

Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population

Summary of Program and Evaluation Plans

June 16, 2016

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Executive Summary

The Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), awarded nine new grants in October 2014. The purpose of the grants is to (1) build greater awareness and a better response to the problem of child trafficking in the child welfare population, (2) add to the research base and help systems and service providers as they consider enhancing their practices in the context of limited resources, (3) build internal capacity to work with trafficking victims and engage in outreach to support similar capacity-building efforts in other systems, and (4) build on federal anti-trafficking work.

The grantees are as follows:

- Arizona State University
- California Department of Social Services
- Connecticut Department of Children and Families
- Healing Place Serve, Louisiana
- Justice Resource Institute, Massachusetts
- King County Superior Court, Washington
- Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Florida
- University of Maryland-Baltimore
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

The grantees' approaches include developing or enhancing effective cross-system partnerships to address system barriers, data collection and reporting systems to determine the prevalence of child trafficking, multidisciplinary teams to provide individual case management for victims, and evidence-based services for victims; conducting trainings to promote awareness and knowledge; and developing policies, program models, screening tools, and a process to track service provision.

All the grantees are conducting a mixed-methods (i.e., quantitative and qualitative methods) process evaluation to document project implementation. The grantees' evaluation plans vary, but most include longitudinal analysis of case-level data.

James Bell Associates (JBA) serves as the evaluation technical assistance advisor to the grantees. This assistance includes support for evaluation design and implementation, development of overview documents such as a summary matrix of projects and grantee profiles, peer-to-peer learning and information dissemination through collaborative Web sites, facilitation of work across grantees, and preparation of materials on topics of high interest to ACF.

JBA is also leading efforts to collect common data across the grantees, including the development and administration of a new instrument, the Trafficking Awareness Survey, to assess awareness of trafficking in child welfare. JBA has developed a logic model with common

outputs, short-term and intermediate outcomes, and long-term child-level trafficking and well-being outcomes across projects. Multiple grantees are assessing the following outcome areas and indicators using various data collection methods.

Improved cross-system coordination, collaboration, and infrastructure. Grantees are conducting document reviews, interviews, and focus groups to assess key aspects of cross-system partnerships and multidisciplinary teams. All grantees are administering the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory survey. Many are tracking the type and amount of services child trafficking victims receive, with some collecting additional fidelity/service quality data.

Increased awareness and knowledge of child trafficking. Grantees are assessing reach and increased awareness, knowledge, and self-efficacy among recipients of trainings, events, and resources using pre- and post-surveys (including the Trafficking Awareness Survey) and assessments. They are also using focus groups and interviews to track these constructs among stakeholder groups.

Enhanced systems to facilitate data collection, sharing, and use. The grantees are documenting whether data systems to record and monitor trafficking have been established or enhanced, data sharing is streamlined, and data are being used for continuous quality improvement.

Increased capacity to identify and track prevalence of victims of child trafficking or youth at risk. Grantees are exploring various methods of identifying victims, including annually surveying state and local agencies about trafficking investigations, integrating agency or system databases to identify victims among service populations, administering and/or testing the predictive utility of screening and risk assessments, and mining and analyzing administrative and case data. These methods will provide data to track key indicators, which include the number of accurately identified victims, number and incidence rate over time, and time between first child welfare involvement and identification of trafficking.

Grantees' process evaluations are also documenting legislative efforts, dissemination of knowledge, and key challenges and facilitators in their work.

In the first two years of implementation, the grantees have made significant progress in establishing their projects and evaluation infrastructure to achieve the grant goals. Their evaluations are beginning to produce key lessons and findings about factors that support effective systems collaboration and multidisciplinary services, methods to increase awareness and identification of child trafficking, and critical data elements and opportunities within data systems to monitor trafficking. In future years, as later syntheses will report, grantees' outcome evaluations will generate evidence to support specific methods of early identification and tracking; identify effective strategies for improving access, coordination, and service models for victims; and document improved outcomes.

Introduction

Overview and Objectives

The Children’s Bureau (CB), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), awarded nine new grants in October 2014 to increase awareness of child trafficking and improve cross-system responses to trafficking within the child welfare population.

