

# Human Trafficking: A Child Welfare Response

**Presenter:**

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• You will need speakers or headphones to hear the audio, since this webinar is VoIP only. You can test your audio from the "communications" tab while you wait for the webinar to start.

• If you have questions during the presentation, type them into the Q&A box, and we will try to address as many as possible in the Q&A session following the presentation. We hope to publish Mr. Rivera's answers to the remaining questions on our website after the presentation.

• William Rivera will also be presenting at the National Center for Victims of Crime National Conference, September 9-11, in Phoenix, AZ. Visit our conference website to get more information and to register:

<http://www.victimsofcrime.org/training/national-conference/2013-national-conference>

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# Human Trafficking: A Child Welfare Response



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The mission of the Department of Children and Families is to:

- Protect children
- Support and preserve families
- Improve child and family well-being

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### CT Department of Children and Families Mandates

- Child Welfare
- Children's Behavioral Health
- Juvenile Justice
- Prevention

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### Commissioner Katz Three Major Areas of Focus

- Prevention of child abuse and neglect
- Public awareness of human trafficking as a child abuse and neglect issue
- Proper identification of physical abuse and injury of children by the medical community

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### Bottom Line

The Department of Children and Families is charged with and responsible for protecting **ALL** children under the age of 18 from harm.

This includes victimization through means of human trafficking.

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### Agency Organization throughout the State

- DCF is divided into 6 regional areas
- Staff assigned to 1 of our 15 area offices
- Ensures that staff are in the community and able to respond to and assist the children and families we serve

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### The Careline: Intake

- Reports of Abuse and Neglect; operates 24/7 (1-800-842-2288)
- The Careline (formerly "Hotline") received more than 96,000 calls in SFY 2012. Of those, 46,390 were reports, and 27,890 reports were investigated.
- In SFY 2012, 1,255 allegations of physical and sexual abuse were substantiated as were 16,036 allegations of physical, emotional, educational and/or medical neglect.
- Approximately 70% of reports come from mandated reporters (CGS Sec. 17a-101(b))

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### Legislative Context

- 2010 Public Act 10-115 – "An Act Providing a Safe Harbor for Exploited Children."
- 2011 Public Act 11-180 - The law provides in part that upon the arrest of any youth by an officer for a violation of section 53a-82, such officer shall report suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families in accordance with the provisions of sections 17a-101 to 17a-101d. Those reports should be made to the DCF Careline at (800) 842-2288.
- 2012 Public Act 12-141 – An act concerning commercial sexual exploitation of a minor.
- 2013 Public Act 13-166 – An act concerning sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons.

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### DCF Internal Response Time Line

- 2005 HT training – focus international and investigative (3x year in service)
- 2008 (April call from NGO of possible international child victim. Careline team and NGO created protocol on spot)
- 2009 DCF HT team established to create response policies and protocols
- 2010 Implemented HT policy & response protocols
- 2010 HT Training shifts focus to DMST
- 2011 HT response shifts from international to DMST – Directed to create existing model/team

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### Careline Intake: The Initial Agency Response and the Process

- Determine if report is Human Trafficking or other types of Abuse/Neglect
- Determine the appropriate response and time
- Area Office Response
- After Hours – Response
- Designated EDs
- Tracking Data / Numbers

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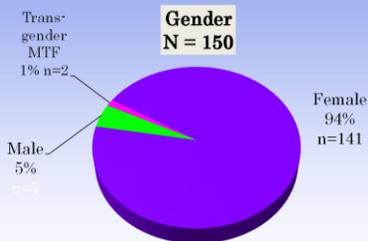
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### CT Victim Data: Referrals by Gender

March 13, 2009 - July 12, 2013



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### CT DCF HT Child Victim Data

- Trafficking type: DMST/CSE
- Vulnerability: All victims were on runaway/AWOL status; All victims had experienced sexual abuse and/or neglect
- Age range: 11 – 18
- Referrals: DCF Social Workers, Law enforcement, congregate care facilities, Courts, public defenders' office, NGOs

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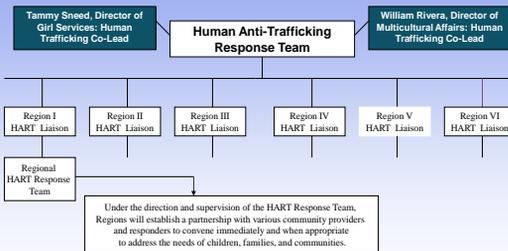
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### Regionalization of Human Trafficking Response



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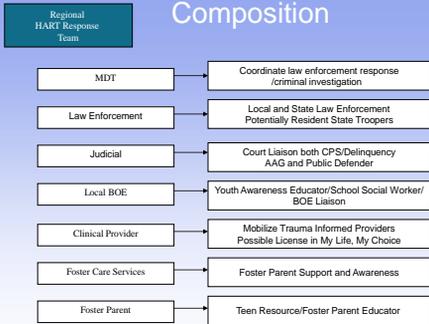
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### Regional HART Response Team Composition



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### CT DCF Human Trafficking Training and Partnerships

- Internal and external training efforts expanding and now includes certification programs (comprehensive three day training program for internal staff)
- Human trafficking awareness and intervention training provided through Girls Provider Network.
- Prevention Pilot "Man Up" model implemented for young men
- Joint CPS and Law Enforcement committee formed to expand training and develop law enforcement specific tools.

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### Lessons Learned

- Every case different, therefore the response and services must be individually designed for victims.
- Every **Careline** report is not an automatic accept; many cases will require staff to "look beneath the surface" to connect dots on an ongoing basis.
- Every case brings new learning; Sex trafficking is ever evolving and requires adjusting existing skills.
- Interagency systems response are essential. No one agency will be able to deal with the complexities associated with this issue.
- Great laws are not synonymous with great practice.

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### Summary

- In October 2008, the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (CTDCF) responded to the first known case of human trafficking involving a minor child. Up to that time the Department had no policies, protocols, or specialized services to serve minor victims of human trafficking.
- This presentation illustrates the CT DCF infrastructure that has been constructed since 2008 and how it works. The core elements of the systems response have been designed to raise public awareness and provide education on this issue, the indicators for identifying victims and how DCF will respond, and lastly, the specialized services that have been created for serving this population.

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Questions/Comments

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Contact Information

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