

C.T.D. Grant

Project Abstract

The Collin County Juvenile Probation Department is seeking to continue with the community-based services and projects to work with juveniles who have been referred for offenses with an emphasis on those who have been subjected or who are at high-risk of commercial sexual exploitation. Juveniles who are referred for offenses are often detained in the detention center, as the county is currently in the first year of the diversionary program for these at-risk youth, there has been an increase in numbers. The level of offense (runaway, truancy, signs of violence, etc.) are often found to be early indicators for youth being victims of human trafficking in the juvenile justice system. While the Collin County Juvenile Probation has successfully implemented departmental protocol and policy to screen and identify youth for commercial sexual exploitation, this program will look to expand operational capacity to identify even more victims of trafficking which has become a nationwide epidemic. More importantly, the program will look to serve as an early intervention program to provide appropriate services to keep them from being referred into the criminal justice system and divert them all together. Children, especially those with histories of runaway, truancy, expulsion, sexting, signs of violence (cuts, bruises, burns on child's body) or electronic transmission of certain material depicting minors, etc., and those involved in foster-care are exponentially more likely to be trafficked than other similar youth. Even tattoos used from "branding" being found on youth, sometimes in inconspicuous locations on youth's bodies have become common place. Our program will focus on early identification by using a multidisciplinary agency developed screening tool focusing on risk factors, in conjunction with applicable youth being screened via the Commercial Sexual Exploitation Tool, commonly referred to as CSE-IT, a validated risk-assessment tool specifically designed to identify victims and potential victims of sex-trafficking. Once youth are appropriately identified, the program will provide youth with community based services with an emphasis on comprehensive victim's service care coordination. These services may include but not be limited to medical and therapeutic services and intervention, educational services, clothing and school supplies, intensive-community-based case management services to establish wraparound support for ongoing success and long-term community-based placement. The program will use a multidisciplinary approach to service delivery, working with all community-based stakeholders serving youth throughout the community. This diversionary program will provide trafficked youth with needed services as opposed to criminalizing actual victims who are often detained in juvenile detention centers. This program will provide law enforcement a safe and services-based alternative to refer these youth as opposed to referring them to juvenile detention. Juvenile detention is the probation department's most cost-prohibitive service and should not be the only resort for short-term intervention and/or punishment for actual victims. The C.T.D. Program will foster a safe environment for exploited and vulnerable youth to build community and healthy relationships, gain new knowledge, cultivate leadership abilities, and access resources. Through these community based program activities, youth learn to connect and collaborate with others, uplift their voices and express their truths, explore their passions and interests, access safety and healing, and develop the confidence, knowledge, and self-advocacy skills that empower them to lead healthy lives.

Problem Statement

Every day in the United States, children and adolescents are victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Sex trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud,

or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act is under the age of 18 years (Center For Family Services, 2020). While there is no consensus on the number of minor sex trafficking victims in the United States, there is clear consensus that the impact of this crime on the victims is devastating. Girls who have been trafficked experience physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual repercussions from the trauma of sexual exploitation.

One out of eight endangered runaway youths is likely a victim of human trafficking (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2019).

There are no exceptions: No cultural or socioeconomic rationalizations may prevent the rescue of children from sexual servitude. The use of children in the commercial sex trade is prohibited both under U.S. law and by statute in most countries around the world. Sex trafficking has devastating consequences for minors. (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2019).

Victims often present with following health-related issues:

- Physical health problems associated with beatings and rapes, including broken bones and the need for wound care;
- Reproductive health problems, including exposure to HIV and other STDs, pregnancies, and fertility issues;
- Malnutrition
- Mental health problems, including PTSD and somatic complaints (headaches, chronic pain) resulting from the trauma;
- Alcohol and other drug use, as well as addiction.

Mental Health Symptoms resulting from repeated abuse include but are not limited to the following:

- Extreme anxiety and fear;
- Changed relationships with others (including the inability to trust);
- Self-destructive behaviors (including suicide attempts);
- Changed feelings or beliefs about oneself (including profound shame and guilt)
- Changed perception of the perpetrator (including establishing a traumatic bond); and
- Despair and hopelessness.

(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Heather J. Clawson, Ph. D. and Lisa G. Grace, LICSW, Finding A Path To Recovery).