This synthesis introduces the innovative work of these grantees in their first 2 years. It describes the needs the grants are intended to address, summarizes the projects’ core components, and describes both cross-cutting and unique evaluation efforts. Efforts to implement common data collection across grantees are highlighted, including a new survey to assess awareness of child trafficking in child welfare. This early synthesis is intended to help the field understand more about these nine projects and their contribution to knowledge about model practices and effective evaluation designs to address trafficking in the child welfare population. Information for this document came from a review of grantees’ applications and semi-annual progress reports.

Trafficking in the Child Welfare Population

Increased risk in child welfare. Human trafficking is often referred to in the context of adults who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation or forced labor. Traffickers also target vulnerable children who have experienced abuse and trauma. Youth involved in the child welfare system who have been removed from their homes and placed in foster care or congregate care are at particularly high risk for trafficking (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2015). In fact, research indicates that most youth victims of trafficking have had prior involvement with the child welfare system (ACYF, 2013).

Youth involved in the child welfare system are at particularly high risk for trafficking.

Child welfare agencies are in a unique position to identify youth who are victims of trafficking and provide them with appropriate care and services.

They are also positioned to identify youth at risk for trafficking and provide interventions to prevent further exploitation.

Prevalence and federal response. Data on the prevalence of youth trafficking are limited. Inconsistent definitions, poor data integration, and low rates of disclosure or self-identification make identifying and tracking rates of victimization especially challenging. However, several studies indicate that 50 to 90 percent of child victims of sex trafficking had prior or current child welfare involvement (ACYF, 2013). Approximately one in six endangered runaways were likely victims of sex trafficking (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2014).

Federal attention to child trafficking has significantly increased in recent years, as reflected in the formation of the President’s Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. The task force, in which CB participates, supports state systems integration and systems change to address trafficking. CB is committed to expanding the evidence base, ensuring rigorous research and reporting, and coordinating data across grantees and programs to develop new strategies for developing unduplicated estimates of child trafficking.

The Children’s Bureau participates in the President’s Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.

Other federal efforts include the release of *Coordination, Collaboration, Capacity: Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States, 2013–2017*; the passing of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, Public Law 113–183, and the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015; and the creation of the ACF Office on Trafficking in Persons. As part of ACF’s commitment to the federal action plan, CB funded the nine grants that are the focus of this synthesis and anticipates funding eight new grants to undertake similarly focused work in September 2016.

A summary of federal and legislative efforts to combat trafficking can be found in the CB issue brief *Child Welfare and Human Trafficking* (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2015).¹ Many states are also addressing trafficking, primarily through legislation and policies that often include cross-system approaches.

Despite the growing response to trafficking, there is a need to increase awareness of the problem, improve identification and monitoring through coordinated data systems, and build the evidence base of interventions and practices that serve victims and prevent trafficking.

Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population: Background and Goals

The Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population cluster seeks to (1) build greater awareness and a better response to the problem of child trafficking in the child welfare population; (2) add to the research base and help systems and service providers as they consider enhancing their practices in the context of limited resources; (3) build internal capacity to work with trafficking victims and engage in outreach to support similar capacity-building efforts in other systems; and (4) build on federal anti-trafficking work, including the

¹ See also *Guidance to States and Services on Addressing Human Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States* (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/human-trafficking-guidance>), *Emerging Practices Within Child Welfare Responses* (https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/briefing_spotlight_b.pdf), and *Confronting Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Minors in the United States* (<http://www.nationalacademies.org/hmd/reports/2013/confronting-commercial-sexual-exploitation-and-sex-trafficking-of-minors-in-the-united-states.aspx>)

recommendations presented in the federal action plan. To achieve these goals, the grantees must include the following project components.

Infrastructure building. Grantees must foster strategic coordination and institutionalized collaboration among public child welfare agencies and systems aimed at preventing child welfare involved youth from becoming victims of trafficking (e.g., partnerships with local law enforcement, juvenile justice, courts, runaway and homeless youth programs, Children’s Justice

Grantees must increase awareness of how involvement in child welfare increases trafficking risk and disseminate their findings to the field.

Act grantees, child advocacy centers, other service providers). This includes the promotion and use of multidisciplinary interventions and quality practices, development of associated policies, identification of youth victims, and provision of necessary services and supports to victims. Grantees must also increase awareness of how involvement in child welfare increases trafficking risk and disseminate their findings to the field.

Data gathering. Grantees must identify and gather specific data elements related to trafficking for youth served by their system.

