

EMPOWERED EYES

Recognizing Child Trafficking
in your CASA Youth



KEY OBJECTIVES

01

**DEFINING
HUMAN
TRAFFICKING**

02

**RISK FACTORS +
VULNERABILITIES**

03

**INDICATORS +
RED FLAGS**

04

**TRAFFICKERS,
BUYERS,
RECRUITMENT**

05

**SAFETY
PLANNING,
ENGAGEMENT,
ADVOCACY**

BE MINDFUL



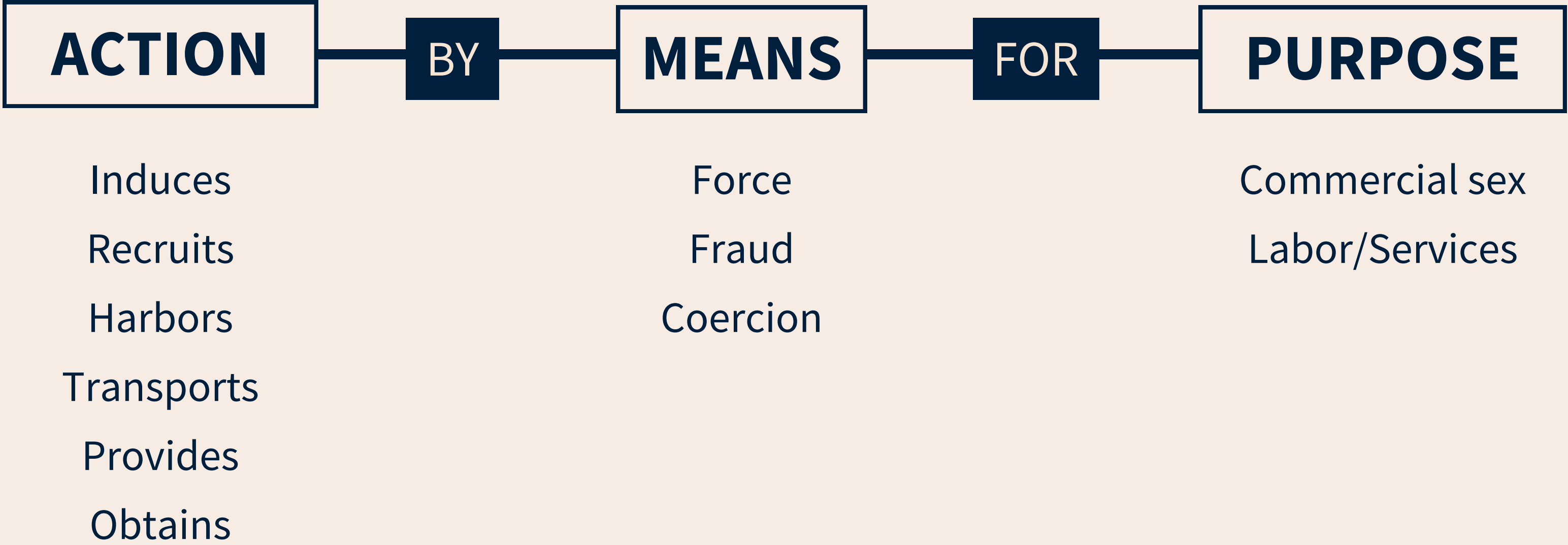
HUMAN TRAFFICKING DEFINED

A crime involving the exploitation of someone for the purpose of compelled labor or a commercial sex act, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion.

Trafficking Victims' Protection Act (TVPA) 2000
22 U.S.C. §7101

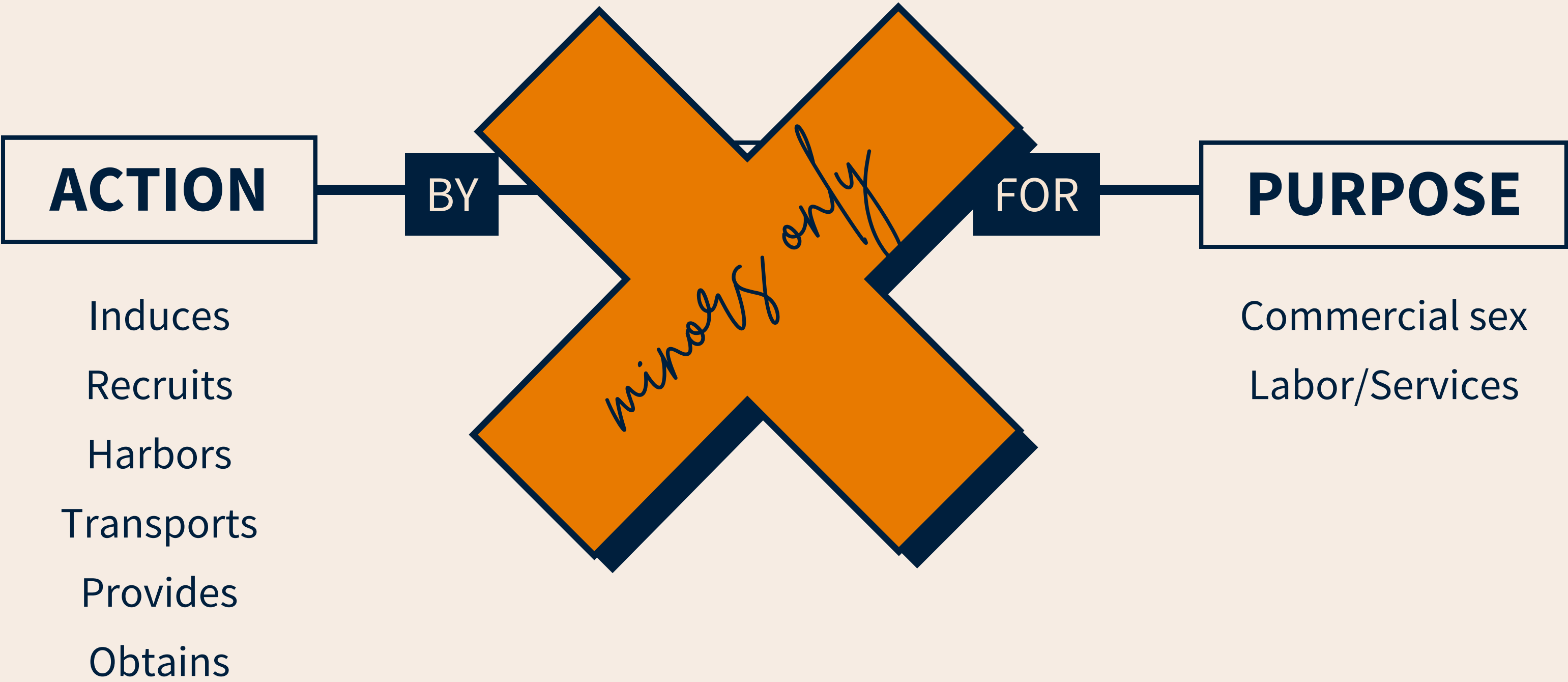
A-M-P MODEL

U.S. Federal Law



A-M-P MODEL

U.S. Federal Law



A child who
is induced to
perform a
sex act for
something of
value



**COMMERCIAL
SEXUALLY
EXPLOITED
CHILD (CSEC)**



WHAT MAKES A SEX ACT “COMMERCIAL”

