

# **Child and Youth Sex Trafficking:** *Raising Awareness & FSD's Response*



*Agency of Human Services*

# National Snapshot

- Sex trafficking is reported in all 50 states
- An estimated 100,000 children/youth sexually are exploited in the United States every year
- 1.3 million children go missing every year; only 797,500 of those are reported to law enforcement
- In 2014, **1 out of every 6 runaways** reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) was likely a child sex trafficking victim
  - 1 in 3 runaway teens will be approached by a pimp or bottom girl **within 48 hours** of being on run/the street.
- **68 percent were in the care of child welfare** when they went missing
- 2014 data identified **5,042 victims**:
  - ✓ 1,581 minors (31.4 percent)
  - ✓ 90 percent female
  - ✓ 8 percent male
  - ✓ 0.5 percent transgender
- Native children/youth are five times more likely than peers to be trafficked



# Vermont Snapshot

- FSD began consistently tracking suspected sex trafficking cases approximately one year ago. Within this time, there have been **more than 30 intakes flagged for sex trafficking**.
- Each FSD district office has had at least one trafficking case.
- The victims have mostly been female (2 males).
- The ages of the victims range from 6 – 17 years old.
  - Age 6 = 1 case
  - Age 12 = 1 case
  - Age 13 = 3 cases
  - Ages 14-17 = 25 cases
- Half of the victims are in DCF custody.
- Most common themes: exchanging sexual acts for drugs, cigarettes, alcohol, phone cards, electronics, clothing, other gifts, or promises of becoming famous.



# Defining Sex Trafficking

**Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000** (federal law)

**Act 55 of 2011** (Vermont law)

**The Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014** (federal law)

**Act 60 of 2015** (Vermont law)

The Family Services Division defines ***Sex Trafficking of Minors*** as a range of crimes committed against children and adolescents, including but not limited to:

- sexually exploiting a minor;
- recruiting, enticing, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining minors by any means for the purpose of sexual exploitation;
- exploiting a minor through survival sex (exchanging sex or sexual acts for money or something of value, such as shelter, food, or drugs);
- using a minor in child pornography;
- exploiting a minor through sex tourism, mail order bride trade, or early marriage; or,
- exploiting a minor by having her/him perform in sexual venues (e.g., peep shows or strip clubs).

# **Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (2014)**

## **Public Law 113–183**

- **Section 101:** Identifying, Documenting, and Determining Services
  - **Section 102:** Reporting Instances of Sex Trafficking
  - **Section 103:** Sex Trafficking Data in the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)
  - **Section 104:** Locating and Responding to Runaway Foster Youth
  - **Section 113:** Involving Foster Youth in Case Planning
- 

# **Forms of Child Sex Trafficking**

- **Traffickers – “pimp”, “daddy”, “gorilla”**
  - **Family-based**
  - **Gang-controlled**
  - **Peer-to-peer**
  - **Non- pimp or trafficker controlled “survival sex”**
  - **Independent “renegading” (involvement in the sex trade industry without a pimp)**
- 

# Traffickers' Recruitment Strategies

- **Boyfriend:** Forms a romantic relationship with victims
- **Daddy:** Acts as a father-figure who provides family
- **Finesse Pimping or Romeo Pimping:** manipulates young girls into making their own decisions to engage in sexual services, and give their money to a trafficker
- **Employer (Bait and Switch):** Recruits based on promises of modeling, dancing, singing, or acting
- **Gorilla Pimping:** Uses extreme force to gain compliance from victims
- **Friend:** Forms a “normal” friendship to gain the trust of victims

# Changing our Perspective & Language

- ***Inappropriate:***
  - Places blame on child rather than recognizing the perpetrator;
  - A “bad kid” acting as a delinquent or committing delinquent acts;
  - Associating trafficking with charges or delinquency for minors;
  - Used as an insult or derogatory term;
  - A label with long-lasting stigma;
  - Associated with negative stereotypes (drug addict, sexually promiscuous, etc.); and
  - Wrongly equated with a “profession” or “choice”

# Changing our Perspective & Language, cont.

- ***Appropriate:***

- Recognizes that **a child is not developmentally, legally, or socially able to make the “choice” or consent to become involved in the commercial sex industry;**
- Defines what is happening to the child rather than labeling the child;
- A young person who deserves intensive support and services;
- A young person who has been sexually used, coerced, manipulated, abused, and violently controlled for another person’s benefit;
- By acknowledging the “victim,” also conveys that there is an “offender” or “perpetrator”;
- Takes into consideration vulnerability of children; and
- Defined and viewed as a form of **child abuse** and must be reported to the Child Protection Hotline (CIES).

