

SAFE HARBOR

Safe Harbor

The Minnesota Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Youth Law says that all sexually exploited youth under the age of 18 are now recognized as crime victims, not criminals. This law was created to treat youth with dignity and respect while directing them to appropriate supportive services.

What is sexual exploitation?

A sexually exploited youth is someone under the age of 18 who may be subject to sexual exploitation because they engaged, agreed to engage, or were forced into sexual conduct in return for a fee, food, clothing or a place to stay. A youth also can be sexually exploited if he or she has engaged in exotic dancing, been filmed doing sexual acts, traded sex for drugs, or has been found guilty of engaging in prostitution or prostitution related crimes.

For the purposes of Safe Harbor/No Wrong Door the means of exploitation is irrelevant in determining eligibility for services.

STATISTICS

80% of runaway and homeless girls reported having been sexually or physically abused. 1. Heartland Girls' Ranch Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking in MN Infographic (as cited in Molner, B., Shade, S., Kral, A., Booth, R., & Watters, J., 1998)

An estimated 30% of youth living in shelters and 70% of street youth have reported having been victimized through sexual exploitation. 2. Heartland Girls' Ranch Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking in MN Infographic (as cited in Estes & Weiner, 2001)

Within 36-48 hours of being on the run, runaways will be approached by a pimp, trafficker or perpetrator looking to sexually exploit them. 5. Heartland Girls' Ranch Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking in MN Infographic (as cited by the Center for Missing and Exploited Children)

Life expectancy after entering prostitution is seven years. 3. Heartland Girls' Ranch Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking in MN Infographic (as cited in Hamm, H., Finkelhor, D., & Sedlak, A., 2002)

More adolescent girls are commercially sexually exploited in one month in Minnesota than girls who die by suicide, homicide, accidents, SIDS, AIDS and domestic violence combined in one year. 4. Heartland Girls' Ranch Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking in MN Infographic (as cited by The Shapiro Group, May 2010)

COMMON EXPERIENCES OF VICTIMS

Violence ~ terroristic threats, beatings, threats to self/family

Sleep/food deprivation

Emotional/verbal/psychological abuse

Prior history of being sexually abused as a child

98% of women and children being prostituted would get out if they thought that was an option 6. Heartland Girls' Ranch

Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking in MN Infographic (as cited in S.B. Satterfield., M. Silbert and A.M. Pines., L. Lee)

Survival Sex: Another Form of Sexual Exploitation

Many unaccompanied (homeless or runaway) youth turn to prostitution for survival.

This is known as “survival sex,” where a sex act is performed in exchange for money, shelter, food, or other necessities.

Over one third of homeless youth report exchanging sex for food, shelter, or drugs, and 75% of youth who engaged in survival sex report only doing so while they are homeless.

Survival sex is form of sexual exploitation, whether at the hands of a pimp/trafficker or a “patron.” For the same reasons youth are vulnerable to recruitment into prostitution by a pimp/trafficker, they are also susceptible to sexual abuse and exploitation predatory “customers” or “patrons.”

In Minnesota, buying sex from a minor – whether the sex act is exchanged for money, shelter, food, or anything else of value - is a felony, and a crime against children to which they can never consent.

7. MNHTTF (as cited in Beech, B.M. Myers L., Beach D.J. & K. Ernack, N.S., 2003 and MN Statute 609.324 subd. (1) (2012)

Sex Trafficking

Sex trafficking is defined as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act where such 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.

Identifying Trafficking Victims

Things To Look For

Physical abuse/Signs of violence (bruising, cuts, burns, etc.)

Afraid/unwilling to talk

Unusually hostile, anxious and/ or depressed

Significantly older boyfriend

Sketchy explanations of relationships

Lack of control over ID/ belongings

Possessing large amounts of cash

Possessing prepaid cards

Inconsistencies in story/appears coached

Youth living in poverty, homeless, or chronic runaway

Social isolation

Questions To Ask

Has anyone ever hurt you?

