Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

2016 National Sexual Assault Conference
Washington, D.C.
September 1, 2016

NSVRC
national sexual violence resource center

PCAR
PENNSYLVANIA COALITION AGAINST RAPE

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PENNSYLVANIA COALITION AGAINST RAPE

Help • Hope • Healing

Founded in 1975, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) partners with organizations and individuals at the state and national levels to better respond to and prevent all forms of sexual violence. PCAR works with its network of 50 sexual assault centers throughout the Commonwealth to raise public awareness, support victims and significant others, change public policy, and create materials that help communities prevent sexual violence.

NSVRC

national sexual violence resource center

Established in 2000, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) created under the umbrella of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) primary goals are to provide a central location for easy access to information and resources pertaining to all aspects of sexual violence; to highlight successful and innovative work and prevention initiatives occurring throughout the country; and to facilitate connections between anti-sexual violence advocates. NSVRC's primary customers are State and territory anti-sexual assault coalitions, local rape crisis centers, national allied organizations, tribal entities, state departments of health, media and policy makers.

Our time together...

- Identify commonly held beliefs & stereotypes that promote CSEC.

- Identify intersections between CSEC and other areas of work.

- Identify 3 ideas or new knowledge to implement in your work.

Think about it: Language

- What images or words come to mind when you hear the word "teen prostitution?"

- What images or words come to mind when you hear the words "Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children?"

Think about it: Language

Child/Teen Prostitute

- Resistant
- "Easy"
- Drug abuse/Addict
- "Making money"
- Choice
- Involved with the system(s)
- "Ho" "Slut"
- Stilettos/mini-skirts/fishnets

Who's problem?
Law enforcement

Sexually Exploited Child

- Needs help
- Victim
- Vulnerable
- Abused
- Neglected
- Controlled by an adult
- Trapped

Who's problem?
Everyone's

Changing our Language

- Reframes the issue as a form of child abuse.

- Expresses the philosophy that sexually exploited children deserve support services instead of jail sentences.

- More accurately represents the scope of the issue and the reality of exploited youth's experiences.

- Creates a common language to move toward facilitating a community response plan.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children is...

Sexual activity involving a child in exchange for something of value, or promise thereof, to the child or another person or persons.

Treating a child as a commercial and sexual object.

A form of violence against children.

CSEC includes...

- Street exploitation
- Pornography
- Stripping
- Erotic/nude massage
- Escort services
- Phone sex lines
- Private parties
- Gang and organized crime-based exploitation
- Familial pimping
- Forms of Internet-based exploitation

CSEC Facts

A study in San Francisco of 149 youth identified as commercially sexually exploited children found that:
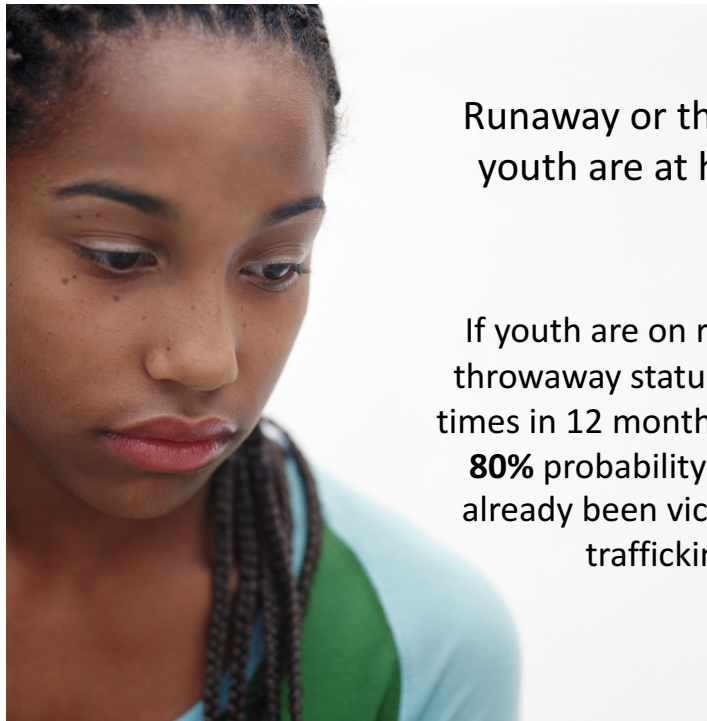
- 61% of the youth had been raped one or more times
- 55% were foster care youth from group homes
- 82% had previously runaway from home multiple times
- 60% had previously been arrested for solicitation

(Brantley, 2009)

Risk Factors

Youth at risk for recruitment into CSE:
- Are under 18 years old
- Walk to school or to the store alone
- Own or have access to a computer
- Are attracted to consumer goods
- Desire to develop romantic relationships
- Sometimes feel insecure
- Feel misunderstood
- Fight with their parents
- Sometimes feel their parents don't care
- Want more independence
- Test boundaries and take risks

Runaway or throwaway youth are at high risk.