# Where does sex trafficking occur?

- Street trafficking in the community (Church Street in Burlington)
- Truck stops, bus stops, parks, bars
- Schools
- Within families and their homes
- Group homes, residential programs, shelters
- Phone sex lines / webcams
- Strip clubs, massage parlors, brothels
- Public events, sporting events
- Hotels or motels
- Online, via social media



# Why does exploitation happen?

## Push Factors

- Poverty/economic difficulty
- Lack of opportunity and jobs
- Homelessness
- Lack of education or illiteracy
- Intimate partner violence, prior sexual abuse, other forms of trauma
- Subordinate identity
- Discrimination
- Civil/ethnic violence and war

## Pull Factors

- Desire for a better life
- Seeking safety or protection
- Seeking stability and control
- Seeking support and love
- False opportunities
- In search of money, drugs, validation, or belonging
- Financial desires

# Who is vulnerable to sex trafficking?

**Homeless  
children and  
youth /  
Youth “on run”**

**Both  
males  
and  
females**

**Every race and  
socioeconomic  
class in ANY area**

**Refugees /  
Unaccompanied  
Minors**

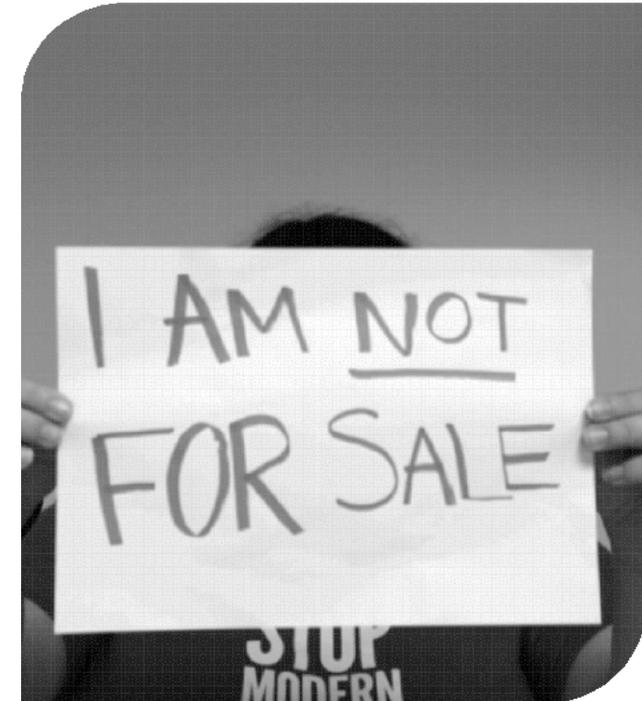
**Children  
and  
youth in  
foster  
care**

