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## **Human Trafficking Guidelines for Child Protection Agencies**

### **I. Training:**

1. All human trafficking trainings for child protection agencies should cover sex and labor trafficking of foreign national and U.S. citizen children in line with the federal definition of human trafficking.
2. Child protection agencies should involve specialized service providers and survivors in both the development and the delivery of trainings. Survivors should receive compensation and support for their work. Providers can include runaway homeless youth services, LGBT youth organizations, anti-trafficking and victim services agencies in the development and implementation of the trainings.
3. All staff should be required to attend an introductory human trafficking training that is no less than two hours in length and should attend a continuing education training no less than once a year. These trainings must cover both labor and sex trafficking of girls, boys and transgender youth.
4. Advanced human trafficking training should be available, and ideally required, for those likely to interface with potential trafficked youth. Staff with a special interest in this population should be targeted for this advanced training. If possible, specialist caseworkers should be identified and receive advance training.
5. A formal protocol for training should be implemented in order to ensure that human trafficking 101 and advanced trainings are mandatory for target staff and available to staff on a regular basis. Child protection agencies should also reach out to emergency response partners, including police and emergency medical staff to partner on basic trainings where possible.
6. Advanced training should target staff with specific roles within child protection agencies such as supervisors and residential and emergency workers.
7. All mandated reported trainings should be updated to include human trafficking of minors.
8. Human trafficking 101 training should at a minimum include:
  - Types of human trafficking, including profiles and methods.
  - Identification of trafficked youth, which should include indicators, sample questions to ask based on role, etc.

- Dynamics of exploited and trafficked youth, which should include profiles, trauma and developmental impact.

9. Advanced training topics could include the following:

- Building trust and a rapport with trafficked youth
- Methods of interviewing trafficked youth
- Applying client-centered practice to trafficked youth
- Addressing safety issues for trafficked youth
- Engaging parental or support care systems for trafficked youth
- Exploring benefits available to trafficked youth, such as Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding, public benefits for foreign nationals, and forms of immigration relief
- Managing criminal victim witness issues for trafficked youth
- Understanding the interplay between forms of legal redress, such as vacating prior convictions, bringing a private right of action, appearing as a victim-witness, and engaging in immigration proceedings.
- Defining the intersection of intimate partner violence, domestic violence and dating violence in both labor and sex trafficking of minors
- Identifying boys, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth and other marginalized youth populations at risk for trafficking
- Working with developmental delays and trafficking vulnerability
- Identifying the needs of undocumented youth, i.e. unaccompanied minors and SIJS (special immigrant juvenile status)
- Working with migrant farm-worker youth and trafficking vulnerabilities
- Addressing trafficking within child protection settings, groups homes, foster homes, and emergency shelters as targets for trafficking (This section should also be included in the basic training when the audience is applicable.)

10. Target audiences for advanced training should include:

*Child Protection Staff*

- Child protection investigators
- Child protection staff responsible for intakes
- Staff in residential placement facilities
- Specialist caseworkers focused on human trafficking;
- State Central Registry and hotline workers
- All mandated-reporter training materials
- Emergency overnight shelter service staff including security officers
- Group home staff
- Juvenile justice staff within the child protection system

*Contracted Partners and other stakeholders*

- Contracted medical and mental health providers
- Court mandated and alternative to incarceration, and family court program partners
- Mental health professional staff serving identified trafficked youth

- Legal advocates, including guardians ad litem, representing identified trafficked youth.

### *Families*

- Foster families caring for trafficked youth
- Parents or guardians of identified trafficked youth

## **II. Prevention:**

1. Training programs should explore early identification of youth at risk of trafficking for all front-line staff.
2. Specialized programming or therapy for youth at risk for trafficking should be developed.
3. Links to external programs for at-risk youth should be identified and cultivated. Additionally, organizations and speakers who can educate staff about youth at-risk to trafficking should be utilized as resources.
4. A formal protocol for identifying at-risk youth should be implemented.
5. Child protection agencies should consider partnering with schools to do outreach and training as this is a critical location for prevention efforts.