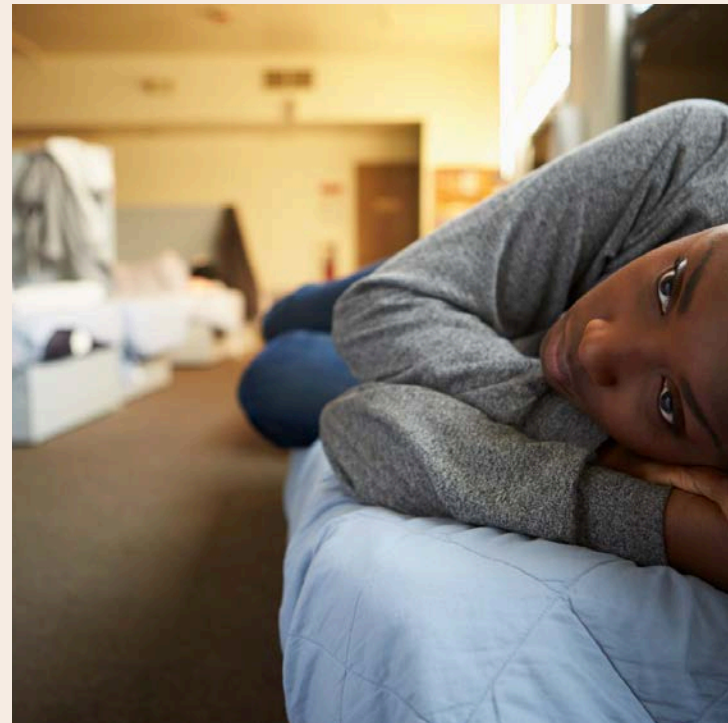
valuable

FOOD

MONEY

SHELTER

DRUGS



FORMS OF CSEC

CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING

PORNOGRAPHY/CSAM

SURVIVAL SEX

CHILD SEX TOURISM

STRIPPING

EXOTIC ENTERTAINMENT





FORMS OF LABOR TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN

TRAVELING SALES CREWS
SOLICIT CHARITABLE DONATIONS
COERCED DRUG DEALING
DOMESTIC SERVANT

A conceptual image with a blue tint. A hand on the left holds a stack of US dollar bills, with the top bill being a \$100 bill. Below it, another hand is open and empty. The background is a solid blue color.

