

Human Trafficking Resource Guide for Ohio's Public Children Services Agencies

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Ohio

Department of
Youth Services

Ohio

Department of
Public Safety

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Introduction

What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is the control and exploitation of a person for profit. Traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion to compel a person to engage in commercial sex acts or labor. If the person induced to perform commercial sex acts is a minor, law enforcement does not need to demonstrate that the minor was compelled (forced or coerced) to perform the acts. Minors induced to perform commercial sex are victims of human trafficking under the law, regardless of the presence of force, fraud, or coercion. Further, minors involved in any commercial sexual activity, with or without the involvement of an explicit trafficker, should be considered victims of human trafficking.

There are many myths and misconceptions that prevent communities and professionals from identifying cases of human trafficking (Polaris). In movies, television shows, and other forms of media, human trafficking is often depicted in conjunction with the kidnapping, international border crossing, and forceful confinement of victims by strangers. Because of these common and often misleading narratives, many individuals struggle to identify human trafficking when it does not involve kidnapping, transportation, or confinement, or when the trafficker is the victim's romantic partner, employer, friend or family member.

Under state and federal law, there are two different types of human trafficking: sex trafficking and labor trafficking. Sex trafficking cases have been identified in diverse venues including street prostitution, escort services, pornography, and illicit massage businesses; sex trafficking can occur anytime there is a sex act exchanged for something of value. For example, homeless and runaway youth under the age of 18 who trade sex to meet their basic needs are considered victims of sex trafficking. Labor trafficking cases have been identified in industries such as hospitality, agriculture, construction, domestic work, and street economies (begging, peddling, illegal activities); labor trafficking occurs when a person is compelled to perform work or services for another person.

Human trafficking happens in rural, suburban, and urban areas all across the state of Ohio. A recent study estimates that there were 1,032 known victims of human trafficking in Ohio between 2014 and 2016. Most of these identified victims were minors and victims of sex trafficking (Anderson, Kulig and Sullivan). The same study identified approximately 4,209 at-risk individuals with risk factors such as prior abuse/neglect, runaway behavior, truancy, substance use, family dysfunction, mental health challenges, and other risk-taking behaviors (Anderson, Kulig and Sullivan).

Reminders

Human trafficking is the control and exploitation of a person for profit.

Minors involved in any commercial sexual activity should be considered victims of human trafficking.

Sex trafficking can occur anytime there is a sex act exchanged for something of value.

Labor trafficking occurs when a person is compelled to perform work or services for another person.

There were 1,032 known victims of human trafficking in Ohio between 2014 and 2016. Most were minors and victims of sex trafficking (Anderson, Kulig and Sullivan).

Definitions

Under U.S. federal law, “severe forms of trafficking in persons” includes sex and labor trafficking.

Sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age (22 USC § 7102).

Labor trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery, (22 USC § 7102).

“**Coercion**” includes:

- threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any person;
- any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; or
- the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process (22 USC 7102(3)).

“**Commercial sex act**” is defined as any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person (22 U.S.C. 7102 (4)).

Federal Laws

Trafficking Victims Protection Act

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) is the first comprehensive federal law to address trafficking in persons. The TVPA and subsequent reauthorizations provide a three-pronged approach to combating trafficking by **preventing** human trafficking, **protecting** victims, and **prosecuting** traffickers.



This 3P (prevention, protection, prosecution) framework can be used to shape any community’s response to human trafficking (National Human Trafficking Hotline). Activists often also include a “4th P” – **partnership** – in recognition that all parts of a community are needed to achieve progress in combatting this issue (U.S. Department of State).

To read the TVPA and subsequent reauthorizations, see:

[Victims of Human Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000](#)

[Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003](#)

[Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005](#)

[Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008](#)

[Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2013](#)

[Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2017](#)

Justice for Victims of Human Trafficking Act

The [Justice for Victims of Human Trafficking Act \(JVTA\) of 2015](#) seeks to improve the U.S. response to trafficking by expanding the definition of sex trafficking to include those who “patronize or solicit,” to clarify that those who purchase sex acts from victims of human trafficking can be prosecuted as traffickers. This act also classifies child pornography as a form of human trafficking. This act amends the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) by declaring trafficked youth as eligible for services under the RHYA.

The JVTA amends the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) state grant program to add new requirements and modifies the definition of child abuse and neglect to consider any child who is identified by the state as a victims of sex trafficking or severe forms of trafficking as a victim of “child abuse and neglect” and “sexual abuse.” Specifically, the JVTA requires states to describe in their CAPTA state plan that they have:

- Provisions and procedures regarding identifying and assessing all reports involving known or suspected child sex trafficking victims as defined in the TVPA.
- Provisions and procedures for training child protective services (CPS) workers about identifying, assessing and providing comprehensive services to children who are sex trafficking victims.

This act also requires states to collect and report the number of children who are sex trafficking victims. The Children’s Bureau information memorandum (IM) can be found here:

[ACYF-CB-IM-15-05](#)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families (2015)

Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014

The [Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014](#) seeks to reduce sex trafficking among youth involved in the foster care system. This act has many mandates for supporting normalcy for children in foster care, such as involving youth ages 14 and older in the development of his or her case plan, improving adoption incentives, and various other provisions.

This act established the following requirements:

- States must have in place policies and procedures for identifying, documenting, screening, and determining services for children who are victims of sex trafficking or at risk of being victims of sex trafficking including:
 - Children with an open case file but who have not been removed from home
 - Children who have run away from foster care
 - Children who are receiving adoption assistance
 - Any individual under 26 at the option of the state, whether or not they are in foster care
- Children services agencies must report to law enforcement immediately when children in foster care are identified as sex trafficking victims
- Requires children services agencies to report missing youth to law enforcement, within 24 hours, for entry into the [National Crime Information Center](#) and to the [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#).

To learn more about the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, see the [National Conference of State Legislatures’ Summary](#).

Ohio's Laws

Enacted in 2011, [Ohio Revised Code \(ORC\) 2905.32](#) defines human trafficking as follows:

“(A) No person shall knowingly recruit, lure, entice, isolate, harbor, transport, provide, obtain, or maintain... another person (1) knowing that the person will be subjected to involuntary servitude or to be compelled to engage in sexual activity for hire, engage in a performance that is obscene, sexually oriented, or nudity oriented, or be a model or participant in the production of material that is obscene, sexually oriented, or nudity oriented.”

