Working Together

Meeting the needs of sexually exploited youth

The Bridge for Youth and YouthLink
World Childhood Foundation Grant
July 2008 - June 2009

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Executive Summary

World Childhood Foundation Grant
YouthLink and The Bridge for Youth
July 2008 - June 2009

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Introduction

In June 2008, The Bridge for Youth and YouthLink were awarded a grant from The World Childhood Foundation for a joint planning effort to create an evidence-based model of service delivery for sexually exploited youth in the Twin Cities. The goal of the grant was two-fold: to strengthen services/programs within each organization and to identify and create opportunities for collaboration between the two agencies. The scope of work was divided into three phases:

1. **Assessment**
   The assessment phase consisted of an extensive literature review of research related to sexually exploited youth; web-based scan of program models designed to serve this population; and interviews with outreach workers, program managers and other professionals serving these youth.

2. **Program Design**
   The design phase focused on the common themes that emerged from the assessment. The themes capture the components of what is referred to as "evidence-based practice" "emerging best practices," or "promising practices". During the program design phase, organization staff identified possible applications of the themes to current and future work.

3. **Action Plans**
   The action planning phase is an ongoing process. To date, YouthLink and The Bridge have identified opportunities for growth within their individual organizations, as well as opportunities for collaboration between their programs. Preliminary steps have been taken to move from plan to action, however, much of the work will continue beyond this grant period.

Definition of Sexually Exploited Youth

For the purpose of this project, **sexually exploited youth** are defined as:

> *Young people who are trafficked or prostituted, involved in pornography or stripping, victims of rape or incest, or engaged in survival sex, i.e. the exchange of sex for money or other considerations (e.g., food, shelter, drugs, etc.) – "doing what is necessary" to ensure their survival.*

Typically, young people don't define themselves as "sexually exploited". Though their behaviors and circumstances may fit the description above, they do not see themselves as being sexually exploited, prostituted or trafficked.

Summary of Grant Activities and Findings

Assessment

- Consultants reviewed over 40 research articles, reports and programs related to sexually exploited youth. (See summary of activities.)

- Consultants interviewed 10 key stakeholders identified by YouthLink and The Bridge. (See summary of activities.)

- Consultants created an annotated bibliography of literature/program review for future reference by program staff. (See annotated literature review).

- Consultants met with providers who conducted the 2008 Minnesota Youth and Outreach Worker survey. Survey results were unavailable for review during the grant period.

Program Design

- Consultants analyzed assessment findings to identify common themes to guide the planning process. Although there is general acknowledgment that to date there are few scientifically evaluated programs and little research on how to best serve sexually exploited youth, eight (8) common themes about best practice emerged from the literature review and interviews with local providers. (See emerging themes for best practice.)

  1. Sexually exploited youth require a continuum of services including prevention, harm reduction, early intervention/crisis intervention and healing/connection.

  2. All runaway, homeless and highly mobile youth are at risk of sexual exploitation. Programs should focus on the needs of youth who are currently involved, as well as those at risk of exploitation.

  3. A young person who is ready to leave "the life" needs a safe place to go to immediately. Communities need to have appropriate housing opportunities available.

  4. The majority of young people who are sexually exploited use drugs and alcohol. Programs should address substance use through assessment, direct service and referral for treatment.

  5. Peers are a driving force for whether a young person stays on the street, goes to a shelter, is exploited or exploits others. Programs should recognize and utilize the power of peer influence.

  6. Feeling that one is a contributing member of a community is vital to building self-esteem and respect for others and self. Program should provide youth with opportunities for leadership including program design, implementation and evaluation.

  7. Providers lack clear language for effectively engaging youth, the community and policy makers regarding sexual exploitation. Programs serving this population need to adopt clear, youth-friendly messages to use within their programs and the community at large.

  8. The needs of this population are complex and demanding. Staff needs ongoing training and supervision to be able to work appropriately and effectively with this population.

Program Design Cont.

- The Bridge and YouthLink staff held two joint meetings to review these themes. In the process, each agency was able to identify current practices that are aligned with "best practice" and identify areas for program improvements. Though the findings were not surprising to veteran staff, they provided both an affirmation that their programs are grounded in "what works", and guidance on ways they can enhance what they do.

- Through a consensus building process, consultants used the themes to help the two organizations identify opportunities for collaboration to enhance current programming.

Action Plans

Collaboration Plan

- Through a series of four individual and group meetings, The Bridge and YouthLink staff reached consensus on which opportunities for collaboration would receive immediate priority. (See collaboration plan.) Some opportunities can be implemented with current staff and funding levels; others require additional resources.

    Collaborative opportunities given high priority:
    □ Provide a comprehensive program model for a group of young women who are at risk of or engaged in sexual exploitation. YouthLink and The Bridge staff will:
        ○ Co-facilitate S.I.S.T.E.R.S. education/support group
        ○ Share case management caseload
        ○ Provide individual therapy
        ○ Follow and support S.I.S.T.E.R.S. group participants into stable housing

    □ Develop opportunities for peer education and leadership.

    □ Create clear messages/language about sexual exploitation.

    □ Provide training for staff at both organizations on best practice in working with youth who are sexually exploited.

    □ Present project findings at local, state and national conferences.

- The Bridge and YouthLink staff identified **additional opportunities for collaboration to be considered in the future**. Though very important, these opportunities would require significant investments of additional staff time and resources. They include:

    □ Expand housing options available to sexually exploited youth to ensure they have immediate access to safe, stable housing when they are able to leave "the life".

    □ Identify targeted outreach and intervention strategies for young men and LGBT youth.

    □ Adapt/expand services to respond to the substance use/abuse by young people who are sexually exploited.

- The Bridge and YouthLink staff began conversations about next steps for implementing these collaborative efforts.

Individual Organizational Plans

Consultants worked with each organization to review current programming for sexually exploited youth. Individualized action plans were created to clarify current practice and identify opportunities for growth consistent with best practice.

- **The Bridge for Youth**
  In general, care for youth who are sexually exploited or at risk of sexual exploitation is integrated into the overall services offered all young people who enter The Bridge. The Bridge staff identified a variety of programmatic changes that would enhance the work they currently do and focus targeted efforts on youth currently involved with or at risk of sexual exploitation. (See individual plan.)

- **YouthLink S.I.S.T.E.R.S. Project**
  Currently, young women involved with or at risk of sexual exploitation are served by the S.I.S.T.E.R.S. program. YouthLink staff plan to strengthen individual components of the S.I.S.T.E.R.S. program (e.g., more intensive case management, link to mental health services, increasing opportunities for leadership development), as well as build stronger connections with other programs at YouthLink. (See individual plan.)

Conclusion

Meeting the needs of sexually exploited youth requires a multi-faceted response from service providers, public institutions, policy makers and the community at large. The complexity of the response must mirror the complexity of the lives these young people navigate each day. This grant offered The Bridge for Youth and YouthLink the opportunity to go through a thoughtful, deliberate process to assess, analyze, clarify, refocus and invigorate their individual and collective practice related to sexually exploited youth. Looking through the lens of best practice, they were able to identify the strengths and limitations of the services they provide. The process affirmed the good work they do and offered insights into how their work could be even more effective.

The real work of this grant is yet to come – bringing to life the collaborative and individual opportunities for growth. Both organizations come to this point well grounded in the research, clear about the direction they hope to go, and committed to serving these young people in the most comprehensive, effective way they possibly can. Some changes can be implemented immediately; others will take significant allocations of time and resources. With the commitment of each organization's staff, executive leadership and funders, all proposed changes hold great promise for improving the work we do and in turn, improving the lives of the young people we serve.

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Background

World Childhood Foundation Grant
YouthLink and The Bridge for Youth
July 2008 - June 2009

Project Description

In June 2008, The Bridge for Youth and YouthLink were awarded a grant from The World Childhood Foundation for a joint planning effort to create an evidence-based model of service designed to serve sexually exploited youth in the Twin Cities. The focus of this grant is to conduct research and collect data to develop an evidence-based approach to serving sexually exploited youth. This collaboration builds off of each organization's experience serving at-risk youth on the streets and incorporates research into "evidence-based practices," "emerging best practices," and "promising practices" that would result in new program approaches to address sexual exploitation in the Twin Cities community.

