

# DCYF Missing & Exploited Youth Program: Response to the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

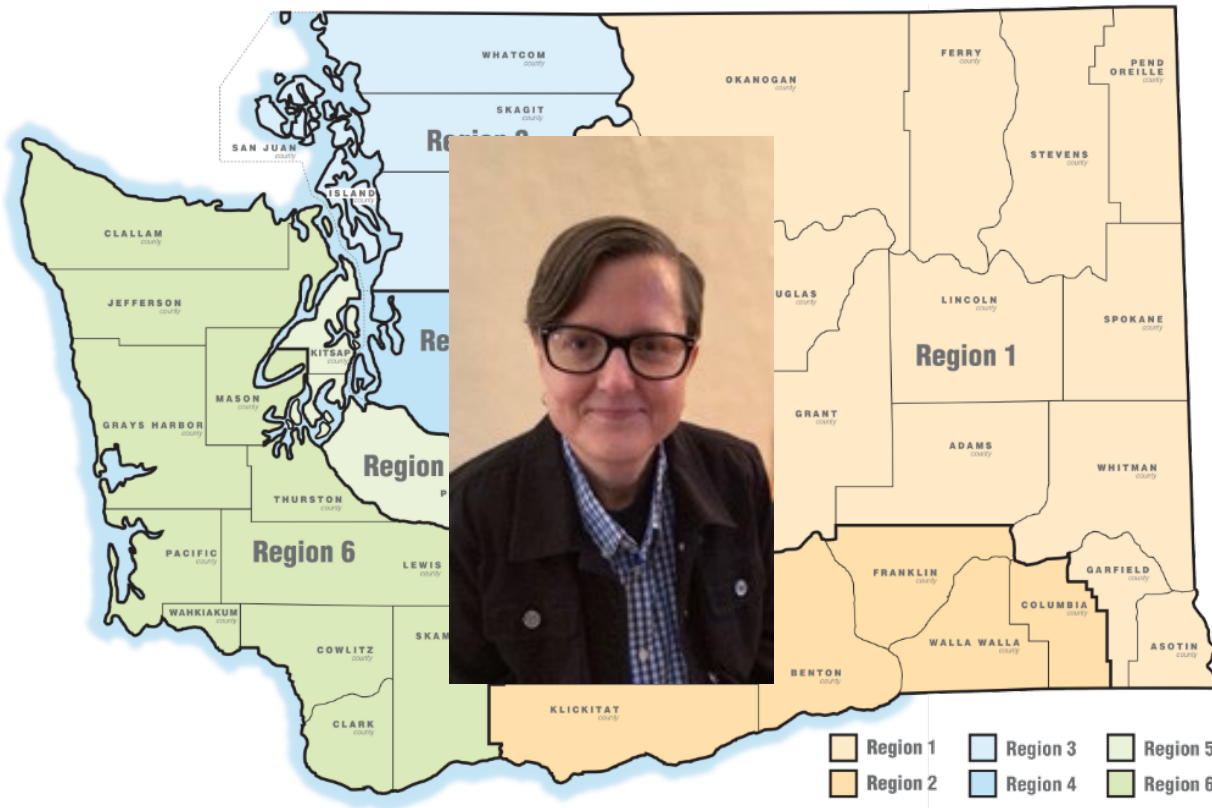
**19th Annual Becca Conference**

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Washington State Department of  
**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

Some of the following material has been adapted from  
Responding to Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Youth  
*Content Created by Leslie Briner, MSW*  
*With contributions from Norene Roberts, MSSW*  
And the Center For Children & Youth Justice



