The StreetWorks Tool Kit:
A Best Practice Certification for Working with People At-risk of or Experiencing Homelessness and/or Sexual Exploitation

Trainee Workbook
2nd Edition July 2019

WALKING ALONGSIDE YOUNG PEOPLE
Acknowledging and Honoring their Individual Journeys

Lutheran
Social Service
of Minnesota

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION TO STREETWORKS OUTREACH WORKER CERTIFICATION TRAINING CURRICULUM

Letter from the Director

Having experienced homelessness and housing instability myself for many years of my adolescence, I know first-hand what an enormous impact a relationship with a caring, healthy adult can make in a youth's life.

While homeless, my street family and I regularly frequented two small drop-in centers in the Twin Cities, both current partner organizations with StreetWorks. Drop-in centers during those days were nothing fancy—programs operated on shoestring budgets. Fortunately, the most important thing they gave to us required no money. It was the positive, impactful, authentic relationships that were developed with us, despite our tough exteriors and difficult situations, that helped me to see myself through a different lens and helped me envision a new reality and changed the course of my life.

Relationship development is the very heart of our work at StreetWorks.

Once I got back on my feet, I had the honor of being a StreetWorks Outreach Worker for six years of my career. This experience reinforced that authentic relationship development is the linchpin to interrupting sexual exploitation and homelessness.

The theme of relationship development is interwoven throughout this manual. While the skills developed here are intended for outreach workers, our hope is that other youth-work staff will be able to glean important skills from this as well. Despite the fact that these skills are presented in the context of training youth workers, they are skills that are valuable outside of this field; skills like active listening, cultural responsiveness and positive youth development, which is actually positive HUMAN development.

In 2015, I had the privilege of stepping into the role of Director of Metro Homeless Youth Services and the StreetWorks Collaborative. Because of my personal experiences, I have a huge passion for this work and have spent my career dedicated to creating new realities for youth experiencing homelessness and exploitation. I am enormously thankful to the youth we serve and the numerous outreach workers, past and present, who do this difficult work with pride and passion every day. I learn new things from these individuals continuously.

StreetWorks couldn't do this work without the efforts of an entire community of like-minded individuals, committed to ending homelessness and sexual exploitation for youth. Outreach is life-changing work and I am honored to partner with this amazing Collaborative.

With Gratitude,

Jen Fairbourne
Director of Metro Homeless Youth Services, including The StreetWorks Collaborative
Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

HISTORY OF THIS PROJECT

This project was made possible through a Safe Harbor grant funded through the Minnesota Department of Human Services Office of Economic Opportunity, as a way to ensure outreach workers are effectively trained in responding to youth who are at-risk of, or who have been, sexually exploited.

A Background and Summary of Safe Harbor

In 2011, Minnesota became the fifth state in the nation to pass Safe Harbor legislation decriminalizing prostitution charges for youth under the age of 18. Through a statewide multidisciplinary collaborative process, Minnesota developed one of the most comprehensive models for responding to the commercial sexual exploitation of youth: No Wrong Door. Minnesota's No Wrong Door Response Model creates a statewide infrastructure for service delivery, specialized housing and shelter, training for systems professionals, and the development of community-specific protocols across the state. In 2016, the age of eligibility to receive Safe Harbor services was increased to include at-risk and sexually exploited youth ages 24 and under.

Working definition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Youth (who is eligible for services): Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Youth (CSEY) occurs when someone 24 or under engages in commercial sexual activity. A commercial sexual activity occurs when anything of value or a promise of anything of value (e.g., money, drugs, food, shelter, rent, or higher status in a gang or group) is given to a person by any means in exchange for any type of sexual activity. A third party may or may not be involved.

Key Points

Safe Harbor is structured under MN Department of Health, which offers a public health and public safety focus. A public health focus encourages victim-centered and harm-reduction services, also allowing for prevention efforts. This view shifts the criminal justice focus to the perpetrators, such as the buyers and the traffickers, instead of on the exploited youth.

No Wrong Door Model has a multidisciplinary and multijurisdictional approach. This ensures that no matter where a youth is identified, whether through schools, advocacy groups, clinics, child protection, law enforcement, or other avenues, every professional will be able to identify exploitation and will know where to refer the youth for services.

Values and philosophies of No Wrong Door Response Model
- Those who come into contact with youth should be trained to identify exploitation.
- Youth who are sexually exploited are victims of a crime.
- Victims should not feel afraid, isolated or trapped.
- Sexual exploitation is traumatic. Victim-centered services should be based in trauma-informed care.
- Services should be responsive to needs of youth (gender-responsive, culturally competent, age appropriate, and supportive for LGBTQ youth).
- Services should be offered statewide.
- Youth have a right to privacy and self-determination.
- Services should be based in positive youth development.
- Sexual exploitation can be prevented.

Regional Navigators stationed throughout the state can help professionals with technical assistance, connect youth with services, provide professional and community trainings and assist with protocol development.

Outreach plays a critical part of the No Wrong Door Response Model implemented in Minnesota, addressing needs by meeting youth where they are at, connecting them to needed resources including basic needs, case management, the Regional Navigator, and shelter/ housing, as well as educating the broader community to raise awareness of this epidemic and engage everyone in the fight to end sexual exploitation of youth.

Outreach workers may be the first point of contact for many youth and can assist in numerous ways, even if youth aren't ready or willing to access mainstream resources. Outreach workers are the safe, adult presence on the streets, helping build trusting relationships with youth that may have had trust destroyed by other adults in their life.

Through the Facilitator's Guide, Outreach Worker Field Experience Work Book, Supervisor's Handbook, numerous handouts and accompanying videos, this project ensures an evidence-based, comprehensive, skills-based certification process for outreach workers both within the StreetWorks Collaborative, as well as in other communities.

HISTORY/BACKGROUND OF THE STREETWORKS COLLABORATIVE

StreetWorks Collaborative (SWC) provides a coordinated intervention to meet the immediate needs of runaway youth and youth experiencing homelessness. We aim to interrupt exploitation by providing valuable resources, connection to services, and regular interaction with a trustworthy adult. Our collaborative model has proven to be an effective way to conduct coordinated outreach across a broad metro area.

StreetWorks has provided street-based outreach to youth ages 14-24 experiencing homelessness and sexual exploitation in the Twin Cities Metro since 1994. StreetWorks became an official program of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota in 2015, and remains committed to the collaborative approaches that ensure our success. There are currently 14 partners combining efforts to meet the needs of youth in our community through street and site-based outreach. We are the largest outreach collaborative in Minnesota serving homeless youth.

StreetWorks Collaborative Mission/Purpose/Values:

Mission — We provide collaborative leadership, outreach, education, and systems reform, as we walk alongside young people at-risk of, or experiencing homelessness and exploitation.

Primary Purpose — To empower, connect and support young people in making lasting change in their lives and communities.

We Believe – As a collaborative, StreetWorks believes that youth are resilient, full of hope, dreams, and potential – having the ability to succeed in life despite their histories of abuse, exploitation, neglect, and /or abandonment.

LSS/StreetWorks and our partners were part of a collaborative process to shape and develop the *"9 Evidenced Based Guiding Principles to Help Youth Overcome Homelessness"* to ensure that programs and services offered to young people through SWC are:

1. Journey-Oriented
2. Trauma-Informed
3. Non-Judgmental
4. Harm Reduction
5. Trusting Youth-Adult Relationships
6. Strengths-Based
7. Positive Youth Development
9. Collaboration
https://tinyurl.com/yas6eolo

All of these principles, as well as cultural responsiveness, are woven throughout this entire curriculum.

SWC's Three Primary Goals:

Goal 1. Serving Youth: Provide high quality outreach to runaway and homeless youth at risk of, or currently experiencing, homelessness and/or exploitation. Fostering self-advocacy and self-sufficiency, SWC empowers youth to meet their own needs. Our primary purpose is to walk alongside young people, meeting them where they are and acknowledging and honoring their individual journey.

Goal 2. Leading the Collaborative: Provide leadership, technical assistance, training and support to members and other youth-serving agencies by providing space for sharing, networking and collaboration. We define "collaboration" as a meaningful, valuable, action-oriented, mutually beneficial relationship that empowers us all to better serve young people than we could alone.

Goal 3. Impacting the Community: Engage members, partners, youth and the community to effectively steer public perception of the problem of homelessness and sexual exploitation and ensure that policy, funding opportunities and community strategies more accurately reflect the strengths and barriers of the youth we serve. By acting as a collaborative, our collective voice will reach more people with greater credibility.

Current SWC Structure:

- Functioning as a collaborative led by LSS staff - Director of Metro Homeless Youth Services, Senior Program Manager of StreetWorks, Senior Training Manager, Training Specialist and the StreetWorks Collaborative Administrators.
- The Collaborative consists of member agencies, collaborative partners, supporters, and the broader community.
- Guidance and oversight are provided by an Advisory Committee comprised of Directors from member and partner agencies.
- Leadership and insight are provided by Outreach Workers, including peer outreach workers and peer interns and their Supervisors through ongoing communication and monthly collaborative meetings.

Membership:

SWC has many diverse partners and members. Membership consists of working collaboratively to develop best practices, participating in various training opportunities, attending monthly informational meetings, and coordination of geographic outreach areas and schedules to ensure the most consistent services for youth. In some, but not all cases, SWC Members may also be sub grantees of LSS. However, membership is open to all youth-serving agencies throughout the metro (and beyond).

SWC membership is a model based on the desired level of engagement of SWC Members, Collaborative Partners and Supporters. Agencies choose their own level of engagement based on the criteria noted below, and can move from one level to another as needed and appropriate.

The Member and Partner Agencies of StreetWorks currently include:

- Ain Dah Yung Center
- Avenues for Homeless Youth
- The Bridge for Youth
- Catholic Charities – Hope Street
- Pillsbury United Community-Full Cycle
- Face to Face - SafeZone
- Hope 4 Youth
- The Link - C.O.R.E. drop-in center
- Lutheran Social Service-Metro Homeless Youth Services
- MoveFwd
- Oasis for Youth
- Salvation Army's Booth Brown House
- YMCA Youth Intervention Services
- YouthLink

STREETWORKS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Organizations and individuals that successfully support homeless youth take a principles-based approach to their work, rather than a rules-based approach. Principles provide guidance and direction to those working with homeless youth. They provide a framework for how we approach and view the youth, engage and interact with them, build relationship with them and support them.

The challenge for youth workers is to meet and connect with each young person where they are and build a supportive relationship from there. Principles provide the anchor for this relationship-building process. *[Source: 9 Evidenced-based Guiding Principles to Help Youth Overcome Homelessness, 2014]*

1. *Journey-Oriented:* Interact with youth to help them understand the interconnectedness of past, present, and future as they decide where they want to go and how to get there.

2. *Trauma-Informed:* Recognize that most homeless youth have experienced trauma; build relationships, responses, and services on that knowledge.

3. *Non-Judgmental:* Interact with youth without labeling or judging them on the basis of background, experiences, choices, or behaviors.

4. *Harm Reduction:* Contain the effects of risky behavior in the short-term and seek to reduce its effects in the long-term.

5. *Trusting Youth-Adult Relationships:* Build relationships by interacting with youth in an honest, dependable, authentic, caring, and supportive way.

6. *Strengths-Based:* Start with and build upon the skills, strengths, and positive characteristics of each youth.

7. *Positive Youth Development:* Provide opportunities for youth to build a sense of competency, usefulness, belonging, and power.

8. *Holistic:* Support youth in a manner that recognizes the interconnectedness of their mental, physical, spiritual, and social health.

9. *Collaboration:* Establish a principles-based, youth-focused system of support that integrates practices, procedures, and services within and across agencies, systems, and policies.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

The intended audience of this certification curriculum is new and/or existing youth outreach workers and/or other professionals who work with vulnerable populations.

Important Roles:

Facilitators

In this curriculum, the term "facilitator" is used to describe the people who will be conducting the training of workers using the StreetWorks Tool Kit: Best practices for Working with People At Risk of or Experiencing Homelessness and/or Sexual Exploitation.

Facilitators should:
- Have experience doing outreach work
- Become very familiar with the training materials before the first training session
- Have some familiarity with the community in which the trainee will be working

Facilitators will be responsible for:
- Presenting the classroom material
- Processing the observations and experiences of the trainees' field work with the trainee during the Classroom 201 sessions
- Reviewing and providing feedback on the written "homework" that trainees produce as part of their training

Field Trainers

Field Trainers are the workers that new trainees will job shadow as part of their Field Experience #1 and Field Experience #2 training. This person is intended to be an established worker, but could also be the facilitator themselves, a supervisor who has experience working with vulnerable populations on an individual and community level.

Field trainers should be pre-approved by the facilitator and the trainee's Supervisor. These trainers are responsible for taking the trainee into the field so that the trainee can observe and participate in outreach work in the community.

Trainers must be able to engage the trainee in dialog about the training concepts taught in all of the modules and be able to give constructive feedback to the outreach worker on their understanding of the concepts and their ability to put them into practice. Trainers will document their feedback for the trainees in the Trainee Field Work Handout Sheets, and provide any needed feedback to the facilitator before Classroom 201 sessions begin.

A handout with instructions for the Field Trainer is in the Appendix.

As part of this curriculum, a Supervisor Handbook has been created and is designed to give the worker's supervisor insight into the worker's unique role and instruction for the supervisor on how to provide support. The handbook introduces the StreetWorks Tool Kit Curriculum and the material that workers will cover as part of their initial training. The handbook addresses the organizational role in outreach, hiring practices, and best-practices for outreach programs.

PATH TO CERTIFICATION

The StreetWorks Outreach Worker Certification Training Curriculum is designed to bring trainees work through 5 interactive and experiential stages of learning and development. Each stage builds the skills necessary to enter into the next stage leading up to certification. Each stage and its intended outcomes are listed below.

Stage 1: Introduction to Concepts, Classroom 101 Sessions. In Stage 1, trainees will learn about outreach work and the role they play in a community response to help at-risk, sexually exploited and homeless youth. They will gain foundational knowledge about how to engage with youth safely and effectively. This will give them the general concepts needed before they go into the field for their first observation/shadow shifts. There are 8 separate 90-minute Classroom 101 sessions for a total of 12 hours.

Stage 2: Observation and Exploration, Field Experience #1. In Stage 2, trainees will observe the work of their seasoned outreach field trainer in their Field Experience #1, and will compare available community resources for a better understanding of where they might be referring youth. In Field Experience #1, trainees will schedule 3 shadow shifts with their outreach worker field trainer, of 4 hours each shift. They will also plan for at least 6 site visits (on their own, without their outreach trainer) to be scheduled before they move on to the next stage where they will reflect and learn from their past outreach experiences.

Stage 3: Reflection and Advanced Learning, Classroom 201 Sessions. In Stage 3, trainees will bring their Journals and Logbooks from their Field Experience #1 to Classroom 201 sessions and compare their experiences from the field with the concepts they learned in Classroom 101 sessions. They will also get a deeper, and more advanced understanding of the Classroom 101 modules. Through lecture, activities, case scenarios, and role playing they will be prepared for their more hands-on Field Experience #2. There are 8 separate 90-minute Classroom 201 sessions for a total of 12 hours.

Stage 4: Action and Application, Field Experience #2. In Stage 4, trainees will take a more active role in their training. Rather than observing, the trainee will take the lead in their shadow shifts and will practice relationship building with community partners. In Field Experience #2, trainees will schedule 3 shadow shifts of 4 hours each, with their outreach worker field trainer, and will plan for at least 6 site visits to work on building relationships with community partners.

Stage 5: Readiness Assessment, Certification. In Stage 5, the trainee, training facilitator, and supervisor meet to review the trainee's workbook assignments and journals. During this time, trainees receive feedback on their strengths and on which areas they need further support. Following the meeting, the trainee, the training facilitator, and their supervisor do a short outreach shift together to mark the final stage of certification. *It is important that the supervisor also participates in this final stage, to demonstrate the supervisor's involvement in the ongoing development of the outreach worker.

INTRODUCTION

Classroom 101
Sessions

8 separate 90-minute
Training Modules
(12 hours)

**OBSERVATION &
EXPLORATION**

Field Experience #1

3, 4 Hour
Shadow Shifts
Site/Drop-in Visits
(12 hours)

**REFLECTION &
ADVANCED LEARNING**

Classroom 201
Sessions

8 separate 90-minute
Training Modules
(12 hours)

**ACTION &
APPLICATION**

Field Experience #2

3, 4 Hour
Shadow Shifts
Site Visits/Partnerships
(12 hours)

**READINESS
ASSESSMENT**

Certification

Final Shift
(2 hours)

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

In the Facilitator's Guide, you will find:

- Core Information: "What You Need to Know." Content in this first section gives important researched-based information facilitators will need to know in order to facilitate the curriculum
- Detailed instructions and general information on how to facilitate both Classroom 101 and 201 sessions
- Classroom 101 and 201 training materials
- Appendix
- Youth Focus Group Report: *"What Youth Say"*
  - *Outreach Worker Field Trainer Handout*
  - *StreetWorks Greater Minnesota Focus Group Summary: Youth Experts and Service Providers – Research for StreetWorks Training Curricula and Regional Training Needs in Greater Minnesota*

Introduction to Youth Focus Group Report: "What Youth Say"

StreetWorks conducted a series of focus groups and interviews with sexually exploited youth to gain insight into their perceptions about street outreach, current trends in exploitation and knowledge about resources. Given the hidden nature of commercial sexual exploitation, it can be difficult to gain first-hand information, yet it is imperative to hear about experiences directly from youth to help understand key issues to improve programming and develop strategies for future outreach.

In addition, we intentionally sought out the participation of underserved and underrepresented populations. The report on these focus groups and interviews are provided in the Appendix and quotes from the youth are highlighted throughout the training guide. Thank you to Trudee Able-Peterson who facilitated these groups, and the courageous expert youth who participated in them, providing invaluable feedback to inform this work.

Introduction to the StreetWorks Greater Minnesota Focus Group Summary: Youth Experts and Service Providers – Research for StreetWorks Training Curricula and Regional Training Needs in Greater Minnesota

To expand support for youth experiencing homelessness in Minnesota, The StreetWorks Collaborative (StreetWorks), a Program of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, conducted focus groups at five sites in Greater Minnesota. The goal of these focus groups was to determine the needs of youth and youth workers in rural areas, and to gauge whether the StreetWorks Outreach Worker Curriculum designed for use in the Twin Cities could be adapted for use in Greater Minnesota. The focus group sites were Willmar, Duluth, Mankato, Brainerd, and Rochester, and took place between March and May of 2018.

The purpose of the research was to compare StreetWorks knowledge of youth outreach in the Twin Cities area to the needs and resources available in Greater Minnesota. Based on the findings, there is a significant need in Greater Minnesota for an effective training process for providers and other professionals who encounter youth in their work.

StreetWorks currently provides training and technical assistance to StreetWorks Outreach Workers, community partners, and other youth-serving providers in the Twin Cities metro area, and has modified its current curriculum to better serve Greater Minnesota.

FOUNDATIONAL MODULES OVERVIEW

The following graphic shows the topics that will be covered in the various Learning Modules. While the modules in Classroom 101 and 201 sessions are labeled the same, there is advanced information given in the 201 sessions. 201 sessions build off of information given in the 101 sessions as well as in the Field Experience learning. In Classroom 101 sessions, there is more teaching by the facilitator, whereas in 201 sessions, the trainees are learning more strategies and tools to think critically about implement their learning. The training topics are ordered in a specific way so certain points can be understood and highlighted in later modules.

INTRO

Introduction to Outreach, Working with Clients, and Safe Harbor
- StreetWorks Guiding Principles
- Safe Harbor and Local Resources
- Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking

MODULE 1

Module 1: Population and Barriers
- Stereotypes, Risk Factors and Vulnerability
- Impact of Homelessness and Sexual Exploitation
- Adolescent Brain Development and Traumatic Responses
- Barriers
- Holistic View using a Systems Approach

MODULE 2

Module 2: Cultural Responsiveness
- Culture, Biases, Oppression, Privilege
- Intersectionality
- Practicing Cultural Responsiveness

MODULE 3

Module 3: Community Partners
- Role of Community Partners
- Obvious and Less Obvious Partners
- Cultivating Community Partners

MODULE 4

Module 4: Boundaries
- Boundaries as Positive Guidelines
- Professional Relationships
- Complexities and challenges in Creating Positive Boundaries
- Building and Maintaining Boundaries Takes a Team

MODULE 5

Module 5: Safety
- Introduction to Safety
- Components of Personal Safety
- Awareness
- Safety Considerations for Youth

MODULE 6

Module 6: Engagement
- Dynamics of Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking
- Principles for Engagement
- Stages of Interactions
- Engagement with Community Partners

MODULE 7

Module 7: Harm Reduction
- The Harm Reduction Approach
- Philosophies with Harm Reduction
- Articulating Harm Reduction
- Harm Reduction and Vicarious Trauma

HOMELESS, AT-RISK/SEXUALLY EXPLOITED YOUTH STATISTICS

Homeless Youth in the U.S.

- It is difficult to accurately assess the numbers of homeless youth, and most studies agree that the number of homeless youth are greatly underreported.
- Many homeless youth go uncounted because they are "couch hopping," living with friends, relatives, or strangers for short periods of time, or living on the streets or abandoned buildings where they go mostly unnoticed.[1]
- An estimated 1.3 - 2.1 million youth experience homelessness each year.[2]
- Nearly 40% of homeless people in the United States are under age 18.[3]
- 50% of adolescents aging out of foster care and juvenile justice systems will be homeless within six months because they are unprepared to live independently and have limited education and no social support.[4]
- Homeless youth are at a higher risk for physical abuse, sexual exploitation, mental health disabilities, substance abuse, and death.[5]
- An estimated 5,000 unaccompanied youth die each year as a result of assault, illness, or suicide.[6]

Homeless Youth in Minnesota [7]

- Youth who are homeless and on their own tend to be some of the most difficult to find of those experiencing homelessness.
- Of all age groups, children and youth age 24 and under are the most likely to be homeless in Minnesota. This includes children with their parents (35%) and youth (minors and young adults) on their own (16%).
- For youth through age 24, the definition of homelessness is expanded to include people who are not with a parent or guardian and who are staying temporarily with other relatives or friends ("couch hopping").
- African Americans and American Indians are far more likely to be homeless than members of other races. African Americans make up 39% of homeless adults, but only 5% of adults statewide. American Indians make up 8% of homeless adults, compared to 1% statewide.
- 27% of homeless adults first experienced homelessness as a child

Sexual Exploitation

- An estimated 30% of youth living in shelters and 70% of street youth report having been victimized through sexual exploitation.[8]
- Within 36-48 hours of being on the run, runaways will be approached by a pimp, trafficker or perpetrator looking to sexually exploit them.[9]
- More adolescent girls are commercially sexually exploited in one month in Minnesota than girls who die by suicide, homicide, accidents, SIDS, AIDS and domestic violence combined in one year.[10]
- Boys are victims too. One report shows one out of every three child victims is a boy.[11] (This is not an issue of sexual orientation.)
- LGBTQ youth are 3-7 times more likely to engage in survival sex to meet basic needs because they are often faced with fewer resources and social supports. They are also 7.4 times more likely to experience acts of sexual violence than their heterosexual peers.[12]
- Statistics show that the top reason for survival sex is shelter.[13]
- Though many victims come from a history of abuse or homelessness, victims also come from stable home environments with no history of abuse.[14]
- Service providers identified the reluctance of youth to self-identify as victims as a barrier to identification and services.[15]
- Buyers of sex are also called johns, purchasers, clients, and dates. One report shows:[16]
- 99% of buyers were men with a median age of 42.5 years old
- 19% of buyers had professions that involved working with children. (Teachers, coaches)
- Over 21% of the buyers were a person in authority. (Such as law enforcement, ministers and first responders.)

*1 - Homeless and Runaway Youth. (2016, April 14). Retrieved May, 2017, from http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/homeless-and-runaway-youth.aspx;
2 - ibid; 3 - Homelessness in America. (n.d.). Retrieved May 19, 2017, from https://www.covenanthouse.org/homeless-teen-issues/statistics; 4 - ibid; 5 - Homeless and Runaway Youth. (2016, April 14). Retrieved May, 2017, from http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/homeless-and-runaway-youth.aspx; 6 - ibid;
7 - Homelessness in Minnesota: Findings from the 2015 Minnesota Homeless Study (Rep.). (2016). Saint Paul, MN: Wilder Research. doi:http://mnhomeless.org/minnesota-homeless-study/reports-and-fact-sheets/2015/2015-homelessness-in-minnesota-11-16.pdf; 8 - Smith, L. A., Vardaman, S. H., & Snow, M. A. (2009). Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: America's Prostituted Children (Rep.). Vancouver, WA: Shared Hope International. doi:https://sharedhope.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/SHI_National_Report_on_DMST_2009.pdf; 9 - Heartland Girls' Ranch Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking in MN Infographic (as cited by the Center for Missing and Exploited Children); 10 - Adolescent Girls in the United States Sex Trade: Tracking Studying Results for May 2010 by the Shapiro Group. Comparison data from the Minnesota Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, 2007.; 11 - What are the statistics on human trafficking of children? (n.d.). Retrieved June 21, 2017, from http://arkofhopeforchildren.org/child-trafficking/child-trafficking-statistics; 12 - Sex Trafficking and LGBTQ Youth. (2016, May 05). Retrieved June 21, 2017, from https://polarisproject.org/resources/sex-trafficking-and-lgbtq-youth; 13 - Homelessness in America. (n.d.). Retrieved May 19, 2017, from https://www.covenanthouse.org/homeless-teen-issues/statistics; 14 - Demanding Justice Report (p. 43, Rep.). (2014). Vancouver, WA: Shared Hope International. doi:http://www.demandingjustice.org/content/themes/dj/assets/resources/Demanding_Justice_Report_2014_Final.pdf; 15 - ibid; 16 - ibid*

STREET LANGUAGE USED BY THOSE IN "THE LIFE"

(Terms can change rapidly, but most of these have been in use for some time.) [22]

Bottom bitch: A female appointed by the trafficker/pimp to supervise the others and report rule violations.

Branding: A tattoo or carving on a victim that indicates ownership by a trafficker/pimp/gang.

Choosing Up: The process by which a different pimp takes "ownership" of a victim.

Circuit: A series of cities among which prostituted people are moved. One example refers to a chain of states such as the "Minnesota pipeline" by which victims are moved through a series of locations from Minnesota to markets in New York.

Daddy: What many girls/victims call their pimps, sometimes by choice, or because he requires it.

Date/Call/Appointment: The exchange when prostitution takes place, or the activity of prostitution. A victim is said to be "with a date" or "dating."

Escort Service: An organization, operating chiefly via cell phone and the internet or local newspapers, which sends a victim to a buyer's location.

"John" (a/k/a Buyer/the Demand, Customer, Client, Sugardaddy, or Trick): An individual who pays for, or trades something of value for sexual acts.

Lot Lizard: Derogatory term for a person who is being prostituted at truck stops.

Madam: A woman who manages a brothel, escort service or other prostitution establishment.

Out of Pocket: The phrase describing when a victim is not under the control of a pimp but working on a pimp-controlled track, leaving her vulnerable to threats, harassment, and violence in order to make her "choose" a pimp. This may also refer to a victim who is disobeying the pimp's rules.

Quota: A set amount of money that a trafficking victim must make each night before she can come "home."

Seasoning: A combination of psychological manipulation, intimidation, gang rape, sodomy, beatings, etc., designed to break down a victim's resistance and ensure compliance.

Squaring Up: Attempting and/or succeeding to escape or exit prostitution.

Stable: A group of victims who are under the control of a single pimp.

The Game/The Life: The subculture of prostitution, complete with rules, a hierarchy of authority, and language.

Track (a/k/a Stroll or Blade): An area of town known for prostitution activity. This can be the area around a group of strip clubs and pornography stores, or a particular stretch of street.

Trick: Committing an act of prostitution (verb); or the person buying it (noun). A victim is said to be "turning a trick" or "with a trick."

Turn(ed) Out: To be forced into prostitution, or to train someone how to prostitute (verb); a person newly involved in prostitution (noun).

Wifeys/Wife-in-Law/Sister Wife: What women and girls under the control of the same pimp call each other.

Terms from Local Youth
(Taken from "Youth Focus Group Report: What Youth Say")

Appointment: What contact with a client is called
Cookies: Having an orgasm
Donations: What the "date" pays
Finesses: Gets a deal, may get money without having sex
Get that work: Get drugs to get high
Glass/Snow: Coke
Green/Grissle: Marijuana
Head: Oral sex
Hitting a stain: Getting ready to work in prostitution or selling drugs
Packing: Carrying a weapon
Peep somebody: Figure out if a "date" is safe
Poonanny: Sex
Ran a train: Raped by multiple men
Shorty: Gay hustler
THOT (Thottie Body): That Ho Out There
Thirsty: Asking for "boy pussy"
Wet Wet: Oral sex

StreetWorks Tool Kit

Introduction to Outreach, Working with Clients, and Safe Harbor

STREETWORKS TOOL KIT: INTRODUCTION TO OUTREACH, WORKING WITH CLIENTS, AND SAFE HARBOR
CORE INFORMATION: "WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW"

Outline

Section 1: Introduction to Outreach and Work with Clients
Section 2: Introduction to Sexual Exploitation, Sex Trafficking and Minnesota's Safe Harbor Law and Related Services

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. List the StreetWorks Guiding Principles.
2. Identify Safe Harbor resources in their area.
3. Distinguish the difference and similarities of the terms "sexual exploitation" and "sex trafficking."
4. "Identify ways to advocate and create change at a macro level."

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO OUTREACH AND WORKING WITH CLIENTS

Origin of this Training

This training curriculum is the result of a partnership between StreetWorks and the State of Minnesota, that started with the desire to incorporate Safe Harbor principles into the way that outreach workers in the StreetWorks collaborative were trained.

Once a pilot training was created, that partnership continued with the intention of adapting this training to communities in Greater Minnesota. StreetWorks not only tested the pilot, but continued the research by interviewing experts in exploitation as well as interviewing both staff and clients in Greater Minnesota in order to ensure that the training would be effective and relevant outside of the Twin Cities Metro area. We are grateful to our statewide LSS colleagues and the youth they serve for their partnership on this important work.

The result of this effort is a training curriculum based on both StreetWorks' time tested strategies, Safe Harbor principles, evidenced based practices and the guidance of both current and former clients and a wide and varied set of communities in the state.

StreetWorks has made a point of training workers outside of the original focus of the StreetWorks Collaborative workers, including trainees across disciplines, in order to ensure that the training is relevant outside of the original focus of outreach workers.

Defining Outreach

A formal definition of outreach is, "an effort to bring services or information to people where they live or spend time."[1]

This project started with a formal definition of outreach, believing that we would refine and focus that definition as we continued to research and test the training. Instead of focusing on that definition, we found that a single formal definition of outreach would not represent the variety of roles and approaches that outreach workers experience in different communities.

Even within the StreetWorks Collaborative itself, different agencies, and individuals in those agencies, will often have different ideas of what outreach means and they practice outreach work in different ways. The diversity in the work is often a response to the population the worker is serving as often as it is an institutional difference. Some agencies practice outreach by going out and walking around on streets looking for people who may need resources, some will visit different sites such as libraries or schools, and some may consider outreach to be educating the public and building partnerships in their community.

Community Response to Youth Experiencing Homelessness

Historically, in Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN, there was little coordinated community response to homelessness or at-risk, runaway and homeless youth. Different organizations were providing agency specific services to homeless youth but they were not coordinating their efforts. Since 1994, StreetWorks Collaborative (SWC) has helped to fill that void and has been providing the Twin Cities metro area with coordinated street-based outreach to at-risk youth and young people experiencing homelessness. More recently SWC has expanded its efforts and includes coordination not only in street-based outreach but also in site-based, and school-based outreach programs.

This collaborative model provides "young people with connections and needed resources such as housing, case management, counseling, life-skills training, food, family reunification and safety planning, emergency shelter, and other basic necessities." The goal of this community response is "to increase access to resources and opportunities for homeless and at-risk youth, and ensure that programs and services are based on best practices."[2]

While the StreetWorks Collaborative represents a community response to homelessness, it represents a community response that reflects its origin in downtown Minneapolis and the evolution it experienced growing and adapting to a wider seven county metro area that encompassed a variety of communities, urban and suburban environments and the diverse populations within those areas.

The response to homelessness outside of the seven-county metro area would intentionally be different, because that response would reflect a different community and population. This training reflects both StreetWorks' origins in an urban area and the recognition that if the training is going to be useful outside of that original area, it would have to be able to adapt to new communities that it would be used in.