Cross-system coordination and collaboration. Grantees must foster coordination and collaboration and emphasize victim-centered, trauma-informed approaches among public child welfare agencies and other systems aimed at preventing trafficking.

Legislative efforts. Grantees must understand and be guided by policies or laws in their state regarding the protection of trafficking victims (e.g., “safe harbor” laws).

Evaluation. Grantees must evaluate their projects and use the data to assess the needs and problems of trafficking in the child welfare population.

Project sustainability. Grantees must document strategies and activities that should and can be sustained after the grant period.

Grantee Overview

Core Features

Nine 5-year grants were awarded on October 1, 2014 (see exhibit 1). All of the grant projects include strategies to develop or enhance effective cross-system partnerships to address barriers in identifying children involved in child welfare who are victims of or at risk for trafficking. Grantees are engaging a range of stakeholders, including public child welfare agencies, juvenile justice departments, state agencies and commissions (e.g., departments of youth services,

mental health, and public health; Commission to Prevent Violence Against Women), corrections (e.g., police departments, juvenile detention, adult probation), court and legal stakeholders (e.g., court-appointed special advocates, administrative offices of the court, attorneys general, county attorneys, American Bar Association, Center on Children and the Law, superior courts), service providers (e.g., substance abuse, mental health, homelessness), human trafficking survivors, universities, and evaluation partners.

Exhibit 1. Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population, 2014

Grantee	State	Project Name	Evaluator
Arizona State University (ASU)	Arizona	Sex Trafficking and Arizona’s Vulnerable Youth: Identification, Collaboration, and Intervention (STAVY)	ASU
California Department of Social Services (CDSS)	California	The California Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking (PACT) Project	Resource Development Associates
State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families (CTDCF)	Connecticut	Connecticut’s Human Anti-trafficking Response Team (HART) Project	ICF International
Healing Place Serve (HP Serve)	Louisiana	Louisiana Children’s Anti-Trafficking Initiative (LACAT)	Louisiana Children’s Trust Fund
Justice Resource Institute (JRI)	Massachusetts	Massachusetts Child Welfare Trafficking Grant (CWTG)	Northeastern University
King County Superior Court (King)	Washington	King County CSEC Program	University of Washington School of Medicine
Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc. (Our Kids)	Florida	Miami CARES (Community Action Response to Exploitation and Sex Trafficking)	University of South Florida
University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMD)	Maryland	The Child Sex Trafficking Victims Support Initiative	UMD

Grantee	State	Project Name	Evaluator
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC)	North Carolina	Project NO REST (North Carolina Organizing and Responding to the Exploitation and Sexual Trafficking of Children)	UNC

Projects include trainings for child welfare staff and, in some instances, service providers and community stakeholders to increase awareness and knowledge of trafficking in the child welfare population. As required by the grant, all projects include an evaluation and an expectation that results will be disseminated locally and to the child welfare field.

Exhibit 2 on the following page summarizes the projects' core features and activities. All grantees are focusing on improving the identification of victims of trafficking in their child welfare systems. Six of the nine grantees are developing or enhancing data collection and reporting systems to improve the accuracy of prevalence data. Most of the grantees ($n = 6$) are using an existing screening tool or developing new tools. Tools in use include the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths-Commercially Sexually Exploited (CANS-CSE) tool used by Our Kids and UMD, the Comprehensive CANS used by UMD, the Human Trafficking Screening Tool (Florida Department of Children and Families) used by Our Kids, and the Sex Trafficking Screening for Youth tool used by HP Serve. UNC, King County, and ASU are all developing screening tools as part of their grants.

Grantees are also focusing on improving case management and availability of services for victims of youth trafficking. Six grantees are developing or enhancing existing multidisciplinary team (MDT) processes to improve case management for victims, and four are improving the array of evidence-based services available to serve them.

