via permanency hearings. In practice, some youth are offered very little substantive involvement in planning their placement. Further, direct care staff and case managers are sometimes prevented from contributing substantive input in a youth's placement.

In these instances that the decisions are not necessarily in the best interest of the child can result in youth running away.

[1] Department of Education. (2014). Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care__3_.pdf

[2] Finkelstein, M., Wamsley, M., Currie, D., & Miranda, D. (2004). Youth who chronically AWOL from foster care. Why they run, where they go, and what can be done. New York: Vera Institute.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Behavioral Health and Welfare Program Institute for Juvenile Research, University at Chicago. (2010). Residential runaway risk assessment user guide. Retrieved from http://www.nrcpfc.org/teleconferences/4-21-10/Runaway_Risk_Assessment_User_Guide_.pdf

[5] Thomson, N. (2014, December 10). Conference call.

[6] Day, A., & Riebschleger, J. (2007). Circumstances and suggestions of youth who run from out-of-home care. The Michigan Child Welfare Law Journal, Fall, 20-30.

RISK ASSESMENT [7]

All youth should be assessed for their likelihood of running away from care upon intake

- o Assessment should be ongoing and reviewed whenever risk factors change. Minimally, a new assessment is recommended 30 days after intake and at quarterly reviews.

Assessment should identify the presence of behavior patterns and other variables(see above) that indicate a youth's likeliness to leave a placement

- o Risk assessments should also be used to determine a youth's level of vulnerability in the community in the event that they run away from the placement.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH AT HIGH RISK OF RUNNING AWAY FROM PLACEMENT [8,9,10,11]

Give youth an active role in their placement planning

- o When youth are engaged in their own treatment planning they have an increased sense of control over their lives.

Support safe connections to non-offending family members

- o Youth are most successful when they have at least one consistent adult in their life.

Acknowledge that youth can run away from placement, even though you don't want them to

- o Be factual and non-threatening about what can happen if a youth does run away from care. Help youth create safety plans for what to do if they do run away and get into trouble.

Create an environment where the youth feel safe and supported

- o Youth need to feel physically and psychologically safe in their placements. Youth also need to feel that the adults in their environment genuinely care about their wellbeing and that their decisions and wishes are supported. Be friendly!

Provide youth with leadership opportunities and responsibilities in placement and within their community

- o Young people who are contributing members of the community are less likely to exhibit rebellious and delinquent behavior and are more likely to become effective in coping with their own challenges.

Provide support, training, and supervision to front-line staff regarding running away from placement

- o It will help them provide better services to youth and prevent staff burnout.

Staff should be supported in not taking youth's behaviors personally

- o Staff might perceive that they 'failed' when a youth runs away from placement. Running away is not about staff members. Programs need to be accepting of the risk inherent in working with youth and be supportive of their staff.

[7] Behavioral Health and Welfare Program Institute for Juvenile Research, University at Chicago. (2010). Residential runaway risk assessment user guide. Retrieved from http://www.nrcpfc.org/teleconferences/4-21-10/Runaway_Risk_Assessment_User_Guide_.pdf

[8] Shared Hope International, ECPAT-USA & John Hopkins University. (2013). National colloquium 2012 final report: An inventory and evaluation of the current shelter and services response to domestic minor sex trafficking. Retrieved from http://sharedhope.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/National-Colloquium-2012-Report-B.pdf

[9] Finkelstein, M., Wamsley, M., Currie, D., & Miranda, D. (2004). Youth who chronically AWOL from foster care. Why they run, where they go, and what can be done. New York: Vera Institute.

[10] Day, A., & Riebschleger, J. (2007). Circumstances and suggestions of youth who run from out-of-home care. The Michigan Child Welfare Law Journal, Fall, 20_30.

[11] Thomson, N. (2014, December 10). Conference call.

If a youth runs from placement once, or makes one bad decision, understand that the young person does not 'become' that one decision.

- o Youth are teenagers who make mistakes -it's part of the normal maturing process.

Be happy when youth returns after running away from placement.

- o When child welfare staff show that they're happy that the youth has returned safely, it helps to build healthy relationships and strong connections with youth.