Outreach Worker's Role within a Community Response

Day-to-day outreach work can look different for different agencies, and for people in different locations. For example, in the Twin Cities metro area, youth are more likely to be on the streets, but in suburban and rural areas you may be more likely to find youth in other places such as community centers, libraries and schools. No matter where a youth is, both in location and in need, the worker's role is to connect with youth to begin to build healthy relationships, increasing opportunities by increasing their access and use of resources and improve their network of support.

> **A truly positive piece of street outreach work is that many outreach workers have the ability to meet the youth where the youth is the most comfortable, which is often outside of a formal agency or service provider.**

The ultimate *goal* is to ensure the client is: ***Safe, Stable, Healthy and Empowered.***

Increase Access and Use of Resources

Workers can increase access and use of resources by acting in four different ways, through giving referrals, acting as a liaison, advocacy work and through documentation. Thinking holistically will help workers understand which services are needed.

Layers of Issues Youth and the problems they are facing can be caused, and exacerbated, by multiple layers of the different types of issues they face. Workers would not expect to work with youth on only one of their issues and expect the other issues to get better. For example, if a youth is homeless, one would not expect that once the youth was housed, their mental health or drug issues would simply go away.

Holistic Care When holistic medicine is practiced, the doctor takes into "consideration the complete person, physically, psychologically, socially, and spiritually, in the management and prevention of disease. [These different states] should be managed together so that a person is treated as a whole." In the same way, workers can help a youth be more successful if they consider their whole life situation when working with that youth.

Referrals It is important for workers to know which local resources are available for youth and exactly what the youth can expect to happen when they go to access those resources. Workers can help sort through whether or not those options will work for the youth. Just because a resource is available for the youth, it does not mean that resource is a "good fit" for them. It is more strengths-based to think of it as "that program is not a good fit for the youth," instead of "the youth is a bad fit for that program."

Workers need to figure out which referrals the youth actually wants and will use. Those referrals may not necessarily be the resources the worker believes or hopes the youth will use. Allowing the youth as much autonomy as possible will help build a trusting relationship, and will help empower them, which could lead to better use of services in the future.

Liaison and Warm-Transfers

YOUTH SAY: "DON'T JUST TELL THE PERSON WHAT TO DO."

Workers act as the connector, or a liaison, between a youth in need and the available resources in the area. When possible, it is helpful to use a warm-transfer in order to help ensure youth will access services. A warm-transfer is when the worker and the youth come to a mutual agreement about which resource the youth will be accessing, and then the worker helps the youth initiate the next steps. This can be done by things such as:

• Helping to make phone calls with the youth,
• Calling an agency ahead of time telling them they can expect this youth to be coming in and what their needs are,
• Giving the youth the name of a specific person they can ask for when they get to an agency,
• Explaining what the client can expect when they get to the agency.
• Helping to figure out transportation

In order to execute a warm-transfer it is important to have good working relationships with referral sources.

Advocacy

One definition of an advocate is "a person who speaks or writes in support or defense of a person, cause, etc."[3]

Micro level advocacy:
- Specific individuals
- Internal and outside agencies
- Local businesses and community institutions
- Advocating on behalf of an agency or a resource to increase the chances that the youth will use that resource

Macro level advocacy:
- Within city, county, state and national government systems
- Push for policy changes that will better serve clients
- With local businesses and community institutions
- Partnering with local businesses, or community funded sites like libraries and community centers

Workers may need to advocate for youth on an individual level with service agencies because of things such as:
- Negative past experiences with the youth
- Youth does not fit the exact criteria needed to obtain services
- Youth was not able to articulate to the agency what they needed

One way a worker could advocate for youth could be as simple as helping youth figure out basic strategies to get the services they need. This could include helping them to ask the right questions or ask questions in a certain way to get the results they are looking for. It could also be finding ways to help them access services in a round-about way.

> *Example: A female identified youth, with a history of abuse, attempts to get a housing assessment. In this situation, in order to be eligible for services, the client must tell her story of abuse. Her assessor happens to be male, which makes her uncomfortable. Instead of accurately answering the questions, which would have made her eligible for services, she does not share enough of her story and is turned away. In this case, the OW could approach the assessing agency and advocate for a female assessor.*

A worker may need to advocate for an agency or a specific resource to the youth themselves in order to increase the chances that the youth will use those resources. Advocating on behalf of an agency can mean explaining why an agency has specific rules or telling a youth how obtaining a particular resource can benefit them.

> *Example: A youth is interested in gaining employment services from an agency that has very strict rules about wearing gang colors on the property. The youth keeps getting turned away at the door because the youth in not "going to let someone tell me how to dress." The outreach worker could attempt to explain why the rules are not personal, but are there to ensure the safety of everyone.*

Advocacy: Cultivate Resources

In many areas, there are few available resources or the resources that are available are not what the client needs. Workers may need to be creative and cultivate the needed resources by partnering with local businesses, schools, or community centers. This could be things like working with the library to allow youth to have a safe place to go during the day. Or it could be working with a school to change some of their policies that aren't working for youth.

> *Example: A youth may not have a home to store his things, the school could give him an extra locker to hold those things and could open the doors early for that youth so they can access the locker room before class. Developing partnerships with local organizations like coffee shops, laundromats, libraries, and community centers is imperative when resources are scarce.*

Documentation

Documentation can be something workers do not think of as an important part of their job, but documentation can have significant impacts on the long-term success of both the worker's agency and ultimately the youth being served. Funders often look at an agency's outcome data when deciding whether or not to fund an organization. Current funders look to see if an agency is fulfilling its promised outcome measures and new funders will check to see if agencies are reaching their goals and if they are actually doing any good in the community. Potential funders will analyze the efficacy of a program to decide if it is worthy investment of funds and if it is truly making an impact on individuals and the community.

If workers are not documenting all of their hard work, it can look as if the agency is not accomplishing what it has set out to do. Documenting and compiling data also shows what services are being used in the community, who is using those services, and can highlight which services and resources are missing in the community. This data can be used to advocate for youth at an agency, within the community, and at governmental levels.

The data that system professionals gather as part of their work is more of a reflection of their work than it is a reflection of the people in their community. If they serve a particular community or population well, that population will be represented in their data, which will in turn be used to justify, advocate for and fund services for that population. If those professionals fail to serve a particular population, that population is rarely represented in their data, and that data will not justify services for that population, creating an incredibly damaging information feedback loop that perpetuates that population's invisibility, further cementing their marginalization and ensuring that not only will established systems continue to fail to serve them, but may in fact, ensure they remain invisible.

StreetWorks Youth Contact Form (2a)

OW & Partner: _____ Date: _____
County of Service: _____ Method/Location of Contact: _____

PRIMARY YOUTH INFORMATION
Name: _____
Other Names Used: _____
Date of Birth: (mo/da/yr)_____
Gender: _____
Ethnicity: Hispanic/Latino? ❑yes ❑ no
Race: _____

CURRENT LIVING SITUATION
Where did you stay last night?
❑ Not Meant For Habitation_____
❑ Emergency Shelter: _____
❑ Supportive Housing Program (TLP, PSH, RRH)_____
❑ Permanently Staying with Friends/Family
❑ Temporarily Staying with Friends/Family
❑ Living on Own (w/o program assistance)
❑ Treatment Facility: _____
❑ Correctional Facility
❑ Hospital
❑ Group Home
❑ Facing immediate eviction (5 days)
❑ Fleeing Abusive Situation
❑ Other: _____
Was it safe? ❑Safe ❑ Unsafe ❑ Unknown
Is it stable? ❑Stable ❑ Unstable ❑ Unknown

HOUSING HISTORY
Length of stay in current location:
❑ One day or less ❑ 2 days-1 wk ❑ 1 wk-1 mo
❑ 1-3 mo ❑ 3 mo-1 yr ❑ 1 yr +
Extent of Homelessness:
❑ Not currently homeless
❑ First time homeless AND less than one year
❑ Multiple times homeless
❑ Long term: 1 yr OR at least 4 times in the past 3 yr

If on street or shelter, approx. entry date: _____
# of times on the street/in shelter past 3 yrs:_____
# of mos on the street/in shelter past 3 yrs:_____
How long since permanent residence: _____
Location of last permanent residence: ____

RESOURCE SPECIFIC INFORMAION

Sexual Orientation:_____
Pregnant: ❑Yes ❑ No ❑ Unk
Parenting: ❑Yes ❑ No ❑ Unk
List Children's Age, DOB on back
Have you been in foster care?
❑Yes ❑ No ❑ Unk
Have you been in other "Out of Home Placement"?
(corrections/JDC, Inpatient, Hosp, etc) ❑Yes ❑ No ❑ Unk
Dom. Violence Survivor *Ever*? ❑Yes ❑ No ❑ Unk
When? ❑less than 3 months ❑ 3-6 mo ❑ 6-12 mo
❑ 1 year +   Currently fleeing DV? ❑ y ❑ n
***Ever* engaged in Survival Sex?** ❑Yes ❑ No ❑ Unk
(Exchanged sex of any form for a place to stay, food, etc)
Mental Health, Phys./Devel. Disability, Diagnosis or concern (list): _____
_____

Able to live independently? ❑ y❑ n
Documentation on file? ❑ y ❑ n
Long-term disable? ❑ y ❑ n
Receiving treatment/care for disability? ❑ y ❑ n
Veteran Status? ❑ y ❑ n
Last Grade in School Completed: _____
Name of school: _____
History of or Current Drug/Alcohol Use:_____

Do you want help or treatment to change your substance use? ❑ y ❑ n
Do you know how to keep yourself safe when using?
❑ y ❑ n

Items Received from Outreach Worker:
(larger financial assistance, complete whole form incl backside)
❑ Bus Tokens $_____
❑ Bus Card $_____
❑ Gift Card: _____ $_____
❑ _____ $_____
❑ _____ $_____
❑ $

NOTES:
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Monthly Income
❑ Earned Income: _____
❑ Unemployment: _____
❑ SSI: _____
❑ SSDI: _____
❑ VA Disability: _____
❑ Private Insurance: _____
❑ Child Support: _____
❑ MFIP/WIC/SNAP: _____
❑ Other: _____
Total Monthly Income: _____

Social Security Number:
_____-_____-_____

S R O
Seeking/Referred/Obtained
❑ ❑ ❑ Immediate Safety
❑ ❑ ❑Emergency Shelter
❑ ❑ ❑Long Term Housing Assistance

❑ ❑ ❑ Hygiene/Basic Needs
❑ ❑ ❑ Food/ Food Shelf
❑ ❑ ❑ Transportation
❑ ❑ ❑ Clothing

❑ ❑ ❑ Mainstream (GA, MA, SNAP)
❑ ❑ ❑ Financial Assistance
❑ ❑ ❑ Medical Services
❑ ❑ ❑ Education
❑ ❑ ❑ Employment
❑ ❑ ❑ Other Collaborative Agency
❑ ❑ ❑ Obtaining ID/ Documents

❑ ❑ ❑ Legal
❑ ❑ ❑ LGBTQ Specific Supports
❑ ❑ ❑ Case Management
❑ ❑ ❑ Counseling
❑ ❑ ❑ Parenting Resource
❑ ❑ ❑ Family Reunification
❑ ❑ ❑ Life Skills Program
❑ ❑ ❑ Other Collaborative Agency:

Release of Information

I understand I will not be denied help if I choose not to share information, unless that information is essential to determining my eligibility for services, and that if I choose not to share information it may affect the ability of the Participating Entity to quickly and appropriately identify services for me.

When you sign this form, it shows that you understand the following:

- If you permit us to share your information, this authorization will be valid until your cancel it. If you cancel it, your information will not be shared except to the extent it has already been shared.
- You may change your mind and cancel this authorization at any time.
- This authorization will not expire until you cancel it.
- You may request a fully signed copy of this authorization at any time.

- The law says we have to report physical or sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults. If we think there is abuse or neglect in your household, we will report it to Child or Adult Protection.
- We may release your information to protect the health or safety of you or others.

Privacy Notice

You are applying for services to prevent or end homelessness. In order to assist you we are required to collect information about you that may be considered private data under Minnesota law. We may also ask for other private information that is not necessary to determine your eligibility for the service you are applying for now, but will help to determine your eligibility for other services that you may apply for later, and to assist in managing and evaluating the programs you participate in.

☐ **Streetworks**

You authorize Streetworks staff to share information between outreach workers and the staff of member and partner agencies who participate in the Streetworks Outreach Worker Team.

☐ **HMIS**

The information you provide will be entered into Minnesota's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). HMIS is a computer system used by this organization and other organizations that provide services to prevent or end homelessness. Having your information in Minnesota's HMIS will also help reduce the paperwork you would have to fill out at other participating organizations. It will also allow participating organizations to work together to help you.
I understand that the participants in Minnesota's HMIS may change from time to time but that a current list of participants in Minnesota's HMIS is available upon request, but includes Minnesota Housing.

Coordinated Entry
☐ Coordinated Entry Hennepin County COC
☐ Coordinated Entry Ramsey County COC
☐ Coordinated Entry SMAC COC (Scott, Carver, Washington, Anoka, Dakota)

If you chose to allow us to release information to one or more Coordinated Entry systems, this authorizes us to speak to Coordinated Entry assessors, priority list managers and housing providers to whom you have been referred as part of the Coordinated Entry process.

Other Agencies
☐
☐
☐

Client's Signature:

Date of Birth:

Creating Change

Trainees should understand their role in the community as change agents both at an individual level and also within their community at large. For trainees, it can be more difficult to grasp the idea of advocacy at a community level and the importance of documentation, which will be discussed further.

Advocacy A worker can advocate for youth on a micro level, which can include working with specific individuals, with internal and outside agencies, and with local businesses and bigger institutions. A micro level advocacy could also include advocating on behalf of an agency, or a resource, to increase the chances that the youth will use that resource. Macro level advocacy includes advocating within city, county, state, and national government systems.

Agency Forms

Workers have a certain amount of responsibility to know which documents and forms need to be completed, including when and how to use them. They need to be sure and ask their Supervisor if they don't know.

SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION TO SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, SEX TRAFFICKING AND MINNESOTA'S SAFE HARBOR LAW AND RELATED SERVICES

Defining Sexual Exploitation, Sex Trafficking, and Understanding Minnesota's Response

Federal Definition of Sex Trafficking

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA)[4]:
The act of sex trafficking is "the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act." The federal definition includes the need to prove force, fraud, or coercion in order to prosecute a case as a sex trafficking case. Although, if the person is under 18, there is no need to prove force, fraud, or coercion.

Minnesota's Definition of Sex Trafficking[5]

Defined as "receiving, recruiting, enticing, harboring, providing, or obtaining **by any means** an individual to aid in the prostitution of the individual."

In Minnesota, our definition of sex trafficking differs slightly from the federal definition. In Minnesota, in order to prosecute someone for sex trafficking, we do not have to prove that "force, fraud, or coercion" was used to traffic that person. Instead, Minnesota is saying that no one can consent to being trafficked. Thus, the third parties who benefitted from the trafficking of others are considered the guilty parties, not the victim.

Minnesota's Safe Harbor Law:[6]

Briefly explain MN's Safe Harbor law, or your own state's law.

Safe Harbor Law

- In 2011, Minnesota became the fifth state in the nation to pass Safe Harbor legislation decriminalizing prostitution charges for youth under the age of 18.
- In Minnesota, our Safe Harbor law says that minors, children under the age of 18, who have engaged in prostitution-related activities are now considered victims rather than criminals.
- This idea that children who have been involved in prostitution related activities are victims, is a real paradigm shift for law enforcement, investigators, prosecutors and judges. In the past, we would arrest and prosecute children who have been victimized and exploited. Imagine being a child who has not only been victimized, abused, and taken advantage of but then you are the one arrested for your own victimization. Now, you have a criminal record, which can affect you in multiple ways. Your trafficker has been telling you all along that no one cares about you or will help you. After being arrested, you believe the trafficker and feel even more stuck in this situation. The traffickers are rarely arrested.

MN Safe Harbor was also designed to:
- Train law enforcement and community how to identify and assist victims
- Increase penalties for traffickers
- Promote the development of statewide system of care—the No Wrong Door Model

MN Working Definition: This explains who is eligible for services under the MN safe Harbor Law

- The MN Working Definition explains who is eligible for Safe Harbor funded services.
- Eligibility for services includes trafficked and sexually exploited youth (SEY) under the age of 24. Youth ages 18-24 are still not protected from prostitution related charges under the law, but are eligible for Safe Harbor funded supportive services. Systems professionals such as law enforcement and prosecutors throughout the state are currently being trained about exploitation and the dynamics of trafficking in the hopes that victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation, even people age 18-24, will be referred to services rather than being prosecuted for their victimization. Just because someone turns 18, and are legally adults, doesn't mean their exploitation has ended.
- The term "sexual exploitation" is described in this definition to include all youth under age 24 who have engaged, agreed to engage, or were forced into sexual conduct in return for…" something of value. This includes:
    - Survival sex – exchanging any type of sexual act in return for something of value. Including things like money, a place to sleep, food, diapers, transportation, drugs or higher status in a gang or group.
    - Exotic dancing and pornography

Intersections of Abuse

Understanding the difference between sexual exploitation and sex trafficking can be a complicated idea to grasp. This graphic can help to better understand how it all fits together.
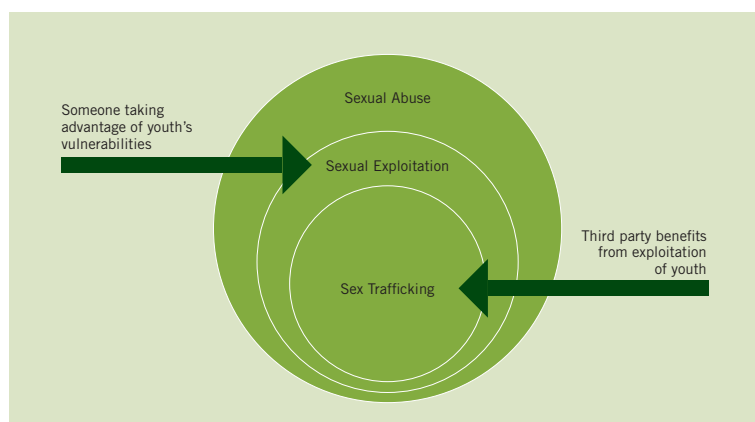
- *Sexual Abuse*. Starting with the outside ring of the graphic, it is understood that all exploitation and trafficking is considered sexual abuse."
- *Sexual Exploitation.* The next ring, sexual exploitation includes all situations where someone is taking advantage of a youth's vulnerabilities. This includes survival sex. For example, when a home owner allows a youth to stay or sleep at their house, but in exchange for sleeping there, that youth must perform some sexual act for the homeowner, this is sexual exploitation. This can also include anytime when a youth is involved in the sex industry in any way, including exotic dancing and pornography.
- *Sex Trafficking.* The inner most ring, sex trafficking, is when sexual exploitation becomes trafficking. It means that a third party is involved and is benefiting from the trafficking of the youth. For example, a mother owes money to a landlord for rent, so she allows the landlord to have sex with her son in exchange for the rent money. The mother is the trafficker, the landlord is the buyer, and the son is the victim. There are three parties involved.

Clear Communication: A person who is being trafficked is by definition being exploited, but a person who is being sexually exploited is not necessarily being trafficked.

These common terms are used for professionals to communicate between others, these are not terms that youth use to describe their own situation, nor are they terms they may even recognize as applying to themselves.

No Wrong Door

Through a statewide multidisciplinary collaborative process, Minnesota developed one of the most comprehensive models for responding to commercial sexual exploitation: No Wrong Door. Minnesota's No Wrong Door Response Model (NWD) creates a statewide infrastructure

for service delivery, specialized housing and shelter, training for systems professionals, and the development of community-specific protocols across the state. This model aims to ensure that no matter where a youth is identified, whether through schools, advocacy groups, clinics, child protection, law enforcement, or other avenues, every professional will be able to identify exploitation and will know where to refer the youth for services.

Values and Principles of the No Wrong Door Response Model:[7]
1. Sexually exploited youth are victims not offenders
2. Sexual exploitation can be prevented
3. Youth should not feel isolated or trapped while receiving services
4. Youth have a right to privacy and self-determination
5. Services will be based in positive youth development
6. Community members and professionals must be trained to identify sexual exploitation
7. Services must be responsive to the needs of individual youth
8. Services must be victim-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally inclusive and
9. No Wrong Door is a statewide program and will be tailored to regions' needs and resources.

Safe Harbor Funded Services:

Talk through the different types of services Safe Harbor is providing funding for.

- ***Regional Navigators (stationed throughout the state).*** Help professionals with technical assistance, connect youth with services, provide professional and community trainings and assist with protocol development. Outreach workers and youth can contact their local Regional Navigator whenever needed to help find appropriate services.
- ***Supportive Services.*** Long-term case management, also includes, mental health, legal, health care, advocacy, culturally specific services and ongoing support.
- ***Housing and Shelter.*** Housing options available specifically for youth who are at-risk or who have been sexually exploited and/or sex trafficked. Emergency, transitional and permanent housing options available.

SAFE HARBOR SERVICES THROUGHOUT MINNESOTA HANDOUT 0.1.1 "SAFE HARBOR REFERRALS."

This handout shows the Safe Harbor services that are available throughout the state. Those services can be used as resources for both the worker and the youth. Explain:
- The first page has a map of the state showing how the state has been split into eight geographical locations. There is one Regional Navigator assigned to each of those eight regions.
- The second page has broken down Safe Harbor resources into two categories, Housing and Services. The agencies listed have been given grants to provide services to sexually exploited youth through Safe Harbor.

As grant funding changes, this document may change. Please check the following link for updated versions of this document. *http://www.health.state.mn.us/injury/topic/safeharbor/docs/MDHSafeHarborReferral.pdf*

1 - Valvassori, P., PhD, ARNP, Schoepp, N. C., D.O, Sklar, E. M., PH. D, & Grassette, A. (n.d.). The Implications of Integrating a Street Outreach Curriculum for Medical Students. Retrieved May, 2017, from http://www.nhchc.org/wp- content/uploads/2012/11/The-Implica- tions-of-Integrating-a-Street-Outreach-Curriculum-Valvassorit.pdf

2 - StreetWorks Collaborative/Lutheran Social Services. (n.d.). StreetWorks Summary and Overview [Brochure]. Author. Prepared by Heather Caillier, Ascend Consulting Solutions

3 - Advocate [Def. 3]. (n.d.). In Dictionary.com. Retrieved May, 2017, from http://www. dictionary.com/browse/advocating

4 - 22 U.S.C. § 7102(9).

5 - MINN. STAT. § 609.321, subd. 7a (2009).

6 - MINN. STAT. § 609.322 (2009).

7 - No Wrong Door: A Comprehensive Approach to Safe Harbor for Minnesota's Sexually Exploited Youth (Rep.). (2013). MN: Department of Public Safety Office of Justice Programs. doi:https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/forms- documents/Documents/!2012%20Safe%20Har- bor%20Report%20%28FINAL%29.pdf

Module 1

Population and Barriers

STREETWORKS TOOL KIT
MODULE 1 – POPULATION AND BARRIERS
CORE INFORMATION: "WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW"

Outline

This Module Includes 5 Sections:
Section 1: Stereotypes, Risk Factors and Vulnerability
Section 2: Impact of Homelessness and Sexual Exploitation
Section 3: Barriers
Section 4: Adolescent Brain Development and Traumatic Responses
Section 5: Holistic View using a Systems Approach

Learning Objectives

Classroom 101 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Describe vulnerabilities and factors that lead to homelessness and sexual exploitation.
2. Summarize the realities and impacts that homelessness and sexual exploitation have on clients.
3. Give examples of different barriers to services clients may face.
4. Describe the basics of systems theory and ecomaps.

Classroom 201 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Relate Module 1 learning to their field experiences.
2. Describe what they learned about their community's services and the barriers their clients may face when trying to access those services.
3. Give examples of their community's and their agency's response to homelessness.

SECTION 1: STEREOTYPES, RISK FACTORS AND VULNERABILITY

Understanding Homeless Youth

There have been many studies on homeless youth throughout the nation as well as in the state of Minnesota. It is important for workers to know some of the current statistics, the definition of homelessness, the reasons why youth are homeless, and the possible barriers associated with homeless youth to be effective workers. The next section briefly covers these topics.

Common Stereotypes

There are common stereotypes and assumptions about "homeless" people and youth who have been involved in exploitation. Assumptions may include things like:

- What it might be like to experience homelessness
- Reasons why people may be homeless
- Reasons why people may be using drugs or alcohol
- People may have options but are just not willing to take advantage of them
- Reasons why people may trade sex for things they need
- Panhandlers make more money than most minimum-wage workers.

Consider people's assumptions around exploitation and prostitution:
- What do they look like?
- What do people call them?
- How do they act?
- Why are they trading sex for money?
- What is it like to be exploited?
- Why might people be using drugs or alcohol?

Statistics

Review *Handout 1.1: Statistics for At-Risk, Homelessness and Sexually Exploited Youth* before reviewing the following factors that can lead to youth homelessness.

Factors that can lead to youth homelessness:

- Often involve histories of trauma and abuse[8]
- Nearly 50% reported intense conflict or physical harm by a family member[9]
- Mental health disorders of a family member, substance abuse and addiction of a family member[10]
- Parental neglect[11]
- Family conflict such as fighting with parents, being told to leave, or unwillingness to live by their parent's rules[12]
- Transitions from foster care and juvenile justice systems[13]
- Family runs into financial difficulties[14]

Risk factors for sexual exploitation:

- ***Chronic runaway and/or homelessness.*** Homeless and runaway youth often have many of the other risk factors of exploitation.
- ***Past history of sexual or physical abuse***
- An estimated 30% of youth living in shelters and 70% of street youth report having been victimized through sexual exploitation.
- Statistics show that the top reason for survival sex is shelter.
- Often homeless youth are unemployed and have no real means of making money, which can lead to involvement with the justice system and desperation. Survival sex can seem like a viable option, and once that option has been introduced it is a difficult "choice" for youth to make.
- There is a real fluidity between survival sex and eventually being trafficked.
- ***Age***, and lack of experience, are sometimes the biggest vulnerabilities a youth has. The younger a person is, the easier it is for exploiters to recruit and take advantage of them.

SECTION 2: IMPACT OF HOMELESSNESS AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Realities for Youth Experiencing Homelessness

- Limited resources - Not enough food, shelter, clothes, etc.
- Long wait times for services
- Vulnerabilities - People are actively looking to exploit vulnerable youth.
- Constantly in transition
  - From one placement, home, or shelter to another and between friends, enemies, and exploiters
  - Between case-managers, systems workers and outreach workers.
  - Transitions interrupt or prevent services and relationship building, and can create barriers to maintaining community and a support networks
- Constantly being triggered - Often, youth are traumatized before and during homelessness
- Marginalization - Marginalized people, including homeless youth, have a different set of societal systems they are maneuvering through. For a homeless youth to "cross back into mainstream society [they run] the risk of breaking up the networks and other resources on which homeless persons depend" without any guarantee that they will not be set apart and marginalized yet again.[15]
- Developmental issues - Issues such as mental health issues with formal or no formal diagnosis, developmental disabilities or delays, and delayed social development.
- Age - Younger youth can expect fewer legal means to gain employment, housing and other age restricted options.
- Survival mode - Homeless youth may find themselves doing things they never thought they would have to do in order to survive. Things like engaging in survival sex (sexual exploitation where youth are required to participate in some form of sexual activity in exchange for food, transportation, or other things), stealing food, stealing other things for money, or selling drugs are often survival techniques youth never thought they would have to succumb to.
- Community - Even though a youth may be homeless, they still have a community that they live and survive in.

Impacts of Sexual Exploitation

Review *Handout 1.3, "Psychological/Emotional Impact of CSEC."* This is an infographic that explains the impact sexual exploitation has on youth.

Consequences and Characteristics of Youth Experiencing Homelessness

Read through *Handout 1.4, "Consequences and Characteristics of Youth Experiencing Homelessness."*

Knowing and understanding some of the consequences and characteristics of homeless youth can help workers to:
- Better identify homeless youth
- Better understand why youth don't always trust workers or want their help
- Understand how to better approach and provide services
- Understand what youth need
- Understand the complexity of why this work is so difficult.

SECTION 3: BARRIERS

Determining Barriers to Using Services In order to ensure the youth is safe, stable, healthy and empowered, workers may have to look below the surface to figure out what the primary issues are for the client. For example, if there are unaddressed mental health issues, chemical dependency issues, sexual or gender identification concerns, or other unexplained fears a youth is dealing with, the available housing or shelter options may not actually help the youth be safer, more stable or empowered.

Considerations in Determining Barriers

Things to consider when determining a client's barriers:
*   What is making their current situation unsafe?
*   What is making their current situation more safe than other available options?
*   What is their timeline?
*   How did their homelessness start?
*   What are the reasons behind the youth's current circumstances?
*   What reasons does the youth give for not accessing available resources?
*   What do you know of their medical or mental health history? Their chemical use?
*   What do you know of their current fears?
*   How do they relate to accessing services?
*   What does the youth believe they need or want? Does it match what you assumed?

Although gaining a history or background of the client's life can help workers understand the barriers that youth are facing, workers do not need to know a person's entire story or background to be able to help them. It is the client's story to share when and if they want to.

A few other barriers to accessing services can include:
*   Capacity of the agencies
*   Ineffective or damaging services
*   Services that are inaccessible and confusing
*   Services don't fit the client

Definitions of Homelessness

Workers should know the two definitions on *Handout 1.2, "Defining Homelessness" Worksheet* because these definitions impact the services that youth can receive. These, and other definitions, can be frustrating because they rarely do a good job defining a youth's actual situation. Using *Handout 1.2, "Defining Homelessness" Worksheet*, compare similarities and differences between the Minnesota Definition of "Homeless Youth" to the HUD definition of "Homeless."

"Housing First" and an Alternative View

Often, housing is the first resource people believe runaway and homeless clients need to access, but "housing first" does not always work best for all youth. The "Housing First" approach says that if a client attains housing or shelter, the client and their workers will then be able to focus on personal goals to improve their quality of life. Housing First can be the best option for some clients, but often, even if housing is the optimal goal, other needs will

have to be addressed before the available housing options will fit the youth's current wants, needs, and abilities. Housing is not always the "first" issue the client needs addressed.

Challenges and Barriers working with Sexually Exploited Youth

Challenges

Youth may not recognize they are being trafficked/exploited, and often do not identify as a victim. Often times, a youth may believe that they are not victims because of "choices" they have had to make along the way. For example, when a youth feels they have no other options in order to survive except to stay with the person who is exploiting or selling them, they believe they have chosen to be a part of their abuse. While they may recognize that the person is making them do things they don't want to, they may not recognize this person as an abuser, or that they are victims of exploitation. Another reason youth may not believe they are being trafficked is because they do not understand what being trafficked means. They do not know what sexual exploitation is, and minors have no idea they are protected from sexual exploitation by the law.

- *Minors are often afraid of being reported, or returned to another unknown, or unsafe place.* Even if the place they are living in is dangerous, they at least know what they need to be afraid of. They have learned to at least partially manage their current environment. There is fear of the unknown.
- *Unaware of alternatives or the Safe Harbor law that protects them.*
- *Fearful of harm.*
- *Difficulty adhering to rules and structure.* Once a youth has been living in a world where the regular societal rules don't apply, it can be difficult to have to go back to the strict rules that are expected in shelters, in foster care, at school, or at home with guardians.
- *Stigma and Shame associated with sexual exploitation.* As a general rule, our society places a lot of shame on victims of abuse, and of sexual exploitation. It can be very difficult for a youth to immerse themselves back into a society that treats victims of prostitution worse than the exploiters (the buyers and the traffickers).
- *Victims' actions and locations may be monitored very closely.*
- *Glamorizing the exploitation (helps to mask the shame).* Youth will tell themselves and sometimes believe new gifts or items such as phones and shoes show that what they are gaining from their exploitation is worth going through the parts they don't like.

SECTION 4: ADOLESCENT BRAIN DEVELOPMENT AND TRAUMATIC RESPONSES

Understanding adolescent brain development, trauma's effect on brain development and flight-or-flight responses will be discussed in the following section.

Adolescent brains think things through differently from adults, in part, because their brains are not fully developed. In humans, the prefrontal lobe, or prefrontal cortex, does not fully develop until about 25 years old. The prefrontal lobe is "the decision-making part of the brain, responsible for [the] ability to plan and think about the consequences of actions, solve problems and control impulses."[16] Since the connections between the emotional and the logical processing are not fully developed in young people they are likely to act on emotion more than they rely on logic. The lack of neurological connections in the adolescent prefrontal lobe helps explain many adolescent behaviors.[17]

YOUTH SAY: "[YOUTH] MIGHT NOT TRY TO ESCAPE BECAUSE OF THREATS, [BEING] AFRAID, AND NOT RECOGNIZING [THAT THEY ARE] BEING EXPLOITED."

