

Family Reunification

May 15, 2018
2:00–3:30 p.m. (eastern time)

Presenters:

Hilary Chester, Associate Director for Anti-Trafficking Programs, U.S.
Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services

Alison M. Iannarone, Behavioral Health Specialist, Covenant House New
Jersey

Sarah Jones, Behavioral Health Specialist, Covenant House New Jersey

Shannon Traore, Program Manager, National Center for Missing &
Exploited Children

The material presented during today's webinar session will be available on the Human Trafficking Learning Grantees Community and the OVC TTAC Human Trafficking Webinars page.

The session will be recorded and will begin shortly.

As with all technology, we may experience a momentary lapse in the webinar session. In the event of a problem, please be patient and remain on the line. If the problem persists, please contact jadams@ovcttac.org for technical assistance.



Today's Presenters

Hillary Chester



Alison Iannarone



Sarah Jones



Shannon Traore



Objectives

As a result of this webinar, participants will be equipped to:

- Understand the prevalence of and vulnerabilities to human trafficking for homeless and runaway youth, and the family dynamics that impact permanency outcomes for this population.
- Identify and access immigration relief tools and appropriate services to support family reunification for foreign national victims of human trafficking.
- Identify short- and long-term services and strategies to strengthen the reunification process as it relates to the unique service needs of and the trauma endured by victims and their families.
- Understand the challenges of family reunification, and victim-centered approaches to ensuring safe and appropriate outcomes and stability.



Family Reunification

- Reuniting family after one or more members of the family have been separated.
- We typically think of family reunification in terms of child welfare and immigration, and
 - Prioritize reunification
 - Provide supportive services to do this successfully
- How does exploitation through human trafficking impact this traditional view?
 - Immediate and ongoing safety needs
 - Victim-centered approaches and choice
 - Impact of trauma on the victims and their families
 - Successful strategies and challenges



Covenant House, New Jersey

Alison M. Iannarone, Behavioral Health Specialist

Sarah Jones, Behavioral Health Specialist



About Covenant House, New Jersey

The main takeaway from the Covenant House Mission Statement is to protect and safeguard our young people and to serve them with absolute respect and unconditional love.

- Covenant House is in 31 cities across 6 countries
- Homeless Shelter for 18-21 year olds
- Newark and Atlantic City crisis shelters as well as day services
- Transitional Living Programs - Newark, Montclair, AC, Asbury Park
- Drop in Centers - Jersey City, Camden and Asbury Park
- Statewide Outreach teams
- Supportive Apartment Living - Newark and Montclair



Poll

What percentage of 18-21 years olds living at Covenant House experienced labor and/or sex trafficking?

- A. 5.2%
- B. 25.3%
- C. 31.6%
- D. 9.2%



Understanding Our HT Population

- Longitudinal Study:
 - Goal: to learn how common human trafficking was among our clients so we could learn how to serve them better.
 - Significance: largest longitudinal study of trafficking among homeless youth (ever!)
 - Conducted: November 2015 - November 2016 in Newark and February 2016 - February 2017 in Atlantic City.
 - This is the first study to identify statistically significant factors associated with trafficking among homeless youth.
- Key Findings and Factors:
 - **9.2%** of youth trafficked, 63% sex, 51.8% labor
 - The study looked for the factors that differentiated trafficked homeless youth from not-trafficked homeless youth.
 - Identification of risk and protective factors allows service providers like CHNJ to serve youth better:
 - reach the most vulnerable youth sooner
 - develop approaches to reduce risk factors
 - more aptly target services



11 Associated Factors and Toxic Stress: Vulnerabilities Impacting Homelessness and Trafficking Victimization

- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Witnessed violence in the home
- Having a family member with law problems
- Foster care
- Having a learning disability (IEP/504 Plan)
- History of suicidality
- Mental health issues
- Disability
- History of arrest



Quick Youth Indicators for Trafficking

1. It is not uncommon for young people to stay in work situations that are risky or even dangerous, simply because they have no other options. Have you ever worked, or done other things, in a place that made you feel scared or unsafe?

Yes No Refuse to Answer Don't Know

2. Sometimes people are prevented from leaving an unfair or unsafe work situation by their employers. Have you ever been afraid to leave or quit a work situation due to fears of violence or threats of harm to yourself or your family?

Yes No Refuse to Answer Don't Know

3. Sometimes young people who are homeless or who are having difficulties with their families have very few options to survive or fulfill their basic needs, such as food and shelter. Have you ever received anything in exchange for sex (e.g.: a place to stay, gifts, or food)?