**LGBTQ  
youth**

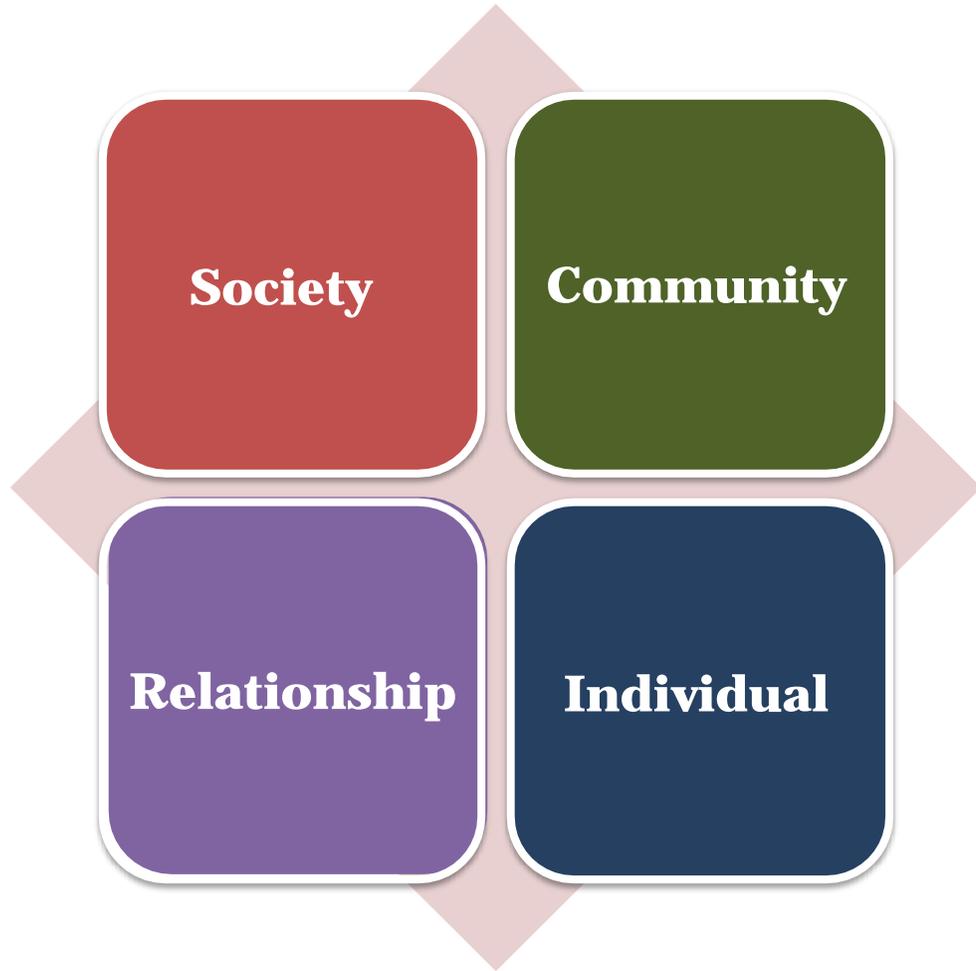
While any child is at risk, child sex trafficking disproportionately impacts children with greater social, economic, and environmental vulnerabilities.

# Characteristics of Children at Risk of Recruitment

- Unsupervised internet use or obsessive use of social media
- Attracted to consumer goods
- Desire to develop romantic relationships
- Insecurity, feeling misunderstood, anxiety, depression, loneliness, lack of belonging
- Frequent fighting with parents or caregivers
- Feeling that parents or caregivers don't care or aren't present
- Seeking more independence
- Desire to test boundaries and take risks; distrustful of authority
- Withdrawal or lack of interest in previous hobbies and activities
- Lack of enrollment in school or repeated absence from school
- Homeless youth or youth on run



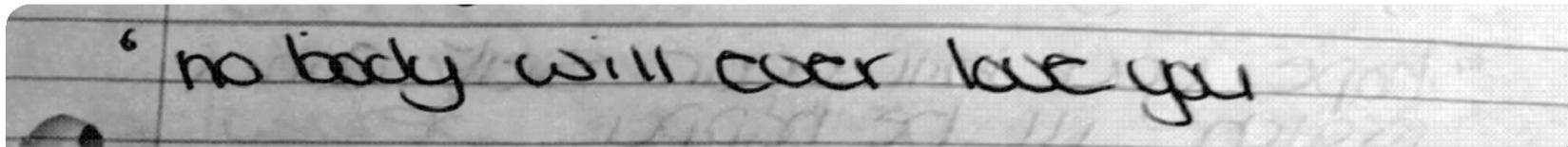
# Influences Impacting the Risk of Sex Trafficking



- History of childhood trauma and abuse (mental, physical, sexual);
- Children and youth in foster care;
- History of involvement with the juvenile justice system;
- Children and youth in group homes and shelters;
- Lack of supervision, homelessness , a history of running away;
- LGBTQ youth;
- Youth living in poverty; and
- Youth experiencing, or in families with, mental health issues or substance abuse issues.

