Final Synthesis of Evaluation Findings

Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population

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Disclaimer

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Introduction

Youth involved in the child welfare system are at increased risk of trafficking (Administration on Children, Youth and Families, 2013). In response, federal attention to child trafficking has significantly increased in recent years. A summary of federal and legislative efforts to combat trafficking can be found in the Children's Bureau issue brief *Child Welfare and Human Trafficking: A Guide for Child Welfare Agencies* ([Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2017](#)).[1]

Although most youth victims of trafficking in the United States have had prior involvement with the child welfare system (Administration on Children, Youth and Families, 2013), questions remain about how child welfare agencies can lead a coordinated response to effectively identify and serve youth victims of trafficking. In 2014, the Children's Bureau (CB), Administration for Children and Families (ACF) awarded nine grants to address trafficking within the child welfare population (exhibit 1). The grant period lasted 5 years and grantees received $250,000 per year to complete their project activities. (Appendix A lists grant contact information for the grantees.) This third and final synthesis about the child trafficking grant cluster summarizes evaluation grantee findings. Information for this synthesis was compiled from semiannual grantee progress and final reports. For a summary of the core components and evaluation plans of the projects, see *[Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population: Summary of Program and Evaluation Plans](#)* (Fromknecht & Ingoldsby, 2016); and for a summary of midpoint process evaluation findings, see *[Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population: Mid-Cycle Synthesis of Process Evaluation Findings](#)* (Fromknecht & Ingoldsby, 2017).

The goals of the grantee cluster were to—

- Build greater awareness and a better response to the problem of child trafficking in the child welfare population
- Add to the research base and help systems and service providers as they consider enhancing their practices in the context of limited resources
- Build internal capacity to work with trafficking victims and engage in outreach to support similar capacity-building efforts in other systems
- Build on federal anti-trafficking work

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[1] See also *[Guidance to States and Services on Addressing Human Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States](#)*, *[Emerging Practices Within Child Welfare Responses](#)*, and *[Confronting Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Minors in the United States](#)*.

Grantees were expected to—

- Foster coordination and collaboration and emphasize victim-centered, trauma-informed approaches among public child welfare agencies and other systems aimed at preventing trafficking (e.g., local law enforcement, juvenile justice, courts, runaway and homeless youth programs, Children's Justice Act grantees, child advocacy centers)

- Build public child welfare's infrastructure to address trafficking through:

  o Use of multidisciplinary interventions

  o Identification of youth victims

  o Establishment of necessary services or referral processes for victims

  o Development of associated policies

  o Increased awareness of how child welfare involvement increases trafficking risk

  o Dissemination of findings to the field

- Gather data related to trafficking for youth served by their systems

- Understand and be guided by policies or laws in their states regarding the protection of trafficking victims (e.g., "safe harbor" laws)

- Evaluate their projects and use the data to assess the needs and problems of trafficking in the child welfare population

- Document strategies and activities that should and can be sustained after the grant period

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	Human Anti-Trafficking Response Team (HART) Project	ICF Incorporated, LLC
Empower 225 (E225)[2]	Louisiana	Louisiana Children's Anti-Trafficking Initiative (LACAT)	D3 Research & Consulting Services, LLC

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[2] Formerly known as HP Serve.

Grantee	State	Project name	Evaluator
Justice Resource Institute (JRI)	Massachusetts	Massachusetts Child Welfare Trafficking Grant (CWTG)	Northeastern University
King County Superior Court (King)	Washington	King County Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Program	University of Washington School of Medicine
Citrus Family Care Network (CFCN)[3]	Florida	Miami CARES (Community Action Response to Exploitation and Sex Trafficking)	University of South Florida
University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB)	Maryland	The Child Sex Trafficking Victims Support Initiative	UMB
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

The review of the final grantee reports[4] and the data submitted to James Bell Associates (JBA), the cluster's evaluation technical advisor, provided the information for this report. It focuses on shared, cluster-wide outputs and outcomes from the cluster-level logic model (appendix B). Development of this logic model was led by the JBA evaluation technical advisor. The model was used throughout the grant period to track progress, identify opportunities for shared data collection, and organize findings. While it includes a wide range of outputs and outcomes, the findings reported in this synthesis focus on a smaller set that was common across all grantees (listed in parentheses in headings throughout the synthesis).

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[3] The grant was originally awarded to Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc., but was later transferred to CFCN.
[4] Final reports will be posted in the Child Welfare Information Gateway Children's Bureau Discretionary Grants Library.

Process Evaluation Findings

Findings from the three common outputs identified by grantees are described below.

Outputs

Establish Cross-System Partnerships and Develop Coordinated Responses and Practices (Output 3.1)

All grantees participated in a multidisciplinary task force focused on expanding and enhancing efforts to address trafficking in child welfare. Typically, the task force was in place when the project began. In some cases, grantees formed specialized subcommittees focused on child welfare within the larger statewide or regional initiatives. In others, a child welfare specific task force already existed. The number of organizations participating in these task forces ranged from 8 to 122. The frequency of meetings varied, but most (n = 5) grantees hosted meetings quarterly during the grant period which provided a balance between regular communication and work time between meetings. Participating organizations included public child welfare agencies, juvenile justice departments, state agencies and commissions (e.g., departments of youth services, mental and public health), corrections (e.g., police departments, juvenile detention, adult probation), tribes, 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. Grantees found these cross-system partnerships critical to their success and included all groups who have interactions with trafficked youth. Notably, the task force led by **LACAT** in Louisiana formed partnerships with tribes to ensure tribal children were included in all anti-trafficking efforts.