YOUTH SAY: "ONE PERSON I KNOW WOULD RATHER GET $200 AN HOUR DOING THIS, THAN $10 AN HOUR AT BURGER KING."

Research shows that adolescents:[18]
- Act on impulse
- Misread or misinterpret social cues and emotions
- Get into accidents of all kinds
- Get involved in fights
- Engage in dangerous or risky behavior

Studies show that often, young people do understand the dangers of their risky behavior but they "weigh risk versus reward differently: In situations where risk can get them something they want, they value the reward more heavily than adults do."[19] While these behaviors may seem upsetting to many adults, if we understand that this development stage is important for future survival, it can help workers be more patient and help have more realistic expectations. Teenagers "…are quite possibly the most fully, crucially adaptive human beings around."[20] This period in a young person's life is also a time when they are primed for learning. "What's sometimes seen as the problem with adolescents—heightened risk-taking, poor impulse control, self-consciousness—shouldn't be stigmatized. It actually reflects changes in the brain that provide an excellent opportunity for education and social development."[21] Workers can help guide youth towards some of those opportunities.

Important Realities to Consider:[22]

- Youth prefer short-term rewards. Long-term consequential thinking is difficult.
- It is developmentally appropriate for youth to want to try new things, and often change their minds from week to week or even day to day.
- Youth may not comprehend or retain crucial information the first time they hear it.
- Youth often "put a good face on" even if things are going very badly.
- Youth may have a difficult time gauging potentially negative situations.
- Youth respond strongly to peer approval.

Harms to Brain Development "It is now well established that if children experience any sort of abuse (verbal, emotional, physical, sexual or neglect), especially in the early years of life, it can affect how the brain is wired and functions."[23] Adolescents who have experienced chronic maltreatment may generally have similar behaviors as adolescents who have not been traumatized, but those behaviors are often more apparent and they "may be more drawn to taking risks, and they may have more opportunities to experiment with drugs and crime if they live in environments that put them at increased risk for these behaviors."[24] Often youth who are experiencing homelessness or sexual exploitation have had a history of some sort of maltreatment which may have caused the brain to wire itself in ways that are overly reactive to stimuli. That type of hypervigilance has more than likely helped them to survive, but may not be helping them when they are in safer situations.

Biological Responses to Perceived Danger Our bodies have a biological reaction when we feel threatened in some way, whether that threat is a real or imagined stressor. Our brain will judge the situation and make a decision on whether something is a threat or not, based on what our senses are telling us and also upon past experiences and memories. Once the brain believes it is being threatened it triggers a stress response, or the "Fight, Flight or Freeze" response. The biological responses are activated by the hypothalamus and the adrenal glands are stimulated producing cortisol and adrenaline. Adrenaline gets the body ready for a flight-flight-freeze response by arousing the sympathetic nervous system.

Adrenaline flooding the body can create the following:[25]
- The heart to beat faster than normal, pushing blood to the muscles, heart, and other vital organs.
- Elevated pulse rate and blood pressure.
- Rapid breathing.
- Small airways in the lungs to open wide, allowing the lungs to take in as much oxygen as possible with each breath.
- Extra oxygen to be sent to the brain, increasing alertness.
- Heightened sensory perception, including sight, hearing, and smell.

When people experience these biological responses, they will either stay and fight, leave or avoid the situation, or do nothing and freeze.

Persistent Fear Response Everyone experiences the flight-flight-freeze response at different times in their life. Youth who have been exposed to chronic stressors and repeated trauma can have many biological reactions, including a persistent fear state. "Children with a persistent fear response may lose their ability to differentiate between danger and safety, and they may identify a threat in a nonthreatening situation."[26]

"These children may be highly sensitive to nonverbal cues, such as eye contact or a touch on the arm, and they may be more likely to misinterpret them (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2010b). Consumed with a need to monitor nonverbal cues for threats, their brains are less able to interpret and respond to verbal cues, even when they are in an environment typically considered non-threatening, like a classroom."[27]

SECTION 5: HOLISTIC VIEW USING A SYSTEMS APPROACH

Broken systems (macro) leads to vulnerability (micro), which leads to exploitation.

Workers are often tasked with helping clients address immediate challenges and barriers but, in order for clients to build sustainable change, they need to address those challenges on a systemic level. The Systems Approach, outlined below and carried through the entire training, will give trainees a framework to view and strategize that more sustainable change.

Introduction to the Systems Theory Approach

The system's approach is something that will be discussed throughout the curriculum. Here we will describe the ideas behind thinking holistically when working with youth.

Layers of Issues Client and the problems they are facing can be caused and exacerbated by multiple layers of the different types of issues they face. Workers would not expect to work with youth on only of one their issues and expect the other issues to get better. For example, if a youth is homeless, an worker would not expect that once the youth was housed, their mental health or drug issues would simply go away.

Holistic Care When holistic medicine is practiced, the doctor takes into "consideration the complete person, physically, psychologically, socially, and spiritually, in the management and prevention of disease. [These different states] should be managed together so that a person is treated as a whole."[28] In the same way, an outreach worker can help a youth be more successful if they consider their whole life situation when working with that youth.

A system is: "A group of interacting, interrelated, and interdependent elements forming a complex whole."[29] The following are examples of different types of systems:
- A single cell
- An individual
- A family
- A school
- The City of Minneapolis
- Social Services
- An organization
- A forest

In other words, everyone operates within more than one "system." The individual is their own system which survives by interacting with many other systems. Each of these systems are just a part of that person's life, but each of these systems exert influence on the individual. Individuals can also influence the systems they interact with.

Youth may have connections, interactions, or relationships with systems such as:

School

Friends

Family

Youth

Social Services

Tribe

Probation

Medical Clinic
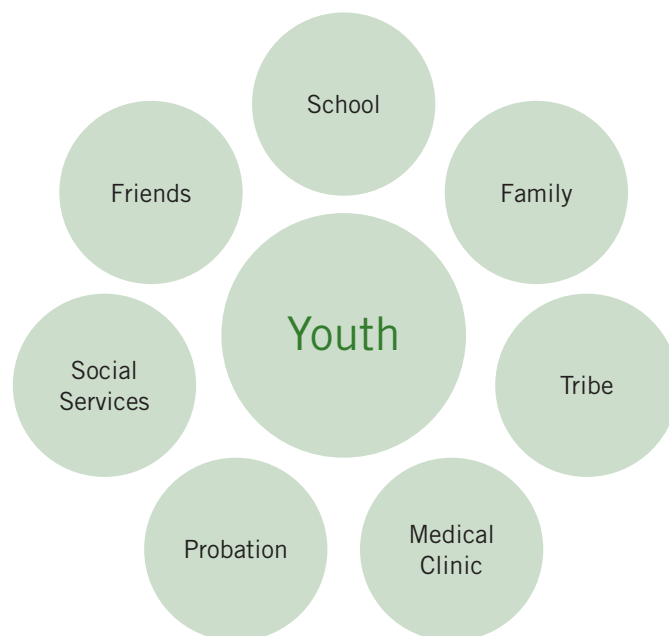
Facilitating connectedness to as many healthy systems as the youth are willing to connect with is the job of the worker. Keep in mind that the systems a youth often works within are built for adults, which can make it difficult for youth to access, understand, or work within the rules of those systems.

Ecomap: Tool for Holistic Care

Ecomaps An ecomap is a useful, holistic tool that outreach workers can use to help show all of the relationships and systems a youth encounters in their environment. Ecomaps "provide a way to visualize the quality of those connections either as positive and nurturing, or negative and wrought with conflict and stress. Connections can also be considered strong or weak."[30] Ecomaps can be drawn by the outreach worker using information gathered from talking with the youth but it can also be extremely helpful to have the youth draw their own ecomaps.

Example of an Ecomap:
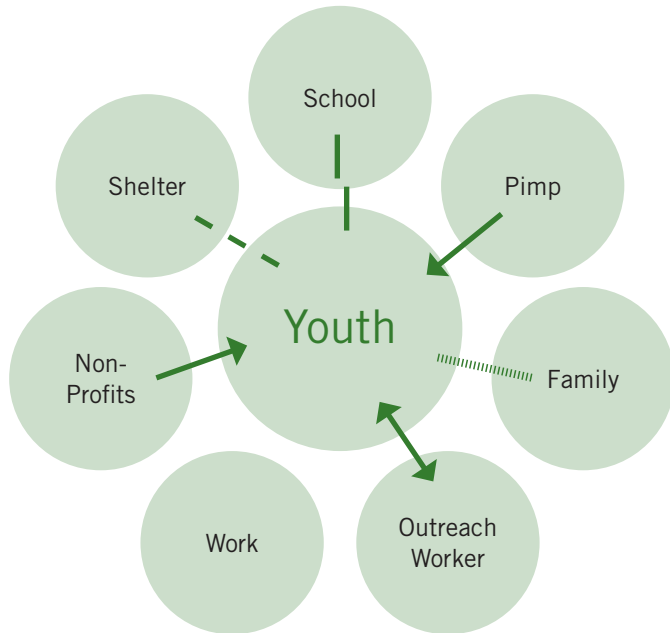
KEY:

Strong or Important Connection (Two lines)

Weak Connection

Broken (Not connected any longer)

Stressful Relationship

No line – No connection

Double Arrow head – influence/power goes both ways

One way arrow head – Influence/power goes one way

Empower youth by helping to connect them to healthy systems. The more positive connections they have with healthy, helpful systems, the more empowered they will be to make their own decisions and have the support they need to safely make desired changes.

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Module 2

Cultural Responsiveness

MODULE 2 – CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS
CORE INFORMATION: "WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW"

Outline

This Module Includes 6 Sections:
Section 1: Culture
Section 2: Bias
Section 3: Oppression
Section 4: Privilege
Section 5: Intersectionality
Section 6: Practicing Cultural Responsiveness

Learning Objectives

Classroom 101 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Describe how our cultural backgrounds can influence how we interpret the world around us.
2. Distinguish their own privileges and how those privileges, or lack of privileges, impacts how they interact with their environment.
3. Give examples of how bias and oppression impacts clients.
4. Describe how intersectionality relates to cultural responsiveness.

Learning Objectives Classroom 201 Session

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Relate Module 1 learning to their field experiences.
2. Describe what they learned about their community's services and the how a client's cultural identification might create barriers to services.
3. Identify how they will combat personal biases.
4. Give examples of both micro and macro level oppressive systems.

Culture, Bias, Oppression, and Privilege

It is not in the scope of this training module to go into great depth about culture, privilege, oppression and bias. However, it cannot be overstated how critical these topics are for workers to grasp and acknowledge while working with at-risk or youth experiencing homelessness or sexual exploitation.

The resources/endnotes listed at the end of this module have great information for delving deeper into these topics.

SECTION 1: CULTURE

A basic definition of culture is "The customary beliefs, social norms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; also: the characteristic features of everyday existence (such as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time."[31] The different dimension of cultures can include things like: language, space and proximity, time, gender roles and expectations, taboos, roles and responsibilities of family members and family ties, grooming, attire and presence, autonomy, status of age, education, how people relate to each other, and types of acceptable friendships and acceptable help from individuals and institutions.

Keep in mind there are cultures we sometimes don't think of like the culture of poverty, culture of survival, and culture of homelessness. There are also cultures of outreach workers, cultures within agencies, and cultures within cities that we need to recognize.

Subculture

"Subcultures are those groups that have values and norms that are distinct from those held by the majority."[32] Examples of subcultures might include hippies, bodybuilders or Trekkies. Countercultures are subcultures that typically focus on deviant activities such as gangs. In this case, the majority would be housed people. "Subcultures will often develop from a position of marginalization and powerlessness within mainstream society."[33] The homeless culture does have identifiers such as language, demeanor and behaviors.[34]

Culture of Homelessness or "Street" Culture

The characteristic features of everyday existence of youth experiencing homelessness create a homeless subculture that is imperative to understand. Many youth don't identify with "homeless," but do identify with "street."

There is a certain attraction and function of the homeless or street culture, which serves specific needs that mainstream society does not offer. A key feature of the culture is its capacity to absorb loners who can remain isolated, and yet can be a part of a relational culture.[35] The homeless community can be very close-knit and the people involved will often help meet each other's needs.[36]

With homelessness or living on the street comes feelings of isolation from mainstream society and people experiencing homelessness compensate feelings of loneliness and separation by forming strong bonds and friendships with others in the same situation.

These friends not only help each other, but they are able to relate with shared suffering and will not pass judgement, which they do not find in mainstream society.[37] The ability to survive is a quality that is esteemed, the "longer an individual has been living on the streets, addicted to alcohol or drugs and survived; the more they are admired."[38]

Once youth have been homeless for a time, and no longer feel they fit within mainstream society, they tend to "shy away from institutions designed to help them, including shelters and soup kitchens. For many, this hiding-out behavior stems from a mistrust of the adult population, as well as the lack of privacy and personal space within institutional environments."[39]

YOUTH SAY: "DON'T TALK LIKE A STUDENT AND A TEACHER, TALK LIKE YOU ARE A FRIEND— NOT LIKE YOU'RE AN ADULT AND I'M NOT." (CULTURE OF AGE)

Strategies of survival inherent in the culture of homelessness are rarely considered by those agencies in providing services to homeless people. Programs should develop cultural sensitivity and use a cultural perspective in planning."[40]

Services and the Culture of Homelessness It is critical to consider what the homeless culture offers youth in order to try to replicate this with services, resources and relationships. Some pieces of the homeless culture that should be replicated through services and resources:

- Combating feelings of isolation and marginalization
- Increasing opportunities for safety
- Need for community/belonging
- Need of close, caring and helpful relationships
- Client's autonomy
- Nonjudgmental help
- Strengths-based approach to emphasizing and transferring the youth's survival skills into mainstream society skills
- Trusted adults (Youth often mistrust the adult population)
- Privacy and personal space

The homeless culture is only one of the cultures a street youth will fit into or identify with, and not all youth workers encounter will be homeless. Keep in mind that youth may identify with different racial, religious, sexual or gender cultures among others.

Outreach Workers' Culture Outreach workers' own cultures will impact their work with clients, because our own values, beliefs, and customs inform our attitudes and behaviors. Outreach workers' cultures should not be the center of their work with youth, but the youth's own knowledge, beliefs and experiences are most relevant.

SECTION 2: BIASES

Bias is the "action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, because of allowing personal opinions to influence your judgment."[41]

(Taken from: Hidden/Unconscious Bias: A Primer) [42]

The ability to distinguish friend from foe helped early humans survive, and the ability to quickly and automatically categorize people is a fundamental quality of the human mind. Categories give order to life, and every day, we group other people into categories based on social and other characteristics. This is the foundation of stereotypes, prejudice and, ultimately, discrimination.

Everyone has biases, including workers, their agencies, and their clients. Some biases are apparent and easily recognized, while others are hidden or unconscious. Unconscious, or implicit, bias has been defined as "social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness."[43] (UCSF.edu)

Unconscious Bias
(Taken from: Hidden/Unconscious Bias: A Primer) [44]

> *"The ability to distinguish friend from foe helped early humans survive, and the ability to quickly and automatically categorize people is a fundamental quality of the human mind. Categories give order to life, and every day, we group other people into categories based on social and other characteristics. This is the foundation of stereotypes, prejudice and, ultimately, discrimination.*
>
> *Studies show people can be consciously committed to egalitarianism, and deliberately work to behave without prejudice, yet still possess hidden negative prejudices or stereotypes. So even though we believe we see and treat people as equals, hidden biases may still influence our perceptions and actions.*
>
> *Hidden biases can reveal themselves in action, especially when a person's efforts to control behavior can lessen when they are under stress, distraction, relaxation or competition. If people are aware of their hidden biases, they can monitor and attempt to ameliorate hidden attitudes before they are expressed through behavior."*

Types of Biases The following are examples of types of biases that could impact, either positively or negatively, outreach workers' judgments, decisions, assumptions, and the ability to make appropriate referrals or advocacy efforts in their work with youth. These are the same types of biases that youth may have towards outreach workers.[45]

- Age
- Belief system
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender/gender identity
- Marital status
- National origin
- Political beliefs
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Social standing

Clear Communication: It is important to point out that we have all been socialized through various environmental and media sources. It is impossible to erase the biased information that has been fed to us and therefore, it is critical to work on interrupting and questioning these biases and stereotypes when they pop into our minds.

Impact of Bias

Having conscious or unconscious biases can impact workers' reactions to youth in a few ways. It could impact:
- How they talk to youth,
- Whether they approach youth at all,
- How they relate to youth,

- Which resources they offer,
- Whether they are afraid of youth,
- Whether they believe what youth are saying about their circumstances,
- Whether they do or do not take an extra step to help youth.

Identifying and Working through Personal Biases

Becoming aware of our biases and doing something about them two different things. Researchers are still looking for ways to de-bias one's self, but there are a few suggestions on how to begin the internal de-biasing process.

First, for workers, it is important to identify risk areas where implicit biases may affect their behaviors and judgments. Second, if a worker knows what those internal risk areas are, and can monitor them, it is possible to compensate and pay attention to language, body language, and the stigmatization felt by the many identities and cultures the youth identifies with.

A third suggestion is to use the "Consider the Opposite" strategy. In this strategy, a person asks, "What are some reasons my initial decision or judgment of the situation might be wrong?"[46] "This strategy works because it directs attention to contrary evidence that would not otherwise be considered."[47]

SECTION 3: OPPRESSION

One definition of Institutional Oppression is: "The systematic mistreatment of people within a social identity group, supported and enforced by the society and its institutions, solely based on the person's membership in the social identity group. If oppressive consequences accrue to institutional laws, customs, or practices, *the institution is oppressive whether or not the individuals maintaining those practices have oppressive intentions.*"[48]

Oppression can be the result of a few people's choices, or policies which create unquestioned norms and habits. These societal rules end up restricting and causing barriers that suppress specific groups of people.[49]

Some structural causes of oppression are:
- Poverty
- Housing discrimination
- Residential segregation
- Discrimination in employment
- Lack of access to behavioral health care
- Racial bias in the criminal justice system

"People should be free to pursue life plans in their own way. Oppressive forces seek to diminish those plans and thus those people as well."[50] Recognize that homeless youth are oppressed simply because they are experiencing homelessness. It is helpful to recognize the other groups, cultures, and types of privilege they may or may not have, to recognize the difficulties and real barriers they are facing as a result of their oppression.

Designing "…services so as to give youth as much flexibility as possible, focusing particularly on needs identified by the youth themselves and working at a pace that also in large part determined by them"18 is so important. This philosophy on working with homeless youth reduces harm and helps overcome oppression by building empowerment.

SECTION 4: PRIVILEGE

Fully comprehending the idea of privilege is often difficult to absorb. When people think of whether or not they are privileged, they often believe they are not. Typically, the more privilege a person has, the less aware they are of their own privilege, which makes it especially difficult to absorb and accept. Almost everyone has some form of privilege and it is necessary to understand our own privileges, without feeling guilty about them, in order to build rapport with people who have more, less, or different privilege than ourselves.

Defining Privilege. One formal definition of privilege is having "a special advantage or authority possessed by a particular person or group."[51]

In our U.S. societal environment, people gain privilege if they fit into any of the following categories (this list is not exhaustive):
- Able-bodied (no physical disabilities)
- Christian
- Heterosexual
- Cisgender
- Educated
- Professionals
- Elevated socio-economic status
- Male
- White

Privilege, discrimination, and social groups all operate within interrelated hierarchies of power, dominance, and exclusion.

Just because someone is privileged in one way doesn't mean they may not be underprivileged in another (and vice-versa). It is therefore important to be aware of the various groups to which one belongs in order to question our own participation in a system of discrimination and privilege."[52]

Microaggressions

Defining microaggressions. Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership. In many cases, these hidden messages may invalidate the group identity or experiential reality of target persons, demean them on a personal or group level, communicate they are lesser human beings, suggest they do not belong with the majority group, threaten and intimidate, or relegate them to inferior status and treatment.[53]

These microaggressions are often hidden and happen in small, seemingly insignificant, occurrences and are often "delivered by well-intentioned individuals who are unaware that they have engaged in harmful conduct toward a socially devalued group."[54]

Some examples of microaggressions:[55]

- Racial Microaggression: A White man or woman clutches their purse or checks their wallet as a Black or Latino man approaches or passes them. (Hidden message: You and your group are criminals.)
- Gender Microaggression: A female physician wearing a stethoscope is mistaken for a nurse. (Hidden message: Women should occupy nurturing and not decision-making roles. Women are less capable than men).
- Sexual Orientation Microaggression: A young person uses the term "gay" to describe a movie that she didn't like. (Hidden message: Being gay is associated with negative and undesirable characteristics.)

When one person in a situation is the target of a microaggression (intended or not), the other people in the situation may not notice because their privilege may keep them from interpreting the microaggression in the same way. The fact that others do not observe the microaggression can lead to the person feeling isolated. If the microaggression is pointed out and dismissed, this can be interpreted as invalidating. It is important to appreciate how the client experiences these events rather than attempt to downplay their significance.

SECTION 5: INTERSECTIONALITY

Defining Intersectionality: "Intersectionality is a concept often used in critical theories to describe the ways in which oppressive institutions (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, classism, etc.) are interconnected and cannot be examined separately from one another."[56]

These different types of discriminations are often considered in isolation but when the intersections of discrimination overlap within one person, it can create a real disadvantage within society. To understand the levels of disadvantage, and the obstacles a homeless youth is facing, all forms of oppression need to be considered.

Clear Communication: "We know that trans women of color face exceptionally high levels of discrimination and threats of violence. Looking through the lens of intersectionality, it may not be hard to see why: they face anti-trans prejudice, sexism and misogyny, and racism, and due to the ignorance surrounding trans identity, might also face homophobia, too." [57]

Intersectionality and Homelessness: Looking through the lens of intersectionality, we can see that youth possess multiple, layered identities, including race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, abilities, and possible mental health diagnoses among others. These identities intersect to shape youth's perspectives and relationships with others. Recognizing a youth's multiple identities can help clarify ways that a person can experience both privilege and oppression at the same time.[58]

Intersectionality highlights the fact that different combinations of social identities create different patterns of vulnerability to homelessness. These patterns of vulnerability, in turn, inform the kind of help that individuals receive or resources that might be effective. Failure to look at and work with youth from this intersectional lens can cause workers to miss important issues a youth is dealing with, which can lead to a lack of safety, stability, health and empowerment.

Practicing Cultural Responsiveness

Culturally Responsive Vs. Culturally Competent

The term "cultural competence" implies that a person is competent in all issues surrounding all cultures. This notion is good in theory, but impossible to achieve. While workers can, and should, work towards culturally competency throughout their lifetime, no one will be fully culturally competent. Instead, the term "cultural responsiveness" refers to how we learn and thoughtfully relate and provide or offer services to people from our own and other cultures.

Being culturally responsive includes:
- Understanding culture, privilege, oppression and biases.
- Understanding intersectionality and how people's beliefs, reactions and decisions and vulnerabilities include all aspects of their identities. This includes both the youth and the outreach workers.
- Being able to identify your own culture, privilege, oppression, biases and intersectionality.
- Bringing it all together to best help youth with respectful, helpful techniques and strategies.

Clients are the experts of their lives. They are the experts of their lived experiences, their fears and hopes, their culture and their identities. Clients should be able to teach the worker about those things. This does not mean that it is a client's responsibility to teach the worker about themselves. Instead, workers need to be sure they are asking enough questions and are open and accepting to what the youth are telling them.

SECTION 6: STRATEGIES FOR PRACTICING CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS

Internal Strategies Internal, or personal, strategies for practicing cultural responsiveness for a worker include: *(Adapted from Seven Principles for Training a Culturally Responsive Faculty)*[59]

- Avoid imposing your own values on others.
- Accept your own naiveté.
- Identify your own cultural beliefs and expectations.
- Identify your own concerns about working with diverse youth.
- Engage in professional development and find learning opportunities to build your own knowledge base about different cultures.
- Ensure your agency keeps cultural responsiveness at the center of its daily processes. Be sure everyone feels comfortable talking about and asking questions about cultural issues.
- Be aware of showing any negative personal attitudes and beliefs to a youth about any culture, even if it is not a culture the youth identifies with.
- Educate partners about culturally diverse youth.

External Strategies External strategies to practicing cultural responsiveness with youth include:
- Don't make assumptions, do not try to identify cultural demographics without asking the youth.
- Find out how youth identifies themselves:
- Intersectionality may not get picked up on paperwork or forms.
- Youth may identify themselves differently once they begin to trust the worker.
- Respond to what the youth is telling you they identify with, even if that changes as time goes on.
- Be aware of possible immigration issues.
- Be sure to ask the youth why they don't feel comfortable or safe accessing certain services.
- Youth may be trying to reflect the outreach worker and may tell the outreach worker what they think the worker will identify with. Make sure the youth do not feel like they need to justify themselves, make sure they know that services are not contingent on what they tell you.
- Build on the knowledge, beliefs and experiences youth bring with them, and value that knowledge.
- Embrace Empowerment:
    - Listen to the youth and work with them on their terms.
    - Weave the realities of youth's lives into resource and service planning. This includes finding people and services that match a youth's identity, with people and agencies that have things in common with the youth.
    - Use cultural information and the strengths of those cultures to remove barriers.
    - Don't push a resource that does not line up with a youth's beliefs and culture.
    - Don't ignore or minimize a youth's claims of being discriminated against.
    - Use a translator when needed and if possible.

Benefits for Worker Cultural Responsiveness not only benefits the youth being served, but it also benefits the worker. It will give the worker:[60]
- Increased level of comfort and confidence
- Increased knowledge
- Increase in freedom
- Discovery of passions
- Increased capacity to help and to teach
- Increased resources

Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Learn about culturally appropriate resources available for emergencies.
- Learn all you can about the community/populations you serve.
- Learn respectful ways to approach and engage youth who are from different cultural backgrounds than your own.

Don't:

- Make assumptions about an individual based on what you know about a group with whom they may (or may not) identify.
- Ask questions that may imply an assumption about the client.
- Get defensive when a client or partner challenges you on your biases or assumptions. Embrace the fact that they were willing to talk to you about it in the first place.

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Module 3

Community Partners

MODULE 3 – COMMUNITY PARTNERS
CORE INFORMATION: "WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW"

Outline

This Module Includes 4 Sections:
Section 1: Role of Community Partners
Section 2: Obvious Partners
Section 3: Less Obvious Partners
Section 4: Cultivating Community Partners

Learning Objectives

Classroom 101 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Identify local community partners, the resources they offer as well as possible gaps in resources.
2. Describe who might be less obvious partners in the community.
3. Distinguish the difference between a transactional and a healthy relationship.

Classroom 201 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Relate Module 3-101 learning to their field experiences.
2. Identify community partners they could potentially build relationships with.
3. Describe the 4 points of accountability.
4. Give examples of macro level partnerships in their community where they could help make changes to benefit their clients.

SECTION 1: ROLE OF COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Defining Community Partners

In this context, a community partner is a member of the larger community that is willing to work with a worker or their agency in order to help youth. This could be individuals, agencies or businesses, or systems professionals.

Community partners can serve several roles in helping the worker provide better resources and services as well as helping the youth even when an (outreach) worker is not involved. This section will focus on three roles that community partners can play: identifying youth, providing referrals and services, and providing safe people and safe places.

Identifying and Understanding Clients in Need

Anyone in a community who comes into contact with young people can learn to identify a youth in need. Community partners can be taught about trauma and coached on how to help a youth or adults using harm-reduction strategies (Module 7 covers harm reduction in-depth)

and can give referrals to youth—even if they are not the workers themselves. Workers can provide the necessary information and tools to help community partners do all of those things.

Clients who are struggling may not reach out to anyone for help, so giving partners the tools to identify a young person in need is an important task for workers, which could lead to an increase in youth accessing services. It can also help prevent youth from having to deal with dangerous or harmful situations.

When a client is in need, they may not reach out to a worker or their agencies, but they may reach out to a person they know and trust. That person could be a teacher or someone in a local coffee shop where they hang out. Those trusted people have an opportunity to build long-term, trusting relationships that a worker may not be able to establish.

Clear Communication: Homelessness, for example, looks different in different communities. The people in those communities may have different attitudes about homelessness or may not know or understand the realities of the homeless in their area.

In a community with a visible population experiencing homelessness, individuals can adopt assumptions about that population. For example, people may think they know what a homeless youth "looks" like because they see them every day.

In communities with a less visible population, they may have a different attitude or understanding of homelessness. For example, they may believe they don't need a drop-in center in their town because they don't believe they have homeless youth in their towns. They may think that homelessness only happens in big cities.

Understanding Trauma and Harm Reduction

Identifying a young person who is struggling is a good first step, but it is important for community partners to understand how past trauma and past environmental circumstances affect adolescent brain development, a youth's current behaviors and a youth's relationships. (Trauma- informed care will be discussed in more detail in Module 6.)

Often, a worker can indirectly impact a youth's safety, stability, health and empowerment if they ensure community partners understand the effects of trauma as well as harm-reduction strategies. (Again, harm-reduction will be discussed more fully in Module 7).

People who care will often want to rescue clients, without realizing that the "rescue mentality" can be harmful to the client and to the people who are trying to help them. Clients must be ready for change and sometimes that process can be slow and difficult. Harm-reduction techniques are geared to help youth take small steps that help minimize the harm that can come from a client's current circumstances. Workers should help community partners fully understand and appreciate these techniques.

Clear Communication: Practicing trauma-informed care and harm-reduction techniques can be difficult for partners to fully believe in or grasp. Workers may have to build trust with a partner before they start advocating for trauma- informed care or harm-reduction techniques.

Referrals and Services

Once community partners are able to identify and appropriately engage with a struggling client, they have a great opportunity to offer community resources to them. A worker can equip community partners with resource lists, or even just the name of a worker's agency. Again, it is important for partners to recognize the client may only be ready to use certain resources and there is value in practicing harm reduction to encourage youth to use the resources for which they are ready to use.

It is also helpful for partners to be familiar with the resources they are giving to the client. If the interaction with the client is focused on what the client wants and needs, and the client has a good experience, they might trust the partner enough to turn to them for further resources in the future.

Clear Communication: An outreach or other worker could recruit a school social worker as a community partner. The outreach worker can talk to the school social worker about how to identify youth in need, understand trauma and harm-reduction techniques and let the social worker know possible resources the social worker can offer youth. The worker could talk through hypothetical scenarios or help the social worker with a specific youth. This social worker is developing a long-term relationship with the youth and will be armed with the appropriate information to help increase the opportunities for the youth.

In some communities, the barbershop may be a place where people gather even if they are not intending to use the barbershop's services. If the owner and employees of the barbershop are acting as a community partner, they could build informal relationships with youth and have easy conversations with them. After the barbershop identified that a youth could use some help, they could tell the youth about nearby resources or give the youth the worker's name and contact information.

Community partners can be a source of services. Whether that source is a case manager in the local benefits office who can help with the administration of emergency assistance, or the local barista who will provide a free meal for a hungry young person, partners can be a source of help.

Safe Places, Safe People

Some of the most important things for clients who are at-risk of or are experiencing homelessness is that they have safe places to go, even if those places are time limited, and safe people they can turn to. Safe places such as going to the local library, the barbershop, a skate park, or a laundromat can offer some down time from the stressful life of being homeless. Community partners may only have the capacity and the willingness to be a safe place for the youth to go, but the importance of having those safe places for clients can be invaluable.

Trainees also need to recognize that just because an agency claims they practice client-centered work, trauma-informed care and harm- reduction strategies, does not mean they always do. There are a variety of reasons they may not practice those things. They may not truly understand what those terms mean, or as another example, a shelter might recognize that some of their intake questions are not trauma-informed, but may be required to ask them because of licensing reasons.

Clear Communication: Partners are not going to be perfect, no matter how hard they try to be. Trainees need to be thinking about their community partners and whether the individuals at the agencies or businesses are safe places for youth.

SECTION 2: OBVIOUS PARTNERS

Some community partners are more obvious, such as other youth- or homeless-serving professionals, teachers, school social workers and case managers. Other partners and relationships that could be helpful but may take a little finesse to ensure good working relationships are partners like police departments, probation, parole and correctional facilities, hospitals and clinics, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations.

Police Departments or Specific Police Officers Outreach and other programs can benefit from information that police can provide, such as immediate violence that has occurred, gang conflicts, and hot spots outreach workers may want to be in. Workers can also serve as a mediator or an advocate between youth and police officers, if needed.