“...For prosecution under division (A)(1) of this section, the element “compelled” does not require that compulsion be openly displayed or physically exerted. The element “compelled” has been established if the state proves that the victim’s will was overcome for force, fear, duress, intimidation, or fraud.

For minors under the age of 18 and for people with a developmental disability, law enforcement officials do not need to prove that the minor was *compelled* by someone to engage in sexual activity for hire with a third party (ORC 2905.32 (A)(2)).

Safe Harbor Act

In 2012, Ohio passed the Safe Harbor Act (H.B. 262), creating opportunities for minor victims of human trafficking involved in the juvenile justice system to access diversion programs and supportive services. ORC 2152.021 (F) allows juvenile courts to hold complaint(s) in abeyance (essentially putting the complaint(s) on hold) to allow minor victims of human trafficking to complete diversionary programming.

These diversion programs create an opportunity for survivors to rebuild their lives. To learn more about Safe Harbor, please review the [Supreme Court of Ohio Juvenile Human Trafficking Bench Card](#) and the [Safe Harbor Procedure Card](#).¹

¹ These resources and more are available on the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force website: humantrafficking.ohio.gov.

Reminders

Ohio’s anti-human trafficking laws have various protections for adult and minor victims and survivors of human trafficking. Examples of these protections include:

Children services agencies can petition courts to terminate the parental rights of a parent convicted of trafficking their child or another child living in the household at the time of the offense (ORC 2151.414)

Courts can allow minors under the age of 16 to give testimony in preliminary hearings via closed circuit television to protect minors from facing their trafficker(s) directly (ORC 2937.11 (D)(1)(a))

Ohio's Response to Human Trafficking

Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force

The Governor's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force was originally created by Governor John R. Kasich via executive order in 2012, and was expanded by Governor Mike DeWine in 2021. The Task Force was created to marshal the resources of state agencies to coordinate efforts to prevent trafficking, identify victims, create a coordinated law enforcement system to investigate and prosecute trafficking crimes, and to provide the services and treatment necessary for victims to regain control of their lives.

An initial recommendation of the Task Force was to hire a State Anti-Trafficking Coordinator to manage the Task Force and state agencies' efforts to combat trafficking. The State Anti-Trafficking Coordinator's Office is housed within the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) and works in close partnership with local service providers, law enforcement, public officials and advocates to strengthen the state's coordinated response to human trafficking. Additionally, the office provides extensive technical assistance and training to professionals and grassroots efforts, including those within child-serving agencies.

As a Task Force agency, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services works closely with the State Anti-Trafficking Coordinator's Office. Past collaborations have included funding opportunities for trafficking prevention through the Ohio Children's Trust Fund, human trafficking training requirements for children services caseworkers, and direct funding to children's advocacy centers to serve victims of trafficking and those at-risk of exploitation.

In 2017, OCJS received funding from the U.S. Department of Justice to improve outcomes for child and youth victims of trafficking. OCJS utilized the federal funding to hire three liaisons housed at the Ohio Department of Youth Services, the Public Children Services Association of Ohio, and the Ohio Network of Children's Advocacy Centers. Through their respective agencies, the liaisons provided direct support, training, and technical assistance to county children services agencies, juvenile courts and children's advocacy centers.

To learn more about the Governor's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force please visit www.humantrafficking.ohio.gov, or email the State Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinator at SAHTC@dps.ohio.gov.

Ohio's Anti-Human Trafficking Coalitions

The Ohio Network of Anti-Human Trafficking Coalitions includes over 20 anti-human trafficking coalitions which are locally coordinated and often comprised of social service providers, law enforcement, legal service providers, courts, nonprofit organizations, universities, and interested community partners. Coalitions seek to develop local multidisciplinary approaches to combat sex trafficking and labor trafficking.

To promote a collaborative response, Ohio's anti-trafficking coalitions are encouraged to follow a [sample coalition model](#) which promotes a local response to protect victims and at-risk individuals, prosecute offenders, and prevent the crime from occurring in the first place.

To view a map of the local coalitions in Ohio, please visit the link below. Contact information and a brief overview of services provided by each coalition are listed on the website:

<https://humantrafficking.ohio.gov/coalitions.html>.

Considerations for Children Services Practice

Human Trafficking Identification

Human trafficking identification requires professionals to examine a situation to see if the circumstances meet the definition of human trafficking. The [Action-Means-Purpose \(AMP\) Model](#), developed by Polaris, can be helpful in understanding the federal definition of human trafficking. Human trafficking occurs when a perpetrator takes an **ACTION** such as recruiting or harboring a person and uses one of the **MEANS** of force, fraud or coercion for the **PURPOSE** of compelling that person to engage in a commercial sex act or provide labor or services.

ACTION	MEANS	PURPOSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment• Harboring• Transporting (can include border crossing)• Providing• Obtaining• Patronizing, soliciting, or advertising (specific only to sex trafficking)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Force: physical means of control such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, confinement, constraints• Fraud<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deception for the purpose of exploitation• Lies• False documents• Coercion<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Threats of harm against any person• Abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commercial Sex Act: any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or exchanged by any person• Labor or Services: any form of work, labor or services (legal, illicit, informal or formal)

Inducing a minor to engage in commercial sex is always considered sex trafficking under federal law. Under Ohio's laws, minors under age 18 and individuals with development disabilities induced to engage in commercial sex are victims of human trafficking, regardless of the presence of compulsion. Survivors may experience both sex and labor trafficking. When working with a youth, consider what elements of sexual or labor exploitation are present in their story.

Most trafficking victims do not self-identify as victims of human trafficking.

They may not know what human trafficking is or how their situation could be considered human trafficking or victimization. Some may normalize their experiences after undergoing trauma and manipulation; some might see their experiences as a part of everyday life. Some might feel shame or self-blame or feel closely bonded to their trafficker. Because self-identification is rare, it is critical that child-serving professionals be familiar with what human trafficking is and how it occurs to be able to identify individuals at high risk or who are experiencing this type of victimization.

Many professionals working in the field have focused on educating key community stakeholders on “red flags” or “indicators” of human trafficking, but as understanding of this diverse and complex crime evolves, professionals now know that in many cases, there is nothing visible or obvious that can alert someone to human trafficking. To assist those reading this guide in deepening their understanding of human trafficking, the appendix includes “red flags” as well case studies which can be used to practice applying the AMP model to identify cases of human trafficking.

