

# YOUTH SERVICES POLICY

<b>Title:</b> Protocol for Delivering Services to Sexually Exploited Youth	<b>Type:</b> C. Field Operations <b>Sub Type:</b> 2. Security <b>Number:</b> C.2.25
<b>Page 1 of 7</b>	
<b>References:</b> 22 U.S.C. 7101 et seq. (Victims Protection Act); Act 429, Chapter 20, Articles 603, 609 and 610 of Title VI of the Children's Code, La. R.S. 14:403 and 23:968, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act of 2008, P.L. 110-378; YS Policy Nos. B.2.20 "Non-Discriminatory Services to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Questioning (LGBTIQ), and Nonconforming Youth", B.6.1 "Health Care", B.6.6 "Secure Care Mental Health Program", C.2.1 "Escapes, Runaways, Apprehensions, and Reporting", C.2.11 "Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)", C.4.3 "Mandatory Reporting of Abuse and Neglect of Youth", D.10.22 "Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ)" and D.15.3 "Delivery of Treatment and Auxiliary Services"	
<b>STATUS: Approved</b>	
<b>Approved By:</b> <i>William A. Sommers, Deputy Secretary</i>	<b>Date of Approval:</b> 03/30/2021

## I. AUTHORITY:

Deputy Secretary of Youth Services (YS) as contained in La. R.S. 36:405. Deviation from this policy must be approved by the Deputy Secretary.

## II. PURPOSE:

To institute a YS policy to provide safe harbor and service planning for sexually exploited youth.

## III. APPLICABILITY:

All YS employees.

## IV. DEFINITIONS:

***Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children*** – An industry that victimizes girls, boys, and transgendered youth. This occurs when individuals buy, trade, or sell sexual acts with a child. (Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children is a global problem.)

**Human Sexual Trafficking** – Trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age. Further, force is a physical assault, sexual assault, rape and/or physical confinement or isolation. Fraudulent employment offers false promises about work and living conditions and/or withholding wages. Coercion is threats of harm, arrest, or deportation, debt bondage, withholding legal document and/or psychological manipulation. Examples of recruitment for such acts occurs:

at bus stops; malls and social hangouts; parties, skip parties; schools; online and social media; neighborhood; and/or girlfriends of gang members.

**Runaway Youth** – Pursuant to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act of 2008, P.L. 110-378, runaway youth means a person under 18 years of age who absents himself or herself from home or place of legal residence without the permission of his or her family.

**Sexual Act** – Any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person.

**Traffickers** – People who exploit others for profit, i.e. pimps, gangs, criminal networks, intimate partners, family members and businesses.

**Vulnerable Youth** – Victims of prior abuse/violence, runaway and homeless youth, LGBTIQ youth, youth lacking strong support networks, unaccompanied and/or undocumented foreign youth, and youth with special needs or cognitive disabilities.

**YS Employee** - For the purposes of this policy, a YS Employee includes employees, contract providers, visitors, volunteers or interns.

## V. POLICY:

It is the Deputy Secretary's policy to take immediate and necessary action to provide safe harbor and service planning for sexually exploited youth as outlined in Act 429, Chapter 20 of Title VI of the Children's Code.

In addition, it is the Deputy Secretary's policy that every youth adjudicated to its custody or supervision that has been reported as sexually exploited shall be considered "at risk", thereby immediately qualifying the youth for services that shall include, but are not limited to diversion, crisis intervention, counseling, and emergency housing services throughout the State of Louisiana.

Sexually exploited youth often have issues establishing parental custody which could result in barriers to beginning therapeutic services. In the event that parental custody cannot be formally established, YS shall work with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to rectify custody issues to obtain legal authorization to begin services.

YS employees who encounter sex trafficked youth shall be encouraged to work with local and state agencies to coordinate efforts of recovery and rehabilitation. No single provider shall be solely relied upon for victim assistance.

YS shall provide a link to information on sexual exploitation education and services on its home page at [www.ojj.la.gov](http://www.ojj.la.gov).

YS personnel shall notify the Louisiana State Police Special Investigations Division of youth who are sexually exploited or suspected of being sexually exploited.