Do you feel unsafe where you live?

Are you being made to do things you do not want to do?

Has anyone ever touch you sexually (or made you touch them) in a way you didn't like?

Did anyone ever take a photo of you that you are uncomfortable with?

Did you ever have sex for things of value (for example money, housing, food, gifts or favors)?

Do you get to choose who you have sex with?

Have you ever had sex with anyone who was five/ten or more years older than you?

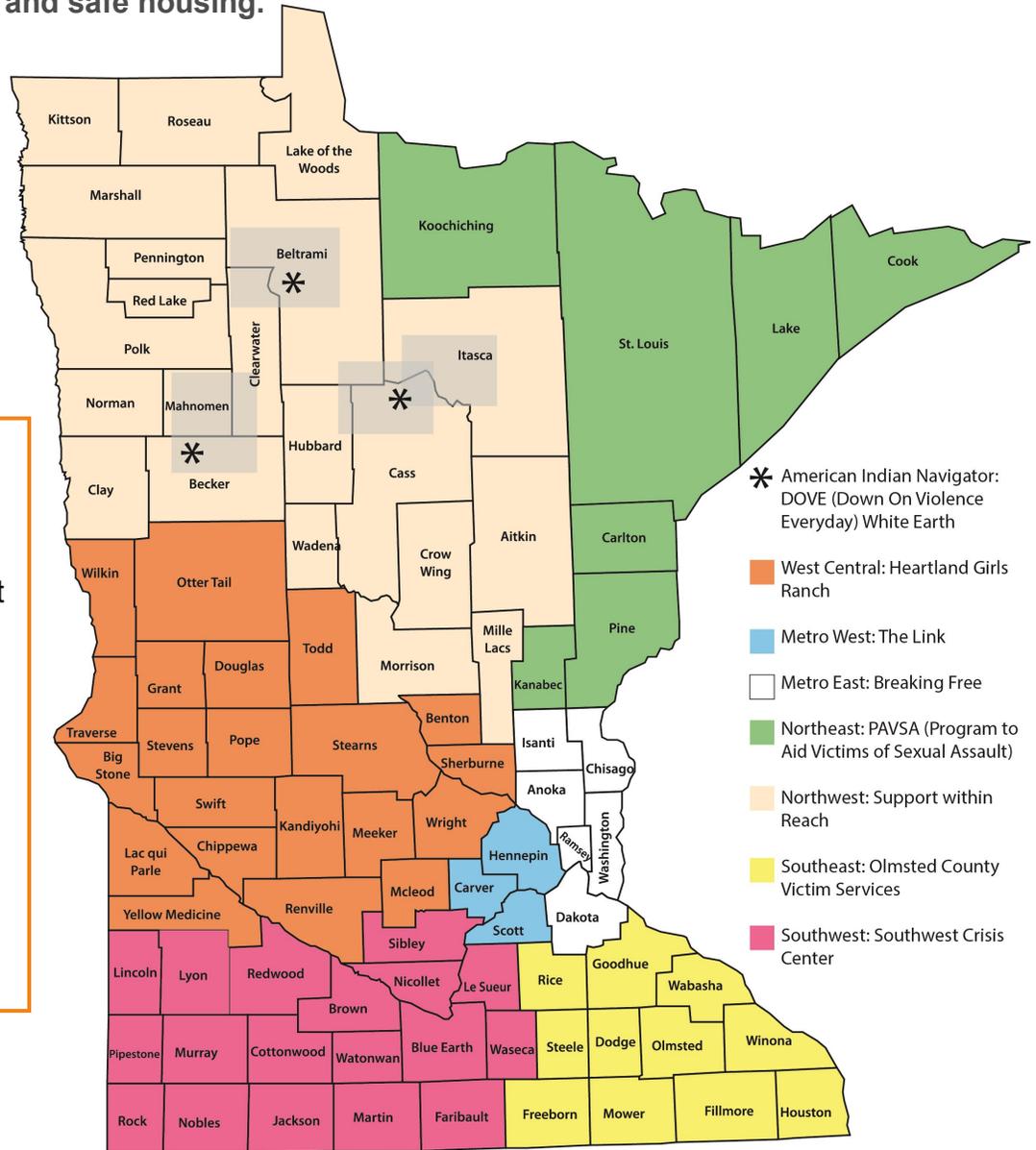
No Wrong Door

No wrong door ensures communities across Minnesota have the knowledge, skills and resources to effectively identify sexually exploited and at-risk youth. **These youth will be provided victim-centered trauma-informed services and safe housing.**

Regional Navigators will coordinate resources and services for sexually exploited youth.

West Central Region Counties

Benton, Big Stone,
Chippewa, Douglas, Grant
Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle,
Mcleod, Meeker, Otter
Tail, Pope, Renville,
Sherburne, Stearns,
Stevens, Swift, Todd,
Traverse, Wilkin, Wright,
Yellow Medicine



West Central Regional Navigator ~ Jennifer Fox, MSW

Office: (320) 843-4815 Cell/Text: (320) 979-9481

navigator@heartlandgirlsranh.org

Heartland Girls' Ranch

185 Hwy 9 NE, Benson, MN 56215

www.heartlandgirlsranh.org

What can you do:

Be Understanding. Recognize that even if a child doesn't identify as a victim or may seem abrasive, they have been abused and traumatized and are in need of services.

Report. If you, someone you know, or someone you suspect is involved in sex trafficking or sexually exploited youth:

- ⇒ Call 911 if there is immediate danger
- ⇒ Make a child protection report at 763-682-7449
- ⇒ Contact Jennifer Fox, MSW (West Central Regional Navigator) at 320-843-4815 or 320-979-9481
- ⇒ Contact NHTRC (National Human Trafficking Resource Center) Hotline at 888-373-7888
- ⇒ Call DAY ONE Hotline for shelter and supportive services in your area at 866-223-1111
