STATEWIDE SCREENING TOOL FOR CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION

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GEORGIA CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL

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STATEWIDE SCREENING TOOL FOR
CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING
AND EXPLOITATION

INTRODUCTION TO CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING & EXPLOITATION

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

Child sex trafficking, one category of the epidemic of human trafficking, is a form of modern-day slavery, where people profit from the control and exploitation of youth. This form of modern-day slavery is a global problem, and one that exists in the United States and the state of Georgia. Human trafficking is a $9.8 billion domestic industry[1]. Eighty-three percent (83%) of sex trafficking victims identified in the U.S. between 2008 and 2010 were United States citizens, and reports of human trafficking were made all 50 states[2].

Specific to child sex trafficking, an average of 100,000 American children are forced into the for-profit sex slavery industry each year[3], and it is estimated that between 244,000 and 325,000 children are at risk each year in the United States[4]. Both the state of Georgia and the city of Atlanta are known as hubs for child sex trafficking/exploitation activity, as well as the response to this violence and abuse against children. In 2005, the FBI named Atlanta as one of 14 cities with the highest incidence of child exploitation/trafficking in the United States[5]. Between 2003 and 2007, the underground sex industry in Atlanta grew from $238 million to $290 million; a 22% increase[6].

DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING (DMST)

The U.S. Government has identified child trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation as a major problem worldwide and nationally. According to the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, **D**omestic **M**inor **S**ex **T**rafficking (DMST) is defined as the "recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act where the person is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident under age 18." A "commercial sex act" is defined as any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person.

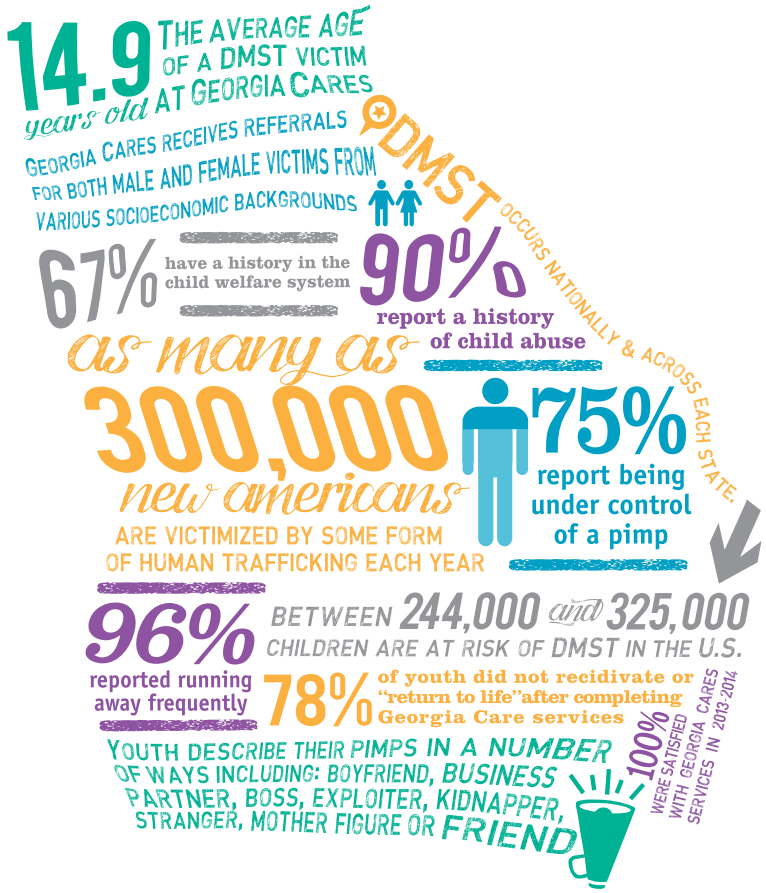
Any child under the age of 18 engaged in a sex act in which something of value (it does not have to be money, it could be a good or service) is exchanged, is a victim of child sex trafficking, or DMST. In general, DMST occurs when U.S. minors are involved in the commercial sex industry- exotic dancing, escort services, massage services, online sex ads, child "prostitution" and/or phone sex services are just some of the ways through which minors can be victimized. It is important to note that the term trafficking used in DMST, does not require movement. A minor can be trafficked anywhere at any time, and does not have to be moved in order to be a victim of this crime.

1 *Shared Hope International, 2013*
2 *Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011*
3 *National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2010*
4 *Estes and Weiner, 2001*
5 *FBI, 2005*
6 *Urban Institute, 2014*

WHAT IS GEORGIA CARES?