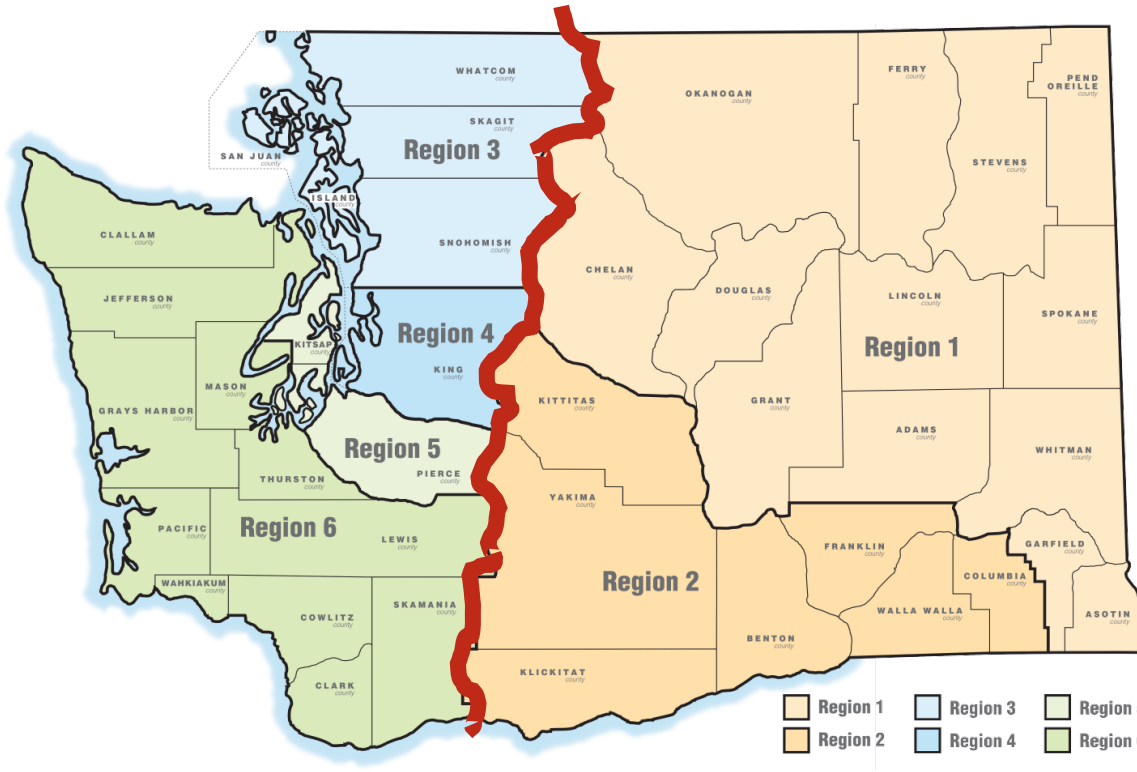
## Missing & Exploited Youth (MEY) Program Manager Cameron Norton

- Joined DCYF in 2008 – working in, then supervising Family Reconciliation, Family Voluntary Services, and Child Protective Services
- Program oversight of MEYP, Missing From Care, and CSEC since December 2020
- Supervises the MEY Liaisons for the East and West side of the state.





Judy Johnston, MAIS  
MEY Liaison-West



Mabel Elsom, M.Ed.  
MEY Liaison-East

Both engage in community based Multidisciplinary Teams and Task Force Meetings for their respective side of the state; connect with regional DCYF staff regarding CSEC issues and resources; collaborate in individualized case staffing



The landmark Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000  
laid the groundwork for the federal response to human trafficking

Policy & Legislation | Polaris ([polarisproject.org](https://polarisproject.org))

**Federal Definition: Sex trafficking** is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, **patronizing, or soliciting** of a person for the purposes of a ***commercial sex act***, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, **or** in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age (22 USC § 7102).



# Commercial Sexual Exploitation

“The term ‘**commercial sex act**’ means any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person” (22 U.S.C. 7102 (4))

Any sex act

In exchange for

Anything of  
value

**COMMERCIAL SEX ACT + MINOR = TRAFFICKING**





**2003**

Washington State became **the first** state to criminalize human trafficking with HB 1175:  
**Prohibiting Trafficking in Persons**

**2010**

Washington State passed the Safe Harbor Bill (SB6476), giving law enforcement the ability to divert Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) from the courts to programs specializing in housing and comprehensive services. But while the statute acknowledged trafficked youth as victims, it still defined them as criminals, vulnerable to charges for prostitution.