(National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2020)

The Collin County Juvenile Probation Department deals with the ongoing mental health and psychological trauma caused by trafficking on a daily basis. The Collin County John R. Roach Juvenile Detention Center is a secure facility designated for both pre-adjudication and post-adjudication detention services. The facility currently designates 60 of its 144 beds to post-adjudication services. During the past fiscal year, the department was able to substantiate more than 25 cases or a staggering 30% of youth being served in post-adjudication having been subjected to commercial sexual exploitation. While youth were not committed to post-adjudication as a directly related consequence to being victims of trafficking, the trauma caused by it and the lack of a more concerted and focused

trauma-informed and intensive services approach contributed to the traditional juvenile services model being ill equipped to keep these youth shallow in the system. Over the past fiscal year, the juvenile detention facility has seen the need for mental health intervention and case management increase exponentially. Although clinical programming and therapeutic services are readily available, the trauma these trafficked-youth have been subjected to manifests in self-harming behavior and acts of violence toward others, even staff members. When a child acts out self-harming behaviors, departmental policy and state statute requires one-on-one supervision until an appropriate mental health intervention can be facilitated. From 2014 to 2021, the juvenile probation department has seen more than a 900% increase in youth requiring suicide-mental health intervention, with children who have been subjected to human trafficking being a very common thread.

Some examples of warning signs that Collin County Detention Center has been exposed to with children who have been subjected to sexual exploitation/human trafficking are the following:

- Thinking about or attempting suicide
- Self-harming (harming and hurting others)
- Poor Mental Health
- Going missing from home or care/runaways
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Anger control issues
- Attention deficit/impulse control issues
- Physical injuries
- Misuse of drugs or alcohol
- Involvement in offending
- Absenteeism from school
- Deterioration in physical appearance
- Evidence of online sexual bullying
- Evidence of vulnerability on social networking sites
- Emotional distance from family members
- Coached or rehearsed responses to questions
- Appears overly frightened, annoyed, resistant, or belligerent to authority figures
- Uncharacteristic promiscuity and/or references to sexual situations or terminology beyond age-specific norms
- Tattoos (a form of branding) displaying the name or moniker of a trafficker, such as "daddy"

(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, 2020), (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2020), and (National Human Trafficking)

Supporting Data

Human trafficking is the world's fastest growing criminal enterprise, valued to be an estimated \$150 billion a year global industry. After drug trafficking, human trafficking is the world's second most profitable criminal enterprise, a status it shares with illegal arms trafficking. Sex trafficking can and does take place in every community, no matter the cultural make up, the affluence, or the location of a

community. No community is immune from being affected by the exploitation of commercial sexual activity. Due to recent legislative changes and the public becoming more informed regarding commercial sexual exploitation of children, the state legislature introduced and passed legislation eliminating prostitution from the juvenile delinquency offense code. Although juveniles can no longer be charged with prostitution, other offenses and patterns of juvenile delinquency have been proven to be an overwhelming correlation to victimization and risk of human trafficking, especially the CINS offense of Runaway. This correlation proves even stronger when a child has multiple Runaways and is even more exacerbated with foster-care system involvement. In fiscal year 2021 (September 1, 2020 – August 31, 2021), the Collin County Juvenile Probation Department received 50 referrals for Runaways. Departmental data shows 70 of the youth had no prior adjudications while 16 had a previous adjudication before the juvenile court. Ages of youth referred ranged from 13 to 16, with white males making up the bulk of the sample. This data is not surprising as females are not exclusive victims of commercial sexual exploitation and the department has multiple substantiated cases of male victims. Even more telling, without a diversion alternative program for Collin County, more than 36% of these youth spent time in the juvenile detention center, including those who were identified as trafficking victims but also had other delinquent conduct pushing deeper into the traditional juvenile justice system. Finally, 15 youth within the sample or 17% were referred to detention for multiple Runaway referrals with one youth being referred a staggering nine (9) times during the review period.

1. "Collin County QuickFacts." State and County QuickFacts. US Census Bureau. [Accessed January 14, 2022]. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48/48085.html>.
2. Texas Crime Report for 2016. Texas Department of Public Safety. [Accessed Jan 25, 2018]. <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/administration/crime>.
3. Collin County Juvenile Probation Departmental Database/Numbers, September 1, 2020-August 31, 2021.
4. www.justice.gov (Sex-Trafficking Law Enforcement Task Force).

