

Clinical Checklist for Working with Trafficking Victims/Survivors

1. **Know & Follow Your Agency's Policies First**
2. Is this an assumed Adult or Minor sex trafficking victim?
 - a. Remember it's like having a conversation, do not interrogate, you will lose them
 - b. Most adults were forced into the life as a minor
 - c. Do not call them victims, or refer to it as sex trafficking (avoid that language)
3. Is the client here alone?
 - a. If yes proceed with screening/intake/assessment
 - b. If no be aware the client could be there with the trafficker. Proceed with caution with conducting the screening/intake/assessment
4. Assess for indicators to help support your assumption
 - a. See Warning Signs of Child Sex Trafficking Handout (By: Shared Hope Int.)
 - b. Prepaid Credit Cards
 - c. Multiple Cell Phones
 - d. Excessive Amounts of Contraceptives
5. Is the client safe (Staff's opinion)?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No, you must meet this need first
6. Assess for medical attention
7. Assess for physical and sexual abuse?
8. Depending on whether it is an adult or minor, some questions to ask include:
 - a. When you leave here do you have a place to sleep?
 - b. Do you attend school every day?
 - c. Do you ever runaway from home?
 - d. When you leave here will you be safe?
 - e. Has anyone asked you to engage in sex for food, shelter, drugs, or money?
 - f. Are you in control of your things like clothes, money, wallet, etc?
 - g. Does anyone force you to do things that you do not feel comfortable doing?
 - h. Have you been assaulted?
 - i. Has anyone ever tried to sexually assault you?
 - j. Has anyone hurt you?
 - k. Do you want to hurt yourself (self-harm)?
 - l. Have you tried to or do you want to commit suicide?
9. If anyone discloses they are being forced to have sex in exchange for anything?
 - a. Make a police report ASAP
10. If a minor tells you they have been forced to engage in sex trafficking
 - a. Please educate the parent/guardian about the process (separately if needed)
 - b. Make a police report
 - c. Make a **CPS Report (especially if you suspect family involvement)**
 - d. Contact **Driscoll Hospital's** Care team and request a SANE exam (evidence)
 - i. Please discuss with the guardian why this is important

- e. Contact the **Child Advocacy Center** and request an appointment (unless CPS or Law Enforcement states differently)
 - i. They will need the police report number because the detective assigned to the case will need to attend the appointment.
 - ii. Forensic interview for court purpose
 - iii. This does not prevent the defense attorney from putting a victim on the stand
- f. Locate a mentor or advocate that works with minor sex trafficking victims if guardian approves and link them to each other
- g. It is normal for the victim to want to protect the trafficker or pimp
 - i. Fear of safety is real
 - ii. The trafficker has been the most constant person in this victim's life and he or she provides them with food, shelter, money and sometimes what they believe as love.
- h. Review all documentation related to this type of client
 - i. Language in notes can make or break a case
 - ii. "Susie was dishonest about being a victim..." (discredited)
- 11. If an adult tells you they have been forced to engage in sex trafficking
 - a. Explain you will have to make a police report
 - i. Be aware they may run so choose wisely when you will say this. No one can force an adult to get help or participate in anything.
 - ii. Make sure you already gathered enough information
 - b. Educate them about having a SANE exam (testing for pregnancy, STD's, allow the nurses to talk about forensic evidence)
 - i. If they agree call **Doctor's Regional** and set up the appt.
 - c. Ask them if they would like help getting out of the life or just having a place to stay for a few days.
 - i. If they agree let them know there are shelters you can call for them
 - ii. **Purple Door** (you will not have easy contact with your client there)
- 12. All possible cases should be reported to the **National Human Trafficking Hotline**
- 13. Still have questions contact the local Taskforce: **Coastal Bend Border Region Human Trafficking Taskforce (www.texascbbtaskforce.com)**
- 14. If a parent comes in and states their child is Missing and he or she does not have any idea where their child is:
 - a. Make a police report
 - b. Provide them with information or Assist them with making a report to the **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)**
 - i. It requires a guardian because they will need a picture to send out an Amber Alert
- 15. Treatment will be needed after basic needs are met
 - a. Assign to a trained clinician in trauma-based therapies and trafficking
 - b. Seek out a counselor who has worked with the trafficking population
- 16. Counseling
 - a. Allow them to talk
 - b. You may want to know but it's not your story

- c. Not every client will have PTSD some will have Acute Stress Disorder
 - d. They do go back to the life, it's part of it.
17. Counseling Session Times
- a. They will often function better late at night
 - b. Sessions in the evening or latter part of the day is better
18. Counseling Supports
- a. Determine early on who they have as supports
 - b. Identify someone who will be that additional constant person in their life
 - c. Provide referrals as needed for additional services/advocates
19. Counseling & Family Support
- a. Start with education
 - b. Be aware of blaming (He or she wanted to do it. She was doing it on her own so she must have wanted it.)
 - c. Find the alliances within the family to help provide support
20. Counseling Education
- a. Trauma
 - b. Sex Trafficking
21. Emotion Regulation is Key because most are Dysregulated
- a. Sour candies
 - b. Cold water
 - c. If they become dysregulated in session you do not continue to process
22. Flexible Counseling Approach
- a. Allow them to walk, or move (eye contact is uncomfortable)
 - b. Regardless of what approach you use, remember if they are not ready then wait
 - i. Once rapport is built you will have a better idea of what the client can handle or what is necessary to process and what can be avoided
 - c. Telling their story is not appropriate for everyone (Minor or Adult)
 - d. Therapy can be a long process due to the complex trauma
23. Life Skills & Trade or Career Building Skills
24. Investigations
- a. Protect the Counseling Room (it's no place for investigations)
 - b. Please work with your client to help them understand their rights
 - c. Convictions are important but **DO NO HARM is Real (ACA Code of Ethics)**
 - d. We are there to help them & support what they want to do, nothing more
25. Court Testimony
- a. These cases do go to court: be prepared (Federal & State)
 - i. Remember check all subpoenas for a judge's signature
 - b. Ensure you have spoken to your client about it
 - c. Remember you cannot be an expert witness if your client is the victim
26. Make sure you are meeting regularly with staff seeing this population if you are the Supervisor
- a. Know the case well, these are high profile cases
 - b. Allow time for debriefing paying close attention to compassion fatigue