**VI. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT DELIVERING SERVICES TO SEXUALLY EXPLOITED YOUTH:**

**A. Victim Centered Approach**

With the passage of Act 429, Louisiana has adopted a victim-centered approach for handling children who are found to be victims of child sex trafficking. This Act assists with the victim-centered approach as it emphasizes decriminalization for youth involved in sex trafficking crimes, and advocacy for their recovery and rehabilitation.

**B. Who is Most At-Risk**

Victims of trafficking often come from vulnerable populations, including the following: oppressed or marginalized groups; inhabitant of impoverished or disaster areas; individuals with drug dependency; runaways and at-risk youth; migrant workers, temporary foreign workers, and undocumented immigrants.

The common elements in the factors that expose people to sexual exploitation and slavery-like practices include inequality and oppression based on gender, age, race and caste, and low economic status, all of which are exploited through deception, corruption, and greed on the part of the trafficker.

Trafficking affects individuals of all ages, race, sexual orientations, and social standings. However, impoverished women and children, women of color, and LGBTIQ youth are the most vulnerable victims of modern-day slavery.

**C. Victim Support and Assistance**

Victims of human trafficking need a complex and comprehensive set of services that require sensitivity and specialized training from all that are involved in serving them.

Per Act 429, the Department of Children and Family Services is tasked with tracking the resources available to assist victims of human trafficking. A list of these resources can be found at: [www.ojj.la.gov](http://www.ojj.la.gov)

**D. Identifying and Assisting Victims**

Pursuant to Act 429, youth adjudicated of prostitution, prostitution by massage, or crimes against nature by solicitation shall be identified as a victim of sex trafficking and shall be provided appropriate care and services.

In addition, internal protocols have been established to educate Central Office and field staff who interact with youth, on the signs which could lead to identifying additional YS youth adjudicated on offenses other than sex offenses.

**E. Screening Indicators for YS Staff to Identify Youth Sexually Exploited Youth**

Several cues and behaviors may flag a potential victim of sexual exploitation. One cue by itself should not raise suspicion, but a cluster of the following cues may warrant further exploration:

1. Visual Cues are as follows:
  - Malnourishment;
  - Avoids eye contact;
  - Injuries;
  - Extremely nervous;
  - Doesn't speak or is incoherent;
  - Signs of physical abuse; and
  - Evidence of sexual assault.
2. Behavioral Cues are as follows:
  - Lack of Documentation
  - Shy and submissive
  - Lack of concentration while speaking;
  - Observable psychological disorder;
  - Appears afraid to speak;
  - Cannot identify place of residence; and
  - May present as defiant and combative.
3. Other Exploitation Indicators are as follows:
  - Chronic runaway/homeless youth;
  - Excess amount of cash in their possession (may be reluctant to explain its source)
  - Hotel keys and key cards;
  - Lying about age/false ID
  - Inconsistencies when describing and recounting events;
  - Unable or unwilling to give local address or information about parents/guardian;

- Presence or fear of another person (often an older male or boyfriend who seems controlling);
- High number of reported sexual partners at a young age;
- Sexually explicit profiles on social networking sites;
- Injuries/signs of physical abuse (that they may be reluctant to explain);
- Inability or fear of social interaction;
- Demeanor exhibiting fear, anxiety, depression, submissiveness, tenseness, nervousness;
- Is not enrolled in school or repeated absence from school;
- Does not consider self a victim;
- Loyalty to positive feelings toward pimp/trafficker;
- May try to protect pimp/trafficker from authorities; and
- Prepaid cell phone.

When meeting with potential victims, YS staff shall ensure that the meeting place is a safe and confidential environment. Regardless of whether the victim is accompanied by someone who may or may not seem controlling, it is best practice that staff separate the victim from the person accompanying the youth and meet in a private setting.

Staff may also call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 888-373-7888 for additional information on identifying and accessing resources.

## **VII. PROCEDURES/RESPONSE PLAN:**

- A. If after a preliminary assessment, the victim or possible victim of sexual exploitation appears to meet the criteria for certification as a victim of a severe form of trafficking as defined in the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act (22 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.), or appears to be otherwise eligible for any federal, state, or local benefits and services, YS staff that identified the victim shall report the finding to their immediate supervisor and shall refer the victim to appropriate services available, including legal services.

The following is a guide to assist YS staff who identify a victim of sexual exploitation:

1. Assess the victim's immediate safety concerns and contact law enforcement. In the event that the victim is in imminent danger of harm, local law enforcement shall be contacted. Suspected instances of trafficking should also be reported to Louisiana State Police and the FBI. Local field offices can be found at [www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices](http://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices). See Section VII.A.6 below for contacting the Louisiana State Police.

