Human Trafficking and the 411: Working with Youth

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- Lead agency in the Rescue & Restore Southwestern Illinois Coalition
- Historically working with families and youth
  - Developmentally Delayed as well
- Provides bilingual Spanish services as well through Puentes de Esperanza
- Growing number of prevention services through community programming
Rescue & Restore

- Increase public awareness of human trafficking.
- Bridge communication between law enforcement, educators, health providers, and social service agencies
- Increase identification and protections of victims of human trafficking
- Third year of sub-grant
Starting up...

- Workers and farmers did not feel that it was happening
- Difficulty understanding the area and areas in which trafficking may occur
- Change focus to trafficking & children
  - Recruitment Zones
Prevention programming

- There is a need to further youth prevention
  - Positive Youth Development: Strength-based, Evidence-based models
- Challenges: “model” school setting, close supervision, pilot or demonstration,
- High and low-risk setting, short and long-term setting
  - (Gager & Elias, 1997)
• Review of 1,200 prevention studies: behavioral & social problems, academic, child maltreatment, drug use, etc.
• SES- low socioeconomic status
• Stress is related to ALL outcomes
• Most prominent factors with negative outcomes (Durlak, 1998)
Considerations

- Crime, Violence, Poverty
- Teen culture: Sexualize, Technology Advanced, “Grown up”
- School settings
- Length of presentation
SMART Choices

- “UGLY” topics
- One time presentation that can be adapted for a different environment
- Factors leading up to potential trafficking
- Safe for school-environment, churches, youth groups, after-school programs, etc.
  - Speak with teachers or social workers
- Adaptation from Safe Dating & National Runaway Youth Curriculum
Topics Discussed in SMART Choices

- Stress: family, friends, school, etc.
- Handling stress
- Healthy relationships
- Teen Violence
- Dreams & Goals
- Run-aways
- Cycle of Entrapment
- Teen prostitution/ Human trafficking
- Resources
Setting Goals

My goal is: __________________________________________
(State the goal positively)

I will achieve my goal by:__________________________________________

To achieve my goal, I will__________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

Potential roadblocks to reaching my goal:____________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________
Story Examples

Fourteen year old girl:

- My mom has drank for as long as I could remember. When I was ten I started taking care of my sister since my mom wouldn’t. I would come home from school and she would be passed out on the couch. We would always fight. Nothing I ever did was good enough and she would never stop drinking. If my dad found the bottle of liquor he would pour it all over her. Usually she would start screaming at him and deny it was hers but we all knew she was lying. A lot of times she got violent after drinking. One time, she smacked me so hard I couldn’t touch my face the next day without pain. I am done fightin’ with her. So was my dad, that’s why he left. My friends all smoke weed. They told me it would make the pain go away… and it did. Sometimes when we’re bored we do acid or shrooms. I stopped going to school cause it was a waste of time. I started hooking up with Marcos, my dealer. I stay at Marcos’s house a lot now. He said he loves me and he could get us a place. He told me I could work at his friend’s bar and I would get paid real good. I agreed to go cause anywhere is better than here.

What elements stick out to you that would relate to teens?
Key points

- Story content
  - Using elicit drugs, risky behaviors, family violence

- The language used
  - Slang terms, short sentences

- Ending: Runaway as a solution
Thirteen year old boy:

- I hate it here. They are all stupid! They laugh at me just because I am different from them. Just because I make choices that they would not. I hate going to gym class because the boys all run away when I come in the locker room. The friends I used to have no longer talk to me. The girls even laugh at me. I tried to talk to my mom about it and when I did she cried. My dad stopped talking to me he won’t even look at me he says that I am a disgrace to his family. I thought that I could at least hide at home after school but it’s even worse there because my brother hits me and laughs at me. He says that I can’t share a room with him anymore because I like boys…. I am going to leave this place. Leave them all because they don’t love me and I don’t love them. I will forget about them all and never look back.

What elements stick out to you that would relate to teens?
Key points

- Age of child
- Questioning sexuality
- Bullying
- Rejection from family and friends
- Lack of acceptance and understanding
- Ending: Runaway as a solution
Cycle of Entrapment

• Family dysfunction, domestic violence, physical and sexual abuse

• School problems, troubled peer group, occasional runaway

• Chronic runaway, recruitment by pimp

• Seduced through love, attention and promises of security

• Controlled through violence and drugs – pre-existing mistrust of the “system” is reinforced.

• Rarely self-report and is often overlooked by law enforcement
Sexting & Social Media

- Sending of sexual explicit images or messages to an individual via electronic avenues
- Social Media forms: Facebook, Snapchat, Myspace, Tinder
- “Thots”
- Consequences appear unrealistic
- Recruitment methods
  - Lockett Brothers- Chicago
Sexting as means to coercive behaviors

- Unwanted yet consensual sex increased
- Research conducted by Tobin & Drouin (2012) found that 60% of women and 40% of men engaged in unwanted sexting
  - Participants were in a relationship
  - Additional significant relationships included anxious attachment and physical abuse in females & physical abuse in males
Incorporating movies

- “Chosen”
- “Gems”
- “The Dark Side of Chocolate”
  - [http://youtu.be/7Vfbv6hNeng](http://youtu.be/7Vfbv6hNeng)
  - Allows for teens to see evidence
Take Action

- Evaluating what teens have learned
- Allowing for opportunity to find out more or provide information
- Providing teachers & youth leaders the necessary materials
- Public Service Announcements
  - Youth Summit
Resources

What types of resources do you think are necessary for youth to know?

- Places they can go to seek services of STDs, STIs, Pregnancy
- Places that address teen violence
- Safe activities to go
- Hotlines: National Runaway Safeline, National Human Trafficking Hotline, Crisis hotlines
  - Multiple languages & culturally sensitive
Contact information

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References