Exhibit 2. Core Features: Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population, 2014

	ASU	CDSS	CTDCF	HP Serve	JRI	King	Our Kids	UMD	UNC
Develop/enhance effective cross-system partnerships to address system barriers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Trainings to promote awareness and knowledge	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Evaluation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Disseminate evaluation results locally and to field	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop/enhance data collection and reporting systems to inform prevalence of child sex trafficking	X		X	X		X	X		X
Develop/enhance MDTs to provide individual case management for child trafficking victims		X	X	X	X	X	X		
Develop/enhance evidence-based service array for trafficked youth				X			X	X	X
Policy and system development					X	X	X		
Develop/adapt screening tool	X			X		X	X	X	X
Develop best practice program model for counties to prevent and address child trafficking, including protocols, tools, and training programs		X							X
Pilot model program		X							
Disseminate program model		X							X
Develop process to track service provision			X	X					
Work to align with legislative requirements (local or federal)	X			X					

Target Populations and Geographic Scope

Grantees' main target populations are children who are involved in the child welfare system and are victims of or at risk for trafficking. Three projects (ASU, CTDCF, and HP Serve) also focus on child welfare agency staff; HP Serve includes service providers as well. The Arizona project also focuses on male youth (ages 11–17) in the child welfare system who are at risk of becoming traffickers. A subset of projects address victims of labor trafficking (CDSS, CTDCF, JRI, and UNC).

Six of the nine projects operate statewide (ASU, CTDCF, HP Serve, JRI, UMD, and UNC). The remaining three operate in one or more counties: CDSS (10 pilot counties in California), King (King County, Washington State), and Our Kids (Miami-Dade County, Florida).

Evaluation Designs

As required, each grantee is conducting an evaluation to measure its progress and identify evidence of impact and success. To meet this requirement, most of the grantees ($n = 6$) have contracted with a third-party evaluator, while three are using an internal evaluator. Exhibit 3 provides an overview of the methods used in each evaluation design.

Exhibit 3. Evaluation Methods: Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population, 2014

	ASU	CDSS	CTDCF	HP Serve	JRI	King	Our Kids	UMD	UNC
Mixed-methods process evaluation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Longitudinal case-level data analysis	X		X		X	X	X	X	X
Longitudinal aggregate data analysis		X							
Comparison site									X
Case studies	X								

The evaluation plans differ by project; however, all are conducting a mixed-methods (i.e., quantitative and qualitative methods) process evaluation to document project implementation. Since the primary goal of the grants is to increase awareness of and response to trafficking within the child welfare population at an organizational and systems level, the grantees are not required or expected to measure changes in child-level outcomes. However, most of the grantees are conducting activities to improve identification of youth victims, access to services, or overall case management practices for victims. Because of this, all but one of the evaluation designs includes measurement of changes in child-level outcomes. Seven grantees are conducting longitudinal analysis of case-level data, and one grantee is conducting longitudinal analysis of aggregated case-level data.

Two grantees are incorporating additional evaluation design elements. UNC is using a comparison site design to compare organizational- and child-level outcomes in participating and nonparticipating counties. ASU plans to conduct two types of case studies. The first will be conducted with a sample of victims to understand service access, service delivery, and factors contributing to success and barriers in service delivery. The second will involve creating an annual case profile to describe the status of the MDT participating in the project.

Two grantees (CDSS and CTDCF) are conducting a needs assessment. CDSS will use an online survey and secondary data analysis to identify service gaps and readiness for change in year 1. CTDCF will use stakeholder surveys, key informant interviews, and focus groups in years 1, 3, and 5 to compare changes in needs and service gaps in a representative sample of jurisdictions.

All grantees will use descriptive statistics of quantitative data to determine frequencies for categorical variables and means or medians for continuous variables, along with qualitative coding of focus group and/or interview data. The majority ($n = 6$) are also using inferential statistics to conduct analyses of longitudinal quantitative data (e.g., t-tests, ANOVA, regression analysis). Some grantees are using additional analytic approaches, including social network analysis ($n = 3$), time series analysis ($n = 2$), life table analyses ($n = 1$), and ecological analyses of population data ($n = 1$).

Outcomes and Evaluation Methods

The grantees are implementing similar approaches and, despite variation in indicators and benchmarks, evaluating some common outcomes. Early in the grants, the JBA evaluation technical advisor led a workgroup to identify and link grantee resources, activities, and outcomes. The resulting cluster-wide logic model (exhibit 4) highlights 11 outputs and short-term and intermediate outcomes that multiple grantees are assessing, as well as 6 long-term child-level trafficking and well-being outcomes that are ultimate goals of the work for all grantees.² The logic model will be updated to continue to reflect the cluster's ongoing work.

² Only some of the grantees will collect data and report on these long-term outcomes; it is not required.