Project Approach & Activities

Youth between the ages of 10-17 years of age who are referred to the juvenile probation department will be immediately screened for trafficking by trained staff with the CSE-IT risk instrument. Potential program candidates may be referred through a myriad of referral sources with law enforcement being the likely primary referral source. Law enforcement agencies will be able to refer youth for screening directly to the juvenile probation department through their traditional avenues including an actual arrest to the detention center for offenses or other delinquent conduct. Law enforcement may also make referrals to the department for youth at-large; police report filed with the department without arrest. This may be the case when a child is an active Runaway and their whereabouts are currently unknown. Schools, parents, and others may also make referrals throughout the community consistent with the traditional juvenile justice system. Youth referred to the juvenile detention center will be screened for human trafficking victimization by trained staff using the CSE-IT risk-assessment tool. Most importantly, youth will no longer require a formal referral for delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision (CINS) for screening and services. All program youth will be assigned to a Liaison who will initiate immediate contact with the youth and their family (if applicable) parent or custodial caretaker for program screening and potential program intake. In order to be consistent with intensive case management best practice fidelity, the liaison will have a caseload not to exceed 30 program

participants at any given time. Program intake will include the collection of demographic information and the explanation of program services, goals, and objectives, with victims of trafficking being provided victim's services and support, as opposed to a traditional juvenile services response, which contains a punitive connotation and element. Youth who are identified as having been trafficked and those subject to being at high-risk for trafficking will be referred to the C.T.D. diversion program to receive community-based services through care coordination with the Collin County Children's Advocacy Center.

The Liaison will foster care coordination for victims to include family advocacy and victim support, mental health services, medical evaluations, forensic interviews, etc. Needed services will be facilitated through a Multidisciplinary framework with the Collin County Children's Advocacy Center (CACCC), the Juvenile Court, and other community stakeholders. The Liaison will also serve on the county's Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) with the Collin County Children's Advocacy Center. The Liaison will ensure an individualized and comprehensive treatment and services plan is developed with participating youth and their family, including but not limited to medical, therapeutic, education, vocational, wrap-around services development. The Liaison will provide direct case management support to participating youth and families as needed, attend all MDT staffing, and provide program services update to the juvenile probation and the juvenile court for case diversion. All program participants and their families deemed appropriate for program services will be assigned a therapist for victim and family counseling. All program youth will receive a triage of needed services as opposed to incarceration and the traditional juvenile justice service model. The services will be tailored to the youth's needs and build on the child and family's strengths. The services will address the voids in the child's life that the exploiter filled – which will be basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing. The case manager will use all information gathered from assessment to tailor services to the child's needs. All program youth will attend school according to their educational needs, receive individual, group, and family counseling, and be linked to community-based linkages for additional services and supports on a daily basis.

Capacity & Capabilities

The mission of our training program is to cultivate practitioners who are compassionate, confident, and armed with the tools necessary to address the complex issues affecting as well as impacting victims. All staff have been and will continue to be trained in understanding sexual exploitation, the realities of prostitution and sex trafficking, the methods of recruitment, the physical/psychological impact of the trauma, safety planning, stages of change, best practices for intervention and response, advocacy and case management, potential methods for exit, an overview of youth development programming, and appropriate boundaries and healthy working relationships. It is of primary importance that staff truly understand minor victims of sex trafficking and the impact of their life experience. Staff will be consistent, nonjudgmental, and treat victims with the utmost respect. Staff will also be able to assist victims in the program by providing the following services: Basic needs; Intensive case management; mental health counseling/treatment; Medical screening/routine care; Life Skills and job training programs; Youth development programming; Education and Family involvement/reunification. The program will maintain collaborative networks with agencies such as victim advocacy groups, local community mental health agencies, local health agencies, local health clinics, local businesses, vocational support services, schools, and police (Collin County will be collaborating with the following but not limited to: Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County; Direction Aging Out Foster Youth Thriving as Adults; etc.). The program will also provide intensive case management services. The staff will coordinate service delivery, ensure communication among providers internally and externally;

ensure follow up of any recommended assessments or services; act as an advocate for client with medical professionals, courts; aid in the development and coordination of treatment plans; and ensure communication with family etc. The Licensed Therapist (one will be hired) will provide behavioral health services. The therapist will be licensed/certified, have experience in working with victims (of sexual exploitation) trauma, have strong multicultural counseling, etc.