If youth are on runaway or throwaway status 4 or more times in 12 months there is an **80%** probability they have already been victims of sex trafficking.

(Fassett, 2011)

What contributes to these risks?

Individual:

Events & characteristics of an individual's life

Environmental:

An individual's neighborhood or community

Social:

Ways in which our society promotes or perpetuates sexual exploitation
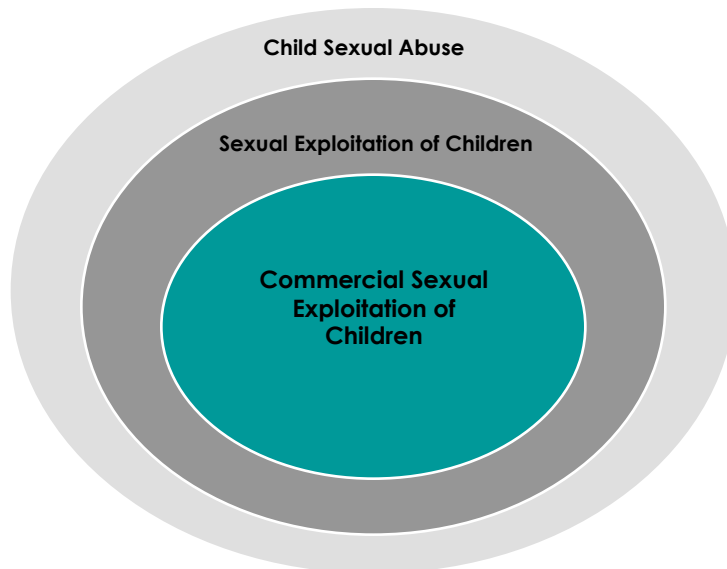
Activity:
Case study

Approximately
90%
of youth who
runaway from home
or foster care are
fleeing physical or
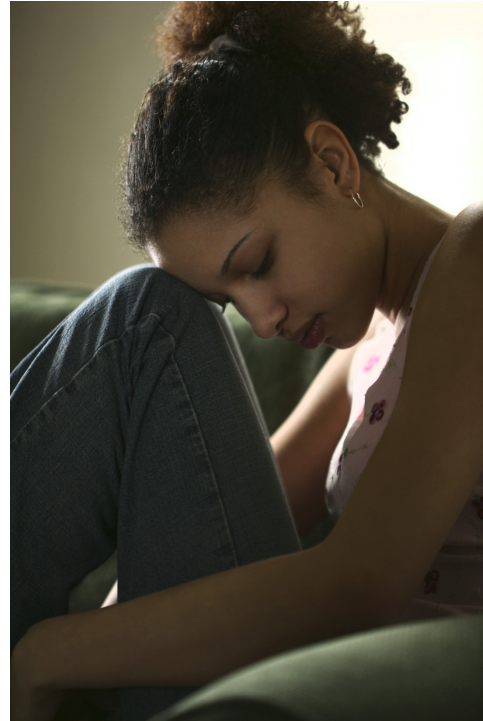sexual abuse in the
home.

(Sedlak, Finkelhor, Hammer & Schultz, 2002)

Intersections of Abuse

Child Sexual Abuse

Sexual Exploitation of Children

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

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Identifying
Commercially
Sexually
Exploited Youth

How do you identify CSE victims?

If the age of the individual has be identified to be **under 18**, and the individual is <u>in any way involved in the commercial sex industry</u>, or has a <u>record of prior arrest for prostitution</u> (or related charges), then he or she **is a victim of commercial sexual exploitation**.

