

U.S. Department of Education Use Case –Human Trafficking Framework for Instructional Programming in Schools.

The Issue

The U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Safe and Healthy Students maintains that schools can and should be a safe place where students thrive. Unfortunately, the trafficking of America’s students, both for labor and for commercial sex, negatively impacts the learning environment, jeopardizing the health and safety of students.

Human trafficking is a form of modern day slavery that is happening in communities across the U.S. including rural areas, suburban towns and big cities. Victims are U.S. citizens as well as immigrants. Trafficked persons represent various socio-economic, ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds as well as a range of ability levels. Men, women, boys, girls and those who identify as LGBT are trafficked within U.S. borders.

The Need for Youth Education and Empowerment within a Framework of Trust

School-aged children and teens are primary targets for traffickers.

An estimated 200,000 American children at risk for trafficking into the sex industry.¹ The average age of entry into the commercial sex trade ranges between the ages of 12-14. Youth are vulnerable to the myriad of tactics that traffickers use to manipulate and exploit potential victims, namely, feigned romantic relationships and friendships. Traffickers build trust with targeted youth over an extended period of time in order to draw them into modern slavery. These tactics are difficult to identify as the social interactions between the trafficker and potential victims (1) vary according to the specific needs and desires of the targeted youth and (2) take place within diverse situational contexts.

Human trafficking negatively impacts students attending America’s schools.

Confirmed cases reveal that trafficking activities occur on campus, during school-sponsored events, and among peers. Traffickers often use students as recruiters. These recruiters form relationships with their fellow students in order to bring more youth into the criminal enterprise. Students may also meet traffickers while travelling to or from school.

Trafficked students may continue to attend school, or at least sporadically, while involved in labor or sexual slavery. Victims endure physical, psychological and emotional trauma which manifests as behavioral issues such as aggression and truancy.² Behavioral issues, in turn, negatively impact the learning environment.

Human trafficking is a form of child abuse and neglect.

The U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services refer to the trafficking of minors as a form of child abuse and neglect. Thus, awareness training and response protocols are necessary to enable school administration and staff to identify victims and to effectually

¹ U.S. Department of Justice. 2004. *Report to Congress from Attorney General John Ashcroft on U.S. Government Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons in Fiscal Year 2003*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

² U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students, *Human Trafficking in America’s Schools*, Washington, D.C., 2015

respond. Moreover, as students are the primary targets of manipulation and exploitation, an educational program, specifically designed for students, is essential to prevent and address human trafficking at the local level.

Human trafficking is a hidden crime.

Human trafficking is often overlooked, misinterpreted and underreported due to the hidden nature of the crime. Minor victims often do not self-identify. Some deny that they are victims.

Every trafficking situation differs according to the trends in the local community, the tactics employed by local traffickers, and the individual characteristics of each targeted youth. Therefore, prevention and response training for the entire community is necessary in order to effectively address this issue affecting students in America's schools.

Teachers, school staff and students are likely to come in contact with victims of human trafficking on school grounds, placing them in a prime position to aid in prevention and detection efforts. Ongoing awareness and prevention education on the issue of human trafficking enables students to recognize the warning signs and report possible victimization. At-risk youth learn how to better protect themselves, and student victims are more likely to get help. Educated students are empowered to advocate for those who experience modern-day human rights violations. Student advocates may also affect real change by participating in community outreach.

This framework not only includes a "student-centered instruction" component, it also involves the hybrid extension of a "whole-community approach". The community approach involves multiple stakeholders that can support educational instructional programming, within the schools, simultaneous to providing students outreach opportunities within their communities.

Best Practice Model: Components of an Effective Youth Education and Outreach Program

Effective prevention and detection efforts include collaboration with many key stakeholders. Prior to educating youth on the issue of human trafficking, ensure that the necessary policies and response protocols are in place, and that key stakeholders are prepared to respond to trafficking. For model policies and protocol refer to the guide published by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students, *Human Trafficking in America's Schools* (2015).

