Identifying and Responding to Sex Trafficking in the United States

Program Description
Sex trafficking (commonly known as commercial sexual exploitation) is a public health and child welfare issue with widespread and long-lasting implications. Though prevalence estimates of sex trafficking in the United States (U.S.) are limited, countless youth of diverse identities, backgrounds, and communities are impacted each year. These youth often endure a continuum of severe and chronic trauma beginning in early childhood and continuing throughout their exploitation. As a result, youth experiencing sex trafficking often intersect with service providers as part of the child welfare, juvenile justice, and healthcare systems. Yet, these youth frequently remain under-identified by service providers, often due to a lack of awareness and adequate training.

This course is designed to equip multidisciplinary service providers with knowledge on how to identify and respond to sex trafficking within their respective roles. First, the course will provide an overview of how to define sex trafficking and identify common risk factors, indicators, and outcomes. The presenter will discuss common characteristics of, and tactics employed by exploiters, including sex traffickers and buyers. Additionally, this course will discuss the impact of sex trafficking on the behavioral health of service providers and healthy response mechanisms. Lastly, information about available local and national resources will be distributed.

Learning Objectives
Upon completion of this workshop, participants should be able to:
1. Define sex trafficking within legal frameworks and identify appropriate (and inappropriate) terminology.
2. Describe sociodemographic characteristics and common risk factors of individuals experiencing sex trafficking.
3. Examine the role of exploiters, including sex buyers.
4. Identify health-related outcomes of sex trafficking and emergent needs.
5. Discuss multi-system response mechanisms for prevention and intervention.
6. Analyze the impact on service providers.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of local and national resources.

Target Audience
Frontline, supervisorial, and administrative level social work, juvenile justice, public health, and healthcare professionals.

Contact Hours
4.0 contact hours

Program Agenda
9:00 AM to 10:30 AM	Definitions and Risk Factors
10:30 AM to 10:45 PM	Break
10:45 AM to 12:15 PM	Exploiters, Outcomes, and Implications
12:15 PM to 12:30 PM	Break

12:30 PM to 1:30 PM	Responses and Resources
1:30 PM	Adjourn

<u>Faculty</u>

Sarah M. Godoy is a PhD candidate, graduate research assistant, and Royster Fellow in the School of Social Work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC Chapel Hill). Since 2015, her research has focused on children and adults experiencing commercial sexual exploitation and their intersections with child welfare, legal, and healthcare systems. Sarah is currently a research volunteer with and the former project coordinator of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation Research Group at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). She served as the chair of the Gender-Based Violence Research Group's Training and Research Committee at UNC Chapel Hill. Her research agenda has expanded to examine eating disorders among marginalized communities as well as experiences of essential workers of color during the COVID-19 pandemic. She served as a project coordinator for the Living FREE Lab at UNC Chapel Hill. She is particularly interested in using participatory research strategies to engage communities with lived experience and service providers to advance the prevention and intervention of commercial sexual exploitation. She was the Co-Investigator of a pilot study at UCLA which used a community-based participatory research approach to develop and implement the first in the nation sexual health intervention for adolescents in foster care with commercial sexual exploitation histories. In 2017, Sarah was named number 20 of the top one hundred Human Trafficking and Slavery Influence Leaders. Sarah earned her Master of Social Welfare degree from UCLA.