2. In the event that a victim is in need of a translator, staff shall arrange for a translator for the victim so that communication is possible.
3. Assess the immediate and long-term needs of the victim in order to refer the victim for services and referrals to the appropriate service providers. If the victim is a juvenile and a victim of sexual assault, local rape crisis centers shall be utilized to help assess the victim in a safe and therapeutic environment. These centers also usually work with law enforcement to gather evidence for conviction of offenders.
4. Provide basic education to the victim about the victim's rights, protections, and services available. YS staff shall explain to the victim in plain/straightforward language, human trafficking and what services the agency may offer.
5. All YS staff shall abide by the MANDATORY REPORTER LAWS as reflected in Ch. C. Articles 603, 609 and 610, and La. R.S. 14:403 and 23:968. This requires that staff working with youth, who became aware of abuse and neglect, take appropriate measures based upon their belief that abuse or neglect has occurred. All instances of suspected child abuse or neglect shall be reported to the DCFS. (Refer to YS Policy No. C.4.3).
6. YS will notify the Louisiana State Police, Special Investigations Division, of youth who are sexually exploited or suspected of being sexually exploited by filling out the Online Complaint of Suspicious or Criminal Activity at <https://dpsweb.dps.louisiana.gov/suspicious.nsf>. If the employee is at a location or facility that does not have internet access or they do not currently have internet access, then they must call the Special Investigations Division hotline at 1-800-434-8007. When they later have internet access, they must fill out the online form, noting at the end of the Synopsis of Incident section that they contacted the hotline.
7. YS shall work in conjunction with DCFS, the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), and other organizations in the community, along with Medicaid managers and providers, to ensure the victim is connected to services that will support the victim's independence from traffickers.
8. YS staff shall document all communications in a Case Narrative / Progress Note in JETS to keep track of information exchanged with the victim. When there is cause for mandatory reporting of abuse or neglect, the initial reporting call shall be documented and written notice shall be sent to DCFS.

9. Following the development of a written service plan, a copy shall be provided to the victim and the victim's parent/guardian. Staff shall enter an alert identifying the youth as a sexually exploited youth in JETS to ensure that any other staff that may come in contact with the case is aware of the youth's situation, and to provide a way for tracking data on the number of human trafficking victims in the state.
10. If victims of sexual exploitation are runaways (refer to YS Policy No. C.2.1), and there is a need for YS staff to locate them in other states, or if there are victims from other states who are currently in this state, staff will continue to work with the Deputy Compact Administrator of the Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ), pursuant to YS Policy No. D.10.22. ICJ services can be accessed through the ICJ website at: <http://www.juvenilecompact.org>.
11. Identifying YS staff shall ensure a victim of sexual exploitation who is currently on runaway is entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

If the youth is in the custody of YS, the following shall be contacted:

- a. Local law enforcement;
- b. The youth's parent/guardian; and
- c. The judge of jurisdiction.

If local law enforcement officials have not entered the youth in the NCIC database, identifying YS staff shall follow agency protocol for entering the youth in the NCIC database.

If the runaway youth is under the supervision of YS and not in custody, the parents/guardian shall be advised to issue a missing person report with local law enforcement, and immediately notify the supervising PPO/J if they learn of youth's whereabouts. YS shall continue to try to locate the youth through contact with the youth's parent/guardian, friends and local law enforcement.

## VIII. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Documented training on identifying and treating sexually exploited youth will be provided through both pre-service and in-service training of all OJJ staff. This training will be administered via Power Point presentation that can either be utilized in a classroom environment or self-guided via computer.

**Previous Regulation/Policy Number:** C.2.25

**Previous Effective Date:** 08/08/2017

**Attachments/References:**

C.2.25(a) Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice Protocol for Delivering Services to Sexually Exploited Children August 2017  
C.2.25(b) Training on Identifying and Treating Sexually Exploited Children March 2021

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# Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice Protocol for Delivering Services to Sexually Exploited Children

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It shall be the policy of the Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice to take immediate and necessary action to provide safe harbors for sexually exploited children as outlined in Act 429, Chapter 20 of Title VI of the Children's Code. OJJ holds that every youth adjudicated to their custody or supervision that has been reported as sexually exploited will be considered “at risk”, thereby immediately qualifying the youth for services that shall include but are not limited to diversion, crisis intervention, counseling, and emergency housing services throughout the state of Louisiana. Sexually exploited children often have issues establishing parental custody which could result in barriers to beginning therapeutic services. In the event that parental custody cannot be formally established, it will be the policy of OJJ to work with the DCFS rectify custody issues to obtain legal authorization to begin services.