In addition to regularly scheduled task force meetings, many grantees hosted formal stakeholder convenings. For example, **STAVY** in Arizona, **HART** in Connecticut, and **PACT** in California hosted annual summits for a larger group of stakeholders and service providers to meet and discuss the anti-trafficking work in their states. These summits served as an important opportunity to strengthen relationships and partnerships, celebrate successes, and discuss challenges. In Louisiana, **LACAT** hosted both a statewide symposium and regional summits. Speakers at the statewide symposium included the Governor and First Lady and local government leaders and highlighted the importance of addressing child trafficking and grantee-led activities. Subsequent regional summits continued the conversations about how to tailor local level responses to child trafficking.

Conduct Trafficking Awareness Trainings (Output 3.3)

Development, implementation, and expansion of training on child trafficking was a major component and a significant accomplishment of the grants. Grantees conducted over 1,500 trainings for more than 38,000 stakeholders. These trainings were typically meant to raise trafficking awareness and increase grantee skills to identify youth victims and refer them to services. Most trainings were conducted in-person and lasted from a half to a full day. Some grantees also adapted their trainings to meet different needs, including creating online trainings and adapting content for specific audiences. For example, **STAVY** in Arizona developed an online version of their training for child welfare agency staff that expanded the number of trainings available beyond what could be provided in-person and **HART** in Connecticut created multiple versions of their introductory training including curricula for law enforcement, emergency medical services personnel, medical providers, staff of hotels, motels and lodging establishments, and foster parents.

Grantee training data reported in this synthesis comes from the Trafficking Awareness Survey (TAS) (see callout box below). During the reporting period, over 11,400 surveys were completed by training participants. Respondent work fields included child welfare, education, juvenile justice, the legal profession, law enforcement, mental health, and other service providers. Findings from the TAS are reported on page 8.

Trafficking Awareness Survey (TAS)

The TAS is a pre- and post-training survey that measures changes in—

- Knowledge about trafficking (12 items)

- Beliefs about trafficking (4 items)

- Self-efficacy to identify trafficking and refer victims to services (6 items)

The TAS includes 22 items on a 10-point scale and was administered by grantee evaluators immediately before and after trainings. See appendix C for more information and pages 8-9 for results.

Grantees co-created the TAS with assistance and support from the JBA evaluation technical advisor. Two rounds of validity and reliability testing on more than 5,000 surveys were conducted by JBA and are reported in the first and second syntheses. Moderate to high internal consistency was found in the three subscales (knowledge, beliefs, and self-efficacy). Factor analysis supported the presence of these three constructs in pretests, whereas four constructs emerged from the survey at posttest: beliefs, self-efficacy, and two dimensions of knowledge (awareness of child trafficking and knowledge of processes to identify and serve youth victims).

Implement Trauma-Focused and Evidence-Based Programs (EBPs) for Trafficked Youth (Output 3.4)

Establishing an array of trauma-informed services for trafficked youth was a common goal of the trafficking task forces, even though it was not a direct service grant. Few programs designed specifically for trafficked youth have been rigorously tested. However, the grantee projects supported trauma-focused and evidence-informed strategies that have been successful with other at-risk populations. Case-level multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) were used by most grantees (*n* = 6). These MDTs convened child welfare, juvenile justice, legal professionals, and service providers for a specific case to support information sharing and shared decision making, and to ensure the child received services to meet his or her needs. Operating case-level MDTs within a larger network of county or regional MDTs was viewed as particularly helpful to meeting a child's needs (see below).

In Florida, the **Miami CARES** project helped establish a trauma-informed human trafficking court, G.R.A.C.E. Court (Growth Renewed Through Acceptance, Change, and Empowerment), for children with dependency and delinquency cases. The mission of this court is to reduce stigma and shame surrounding human trafficking while empowering youth and their families to see themselves in a position of strength and growth.[5] The University of South Florida is currently evaluating G.R.A.C.E. Court to assess implementation of trauma-informed policies and practices, fidelity to the court's trauma-informed model, and the effects on youth outcomes. Similarly, in Arizona the **STAVY** project supported development of a sex-trafficking, case specific court (STRENGTH Court) for youth dependency and delinquency cases in Maricopa County Juvenile Court. This specialized court is working on protocol and training judges and Court Appointed Special Advocates in trauma-informed court strategies.

The need for specialized therapeutic foster care placements for trafficked youth was expressed by all grantees. These placements support residential stability and prevent runaway episodes. Foster parents are specially trained in trauma-informed responses for trafficked youth and are often limited to one youth per household. Grantees preferred this placement over congregate care, however, they reported challenges in identifying and licensing foster parents and in holding beds open for trafficked youth. Successful examples of projects with specialized therapeutic foster care placements include the CHANCE program, a partner of **Miami CARES**, **HART** in Connecticut, and ConnectUP, a partner of the **King County CSEC Program.**

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[5] For more information, see Growth Renewed Through Acceptance, Change, and Empowerment (G.R.A.C.E.) Court.

Outcome Evaluation Findings

As infrastructure building grants, these projects were not expected to collect data on long-term safety and well-being outcomes for children and families. However, they did collect and report findings on several common short-term and intermediate outcomes, which are described in detail.