**2020**

Washington State enacts HB 1775 which exempts minors from arrest and charges of prostitution (by 2024), establishes two receiving centers and directs DCYF to hire a state program manager and two liaisons.



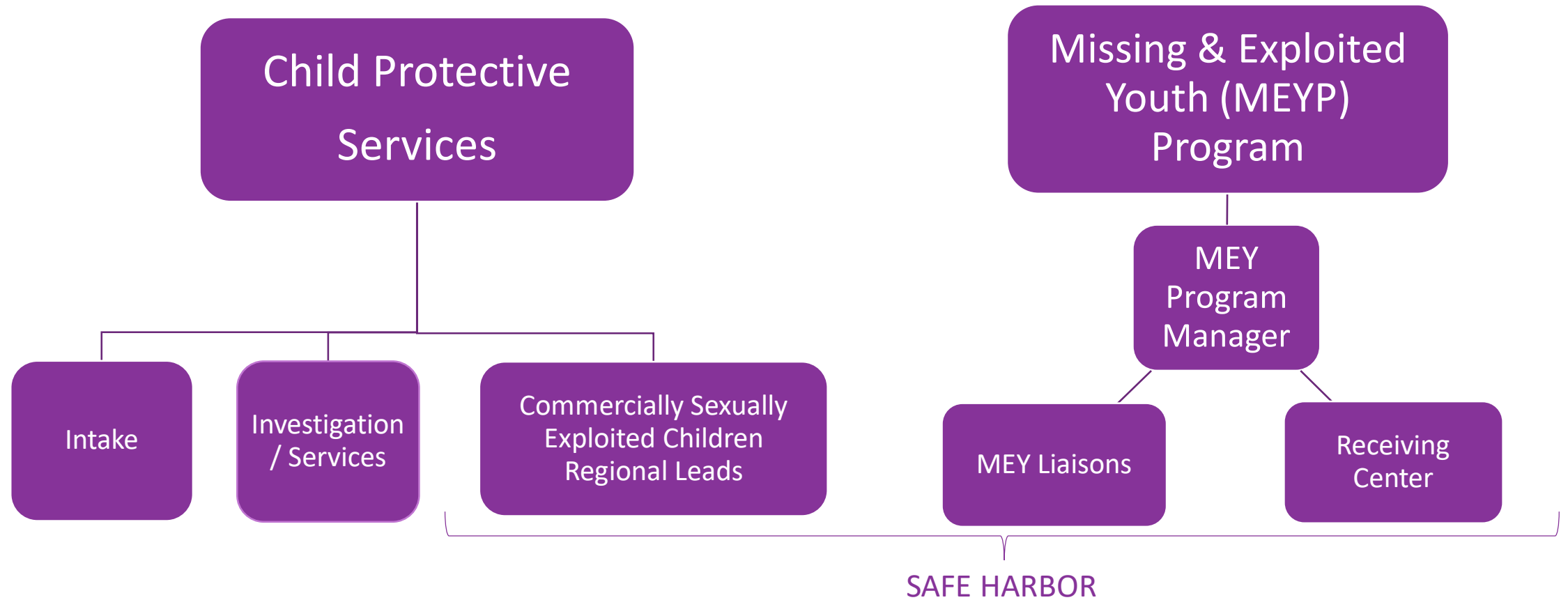
# Washington State Definition: CSAM

**Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor (CSAM)** is when a person solicits, offers, requests to engage, or **provides anything of value** to a minor or a third person as compensation for a minor having engaged in sexual conduct with him or her. (RCW 9.68A.100)

