



Trafficking in the Northland: Trends in Sex Trafficking and Exploitation

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Caution

- ▶ Feel free to step away as needed
- ▶ For the purposes of this presentation I will be using the example of male buyers and female victims
- ▶ Save questions until the end

What are we talking about today?

- ▶ Basics of sex trafficking/exploitation
- ▶ National trends
- ▶ Local trends
- ▶ Minnesota's response
- ▶ What you can do
- ▶ Additional resources

Sex trafficking vs sexual exploitation

Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Commercial Sexual Exploitation occurs when someone exchanges sex for anything of value or a promise of something of value such as money, drugs, food, shelter, rent, or higher status in a gang or group. Another person may or may not be involved in arranging this exchange.

Sex Trafficking

Sex trafficking is a type of commercial sexual exploitation that involves the prostitution of an individual in which a third person – not the buyer or the victim – facilitates or profits.
MN Statute 609.321-609.322.

I thought it was fast money, but it felt like paid rape.



He said he'd post my nude photo online if I didn't do what he said.



I thought I was meeting up with a cool guy online, but he wanted to pay me for sex.



He forced me to have sex with 10 men a day to make money for us.



I was hungry and cold so I traded sex for a place to stay.



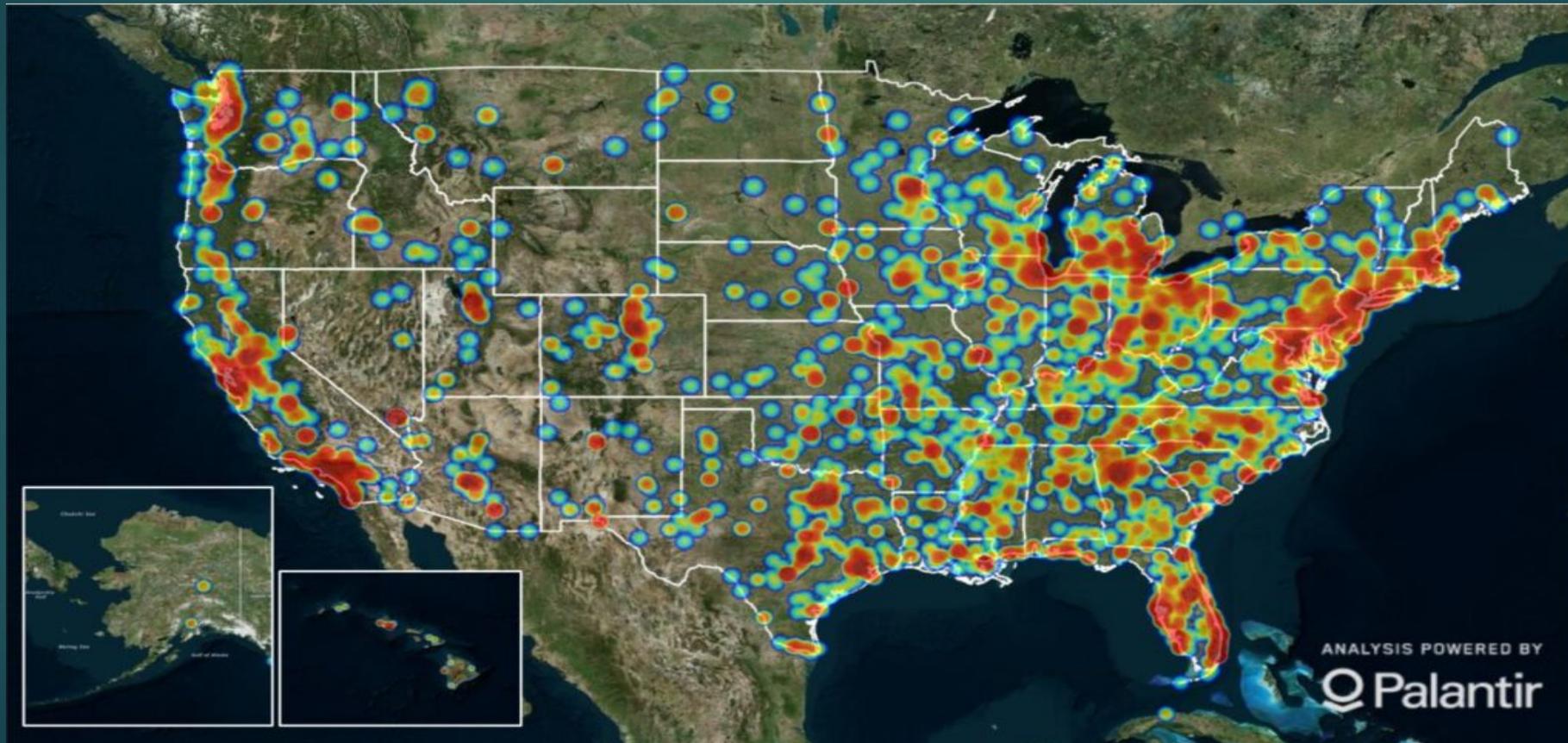
I was doing what I had to do to survive.



If you are 24 or under and need help, we are here when you are ready. TEXT: 612-399-9995

National Trends 2019

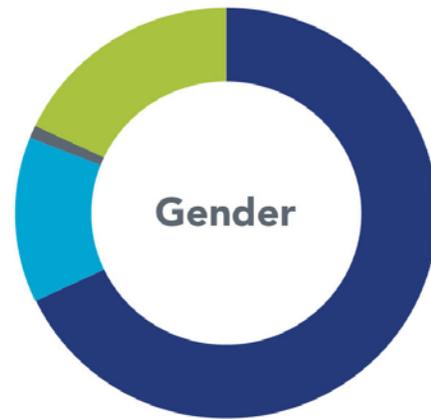
Locations of investigated human trafficking
"situations"