Often, individuals who have experienced human trafficking encounter children services, law enforcement, health care providers, or others in helping professions without being identified as a victim of human trafficking. Individuals may present with substance use concerns, intimate partner violence concerns, or any number of intersecting issues. Because of the hidden nature of this crime, human trafficking may not be identified initially; professionals may have multiple interactions with a trafficked person before seeing the indicators of human trafficking with that person’s experiences.

SCREENING TOOLS TO HELP IDENTIFY HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Tool	Additional Information
<u>Juvenile Human Trafficking, Ohio Laws & Safe Harbor Response</u>	<i>Developed by the Supreme Court of Ohio</i> Includes a list of “Red Flags in Juvenile Human Trafficking”.
<u>Child Sex Trafficking Indicators Tool</u>	<i>Developed by <u>New York State Office of Children and Family Human Trafficking Resources</u></i> Can be used to identify if a child meets the federal definition of child sex trafficking or is at high risk of experiencing child sex trafficking.
<u>Florida's Human Trafficking Screening Tool (HTST)</u>	<i>Developed by Florida Department of Children and Families and Florida Department of Juvenile Justice</i> Can be used to identify child sex or labor trafficking; designed for use in children services and juvenile justice settings.
<u>Urban Institute Human Trafficking Screening Tool (HTST)</u>	<i>Developed by Urban Institute</i> Details the development and testing of the Human Trafficking Screening Tool administered in full-length (19 questions) and short form (6 questions). Tested as effective in identifying sex and labor trafficking in children services and runaway and homeless youth settings.
<u>WestCoast Children’s Clinic Commercial Sexual Exploitation – Identification Tool (CSE-IT)</u>	<i>Developed by WestCoast Children’s Clinic</i> Evidence-based screening tool designed for use in children services, juvenile justice, schools, residential, mental health, and other child-serving systems.
<u>Building a Children Services Response to Child Trafficking</u>	<i>Developed by <u>Center for the Human Rights for Children, Loyola University Chicago</u></i> Includes a Rapid Screening Tool for Child Sex and Labor Trafficking and a Comprehensive Screening and Safety Tool; can be used to identify child trafficking, understand the scope of the trafficking, and assess the child’s safety.

Within the Ohio Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), there are up to five (5) points the user may enter for identification of human trafficking victims*:

1. The first is within a new intake if the referent is aware of human trafficking. This does not require a definitive report of human trafficking by the referent, but may be identified by the PCSA via collection of risk factors indicating that human trafficking may be occurring.
2. Second, within the Safety Assessment > Safety Factors section, Factor 14 includes information on "Child sexual abuse/sexual exploitation is suspected and circumstances suggest that child may be in immediate danger of serious harm."
3. Third, at the time of disposition, a harm description may be selected for Trafficked Child – Forced Labor or Trafficked Child – Sexual Abuse.
4. Fourth, within the Family Assessment > Strengths & Needs > Child Functioning > Self Protection section.
5. The fifth point is within a person's Profile > Characteristics > Traits/Behaviors/Family History. The characteristic feature allows the user to identify a person of either confirmed or suspected Human Trafficking Victim (Labor or Sex). Currently, a report in Ohio SACWIS (Client Characteristics Report) allows the user access to the total number of persons with each characteristic identified.

When several indicators cause children services to suspect human trafficking, the case should be further examined with supervision to determine next steps including utilizing screening/ interviewing tools, involving law enforcement, a children's advocacy center, prosecutor's office, etc.

**This functionality is accurate at the time of publication, but is often evolving and improving.*

Role of a Children's Advocacy Center

A key component of a Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) is its Multidisciplinary Team (MDT). The goal of a CAC is to keep children from being re-traumatized by a system that is meant to protect them. By coming to a CAC where they can talk about their trauma experience and receive the help they need, the child will receive a coordinated response and reduce the number of times they must recount that history. The CAC consists of community partners to include law enforcement, prosecutors, victim advocates, health care providers, and local children services. Through each of the partners, CACs work together to provide hope to children and families.

Survivors of human trafficking are best served through the CAC model. This system ensures that abused children do not fall through the cracks of the traditional service delivery system. Minors are offered a safe, comprehensive response to their specific needs. Survivors of human trafficking are offered a caring and gentle place to be forensically interviewed, undergo a medical exam, and be referred for follow up trauma-focused therapy. Law enforcement officials are involved from the beginning and work closely with the team of social workers, medical providers, and prosecutors to hold offenders accountable.

Although CACs are in place to help survivors and youth at risk of human trafficking and are proven to be best practice, there are unique challenges with these types of cases. Often survivors do not see themselves as victims and are not willing to disclose their trauma, initially. Many survivors are frequently AWOL from their homes or placements which makes it more difficult to investigate and protect these youth. Extended interviews are often necessary to gain trust and to fully understand the events and individuals involved in these trafficking cases. These cases take time, patience, and dedication. In addition, survivors often present as "unruly delinquents" and the human trafficking component is missed or not even addressed during assessments.

While these cases have challenges, CACs provide survivors and their families needed services to protect the child from further harm. To learn more, visit the [Ohio Network of Children's Advocacy Centers](#).

Interview Considerations

Building rapport is the first step in interviewing victims in a trauma-informed way. Keep in mind that a victim's reality is your reality when preparing for and conducting investigative interviews with potential trafficking victims.

A forensic interview is a non-leading, victim sensitive, neutral, and developmentally-appropriate investigative interview that helps law enforcement determine whether a crime occurred and what happened.

The goals of a forensic interview are to minimize any potential trauma to the victim, maximize information obtained from victims and witnesses, reduce contamination of the victim's memory of the alleged event(s), and maintain the integrity of the investigative process.

Joint interviews between law enforcement and children services with the victim can be beneficial to the victim so both agencies can gather the necessary information while allowing the victim to complete one interview.

Various human trafficking identification tools have been developed by organizations such as Covenant House, Polaris, the Vera Institute, and the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force. These tools can be accessed here:

- [Covenant House Interview and Assessment Tool for Minors](#)
- [Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force Screening Tool](#)
- [Vera Institute Human Trafficking Identification Tool](#)
- [National Human Trafficking Resource Center/Polaris Comprehensive Human Trafficking Assessment](#)

The Office of Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance center has additional resources about interviewing suspected victims of human trafficking through the [Human Trafficking Task Force E-Guide](#).