ILLEGAL ORGANIZED CRIMINAL *business*

\$150 BILLION INDUSTRY



SRC: INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO), 2014

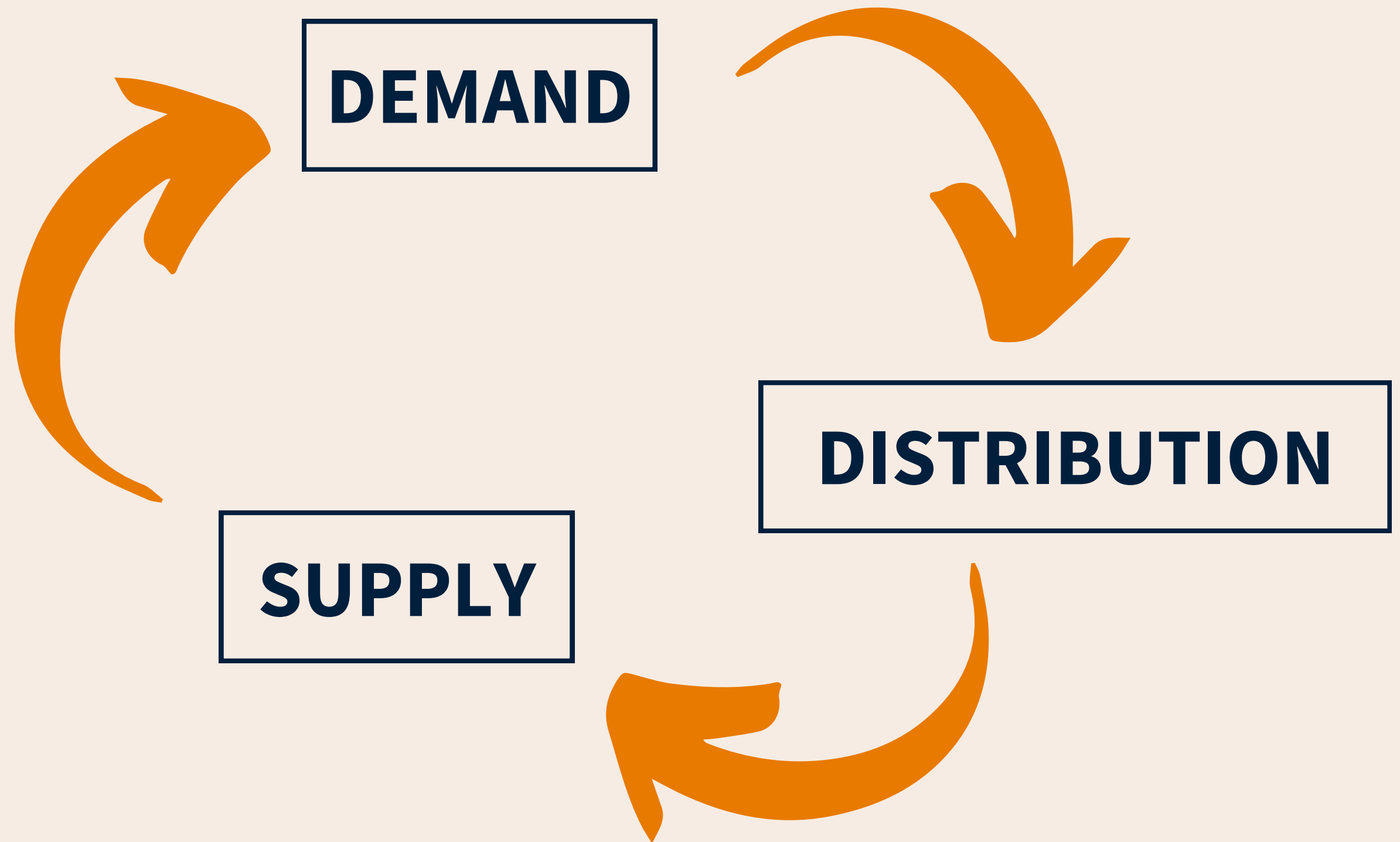
\$99 BILLION



\$51 BILLION



BUSINESS MODEL



trafficking **BUSINESS MODEL**





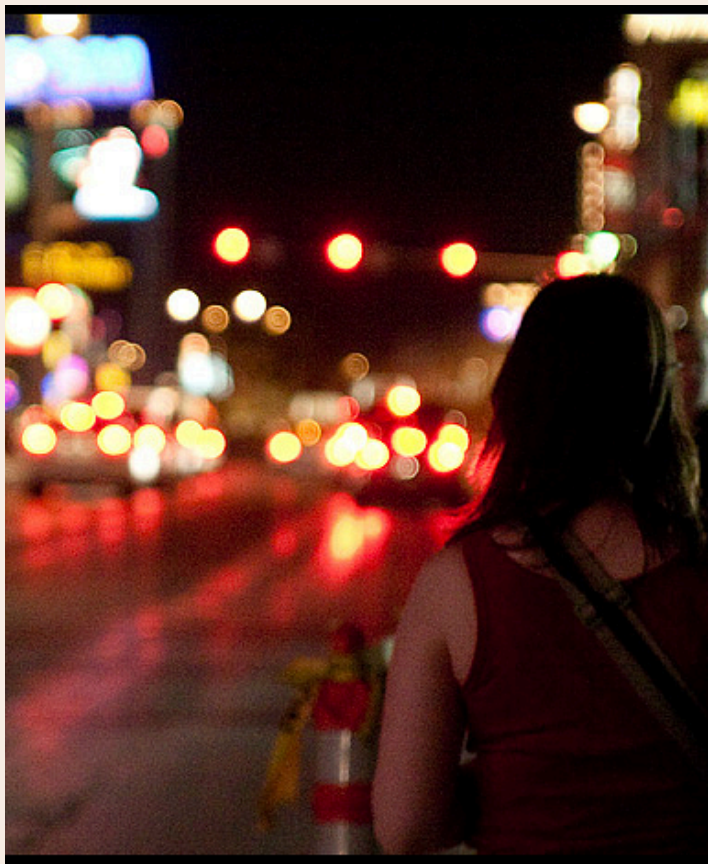
NEVADA BY THE NUMBERS



**SRC: RENO
DEMOGRAPHICS
VIA HEAT TEAM;
THE HT
INITIATIVE,
NEVADA'S
ONLINE
COMMERCIAL
SEX MARKET**



50.5% MINORS
Under the age of 18



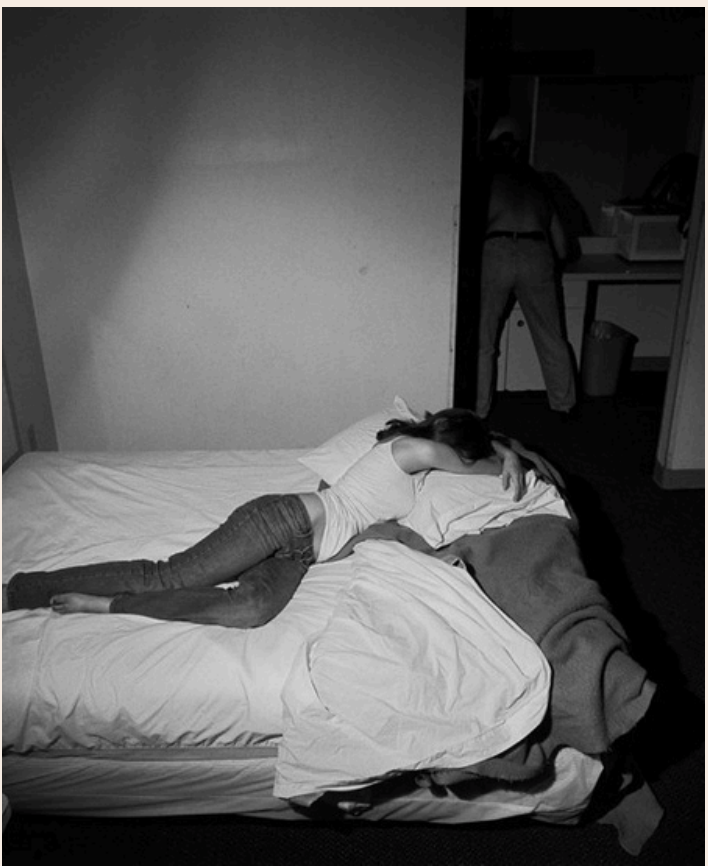
15.9 YRS OLD
Average age of minor



12 YRS OLD
Youngest reported victim



17 YRS OLD
Youngest reported male



5,000 SOLD
People sold for sex in
Nevada monthly



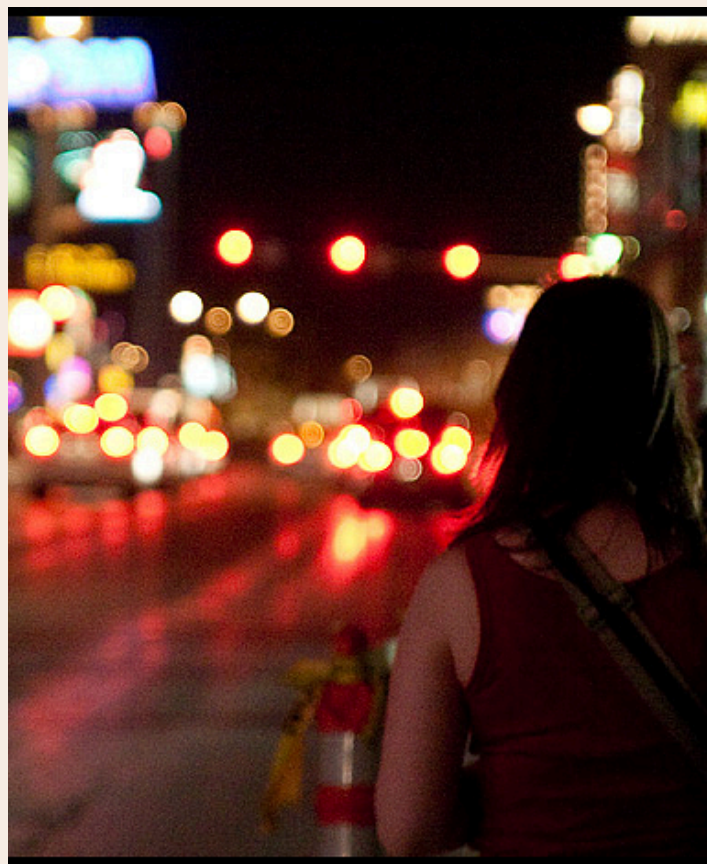
63% LARGER
Nevada's sex market compared
to New York (2nd largest)



**SRC:
SNHTTF/LVMPD;
THE HT
INITIATIVE,
NEVADA'S
ONLINE
COMMERCIAL
SEX MARKET**



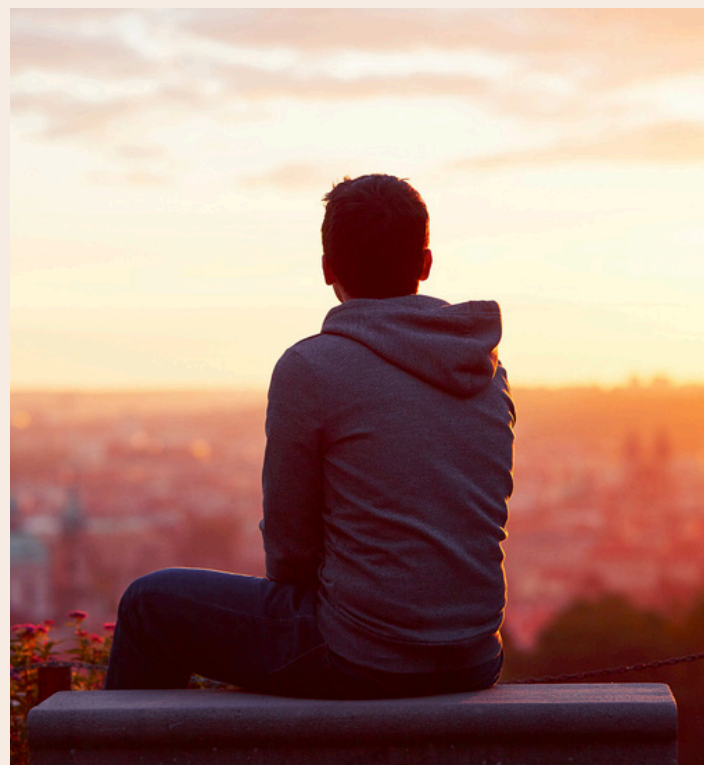
95% TEENS
Aged 14-17 years old



65% LOCAL
Minors identified



6 CHILDREN
Aged 13 years and younger



5 BOYS
Were identified



5,000 SOLD
People sold for sex in
Nevada monthly



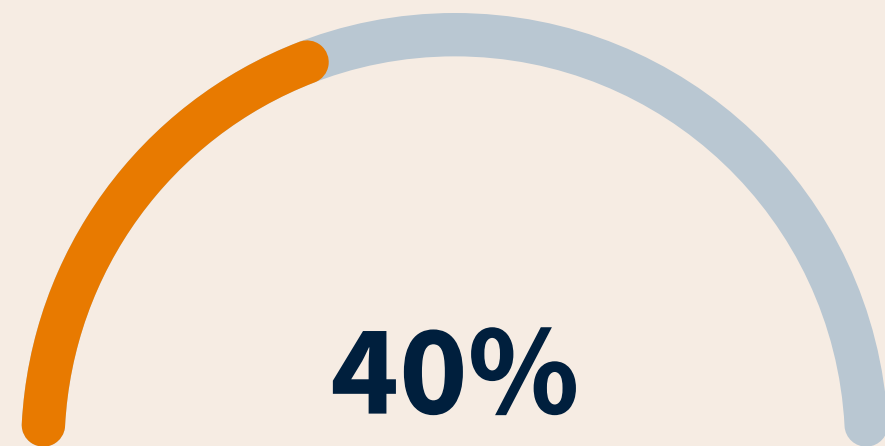
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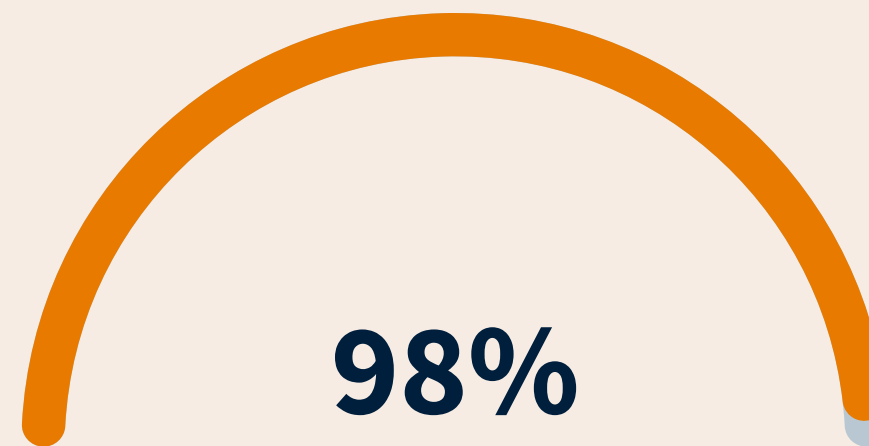
19% OF MISSING CHILDREN IN **FOSTER CARE** IN 2023 WERE LIKELY **SEX** **TRAFFICKING VICTIMS**