1. Train the Trainer

There is inherent value in ensuring that educators are equipped and trained on this issue. This training will provide educators the tools they need to implement this subject matter into their instructional teaching as well as the basic fundamentals of defining human trafficking as it relates to the students receiving this instruction in an educational environment. As a result of this crime falling within the purviews of "child abuse and neglect" the train the trainer methodology would provide the most influential and holistic training for those educators that are delivering educational programming, on this subject, within an educational learning environment. Those learning environments also include students receiving instruction remotely vs that of a traditional formal classroom setting.

Preparation is key to a successful program.

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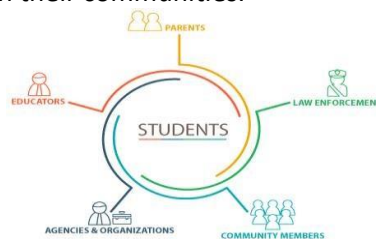
- Trainer and staff preparation is essential to every school-based human trafficking education and prevention program. Those involved in developing or implementing a youth education or outreach program must be knowledgeable about human trafficking and be able to provide support according to established district protocols and policies.
- Trainers must be familiar with the issue of human trafficking as it occurs in the local community. An overview of the problem within the context of the local region includes trends and tactics of local traffickers. This contextual information enables the audience to recognize that the problem exists in their own area and provides a foundation for active problem-solving.
- The trainer must be knowledgeable of ways to prevent youth from being trafficked as well as ways to reduce demand for minors. Trainer preparation includes locating community resources available for at-risk youth or potential victims. Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are also important for the trainer to know as the audience will pose common questions.

Train staff and community prior to youth education and outreach.

If youth are educated on the issue of human trafficking before the school staff and the supporting community are prepared, harmful outcomes may result. Thus, anyone developing or implementing a youth educational outreach program must first be fully trained to provide age-appropriate instruction on human trafficking and related issues. Issues related to human trafficking include, but are not limited to grooming, sextortion, child pornography, media influence on youth perceptions and the role of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) in the solicitation, manipulation and exploitation of youth. It is key to identify educational resources that address issues related to human trafficking.

2. Community Involvement

Partnerships are essential. Education and outreach efforts include community members who aid in human trafficking prevention, detection and response. The goal is to involve multiple stakeholders within a whole-community approach to support the emphasis of the need for instructional educational programming in the school within their communities.



- **Parent Community**

Parents and guardians are a critical link to institutionalizing student safety and well-being. Thus, parents can be active partners in preventing and responding to child trafficking by effectively addressing the issue at home and serving as watchful eyes within the community. Emphasis should also be given to the education community of administrators, teachers, advisors, librarians and school counselors to inform parents of issues regarding student safety and digital citizenship.

- **Law Enforcement**

Emphasis should be given to work with law enforcement agencies at the state and local level in a coordinated effort to educate and empower communities to address issues affecting the safety of today's youth. Law enforcement serves on the front lines in anti-human trafficking efforts and provides valuable insight on the issue. Partners in law enforcement provide information aiding in the development of community outreach programs and deliver presentations in local schools or after school clubs. Identifying the Task Force members which include but are not limited to: Attorneys General, U.S. Attorneys, the FBI, State Police, County Sheriffs, City Policy Departments, District Attorneys, State and local Homeland Security Officials and School Resource Officers.

- **Supporting Community Members**

It is important to seek partnerships with business, civic leaders, NGOs, faith-based organizations, law enforcement, government agencies and other institutions who share a common goal in protecting our nation's youth. Advocates against human trafficking are key partners in collaboration for a nationwide effort in increasing awareness and reducing the demand and exploitation of youth through education and outreach. Resource centers and local services provide identified victims with next steps to recover and prevent re-victimization. Advocacy groups aid schools and school districts in forming a strong coalition to combat trafficking at the local level.

3. Program Metrics and Reporting

Many factors must be considered prior to program implementation including metrics. The ability to measure the impact of a human trafficking education and outreach program is an essential component. Two main types of measurement include output and outcome. Output measures include the number of staff trained, number of students educated, and number of instructional hours. Outcome measures include evaluation of staff training, the number of potential victims identified, and student pre and post assessment scores. No personally identifiable information should be collected along with these data sets.