# Characteristics of Child/Youth Victims

- Often form emotional bonds with trafficker
  - Stockholm syndrome
  - Often express love and loyalty to the abuser/trafficker
  - May feel compelled to return to abuser/trafficker
- May experience feelings of betrayal, powerlessness, stigmatization, and traumatic sexualization
- Often express a lack of desire for help despite needing assistance with getting basic, emotional, medical, and legal needs met
- **Often will not self-identify as victims and will minimize or be unable to recognize exploitation or victimization**



' no body will ever love you

# Characteristics of Traffickers

- **ANYONE** who profits
- May be family members, romantic partners, friends, community members, or strangers
- Looks for vulnerable individuals
- Preys on children in the foster care system, particularly runaways or children experiencing trauma at home
- Preys on children with low self-esteem and minimal social support
- Recruits in public places (shopping malls, bus stops, and outside schools)
- Increasing use of social networking apps/sites for targeting and recruiting children
- Willing to invest a great deal of time and effort into their victims to break down natural resistance and suspicion

# Why are victims often unable to leave?

- Captivity or confinement
- Sense of belonging / family /self-worth
- Drug source, substance use and dependence
- Frequent or constant accompaniment and supervision
- Language and social barriers
- Force, threats, fraud, coercion, blackmail
- Fear of physical retaliation, death, arrest, harm to themselves or to loved ones
- Shame and self-blame
- Traumatic bonding to the trafficker
- Normalization of the exploitation



# The Process of Trafficking Control

## Recruitment

Youth recruited through lures of love, affection, money, safety, and family  
Can occur in person or online/social networking  
Can occur directly with the pimp, bottom girl, or other victims

## Grooming

Investment of time, gifts, building of trust, and sense of belonging  
Increased isolation, control, and breaking down and rebuilding identity  
Increased manipulation and testing of sexual boundaries

## “Turning Out”

Point when relationship fully shifts, and child is exploited through commercial sex.  
Can be gradual, where trafficker promises exploitation will happen only for a short time, or youth can be posted online or put on the street and given a quota.

# Victim-Trafficker Relationship

## Force

Physical harm

Sexual assault

Physical  
confinement

Withholding  
medical care

Induced drug  
addiction

## Coercion

Psychological manipulation

Verbal or emotional abuse

Debt bondage

Systems of reward/punishment

Withholding legal documents

Threats of harm or arrest

## Fraud

Fraudulent  
employment offers

False promises

Withholding wages

# **Inside the Mind of a Trafficker**

**“You’ll start to dress her, think for her, own her. If you and your victim are sexually active, slow it down. After sex, take her shopping for one item. Hair and/or nails is fine. She’ll develop a feeling of accomplishment. The shopping after a month will be replaced with cash. The love making turns to raw sex. She’ll start to crave intimacy and be willing to do anything to get back into your good graces. After you have broken her spirit, she has no sense of self value. Now pimp, put a price tag on the item you have manufactured.”**

**- The Pimp Game: An Instructional Manual (Royal, 1998)**

# Barriers to Investigations & FSD Involvement

- All trafficking cases are different – not one is the same
- Investigations can be both similar and different from other sexual abuse investigations
- Requires a significant amount of flexibility, time, and patience
- May require months or years to investigate
- Rapport-building can be challenging
- Relapse/recovery trajectory is unpredictable and expected
- Victims' trauma histories may impact their ability to recall events and timelines
- Law enforcement investigation process
  - State cases vs. federal cases – different processes and levels of disclosure between agencies

# Vermont Vulnerabilities

- I-89 Corridor
- Internet and social media
- Lack of training for professionals
- Perception of “liberal court system”
- Ignorance, silence, lack of discussion
- Belief that youth can consent or make “this” choice
- Belief that “bad things don’t happen in Vermont”
- No community understanding of trafficking; community apathy
- Belief that trafficking only occurs in large cities and/or in refugee populations
- Heroin epidemic and substance dependency; lack of treatment facilities
- Community bias against “prostitution” and trafficking victims
- Overwhelmed human services system; limited services for victims