Don't make youth less safe by taking shoes or coats to blocking them from leaving

- o Youth have the right to their belongings, and keeping these items does not effectively prevent youth from running away from placement. Traffickers are also known to target youth without coat, shoes, and other necessities.

Be factual about why there is not room for youth upon return

- o If a youth's bed was filled when they return from running away from placement, staff should state this fact in a neutral way to let the youth know that the bed was reassigned not as a punishment, but because another youth needed a safe place to be.

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ADDRESSING YOUTH RECRUITMENT IN YOUTH SEX TRAFFICKING WITHIN SERVICE PROGRAMS

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UNDERSTANDING YOUTH RECRUITMENT IN YOUTH SEX TRAFFICKING SITUATIONS

Traffickers may use youth already being trafficked to convince other young people to join them in the sex trafficking situation. Recruitment can occur through befriending while on the internet, in school or school groups, and while receiving services from the same program, or live in the same child welfare or residential program.[1]

Residential programs are especially vulnerable to youth recruitment as traffickers sometimes knowingly target them to gain access to larger numbers of youth within programs. Trafficked youth may be used as a tool by the trafficker to convince other young people of the benefits of leaving structured residential programs for a life of living with fewer rules and curfews, and to have the opportunity of being gifted with material things they otherwise wouldn't have access to.

All organizations and programs who serve vulnerable youth and survivors of youth sex trafficking should consider the following strategies to handle youth recruitment.

Some general safety measures implemented by shelters or residential facilities to limit recruitment include: [2]

- Being sure the program is not near areas known for street prostitution
- Building relationships with local law enforcement to address current or future safety concerns
- Maintaining confidential locations with unpublished addresses and unmarked buildings
- Gating or enclosing the property
- Screening phone calls and limiting the cell phone use of clients
- Maintaining 24-hour staff
- Installing security monitoring systems
- Allowing youth only limited internet access
- Monitoring youth contact outside of program
- Prohibiting youth from taking pictures of other youth in program
- Locking entrance doors to the facility and requiring all visitors to be screened

These safety measures should be implemented in a way that makes youth feel supported and safe, and not controlled or punished.

[1] *New York State Office of Children and Family Services (2016) Responding to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth: A Handbook for Child Serving Professionals, 31.*

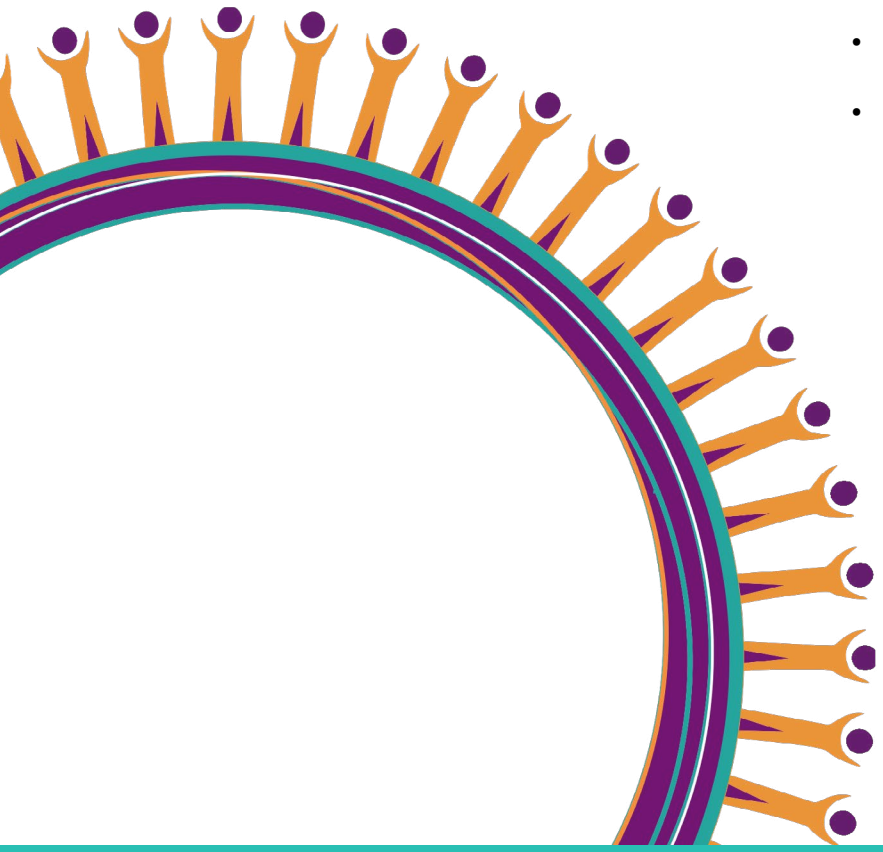
[2] *Reichert, J. & Sylwestrzak, A. (2013). National survey of residential programs for victims of sex trafficking. Chicago, IL: The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.*

