

Identifying and Addressing Human Trafficking in Child Welfare Agencies: Local Human Trafficking Coordinator¹ Interview Guide

This guide should be administered to regional and/or local child welfare human trafficking coordinators or comparable roles.

Respondent:
Title:
Organization:
Interviewer:
Date: _

Introduction

Hello, and thank you again for participating in the study. As we discussed, RTI International is conducting a study sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families to understand child welfare 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 [AGENCY's] policies and practices in these three areas. I have some information on practice within [STATE], but we are also looking for your perspective on these practices and their implementation in [SITE].

This interview guide is designed to be inclusive and to help make sure we capture your feedback on a variety of topics. If there are questions that you don't know the answer to, that's fine; just let us know and we can skip those questions or follow-up by email.

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, if necessary.)

- Participation in this interview is completely voluntary.
- The information we collect from you is private to the extent permitted by law. We keep your interview answers on a secure computer and all staff involved in this research signed a Privacy Pledge. 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.
- 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 audio record 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 interview to take about 90 minutes.

¹ Human Trafficking Coordinator for local agency may work at a regional level; if so, focus the interview on this site.

Permission to Record

Do I have your permission to record the interview? (Circle one.) YES NO
If yes, begin audio recording the interview.

Respondent Role/History

- 1) First, let me confirm your current position:
 - a) What are your main responsibilities, particularly with respect to human trafficking?
 - b) How long have you been in this role?
- 2) Before your current position, did you work in other positions in [AGENCY]?
 - ***If yes, ask:***
 - a) What positions?
 - b) Did these roles include human trafficking efforts?
 - c) How long have you been with [AGENCY] altogether?
 - d) Have you had any roles that included human trafficking efforts outside of [AGENCY]?
- 3) As background, can you describe the scope of your agency's focus with respect to human trafficking – does it include victimization by parents/caregivers only, someone acting in a parent/caregiver role, or any third party? Does it include engagement in commercial sex when there is no third party involved?

Screening Tools and Practice

Our next set of questions are about screening for human trafficking.

Our understanding is that in [STATE], children and youth are screened for human trafficking in the following situations [summarize], using [screening tool for each situation].

- ***If noted during State Coordinator interview:*** We also understand that practice varies within [STATE].
- To what degree does this describe practice in [SITE]? ***Note differences and probe for details, as needed, using questions below.***

If respondent agrees with practice as described by [STATE], continue to question 7). Otherwise, use questions 4)-6) to describe local practice.

- 4) When are children and youth screened for human trafficking, whether as part of a routine assessment or in response to specific events? For example, are they screened...?
 - At centralized intake call center or emergency services
 - During an investigation
 - While in child welfare custody (initial placement or periodically while in custody?)
 - Upon recovery from runaway/missing from care episode

- Other (specify)

Ask the following for each situation:

- a) Are all children and youth screened [in this situation], or only certain children and youth?
How do you decide, or what guidance do you follow?
- b) Who does the screening?

5) **Ask for each situation in which screening occurs:** What screening tool is used in this situation?

- **If tool(s) were sent in advance of the interview, ask any clarifying questions identified during review to capture the information below.**
 - **If tool(s) were not sent in advance of the interview, request that respondent share, but ask for each screening tool:**
- a) How would you describe this screening tool?
 - **Indicator (“red flag”) tool:** a set of behavioral, physical, and situational characteristics that may be associated with trafficking victimization
 - **Interview tool:** a set of questions asked of children and youth about experiences that are consistent with trafficking victimization
 - **Tiered approach:** a relatively brief indicator tool paired with a more in-depth interview used for further assessment
 - **Tailored tools:** interview tools used in specific situations, such as when a youth returns from a runaway episode
 - What does the output of the tool look like? Are there risk categories, scores, or some other result? **(Note moving forward: As able, substitute appropriate language from tool output.)**
 - b) Does this tool identify children and youth at *increased risk* of human trafficking, as well as *likely victims* of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]?
 - c) Does this tool focus primarily on sex trafficking, or is it intended to also identify labor trafficking that does not appear to be sexual in nature?
 - d) Does the tool include a written protocol that provides details on when and how screening is conducted, including measures to build rapport with children and youth and support trauma-informed practice?