## **Victim Centered Approach**

With the passage of Act 429, Louisiana has adopted a victim-centered approach for handling children who are found to be the victims of child sex trafficking. Once victims are found, the healing process can begin to be attempted through recovery and rehabilitation for the victims of this heinous crime is dependent upon a restoration of their health and humanity. This process of restoration can only be facilitated when using a victim-centered approach. The Office of Juvenile Justice will remain tirelessly committed to serving these victims, ever cognizant of the physical and emotional abuse that has been enacted. The exploitation suffered by victims is extensive, pervading body and mind; recovery is a long and arduous process that can be facilitated or hindered by the types of interactions victims have with law enforcement and service providers. A victim-centered approach employs patience, empathy, and compassion for victims while responding to their needs. Act 429 assists with the victim-centered approach as it emphasizes decriminalization for youth involved in sex trafficking crimes and advocacy for their recovery and rehabilitation.

## **Who is most At-Risk? Defining Vulnerable Populations**

Victims of trafficking often come from vulnerable populations, including: oppressed or marginalized groups; inhabitants of impoverished or disaster areas; individuals with drug dependency; runaways and at-risk youth; and migrant workers, temporary foreign workers, and undocumented immigrants.<sup>21</sup> Traffickers specifically target individuals in these populations because they are often easiest to recruit and control and are least likely to be protected by law enforcement. The common elements in the factors that expose people to human trafficking and slavery-like practices include inequality and oppression based on gender, age, race and caste, and low economic status, all of which are exploited



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through deception, corruption, and greed on the part of the trafficker. Trafficking affects individuals of all ages, races, sexual orientations, and social standings. However, impoverished women and children, women of color, and LGBT youth are the most vulnerable victims of modern-day slavery. This makes trafficking particularly repulsive because it shows the ways in which gender discrimination, racism, homophobia, and poverty converge and create extreme forms of violence.

**Statewide number for reporting sex trafficking in Louisiana: The Louisiana State Police Fusion Center at 1-800-434-8007**

## **Victim Support and Assistance**

Despite the seeming multitude of options for crime victims, victims of human trafficking need a complex and comprehensive set of services that require sensitivity and specialized training from all that are involved in serving them. Although services for victims listed below may be helpful, the intricacies of addressing a multilayered crime of human trafficking make it difficult to rely solely on these established services to meet the needs of victims of human trafficking in the state. The Office of Juvenile Justice strongly encourages employees who encounter sex trafficked youth to work with local and state agencies to coordinate efforts of recovery and rehabilitation, so that no single provider is solely relied upon for victim assistance.

There are many victim service organizations throughout the state of Louisiana who offer services for sex trafficked youth. The most up-to-date list can be found on the OJJ website.

## **Identifying and Assisting Victims**

The Office of Juvenile Justice may play a critical role in identifying human trafficking juvenile victims that are currently adjudicated delinquent or Family in Need of Services. Per Act 429, youth adjudicated of prostitution, prostitution by massage, or crimes against nature by solicitation will be identified as a victim of sex trafficking and should be provided appropriate care and services. OJJ will establish internal protocols to educate central office and field staff who interact with youth on the signs which could lead to identifying additional OJJ youth adjudicated on other offenses as sex trafficking victims. These protocols will include providing intensive training to ensure that staff can identify child victims of sex trafficking through a screening process and begin the process of services to include diversion programs, crisis intervention, counseling, and emergency housing services.

## **Screening Indicators for Field Staff to Identify Child Sex Exploitation**

The presence of the indicators noted below does not definitively mean the child is being sexually exploited. These indicators serve as clues to be assessed within the broader context of all information presented.

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Look for the possible indicators and red flags noted below:

## Observational Cues

Several cues and behaviors may flag a potential victim of human trafficking. One cue in isolation should not raise suspicion, but a cluster of these cues may warrant further exploration.