The following are strategies programs should employ to respond to recruitment:

- When a youth is suspected of trying to recruit another client, staff members should not allow them to be alone with others in the program[3]
- Staff should restrict and/or monitor the phone usage of youth suspected of recruitment
- Clients who are consistently causing safety concerns (including recruitment) should be considered for removal from the program and served elsewhere, either in another program or in the community[4]

Preventative measures to avoid recruitment in programming include:

- Separating youth based on stages of recovery in order to prevent those who are most vulnerable to recruitment from being victimized by youth who are not yet engaged in services or ready to leave their situation
- Monitoring youth contact as much as possible
- Prevent romantic relationships or familial like friendships within program
- Explain to youth upon entrance to program that there is zero tolerance for recruiting
- Post informational documents throughout the facility that indicate zero tolerance for recruiting
- Integrate policy that addresses recruitment and create a "no tolerance" atmosphere
- Educating all youth in programming about youth sex trafficking
- Educating parents and other caregivers of youth about youth sex trafficking, what steps to take if they suspect a youth is being exploited, and how to prevent the victimization of youth[5]



[3] *NCFY. (2012). Creating a Safe Place for Trafficked Youth in Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs. Retrieved from http://ncfy.acf.hhs.gov/features/focusing-outcomes-youth-safety/creating-safe-place-trafficked-youth-runaway-and-homeless*

[4] *Thomson, S., Hirshberg, D., Corbett, A., Valila, N., & Howley, D. (2011). Residential treatment for sexually exploited adolescent girls: Acknowledge, Commit, Transform (ACT). Children and Youth Services Review, 33(11), 2290-2296.*

[5] *Walker, K. (2013). Ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children: A call for multi-system collaboration in California. California Child Welfare Council.*

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SAFETY PLANNING FOR YOUTH VICTIMS OF SEX TRAFFICKING

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Safety Plans for children and youth who have been trafficked are important in maintaining their physical, psychological, and emotional safety. In association with this, service providers and professionals working with victims of sex trafficking must also establish a safety protocol to protect staff when working with trafficking clients.

When Should Youth Safety Assessments be Conducted?

It is important to note that safety planning is not a one-time event, but, rather, an ongoing process. As a youth's situation changes, so should their safety plan. Safety planning can be a part of standard case meetings with the youth. It is also important for the youth to have a safety plan in place prior to discharge. Safety planning should be conducted/assessed during initial contact with a youth survivor of SCEC or DMST, during regular case meetings with youth, and prior to discharge.[1]

Imminent Danger

If there is an imminent threat to the youth's safety, call 9-1-1. Once the youth is stabilized, emergency shelter and other basic needs, such as food and housing, should be arranged at the first priority. A safety plan can be established once the youth and their needs are stabilized.

Who Else Should be Considered in Safety Planning?

It is important to note that in SCEC and DMST situations, safety for individuals beyond just the vulnerable youth should be considered. This is especially true for individuals who are closest to the youth or for those who are assisting in intervention from a SCEC and DMST situation. The youth's family, other caretakers and support systems, and social service providers are also at risk and should take safety precautions.

Just as no two youth are the same, no two safety plans will be exactly the same. When working with a youth and non-offending family members to develop a safety plan, consider a variety of strategies for enhancing safety that are applicable to all individuals based on their situation and preferences.

