

Juvenile Justice and the Response to Sex Trafficking

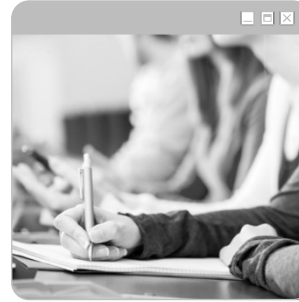
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Heartland Juvenile Services Association
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Today, we're going to



- Define Sex Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Look at sex trafficking and CSE in Nebraska
- Explore how sex trafficking and CSE happen
- Provide guidance on what you can do to respond

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Ok, so who are you?

- Name
- Role
- What do you want to learn today?



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Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Nebraska Law

- Children cannot consent to commercial sex
- Exchange of anything of value for a sex act with/sexual image of a child under 18.
- Exists without coercion, force, fraud, abduction, or manipulation by another person.
- Children cannot be prosecuted for participating in commercial sexual exchanges
- In the law called "sex trafficking of a minor"

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In Nebraska, CSEC is

- A form of child abuse
- Since Sept. 2019, DHHS must assess *all reports* for safety, risk, and needed services
- A felony crime for those who:
 - Purchase or exchange goods for sex acts with minors
 - Help arrange or profit from exploitation

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Just wondering...

What do you think of when you hear sex trafficking?

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CSEC happens in many different ways