-National Center of Missing and Exploited Children

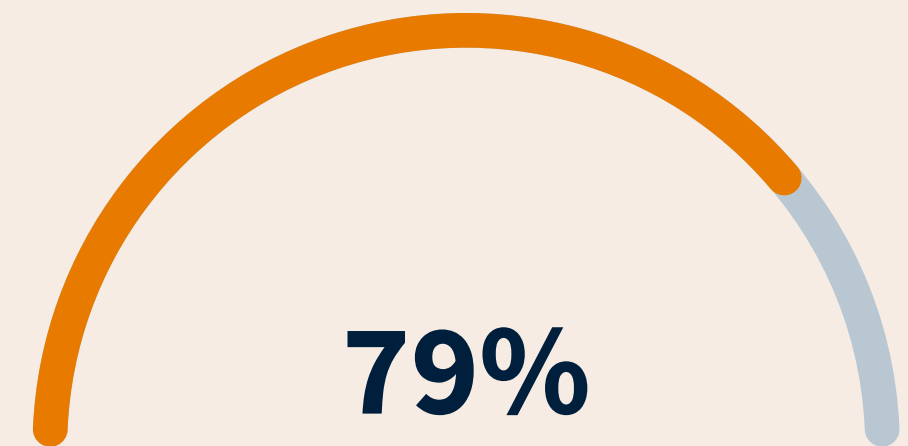
AT-RISK YOUTH IN CHILD WELFARE



**TRAFFICKED
PRIOR TO AGE
OF 18**



**SEX TRAFFICKING
CASES**



**OCCURRED WHILE
IN CHILD WELFARE
PLACEMENT**



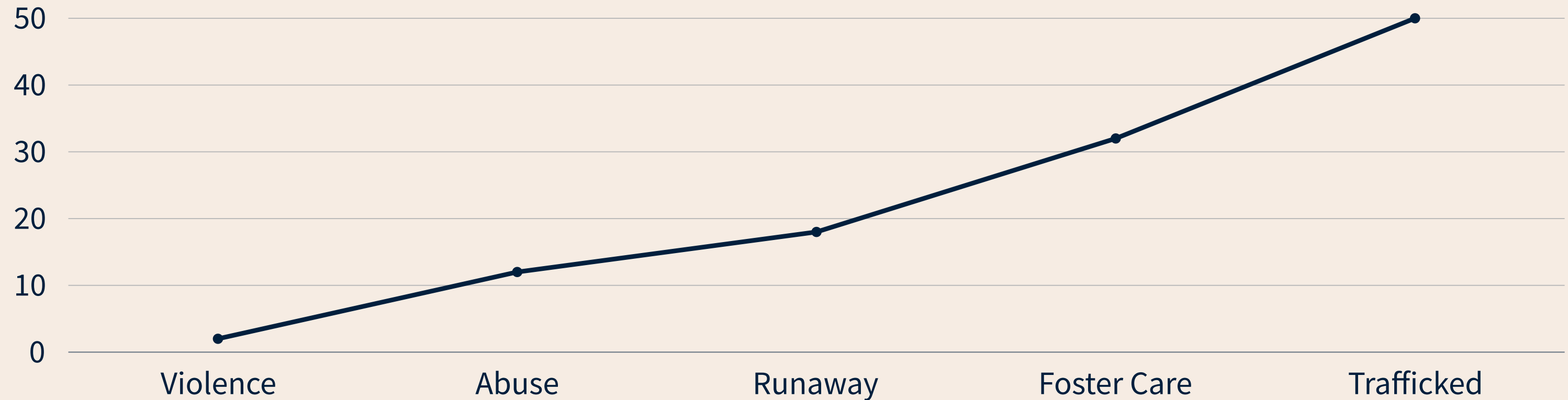
RISK FACTORS



VULNERABILITIES

CHAINS-OF-RISK MODEL

Explains how people become victims of sex trafficking



RISK FACTORS



LESS CHOICES



MORE VULNERABILITY

MOVING HURTS

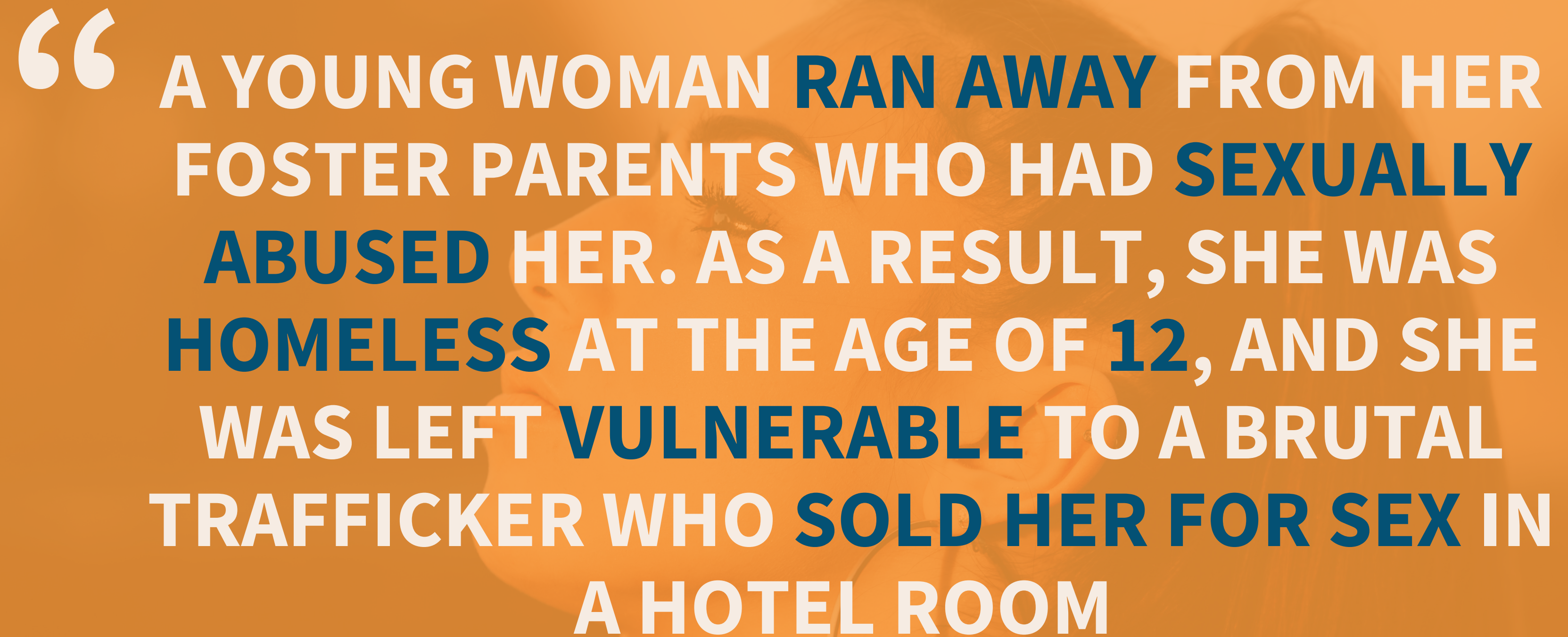
Frequent moves
harm kids
emotionally &
hinder bonding