A Successful Safety Plan Will: [2]

- Involve the youth
- Assess current and potential risks and safety concerns
- Create strategies for avoiding or reducing the threat of harm
- Identify immediate needs and formulate interventions to meet those needs
- Discuss the youth's triggers which could jeopardize their stability
- Discuss coping mechanisms for triggers and other stressful situations to reduce vulnerability
- Outline actionable steps for a youth to take to stay safe in potentially dangerous situations

[1] *Safety Planning Standards for Trafficked and Enslaved Persons, Safe Horizon, 2004.*

[2] *Safety Planning and Prevention, National Human Trafficking Resource Center, Polaris Project, 2011.s*

Creating a Safety Plan:

- Ask the youth what will make them feel safe, or what they need to be/feel safe.
- Consider as many scenarios as possible.
- Be very concrete. Ask the "Who?", "What?", "Where?", "When?", "Why?" and "How?" questions; however do not put undue pressure onto youth to answer all questions if they feel uncomfortable
- Ensure that the plan is realistic and caters to the individual youth
- Practice using the plan during less serious events. Evaluate with the youth afterward and update the plan, if necessary, in potentially dangerous situations

SAFETY STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVORS LEAVING A TRAFFICKING SITUATION [3]

Youth may leave and return to a trafficker multiple times before leaving for good. A youth who leaves a trafficking situation may feel that they are at risk of physical harm to themselves or to their family, friends, and/or other trafficked youth.

Assisting youth to plan a safety strategy for exiting a trafficking situation when they are ready will help the youth feel prepared to leave more safely. Tips for youth still in a trafficking situation may include:

- Call 911 if in immediate danger
- Plan an escape route or exit strategy and rehearse it, if possible
- Keep any important documents in preparation for an immediate departure
- Prepare a bag with any important documents/items and a change of clothes
- Contact trusted friends or relatives to notify them or ask for assistance
- Contact the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline (1-888-373-7888) to obtain local referrals for shelter or other social services

SAFETY STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVORS WHO HAVE LEFT A TRAFFICKING SITUATION

Some youth may have already left the trafficking situation. It is important for youth who have exited the situation to maintain a safety strategy for themselves. Some tips for youth include:

- Vary travel habits and daily routine
- Consider taking out a protective order against the trafficker so they are legally prohibited from contacting the youth
- Keep cell phone charged
- Block trafficker on cell phone and on any social media
- Keep any court documents and emergency numbers with them in case of emergency
- Consider changing their username on social media and changing the image to something the trafficker won't recognize.
- If possible, avoid visiting the same places or cultural communities the trafficker frequents
- Keep and emergency cell phone at all times
- Consider changing phone numbers so the trafficker cannot call or text the youth.
- Identify trusted friends or family. If possible, work with the youth to memorize the phone number of a family member or friend.
- Inform trusted family/friends/co-workers where they are going, when they expect to arrive, and when they expect to return home.
- Identify coping strategies to prevent youth from coming vulnerable in stressful situations
- Contact the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline (1-888-373-7888) to obtain local referrals for shelter or other social services.

[3] *New York State Office of Children and Family Services (2016) Responding to Commercially Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth: A Handbook for Child Serving Professionals, 23-25.*

SAFETY STRATEGIES FOR STAFF AND OTHER YOUTH

Traffickers may view service agencies as a barrier between them and the youth and make threats or show up to the service site. This can put the youth, staff, and other youth receiving services at risk. Some tips to make providing services safer for staff and other youth include:

- Make sure the agency's location is confidential, if appropriate. If possible, do not list the agency's address on its website or identify the building with signs.
- Keep case managers direct phone number or extension confidential
- Block office and cell phone numbers from being displayed when making outgoing calls
- If the youth is based in the same area as the trafficker, see the youth in a space away from this region.
- If meeting with youth in the community, meet in a public space as appropriate.
- Use rental or unmarked agency cars for youth-related travel when necessary so that vehicles cannot be traced to the organization, staff, or survivor
- If working in the community or conducting home visits, staff should tell a colleague where they are going and when to be expected back.
- Utilize law enforcement if necessary and appropriate
- Avoid publicity and media. Public attention can compromise staff and youth safety, and can hinder ongoing investigations by law enforcement

Using a trauma-informed and victim-centered approach is always important when working with victims and survivors of domestic minor sex trafficking. These suggestions for safety planning are not all-inclusive, but are meant to increase opportunities for safety and to begin discussions for agency protocol.