- **Reporting Mechanic:** Reporting mechanics are simplified and provide a more valuable means of accuracy when automated. Such automation should allow state departments, school districts and school administrators to report on educator training certification and classroom curriculum implementation at the district, school, grade and classroom level. For example, administrators should be able to track the number of staff members that have completed the training as well as those that have been identified as meta trainers. There is considerable value when the reporting mechanics are able to drill down to identify the classrooms that have implemented specific lesson plans and resources, during instruction, enabling a calculation of the number of students trained.
- **Additional Metrics:** Additional measures may also include, but are not limited to, the number of students registered with Youth Outreach and Empowerment programs. Schools and student association activities, such as after school clubs and community centers, are venues where youth empowerment outreach events can be held.

4. Custom Curriculum and Program Implementation

The goals of student education and outreach on the issue of human trafficking are threefold: (1) to increase awareness of human trafficking among students; (2) to identify at-risk youth and potential victims; (3) to provide students with the skills to prevent, detect and respond to potential trafficking incidents both safely and effectively. Researched-based evidence, on prevention education programs, guides the development of instructional curriculum and programming as outlined below.

- **Educational Programming Offers a Tailored Approach:** A one-size-fits all approach to human trafficking education and outreach does “not” effectively address the complexities of the issue. The issue of human trafficking differs in every state, region, community, school, and for every student. Situations involve a variety of risk factors. A tailored approach is recommended to address the specific needs of students living in a given community and for at-risk student groups. At-risk groups include migrant youth, foster youth, students with disabilities, students with mental or behavioral health issues, transfer students, students living in areas with high levels of prostitution, students who identify as LGBTQ and homeless youth.

Students need to be able to recognize risky situations, grooming tactics, and signs of victimization within multiple situational contexts. Thus, curriculum should be selected and customized to meet the needs of at-risk groups and the local trends and tactics of traffickers in the surrounding area.

- **Educational Programming should allow for Multiple Instructional Sessions:** A one-time assembly or classroom session is insufficient to effectively address a complex issue such as human trafficking. Effective youth education and prevention programs are comprised of curriculum that instructs students over a period of several instructional sessions. Students need the opportunity to acquire and practice new knowledge and skills. Multiple instructional sessions are needed on the issue of human trafficking in order for students to grasp the principles of prevention and demand reduction, and to take appropriate actions.
- **Educational Programming Integrated Across the Curriculum:** It is important that the curriculum be integrated in with core subject matters such as Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, History, Science, Health, Technology, and even Physical Education. Lessons address Common Core State Standards and ISTE/NETS standards.
- **Human Trafficking Education Integration:** Education on the topic of human trafficking can and should be integrated with regular classroom instruction. Human trafficking awareness and prevention education fits into core subjects such as history, English Language Arts, health, sociology, civics, math and technology.
- **Examples of Entry Points into Core Subject Matter:** The complex issue of human trafficking presents educators with multiple entry points that link to core subject matter. For example, human trafficking is a form of modern day slavery. Thus, the link between the history of slavery and modern slavery is a practical entry point for initial instruction on human trafficking. Creating an introductory lesson on human trafficking, that uses the concept of slavery as an entry point,

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allows the lesson to build on the students' prior knowledge of history and slavery and then links this concept to a contemporary problem within the United States and around the world. Additional examples of cross-curricular integration of human trafficking education and regular classroom instruction include but are not limited to lessons on human rights, the principle of supply and demand, the criminal justice system, the legislative process, media literacy and the influence of pop-culture on self-concept and self-worth.

Student-Centered Instructional Materials:

Effective educational programs actively engage students in the learning process in a manner that lecture-only programs do not allow. In order to guide students through the learning process, educators need lesson plans that include detailed background information about the topic, a narrative for implementation, discussion guide and supporting materials. A student-centered approach to human trafficking education places students in the drivers' seat of their own learning experience and combines collaborative student discussion, problem-solving, and meaningful activities.

Curriculum on human trafficking, designed for grades 9-12, should take a problem-based approach to a complex issue. Students take a central role in understanding, investigating and devising workable solutions for a problem affecting youth who live in their community; the problem of human trafficking in the U.S.