Third-party Trafficker

Familial

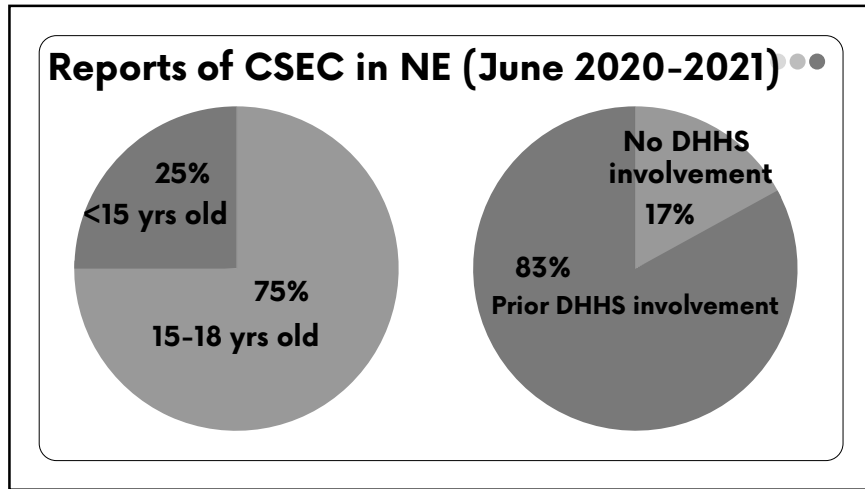
Gang-based

Independent/Individual

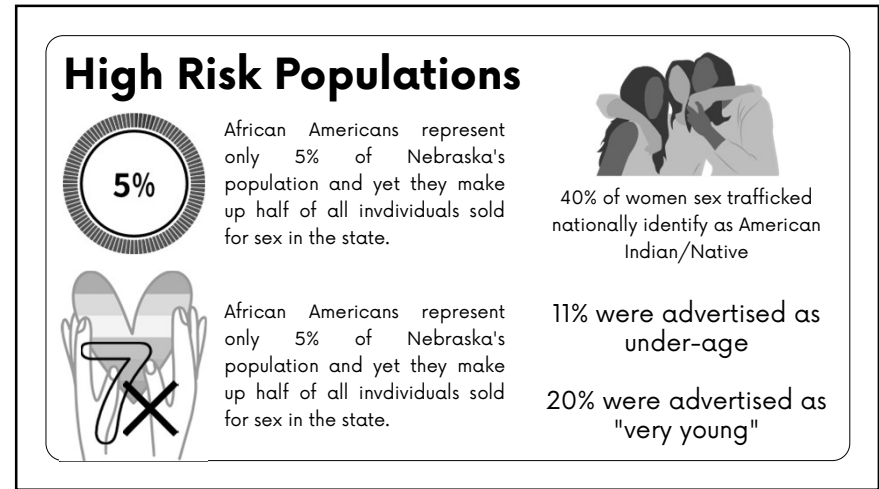
Peer Network

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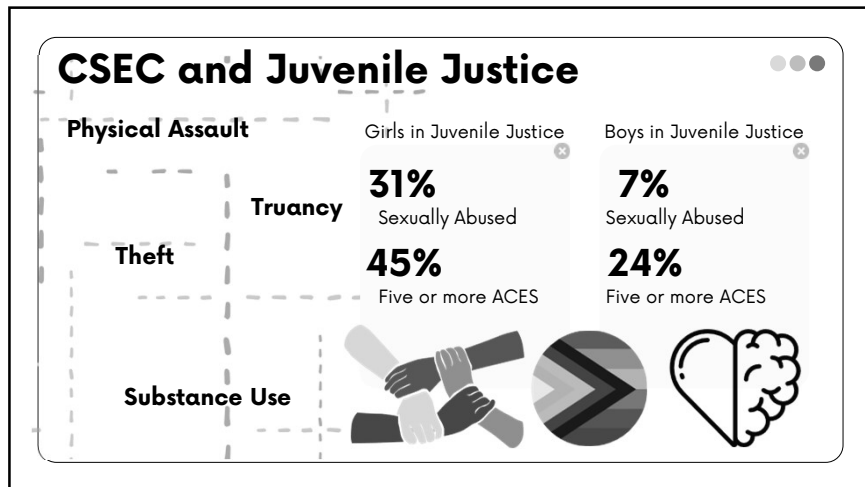
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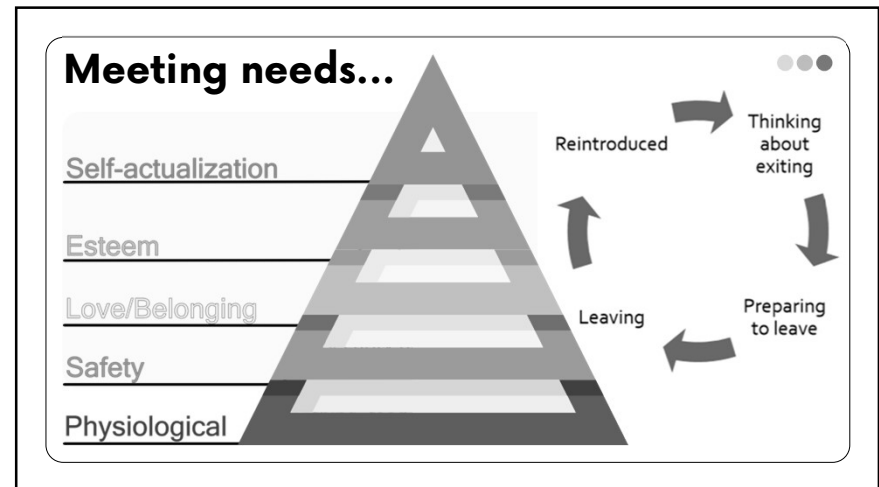
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Why do they stay?

SHAME

"I am bad."

STIGMA


"They think I'm bad."

GUILT

"I did something bad."



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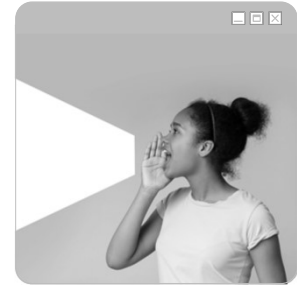


Have you ever worked with a young person who is being sexually exploited?

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Strategies to Respond


1. SCREEN
2. IDENTIFY




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Screen for Potential Signs


- Housing
- Prior Abuse
- Physical Health
- Mental Health
- Environment
- Relationships



thinking about making cupcakes...
it may happen



all the ingredients are there for cupcakes...
it is likely



the cupcake is there...
it is here
TAKE ACTION

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Try to Identify

ASK SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

"Sometimes people trade sex for money or things they need to survive, is that going on around you?"

OBSERVE PATTERNS

What keeps changing for this young person?
What remains the same?

NOTE PHYSICAL CHANGES

Ask about physical and sexual health.
I.e. STIs, Pregnancy, Injuries, Illness

SHARE OBSERVATIONS

"I've noticed...
Help me understand...
Tell me about..."