Exhibit 4. Cluster Logic Model: Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population, 2014

The goal of the grants is to build greater awareness and a better response to the problem of child trafficking within the child welfare population.

Process			Outcomes		
1.0 Inputs	2.0 Activities	3.0 Outputs	4.0 Short-Term Outcomes	5.0 Intermediate Outcomes	6.0 Long-Term Outcomes
1.1 Nine grantee projects 1.2 Multidisciplinary stakeholders from each grantee project 1.3 Support & leadership from federal project officers & CB 1.4 Evaluation TA from JBA 1.5 Peer learning among grantees 1.6 Collaboration with other CB initiatives 1.7 Written materials & resources	2.1 Statewide, cross-system, multidisciplinary partnerships are developed or enhanced 2.2 Policies are developed aimed at prevention, identification, & intervention for child welfare victims of trafficking 2.3 Child welfare staff are trained on how to identify & work with trafficking victims 2.4 Appropriate trauma-focused, & evidence-based programs (EBPs) are provided to trafficking victims 2.5 Databases are developed or enhanced to systematically track child welfare-involved youth who are victims of trafficking 2.6 Dissemination plans are developed to share lessons learned with a broad audience 2.7 Sustainability plans are developed to ensure projects continue after the grant period 2.8 Additional grant-specific activities are implemented	3.1 Cross-system partnerships are established to develop coordinated responses & practices 3.2 Number of policies developed 3.3 Number of trainings conducted & number of staff trained 3.4 Number of trauma-focused services & EBPs implemented 3.5 Databases created & number of data elements available 3.6 Dissemination plans developed 3.7 Sustainability plans developed 3.8 Number of grant-specific activities implemented	4.1 Improved infrastructure to provide a coordinated response to child trafficking 4.2 Increased state-level & local awareness of trafficked youth 4.3 Proposed policies/bills drafted & presented to state legislature for approval 4.4 Increased knowledge of the needs of trafficked youth across systems 4.5 Improved ability to quickly identify trafficked victims 4.6 Improved capacity of organizations to adequately serve trafficked youth 4.7 Increased accessibility of trauma-focused & evidence-based services for trafficked youth 4.8 Improved collection, sharing, & use of data across system partners 4.9 Data collection methods enhanced for children served by child welfare & contracted service providers 4.10 Increased capacity to contribute to & expand extant research on trafficked youth among grantees	5.1 Decreased entry into trafficking among at-risk youth 5.2 Improved identification of trafficked youth 5.3 Improved cross-system response to child trafficking 5.4 Policies adopted & proposed bills signed into law 5.5 Reduction in trauma for trafficked youth after they have been identified 5.6 Decreased number of days trafficked youth are missing from care 5.7 Increased reliable housing for trafficked youth 5.8 Increased number of trafficked youth with an adult mentor 5.9 Decreased number of criminal justice system contacts among trafficked youth 5.10 Increased resources for the scientific study of child trafficking	6.1 Decreased incidence of child trafficking 6.2 Increased successful exits from trafficking for child welfare involved youth <i>Well-Being</i> 6.3 Improved cognitive functioning among trafficked youth 6.4 Improved physical health & development among trafficked youth 6.5 Improved emotional/behavioral functioning among trafficked youth 6.6 Improved social functioning among trafficked youth

Note: Common outputs and outcomes are shown in bold. Not all grantee projects will be able to collect and report data for long-term outcomes.

Although there is no formalized cross-site evaluation requirement associated with this grant cluster, commonalities among the projects and their evaluation strategies present opportunities for voluntary shared data collection and learning. The JBA evaluation technical advisor is leading efforts to standardize cross-cluster data collection, analysis, and reporting. Based on a consensus recommendation by JBA and the cluster workgroup, all grantees agreed to conduct multiple administrations of the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory to measure changes in systems collaboration. Results will be aggregated and synthesized to examine trends over time. JBA is also leading the development of the Trafficking Awareness Survey to measure changes in relevant knowledge, beliefs, and self-efficacy. Initial psychometric testing of the survey is described in the appendix. Key cluster outcome indicators and data collection methods are further described below.