Case Planning

Children who have been trafficked will have a variety of needs including safety, shelter, basic needs, medical and mental health care, legal assistance, educational/vocational needs, and much more. Case planning should not only consider immediate safety, but also long-term well-being.

Reminders

Any approach to the victim should be gradual and non-threatening. Be sure the victim has some control in the situation (breaks, water, seating placement). Avoid interrogation methods and refrain from physical contact with victims.

The screening interview should take place in a comfortable environment and be conducted by someone who was not directly involved with the victim during his/her arrest.

Use a conversational approach to obtain preliminary information rather than a rapid series of questions. Remember open-ended questions may elicit more information than yes or no questions.

Review "Considerations for Interacting with Survivors of Human Trafficking" in the appendix for suggestions on the language and approach to use with potential trafficking victims.

To identify local or regional trafficking-specific and trafficking-adjacent service providers, consider consulting with the [National Human Trafficking Hotline](#), which is available 24/7 at 1-888-373-7888 with tele-interpretation in over 300 languages. Its [online referral directory](#) lists anti-trafficking organizations and programs that provide emergency, transitional, or long-term services to those who have experienced human trafficking. Children services workers can also call the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) for assistance with human trafficking cases. [See Appendix 4](#) for an overview of NCMEC’s services and the regional point of contact for Ohio.

No single entity will be able to successfully meet all the needs of a trafficked individual, and a collaborative multi-disciplinary team response is needed to provide trauma-informed, strengths-based, gender responsive, and culturally/linguistically appropriate services. Trafficking-specific programs are rare in Ohio, so training for providers working directly with trafficked or at-risk youth is needed to meet the needs of this population.

Children services agencies should develop a partnership with the local anti-trafficking coalition to take part in developing local response to human trafficking. Review the [Protocol for Serving Child Victims of Human Trafficking in Ohio](#) to understand the preferred practices for creating collaborative, survivor-centered interventions.

As described in the Protocol, communities should identify a centralized Point of Contact (POC) to coordinate care for the survivor. The POC should remain engaged with the survivor throughout their healing process and provide support before, during, and after a survivor engages with service providers. Depending on the case and the community, the POC could be the children services agency, a CAC, juvenile court or human trafficking victim services provider, or local anti-trafficking coalition. In some situations, there might be multiple POCs.

Children who have been trafficked may suffer from health problems including but not limited to:

Physical	Mental
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injuries, sometimes untreated, due to physical violence and/or sexual abuse • Reproductive health problems • Malnutrition • Substance use disorders • Chronic back, vision, hearing, or respiratory problems due to unsafe working conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety, depression • Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder • Changed relationships with others • Anger, aggression, explosive behaviors • Self-harm behaviors • Feelings of shame, guilt, despair, hopelessness • Traumatic bonding

Case management services should be trauma-informed, focused on empowering the child and equipping them with resources to prevent future victimization. Caseworkers and other services providers should focus on self-determination and partnership. Case planning should incorporate:

- An assessment of the child’s needs
- Defining desired outcomes
- Obtaining necessary services, treatments, and supports
- Managing crises

Caseworkers and service providers should consider:

- Educating the child about their rights as a victim of crime
- Legal protections and entitlements available to child survivors of human trafficking
- The criminalization of trafficked children and protections available, such as Safe Harbor
- Power dynamics when engaging with survivors (gender, age, race, profession, etc.)
- Avoiding victim-blaming attitudes, statements, and body language
- Avoiding reactions that convey judgement
- Being a consistent source of support through the process of recovery despite setbacks or challenges
- Learning about the culture and beliefs of the child (New York State Office of Children and Family Services)

Placements for children who have survived human trafficking need to be willing to support the suggested models for safety, mental health services, substance use disorders, and case management services. Providers need to be willing to accommodate additional needed services. These children may require more intensive mental health treatment as well as substance use treatment. Additional means of making the child feel safe may be required (such as locking doors, home alarms, etc.).

Utilize therapies including trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy (TF-CBT), dialectical trauma focused cognitive behavioral therapy (DTF-CBT), and eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) which studies have shown to positively impact those diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or child sexual abuse (Twigg).

Caseworkers should become knowledgeable about how Safe Harbor can be a resource for these children. Caseworkers should work with the court, the child’s attorney, and any other relevant partners to ensure the child is able to access the appropriate protections and services.

Reminders

Children who have been trafficked may have been forced to engage in criminal activity due to the dynamics of their trafficking situation.

They may have been forced to engage in commercial sex, carry or sell drugs, steal for their trafficker or to meet their basic needs, or another criminal activity at the direction of their trafficker.

These children are often viewed as delinquent, but it is important to understand how these actions occurred because of the trafficking situations.

Statistics

Most youth who run away tend to be older teens. A slightly higher percentage of runaways are girls, and African American and Hispanic/Latino(a) youth were overrepresented among runaways compared to the rest of youth in care (Capacity Building Center for States).

Nearly 40% of the youth who ran away were expected to “age out” of care. About 42% of youth who ran away had five or more placement settings (Capacity Building Center for States).

Homeless and runaway youth face vulnerabilities to both sex and labor trafficking. Covenant House interviewed over 900 youth aged 17-25 from 13 cities across the United States and Canada. Nearly one in five of the youth interviewed were victims of human trafficking, with 15% trafficked for sex, 7.4% trafficked for labor, and 3% trafficked for both (Covenant House).

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) estimated that one in six of the endangered runaways reported to NCMEC in 2019 were likely victims of sex trafficking based on indicators such as disclosure of sex trafficking from the youth, recovery from known trafficker, commercial sex advertisements, and arrest on prostitution charges.

What to Do If a Child Runs Away

Because children and youth who run away from foster care are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking, children services agencies are required to identify and report on youth who run away from foster care by contacting law enforcement and making a report to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) (OAC 5101:2-42-88).

Push and pull factors that may influence a child to run from foster care could include escaping from highly restrictive placements; gaining access to friends, family, or romantic partners; maintaining connection to community of origin; or gaining a sense of normalcy or independence (Latzman and Gibbs).