Identifying CSE Youth

- Most sexually exploited youth have been trained to <u>lie about their age</u>. Sometimes a youth's appearance and/or actions can contradict the information they give. Be sensitive to **clues in behavior or appearance that could indicate that a child is underage.**

- **Personal information** – such as: age, name, and/or date of birth – **might change** with each telling of his or her story, or the **information given might contradict itself.**

- **Has no identification** or is not in control of his or her identification documents.

Identifying CSE Youth

- **Physical and sexual violence** are the everyday reality of many sexually exploited youth and may leave visible signs of abuse**,** such as: unexplained bruises, blackeyes, cuts, or marks.

- Exhibit behaviors including fear, anxiety, depression, submission, tension, and/or nervousness.

- Exhibit "hyper-vigilance" or **paranoid behavior.**

- Sexually exploited youth often express interest in, or are in relationships with, adults or older men**.**

- **Truancy or tardiness** from school

Identifying CSE Youth

- Evidence of **controlling or dominating relationships,** including: repeated phone calls from a "boyfriend" and/or excessive concern about displeasing partner.

- Unexplained shopping trips or possession of expensive clothing, jewelry, or a cell phone could indicate the manipulation of an exploiter.

- Not in control of their own money.

- Use of **lingo or slang** from "the life" among peers, or referring to a boyfriend as "Daddy."

Identifying CSE Youth

- Wearing **sexually provocative clothing** can be an indicator of sexual exploitation. Sexually provocative clothing is not a warning sign in and of itself. Wearing new clothes of any style, or getting hair or nails done with no financial means to this independently, is a more general indicator of potential sexual exploitation.

- Unable to make **eye contact**

- A tattoo that he or she is reluctant to explain may be the result of tattooing or **branding by a pimp**. Pimps and other sexual exploiters often tattoo or brand youth and youth, particularly girls. Youth are commonly branded with their exploiter's name tattooed on the neck, chest, or arms.

Identifying CSE Youth

- Has an **explicitly sexual online profile** via internet community sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Snapchat, KiK, YouTube.

- **Excessive frequenting of internet chat rooms** or classified sites**,** such as Backpage.com, Craigslist, known for recruitment.

- Doctors and nurses can consider **frequent or multiple sexually transmitted infections** (STIs), pregnancies or abortions a warning sign.

- Homeless, runaway, group home children

Discussion:

Have you seen these warning signs in clients/young people in your life?

Are there any other red flags you've seen?

Pathways to entry

Ways recruitment can happen:

- Parents selling children
- Violence and force
- Kidnapping
- Seduction and coercion
- False advertising for "modeling," "acting," or "dancing" opportunities
- Peer recruitment
- Internet enticement through chat rooms or profile-sharing sites
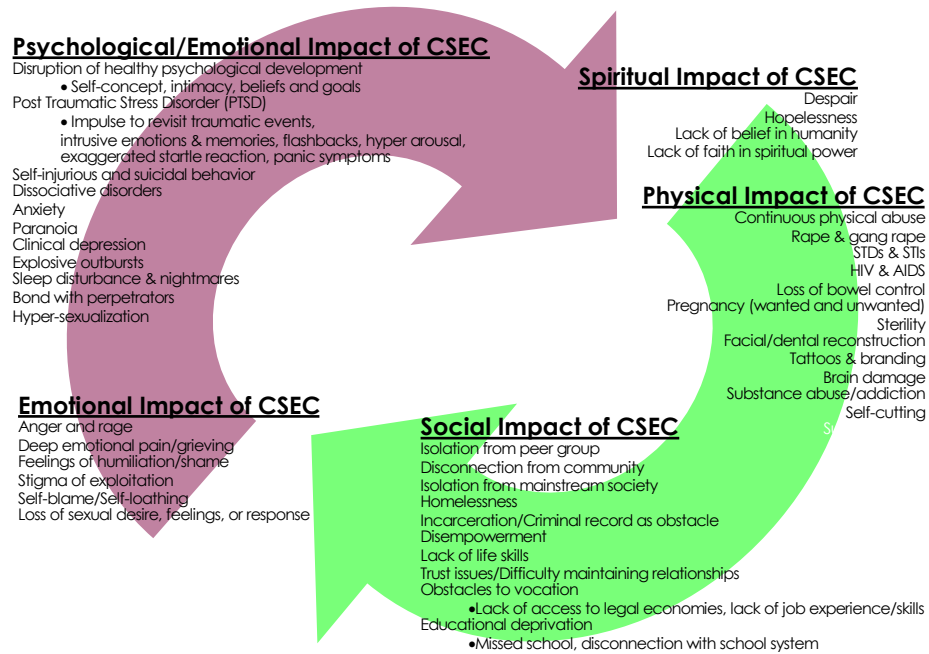
America's daughters
http://youtu.be/aTAVZChvLR4