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How to Respond

DON'T

- DON'T be gross - seriously
- DON'T pressure for more information
- DON'T ask leading questions
- DON'T make promises

DO

- Thank them for sharing
- Ask what they want to do next
- Make a report
- Learn more by attending minimal facts interviewing

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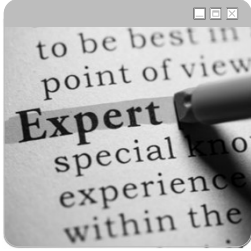
Strategies to Respond

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



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Engagement



WORDS


- Be real and direct
- Be aware of word choice
- Speak with compassion
- Check your biases
- Stop digging - you will never know the whole story

ACTIONS

- It's a process to build trust
- Be consistent
- Provide choices
- Promote empowerment
- Celebrate the small stuff

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Intervention ▾
● ● ●



CONSIDER

- Past experiences
- Ability to be honest
- Reluctance to ask for help
- Don't feel heard
- Inner messaging
- Outside influences

APPROACH

- Choose to be present
- Allow time for trust
- No judgement
- Open up
- Offer help
- Be consistent
- People > Programs

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Principles Driven Implementation of Programming
● ● ●

COMPLEX DEVELOPMENTAL

Recognizing where youth have been, are, and would like to be; utilizing strengths to support youth development

RELATIONSHIP

Recognizing the importance of and power of relationships for healing, growth, and transformation.

MEETING WHERE THEY ARE

Recognizing that youth have likely experienced trauma and responding in an appropriate way; helping youth to reduce the potential for harm in their lives

BIO-PSYCHO-SOCIAL-CULTURAL-WELLBEING

Recognizing that well-being involves multiple aspects of the youth's lives; recognizing that one organization cannot be/do it all.

9 evidence-based guiding principles to help youth overcome homelessness. The Homeless Youth Collaborative on Developmental Evaluation (2014).

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Strategies to Respond
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**CHANGING
OUR
APPROACH**

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Define Safety
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PHYSICAL

PSYCHOLOGICAL

EMOTION

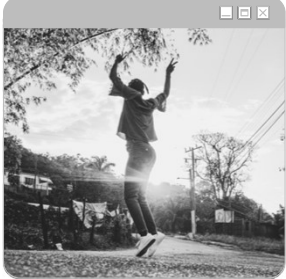
FINANCIAL

ENVIRONMENTAL

**RELATIONAL
VERSUS
PHYSICAL**

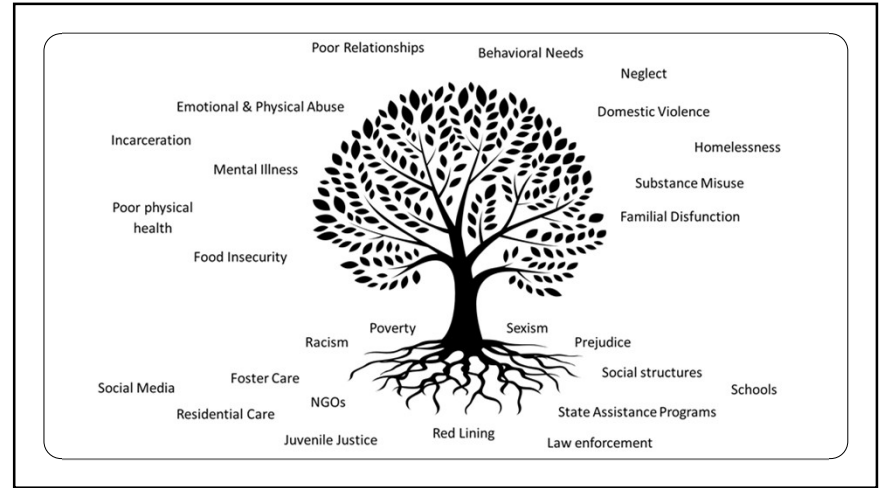
"At the very moment when some professionals felt relieved that a child at high risk was now finally in a physically safe place, the child themselves often felt relationally 'unsafe', unanchored, isolated and highly anxious about these new placements." Shuker, 2013

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Who is responsible for creating "vulnerabilities" of children who experience sexual exploitation?

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We have good people in broken systems

CYCLES OF POWER AND CONTROL

- Protect? Empower?
- Exploit? Support?
- Good intention?
- Negative impact?



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Reflect

IS MY NEED FOR...

- Control
- Outcomes
- Case Closure
- Praise
- Grant Reporting

MORE IMPORTANT THAN...

- Your comfort
- Your needs
- Your readiness
- Your truth

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Thank You!
SEE YOU NEXT TIME

GET IN TOUCH

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