Yes No Refuse to Answer Don't Know

4. Sometimes employers don't want people to know about the kind of work they have young employees doing. To protect themselves, they ask their employees to lie about the kind of work they are involved in. Have you ever worked for someone who asked you to lie while speaking to others about the work you do?*

Yes No Refuse to Answer Don't Know



Why QYIT is so important

- Increasing CHNJ's ability to recognize trafficked youth earlier and offering needed interventions, will build strong relationships faster, and encourage trafficked youth to stay on, to access services.
- Twice as many (25.0% vs 12.6%) short-stay youth, who did not stay for a protocol, answered “yes” to the screening question inquiring whether they had ever exchanged sex for something of value as youth who answered “yes” for this question overall
 - This suggests a higher percentage of the short-stay youth may have had prior sex trafficking or survival sex experiences.



Family Reunification vs Returning to Family

Trafficked young people

- 17/48 listed their transition destination as family
- 6 were family reunification
- 9/55 young people still reside at one of Covenant House's programs
- 1 young person was day services
- 10 temporary, 15 permanent (3 young people had multiple stays at Covenant House)

Not Trafficked young people

- 16% go to permanent family placements
- 12% go to temporary family placements
- 9.8% family reunification



Impact and Experience With Family Reunification

- The role of CHNJ in reunification
- Permanent Housing conversations
- Choice
- Recidivism



Specific Considerations for Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

- **Experiences**

- No longer wanting to live in a homeless shelter
- Wanting increased Independence
- Not recognizing the unhealthy relationships with their families that can lead to them being exploited again
- Not having any family support or positive relationships with family
- Family is the trafficker
- Returning to family in areas where there is a high prevalence of trafficking



Returning to Family Stories

- Negative - after two different stays at Covenant House, receiving behavioral health services at Sanar Wellness Institute, client abruptly decided to leave Covenant House and returned to a mother who had previously been her trafficker.
- Positive - We helped facilitate reunification with a young person and his uncle. Uncle was excited and said that he could stay with him indefinitely at this time.
- 39% of our young adults moved to positive living environments - own apartment, family reunification, transitional living program



U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services

Hilary Chester, Associate Director for Anti-Trafficking Programs



About the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Migration and Refugee Services

- National headquarters for the administration of the Catholic Church in the U.S.
- Migration and Refugee Services advance the bishops' priorities of serving and advocating for people on the move-including refugees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, unaccompanied migrant children, victims and survivors of human trafficking.
- On human trafficking:
 - Provide case management services through local provider networks for HHS/OTIP and DOJ/OVC for over 15 years
 - Support foreign-national child victims in URM foster care and in the community
 - Conduct training and capacity building, program evaluations for other professionals
 - Provide technical assistance and case consultation, including to HHS/OTIP on child trafficking cases
 - Advocacy and public policy activities



Family Reunification among Foreign-National Victims and Survivors

- Adult or minor survivors' family members 'follow to join' from country of origin
 - Eligible family members included in T-Visa application; receive derivative T-Visas (most common)
 - Attorney must include in filing
 - Eligible family: legal spouse; unmarried children under 21; parents of minor victims; unmarried siblings under 21 of minor victims
- DHS/ICE issue Humanitarian Parole I-94 (discretionary & rare)
 - International Organization on Migration (IOM) program for travel assistance
 - Passports/identity documents
 - Airline tickets, in country travel to airport



Family Reunification among Foreign-National Victims and Survivors

Minor victim/survivor released from federal custody to family in the U.S.

Pre-release Home Study

- Minimally one in-person home visit
- Background checks on key sponsor/other occupants
- Psycho-social education for sponsor
- Legal orientation for sponsor

Post-Release Services

- Additional in-person home visits (3 months)
- Psycho-social education for sponsor
- Ideally separate interviews with minor
- Referrals to community services and resources
- *No financial support through ORR/DCS program*
- ***Minor can be (co-)enrolled in HHS/TVAP for 3 months***



Eligibility for Services and Resources

- T-Visa Derivatives eligible for:
 - Employment Authorization for adults
 - Refugee services, i.e. Refugee Medical Assistance; Match Grant, etc.
 - HHS/TVAP for 3 months
 - TANF, Medicaid, WIC (per eligibility requirements)
 - Adjust to LPR status
- Humanitarian Parole recipients:
 - Employment Authorization for adults (will take 3-6 months to issue)
 - May **NOT** access state or federal benefits
- Sponsors of Minor Victims Released from ORR/DCS
 - ***Ineligible***



Common Challenges

Prolonged Separation

- Re-learn family roles and relationships
- Adjustment to children's actual age versus age at separation
- Second families; blended families
- Adjustment to U.S. parenting norms

Financial Pressures

- Long work hours
- Unmet expectations about financial status in U.S.
- Pressure on Child Survivors to work and support household

Social Pressures

- Home sickness for caregivers in home country
- Lack of extended family/social supports
- Anger/resentment over separation
- Anger/resentment over financial deprivations
- Shame over exploitation/labeling