Collaboration, Coordination, and Infrastructure Development

Grantees are implementing activities to improve collaboration and coordination of responses to child trafficking. At the systems level, they are assessing the degree to which their efforts result in expanded and effective cross-systems partnerships. They are also documenting progress in establishing infrastructure to streamline the response to child trafficking among child welfare and partner systems. Many grantees are also tracking coordination at the services level, focusing on key aspects of multidisciplinary interventions and an array of services for the target population.

In general, grantees are conducting document reviews, interviews, and focus groups to assess—

- Establishment of formalized cross-system workgroups and MDTs
- Active participation of representatives and frequency of meetings
- Cross-system policies and procedures detailing the response when youth victims of trafficking are identified
- Challenges and opportunities to improve collaboration and coordination of services

Aggregated results of the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory will be used to examine the degree to which organizational-level MDTs develop key infrastructure and processes known to support effective collaboration.

Many grantees are also monitoring service- and individual-level case data to assess access, referral, and engagement patterns in interventions and other services. Six of the grantees have established or are enhancing MDT case management approaches. These sites are collecting data on quality of the service models through youth and provider focus groups, observations, fidelity assessments, or case review. For example, King County's Bridge Collaborative is tracking the unduplicated number of youth referred and enrolled in MDT-directed services (e.g., joint case management and service planning), and evaluators are developing and applying an MDT fidelity tool.

Project Highlight: California Department of Social Services

California's Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking (PACT) Project has developed a best practice program model with a two-tiered approach: interagency committees to address systems barriers and MDTs to provide individual case management for child trafficking victims. During the planning and early implementation phase, the evaluation team initiated needs assessments in 10 pilot counties, including online surveys and readiness assessments and document review. The team collected data on state- and county-level collaboration (including development of tools and resources and establishment of key teams); county readiness for implementation (presence of structures, protocols, trafficking services, and trainings); and capacity for data collection, analysis, and sharing. The analysis identified key strengths and challenges and informed improvements to PACT's technical assistance approach. A process evaluation is underway with key informant interviews, youth and staff focus groups, surveys, and observations/site visits.

Increased Awareness and Knowledge of Child Trafficking

All nine grantees are conducting trainings to increase awareness and knowledge of trafficking. Some are hosting learning events with child welfare staff, service providers, and community stakeholders or developing and disseminating resources such as toolkits. Project evaluators are assessing outputs and outcomes of these efforts using various methods:

- Documenting the number and types of trainings conducted, number and disciplines of participants, and geographic and cross-system reach of training efforts
- Assessing pre- and post-training scores on the Trafficking Awareness Survey (see below)
- Applying other surveys and tools to assess expanded knowledge and skills and to gather formative feedback on curricula and resources
- Conducting focus groups and key informant interviews to assess awareness and to identify needs and opportunities for training and dissemination of resources

Most of the grantee evaluation plans included a pre/post training survey to measure changes in awareness; however, there are no known validated tools in the literature. In early 2015, recognizing the unique opportunity to collect information on awareness efforts at an aggregate level within the cluster and to develop an instrument that could contribute to the fields working on trafficking prevention, the cluster's evaluation technical advisor convened a subcommittee of grantee evaluators to discuss the development and administration of a common awareness survey.

The subcommittee reviewed existing awareness surveys and identified three domains of interest:

- Knowledge (e.g., definition of trafficking, risk and protective factors, scope of the problem, identification process)
- Attitudes/beliefs (e.g., culpability of victims)
- Self-efficacy/confidence (e.g., to engage, identify, and document victims and refer them to services)

The subcommittee drafted and revised survey items for each domain. The final pre- and post-training Trafficking Awareness Survey includes 12 knowledge items on a 5-point scale from “No knowledge” to “Complete knowledge/Expert,” 4 attitudes/beliefs items on a 10-point scale from “Completely false” to “Completely true,” and 6 self-efficacy items on a 10-point scale from “Not at all comfortable” to “Completely comfortable.” The pre-survey also includes five demographic items, and the post-survey includes five items on training quality. The grantee evaluators agreed to administer the survey immediately before and after trainings delivered as part of the grant. They were able to adapt or omit items to fit the local context, such as using the term “commercial sexual exploitation of children” instead of “trafficked.”

An electronic, deidentified, raw data file is submitted to the evaluation technical advisor with each semiannual progress report. The first round was administered during the second semiannual reporting period (April 1, 2015–September 30, 2015), and data for over 3,000 unique surveys have already been submitted. Results of the preliminary psychometric testing of the instrument are provided in the appendix.

