

Identifying and Addressing Human Trafficking in Child Welfare Agencies: Casework Supervisors Group Interview Guide

This guide should be used with casework supervisors, or comparable staff designated by the agency as points-of-contact to provide information on screening, specialized service provision, and training on screening procedures.

Respondents and Titles:

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Organization:

Interviewer:

Date:

Introduction

Hello, I am _____ from RTI International. As you heard when you were asked to participate in this interview, we are conducting a study sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families to understand child welfare agency efforts to identify human trafficking, serve victimized children and youth, and train staff on screening for human trafficking. From your perspective as a leader, we would like to learn more about your agency's policies and practice in these three areas. I have some background based on a conversation from other interviews on screening, specialized services, and training in [STATE] and [SITE]; however, what is on paper doesn't necessarily tell the full story about how they are used in practice.

We are interested in your experiences and opinions. We are not expecting a single response to represent the agency or this group, so please speak up if you see things differently than your colleague.

Voluntary and Private to the Extent Permitted by Law

Did you have any questions about the information in the email I sent regarding your participation in this interview? (Review below, as necessary.)

- ☐ This interview is completely voluntary.
- ☐ We will take every precaution to maintain privacy of the information we collect from you. However, the nature of a group interview prevents us from guaranteeing confidentiality. (Please remember to respect the privacy of their fellow participants and not repeat what is said in the discussion to others.)
- ☐ In the future, information from this study may be securely shared with qualified researchers to help improve supports for children and youth who have experienced trafficking. The information that is shared will not include your name.

- ☐ When we summarize what is learned from this study, we will report on innovative practices and challenges described by different states and counties (jurisdictions). If you prefer that we not identify your state or county in relation to anything you describe, let us know and we will be sure that it is not reported. We will not use your name in any reports.
- ☐ With your permission, we will be audio recording the interview. This recording will be a backup to our written notes and only shared with the study team.
- ☐ You may choose to not answer certain questions or to not take part in the interview at any time.
- ☐ We expect this group interview to take about 90 minutes.

Permission to Record

Before I start recording, let me confirm that it's okay with everyone.

(Interviewer circle one.) YES NO

If all agree, begin audio recording the interview.

Staff Role/Context

- 1) First, would you each please tell me your name, your role here, and how long you have been in your current role?
 - a) **Probe if not clear:** Do you oversee a specialized human trafficking unit?
- 2) Before your current position, did you work in other positions for [SITE]? What about for another service organization (child advocacy center, etc.)?

If yes:

 - a) What positions?
 - b) How long were you in that role/those roles?

Screening Tools and Practice

First, I'd like to talk about screening tools and practice in [SITE]. As I mentioned, we have some information about these topics. However, what is on paper doesn't necessarily tell the full story about how they are used in practice. My goal is to better understand what screening looks like in practice.

- 3) In which situations would you say it is *most* important to screen children and youth for human trafficking? For example, during an investigation if specific risk indicators are identified, following a runaway episode, etc.?
 - a) Are there other situations in which screening should occur but may not, or other children and youth, who should be screened but may not be?
- 4) What factors do you think influence whether children and youth disclose trafficking victimization during a screening?
 - a) Does likelihood of disclosure vary according to the role of the person who does the screening?
 - b) How can the person who conducts the screening address these factors? **Probe: steps to take before screening, during screening.**
 - c) Before conducting a screening, how should the person conducting the screening build rapport with children and youth?
 - d) What are the potential barriers that may make disclosure less likely to happen?

- e) If the team believes that a child or youth is a trafficking victim, but the child does not disclose this in the screening, what are your next steps?
- 5) What are some of the ways in which trauma-informed practices can be incorporated into screening for human trafficking? **If needed, probe for:** conducting the screening in private, selection of who does the screening, not criticizing decisions made by the individual, etc.
 - a) What are the potential barriers that may make trauma-informed practices less likely to happen?
- 6) Are there circumstances in which a child or youth is identified as a *likely victim of human trafficking* other than by screening, e.g., law enforcement action, labor department action?
 - a) What other sources of information do you and your teams use in thinking about whether children and youth may have experienced trafficking or be at increased risk of trafficking?
 - b) If this determination is made, would a screening or other assessment still be conducted?
- 7) Are there aspects of the screening protocols, i.e., the way trafficking screening and identification is supposed to happen, that are challenging to implement in practice? What are the ways you have successfully worked around those challenges or altered your practice?
- 8) Thinking about screening and identification of human trafficking in [SITE]:
 - a) From your perspective, what are the strengths of the screening practices in [SITE]?
 - b) From your perspective, what are the areas for improvement, or gaps, in the screening practices used in [SITE]?
 - c) What, if anything, do you wish you could change?
 - d) To what extent are you able to get clarification on screening policy and practice when you need it?
 - e) Do you have opportunities to provide feedback or recommendation around screening practices? Do you feel like your feedback has an impact on practice?
- 9) How, if at all, has screening policy or practice changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Connections to Specialized Services

- 10) In the last year, what proportion of children and youth in your units were screened for human trafficking? If you don't know an exact number, please provide your best estimate.
 - a) In the last year, how many of these children and youth (or about how many) were identified through screening as likely victims of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]?
 - b) In the last year, how many of these children and youth (or about how many) were identified as being at risk of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]?
- 11) The next questions are about children and youth who are identified as *likely victims* of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL].
 - a) What, if anything, is communicated to children and youth who are identified through screening as *likely victims* of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]? Who is responsible for that communication?
 - b) What are other immediate next steps after children and youth are identified through screening as *likely victims* of human trafficking, e.g., hotline report, further assessment, staffing, referral to child advocacy center, or law enforcement involvement?