Promising Strategies and Practices

Maximize Federal Benefit Programs

- Enroll in HHS/TVAP sequentially to maximize coverage
- Save survivor HHS/TVAP lifetime units for reunification period
- Enroll eligible minors in TVAP after ORR/DCS Post Release Services

Educate and Normalize: Prepare for Challenges

- Parenting classes; family strengthening services
- Age appropriate children's activities: libraries, youth groups, sports

Therapeutic Resources and Services

- Positive family engagement
- Family, marriage counseling



Family/Placement Breakdowns

- Follow mandatory reporting protocol for:
 - Domestic violence
 - Runaway/child in need of services
- Foreign national child of survivor: CPS
- Child Victim released from ORR/DCS:
 - Return to ORR/DCS custody*
 - Reclassification to URM (Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Foster Care)

*Note: if minor is near 18th birthday, to avoid transfer to DHS/ICE detention



Poll

Foreign national survivors can include up to three (3) family members of their choice on their T-Visa application.

- A. True
- B. False



Poll

Family Derivatives are **not** eligible for any federal services, i.e. HHS/TVAP.

- A. True
- B. False



Poll

Family reunification among foreign-national victims rarely works out well and should be discouraged.

- A. True
- B. False



National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

Shannon Traore, Program Manager



OVC



About the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

- Founded in 1984
- Nonprofit, non-governmental organization
- Congressionally funded in part to operate 22 programs related to missing & exploited children
- National resource center for families, law enforcement and other professionals
- Learn more at missingkids.org



NCMEC's Mission

Find missing children

Reduce child sexual exploitation

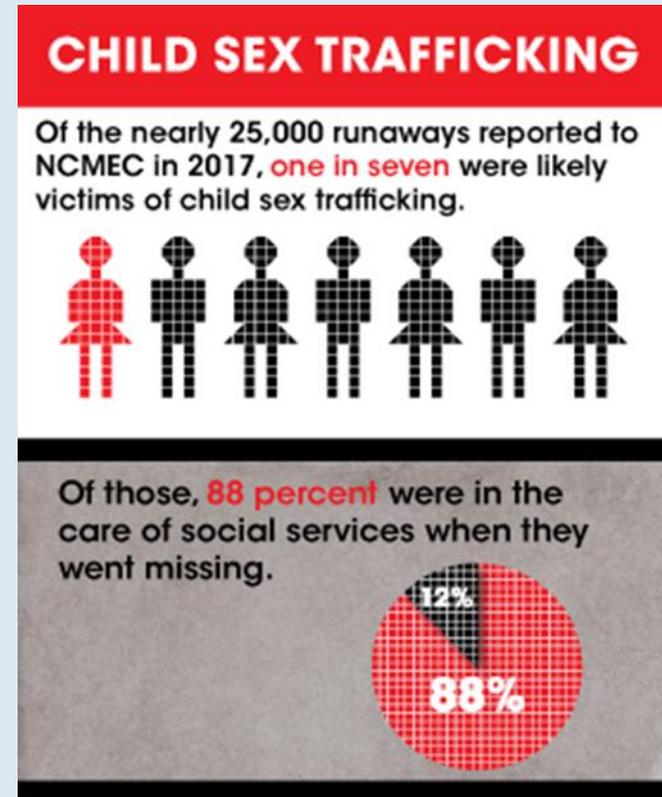
Prevent future victimization

HOPE IS WHY WE'RE HERE



Child Sex Trafficking (CST) What We Are Seeing

- In 2017, NCMEC assisted with approximately **10,000** reports related to possible CST
- NCMEC has responded to reports of CST in **every state**
- Cases included both **males** and females
- Average age of CST victims reported missing to NCMEC is only **fifteen** years old



NCMEC's Response to Child Sex Trafficking (CST)



**IF YOU SUSPECT
CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING,
CALL
1-800-THE-LOST® (1-800-843-5678) OR
VISIT www.cybertipline.org**



Family Support at NCMEC



- Pre and post-recovery support & therapy
- Team HOPE
- Victim Reunification Travel Assistance
- Family Advocacy Outreach Network



Supporting Families During Reunification

- Recovery/Rescue/Reunification-it's not the end but the beginning
- Where have you been, where are you now, where do you want to be?
- What's the same and what's different now that your child is home?
- Who do I talk to about what happened?
- Who can help me be prepared for my child?
- How do I help my child process what happened?
- Who can help my other children/spouse/parents/relatives?
- When missing becomes exploited
- When exploited becomes missing



Supporting Families-Case Examples

- The child was recovered by the FBI this weekend in the Atlanta area.
 - It appears that an adult male picked the child up from Florida and transported her to Atlanta to work for him in a strip club.
 - Additionally, the person posted pornographic photos of the child online.
 - The child was forced to strip to 'pay rent'.
- The child is afraid to give any information out about the people who victimized her because she's worried someone is going to come hurt her and her family.
- The child's mother is requesting immediate assistance in terms of finding longer term counseling for the child given her victimization.