Performance Management

Program goal will be to serve a minimum of 30 youth identified as victims or potential victims (high risk) of trafficking via the Validated Risk Instrument (CSE-IT). Objective 1: Ensure 75% of youth identified and served do not receive any additional referral for offenses which increases the chances of trafficking while in the program. Objective 2: Ensure 75% of youth identified and served are placed in long-term community based, family or custodial kinship placement and working toward academic achievement or appropriate job placement upon program completion. Offenses will be tracked via the department's case management software applications, Techshare Juvenile Case Management System. The software applications also provides a platform (Noble Software Application) to enter all CSE-IT screenings and account for recidivism rates to track program success, number of youth screened, identified, and served in the program. The department's case management system also tracks and records all demographic information for youth including race, age, gender and educational status.

Target Group

The C.T.D. Program staff will serve any victim with the main focus being youth between the ages of 10-17 years of age and victims of commercial sexual exploitation/human trafficking. The program will not discriminate in service delivery for any victims pursuant to race, gender, religion or sexual orientation. The Collin County Juvenile Probation Department will be collaborating with other agencies and stakeholders working with program youth on a daily basis. One of them being The Collin County John R. Roach Juvenile Detention Center, a secure facility designated for both pre-adjudication and post-adjudication detention services. The facility currently designates 60 of its 144 beds to post-adjudication services. During the past fiscal year, the department was able to substantiate more than 25 cases or a staggering 30% of youth being served in the post-adjudication program having been subjected to commercial sexual exploitation. While youth were not committed to post-adjudication as a directly related consequence to being victims of trafficking, the trauma caused by it and the lack of a more concerted and focused trauma-informed and intensive services approach contributed to the traditional juvenile services model being ill equipped to keep these youth shallow in the system, let alone divert them altogether as this program is focused, evidenced-based, and trauma informed has left youth who are victims of human trafficking to fall through the cracks and be subjected to punitive punishment as opposed to receiving needed treatment and services. The need for mental health intervention and case management for identified youth has increased drastically. From 2018 to 2021, the juvenile probation department has seen more than a 900% increase in youth requiring suicide-mental health intervention, with children who have been subjected to human trafficking being a very common thread. The program will work closely with the Collin County Children's Advocacy Center (CACCC) and The Collin County Multidisciplinary Team (MDT). Additionally, the program will work to ensure ongoing public awareness and education by ensuring literature regarding warning signs of human trafficking, and more importantly, the availability of this program to provide services for children who may be victims of human trafficking be readily available to the Collin County community. This will include adding programming information to the Collin County Juvenile Probation Department web pages and sending program literature to all local law enforcement agencies and 17 school districts within the county.

Evidence-Based Practices

Harvard Business Review Evidence-Based Practice: Effective treatments for victims of sex trafficking/commercial sexual exploitation, indicates that the mental health needs of this population may be similar to other groups who have experienced complex trauma (e.g., victims of child sexual abuse, torture, etc.). Service providers will be expected to adopt and utilize evidence-based treatments that best suit the needs of children who are victims of sex trafficking/commercial sexual exploitation. The therapist and case manager will adopt and utilize the evidence-based treatments that best suit the needs of children who are victims of sex trafficking/commercial sexual exploitation.

They will be able to choose and incorporate the following Therapeutic services/models:

- Family therapy
- Group therapy
- Individual therapy
- Survivor Engagement
- Substance abuse
- Support System
- Case management
- Treatment planning (Safety planning/ongoing treatment, etc.)
- Alternative therapies (art therapy, music therapy, drama, community service projects, etc.)

Collin County, uses the CSE-IT tool, which has been proven to be an evidence-based tool to screen and identify potential victims of sex trafficking. Research has shown these children are actual victims and should not be funneled through the traditional juvenile justice model wherein they are subject to additional trauma. The program will also ensure all staff working with program youth are fully trained in TBRI (included in the program budget). Collin seeks to be the first Texas County of any size to implement a fully integrated trauma-informed juvenile justice system wherein all stakeholders working with at-risk youth are fully engaged Trauma informed and TBRI practitioners: All juvenile probation staff, contract service providers, collaborating, partnering educational staff working with departmental youth, juvenile court judges and entire judicial staff, etc. Additionally, youth who are referred will be receive intensive community-based case management services by trained staff wherein an individualized case plan will be developed using the Pact Assessment Tool to identify carcinogenic risk factors and needs for evidence-based services delivery. These strategies have proven to reduce recidivism for youth and families.