2019 National Demographics



Adult **1,435**
Minor **5,359**
Unknown **15,532**

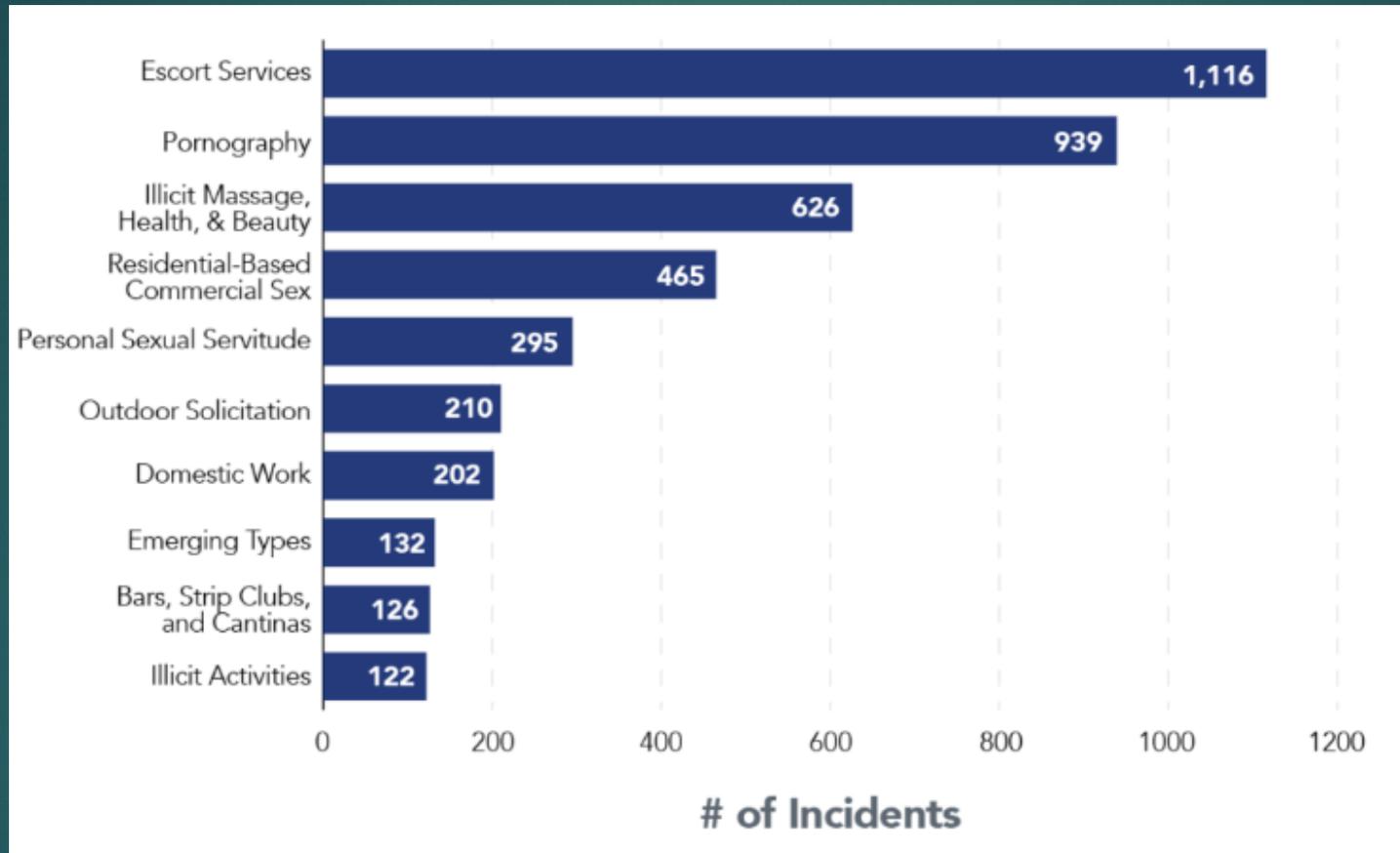


Female **15,222**
Male **3,003**
Gender minorities **135**
Unknown **3,966**



U.S. citizen/Lawful permanent resident **1,388**
Foreign national **4,601**
Unknown **16,337**

Top Trafficking Situations



Top Risk Factors

SEX TRAFFICKING

Substance Use Concern **510**

Runaway Homeless Youth **473**

Recent Migration/Relocation **416**

Unstable Housing **366**

Mental Health Concern **334**



People may be **more** at risk to be trafficked if they...

- Have mental health issues and/or chemical dependency
- Have physical and/or cognitive disabilities
- Are children or youth
- Are persons of color
- Experience historical trauma
- Are homeless
- Are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, gender non-conforming
- Lack immigration status
- Are in trouble with the law
- Are runaways
- Experience poverty

Most Common Recruitment Tactics

SEX TRAFFICKING

Intimate Partner/Marriage Proposition **1,067**

Familial **981**

Job Offer/Advertisement **515**

Posing as a Benefactor **438**

False Promises/Fraud **353**



Recruitment Tactics



Online recruitment increased a significant 22%. During the lockdowns, as the proportion of victims from common recruitment sites such as strip clubs (-46%), foster homes (-70%) and schools (-38%) went down drastically, the internet was reported as the top recruitment location for all forms of trafficking.



Most notably, the analysis found a significant increase in the proportion of potential victims for whom Facebook and Instagram were the sites for recruitment into trafficking (120%). **There was a 125% increase in reports of recruitment on Facebook over the previous year and a 95% increase on Instagram.**

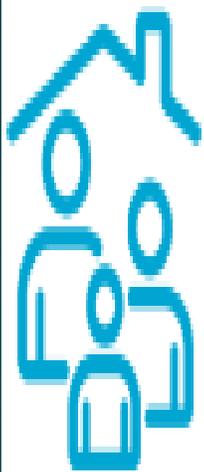
Recruitment Cont.



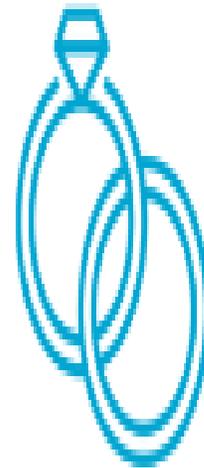
In 2020, among all forms of trafficking whose recruitment relationships were known (4,142), the proportion of victims recruited by a family member or caregiver increased significantly – **from 21% of all victims in 2019 to 31% in 2020 – a 47% increase.**



In addition, the proportion recruited by intimate partners jumped 21% – **from 22% in 2019 to 27% in 2020.**



42% were brought into trafficking by a member of their own families.



39% were recruited via an intimate partner or a marriage proposition.

Most Common Types of Force, Fraud, or Coercion

SEX TRAFFICKING

Induces/Exploits Substance Abuse Issues **1,898**

Physical Abuse **1,780**

Sexual Abuse **1,184**

Intimidation - Displays/Threatens Weapons **1,102**

Emotional Abuse - Intimacy Related **1,019**



Potential Signs of Sexual Exploitation

- Youth avoids eye contact, looks uneasy, is anxious or hostile
- Youth is wearing clothing that seems inappropriate for the weather and/or setting
- They are with an over controlling or abusive older person
- Youth lacks control over their schedule, money, proof of identification, and personal items
- Signs of physical trauma, including bruises, cuts, burns, scars
- Lying about age, where they've been, who they've been with, etc.
- May be carrying a lot of cash, prepaid credit cards, multiple phones

Minnesota 2019 Statistics

Victims
Identified

322

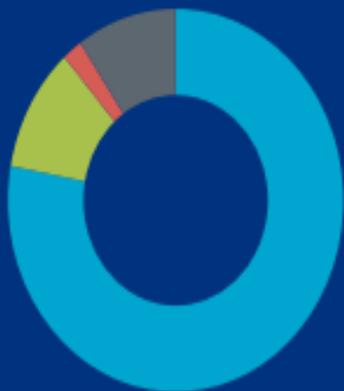
Traffickers
Identified

32

Trafficking
Businesses

10

104 Trafficking Cases



Sex
Trafficking
81 Cases

Labor
Trafficking
11 Cases

Sex & Labor
Trafficking
2 Cases

Form Not
Specified²
10 Cases

Mapping the Demand: Sex Buyers in Minnesota

Sex buyers are predominantly middle aged, white, married men.

Most sex buyers use the internet to find a provider/victim.

