



Advocating for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children

Rachael Ray, LMSW
Megan Valdez

What IS human trafficking?

- Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery in which traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion to control victims for the purpose of engaging in commercial sex acts or labor services against his/her will.
 - If a sex trafficking victim is under the age of 18 (or age of consent in that region of the country), there is no burden of proof for force, fraud, and coercion. (Source: Polaris Project)

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children/Youth (CSEC or CSEY)

- Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) is a term that refers to a range of crimes and activities involving the sexual abuse or exploitation of a child under the age of 18 for the financial benefit of any person or in exchange for anything of value, including monetary and non-monetary benefits, that are given or received by any person.

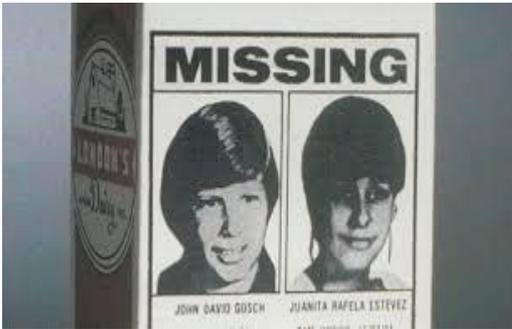
National Statistics

- 2016 study by University of Texas and the Institute on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault:
 - Est 300,000 human trafficking victims in the United States
 - 79,000 were minors
 - Est 60-70% of those youth have experienced the foster care system
 - Average age of reported trafficking victims in the US is **14**
- State Rankings for number of reported cases of human trafficking:
 1. California
 2. Texas
 3. Florida

What Society Thinks Sex Trafficking Is...



What Sex Trafficking ACTUALLY Is...



Case Study: “Destiny”

- Entered foster care at age 9 because of sexual abuse by her mother’s boyfriends. In exchange for sex with Destiny, boyfriends paid for the mother’s rent and food. After CPS removal, Destiny lived in several different foster homes and then Residential Treatment Centers. CASA was appointed from the beginning. At age 13, Destiny began running away – always running back to her mother. Her mother would give Destiny drugs and alcohol and further victimize her through sexual abuse by her boyfriends. It was hard to keep in touch, but Destiny always called her advocate when she had access to a phone. Destiny fell behind in school – she is now 16 years old and is classified as a freshman. She was introduced by her mother to a 22-year-old man named Tony – they began dating and it is suspected that he is now her trafficker. Destiny has a public and active social media page – she uses an alias and the majority of her friends are male and most of her photos are provocative. After a falling-out with her mother, Destiny is now living with Tony. She is pregnant.

CSEC and Risk Factors

- Runs away from home or placement
- Uses drugs or alcohol
- Basic needs are not met
- In foster care/CPS system
- History of sexual abuse
- Low self-esteem
- Unaddressed trauma
- Developmental or learning delays/disabilities
- Mental health issues
- Identifies as LGBTQ+
- Spends a lot of time alone

Recruitment of a Foster Youth

- Traffickers are meeting basic needs that are otherwise not being met
 - LOVE, housing, food, clothing (sometimes very nice and expensive, other hygiene products, consistency, “family”, transportation
- Using social media to find vulnerabilities (i.e. “had a fight with my mom....”, troubles at home, etc., “Not feeling cute today”
- Youth are often approached within hours after running away from home/placements.

Internet Safety

 Snapchat	 WhatsApp	 Kik Messenger	 IMVU	 IMO	 Azar
 Afterschool	 LivU	 Wishbone	 FriendO	 TikTok	 Bermuda
 Tumblr	 Ask	 YouNow	 Whisper	 Houseparty	 Threema
 Jott	 MYLOL	 Yubo	 Monkey	 Discord	 Badoo
 Liveme	 MeetMe	 Tango	 Spotafriend	 Tellonmy	 YOLO
 Phoner	 Burner	 Vent	 Mappen	 IRL	 Hago
 Holla	 Boo	 Lipsi	 SKOUT	 Bigo Live	 Mimi 4Chan
 Red Onion	 Tagged	 Bumble	 Omnichan Pro	Updated Sept 2019	

Meeting the Child Where They Are

Don't try to rescue them!