The goal of the grant is two-fold: to strengthen services/programs within each organization and to identify and create opportunities for collaboration between the two agencies.

Definition of Sexually Exploited Youth

For the purpose of this project, **sexually exploited youth** are defined as:

> *Young people who are trafficked or prostituted, involved in pornography or stripping, victims of rape or incest, or engaged in survival sex, i.e. the exchange of sex for money or other considerations (e.g., food, shelter, drugs, etc.) – "doing what is necessary" to ensure their survival.*

Typically, young people don't define themselves as "sexually exploited". Though their behaviors and circumstances may fit the description above, they do not see themselves as being sexually exploited, prostituted or trafficked.

Experience of Homeless Youth in Minnesota

- On any given night, 550-650 youth (age 11-17) and 700-1650 young adults (age 18-21) are estimated to be homeless and on their own. Over the course of a year, 12,300-22,000 Minnesota youth and 4,900-8,000 young adults experience at least one episode of homelessness. *(Wilder Foundation, 2008)*

- Studies show that between 10 and 50% of homeless youth and young adults trade sex for shelter, food, money, or other goods. The percentage is higher for "street youth" than for those who access shelters.

- Sometimes the entrance into the life of being prostituted is forceful and threatening, but more often it appears to involve a gradual introduction of the teen to "the life."

- The average age of introduction into commercial sexual exploitation is 13-16 years of age.

- Though there is no empirical evidence to quantify how quickly young people become sexually exploited after becoming homeless, experience indicates that within a very short period of time, a young person on the street must compromise some of their values in order to survive, e.g. use intoxicants, trade sex for food or shelter, and/or commit a petty crime.

Phase One: Assessment
Summary of Activities

1. **Interviewed key informants identified by The Bridge for Youth and YouthLink**

    - Cordelia Anderson, Sensibilities, Inc.
    - Jane Bates, Genesis II
    - Nancy Cusak, The Bridge for Youth
    - Beth Holger-Ambrose, MN Department of Human Services
    - Sarah Johnston, Freeport West
    - Cheree Langmade, The Bridge for Youth
    - Erin Mehta, Center for Victims of Torture
    - Monica Nillson, St. Stephens
    - Denise Williams, YouthLink
    - Transitional housing staff, The Bridge for Youth

2. **Conducted literature review of research about programs/services for sexually exploited youth.**

    The Advocates for Human Rights (2008). *Sex Trafficking Needs Assessment for the State of Minnesota.* www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org

    Auerswald, C.L.; Sugano, E; Ellen, J.M. & Klausner, J.D. (2006). Street-based STD testing and treatment of homeless youth are feasible, acceptable and effective. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 38(3):208-212*.

    Brandon, D.L. & Marshall, E. W. (2009). Sex Work and Sex Exchange Among Street Children: An Urgent Need for a Global Response. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 44(3):201-202*.

    Brawn, K.M. & Roe-Sepowitz, D (2008). Female juvenile prostitutes: Exploring the relationship to substance use. *Children and Youth Services Review, 30(12):1395-1402*.

    Childwatch International Research Network (2009). World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents *The Rio de Janeiro Declaration and Call for Action to Prevent and Stop Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents*. http://www.childwatch.uio.no/news/2009/rio-declaration.html

    Cochran, B.; Steward, A.; Ginzler, J; & Cauce, A. (2002). Challenges Faced by Homeless Sexual Minorities: Comparison of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Homeless Adolescents with their Heterosexual Counterparts. *American Journal of Public Health, 92(5):773-777*.

    Coward Bucher, C.E. (2008). Toward a Needs-Based Typology of Homeless Youth. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 42(6):549-554*.

    Edinburgh, L; Saewyc, E; Thao, T; & Levitt, C. (2006). Sexual Exploitation of Very Young Hmong Girls. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 39(1):111-118*.

    Estes, R., and Weiner, N. (2001) Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the US, Canada and Mexico. U of Pennsylvania. http://www.sp2.upenn.edu/~restes/CSEC_Files/Exec_Sum_020220.pdf

    Fedina, L: Trease, J; Williamson, C. (2008). Human Trafficking in Ohio: A Resource Guide for Social Service Providers for Social Service. http://www.secondchancetoledo.org/guide.htm.

    Garrett, S.B.; Higa, D.H.; Phares, M.M.; Peterson, P.L.; Wells, E.A.; & Baer, J.S. (2008). Homeless youths' perceptions of services and transitions to stable housing. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 31(4): 436-444*.

    Greene, J.; Ennett, S.; & Ringwalt, C.L. (1999). Prevalence and Correlates of Survival Sex Among Runaway and Homeless Youth. *American Journal of Public Health*, 89(9):1406-1410.

    Goulet, Liza E. (2001) The Institute for Child Rights and Development (ICRD), University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. *Out from the Shadows: Good Practices In Working with Sexually Exploited Youth in the Americas.* http://web.uvic.ca/iicrd/graphics/Out%20from%20the%20shadows.pdf

    Hoyt, D.R.; Ryan, K.D.; & Cauce, A.M. (1999) Personal victimization in a high-risk environment: homeless and runaway adolescents. *J Res. Crime Delinquency,* 36:371-392.

Justice Institute of British Columbia (2002). *Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Innovative Ideas for Working with Children and Youth.* http://www.jibc.ca/seytoolkit/pdfs/CSE%20Innovative%20Ideas.pdf

Lindsey, E.; Kurtz, P; Jarvis, S; Williams, N; & Nackerud, L. (2000). How Runaway and Homeless Youth Navigate Troubled Waters: Personal Strengths and Resources. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal,* 17(2): 115-139.

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (2002). *Female Juvenile Prostitution: Problem and Response.* www.missingkids.com

Partners for Violence Prevention (2009). *Safe Harbors Youth Intervention Project (SHYIP) – Guidelines for Working with Homeless, Runaway and Sexually Exploited Youth*

Rew, L; Taylor-Seehafer, M.; Thomas, N; & Yockey, R. (2001). Correlates of Resilience in Homeless Adolescents. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 33(1): 33-40.

Solorio, M.R.; Rosenthal, D.; Milburn, N.G.; Weiss, R.E.; Batterham, P.J.; Gandara, M. & Rotheram-Borus, M.J. (2008). Predictors of Sexual Risk Behaviors Among Newly Homeless Youth: A Longitudinal Study. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 42(4): 401-409.*

Slesnick, N.; Dashora, P.; Amber Letcher, A.; Erdem,G. & Serovich, J. (2009). A review of services and interventions for runaway and homeless youth: Moving forward. *Children and Youth Services Review, In Press, Corrected Proof, Available online 2 February 2009.*

Tyler, K.; Whitbeck, L; Hoyt, D; & Cauce, A.M. (2004). Risk Factors for Sexual Victimization Among Male and Female Homeless and Runaway Youth. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 19(5): 503-520.