Martin, et al, Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC), U of M
August 2017



Feb 19th, 2021

- ▶ 7 people were charged following arrests in Itasca County
- ▶ The Itasca County Attorney's Office said the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension's Human Trafficking Investigators Task Force led a three-day operation in partnership with the Itasca County Sheriff's Office and the TRUST Task Force from Wednesday through Friday.
- ▶ Authorities said the suspects talked with undercover agents and investigators on several sex advertisement websites. Investigators then arrested the suspects as they arrived at arranged meeting places.

<https://www.fox21online.com/2021/02/19/seven-arrested-charged-in-itasca-county-human-trafficking-operation/>

Cont.

- ▶ Male, age 45, of Grand Rapids — charged with solicitation of a person believed to be a minor and fourth-degree DWI.
- ▶ Male, age 32, of Mt. Pleasant, Texas — charged with solicitation of a person believed to be a minor.
- ▶ Male, age 44, of Sawyer — charged with solicitation of a person believed to be a minor.
- ▶ Male, age 56, of Grand Rapids — charged with solicitation of a person believed to be a minor.
- ▶ Male, age 53, of Rolla, Mo. — charged with carrying a pistol without a permit and solicitation to engage in prostitution.
- ▶ Male, age 54, of Goodridge — with communication of sexually explicit materials to a minor.
- ▶ Male, age 20, of Chisolm — charged with solicitation of a person believed to be a minor.

June 25th-26th Trafficking Sting

- ▶ 7 men, including two Line 3 workers, were arrested in another sex trafficking sting.
- ▶ 5 of the men were from Minnesota, 2 were from out-of-state.
- ▶ The sting operation was conducted by the Minnesota BCA, TRUST taskforce, Beltrami county Sheriff's office, and the Bemidji PD.

<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2021/07/03/six-men-including-two-line-3-workers-arrested-in-human-trafficking-sting>

2019 MN Student Survey

Have you ever traded sex or sexual activity to receive money, food, drugs, alcohol, a place to stay, or anything else?

NO

YES

1.4% answered "yes"

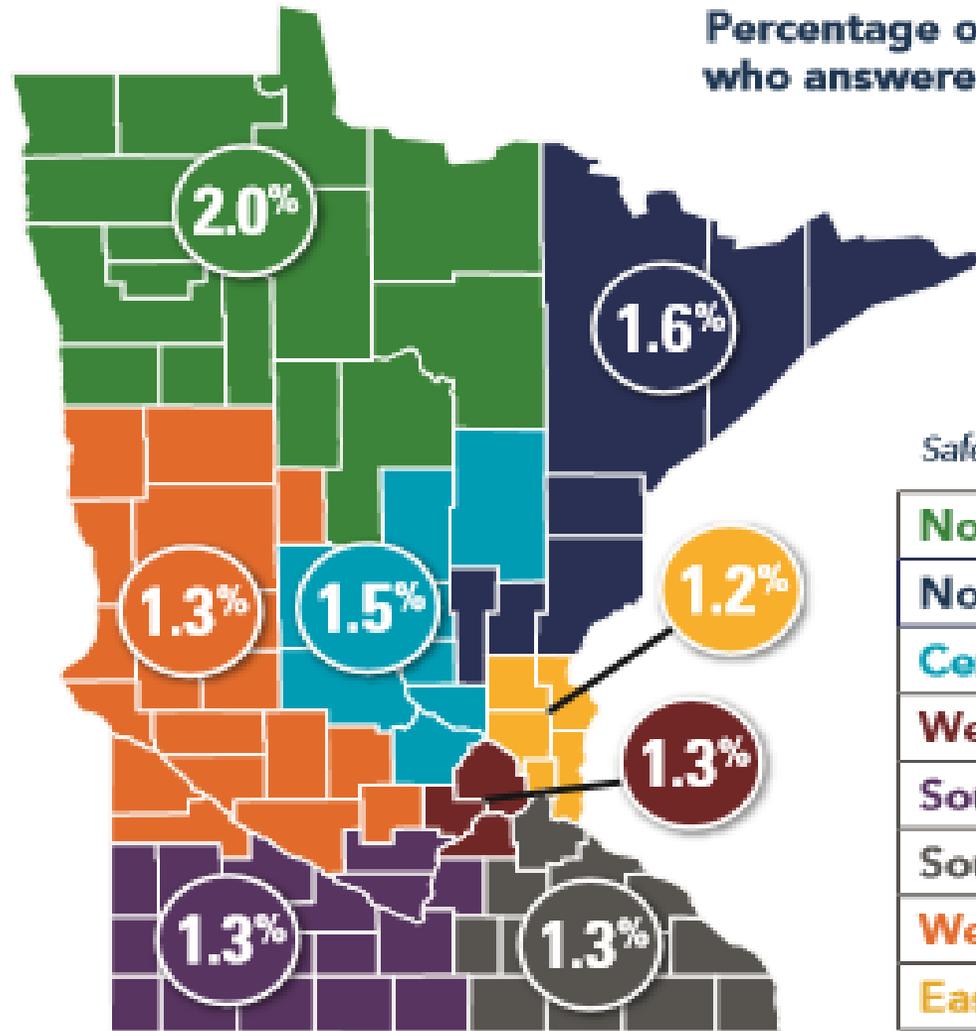
At least 5,000 YOUNG PEOPLE IN MINNESOTA
HAVE TRADED SEX¹

This is likely an underestimate because the MSS is completed by students enrolled in school. It does not include youth who were not in school on the day of the survey or who do not attend school. Young people may also be reluctant to answer "yes" for many reasons, including shame or fear.