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YOUTH SEX TRAFFICKING AND GANGS

Gangs control a significant proportion of the youth sex trafficking industry.[1] Street gangs use sex trafficking as a source of income to fund their gangs. A National Institute of Justice (NIJ) study in San Diego found that sex trafficking produces an estimated $810 million annually in San Diego, making it the city's second-largest underground economy after drug trafficking ($4.76 billion annually). Gang members made up an estimated 85 percent of pimps/sex-trafficking facilitators in the area.[2] This is because gangs perceive sex trafficking as less risky, compared to weapons and drug trafficking, and thus view it as a lucrative market. In some gangs, prostitution is a central revenue source.

In gang-controlled trafficking, youth may engage in prostitution as initiation and/or to bring in revenue for the gang. Minors, in particular, can be vulnerable to involvement in such exploitative activities, as gangs prey on their vulnerability due to oftentimes making more money from minors engaged in commercial sexual exploitation than from adults. Gangs often manipulate young women into joining the gang but then do not fully consider them full members, and rather utilize them solely for exploitation.

Youth are often manipulated into gangs through:

- Promises of protection/Survival
- Peer pressure and status
- Drugs and alcohol
- Money
- Loyalty
- Threats of physical harm to self and/or loved ones

ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS FOR PROFESSIONALS WORKING IN A GANG-CONTROLLED SITUATION

Professionals working with vulnerable youth may use the following questions to help determine if the youth is or has been involved in a gang-related trafficking situation. Assessment questions may be asked upon entry into the program but are best used after building rapport with the youth throughout the time the youth receives services. Understanding language used by gangs is essential in conducting such assessments.

Have you ever been asked to go to a skip party? How did you hear about it?

o Skip parties[3] are organized by gangs to lure youth into a setting where they are then exposed to violence or sexually assaulted, which is then used to make the youth feel trapped within the gang's activities.

[1] Sex Trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery and involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain a commercial sex act. For minors, individuals under the age of 18, the means of force, fraud, or coercion are not necessary to implicate engagement in sex trafficking.

[2] National Institute of Justice, "Gangs and Sex Trafficking in San Diego" September 20, 2016, from NIJ.gov:http://nij.gov/topics/crime/human-trafficking/pages/gangs-sex-trafficking-in-san-diego.aspx

[3] Skip parties are parties organized by gangs during the day to encourage youth to skip school. These parties are usually advertised online and promise access to drugs and alcohol.

Were you asked to bring any friends?

o Many teens feel a sense of comfort and perceived safety when bringing friends to a party. However, gangs take advantage of this, using it as an opportunity to recruit additional youth.

Did anyone ever show you pictures or videos either on social media, YouTube, in magazines, or through other outlets of them or someone else harming someone?

o Youth involved with gangs are often exposed to footage of violence committed by the gang as a tactic to intimidate the youth. This footage includes crimes such as rape and murder.

Were you asked to bring any friends?

o Women and girls who are trafficked in gangs are often unaware of the rules or how to move up the ranks in the gang. They may express affiliation with the gang but do not know and/or do not belong to a clique or set.[4] Not knowing/not belonging to a clique or set may indicate that they are being trafficked.

RED FLAGS SPECIFIC TO GANG-CONTROLLED TRAFFICKING

Youth wanting to wear only a certain color or fixation on a certain color, ie. yellow, purple, or red; especially in relation to shoes.

o Showing a specific color may be the earliest indicator that a youth has become involved in a gang. It is important for service providers and individuals engaging with youth to familiarize themselves with the local gang colors

Jewelry that is excessive or not the style the youth previously wore.

New tattoos that are affiliated with gangs or are seen on other youth

o Like colors and jewelry, tattoos can indicate affiliation with a gang

BARRIERS TO EXITING A GANG-CONTROLLED TRAFFICKING SITUATION

Gang-controlled trafficking creates immense barriers to leaving the situations.

Practitioners need to be aware of and how to address threats of violence. Safety plans for youth and staff members is important.