Children services caseworkers can support a child who has returned from running away by recognizing that this child has experienced a disruption in services and probably has unmet needs. In addition to asking about the child’s experiences while gone, caseworkers should have authentic conversations about why the child left care and what the child needs in order to prevent future runaway episodes (e.g. *What can we do to help improve the situation so that you don’t feel like you need to run in the future?*) (Latzman and Gibbs).

Programmatic approaches that show promise in reducing runaway behavior include treatment foster care, utilizing a continuum of comprehensive services including those specific to human trafficking, involving youth in placement decisions, and using family-based placements whenever possible (Latzman and Gibbs).

It is critical that youth at high risk of running away are knowledgeable about resources and ways to access assistance. Caseworkers should safety plan with the youth to mitigate risk if the youth does leave their home or placement; safety planning should include a discussion of what resources are available to keep them as safe as possible when they are out of their home or placement (T. B. Gambon).

Caseworkers should share information about local resources, such as drop-in centers, shelters, food banks, or other community resources where youth can access assistance, and local and national hotlines youth can call for assistance. Caseworkers should talk with youth about appropriate sources of support, safe adults who can help that youth in a crisis, and how to safely return.

The Child Welfare Information Gateway has developed a [sample protocol to follow when a child goes missing](#).

Human Trafficking Education for Children Services Professionals

Ohio children services caseworkers and supervisors are required to complete an introductory course on human trafficking within two years of being hired (OAC 5101:2-33-55(F)(4); OAC 5101:2-33-56(A)(5)). This training should include:

- Laws governing human trafficking, including the definition of human trafficking under section 2929.01 of the Revised Code, the mandates of court, law enforcement and other organizations working to bring attention to the problem of human trafficking, and the criminal offense of trafficking in persons under section 2905.32 of the Revised Code.
- The dynamics of human trafficking and its effects on the victims.
- Human trafficking: what is it?
- The provision of resources to identify and assess victims of human trafficking. "[The Standards of Services for Trafficked Persons](#)" was developed in 2010 by the Ohio Human Trafficking Commission Victim Services Committee to provide best practice guidelines for communities seeking to develop or strengthen a response system for survivors of human trafficking.

The Ohio Child Welfare Training Program provides training on human trafficking which meets the requirements as specified by Ohio Administrative Code; children services professionals can search for and enroll in these trainings using [E-Track](#).

For additional training on local human trafficking responses and resources, consider reaching out to the regional anti-trafficking coalition. Contact information and a brief overview of services provided by each coalition are listed on <https://humantrafficking.ohio.gov/coalitions.html>. The Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force can also provide training on statewide anti-trafficking efforts. To request a speaker, visit <https://humantrafficking.ohio.gov/speaker.html>.

Training on human trafficking is not required for foster caregivers, but it is recommended for any foster caregivers who may be caring for a high risk, trafficked or exploited youth. The Ohio Child Welfare Training Program has collected resources for foster caregivers serving this population as well as a one-hour online training on "[What Caregivers Need to Know About Human Trafficking.](#)"

Educating Mandated Reporters about Human Trafficking

Within the field of children services, it is imperative to develop partnerships with mandated reporters, especially law enforcement and hospital systems which may be in constant communication with children services as it relates to child abuse and the issue of human trafficking.

Mandated reporters should be connected to ongoing education to raise awareness about human trafficking in the community and to encourage collaboration with children services on suspected or identified cases of child trafficking. Mandated reporters should not only be educated about what human trafficking is, but common indicators (see Appendix 2), what to do if they suspect human trafficking, and resources in the community to help the potential victim. Mandated reporters should be encouraged to help establish a sense of safety and build a rapport with the survivor. The survivor should have a safe space to express their emotions and talk about their experiences.

If there is a local anti-human trafficking coalition, children services agencies should partner with the coalition to ensure that local human trafficking awareness and training efforts include information about the local resources and response efforts. If there is not a local coalition, there are human trafficking training resources available through the Governor's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force.

Working with Foreign National Juvenile Victims of Human Trafficking

Juvenile foreign nationals may be at risk of being trafficked for sex or labor in their home country, in transit, and within the United States. In their home country, they may face vulnerabilities such as poverty, gang violence, and civil and political unrest. They may experience abuse, gender-based violence, or lack of educational opportunities.

On route to the United States, they may be forced to earn money in dangerous settings and coerced into sex or labor trafficking. In the United States, they may have been charged heavy fees by smugglers and be expected to pay back these fees or additional expenses; they may experience debt bondage. They may also be victimized by family members or caregivers who treat them as domestic servants or force them into commercial sex.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), [Office of Trafficking in Persons](#) (OTIP) can help foreign national children who have experienced human trafficking. These children can become eligible to receive benefits and services including medical screenings, Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and other public benefits.

If working with a foreign national minor who may have experienced human trafficking, contact the OTIP Child Protection Specialists at 202-205-4582 or by email at childtrafficking@acf.hhs.gov to ask questions or to discuss a potential case. A Request for Assistance (RFA) can be filed through the [Shepherd Case Management System](#).

Reminders

Once law enforcement identify a foreign national minor victim of human trafficking, they must notify HHS within 24 hours.

OTIP issues Interim Assistance Letters to foreign children who may have been subjected to human trafficking. The letters provide potential victims with an up-to 90-day period of eligibility.

OTIP issues [Eligibility Letters](#) to a foreign child with credible information that the child was subjected to trafficking as defined by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

Child victims are not required to cooperate with law enforcement or receive Continued Presence or a T Visa as a condition for receiving an HHS Eligibility Letter.

A child victim with an Eligibility Letter who has no available parent or legal guardian is eligible for the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) program, which includes all services available to foster children and special services to help them adapt to the United States and recover from their experiences.

Appendix 1: Case Studies

Review the following case studies to test your knowledge.

- Is this case human trafficking? If yes, what components of the scenario align with federal and state law? If no, what components are missing?
- What are the red flags or indicators in this case?
- What service needs does this individual have?

Case Study #1²

Jamil is 14 years old and lives with his mother in an apartment. Even though she works two jobs, his mother struggles to make ends meet. Jamil spends a lot of time home alone, and the landlord often asks Jamil to help him with some projects around the building to keep him busy. For the last three months, while they are hanging out, the landlord makes Jamil perform oral sex and sometimes takes pictures of him during the sex acts. The landlord told Jamil and his mother that he would not evict them as long as Jamil keeps hanging out with him.