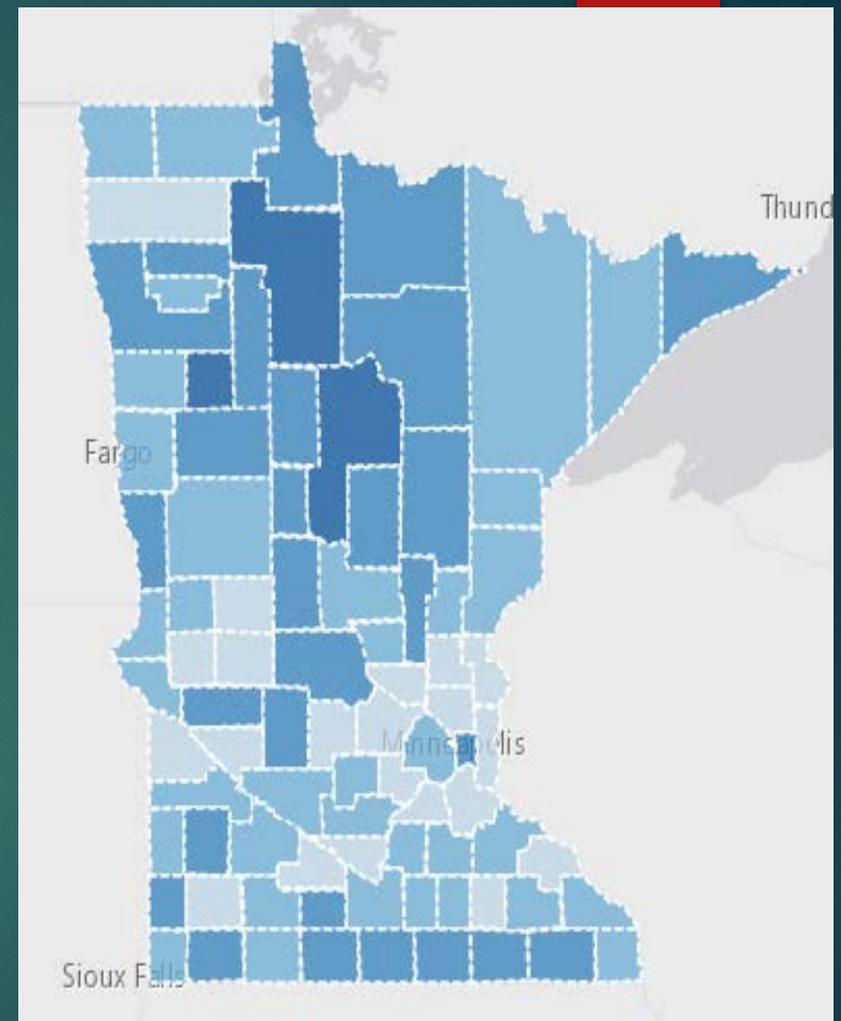
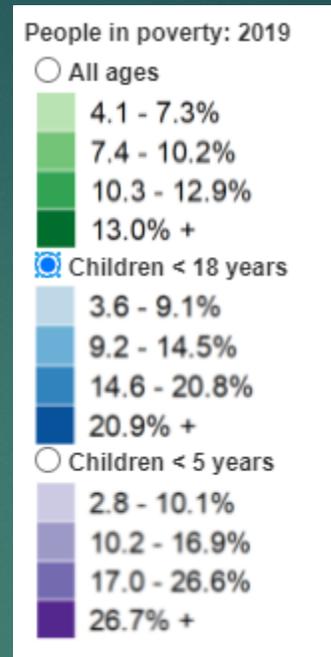
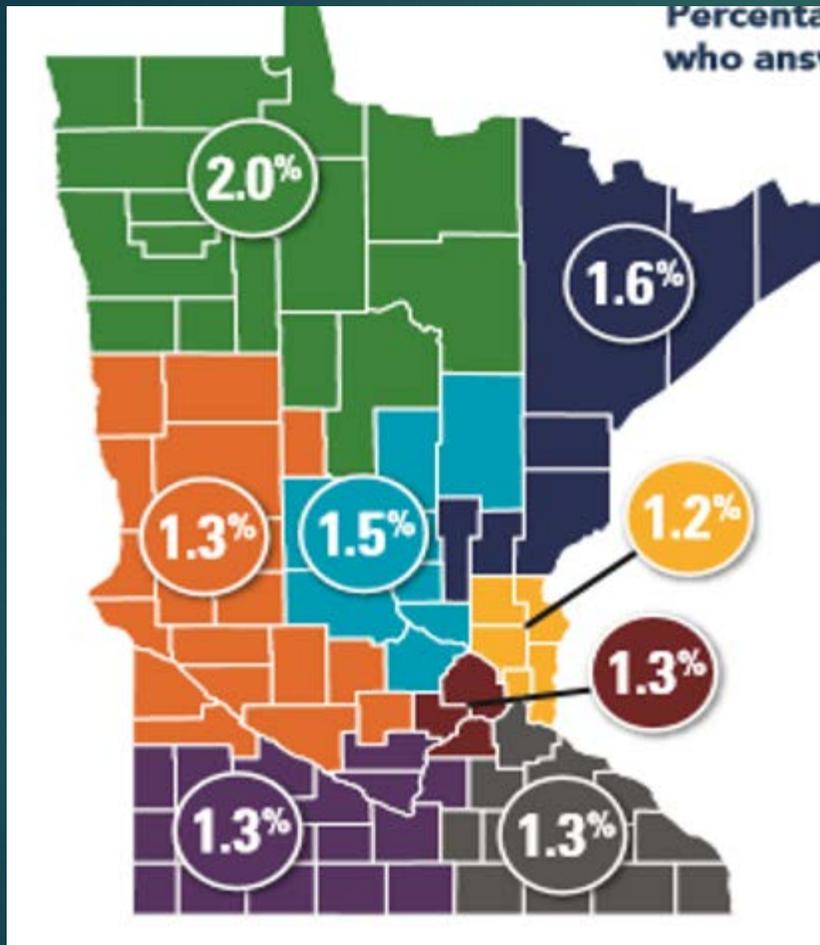
¹ This estimate of 5,000 young people is based on the 2018 Census number of 15-19 year-olds in the State of Minnesota. We used this formula: 1.4% of 357,809 = 5,009.

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/news/pressrel/2020/exploitation012720.html>

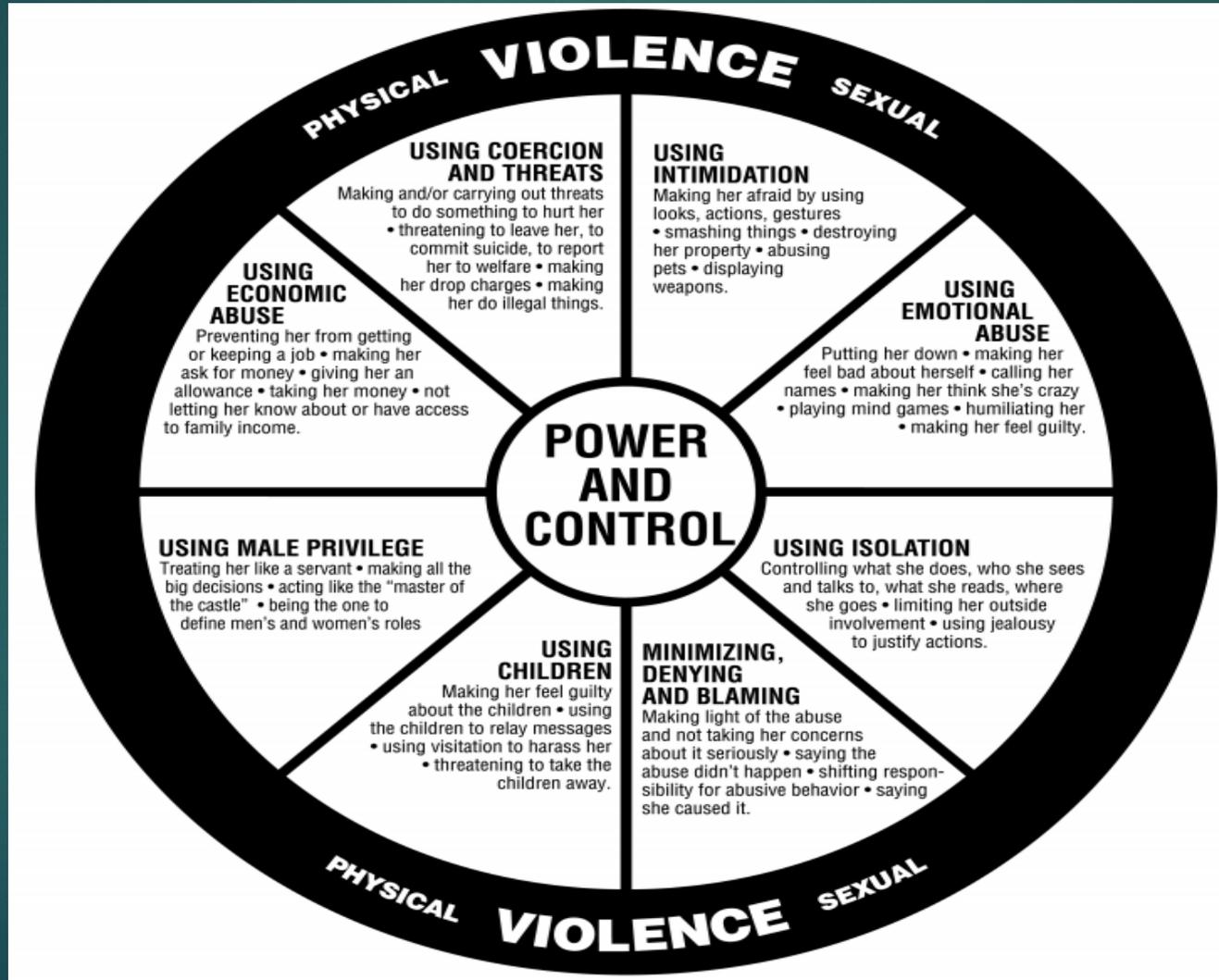
Percentage of high school students who answered "yes" to trading sex



