

Recognizing and Supporting Victims of Sex Trafficking

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Forms of Child Sex Trafficking

Pimps/traffickers

Family-based

Gang-controlled

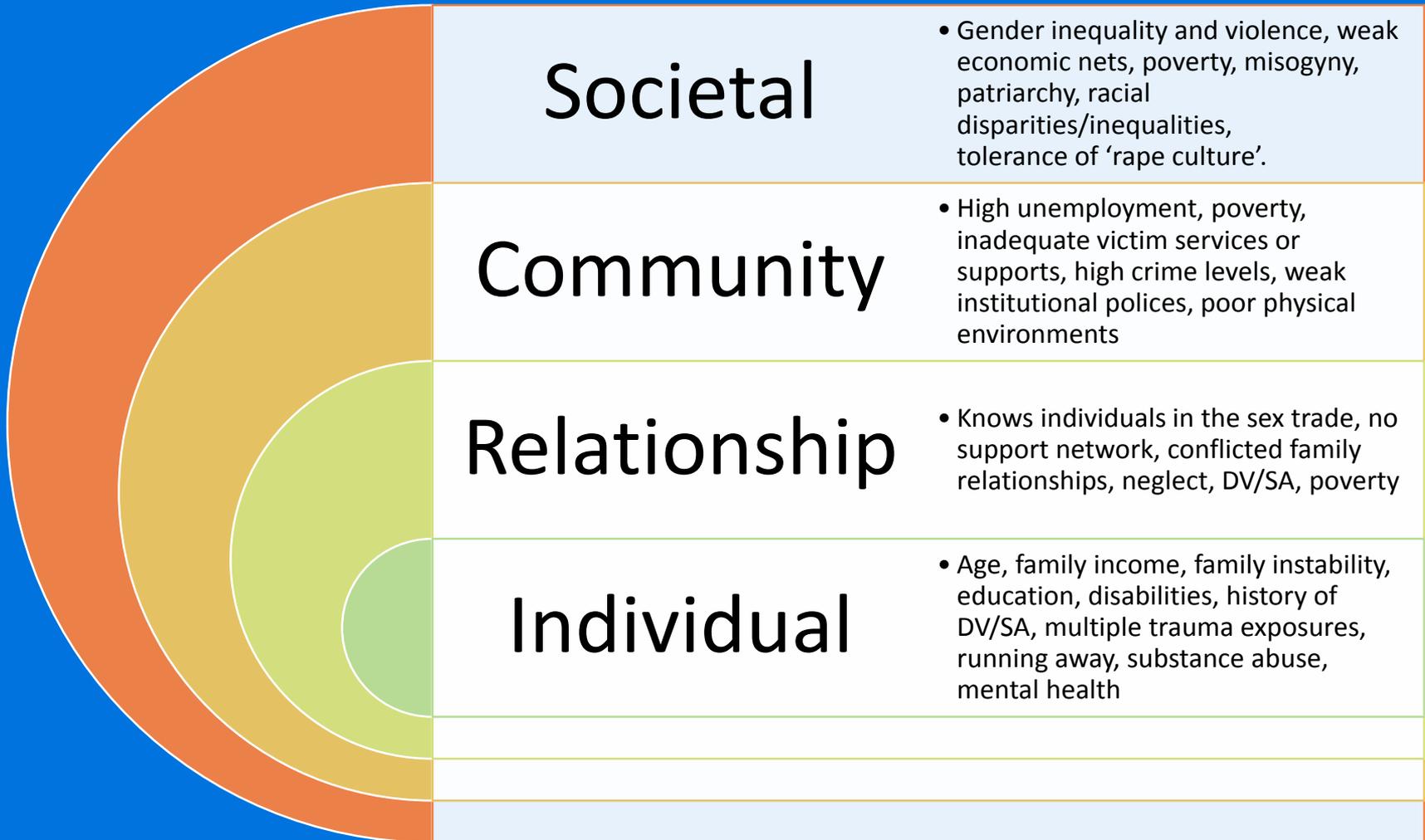
Non-pimp controlled
“survival sex”

Peer-to-peer

Independent “renegading”



Sex Trafficking/Exploitation



Characteristics of Traffickers



- Can be family members, friends, or strangers
- They look for vulnerable individuals
- Prey on children in the foster care system
- Prey on children/youth with low self-esteem and minimal social support
- Recruit in public places (shopping malls, bus stops, outside schools)
- Increasingly use social networking apps/sites for targeting and recruiting children/youth