- ⇒ Rebecca Kotz, Human Trafficking Services Coordinator (Central MN Sexual Assault Center) (Serving Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, and Wright counties) rkotz@cmsac.org 320-251-4357

Other Points of Contact and Helpful Information

[The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children:](#) 800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678)

[Minnesota Human Trafficking Task Force](#) Facts sheets, information & to subscribe to statewide updates

[White Earth Reservation Tribal DOVE \(Down ON Violence Everyday\) Program](#) Serves victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Stalking, Dating Violence, Elder Abuse, Trafficking and General Crime and provides services to Native and non-Native women, men, and youth who live on or near the White Earth Reservation. Crisis Line 1-877-830-DOVE (3683)

References:

- (1) Molnar, B., Shade, S., Kral, A., Booth, R., & Watters, J. (1998).
- (2) Estes & Weiner 2001 - from The Wilder Foundation's report, "Overview of domestic trafficking of minors In the United States" 2009. References Include: Smith, L.A., Vardaman, S.H., & Snow, M.A. (2009). "The National Report on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking." Shared Hope International.
- (3) Hamm, H., Finkelhor, D., & Sedlak, A., (2002). Runaway/Thrownaway Children: National Estimates and Characteristics. National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. - See more at http://www.1800runaway.org/learn/research/third_party/
- (4) Adolescent Girls in the United States Sex Trade: Tracking Studying Results for May 2010 by The Shapiro Group. Comparison data from the Minnesota Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, (2007)
- (5) Center for Missing and Exploited Children
- (6) S.B. Satterfield. Clinical Aspects Of Juvenile Prostitution. M. Silbert and A.M. Pines. Entrance Info Prostitution. L. Lee "The Pimp And His Game".
- (7) Minnesota Human Trafficking Task Force (MNHTTF) as cited in Beech, B.M. Myers L., Beach D.J. & K. Ernack, N.S., 2003 and MN Statute 609.324 subd. (1) (2012)