Ask the following for each tool referenced in question 5):

- 6) Is this a tool that [AGENCY] developed, adapted from an existing tool, or did the agency adopt an existing tool without any changes?
 - a) What were the most important influences on [SITE’s] decision to [develop its own tool(s), adapt existing tool(s), and/or adopt existing tool(s)]?
 - b) Who led the process, and who was involved, i.e., state child welfare agency, local agency/ies, and/or human trafficking task forces?

- c) *If developed own tools*: What was [SITE's] process for developing its screening tool(s)? Has it been updated over time?
- d) *If adapted an existing tool*: What kinds of adaptations were made, and why? Has it been updated over time?
- e) *If adopted an existing tool*: What factors led [SITE] to select this tool? Is it used as intended by the developer?
- f) *All*: What kind of work, if any, has been done to validate or evaluate the tool(s)?

Resume for all respondents

For the following questions, focus on a global assessment of screening practice, but identify strengths or weaknesses associated with specific tools, if mentioned.

- 7) Thinking about *screening tools* used in [SITE]:
 - a) From your perspective, what are the strengths of the tool(s) used?
 - b) From your perspective, what, if anything, are weaknesses of the tool(s) used?
 - c) From your perspective, do screening protocols provide adequate guidance for staff who use the tool? What, if anything, would you add or change to the protocol?
 - d) If [SITE] were choosing or developing its screening tool today, what would be your recommendation, and why?
- 8) Thinking about *screening practice* in [SITE]:
 - a) From your perspective, what have been the most significant challenges in implementing screening for human trafficking? What has supported implementation?
 - b) From your perspective, what are the strengths of screening practices in [SITE]?
 - c) From your perspective, what are the areas for improvement, or gaps, in the screening practices used in [SITE]?
 - d) What, if anything, would you change if you could?
 - e) Do you expect any changes to the screening practices you described, within the next year or longer term?
- 9) How, if at all, has screening policy or practice changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Screening Outcomes and Connections to Specialized Services

Our next questions are about screening outcomes and connecting children and youth to specialized services after they are identified as likely victims of, or at increased risk of, human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL].

If state leader provided regional and/or local screening data, confirm numbers; otherwise, ask question 10).

- 10) Does [SITE] keep data on screenings and findings?
 - ***If yes, ask***: Are there reports or summaries that can be shared, e.g., by year, total screenings conducted, unique children and youth screened, outcomes?

- **If no, say:** Please give us your best estimates for the next few questions. We are going to ask about the last 12 months, but if you don't have estimates for that timeframe, the last calendar or fiscal year would work as well. Just let us know the timeframe you are referencing.
- a) In the last year, how many unique children and youth were screened for human trafficking?
- b) In the last year, how many screenings for human trafficking were conducted?
- c) In the last year, how many children and youth were identified through screening as *likely* victims of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]?
- d) **If screening tool(s) used in [STATE] identify children and youth at increased risk of human trafficking, ask:** In the last year, how many children and youth were identified through screening as being at increased risk of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]?

Our understanding is that in [STATE], **recap information from the State Coordinator on next steps after screening and how children are connected to services after being identified as likely victims of human trafficking.**

- **If noted during State Coordinator interview:** We also understand that practice varies within [STATE].
- To what degree does this describe practice in [SITE]? **Note differences and probe for details, as needed, using questions below.**

If respondent agrees with practice as described by [STATE], continue to question . Otherwise, use questions 11)-a) to describe local practice.