The Process of Pimp Control

Recruitment

Youth recruited through lures of love, affection, money, safety, & 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, & sense of belonging
Increased manipulation & testing of sexual boundaries
Increased isolation, control, and breaking down and rebuilding identity

“Turning Out”

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

Trauma-Bonding

The exploiter is *all* about power and control. He systematically erodes a person's ability to think and act independently, using a range of manipulative tactics which include:

- *Physical abuse/violence and intimidation, constant threats*
- *Making someone constantly doubt their own judgement/perception*
- *Isolating a person from friends and family that may be able to help*
- *Manipulative lies designed to undermine self-esteem and run someone down*
- *Making sure that a victim's time, energy and other resources are focused solely on their exploiter's/trafficker's needs*
- *Keeping a victim continually short of money and dependent on the exploiter*

In time, like a baby, **the victim feels dependent upon the exploiter for all of their emotional and physical needs.** The person forms a powerful emotional attachment to the exploiter, which he doggedly reinforces through a pattern of abuse/violence and love/reward.

(Avalanche of the Soul 2014)

Minnesota Safe Harbor/No Wrong Door

Language Matters: Minnesota Department of Health's Definition of Minor Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Minor Commercial Sexual Exploitation occurs when someone under the age of 24 engages in commercial sexual activity.

A commercial sexual activity occurs when anything of value or a promise of anything of value (e.g., money, drugs, food, shelter, rent, or higher status in a gang or group) is given to a person by any means in exchange for any type of sexual activity.

A third party may or may not be involved.

Safe Harbor Law

Sexually exploited youth

17 years old and under

can no longer be criminalized for engaging in prostitution in Minnesota but should be referred to services.

Sexually exploited youth

24 years old and younger

deserve and are eligible for specialized, trauma-informed services to heal and recover.

Forms of Sexual Exploitation



NO WRONG DOOR



A Comprehensive Approach
to Safe Harbor for Minnesota's
Sexually Exploited Youth

January 2013



[We need] “a new community resource - to get help...to live a stable lifestyle, courses on the effects of sex trafficking on your health, parenting courses, finances, counseling, housing program ... A place in the community that youth and young adults can go to that’s safe.”

- Voices of Safe Harbor

**Voices of Safe Harbor:
Survivor and Youth Input for
Minnesota's Model Protocol on Sexual
Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Youth**

Available at: mncasa.org

No Wrong Door: Underlying Values and Philosophy

Those who come in contact with youth should be trained to identify sexual exploitation.

Youth who are sexually exploited are victims of a crime.

Victims should not feel afraid, isolated or trapped.

Sexual exploitation is traumatic. Victim centered services should be based in trauma-informed care.

No Wrong Door: Underlying Values and Philosophy

Services should be responsive to needs of youth (gender-responsive, culturally competent, age appropriate, supportive for LGBTQ youth).

Services should be offered statewide.

Youth have the right to privacy and self-determination.

Services should be based in positive youth development.

Sexual exploitation can be prevented.

