

## **Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)**

### **AKA: Human Trafficking**

#### **For CASAS:**

**\*Key Terms:** CSEC: Commercially sexually exploited children, AWOL: Absent without leave, RBY: Resilient Brave Youth

#### **\*How do foster youth become trafficked?**

Foster youth are a very vulnerable population, and can easily fall into 'the life' of being trafficked. Traffickers are very aware of where to meet children; many times, it happens at parks, stores, near schools, or anywhere in the community that children frequent. Many traffickers become aware of where group homes and foster homes are located, and once they are able to lure one child into the life, they use that child to recruit other residents in their foster or group home to also join the life.

Predators are skilled at building relationships and determining the level of engagement and supervision at home. They are persuasive and can con their victims to do more, like sending nude pictures or videos, and eventually meeting in person.

#### **\*Does trafficking happen to both genders?**

YES! Although CSEC is more prevalent and frequently seen with female youth, male youth also are victims of trafficking. It is nondiscriminatory and can happen to any child, any time, but foster youth are just a more vulnerable population.

Every child is vulnerable to human trafficking, but some are at greater risk: those who were sexually abused; those who were in the child welfare system before age 5; LGBTQIA+ youth; runaways; and children from poverty-stricken families.

#### **\*What are the signs of a youth being trafficked?**

- Going AWOL frequently. Youth who often run away and are gone for more than 24 hours
- Taking others with them during AWOL episodes (sign of recruiting others)
- Having extra money that is not allowance money from the caregivers
- Having belongings in their possession that they normally would not be able to afford: nails done, hair done, cell phones, etc.
- Having drugs and/or alcohol frequently in their possession
- Being secretive/withdrawn about their life, boyfriend/girlfriend, friends, etc.
- Tattoos/markings on their body
- Sexualized behaviors

### **What do professionals do when a child is labeled CSEC?**

SSPs and attorneys want to do what they can when they know that a child is actively being trafficked, or are at risk of being trafficked. SSPs have a CSEC assessment tool that they complete periodically that gives them an idea of the risk of being trafficked for each youth on their caseload. Once they complete the tool, the child is either labeled as a CSEC youth, or 'at risk' of becoming CSEC.

DPSS connects these youth with counseling, resources and programs specializing in human trafficking through community partners — Resilient Brave Youth (RBY), Rebirth Homes, and Run to Rescue.

### **\*What can CASAS do to help their CSEC child?**

-Just BE there and be consistent! You can be someone safe for them that they can talk to, and open up. We never want to pry for information, but let them come to us when they are ready. They may NEVER admit to what is happening, but knowing that they have a safe adult in their corner will help a ton.

-Keep in contact with professionals, and let them know what you know.

-NEVER pick a child up from an AWOL, always alert the SSP immediately if you hear from a youth who is AWOL.

-Attend CFTMs, recommend a referral to a CSEC support services like RBY or Run to Rescue if the youth does not have those services in place yet.

-Talk to your supervisor about other ways you can be a support, sometimes we may be able to recommend other things/services that we are aware of that can be a support for your child.