

Contra Costa County California
Employment & Human Services

Kathy Gallagher, Director

40 Douglas Dr., Martinez, CA 94553 ★ Phone: (925) 313-1579 ★ Fax: (925) 313-1575 ★ www.cccounty.us/ehsd

TO: Family and Human Services Committee
Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Devorah Levine, Principal Analyst
Zero Tolerance for Domestic Violence Initiative

SUBJECT: Update on Human Trafficking - Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children &
Update on Family Justice Center(s)

HUMAN TRAFFICKING – SPOTLIGHT ON COMMERCIALLY SEXUALLY EXPLOITED CHILDREN

A. Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)

Nationally, commercial sexual exploitation of children is considered one of the fastest growing crimes in our country. Three of the FBI's thirteen highest areas of commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC) are found in California: San Francisco, LA, and San Diego areas. Exploitation often begins between the ages of 12 and 14. A recent report by the CA Child Welfare Council found that 50% to 80% of CSEC are or was involved in the child welfare system. The number of sexually exploited minors is unknown in our County.

The array of challenges facing CSEC is complex and daunting—most have experienced complex trauma prior to becoming victims of trafficking (indeed, the aftermath of multiple trauma, losses, and family disruption is in part what can make a young person vulnerable to the tactics of exploiters) compounded by the manipulation and dynamics of a sexually exploitive relationship.

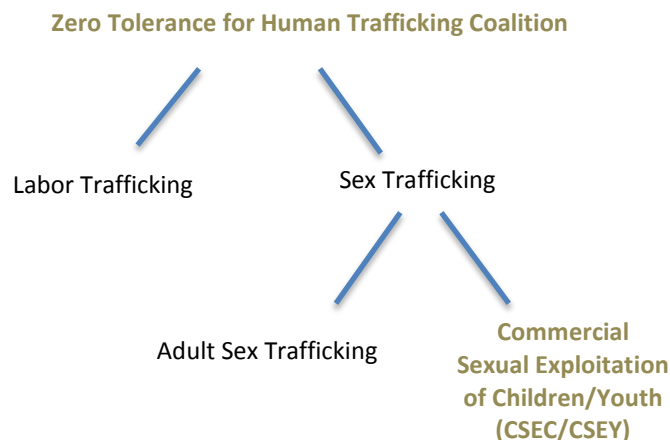
Victims need intensive and sustained case management services, backed up by concrete assistance. The needs of CSEC are vast; including mental health, physical health, substance abuse, education, housing, legal services, job and life skills.

Currently, Contra Costa lacks a comprehensive system of care for identification and services for CSEC. Victims are most frequently identified by just a few agencies through the juvenile or criminal justice systems (since CSEC are often picked up for solicitation, loitering or a related offense) and community agencies.

Significantly, in June 2014, legislation (Senate Bill 855) amended California’s Welfare and Institutions Code, establishing that commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC) may be served through the child welfare system as victims of child abuse.¹ SB 855 also authorized the California Department of Social Services to allocate funds to county child welfare departments opting in to begin CSEC infrastructure development and allocated funds to various state-wide training organizations to train child welfare staff, caregivers, foster youth and community agencies on the issue of CSEC in Foster Care. Contra Costa has opted in, paving the way for limited state funds aimed at developing and supporting prevention and intervention services as well as training for child welfare staff, foster caregivers, probation staff, and young people at risk of commercial sexual exploitation.

B. Responding to and Preventing CSEC

Contra Costa County’s Zero Tolerance for Domestic Violence Initiative (Zero Tolerance) has been working on this issue for more than five years, providing a strong foundation for the County to be successful and holistic in responding to the SB 855 opportunities. With more than a decade of effective collaboration and significant results in addressing the complex issues surrounding domestic violence, in 2009, Zero Tolerance began addressing human trafficking as the next natural progression in violence prevention in the County. While several of the member organizations and agencies of Zero Tolerance had implemented anti-trafficking programs or activities, these efforts were not coordinated. The goals of the Zero Tolerance for Human Trafficking Coalition are to raise awareness about human trafficking, collect and disseminate relevant data, increase identification of victims, improve practices and policies, and implement collaborative approaches to respond to all forms of human trafficking – sex trafficking and labor trafficking – countywide.