<i>Safe Harbor Region</i>	<i>Answered "yes"</i>
Northwest	2.0%
Northeast	1.6%
Central	1.5%
West Metro	1.3%
Southwest	1.3%
Southeast	1.3%
West Central	1.3%
East Metro	1.2%



Why survivors don't report.



Why survivors don't report:

Woman Sues San Francisco Over Arrest Based on DNA From Her Rape Kit

The woman had provided her DNA to police after being sexually assaulted in 2016, her lawyer said. About five years later, officers used it to charge her with retail theft.

KARE 11 Investigates: Police in Minnesota destroyed hundreds of rape kits, putting cases in peril

— Destroying rape kits in unsolved cases violates U. S. Department of Justice guidelines – and may be allowing serial rapists to go free.

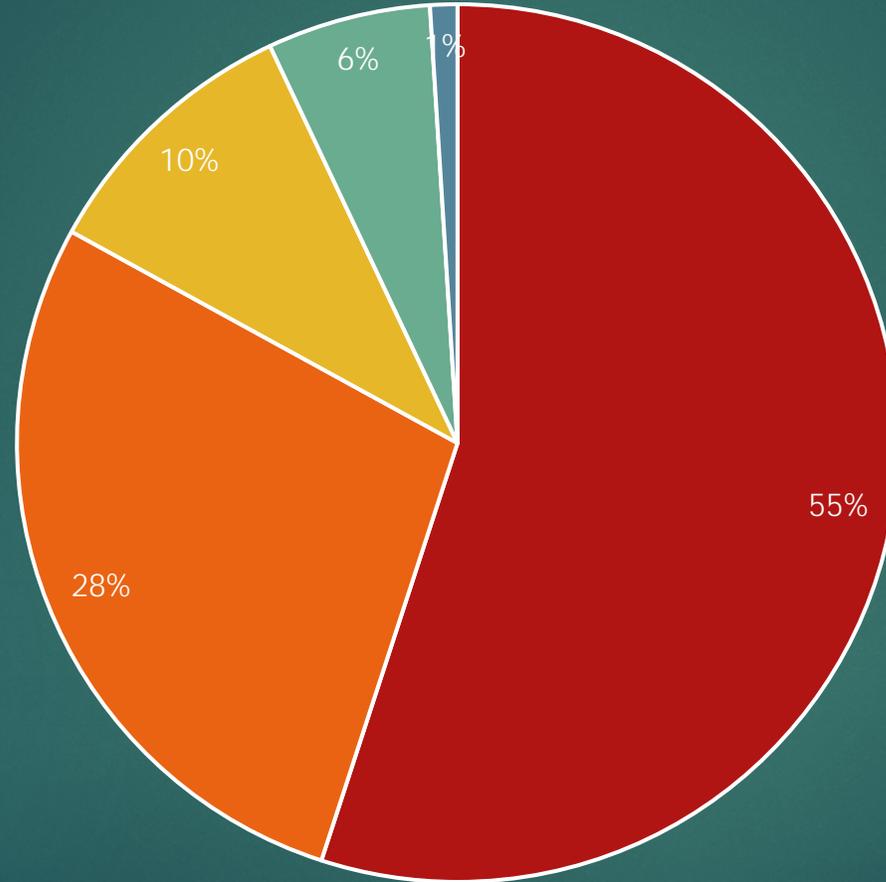
Itasca County lawyer pleads guilty to multiple sexual assaults

Sep 17, 2022 06:02AM • By Editor

Evergreen's Safe Harbor Program

- ▶ To date our SH Program at Evergreen has housed 27 clients, and provided supportive services to an additional 36 clients.
- ▶ From May 2020-May 2021 we received referrals for an additional 32 clients.
- ▶ To date, only 10% of referrals have come from outside of Beltrami county
- ▶ 90% of referrals are female
- ▶ Average age at intake is 19.8 years old. In the last year we have housed two minors.
- ▶ About 75% of participants in our Safe Harbor program have been in foster care.

Racial Demographics



■ AI- 55% ■ White-28% ■ Latin/Hispanic-6% ■ Black-6% ■ Mixed Race-1%

Child Protection and Exploitation

- ▶ Overall, the response from CPS is hugely inconsistent across the state
- ▶ Each county is it's own jurisdiction
- ▶ In July of 2020, mandated reporting statutes were revised and condensed into a new statute (260e)
- ▶ The state of Minnesota gave each tribe the choice to opt in to these statutes. So far, Leech Lake and White Earth have opted in.

CPS Role in Responding to SE

- ▶ In 2017 sex trafficking became mandated report, requires a family investigation within 24 hours (even if trafficker is non-caregiver)
- ▶ Law enforcement and county/tribe must cross-report within 24 hours
- ▶ Reports of sexual exploitation or labor trafficking should be referred to voluntary child welfare services
- ▶ No mandatory response for labor trafficking
- ▶ CPS workers only required to have 1.5 hour training on exploitation (this may have changed due to Families First Preventative Service Act?)