Visual Cues	Behavioral Cues
Malnourishment	Lack of Documentation
Avoids eye contact	Shy and submissive
Injuries	Lack of concentration while speaking
Extremely nervous	Observable psychological disorder
Doesn't speak or is incoherent	Appears afraid to speak
Signs of physical abuse	Can't identify place of residence
Evidence of Sexual assault	May present as defiant and combative

## Other Trafficking Indicators:

- Chronic runaway/homeless youth
- Excess amount of cash in their possession (may be reluctant to explain its source)
- Hotel keys and key cards
- Lying about age/false ID
- Inconsistencies when describing and recounting events
- Unable or unwilling to give local address or information about parents/guardian
- Presence or fear of another person (often an older male or boyfriend who seems controlling)
- High number of reported sexual partners at a young age
- Sexually explicit profiles on social networking sites
- Injuries/signs of physical abuse (that they may be reluctant to explain)
- Inability or fear of social interaction
- Demeanor exhibiting fear, anxiety, depression, submissiveness, tenseness, nervousness
- Is not enrolled in school or repeated absence from school
- Does not consider self a victim
- Loyalty to positive feelings toward pimp/trafficker
- May try to protect pimp/trafficker from authorities
- Prepaid cell phone

When meeting with potential victims, OJJ staff will ensure that the meeting place is a safe and confidential environment. Regardless of whether the victim is accompanied by someone who may or may not seem controlling, it is best practice that staff separate the victim from the person

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accompanying her/him and meet in a private setting. Below are sample questions to help identify child sex trafficking victims:

### **Living Situation and General Wellbeing**

- How do you feel? Tell me about ways/places in which you feel safe. Tell me about ways/places in which you feel unsafe.
- Describe your current living situation. What are the people you live with like?
- Help me understand what a day in your life is like. What kinds of activities do you do throughout the day?
- Who are the people closest to you? Which friends or family do you feel you can confide in?

### **Work Situation**

- Do you have a source of income?
- How do you get by?
- Tell me about your job. What type of work do you do? Do you like your job?
- What are your working conditions like? What is your workspace like?
- How are you compensated for the work that you do? Are there specific work rules that you have to follow?
- Can you leave your job if you want to? Tell me why you do the job that you do.

### **Freedom of Movement**

- What are the sleeping arrangements where you live?
- Are there activities that you enjoy outside the home? How often or for what reasons do you leave your home?
- Tell me what would happen if you left your home or job.
- Tell me about the rules in your home. Are there specific rules about your schedule for eating, sleeping, or using certain rooms in the house?
- Tell me about why you stay in your home. Are there locks on your doors and windows? (If yes): Are these locks there to prevent you from leaving?
- Has there ever been a time when you went without food, water, sleep, or medical care? How often does this happen?

### **Safety Issues**

- Has there ever been a time when someone made you do something you didn't want to do? When was this? How did it happen? How often does this happen?
- Tell me about things you worry about or are scared of.
- Have you ever been threatened? What kind of threats have you experienced?

OJJ staff may also call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 888-373-7888 for more information on identifying and accessing resources.

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## OJJ Response Plan

If after a preliminary assessment the victim or possible victim of sexual exploitation appears to meet the criteria for certification as a victim of a severe form of trafficking as defined in the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act (22 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.) or appears to be otherwise eligible for any federal, state, or local benefits and services, then OJJ shall report the finding to the victim and shall refer the victim to appropriate services available, including legal services.

The following is a guide to assist OJJ staff who encounter a victim of sexual exploitation.