Implementation of Safe Harbor and No Wrong Door

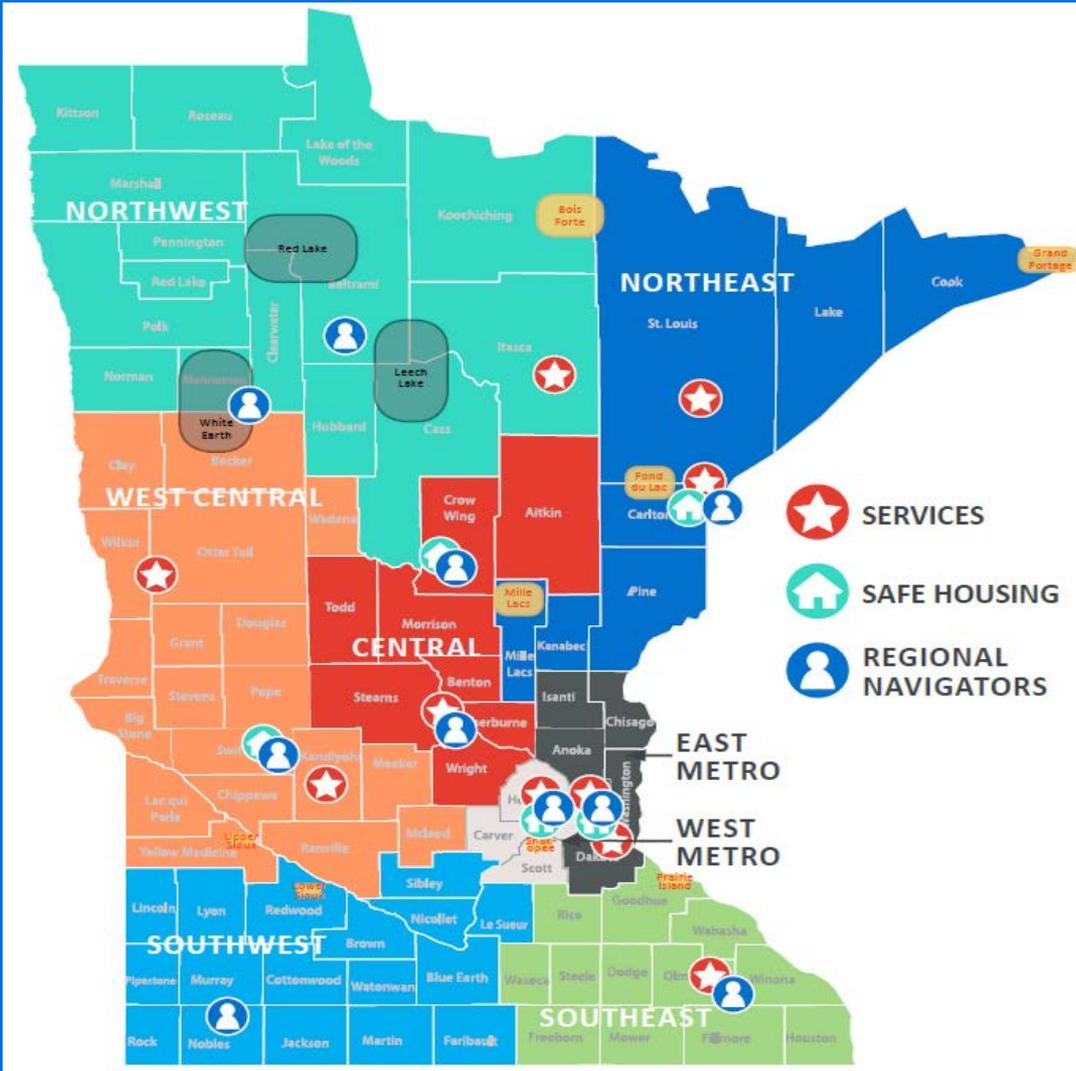
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graph TD; A[Implementation of Safe Harbor and No Wrong Door] --> B[Training and Protocols for professionals]; B --> C[Housing for sexually exploited youth]; C --> D[Services for sexually exploited youth]; D --> E[New Federal Grant to strengthen services for sex and LABOR trafficked youth (age 24)];
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Training and Protocols for professionals

Housing for sexually exploited youth

Services for sexually exploited youth

New Federal Grant to strengthen services for sex and LABOR trafficked youth (age 24)



View from the schools

- Signs and indicators a youth is being exploited
- Case examples based on real life situations in school settings
- How social workers and school psychologists can respond

Signs and Indicators

- **Does the student have unexplained absences from school, or has the student demonstrated an inability to attend school on a regular basis?**
- **Has the student suddenly changed his or her usual attire, behavior, or relationships?**
- **Does the student suddenly have more (and/or more expensive) material possessions?**
- **Does the student chronically run away from home?**
- **Does the student defer to another person to speak for him or her, especially during interactions with school authority figures (this may include an adult described by the student as a relative, but may also be a friend or boyfriend/girlfriend)?**

Signs and Indicators

- Does the student have a “boyfriend” or “girlfriend” who is noticeably older?
- Is the student engaging in uncharacteristically promiscuous behavior, or making references to sexual situations or terminology that are beyond age-specific norms?
- Can the student freely contact friends, family, or his or her legal guardian?
- Uses sex industry lingo: refers to controller as boyfriend, pimp, manager, or “daddy”; refers to commercial sex as “The Life,” or “The Game”; refers to dates as “Johns” or “Tricks.”

Signs and Indicators

- Has abrupt changes in mood or behavior (e.g., was once extroverted, but is now withdrawn).
- Is overly shy about changing clothes or refuses to participate in physical education.
- Demonstrates unusually fearful, anxious, depressed, or angry behavior.
 - Resists or is emotionally triggered by touch.

Signs and Indicators

- Has frequent unexcused absences or an inability to attend classes.
- Has a history of attending many different schools or has multiple recent transfers.
- Indicates that meals/food/money is limited or regulated and/or they need to help the family save money.
- Has unreasonable work or “chore” expectations at home.
- Travels frequently.
- Has numerous inconsistencies in their story when recounting life outside of school.

What is the impact?