Project Highlight: University of Maryland

UMD conducted six focus groups with child welfare workers in regions with high rates of child trafficking to assess current knowledge, comfort level in providing services, identification strategies, and perceptions of areas requiring further training. Findings informed development of the statewide training curricula.

Processes and Data Systems to Identify and Track Child Trafficking Victims

As noted above, grantees are implementing strategies to build data infrastructure and processes to increase identification of child trafficking victims in the child welfare population and to improve service delivery. Common outcomes, target indicators, and evaluation methods include the following.

Improved infrastructure to enhance data collection, sharing, and use across systems partners.

Evaluators are documenting through their process evaluations whether—

- Data systems to record and monitor trafficking are established or enhanced
- Memoranda of understanding and data sharing agreements exist across project partners
- Communication processes and information sharing across systems and partners are streamlined
- Continuous quality improvement (CQI) processes are in place, including functions for reporting information on risk, referral, enrollment, and services to stakeholders and providers

Increased capacity to quickly and accurately identify youth victims of trafficking or those at risk and estimate prevalence. Grantees are using a variety of methods:

- Surveys of investigations: UNC is surveying all law enforcement agencies in the state to estimate the number of child labor and sex trafficking investigations during the prior calendar year. Surveys may be administered annually to assess change over time.
- Data integration and reporting: CTDCF is working to identify trafficking indicators among all referred cases. It aims to allow service providers to enter key data elements into an automated system, including type of trafficking, police investigation outcome, victim's relationship to the trafficker, and type of child welfare involvement pre- and post-referral. UNC, UMD, and HP Serve have reported similar efforts to identify key data elements, improve local databases, and develop outcome tracking and CQI reports.
- Analysis of screening data: Six grantees are implementing new or existing screening tools and using the data to identify victims and children at risk to refer to services, as well as to generate knowledge of the scope of the problem in the child welfare population. Evaluators are also exploring the predictive utility of screening and assessment items to accurately identify children most at risk or in need of victim services. For example, UMD is piloting a process of using specific CANS assessment items to identify children and youth who are victims of trafficking or at high risk in a sample of known victims.
- Analysis of administrative and case data: Some evaluators are mining child welfare administrative data to identify victims of trafficking, identify key risk factors for use in identification, and develop estimates of child trafficking in the population.

Grantees are applying these methods to evaluate common targeted outcomes, including increased number of accurately identified victims of trafficking; decreased number and incidence rate over time; and decreased number of days between first child welfare involvement and identification of victims of trafficking.

Project Highlight: Arizona State University

In the grant's first 2 years, ASU is exploring the efficacy of two approaches to identifying victims of trafficking in the child welfare system and estimating prevalence, by comparing victims identified through (1) data mining from case information tracked in the Department of Child Safety state electronic information system and (2) surveys of child welfare workers participating in training regarding victimization or potential victimization among children on their caseloads. Once the best method is determined, it will be repeated in years 3–5 of the grant to calculate and track incidence rates of child trafficking in Arizona. A search algorithm will help identify potential victims and data points in the state child welfare database to increase accuracy.

Legislative Activities Impacting Human Trafficking Efforts

All grantees' efforts must be guided by state laws and policies regarding the protection of trafficking victims. However, some grantees proposed additional legislative activities and corresponding outcomes. Their evaluators are documenting the extent to which new state laws or policies regarding protections for trafficking victims have been proposed and/or enacted (e.g., CTDCF, JRI).

Sustainability

Sustainability is a cross-cutting goal: all grantees are working toward maintaining or expanding their collaborations and obtaining sustainable funding for their coordinated services. Evaluators are documenting grantees' early sustainability efforts and achievements and disseminating knowledge and key findings through reports, Web sites, presentations, and journal articles.

Long-Term Outcomes Among Victims of Child Trafficking

Although outside of the scope and expectations of these grants, the grantees' ultimate goal is to improve outcomes for youth who are victims or at risk of trafficking. Long-term child-level outcomes are represented in the cluster-level logic model, but not all grantees are able to collect and report data for these outcomes. Outcomes of interest include decreased incidence of child trafficking; increased successful exits from trafficking for child welfare involved youth; and improved well-being among victims of trafficking, including improved cognitive functioning, improved physical health, improved emotional/behavioral functioning, and improved social functioning. The ability of grantees to track changes in these child-level outcomes and the extent to which their activities supported changes will be explored as implementation continues.