Williams, L. & Powell, A. (2008) *Pathways into and out of Commercial Sexual Exploitation – Preliminary Findings and Implications for Responding to Sexually Exploited Teens* http://www.fairfund.org/Pathways_111808.pdf

3. Conducted web-based scan of organizations addressing sexually exploited youth.

- Department of Health, Home Office, Safeguarding Children Involved in Prostitution, Supplementary Guidance to Working Together to Safeguard Children, HMSO, 2000 www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4006037

- GEMS – Educational and Mentoring Services, New York www.gems-girls.org/

- Home for Little Wanderers (implement My Life My Choice) Received grant to evaluate curriculum. www.thehome.org/

- Kristi House, Miami, Florida (WCF funded program) www.kristihouse.org/

- Los Angeles Youth Supportive Services www.la-youth.org/main.htm

- Lola Greene Baldwin Foundation, Portland, OR www.prostitutionrecovery.org/

- Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless www.mnhomelesscoalition.org

- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children www.missingkids.com

- NSPCC Street Matters and BFree Programs www.communitycare.co.uk/Articles/2007/04/19/104202/sexual-exploitation-east-londons-b-free-and-street-matters-work-with.html

- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention - Grants given to organizations for work related to commercial sexual exploitation of children www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/programs/csec_program.html

- RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest, National Network) www.rainn.org

- Rethink Resources www.rethinkresources.net

- The Paul and Lisa Program, Inc., Westbrook, CT www.paulandlisa.org

- SAGE Project - Standing Against Global Exploitation, San Francisco, CA www.sagesf.org

- World Childhood Foundation www.childhood.org

- Young Women's Empowerment Project, Chicago, IL www.youarepriceless.org

4. Reviewed survey results of 2008 provider and youth outreach surveys.
Survey results were not available during the grant time period.

Phase Two: Program Design
Emerging Themes for Best Practice

There is general acknowledgment that to date, there are few well evaluated programs and very little research on how to best serve sexually exploited youth. What are offered below are some common themes and recommendations that both appeared in the literature and emerged from our interviews with local providers.

1. **Sexually exploited youth require a continuum of services**
   Services must meet their immediate crisis needs while laying a foundation of practical and emotional support for when they are ready to leave.

   Prevention - decrease risk of youth being involved in commercial sexual exploitation
   - Support families regarding abuse, addiction, parenting, etc. before youth become involved
   - Offer professional training and sensitization about marginalized youth
   - Develop programming designed to confront social norms that support commercial exploitation of children

   Harm Reduction –help youth to stay alive and healthy during the period of their sexual exploitation; increase the likelihood of a safe exit from sexual exploitation while minimizing risk to individual, family and community.
   - Train law enforcement (not just those in special units) to identify and assist at-risk and prostituted teens and to improve skills for communicating with them and connecting them to service providers
   - Provide street outreach with clear goals with aligned activities, as well as measures of success
   - Offer needle exchange programs
   - Offer access to birth control, condoms and STI testing

   Early Intervention/Crisis Intervention – supportive programs and services for youth who are being exploited.
   - 24/7 drop in center
   - Safe supportive shelters – both emergency and long-term
   - Opportunities for safe disclosure – assessment practices (motivational interviewing)
   - Opportunities for peer mentoring and education

   Healing and Connection – supportive programs and services for youth who want to exit.
   - Ongoing psychological support with emphasis on building sense of competence, self-control/determination, self-esteem.
   - Access to age and culturally appropriate therapy
   - Creating alternative income-generation strategies, e.g., education credentials, job training or work skills. Mobilize the private sector to provide sexually exploited youth with apprenticeships and training opportunities.
   - Connecting youth to school and access to post secondary education
   - Opportunities to share experiences with other sexually exploited youth and broader community.

2. **Programs should focus on needs of youth who are being exploited, as well as those at risk of exploitation**
   - Don't need to look for this population – can assume all homeless youth may be engaged or vulnerable
   - But, this population has some specific needs that must be addressed
   - Assessment tools need to ask specific and appropriate questions about exploitation

3. **A young person who is ready to leave "the life" needs a safe place to go to immediately.**
   - 24/7 counseling and shelter
   - Focus on safety
   - Outreach that connects homeless youth with services and support

4. **The majority of young people who are sexually exploited use drugs and alcohol. Programs should address substance use through assessment, direct service and referral for treatment.**
   - Emergency and long term shelters should have clear, yet flexible guidelines for substance use assessment, intervention and treatment; require flexibility in terms of length of stay, goals, drug and alcohol use.
   - If shelters don't offer treatment, will want to have a strong connection with a variety of treatment programs.

5. **Programs should recognize and utilize the power of peer influence.**
   Peers are a driving force for whether a young person stays on the street, goes to a shelter, is exploited or exploits others (recruiting).
   - Create opportunities for positive group interaction
   - Offer opportunities for mentoring, peer education, "tone-setter" to serve as role-model.
   - Positive support system – "need to take care of the group." (If house one young person, need to house all young people in their immediate group or they will bring the street into the housed person's life.)

6. **Youth participation should be a primary programming feature — from program design to leadership and evaluation.**
   Feeling that one is a contributing member of a community is vital to building self-esteem and respect for others and self.
   - Listen to youth and develop programs that meet their stated needs.
   - Create opportunities for youth voice to be heard. Include sexually exploited young people on advisory groups and planning groups.
   - Create opportunities for youth to be employed in the program – internships, staff positions, volunteer positions, etc.

7. **There is a need, both within organizations and the community at large, for a common language and correct framing of the issue.**
   - Many providers do not address sexual exploitation explicitly. Organizations and individuals must give a clear message that exploitation is not O.K. There needs to be a common language for the professional community so people can talk about sexual exploitation in a clear, consistent way.
   - The language we use to describe behaviors (prostitute vs. prostituted; pimps vs. exploiters) impacts how we think about the issue, create policies, and support services that work with exploited youth. It is particularly difficult to find language for adolescents that reflects their vulnerability and victimization and at the same time recognizes their independence and autonomy.

8. **Staff needs training and supervision.**
   - Agency staff lacks necessary training and supervision to work with this population effectively.
   - Staff is often hired from the community and may have experienced homelessness and exploitation themselves. Poses a challenge when you hire people who have been traumatized and have them work with young people who are currently in trauma.
   - Staff needs training on how to talk about the issue. Many outreach/youth workers don't bring up the issue as they don't want to be perceived as shaming, blaming or judgmental. Need to send the message that it is O.K. to start talking to young people about sexual exploitation. Need to give professional tools for doing so.
   - Models to consider include reflective supervision, training on secondary trauma, motivational interviewing.

"It's not that we aren't doing the right thing…it's that we aren't doing it enough." Provider interview

Phase 3: Action Plans
Collaboration Plan Between The Bridge for Youth and YouthLink

Immediate opportunities for collaboration
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- ☐ **Integrate existing services to create a comprehensive program model** for a group of young women who are at risk of or engaged in sexual exploitation.

  - o **Co-facilitate S.I.S.T.E.R.S. education/support group**
    Family counselor from The Bridge and case manager from YouthLink co-facilitate S.I.S.T.E.R.S. group held at YouthLink. Bridge staff brings 16-17 year old girls from The Bridge to participate in the group.

  - o **Share case management caseload**
    Build on group experience with intensive case management. YouthLink case manager provides case management to the girls from The Bridge who participate in the S.I.S.T.E.R.S. group.

  - o **Provide individual therapy**
    Family counselor who co-leads S.I.S.T.E.R.S. group provides therapy for girls participating in group and case management services.

  - o **Integrate housing options**
    Follow and support S.I.S.T.E.R.S. group participants into stable housing

- ☐ **Develop opportunities for peer education and leadership.**
  Build on current efforts at both organizations to create opportunities for young people participating in group and case management, to take on leadership roles in the program.

- ☐ **Create clear messages/language about sexual exploitation.**
  - • **For youth** - to increase awareness about sexual exploitation; create opportunities for connection with community resources; provide ideas for prevention and harm reduction; and let them know that these organizations are safe places to talk and seek support.

  - • **For staff** - to use when they meet with youth; increase opportunities for engagement with youth involved with or at risk of sexual exploitation; guide what they say to young people regarding sexual exploitation; and use in outreach materials regarding prevention and harm reduction.

- ☐ **Provide training open to staff at both organizations** on best practice in working with youth involved in CSE.

- ☐ **Present project findings and overview of sexual exploitation** of runaway and homeless youth at local, state and national conferences.

Future opportunities to consider
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- ☐ **Expand housing options available to sexually exploited youth** to ensure they have immediate access to safe, stable housing when they are able to leave "the life".