- **In 2010 A North Minneapolis study of primarily African Americans who had traded sex in the past 5 years found that 50% had first traded sex as a minor at an average age of 13.2**
- **A 2014 study of the trafficking of minor girls in Minneapolis found evidence that:**
 - Locations where youth are recruited and captured into operations include schools, parks, shelters and youth programming, juvenile detention and treatment facilities, streets, bus stops, libraries, malls, and other places where youth congregate
 - Sexual transactions primarily occur at sex buyers' homes, hotels in the Minneapolis suburbs, and streets easily accessed by commuters
 - Sex trafficking in Minneapolis is conducted by structured business operations, using a variety of business models (street, escort, brothel/brothel-like, and closed sex buyer networks)

What is the impact?

- Example 1 - 15yr old girl who would come to school – right from the time she got there until she left she pretty much was out in the hall – yelling, screaming, picking fights, joining other kids acting out, etc. – never really able to make it a whole day in her classrooms.
- *Eventually her SW found a note that said “you’d be acting this way to if your mom was selling you out of the car at night”*

What is the impact?

- Example 2 - 16yr old girl who would come to school at her Level 4 setting – no issues that were outside the standard range – began to be dropped off instead of taking the bus – she had newer/nicer clothes than her peers

- *Eventually she told administration that her “boyfriend” was getting her “work” at parties on the weekends*

If you suspect exploitation?

- **Trust your instincts**
- **Have a protocol**
 - Safety is top priority
- **Utilize your partners**
- **Document and follow up**

Sample Protocol

- **Suspected Recruitment**
 - Articulate observations
 - Notify administration
 - Consult appropriate LE representative
 - Complete due process in regards to actions specific to school
 - Determine appropriate school based consequence and support plans

Sample Protocol

Suspected/Confirmed Victim

- Articulate observations
- Notify administration
 - Consult appropriate LE representative
 - Report as appropriate any abuse or neglect
- As appropriate inform parents and connect the victim to outside support network
- Investigate and deeper connections/impact to the school community
 - Determine appropriate school based support and safety plans

Resources/Credits

- <http://mnhttf.org/educationtraining/fact-sheets/>
- <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/HumanTraffickinginAmericasSchools.pdf>
- <http://www.health.state.mn.us/injury/topic/safeharbor/docs/MDHSafeHarborReferral.pdf>
- http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/sextrafficking_safe_harbors_resource_for_teachers_2.pdf
- http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/sextrafficking_fact_sheet_october_2011.pdf
- <https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/blue-campaign/Blue%20Campaign%20-%20Human%20Trafficking%20101%20for%20School%20Administrators%20and%20Staff.pdf>

Prevention

What Schools Can Do ...