**Consent of a minor to any sexual conduct does not constitute a defense**



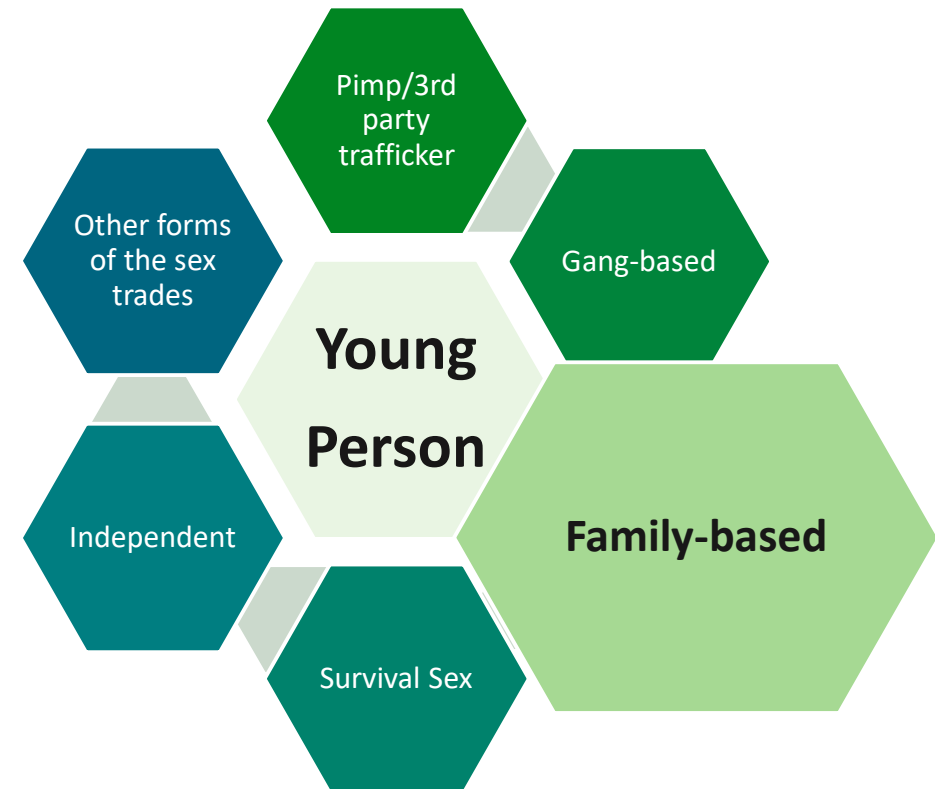
# Department of Children, Youth and Families





# CPS Involvement With CSEC Cases

CPS only becomes involved with a trafficked youth when there are allegations of commercial sexual exploitation/trafficking **perpetrated by a parent or guardian**, or allegations that the parent or guardian is **failing to protect** the child from the perpetrator(s).