1. Assess the victim's immediate safety concerns. OJJ staff will ensure that the victim is not in immediate danger. In the event that the victim is in imminent danger of harm then local law enforcement shall be contacted. Suspected instances of sexual exploitation can be reported to the FBI. Local field offices can be found at [www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/fo.htm](http://www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/fo.htm). The Department of Justice's Human Trafficking Office can also be called at 1-888-428-7581. OJJ will also ensure that safe harbor will be utilized for victims, if deemed necessary and by court order, in a therapeutic foster care setting.
2. Arrange for interpretation services. In the event that a victim is in need of a translator, OJJ staff will ensure that a translator will be provided for the victim so that communication is possible.
3. Assess the immediate and long-term needs of the victim. OJJ staff will assess the victim for services and make referrals to the appropriate service providers. Considering that these victims are juveniles and victims of sexual assault local rape crisis centers will be utilized to help assess the victim in a safe and therapeutic environment. These centers also usually work with law enforcement to gather evidence for conviction of offenders. Victims who are in the custody of OJJ will be provided housing, health care, mental health counseling, access to employment services, educational services including vocational and secondary education, and independent living education. All of which will be determined through working with the Louisiana Behavioral Health Partnership, State Management Organization, Magellan Services and its network of providers. A service plan will be developed to ensure that all the needs of the victim are met. Victims that are only under the supervision of OJJ will also be afforded all of these services through Magellan providers or other providers in the community. A service plan will also be developed with the victim and his/her guardian to ensure needs are being met.
4. Provide basic education to the victim about her/his rights, protections, and services available to her/him. OJJ staff shall explain to the victim in plain and straightforward language human trafficking and what services the agency may offer. Local statewide resources that specialize in services for sexually exploited victims will be utilized, where available, to provide the victim a therapeutic environment and access to all benefits that may be available for the victim.
5. Mandatory Reporting. OJJ staff shall abide by the mandatory reporter laws as reflected in Ch.C. Articles 603, 609, and 610; and La. R.S. 14:403 and 23:968, which require staff working with youth who become aware of abuse and neglect take appropriate measures

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based upon their belief that abuse or neglect has occurred. The Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) shall ensure that youth placed under supervision or custody receives adequate and humane treatment. All instances of suspected child abuse or neglect shall be reported to the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) toll-free number 1-855-4LA-KIDS (1-855-452-5437), which is manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

6. Contact the Louisiana State Police's Special Investigations Division. YS will notify the Louisiana State Police, Special Investigations Division, of youth who are sexually exploited or suspected of being sexually exploited by filling out the Online Complaint of Suspicious or Criminal Activity at <https://dpsweb.dps.louisiana.gov/suspicious.nsf>. If the employee is at a location or facility that does not have internet access or they do not currently have internet access, then they must call the Special Investigations Division hotline at 1-800-434-8007. When they later have internet access, they must fill out the online form, noting at the end of the Synopsis of Incident section that they contacted the hotline.
7. Collaborate with other organizations and public agencies to ensure the victim is connected to services that will support her/his independence from traffickers. OJJ staff will work in conjunction with DCFS other organizations in the community to provide a coordinated delivery of services to sexually exploited children and will also work together to provide information to court personnel to ensure that all state, federal, and community-based resources for sexually exploited children are known and available to victims. OJJ will also provide a link to information on human trafficking education and services on our home page at [www.ojj.la.gov](http://www.ojj.la.gov).
8. Document communications. OJJ staff shall document all communications in narrative form to keep track of information exchanged with the victim. Staff shall also follow OJJ policy as to mandatory reporting of abuse or neglect which includes follow up to the initial reporting call with written notification to DCFS. A service plan shall be developed for victims and a copy provided to the victim and the victim's guardian. OJJ staff shall enter an alert identifying the youth as a sexually exploited youth on the main screen of the Office of Juvenile Justice Tracking System. This is to ensure that any OJJ staff that may come in contact with the case is aware of the youth's situation.
9. Locating Runaways. Victims of sexual exploitation may also become runaways and there may be a need for OJJ staff to locate victims in other states who have ran away from Louisiana or victims from other states who are now currently in Louisiana. To ensure that these victims are returned home OJJ staff will continue to work with the Deputy Compact Administrator (The individual appointed by the Commissioner/Compact Administrator to act on behalf of the state's Commissioner/Compact Administrator, pursuant to the terms of the ICJ responsible for the administration and management of the state's supervision and transfer of juveniles subject to the terms of the ICJ, the rules adopted by the Interstate Commission, and policies adopted by the State Council under the ICJ) of The Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ, the Compact). The compact is a federally established agreement in which the compacting states recognize that each state is responsible for the proper supervision or return of juveniles, delinquents and status offenders who are on probation or parole and who have absconded, escaped, or run away from supervision and control and in so doing have endangered their own safety and the

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safety of others. The compacting states also recognize that each state is responsible for the safe return of juveniles who have run away from home and in doing so have left their state of residence. The compacting states also recognize that Congress, by enacting the Crime Control Act, 4 U.S.C. Section 112 (1965), has authorized and encouraged compacts for cooperative efforts and mutual assistance in the prevention of crime. OJJ staff can access ICJ services and provide information through the ICJ website at: <http://www.jids.juvenilecompact.org>.