- **A Flexible Framework for a Student Initiative on Human Trafficking in the U.S** Curriculum on human trafficking should be within a flexible framework for a student-centered learning experience. Through inquiry and research, students come to understand that human trafficking is a problem affecting youth in their own neighborhood, region, state and nation. The curriculum may include a student workbook that provides age-appropriate background information on human trafficking. The workbook guides students through the process of defining the problem, developing investigative questions, gathering relevant and credible sources related to their inquiry, and arriving at a workable solution. Students then learn that they can take action through student-driven empowerment projects.
- **English Language Arts & 21st Century Skills in Action:** Students apply English Language Arts skills as they select credible sources in relationship to their inquiry questions. The support statements with evidence and reason and effectively integrate information using source citations. Students hone ELA skills through close reading of selected texts, integration of knowledge and ideas in writing, and practice speaking and listening skills during discussions and presentations. They use technology in the creation and publication of their learning products.
- **Human Trafficking and e-Safety:** Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) play a major role in the targeting, solicitation, manipulation, marketing and exploitation of minor victims. Minors are bought, sold and advertised online every day. Mobile phones, social media, messaging apps and other digital forms of communication enable traffickers to target and groom minors around the clock and from almost anywhere.

- **Educational Program Integration:** Schools can strengthen human trafficking education and awareness by combining with other educational programs that address topics such as Internet safety, bullying, drug abuse awareness and prevention, sexual or domestic violence awareness and prevention, and community service.

5. Youth Outreach and Empowerment



- **Scalable Outreach Efforts:** It is key outreach efforts be scalable thereby allowing the awareness and prevention efforts, led by students for students, to be easily replicated and become viral. The replication process creates a viral momentum constitutionalizing the “awareness” of the outreach efforts deployed by the students. The foundation to a successful Youth Outreach and Empowerment Program is the capability to provide students the tools, and guidelines, on how to deploy successful collaboration opportunities, with other students, outside the confines of their own school and/or district. Such guidelines can provide students the basic mechanics on how they can constructively and safely collaborate with one another through the utilization of the various technology mediums they are afforded and have access to. Such mediums include but are not just limited to social media but rather also include traditional awareness which might take place through a partnership with an after school club and/or local business establishments within their community. Such establishments might also include a local fast food chain that is frequented by students and families within their community.
- **Curriculum Integration:** There is considerable value in integrating the Youth Outreach and Empowerment programming within the classroom instruction programming. The purpose of this integration is to enable students to extend their learning beyond the classroom to make a positive impact within their own local community. The peer-to-peer model draws on the credibility that youth have among their own age demographics to convey messaging that more effectively reaches students.
- **Human Trafficking and Youth Outreach and Empowerment:** Human trafficking is a grave and serious subject. Thus, education programs aimed toward youth must include positive actions that students can take to address the problem. Solutions should include personal as well as collective actions. For example, integrating within the classroom curriculum the opportunity for students to form a dynamic collection of resources that make a real-world impact. Students not only increase awareness among their own peers but they also have the opportunity to educate others in communities across America.

- **Nationwide Student Initiative on Human Trafficking:** The curriculum may be to include a student workbook. After students investigating the problem of human trafficking in their local communities, they can collaborate on solutions and address the issue by engaging in one or more empowerment projects. These projects can be submitted to their teacher. Opportunities for students may involve their production of video segments, visual media and then providing an opportunity for students' written work to be publicized, distributed and shared with schools across the United States in a collective effort to increase awareness of the issue and to inspire more youth to take action. Students in communities across the U.S. can engage in investigative reporting on the trafficking cases and the efforts that are taking place within their own region. Projects also include opportunities to impact legislation, provide better services for rescue and rehabilitation, and to educate the community in order to prevent and report cases. The goal is to give trafficking victims a voice and a face.
- An example of the work of one high school, in partnership with the NGO i-SAFE, can be viewed at: www.isafeventures.com/twelve.

6. School Assembly Experience

- An all-school assembly is a useful complement to awareness and prevention education. A onetime assembly should not replace classroom instruction, but serve to initiate or conclude a multi-session instructional program on the issue of human trafficking.
- School assemblies are considered a campus outreach. Therefore assemblies that address human trafficking are to be comprised of student-generated content produced as part of their empowerment projects. A trained and certified staff advisor is needed to oversee the production of the school-based or community-based outreach program.