(Polaris, 2014)

Impact of CSEC on Society

- Impacts the local economy- tax payers dollars
- Decreases safety in neighborhoods
- Links to other types of crime: guns, drugs, organized crime
- Promotes negative images for youth
- Creates demand, a need for supply, and increased recruitment of youth
- Directly exposes youth to CSE locations
- Creates danger for youth
- Costs resources of social service and healthcare systems
- Costs resources of law enforcement and court systems
- Contributes to long-term impacts of prostituted adults and costs to systems

Discussion:
What impact does this level of violence and abuse have on youth?

Psychological/Emotional Impact of CSEC
Disruption of healthy psychological development
• Self-concept, intimacy, beliefs and goals
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
• Impulse to revisit traumatic events,
intrusive emotions & memories, flashbacks, hyper arousal,
exaggerated startle reaction, panic symptoms
Self-injurious and suicidal behavior
Dissociative disorders
Anxiety
Paranoia
Clinical depression
Explosive outbursts
Sleep disturbance & nightmares
Bond with perpetrators
Hyper-sexualization

Spiritual Impact of CSEC
Despair
Hopelessness
Lack of belief in humanity
Lack of faith in spiritual power

Physical Impact of CSEC
Continuous physical abuse
Rape & gang rape
STDs & STIs
HIV & AIDS
Loss of bowel control
Pregnancy (wanted and unwanted)
Sterility
Facial/dental reconstruction
Tattoos & branding
Brain damage
Substance abuse/addiction
Self-cutting

Emotional Impact of CSEC
Anger and rage
Deep emotional pain/grieving
Feelings of humiliation/shame
Stigma of exploitation
Self-blame/Self-loathing
Loss of sexual desire, feelings, or response

Social Impact of CSEC
Isolation from peer group
Disconnection from community
Isolation from mainstream society
Homelessness
Incarceration/Criminal record as obstacle
Disempowerment
Lack of life skills
Trust issues/Difficulty maintaining relationships
Obstacles to vocation
•Lack of access to legal economies, lack of job experience/skills
Educational deprivation
•Missed school, disconnection with school system

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Rules of the Game

Try to imagine trying to cope with all of this at once…

- Constantly having to lie about your age
- All of your identification is taken away
- Having to change your name
- Constantly moving wherever someone else wants to
- Being kidnapped
- Being raped, repeatedly
- Being beaten for not making enough money
- Having to give all the money you make away
- Having threats made against your family
- Having to completely change your appearance
- Getting a tattoo on your neck of the name of the person who constantly abuses you
- Being constantly threatened with violence
- Living with a group of people you call "family" who you could never depend on for support
- Feeling trapped in an abusive and violent situation

Rules of the Game

- Not being allowed any contact with the world outside of your abusive situation
- Not being able to make eye contact with men other than the one who abuses you
- Having to call a man who is not your father, who abuses you, "daddy"
- Being punished and beaten when someone else breaks an abuser's "rules"
- Having to meet a nightly quota based on how much money you make for having sex
- Having to compete for attention from your abuser with five other girls
- Having sex with strangers every night
- Getting an STD
- Getting arrested again and again
- Having to trade sex with a police officer in exchange for not getting arrested
- Being beat up by a group of 5 pimps for looking one in the eye

...at only 13 years old.

Discussion:

Meeting the needs of Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth

What needs are met by being in "the life?"

What needs are *not* met by being in "the life?"