OJJ staff will also take steps to ensure that the victim is entered into NCIC. *National Crime Information Center (NCIC)* is a computerized index of criminal justice information (i.e. - criminal record history information, fugitives, stolen properties, missing persons). It is available to federal, state, and local law enforcement and other criminal justice agencies, and is operational 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If the youth is in the custody of the Office of Juvenile Justice the following will be contacted: local law enforcement, the youth's parents, and the youth's judge. OJJ staff will check with local law enforcement to see if the youth has been entered in NCIC, if the youth has not, OJJ staff will enter the youth into the NCIC database. If the runaway youth is only under the supervision of OJJ and not in custody the parent/guardian shall be advised to issue a missing person report with local law enforcement, and immediately notify the supervising PPO/J if they learn of the youth's whereabouts. OJJ staff will continue to try to locate the youth through contact with the youth's family, friends and local law enforcement.

# Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice Protocol for Delivering Services to Sexually Exploited Children



Updated March 2021

# *Act 429, Chapter 20 of Title VI of the Children's Code*

The Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice will take immediate and necessary action to provide safe harbors for sexually exploited children.

Every youth adjudicated to OJJ's custody or supervision that has been reported as *sexually exploited* will be considered "*at risk*", thereby immediately qualifying the youth for services that may include:

- *Diversion*
- *Crisis intervention*
- *Counseling*
- *Emergency housing services*

If parental custody cannot be formally established, OJJ will work with DCFS to obtain legal authorization to begin services.



# Victim-Centered Approach

**Act 429** provides for a *victim-centered* approach for children who are found to be the victims of sex trafficking.

- *Recovery and rehabilitation*
- *Restoration of health and humanity*
- *Patience, empathy, compassion*
- *Decriminalization of victims*
- *Advocacy for recovery*

# Who is most At-Risk for Sexual Exploitation? Defining Vulnerable Populations

- Oppressed or marginalized groups
- Inhabitants of impoverished or disaster areas
- Individuals with drug dependency
- Runaways and at-risk youth
- Migrant workers, temporary foreign workers and undocumented immigrants
- **Impoverished women and children, women of color and LGBT youth are the most vulnerable**

*Statewide number for reporting sex trafficking in Louisiana:*

***Louisiana State Police Fusion Center***

***1-800-434-8007***



**SEE IT. SUSPECT IT.  
REPORT IT.**



# Indicators for Field Screening Staff to Identify Child Sex Exploitation

# Observational Cues

Visual Cues	Behavioral Cues
Malnourishment	Lack of Documentation
Avoids eye contact	Shy and submissive
Injuries	Lack of concentration while speaking
Extremely nervous	Observable psychological disorder
Doesn't speak or is incoherent	Appears afraid to speak
Signs of physical abuse	Can't identify place of residence
Evidence of Sexual assault	May present as defiant and combative

# Other Trafficking Indicators

- Chronic runaway/homeless youth
- Excess amount of cash in their possession (may be reluctant to explain its source)
- Hotel keys and key cards
- Lying about age/false ID
- Inconsistencies when describing and recounting events
- Unable or unwilling to give local address or information about parents/guardian
- Presence or fear of another person (often an older male or boyfriend who seems controlling)
- High number of reported sexual partners at a young age

# Other Trafficking Indicators

- Sexually explicit profiles on social networking sites
- Injuries/signs of physical abuse (that they may be reluctant to explain)
- Inability or fear of social interaction
- Demeanor exhibiting fear, anxiety, depression, submissiveness, tenseness, nervousness
- Is not enrolled in school or repeated absence from school
- Does not consider self a victim
- Loyalty to positive feelings toward pimp/trafficker
- May try to protect pimp/trafficker from authorities
- Prepaid cell phone

When meeting with potential victims, OJJ staff will ensure that the meeting place is a **safe** and **confidential** environment.

Regardless of whether the victim is accompanied by someone who may or may not seem controlling, it is best practice that staff separate the victim from the person accompanying her/him and meet in a private setting.