There can be many benefits to building relationships with police departments, but it can be difficult to establish and maintain those relationships. If these relationships are built, there needs to be clear boundaries about what information can and should be shared. Police may worry that outreach workers may share sensitive information with the community. Information from the outreach worker to the police should be limited to "their view of which neighborhoods are becoming more active and where the police should be spending more time."[61]

On the street, in most cases, police and outreach workers should not demonstrate any relationship. If communication takes place, it should be over the phone, by text, or in a designated meeting place away from the streets where they are working. Youth need to trust the outreach worker and the outreach worker has to make sure they are not giving information to the police that would betray that trust. Youth need to believe the worker is not a "snitch." Partnerships with law enforcement can be extremely complex. Depending on the community, police may be active propagators of the oppression that youth experience. In addition, the outreach workers themselves may have a negative history with the police, and discussions of potential partnerships with law enforcement can lead to distrust from the trainee if these complexities are not discussed openly.

Field Experts

One field expert explains, *"Workers should know at least one law enforcement professional they can call when they need to, and one they feel safe and comfortable referring youth to. Build relationships with law enforcement!"*

Tips on Law Enforcement Relationships

- Workers and law enforcement have very different roles even when they may share the same goal.
- Law enforcement officers may not be client-centered or trauma-informed. If a worker believes the officer is a great contact, try to educate the officer on this population of youth, helping to ensure the officer does not cause any further damage.

YOUTH SAY: "CALLING COPS PUTS UP A RED FLAG, IT PUTS UP A TRUST ISSUE."

- Law enforcement educated on SEY will benefit in their work, their relationships with youth, in their reporting, and with their investigations.
- It can be detrimental to the worker's relationship with the youth if they refer them to an officer who does not understand this population and who does not respect the youth or treat them well.
- Youth should know that they have a choice on whether or not to talk to law enforcement.
- Youth will be more willing to speak with law enforcement if the worker can explain exactly what the officer is like, why they trust that officer, and what the possible outcomes may be if they share their story with the officer.
- If an officer works well with the youth, youth will more than likely tell each other that that officer is trustworthy, which helps build credibility.
- When needed, adding a positive, strong connection with the law enforcement system can be extremely empowering for youth.

Many SEY have had negative past experiences with law enforcement, and if they have a pimp, they have probably been told to trust no one, especially not someone in a position of authority.

One expert advises,
"If working with law enforcement, you may need to do a lot of hand-holding. It can be emotionally exhausting for youth to work with law enforcement. Sometimes the outreach worker can advocate for the youth when they are too overwhelmed to tell law enforcement their story, or when they are too afraid to speak up or be assertive about something. The worker can be the person who speaks up for them, on their behalf, in a manner the youth is comfortable with."

Probation, Parole and Correctional Facilities

Partnerships with probation, parole and correctional facilities can be very beneficial for programs that work with high-risk youth, who may be under probation or on parole. Workers could serve as advocates for the youth if needed. If a client has been sent to a juvenile facility, "a relationship with juvenile probation allows the worker to maintain their client relationship even while the youth is away."[62] Programs could also conduct outreach in juvenile or adult facilities, when clients may be at a point where they are considering their street life and may be willing to consider other options once they are released.[63]

Hospitals and Clinics

Hospitals and clinics, and specific nurses or social workers in those clinics, can be helpful partners with workers. If staff at hospitals and clinics can understand clients experiencing homelessness better and are able to identify those clients, they can practice harm-reduction by giving outreach program information to youth, among other practical strategies.

When workers know which clinics will be helpful and understanding towards youth experiencing homelessness and trauma, they will be able to build trust by giving those safe clinics as resources to youth.

Field Experts

The healthcare system can be very difficult to manage, and many clinics and staff are still not trauma-informed nor do they understand sexual exploitation and sex trafficking issues.

A few key points on healthcare partners from the experts:
- *Judgment Free* In the healthcare setting, youth need to be able to feel like they are safe and free from judgment about sex work. Workers need to find clinics and staff that understand this population and will treat the youth with respect. Youth should also know they do not have to tell the clinic or hospital staff all of the things they are involved in, but it can be helpful for their doctor to know what is going on so they can best help the youth preventatively, acutely, as well as long-term.
- *Free Services* Clinics that offer free services and/or free testing are necessary for youth who do not have insurance.
- *Prescribing Medications* Clinics that are willing and able to prescribe medications (for things like STDS) to the youth's partner can help in reducing harm.
- *Rape* If a youth needs medical attention because of a rape, outreach workers need to know where there is a safe place to have a rape kit administered.
  - Workers need to know the process of this type of exam so they are able to explain the process to the youth. This will make it so youth will be more likely to have the exam, and may be a little less anxious when going.
  - Workers should also let the youth know that having a rape kit exam will flag law enforcement. Outreach workers should know which officers are safe to call in a rape situation.
  - Youth need to know that they are not required to press charges and they have the power to tell law enforcement if they do or do not want to press charges.

> **If SEY can build a connection within the healthcare system, it can be an extremely effective way to reduce the harm in a youth's life. Once a youth knows where they can go to obtain safe, non-judgmental care, they will have yet another connection to a healthy supportive system which will help to empower them even after their worker is no longer involved.**

Legal System

Field Experts

All youth, but especially SEY might need legal help because of their exploitation, but they may also have myriad other legal issues they are facing. Connecting to, and creating a partnership with, the legal system can be a necessary component when working with SEY.

Workers should:
- Know and understand different types of charges that can be given to youth experiencing homelessness or exploitation, for example, lurking with intent, trespassing, and prostitution.
- Help empower youth by knowing their rights and what laws are in place to protect them, like the Safe Harbor law if the youth is under age 18, and which laws will change after they turn 18.
- If a youth is being charged with something, workers should know the process of what will happen to the youth, and which legal resources are available to them.

- Know the resources in the area and have a relationship with the lawyers and staff at the places they are going to be referring youth.

One expert says, "Like in any field, building relationships goes a long way. There are definitely some great workers in these fields, so finding who these people are and building relationships with them is the key."

Legal Partners In Minnesota, the Legal Aid Youth Law Project and Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid works with and is specifically geared for youth's issues and clearly know what a youth's rights are. Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid, for example, works across the state and has years of experiencing working with SEY. Safe Harbor Regional Navigators should be able to help assist in finding appropriate legal resources for SEY throughout Minnesota.

Workers need to examine their own communities for partners that can offer similar legal aid. There may be established resources in the worker's community, but if there is nothing accessible, they may need to reach out (or have other members of their agency reach out) to legal resources that could be engaged when needed.

Community-Based Organizations and Service Agencies

These organizations are important for more obvious reasons as they provide essential services to youth, such as substance abuse treatment, counseling, job skills, educational help, housing, food, and other essentials. These organizations can also provide other supports to improve a youth's opportunities for social interaction and recreational activities.

"Some service agencies may not be used to working with such high-risk clients, or may have practices that make it difficult for youth to participate in their programs. … Outreach programs can work with service agencies to ensure their clients can receive access to services and that their programming is adequate for the high-risk caseloads of outreach programs."[64] Workers may also commit themselves to ensuring that youth will participate in the programming (e.g., worker may drive a client to a training provided by a service agency)."

Faith-Based Organizations

Faith-based organizations can be respected community leaders that run some of the most active local organizations. These types of organizations often provide services, space for activities, and support for youth. "For some youth, developing a stronger relationship with God or stronger spiritual beliefs can be essential in choosing to leave a violent street lifestyle."[65] For other youth, they may have had negative experiences with churches or other faith-based organizations and would not want to use them as a resource. Youth may also have a difficult time communicating with authority figures, such as religious leaders.

SECTION 3: LESS OBVIOUS PARTNERS

Community partners can also include people and agencies that may not be as obvious. Anyone who has contact with youth is in a position to have a positive impact on youth and can act as possible outreach partners. People such as librarians, coffee house employees, barbers, shop owners and bus drivers can all be partners. Local businesses can help

programs publicize events by displaying posters and pamphlets. Businesses can also be a source of jobs as well as financial support for outreach programs. Providing an entry level part-time job can be a relatively small gesture for a business, but can be transformative in the life of a youth.[66]

Indirect Partners

Other types of community partners may not come in regular, face-to- face contact with youth. While these partners may not work directly with youth, they are able to have a major impact on their lives. These types of partners can help through advocacy, raising money or supplies, and by spreading the word about homelessness and outreach work.

These partners may also be lawmakers or other systems professionals who are making top-level decisions that impact the lives of outreach workers' clients. Examples of these types of partners are:
- Church groups
- Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, School Boards
- Local councils (city, town or county)
- County Child Protection teams. Child protection teams usually involve multidisciplinary members who come together on a regular basis to discuss and work on specific cases in their county
- Existing local initiatives such as:
  - Task-forces and workgroups that focus on issues such as; domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, poverty, and homelessness
  - Partnerships like the Downtown 100 in Minneapolis—where local government (parole officers, police, attorneys), businesses, non-profits, and the community work together to decrease crime and collaborate on local issues that impact youth.[67]

Typical Steps:

Step 1: Work with the more recognizable and obvious resources
Step 2: Work at building relationships with the less obvious partners
Step 3: Build partnerships with systems professionals whose decisions and activities are impacting youth in macro ways

The long- term goal is to train workers to understand that in time, they can have an impact on the larger systems that they, and youth, interact with.

SECTION 4: CULTIVATING COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Effective workers build a long list of partners in their communities, but it can take time to get to that point. Workers should start with the obvious partners, like other service providers and schools, but quickly start cultivating partners in other areas.

Three factors for trainees to focus on: Worker accountability, understanding the costs to partners, and showing the impact of the partner's contributions. Each is discussed below.

Accountability

- Build and maintain accountability through:
- Clearly communicating what the worker can do for the community partner.
- Following through on everything you say you are going to do.
    "Say what you do and do what you say"
- Not over-promising (until limits are understood, there is a tendency to over-promise).
- Delivering more than the partner expected. This is very powerful.
    "Under-promise and over-deliver"

Understanding the Costs

Workers need to be aware of the community partner's point of view. If a worker is going to ask an individual, an agency or a business to help them or the youth with whom they are working, it is important to try to understand how this will impact the partner. Whether it has an actual financial cost, or the cost of time and effort, trainees need to take the time to appreciate what it costs the partner to help. Workers should be sure the partners continuously feel appreciated and communicate that the partner's help is invaluable.

Showing the Impact

If workers can show community partners the impact their involvement has had, it can help to continue the momentum of the work. Showing impact can be as easy as telling stories. Partners want to hear personal and specific stories; however, trainees must recognize that the youths' stories belong to them, not to the worker nor to the community partner. Without revealing information about a specific youth, help your partners see that their efforts have a positive impact.

Partnership Building

Tips to help build community partners:
1. Find possible partners who can help fill needs or gaps of services in the community.
2. Figure out what motivates a possible partner. Is it bragging rights? Do they need a tax write-off? Do they simply care? Everyone has a motivation for helping, if a worker can hone in on a partner's motivations, it will be easier to convince them to help.
3. Talk to donors—not only about raising money, but also about building partnerships.
4. Systems-level partnerships:
    - Go to community meetings
    - Find workgroups or initiatives that are doing work that impacts clients

Exploiters as Community Partners

The exploitation of any one youth may not look the same as for all other youth, but in any case, it is important that the exploiter, whether it is a family member, friend, or traditional/stereotypical pimp, or strip club is part of the youth's ecomap and on different occasions, may end up being a community partner for outreach workers.

Pimp/Trafficker Outreach workers should know that they do not have to respect the pimp, but they should treat them with the respect the pimp *thinks* they deserve. If the outreach worker does not show them respect it can put the youth in danger.

If an outreach worker is working with a youth who has a pimp, let the youth lead how they want an interaction with their pimp to go. For example, one expert explained that, *"If a youth needs to introduce you to [their] pimp, let the youth explain who you are."* Outreach workers can explain their work to a pimp by saying such things as:

- We are agencies working together to offer supplies to youth.
- We can help with transportation, free supplies, condoms, free gift cards, etc.
- We are not affiliated with law enforcement; we are with nonprofits. ("Letting them know you are with a nonprofit helps them trust you more." – Outreach Worker)

Experts also mention:

- "Offering supplies to the pimp is okay too. Especially condoms and things that will end up helping the youth who are being trafficked."
- "Be aware that pimps may also try to recruit the outreach worker."
- "Doing outreach on [known track]—there are many older women and they usually have pimps. The pimps were happy with outreach workers, because they were helping keep the women healthy, so they could keep working."

> **Strip Clubs** Strip clubs can be a good place to reach out to SEY. A few things to keep in mind when doing outreach in or near strip clubs:
> - Other people and groups may already be doing different types of work within these clubs.
> - Outreach workers should work with and coordinate with those groups to maximize everyone's efforts.
>   - Coordinate times and types of outreach being done
>   - Find out what other groups are offering and let those groups know that the outreach worker can offer help, find services and provide ongoing support for exploited youth
> - If there are not already other groups working in local strip clubs, outreach workers will need to connect with and build trusting relationship with the club's owners, managers, and bouncers. Outreach workers will need to:
>   - Find out what they are willing to let the outreach worker do, when they can go in, how often, etc.
>   - Keep in mind the same three points listed below: Accountability, Understanding the Costs, and Showing Impact

> **Handout 3.1: "Understanding a Pimp's Mindset" and Handout 3.2: "Exploitation and Gangs"** give a better understanding of the culture and mindsets of possible exploiters.

Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Regularly maintain your relationships with community partners. If you will be on vacation or out for any reason for more than a week, let community partners know you'll be gone and when you'll return.
- Introduce new workers to all of your community partners.
- Keep abreast of changes in your community partner's, schedules, activities, and staff changes. Nurture your partnerships and ask yourself, "What do I contribute to this partnership"?

Don't:

- Take community partners for granted. Be aware of all the services they offer and when services may change.
- Form partnerships with just the obvious services. An elderly woman who sits on her stoop every day is aware of what goes on in her neighborhood, so it may be helpful to form relationships with many different players.
- Ignore adult services; many youth are using adult services.

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Module 4

Boundaries

MODULE 4 – BOUNDARIES
CORE INFORMATION: "WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW"

Outline

This Module Includes 4 Sections:

Section 1: Boundaries as Positive Guidelines
Section 2: Professional Relationships
Section 3: Complexities and Challenges in Creating Positive Boundaries
Section 4: Building and Maintaining Boundaries Takes a Team

Learning Objectives

Classroom 101 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Indicate why boundaries are a benefit to both a client and the worker.
2. Describe how power differentials can make a youth vulnerable or like they are in a transactional relationship.
3. Describe their own role within their agency and within their relationship with their clients.

Classroom 201 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Relate Module 4-101 learning to their field experiences.
2. Identify instances during their fieldwork where boundaries needed to be articulated.
3. Describe strategies to use in order to maintain boundaries when difficult or gray areas are presented to the worker.

SECTION 1: BOUNDARIES AS POSITIVE GUIDELINES

Looking at personal and professional boundaries in a positive light, rather than in a negative one, will create healthy, professional relationships between workers, their clients, and their community partners. It is important for outreach workers to genuinely believe that boundaries are a positive and necessary part of the client/worker relationship.

Do Not's: While lists of boundaries are important, and can be helpful, they are often given to outreach workers as a list of things they should not do, sometimes without much explanation as to why the boundaries are beneficial.

Common examples of Do Not's:[68]
- Do not accept or give gifts or favors of more than nominal value.
- Do not offer personal information about yourself.
- Do not give your personal cell or home phone number.
- Do not bring a client home.
- Do not physically touch a client. If absolutely needed, always ask permission first.
- Do not engage in a sexual relationship with a client.

- Do not lend or borrow money, vehicles, or other items to or from the individuals we support.
- Do not engage in drug use with a client.
- Do not sell or buy merchandise of any kind to or from a client.
- Model appropriate language and behavior.
- Do not impose your personal beliefs and values upon clients, including your religious or spiritual beliefs.
- Do not "vent" to clients about work issues, colleagues, or the agency.
- Do not break the rules.

Boundaries are not simply a list of "do-not do's." Instead, they are guidelines for healthy professional relationships that keep the client and the worker both physically and emotionally safe. The following examples show how some of the things on the preceding list should be looked at as beneficial to both the client and the worker.

SECTION 2: PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

To understand boundaries, it can be helpful to think in terms of over- involvement and under-involvement of outreach workers in a youth's life. There is a healthy, middle ground that workers should stay within.

YOUTH SAY: "DON'T BE ALL PROFESSIONAL ABOUT IT."

Professional Relationships Vs. Friendships The client/worker relationship is a friendly, professional relationship but not a friendship. The client needs to understand that the worker is helping because it is their job, not because they are friends. Youth need to understand that this is not a transactional relationship; this is not like some of the other relationships in their lives.

Clients need to know the worker will help them:
- Without having to manipulate in any way or give the worker anything in return for services
- Even if the worker does not "like" the youth or approve of all the things the youth is doing
- Even if the client is not overly nice to the worker
- Without a promise of loyalty or sex

When workers establish a clear understanding with youth regarding roles, and the expectations of those roles, it will help the youth to have realistic expectations. If a youth thinks of the worker as a friend, in their minds, there is room for the worker to back out if they think the worker does not like them. This makes them feel less safe. That doesn't mean a worker needs to be harsh, just clear.

On the streets, a client may have to be overly nice, have sex with, promise loyalty, or manipulate another person to meet basic needs. The professional relationship cannot mimic other unhealthy relationships. The professional relationship should be about what the worker and the client can do together to help the client's life, not about what the client can give the worker.

Non-Transactional Relationships - Good boundaries help ensure youth will not feel like they need to manipulate the worker in order to get their needs met, which ultimately helps them feel safer. In many relationships SEY have had, they may have had to lie, trick, or follow along without complaining, in order to get their needs met. They need to know that in the worker/youth relationship they will not need to do those things in order to get their needs met.

Boundaries While thinking about a client's systems, it's important to understand they do not jump from "the life" to another "square" life and stay there. Workers should recognize that there are different sets of rules and different types of boundaries a youth is navigating as they jump back and forth between structured worlds and the street, or the world of sexual exploitation.

Clients can decide what those boundaries are for themselves, and those boundaries can change depending on which world they are living in at that moment. If their boundary is no sex, then they have the right not to have sex. Workers can take their learning from these modules about boundaries and help youth understand they also have the right to their own boundaries.

When youth are navigating their systems, it can be beneficial for youth to think about creating their own boundaries to serve as positive guidelines in their own lives. SEY have generally had unhealthy and unstable boundaries within their past and current relationships. Workers can model good boundaries, and help SEY understand that they too have the right to set positive boundaries in their own lives.

Power Differentials The difference in power levels between a worker and a youth can impact how a relationship is built. In part, the power of the worker comes from the professional position, as well as the worker's access to private knowledge about the individual receiving services.

It is important for workers to understand that "clients are in a position in which they must trust in the knowledge and guidance of their caregiver. This difference results in a greater than ordinary possibility of vulnerability on the part of the client."[69] Youth experiencing homelessness and/or exploitation are a particularly vulnerable population already, and this puts youth in a position where they are "susceptible to harm and confusion through misuses (either under- or over-use) of power and influence."[70]

However, the power differential can be valuable in the client/worker relationship if used appropriately. It can offer clients confidence in the workers "knowledge, training, direction and support, role, boundary clarification, and allocated responsibilities."[71] Establishing boundaries allows workers to control the power differential and allows a safe connection to meet the client's needs.

Depending on the situation, sometimes minimizing these power differentials can increase trust and ultimately help increase youths' engagement in services and increase their safety, stability, health and empowerment. One way to do this is to ensure clients know they have the option to go to other people in your agency for help. Workers should keep in mind that the more vulnerable an individual is, the more rigid boundary compliance should be.

Clear Communication: Note that many workers may see power differentials as a negative aspect of the relationship. They will often compensate for it by attempting to minimize the youth's perception of the differential (we are equals) or to ignore it completely, which is not helpful for the youth.

YOUTH SAY: "I'LL SHUT DOWN FAST IF YOU TRY TO SHOW YOUR POWER ISSUES."

SECTION 3: COMPLEXITIES AND CHALLENGES IN CREATING POSITIVE BOUNDARIES

Some boundaries may seem more complex and less clear-cut than others. These gray areas can cause tensions between a worker, their agency or supervisors, and can lead to harming the client. It is important for workers to be able to identify these gray areas and manage them appropriately.

Managing Boundaries The following tips can help outreach workers manage boundary issues:
- Avoid spending a disproportionate amount of time with one client in particular, or inappropriate amounts of increased contact with a client outside of the contracted relationship.
- Provider burnout/compassion fatigue is a recipe for bad boundaries! Make sure you are getting enough sleep, eating well, spending time with friends and family, exercising, seeking supervision as needed, and "leaving work at work" to the greatest extent possible.
- Workers should constantly ask themselves: "What is my role in the youth's life?" and use that to make daily decisions.
- Boundary violations can result when service providers, consciously or unconsciously, use their professional relationship to meet personal needs at the expense of meeting the needs of the clients they serve.
- Avoid over-identifying or becoming enmeshed with clients, or putting yourself in the role of being the sole provider in a client's life.
- Role confusion may lead to the client feeling betrayed, abandoned, and/are poorly served, and may make them unwilling to trust or accept future services from other providers.
- Workers need to be able to clearly articulate these roles to the client.

> **Boundaries When Working with SEY -** When youth are navigating their systems, it can be beneficial for youth to think about creating their own boundaries to serve as positive guidelines in their own lives. SEY have generally had unhealthy and unstable boundaries within their past and current relationships. Outreach workers can model good boundaries, and help SEY understand that they too have the right to set positive boundaries in their own lives.

Strong Bonds and Dependency

Once a safe relationship has been built with SEY and the ongoing supportive relationship has begun, the youth is typically much more dependent on the outreach worker initially than other youth. One experienced outreach worker explained, "The relationships are often like, 'I hate you, I don't want anything to do with you' to 'I need you all the time.'"

The bond between an outreach worker and a SEY can become stronger because:
- Support given to SEY may be more ongoing and the relationship is often extended.
- Of the types of conversations and story sharing that happens.
- The outreach worker may literally be the only person the youth trusts.
- The outreach worker is not looking at the youth with the stigma that often goes along with exploitation.

This stronger, long-term relationship can make professional boundaries harder to maintain.

Connecting to Other Systems

Past life experiences and sexual exploitation have taught the SEY to be very dependent. This outreach worker/youth relationship is bound to be fairly dependent initially, which should not worry the outreach worker. The worker's job is to work towards connecting youth with other healthy, helpful systems over time, which will help lessen the dependency on them, and on other unhealthy systems.

Building Relationships Based on Positive Boundaries

While boundaries look different depending on the person, role, and individual situation, professionals should share a common rationale and purpose for their boundaries. To effectively execute healthy boundaries, professionals need to be able to articulate and model the boundaries themselves, and the rationale behind them, to their clients and co-workers. To do this well, trainees need to have a good understanding of how bad boundaries impact both parties in negative ways.

Bad Boundaries

Trainees should understand how not following boundary guidelines hurts both them and the youth. Bad boundaries hurt the worker through:
- Vicarious trauma
- Blurring responsibilities
- Burn-out
- Infringing on personal time and personal relationships

Bad boundaries hurt the youth through:
- Creating a dependency on the worker
- Identifying the worker in the same light as their exploiter
- Having unreasonable expectations of the worker and the relationship, which sets them up for disappointment and validates trust issues
- Youth trying to meet the workers' needs
- Having relationships which may become transactional or conditional where youth might begin to feel bad if they let the worker down and will avoid facing them or working with them.

Articulating Boundaries

Trainees need to be able to articulate clear boundaries to youth from the beginning of the relationship.

Confidentiality and Mandated Reporting

Most agencies will have specific ideas and policies regarding confidentiality and mandated reporting. It is important to follow your agencies policies and procedures, and to highlight the need for healthy boundaries to be in place when these issues come up.

Confidentiality It is important for youth to feel safe disclosing some of their personal history with workers and their agencies. Workers can explain to youth that the only people who will

be given any information about them would be the workers' team and supervisor at their agency. It is also important to tell youth that the worker will not share any confidential information outside of the agency unless the youth signs a Release of Information form. Workers should explain when it might be necessary to share their information, and that a Release of Information form allows the youth to decide exactly who would have accesses to their personal information.

Mandated Reporting Outreach workers need to know the law and expectations around mandated reporting. The Minnesota "Resource Guide for Mandated Reporters of Child Maltreatment Concerns"[72] can be found at ***https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/ DHS-2917-ENG***.

*Please see Handout 4.1: Mandated Reporting

> **Challenges with Mandated Reporting and SEY -** Youth may not recognize they are being trafficked/ exploited, and often do not identify as a victim. Often times, a youth may believe that they are not victims because of "choices" they have had to make along the way. For example, when a youth feels they have no other options in order to survive except to stay with the person who is exploiting or selling them, they believe they have chosen to be a part of their abuse. While they may recognize that the person is making them do things they don't want to, they may not recognize this person as an abuser or that they are victims of exploitation. Another reason youth may not believe they are being trafficked is because they do not understand what being trafficked means. They do not know what sexual exploitation is, and minors have no idea they are protected from sexual exploitation by the law.

- Minors are often afraid of being reported, or returned to another, unknown, or unsafe place. Youth may not want to tell a worker what is happening to them. Even if the place they are living in is dangerous, they at least know what they need to be afraid of. They have learned to at least partially manage their current environment. There is fear of the unknown.
- Unaware of alternatives or the Safe Harbor law that protects them.
- Fearful of harm.
- Difficulty adhering to rules and structure Once a youth has been living in a world where the regular societal rules don't apply, it can be difficult to have to go back to the strict rules that are expected in shelters, in foster care, at school, or at home with guardians.
- Stigma and Shame associated with sexual exploitation As a general rule, our society places a lot of shame on victims of abuse, and of sexual exploitation. It can be very difficult for a youth to immerse themselves back into a society that treats victims of prostitution worse than the exploiters (the buyers and the traffickers).
- Victims' actions and locations may be monitored very closely.
- Glamorizing the exploitation (helps to mask the shame) Youth will tell themselves or will believe new gifts or items such as phones and shoes show that what they are gaining from their exploitation is worth going through the parts they don't like.

SECTION 4: BUILDING AND MAINTAINING BOUNDARIES TAKES A TEAM

Boundaries require a team effort, involving the client, co-workers and positive oversight. Topics to consider around team efforts are appropriate roles, accountability, supervision, and self-care/burnout.

Appropriate Roles

Agencies should have clear roles documented so professionals in the agency understand their role in a client's life. A worker should be able to clearly articulate roles and expectations to the youth and use this defined role to help make daily decisions.

It needs to be clear to workers that it is not their role to be available to a client at any given moment. Instead, it is important to create a safety net around the client, so they have many options and outlets they can turn to in a time of need.

A client should also know that they have the option of going to others in your agency to obtain help if their worker is not available, or if they simply want to work with someone else, and that because this is a professional relationship and not a friendship, it is okay if the youth would rather work with someone else.

Accountability

A client needs to know that their worker is being held accountable for following the rules through their agency, which creates a safe environment for the youth. A client should know that workers talk through situations with their team and supervisors. Explaining that workers need oversight, and need to be able to talk through decisions before making them, models good decision making and shows youth that the worker is being held accountable. It also shows youth that when workers have others they can consult with, there is backup if a tough situation arises.

> One of the issues that come up for Outreach Workers who work on the streets, is that they don't have an agency setting to help dictate their relationships. For example, if the outreach worker only sees the youth at a drop-in center or at a shelter, it is easier to maintain boundaries because the agency provides certain expectations for youth and for the worker. Outreach Workers who work on the streets don't have this type of setting to help reinforce and identify those boundaries. Without the automatic reinforcement of the setting, the responsibility to make and maintain boundaries is placed more heavily on the Outreach Worker.

Boundaries and Supervision

It is critical for workers to use their supervisor, professional colleagues, and/or a mental health professional as a sounding board when questions or concerns regarding boundaries come up. It is especially important when boundary issues are impacting a worker's ability to provide objective, compassionate care.

Remembering that the focus of the client/worker relationship is on the needs of the client and not the worker is always important, but it does not mean that a worker's needs are unimportant. Workers need to be sure their personal needs are being met in other ways, outside of their relationship with clients. Some of these needs can be met within the agency, with co-workers or with supervisors.

Boundaries and Burnout

Studies have shown that ethical misconduct and boundary violations related to client provision is evident in those who are reporting burnout. A worker is less vulnerable to crossing boundaries if they are self-aware and engaged in constant self-care strategies.

Self-care also enables outreach workers to care for their clients in a sustainable way with greater compassion, sensitivity, effectiveness, and empathy. Dimensions of self-care should include: Physical, Social, Emotional/Mental, Creative, Spiritual/Mindfulness.[73] Ethically, it is imperative to have a working self-care plan in place.

What to Do Next:

Trainees should not let the conversation end here. Following are a few helpful tips for workers:
- Consult with supervisor or professional colleagues if you are feeling uncomfortable about talking with your clients about boundaries.
- Talk about boundaries during your next team meeting and make it a part of regular professional development.
- Check in about boundary issues and topics each time you meet with your supervisor.
- Avoid getting defensive – strive for team communication around boundaries that is open, honest, calm, and respectful.
- Consider it part of your job description to discuss definitions of roles with your supervisor.

Reach out to Support Systems

Field Experts:

When youth present with extreme emotions, and recount stories of violence and abuse, it is not only important for workers to maintain good professional boundaries with youth, but workers should be sure they are reaching out to their own support systems often and regularly. Workers should keep in mind that sometimes it is healthier for both parties to refer youth to other services or other outreach workers when necessary.

The worker is often confronted with situations they can't "fix," people that they can't (and shouldn't) "save," and questions for which they do not possess good answers. These situations lead to pressure for the outreach worker to be more for the youth than the worker could possibly be expected to be. Boundaries can help reinforce more realistic expectations for the youth and the worker, leading to a healthier and more sustainable relationship.

Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Practice open communication with the client
- Keep the focus of the relationship on the client
- Be up front with the client about your limitations

Don't:

- Overshare or make the relationship about you
- Allow the youth to become dependent on you
- Over promise or give youth the impression you can do more than what you can actually do.

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Module 5

Safety

MODULE 5 – SAFETY
CORE INFORMATION: "WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW"

Outline

This Module Includes 4 Sections:

Section 1: Introduction to Safety
Section 2: Components of Personal Safety in Outreach Work
Section 3: Awareness
Section 4: Safety Considerations for Youth

Learning Objectives

Classroom 101 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Describe why safety is not a binary concept and can describe what it means to think of "Safety on a Spectrum."
2. Distinguish the difference between a safe and unsafe sight.

Classroom 201 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Relate Module 5-101 learning to their field experiences.
2. Identify instances during their fieldwork where they felt more or less safe.
3. Describe the 5 Components of Personal Safety.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO SAFETY

Workers' Role

It is critical for workers to understand their role in personal safety. Whether the worker, their partner, and the youth is safe is largely dependent on the workers themselves. When working at "safe sites" or on the street, it will be the workers' own awareness, proactivity and safety skills that will keep them safe.

Workers should not rely on other people's judgement about whether a place or a situation is safe or not. They need to be able to decide if a situation is safe or not, every time, in every situation, even if they have been to a site before, and even if the site is considered a "safe site." Safety levels include many factors and can change rapidly depending on the situation. Responses should be situational and judged moment-to-moment.

Requirements and decisions about safety should be sought from:
• Agency policies
• Supervisor's direction
• Advice from partners
• Community members
• Clients—it is not their responsibility to keep a worker safe, but they do have inside information, so listen to them

While it is important to seek guidance from other sources, some of the most important safety decisions an outreach worker will need to make will require using their own judgment, in the field, without consultation.

Safety on a Spectrum It is not helpful to think of safety in binary terms like: Lake Street is safe. Broadway is unsafe. It is far more accurate to describe and think about safety in terms of a spectrum, and a situation or place's safety can move along that spectrum depending on a number of factors. Factors such as time of day, geographical location, if there are other people around, or what the client to worker ratio is in any given location all play a critical role in determining safety. (The facilitator's activity will help explain this concept.)

Safe and Unsafe Sites

Safe and Unsafe Sites - Oftentimes, agencies deem some outreach sites as "safe sites." However, even in those sites, a worker needs to be aware of the quickly changing environmental cues that can give them warnings about whether a place is becoming unsafe.

A safe site is often considered a safe place where:
- The people around would notice, and care, if the worker was in trouble
- There are video cameras, or security is in place
- It is a pre-approved site that is familiar to the agency or to the worker
- Place where worker knows what the environment is usually like and can easily decipher if the situation is not normal, or is becoming escalated.
- People are familiar with the worker, and know what their job is and who they work for
- Examples: schools, libraries, community centers, coffee shops, food shelves, barber shops.