- ☐ **Identify targeted outreach and intervention strategies for young men**.
  - • to reduce perpetration and influence on exploitation
  - • to address their needs as victims of CSE

- ☐ **Identify targeted outreach and intervention strategies for LGBT youth.**

- ☐ **Adapt/expand services to respond to the substance use/abuse** by young people who are sexually exploited.

The Bridge for Youth

Program Component	Current Practice	Opportunities for Growth

Emergency Services
 	
▪ Crisis hotline
▪ Walk-In Counseling Services
▪ 17 bed short term shelter
  ○ 14 dormitory style beds – average length of stay 3-5 days
  ○ 3 E-beds (emergency beds) for 16 & 17 year old homeless youth - available nightly on a first-come, first-served basis
	In general, the needs of sexually exploited youth are integrated into overall practice of emergency services program.
	
	Questions on sexual exploitation are part of intake assessment.
	
	Staff participated in all staff training on sexual exploitation. January 2009.
	
	E-beds are most often used by youth who are at high risk of sexual exploitation.
		Independent opportunities:
		▪ Review/revise assessment tool to ensure it is sufficient in assessing risk/involvement in sexual exploitation.
		▪ Incorporate training on sexual exploitation into new staff orientation including topics such as, the realities faced by youth; staff beliefs and values regarding sexual exploitation; interviewing strategies; and their role in helping youth get the support they need.
		▪ Review/revise shelter rules and practices that may make it difficult for youth transitioning out of "the life" to be compliant and successful.
		
		Collaborative opportunities:
		▪ Create and display messages for youth entering The Bridge to let them know this is a safe place to talk about sexual exploitation.
		▪ Provide staff development training for all staff on the power of language in engaging sexually exploited youth.
		▪ E-beds – Refer girls in E-beds to S.I.S.T.E.R.S. group and connect to case management and individual counseling.

Health ▪ Street Outreach ▪ Group on sexual health education ▪ Health assessment and education	In general, the needs of sexually exploited youth are integrated into overall health program. Interagency Outreach teams do street and site-based outreach to at-risk populations through the street outreach collaborative StreetWorks. 20 hours/month agency RN time goes to street outreach through the StreetWorks collaborative. Sexual health group offered weekly through emergency services program. Topics related to sexual exploitation are addressed, however, the group is not offered specifically for girls who are being sexually exploited. Additional sexual health groups are occasionally offered through other programs at The Bridge. Health assessment includes questions on sexual exploitation and risk for sexual exploitation. Staff conducted all staff training on sexual exploitation. January 2009.	**Independent opportunities:** ▪ Assess current response to drug use, e.g., need for treatment and flexibility in programming. ▪ Clarify goal of street outreach; enhance tools and materials. ▪ Clarify what is meant by harm reduction for this population; enhance strategies, tools and materials. ▪ Review assessment tool to ensure it is sufficient in assessing risk/involvement in sexual exploitation. ▪ Incorporate training on sexual exploitation into new staff orientation (see above). **Collaborative opportunities** ▪ Create messages for engaging youth who may be sexually exploited. ▪ Provide training to outreach workers through StreetWorks collaborative on using consistent language regarding CSE. Ensure that outreach workers have information necessary to refer youth to The Bridge and YouthLink.

The Bridge for Youth

Program Component	Current Practice	Opportunities for Growth
Family Counseling ▪ Family and individual counseling offered to youth staying in the shelter and after they leave the program (aftercare) ▪ Family therapy for families on a walk-in basis.	In general, the needs of sexually exploited youth are integrated into overall practice of family counseling services. Co-lead group at MN Children's Resource Center for Hmong youth who are sexually exploited. Staff participated in all staff training on sexual exploitation. January 2009.	**Independent opportunities:** ▪ Incorporate training on sexual exploitation into new staff orientation. (see above). ▪ Provide staff development training for all staff on the power of language in engaging sexually exploited youth. **Collaborative opportunities:** • S.I.S.T.E.R.S. group at YouthLink would be co-lead by family counselor from The Bridge and S.I.S.T.E.R.S. case manager. Family counselor would provide individual counseling and case manager would provide case management services to all girls in the group. Girls from all programs (emergency services, housing and youth empowerment) would be referred to this group. • Family counselor from The Bridge and case manager from YouthLink would follow group participants into housing options. Housing might be provided by The Bridge, YouthLink or other entity (e.g., family, other community-based housing program etc.)
Housing **Transitional Living Program** ▪ 18 bed residential up to 24 months ▪ Life skills ▪ Case Management **Youth Housing Program** ▪ Scattered site housing options – up to 24 sites in Minneapolis.	In general, the needs of sexually exploited youth are integrated into services received through the housing program. There are no specific housing options for youth who are sexually exploited. Staff participated in all staff training on sexual exploitation. January 2009.	**Independent opportunities:** ▪ Incorporate training on sexual exploitation into new staff orientation (see above). ▪ Provide staff development training for all staff on the power of language in engaging sexually exploited youth. ▪ Review/revise transitional living program rules and practices that may make it difficult for youth transitioning out of "the life" to be compliant and successful. **Collaborative opportunities:** ▪ Create and display messages for youth in transitional living program to let them know this is a safe place to talk about sexual exploitation. ▪ Participate in S.I.S.T.E.R.S. collaboration identified above.

The Bridge for Youth

Program Component	Current Practice	Opportunities for Growth
Youth Empowerment in Action ▪ Individual counseling and case management ▪ Support groups ▪ Peer leadership ▪ Summer retreats	Conduct a variety of ongoing groups for youth in the shelter and in aftercare, e.g., VOICE, girl's group, sexual health group, There is no group currently available that is specific to youth who are sexually exploited. Conduct groups for families after young person has been at The Bridge. Provide intensive case management. Caseload of 10 clients per case-manager. Youth Empowerment participants have leadership development opportunity to co-lead groups at emergency shelter after successful completion of program.	**Independent opportunities:** ▪ Facilitate a group specifically for sexually exploited youth on-site. Group may be led by Bridge staff or staff from other community program. Young people in all Bridge programs would be eligible to participate in the group. ▪ Increase opportunities for young people to find their own power and feel safe. **Collaborative opportunities:** ▪ Participate in S.I.S.T.E.R.S. collaboration identified above. ▪ Expand leadership development opportunities to girls who participate in S.I.S.T.E.R.S. group.

YouthLink S.I.S.T.E.R.S. Project

Stated Program Component	Current (Actual) Practice	Best Practice
Outreach Services • Street based location: Broadway – North Minneapolis. • Site based locations: Mall of America, Block E, Brookdale Mall, strip clubs and adult entertainment stores, hotels and motels • Online sites: presence on Craigslist	**Outreach Services** – on hold 6/1/09 Outreach services are not currently provided in an effort to re-examine effectiveness. In the past outreach services focused on providing a consistent presence in the community by program staff with emphasis on referrals to resources and distribution of hygiene kits. Online outreach (past 6 months) was developed to identify sexually exploited youth and provide resources through social networking sites and Craigslist. Existing online efforts were deemed ineffective and suspended. Alternative sites and online venues are being explored. **Referrals from other YouthLink outreach staff** Most S.I.S.T.E.R.S participants come in through the drop-in center. Very few come to S.I.S.T.E.R.S through outreach referral. Though other YouthLink outreach workers are expected to refer to S.I.S.T.E.R.S., in reality, few if any, referrals come from other outreach workers. **Paired Outreach** Staff expressed concern that they are expected to conduct outreach in pairs which dictates and limits extent to which outreach can be conducted in targeted areas.	**Outreach activities are intentional, clearly defined and measurable.** *Key Considerations:* ☐ What is the goal of street outreach? How do you define harm reduction? ☐ How do outreach activities target and reach sexually exploited youth? ☐ What messages regarding sexual exploitation are being communicated through outreach, are they working, what else might be important to communicate? ☐ What are the measures of success for street outreach to this population? ☐ What opportunities exist to collaborate with the Bridge, schools, StreetWorks, etc.? **Outreach referral/recruitment practices are intentional, clearly defined and practiced throughout organization.** *Key Considerations:* ☐ Why aren't referrals being regularly made to S.I.S.T.E.R.S by other YouthLink staff? What barriers exist? What systems need to be changed to increase communication and collaboration within the organization? ☐ How many referrals come from other programs/organizations? What efforts exist to make the community aware of the S.I.S.T.E.R.S. program? ☐ When youth come into POS/YouthLink, how are they assessed? How is the referral made to the S.I.S.T.E.R.S. Program? How is S.I.S.T.E.R.S. integrated into POS? **Outreach offers an opportunity for leadership development.** *Key Considerations:* ☐ Could past participants (peers) be trained to provide outreach with staff? ☐ How could participants help create messages that outreach workers share with youth on the street?