- 12) What is the process for connecting children identified as likely trafficking victims [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL] to specialized services?
- a) Is there a specialized case management protocol? How is it different from practice with other children and youth? How helpful have you found it?
- 13) Thinking of children and youth in your teams' caseloads who have been identified as likely victims of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL], what are the specialized services available to them?
- Probe for all specialized services and ask detailed questions for those identified.**
- Specialized case management protocols or specialized case managers
 - Specialized foster homes or group and residential placements
 - Clinical services
 - Medical and Dental
 - Mentoring and support programs
 - Other services (specify)
- a) Who provides these services?
- b) How are these resources different from those available to other children and youth?
- c) Does the availability of these services match the need for them?
- i) **If no:** Which services do you need more of and/or better quality of?
- d) Have caseworkers or youth reported any challenges accessing these services, e.g., Medicaid coverage, geographic location, funding?
- e) To what extent do available services match the needs of children and youth identified as likely trafficking victims [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]? **Probe if needed:** younger children, LGBTQ youth, males, intellectual disabilities, etc.
- f) From your perspective, are services acceptable to the children and youth who need them (including younger children, LGBTQ youth, males, children and youth with intellectual disabilities)?
- 14) Are there occasions when a child or youth identified as a likely trafficking victim [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL] doesn't receive any specialized services? If so, why might that happen? **Probe if needed:** child refuses, child goes missing, family refuses, capacity, funding, etc.
- 15) The next questions are about children and youth who are identified as being *at increased risk* of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL].
- a) **(If not identified through the screening tool):** What kinds of information are used to determine that children and youth are at increased risk of trafficking? (Screening tool and/or other information, e.g., case manager concerns, parent or provider concerns, law enforcement information.)
- b) What happens after children and youth are determined through screening to be at an increased risk of trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]? **Probe for the following:** documentation, education, safety planning, referrals to services, etc.
- c) Are specialized services available for children and youth determined to be *at increased risk* of trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]? What types of services? Educational opportunities to increase protective factors?

- 16) What kinds of specialized services might be provided to children and youth who do not disclose trafficking victimization during screening, but who you believe are very likely to be victims of trafficking?
- 17) Thinking about the process for connecting children and youth to specialized services, and specialized services for children and youth who are *likely victims of*, or at *increased risk of*, trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL] in [SITE]:
- From your perspective, how well does the process for connecting children and youth to services work?
 - From your perspective, what are the strengths of specialized services in [SITE]?
 - From your perspective, what are the areas for improvement, or gaps, in these services?
 - What kinds of services do you wish that [SITE] could provide?
- 18) How, if at all, has availability of or access to specialized services changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Training

- 19) Please tell me about training you have personally received on how to screen children and youth for human trafficking, which children and youth should be screened, and connecting children and youth to specialized services.
- What was included in the training?
 - Specifics of screening tool
 - Establishing rapport and ensuring trauma-informed practice
 - Reporting findings
 - Connecting children and youth to specialized services
 - Identifying children and youth who should be screened for human trafficking
 - Who delivered the training, and how was it provided, e.g., mode, stand-alone or within other training?
 - How long ago did this training occur?
 - Are there refresher trainings? If so, how often?
 - To what extent did the training meet your needs?
- 20) Did the caseworkers you supervise receive the same training? **Get specifics of their training, if different:**
- What was included in the training?
 - Specifics of screening tool
 - Establishing rapport and ensuring trauma-informed practice
 - Reporting findings
 - Connecting children and youth and youth to specialized services
 - Identifying children who should be screened for human trafficking
 - Who delivered the training, and how was it provided, e.g., mode, stand-alone or within other training?
 - How long ago did this training occur?
 - What proportion of caseworkers in your teams have received this training?
 - Are there refresher trainings? If so, how often?
 - To what extent did the training meet your teams' needs?

- 21) How is training reinforced in practice and supervision? Both training specific to human trafficking and training on trauma-informed practice, more generally?
- 22) In what areas could you, or your teams, benefit from additional training, e.g., dynamics of trafficking, trauma-informed assessment, how to engage victims??
- 23) Thinking about training related to human trafficking (including screening and specialized services):
 - a) From your perspective, what are the strengths of practice in [SITE]?
 - b) From your perspective, what are the areas for improvement, or gaps, in the training/training programs offered? **If needed, probe:** Are the right staff trained? Are they trained often enough? Does the training address what staff need to know about identifying and screening for human trafficking?
 - c) What, if anything, would you change if you could?
- 24) How, if at all, has training on human trafficking changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Wrap-Up

- 25) Is there anything I haven't asked on these topics that we should understand?
- 26) We expect to create a summary of what we learn from these interviews to be shared with participants and more broadly.
 - a) Thinking about the things we've discussed in this interview, are there topics where you'd be particularly interested in the experience of other child welfare agencies?
 - b) How would you like to receive this information, e.g., report, webinar, etc.?

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today.

The described collection of information is voluntary and will be used to improve supports for children and youth who have experienced trafficking. Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 90 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number and expiration date for the described collection are OMB #: XXXX-XXXX, Exp: XX/XX/XXXX. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Melissa Dolan, 230 W Monroe St., Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60606.