FALLING BEHIND IN SCHOOL

These moves
often lead to
educational
struggles

LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES

Traps youth in
poverty & housing
insecurity



“ A YOUNG WOMAN **RAN AWAY** FROM HER FOSTER PARENTS WHO HAD **SEXUALLY ABUSED** HER. AS A RESULT, SHE WAS **HOMELESS** AT THE AGE OF **12**, AND SHE WAS LEFT **VULNERABLE** TO A BRUTAL TRAFFICKER WHO **SOLD HER FOR SEX** IN A HOTEL ROOM

-Labor and Sex Trafficking Among Homeless Youth: A Ten-City Study, 2016



RISK *factors*

HOMELESSNESS

POVERTY

NEGLECT

SEXUAL ABUSE

SYSTEM-INVOLVED

CHRONIC RUNAWAY

HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

SUBSTANCE USE/ABUSE



RISK *factors*

LGBTQ+

TEST BOUNDARIES + TAKE RISKS

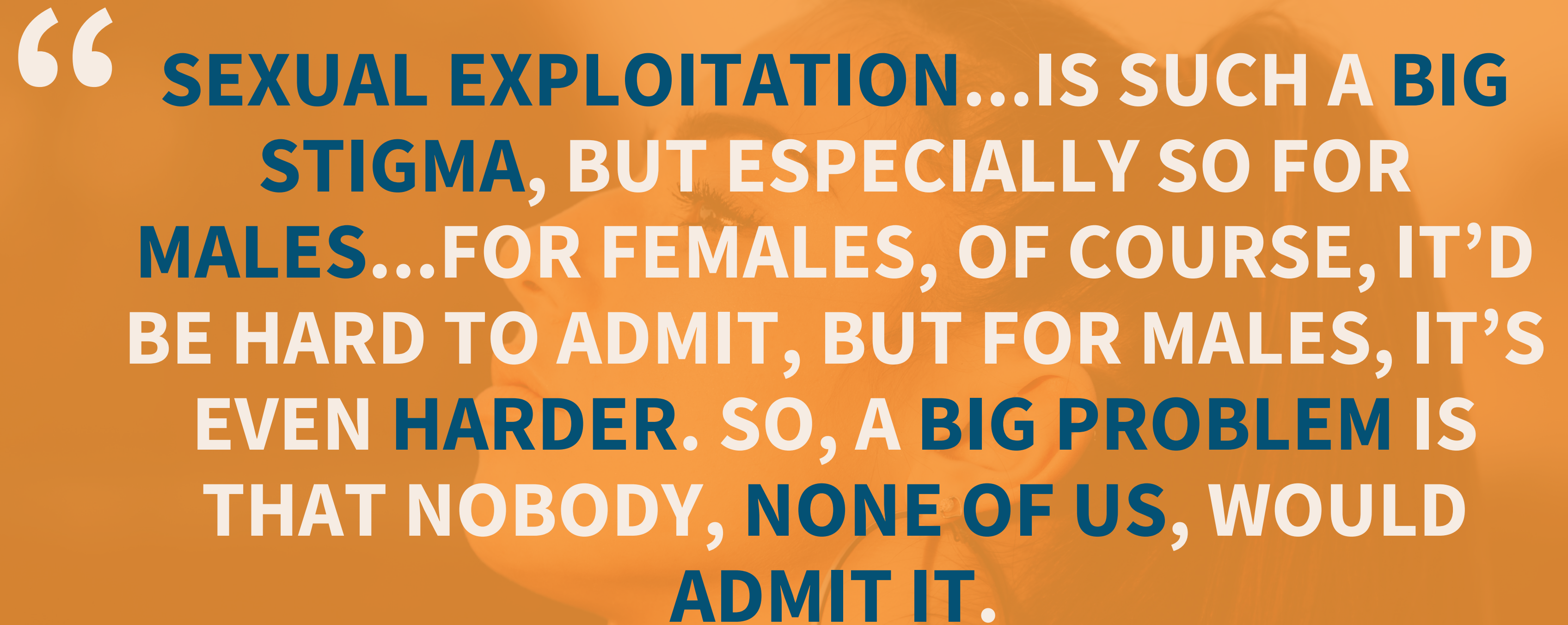
WANT MORE INDEPENDENCE

FEEL LIKE FOSTER PARENTS DON'T CARE

FEEL MISUNDERSTOOD

MINIMAL SUPERVISION

PERCEIVED AS BEING OLDER THAN THEY ARE



“ SEXUAL EXPLOITATION...IS SUCH A BIG STIGMA, BUT ESPECIALLY SO FOR MALES...FOR FEMALES, OF COURSE, IT'D BE HARD TO ADMIT, BUT FOR MALES, IT'S EVEN HARDER. SO, A BIG PROBLEM IS THAT NOBODY, NONE OF US, WOULD ADMIT IT.

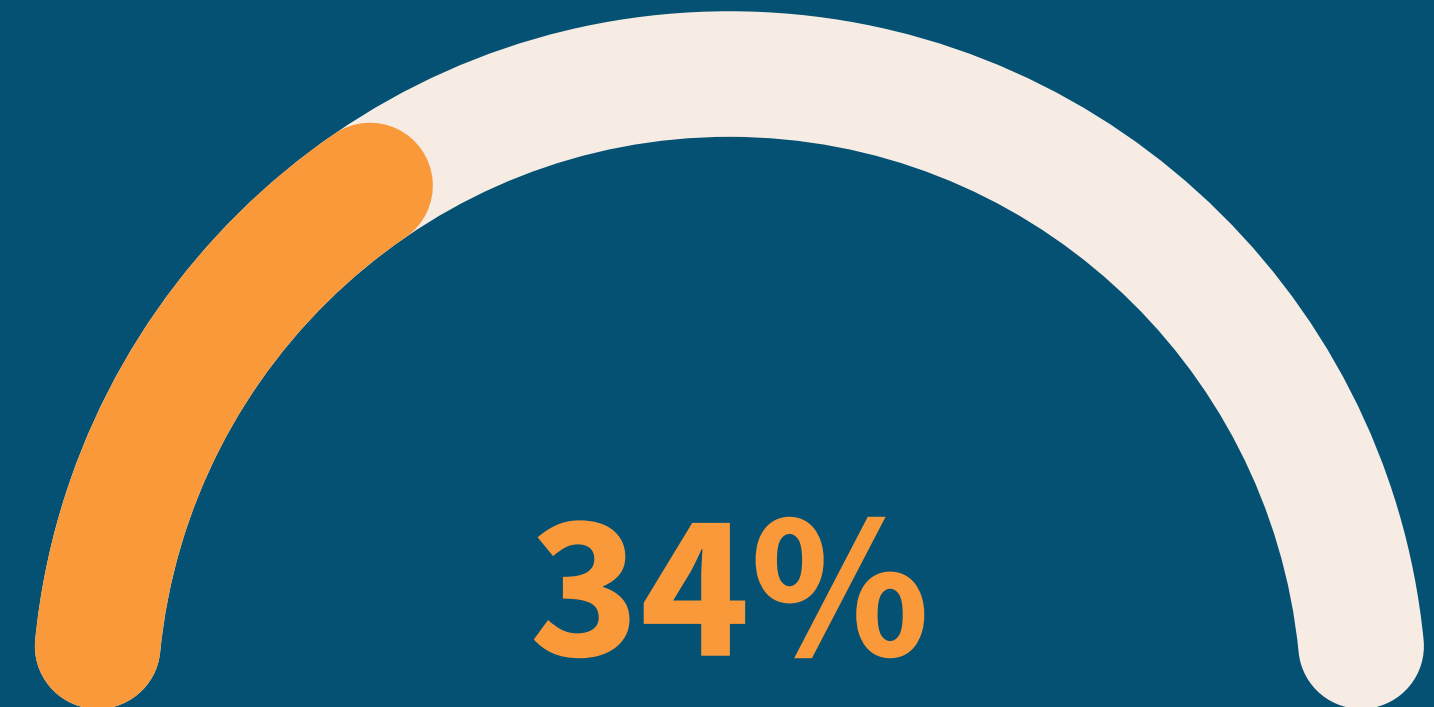
-Young man forced by girlfriend to have sex with her friends for money

HIGH CORRELATION

Children exploited through prostitution were also victims of child abuse



LEAVING HOME
INCREASES
RISK OF SEX
TRAFFICKING



01

FOSTER CARE

Frequent moves + lack of stability + no long-term support = high vulnerability

02

YOUTH WANT “THEIR PERSON”

They crave a stable, caring adult - a lasting connection.