Tangible Needs

- Crisis housing
- Longterm housing
- Food
- Clothing
- Education
- Job or income
- Viable alternatives for employment
- Transportation

- Legal representation and/or advocacy
- Opportunities to develop new skills and strengths
- Medical and/or dental care
- Health education
- Mental healthcare
- Counseling and/or case management
- Safety plan

Intangible Needs

- Safety
- Protection
- Nonjudgmental environment
- Respect
- Acceptance
- Engagement in positive community
- Healthy adult relationships
- Mentors and/or positive role models
- Supportive peers
- Understanding of the recovery process

- Affirmation of skills and strengths
- Recognition of abuse and trauma
- An opportunity to not be defined solely by abuse and trauma
- Options
- A sense of empowerment in one's own healing and restoration process
- Political education to understand the issue of CSE
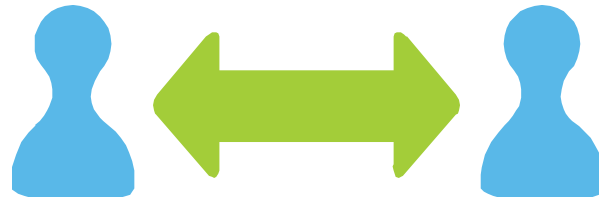- Youth leadership opportunities
- Love & Holistic care

Discussion

What personal and professional skills can you offer to help meet CSE youth's needs?

How would you (or do you) offer these skills in a way that specifically serves CSE youth?

How can you collaborate with another professional field/community partner to better meet youth's needs?

Working with Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth

Working with CSE Youth

- **DO** meet a sexually exploited youth where they are and on their terms. They may not present themselves as a victim or identify their situation as exploitation.

- **DO** recognize the various symptoms of trauma exhibited and coping mechanisms used by a CSE youth that may not be those one typically associates with victims.
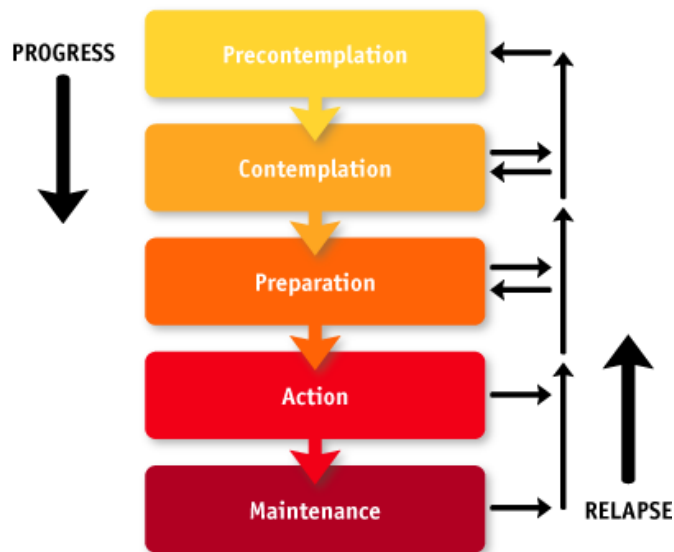
Working with CSE Youth

- **DO** be **nonjudgmental** when listening to a sexually exploited youth.

- **DO** keep the youth **talking** and make him or her feel comfortable (emotional & physical safety).

- **DO** improve a systematic response to CSEC by creating inter-agency relationships to comprehensively address needs.

Discussion:
Are there other engagement strategies you've used with CSE youth that have worked?

Working with CSE Youth: Stages of Change

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Stages of Change
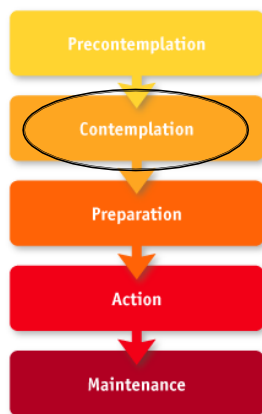
- Precontemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance

- Denies being sexually exploited
- Discloses involvement in the life, but doesn't see it as a problem
- Defensive
- Does not want your help

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Stages of Change

- Precontemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance

- Being in the life is painful & not what they want for themselves
- Not ready to leave, but processing the effects of the abuse
- Open to talking about feelings and weighing consequences