YouthLink S.I.S.T.E.R.S. Project

Stated Program Component	Current (Actual) Practice	Best Practice
Peer Group Activities • Group intended to support case management services and provide additional education and skill building opportunities for youth involved in program. Provided on a weekly basis and structured based on *My Life, My Choice* curriculum.	**Peer Group Activities** • Group held weekly on Thursdays for 20 weeks using *My Life, My Choice* curriculum. • Rolling involvement has 4-5 young women (ages 17-21) consistently attending. • Currently, one regular group attendee is involved in S.I.S.T.E.R.S. case management. Other group attendees are referred from other YouthLink case managers. • Staff is concerned about high turnover with participants, extremely low and inconsistent participation in group and inconsistent use of curriculum.	**Purpose of group and group structure/activities are clearly defined and operationalized.** *Key Considerations:* ☐ What is the goal of the group? ☐ Who can come to group? For how long? ☐ Should group have ongoing enrollment? What are the implications if enrollment is ongoing vs. limited to first few weeks of the session? **Referral/recruitment practices for group is clearly defined and practiced throughout the organization.** *Key Considerations:* ☐ How do girls/women get referred into group? Internal and external channels. ☐ Percent of caseload that actually is involved? How many on a regular basis? Is this important? **Group offers an opportunity for leadership development.** *Key Considerations:* ☐ Do participants graduate from group? Then what? How can group "graduates" continue involvement? Peer Leaders? **S.I.S.T.E.R.S. collaborates with other organizations to provide effective group experience.** *Key Considerations:* ☐ What are the opportunities and challenges of collaboration? ☐ What are the opportunities for growth? *What training does staff need to be able to move from current practice to best practice?*

YouthLink S.I.S.T.E.R.S. Project

Stated Program Component	Current (Actual) Practice	Best Practice

Case Management Services
 	
Key Considerations:
• Referral and Recruitment
  a. External agencies refer including housing programs and juvenile court.
  b. Outreach worker referrals by YouthLink staff or other outreach workers.
  c. Drop In at YouthLink, assessment conducted and assigned to case manager.
  d. Case Transferred: youth identified as needing specific services after being assigned to other case manager.
• Intake/Goal Planning leads to referral.
• Goal Planning/Service Coordination leads to referral.
	Case Management Services
	
	Key Considerations:
	• Case manager's current case load is being lowered to 25. Intend to reduce case load to 15 by end of year.
	• Some youth are co-case managed with multiple YouthLink staff.
	• Outcomes of case management include:
	  o Housing
	  o Employment
	  o Education
	• Case managers also serve as an advocate for youth for basic needs and special needs (e.g. legal needs).
		Reduced caseload to provide more in-depth and targeted case management.
		
		Key Considerations:
		☐ How will case management practice change when caseload is reduced?
		☐ What opportunities exist for collaboration with other staff and agencies for case management?
		☐ What is the optimum flow for S.I.S.T.E.R.S. participants to access services, improve wellbeing and safe housing? Is this happening?
		☐ How does case management address substance use and treatment?
		
		Clearly defined purpose of case management and S.I.S.T.E.R.S. program; activities linked to outcomes.
		
		Key Considerations:
		☐ How could case management add additional outcomes and activities to include safety and health (physical and mental)?
		☐ How could case management focus on mental health screening, referrals and increasing comfort with therapeutic interventions?
		☐ What is the connection between this work and other YouthLink programs (i.e. the Life Transitions program)?
		☐ How does a young woman exit/graduate from case management?
		
		What training does staff need to be able to move from current practice to best practice?

YouthLink S.I.S.T.E.R.S. Project

Stated Program Component	Current (Actual) Practice	Best Practice

Overall Program Design
S.I.S.T.E.R.S. is a program within YouthLink focused on the unique needs of sexually exploited youth.
	Overall Program Design
	S.I.S.T.E.R.S. is a program within YouthLink focused on the unique needs of sexually exploited youth. It is not clear exactly who is in the SISTERS program, e.g. young women who are on Lindsey's caseload? Young women who participate in group? Young women co-case managed by Lindsey and other YouthLink staff?
		Issues surrounding sexual exploitation are deliberately embedded / integrated into broader YouthLink services.
		Key Considerations:
		1. Who is considered to be a part of S.I.S.T.E.R.S.?
		  • Young women who participate in the S.I.S.T.E.R.S. group?
		  • Young people (girls and boys) on Lindsey's caseload?
		  • Any young person at YouthLink at high risk of sexual exploitation?
		  • Other?
		2. How do young people enter and exit S.I.S.T.E.R.S.?
		3. How can YouthLink integrate needs of sexually exploited youth into all of their programming? Is this a realistic and/or desirable goal?

Training Plan
Professional Development/Training Ideas for Meeting the Needs of Sexually Exploited Youth

Core Training Topics
These topics will become part of core training for all staff at The Bridge and YouthLink. They will be offered as stand alone training, integrated into new staff orientation and/or addressed during reflective supervision.

- □ Primer on sexual exploitation of homeless youth
- □ Strategies for communicating with youth about sexual exploitation – *Messaging and the power of language*

Additional Training Topics
This is a sample of the topics that may be offered to program staff as part of ongoing staff development.

- □ Housing youth involved in sexual exploitation
- □ Male involvement in sexual exploitation (victims and perpetrators)
- □ Managing trauma (intervention and healing)
- □ Harm reduction – best practices
- □ Group therapy/facilitation - best practices
- □ The power of peers – engaging peer influence as a positive strategy
- □ Motivational interviewing; solution focused approaches
- □ Special needs of LGBT youth
- □ Integrating substance abuse treatment and support within current programming
- □ Reflective practice and supervision

Trainer Resources

Local Resources

Cordelia Anderson, MA
Prevention Consultation & Training, Founder Sensibilities, Inc.
Chair, National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Exploitation
4405 Garfield Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55419
612-824-6217 / cordelia@visi.com
www.cordeliaanderson.com
Topics: A wide variety of issues related to sexual exploitation of youth

Walter Bera, PhD
Director, Kenwood Therapy Center, LLC
2809 South Wayzata Blvd, Minneapolis, MN 55405
612-377-9190 / walterbera@visi.com
www.kenwoodcenter.org
Topics: A wide variety of issues related to sexual exploitation of youth

Bravada Garrett-Akinsonya
Brakins Consulting & Psychological Services
13805 60th Ave N, Plymouth, MN 55446-3583
763-522-0100 / bravadaakinsanya@hotmail.com
Topics: Trauma and healing

Center for Victims of Torture
Alison Beckman
717 E River Pkwy, Minneapolis, MN 55455-0337
612-436-4845 / abeckman@cvt.org.
Topics: secondary trauma; reflective practice

Rainbow Health Initiative
http://www.rainbowhealth.org
Topics: LGBT Issues

District 202
1601 Nicollet Avenue South Minneapolis, MN 55403
612-871-5559 / youth@dist202.org
Topics: LGBT issues

National Resources

Young Women's Empowerment Project
773.728.0127
www.youarepriceless.org
Topics: A wide variety of issues related to sexual exploitation of youth

ReThink Resources
Claudine O'Leary
Chicago, Illinois
414.374.7525,
www.rethinkresources.net
claudine@rethinkresources.net
Link to recent workshops and projects http://www.rethinkresources.net/about/current-projects/
Topics: A wide variety of issues related to sexual exploitation of youth

Appendices

Annotated Literature Review

Consultants searched Medline, PubMed and Google using terms: *Prostitution, Runaway, Youth, Juvenile, Sexual Exploitation, and/or Homeless.*

The Advocates for Human Rights (2008). *Sex Trafficking Needs Assessment for the State of Minnesota.* www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org
- Provides linkages between varied forms of exploitation and recommendations based on findings.

