

Addressing Child Sex & Labor Trafficking in Healthcare Settings

Jordan Greenbaum, MD

Institute on Healthcare and Human
Trafficking
Stephanie V. Blank Center for Safe &
Healthy Children
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta



International Centre for Missing &
Exploited Children



Objectives

1

Identify risk factors and possible indicators of sex or labor trafficking of minors

2

Describe the developmental aspects particularly relevant to trafficking of minors that may impact provider-patient interactions

3

Be familiar with a screening tool for adolescent sex trafficking risk

Trafficking Examples

- Hector is a 17 yo male from a small village near Villa Nueva. His parents wish to get him out of Guatemala due to violence. His mother works with an employment agency to get him a job in Akron, in construction.
- Louisa is a 10-year-old female whose mother lost her job during COVID. The family is now facing eviction. The mother tells Louisa to ‘go with the landlord and do whatever he wants...’
- Sophia is a 14 yo female who has a boyfriend in a gang. She is made to sell sex at a local motel as part of her affiliation with the gang.

Severe Forms of Human Trafficking

Action

Recruits
Harbors
Entices
Transports
Provides
Obtains or
maintains a
person
OR
[patronizes
/solicits sex]

Means

Force
OR
Fraud
OR
Coercion

Purpose

Involuntary servitude
OR
Debt Bondage
OR
Slavery
OR
Sexual exploitation

Sex Trafficking of a Minor

Action

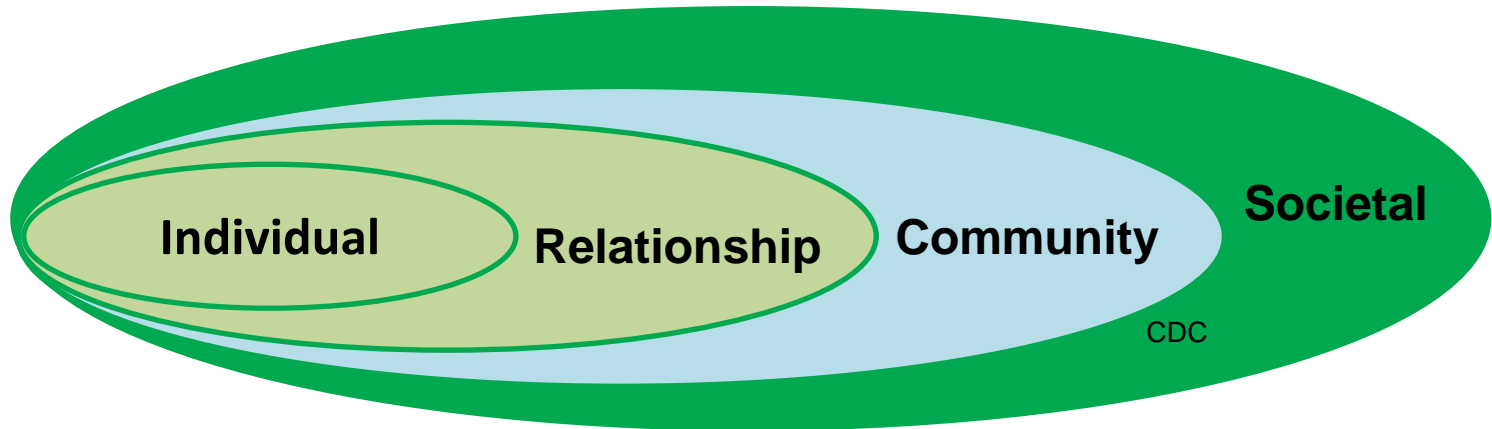
Recruits
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Individual

Hx maltreatment
Homeless/runaway
LGBTQ+ status
Substance misuse
Hx with JJ, CPS
Unaccompanied
minor

Relationship

Family violence
Familial poverty
Family dysfunction
Forced migration

Community

Tolerance of sexual
exploitation
High crime rate
Lack of community
resources/support
Transient male
populations

Societal

Gender-based
violence &
discrimination
Cultural
attitudes/beliefs
Natural disasters
Political/social
upheaval

Do Trafficked Persons Seek Medical Care?