- 11) What happens after children and youth are determined through screening to be *likely victims* of trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL], e.g., hotline report, further assessment, staffing, child advocacy center, or law enforcement involvement?
- a) Who is responsible for follow-up after likely trafficking is identified?
- 12) Does the [STATE] have specialized services for children and youth identified as *likely victims* of trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]?
- **If no, skip to question 13).**
 - **If yes, ask the below:**
- a) What is [SITE's] process for connecting children and youth identified as *likely victims* of trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL] to specialized services?
- b) Is a specialized case management protocol used?
- **If reviewed in advance, ask any clarifying questions.**
 - **Otherwise, request a copy and ask:**
- i) Can you describe what it specifies and how it varies from practice for children and youth who are not identified as likely trafficked [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]?
- ii) Does this protocol specify assignment to a case manager with additional training?
- c) What additional or specialized services are likely to be recommended, e.g., specialized placements, more intensive case management, and other services?

Resume for all respondents

13) Thinking of children and youth who have been identified as *likely* victims of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL] in [SITE], what are the specialized services available to them? **Probe for all specialized services and ask detailed questions for those identified.**

- Specialized case management
 - Specialized foster homes or group and residential placements
 - Clinical services
 - Mentoring and support programs
 - Medical and Dental
 - Other services (specify)
- a) From your perspective, does the availability of services match the need for them? What services do you need more of and/or better quality of?
- b) From your perspective, are they geographically accessible to children and youth in [SITE]? If no, what areas do not have access to services, and which services?
- c) From your perspective, are services appropriate for the children and youth who need them (including younger children, LGBTQ youth, males, and children and youth with intellectual disabilities)?
- d) From your perspective, are services acceptable to the children and youth who need them (including younger children, LGBTQ youth, males, and children and youth with intellectual disabilities)?
- e) What kinds of services are available for children and youth identified as likely victims of labor trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]?

Our understanding is that in [STATE], **recap information from the State Coordinator on response to children identified as being at increased risk of human trafficking.**

- **If noted during State Coordinator interview:** We also understand that practice varies within [STATE].
- To what degree does this describe practice in [SITE]? **Note differences and probe for details, as needed, using the questions below.**

If respondent agrees with practice as described by [STATE], continue to question 15). Otherwise, use question 14) to describe local practice.

14) What is [SITE's] response to children and youth considered to be at *increased risk* of 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 [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL], e.g., case manager concerns, parent or provider concerns, law enforcement information?
- b) What happens after children and youth are determined to be at increased risk of trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]? **Probe for the following:** documentation, assessment, education, safety planning, or referrals to services.

- 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?
- d) Are these children and youth re-screened or assessed after any period?
- 15) Do you expect any changes within the next year to the specialized services you described?
- 16) 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]:
- a) From your perspective, how well does the process for connecting children and youth to services work?
- b) From your perspective, what are the strengths of specialized services in [SITE]?
- c) From your perspective, what are the areas for improvement, or gaps, in the specialized services in [SITE]?
- d) What kinds of services do you wish that [SITE] could provide?
- 17) How, if at all, has availability of or access to specialized services changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Training

Finally, we have some questions about training. This includes training on conducting screenings for human trafficking, identifying children and youth who should be screened, and connecting children and youth to specialized services.

Our understanding is that in [STATE], **recap information from the State Coordinator on training for staff who conduct screening for human trafficking and training on identifying children who should be screened.**

18)
Do

- **If noted during State Coordinator interview:** We also understand that practice varies within [STATE].
- To what degree does this describe practice in [SITE]? **Note differences and probe for details, as needed, using the questions below.**

If respondent agrees with practice as described by [STATE], continue to question 21). Otherwise, use questions 18)-20) to describe local practice.

staff who conduct screening for human trafficking receive training on the tool and on screening procedures?

- a) **If no, ask:** Are you aware of any plans to offer training on screening for human trafficking? **Skip to question 20).**
- b) Is the training on how to conduct screening mandatory for *staff who conduct screenings*? (Reference specific types of personnel named in **question 4).**)
- c) When is the training offered, e.g., pre-service only, annually?