Auerswald, C.L.; Sugano, E; Ellen, J.M. & Klausner, J.D. (2006). Street-based STD testing and treatment of homeless youth are feasible, acceptable and effective. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 38(3):208-212.*
- Successful model due to culturally competent staff, collaborative model between a University project and the PHD, and relationship with homeless youth programs.
- Considerations for service design and outreach strategies: Field-delivered testing and field-delivered therapy are feasible, acceptable and effective interventions for the diagnosis and treatment of STDs in homeless youth.

Brandon, D.L. & Marshall, E. W. (2009). Sex Work and Sex Exchange among Street Children: An Urgent Need for a Global Response. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 44(3):201-202.*
- Research is limited.
- Exchange of sex for resources for homeless children varies from 10-50%.
- Considerations for service design and outreach strategies: Educational intervention is not enough…need systems to address myriad of social, cultural and economic factors that structure and produce the conditions in which street children must turn to sex work for survival.

Brawn, K.M. & Roe-Sepowitz, D (2008). Female juvenile prostitutes: Exploring the relationship to substance use. *Children and Youth Services Review, 30(12) 1395-1402.*
- Risk factors for prostitution: homeless experience, family backgrounds of low socioeconomic status, chaotic and ineffective parenting, engagement in early sexual experiences and experiences of sexual abuse
- The majority of past studies have suggested that drug and alcohol use was the motivating factors for the entry of female juveniles into prostitution.
- The study found specific differences between substance using female juvenile prostitutes and non-substance using female juvenile prostitutes. Among these were differences in race, a significant lack of parental control, negative and delinquent peer relationships, and poor school adjustment.
- Considerations for service design and outreach strategies: parental control and supervision, peer associations, school adjustment, and mental health and trauma are major factors which should be addressed in the treatment and supervision of juvenile female prostitutes in efforts to reintegrate these youth into society.
- All juvenile female prostitutes are not substance users and some should be provided with substance abuse treatment and non-users should be provided with substance abuse prevention programming.
- Family involvement, parent training, and development of social supports should also be emphasized in practice.

- Outreach programs to juvenile female runaways, along with family treatment, could provide these girls with the opportunity to work out their familial conflict, return to the home, and prevent prostitution solicitation or the engagement in sex work for survival on the streets.
- In-school prevention programs for those considered at-risk for running away from home or involvement in prostitution based on the risk factors such as poor school adjustment, poor parental control within the home, substance use and delinquency problems could be beneficial as well. In addition, outreach in the community about the seriousness of the problem
- Community presentations and workshops could foster increased knowledge about this societal issue and aid in the development of effective programs.

Cochran, B.; Steward, A.; Ginzler, J; & Cauce, A. (2002). Challenges Faced by Homeless Sexual Minorities: Comparison of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Homeless Adolescents with their Heterosexual Counterparts. American Journal of Public Health, 92(5): 773-777.
- GLBT youth left home for similar reasons to Heterosexual peers, left home more often than peers and experienced victimization more often than peers.
- GLBT youth report 7.4% more sexual victimization than heterosexual youth.
- Higher rates of substance use, more psychopathology, and riskier sexual behavior.
- Considerations for service design and outreach strategies: focus on preventing initial and recurrent episodes of homelessness by providing therapy to families on sexual identity development.
- Assessments should ask about sexual orientation.
- Consider homophobic constructs including etiology and maintenance of substance abuse problems.
- Encourage acceptance of sexual minorities among staff and youth in shelters.

Coward Bucher, C.E. (2008). Toward a Needs-Based Typology of Homeless Youth. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 42(6): 549-554*.
- "Current strategies for helping homeless youth tend to emphasize housing and family reunification without sufficient attention paid to other barriers to housed society"
- Paper suggests a matrix of 4 service clusters: 1. Minimal treatment (18%), 2. therapeutic housing with emphasis on addiction (21%), 3. therapeutic housing with emphasis on behavior management (21.5%) 4. Comprehensive treatment (38%).
- Considerations for service design and outreach strategies: need for multi-system services that include counseling for chemical dependency and mental health, family intervention, and safe spaces or alternative housing for abused children, as well as behavioral intervention strategies to address involvement in criminal activities

Edinburgh, L; Saewyc, E; Thao, T; & Levitt, C. (2006). Sexual Exploitation of Very Young Hmong Girls. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 39(1):111-118*.
- "The Hmong community blame the woman or girl for any sexual assault because she left home or put herself in a circumstance where she could be victimized. These cultural beliefs may make it even more difficult for a victim to disclose abuse. "
- Hmong girls were more likely to run away from their home than other peers. This study found that running away usually preceded the extra-familial sexual assault. Sexual assault usually more severe than other peers.
- Clear association between running away and risk of subsequent sexual assault and sexual exploitation.
- Considerations for service design and outreach strategies: Law enforcement are in a position to respond to and identify runaway fits at risk for sexual violence. Interagency connections between lay enforcement involved with runaways and health care providers who have the expertise to evaluation for sexual abuse may increase opportunities to intervene. Train health care providers in assessment and screening practices.

Estes, R., and Weiner, N. (2001) Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the US, Canada and Mexico. U of Pennsylvania. http://www.sp2.upenn.edu/~restes/CSEC_Files/Exec_Sum_020220.pdf
  - Pimps are an omnipresent reality among street girls and girls that are trafficked as part of regional and national sex rings. Boys, on the other hand, rarely have pimps.
  - Most children recruited by organized crime groups are runaway and homeless youth. Most are recruited by same-sex peers, though adults play a very active role in managing the peer recruiters through the provision of financial and drug incentives.

Fedina, L: Trease, J; Williamson, C. (2008). Human Trafficking in Ohio: A Resource Guide for Social Service Providers for Social Service. http://www.secondchancetoledo.org/guide.htm.
  - Interviewing Questions for Possible Victims of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking
  - <u>Considerations for service design and outreach strategies:</u> When child-victims of commercial sexual exploitation come to the attention of authorities, the public often regards them as teenage prostitutes, but this is not an accurate description. Rather, when a minor, with few visible choices, sells sex at the hands of an exploitative adult, it is generally a means of survival….It is important that victims of CSEC are not mistaken for offenders.

Hoyt, D.R.; Ryan, K.D.; & Cauce, A.M. (1999) Personal victimization in a high-risk environment: homeless and runaway adolescents. *J Res. Crime Delinquency,* 36:371-392.
  - Involvement in deviant activities enhances the risk of victimization. There is a reciprocal nature of deviance and victimization among homeless youth.
  - Decreased guardianship and increased exposure to deviance increases risk of victimization. More time on streets associated with increase risk. Increased internalization = increased risk. Prior victim of assault = increased risk.
  - <u>Considerations for service design and outreach strategies:</u> Intensive case management increased guardianship protective factor and decreased victimization risks for females.

Garrett, S.B.; Higa, D.H.; Phares, M.M.; Peterson, P.L.; Wells, E.A.; & Baer, J.S. (2008). Homeless youths' perceptions of services and transitions to stable housing. *Evaluation and Program Planning,* 31(4): 436-444.
  - Barriers to service use among homeless young people include distrust or dislike of staff, restrictive rules, unrealistic expectations, unsafe or unsuitable environments, and excessive access requirements.
  - Service providers who are open, accepting, and caring; as well as, offering practical help, being unobtrusive and not approaching youth too soon or too often were especially noted as helping young people engage in services.
  - Restrictions in shelters was seen as a barrier. Age restrictions were concerning as youth can age or of services and be ineligible.
  - Sense of pride of self reliance to living on the street.
  - <u>Considerations for service design and outreach strategies:</u> Need to support autonomy and independent functioning while also providing safety and resources in ways broader communities will support.
  - Design interventions that utilize strengths associated with autonomy and assisting young people in developing bonds with their housed peers.

