

This proposal will outline the Onondaga County DSS plan for addressing the needs of sexually exploited children in Onondaga County utilizing the funds being made available through the Safe Harbor Act.

Onondaga County has been identified by OCFS as one of the 5 counties in NYS with the highest population of sexually exploited youth.

General Information

Join / Collaboration with the CNY Regional Human Sex Trafficking Task Force: The Regional Task Force which includes Onondaga County is led by representatives from The NYS Attorney General's Office & the Mohawk Valley Resource Center. Some representatives from our local CAC and CART team are actively associated with this Task Force. Tracy Miller, A Supervisor, spoke with Amy Fleischauer, Director of Victims Services at the International Institute of Buffalo. Amy is associated with the Regional Task Force, has significant familiarity with IOFA and was involved in the Safe Harbor Plan development for Erie County. She is in the process of developing a Human Trafficking Service Resource Guide and will be sharing the information with us once it is completed. Tracy also spoke with Steve Maher, Deputy Bureau Chief of the Criminal Prosecutions Bureau for the NYS Attorney General's Office. He is the lead for the Task Force and would welcome us joining them. The Task Force generally meets approximately every 2 months, usually at locations between Syracuse and Utica. (The next meeting is scheduled for the first week in February). Joining with the Regional Task force could provide opportunity for potential education and information sharing for best practices, prevention strategies, response outcomes and supportive insight.

Clarify the existing role of the Onondaga County DSS Human Sex Trafficking Liaison / OTDA

Onondaga County has an existing DSS HSTL through OTDA. We will need to gain a clear understanding of their role and associated HST response/service provision plan while exploring how that would or could have the potential to relate to and/or partner with the OCDSS/OCFS Safe Harbor Plan if applicable. I am not familiar with the criteria being used for the current OCDSS HST victim response protocol, but my assumption is that it includes the service provision entitlements identified in the NYS Anti-Trafficking Law of 2007 and the primary focus thus far has been adult victims. There will likely be a broader HST and at risk target population associated with the Safe Harbor Plan/Initiative (limited to Children/Youth). From communication with Lynn Baniak, Policy Analyst in Strategic Planning & Policy Development for OCFS, our understanding is that OTDA and OCJS receive referrals for certification/confirmation of HST victims and that in order to be referred to be confirmed as a victim the referral needs to be made by Law Enforcement or the District Attorney's Office. If the existing OCDSS HST response protocol is structured within those same parameters, our assumption is that it most likely may not include a significant portion of the anticipated Safe Harbor target population. Lynn provided us with the breakdown of the stats received from OTDA/OCJS, keeping in mind that the stats would only reflect cases where Law Enforcement and or the District Attorney's Office had involvement (please see attached) . She also recommended looking at the National

Hotline stats to gain a broader picture of potential trafficking cases in NYS.

<http://www.polarisproject.org/state-map/new-york> . Tracy also spoke with Carl Boykin from DCJS who provided us with what they had available on the latest trafficking statistics (please see attached).

1. Identification of Communities with the Greatest Number of Sexually Exploited Children

Obtain statistics associated with Child Sex Trafficking prevalence and trends specific to Onondaga County

The information from OTDA and OCJS provides some insight for general HST statistics in NYS, but the applicable parameters for that data collection does not provide foundational information that would benefit planning specific to Onondaga County / Child HST victims. Joanne Ruppel from the Bureau of Evaluation and Research provided Tracy with the study that was completed back in 2007 estimating the prevalence of sexually exploited children in NYS <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/reports/csec-2007.pdf>. We believe that Onondaga County was one of the sample counties, but the estimates were statewide, not by county. Information from OCFS indicates that Onondaga County was identified as one of the five counties with the highest number of identified sexually exploited children. The provision of access to the specific statistics, demographics and any available case profile information would be beneficial to the planning process.

Since the majority of sexually exploited children have had a significant amount of contact with the Child Welfare System (89%) as well as contact with the Juvenile Justice System we would look toward servicing that population of children. And as most of the children who have crossed between the two systems live within Syracuse – the largest populated area in the county - we expect our target population will be young people within the city.

We would rely upon the screening and assessment tools being developed by the International Organization for Adolescents to help us identify sexually exploited youth and help create individual treatment plans.

Allowable use of funds – Suggestions/Ideas

- **1.) Provide Safe long and short term housing for victims: Existing Contracted and existing resources should be explored.** Depending on the age, needs, safety factors and dynamics associated with the CHST history, some traditional “placement” options commonly utilized for children/youth that have experienced abuse or neglect may not be optimal. Housing considerations should include provision of 24 hr. crisis support and safety. We will look at the possibility of “respite beds” designated for identified CHST victims or more long term arrangements with contract agencies (ex. Elmcrest, Toomey), Community/Youth Runaway Shelters (ex. Booth, Barnabus House). One possibility - incorporating beds into a portion of the Salvation Army Teen Parenting Center with staff that are trained in responding to the needs of CHST victims will be explored.

Projected Outcome: Sexually exploited youth in Onondaga County will have appropriate safe and secure housing with an onsite support system.