- In this scenario, if sex trafficking is occurring, who would be identified as the trafficker?

Case Study #2

Ashley is 16 years old. She lives with her 84-year-old grandmother, who also takes care of her four younger siblings. The week before her first day of school, Ashley realizes they don't have enough money to buy her school uniform and supplies. One of her friends suggests she go down to the local gas station and "stand on the corner" to make money. Within 15 minutes of standing on the corner, a man offers her \$50 for an oral sex act. Ashley agrees because \$50 will pay for her school uniform.

Case Study #3

Sam is an 18-year-old transgender woman. You've been working on a transitional living plan as she ages out of foster care, but you're having trouble locating housing. She decides she's going to stay with friends and says they're going to let her stay there for free. Unfortunately, that arrangement falls apart quickly, and Sam becomes homeless. One night while smoking a cigarette outside of the homeless shelter, a woman approaches Sam and asks her for a cigarette. The woman tells Sam that she's too pretty to be staying at the homeless shelter and knows a way for her to make quick money. Although Sam is hesitant, she thinks that anything has to be better than the shelter. The woman takes Sam back to her place and explains how to "walk the track" and "turn a trick." Sam's not thrilled about the idea but feels desperate, so she decides to give it a try.

Sam makes \$450 her first night out. On her second night out, a john/buyer violently assaults her, and she is admitted to the hospital. She calls you for help.

² Case studies #1-4 from Capacity Building Center for States. (2015). "Child welfare response to child & youth sex trafficking: Caseworker's curriculum." Washington, DC: Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Case Study #4

Vanessa just turned 15 years old and is on the run from her foster home when she meets an older girl who says she can get her a job as a stripper. The girl introduces Vanessa to her boyfriend, Ricky, who says he'll operate as her manager. Vanessa gets a job at the club without even interviewing. She's super excited, but at the end of her first night of dancing, Ricky tells her he needs all of her money to cover rent and her dance outfits. When she hands him \$300, he says it's not enough and tells her he needs her to work "overtime" in the back rooms. She feels like she does not have a choice if she wants a place to sleep that night, so she goes in the back and engages in sex acts to earn another \$300 for Ricky.

Case Study #5

John is 15 years old and lives with his mother, Mary, and two younger siblings. John helps his mother take care of his siblings and has few friends. Mary has always struggled to maintain employment and has recently turned to selling prescription drugs to pay their bills. Mary has started using the drugs she was selling and is now forcing John to help her sell drugs. Mary will not let John attend school and says John must help more to pay the rent. Mary is becoming more dependent on the drugs and is sometimes physically violent when John disagrees with her.

Case Study #6³

Lynette grew up in a very impoverished country. From a young age, she was expected to work in the house while taking care of her younger siblings. Once she finished school, she began looking for work abroad so that she could better support her family. She secured a job in Qatar which promised a salary and housing. But after a few days in the country, Lynette was offered a new opportunity, this time to come to the United States for a childcare position with a wealthy family. Excited and eager to help her family, she jumped at the chance.

But when Lynette arrived in the U.S., her dreams were crushed. Her employers forced her to take care of their medically ill child day and night. And while she had been promised free room and board, Lynette and others working for the family were denied access to proper clothing, food, and medical care. The workers were subjected to emotional and physical threats, and their identification was confiscated so they couldn't leave.

Case Study #7⁴

Kevin was recruited by a crew member who came to his door selling magazines. When Kevin revealed that he was experiencing financial difficulties, the worker offered Kevin a job and a signing bonus. The crew that Kevin joined was under the control of several managers, all of whom openly boasted about their arrest warrants. These managers would frequently compel the crew members to work from eight in the morning until after midnight, would require them to reimburse the business for lodging and gas costs, and would only pay members if they met their daily quotas. Members who performed particularly well were typically paid in drugs instead of cash, and Kevin never saw the signing bonus he had been promised.

³ From Polaris: <https://polarisproject.org/blog/2015/11/30/survivor-story-global-journey-help-her-family>

⁴ From Polaris: <https://polarisproject.org/blog/2015/08/25/survivor-story-abandoned-traveling-sales-crew>

Kevin reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline that all the workers he interacted with while on the crew said that they wanted to leave. However, they were afraid to do so because of their managers' reputations. Workers who did try to leave were often beaten severely and in some cases were sexually assaulted by either the manager or the senior salespeople. When Kevin himself tried to leave, one of the managers threatened to kill him and confiscated his identification documents.

Case Study #8⁵

Mari is a 37-year-old African American woman who had been in a relationship with Darrell for 16 years. During that time Mari and Darrell had four children. Over the course of the relationship, Darrell had been verbally, physically, and sexually abusive of Mari. Additionally, when Darrell wanted extra money, he called friends of his and forced Mari into commercial sex. She had tried to leave Darrell in the past; however, he either threatened to hurt their children, or convinced Mari that she had no other options other than staying with him. He controlled all of her money, did not allow her to keep her own bank account, and forbade her from getting her driver's license. Mari could not see any alternatives for leaving.

Case Study #9⁶

Sarah is a 17-year-old Caucasian female who grew up in rural Ohio. Sarah ran away from home a few times because her mom and stepfather drank a lot and did not pay attention to her. A few months ago Sarah was walking to the store alone and a 30-year-old male drove up beside her and told her how pretty she was and asked why she looked so sad. Sarah told him that she was angry with her mom and just needed to take a walk. He asked if he could take her to get her nails done down the street to cheer her up, and she agreed. He paid right away while giving compliments and telling her he wanted to meet again the next day.

For the next two months he picked Sarah up and took her to eat, to get her nails done and continued to act like a loving boyfriend. They both began calling each other boyfriend and girlfriend. They spent a lot of time together and he asked Sarah to move in with him, but after another month of living together he told her he couldn't make the rent payment and needed help. He asked her to go on dates with older men and engage in commercial sex. Sarah felt uncomfortable but agreed because she would do anything not to return home, and wanted to make him happy. Her boyfriend praised her and told her he didn't mind that Sarah helped them get money for rent this way. This continued until one night when Sarah was out on the street and was raped by a stranger who initially solicited her for sex. She immediately called the police and was taken to the hospital for an exam.