Minnesota CPS reports 2017-2019

- ▶ 1,629 reports were made to CPS regarding children being sex trafficked
- ▶ 538 reports were screened in (33%)
- ▶ 42% of reports involve non-family members
30% of reports unknown offender
28% of reports involved family members as offenders
- ▶ 50% of reports involve children ages 15-17
21% of reports involve children age 11 and under
- ▶ 17% of reports involve male children

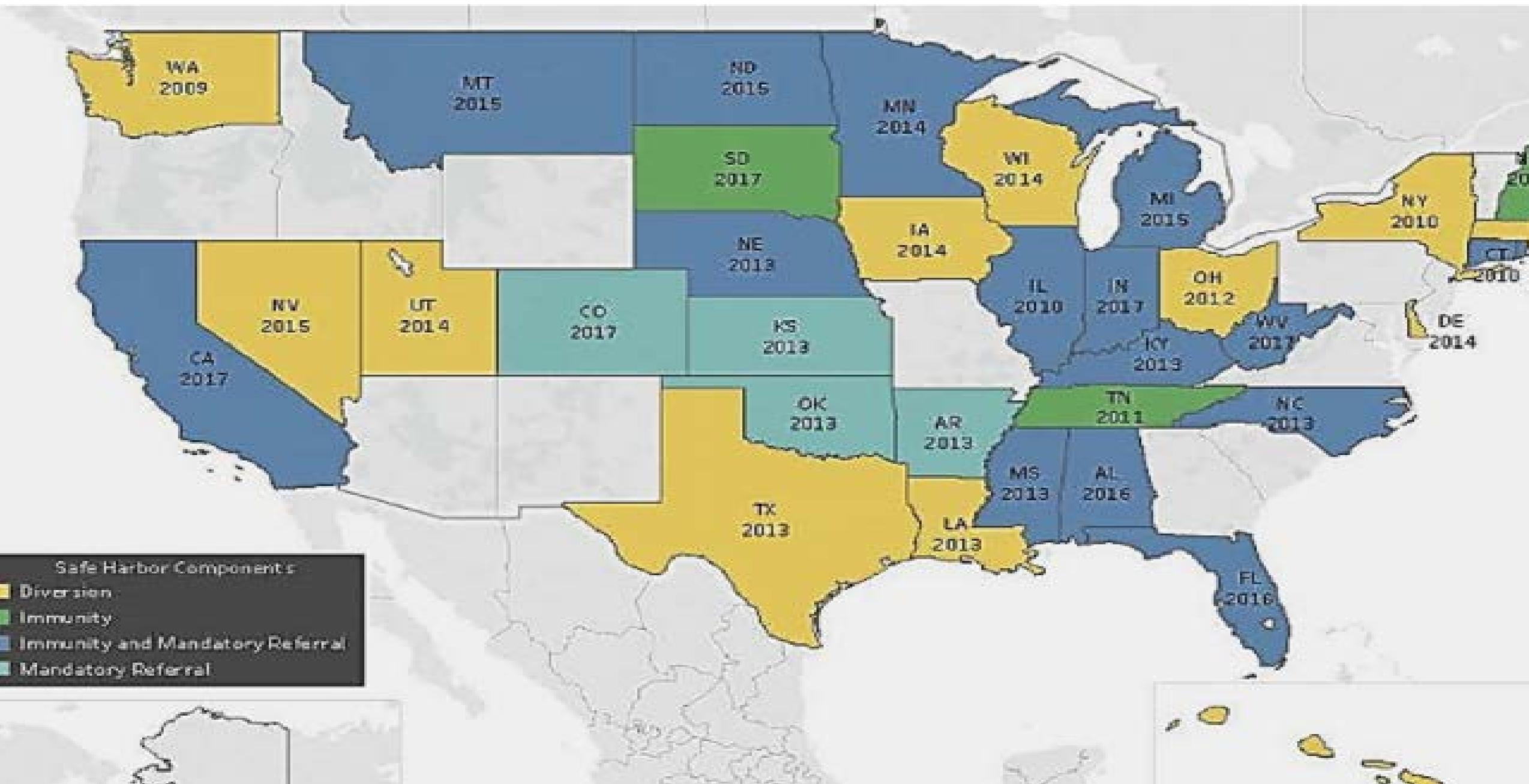
Minnesota's Response Safe Harbor Timeline

- ▶ 2011 Safe Harbor legislation passed in Minnesota
- ▶ Added the definition of sexually exploited youth in Minnesota's child protection codes;
- ▶ Increased the penalties against commercial sex abusers or purchasers; and
- ▶ Directed the Commissioner of Public Safety to work with stakeholders to create a victim-centered, statewide response for sexually exploited youth.

Timeline Cont.

- ▶ August 1, 2014:
Excluded sexually exploited youth under 18 from the definition of delinquent child.
- ▶ July 1, 2016:
Safe Harbor services were made available to individuals age 24 and younger, increasing the prior eligibility age for services from 18.
- ▶ What's happening now?
Trainings for hotels, updating legislation, build service availability.

Safe Harbor Laws Across the United States





DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

- Regional Navigators and Specialized Community Services
- OVC Expansion Grant to include Labor Trafficking
- Training & Technical Assistance
- Youth Outreach Materials
- Wilder Evaluation Report



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

- Specialized Housing/Shelter
- Youth Outreach
- Child Protection/Child Welfare
- Vulnerable Adult Protection