## local places 28

- [events](#)
- [bars/clubs](#)
- [restaurants](#)
- [salons/nails/spas](#)

## community 20

- [childcare](#)
- [classes/workshops](#)
- [general](#)
- [groups](#)
- [lost & found](#)
- [volunteers](#)

## buy/ sell/ trade 329

- [antiq.-collectibles](#)
- [appliances](#)
- [business](#)
- [boats & motorcycles](#)
- [clothing/jewelry](#)
- [farm/garden](#)
- [computers/electronics](#)
- [free](#)
- [furniture](#)
- [household items](#)
- [miscellaneous](#)
- [pets, pet supplies](#)
- [sports equip.](#)
- [tickets](#)
- [tools/materials](#)
- [want-trade](#)
- [yard sales](#)

## automotive 1,527

- [auto-truck-rv](#)
- [auto parts](#)
- [services](#)

## musician 20

- [available/wanted](#)
- [equip/instruments](#)
- [instruction](#)
- [services](#)
- [plug the band](#)

## rentals 30

- [roommates](#)
- [apt/condo/house](#)
- [commercial](#)
- [vacation](#)
- [miscellaneous](#)
- [rentals wanted](#)

## real estate 238

- [house/condo](#)
- [land for sale](#)
- [commercial](#)
- [misc](#)
- [wanted](#)

## jobs 3,079

- [acctg/finance](#)
- [admin/office](#)
- [computer/technical](#)
- [customer service](#)
- [domestic](#)
- [driver/delivery/courier](#)
- [education](#)
- [focus group/studies](#)
- [job wanted/resume](#)
- [mgmt/professional](#)
- [medical/health](#)
- [miscellaneous](#)
- [part-time jobs](#)
- [real estate](#)
- [rest/retail/hotel](#)
- [sales/mktg](#)
- [salon/spa](#)
- [show biz/audition](#)
- [trades/labor](#)

## dating 22

- [women > men](#)
- [men > women](#)
- [men > men](#)
- [women > women](#)

## adult

- [escorts](#)
- [body rubs](#)
- [strippers & strip clubs](#)
- [dom & fetish](#)
- [ts](#)
- [phone & websites](#)
- [adult jobs](#)

## services 197

- [biz opps](#)
- [business](#)
- [cleaning](#)
- [computer](#)
- [creative](#)
- [financial](#)
- [health & beauty](#)
- [home improvement](#)
- [landscape/lawn](#)
- [labor/moving](#)
- [legal](#)
- [massage](#)
- [misc.](#)
- [real estate](#)

[post to classifieds](#)[my account](#)[search craigslist](#)[event calendar](#)

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15

[help, faq, abuse, legal](#)  
[avoid scams & fraud](#)  
[personal safety tips](#)  
[terms of use](#)  
[privacy policy](#)  
[system status](#)

[about craigslist](#)  
[craigslist is hiring in sf](#)  
[craigslist open source](#)  
[craigslist blog](#)  
[best-of-craigslist](#)  
[craigslist TV](#)  
["craigslist joe"](#)  
[craig connects](#)

**community**

[activities](#) [local news](#)  
[artists](#) [lost+found](#)  
[childcare](#) [musicians](#)  
[classes](#) [pets](#)  
[events](#) [politics](#)  
[general](#) [rideshare](#)  
[groups](#) [volunteers](#)

**personals**

[strictly platonic](#)  
[women seek women](#)  
[women seeking men](#)  
[men seeking women](#)  
[men seeking men](#)  
[misc romance](#)  
[casual encounters](#)  
[missed connections](#)  
[rants and raves](#)