Child sex trafficking is occurring in Georgia. Unfortunately, these child victims often don't receive the services they need. Georgia Cares was created as an initiative of the Governor's Office for Children and Families in 2009 with the mission of ensuring that child sex trafficking victims receive quality care and services in the State of Georgia. In 2013, Georgia Cares became a 501(c)(3) and is now an independent, non-profit organization working to serve child sex trafficking victims across the State of Georgia.

As the single, statewide coordinating agency to connect services and treatment care for victims, Georgia Cares facilitates services to meet all needs and dimensions of a child's wellbeing. It is the vision of Georgia Cares that DMST is one day eradicated, and survivors of DMST are able to thrive with the help of trauma-informed treatment. Georgia Cares believes that youth who have been exploited/trafficked can be restored to safety, health, and well-being when they are recognized as victims of sexual abuse and supported with appropriate treatment.



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PURPOSE OF THIS SCREENING TOOL

The purpose of the Georgia Statewide Screening Tool is to equip communities across Georgia to appropriately respond to suspicion of DMST/CSEC by utilizing the tool as guide for identification and referral to Georgia Cares.

The following tool outlines indicators of trafficking and exploitation in order to serve as a guide for determining whether there is sufficient evidence to refer a youth to Georgia Cares for a research-based assessment. The tool was developed with the aim of:

- Decreasing the number of referrals of children who are not victims of DMST/CSEC;
- Increasing education and capacity of communities to appropriately respond to suspicion of DMST/CSEC;
- Creating a statewide protocol specific to the suspicion of DMST/CSEC that aligns with the statewide system of Georgia Cares.

The indicators delineated in the tool may be signs that a youth is a victim of sex trafficking. The indicators are not exhaustive or cumulative in nature and each statement, taken alone, may not indicate a potential trafficking situation. This list is intended to be a general guide of possible signs that a young person may be a victim of sex trafficking & exploitation. The purpose of the tool is to help the individual completing the statements to determine whether a referral to Georgia Cares is an appropriate next step.

WHEN TO USE THIS SCREENING TOOL

This tool should be used whenever there is reason to suspect that a child is being, or is at high risk for being, sexually exploited/trafficked.

While it is true that children are inherently vulnerable, and therefore, any child is at risk of becoming trafficked or exploited for the purposes of sex, there are certain exposures that increase this risk. Some of the key exposures include:

- Child sexual abuse
- Domestic violence within the family
- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Family involvement in sexual exploitation
- Parents with a high level of vulnerabilities (drug/alcohol, mental health etc.)
- Drug/alcohol, mental health or other difficulties themselves
- Frequent or chronic runaway
- Multiple out of home placements

The screening tool provides indicators on pages 7-9 for behaviors of youth trafficking.

HOW TO USE THIS SCREENING TOOL

- This assessment tool is **NOT** an interview guide and is **NOT** intended to be implemented directly with the child who is the subject of concern. Rather, the tool is designed for use by individuals working with children who should answer the questions based on information known to them or acquired from other relevant individuals. It is critically important that there is no interaction with the child while completing this tool, as it is not a mechanism for "intervention."

- When specific information is unknown to the individual completing the form, these statements can be left blank. It should be noted, however, that the screening tool is less reliable when questions are left unanswered.

- For each statement outlined, the corresponding *'Yes'*, *'No*, or *'Don't Know'* box should be ticked. Please note that this tool is organized by the categorization of Primary-HIGH, Secondary-MEDIUM or Tertiary-LOW indicators with each level representing a more significant warning sign for involvement in trafficking and exploitation.

- A table is provided below the tool to allow for summary of the ratings. The rating guide provided under 'How to Interpret the Ratings' clarifies when the ratings indicate that a referral is appropriate. The instructions for making a referral are provided. See page 10 for next steps.

Disclaimer: Measurement outcome does not guarantee a Georgia Cares assessment. Measurement also does not guarantee DMST specific safe home placement- this tool is not used for placement purposes.

INDICATOR OF CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION

Section A / PRIMARY-HIGH	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	Circumstances for Referral / NOTES
The youth has been charged or has a previous record of a charge of prostitution.				
The youth discloses exploitation followed by a withdrawal of allegation/recantation.				
The youth has started accumulating new goods such as a cellphone, clothes, shoes, and/or jewelry that is unaccounted for.				
The youth has an increase in income that is unaccounted for.				
There are ads online soliciting sex with the youth on internet classified websites (such as Craigslist, Backpage, sipsap, erotica).				
There is evidence that the youth has visited or frequented strip clubs, truck stops, commercial-front brothels (fake massage parlors, nail salons, bars), escort services, or residential brothels.				
The youth has a significantly older "boyfriend" or "girlfriend."				
The youth has possession of prepaid, debit or gift cards and/or hotel keys or receipts.				
The youth has special marked tattoos, or branding on their body (that they might be unwilling to explain).				
Reports from reliable sources of the youth's involvement in the commercial sex industry.				
The youth has friends or relationships with indivuduals who have confirmed involvement in the commercial sex industry.				
The youth has a confirmed family history in the commercial sex industry.				
The youth is labeled as a chronic runaway (including chronically returns home late or unexplained overnight absences).				
Total Number of "YES" Responses for Section A				