Short-Term Outcomes

Improved Infrastructure to Provide a Coordinated Response to Child Trafficking (Outcome 4.1)

An effective, coordinated response to child trafficking requires a reliable infrastructure between child welfare agencies and partner organizations. Grantees used a variety of strategies to improve child welfare agency infrastructures to respond to child trafficking (exhibit 2). Most were centered around collecting and sharing information about individual cases and data trends among system partners. Several also used grant funds to support development or expansion of projects or task force websites that serve as a central clearinghouse for information about available services, training, resources, and events. Examples include—

- **STAVY** project in Arizona (www.sextraffickinghelp.com)
- **King County CSEC Program** in Washington (www.kingcountycsec.org)
- **Project NO REST** in North Carolina (www.projectnorest.org)

Exhibit 2. Infrastructure Strategies to Provide a Coordinated Response to Child Trafficking

| Infrastructure strategies	Number of grantees
Systems to record and monitor trafficking established or enhanced.	9
Communication processes and information sharing streamlined across systems and partners.	7
Memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and data-sharing agreements exist across project partners.	6
Case-level MDTs developed, supported, and facilitated.	6
Continuous quality improvement processes in place, including functions for reporting information on risk, referral, enrollment, and services to stakeholders and providers.	4

Infrastructure strategies	Number of grantees
Training and technical assistance sought from outside sources.	6
Training of trainers conducted to expand local capacity.	4

Increased State-Level and Local Awareness of Trafficked Youth (Outcome 4.2)

Grantees used widespread trainings and public outreach campaigns to increase awareness of the problem of trafficking in their communities. According to the TAS, trained participants self-reported statistically significant improvements ($p < .001$) in knowledge about trafficking, beliefs about trafficking issues, and self-efficacy to identify and respond to youth victims of trafficking (exhibit 3). These results, based on the response average from over 11,400 surveys across the cluster, suggest the trainings provided by grantees have been successful in increasing participants' knowledge of trafficking, shifting beliefs around trafficking issues, and increasing self-efficacy to identify and respond to youth victims of trafficking. While these results are promising, they should be interpreted with caution due to the self-report design of the survey (see callout box on page 9). Appendix C provides more information about the survey items in each domain and the pre- and post-scores by item.

Grantees also tested adaptations to their training curricula. In Arizona, the **STAVY** project created an online training version to increase availability to child welfare agency staff. When comparing differences in respondents' self-report from in-person versus the online training, similar results were found for both training modes. This supported the **STAVY** team's use of an online training that produced comparable improvements in outcomes as the in-person training.

Exhibit 3. Levels of Knowledge, Beliefs, and Self-Efficacy on the Trafficking Awareness Survey Among Training Recipients Over Time
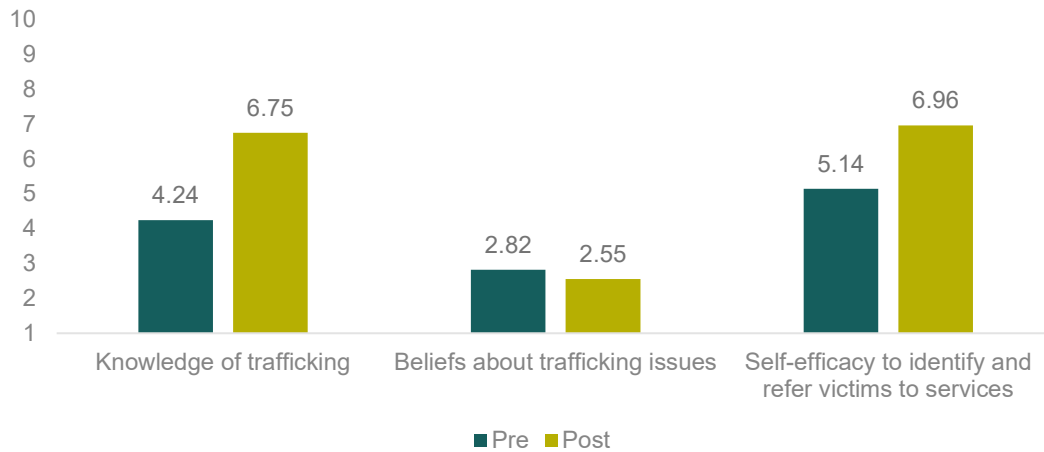
Note: Items in the belief domain were reverse coded so a decrease at posttest was desirable.

Self-Reported Versus Objective Knowledge of Trafficking Identification

By nature, self-reported data have limitations as they rely on participants' perceptions of their own knowledge, beliefs, and behavior rather than an objective assessment. To address this limitation, evaluation teams from **King County CSEC Program** and **Miami CARES** implemented a set of objectively rated knowledge questions before and after the trainings. Participants were asked to read a scenario about a youth and identify whether the youth met the definition of a sex trafficking victim. Comparison of these items with the subjective TAS knowledge items revealed (1) low or no association between self-rated knowledge of the definition of sex trafficking and correct responses to the objective knowledge scenarios; and (2) very small gains in correct responses to the objective knowledge scenarios. This illustrates the need to interpret with caution the findings from the knowledge factor from the TAS.

In North Carolina, **Project NO REST** received a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant allocated through the North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission to conduct a public outreach campaign. This campaign included television and radio advertisements and digital messages distributed through Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Spotify. All messages directed viewers to contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline for further information, make a report of human trafficking, or seek services for human trafficking victims. These efforts contributed to an increase in calls from North Carolina by 143 percent in 2017. See https://www.projectnorest.org/ for more information.

Improved Ability to Quickly Identify Trafficked Victims (Outcome 4.5)

Five of nine grantees use a trafficking identification variable in their state child welfare electronic information system to track the number of victims. For example, the **CSTVI** project in Maryland recently supported the Maryland Department of Human Services in a process to directly incorporate screening into its child welfare information system (see also, outcome 5.2). This type of data integration allows for regular monitoring, reporting, and data analysis for continuous quality improvement purposes and enhances the potential for aggregate analysis to examine data trends.