Create a strategic plan for addressing youth sexual abuse/exploitation

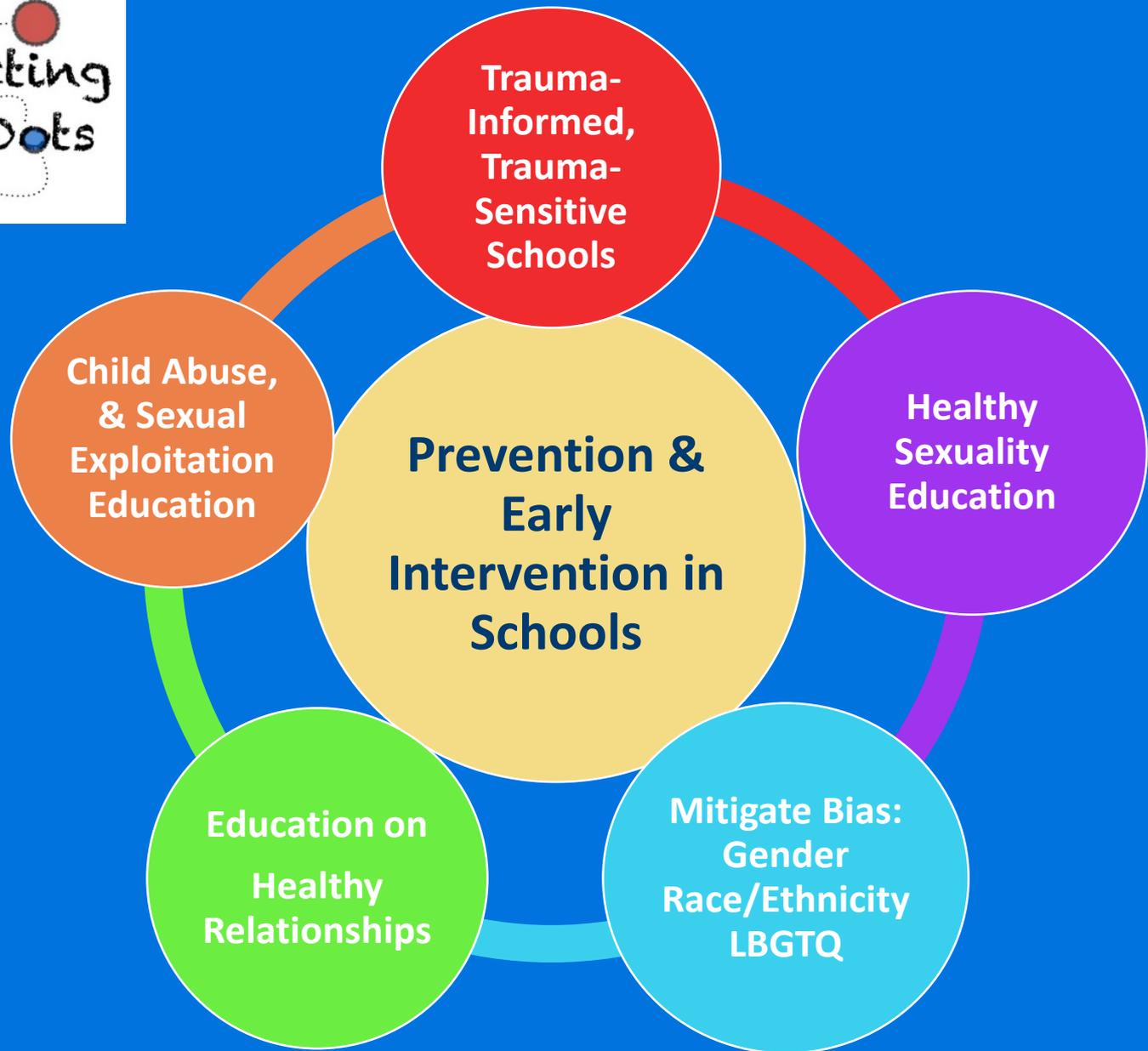
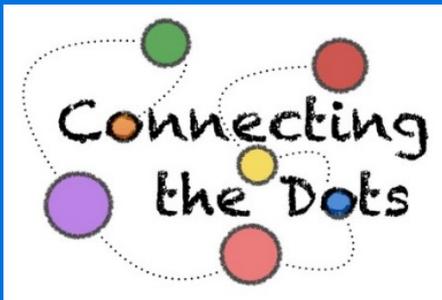
- Educate school staff – all staff - on child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, trauma, trauma-informed care
- Create trauma sensitive schools
- Support education for parents and the community
- Educate students

Trauma Sensitive Schools (TSS) incorporate 5 fundamental principles into the vision and fabric of their school:

1. School staff understand the prevalence of trauma for young people and the impact it can have on their behavior and learning.
2. Staff adopt a perspective shift that enables them to see the behaviors of their students as a way to get a need met, rather than compliance or disobedience.
3. Staff understand that relationships heal and build school connectedness. Relationships are also an important strategy for building trust with students who have been traumatized so that they feel safe in school.

4. Caregiver capacity provides a collaborative staff climate where staff are supportive of one another and work as a team. Staff also engage in regular self-care to remediate the effects of vicarious trauma and teacher burnout.

5. TSS encourage empowerment and resiliency to make students feel safe in school through interventions that teach students how to use sensory input to stay calm, using sensory calming strategies in a self-regulated way.



Education for Staff, Parents, & Communities

- Prevention of Child Maltreatment
- How perpetrators groom children
- How perpetrators groom parents
- Trauma
- Resources - where to turn for help

Education for Students

- Healthy relationships
- Comprehensive and holistic sexual health
- Bullying Prevention
- Child/Youth Sexual Abuse/Exploitation/Trafficking

Additional Resources

- **Not A #Number Human Trafficking Prevention Curriculum for Youth, Love146** <https://love146.org/notanumber/>
- **Voices of Safe Harbor: Survivor and Youth Input for Minnesota's Model Protocol on Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Youth** Available at: mncasa.org
- **Children, Violence, and Trauma—Interventions in Schools** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49GzqPP7YYk&feature=youtu.be>
- **Trauma Sensitive Schools** <http://traumasensitiveschools.org>
- **Don't Buy It Project, Men As Peacemakers** dontbuyitproject.org
- **Many more on the Safe Harbor Resource List**
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Questions

Thank you and please complete the evaluation!

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