Sex Trafficking in Oklahoma: 
#TraumaInformedApproach

Meet the Team

The Team

Whitney Anderson, Co-founder/CEO
- Master in Business Administration (M.B.A.), focus on Nonprofit Management
- 8 years of corporate business experience
- Executive Director & Co-founder of The Dragonfly Home: Human Trafficking Relief & Restoration Center

Niqui Mac, Co-founder/COO
- Master in Health Administration (M.H.A.)
- 15 years of experience in health care and human services
- Program Director & Co-founder of The Dragonfly Home: Human Trafficking Relief & Restoration Center
Our Experience

Advocacy, Training, and Technical Assistance
- HT training for over 8,000 professionals, students, and community members including attorneys, medical professionals, legislators, counselors, therapists, advocates, law enforcement, and tribes

Direct Care Experience
- Former Director and Program Director for NGO that opened first Emergency shelter for adult sex trafficking victims in Oklahoma City
- Operated 24 hour crisis hotline and non-residential program
- Liaise with law enforcement
- Currently opening first state certified crisis center for HT victims

Oklahoma Human Trafficking Task Force
- Chair of Training and Awareness Committee
- Innovative work on Data Committee

Pop Quiz!
#HowMuch4TheNight?
Human Trafficking Defined

The Trafficking Victims’ Protection Act of 2000 defines “trafficking in persons” as:

• sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or
• the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjecting to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

*Proof of force, fraud, coercion is not required for persons who have not attained 18 years of age.
* Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of a Child/Youth are terms often used interchangeably.


#IWouldNeverFallForThat

Act

Induce

Recruit

Harbor

Transport

Provide

Obtain

Means

Finesse/Romeo Pimping

Blackmail

Debtor Pimping

Selling the Dreams

Forced Drug use

I will kill your family...

Abduction

Seduction

Sextortion

If you loved me...

Purpose

Commercial Sex

Labor

Commercial Sex and Labor

Case Studies
Case Study 1: Familial Sex Trafficking

- Born into generations of sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation
- Developmental disability
- Taken into state custody
- Abusive, exploitative relationships
- Homelessness, vulnerability

Case Study 2: Pimp-Controlled Sex Trafficking

- Family had involvement in commercial sex industry
- Successful student, athlete
- Taken into state custody
- Recruited by violent pimp
- Incarcerated

Case Study 3- Gang Involved Sex Trafficking

- Witnessed murder of relative
- Continual victimization while in state custody
- 4.0 Student
- Gifted to other gang members
The Numbers: Oklahoma

- Data Study in Oklahoma involving 3 State Certified Programs for Adult Victims of Sex Trafficking
- Information from 1 State Certified:
  - Residential Program
  - Non-Residential Program
  - Crisis Hotline
- NHTRC, 2015

Issues of Vulnerability Affecting HT in Oklahoma

2015 Poverty Report:
- Higher Education Attainment, ranked 44th
- Disconnected Youth, ranked 41st
- Children Living Apart from Parents, ranked 50th
- Teen Birth Rate, ranked 49th
- Poverty Rate, ranked 37th

Other Issues:
- The lifetime prevalence of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner, ranked 1st (Centers for Disease Control. 2010. National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey).
Leaving the Life Activity

Common Misconceptions

- Trafficking victims are all foreign nationals
- Trafficking requires movement
- Trafficking always involves organized crime
- Traffickers are always strangers and abductors
- The highway system is the largest factor in determining a state’s vulnerability
- Statistics related to trafficking are known and easy to gather
- Victims always self-identify
- An adult cannot be a victim of sex trafficking
Barriers to Getting Out of Sex Trafficking

- Fearful of traffickers
- Dependent on trafficker (e.g. child victims)
- Distrust of law enforcement and fearful of deportation
- Thinking that nobody cares
- Unaware they are victims of a crime
- Unfamiliar with the language and culture
- Addicted to drugs or alcohol
- Without personal identification
- Unaware that they have basic rights
- Guarded 24 hours a day
- Ashamed of their situation


Trauma

What is Trauma?

"Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individuals' functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional or spiritual well-being."