**discussion forums**

<a href="#">apple</a>	<a href="#">help</a>	<a href="#">photo</a>
<a href="#">arts</a>	<a href="#">history</a>	<a href="#">p.o.c.</a>
<a href="#">atheist</a>	<a href="#">housing</a>	<a href="#">politics</a>
<a href="#">autos</a>	<a href="#">jobs</a>	<a href="#">psych</a>
<a href="#">beauty</a>	<a href="#">jokes</a>	<a href="#">queer</a>
<a href="#">bikes</a>	<a href="#">kink</a>	<a href="#">recover</a>
<a href="#">celebs</a>	<a href="#">legal</a>	<a href="#">religion</a>
<a href="#">comp</a>	<a href="#">linux</a>	<a href="#">romance</a>
<a href="#">crafts</a>	<a href="#">m4m</a>	<a href="#">science</a>
<a href="#">diet</a>	<a href="#">manners</a>	<a href="#">spirit</a>
<a href="#">divorce</a>	<a href="#">marriage</a>	<a href="#">sports</a>
<a href="#">dying</a>	<a href="#">media</a>	<a href="#">tax</a>
<a href="#">eco</a>	<a href="#">money</a>	<a href="#">travel</a>
<a href="#">educ</a>	<a href="#">motocy</a>	<a href="#">tv</a>
<a href="#">feedback</a>	<a href="#">music</a>	<a href="#">vegan</a>
<a href="#">film</a>	<a href="#">nonprofit</a>	<a href="#">w4w</a>
<a href="#">fitness</a>	<a href="#">open</a>	<a href="#">wed</a>
<a href="#">fixit</a>	<a href="#">outdoor</a>	<a href="#">wine</a>
<a href="#">food</a>	<a href="#">over 50</a>	<a href="#">women</a>
<a href="#">frugal</a>	<a href="#">parent</a>	<a href="#">words</a>
<a href="#">gaming</a>	<a href="#">pets</a>	<a href="#">writing</a>
<a href="#">garden</a>	<a href="#">philos</a>	<a href="#">yoga</a>
<a href="#">haiku</a>		

**housing**

[apts / housing](#)  
[housing swap](#)  
[housing wanted](#)  
[office / commercial](#)  
[parking / storage](#)  
[real estate for sale](#)  
[rooms / shared](#)  
[rooms wanted](#)  
[sublets / temporary](#)  
[vacation rentals](#)

**for sale**

<a href="#">antiques</a>	<a href="#">farm+garden</a>
<a href="#">appliances</a>	<a href="#">free</a>
<a href="#">arts+crafts</a>	<a href="#">furniture</a>
<a href="#">atv/utv/sno</a>	<a href="#">garage sale</a>
<a href="#">auto parts</a>	<a href="#">general</a>
<a href="#">baby+kid</a>	<a href="#">heavy equip</a>
<a href="#">barter</a>	<a href="#">household</a>
<a href="#">beauty+hlth</a>	<a href="#">jewelry</a>
<a href="#">bikes</a>	<a href="#">materials</a>
<a href="#">boats</a>	<a href="#">motorcycles</a>
<a href="#">books</a>	<a href="#">music instr</a>
<a href="#">business</a>	<a href="#">photo+video</a>
<a href="#">cars+trucks</a>	<a href="#">rvs+camp</a>
<a href="#">cds/dvd/vhs</a>	<a href="#">sporting</a>
<a href="#">cell phones</a>	<a href="#">tickets</a>
<a href="#">clothes+acc</a>	<a href="#">tools</a>
<a href="#">collectibles</a>	<a href="#">toys+games</a>
<a href="#">computers</a>	<a href="#">trailers</a>
<a href="#">electronics</a>	<a href="#">video gaming</a>
	<a href="#">wanted</a>

**services**

<a href="#">automotive</a>	<a href="#">labor/move</a>
<a href="#">beauty</a>	<a href="#">legal</a>
<a href="#">cell/mobile</a>	<a href="#">lessons</a>
<a href="#">computer</a>	<a href="#">marine</a>
<a href="#">creative</a>	<a href="#">pet</a>
<a href="#">cycle</a>	<a href="#">real estate</a>
<a href="#">event</a>	<a href="#">skilled trade</a>
<a href="#">farm+garden</a>	<a href="#">sm biz ads</a>
<a href="#">financial</a>	<a href="#">therapeutic</a>
<a href="#">household</a>	<a href="#">travel/vac</a>
	<a href="#">write/ed/tran</a>