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Stages of Change

Precontemplation

Contemplation

Preparation

Action

Maintenance

- Has made a commitment to leave
- Begins to "test the waters" around leaving
- Taking small steps to be able to leave
- Is open to available resources
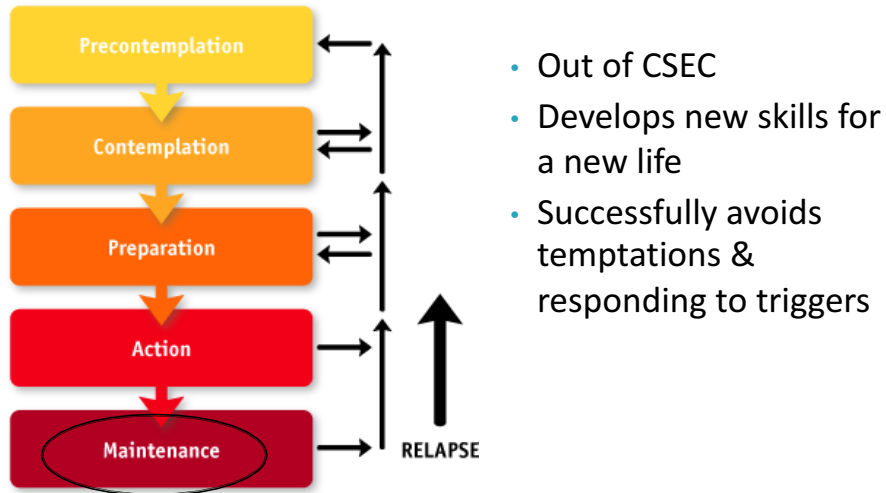
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Stages of Change

Precontemplation

Contemplation

Preparation

Action

Maintenance

- Leaving the life

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Stages of Change

- Out of CSEC
- Develops new skills for a new life
- Successfully avoids temptations & responding to triggers

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Activity:
Case study continued

What Youth Say Works

What do these comments tell you about how to engage with and support CSE youth?

How do these comments speak to your capability to meet the needs of CSE youth?

Essentials of
service delivery
for youth

Safe space: Physical safety

- Choose a safe location
- Install a security system
- Maintain a confidential address
- Recognize and respond to limitations of a confidential address: protocols around exploiters knowing location
- Set rules for appropriate conduct for youth
- Create a staff code of conduct/ethics and ensure training
- Create an inviting, youth friendly space
- Provide space for confidential interviews/counseling

Safe space: Emotional safety

- Appropriate music (do not play music that promotes sexual exploitation)
- Decorate the space with appropriate, informational, and/or inspiring images
- Use appropriate language (be especially sensitive to derogatory terms in reference to sexually exploited youth)
- Create policies that address recruitment in the agency
- Respect children's need for privacy and confidentiality
- Set protocols for counseling that ensures privacy and confidentiality (i.e. Door open or closed)
- Conduct mental health assessments
- Encourage and practice self-soothing/self-care for staff and youth
- Promote an inclusive and non-judgmental community
- Provide ongoing professional development opportunities to ensure a trained and sensitive staff

Cultural Competency

- Staff have a thorough understanding of impact, dynamics, and subcultures of CSEC
- Build on the cultural strengths of youth & incorporate these into programming
- Employ staff that speaks the language(s) of clients
- Print promotional materials in languages used in the community
- Make an effort to maintain a staff population that is representative of client population (consider gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation)

Cultural Competency

- Support survivor voices and/or work with survivors of CSEC
- Work with a CSEC victim as a whole person, not just a victim of abuse.
- Accommodate mental health services to ensure they are sensitive to cultural/community perception of mental health care
- Take into account community relationships with outside agencies when building relationships
- Celebrate and foster diversity in your agency (staff and youth populations)

Youth Development

- Believe that all sexually exploited youth have the ability to be leaders
- Infuse programming with youth leadership opportunities
- Give youth ownership of aspects of program planning
- Provide age appropriate, engaging, and youth friendly activities
- Provide a continuum of services to meet immediate and long term needs

Youth Development

- Address all areas of adolescent development in programming: physical,
- Cognitive, psychosocial
- Offer access to diverse learning experiences
- Create opportunities for youth to learn and master new skills
- Focus on providing opportunities for youth to build healthy self esteem
- Foster a sense of belonging and importance in the community
- Create opportunities for investment and empowerment within the community

Resources

Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4-A-Child

Covenant House:1-800-999-9999

Girls Education and Mentoring Services (GEMS) http://www.gems-girls.org/

GEMS Stages of Change in CSEC Counseling *(WCSAP Connections Magazine, Summer 2011)*
http://www.wcsap.org/sites/wcsap.org/files/uploads/resources_publications /connections/Commercial_Sexual_Exploitation_of_Youth_2011.pdf

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children: 1-800-THE-LOST

National Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-800-373-7888

References

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Fassett, Byron. (2011, June). Dallas Police Department High Risk Youth Initiative.

Polaris Project http://www.polarisproject.org/index.php

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