VULNERABILITY
factor

**UNSTABLE +
UNATTACHED**

WHY YOUTH **RUN** FROM FOSTER CARE

01

RULE PUSHBACK

Dislike of rules of
their placement

02

ANGRY AT THE SYSTEM

Anger at CPS or
the child welfare
system

03

CRAVING FREEDOM

A desire to be on
their own

04

CAREGIVER CONFLICT

Frustration or
anger with
caregivers

WHY YOUTH **RUN** FROM FOSTER CARE

05

MISSING FAMILY

They desire to
see family

06

ROMANTIC PULL

They desire to be with
a romantic partner

A photograph of a woman and three children in a warm embrace, overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The woman is in the center, smiling, with her arms around two children. A third child is in the foreground, looking towards the camera. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**“ FOSTER CARE WAS THE
TRAINING GROUND TO
BEING TRAFFICKED**

-Survivor Leader

TRANSACTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS NORMALIZED



Youth believe they are being USED for FINANCIAL GAIN

Your involvement is
time-limited



**YOU ARE
THE
EXCEPTION**

A woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a denim jacket over a white shirt, is smiling and holding a blue clipboard. She is standing in front of a bookshelf filled with books. The image has a blue overlay.

INDICATORS

+

RED FLAGS



INDICATORS

red flags

NEW ITEMS THEY DON'T HAVE THE MEANS TO
PURCHASE

MORE SECRETIVE AND DEFIANT

GONE FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME + VAGUE ABOUT
WHEREABOUTS

CHRONICALLY RUNS AWAY

A DIFFERENT SET OF FRIENDS

**NOT IN SCHOOL/SIGNIFICANT GAPS IN
SCHOOLING**



INDICATORS

red flags

LOOKS TIRED AND SLEEPS AT UNUSUAL HOURS

SUDDEN CHANGE IN DRESS OR HOBBIES/MUSIC

DISPLAYING INAPPROPRIATE SEXUALIZED
BEHAVIOR/POSTINGS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

SIGNS OF MALNOURISHMENT

REFERENCES TO FREQUENT TRAVEL TO OTHER
CITIES

UNEXPLAINED PHYSICAL INJURIES

LIVING AT PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT

INDICATORS

red flags

HAS AN OLDER FRIEND OR ROMANTIC PARTNER

EXPRESSES INTEREST IN OLDER ADULTS

PARTNER APPEARS OVERLY CONTROLLING &
ABUSIVE

NEW TATTOO (BRANDING)

TRAUMA BONDING WITH TRAFFICKER

USE OF SLANG/EXPLOITATIVE TERMINOLOGY

SPEAKING OF MAKING MONEY FOR THEIR S.O.



INDICATORS

red flags

SHARP, SEVERE MOOD SWINGS

DEMEANOR IS DIFFERENT/PERSONALITY CHANGES

FEARFUL

ANXIOUS, NERVOUS, TENSE

DEPRESSED

LACK OF EMOTIONAL RESPONSIVENESS

SUBMISSIVE





INDICATORS

red flags

NIGHTMARES, FLASHBACKS, PHOBIAS, PANIC
ATTACKS

FEELINGS OF SHAME/GUILT

LOW SELF-ESTEEM

ACUTE STRESS

SELF-HARM

SUICIDAL IDEATION/MULTIPLE ATTEMPS

PTSD/COMPLEX TRAUMA

INDICATORS

red flags

HYPER-VIGILANCE OR HYPER-ALERTNESS

EMOTIONAL NUMBING

DISSOCIATION

LOSS OF INTEREST IN ONCE-ENJOYED ACTIVITIES



WHAT TRAUMA CAN LOOK LIKE

Kids may come across as:

- Deceptive
- Manipulative
- Uncooperative
- Protecting the perpetrator





**TRAFFICKERS
BUYERS
RECRUITMENT**

TRAFFICKERS

"honest heroes"



Traffickers see themselves as RESCUING youth from their circumstances

PREDATORS IN DISGUISE

TARGET VULNERABLE YOUTH

Runaways, foster youth, in
shelters/group homes, etc.

EXPLOIT BASIC NEEDS

Food, shelter, clothing, love,
friendship

CREATE OBLIGATION

make youth feel they
“owe” them

WHO THE TRAFFICKERS ARE

01

ROMANTIC PARTNER

Someone they
have a romantic
relationship with

02

OLDER ADULT FRIEND/MENTOR

A young adult
who appears to
befriend or
mentor them

03

PEER

A child their age
or in the same
grade

04

FAMILY MEMBER

Someone from
their family or
who have access
to them

05

GANG MEMBER

Wanted as a way
to make money
for the gang
family



“ YOU
control
DESTINIES,
own
SOULS, AND
guide
LIVES.

BUYERS ARE DRIVEN

by demand



High US demand for sex trafficking FUELS child exploitation

DEMAND DRIVEN BY

LARGE ADULT INDUSTRY

Sex sells is true - it's a billion dollar industry

SOCIETY THAT SEXUALIZES YOUTH

A culture that objectifies bodies & commodifies sex

MEDIA INFLUENCES

Societal factor that encourages consumerism of sex

“
...SHE GAVE UP HER
rights
WHEN SHE
ACCEPTED MY
money

SRC: RACHEL DURCHSLAG & SAMIR GOSWAMI, “DECONSTRUCTING THE DEMAND FOR PROSTITUTION: PRELIMINARY INSIGHTS FROM INTERVIEW WITH CHICAGO MEN WHO PURCHASE SEX,” CHICAGO ALLIANCE AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, 2008.



GROOMING

“seasoning”



Progression of POWER to CONTROL victims

TRAFFICKERS ENSNARE



LURE

How traffickers deceive & manipulate to recruit



TRICK

“Love bombing,”
affection, false promises



TRAP

Flipping the switch,
turning into dominance

SRC: O’CONNOR, M., & HEALY, G. (2006) “THE LINKS BETWEEN PROSTITUTION AND SEX TRAFFICKING: A BRIEFING HANDBOOK



“

I TELL HER

what

SHE

wants

WHAT SHE'S

dying

TO HEAR

“

HE

sees me.

HE

gets me.

HE

listens.



DEPENDENCE

isolation

Family + Friends = ENEMIES





“ I
convinced
HER
family & friends
THAT I WAS THE
good one.

“
HE MET MY
parents
AND THEY
really liked
HIM.



TAKING CONTROL

"flipping the switch"

Trafficker behavior goes from CARING + SUPPORTIVE to CONTROLLING + POSSESSIVE





“ I
told
HER THAT I'D
never
LET HER
go.