Improved Collection, Sharing, and Use of Data Across System Partners (Outcome 4.8)

In responding to trafficking in child welfare cases, information sharing is important at both the organization and individual case levels. At the organization level, grantees share data among partners to monitor the scope of the problem and work together on system-level improvements (e.g., coordinated identification, reporting). Most grantees (*n* = 6) use MOUs to establish information sharing among system partners. The MOU process helps the collaborating partners to discuss key issues and plan all levels of information sharing; supports accountability by clearly defining partner roles, expectations, and decision-making processes around the collection and treatment of data; and helps ensure the collaboration can survive changes in organizational information gathering policies and/or turnover among staff involved in data management and analysis. The MOU developed in Massachusetts by the **CWTG** project, which was signed by over 30 local and statewide agencies, successfully established a joint mission for the partnership and clarified each partner's role in the response to trafficking.

Information sharing at the case level helps to tailor services to meet individual youth needs. For example, the Connecticut **HART** project shares case-specific information through MDTs, collects data through the state computer data collection system (known as PIE: Program Information Exchange), and disseminates information about aggregate data trends through reports and newsletters. Another example includes the **LACAT** outreach to trafficking service providers across Louisiana to inform development of an annual statistical report required by the state legislature. Data from service providers are compiled and shared with state leadership.

Intermediate Outcomes

A summary of shared intermediate outcomes addressed by the grantees is provided below.[6]

Improved Identification of Trafficked Youth (Outcome 5.2)

Within child welfare, an effective response to child trafficking depends on accurate identification of at-risk and trafficked youth. All grantees reported enhanced systems to record and monitor trafficking among the child welfare population (see exhibit 3). Five of the grantees used a specific screening instrument or protocol for all children with child welfare cases. These are described below.

- **Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment (CSTVI, Maryland).** The CANS is an established screening tool used in Maryland with all child welfare involved children at case intake and again every 6 months thereafter. Rather than implementing a separate trafficking screening tool, the **CSTVI** team developed an algorithm using the CANS items related to risk factors and signs of trafficking (including runaway behavior, impulsivity/risk-taking, delinquency, substance abuse, and sexual reactivity) to identify youth that may be at risk or victims. The **CSTVI** evaluation team tested the accuracy of the screening algorithm with a sample of known trafficking cases. Of the 129 alleged youth victims with a matched CANS assessment, 101 (78 percent) were flagged as at risk for sex trafficking by the algorithms on at least one of the CANS assessments. The algorithm is being programmed into the new state child welfare data system to automatically screen all child welfare cases.

- **Human Trafficking Screening Tool (Miami CARES, Florida).** This tool is used throughout Florida by the Departments of Children and Families and Juvenile Justice. When youth are identified as potential victims, the screener places a call to the child welfare hotline and reports alleged human trafficking.

- **Sex Trafficking Screening for Youth (LACAT, Louisiana).** This tool is completed by caseworkers for foster care youth aged 12–17. It distinguishes human trafficking risk and involvement using three categories: confirmed victim, high risk, and at risk. The tool is updated every 6 months in coordination with a case planning meeting.

- **Department of Children, Youth, and Families CSEC Screening Tool (King County CSEC Program, Washington).** This tool was locally developed and is now used throughout Washington State to screen children with child welfare cases. The team will conduct a psychometric validation study of the tool using data from all CSEC screenings conducted.

- **Decision Map for Intake and Investigative Response to Human Trafficking of Children (HART, Connecticut).** This Decision Map asks a series of yes/no questions to identify whether

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[6] Intermediate outcome 5.1: Decreased entry into trafficking among at-risk youth was identified as a shared outcome; however, grantees were not expected to collect data on this outcome.

children are confirmed victims, high risk, or at risk of trafficking. The Decision Map explains the correct protocol to use for each result.

Over the course of the 5-year grant period, the grantees identified 3,710 youth as at risk or victims of trafficking. Grantees recognized the efforts to increase awareness and implement enhanced screening protocols would result in an increase in identification of at-risk or youth victims. However, this was not an indication of greater rates of victimization but rather of improved identification efforts.

Improved Cross-System Response to Child Trafficking (Outcome 5.3)

Collaboration among partner agencies is a critical indicator of an effective cross-system response to child trafficking. Collaboration among agency-level MDTs convened by the grantees remained stable over time. The grantees selected the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory (hereafter referred to as the Wilder, see callout box below) as a common data collection tool to measure changes in system collaboration over the grant period. All agreed to administer the Wilder a minimum of three times. Respondents included members of the multidisciplinary task force that met for the purposes of the grant. Individual evaluation teams were given discretion to determine who from each project should participate. Respondents included a range of group members, including child welfare administrators and frontline staff; representatives from juvenile justice, law enforcement, mental health, and education agencies; service providers; court officials (judges, attorneys, CASAs); and victim advocates.