Supporting Families-Case Examples Cont.

- The child allegedly plans to run away to Mexico to be with the reported user.
- This user is allegedly verbally abusive to the child and says things like the child should die and that he wishes he could kill the child.
- The reported user allegedly traveled to the child's job and tried to pick her up; he also allegedly offered the child \$150 to engage in sexual activity.
- The child has also allegedly been sending nude images and "inappropriate messages".
- The child victim's mother is very upset over the reported incident and is concerned for her daughter's safety.



Post Recovery/Reunification Response

- Divided loyalties
- Lack of control
- Belief confusion
- Anger and Sadness
- Role and identity confusion
- Fear
- Problems with trust
- Guilt
- Missing the life during the missing
- Relief



Team HOPE Volunteer Training Topics

- Tools and Techniques for Supporting Referrals
- CART Training/understanding how to effectively work with LE
- Stress Management
- Team Building Skills
- Debriefing
- Diversity and Cultural Sensitivity
- Trauma
- Coping and Self Care
- Challenges and Success for supporting referrals
- Listening Skills



Family Advocacy Outreach Network



Family Reunification Retreat

- **Dad:** What brought me and my daughter to this retreat was our own personal experience involving child sex trafficking. My daughter was exploited for 108 days, and by the grace of God we were able to be reunited. Now two trials and 5 years later here we are. Reunification means to me, throwing away all personal expectations which became unreasonable, patience love and understanding. I have taken an inward look at my own faults, and have come to understand that my hopes and dreams weren't exactly my daughters hopes and dreams. And a life lived well is worth living.



Family Reunification Retreat Cont.

- **Daughter:** What brought me to this retreat was a personal invitation from my father that I reluctantly accepted, because when it comes to my story and what happened to me I'm a little shy to share. Reunification means everything to me. Its the little things that I know cherish in life. Its the late night talks that I now love its the laughs and tears that me and my family now share. Its the fact that I have now started a family of my own that would of never been possible if my parents didn't fight to find me. And I love them unconditionally for everything they have done for me.



Poll

My organization has a therapeutic program to support appropriate and healthy family members of domestic minor sex trafficking victims, especially when the child may be missing and cannot attend

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. We are working on incorporating and/or referring services



Poll

Can you offer a guess to how many children/cases you've worked with that have a healthy person in their lives that could benefit from family reunification education?

- A. 0-25 of total%
- B. 25-50 of total%
- C. 50-75 of total%
- D. 75-100 of total%



Poll

If you do not currently provide internal services, where do you send family members who need support, education, and a helping hand?

- Please note your answer in the chat box.



Poll

Which learning objective would you like to hear more about?

- A. Understand the prevalence of and vulnerabilities to human trafficking for homeless and runaway youth, and the family dynamics that impact permanency outcomes for this population.
- B. Identify and access immigration relief tools and appropriate services to support family reunification for foreign national victims of human trafficking.
- C. Identify short- and long-term services and strategies to strengthen the reunification process as it relates to the unique service needs of and the trauma endured by victims and their families.
- D. Understand the challenges of family reunification, and victim-centered approaches to ensuring safe and appropriate outcomes and stability.



Audience Q&A

Join the conversation:

Ask in the chat box below.

Send an email to

humantrafficking@ovcttac.org



Resources

- Chester, Hilary; Lummert, Nathalie; Mulluooly, Anne. “Child Victims of Human Trafficking: Outcomes and Service Adaptation within the U.S. Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Programs”. 2015. Available at: <http://www.usccb.org/about/anti-trafficking-program/upload/URM-Child-Trafficking-Study-2015-Final.pdf>
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- Darlington, Elizabeth. “Return, Reintegration and Family Reunification”. 2017. Prezi Presentation. International Organization for Migration. Available at: <https://prezi.com/kbdbb51zviua/return-reintegration-and-family-reunification/>
- Juabsamai, Kamolwan ‘Juli’; Taylor, Ileana. “Family Separation, Reunification, and Intergenerational Trauma in the Aftermath of Human Trafficking in the United States”. *Anti-Trafficking Review*, [S.I.], n. 10, apr. 2018. ISSN 2287-0113. Available at: <http://www.antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/article/view/325>
 - Safe Horizon (OVC Human Trafficking Program Grantee)
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: “Hope is Why We’re Here”. 2014. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iV3PXxYtcm0>
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: <http://www.missingkids.com/home>



Thank you!

Please take a moment to fill out an evaluation for this webinar.



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