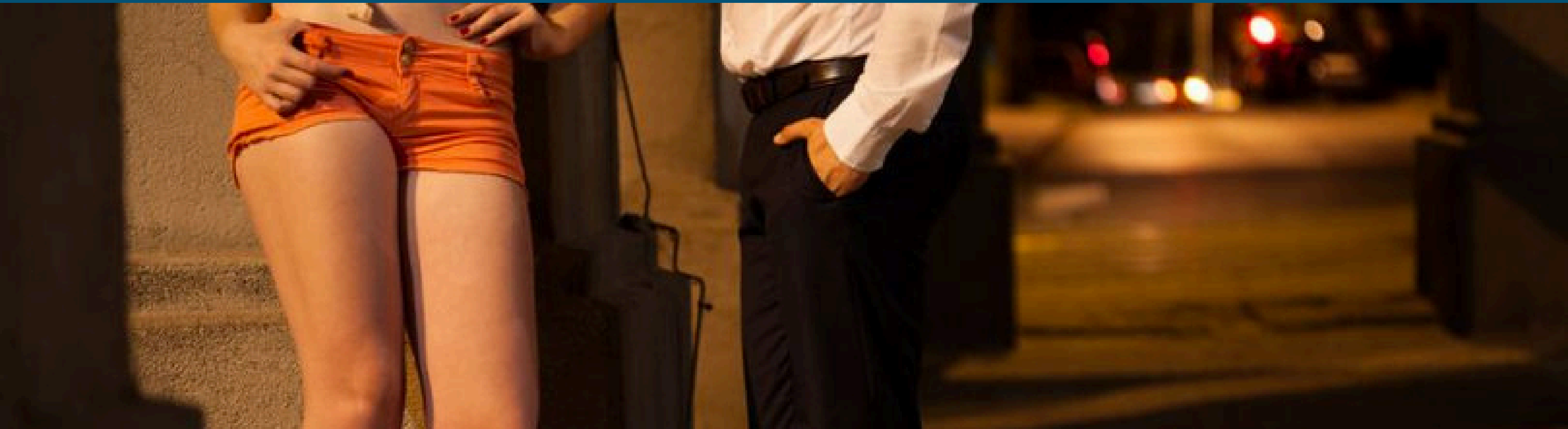
“ I THOUGHT,
HE
loves me
THAT MUCH
THAT
nothing
CAN SEPARATE
our love.



TOTAL DOMINANCE


complete dependence

Trafficker controls the victim and selling sex is “supporting” the relationship





“ I’D GIVE HER A
night off
AND RENT
movies
AND SPEND
quality
TIME TO
convince
HER THAT I
cared.



“ I THOUGHT,
THIS IS HOW
life
WILL BE
WHEN WE
finally
HAVE ENOUGH
money.



SAFETY PLANNING ENGAGEMENT ADVOCACY

KEEP
in mind



Your GOAL with your
child



CONNECTION
NOT
DISCLOSURE



**“ BE SOMEONE THAT THEY
CAN TURN TO...CREATE AN
ENVIRONMENT THEY FEEL
SAFE COMING BACK TO**

-Mentor of Dr. Anish Raj



WHAT SURVIVORS

revealed

FEAR IS A SIGNIFICANT BARRIER

**BE TRANSPARENT & CLEAR ABOUT YOUR
LIMITATIONS**

BE NICE = NONJUDGMENTAL, INQUISITIVE,
COMPASSIONATE, EMPATHETIC

**THEY DO WANT TO TALK ABOUT THEIR
SITUATION & IT'S NOT HARMFUL TO DO SO**

DON'T MAKE PROMISES

WHAT KIDS **REALLY** WANT

01

**ACTIVE
LISTENING**

02

**ENCOURAGE-
MENT**

03

**ACCEPTANCE
OF WHERE
THEY'RE AT**

04

RELIABILTY

FAILURE TO DISCLOSE



FEAR OF ARREST



FEAR OF OR LOYALTY TO
TRAFFICKER



FEELINGS OF SHAME OR
HUMILIATION



DO NOT SELF-IDENTIFY AS A VICTIM



IF THEY DO DISCLOSE

REASSURE YOUTH


Believe them, thank them, & focus on safety

NO PRESSURE

Don't press for details

REPORT MANDATORY

You are a MANDATED REPORTER. Ask if they want to make the report or if you should



"Words"
Have Power

WHAT YOU SAY + HOW YOU SAY IT MATTERS

LANGUAGE MATTERS

01

**CHOOSE
RESPECTFUL
LANGUAGE**

Don't imply they
are to blame

02

**AVOID
“PROFESSIONAL”
TERMS/JARGON**

e.g. trafficking,
exploitation, CSEC

03

**BE VICTIM-
CENTERED +
SHIFT BLAME**

Highlight
exploiter's actions

04

**HAVE A
PERSON-FIRST
FOCUS**

People first, not
labels

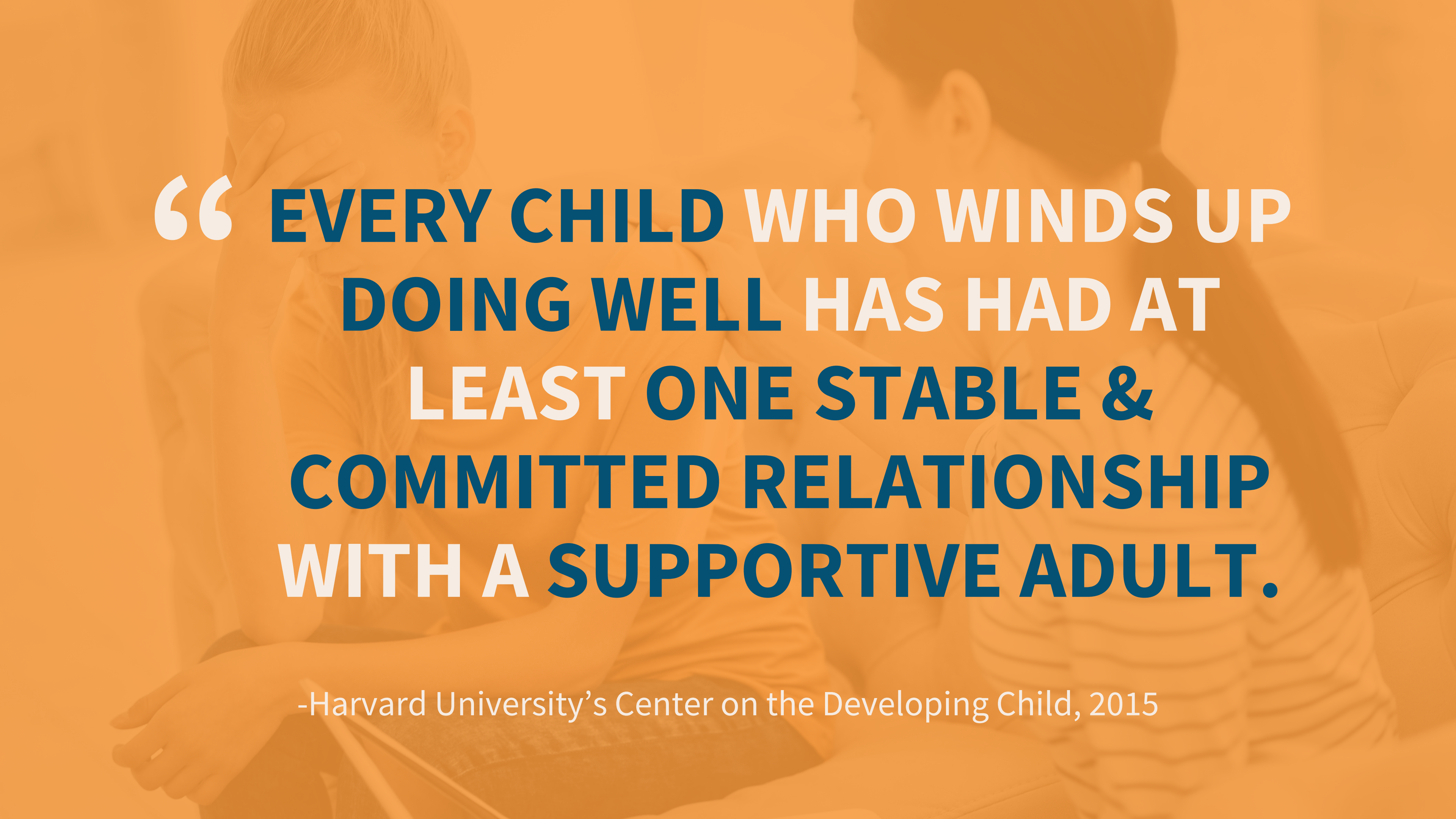
FOLLOW THE YOUTH'S LEAD

INSTEAD OF...

- Child pornography
- Pimp
- Prostituted
- Case
- Child Sexual Assault Victim
- Brothel
- Prostitute
- John/Trick

USE...

- Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)
- Trafficker
- Exploited
- Child/Parent/Family
- Child
- Illicit Massage Business
- Victim/Survivor/Overcomer
- Buyer



**“ EVERY CHILD WHO WINDS UP
DOING WELL HAS HAD AT
LEAST ONE STABLE &
COMMITTED RELATIONSHIP
WITH A SUPPORTIVE ADULT.**

-Harvard University's Center on the Developing Child, 2015

PROTECTIVE *factors*

GOOD COPING SKILLS + PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

ENGAGEMENT + CONNECTIONS IN TWO+ CONTEXTS: SCHOOL, WITH PEERS, ATHLETICS, EMPLOYMENT, RELIGION, CULTURE

PRESENCE OF MENTORS + SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS & INTERESTS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT WITHIN SCHOOL + COMMUNITY



SRC: O'CONNELL, BOAT, & WARNER, 2009

RESILIENCY *factors*

DESIRE TO LIVE

POSITIVE THINKING

MOTIVATION FOR CHANGE

ABILITY TO “BORROW STRENGTH FROM RISKS”

PRESENCE OF SUPPORT



BUILDING **TRUST** WITH YOUTH

01

MEET THEIR BASIC NEEDS

Food, shelter, &
safety come first

02

SLOW + STEADY

Be patient, trust
takes time

03

HONESTY IS KEY

Explain
confidentiality
limits clearly

04

WORK TOGETHER

Empower them,
don't control
them

05

STRENGTH + AGENCY

Help them
believe in
themselves

BUILDING **TRUST** WITH YOUTH

06

NOT THEIR FAULT

Reassure them
they're not to
blame

07

SENSITIVE TO FEAR

Support them +
understand their
anxieties

08

POSITIVE APPROACH

Don't speak ill of
the trafficker

09

REAL + CARING

Be genuine and
present

10

EMPOWER THEIR VOICE

Listen actively &
build their
confidence

BUILDING A SAFETY PLAN TOGETHER

RESPECT THEIR CHOICES

They know their situation
best

OPEN + SAFE COMMUNICATION

Let them know you're
always there to listen
(without judgment)

SAFETY WORDS (IF ALONE)

Create secret code words
for danger & what to do
(e.g. stop talking, call for
help)

LISTEN TO THEIR CONCERNS

Understand what scares
them

HELP THEM PLAN AHEAD

What resources do they
need (shelter, services, etc)?

STAY SAFE

Tips for youth

01

TRUST YOUR GUT

If something
feels off, it
probably is

02

TELL SOMEONE YOU TRUST

Talk to a friend,
family, or CASA
about suspicious
situations

03

SAFETY WORDS

Set secret words
with loved ones to
signal danger or
safety

04

KEEP YOUR STUFF

Don't let anyone
take your
documents or ID

STAY SAFE

Tips for youth

05

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Have a list of
safe contacts
without your
phone

06

BE PREPARED

Have a phone,
money (if possible),
& medicine on
hand

07

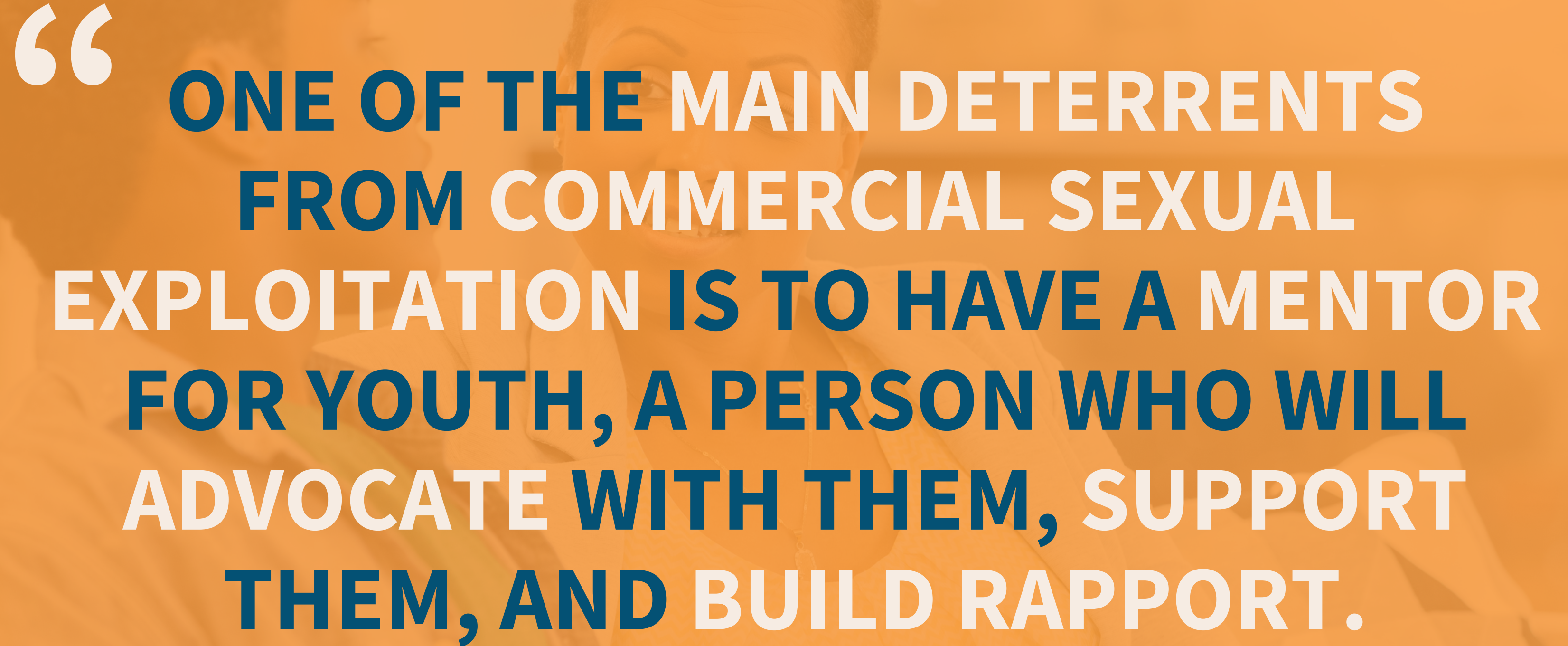
NEED A PLACE TO STAY?

Call 1-800-
RUNAWAY (24/7
confidential
support)

08

EMERGENCY?

Call 9-1-1
immediately



**“ ONE OF THE MAIN DETERRENTS
FROM COMMERCIAL SEXUAL
EXPLOITATION IS TO HAVE A MENTOR
FOR YOUTH, A PERSON WHO WILL
ADVOCATE WITH THEM, SUPPORT
THEM, AND BUILD RAPPORT.**

*-FAILING VICTIMS? CHALLENGES OF THE POLICE RESPONSE TO HUMAN
TRAFFICKING, 2019*

LOCAL HOTLINES

Northern Nevada

AWAKEN RENO

Phone: **775-393-9183**

Drop-In Center: **433 Spokane St.**

Reno 89512

Email: **infonv@awakenjustice.org**

REPORT CHILD ABUSE + NEGLECT

Washoe County (Reno/Sparks)

833-900-SAFE

REGIONAL HUMAN EXPLOITATION & TRAFFICKING UNIT (HEAT TEAM)

Office: **775-325-6470**

Email: **heat@reno.gov**

XQUISITE 24/7 HOTLINE

Phone: **775-434-7070**

Text: **504-434-7255**

Email: **info@xquisite.org**

LOCAL HOTLINES

Southern Nevada

VICE LOCAL HOTLINE

702-828-3455

(not monitored 24/7)

RISE ALERT HOTLINE

775-352-5081 (24/7)

**for trained*

professionals only

S. NEVADA HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

snhttf@lvmpd.com

REPORT CHILD ABUSE + NEGLECT

Clark County

(Las Vegas/Henderson)

702-399-0081

**All other counties*

*Afterhours + Weekends, call
local LE to make report*

833-571-1041



CASA HT
resources



THANK
you

702-305-5197

adia@onefamproject.org

onefamproject.org