The overall summary score started high and increased slightly over time, from 3.8 in year 1 to 4.0 in years 3 and 5 (exhibit 4). This suggests the grantees were already collaborating with a range of stakeholders when the project began. Exhibit 5 displays the average cluster score for each factor

The Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory

The Wilder includes 40 items grouped into 20 factors that are deemed essential to the successful functioning of collaborative groups (e.g., mutual respect, understanding, trust, appropriate representation of members). It produces an overall summary score as well as a score for each of the 20 factors. Possible scores range between 1.0 and 5.0. Scores between 1.0 and 2.9 indicate an area of concern to be addressed; scores between 3.0 and 3.9 indicate borderline areas deserving some discussion; and scores between 4.0 and 5.0 indicate strengths not needing attention. For more information, see https://wilderresearch.org/tools/cfi-2018/start.

over time. Mean ratings of the individual factors remained relatively consistent over the grant period. Factors 1, 11, and 13 had the greatest increase between years 1 and 3, with each increasing by a score of 0.4. The area of greatest strength remained factor 6 (members see collaboration as in their self-interest), with a mean score between 4.5 and 4.6. The lowest rated score remained factor 19 (sufficient funds, staff, materials, and time) with ratings ranging from 3.0 to 3.2. These findings are limited, however, since only two grantees reported findings by factor in year 5.

Exhibit 4. Change in Overall Average Scores on the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory

Possible scores ranged from 1 to 5.
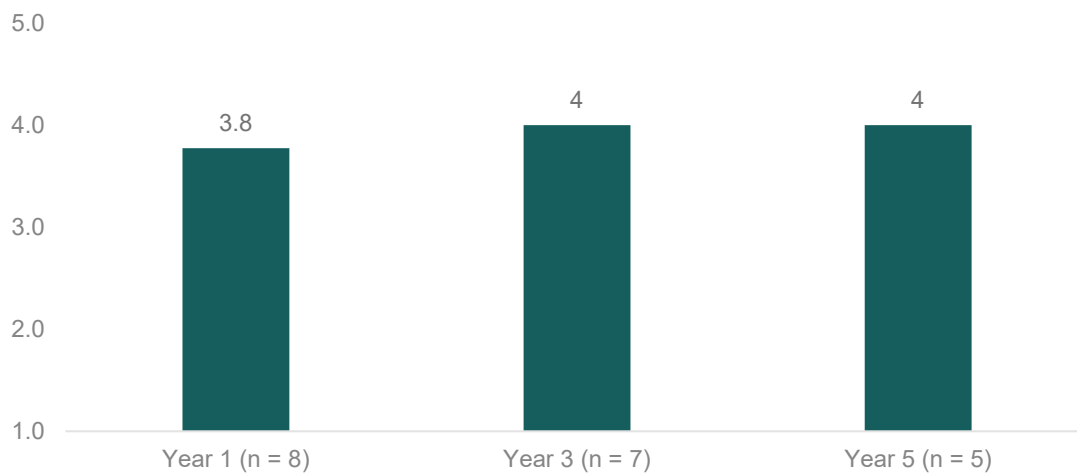
Exhibit 5. Change in Average Scores on the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory by Year

Fewer grantees reported their data by factor over time, ranging from seven grantees in year 1 to two grantees in year 5.

Factor	Year 1 (*n* = 7 projects)	Year 3 (*n* = 4-6 projects)	Year 5 (*n* = 2 projects)	Year 1–3 difference
Factor 1: History of collaboration	3.7	3.7	4.1	0.4
Factor 2: Collaborative group seen as a legitimate leader in the community	3.7	3.8	4	0.3
Factor 3: Favorable political and social climate	4.3	4.3	4.3	0

Factor	Year 1 (n = 7 projects)	Year 3 (n = 4-6 projects)	Year 5 (n = 2 projects)	Year 1–3 difference
Factor 4: Mutual respect, understanding, and trust	3.8	4	4	0.2
Factor 5: Appropriate cross-section of members	3.7	3.8	4	0.3
Factor 6: Members see collaboration as in their self-interest	4.5	4.6	4.6	0.1
Factor 7: Ability to compromise	3.7	3.7	3.6	-0.1
Factor 8: Members share a stake in both process and outcomes	3.9	4.1	4.2	0.3
Factor 9: Multiple layers of participation	3.4	3.5	3.7	0.3
Factor 10: Flexibility	3.9	3.9	3.9	0
Factor 11: Development of clear roles and policy guidelines	3.4	3.5	3.8	0.4
Factor 12: Adaptability	3.6	3.8	3.8	0.2
Factor 13: Appropriate pace of development	3.6	3.6	4	0.4
Factor 14: Open and frequent communication	3.9	3.9	4.2	0.3
Factor 15: Established informal relationships and communication links	3.9	4	4.1	0.2
Factor 16: Concrete, attainable goals and objectives	4	4	4	0
Factor 17: Shared vision	4	4.1	4.3	0.3
Factor 18: Unique purpose	4.2	4.2	4.2	0
Factor 19: Sufficient funds, staff, materials, and time	3.2	3	3.3	0.1
Factor 20: Skilled leadership	4.2	4.2	4.4	0.2

Some grantees applied additional strategies to examine the effectiveness of their collaboration. For example, the **King County CSEC Program** evaluation team conducted three rounds of social network analysis surveys with partner organizations. From 2015 to 2019, the number of organizations that identified as CSEC Task Force members increased substantially from 39 to 62 organizations. Additionally, the Washington Department of Children, Youth, and Families moved from the 10th percentile for communication to the 1st percentile for communication, evidence of a move toward a central role for Washington State in responding to trafficking.