A site may be considered unsafe if it is:
- An isolated location
- No one knows where the worker is
- The site is unknown to the worker and the agency
- The community is escalated because of current environmental factors such as a recent drug bust
- A place where the youth is feeling unsafe (they may feel unsafe for any number of reasons)

What makes a place safe and unsafe can depend on small factors, that may not be immediately noticed, such as where a person is standing in a room.

Use the following example to help understand this concept.
- Using the room you are in as an example, discuss how the room could be safe or unsafe. Talk about things such as:
- Where the exits are located
- Where trainees are in relation to the exits
    - Are they close to the exit?
    - Is the door open or closed?
- Is there furniture or people in the way of the door?
- What is on the other side of the door?
    - Is there help on the other side of the door?
    - Danger outside of the door?
    - Where will you be when you walk through that door?

- Lighting and sightlines: are there parts of the room you can't see, or are obscured?
- Are the other people in the room quiet, or escalated?

The more trainees practice situational awareness, the more it will become more instinctual. It must be understood that these "instincts" are an awareness of those environmental cues. When workers enter a less familiar environment, they will need to rely less on their automatic instincts, and focus more on the environmental cues to help them be safe.

SECTION 2: COMPONENTS OF PERSONAL SAFETY IN OUTREACH WORK

This section will discuss the importance of preparing for safety before a worker's shift and things workers need to be keenly aware of when they are in the field.

Preparation - Outreach workers should be proactive and prepare for safety before they begin their shift. They should prepare within their agency, outside of their agency and with their partner.

Agency preparation - There are a number of ways that a worker and their team safely prepare for outreach work before they even leave their agency site:

Schedules: The outreach worker and their supervisor and team should understand how the worker plans and schedules work and how this is communicated to a supervisor and other team members. Schedules should be shared with the worker's supervisor at the very least.

Most agencies use online schedules that can sync with a worker's smartphone that allows the worker to not only share this information easily and quickly, but allows the worker to adjust the schedule remotely to keep a supervisor updated when things change. If these online schedules are not used, the worker and supervisor should agree on a system that allows the two of them to stay updated on the worker's schedule. It is safer if your supervisor knows where you are.

Communication: Outreach workers must carry a working cell phone whenever they are working outside of their agency. Each agency should have a plan for who that outreach worker should contact in the event of an emergency. In some cases, this is the outreach worker's supervisor, in others, this is a system of on-call responses.

Locations: Locations where outreach is conducted should be discussed within the agency. Preparation also includes deciding on whether a location is safe to go alone, or if the worker should only go to the planned location with a partner. Whether a worker goes to a site alone, or with a partner, the site should be approved by agency supervisors.

Outside agency preparation

If workers are planning to visit a new area, they should scout the area out ahead of time. Outreach workers should make note of:
- How they would get around the area, noting streets, sidewalks, and public transportation
- The type of businesses and their accessibility during the time they plan to visit.
- How many people are in the area and how much of the local population is normally "on the street" when they plan to work.

Even if a worker has been to a neighborhood or site before, a worker should observe the surroundings and make sure things seem normal and are not escalated (or especially quiet) before beginning work.

Whether a worker is going to a site alone, or with a partner, there should be places nearby that are known as safe places, or where there are other, known, safe people. This can include meeting local store owners or employees, such as convenience store workers and letting them know who you are and what you are going to be doing in the area. Knowing the local community people can help act as a safety net for the worker. It can also help ensure people in the community trust that the worker is legitimate and is not a police officer.[74][75]

If there is a partnership with law enforcement, it is helpful to find out ahead of time if there are any areas that would be considered unsafe because of increased gang activity, a drug bust, or other violence happening on a particular day.[76]

Partner preparation

When working with a partner, preparation includes meeting with the partner before leaving for their shift to discuss the following:
- Partners should exchange cell phone numbers and their emergency contact information in the event they become separated from the partner, or experience a medical emergency.
- Partners should have a conversation about how they are feeling physically and emotionally, and adjust their plan if there are any limitations (planning a less mobile shift if one of the workers has a physical limitation).
- Where they will be going and any known issues, new or old.
- Information that may be important to know about the area
- What their code word or phrase will be if a situation comes up where they need to leave the area immediately. Something like, "we have to catch our bus," or, just a word like "pimento." When one outreach partner says the safety word, the other may not know why, but they take it as the cue to leave immediately. The key here is immediately; a worker does not have to question anything in the moment. If there are any disagreements about the safety of something, don't argue or question your partner about it until you have left and are out of the situation.

Clear Communication: When partners repeatedly work together, they establish a rapport and understanding that allows them to communicate and work together more fluidly. This pattern and relationship takes time, and when two partners work together for the first couple of shifts, they will need to rely on more overt conversations before, during, and after a shift to keep themselves safe.

SECTION 3: AWARENESS

Becoming complacent or lackadaisical can easily happen to a worker when they are at a "safe site" or a familiar site. Workers should be aware of the environment surrounding them, people who are present, the geography of the place, how isolated they are and if others are feeling threatened. All of these will be discussed next.

Awareness of Environment

Being aware of your environment includes:
- What is going on around you?
- Who is there?
- How are people talking and acting?
- Is it the same as last time they were there?
- Is the situation changing? Remember, things can change quickly.

Awareness of Geographical Locations and Spaces

Thinking about safety in geographic locations could range from where a worker is in a specific community, to where people are located in a specific room. Some people may feel safe in a certain location and others may not. For example, a worker's partner may feel safe working in a specific street location because of familiarity with the people, or an easy escape route. Or a youth may feel unsafe in a room where the worker is close to the door, and the youth is on the other side of the worker, farther away from the door.

Awareness of Others

Awareness of others includes outreach partners, the youth they are serving and the other people surrounding them. An outreach worker should also be aware of who is around them for support. They should be aware of:
- Where other staff are located
- Where their outreach partners are located
- Is there a safe community partner nearby, or safe business to go if needed?
- An escape plan in any situation

Awareness of Self

- Be proactive and prepared for escalation or crisis rather than simply reacting in the moment.
- Recognize power differentials between a youth and an outreach worker, especially if the interaction is happening inside an agency. (Street outreach work gives less power to the outreach worker compared to if they were working inside an agency building.) Power differentials can cause a youth to be more fearful and anxious.
- Recognize where you are at. Have you slept well, eaten well, are in good shape to handle your work?
- Debriefing with the youth, with peers, and with a supervisor are necessary for healing and constant improvement.
- Be sure not to respond to every situation as if it is an attack. Sometimes a youth needs to vent, or could be upset and they have the right to show how they are feeling.
- Workers cannot de-escalate a crisis situation if they cannot keep themselves safe, or are emotionally dysregulated.

> **While thinking about others, keep in mind that trafficked youth are often being watched, if not by their trafficker, then possibly by others in the area.**

Clear Communication: Even if the worker feels safe, it does not mean their partner, or the youth are feeling safe. For example, simply talking to an outreach worker may draw other people's attention to the youth, and for a youth who is trying to "lay low," talking to the worker could be a problem. This is a particular issue with youth who are being sexually exploited, as a pimp may punish someone for talking to a worker.

Awareness of Trauma As has been discussed in previous modules, youth who have experienced homelessness and/or sexual exploitation have typically experienced trauma and crisis (often on a regular basis), which can propel or keep them in a heightened, hyper-vigilant state.

Trauma wires the brain to expect danger. It is easy for youth with traumatic experiences to have a baseline of flight, fight or freeze mode, or could be easily triggered into flight, fight, or freeze.

Workers need to be able to recognize signs of fight, flight or freeze in the people around them, but also in themselves. They should be checking their own bodily symptoms and be prepared to know when there is actual danger, and when it is time to leave a situation.

Signs of Escalation To be aware if others are feeling safe, a worker should be watching for whether someone is uncomfortable or becoming worried or escalated. This can happen by watching changes in people's bodies and behaviors.

Some visible physiological signs that someone may be becoming agitated or escalated are:
* Involuntary hand shaking or clenching
* Breathing heavy
* Flushed skin
* Dilated pupils

Some behavioral signs are:
* Deliberate shaking of finger, foot or head
* Sudden movement or jolts; pacing
* Talking louder than usual or changes in voice pitch or tone
* Fixed stare at you or something else
* Scanning the room/environment
* Yelling or swearing/anger
* Increasing resistance to requests or increases demands
* Challenging or questioning comments (For example asking, "Why did you do that?" Client may not be able to answer and may escalate the situation.)

It is critical for outreach workers to focus on trauma-informed care throughout every interaction with youth, with their co-workers, and with their community partners. Trauma-informed care will be discussed in further detail in Module 6, but it is important to talk about trauma when thinking about safety. A traumatized youth may not easily trust outreach workers, or may be triggered into a reaction that may put an outreach worker and the youth into danger.

YOUTH SAY: "DON'T WALK UP REALLY FAST."

YOUTH SAY: "MAKE SURE THEY [YOUTH] ARE COMFORTABLE. WATCH BODY LANGUAGE AND FACIAL EXPRESSIONS, FIDGETING, OR TWIRLING THEIR HAIR MEANS THEY ARE UNCOMFORTABLE."

Best Practices in Personal Safety

While this module gives tips on best practices, it is very important for workers to be aware of, and respond to, their current situation.

> See Handout 5.1, "Personal Safety in Outreach." Details of each of the following topics are on the handout:
> • **Awareness**
> • **Working in pairs- "Batman and Robin approach"**
> • **Introduce self and agency**
> • **Know neighborhood safety levels**
> • **Use extra caution in isolated areas**
> • **Avoid escalating situations and people**
> • **Appropriate dress**
> • **Personal confidentiality**

> **Safety Considerations for Outreach Workers when working with SEY** - Outreach workers should have a well thought out safety plan as well. Safety plans will look different depending on who their partner is, which community they are working in, and what times they are working. This is especially true for workers reaching out to SEY because shifts can be done on off times and in more dangerous locations. For new outreach workers, outreach geared specifically for SEY should not happen until the outreach worker has practiced their approaches and safety techniques in less dangerous situations. No amount of classroom or textbook training will replace experience. Experience with other, more experienced outreach workers is of the utmost importance.

SECTION 4: SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUTH

> **SEY Call out box:** For youth who are being trafficked, barriers to services tend to be higher, stakes are higher, and the probability of danger is also much higher than for youth who are not being trafficked. Remember that safety is not a binary concept, instead think of safety in terms of a spectrum where a situation or place's safety can move along that spectrum depending on a number of factors.

Safety Plans and Work Plans

Safety and work plans do not necessarily need to be formal, or written plans. Safety and works plans can have different levels of adjust based on youths' needs:

• *Formal Plan:* These plans have more structure to them and are generally more for agency documentation.
• *Written Plan:* A plan put on paper, with the young person's input. The youth may or may not take that paper with them. Remember, it may not be safe for youth to walk around with a piece of paper with a plan on it. Written plans can help the worker remember what goals or plans have been made.
• *Informal Plans:* These are discussions about a plan but are not necessarily written down.
• *Conversations:* This is generally just giving advice, or talking about safety or next steps, but the youth has not "committed" to anything specific about a plan.

Creating a Safety Plan Safety plans can be incorporated for any youth and will be unique to the individual youth. For SEY the "type of work" the youth is involved in may make a difference on what their safety plan looks like. Safety plans can include others on the streets, if needed. A safety plan may include things such as:

- What are the warning signs that a crisis is about to occur?
- Where are their safe spots?
- Who are their safe people?
- Who will they call when they need help?
- Where will they go when they are in trouble?
- What will they have packed and ready to go if they need to leave in a hurry?
- Coping strategies
- Creating a will (What will happen to their children etc.)

> **Creating a Work Plan - Work plans are typically more effective when a young person is not working with or controlled by a pimp - when they have more choices involving the work. A work plan can include things like the following:**
> - **What sort of clients does the youth want? What is the youth offering that clients are looking for?**
> - **Is the youth working independently? Is the youth working with an agency?**
> - **Who knows you are out on a "job"/watching your back?**
> - **"Advertising to attract what the young person wants and screen to filter out what they don't want."**
> - **What makes the youth a great companion?**
> - **Why should clients choose to spend their limited time with them rather than the next escort?**
> - **What is your name?**
> - **For what price? Different rates will bring in different clientele; there is a client for every price.**
> - **Consider how many sessions each week will meet financial goals.**
> - **Have a screening process, whenever possible.**

A few Safety Tips when working with Youth Youth are the experts in what different types of threats there are to their safety. Workers need to respect who and which environments youth consider to be safe. A few tips from the experts:
- Know the youth's safe spots.
- Know their safe phone numbers. If it's not a safe phone number, don't call the number back, even if they have called you from a number and you hear things that sound upsetting.
- Know and have numbers of the young person's safe people.
- Tell youth about safe and trusted law enforcement officers.
- Provide basic needs as much as possible [They won't have to be in dangerous situations as often in order to get those needs met, which helps in reducing harm.]

> **A Word on Safety One of the expert interviews summarized safety issues for SEY this way: "There are higher safety concerns especially if the trafficker thinks the youth might be cooperating with law enforcement. If a youth is willing to change their phone/social media accounts, that is helpful for their safety. Also, getting them to a safe place if they don't have one, preferably a Safe Harbor shelter/ housing program or some of the Domestic Violence programs in the area."**
>
> **"As always, youth know best, they know their trafficker's patterns/habits and what can keep them safe, so listen to them. If they think talking to law enforcement, or putting out an Order for Protection is going to put them in danger, then allow them to do this when they are ready and comfortable with it (there may be circumstances where this is not best, but most of the time it is). Youth may have a lot of fear bringing law enforcement into the situation; in these cases, [outreach workers should] be supportive of the youth, be available to sit in on interviews if the youth wants them to, and help the youth get connected with the Safe Harbor Regional Navigator or other Safe Harbor services, especially the Youth Law Project for legal representation is helpful."**

Safety Considerations for Youth's Family

Trafficked youth will often have threats of violence not only to themselves, but anyone around youth will tend to have threats to their safety. Family members such as children or parents who are important to the youth should be included on the youth's ecomap. Ecomaps can also be created and used for a young person's children. A few tips from the experts about harm reduction, safety, and the youth's family:

- Create a safety plan for their children.
  - For example: make sure the child is not around when they are working.
  - Be sure the child is with someone who is fairly safe when the youth cannot be with them.
- Decide who the child will stay with if something bad were to happen to the youth. How will the child get their needs met?
- Talk with youth about checking in with their family (parents, aunties, siblings) to let them know they are okay.
- If family knows what is going on in their lives, let them know where they are going to be working.
  - If their family knows what is going on, youth can create a safety plan with the family too. Things like how far away from home they should be, what forms of transportation will they take to get home, etc.
  - If the families are involved and are looking for the youth (which can be rare) be sure the family understands the role of the worker, what the worker can and can't do, and why workers do things the way they do them.

Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Discuss the issue of carrying weapons while on outreach with your partner before the shift begins.
- Locate and get to know leaders and individuals in the community who know all the "actors" there. Ex: The security guard at the liquor store, or the little mini street mall likely knows everybody and could be respected.
- Use common sense when danger is apparent. Protect yourself and your partner first.
- If a youth is in danger, try to call them first and tell them to come to you in a safe area nearby.

Don't:

- Be a hero. Walk away when needed.
- Try to save/rescue youth.
- Act like a police officer, that's not what an outreach workers' role is.
- Work in unfamiliar areas until you've done an environmental scan. This includes introducing yourself to community members, and having a look at the community at different times of the day and evening.
- Risk isolating/endangering yourself by going inside unfamiliar spaces.

74 - National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth. (2007, July). Safety's the Rule for Street Outreach Workers. Retrieved May, 2017, from
https://ncfy.acf.hhs.gov/features/street-out- reach- programs-reach-out-youth-diverse-needs/safetys-rule-street-outreach-workers
75 - ibid
76 - ibid

Module 6

Engagement

MODULE 6 – ENGAGEMENT
CORE INFORMATION: "WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW"

Outline

This Module Includes 4 Sections:
Section 1: Dynamics of Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking
Section 2: Principles for Engagement
Section 3: Stages of Interactions
Section 4: Engagement with Community Partners

Learning Objectives

Classroom 101 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Describe 3 Stages of Exploitation
2. Identify the 8 Principles of Engagement
3. Illustrate an example of someone going through the Stages of Change

Classroom 201 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Relate Module 6-101 learning to their field experiences.
2. Identify instances during their fieldwork where they observed or used one or more of the different Principals of Engagement.
3. Identify where a client is in the Stages of Change
4. Define the 3 Stages of Interactions.

Introduction to Engagement

Before beginning to discuss how to engage with clients in general, we will first address the population of youth who have experienced, or are at risk of exploitation. The intersection of homelessness and exploitation ensures that the rate of exploitation in the population of youth experiencing homelessness is extremely high. Couple that with the fact that most youth who do experience exploitation either don't recognize the experience as exploitive and/or will not identify as being exploited for safety or stigma reasons. Those who are working with youth experiencing homelessness are working with youth who are experiencing exploitation and for this reason, our strategies should reflect that whether the client identifies as being exploited or not.

SECTION 1: DYNAMICS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SEX TRAFFICKING

While not every worker will be working specifically with sexually exploited youth, many workers will be working with youth at-risk for exploitation, or with youth who are being exploited but have not identified as such. Before looking at engaging with youth, it is helpful to understand a little more of the dynamics of sexual exploitation and sex trafficking.

Experts explain that workers should understand what a day in "the life" might look like, as well as some of the other types of challenges both the youth and the worker face when working together and building relationships.
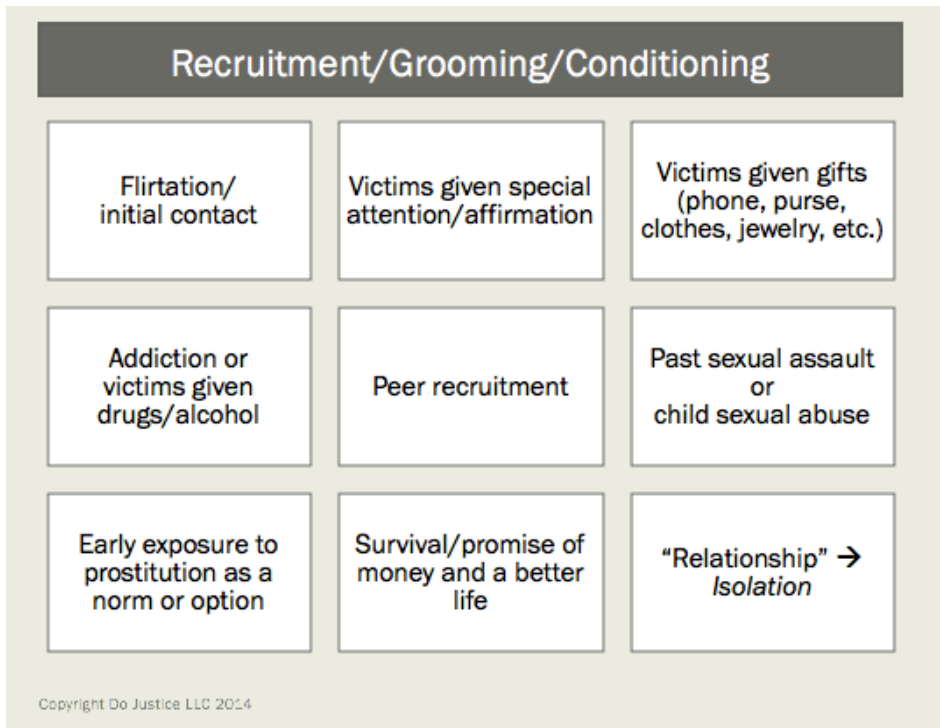
Day in the Life of SEY Sexually exploited youth are generally in crisis. Their life is about daily survival and often out of necessity, their thinking and planning does not extend past the current day. SEY will often bounce around each day trying to get their needs met one way or another. For some youth, they know that if they do not get their needs met by the end of the day they will have to "go to work." Youth know that going to work involves many possible dangers to their physical health, but may not understand the long-term consequences to their mental and spiritual health. If a young person needs to go to work, they may find it necessary to use some sort of drug or alcohol in order to mentally cope with what is happening to them. Obtaining those drugs can also be dangerous and they may end up exchanging sex for those substances.

If the young person is homeless, or is not living with their exploiter, they may be searching for a place to sleep at night, which may involve exchanging shelter for some sort of sexual act. Some SEY may have "regulars" who will allow them to stay at their house and feed them in exchange for sex. Trauma bonds with exploiters are often formed which keeps SEY protective and loyal to their perpetrators. If a youth is in a site-based housing program they will more than likely not be able to have any overnight guests, so youth may leave these housing situations because staying in them means they won't be allowed to help their friends anymore.

The impacts of living a life in constant crisis and the traumatic effects of sexual exploitation will impact a young person's behaviors and thought processes. Handout 4.1 covers many of the impacts of sexual exploitation on youth. Keeping these impacts in mind when approaching, engaging and planning next steps for youth will help a worker and the youth fill out their ecomap.

Stages of Sexual Exploitation [77]

Sexual exploitation often starts in slow and insidious ways. There are three stages people generally go through during their victimization: Recruitment/Grooming/Conditioning, Initiation/Breaking/Point of No Return, and Maintenance.

Recruitment/Grooming/Conditioning

Flirtation/ initial contact	Victims given special attention/affirmation	Victims given gifts (phone, purse, clothes, jewelry, etc.)
Addiction or victims given drugs/alcohol	Peer recruitment	Past sexual assault or child sexual abuse
Early exposure to prostitution as a norm or option	Survival/promise of money and a better life	"Relationship" → *Isolation*

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Stage 1: Recruitment/Grooming/Conditioning

In this first stage of exploitation, activities and behaviors of the exploiter are usually not seen or understood as threatening to the victim, especially if this recruitment stage is being done by someone the youth thinks they can trust, or thinks is their boyfriend.

Read through the following examples of how a youth might be recruited into "the life."
- Initial contact, could be friendship initiation or flirtation
- Victims given special attention / Affirmation
- Victims given gifts such as phones, purses, clothes, jewelry, food, place to stay, etc.
- Introducing drugs and alcohol to victim
- Peer recruitment, peers glamorizing the lifestyle
- Past sexual assault or child abuse can be thought of as its own form of grooming a youth
- Early exposure to prostitution as a norm or an option
- Survival or promise of money and/or a better life
- If a youth is not already isolated from their families, this will usually begin to happen in this stage.

YOUTH SAY: "I WENT TO CA, AND HE KIND OF MADE ME DO METH, THEN I GOT ADDICTED."

Initiation/Breaking/ "Point of No Return"

| First customer	Physical abuse	Rape/gang rape
Pornography/blackmail	Making an "example" out of another victim	New name/identity
Inducing or enabling chemical addiction	Threat of "getting in trouble"/criminal prosecution	Exploiting trauma bond (loyalty towards "family" or "boyfriend")

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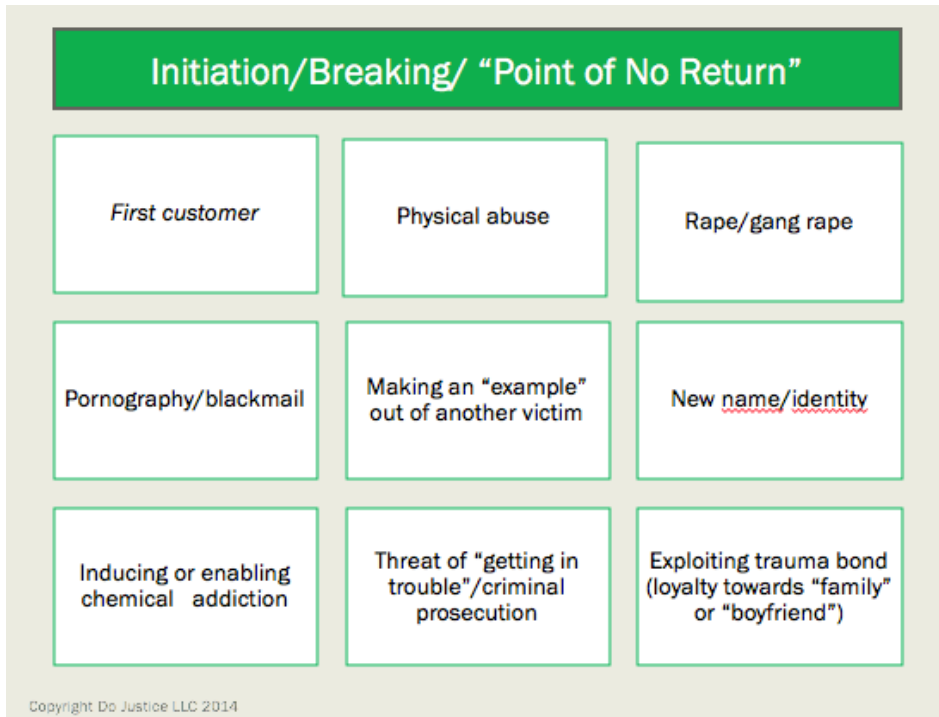
YOUTH SAY: "LIKE I WAS NEVER HELD HOSTAGE, BUT HE [HER PIMP] WAS GOING TO SEND ME OUT OF THE STATE."

Stage 2: Initiation/Breaking/Point of No Return

Their first customer – once a person has been sold the first time, it can cause severe mental anguish, such as making the youth feel like a bad person, or feeling dirty and often they can believe that no future relationships could ever be positive.

- Physical abuse can start, causing fear of leaving or of going against the trafficker.
- Rape/Gang Rape- sometimes rapes can be recorded and used as blackmail.
- Pornography involving the youth is also sometimes used as blackmail.
- Making an "example" out of another victim. Showing the victim what the trafficker is willing to do to someone if they get out of line and don't do what they are told can also break a person.
- Youth are given a new name/identity. Often people who are being sold for sex will not use their real name. It is a way to keep them from being found and it can help with dissociation.
- Inducing or enabling chemical addiction.
- Using threats of "getting in trouble"/criminal prostitution.
- Trauma bonds occur in relationships where feelings and expressions of love and nurturing are mixed with neglect, manipulation and even violence. A person may recognize the negative or harmful aspects of the relationship, but will simultaneously respond to the positive parts of the relationship, making a person's feelings about a partner or family member complicated and unmanageable.
- Exploiters often target victims of child abuse and sexual abuse, because many survivors of these events have experienced trauma bonds and the exploiter taps into those bonds as part of the grooming process.
- Stockholm Syndrome is a psychological condition that will cause a person to be loyal to their captor, or in this case trafficker, even under the most extreme conditions. This psychological alliance is a survival mechanism that is not easily broken. It is important to understand this loyalty to a person who is exploiting and abusing them can be a normal reaction to their horrible circumstances.

YOUTH SAY: "I RAN AWAY FROM HOME, HAD TO HAVE SEX TO SURVIVE, SO I HAD SEX, BUT I HAD TO HAVE DRUGS TO DO THOSE THINGS."

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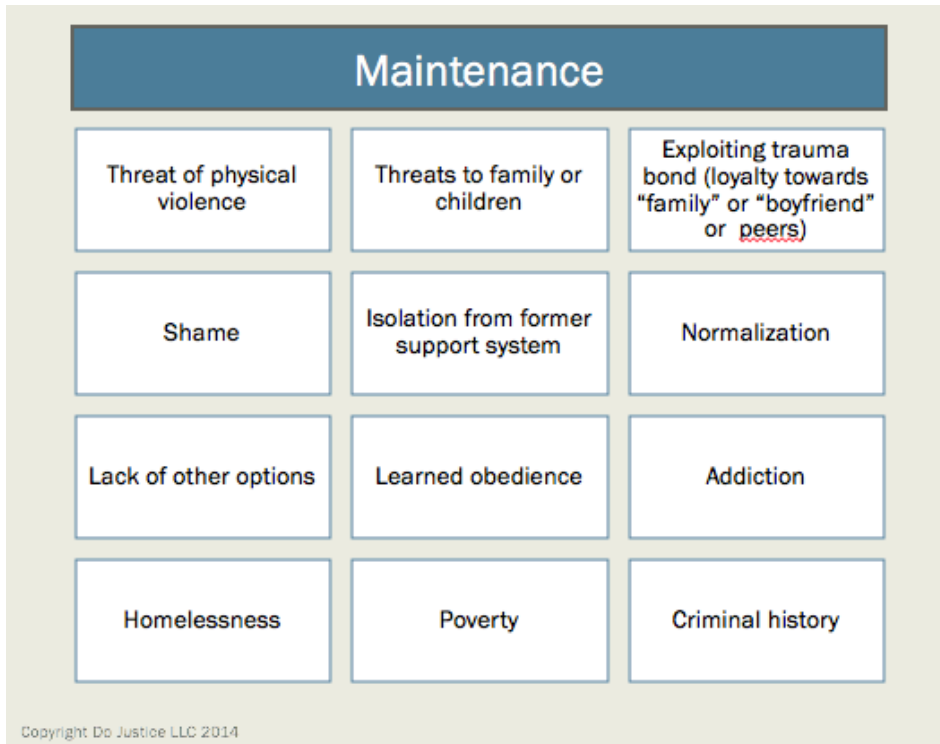
Stage 3: Maintenance

Once a person has been groomed and broken, a trafficker will need to maintain the loyalty and secrecy of the victim. In the Maintenance stage, there can be threats of physical harm to the victim and their families. Other things that can keep a person under the traffickers control and in the life may include:

- *Shame* Getting help or going back to their family for support can be very difficult when a victim is ashamed of what has happened to them.
- *Isolation* from former support system.
- *Normalization* The world they are living in becomes normalized. It can become that the only people the victim is interacting with are other exploited people, their trafficker, and the buyers.
- Victims are often made to believe they have *no other options*, and truly, the longer a person is involved in the life, the less options they do have. Often criminal records, not having a housing rental history, not having legitimate work experience and lack of education can keep available options at a minimum.
- *Addiction* Often times victims will say that in order to be able to tolerate what it is happening to them, they will have to be using drugs or alcohol. Once this turns into an addiction, among other issues, other options become less and less available to them.

Clear Communication: Trainees will encounter youth that were, are, or are imminently in danger of becoming victims of exploitation and trafficking. In the majority of these situations, they may never have a clear-cut indication that the youth is being exploited.

Warning Signs and Indicators

Please read *Handout 6.1: "Warning Signs and Indicators of Sexual Exploitation,"* this is not an exhaustive list but it is important for workers to have a basic understanding of some of these warning signs.

Making of a Girl:[78]

This 5-minute video from GEMS, wraps up the above ideas nicely. The video has outdated statistics, but it is great to help understand how children do not realize what they are getting into and how hard it will be to leave. It is important to understand how a youth gets wrapped up into sexually exploitative situations; they did not wake up and decide to be exploited or trafficked. Their circumstances have usually put them into a situation they had little control over, even if they believe they had some tough choices, or they believe they had a choice, someone is still exploiting a vulnerability. They are being victimized.

SECTION 2: PRINCIPLES FOR ENGAGEMENT

For workers to be effective in their jobs, it is necessary to understand some basic best-practices principles that help workers effectively engage with youth. In this section, authenticity, strengths-based perspective, positive youth development, trauma-informed care, and stages of change will be discussed.

Clear Communication: It is not in the scope of this module to go into depth surrounding each of these issues, but it is good for outreach workers to have a basic understanding of the following principles.

Authenticity

"Authenticity is our expression of emotions, reactions, thoughts and ideas that are consistent with our internal experience. It's what is real and true for us from our perspective and values." [79]

Authenticity in a relationship with a client is one of the most important concepts workers can practice. If a worker is not authentic, anything else they try to do will have minimal impact. Youth know when someone is not being genuine, which will cause them to not trust the worker and the worker will lose credibility. "Staying authentic requires self-awareness, confidence, and a willingness to tolerate and work through conflict. When we are authentic we instill confidence, and solidify the relationship."[80]

Tips on how to be authentic:
- Explain processes – Explaining the rationale behind why decisions are made, or why the worker or a service agency has to do things a certain way, will help youth trust the outreach worker. (Cohesive Learning: Boundaries)
- Clarifying roles – Workers can be proactive and set clear expectations on what youth can expect from the worker and what is expected from the youth. (Cohesive Learning: Boundaries)
- Owning mistakes – Be open to youth feedback and respond with self-correction when needed.[81]
- Admit when you don't know something – Model that there is no shame in not knowing something. Youth who have had to rely on their own senses for survival are keenly aware of when people are not being honest with them.[82]
- Provide honest feedback – Feedback can be delivered with both positive and negative input. Even negative input can be framed as a positive.[83]
- Don't over promise – Only promise things that can be delivered. If a worker is unsure of an outcome, they need to be transparent and explain the different possible outcomes to the youth. (Cohesive Learning: Community Partners)

Clear Communication
- *If someone is "stubborn" it can be framed as "strong determination" and can be used as a strength to help increase a youth's self-confidence and self-efficacy.*
- *Be yourself! – Don't be phony, or try to act like someone you are not. Be transparent and real.*
- *Tie in the Boundaries training when talking about authenticity and note that "being yourself" requires a balancing act between "being real" and not over-sharing.*

Strengths-based Perspective

Oftentimes people in helping professions are looking to problem-solve with clients by focusing on what is wrong and on what aspects of a client's situation are negative. From a strengths-based perspective, problem-solving revolves around acknowledging clients' strengths and using those strengths as a starting point for change. It is more helpful to focus on the "cans" than on the "can nots."[84]

(Taken directly from Resiliency Initiatives)[85]

"A strengths approach offers a genuine basis for […] people taking control of their own lives in meaningful and sustainable ways.
- Focus on trusting and workable relationships
- Empowering people to take a lead in their own care process
- Working in collaborative ways on mutually agreed upon goals
- Drawing upon the personal resources of motivation and hope
- Creating sustainable change through learning and experiential growth"

A strengths-based perspective is not denying that youth experience, problems and challenges that can be corrected. It is not ignoring problems and difficulties, instead "it attempts to identify the positive basis of the person's resources (or what may need to be added) and strengths that will lay the basis to address the challenges resulting from the problems."[86]

YOUTH SAY: "AN OUTREACH WORKER SHOULD PULL ME TO THE SIDE, SAY ARE YOU OKAY… SHOULD NOT BE JUDGMENTAL, BE HONEST, UP-FRONT."