## Regional Missing From Care Leads and Locator Staff (\*\* DENOTES CSEC LEADS)

Region	Office	Role	Name	Email	Phone
1	Spokane	Lead	Joshua Koutecky**	<a href="mailto:joshua.koutecky@dcyf.wa.gov">joshua.koutecky@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	509-413-7106
1	Spokane	Locator	Jon Naught	<a href="mailto:jon.naught@dcyf.wa.gov">jon.naught@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	509-828-6831
2	Richland	Lead	Brittany Lenihan**	<a href="mailto:brittany.lenihan@dcyf.wa.gov">brittany.lenihan@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	509-578-9234
2	Yakima	Locator	Michelle Moore	<a href="mailto:michelle.moore@dcyf.wa.gov">michelle.moore@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	509-823-6544
3	Mount Vernon	Lead	Sarah Shaffer	<a href="mailto:sarah.shaffer@dcyf.wa.gov">sarah.shaffer@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	360-399-9842
3	Everett	Lead	Amanda Bernard**	<a href="mailto:amanda.bernard@dcyf.wa.gov">amanda.bernard@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	425-308-1010
3	Smokey Point	Locator	David Martz	<a href="mailto:david.martz@dcyf.wa.gov">david.martz@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	425-599-5074
4	MLK/Seattle	Lead	Bo Xayavong	<a href="mailto:bo.xayavong@dcyf.wa.gov">bo.xayavong@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	253-278-1374
4		Locator			
5	Tacoma	Lead	Angela Hodges	<a href="mailto:angela.hodges@dcyf.wa.gov">angela.hodges@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	253-312-4906
5	Lakewood	Locator	Abbie Tauvell	<a href="mailto:abbie.tauvell@dcyf.wa.gov">abbie.tauvell@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	253-244-4353
5	Bremerton	Locator	Michael Stamp**	<a href="mailto:michael.stamp@dcyf.wa.gov">michael.stamp@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	360-509-2671
6	Tumwater	Locator	Sarah Lindquist	<a href="mailto:sarah.lindquist@dcyf.wa.gov">sarah.lindquist@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	360-947-7897
6	Vancouver	Locator	Eric Anderson**	<a href="mailto:eric.anderson@dcyf.wa.gov">eric.anderson@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	360-869-9869
All	Spokane	HQ PM	Cameron Norton	<a href="mailto:cameron.norton@dcyf.wa.gov">cameron.norton@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	509-991-0748

For DCYF: If the youth has indicators of CSEC, they should be staffed with Regional Leads early and often.



# Missing & Exploited Youth Program

Partnering with community agencies and providers

MEY Program actively engages with and participates on task forces and committees concerned with CSEC issues

MEY Program collaborates with relevant agencies and community organizations, including legal and criminal justice system entities

This community outreach and integration into the work of the regions serves as a conduit for enhanced collaboration and strong case planning that will improve communication, service delivery, and outcomes for exploited youth.



# Responding to the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children



# Myth

Only women and girls can be victims and survivors of sex trafficking

Source: Polaris Project @ <https://polarisproject.org/myths-facts-and-statistics/>



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# Fact

Victim and survivors are of all genders.  
Available national research suggests that 50% of  
victims/survivors are boys

Source: Briner, L. and Roberts, N. (2017). Responding to the Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Youth



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# Human Trafficking & Sexual Exploitation Affects Every...



- Community
- Race
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Education Level
- Economic Class

Adapted from Responding to Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Youth, Content Created by Leslie Briner, MSW with contributions from Norene Roberts, MSSW

# HOWEVER

Exploitation **DISPROPORTIONATELY** affects young people, people who are/have been involved with child welfare or have been incarcerated, people experiencing poverty, homelessness, and discrimination; particularly those who identify as BIPOC and/or LGBTQ2IA+

# BECAUSE

Labor Exploitation & the Commercial Sex Trade is **BUILT ON A FOUNDATION** of Patriarchy, Poverty, Racism, Heterosexism, Colonialism, and Systematic Oppression.

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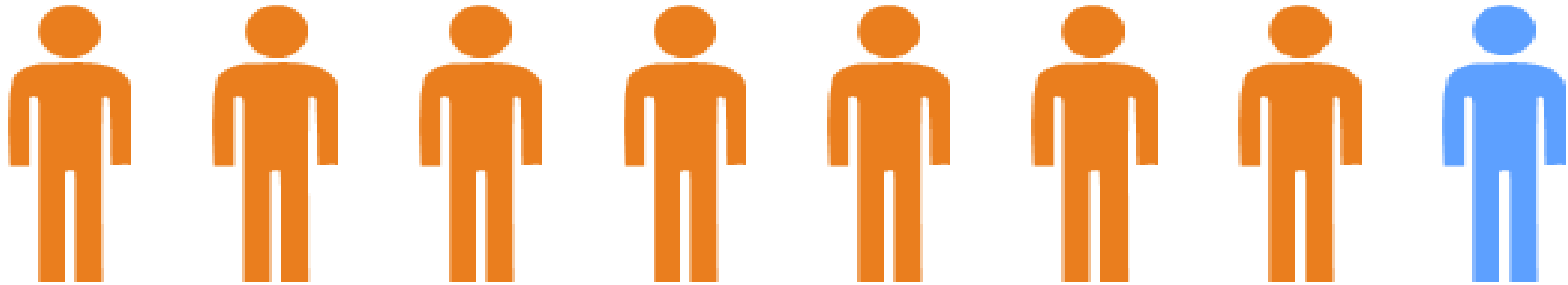
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# Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Identity