11 Characteristics of an Effective Advocate

- Fearlessness
- Discerning
- Adaptable
- Integrity
- Leader
- Initiative
- Principled
- Emotional Stability
- Approachable
- Confident
- Team Player

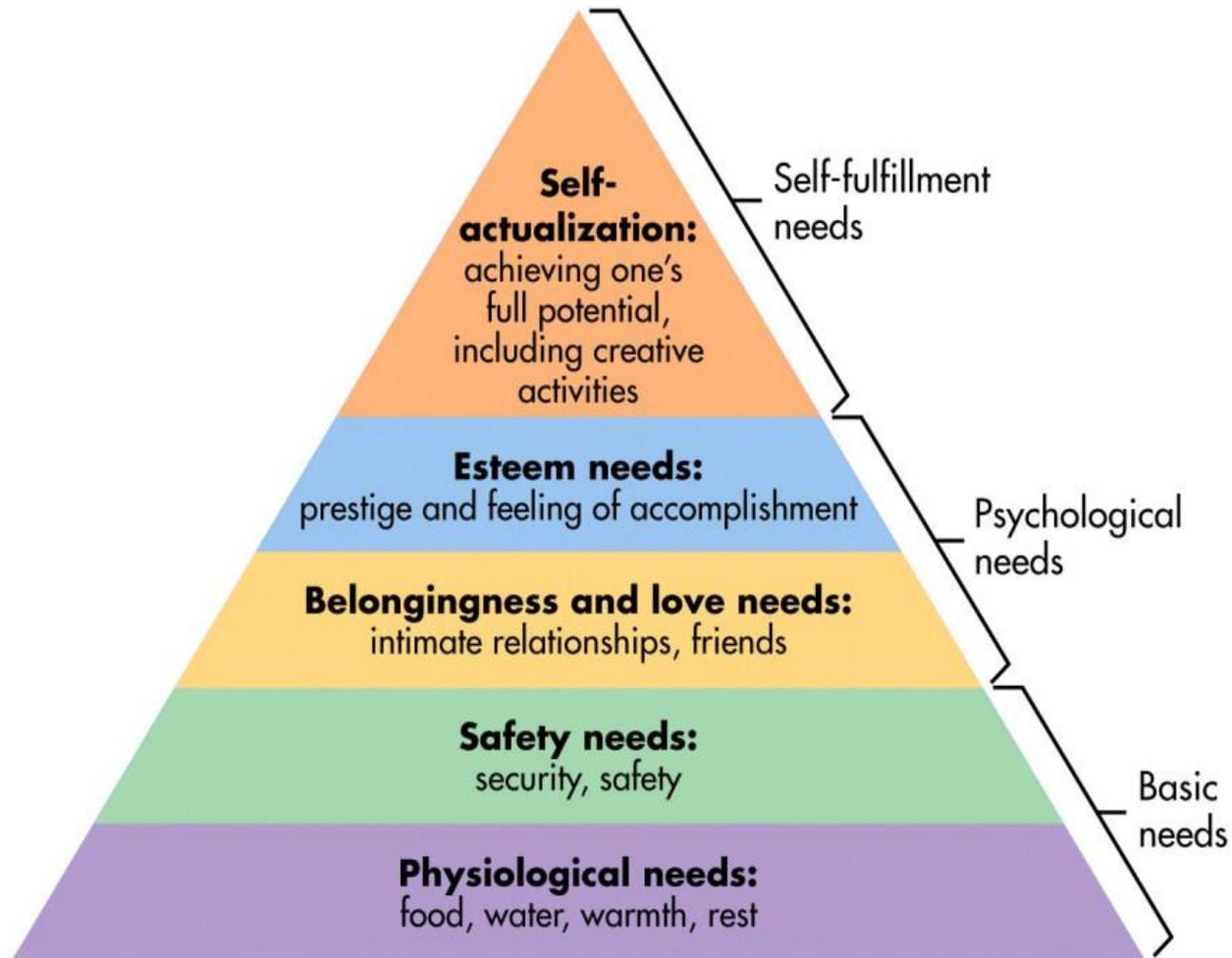
Dallas CASA Safety Plan for Face to Face Visits with High Risk Youth