Case Study #10

Chanel is 11 years old and lives with her mother, Crystal. Crystal has suffered from an opiate dependence for three years, and she no longer has the financial resources to support her addiction. Desperate to prevent withdrawal symptoms, Crystal asks the person from whom she usually buys heroin if there is any way she can acquire the substance despite having no money. Her dealer replies that Crystal could allow him to spend some time with Chanel and promises

⁵ From Polaris: <https://polarisproject.org/blog/2015/05/03/survivor-story-four-children-and-16-year-relationship>

⁶ Polaris: <https://polarisproject.org/blog/2015/04/14/survivor-story-boyfriend-turned-trafficker>

“he’ll be gentle.” Crystal invites him to her home and leads him to Chanel’s bedroom. Crystal locks herself into her own room to get high and blasts her music to avoid hearing the sounds of her daughter’s assault. She promises herself she’ll get sober and never allow anything to happen to Chanel again.

Case Studies: Answer Key

1. Is this case human trafficking? If yes, what components of the scenario align with federal and state law? If no, what components are missing?
2. What are the red flags or indicators in this case?
3. What service needs does this individual have?

Case Study #1

1. This scenario aligns with the definition of sex trafficking under federal law in that a minor is induced to engage in sex for something of value. Jamil is 14 years old and is engaging in sex acts with the landlord to keep his housing. This scenario does not align with Ohio's definition of human trafficking as the sexual activity would need to occur with a third party.
 2. Red flags in this scenario include Jamil spending time alone, the mother's economic struggles, the reliance on the landlord to keep Jamil busy, and pictures of Jamil during the sex acts.
 3. This is an unsafe housing situation as the landlord is sexually exploiting Jamil; alternate housing should be identified. Services should focus on addressing Jamil's vulnerabilities such as his family's economic insecurity. His mother may need economic support to help her meet her family's needs; his mother may benefit from workforce development programming. Jamil would likely need trauma-specific counseling to address the trauma from the sexual exploitation. Jamil may also benefit from after school programming so he is not spending so much time home alone.
- In this scenario, if sex trafficking is occurring, who would be identified as the trafficker?
 - This scenario does not include very much information about what the mother knows. The scenario states "The landlord told Jamil and his mother that he would not evict them as long as Jamil keeps hanging out with him." If Jamil's mother knows Jamil is experiencing sexual exploitation, she would be identified as the trafficker under federal law as well as state law.

Case Study #2

1. Yes. The child is a victim of sex trafficking according to both state and federal law, because she is a minor engaged in commercial sex.
2. The child is engaging in commercial sex.
3. First and most obvious, she needs a school uniform. She may also need less tangible resources like a mentor, who can model safe and appropriate means of meeting needs.

Case Study #3

1. In order for this case to meet the threshold of trafficking, there need to be elements of force, fraud, and/or coercion. It may be that the woman Sam met outside exploited Sam's basic needs and defrauded her into believing she can better meet her needs through commercial sex. More information is needed.
2. Sam was recruited into commercial sex. She is very vulnerable due to unmet needs like safe and stable housing.
3. Sam needs safe and stable housing, connections to a safe community, follow up medical care, and possibly mental health supports to address the trauma she endured.

Case Study #4

1. Yes. The child is a victim of sex trafficking according to both state and federal law, because she is a minor engaged in commercial sex.
2. The child is engaging in commercial sex.
3. Vanessa is in need of housing in which she feels safe and supported. She also needs access to safe people and organizations that she can reach out to if she runs away in the future, as running away is a common trauma response. She may also be interested in safer opportunities for employment so that she can earn her own money.

Case Study #5

1. Yes. The child is a victim of labor trafficking according to both federal and state law, because he is being forced to engage in labor. Labor trafficking can apply to illicit activities like drug sales, which is what is occurring in this case study.
2. The child is missing school, and his parent is suffering from a substance use disorder, both of which can be red flags for trafficking and/or other forms of maltreatment.
3. The child is in need of a safe place to live. He is also in need of resources to help him catch up in school, as he has been absent for an unknown period of time. In thinking holistically about the entire family, the youth's mom is in need of services to address her substance use disorder.

Case Study #6

1. Yes. Lynette is a victim of labor trafficking. She was defrauded into the labor trafficking situation with false promises, and she is being forced and coerced to remain in that situation.
2. Lynette is being threatened, and she does not have access to her identity documents.
3. Lynette needs a safe place to live, and she needs someone to help her obtain new identity documents. She is also in need of immigration services and a plan to remain in the U.S. safely or to return to her country of origin.

Case Study #7

1. Yes. Kevin is a victim of labor trafficking. He was defrauded into the employment with false promises, and he is being forced and coerced to stay with threats of violence and confiscation of his identity documents.
2. Kevin's employers are withholding wages, have made false promises about job opportunities, and are using violence to control their crew.
3. Kevin is in need of safe housing. He may also be in need of protection from his traffickers. Thinking more long term, Kevin is also in need of safe employment so that he can meet his basic needs.

Case Study #8

1. Yes. Mari is a victim of sex trafficking and domestic violence. Her partner has used force, fraud, and coercion to compel her engagement in commercial sex with his friends.
2. Mari is engaging in commercial sex with her husband's friends under threats of violence and abuse. She has no access to the resources she needs to exit the situation and does not feel safe doing so.
3. Mari is in need of safe housing for her and her children and protection from her abuser in order to exit the situation. She and her children will likely be in need of mental health services to help address the trauma her husband has caused them. She will need to be linked to safe employment eventually to meet her basic needs.

Case Study #9

1. Yes. The child is a victim of sex trafficking according to both state and federal law, because she is a minor engaged in commercial sex.
2. Most obviously - the child is engaging in commercial sex. Her runaway status is also a red flag, as is her relationship with a much older partner.
3. Sarah is in need of placement in which she feels safe. She is in need of counseling and psychoeducation regarding healthy relationships. She will likely be in need of a victim advocate, should she choose to pursue charges against her rapist and/or trafficker.

Case Study #10

1. Yes. Though no money is being exchanged, Chanel is being sexually assaulted in exchange for something of value (heroin).
2. Chanel's caretaker is unable to provide adequate care due to her substance abuse disorder. It also seems the family lacks financial resources.
3. Chanel is in need of placement where she can be safe from exploitation. Crystal is in need of services to aid in her sobriety. Both are likely in need of mental health and trauma-responsive services.

