

Human Trafficking in Affordable Housing

Awareness, Understanding, and Prevention

Sue Johnson, The Success Group

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VII. Property and Community Mapping

Property and community mapping is the process of examining a development, neighborhood, community, and market area for the purpose of determining where pockets of trafficking activity and recruiting may most likely be occurring. This will be a useful tool in developing prevention strategies. Among the indicators (referring back to those push and pull factors), the following should be identified within the property:

- Presence of foster children;
- Presence of physical areas or structures that may be conducive to trafficking;
- Vacant units;
- Number of extremely low income households;
- Number of single parent households;
- Number of youth living with an unrelated adult in the household; and
- Presence of gang activity.

These same factors should be considered in neighborhood and community mapping. In addition, such mapping should locate potential trafficking and recruitment locations, such as:

- Massage parlors;
- Hotels and motels;
- Correctional facilities;
- DCF homes;
- Juvenile justice facilities;
- Bus Stations;
- Train Stations;
- Truck Stops;
- Malls;
- Schools;
- Store "fronts;"
- Locations of gang activity;
- Low income neighborhoods;
- Minority neighborhoods;
- Places where large public groups gather (stadiums, arenas, etc.); and,
- Community cyber-mapping through Backpage and similar sites (escort services).

Exercise – identify as many indicators as possible that exist on, in, or near your apartment community, neighborhood, and community. Share what you come up with and be prepared to report back what you develop.

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VIII. Prevention Strategies

The United Nations Model for addressing human trafficking provides some equally good principles that can be employed locally. These principles include:

- Finding root causes of trafficking;
- Awareness-raising steps;
- Communication and Collaboration strategies; and
- Discouraging Demand.

The Dept. of Homeland Security has an excellent set of resources as part of its' Blue Campaign. It also has an initiative called "Stop, Think, Connect," that provides cyber-awareness resources including videos, handouts, facts sheets and more.

Staff at properties can work collectively and wisely to develop prevention strategies through education about trafficking and through empowering the resident population. RSCs can play a lead role in this process, by networking in the community to determine what programs and resources are available for children, youth, and adults. Staff can also think about the programs currently being offered at the property, such as:

- After school programs;
- Computer learning centers;
- Life skills and job skills training programs;
- Job fairs;
- Community clubs and groups that would be interested in setting up a chapter at the site; and,
- Other related programs and services.

Some communities have implemented an "adopt a school" program; a similar approach could be taken with "adopt a property" which would include an awareness and educational component targeted at the highest risk age group: 10-13 year old girls.

The US Dept. of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, has available its Family Violence Prevention and Services Program. This program awards grant money for emergency shelters and services to victims of domestic violence. The Department has closely connected domestic violence and human trafficking in its reports.

The State of Ohio has developed some resources to address demand reduction, especially among boys and male youth. Some of the highlighted recommendations that a parent/community member can engage if (when properly educated on the topic) include:

- Model healthy relationships
- Call out and reward positive behavior

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Counter the risk factors in your neighborhoods

Intervene when students say things that are inappropriate (and with other adults as needed!)

Draw on local violence prevention programs to access effective programs

Point out gender stereotypes, violence, and unhealthy attitudes

A great resource for educating children, youth, and parents about Internet safety is www.netsmartz.org. The site is part of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. On the Netsmartz site is a wealth of material that RSCs and management staff can use in developing programs for all ages in dealing with one of the biggest unseen trafficking predators – the Internet.

By creating an account, a user can then access a variety of resources for teaching on internet safety, cell phone safety, and how parents can monitor what their children and youth are doing.

Property Prevention Plan

I. Determine Root Causes of Trafficking

- Property
- Neighborhood
- Community

II. Create an Awareness Program

- Among Resident-Parents
- Among Resident-Youth
- Within Community

III. Develop a Trafficking Prevention Program

- Target the Audience to be Served
- Specify a Short Term Goal
- List the Components (or Steps) of the Program
- List the Community Stakeholders to be Involved in the Program

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IV. Establish a Demand Reduction Program

- Parenting Program
- Mentoring Youth Program
- Positive Male Role Models

V. Communication

- Means of Communication
- Frequency of Communication

IX. Resources and Partnerships

National Resources

National Human Trafficking Resource Center

Call 1-888-373-7888 or text BeFree (233733). The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) is a national, toll-free hotline, available to answer calls and texts from anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year.

The NHTRC is a program of Polaris Project, a non-profit, non-governmental organization working exclusively on the issue of human trafficking. We are not a government entity, law enforcement or an immigration authority.

Call us at **1-888-373-7888** or text HELP or INFO to BeFree (233733).

- To report a tip;
- To connect with anti-trafficking services in your area; or,
- To request training and technical assistance, general information or specific anti-trafficking resources.

Department of Homeland Security

Report Suspicious Activity: 1-866-DHS-2-ICE (1-866-347-2423) www.dhs.gov/humantrafficking

Office of Refugee Resettlement – U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Service

Rescue and Restore Campaign

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If a child is in urgent need of assistance, contact law enforcement or child protective services to report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child. The Childhelp® National Child Abuse Hotline professional crisis counselors can connect a caller with a local number to report abuse. Contact Childhelp at 1.800.4.A.CHILD. (1.800.422.4453).

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) aims to prevent child abduction and sexual exploitation; help find missing children; and assist victims of child abduction and sexual exploitation, their families, and the professionals who serve them. Contact NCMEC at 1.800.THE.LOST (1.800.843.5678).

Massachusetts Resources

Project REACH - Project REACH is a mobile crisis intervention team comprised of trauma specialists and is part of JRI.

Gaining Independence for Tomorrow – GIFT – a community-based program at Roxbury Youthworks that provides intensive case management services to assist DCF-involved youth to leave CSE.

EVA Center (formerly Kim’s Project) – a Boston-based program with the goal of creating sustainable comprehensive exit program for women leaving sex trafficking. It is a survivor-led program that offers long term support, services, information, and resources.

Lutheran Social Services – provides legal and social services to noncitizen victims of labor and sex trafficking across Massachusetts. LSS provides case management, advocacy, and legal representation for those who exit trafficking.

My Life, My Choice – a program of JRI; a survivor-led Boston-based program offering a variety of services, including prevention education, training, and intervention for CSEC.

Support to End Exploitation Now (SEEN) – a partnership operated by the Children’s Advocacy Center of Suffolk County uniting more than 35 agencies working together to provide services to commercially exploited youth.

Surviving our Struggle – a survivor led mentor program for men, boys, and LGBTQ youth; a Boston-based program of JRI.

Amirah - a North Shore program that provides a variety of services for those exiting sex trafficking.

Safelink – this is a Massachusetts hotline that operates 24 hours a day and provides multilingual resource information for victims of domestic violence. The number is: 877-785-2020.

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Metrowest Worker Center – a worker-led program available throughout the State that identifies exploited workers and trafficking survivors through support to redress labor exploitation and advocate for a just wage.

Massachusetts Coalition of Occupational Safety and Health (MassCOSH) – a group that organizes and trains workers to protect themselves against abusive work conditions.

Massachusetts State Police – Human Trafficking division