Positive Youth Development

Positive youth development comes from a preventative and resiliency- based approach, recognizing that increasing protective factors in a youth's life can help overcome adversity.[87] When engaging with youth, workers should focus on helping build those resiliency and protective factors. Some of these factors include:

- Outreach worker support and monitoring
- Caring adults
- Positive peer groups
- Strong sense of self
- Self-esteem and self-efficacy
- Future aspirations
- Engagement in school and community activities[88]
- Building a safety net of people and resources a youth can turn to for support (Cohesive Learning: Boundaries)

Trauma-Informed Care

A trauma-informed approach is needed to ensure no further harm or re-traumatization happens to the youth. Practicing trauma-informed care will also affect the nature of the relationship in positive ways. A trauma-informed worker recognizes the impact that trauma can have on youth, including the decisions youth make, the responses they have to others, and their ability to trust outreach workers or anyone in a position that has more power.

Many issues and incidents that arise when providing services for traumatized youth stem from their past trauma. It is critical to recognize when a youth's behaviors are reflecting trauma so workers will be able to keep themselves and the youth safe. Behaviors triggered from traumatic experiences can include:

- Running away
- Breaking or pushing back against rules and policies
- Keeping relationships with staff and other helping professionals distant
- Not trusting authority
- Disrespecting staff
- Being in constant conflict with others
- Creating chaos
- Displaying lack of social skills or anti-social behavior
- Lack of emotional regulation skills
- Distorted or inconsistent memory and recall
- Dissociation
- Anger or violence

Understanding these types of trauma behaviors will allow the worker to be more empathetic and patient with youth. It will also help workers understand how to better meet the youths where they are and plan resources and services accordingly.

If these types of traumatic responses are displayed with community partners, it can be disruptive to a youth's progress if the partners do not know how to properly respond. Outreach workers may need to advocate for youth with other service providers and other community partners so that unwanted behaviors are met with trauma-informed consequences.

Active Listening

Active listening will be referenced in each of the three stages of interactions with youth. Active listening is "a communication technique used in counseling, training, and conflict resolution. It requires that the listener fully concentrate, understand, respond and then remember what is being said."

By practicing active listening skills, a worker will build rapport, understanding, and trust with youth. A worker can show they are listening and help a youth feel free to continue talking, even if the worker is not offering much in way of response.

Tips for Active Listening: [89]

1. Restating: Repeat every so often what the worker thought the youth said using their own words. "Let's see if I'm clear about this…"
2. Summarizing: Bringing pieces of the problem together to check for understanding. "So, it sounds to me as if…"
3. Reflecting: Reflecting youth's words in terms of feelings. "This seems really important to you."
4. Giving Feedback: Letting youth know the worker's initial thoughts. Share pertinent information, observations, insights, and experiences.
5. Emotion Labeling: Putting feelings into words. "I'm sensing that you're feeling frustrated."
6. Probing: Asking questions to get deeper and more meaningful information. "What do you think would happen if you…?"
7. Validation: Acknowledge problems, issues and feelings. "I appreciate your willingness to talk about such a difficult issue."
8. Silence: Allow for silence. Give a youth time to think as well as talk. It is best not to fill in every silence even if it feels a little uncomfortable.
9. Consequences: Talk about possible consequences of taking action, or of inaction. "What happened the last time you did that?"

Stages of Change

While youth may want things to be better in their lives, they do not always recognize what is holding them back and may not recognize the strengths and resources they have around them that can support their efforts in making changes. Using a strengths-based approach and understanding that changes take place slowly and in stages will help a worker understand what a youth needs at a given moment. The Stages of Change model recognizes that change is a process in which people typically cycle through stages.

Please see *Handout 6.2: "Stages of Change"* for detailed information about the Stages of Change.

The Stages of Change are:
- Pre-contemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance
- Relapse

Workers can sometimes try to move a client through the stages of change too quickly, or try to push them into taking action on things the worker believes the youth should need or want. If the worker tries to move faster than the client is ready to move it could:

- Cause them to become defensive about their behaviors
- Turn them away from the worker and/or their agency
- Lead them to fail in their efforts

Instead, workers should ask, and really hear, what the client wants and then offer suggestions and options that line up with current needs, desires and values (where the youth is in the stages of change).

Clear Communication: When an worker tailors their strategies and approaches to the youth's current stage of change, they demonstrate that they are listening and responding to the youth.

SECTION 3: STAGES OF INTERACTIONS

Interactions and building rapport with youth happens in stages. Three stages of interactions are 1) Initial Contact and Approach, 2) Engagement and 3) Building Relationships. Throughout each of these stages of interaction with youth, workers should keep in mind past learning modules as well as the principles introduced in the previous section of this module.

Stage 1: Initial Contact and Approach

When first approaching a youth, whether on the street or within an agency, the initial step is to let youth know who the worker is, what the worker's role is, and if working outside the agency, with which agency the worker is employed. This stage is to let youth see and know who the worker is. It is not about forcing a youth to identify as being in need of help, or if they are interested in obtaining help.

Cohesive Learning: Active Listening. Workers are probably not getting very much information about a youth in this stage of interaction. Instead, workers are simply showing the youth that they are truly listening and interested in what the youth is saying.

Cohesive Learning: Cultural Responsiveness. Workers should remember:

- Not to be making assumptions about how a youth identifies with different cultures, including sexual orientation or gender identities
- To constantly check their own biases and judgments so they are not negatively influencing the ability to connect with youth on a deeper level
- To be aware that privilege differences can affect how the youth is perceiving the worker.

Cohesive Learning: Personal Safety. When first approaching a youth, be aware of cues from the environment and from the youth themselves. If a youth is giving signals they do not want to be approached, are in the middle of criminal or other activity, or are obviously agitated, don't approach them.

YOUTH SAY: "THE BEST WAY IS TO SAY, 'HI, DO YOU NEED HELP WITH ANYTHING?' TELL ME YOU'RE AN OUTREACH WORKER. IT'S IN THE WAY YOU TALK TO ME."

YOUTH SAY: "[YOUTH ARE] NOT GOING TO TRUST PEOPLE RIGHT AWAY."

Experts mentioned the following few things to keep in mind when approaching youth on the street:
- Before approaching a youth, take time to check and see if anyone is watching them
- See if they will come to you, if they don't, let them go
  - Trying to keep engaging with a trafficked youth who is avoiding the outreach worker could put the youth in more danger.
- If they will come to you then you can try to engage
- Have an immediate response plan – if youth asks for immediate help, the worker needs to have a plan and should always know where an immediate safe place is. For example: running into Target and getting a security officer to help get you out of sight. A worker can ask things such as:
  - "Is this person [the pimp or abuser] near you right now?"
  - "What is their connection with you? (A parent, relative, friend, pimp, etc.)"
  - "Where do you feel safe going to?"

Several experts interviewed also mentioned that outreach workers should not interrupt interactions they see happening. If a youth says "don't talk to me in a certain situation," don't do it. Respect them. One expert said,"Even if you see them getting hurt, talking to them or trying to do something to stop it could put them in even more danger. What will happen to them if you do get involved? You get to leave the situation, what happens to them when you leave? If they say don't get involved, then don't."

If a pimp approaches the outreach worker:
- Don't challenge them
- Try to treat the pimp with respect
- Normalize the outreach workers' presence in the area. Explain you are there to make sure the youth is healthy, which benefits not only the youth, but the pimp as well.
- Humanizing the pimp in the outreach worker's mind can help. Recognize that:
  - The pimp has likely had exponential trauma too
  - The pimp may have been brought up seeing trafficking as a normal part of life
  - Some pimps believe this may be one of the only ways they can move up in the world and get out of their current life situation.

Cohesive Learning: Boundaries. Boundaries should be articulated to the client from the beginning of the relationship, starting with the initial contact. This can be done in part, by establishing a clear understanding with youth regarding the role of an outreach worker and the expectations of the role, which helps the youth to have realistic expectations.

Cohesive Learning: Harm Reduction. (Harm reduction will be taught in depth in the next module.) A harm-reduction approach requires small, incremental steps. Even an "unsuccessful" approach can be a step forward if the worker is non-judgmental and uses trauma-informed care. If the youth is not disposed to show interest or trust in the worker, and the worker responds respectfully, this can leave a positive impression on the youth and could eventually lead to a more successful interaction in the future, either with that worker or a different worker.

Stage 2: Engagement

Once a worker has approached a youth and has employed initial active listening skills, the next stage is to engage with the youth. In this stage, the youth identifies as interested in obtaining help, and real conversations begin.

Cohesive Learning: Active Listening. In this stage of interacting with youth, workers will need to truly engage in active listening to figure out what is going on with the youth. It is critical for workers to not make assumptions about what the youth is telling them. Be sure to "restate" what a youth is saying, so there is no confusion. Other pieces of active listening are important here too, but especially reflecting, validating and probing. Asking thoughtful questions to obtain more meaningful information, without being invasive, is key.

YOUTH SAY: "MAKE SURE THE PERSON KNOWS THAT YOU [THE WORKER] MIGHT BE HELPFUL FOR THEM TO KNOW, IF THEY WANTED TO ESCAPE."

YOUTH SAY: "JUST GIVE OPTIONS."

Worker's reactions. SEY know when they tell their story, or about things they have been made to do, people will be shocked. Those shocked and concerned reactions can show in outreach worker's words, body language, and sometimes in the services offered. If the outreach worker does not control their body language and words, it can cause the youth to not trust the outreach worker.

Cohesive Learning: Stages of Change. Using active listening skills can help the worker figure out which stage of change a youth is in. Once the stage of change has been identified, the worker can use the Stages of Change advice in Handout 6.1, to engage youth by meeting them where they are. Change must happen on the youth's time, based on individual wants, needs, and abilities.

Cohesive Learning: Cultural Responsiveness. Again, in this stage, workers need to constantly check their own biases and judgments so they are not negatively influencing their own ability to connect with youth on a deeper level. As engagement occurs, workers should be recognizing some different cultural aspects based on what the youth is telling them. Workers should begin to think about issues the youth may be facing because of cultural barriers, oppression, and possible lack of privilege.

Cohesive Learning: Trauma-Informed. Workers should never make assumptions, but they should view each person they meet on the job, whether it is a youth, a co-worker, or a community partner through a trauma-informed lens. A worker will not know who has been impacted by trauma, in what form, or to what degree, so best-practice is to approach everyone through this lens.

No matter how effective a worker is in using active listening and being non-judgmental, there is always a possibility of miscommunication. Workers can actively address the disparity in the power differential by owning any mistakes so that the youth is not on the defensive.

Stage 3: Relationship Building:

Once youth are engaged and willing to begin working with the outreach worker, it is critical to build a healthy, positive, and productive relationship for increasing a youth's safety, stability, health and empowerment.

Cohesive Learning: Authenticity. Youth know when a worker is not being genuine, which will cause them to not trust the worker and the worker will lose credibility. Authenticity also includes follow through. When workers state specifically what they plan to do, it builds a more trusting relationship. Workers need to be themselves, be transparent, and not over-promise.

Cohesive Learning: Cultural Responsiveness. As a relationship builds with youth, workers should be looking for how a youth identifies culturally. As awareness of the layers of cultural intersectionality emerge, a worker will better understand how the youth's beliefs, reactions, decisions and vulnerabilities are impacting their relationship and their work together. Awareness of cultural identities will also allow the worker to advocate for the youth better and they will be better equipped to offer more appropriate resources.

Clear Communication: Workers should acknowledge that youth are in a very transitional stage and the way they identify can blur and change often and rapidly. Be prepared for these changes. Don't assume that just because a youth identifies one way this week, that they won't identify differently the next.

YOUTH SAY: "DON'T ASK A MILLION PERSONAL QUESTIONS AT FIRST."

SEY might not want to, or may not be allowed to talk to an outreach worker for various reasons, the reasons experts in the field gave are as follows:

1. SEY are being watched and controlled
    • It can be very difficult to keep in touch with SEY.
    • SEY may not be allowed to talk to anyone about anything, and may be threatened or abused if they do.
    • SEY will often have several different cell phones and/or will constantly have new phone numbers.
    • Even if the youth wants to work with the worker, they may not have a choice. (They may not be in control of anything they are doing.)

2. Living in chaos SEY are living in chaos and have a lot going on, so it is difficult for them to stay connected with people on a regular basis. This can make it difficult for SEY to make it to appointments and to meet the worker when they agreed to meet, which can be frustrating for the worker. Workers should never take it personally if youth don't talk to them, return their calls, let them know their contact information, or show up for scheduled meetings or appointments.

3. Paperwork Organizations sometimes require youth to fill out paperwork in order to receive services. There are several reasons youth may not want to fill out paperwork, but for SEY especially, they may not feel safe doing so because:
    • Their pimp may be watching the interaction between the youth and outreach worker and may not approve of the interaction and/or of the youth filling out paperwork.
    • The youth may feel unsafe giving their real names and other identifying information to anyone, much less to an organization.

Cohesive Learning: Boundaries. Boundaries should be articulated to the client consistently throughout the relationship. As was mentioned in Module 4, youth need to know that this is not a transactional relationship, that this is not like some of the other relationships in their lives. Youth need to know the outreach worker will help them:
• Without having to manipulate in any way, or give the worker anything in return for services
• Even if the worker does not "like" them or approve of all the things the youth is doing
• Even if they are not overly nice to the worker
• Without a promise of loyalty or sex

Cohesive Learning: Positive Youth Development. Positive youth development practices can help build better relationships with youth. Positive youth development is building resiliency and protective factors around youth, which includes support from the worker, but also support from people and resources outside of the client/worker relationship. If youth do not build a dependency on one outreach worker, and understand that other people besides the worker can help them, the relationship with the outreach worker will be healthier and more beneficial.

Cohesive Learning: Active Listening. Active listening remains a critical component in the relationship-building stage. Outreach workers should use all nine active listening skills throughout their relationship, but as youth begin to trust the worker more it will be easier to give helpful feedback and ask more probing questions to be able to get to the deeper issues. It is also easier to talk seriously about consequences of taking action or remaining inactive on making changes. Active listening is critical for assessing stages of change and assessing what the youth is willing to do now, with an eye on what they may want for the future.

Often the goal of a worker is to identify partners who can provide long term support (more intensive) and then act as a liaison or bridge to these services, but the youth's situation may prevent youth from accessing more traditional services, necessitating "ongoing" work from the worker. Extended, ongoing support is more likely to be needed by SEY than for youth who have not been exploited. Youth who have been, or are currently being sexually exploited, may have more contacts with a worker, and may need more ongoing support in order to become safe, stable, healthy and empowered.

In Handout 6.3: Ongoing Support for SEY, general ongoing support considerations, differences when there is a third-part trafficker involved, and considerations for when SEY have children are discussed. Considerations surrounding what it actually takes to help someone leave an exploitative situation, based on tips from the experts are also discussed.

SECTION 4: ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Applying Principles of Engagement with Community Partners

Principles of Engagement were discussed in the context of practicing them with clients. This section of the module will ask trainees to critically think about and discuss how to use those same strategies when engaging and working with community partners.

FLEXIBILITY IN OUTREACH WORK

Outreach workers have more flexibility in working with youth and employing the Principles of Engagement than workers who work within agencies. The following examples show how an Outreach Worker can be more flexible and use some of the Principles of Engagement in different ways than a shelter worker could do.

Examples of Flexibility:

The setting where you may work. Compared to a shelter worker who works within agency walls, an outreach worker has flexibility to meet a youth where they feel more empowered. If a youth is not comfortable inside a shelter, an outreach worker can meet a youth wherever feels safer to them.

Cohesive Learning: Cultural Responsiveness. If for example, a youth is Native American and refuses to use shelter, an Outreach Worker has the flexibility to meet the youth in their own community. Or if a youth identified as transgender and says that the shelter is unsafe, the Outreach Worker can work with the youth in safe LGBTQ+ spaces.

Time:

An outreach worker has the possibility of working within the youth's timeframe. An outreach worker can be more flexible on what time of the day works best to meet the youth.

Cohesive Learning: Stages of Change. Being flexible with time also means that an outreach worker has the ability to work through the Stages of Change on the youth's timeframe. Outreach workers have the ability to meet the youth where they are at in the Stages of Change, and to work long-term with youth through those stages, where a shelter worker may not have the time or flexibility to do so.

Cohesive Learning: Authenticity. While a shelter worker can, and should, be authentic with youth, an Outreach Worker may have more time to build a trusting relationship built on authenticity and transparency. Having the time to build that trusting relationship can help propel a youth to access services that a shelter worker may not have time to build that kind of a relationship.

Asking Invasive Questions:

Often, a shelter worker will be required to ask questions that can sometimes be invasive, frustrating, and upsetting to a youth. An Outreach Worker does not have to ask specific questions to help or work with a youth.

Cohesive Learning: Active Listening. In this situation, an Outreach Worker will have an easier time using active listening techniques to help figure out where the youth is at, and what services the youth is willing and able to use.

Requiring Documentation:

If a youth does not have documentation or identification, a shelter worker may have to turn the youth away. An outreach worker does not require documentation to work with a youth. An outreach worker can follow up with a youth if the youth cannot access shelter due to documentation requirements, or if they have been kicked out of shelter.

These situations compare Outreach Workers to a shelter worker. Have trainees talk about other types of workers who will not have the same flexibility as an OW.

Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Observe each youth and the environment carefully before any approach is made.
- Identify yourself, your partner, your affiliation/agency and purpose immediately, and offer the youth a business card with your name and a number.
- Be earnest, and respectful in all your approaches and contacts with youth and leave the encounter as positive as possible.
- Let the youth know when you will be back in the area.

Don't:

- Take any rejection during an approach personally. It's not about you and you don't know what the youth is going through at that moment.
- Rush into any approaches without first scanning the environment and mood.
- Ever, ever chase or follow a youth to make an approach.
- Use language that will be off-putting for a youth, or imply homelessness.

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Module 7

Harm Reduction

MODULE 7 – HARM REDUCTION
CORE INFORMATION: "WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW"

Outline

This Module Includes 4 Sections:
Section 1: The Harm Reduction Approach
Section 2: Philosophies with Harm Reduction
Section 3: Articulating Harm Reduction
Section 4: Harm Reduction and Vicarious Trauma

Learning Objectives

Classroom 101 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Describe the Harm Reduction Approach
2. Explain what it means to take "incremental steps"
3. Identify ways that vicarious trauma can be induced

Classroom 201 Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, trainees will be able to:
1. Relate Module 7-101 learning to their field experiences.
2. Identify instances during their fieldwork where they observed or used harm reduction.
3. List Guiding Principles
4. Illustrate an understanding of ecomaps and Systems Theory

SECTION 1: THE HARM-REDUCTION APPROACH

The Harm-Reduction approach was initially created to reduce the negative consequences associated with drug use, to be used with people for whom abstinence was not feasible. More recently, the same techniques have been successfully used with an array of different populations of people who are in harmful situations and circumstances. Harm reduction improves quality of life, not necessarily the cessation of all dangerous or harmful behavior.

We adapt the Harm-Reduction approach to working with clients experiencing homelessness and exploitation because the barriers to addressing those conditions are often as complicated and difficult as drug use. Surmounting the trust barrier with clients often requires a significant amount of time and rapport building. Harm-Reduction gives workers a practical framework to do this. It's non-judgmental and client centered aspects give workers practical strategies that reflect Safe Harbor principles.

Clear Communication: Harm reduction does not attempt to minimize or ignore the harm and danger in which youth may be involved. It simply recognizes that sometimes the best, or only option is to reduce the harmful effects of the risky or dangerous behavior.

Harm reduction acknowledges that some behaviors are clearly safer than others and true change is not going to happen until the client is ready. For youth, harmful behaviors can include drug or alcohol use, survival sex, unprotected sex, sleeping in unsafe places and self-harming behaviors, among others. Youth in general take risks, but at-risk and youth experiencing homelessness or sexual exploitation are at even greater risks for engaging in harmful behaviors.

The foundation of harm reduction is in meeting youth where they are, being non-judgmental and encouraging youth to take small, incremental or cumulative steps towards reducing harmful behaviors. When workers use harm-reduction techniques, and encourage youth to take incremental steps, the steps must be based on things the youth is willing to do, or change will not happen. A worker cannot push their own ideas or agenda on youth.

Harm reduction is client-centered and collaborative. Using harm-reduction techniques also allows the worker and the client to build trusting and collaborative relationships. When a youth is offered options that involve taking smaller, easier steps, it gives the worker time to build a good working relationship with the youth. This makes it more likely that the youth will come back to the trusted worker when ready to take those bigger steps.

Harm Reduction and Systems Harm reduction is encouraging youth to take small, incremental or cumulative steps towards reducing harmful behaviors. Some of those incremental steps will include connecting youth to other people or resources (other systems) outside of the outreach worker. Connecting youth incrementally with healthy resources and systems they are willing to connect with is part of both a harm reduction and a systems approach.

Clear Communication: If a youth is homeless, oftentimes the big step from living in a tent to staying in a shelter is not going to happen right away. Using harm reduction's incremental steps, a worker can consider:
- *When first engaging with a youth, first offer the food shelf as a resource (building relationship and rapport).*
- *After rapport has been built and the youth trusts the worker, the worker could mention a safer place for the youth to camp.*
- *After seeing the youth again, the next step could be to offer to help the youth apply for an apartment. (The paperwork has to be done at the shelter).*
- *Once the youth has been to the shelter (to do their apartment paperwork), they may begin to feel more comfortable with the shelter and on a cold night, the worker could mention that the youth could stay at the shelter, just for the weekend.*
- *Finally, the youth might eventually make it to the shelter on a longer-term basis*

Cohesive Learning: Role of Worker (Module 1). When workers observe a youth experiencing, participating in or choosing unsafe, harmful or dangerous situations or actions, the natural response is to want to get them to completely stop or end the harm. In Module 1, it was stated that the role of the worker is to work towards a client's safety, stability, health and empowerment. When working with youth, sometimes the best and most effective tactic to head towards the goals of safety, stability, health and empowerment are to use harm-reduction techniques.

Clear Communication: Harm reduction is not always an intuitive approach; it is hard to see youth in dangerous situations and not want to rescue them. At first, harm reduction can be a difficult concept to grasp. Very often, workers focus on the most literal interpretation of the phrase itself, often leading workers to believe that harm reduction is simply anything that makes the youth's situation safer. Harm reduction is more complex than that.

Think of a youth walking down the middle of the street. To the worker, the most obvious way to help this youth safely would be to direct or convince the youth to walk on the sidewalk. However, the harm-reduction approach assumes that if youth is either unwilling or unable to walk on the sidewalk, the best approach would be to attempt to help the youth who is continuing to walk down the middle of the street to look both ways and avoid the traffic. Harm reduction also assumes that looking both ways may eventually lead to the youth choosing to walk on the sidewalk.

> Experts note the tendency of workers to want to save youth because this population is often in such danger. One of the experts interviewed put it this way,
>
> "People get the mentality that [they want] youth to see the end goal, which is that they will no longer be doing sex work. Instead, outreach workers need to think about [their work with youth] in terms of the young person might actually start eating food, have access to a health care provider, a person to talk to, and have clean underwear and socks."
>
> Workers should be intentional about thinking of their work with SEY as a support person and a connector to healthy systems, not a "savior." This goal will help both the youth and the outreach worker with maintaining healthy boundaries and will empower youth by increasing interactions with healthy, supportive systems.
>
> The incremental nature of harm reduction combined with the dangerous nature of these youth's lives often make some harm reduction strategies unique to this population. For example, case planning involving a will or other plans in the event of the young person's death may seem extreme, but may be what the youth wants or needs.

Field Experts:

Some tips about harm reduction from the experts:
- Know this is a lengthy process. Don't internalize or be frustrated by the length of the process, it's not because the outreach worker is failing! Be patient!
- Little victories, small changes and small steps, need to be applauded. Build the young person up as often as possible. Youth who are being exploited rarely hear how good they are doing, instead they are constantly torn down.
- Rewarding young people for the smaller things keeps them engaged and lets them know the worker notices and cares.
- Respect and understand which stage of change they are in.
- Often times, relapse is part of the process.
- Create small incremental goals in a work or safety plan. For example, create a goal of not talking to the pimp or not going out with certain groups of friends. Goals can be set specifically around not doing things that will pull them back into things they don't want to be doing. (It can be helpful to come up with goals after an ecomap has been filled out.)

SECTION 2: PHILOSOPHIES WITH HARM REDUCTION

Harm-reduction strategies can help workers and youth be more successful, even if a worker does not always see the results of implementing harm-reduction strategies. It doesn't always mean that youth are not going to get hurt.

There are positive results even if they are not obvious immediately. Results to consider are things such as the "less likely's." For example, with harm reduction, a youth is less likely to be assaulted, less likely to be sleeping on the street, less likely to be sexually exploited, and less likely to overdose, etc.

Another, less obvious, positive result is that harm reduction allows a trusting relationship to be built based on the youth's timing. To be successful using harm-reduction techniques, trainees should practice the following philosophies. The youth-centered approach is introduced in this section, but the other philosophies include theories and principles from learning in past modules.

New Concept: Youth-Centered Approach

A youth-centered approach (often called client-centered approach) moves helping professionals from being the "expert" in a client/worker relationship towards a "nondirective, empathic approach that empowers and motivates the client" based on the belief that "every human being strives for and has the capacity to fulfill his or her own potential."[90]

Being youth-centered means putting the needs and interests of the youth first. It requires keeping in mind that youth are "more than the sum of things—in particular, traumatic things—that have happened to them.[91] Each youth brings unique context, interests, strengths, and skills that have aided in that youth's ability to survive."[92]

Tips for being youth-centered (Adapted from Safe Harbor Protocol Guidelines)[93]
1. Consider the youth first. The youth and the youth's unique needs and abilities should be considered first.
2. Listen generously. Listen with belief and with patience. Listen with compassion and faith in the youth's resiliency. Listen to understand the youth's own goals for safety, stability, health and empowerment. (Use active listening skills)
3. Promote self-agency. Offer support and information that youth need to act in their own best interest relative to the unique circumstances of their lives.
4. Hold self and others accountable. Be able to explain and answer for our own actions and decisions. Ask others to do the same.

Cohesive Learning Philosophies

The following philosophies are listed with the intent to help trainees be successful when using harm-reduction techniques by tying together concepts and learning from past modules.

Active Listening In order to use harm reduction strategies, a worker needs to be aware of what a youth actually needs and wants. Wasting time and resources on things the youth is not going to use or follow through on is not helpful. Using active listening skills is the best way to figure out which issues are most concerning to the youth and can help figure out the first steps to be taken. Cohesive learning: Active listening in Module 6.

Strengths-Based Approach No matter what steps a youth is willing to take, encouraging youth through a strengths-based approach can go a long way towards helping the youth actually follow through. Focusing on what the youth can do, instead of what they cannot do, will help create sustainable change through learning and experiential growth that will come from following through on the incremental steps. Cohesive learning: Strengths-Based Approach in Module 6.

Culturally Responsive A culturally responsive approach will also help with implementing harm-reduction strategies. When outreach workers are culturally responsive, they are keeping in mind the intersectionality of the youth and basing suggestions and resources with different cultural identities in mind.

Being culturally responsive also includes outreach worker's checking their own biases and making sure they are not being judgmental.

Being judgmental is not always obvious to the worker. For example, less obvious signs of judgment include:
*   Showing "tough love"—this can often a signal that a person is trying to rationalize their own judgments
*   Saying, "I just want what's best for you"
*   Or saying, "I can't stand to watch you live like this"

Also, workers need to recognize what it is that makes them excited about coming to work every day, so they don't allow those biases to sway their judgments and their work with youth.

Clear Communication: As an example, workers may be drawn to youth who are more housing ready than youth who are not, because they get excited when a youth is actually housed. Workers need to be sure their own need for fulfillment is not driving their work; the youth's needs should be what matters. Cohesive learning: Cultural Responsiveness in Module 2.

Stages of Change Harm reduction allows the client to change their lives depending on their own concerns and values. Working through the Stages of Change with youth requires practicing harm reduction techniques. Using a strengths-based approach and understanding that changes take place slowly and in stages, a worker practicing harm reduction will work to help the youth be safer in the pre-contemplation, contemplation and preparation stages.

Cohesive learning: Stages of Change in Module 6

Clear Communication: If a youth has had to engage in survival sex in order to have food and shelter, and are in the pre-contemplation stage, a worker can help them be safer even while still engaging in survival sex. A worker can practice harm reduction by offering education about STIs, offering other options for food or shelter, or giving the youth condoms, etc. Harm reduction and stages of change require a worker to meet the youth where they are at.

For all youth, but especially for youth experiencing sexual exploitation, educating on sexual health is needed. Educating on things such as how to minimize infections and transmission of diseases, should be discussed with youth and thought about in a harm-reduction view point. Handout 5.1: Safety Tips for Sexually Exploited Youth, gives basic tips for safety, sexual/hygiene safety and substance use tips.

Positive Youth Development Harm reduction and positive youth development also work together. Creating and helping youth build protective factors around them is the basis for positive youth development. This could begin as an incremental step of simply having conversations with a caring, trusted outreach worker. Harm can be reduced through:

- Education on topics that are issues or problems for youth
- Talking with youth—just being available and fully present
- Listening and being non-judgmental
- Creating other opportunities, in small increments, for self-efficacy
- Encouraging talk about future aspirations
- Slowly building a safety net of people and resources a youth can turn to for support

Cohesive learning: Positive Youth Development in Module 6

Clear Communication: All of these strategies require putting the youth's expectations and needs at the center of the worker's focus, but there are plenty of factors that compete with that.

Difficulty with Harm Reduction

Practicing harm reduction is not easy. Harm reduction requires a focus on immediate needs and incremental solutions. For example, when a youth is engaging in risky sexual activity, it can be difficult for the worker to focus on handing out condoms when what they really want is for the activity to end. It can also be difficult because the outreach worker may not see the results of their work. Harm reduction requires patience and a trust that those incremental steps add up to safer results in the long term.

YOUTH SAY: "I DON'T TRUST COPS ANYMORE."

> **The Challenges of Harm Reduction when Working with SEY**
>
> **Some challenges that might make harm reduction difficult when working with SEY [i]**
> - **Effects of Trauma** - Defense mechanisms such as dissociation, projection, denial, etc. will undoubtedly come into play. When a youth acts out in these ways, it is important to remember to meet them where they are at. Use terms that they use to describe what is happening to them. For example, if a youth calls their trafficker their "boyfriend," the outreach worker should also refer to him as the youth's boyfriend.
> - **Addiction to Lifestyle** - Even though the lifestyle is harmful and dangerous, there are parts of the lifestyle that can be addictive. Things like gaining attention they may not have had before can be very gratifying to youth. There is also often extreme drama and almost an excitement that can go along with crisis events. This does not mean they enjoy the abuse, but rather that abuse and trauma has made them accustomed psychologically and physiologically to adrenaline and crisis.
> - **Mistrust of Authority** - Victims of sexual exploitation often do not trust authority, or anyone they do not know. This mistrust of unknown people has probably been engrained in them and has probably saved their lives in the past. Youth often believe you will ultimately harm/ abandon or betray them and will push boundaries constantly. Outreach workers need to remain consistent, supportive and truthful.

YOUTH SAY: "I COULD WALK AROUND THE HOUSE, HAD EV- ERYTHING I NEEDED, LIKE A SHOWER, FREE MAR- IJUANA, SO I DIDN'T REALLY NEED TO LEAVE."