Goulet, L.; (2001) Out from the Shadows: Good Practices In Working with Sexually Exploited Youth in the Americas *The Institute for Child Rights and Development (ICRD), University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.* http://web.uvic.ca/iicrd/graphics/Out%20from%20the%20shadows.pdf
- Identifies seven critical elements that are integral to good practices in working with sexually exploited children and youth.
- <u>Considerations for service design and outreach strategies:</u> The decision to exit the trade requires both a clear personal decision and community support to sustain the process of recovery. Immediate access to safe shelters, ongoing economic, psychological and emotional assistance, practical life skills training and affordable education are all necessary to take advantage of this window of opportunity.

Greene, J.; Ennett, S.; & Ringwalt, C.L. (1999). Prevalence and Correlates of Survival Sex Among Runaway and Homeless Youth. *American Journal of Public Health*, 89(9): 1406-1410.
- 27.5% "street youth" had engaged in survival sex compared to 9.5% of "shelter youth."
- "Engaging in survival sex increased for those whom had been victimized, participated in criminal activities, those with suicide attempts, those with STDs and those who had been pregnant. IV substance use had the greatest correlation to increases in survival sex."
- <u>Considerations for service design and outreach strategies:</u>

Lindsey, E.; Kurtz, P; Jarvis, S; Williams, N; & Nackerud, L. (2000). How Runaway and Homeless Youth Navigate Troubled Waters: Personal Strengths and Resources. Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 17(2): 115-139.
- Protective factors relating to success transition: Changing attitudes/behavior and learning new things about themselves and learning from the resources and help provided. Self-confidence, self-care strategies, learning to love and respect who they are and goal-setting. Being considerate, taking responsibility, distinguishing right from wrong, getting along with others, learning to trust, accepting help, learning from mistakes, character judge and avoiding bad influences.
- Successful transition was attribute highly to the recognition of how their own personal strengths and internal attributes and developing a sense of spirituality.
- <u>Considerations for service design and outreach strategies:</u> Program activities and goals should include focus on the above listed protective factors.

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (2002). *Female Juvenile Prostitution: Problem and Response.* www.missingkids.com
- Innocence lost initiative: "addressing the growing problem of domestic sex trafficking of children in the United States."
- Listing of Programs: http://www.missingkids.com/missingkids/servlet/PageServlet?LanguageCountry=en_US &PageId=1496

Partners for Violence Prevention (2009). *Safe Harbors Youth Intervention Project (SHYIP) – Guidelines for Working with Homeless, Runaway and Sexually Exploited Youth*
- Includes protocol guidelines for various disciplines including shelters, drop-in centers and street outreach.
- <u>Considerations for service design and outreach strategies:</u> Includes assessment questions

Rew, L; Taylor-Seehafer, M.; Thomas, N; & Yockey, R. (2001). Correlates of Resilience in Homeless Adolescents. Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 33(1): 33-40.
- Reasons youth were homeless: thrown out (51%), parental disapproval of drug use (37%), parental abuse (31%)…47% reported sexual abuse history.

- Resilience in homeless youth may be a different phenomenon than for other youth. Homeless youth are self-reliant but often feel lonely and isolated.
- <u>Considerations for service design and outreach strategies:</u> Need to address underlying concerns about why they are homeless. Traditional youth development attempts to build resilience may or may not be applicable to homeless youth.

Slesnick, N.; Dashora, P.; Amber Letcher, A.; Erdem,G. & Serovich, J. (2009). A review of services and interventions for runaway and homeless youth: Moving forward. *Children and Youth Services Review, In Press, Corrected Proof, Available online 2 February 2009*.
- Seminal piece evaluating varied interventions for all homeless youth.

Solorio, M.R.; Rosenthal, D.; Milburn, N.G.; Weiss, R.E.; Batterham, P.J.; Gandara, M. & Rotheram-Borus, M.J. (2008). Predictors of Sexual Risk Behaviors among Newly Homeless Youth: A Longitudinal Study. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 42(4): 401-409.*
- Living with non-family members and drug use appear to be the most salient in explaining sexual risk among newly homeless youth.
- <u>Considerations for service design and outreach strategies:</u> findings indicate that interventions aimed at reducing sexual risk behaviors, and thereby reducing sexually transmitted diseases and HIV among newly homeless youth, need to help youth in finding housing associated with supervision and social support (family and institutional settings) as well as aim to reduce drug use.

Toro, P.A.; Dworsky, A. & Fowler, P.J. (2007) Homeless Youth in the United States: Recent Research Findings and Intervention Approaches. National Symposium on Homelessness Research 2007. Retrieved 4/23/09 from http://www.huduser.org/intercept.asp?loc=/publications/pdf/p6.pdf
- Provides an overview of the issue of homeless youth and explores intervention practices.

Tyler, K.; Whitbeck, L; Hoyt, D; & Cauce, A.M. (2004). Risk Factors for Sexual Victimization among Male and Female Homeless and Runaway Youth. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 19(5): 503-520.
- 64% if homeless females reported victimization by either a friend or acquaintance. Whereas, homeless males reported 59% reported victimization by a stranger.
- "For females, age, first run away and higher rates of hard drug use were predictors of sexual victimization by strangers. On the other hand, deviant survival strategies, participation in survival sex and being physically well-groomed significantly correlated to being victimized by friends or acquaintances."
- "Males who identified as gay or bisexual were 5 times more likely to be victimized by a friend/acquaintance."
- <u>Considerations for service design and outreach strategies:</u> education about risk of friend/acquaintance victimization with homeless youth. Education/Message to males and females differently.

Williams, Linda; Powell Andrea (2008) Pathways into and out of Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Preliminary Findings and Implications for Responding to Sexually Exploited Teens http://www.fairfund.org/Pathways_111808.pdf
- Provides summary of findings and preliminary recommendations of a an in-depth, field-based study designed to understand the victims' perspectives; and identify the factors (individual, family, peer, school, and community contexts) associated with the commencement of CSEC, that surround its maintenance and escalation; and impede or empower exiting from or overcoming exploitative situations.

The Power of Language
Creating Effective Messages about Sexual Exploitation

It was clear from the literature review and interviews with local professionals, that service providers lack a common language for talking about sexually exploited youth. Given the power of language, these inconsistent messages can lead to misunderstanding of the issue, missed opportunities to engage involved youth, and less effective advocacy for public and private support.

The language we use to describe behaviors (prostitute vs. prostituted; pimps vs. exploiters) impacts how youth, providers, community members, policy makers, etc. think about sexually exploitation and the kinds of policies and support services that exist to meet the needs of sexually exploited youth. Well meaning professionals often avoid the issue as they don't have the words, understanding or skills necessary for effective communication.

In response, YouthLink and The Bridge for Youth plan to create clear messages/language about sexual exploitation.

- **For youth** - to increase awareness about sexual exploitation; create opportunities for connection with community resources; and to let them know that The Bridge and YouthLink are safe places to talk about this issue.

- **For staff** - to use when they meet with any young person; to increase opportunities for engagement with youth involved or at risk of sexual exploitation; to guide what they say to young people regarding sexual exploitation; to use in outreach materials regarding prevention and harm reduction; and to display in public spaces to let youth know that caring adults are there to support them.

To do so, they will utilize messages that have been developed by other organizations nationally, work with local programs to find common ground, and craft language that reflects their goals, values and youth they serve.   What follows are examples of messages used by other programs serving sexually exploited youth.