## **III. Identification:**

1. Child protection agencies should implement a formal protocol for identifying trafficked youth.
2. Understanding that there are no magic button intake questions, child protection intakes should be updated to include several key questions about human trafficking. If the child answers “yes” to any of these then they should be referred to a human trafficking case management specialist for a more comprehensive screening. However the term human trafficking should not be used with youth as this is often a misunderstood or unclear term. Instead, screening questions should utilize youth friendly terminology and focus on survival activities to identify potentially trafficked youth.
3. Intake questions may include, but are not limited to:
  - Do you have access to your identification documents or is someone else is holding them?
  - Have you worked for anyone without being paid or without being paid what you were promised?
  - Have you not been able to attend school because you had to work?
  - Have you ever done something sexual for money or food or a place to stay?

- Have you been involved sexually with people on the internet like sending photos or videos to someone?
- Has an older person outside of your family ever asked you to leave home with them?
- Have you ever been arrested or committed a crime that you felt someone else forced you to do?
- Have you spent one or more nights homeless in the last year?
- Have you ever done something like holding or selling drugs or other things that may have gotten you in trouble, for someone else?

#### **IV. Serving and engaging potential victims:**

Knowing youth are often wary of child protection staff, trainings should be provided to help key front-line staff engage youth who may be victims of trafficking. Outreach workers, truancy officers, age-out planners and other key stakeholders should receive training to help them engage vulnerable youth including the traveler homeless youth communities, youth with mental illness, and developmental delays. Once a child has been identified as trafficked, the following guide-lines can help child protection workers to effectively address the full range of survivors needs:

1. Child protection agencies should make every effort to designate specialist caseworkers to specifically focus on working with youth identified as trafficked or strongly suspected as trafficked. Knowing that it often takes time for youth to disclose they have been trafficked, workers should be given extended time on these cases.
2. Refer youth to therapists who have received advanced human trafficking training.
3. Share information about enrollment in VOCA or other state benefits including relevant deadlines.
4. Refer to an attorney with expertise in criminal victim witness advocacy for all trafficked youth and immigration expertise for foreign national victims.
5. Provide consistent safety screenings and assessments.
6. Finding safe housing for trafficked youth can be challenging. Trafficked children need options for various placement and housing, as preferences will be dependent on a variety of factors including: gender, sexual preference, and safety. Because this population often lacks stability, it is extremely important that children who leave placement should be able to return to the same placement if they choose to do so. Housing options should include:
  - Placement with family or former guardian(s) with specialized support for family reunification, when appropriate.

- Placement in specialized foster care. Consider providing additional financial support to these foster families in the same way that additional support is often provided to foster families caring for children with special medical or mental health needs.
  - Preferential residential care facilities for trafficked children or for children who identify as LGBT. Out-of-state placements should also be an option for the child (if preferred), while simultaneously preparing wrap around services for the child when they return.
  - Secure placement should be considered as a last resort, and when used it should be modeled after the strict requirements in place for children designated as a harm to themselves or others.
  - A specialized case manager with a reduced caseload should serve trafficked youth wherever possible.
- Note: It could take months or longer for youth to self-identify. Services should not be contingent on positive identification.

## **V. Data Collection**

1. Implementation of a formal protocol for data collection and regular reporting should be completed and rolled out.
2. There should be standardized data collection on all trafficked youth, including:
  - Separate categories for sex and labor, or both
  - Indication of whether labor trafficked youth also experienced sexual violence
  - Gender
  - Gender identity
  - Sex
  - Whether a third party exploited the trafficked youth
  - If the child was trafficked by a family member
  - Age at recruitment
  - Number of traffickers
3. There should also be standardized data collection of all at-risk trafficked youth.

## **VI. Case Examples:**

The following case examples represent the diversity of human trafficking cases identified throughout the United States (labor and sex).