Codependency This relates back to Stockholm Syndrome. It is extremely important to understand that the attachment to the person who is providing for their needs is strong and difficult to overcome. Especially if the person supplying their needs and exploiting them at the same time is someone they believe loves them or will protect them like a boyfriend, parent, or gang.

SECTION 3: ARTICULATING HARM REDUCTION

Community Partners Workers may be engaging with people who do not understand or adhere to a harm reduction philosophy. Also, disciplines such as law enforcement and county workers (child protection) may not be allowed to employ harm reduction strategies in their work. Harm-reduction techniques may also not work well for parents who are working under a different set of rules and expectations than an outreach worker would be.

Outreach workers need to be able to articulate why they act differently than other disciplines and be able to frame it in a positive light. Because it is counter-intuitive to those who do not practice harm reduction, it often takes repeated explanations. Workers may have to explain why they have made the decisions they have made to others.

Workers may also need to advocate for harm reduction when they are working with community partners. In addition, workers need be sure that they are not thinking or acting judgmentally about different approaches others may take when working with youth.

Prepare outreach workers for the fact that some partners may never fully buy into harm reduction. Some people will continue to see it as "enabling" harmful behavior while others cannot let go of the desire to "save" the youth. Outreach workers may need to use the same patience with their partners that harm reduction requires in order to work with youth.

SECTION 4: HARM REDUCTION AND VICARIOUS TRAUMA

Big Picture Since practicing harm reduction involves taking those limited, small steps, it can become easy to lose sight of the big picture. Outreach workers have to keep in mind that those small steps are incremental and do build up over time.

Workers should also recognize that the incremental steps that occur in a youth's life may not all take place with the same worker. If the first interaction with a youth is authentic, safe, and helpful for the youth, other outreach workers or service providers may be able to help the youth take the next small steps, reducing harm while working towards the optimal goal. Workers may never know the impact of the first small step the youth took.

> Harm reduction work does not always look or feel successful because the changes can often be very small and incremental. Compared to getting the youth off the street and into housing or moving a youth into their first apartment, the day-to-day work of outreach may seem to have a smaller impact on the youth served.

Workers need to internalize the idea that harm reduction is necessary in order for next steps to happen. If they don't internalize this, they can become:

- Dissatisfied with the work they are doing or the results they are achieving
- Focused on non-harm reduction strategies, which can lead them to focus on populations that are easier to serve at the expense of clients that may need their help more
- More vulnerable to vicarious trauma

Remember to incorporate what you have learned in previous modules:

- Your work needs to be journey oriented. When worker is trying to understand their role along with harm reduction's role, they have to be journey oriented, so they can focus on long-term benefits of harm reduction. This will give workers patience to do the work in necessary increments.
- Workers must have good boundaries. A positive understanding of the worker's role reminds the worker what they should and shouldn't be doing. Identifying their own values will allow them to be non-judgmental and client focused. An example of how values can get in the way might be, you believe that drug use is wrong. The youth's drug use holds them back and clouds their judgement. But your value of this is can cloud their work. Another example of values getting in the way might be that you believe young people need to be treated respectfully. This can negatively impact the youth when the worker believes the youth should not be in an abusive relationship because they deserve more.
- A collaborative approach. When the worker understands that they are not doing this alone, that they are part of a larger community response, the worker will not feel they are the only person responsible a response or connection. A well-connected worker will be able to lean on others for help and support.

Vicarious Trauma, First-Hand Trauma and Self-Care

From a vicarious trauma stand point, practicing harm reduction can be difficult, exhausting, triggering and potentially harmful to workers. Workers might experience trauma in several ways. Examples include that they can:
- Be re-traumatized because of their own triggers and past experiences
- Be exposed to new traumas through witnessing it themselves, such as seeing the bruises, or watching the youth walk into an unsafe situation (like walking away with their exploiter)
- Be traumatized by hearing about trauma through the client's stories
- Be traumatized through implied trauma (or trauma that is imagined).

Please see *Handout 7.1 Vicarious Trauma and Self-Care*. Go through the information on the handout and think through the following questions:
- Can you think of a time when someone you know has experienced vicarious trauma? Was it easy to see the symptoms in someone else? (Remember that it is good to listen to others if others are noticing symptoms in you, and seek help.)
- What are three ways you would be comfortable practicing self-care?
- What will the barriers be to practicing self- care?

It may be too soon to create a self-care plan before there is a good understanding of what the work will look like, what their schedule will look like, or the forms that the eventual stressors will take. Be sure to be thinking about and preparing to work on self-care with their supervisor or other partners in the future.

Field Experts

Expert Advice: Experts interviewed for this curriculum talked in-depth about secondary trauma and working to prevent vicarious trauma for workers. They explained that people in the helping field usually have a greater need to practice self-care and yet are quite likely to avoid obtaining help for themselves.

Often self-care techniques such as deep-breathing, meditation, or yoga are given as examples of ways to practice self-care, but practicing self-care is going to be different for different people. How a person takes care of themselves is a very personal choice. One expert explained, "Different cultures may have different expectations and ways that they practice self-care. For example, in the Native American community there is an old saying, 'Keep cedar in the bottom of your shoes.' This is practiced in order to help keep people safe. Native Americans also do different things to keep negative energy off of them such as smudging, etc."

Be sure you are thinking about things that actually help you feel better. A few tips from experts in the field:
- Obviously, workers need to get sleep and eat well, but workers need to do things that make them feel better. They should talk to their supervisor so they can do those things. It might mean changing hours or changing a shift once in a while, but workers should feel empowered to ask their supervisors for time when they need to practice self-care.
- Make a plan for doing things that actually calms them down and makes them feel good and make sure they are doing those things on a regular basis.
- Pause and reflect on everything.
- Mentally process what you are seeing and doing, whether its talking it through with someone you trust, or writing things down.

> **At the end of a shift, outreach workers should take ½ hour or so to grab coffee, do paperwork together and vent about everything; talk everything through from your shift immediately.**

Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Meet youth "where they are at." This is the basic premise of Harm Reduction.
- Ask the youth where they use drugs and strategize with them to find the safest place possible when using.
- Give information about needle exchange if the youth injects and if programs exist in your community. If programs don't exist, teach them how to clean needles and ask them not to share with anyone.
- Understand and work with youth based on the Stages of Change philosophy.
- Have condoms available when you're working with youth and learn how to offer them in a practical way. Learn how to teach safe condom use.
- Ask the youth how well they know their dealer so they can better determine if the drugs are cut with other toxic substances.

Don't:

- Make judgments. This is about reducing harm
- Feel you are responsible to "cure" them of drug use or other harmful behavior.
- Look at addiction as a disease, as this only works to stigmatize the young person. Look at other models such as Harm Reduction theory and practice.
- Get too discouraged if a youth gets "clean" and has a relapse. It's their journey. Stay supportive.
- Make a youth feel uncomfortable when/if they don't use condoms. Keep offering and educating them.

90 - GoodTherapy.org. (n.d.). Retrieved June 6, 2017, from http://www.goodtherapy.org/learn- about- therapy/types/person-centered
91 - Ramsey County Attorney's Office, & Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault. (2017). Safe Harbor Protocol Guidelines (pp. 43-48, Publication).
92 - ibid
93 - ibid

Appendix

StreetWorks Greater Minnesota
Focus Group Summary:
Youth Experts and Service Professionals

Research for StreetWorks Training Curricula and Regional Training Needs in Greater Minnesota

WALKING ALONGSIDE YOUNG PEOPLE
Acknowledging and Honoring their Individual Journeys

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

Acknowledgment

It is with sincere gratitude that we acknowledge and thank the youth
who shared their expertise and experiences throughout this project.
Your honesty, courage and desire to help other young people
by sharing your experiences is an inspiration.

Additionally, we thank Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota
professionals and other community professionals, who contributed their
time and expertise to help others understand the unique aspects of
serving youth in Greater Minnesota.

Thank you.

INTRODUCTION

Youth experiencing homelessness are at increased risk of sexual exploitation. To expand support for youth experiencing homelessness in Minnesota, The StreetWorks Collaborative (StreetWorks), a Program of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, conducted focus groups at five sites in Greater Minnesota. The goal of these focus groups was to determine needs of youth and youth workers in rural areas, and to gauge whether the StreetWorks Outreach Worker Curriculum designed for use in the Twin Cities could be adapted for use in Greater Minnesota. The focus group sites were Willmar, Duluth, Mankato, Brainerd, and Rochester, and took place between March and May of 2018. This report shares findings from the five focus groups.

The purpose of the research was to compare StreetWorks knowledge of youth outreach in the Twin Cities area to the needs and resources available in Greater Minnesota. Based on the findings, there is a significant need in Greater Minnesota for an effective training process for providers and other professionals who encounter youth in their work.

StreetWorks currently provides training and technical assistance to StreetWorks Outreach Workers, community partners, and other youth-serving providers in the Twin Cities metro area, and plans to modify its current curriculum to better serve Greater Minnesota.

Background

StreetWorks was established in 1994 as a collaborative of youth-serving nonprofits who provide street-based outreach to youth experiencing homelessness in the Twin Cities metro area. In 2015, StreetWorks was awarded a Safe Harbor grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services Office of Economic Opportunity (DHS O.E.O.) to develop a training curriculum and tools to ensure consistent and effective training for youth outreach workers. The focus of this grant was specifically to build capacity for working with youth at-risk of, or experiencing, sexual exploitation who are also experiencing homelessness or housing instability. The certification process trains youth workers in best practices to support this population and began with a focus in the Twin Cities metro area. StreetWorks is now adapting and expanding its work to Greater Minnesota service providers and professionals who encounter youth in their work.

Minnesota's Safe Harbor law went into effect in 2014 and has since increased awareness, understanding, and identification of the commercial sexual exploitation of youth across the state. In Minnesota, sexually exploited youth are no longer treated as criminals, but instead viewed as victims in need of services. *[http://www.health.state.mn.us/injury/topic/safeharbor/legislative_timeline.html]*

PHASES

The StreetWorks Safe Harbor Project began with two outlined phases:

Phase 1 (July 1, 2015 – June 20, 2017)
Phase 2 (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2019)

Phase 1

The first phase of this project resulted in the development of the following training materials and tools utilized to train outreach workers in the Twin Cities metro area:

- The StreetWorks Outreach Worker Certification Training Curriculum, the Facilitator's Guide, and a Trainee Workbook;
- An accompanying Supervisor's Guide;
- The "What Youth Say" Report – a culmination of focus group feedback from youth at-risk of, or experiencing, sexual exploitation;
- Eight "Crash Course" training videos on a variety of topics useful for anyone working with youth (videos available at *http://www.streetworksmn.org/video-cats/streetworks-crash-course-training-videos/);* and
- A series of in-person trainings for youth workers (videos available at *https://www.streetworksmn.org/video-cats/sh-training-videos/)*.
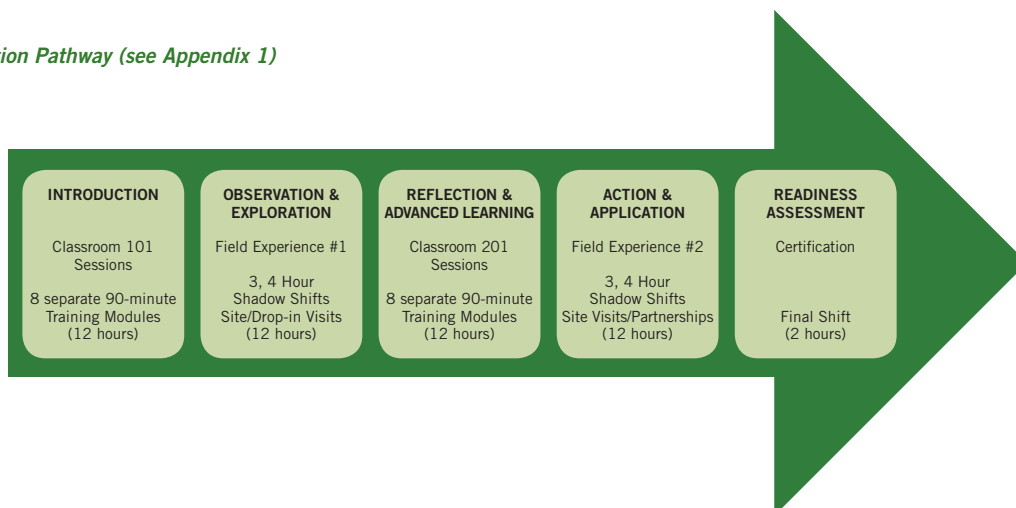
Phase 2

In the second phase of this project, StreetWorks began piloting the curriculum in the metro area (2017–2018) and received additional funding from DHS O.E.O. to develop a specialized Twin Cities Outreach Team, called the ACE Squad, focused on serving sexually exploited youth. Phase 2 work also included conducting focus groups with youth and youth workers (completed in 2018), developing and adapting the training curriculum and resources for Greater Minnesota based on focus-group feedback, and the production of three regional trainings in Southwest, Southeast, and West Central Minnesota in 2019.

StreetWorks Outreach Worker Certification Training Curriculum

The pilot version of the StreetWorks Outreach Worker Certification Training Curriculum, currently being used in the Twin Cities, is the foundation for adapting a relevant curriculum for Greater Minnesota. The certification process ensures consistent, up-to-date, best-practices, training, legitimacy for outreach workers, and improved service delivery. The certification includes the following five steps:

1. *Introduction:* (Classroom 101 sessions) Trainees learn relevant module content from eight modules in an in-person, classroom style setting.

2. *Observation and Exploration:* (Field Experience 1) Trainees job shadow veteran outreach workers and visit other youth-serving agencies in their communities. This step includes journaling and homework assignments.

3. *Reflection and Advanced Learning:* (Classroom 201 sessions) Trainees come back to the classroom after completing job shadowing and site visits to discuss each of the eight modules in more detail and apply what they learned to the experiences they had during those shadow shifts and site visits.

4. *Action and Application:* (Field Experience 2) Trainees once again work with veteran outreach workers. In this second field experience, trainees take the lead, doing more outreach work to practice what they have learned while receiving feedback from the veteran worker. This step also includes journaling and homework assignments.

5. *Readiness Assessment:* (Certification) Trainees meet with their supervisor to present their homework and have a final follow-up shift with their supervisor and the StreetWorks Senior Training Manager to show learning and to gain any other feedback before graduating from the certification program.

StreetWorks Certification Pathway (see Appendix 1)

| INTRODUCTION	OBSERVATION & EXPLORATION	REFLECTION & ADVANCED LEARNING	ACTION & APPLICATION	READINESS ASSESSMENT
Classroom 101 Sessions	Field Experience #1	Classroom 201 Sessions	Field Experience #2	Certification
8 separate 90-minute Training Modules (12 hours)	3, 4 Hour Shadow Shifts Site/Drop-in Visits (12 hours)	8 separate 90-minute Training Modules (12 hours)	3, 4 Hour Shadow Shifts Site Visits/Partnerships (12 hours)	Final Shift (2 hours)

STREETWORKS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Organizations and individuals who successfully support youth experiencing homelessness or sexual exploitation take a principles-based approach to their work, rather than a rules-based approach. Principles provide guidance and direction to those working with youth experiencing homelessness or sexual exploitation. They provide a framework for how we approach and view youth, engage and interact with them, build relationships, and support them.

The challenge for youth workers is to meet and connect with each young person where they are and build a supportive relationship from there. Principles provide the anchor for this relationship-building process. The StreetWorks Outreach Worker Certification Training Curriculum is significantly informed by the StreetWorks Guiding Principles, listed below *[Source: 9 Evidenced-based Guiding Principles to Help Youth Overcome Homelessness, 2014]*:

1. *Journey-Oriented:* Interact with youth to help them understand the interconnectedness of past, present, and future as they decide where they want to go and how to get there.

2. *Trauma-Informed:* Recognize that most homeless youth have experienced trauma; build relationships, responses, and services on that knowledge.

3. *Non-Judgmental:* Interact with youth without labeling or judging them on the basis of background, experiences, choices, or behaviors.

4. *Harm Reduction:* Contain the effects of risky behavior in the short-term and seek to reduce its effects in the long-term.

5. *Trusting Youth-Adult Relationships:* Build relationships by interacting with youth in an honest, dependable, authentic, caring, and supportive way.

6. *Strengths-Based:* Start with and build upon the skills, strengths, and positive characteristics of each youth.

7. *Positive Youth Development:* Provide opportunities for youth to build a sense of competency, usefulness, belonging, and power.

8. *Holistic:* Support youth in a manner that recognizes the interconnectedness of their mental, physical, spiritual, and social health.

9. *Collaboration:* Establish a principles-based, youth-focused system of support that integrates practices, procedures, and services within and across agencies, systems, and policies.

METHODOLOGY
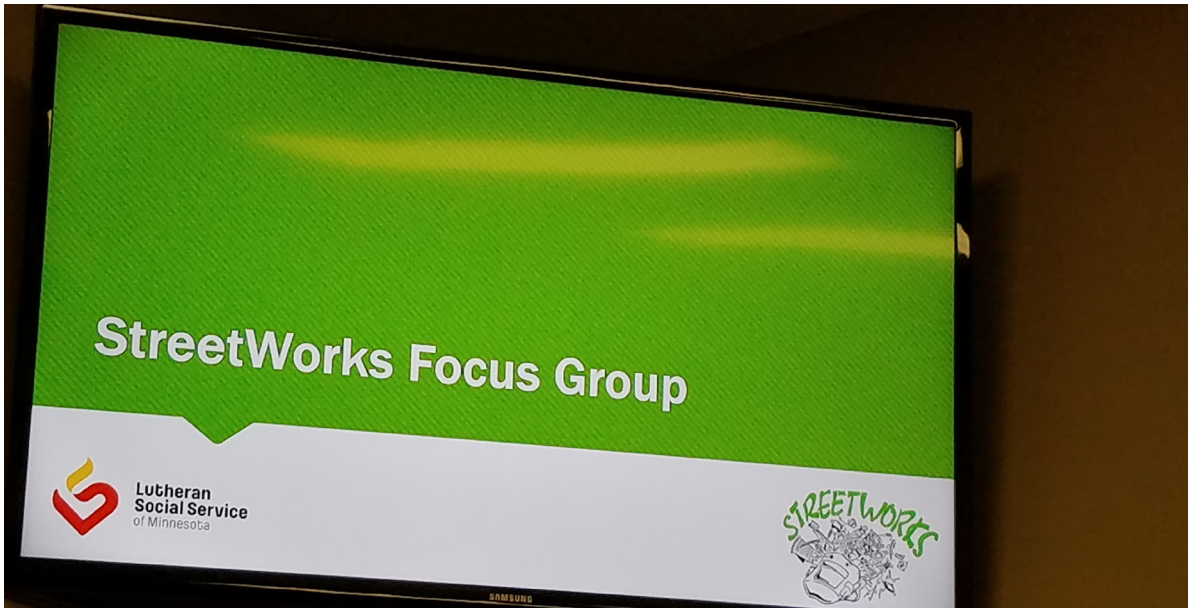
Focus groups were held to gather feedback to help formulate pilot curriculum, supplemental resources, and regional trainings relevant to Greater Minnesota. StreetWorks and LSS collaborated to convene focus groups in five cities: Willmar, Duluth, Mankato, Brainerd, and Rochester. These cities were selected because they include other LSS program sites and align with the Safe Harbor regional division of the state.

StreetWorks and LSS recruited local experts, which included both professionals in youth-serving organizations and systems (outreach workers and others providing services for youth) and youth (ages 18-24) who had been or were currently experiencing homelessness. Two focus groups were held in each area—one for the professionals and one for the youth. LSS Program Directors from each geographic area were able to use their expertise and knowledge of their local communities to invite appropriate local community partners to give their input to the project. Most of the youth who attended the focus groups were recruited by LSS staff who have worked, or still are working, with them.

To supplement the focus groups, the methodology included a pre-focus group and post-focus group survey for the professionals. The pre-focus group survey helped the facilitators gain insight into youth homelessness and resources in each area of the state. A summary of the pre-focus group survey was given to participants during the professional focus group session. After the background information of the project and a review of the current curriculum was presented, the facilitator of the focus group reviewed participant survey answers with the group and asked clarifying questions. The clarifying questions were different for each group, and were based on what was found from the surveys to be significant or unclear for that region. The follow-up survey was sent to further define regional training needs, partnerships, potential locations, and recommended timeframes for trainings.

Professional Focus Groups

The majority of survey respondents (but not all) were in attendance at the in-person meetings. There were 45 professionals who attended the professional focus groups, 47 who completed the pre-focus group survey, and 36 who completed the post-survey. It should be noted that because LSS hosted the focus groups, LSS staff made up the majority of participants in this group. Job titles and occupations of the professional participants included the following:

- Outreach workers and youth workers from LSS, and other nonprofit agencies
- Safe Harbor Regional Navigators
- Case managers
- Program directors, managers, and coordinators of youth programs
- Health practitioners (RN)
- Supportive housing and shelter workers
- Youth workers who specialize in working with LGBTQ+ youth
- County attorneys
- School social workers
- County social service workers
- Youth workers who specialize in working with the refugee community
- Women's shelter directors

The pre-focus group survey was designed to gather a baseline understanding of the available services and resources for youth, as well as training needs of professionals in that region. The objectives of the pre-focus group survey were to:

- Understand how youth homelessness and sexual exploitation presented in each region;
- Gain insight into available resources for youth experiencing homelessness in each region (including gaps in services and community partners);
- Understand how outreach services are currently being provided in each region and within each focus group participant's own organization; and
- Identify current training needs in each region.

The in-person focus groups were two to three hours in length and conducted by the StreetWorks Safe Harbor Project Team. The agenda consisted of a presentation and overview of the project, a summary review of survey results, and further discussion about training needs and challenges in the region. The objectives of the in-person professional focus groups were to:

- Present the current curriculum topics and the Pathway to Certification process to gain feedback on the relevancy of the topics and whether it would be beneficial to their organization;
- Gain insight on how this curriculum could be delivered and trained, including regional differences in culture and available resources;
- Clarify and further understand responses given in the pre-survey; and
- Identify current regional training needs, location possibilities, and delivery options for 2019 trainings.

Youth Focus Groups

The youth focus groups took place in the afternoon, after the professional groups. A total of 49 youth attended the youth focus groups. These participants were ages 18-24 and were currently experiencing or had previously experienced homelessness. Participating youth were provided lunch and each was given a stipend in the form of a $50 Visa gift card. All information gathered was anonymous and no identifying names were provided to the group facilitators or team.

The objectives of the in-person youth focus groups were to:

- Understand how youth homelessness is experienced in each region;
- Gain insight into available resources for youth experiencing homelessness in each area (including both gaps in services, and community resources that are currently available and utilized);
- Gauge youth knowledge and understanding of available resources, Safe Harbor, and sexual exploitation; and
- Gain expert knowledge from youth on what youth workers should know to facilitate positive outcomes with youth.

FINDINGS & RESULTS

As a result of holding the focus groups and reviewing survey data, StreetWorks was able to determine similarities and differences in how youth experience homelessness in Greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities.

Throughout all five communities, participants shared concerns about the lack of available resources for youth experiencing homelessness. Both professional and youth focus group participants shared that youth who are experiencing homelessness in their area are often couch hopping, doubling up, participating in survival sex, and/or sleeping in various outdoor places such as under bridges, in cars, at parks, etc.
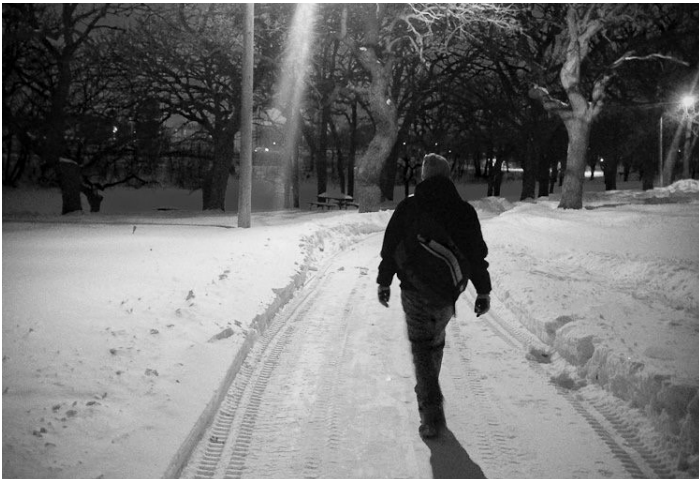
Both professional and youth focus group members described increased vulnerabilities for youth experiencing homelessness. These included encountering overt and covert racism, homophobia, and discrimination due to their age. Another vulnerability of note is that nearly every young adult, in every city, acknowledged having been involved with "systems" as a minor, including foster care or Juvenile Detention.

Most participants believed the Twin Cities metro area had more resources available to youth, such as shelters and transitional housing programs, that their areas did not have, and that it was easier to serve youth in the Twin Cities as a result. This feedback will inform how StreetWorks proceeds with modifications to the curriculum to account for regional differences.

"Homelessness is pretty much invisible here, and it's so cold. A lot of them [youth] are doubled up and just aren't on the street. Officials say it's not a problem." —SERVICE PROVIDER

PROFESSIONAL GROUP SURVEYS AND FOCUS GROUP RESULTS:

Professionals who participated in the pre-focus group surveys and focus groups provided the facilitators with an understanding of the situation, problems, and resources in each area. The surveys and focus groups also identified the following topics and concerns relating to specific regions.

Safe Harbor

Professionals said they did not believe most young people had heard of Safe Harbor. This was confirmed when the facilitator asked the youth focus group. Lack of awareness about Safe Harbor amongst systems professionals, health care workers, schools, and other professionals who may encounter youth at-risk of, or experiencing, sexual exploitation was noted in every professional focus group.

Community Partners

The professional group overwhelmingly reported that in smaller communities, other professionals who did not regularly work with youth and general community members did not believe homelessness or sexual exploitation was a problem in their area. The professionals believe that because community members do not physically see people who are homeless on the streets, they do not have any awareness that this is happening in their community. Participants expressed a need for more training for community partners on these issues.

Some areas reported more positive and intentional collaborations with other community partners than other areas. For example, Mankato professionals believe that because of Safe Harbor, and the collaboration that has happened since Safe Harbor was passed, there are greater connections in their community. The professionals in that area, and LSS staff specifically, explained that they are constantly working to include the community and other professionals to increase coordination, collaboration, and services for youth. Professionals in Duluth, on the other hand, believe there is much work to be done to be more collaborative when providing services to youth. In Willmar, LSS is the only agency that provides services specifically to youth. This has required them to work extensively with adult-serving agencies to help develop and recommend services for young people.

Professionals in a few groups mentioned they have a hard time reaching out to members of culturally-specific communities, including Native Americans and members of the Somali and Hmong communities. They expressed a desire to build better community partners and better relationships with these communities.

Outreach Services

One thing heard consistently from professionals is that youth-serving agencies in Greater Minnesota understand and practice outreach work differently than youth-serving agencies in the Twin Cities metro area.

One example of this difference is that there are few agencies practicing traditional "street outreach" in Greater Minnesota. A reason for this lack of street outreach in Greater Minnesota is that there are fewer youth experiencing homelessness in these areas who are visible on the street. Several professionals mentioned that youth who are experiencing homelessness do not necessarily hang out or live in larger camps together in groups, instead they are necessarily more hidden and tend to be together in smaller groups of two or three.

Another characteristic of these communities that can make street outreach more difficult is the large geographic territories each agency covers. Some of the agencies provide youth services for several counties. In Willmar, for example, LSS provides youth services for seven counties. Instead of street outreach, agencies in these cities tend to find youth in need with a more site-based approach, or through referrals. Youth workers might work with other professionals in places like schools or libraries, but most of the youth find agencies through word-of-mouth from other youth and through referrals from county agencies or other youth service providers.

Many professionals considered youth outreach work in terms of educating the public and other youth workers on issues surrounding homelessness and sexual exploitation, or as a form of case management and/or advocacy work. Professionals also mentioned that they do not refer youth to some shelters because grooming and recruitment that leads to sexual exploitation occurs in them.

Professional Training

Most agencies, outside of governmental agencies, acknowledged they did not have a structured training program for their youth workers. Often, they rely on having new workers job shadow veteran youth workers, or "jump in" to their work and figure it out on the job. They also rely on training resources from outside of their agencies, such as Youth Intervention Programs Association (YIPA) and relevant in-person trainings that might be available throughout the state. LSS staff mentioned using the online StreetWorks Safe Harbor training sessions (developed in Phase 1) for new staff.

From the in-person professional focus groups, it was determined that participants would be interested in a structured StreetWorks training if it were available. In addition to being beneficial within their own organization, most believed the outlined topics would be relevant and useful to all youth workers, and those who encounter youth as part of their work (this may include health care professionals, educators, librarians, coaches, other systems professionals etc.).

Participants noted many community partners in Greater Minnesota who could use training on both youth homelessness and sexual exploitation, including:

- Health care workers
- Law enforcement officials
- Judges and county attorneys
- Legislators and county commissioners
- School staff members
- Nonprofit and social service organization youth workers

Professionals also identified several training topics they have a need for and would be interested in, including:

- Intake process—if an employee serves as the first contact a young person has with an agency, what should their intake look like and what questions should they be asking?
- Trauma-informed care
- Harm-reduction
- Clear referral process for trafficked youth (protocol development)
- How agencies can collaborate better
- Cultural sensitivity
- Bystander intervention
- Nonverbal communication
- Stress-reduction/Self-care
- How to use social media to communicate with youth, and other social media issues
- Sexual exploitation, survival sex, and sex trafficking identification and prevention
- How to talk with youth who have experienced exploitation
- Ethical dilemmas/boundaries
- Primary prevention for primary school age
- Special considerations when working with LGBTQ+ youth
- Gangs
- Mental health and suicide interventions
- Available resources in the area
- Training designed specifically for youth
- Raising awareness and education in the community (including parents)

Professionals explained they would like to have a structured training for new staff but were unable to do so because there is no standard curriculum for them to use. They also said the main reason they are unable to provide structured training is because they do not have staff dedicated to training and do not have the time to train new staff themselves on such a deep level.

Suggestions on using this curriculum to train youth workers in their area included:

- *Creating a train-the-trainer option:* This would involve training an organization staff member who could then serve as a training resource to the rest of an organization's staff. Most participants did not believe they would be able to implement this option because they do not have the infrastructure in their agencies to support this.

- *Completely online:* All curriculum would be taught using an electronic training platform. Due to the complexity of the training and the nuances in each region, most thought this would be extremely difficult to design in an effective way.

- *Hybrid option:* All classroom sessions would be available online, some designed for staff to work through alone, and some that require more discussion and critical thinking would be conducted via online meeting tools or software with a StreetWorks trainer facilitating.

- *In-person:* StreetWorks would offer regional certification trainings held throughout Minnesota at specific times throughout the year, in a cohort format.

Participants relayed that due to the depth and breadth of the training needs, it would be most beneficial if the training were delivered in-person, with a cohort if possible, and with some pre/post work, as well as available support from StreetWorks during the process. Consistently, they stated that training from a StreetWorks trainer would be necessary, as their organizations did not have training staff, or other professionals in the area, who would be available or able to deliver this content.

YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS RESULTS:

StreetWorks believes that youth are the true experts in their own experiences, needs, and identification of available resources. During the youth focus groups, StreetWorks heard from individuals about the realities they face, the needs they have and what the adults they encounter could do to improve services. It is important to note that most youth who attended the focus groups were recruited by LSS staff who have worked, or still are working, with them. Youth who attended these focus group sessions may have a different view of some of the available resources than youth who have not been in contact with LSS youth services.

The youth in all regions described constantly feeling unsafe, being hungry, battling addictions, and struggling with their own mental health. They shared feelings of hopelessness and depression, and thoughts of suicide. Several young people agreed that not having anywhere to go or anything to do during the day caused boredom and increased their chances of getting into trouble. Many expressed wanting to work but finding it difficult to get a job. Employment barriers identified by youth included lack of clean (or appropriate) clothes, having nowhere to shower, being without transportation, and lacking a legal address.

In several cities, but especially in Brainerd and Willmar, youth talked extensively about how having drugs and their bodies to use as bartering tools were more valuable than having money when they needed a place to stay or to sleep. Young people also mentioned that when there is not a safe place to sleep, it can be necessary to move around and keep walking during the night to stay safe. A few participants mentioned that even though they did not consider themselves drug users, they would turn to drugs to stay awake all night because it is safer to be awake than asleep when on the streets, in parks, or in camps. They said they also go to businesses that stay open 24-hours, such as Walmart or Cub Foods.