Increased Resources for the Scientific Study of Child Trafficking (Outcome 5.10)

These grantees have made important scientific contributions that help guide future efforts to collaborate and coordinate services to effectively address child trafficking. They have done so through—

- Specifying critical partnerships and resources to support infrastructure (MOUs)

- Creating an instrument to assess knowledge, beliefs, and self-efficacy gained from training and awareness efforts

- Adapting and applying targeted screening instruments and developing protocols to accurately identify affected individuals

- Specifying and collecting electronic data elements to enhance surveillance and understanding of the scope of child trafficking

- Producing handouts and brochures targeted towards youth, parents, and school educators to enhance understanding of child trafficking signs and risk factors

- Disseminating strategies and findings through presentations, reports and briefs, and peer-reviewed publications (see callout box below and appendix D for more information)

Dissemination to Support Scientific Study of Child Trafficking

The grantees have authored eight peer-reviewed academic articles, including one that was co-authored by evaluators from four projects and the JBA technical advisor: *A Traumagenic Social Ecological Framework for Understanding and Intervening With Sex Trafficked Children and Youth* (Finigan-Carr et al., 2019). According to the editors of the *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, this article is the fifth most requested article in all publication years and was downloaded 1,865 times in 2019. See appendix D for a list of academic articles published by the grantees during the grant cycle.

The grantees also gave over 60 presentations on their work and released many reports and briefs. Presentations included those given at national conferences, including the 2019 National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect and the 2019 Child Welfare Evaluation Summit.

Sustainability

Grantees prioritized sustaining partnerships among allied organizations, continued funding for trafficking case coordinators, and creating online archived trainings. Not all grantees were able to secure funding to continue project activities at the same level this grant afforded. However, several have documented examples of how the work will continue even without the same level of funding received through federal grants. Five grantees have secured funding, either through other grants or committed child welfare or superior court budgets, to continue trafficking coordinator positions. These coordinators, or liaisons, serve as a single point of contact for all trafficking cases and help to coordinate MDTs at the case and agency level. Grantees reported they are most successful when they do not carry a caseload but instead are able to coordinate services, placements, and court requirements for trafficking cases. They viewed this coordinator position as critical to an effective response to trafficking. Examples include CSEC Coordinators for each county in Massachusetts funded by a VOCA grant for the next 2–4 years; a new law in Maryland that establishes grant funding for regional navigators to coordinate child sex trafficking cases; and funding being secured for a CSEC Program Manager, Community Outreach Specialist, and CSEC Liaison for two child welfare regions as part of the King County Superior Court budget for the next 2 years.

Several of the grantees have secured funding to continue stakeholder convenings. For example, in Massachusetts, most county-level biannual and quarterly convenings of leadership and meetings of the statewide Leadership Advisory Board will continue thanks to financial support from the Massachusetts Children's Alliance (MACA). In California, CDSS plans to expand the **PACT** project statewide using a portion of appropriated funds for the State Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Program. This will ensure continued and expanded funding for **PACT** coordinators, customized technical assistance, support from a PACT Consultation Team, (a diverse group of adult survivors of trafficking and subject matter experts), statewide convenings, and web-based trainings.

Creating online training modules, customizable template presentations, and extended train-the-trainer sessions are examples of how grantee efforts to train the child welfare workforce on defining and identifying trafficking and how to appropriately serve victims will continue.

Recommendations for the Field

The grantees learned many lessons over the 5-year grant period that can be applied to child welfare anti-trafficking efforts. Their key recommendations to improve child welfare's response to trafficking are described below.

Recommendations for the Children's Bureau and other federal agencies—

- Prioritize funding for studies of specialized therapeutic foster care placements and other placement settings for trafficked youth. Residential stability continues to be a challenge for trafficked youth, and more evidence is needed about what placement settings are most effective for this population.

- Fund research to study how EBPs for the general child welfare population can be adapted for trafficked youth. Examples of interventions that could be tailored and tested for use with trafficked youth include Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care and Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT).

- Expand funding of programs beyond sex trafficking to include programs and research related to labor trafficking of youth and support programs for families and caregivers of trafficked youth.

- Require youth and survivor involvement in all funded trafficking projects. These should be paid positions that are part of the project teams, rather than consultants brought on to review and provide feedback on discrete pieces of the project.

- Support national technical assistance initiatives to support organization-level collaboration among partners, with particular focus on child trafficking and issues concerning the vulnerable population of children involved with child welfare. A national technical assistance center could also centralize the storage and dissemination of online resources like trainings, instruments, and evaluation information.

Recommendations for state and cross-systems partnerships—

- Develop local MDTs that allow agencies to coordinate on a case-by-case basis for each child victim of trafficking. These local MDTs may be supported by a regional or statewide MDT structure that can provide oversight, technical assistance, and facilitation of peer learning among local MDTs.

- Fund a trafficking case coordinator position within the child welfare agency to coordinate communication, case planning, and overall anti-trafficking efforts between stakeholders at the local and agency level.

- Maintain a website as a central repository of trafficking service providers with contact information and descriptions.

- Actively engage the faith-based community as partners in identification of victims and service provision.

- Develop web-based training modules to extend the reach of training efforts. Incorporate case application games into training for child welfare professionals which can be an effective way to practice critical thinking skills in child welfare trafficking cases.

- Develop and share templates for data sharing agreements among research partners, child welfare agencies, juvenile courts, and service providers.

- Fund specialized therapeutic foster care homes for youth who have been identified as trafficking victims. Existing foster care parents who are already familiar with the child welfare system could be key recruitment resources.

Recommendations for researchers and evaluators—

- Engage in further study of effective strategies for the identification of trafficking cases in the child welfare system and of coordinating services for these cases.

- Continue to test and validate trafficking screening tools and protocols.

- Further explore and test the traumagenic social ecological framework posited by the grantees in this cluster (Finigan-Carr et al., 2019).

- Include objective measures of knowledge gain when evaluating training effectiveness.

- Help community service providers build staff capacity to fully participate in data collection.