# Sample questions to help identify child sex trafficking victims



# Living Situation and General Well-being

- How do you feel? Tell me about ways/places in which you feel safe. Tell me about ways/places in which you feel unsafe.
- Describe your current living situation. What are the people you live with like?
- Help me understand what a day in your life is like. What kinds of activities do you do throughout the day?
- Who are the people closest to you? Which friends or family do you feel you can confide in?

## Work Situation

- Do you have a source of income?
- How do you get by?
- Tell me about your job. What type of work do you do? Do you like your job?
- What are your working conditions like? What is your workspace like?
- How are you compensated for the work that you do? Are there specific work rules that you have to follow?
- Can you leave your job if you want to? Tell me why you do the job that you do.

# Freedom of Movement

- What are the sleeping arrangements where you live?
- Are there activities that you enjoy outside the home? How often or for what reasons do you leave your home?
- Tell me what would happen if you left your home or job.
- Tell me about the rules in your home. Are there specific rules about your schedule for eating, sleeping, or using certain rooms in the house?
- Tell me about why you stay in your home. Are there locks on your doors and windows? (If yes): Are these locks there to prevent you from leaving?
- Has there ever been a time when you went without food, water, sleep, or medical care? How often does this happen?

# Safety Issues

- Has there ever been a time when someone made you do something you didn't want to do? When was this? How did it happen? How often does this happen?
- Tell me about things you worry about or are scared of.
- Have you ever been threatened? What kind of threats have you experienced?

OJJ staff may also call the  
***National Human Trafficking Hotline***  
**888-373-7888**

for more information on identifying and accessing resources.

# OJJ Response Plan

1. **Assess the victim's immediate safety concerns.** Ensure that the victim is not in immediate danger. In the event that the victim is in imminent danger of harm then local law enforcement shall be contacted. OJJ will also ensure that safe harbor will be utilized for victims, if deemed necessary and by court order, in a therapeutic foster care setting.
2. **Arrange for interpretation services** if necessary.
3. **Assess the immediate and long-term needs of the victim.** Assess the victim for services and make referrals to the appropriate service providers.
4. **Provide basic education to the victim about his/her rights, protections and available services.**

# OJJ Response Plan

5. **Mandatory Reporting.** Abide by the mandatory reporter laws as reflected in Ch.C. Articles 603, 609, and 610; and La. R.S. 14:403 and 23:968, which require staff working with youth who become aware of abuse and neglect take appropriate measures based upon their belief that abuse or neglect has occurred.
6. **Contact the Louisiana State Police's Special Investigations Division.**
7. **Collaborate with other organizations and public agencies to ensure the victim is connected to services that will support her/his independence from traffickers.** Work in conjunction with DCFS other organizations in the community to provide a coordinated delivery of services to sexually exploited children. Provide information to court personnel to ensure that all state, federal, and community-based resources for sexually exploited children are known and available to victims.
8. **Document communications.** Follow OJJ policy as to mandatory reporting of abuse or neglect which includes follow up to the initial reporting call with written notification to DCFS. A service plan shall be developed for victims and a copy provided to the victim and the victim's guardian. OJJ staff shall enter an alert identifying the youth as a sexually exploited youth on the main screen of the Office of Juvenile Justice Tracking System.

# OJJ Response Plan

9. **Working with Runaways.** Ensure that these victims are returned home through the Interstate Compact system. The compact is a federally established agreement in which the compacting states recognize that each state is responsible for the proper supervision or return of juveniles, delinquents and status offenders who are on probation or parole and who have absconded, escaped, or run away from supervision and control and in so doing have endangered their own safety and the safety of others. The compacting states also recognize that each state is responsible for the safe return of juveniles who have run away from home and in doing so have left their state of residence.

*If a sexually exploited youth in the custody or supervision of OJJ runs away ensure that the victim is entered into National Crime Information Center (NCIC).*

- If the youth is in the custody of the Office of Juvenile Justice, the following will be contacted: local law enforcement, the youth's parents, and the youth's judge.
- If the runaway youth is only under the supervision of OJJ and not in custody, the parent/guardian shall be advised to issue a missing person report with local law enforcement, and immediately notify the supervising PPO/J if they learn of the youth's whereabouts.
- Continue to try to locate the youth through contact with the youth's family, friends and local law enforcement.

## Other Resources

1. Your Supervisor or Regional Manager
2. OJJ Policy C.2.25 Protocol for Delivering Services to Sexually Exploited Youth