Appendix 2: Chart of Indicators/Red Flags of Human Trafficking

RED FLAGS FOR SEX OR LABOR TRAFFICKING

PHYSICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs of physical abuse and/or evidence of lack of appropriate medical care • Poor dental hygiene/lack of dental care • Malnourished, hungry, thirsty • Exhausted (e.g.: dark circles under eyes) • Wounds, lesions, bruises • Intoxicated or evidence of drug/alcohol abuse • Over-sexualized behavior • Branding/tattoos • Burns/chemical burns related to machinery • Repetitive stress injuries
SOCIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence, drug abuse, alcoholism in home • Prior history of sexual or physical abuse • Guardianship by unrelated person • Older, controlling significant other • Runaway and/or homeless • No form of ID/documentation • Limited/no English proficiency • Unsure of address or inconsistencies in describing where he or she lives/goes to school • Not speaking for one's self and/or signs of being controlled • Evidence of being unable to move and/or unable to leave job • History of STDs, multiple sexual partners • Possession of items outside personal or family income level • Condoms, pre-paid credit cards, large amount of cash, hotel keys, fake ID • Items found on person: Multiple cell phones, list of names (likely buyers)
PSYCHOLOGICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses fear: of not returning home on time, of losing job, of caregiver, of significant other • Depression, suicidal ideation and/or history of suicide attempt • Lack of eye contact or dulled emotions
LEGAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charges: Truancy, theft (esp. of basic necessities), multiple curfew violations, prostitution, solicitation, drug/alcohol charges • Circumstances of arrest: High risk location (e.g.: hotels and restaurants known for human trafficking incidents, truck stops, massage parlors, etc.) • If foreign national, limited English proficiency • If foreign national, no form of ID/documentation

Appendix 3: Considerations for Interacting with Survivors⁷

DO	DON'T	WHY
Express empathy and compassion.	Express pity or judgement.	Surviving human trafficking takes resourcefulness and resilience. Survivors of trafficking are more complex individuals who should be provided support.
Maintain composure and provide reassurance. <i>"I believe you, and it's not your fault."</i>	Gasp, make faces, appear shocked. <i>"That's so awful! I can't believe that happened to you! I don't believe it!"</i>	Sometimes survivors share parts of their story that may be difficult to process and understand. While interacting with a survivor, focus on providing reassurance and messages of safety. People may make expressions of disbelief because they are surprised or shocked, but this might have the unintended consequence of conveying that the story is not believable or that the survivor should not share about their experience.
Gently encourage information sharing.	Demand information.	Let youth share their story at their own pace.
Gather information that will ensure safety and service delivery.	Ask questions to satisfy your own curiosity.	Depending on your role and responsibilities, it is not necessary to know all the details of this youth's trauma history. It is important to understand safety concerns and the youth's service needs to facilitate care coordination.
Remain neutral and supportive.	Lecture or express other assessments of behavior.	Youth may have engaged in dangerous or risky behavior during their trafficking situation. It is important not to express judgment; focus on messages of support.
<i>"What happened to you wasn't your fault."</i>	<i>"You don't have to do that anymore."</i>	Saying that someone doesn't need to do something anymore implies that the youth consented to being trafficked.
Survivors need supportive providers as they leave their situation on their own terms and in a way that is safe for them.	<i>"We rescue victims."</i>	The focus should be on empowerment. Service providers should inform survivors of human trafficking of services available to them and what exactly it means to engage in these services. If we force youth to engage in services or "rescue" youth, we are not addressing their vulnerabilities, and they may return to their trafficker.
<i>"We will do everything we can to keep you safe."</i>	<i>"You are safe now."</i>	Our understanding of safety may be different from the youth's. Have conversations with the youth about their understanding of safety and how to achieve safety. Do not to make promises about safety because safety cannot be guaranteed.
<i>"We are here because we want to help you. We will do our best to meet your needs."</i>	<i>"We can fix your problems."</i>	It is important not to make promises about meeting the individual's needs because services cannot be guaranteed. Be transparent about your role and what you can and cannot do.
<i>"Is there anyone you know who might need help?"</i>	<i>"We want to make sure what happened to you does not happen to anyone else."</i>	Youth should not be made to feel responsible for the potential victimization of others. Asking if they know of other youth in need of services is acceptable, but youth should not be forced to provide information when they are unwilling to do so.
Use language like "human trafficking survivor, commercial sexual exploitation, or commercial sexual activity".	Do not say "child prostitute or teen prostitute".	Minors cannot consent to engage in commercial sex. To call a survivor of trafficking a "prostitute" implies that the youth made a choice instead of acknowledging the reality of commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

⁷ Adapted from New York State Office of Children and Family Services, "Do's and Don'ts When Discussing Child Trafficking."

Appendix 4: NCMEC Child Sex Trafficking Recovery Services Team



Child Sex Trafficking Recovery Services Team (RST)

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) is available to provide specialized technical assistance and resources to child welfare professionals, foster parents and law enforcement who are working with missing children who are also victims of child sex trafficking.

RST Resource Specialists are assigned to multi-state regions and available to offer the following assistance for cases involving child sex trafficking:

- » Share promising practices in trauma-informed responses and reducing running behavior
- » Provide case-based assistance in the development of trauma-informed and victim-centered recovery plans
- » Connect professionals to local and national organizations that provide specialized services
- » Provide resources and support on meaningful youth engagement, effective approaches to trauma responses, strategies to address and reduce running behavior, and safety planning
- » Provide training and assist with protocol development
- » Support multidisciplinary efforts to prevent revictimization

Why Recovery planning?

When a survivor of child sex trafficking is “recovered” or returns to child welfare care, it is a disruption, or a pause, in their victimization. “Recovery Planning” recognizes this disruption as an unparalleled opportunity to begin to break the cycle of exploitation through intentional, planned, trauma-informed, and victim-centered engagement. Informed and specialized engagement at the time of and following recovery, has the potential to discredit the lies and manipulation of a trafficker and start to build the foundation of healthy, caring relationships.



NCMEC has developed a three-part Child Sex Trafficking Training “Addressing Child Sex Trafficking: Risk Factors, Recognition and Response”. You can access it [here](#).

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