Conclusion

With $250,000 per year over the 5-year funding period, the nine grantees made considerable progress toward the goals of improving the response to child trafficking and increasing awareness of trafficking among child welfare professionals and other stakeholders. The use of trafficking-specific case coordinators; local MDTs supported by a regional or statewide MDT structure; and extensive training provided in-person, online, and expanded through a train-the-trainer model stand out as effective strategies to enhance child welfare's response to trafficking. Collectively, this cluster made significant contributions to the field, including the TAS as a tool for assessing trafficking trainings and a traumagenic social ecological framework of child trafficking (Finigan-Carr et al., 2019) that can be used by researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to identify intervention points and areas for future study.

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Fromknecht, A., & Ingoldsby, E. (2016). *Grants to address trafficking within the child welfare population: Summary of program and evaluation plans*. James Bell Associates. https://www.jbassoc.com/resource/grants-address-trafficking-within-child-welfare-population-summary-programs-evaluation-plans/

Fromknecht, A., & Ingoldsby, E. (2017). *Grants to address trafficking within the child welfare population: Mid-cycle synthesis of process evaluation findings*. James Bell Associates. https://www.jbassoc.com/resource/grants-address-trafficking-within-child-welfare-population-mid-cycle-synthesis-process-evaluation-findings/

Appendix A. Grantee Contact Information

Grantee	State	Project name	Project director contact information	Evaluator	Evaluator contact information
ASU	AZ	Sex Trafficking and Arizona's Vulnerable Youth: Identification, Collaboration, and Intervention (STAVY)	Dominique Roe-Sepowitz Dominique.roe@asu.edu	ASU	Judy Krysik Judy.Krysik@asu.edu
CDSS	CA	The California Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking (PACT) Project	Kelly Winston Kelly.Winston@dss.ca.gov Melissa Gomez melissa.gomez@cfpic.org	Resource Development Associates	Alison Hamburg ahamburg@resourcedevelopment.net
CTDCF	CT	Human Anti-Trafficking Response Team (HART) Project	Tammy Sneed Tammy.Sneed@ct.gov	ICF Incorporated, LLC	Samantha Lowry Samantha.Lowry@icf.com
Empower 225	LA	Louisiana Children's Anti-Trafficking Initiative (LACAT)	Meagan Westmoreland Meagan.westmoreland@empower225.org	D3 Research & Consulting Services, LLC	Dana Hunter Danahunterla1@gmail.com
JRI	MA	Massachusetts Child Welfare Trafficking Grant (CWTG)	Lisa Goldblatt Grace lgrace@jri.org	Northeastern University	Amy Farrell am.farrell@neu.edu
King	WA	King County CSEC Program	Kelly Mangiaracina Kelly.mangiaracina@kingcounty.gov	University of Washington School of Medicine	Michael Pullmann pullmann@uw.edu

Grantee	State	Project name	Project director contact information	Evaluator	Evaluator contact information
Citrus Family Care Network	FL	Miami CARES (Community Action Response to Exploitation and Sex Trafficking)	Yinay Ruiz yruiz@citrusfcn.com	University of South Florida	Melissa Johnson mhjohns4@usf.edu
UMB	MD	The Child Sex Trafficking Victims Support Initiative	Nadine Finigan-Carr nfinigan-carr@ssw.umaryland.edu	UMB	Nadine Finigan-Carr nfinigan-carr@ssw.umaryland.edu
UNC	NC	Project NO REST (North Carolina Organizing and Responding to the Exploitation and Sexual Trafficking of Children)	Dean Duncan dfduncan@email.unc.edu	UNC	Joy Stewart jstewart@unc.edu

Appendix B. Cluster-Level Logic Model

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 technical assistance (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 youth** 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** *Well-Being* **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 across all grantees are shown in bold. Not all grantee projects were able to collect and report data for long-term outcomes.

Appendix C. Description of the TAS and Pre- and Post-training Differences by TAS Domain

The TAS is a pre- and post-training survey that measures changes in three domains: knowledge about trafficking, beliefs about trafficking, and self-efficacy to identify trafficking and refer victims to services. See exhibit C-1 for a description of the TAS domains.

The TAS includes 22 items on a 10-point scale and was administered by grantee evaluators immediately before and after trainings delivered as part of the grant. Grantees co-created the TAS under the direction of the JBA evaluation technical advisor. Two rounds of validity and reliability testing on more than 5,000 surveys were conducted by JBA and are reported in the previous two syntheses of this grantee cluster.[7] Moderate to high internal consistency was found in the three subscales (knowledge, beliefs, and self-efficacy). Factor analysis supported the presence of these three constructs in pretests, whereas four constructs emerged from the survey at posttest: beliefs, self-efficacy, and two dimensions of knowledge (awareness of child trafficking and knowledge of processes to identify and serve youth victims of trafficking). Pre- and post-training differences by TAS domain and item are presented in exhibits C-2 through C-4.

Exhibit C-1. Description of TAS Domains

Domain	Number of items	Scale	Example item
Knowledge	12	1 = No knowledge 10 = Complete knowledge/expert	Factors that put youth at risk of sex trafficking
Beliefs	4	1 = Completely false 10 = Completely true	Secure detention is necessary to serve youth involved in sex trafficking

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[7] See *Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population: Summary of Program and Evaluation Plans* (Fromknecht & Ingoldsby, 2016) and *Grants to Address Trafficking Within the Child Welfare Population: Mid-Cycle Synthesis of Process Evaluation Findings* (Fromknecht & Ingoldsby, 2017).