- d) Is this a training that [AGENCY] developed, adapted from an existing training, or did the agency adopt an existing training?
- e) Does the training offer:
- i) An introduction to human trafficking more generally? If not, is that training a pre-requisite training in order for them to be trained on screening?
- 19) We would like to be able to describe training for staff who conduct screening in [SITE].
- ***If training materials were sent in advance of the interview, ask any clarifying questions identified during review.***
 - ***If training materials were not sent in advance of the interview, request materials and ask:***
How would you describe the training?
 - a) How is the training delivered (instructor-led, online, etc.)?
 - b) What guidance does the training provide as to when and how to conduct screenings?
 - c) Does the training include specific instructions on how to incorporate trauma-informed practice into the screening?
 - d) What guidance does the training provide about how to report screening results for children and youth who are likely trafficking victims [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]? At increased risk of trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]?
 - e) Does the training include content on placement and service options for children and youth who are likely trafficking victims [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]?
- 20) In addition to training for staff who conduct screening, do existing trainings on human trafficking include information on identifying children and youth who should be screened for human trafficking?
- ***If no, skip to question 21).***
 - a) What types of personnel receive this training? ***Probe, as necessary, for different types of personnel, such as:***
 - Agency directors
 - Casework supervisors
 - Investigative caseworkers
 - Caseworkers who provide ongoing case management and services
 - Public agency foster parents
 - Public agency group and residential care staff
 - Private agency foster parents
 - Private agency group and residential care staff
 - Other agency staff, e.g., juvenile justice, law enforcement, judges, parole/probation, TANF, SNAP
- Ask the following for each type of personnel identified:***
- b) Is the training integrated into more general training on human trafficking, or is it offered as a standalone?
 - c) Who delivers the training?
 - d) What is the mode of the training, e.g., integrated into other training, required or optional, etc.?
- 21) Do staff receive training on connecting children and youth who are identified as likely victims of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL] to specialized services?
- a) Which staff receive this training? Is it mandatory or optional?
 - b) When is the training offered? (Pre-service, annually?)

- c) Is it part of a more comprehensive training or stand-alone?
- d) Is this a training that [AGENCY] developed, adapted from an existing training, or did the agency adopt an existing training?
- e) What is included in this training? **Probe for: selecting services/providers for children and youth who are trafficked, referral processes, delivery.**

22) Thinking about training related to human trafficking, are there any resources to support this training beyond the typical resources (funds) used to train staff more generally?

Resume for all respondents.

Skip if state provided regional or site-specific numbers.

- 23) Does [SITE] track how many staff are trained on screening? If yes, can you share data on how many staff have been trained on the screening protocols, e.g., each year, in total, etc.?
- **If yes, ask:**
 - a) Do these numbers include contact staff?
 - b) Do these numbers reflect a “Train the Trainer” approach?
 - If no, ask for best estimates for the questions below. Note: We are going to ask about the last 12 months, but if you don’t have estimates for that timeframe, the last calendar or fiscal year would work as well. Just let us know the timeframe you are referencing.
 - c) In the last year, how many staff members have been trained on how to conduct screenings?
 - d) In the last year, how many staff members in [AGENCY] have been trained on identifying children and youth who should be screened?
 - i) What types of staff or agencies does that include, e.g., juvenile justice, law enforcement, schools?
 - e) In the last year, how many staff members from other agencies have been trained on identifying children and youth who should be screened?
 - f) In the last year, how many foster parents have been trained on identifying children and youth who should be screened?
 - g) In the last year, how many staff have been trained on specialized services for children and youth who are identified as being at increased risk of human trafficking or are likely victims of human trafficking [or LANGUAGE FROM TOOL]?
- 24) Thinking about training on 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?
 - c) In what areas could staff benefit from additional skills/knowledge/support, e.g., dynamics of trafficking, trauma-informed assessment?
 - d) What, if anything, would you change if you could?
- 25) How, if at all, has training on human trafficking changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Wrap-Up

- 26) Is there anything I haven't asked on these topics that we should understand?
- 27) I look forward to reviewing the information that you offered to share with us. **Recap materials or information offered during the interview.**
- You can send this information/material to us at [email].
 - I'd appreciate receiving it by [DATE] so we can review it with other information from other sites.
- 28) 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.