- **Mary**, a young Mexican girl was forced to peddle tamales on the street and sexually assaulted in the family's home. While she was peddling on the street, a woman noticed bruises on her body and called the police. Police dropped Mary off at the local homeless shelter where she waited for help for over two months before being identified as a child trafficking victim by a staff member.

- **Christina** was twelve years old when she first came to a homeless youth drop-in center. Her mother was mentally ill. Christina reported to the drop-in center counselors that her mother's boyfriend was physically abusive toward her mother, her brothers, and herself. The counselors called child protection to report the suspected abuse. Christina and her siblings were removed from her mother's care and all placed in different foster homes and group homes. Christina and her older siblings all ran away and returned to their mother. They reported that they did not feel safe or supported in the group homes and that the environments of the group homes were closer to a jail than a home. Even though the city knew where the mother lived, no child protection worker ever went to see if the runaway siblings were staying there. While staying with her mentally ill mother, an adult couple recruited Christina into prostitution for over two years.
  
- **Liz and Marty**, two lesbian American youth were homeless after their families kicked them out of their homes and answered an ad for au pair services posted on a website. Once they were flown to the family's home, they were forced to work every day and sexually assaulted by the father of the household, who used drugs to sedate them.
  
- **Jeffery**, 16, was brought over to the U.S. by a family. He was told that he had to work for them at their store to pay off his travel debt. He worked eight hours a day, six days a week. He did not attend school. Eventually, the family told him to leave and he ended up homeless on the street.
  
- **Brandon**, 17, from a Central American country was forced to sell drugs in the United States. He was eventually charged with drug trafficking in juvenile court. The Juvenile Justice System eventually found Brandon guilty of selling drugs.
  
- **Mary** was 13 years old when she came from Central Africa to stay with a family member who promised her an education in the United States. Instead she was forced to cook, clean, and take care of the other small children in the family 24 hours a day. She was not allowed to go to school, and was physically and verbally abused. She escaped with the help of a good Samaritan when she was 17. She and her family received repeated threats from her trafficker after her escape and during the criminal case. Mary stayed temporarily in the home of a local NGO case manager because there were no safe shelter options available to her. Eventually, she was placed in the foster care system but had to move twice. She reported feeling alone and scared and that no one in this system understood what happened to her.
  
- **Keisha** was born in the United States. As a baby, her mother left her outside a dumpster by the hospital and she bounced around in foster care programs, suffering sexual abuse at the age of 7. At the age of 12, a pimp offered her a ride in his car, got her high on drugs, and then forcibly raped her and sent her to work that night on the street. Keisha continued to bounce from pimp to pimp until she was 17 years old and sent to juvenile detention.

- **Maria**, a 14-year-old from Mexico was promised a job as a nanny in the United States. Instead, when she arrived in the United States she was forced into prostitution through beatings and threats and raped repeatedly by her traffickers. After being discovered by the FBI and freed from her traffickers, she was placed in a foster care program. A case was brought against her traffickers in federal court. By the time the court case ended three years later, Maria had lived with seven different foster care families who struggled to understand her needs and trauma.
- **David**, a United States citizen, was thirteen years old when his mother died. After his mother's death he often spent time on the street, met older homeless youth, and sometimes exchanged sex for money and other survival needs. He experienced a lot of violence while homeless on the street and was picked up by child protection and placed in a group home. He reported that one of the group home staff members harassed, threatened, and once even hit him all in relation to his perceived sexuality. David did not feel safe at the group home so he ran away. He returned to prostitution when he was desperate for money but hated himself for doing so. He also continues to struggle with his sexual identity.
- **Tara**, an African American, was forced to work for no pay selling magazine subscriptions. She was moved from Tennessee to California. When she asked to leave, they smashed her cell phone. She ran away and arrived a local police station that did not identify her as a trafficking victim.
- **Mary** was recruited to join a cult at the age of 17. While with the cult she was forced to work making movie effects at a compound outside of Los Angeles. If she refused to work she was locked in a room. She was never paid for her work despite working 18 hours or more a day.