Volunteer Safety Plan/ Face to Face Visits with High Risk Youth

Preparing for the Visit	
Where is the youth placed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Foster Home? Relative? Own Apartment? RTC? Unauthorized Placement? On the run?
Who lives at the youth's placement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you know who is living there? • Have you ever met them? • Do you have concerns about any household members? • Are there criminal cases pending for the youth, or others involved in the case?
Where will the visit occur?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it a safe place? Does your supervisor need to attend? • What time of day would be the safest to do the visit? • Are you aware of anyone else coming to the visit? What if someone shows up unexpectedly? • Bring a hygiene pack for the youth if they are in an unstable placement!

During the Visit	
Are the youth's basic needs being met?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelter? Food? Clothing? • Is the youth safe? How can we help him/her be safe? Basic needs? • Does youth have birth certificate, SS card, ID? Can we help get these items? • <i>Observe youth- Appear to be under the influence? Unkempt? Injuries? Weight loss?</i>
What are the youth's additional needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does youth need medical attention? • Does youth need mental health services? Counseling? Psychiatrist? • Is youth taking medication? Need a refill? • Is youth sleeping? Quality of sleep? How is appetite? • Does youth have any upcoming court hearings? Pending criminal cases? • Help identify youth's support system- Is youth in contact with family? In a relationship? Does he/she know how to reach CASA, CPS, attorney, <u>Traffick</u> 911 advocate if appropriate? • Education/Employment – is youth in school? Need to be enrolled? Employed? Interested in school/GED/college and/or employment?
Following the Visit- Notify parties of visit outcome and next steps	

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Stages of Change

- Pre-Contemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance
- Relapse

The Stages....

- **Pre-contemplation**: Watching 2 hours a night of reality TV...because it's fine. I don't want to be judged
- **Contemplation**: Unaware of current events in the world because only watching reality TV instead of the news. Feeling guilty that I missed friend's birthday party because I chose to stay home and watch The Bachelor. Maybe I should make a change
- **Preparation**: Researching news podcasts and examining social calendar
- **Action**: Cancelled all DVR recordings, subscribed to news podcast, goes to Zumba class on Mondays in place of watching The Bachelor
- **Maintenance**: Continuing to listen to daily news podcast, cancelled cable all together, making more plans with friends
- **Relapse**: Started dating someone who loves reality TV...

Poll: name the stage of change

- Scenario 1: Destiny has run away and calls you (her CASA) but will not tell you where she is.
 - A. Preparation
 - B. Action
 - C. Contemplation
- Scenario 2: Destiny has engaged in 6 group counseling sessions with a trafficking organization.
 - A. Maintenance
 - B. Relapse
 - C. Preparation

Effective Advocacy: Strengths-Based and Empowerment Tools

Tangible Needs

- Housing/placement
- Basic necessities: food, clothing, toiletries
- Education
- Job/job training
- Legal advocacy/representation
- Medical care
- Counseling/Mental Health treatment
- Safety Plan/ “Relapse” Plan
- General case management

Intangible Needs

- SAFETY
- Nonjudgmental environment
- Respect
- Engagement in positive community
- *Healthy adult relationships and role models
- Understanding of the recovery process/Stage of Change
- Opportunities to learn new skills/Life Skills
- Self Empowerment
- Love