Sample Messages

Young Women's Empowerment Project: www.youarepriceless.org

General messages for youth:
- You are not alone **–** girls everywhere do what they need to do to survive.
- Girls get involved in the sex trade for a lot of reasons. It can be as simple as needing a place to stay or more complicated like being forced by someone you know.
- We all deserve respect.
- You have the right to say no. You have the right to healthy, accurate information about sex, drugs, and your body.
- Don**'**t let what you do define who you are **–** you are creative, intelligent, beautiful and worth something.

Harm reduction messages written by girls for girls involved in trading sex for money or survival needs:
- Safety 1st, Get the money 2nd, then have sex
- Wear shoes you can run in
- Work with a buddy
- Tell someone where you are going, have a safety signal with friends so if you don't come back - they know what to do
- Have someone write down information like license plate numbers or addresses, or pretend someone is doing that in front of the guy.
- Drink lots of water - pee a lot – before and after sex, it helps prevent infections
- Trust your instincts
- Use condoms as much as you can
- Take care of yourself first
- Find someone you can trust to talk with
- Go to a clinic if you are in pain or if you think something is wrong

Messages for providers:
- Girls do not "seek out" abuse. Girls do what they need to do to survive.
- We don't want girls to "be saved." We are here to support young women in making decisions about their lives.
- Sexism, racism, classism, and homophobia intersect and deeply affect the trade and girls and women who are involved. We can't talk about the trade without talking about these issues.
- Solidarity with boys/men/transgender persons involved in the trade. This issue isn't only about women and girls.
- Do not assume you can tell if someone has been involved. Ask and listen first.
- Provide options; don't just say it's wrong. Young people feel bad enough already – they need real options and resources.
- Youth are NOT the source of the problem. Adults create the demand, control the money, make home life unsafe to the point that youth need to leave, sexualize youth instead of providing real opportunities and don't care enough about youth to stop.
- Exit from the sex trade is a process. The need to deal with emotions and life issues, the need for survival, job possibilities and life skills and the need to find support to make that change all take a long time. There are no quick changes or magic words.
- Every participant is smart and can contribute to the program. People don't need to be sober or out of the trade to express their thoughts and feelings, help out, or learn.

Sample Messages (cont.)

Center for Missing and Exploited Children: www.missingkids.com

Messages from a series of ads on sexual exploitation

Message: "Prostitution is a terrible life. Especially when you're 13 years old."
http://www.missingkids.com/en_US/documents/Ad_13yrs_8.5x11.pdf

Message: "This year his charm will lure 10 kids into prostitution, and his fist will keep them there." http://www.missingkids.com/en_US/documents/Ad_Fists_8.5x11.pdf

Rethink Resources, Inc.: http://www.rethinkresources.net/

The words you use make a difference. Rethink your ideas about youth in the sex trade.

Youth with life experience/Experiential youth: Many advocates outside the U.S. use this term when referring to youth who are or have been in the sex trade. It encourages seeing youth as whole people first who also have expertise from their life history.

Involved in or impacted by the sex trade: Another way to talk about how the sex trade can be a part of you but it doesn't have to define you as a person.

National Institute of Justice (2007)
"Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: What Do We Know and What Do We Do About it?"

When child-victims of commercial sexual exploitation come to the attention of authorities, the public often regards them as teenage prostitutes, but this is not an accurate description. Rather, when a minor, with few visible choices, sells sex at the hands of an exploitative adult, it is generally a means of survival….It is important that victims of CSEC are not mistaken for offenders.

Guidelines for Crafting Effective Messages

Below are guidelines for crafting effective messages. They outline a process for framing an issue - for developing language that communicates what you hope to say to different audiences. This general process can be adapted to create messages directed at youth, providers, policy makers or the community-at-large.

1. Be clear about your communications *goals*: know what you are trying to accomplish. Be as specific as possible.

2. Define your *audience(s)*.

3. Determine why they should care about this issue.
   • What are their *concerns* -- what about this issue is important to them?
   • What core *values* in your audience do these concerns speak to?

4. Articulate your *message* in a short paragraph that answers these questions:
   • Why is this issue important for your audience? (Refer to the values and concerns.)
   • What action would you like them to take? (Give people something to do.)

5. Rewrite those messages using *language* that speaks to your audience.

6. Choose how you will **deliver the message** (e.g., poster, pamphlet, person-to-person, media, etc.) Your choice of *messenger* depends on your message and your target audience.

7. Be ready with *anecdotes*, i.e. real, human stories to illustrate and amplify your message.

8. Use *images* to tell your story as well as words, but make sure your *facts* are handy.

9. Distill the essence of your message into a *slogan*, a media "hook" or a sound bite that succinctly communicates your essential action.

10. Determine how you will get this message to your target audience. What are the *points of access* to this particular audience -- mass media, community organizations, groups, street outreach, the web, etc.?

Adapted from: Message Development Workshops for the Biodiversity Project. project@biodiverse.org

PowerPoint Presentation

Working Together

meeting the needs of sexually exploited youth

THE BRIDGE FOR YOUTH

Youth Link

CHILDHOOD
WORLD CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION
FOUNDED BY H.M. QUEEN SILVIA OF SWEDEN

Project Overview

◻ World Childhood Foundation joint planning grant
   ◻ Strengthen services within each organization
   ◻ Create opportunities for collaboration

◻ Sexually Exploited Youth

Young people who are trafficked or prostituted, involved in pornography or stripping, victims of rape or incest, or engaged in survival sex, i.e. the exchange of sex for money or other considerations (e.g., food, shelter, drugs, etc.) – "doing what is necessary" to ensure their survival.

3 Project Phases

1. Assessment
2. Program Design
3. Action Plans
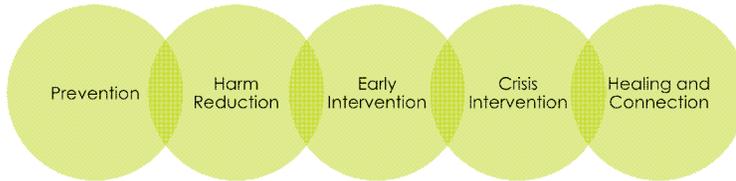
ASSESSMENT

- Interview key stakeholders
- Review research and literature
- Identify and examine existing program models
- Survey providers and youth

Themes of Best Practice

1. Provide a Continuum of Services

"It's not that we aren't doing the right thing…it's that we aren't doing it enough."
   - Stakeholder interview

Themes of Best Practice (cont.)

2. Focus on needs of youth who are exploited, as well as those at risk of exploitation

3. Provide access to safe and immediate shelter

4. Address substance use and provide treatment options

5. Utilize the power of peer influence

Themes of Best Practice (cont.)

6. Engage youth in leadership opportunities

7. Use common language and appropriate messages

8. Train, support and supervise staff; include opportunity for reflective practice

PROGRAM DESIGN

◻ Identify current practices aligned with "best practice"

◻ Consider areas for program improvement
   ◆ Individual
   ◆ Collaborative

◻ Brainstorm opportunities for collaboration

◻ Reach consensus on collaboration plan

ACTION PLANS

Collaboration Plan

◻ Integrate existing services to create a comprehensive program model including group, case management, therapy and housing

◻ Provide opportunities for peer education and leadership

◻ Create clear messages and language

◻ Train staff on "best practice"

◻ Present project findings to community

ACTION PLANS

Collaboration Plan (future opportunities)

◻ Expand housing options

◻ Identify strategies for young men & LGBT youth

◻ Enhance services for substance use/abuse

ACTION PLANS

Individual Organizational Plans

- ◻ The Bridge for Youth

- ◻ YouthLink S.I.S.T.E.R.S. Project

CLARIFY CURRENT PRACTICE → BEST PRACTICE → IDENTIFY GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Conclusion

- ◻ Grant offered opportunity to reflect, refocus and re-engage collaboratively

- ◻ Sexual exploitation is a challenging & complex issue that requires multi-faceted response

- ◻ Plans are set and work has begun…
  continued support is necessary for success!

Contacts

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