(SAMHSA, 2014)
Types of Trauma

Acute

Chronic

Real/Perceived

Direct/Indirect

Types of Sex Trafficking Trauma
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Adverse Childhood Experiences have been linked to:

• Risky health behaviors
• Chronic health conditions
• Low life potential
• Early death

As the number of ACEs increases, so does the risk for these outcomes.


Trauma Triggers

• Sounds
• Smells
• Colors
• Weather
• Movements
• Objects
• Anniversaries/Holidays
• Memories
• Movies
• What YOU say to them

Common Response to Trauma

FIGHT  FLIGHT  FREEZE
What is a Trauma Informed Approach?
A trauma-informed approach is based on the recognition that many behaviors and responses expressed by survivors are directly related to traumatic experiences. Trauma Informed Services are delivered in a way that avoids inadvertent re-traumatization and re-victimization to facilitate survivor participation.

Intention of a Trauma Informed Approach
(1) Realize the impact of trauma
(2) Recognize how trauma affects victims of sex trafficking
(3) Respond by putting this knowledge into practice
(4) Resist re-traumatization.
Case Studies: Victim Interaction with Professionals

Service Provider Trauma Informed Tips
- Know that survivors are doing the best they know how, to cope with their trauma and current circumstances
- Meet them where they’re at... Allow trust to form and don’t expect an immediate connection
- Your normal is not their normal
- Minimize the power imbalance between you and the victim
- Provide culturally sensitive services
- Paraphrase and exercise reflective listening
- Be cautious not to judge or label
- Be mindful of your expressions

Service Provider Trauma Informed Tips
- Collaborate with and include the survivor’s perspective and voice
- Recognize that controlling services can traumatize and re-traumatize survivors as well as diminish their sense of autonomy and control
- Understand, examine and change language that inadvertently blames survivors and fails to hold perpetrators accountable
- Understand survivors in the context of their life experiences, history, and culture
- Understand the impact that violence has on the lives of sex trafficking victims
- Recognize that adaptive behaviors serve a purpose
- Validate and normalize his or her experiences (thoughts, feelings, behaviors) in the context of trauma

Stein, J. (2016). Impact of Trauma and Trauma Informed Services [Powerpoint slides].
Applying a Trauma Informed Approach with Sex Trafficking Victims

- Client Pickups
- Mental Health Intakes
- Residential Program
- Non-Residential Program
- Human Trafficking Crisis Hotline
- Law Enforcement Interviews
- Court Advocacy

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#DramaQueen

- Emotional Reactions to Trauma
  - Emotional Outbursts
  - Anger
  - Mood Swings
  - Guilt/Shame
  - Difficulty Trusting

- Psychological Reactions to Trauma
  - Self Blaming
  - Nightmares
  - Suspiciousness
  - Difficulty with Memory
  - Blames everyone else

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#OhNoSheDidnt

- Physical Reactions to Trauma
  - Dizziness
  - Fatigue
  - Achy/Pains
  - Weakness
  - Nausea/upset stomach
  - Inability to rest

- Behavioral Reactions to Trauma
  - Angry Outbursts
  - Appearance
  - Giggles
  - Manipulative
  - Appear "Crazy"
Common Physical and Mental Health Traits and Issues of Sex Trafficking Victims

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<th>Disease/Infections</th>
<th>Disorders</th>
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Who to Call: National Human Trafficking Resource Center

Who to Call:

- National Human Trafficking Resource Center
- U.S. State Department + Annual Trafficking in Persons Report, state.gov
- Polaris/ National Human Trafficking Resource Center, traffickingresourcecenter.org/
- United Nations on Drugs and Crime, unodc.org
- Shared Hope International, sharedhope.org
- Department of Homeland Security, dhs.gov/blue-campaign

Additional Resources

- U.S. State Department + Annual Trafficking in Persons Report, state.gov
- Polaris/ National Human Trafficking Resource Center, traffickingresourcecenter.org/
- United Nations on Drugs and Crime, unodc.org
- Shared Hope International, sharedhope.org
- Department of Homeland Security, dhs.gov/blue-campaign

Additional Training and Technical Assistance:

Unveiled Human Trafficking Training and Consulting, unveiledtraining-consulting.org
References


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