

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: SAFETY OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

What is Human Trafficking?

- ▶ A crime that involves compelling or coercing a person to provide labor or services, or to engage in commercial sex acts.
- ▶ The coercion can be subtle or overt, physical or psychological.
- ▶ Exploitation of a minor for commercial sex is human trafficking, regardless of whether any form of force, fraud or coercion was used.

Victims can still be living in their own homes, attending school and participating in activities in their community. Victims aren't usually tied up physically but are often held hostage psychologically.



The Connection between Foster Care and Human Trafficking

The National Foster Youth Institute recently estimated that 60% of child sex trafficking victims have been in foster care (or another part of the child welfare system).

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children estimates 19% of children and youth who ran away from foster care likely experienced sex trafficking.

Characteristics for youth who are at high risk

- ▶ 12 to 17 years of age.
- ▶ Most enter foster care after the age of 12.
- ▶ Have three or more foster care placements.
- ▶ Those who have a history of running away.
- ▶ Youth with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and who have experienced trauma, especially those with PTSD.
- ▶ African American and Hispanic youth are more at risk of trafficking than other racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- ▶ Experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ+ youth and having aged out of the foster care system.

Monitor for Potential Human Trafficking

Educate

yourself on the risk factors and identify the youth who are at risk.

Interview

and screen the youth if they may have been sex trafficked or when returning from being on-run.

Report

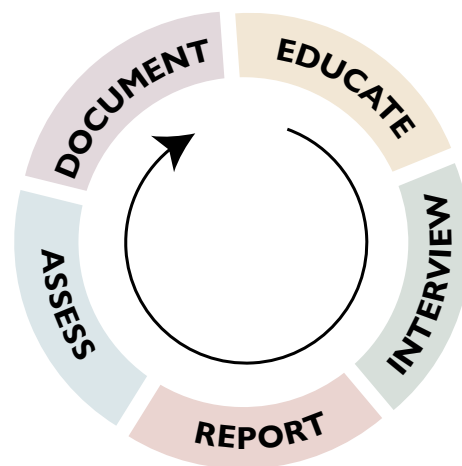
to Law Enforcement & Child Abuse Intake immediately if youth is identified as being trafficked.

Assess

and provide appropriate services.

Document

if youth is a victim or at risk for sex trafficking and services provided in our case notes and case plan.



Resources:

<https://iowadhs.sharepoint.com/sites/SvcHD>

<https://swiaht.org/about>

<https://www.sosillinois.org/the-foster-care-to-human-trafficking-pipeline-why-children-and-teens-in-foster-care-are-more-likely-to-be-trafficked/>

<https://iowanah.org/wp-content/uploads/NAHT-Brochure-2021.pdf>

Responding to Human Trafficking among Children and Youth in Foster Care and Missing from Foster Care | The Administration for Children and Families (hhs.gov)

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