The evaluators' main challenge is lack of data. Child welfare agencies have not historically documented trafficking in their data systems, which makes longitudinal administrative data on this topic scarce. The efforts of several grantees to integrate trafficking-related data elements and explore associated risk factors in existing state child welfare and collaborating agencies' data systems will generate important knowledge and lessons to guide ACF/CB's efforts to develop new strategies for estimating the scope of child trafficking in this population.

Conclusion

The nine grantees funded by CB's Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population have made significant progress in establishing their project and evaluation infrastructure to achieve the cluster-wide goals of building better awareness and a more coordinated response to the issue of human trafficking. Their evaluation designs and data collection efforts will result in clearer estimates of the prevalence of trafficking in the child welfare system, earlier and more accurate identification of victims and at-risk children and youth, and increased access and engagement in services. Moreover, the findings contribute to CB's desire to expand the research base and enhance child welfare and partner systems' capacity to apply innovative and effective practices to address trafficking in the context of limited resources.

This early synthesis highlights both cross-cutting and unique evaluation components. All grantees are conducting mixed-methods process evaluations that include CQI components to refine their project approaches. Notably, all grantees are collecting common data using surveys on collaboration and trafficking awareness, which will be aggregated to provide a broader picture. While in the early stages, grantees' process evaluations are beginning to produce key lessons and emerging findings regarding—

- Factors supporting effective systems collaboration and multidisciplinary services
- Methods to increase awareness and identification of child trafficking
- Critical data elements and opportunities within data systems to monitor trafficking prevalence, service delivery, and individual outcomes over time

In future years, grantees' outcome evaluations will generate evidence to support specific methods of early identification and tracking; identify effective strategies for improving access, coordination, and service models for victims; and document improved outcomes for victims.

There is great interest at both state and national levels in the lessons learned and results of these grant projects, as more attention is paid to the overlapping risk factors and experiences of other vulnerable youth such as victims of domestic violence and homeless youth. Grantees will share their knowledge and experience with other aligned initiatives, including the Family and Youth Services Bureau's Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking grants and recent collaborations by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and ACF on the intersection of human trafficking, housing, and services for youth and adults. These intersecting populations and opportunities have led some grantees to develop partnerships to leverage funding and research and expand program models. As more information on models and evaluation results becomes available, JBA may provide additional synthesis reports on promising practices and findings.

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Appendix

Initial Psychometric Testing of the Trafficking Awareness Survey

The Trafficking Awareness Survey measures changes in knowledge, beliefs, and self-efficacy related to trafficking before and after trainings. The instrument is important because no measures of trafficking awareness have been reported or validated in the field.

Preliminary psychometric testing on the pre-test survey data has yielded promising results. In the first round of survey submissions, derived from trainings held in the grantees' second semiannual reporting period (April 1, 2015–September 30, 2015), data from a total of 3,949 surveys were analyzed. The majority of training participants were female (59 percent), identified as Caucasian (47 percent), and worked in the child welfare field (68 percent) as caseworkers (33 percent) or child protective investigators (19 percent). The length of time respondents indicated working in their position ranged from less than 1 month to 37 years, with a mean of 5.5 years.

Initial reliability and validity testing produced strong results, which contribute to validation of the survey instrument. Reliability testing of the knowledge, belief, and self-efficacy subscales indicated high internal consistency. The knowledge and self-efficacy items maintained especially high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.95 and 0.94, respectively), while the internal consistency of the belief items was lower, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.64. The belief subscale contains only four items that do not have clear right or wrong answers; designed to prompt self-reflection about personal beliefs about trafficking victims, they may contribute to the decrease in consistency.

Validity testing was completed using a principal axis factoring with Varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization. The results suggested a four-factor solution, indicating the survey items were actually measuring two dimensions of knowledge (awareness of child trafficking and knowledge of processes), beliefs, and self-efficacy. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.93, indicating a factor analysis was appropriate (assumption of no multicollinearity). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p < 0.000$), providing evidence that the data are approximately normal and acceptable for factor analysis.

Future rounds of data collection will provide opportunities for test-retest comparisons to further confirm the reliability and validity of the instrument to test awareness of trafficking among a range of stakeholders.