**LGBTQ+**

**7x** more likely to have traded sex for a place to stay

**8x for**

**transgender youth**

8X for transgender youth

Source: Dank, M., et al. (2015). Surviving the streets of New York: Experiences of LGBTQ youth, YMSM, and YWSW engaged in survival sex.



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# Risk Factors

- History of Abuse, Neglect
- Lack of Support
- Mental Health Issues
- Physical disability
- Runaway
- Homeless
- Poor self esteem
- Substance use
- Gang involvement
- Developmental disabilities
- Not doing well in school
- Lack of belonging
- System involved
- Unstable living environment
- Conflict with parents or caregiver
- Questioning Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity
- Incarcerated parent
- Lack of financial resources



# Recruiting Behaviors

The selling of “The Dream”

Lures of love, affection, belonging, money , safety, protection and family; “Partying”, getting hair or nails done, shopping and buying new clothes

Exploiting previous assault history

Seasoning happens through sexual abuse/assault including any sex that violates boundaries or consent, or pornography of such acts

Flashing money or status symbols

Asking specific questions to identify youth who are vulnerable; Do they have weak familial connections and/or have unmet needs?

Isolating vulnerable youth, secretive

Breaking down & rebuilding the youths identity; adopting street names and making them feel special and included



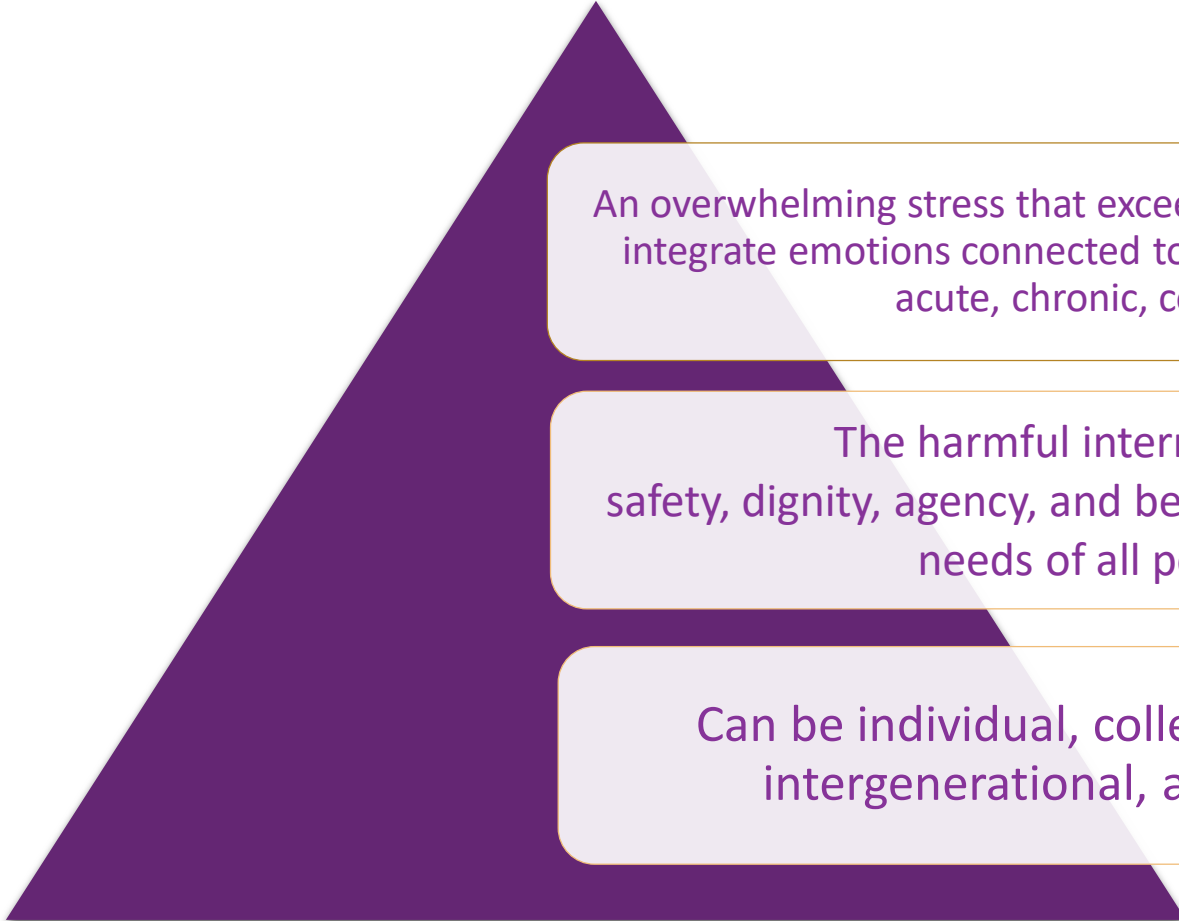
# A Conversation About Indicators

- ***Chronically truant/runaway/homeless/gang-involved youth***
- ***Multiple cell phones or social media profiles***
- ***Excess amount of cash***
- ***Having expensive or consistent goods or services with no known means to pay for them***