It is often better for survivors to fade out—the process of gradually disengaging from the gang while still maintaining membership 5 —than to announce departure. For more information, consult the National Human Trafficking Hotline at (888)-373-7888 for referral information

It is essential to remain vigilant of the potential of some youth to be exploited by gangs - especially when these gangs exert a strong presence in communities. Direct service providers, school administrators and teachers, and parents must work together to understand the needs of individual youth, providing the essential resources to youth to reduce their vulnerability and ability to escape sex trafficking.

[4] Cliques and sets are groups within individual gangs for which an individual can move up the ranks.
[5] Wiener, Valerie. ([1999]). "Winning the War Against Youth Gangs." Conneticut: Greenwood Press.

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PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS ON YOUTH SEX TRAFFICKING[1]

Public awareness campaigns are common strategies employed by anti-trafficking organizations in order to spread messages of awareness, understanding, and resources about human trafficking to large audiences. Some suggestions for conducting effective anti-trafficking public awareness campaigns include the following tips:

Messaging and Language

- Tailor materials as much as possible so that the message disseminated is clear. For example, campaigns may focus on foreign born or domestic victims, adults or children, or sex or labor trafficking. If the focus is on youth sex trafficking, this should be clear in language and imaging.
- Understand your audience. If your goal is to reach and have an impact with youth, use language and images that youth can identify with. Often, youth do not see themselves as victims or survivors, so language such as "human trafficking" or "sex trafficking" may not resonate with a youth and their experience.
- Refrain from using "saving mentality" language. Instead, use consistent, agreed-upon language that has been vetted by youth and professionals for clarity and practicality.
- Create a message that is impactful but not salacious. Testing messages on focus groups can enable organizations or programs to enhance the effectiveness of the campaign and to discern whether the intended message is being conveyed.
- Produce materials in coordination with local support systems, including law enforcement, victim advocates, service providers, students, and other relevant parties so that messaging is consistent. Such partnerships may also make it possible to blend funds for maximum impact.
- If not, promoting a local hotline, consider including the National Human Trafficking Hotline information (888-373-7888) or text "HELP" to BEFREE.

Images

- Refrain from using images of chains or other forms of physical restraint or kidnapping, as often victims involved in trafficking remain in their situation through coercion, lies, and threats.
- Consider using "shadowed people" or silhouettes of youth. Never use photos of scantily-clad youth in various stages of undress
- Images should reflect the diversity of the community and the youth that is served locally, including boys and girls, non-gender conforming youth, various ages, LGBTQ, and economic status.

[1] *Sex trafficking is the "recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act" for remuneration in the form of money, food, shelter, or another valued entity. Evidence of force, fraud, or coercion is not a necessary for youth under the age of 18. Youth under the age of 18 who trade a sex act for something of value is automatically considered a victim of a crime under the U.S. Federal Trafficking of Victims Protection Act of 2000.*

Outreach

- Use social media to spread your message to a wide audience at no cost. Update your posts regularly so as to keep your audience engaged
- Partner with agencies that may be able to provide free or donated advertising space
- Use multiple outlets and media forms. Examples include educational events; posters and postcards; media campaigns; protests and awareness events; petitions, lobbying, and fundraising; educational speeches; informational flyers; concerts and street dramas; research studies; personal testimonials; and other advocacy efforts
- Release campaigns in conjunction with global anti-trafficking advocacy days. See below:

GLOBAL ANTI-TRAFFICKING ADVOCACY DAYS

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month January 1, 1863 President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation took effect January 11 National Human Trafficking Awareness Day	National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month February 1 National Freedom Day February 20 World Day of Social Justice	March 8 International Women's Day March 25 International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade	National Child Abuse Prevention Month National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month First full week in April National Crime Victims' Rights Week	May 1 International Workers' Day
JUNE	**AUGUST**	**SEPTEMBER**	**OCTOBER**	**NOVEMBER**
June 4 International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression June 12 World Day Against Child Labor	August 23 International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition	First Monday of September Labor Day September 22, Abraham Lincoln's announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation	Domestic Violence Awareness Month October 15 International Day of Rural Women	National Runaway Prevention Month

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