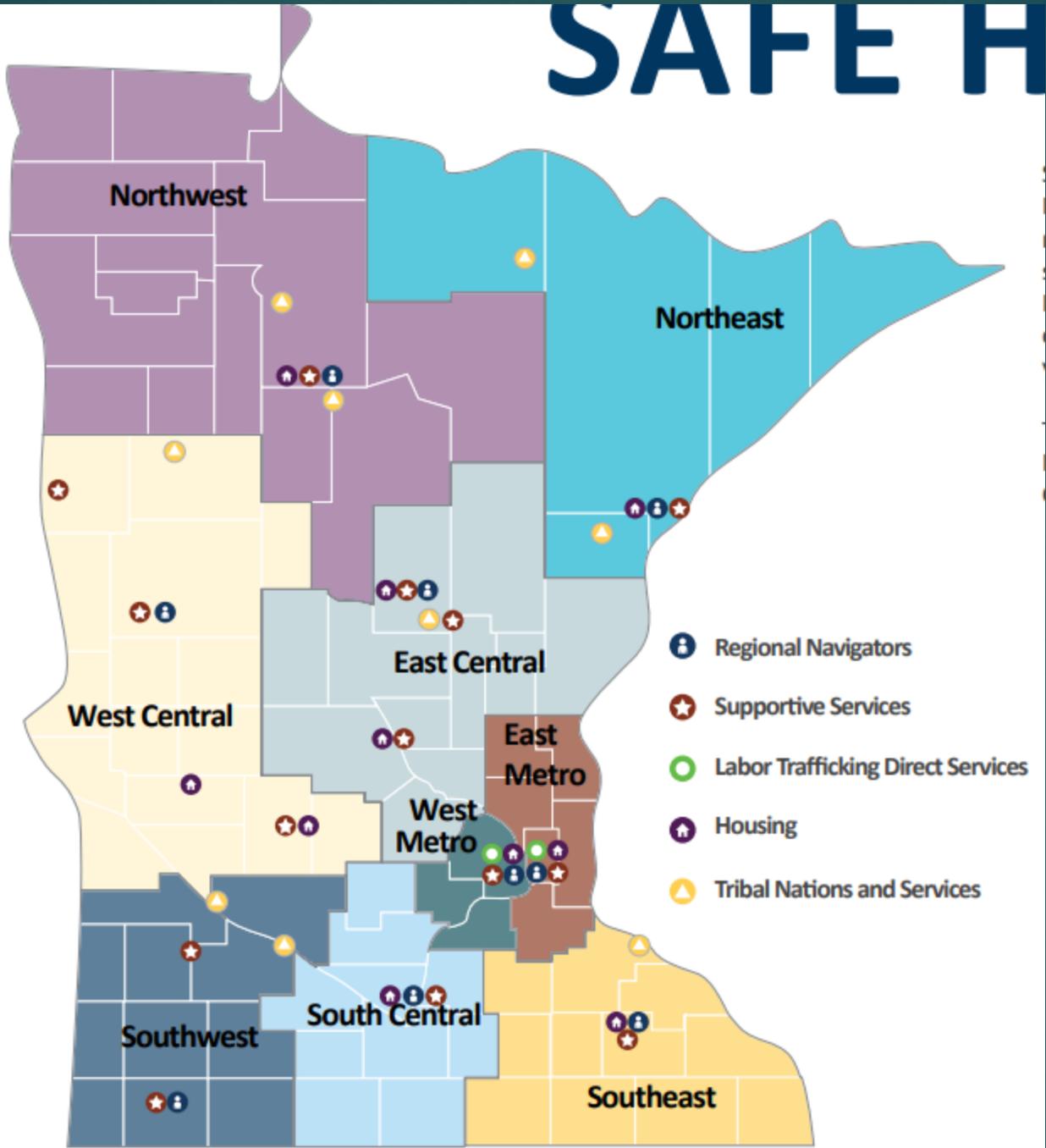


- Missing and Endangered Persons
- Internet Crimes Against Children
- 3 Regional Law Enforcement Task Forces
- 1 Statewide Task Force run by the BCA: 24/7 reporting 651-793-7000
- Training/Consultation for Law Enforcement on Sex Trafficking Investigations



- Protocol Guidelines
- Safe Harbor Protocol Team Formation Starter Kit: A Guide for New Teams
- Protocol Implementation

SAFE H



NW MN Regional Responses

- ▶ Partner agencies: Support Within Reach, North Homes (Winnie SiSu House), NWICDC, Evergreen
- ▶ Headwaters Alliance Against Sex Trafficking and Exploitation
 - Works to address all sexual exploitation by means of community education and awareness, and collaborating with partner agencies to promote services
- ▶ Tribes United Against Sex Trafficking
 - Work to end sex trafficking on tribal lands by means of investigation, victim identification and protection, and community awareness

5 Facts to Keep in Mind

- ▶ People of all genders experience sexual exploitation.
- ▶ People who are commercially sexually exploited are out in the community.
- ▶ Commercial sexual exploitation happens in many different ways.
- ▶ People who have been commercially sexually exploited often don't think of themselves as being victimized.
- ▶ For survivors, seeking support is nonlinear.

What should I do as a professional?

- ▶ Refer potential Safe Harbor clients to appropriate, specialized services, *if* the client is interested.
- ▶ Make mandated report as necessary.
- ▶ Explain options of reporting to authorities for adult clients.

What should I do as a community member?



What is Sexual Exploitation? Sexual exploitation happens when anything of value or a promise of value (like money, drugs, food, a place to stay, rent, or a higher status in a gang or group) is given to you or another person in exchange for any type of sex.

THE DAY ONE HOTLINE FOR LOCAL SHELTER & SUPPORTIVE SERVICES: **1-866-223-1111**
TEXT: 612-399-9995

THIS IS A SECURE LINE. NO JUDGMENT, NO SHAME, JUST SUPPORT.

MDH 4 2017

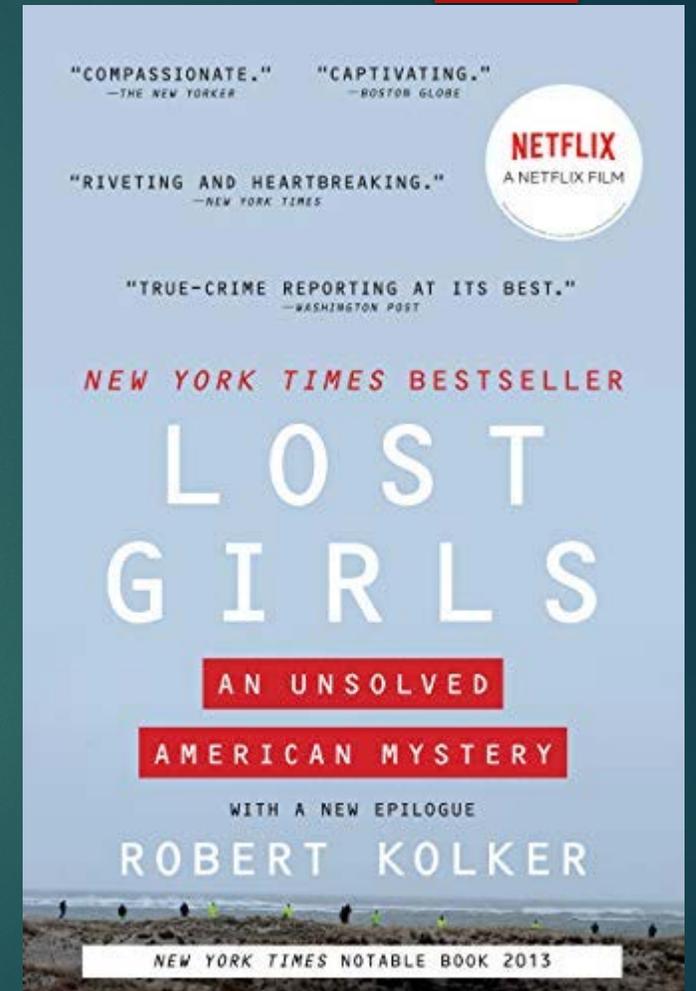
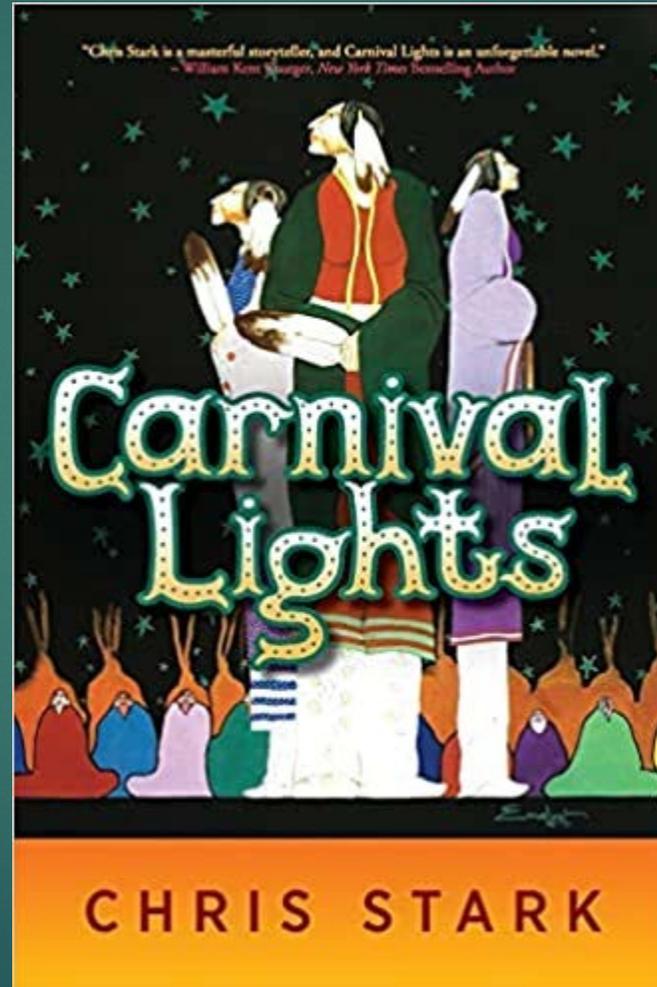
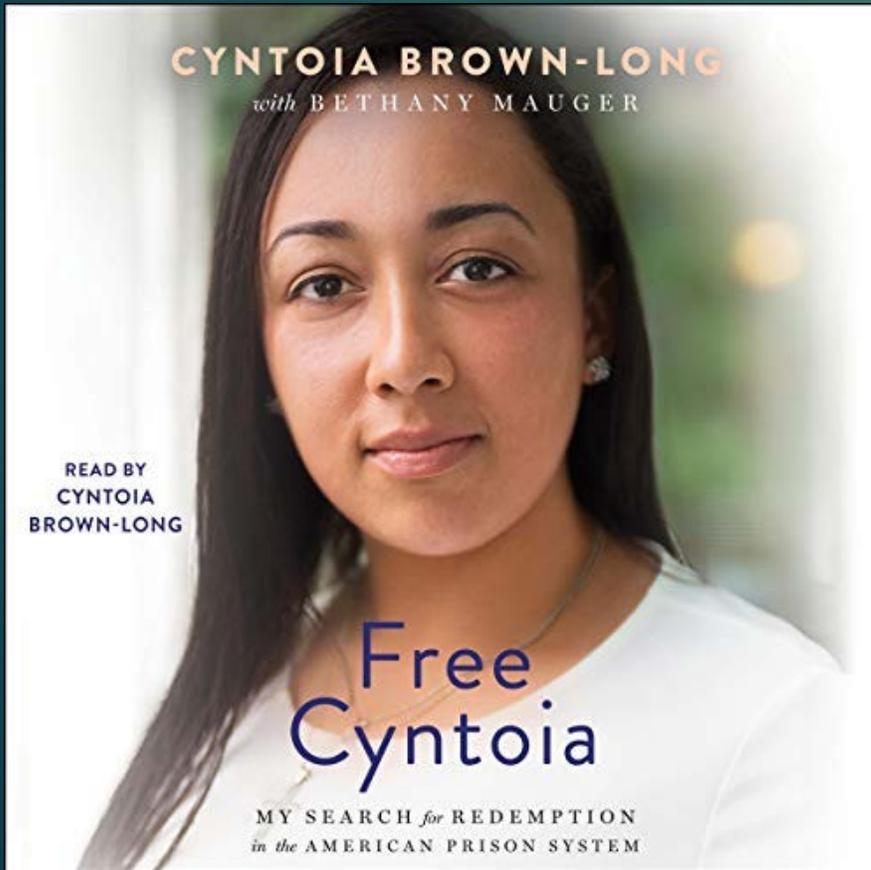
**NATIONAL
HUMAN
TRAFFICKING
HOTLINE**