- ***Hotel room key/keycards***
- Signs of branding (tattoos, jewelry)
- Dramatic personality changes including evasive behavior around a new romantic partner or new group of friends
- Lack of knowledge of a given community or location
- Having multiple kinds of condoms, lube, wet wipes, sex toys





# Trauma Is



An overwhelming stress that exceeds our ability to cope or integrate emotions connected to an experience; can be acute, chronic, complex

The harmful interruption of safety, dignity, agency, and belonging; fundamental needs of all people

Can be individual, collective, systemic, intergenerational, and historical





# Trauma-Informed Practice

Respond with empathy  
and nonjudgmental,  
strengths-based  
support

**Validate  
emotions**

Recognize: fight, flight,  
freeze, appease,  
dissociate

**Offer  
choice**

Reframe “bad  
behavior” as an  
intelligent function and  
result of trauma  
responses

Attend to safety,  
dignity, agency, and  
belonging as  
fundamental human  
needs



# Identification

## Intake Question:

*“Sometimes people trade sex for money or things they need to survive. Is that going on in your life? Or, is that going on around you?”*

## Follow-Up Prompt:

*“I will not judge you or anything you tell me. I’m here if you ever want to talk or want support. We can focus on whatever would be most helpful for you.”*

Ask specific questions during intake to screen for risk factors or involvement.

Track and support youth that are chronically running away and/or truant.

Ask about STIs, pregnancy, unexplained injuries, and/or hyper-sexualized behavior such as offer sex in exchange for money or goods.

Observe communication patterns in school, clinics, drop-in, or street outreach settings. Who talks to who? Who seems to be in charge socially?