Trauma-Related Diagnoses

- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Anxiety/Depression
- Eating Disorders
- Suicidal Thoughts
- Self-Injury
- Substance Abuse
- Acute Stress Disorder
- Dissociative Disorders
- Other common diagnoses:
 - Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)
 - Conduct Disorder
 - Bipolar Disorder

Evidence Based Trauma Treatments

- Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)
- Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR)
- Other promising practices
 - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
 - Seeking Safety
 - Trauma-Focused Coping (TFC)
 - Somatic Experiencing

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

- Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
- Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?
- Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever... Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?
- Did you often or very often feel that ... No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? or Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?
- Did you often or very often feel that ... You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? or Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?
- Were your parents ever separated or divorced?
- Was your mother or stepmother: Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? or Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? or Ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?
- Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?
- Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?
- Did a household member go to prison?
- Total: 0--10

Resiliency

- 7 C's of Resilience

- Competence

- Ability to handle a situation effectively

- Confidence

- Believing in personal abilities

- Connection

- Creating a sense of belonging

- Character

- Having a solid set of morals and values to help determine right from wrong

- Contribution

- Feeling like a valuable member of society

- Coping

- Ability to handle stress in a healthy way

- Control

- Knowledge and ability to affect an outcome

Building Resiliency in Victims of CSEC

- Safety
- Strengths-Based approach
 - *“What happened to you” vs. “What’s wrong with you”*
- Collaboration
- Empowerment, voice, and choice

Empathy

The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

**EMPATHY DOESN'T REQUIRE THAT WE HAVE
THE EXACT SAME EXPERIENCES AS THE
PERSON SHARING THEIR STORY WITH
US...EMPATHY IS CONNECTING WITH THE
EMOTION THAT SOMEONE IS EXPERIENCING,
NOT THE EVENT OR THE CIRCUMSTANCE.**

- BRENÉ BROWN -

LIBQUOTES.COM

Sympathy

"I'm sorry you're suffering"

Empathy

"I feel your suffering"

Compassion

"I want to change your suffering"

Primary Traumatic Stress vs. Secondary Traumatic Stress

Primary Traumatic Stress

- First-hand exposure to a traumatic event.
- Survival responses activated in the brain.
- Response to the traumatic event is extreme fear, sadness, shame, anger, etc.

Secondary Traumatic Stress

- Indirect exposure to a traumatic event.
- Result of empathic response within the helper.
- Response to secondary traumatic stress can result in compassion fatigue or burnout.

Compassion Fatigue

- Sometimes referred to as “vicarious traumatization”
- “The emotional residue or strain of exposure to working with those suffering from the consequences of traumatic events” – The American Institute of Stress
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3yxouKWVTU>



Self-Care Strategies

- Identification and awareness are critical.
- Self-Care!
 - Find someone to talk to (CASA Supervisor or professional mental health provider).
 - Rediscover things that are fun/important to you outside of your CASA work.
 - Utilize self-compassion techniques.
 - Use positive ways to cope with stress.
 - Exercise, meditation, journaling, expressive arts, etc.
 - Take a break.

Resources

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: <https://www.missingkids.org/HOME>

Polaris Project: <https://polarisproject.org/>

Myth of “child prostitution”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyEaGKr35GQ>

Rebekah Charleston:

<https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/commentary/2019/02/24/how-a-regular-girl-from-keller-became-a-victim-of-sex-trafficking-and-managed-to-escape/>

Saving Innocence: A Survivor’s Story:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odASOknP1kY>

Brene Brown on empathy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Ewvgu369Jw>

Stress: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3yxouKWVTU>

Thank you!

- Saving Innocence
- Texas CASA
- National CASA/GAL Association
- EarthX
- The Office of Governor Greg Abbott
- Texas Council on Family Violence
- 4WMedia
- T. Ortiz
- Leah Albright-Byrd
- Good Pitch
- Lekha Singh
- Tiffany Kiernan
- Quan Tran



STAND UP FOR
ABUSED CHILDREN