- **2.) Provide Intensive Case Planning to meet the needs of sexually exploited children:** A designated Intensive Case Planner educated in the diverse needs of CHST victims will be identified to provide on-going “Case Management” services. The ICP should have strong advocacy skills and work directly with the county CHST task force. Ideas for ICP candidates include a Children’s Division Caseworker (from the sexual abuse services unit) who would be assigned the case as part of their caseload; development of the child advocate position through the CAC to include a dual role as a trained CHST ICP or development of this provision in conjunction with an existing preventive service position through a contracted agency.

Projected Outcomes: Availability of service referral and coordination for those youth identified as sexually exploited.

- **3.) Provide information on the county website about resources available in the community to serve sexually exploited children:** Collection and or development of community educational resource and service information could be completed by the County CHST liaison who would work with designated DSS technical support services for website postings.

Projected Outcomes:

- Increase awareness and identification of sexually exploited youth.
 - Increase awareness of services available for sexually exploited youth
- **4.) Promote community awareness about the sexual exploitation of children:** The County CHST liaison could join with the CD Community Liaison to develop and deliver community and professional partnership presentations that would provide an overview of CHST education to support increased awareness. CD could also partner with the CAC in facilitating these sessions. Significant consideration will also be given for reaching out to the School District(s) with the most vulnerable/at risk youth to support increased awareness/education/identification and referral protocol development for staff working with students who are potentially CHST victims or at risk youth. The schools could also provide preventive informational sessions and resource information to students/parents. DMR, FAR and ONCARE could also join in supporting awareness efforts as part of their existing community education initiatives with minority and refugee resettlement community members / organizations.

Brochures will be developed explaining what HST is and the services available for those involved. We will also be placing posters within the county buildings, courthouse, neighborhood centers, libraries and private agency waiting rooms.

Projected Outcomes:

- Increase awareness and identification of sexually exploited youth among both the professional and lay communities.
 - Increase awareness of services available for sexually exploited youth
 - Outreach to victims and/or potential victims with information on how to reach out for help either locally through DSS or through the International Institute's Victim's Services Hotline.
- **5.) Provide case assessment and referral for services through a multi-disciplinary team approach including the use of Child Advocacy Centers where such exist and**
 - **6) Create or further develop a community task force to address the issue of the sexual exploitation of children on a community wide basis:** Establish an Onondaga County Child Human Sex Trafficking Task Force that includes a coordinator and key multi-disciplinary representatives. Primary focus would include development and implementation of a unified approach to identifying CHST victims and developing a wrap-around model for assessment and response to meeting the CHST victim's diverse needs (including but not limited to specialized service provision and or referrals). Potential members of the task force would include those from: Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice Services, Medical, Mental Health, Law Enforcement, Victim Advocacy, District Attorney's office, DSS Legal, Family Court, and the Onondaga County Youth Bureau. Onondaga County has a local CAC and MD CART. Representatives from both are actively associated with the existing Central NY HST Task Force. Consideration should be given to building the Onondaga County CHST task force from the framework of those existing collaborative partnerships/resources. Training would be provided through International Organization for Adolescents for all members of the team and would be available for others in their agencies.

Projected Outcomes:

- Increase awareness of Sexual Exploitation
 - Disseminate information about available services for victims and prevention
 - Coordinated multisystem wraparound approach for responding to needs of CHST victims
- **7.) Develop liaisons between the local department of social services and the family court; legal aid society; district attorney's office:** The county CHST liaison or designated DSS/CD ICP (if applicable) or alternate CD/DSS representative associated with the county CHST task force could act as the liaison for this purpose or a combination thereof.

Projected Outcomes:

- Provide victims with a knowledgeable supportive person to guide them through the legal system.

- Ensure that the rights of the victim are protected while navigating the legal system
- **8.) Develop programs to help transition sexually exploited children/youth, when possible, back to their families and communities:** The identified ICP with the support of the county CHST task force, and applicable oversight/approval from DSS Administration, would take the lead on transition planning and the inclusion of existing programs, future programs and/or the framework/elements of programs designed to assist in the transition process. Research and evaluation of existing programs and best practices will be considered, developed, adopted, implemented, or utilized as applicable.

Projected Outcomes: Youth, if they can be maintained safely, have a better chance to succeed when with family and in their own community. Transitioning them safely back to their families and community will help them in all aspects of their lives.

- **Other: Mental Health/Trauma Treatment/Existing Resources:** SUNY Upstate has a Child & Adolescent Trauma Clinic with an expedited referral and intake process agreement for children referred from DSS/CD. The possibility of specialized services for identified CHST victims being developed and provided through the trauma clinic would be explored and would be a good fit for service/resource consideration.

Other Info:

[. http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/TrainingNetwork/TrainingNetworkCalls.htm](http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/helpkids/TrainingNetwork/TrainingNetworkCalls.htm)

February 9, 2011: Child Trafficking 101 (Presented by the USCCB and Shared Hope International)

- [Recording](#)
- [PowerPoint Presentation](#)
- [Child Trafficking Resources Sheet](#)