Youth in each of the communities (except Rochester) agreed that people in smaller communities know almost everyone in the area. As a result, they said homelessness is more noticeable, and the shame associated with it makes it less likely that youth would access public or community resources for help. For example, one youth explained that the food shelf in their area is on a main street and it is often busy. If they want to get food there, they must stand in line on the street where people who they know will see them. Additionally, most youth in smaller communities agreed that other youth, members of law enforcement, local businesses, and other community members were likely to judge them unfairly based on their last name and assume their character is the same as others who share that name.

Shelter and Housing

The major complaint in all areas is the lack of shelter and housing—especially for young people under 18 and single males. Youth under age 18 cannot stay at a hotel or get their own apartment, and services for single males are more limited as fewer organizations offer services to these young men. Several towns offer host homes, but youth often do not want to stay in those places because it feels like a foster home. Professionals mention that with the lack of housing and other resources, there is a need for professionals to be able to think critically and creatively to create positive outcomes for youth. In several cities, youth did not feel safe going to shelters that also served older adults. Drugs, dirty facilities, and people with severe mental health issues were mentioned as reasons why youth do not feel safe in some shelters. Strict rules such as those limiting cell phone use were also mentioned.

Youth experts reported the following additional barriers they faced due to homelessness:

- No safe place to keep their belongings
- Inability to maintain hygiene
- Don't want to be a burden on people they know, so they often do not ask for help
- Places that require appointments and don't offer walk-in services can be extremely difficult to utilize, especially if the young person does not have reliable transportation
- Find it hard to trust anyone and often avoid law enforcement and county services
- In small towns, everything shuts down around 9:00 p.m.
- People who do drugs are treated poorly
- Finding resources can take all day
- Feeling like they are being judged
- There is nowhere to get water
- Sleep deprivation because they cannot sleep well anywhere
- Lack of childcare

"If you don't have anywhere to go, you feel like a burden to everybody, it's hard to make sure you don't bother everyone." —YOUTH

Drop-In Centers/Safe Places

Young people described a lack of safe housing, drop-in centers, or other safe places to go during the day. Where there are drop-in centers, young people said the hours needed to be extended so the centers remained open all day and into the evening. They also said it would be helpful to have drop-in centers for different age groups. A few youth mentioned that drop-in centers should be age-specific (18 and under and 18+), to account for maturity level differences and concerns for the safety of younger youth.

Transportation

Lack of transportation was a consistent issue for youth experiencing homelessness in all five communities. The Rochester area had fewer transportation issues, but expressed concern about how difficult public transportation can be. In some areas, especially the towns further away from larger cities, public transportation does not exist. In areas where there is public transportation, the following issues were discussed by both youth and professionals during the focus groups:

- Inconsistency/frequency of the pick-up and drop-off times makes it difficult to plan for meetings, appointments, and jobs.
- Public transportation options often ended early in the day, so they could not use the bus after work if they had a night job.
- If a person lived in a smaller town because the smaller town had affordable housing, but the town they lived in did not have jobs available, they would have to work in the larger city but there is no public transportation traveling between the smaller towns and the bigger cities in the area.
- The cost was too high.
- Youth had to be accompanied by an adult (some drivers would not allow unaccompanied youth on the bus).
- Limit on how many items people could carry on the bus.
- It was also mentioned in Brainerd that the only available taxi company is known for abusing and exploiting vulnerable youth.

Since there are such limited options for transportation in all areas, youth will try to find rides with friends but will usually have to come up with gas money.

Food

Many youth mentioned how hungry they are when homeless. In some areas, there were no options for cooked meals. Many young people also mentioned the food shelves would often have bad or expired food.

Youth-serving Agencies

Youth talked highly of LSS staff and said they were grateful to have had LSS services to help them get through tough times. Young people talked about traveling between cities and towns to get their needs met. The young people who had traveled to the Twin Cities area mentioned that in the smaller communities, they received more one-on-one time and were able to meet with staff who seemed to care about them individually and wanted to help them. Some youth intentionally left the Twin Cities to receive what they perceived to be a more personal connection with youth workers.

Safe Harbor and Sexual Exploitation

Most youth had not heard of Safe Harbor, except for a few who had been in a Safe Harbor housing facility. One youth mentioned that she had seen posters in the bathroom at the drop-in center that talk about sexual exploitation so she knows that if she had a problem with sexual exploitation, she could talk to the staff there about it.

None of the youth in the focus groups were asked to disclose personal experiences of being sexually exploited. Several of the participants acknowledged that it is not uncommon for youth to trade sex for food or a place to stay, but many did not necessarily equate "survival sex" with exploitation.

"People are selling their bodies all the time, so they have a place to sleep. It isn't always laid out like a contract, it's just understood. People don't want to discuss the subject with a worker." —YOUTH

As noted previously, many participants stated that they were unaware of what Safe Harbor was, or what services are available for young people who may be at-risk of, have experienced, or are currently experiencing sexual exploitation, despite having received services from a Safe Harbor funded program. In general, participants talked about knowing a "friend" who was involved in "prostitution", but only one participant self-disclosed previous commercial sexual exploitation.

In each youth focus group, the final question at the end of the session was, "What should youth workers know?" After analyzing the responses, the following themes emerged as either being mentioned by most focus groups or deemed insightful for youth workers:

- *People in this situation can't wait so long for help, allow walk-ins, stop making appointments.*

- *Don't give up on us, give us many chances, be patient, keep checking up on us.*

- *Be around more—we want more one-on-one time.*

- *Even if I have done something wrong, still help me and treat me with respect.*

- *Don't be on the cop's side.*

- *Don't assume things—ask, and then hear what I am saying.*

- *Be okay with my story (there is probably even more going on than I tell you at first).*

- *Don't be superior, be respectful, be sincere, don't judge.*

- *Don't just do things for me, teach me.*

- *Build the relationship so we feel like we can open up to you.*

- *We need guidance, and step-by-step instructions on how to get things done and help setting goals.*

- *Build confidence so we believe we can do things—recognize how hard we are working, recognize the things we are doing right.*

- *The blame should not always be on the young adult, it has more to do with society, the government and their family.*

- *Social workers put us into a lot of situations that are dangerous, like into foster homes.*

- *We don't want to get high and be homeless, but you don't want to be homeless and not be high.*

- *Programs should do more about youth homelessness awareness.*

- *Hire the right person to work with youth, it is the worker who makes the experience good.*

DISCUSSION

While there are slight differences in how youth experience homelessness in smaller communities throughout Minnesota, many experiences are extremely similar to youth experiencing homelessness in the Twin Cities metro area. Experiences such as finding shelter, feeling unsafe, being hungry/thirsty, looking for something to do, experiencing discrimination, working all day to find resources, and having issues finding and maintaining employment are similar throughout the state. This information tells us that the foundational best practices of StreetWork's current curriculum are relevant for all youth workers throughout the state.

The StreetWorks Outreach Worker Curriculum has been standardized and offered to pilot site participants in the Twin Cities. Based on the input received from focus group participants— the current curriculum is relevant for Greater Minnesota with some modifications by region. To proceed in Greater Minnesota, StreetWorks should modify the format and update the content of the Twin Cities version with adaptations for suburban and rural youth workers.

The community response to homelessness in Greater Minnesota presents differently than the response in the Twin Cities. Most youth-serving agencies do not have street-outreach staff, which is why an adaptation for Greater Minnesota should focus on training all youth workers and systems professionals who encounter youth, not just street outreach workers.

Identifying youth experiencing homelessness is an issue, so communities in Greater Minnesota may not be sufficiently trained to identify and serve youth. StreetWorks will need to provide training because the focus group participant organizations do not have trainers on staff. The focus groups made comments about the resources in the Twin Cities compared to Greater Minnesota that highlighted a difference in perception versus reality when it comes to resource availability. While it is true that the Twin Cities has more resources, there are also more youth who need assistance in the Twin Cities. As a result, Twin Cities youth workers are faced with the same problem of not having enough resources as those in Greater Minnesota.

The curriculum should be updated to encourage creative solutions because of a consistently similar need for more resources throughout the state, regardless of location.

Youth seeking services in Greater Minnesota may be afraid to reach out to available programs or use community resources due to concerns that workers might know who they are and talk to other community members about their situation, or that the workers might judge them or discriminate against them based on what they know about them. This context and information on how to overcome this challenge should be added into the boundaries and confidentiality sections of the curriculum.

Transportation differences exist between youth experiencing homelessness in smaller communities and youth experiencing homelessness in the Twin Cities area. It costs money for transportation no matter where a youth is located, which is problematic, but when it comes to transportation in smaller communities there are far fewer public transportation options, and youth need to travel farther to resources compared to youth who are located in the Twin Cities area. The curriculum will be updated to help workers think through transportation challenges, and develop strategies for addressing them and identify potential resources that work best in their community.

Community partnerships and effective collaboration skills were identified as being needed throughout the five areas. Some communities are doing this very well, and some believe they need to focus more effort on collaboration and building community partners. This validates that community partners modules in the existing curriculum are relevant for people in Greater Minnesota as well as in the Twin Cities area.

This research demonstrated that outreach work is viewed, practiced, and labeled differently between agencies and throughout different communities. Outreach services throughout Minnesota are practiced on the street, at different sites, through community education, as case management, and as advocacy work. This new understanding of how professionals view outreach services shows a need to expand the current curriculum to include not only workers labeled "outreach workers" but all youth workers as well.

Participants in the professional focus groups liked the structure and the content of the curriculum and thought it would be a great tool to use for their staff. The only concern about using this curriculum was the lack of infrastructure in their agencies to support more in-depth training. Based on the feedback about limited training capacity of Greater Minnesota partners and the critical importance of in-person trainings and personal expert mentorship for youth workers, StreetWorks will begin to research training options beyond train-the-trainer

models or trainings held in the Twin Cities. The proposed solution will be to offer an ongoing traveling StreetWorks Certification Training in the different Safe Harbor regions throughout the state, supplemented by an online video conference platform to provide consultation and coaching during the certification process. This new training curriculum will provide foundational best practices for working with youth experiencing, or at-risk of experiencing homelessness, housing instability, and/or sexual exploitation. For more information about the proposed training model for Greater Minnesota (see Appendix 2).

Looking Ahead

As part of the DHS O.E.O Safe Harbor Phase 2 Project, in the Spring of 2019, StreetWorks will coordinate and produce Regional Safe Harbor Trainings in three of the Safe Harbor regions: Rochester (South East), Alexandria (West Central), and Mankato (South West), all of which will be open to the public and targeted towards youth workers and youth-serving professionals in the region.

Co-hosted by Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, *Beyond the 101: A Regional Multi-disciplinary Safe Harbor Conference* is designed for advocates (youth and adult), youth-workers, systems professionals, and other professionals who encounter youth in their work. The purpose of the conference is to provide an opportunity for multidisciplinary professionals to participate in skills-based learning through a full day of engaging plenary sessions, workshops, and panel discussions focused on best practices when serving youth who are at-risk of and/or have experienced sexual exploitation and/or homelessness. The trainings will also provide an introduction to the new StreetWorks Certification Curriculum and its adaptations for Greater Minnesota, including a preview of certification trainings that will be available for multi-disciplinary professionals in 2019.

StreetWorks has partnered with MDH, DHS, the Safe Harbor Regional Navigator, and other providers in each region to host the trainings, develop content, and identify local training experts that are relevant to the region (see Appendix 3).

Training dates and locations are as follows:

- Rochester (SE Region), April 25, 2019 at the DoubleTree Hotel
- Alexandria (West Central Region), May 8, 2019, at Arrowwood Conference Center
- Mankato (SW Region), May 16, 2019, at the Marriott Courtyard
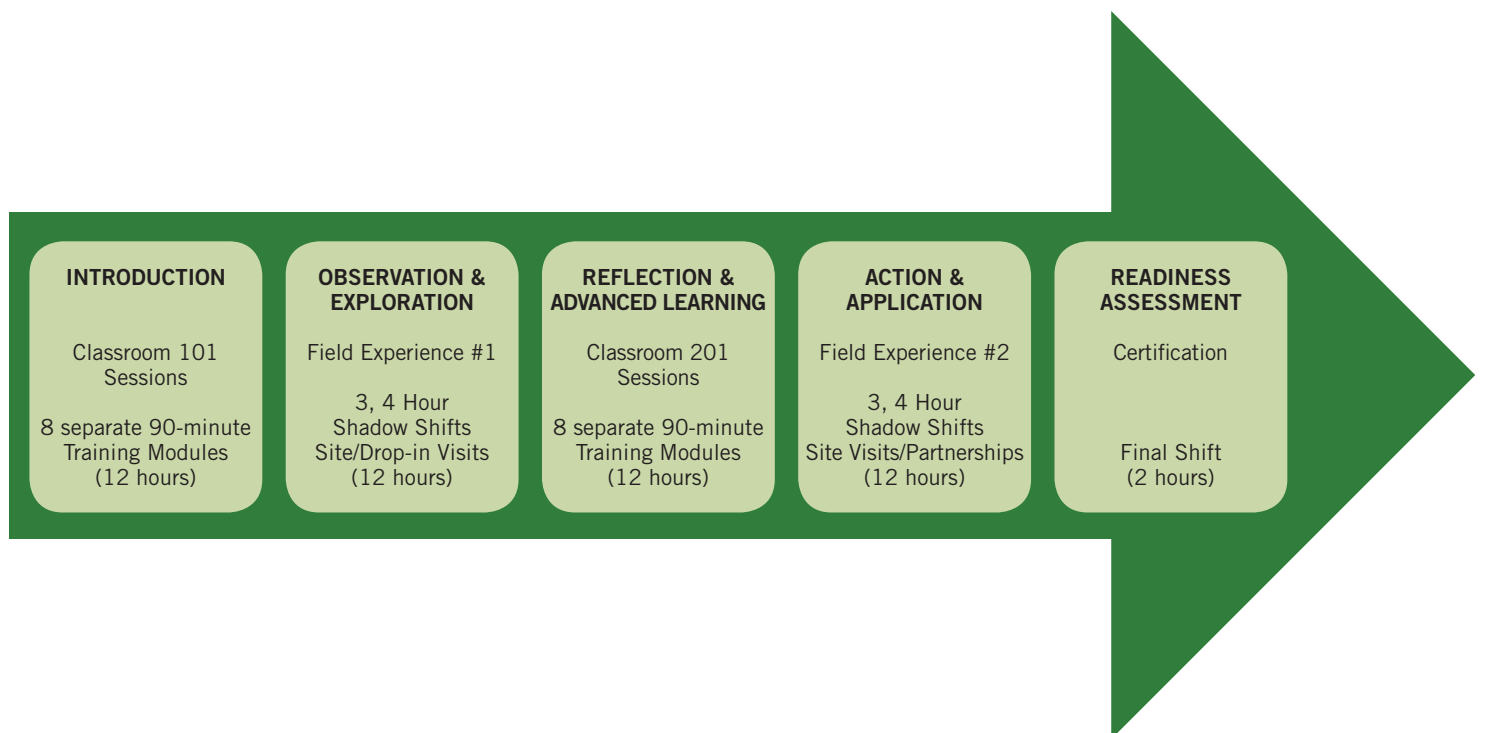- Agendas available upon request.

CONCLUSION

Conducting focus groups with youth and professionals in Willmar, Duluth, Mankato, Brainerd, and Rochester affirmed that the StreetWorks Certification Training Curriculum would be a useful tool for youth workers and youth serving professionals in Greater Minnesota. Focus group results indicate there are key differences between the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota in the way this work should be approached and the challenges youth experiencing homelessness and/or exploitation face. The curriculum should be adapted to account for differences in shelter and housing, safe places for youth, transportation, and confidentiality.

Similarly, the way in which training is delivered will need to be adapted to meet the needs of agencies and organizations that do not have capacity for a train-the-trainer model or frequent travel to in-person training sessions in the Twin Cities metro. StreetWorks is engaging in a strategic planning process to identify increased capacity needs to develop a training team and implement this new certification curriculum statewide.

Appendix

INTRODUCTION	OBSERVATION & EXPLORATION	REFLECTION & ADVANCED LEARNING	ACTION & APPLICATION	READINESS ASSESSMENT
Classroom 101 Sessions	Field Experience #1	Classroom 201 Sessions	Field Experience #2	Certification
8 separate 90-minute Training Modules (12 hours)	3, 4 Hour Shadow Shifts Site/Drop-in Visits (12 hours)	8 separate 90-minute Training Modules (12 hours)	3, 4 Hour Shadow Shifts Site Visits/Partnerships (12 hours)	Final Shift (2 hours)

StreetWorks Certification Training Curriculum Delivery Model

Metro Model – Classroom/In-person -- CURRENT	Traveling Certification — SH Regions-- 2019/20	Hybrid Online -- FUTURE	Train the Trainer --FUTURE
Summary: Participants in the Metro area attend classroom session and are assigned filed experience homework to complete the traditional SWC pathway to certification.	Summary: Community cohorts in greater MN Safe Harbor regions (collaborate with Reg. Nav's and LSS). Traveling version of SWC certification with classroom sessions and online coaching delivered by SWC. Modified field experience.	Summary: An on-line version of the certification process that includes a mix of self-paced learning modules, filed experience assignments, and live online discussion facilitated by SWC.	Summary: A train-the-trainer version, that helps key partners become certified to deliver the SWC training in their agencies and regions.
Time commitment: 6 classroom sessions and 2 field work assignments totaling approx. 40-50 hours.	Time commitment: Two 3-day in-person trainings with 2 online follow-up discussions. Approx. 20 hours classroom 6 hours field, 2 hours Zoom follow-up in between 101 and 201 and at graduation (Sup. and participant. + SWC web resources (videos etc.).	Time commitment: Self-paced, but cohort's set-up throughout the year with timelines and online video conferencing support.	Time commitment: Delivered through a 3-day in-person SWC Training Institute?
Target Audience (s): • SWC member agencies • Other youth serving agencies/workers • Systems professionals	Target Audience (s): • Safe Harbor Grantees • Other youth serving agencies/workers • Systems professionals	Target Audience (s): • Safe Harbor Grantees • Other youth serving agencies/workers • Systems Professionals	Target Audience (s): • Safe Harbor Grantees • Other youth serving agencies/workers • Systems professionals
Needs: • Update existing Fac. Guide, Workbook, PPT's, Sup. Guide, Resources/Activities. Design Regional Appendix/Supplemental information	Needs: • Design 3-day agenda and process, set calendar, design remote field experience and online platform (Zoom), engage cohorts, hire more staff	Needs: • Review OVC SOAR, NSVRC, Hollywood Youth, YIPA, Futures Without Violence webinar archive (adult learners), Shared Hope, create online platform	Needs: • Key host partners, process/training designed for trainers, LSS Guidelines/Criteria, Evaluation/report back

SAVE THE DATE
Beyond the 101:
A Regional Multidisciplinary Safe Harbor Conference

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Co-hosted by Lutheran Social Service of MN, StreetWorks, the MN Department of Human Services O.E.O, and the MN Department of Health Safe Harbor Program, the **Beyond the 101: A Regional Multidisciplinary Safe Harbor Conference** is designed for advocates (youth and adult), youth-workers, systems professionals, and other professionals who encounter youth in their work.

The purpose of the conference is to provide an opportunity for multidisciplinary professionals to participate in skills-based learning through a full day of engaging plenary sessions, workshops, and panel discussions focused on best practices in serving youth who are at-risk of and/or have experienced sexual exploitation and/or homelessness.

The trainings will also provide an introduction to the new StreetWorks Certification Curriculum and its adaptations for Greater Minnesota, including a preview of certification trainings that will be available for multidisciplinary professionals in 2019.

StreetWorks has partnered with MDH, DHS, the Safe Harbor Regional Navigator, and other providers in each region to host the trainings, develop content, and identify local training experts that are relevant to the region.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND THE CONFERENCE?

We welcome broad participation from multidisciplinary partners such as advocates (youth and adult), youth-workers, systems professionals and other professionals who encounter youth in their work.

DATES & LOCATIONS

SE Region
Rochester
April 25, 2019

West Central Region
Alexandria
May 8, 2019

SW Region
Mankato
May 16, 2019

TIME
8:30 registration
9:00-4:30 conference

PRICE
$35 (includes snacks, lunch and materials)

REGISTRATION
Coming soon!

www.streetworksmn.org
ABOUT STREETWORKS: A Program of Lutheran Social Service, StreetWorks is an Outreach Collaborative serving youth at-risk of, or experiencing homelessness and/or sexual exploitation.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

SAFE HARBOR

VICTIM SERVICES
DODGE, FILLMORE, AND OLMSTED COUNTIES

Southwest Crisis Center

someplace safe
SAFETY. OPTIONS. HOPE.

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

StreetWorks
Youth Focus Group Report:
What Youth Say

Pilot Edition July 2017

Lutheran
Social Service
of Minnesota

WHAT YOUTH SAY
SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose

StreetWorks, a program of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, conducted a series of focus groups and interviews with sexually exploited youth, to gain insight into their perceptions about Outreach Workers, current trends in exploitation, and knowledge about resources and Minnesota's Safe Harbor Network of Services for at-risk and sexually exploited. Given the hidden nature of commercial sexual exploitation, it can be difficult to gain firsthand information. Yet, it is imperative to hear about experiences directly from youth to help understand key issues, to improve programming, and develop strategies for future outreach. In addition, we intentionally sought out the participation of underserved and underrepresented youth populations. We intend to use the information gained through this process to influence and inform all aspects of our work, including the StreetWorks training curriculum for new Outreach Workers.

Methodology

As part of this research, StreetWorks conducted two focus groups and one individual interview with eight youth who have been, or are still currently being, sexual exploited. All sessions were facilitated by Trudee Able-Peterson, Outreach and Sexually Exploited Youth Specialist. One focus group occurred in a rural city in greater Minnesota, and the other focus group, as well as the individual interview, were held in the Twin Cities metro area. This was intentional to gain the perspective of youth in both a rural and urban settings.

The age range of participants was 17-24 years. Self-identified genders included five females, two males (both of whom identified as gay) and one transgender female. The participants comprised of diverse racial/ethnic populations, including African American (2), Multi-racial (2), White (2) and Hispanic (1) and one who did not self-identify. See Table 1.

Table 1: Self-identified demographics

Age	Gender	Ethnicity
19	Female	Multi-racial
17	Female	White
24	Transgender female	Hispanic
19	Female	White
19	Male (gay)	African American
24	Male (gay)	African American
19	Female	Multi-racial
21	Female	Did not self-identify

Interview Questions

Each session used a common set of questions, with some conversations moving into additional issue areas. The general questions presented for discussion included:
- Prior interactions with an Outreach Worker (positive and negative)
- How an Outreach Worker can help
- Ways a youth can be sexually exploited
- Most likely places youth are recruited into sexually exploitive situations
- Role of technology in recruitment
- Terms that are used
- Knowledge about the Safe Harbor Law and programs
- Utilization of Safe Harbor Law and programs
- Other community resources – awareness and utilization
- Best approaches for Outreach Workers to connect with sexually exploited youth
- Why a youth might not exit a sexually exploitive situation
- Whether or not a baby would affect a youth's sexually exploitive situation

Language and Terms

The following terms were brought up when youth were asked what terms are being used on the street or in sexual exploitation:
- Appointment: What contact with a client is called
- Cookies: Having an orgasm
- Donations: What the "date" pays
- Finesses: Gets a deal, may get money without having sex
- Get that work: Get drugs to get high
- Glass/Snow: Cocaine
- Green/Grissle: Marijuana
- Head: Oral sex
- Hitting a stain: Getting ready to work in prostitution or selling drugs
- Packing: Carrying a weapon
- Peep somebody: Figure out if a "date" is safe
- Poonanny: Sex
- Ran a train: Raped by multiple men
- Shorty: Gay hustler
- THOT (Thottie Body): That Ho Out There
- Thirsty: Asking for "boy pussy"
- Wet Wet: Oral sex

Terms used in the Twin Cities, but not as familiar in rural Minnesota:
- The Game/The Life: The subculture of prostitution, complete with rules, a hierarchy of authority, and language.
- "John": An individual who pays for or trades something of value for sexual acts.
- Date: The exchange when prostitution takes place, or the activity of prostitution. A victim is said to be "with a date" or "dating."
- Escort: An organization, operating chiefly via cell phone and the internet or local newspapers, which sends a victim to a buyer's location.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SAFE HARBOR

The participants were well aware of community resources available to them and all accessed resources for basic needs, but had mixed familiarity with the Safe Harbor Law and available programs and services.

Community Resources

All participants had prior contact with Outreach Workers or other social service providers. It is Important to point out that one youth from the Twin Cities had been exploited through survival sex since age 13, and had been on a known street for prostitution activity and never met an Outreach Worker on the street.

In the rural group, all five participants had contact with a Lutheran Social Service's Outreach Worker, and were uniformly positive about their interactions with her. They each described helpful actions she had taken on their behalf, such as providing assistance with housing, education, jobs, paying bills, transportation, and getting accepted into a Safe Harbor housing program. They said they also appreciated help in the form of food, water, socks and other practical items.

One rural participant had a negative experience with a local advocacy agency, noting that this organization would contact law enforcement and the participant didn't want that involvement. In other comments, the participants were particularly negative about their local police. There were multiple comments calling area police officers untrustworthy and condescending. Several comments noted that Outreach Workers should avoid forcing any contact with law enforcement on youth they meet. Another set of comments noted that an unnamed program in the area offered poor quality food in inadequate quantities to youth in need.

Among the Twin Cities participants, two of the three participants had been in contact with an Outreach Worker, and two participants had a good relationship with an Outreach Worker from a local service agency. All three said they accessed community resources, and providers were generally considered helpful, with the exception of a few places they would not return for services. Participants liked the practical assistance available from providers that did respond, including food and hygiene products, and practical advice, such as STI screening information.

Safe Harbor

Most of the focus group/interview participants were unaware of the Safe Harbor Law and the available programs and services. Two of the rural participants had heard about Safe Harbor because they had previously been placed at two separate Safe Harbor housing programs, while only one of the three Twin Cities participants had heard of Safe Harbor, and none had used its programs.

Two rural participants admitted that they did not reveal their history of sexual exploitation to staff at the Safe Harbor housing program and, in general, were good at hiding that information from everyone. At the same time, they said the staff there needed training to better help youth. As one youth survivor put it, "People who haven't been in the life have no right to tell me any of it." One noted that the "survivor staff was actually helpful." In general, the group thought that survivors would be the most helpful resource: "Survivors should be working in this…they would be the best to help us."

OUTREACH WORKERS' APPROACH

Participants had very clear advice about best approaches that Outreach Workers need to use to be most effective. Their comments were consistent about the need for Outreach Workers to be genuinely caring, honest and non-judgmental. The youth said they could assess these attributes quickly, but that it takes time for Outreach Workers to build trust and credibility among those served.

According to the participants, the best initial approach from Outreach Workers should involve practical assistance with food, water, snacks, hygiene supplies and connections to resources. Approaches to avoid include direct questions about exploitation, touching and lecturing. The groups said the best time for outreach is during the middle of the night into the early morning hours (one said 1:30 a.m., others said 4:00-5:00 a.m.).

Selected comments from the focus groups/interviews:
- An outreach worker should pull me to the side, say are you okay, are you safe, here's my number. Should not be judgmental, be honest, up-front.
- Make the youth feel comfortable, trusting, friendly, open.
- Outreach Worker is fun, she is all gangster with us, she has a cool vibe.
- Just tell them, "We are here for you."
- Don't' just tell the person what to do.
- Just give options.
- Don't ask if you're okay! I hate that.
- Ask: "Would you want to talk?"
- Say, "You can stop in any time." (In reference to telling a youth about drop-in center services.) Don't have to put the person on the spot.
- Youth are not going to trust people right away. Trust takes time.
- Offer hygiene products without any judgment.
- Say, "Here is what I have in my bag, do you want anything?"
- Don't ask, "Have you been exploited?"
- Make sure the person knows that the Outreach Worker might be helpful for them to know, if they wanted to escape.
- Don't walk up really fast.
- Don't ask a million personal questions at first.
- Make sure they [youth] are comfortable. Watch body language and facial expressions, fidgeting, or twirling their hair means they are uncomfortable.
- If they say, "I don't want to talk about it," quit making them talk about it.
- Don't be all professional about it.
- Talk to them like they are a human being.
- Don't talk like a student and teacher, talk like you are a friend – Not like you're an adult and I'm not.
- I'll shut down fast if you try to show your power issues.
- Build a serious [good] relationship first.
- The best way is to say, "Hi, do you need help with anything?" Tell me you're an Outreach Worker. It's in the way you talk to me.

In one group, the facilitator asked the follow-up question of "What should I do if I saw you about to turn a trick?" Responses included:

- Help with getting out of a bad situation – [Outreach Worker] would pull us out of the situation.
- Calling cops puts up a red flag, it puts up a trust issue, so don't call the cops.
- Wait until the pimp is gone, if they want help, they could help get them the right resources.

In the facilitator's notes regarding the Twin Cities focus group, she noted:

"The participants were both incredibly forthcoming about their experiences and it's very clear they have a good relationship with their Outreach Worker, and the other workers in that program. One young woman "let something slip" during a conversation and the worker "read between the lines." This is a critical listening skill." - Trudee Able-Peterson

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Recruitment

The Twin Cities youth said they were recruited into exploitation by someone they knew (mom, cousin, friend). They said exploitation can happen through the lack of a family protector, rape, stripping, music videos, phone sex, web cam porn, nude photos, and drugs. Their exploitation continued primarily through technology/social media and personal contacts.

The Twin Cities youth listed the following internet sites and other media used for recruitment:
- Facebook
- Meet Me
- Tumblr
- Plenty of Fish (POF)
- Snapchat
- Tagged
- Instagram
- Craigslist
- City Pages ads (sometimes under "girlfriend experience or massage,")
- P411 (Preferred411).

The rural focus group listed the following recruitment places and media:
- Mostly on apps: Grinder, Meet Me, Tinder, Plenty of Fish, Facebook, Snapchat.
- Only one youth had heard of Backpage.
- Direct messaging
- Schools
- Fast food restaurants
- Bigger cities population of about 20,000 people.

The Twin Cities female participants said they "didn't walk the streets, that's not classy, we mostly had set-up visits." Twin Cities recruitment locations listed by the participants include downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul, malls (Mall of America, Southdale, Rosedale), Lake Street, Bloomington hotels, and any Motel 6.

The rural focus group demonstrated a broad understanding of exploitation and listed a wide range of ways youth might be exploited:
- Sexting/Nudes (sending and receiving nude images)
  - Phone sex
  - "People I do know, and people I don't know, ask all the time to do phone sex" and "Old men ALWAYS ask for phone sex."
- Older men: "Above 25 year old prey on kids" and in hunting season, "older men come out and prey on little children."
- Trafficking
- "Like I was never held hostage, but he [her pimp] was going to send me out of the state."
- "I went to CA, and he kind of made me do meth, then I got addicted."
- Survival sex – having sex with someone to survive.
- "I ran away from home, had to have sex to survive, so I had sex, but I had to have drugs to do those things."
- "I could walk around the house, had everything I needed, like a shower, free marijuana, so I didn't really need to leave."
- "To get a ride somewhere."

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS/OBSERVATIONS

1. Facilitator asked if youth thought stripping was sexual exploitation and the participants thought if the person wanted to be doing stripping, it wasn't really exploitation.

2. In response to questions about why a youth would continue in an exploitive situation, the primary response from both groups was the money.
   - "The money is fast, not easy, but fast. I don't take pride in it."
   - "One person I know would rather get $200 an hour than $10 an hour at Burger King."

3. The rural participants also noted a youth might not try and escape exploitation because of threats, fear of change and not recognizing they are being exploited.
   - One participant said, "I got out because I was fed up and caught diseases."
   - "I left because it wasn't helping me, it was just hurting me more and more. It wasn't safe – it's harder to get out the longer you have been in it."

4. Participants were split on whether having a baby would keep people in exploitive situations or it would help them leave.

5. Outreach programs utilizing this material should carefully consider the time of day they're doing outreach in order to meet sexually exploited youth who don't go to work until midnight.

CLOSING WORDS FROM FACILITATOR

Young people want to tell their story, but they need to be safe and comfortable with you to do that. Never ask them to share their story if you can't build trust and rapport with them. When that happens, they can reclaim and regain some power that was stolen from them in their childhoods. Listen.

Each face of each young person in the Focus Groups lingers in my mind. Each story is now a part of who I am. I thank all of them for their willingness to teach us their realities so we can better reach them to serve them.

How fortunate we are when a young person allows us into the hard places they've been. I am grateful to Lutheran Social Service/StreetWorks and its partner agencies to have been entrusted to facilitate these Focus Groups with young people, thank you.

Trudee Able-Peterson