- » 82.5% seen at the local children's hospital within past year ¹
- » 42.9% had received health care within the 2 months prior to identification²
- » Persons seek care in variety of settings³
 - 63% Hospital/ED
 - 57% any type of clinic
 - 30% Planned Parenthood
 - 23% Regular doctor

Sex and Labor Trafficking



Malnutrition

Chronic Conditions



Depression/
Suicidality

Work-related injuries



PTSD

Chronic Pain

**How might Hector, Louisa, &
Sophia present for care?**

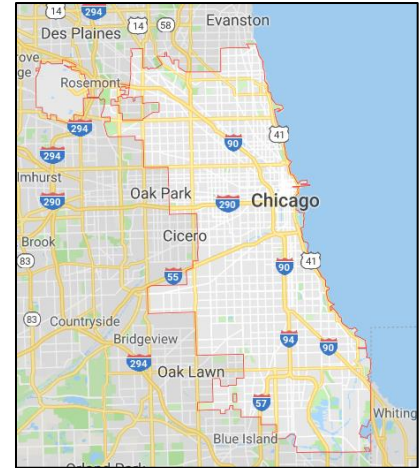
Why might Hector, Pat and Louisa NOT disclose their exploitation?

Developmental:



Possible Indicators of Trafficking: First Impressions

Unfamiliar with
city or where
staying



False Information

Companion
domineering,
controlling

Patient
intimidated,
submissive



Possible Indicators of Trafficking

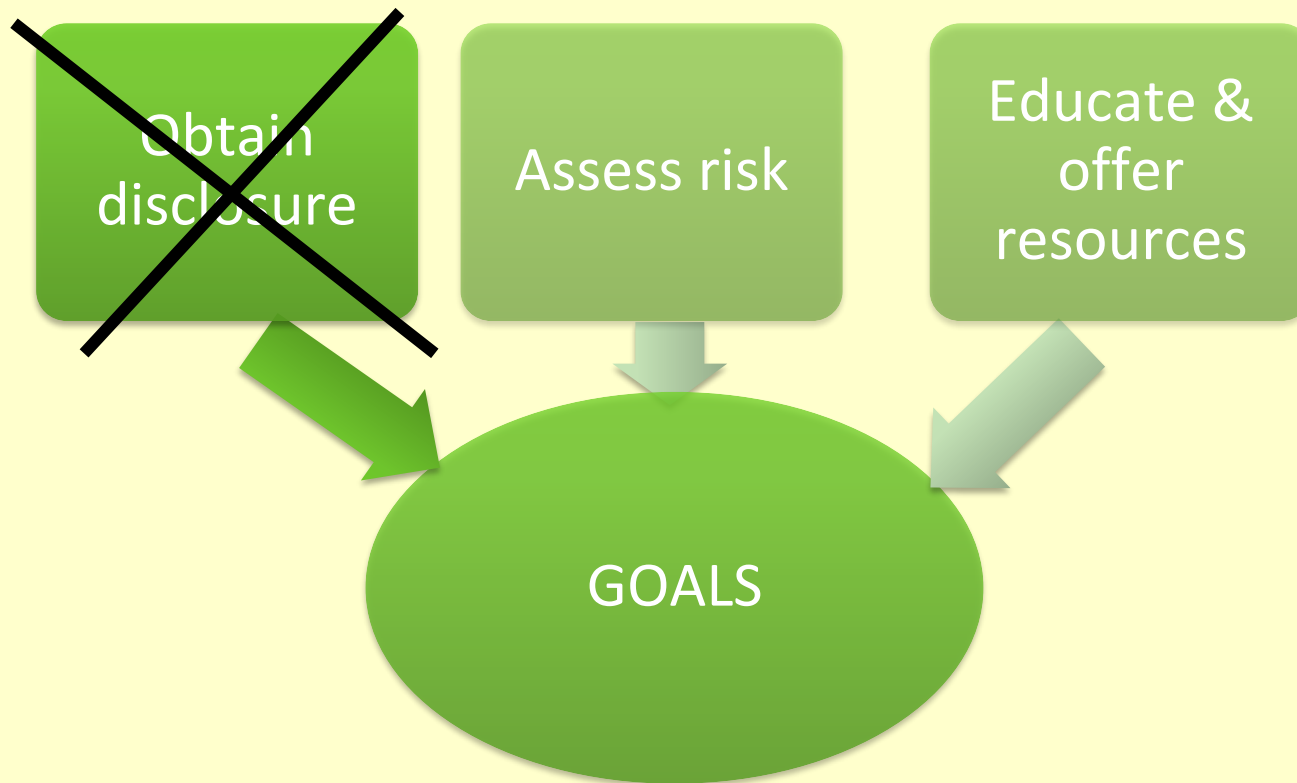
- Consider adverse health effects of trafficking....
 - ✦ Work-related injuries
 - ✦ Malnutrition
 - ✦ Multiple STI's
 - ✦ Pregnancies, abortions, or miscarriages
 - ✦ Illicit drug use
 - ✦ Current or past history of:
 - Sexual assault
 - Inflicted Injury
- Visible signs of physical abuse