# Language Frames the Issue

## Formal/Legal Language

- Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)
- Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor (CSAM)
- Sexual exploitation of youth/young adults

## Informal Language

- Working
- Dating
- Getting taken care of
- Making money
- In the life

## Outdated/Inappropriate Language

- Teenage prostitute
- Self-exploitation



# What families can do if their child goes missing:

## \* Families can contact:

- Washington State Patrol @Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit: [mupu@wsp.wa.gov](mailto:mupu@wsp.wa.gov) (800) 543-5678
- Local Law Enforcement
- FBI Tip Line: email [INLANDNWHT@fbi.gov](mailto:INLANDNWHT@fbi.gov)
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children: 24-Hour Hotline 1-800-843-5678
- National Human Trafficking Hotline: 888-373-7888

## \* Where Native American/Alaska Native families can get extra support:

- Washington State Patrol Tribal Liaisons:  
Patti Gosch [patti.gosch@wsp.wa.gov](mailto:patti.gosch@wsp.wa.gov) (360) 280-0567 or Dawn Pullin [dawn.pullin@wsp.wa.gov](mailto:dawn.pullin@wsp.wa.gov) (360) 890-0150
- Cedar Rising Coalition : 707-499-8276
- MMIWP Family Healing Talking Circle: Annie Forsman Adams at [annie.forsman-adams@atg.wa.gov](mailto:annie.forsman-adams@atg.wa.gov)
- Tribal advocacy programs can be found: Governor's Office of Indian Affairs- <https://goia.wa.gov/>



# Places To Search

- Bus stations
- Youth centers
- Family members' and friends' homes
- Places youth frequently congregate
- Places you know where your child has hung out in the past
- School
- Homeless shelters
- Probation/parole
- Communication with family, friends and known associates
- Social media accounts
- Local homeless outreach programs/ free meal or food locations



# Resources

- **National** Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center (NHTTAC): <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/training/nhttac>
- **National** Human Trafficking Hotline | 1-888-373-7888 | Text 233733 | Live Chat [National Human Trafficking Hotline](#)
- **National Office for Victims of Crime:** Human Trafficking | Help & Resources | Office for Victims of Crime (ojp.gov)
- **Statewide** Survivor Support Services: [By Type — Washington Trafficking Help \(watraffickinghelp.org\)](#)
- **Overview of Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) in Washington State Report:** [GetPDF \(wa.gov\)](#)
- **Washington** Trafficking Help: <https://www.watraffickinghelp.org/>
- **Washington** Trafficking Prevention: <https://traffickingprevention.org/>
- [Polaris | We Fight to End Human Trafficking \(polarisproject.org\)](#)
- King County CSEC Contacts, Advocates & Support Groups: <https://www.kingcountycsec.org/advocates>
- Lutheran Community Services Northwest Sexual Assault 24-hour Crisis Line: 509-624-7273 <https://lcsnw.org/office/spokane/>



# Native American/Alaska Native Specific Resources:

**StrongHearts Native Helpline:** 844-7NATIVE (762-8483)

**National Indigenous Women's Resource Center:** 406-477-3896

**Sovereign Bodies Institute:** (707) 335-6263

**NorthWest Justice Project- Native American Unit:** <https://nwjustice.org/NAU>

**Victim Services Tribal Program @ Rural Resources:**(877) 219-5542

**Innovations Human Trafficking Collaborative:** 833.201.0940

**The Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations-** Residential, chemical dependency treatment center  
<https://healinglodge.org/>

**The Native Project-** Behavioral Health, Prevention & Wellness, Medical, Dental: 509-325-5502

**Seattle Indian Health Board-** Advocacy program: 206-324-9360



# Ideas for Further Learning

## Access to Free Trainings

**The Life Story:** <https://thelifestory.org/>

**King County Task Force Lunch & Learn:**

<https://www.kingcountycsec.org/lunch-learn>

**National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center (NHTTAC):** <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/training/nhttac>

<https://skoll.org/session/skoll-world-forum-2021/no-gender-justice-without-racial-justice-ending-the-abuse-to-prison-pipeline/>

## Recommended Books

**Girls Like Us**

by Rachel Lloyd

**Fragments: A Post-Traumatic Paradigm**

by K.D. Roche

**Runaway Girl: Escaping Life on the Streets**

by Carissa Phelps w/ Larkin Warren



# Thank You!

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Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

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