Domain	Number of items	Scale	Example item
Self-efficacy	6	1 = Not at all comfortable 10 = Completely comfortable	Identify youth victims of sex trafficking in my community

Exhibit C-2. Knowledge of Child Trafficking Domain: Pre- and Post-training Differences

Knowledge of	Average pretest score	Average posttest score	Difference	*n*
Ways to <u>engage</u> with sex trafficked youth	3.68	6.71	3.03	9722
Ways to <u>identify</u> sex trafficked youth	4.08	6.92	2.84	9720
<u>Services</u> available in my community to treat sex trafficked youth	3.61	6.36	2.75	9682
<u>Prevalence</u> of sex trafficking among youth in my community	3.94	6.58	2.64	8642
Federal and state <u>definition</u> of sex trafficking	4.12	6.76	2.64	9731
Agency <u>referral</u> process for sex trafficked youth	3.56	6.16	2.6	9628
Agency <u>process for identifying</u> sex trafficked youth	3.56	6.15	2.59	9619

Knowledge of	Average pretest score	Average posttest score	Difference	*n*
<u>Strategies</u> used to recruit youth into sex trafficking	4.61	7.16	2.55	9742
Factors that <u>protect</u> youth against sex trafficking	4.61	6.88	2.27	9728
How sex trafficking <u>impacts</u> youth	5.06	7.21	2.15	9753
Factors that put youth <u>at risk</u> of sex trafficking	5.14	7.22	2.08	9757
<u>Terminology</u> related to sex trafficking	4.9	6.93	2.03	8698

Exhibit C-3. Beliefs About Child Trafficking Domain: Pre- and Post-training Differences

Belief items	Average pretest score	Average posttest score	Difference	*n*
Minors <u>choose</u> to engage in prostitution for money	3.38	2.83	0.55 (-)	8445
Minors who are involved in prostitution could <u>stop</u> at any time	2.3	2.13	0.17 (-)	9548
Secure <u>detention</u> is necessary to serve youth involved in sex trafficking	3.42	3.02	0.40 (-)	9034

Belief items	Average pretest score	Average posttest score	Difference	*n*
Prostitution is a <u>victimless</u> crime even when minors participate	2.18	2.23	0.05 (+)	8357

Exhibit C-4. Self-Efficacy to Identify Trafficking and Refer Victims to Services Domain: Pre- and Post-training Differences

Comfort to	Average pretest score	Average posttest score	Difference	*n*
<u>Identify youth at risk</u> of being sex trafficked in my community	4.64	6.84	2.2	9457
<u>Identify youth victims</u> of sex trafficking in my community	4.52	6.66	2.14	9453
<u>Respond</u> appropriately when victims of sex trafficking are identified (e.g., documentation, referral, supervisor notification)	5.3	7.13	1.83	9473
Have a <u>conversation</u> with a youth to identify if s/he is currently being sexually exploited or is at risk of being sexually exploited	5.25	6.89	1.64	9511
<u>Refer</u> a youth to local resources and services	5.69	7.33	1.64	9479
Directly <u>ask</u> a youth if s/he is trading sex for money, survival needs, or other items of value	5.44	6.89	1.45	9502

Appendix D. Academic Articles Published by the Grantee Cluster

Article references	Grantee(s)/Evaluators
De Vries, I., Kafafian, M., Goggin, K., Bouchard, E., Goldfarb, S., & Farrell, A. (2019). Enhancing the identification of commercial sexual exploitation among a population of high-risk youths using predictive regularization models. *Child Maltreatment.* https://doi.org/10.1177/1077559519889178	JRI/Northeastern University
Farrell, A., Lockwood, S., Goggin, K., & Hogan, S. (2019). *Specialized residential placements for child trafficking victims 2019*. Violence and Justice Research Laboratory, Northeastern University School of Criminology and Criminal Justice.	JRI/Northeastern University
Finigan-Carr, N. M., Johnson, M. H., Pullmann, M. D., Stewart, C. J., & Fromknecht, A. E. (2019). A traumagenic social ecological framework for understanding and intervening with sex trafficked children and youth. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 36*(1), 49–63. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-018-0588-7	UMB, CFCN/USF, King/UW, UNC, JBA
Finigan-Carr, N. M., & Rubenstein, A. (2018). Commercial sexual exploitation of children and sex trafficking of foster youth. In E. Trejos-Castillo and N. Trevino-Schafer (Eds.) *Handbook of Foster Youth*. New York, NY: Routledge Press.	UMB
Landers, M., Johnson, M. H., Armstrong, M. I., McGrath, K., & Dollard, N. (2020). Exploring relationships as mediators of treatment outcomes among commercially sexually exploited youth. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 100.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2019.104095	CFCN/USF

Article references	Grantee(s)/Evaluators
Landers, M., McGrath, K., Johnson, M. H., Armstrong, M. I., & Dollard, N. (2017). Baseline characteristics of dependent youth who have been commercially sexually exploited: Findings from a specialized treatment program. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 26*(6), 692–709.	CFCN/USF
Pullmann, M. D., Roberts, N., Parker, E. M., Mangiaracina, K. J., Briner, L., Silverman, M., & Becker, J. (2020). Residential instability, running away, and juvenile detention characterizes commercially sexually exploited youth involved in Washington State's child welfare system. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 102.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104423	King/UW
Pullmann, M. D., Roberts, N., Parker, E.M., Mangiaracina, K. J., Briner, L., Silverman, M., & Becker, J. (under review). *Commercially sexually exploited youth involved in the child welfare system: Lifetime residential placements, arrests, and detention.*	King/UW