Screening for Human Trafficking

Using Trauma-Informed, Rights-Based Approach

Keep Your Goals in Mind....



Adolescents: 6-Item Screen

1. Drug/alcohol use in past 12 months
2. History running away
3. History with police
4. History broken bones, knocked unconscious, cuts needing stitches
5. History STI
6. Number of sex partners (>5 is 'Yes')


≥ 2 Yes answers = positive screen

Follow-Up After Screen


- 1) *Follow up on positive answers from screen (open-ended questions)*
- 2) *Have you ever been in a position where you've had to consider exchanging sex for something you wanted or needed (money, food, shelter or other items)?*
- 3) *Has anyone ever asked you to have sex with another person?*

Universal Education and Resources

- Talk about
 - Healthy relationships
 - Impact of violence on health
 - Harm reduction techniques
 - Human trafficking
- Community resources, national resources



Hanging Out or Hooking Up?



Anyone you're with—if you are talking, hanging out, or hooking up—should:

- ✓ Make you feel safe and comfortable
- ✓ Not pressure you to get drunk or high because they want to have sex with you
- ✓ Respect your boundaries and ask if it's OK to touch or kiss you (or whatever else)
- ✓ Give you space to hang out with your friends

But sometimes there is drama in relationships. How often does the person you are seeing:

- ✗ Shame you or make you feel stupid?
- ✗ Pressure you to go to the next step when you are not ready?
- ✗ Control you, or make you feel afraid if you don't do what they want?
- ✗ Send lots of texts, ask for your online passwords, or make you send them naked pictures?

How would you want your best friend, sister or brother to be treated by someone they were going out with? Ask yourself if the person you are seeing treats you with respect, and if you treat them with respect.

FUTURES WITHOUT VIOLENCE

We are here to help. You or a friend can talk to us about how things are going. Or you can make a call to one of these confidential hotlines 24 hours a day:

National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline 1-866-331-9474
or online chat www.loveisrespect.org
Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-8255
Teen Runaway Hotline 1-800-621-4000
Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network (RAINN) 1-800-656-4673

(Futures Without Violence, 2017)

Conclusions

- Working with trafficked minors presents challenges related to developmental factors and status of children/adolescents in society
- Screening for risk may be helpful in the health setting
- Universal education with resources also beneficial



Thank you!

Jordan Greenbaum

jgreenbaum@icmec.org

Institute on Healthcare and Human Trafficking:

www.vIHHT.org

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