Call 1-888-373-7888 (TTY: 711) | *Text 233733

What can I do as a community member?

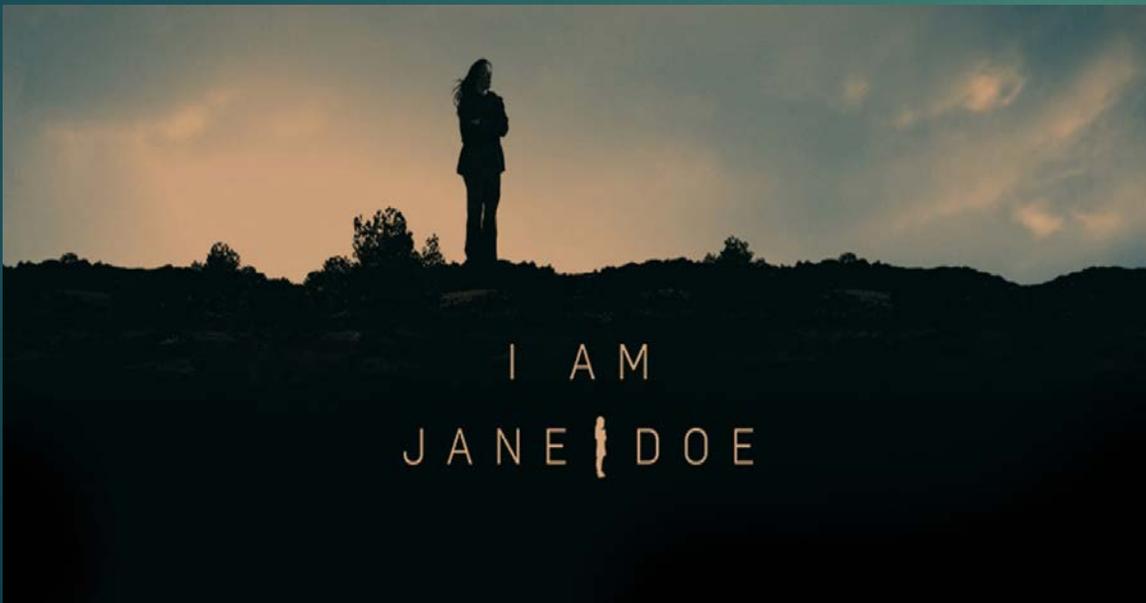
- ▶ Stop using phrases like “child prostitute” or “underage women”.
- ▶ Educate our youth on grooming behaviors of predators, healthy relationships, and boundaries.
- ▶ We need to recognize the need for affordable housing, livable wages, and access to affordable health care and child care.
- ▶ Vote!

Want to learn more? Read:



Watch

- ▶ American Honey (Labor Trafficking)
- ▶ Ted Talk Megan Sobel "Sex trafficking isn't what you think it is"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyhF7q3_bpk&t=89s
- ▶ Now and Next Speaker Series-World Without Exploitation
<https://www.worldwithoutexploitation.org/events/now-next-speaker-series-online#events-section-registration>



Explore

- ▶ Polaris Project
<https://polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/>
- ▶ Safe Harbor Legislation
https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh176/files/newsletter/253287/sf_5.html
- ▶ Minnesota Safe Harbor
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/safeharbor/>
- ▶ Report Cards for Child and Youth Sex Trafficking
<https://sharedhope.org/what-we-do/bring-justice/reportcards/>

Resources Cont.

- ▶ Mapping the Demand
<https://uroc.umn.edu/mapping-demand-sex-buyers-minnesota>
- ▶ 2019 MN High School Student Survey
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/news/pressrel/2020/exploitation012720.html>
- ▶ Child Poverty Data
<https://mndatamaps.web.health.state.mn.us/interactive/poverty.html>