**jobs**

[accounting+finance](#)  
[admin / office](#)  
[arch / engineering](#)  
[art / media / design](#)  
[biotech / science](#)  
[business / mgmt](#)  
[customer service](#)  
[education](#)  
[food / bev / hosp](#)  
[general labor](#)  
[government](#)  
[human resources](#)  
[internet engineers](#)  
[legal / paralegal](#)  
[manufacturing](#)  
[marketing / pr / ad](#)  
[medical / health](#)  
[nonprofit sector](#)  
[real estate](#)  
[retail / wholesale](#)  
[sales / biz dev](#)  
[salon / spa / fitness](#)  
[security](#)  
[skilled trade / craft](#)  
[software / qa / dba](#)  
[systems / network](#)  
[technical support](#)  
[transport](#)  
[tv / film / video](#)  
[web / info design](#)  
[writing / editing](#)  
[\[ETC\]](#)  
[\[ part-time \]](#)

**gigs**

<a href="#">computer</a>	<a href="#">event</a>
<a href="#">creative</a>	<a href="#">labor</a>
<a href="#">crew</a>	<a href="#">talent</a>
<a href="#">domestic</a>	<a href="#">writing</a>

**resumes**

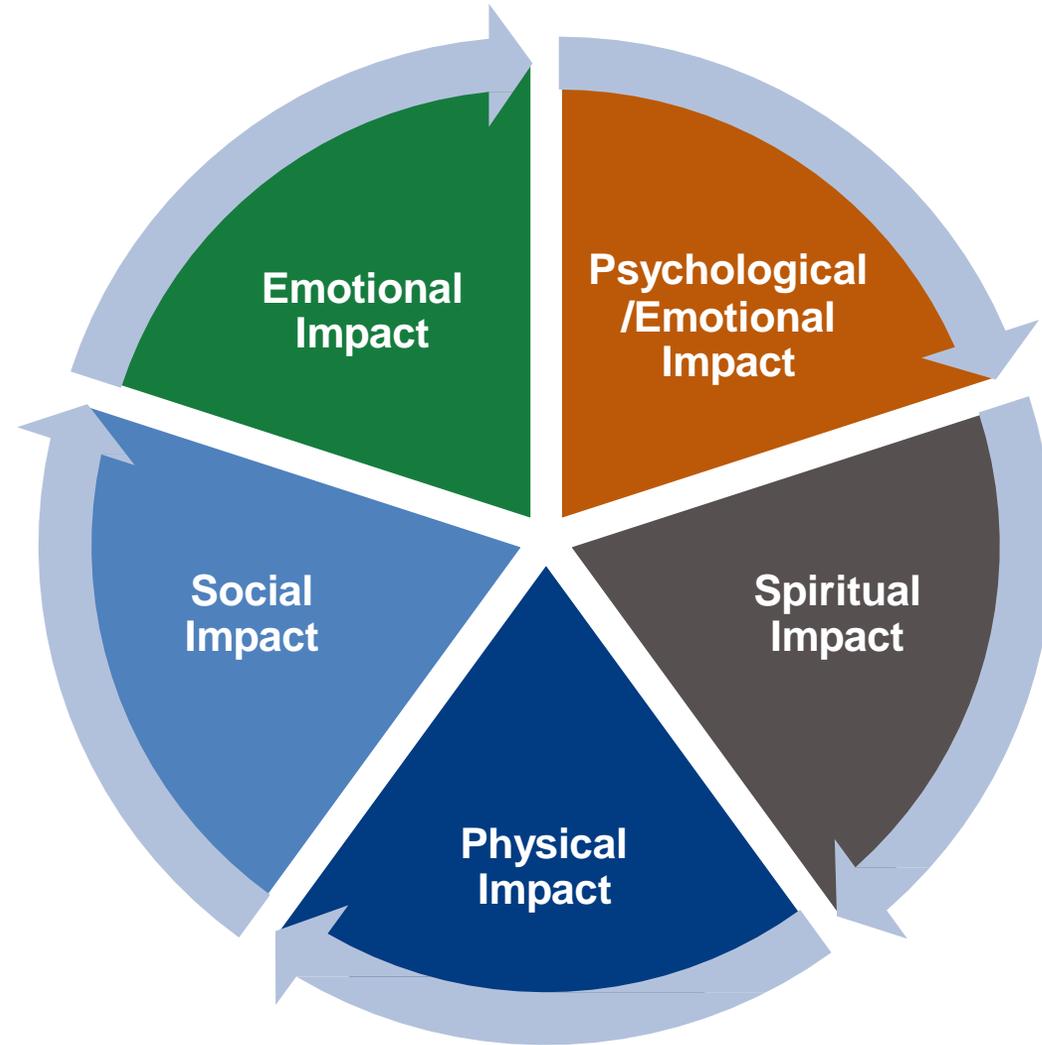
english ▾

**nearby cl**

[albany](#)  
[belleville](#)  
[binghamton](#)  
[boston](#)  
[catskills](#)  
[cornwall](#)  
[eastern ct](#)  
[glens falls](#)  
[hartford](#)  
[hudson valley](#)  
[ithaca](#)  
[kingston](#)  
[maine](#)  
[montreal](#)  
[new hampshire](#)  
[new haven](#)  
[northwest ct](#)  
[oneonta](#)  
[ottawa](#)  
[plattsburgh](#)  
[potsdam-massena](#)  
[quebec](#)  
[rhode island](#)  
[sherbrooke](#)  
[syracuse](#)  
[trois-rivieres](#)  
[utic](#)  
[watertown](#)  
[western mass](#)  
[worchester](#)

**us cities****us states****canada****cl worldwide**

# Understanding the Impact



# Victims' Needs

- Safety
- Basic needs (housing, food, clothing, etc.)
- Medical care and mental health support
- Trauma-informed response
- Strength-based approach
- Gender-responsive care
- Culturally responsive care
- Thoughtful timing before law enforcement investigation



# Tangible Needs

- Safety planning
- Safe shelter / home