INDICATOR OF CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION

Section B / SECONDARY-MEDIUM	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	Circumstances for Referral / NOTES
The youth frequently leaves home without permission, including chronically returning home late and/or unexplained overnight absences.				
The youth frequently travels with an older male or person who is not their guardian.				
The youth has disclosed or has confirmed history of child sexual abuse.				
The youth discloses meeting individuals or establishing relationships with individuals who he/she originally "met" online.				
There is evidence of the youth using a street name or alias.				
There are reports or the youth discloses multiple sexually transmitted diseases/infections or multiple pregnancies.				
The youth has multiple delinquent charges.				
The youth has, or is currently experiencing homelessness.				
The youth has an explicitly sexual online profile found on internet community sites, internet classified ads, and/or social media sites.				
The youth has disclosed or has confirmed history of physical abuse or neglect.				
The youth is chatting online with people their parents/ friends have never met.				
The youth is using substances on a regular basis.				
The youth has an unstable home environment.				
The youth wears overtly sexualized attire or has suddenly changed their appearance to dress more provocatively.				
Total Number of "YES" Responses for Section B				

INDICATOR OF CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION

Section C / TERTIARY-LOW	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	Circumstances for Referral / NOTES
The youth is increasingly absent from school (truant) with no explanation of their whereabouts.				
The youth is very secretive about where they have been and with whom.				
The youth exhibits negative behaviors and lack of success/ attainment while at school.				
The youth has lied about his/her age.				
The youth has a confirmed history of frequent or multiple out of home placements.				
The youth expresses low self-esteem and expressions of despair to include : - self-harm *(cutting, eating disorder, overdosing, sexualized risk-taking)* - intensive acting out *(threatening behavior, violent outbursts, bullying, offending behavior)*, - known mental health diagnosis.				
The youth expresses lack of support or unstable home environment due to expression of sexual orientation or gender identity.				
The youth has no identification or is not in control of his/her identification documents.				
The youth shows signs of physical trauma such as unexplained bruises, black eye, cuts or other marks.				
The youth shows signs of emotional trauma including increased fear, anxiety, depression, tension, and/or nervousness.				
The youth has no contact with support systems- including access to little to no natural supports.				
Total Number of "YES" Responses for Section C				

INSTRUCTIONS

TRANSFER THE NUMBER OF "YES" RESPONSES FROM SECTIONS A, B and C TO THE BELOW TABLE	
Total # of "Yes" Responses for Section A / PRIMARY-HIGH	
Total # of "Yes" Responses for Section B / SECONDARY-MEDIUM	
Total # of "Yes" Responses for Section C / TERTIARY-LOW	
Total # of "Yes" Responses for Sections B & C Combined	

HOW TO INTERPRET RESULTS

1 Once the tool has been completed, the scoring from the tool will determine the appropriateness of a referral to Georgia Cares.

2 Each level of primary, secondary and tertiary indicators represents a more significant list of warning signs for involvement in trafficking and exploitation:

3 Use the following rating system to determine the appropriatesness of a referral to Georgia Cares:

1 or more "Yes" responses in **Section A / PRIMARY-HIGH**
2 or more "Yes" responses in **Section B / SECONDARY-MEDIUM**
3 or more "Yes" responses in **Section C / TERTIARY-LOW**
3 or more "Yes" responses in Sections **B** & **C** combined

4 If these criteria are not met, then the information provided supports that the youth appears to be an at-risk youth, without an emphasis on sex trafficking or exploitation. Please ensure that a referral is made to the Department of Family and Children Services based on the concerns that were presented. If the criteria are met, use the "Next Steps" below to make a referral to Georgia Cares.

NEXT STEPS

- If these criteria are not met, then the information provided supports that the youth appears to be an at-risk youth, without an emphasis on sex trafficking or exploitation. Please ensure that a referral is made to the Department of Family and Children Services based on the concerns that were presented, at 1.855.GA.CHILD.
- For youth that meet the criteria to refer to Georgia Cares, the following methods can be taken to complete a referral:

Call Georgia Cares at 404.602.0068. Georgia Cares operates a 24 hour hotline and can take a call at all hours of the day

Email a referral form to referrals@gacares.org

Fax a referral form to 404.371.1030

Referral forms and Release of Information/Consent Forms can be found at GACARES.ORG

Make a report to DFCS on the basis of suspected abuse by calling the DFCS statewide centralized intake number at 1.855.GA.CHILD

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