- Food, clothing
- Education, employment
- Medical and dental care; mental health supports
- Help navigating the legal system
- Crisis 24/7 response contact/support person
- Information regarding trafficking and/or psychoeducation as appropriate
- Transportation
- Case management
- Therapeutic groups and/or individual counseling



# Intangible Needs

Survivors' treatment plans must include opportunities to address intangible needs, too. Often, the absence of these connections and supports are what initially made the child vulnerable; therefore, they must be addressed in the recovery and healing process in order to comprehensively address risk factors and needs.

- Safety
- Connection / sense of belonging
- Non-judgmental acceptance
- Healthy adult and peer relationships
- Options and opportunities to make choices
- Space to re-define love, sex, and identity
- Opportunities to engage with culturally specific providers/services



# **What is Vermont doing about sex trafficking?**

- **Statewide Human Trafficking Steering Committee**
  - **FSD Human Trafficking of Minors Workgroup**
  - **Training**
  - **Multi-disciplinary liaisons and teams (MDTs)**
  - **Human Trafficking PSA**
  - **Development of DCF-FSD policy and guidance**
- 

# Links & Additional Resources

- Sex Trafficking of Minors Information Sheet:  
<http://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/Prevention/docs/Sex-Trafficking.pdf>
- Policy 155: <http://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/FSD/Policies/155.pdf>
- Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (Public Law 113-183):  
<https://www.congress.gov/113/plaws/publ183/PLAW-113publ183.pdf>
- Act 55 (VT statute related to human trafficking):  
<http://www.leg.state.vt.us/docs/2012/Acts/ACT055.PDF>
- Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative:  
<https://capacity.childwelfare.gov/states/focus-areas/preventing-sex-trafficking/>
- Trafficking Terms: <http://sharedhope.org/the-problem/trafficking-terms/>