¹ Section 300 (b) (2) The Legislature finds and declares that a child who is sexually trafficked, as described in Section 236.1 of the Penal Code, or who received food or shelter in exchange for, or who is paid to perform, sexual acts described in Section 216.1 or 11165.1 of the Penal Code, and whose parent or guardian failed to, or was unable to, protect the child, is within the description of this subdivision, and that this finding is declaratory of existing law. These children shall be known as commercially sexually exploited children.

Because Contra Costa's Children and Family Services (CFS) opted in to the State's CSEC program (SB 855), CFS staff in partnership with Probation took the lead in January 2015 in convening the CSEC multi-disciplinary committee within the Zero Tolerance for Human Trafficking coalition. The primary goal of the committee is to establish a coordinated, interagency response to ensure CSEC and children at risk for exploitation are identified and served through a multidisciplinary approach.

The committee with representation from Probation, Mental Health, Health, Schools, law enforcement, legal systems, and community partners is 1) developing county-wide protocols 2) creating specific approaches to identify and intervene with foster youth at risk for CSE and provide coordinated interventions, case management, placement and services and 3) collecting data.

In addition to the launch of the committee, progress to date includes:

- Building Service Capacity – The coalition oversees a federal grant from the Office on Victims of Crime, providing an umbrella of service coordination and efforts to increase identification for both adult and child victims of human trafficking – including sexual exploitation.
- Increased Coordination across Law Enforcement and Community Agencies – Criminal justice agencies and community service providers have increased their level of coordination (approximately 20% over the last year) in investigating sexual exploitation and providing immediate services and support to victims.
- Staff Trained: To date, over 275 professionals (community agencies, criminal justice, faith and civic groups) have been trained. Specific to child welfare, the Bay Area Academy provided CSEC 101 training for all social workers, social case work assistants, ILSP staff, supervisors, analysts and managers in CFS. Between May and June 2015, 148 CFS staff received training.
- Piloting a Tool to Identify CSEC: The Permanency and Transition Unit within CFS is piloting a Screening Tool developed by West Coast Children's Center beginning late May/early June. The intention is to utilize this tool, once validated, throughout all of CFS.

Immediate next steps include:

- Identification of training for foster youth regarding CSEC awareness.
- Service Delivery – identification of service gaps and support increased capacity.

FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER ALLIANCE UPDATE

A. Family Justice Model is Best Practice Approach in Contra Costa

In September 2014 the Board of Supervisors adopted the Family Justice Center multidisciplinary model as a best practice approach to interrupting intergenerational cycles of violence and abuse in the County. The Board also affirmed its support of establishing a network of Family Justice Centers in Contra Costa County. The County's Zero Tolerance for Domestic Violence Initiative (Zero Tolerance) administrator has undertaken the efforts to establish a countywide network, now called "Contra Costa Family Justice Alliance." Previously, Zero Tolerance led the planning initiative for the West Center (the first established in the County) and assisted with the establishment of the newly opened Central Center.

The Contra Costa Family Justice Alliance represents a successful county-city-community partnership. The approach is a new way of doing business that helps leverage existing and additional resources in new ways.

When survivors of family violence seek help, they are often frustrated by a fractured system. They may have to travel to multiple locations to access criminal, civil, and social services. They will have to re-live personal traumas as they tell their story repeatedly. For clients, coming to just one location is faster, far less expensive, and help is more immediate. Clients can access a broad spectrum of essential services during each visit when multiple partners are on-site. As an added benefit, reducing the number of times a client must tell his or her story significantly reduces the trauma associated with multiple interviews or assessments, especially for children.

Putting many agencies in one place not only promotes efficiency, but also improves the quality of services. Working face-to-face in the same location allows agencies to serve and advocate for clients quickly and directly; eliminates redundancies; and improves coordination. Papers are filed right away and cases are completed more quickly, with the ultimate result that clients can be safer sooner.

The Family Justice Alliance supports the West Center located in Richmond and the Central Center in Concord. The Centers are hubs for education and comprehensive and integrated services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse and human trafficking.

The Centers' services and programs are designed to facilitate safety and crisis management initially while working toward long-term safety, including health, education and financial security. The Centers' expect to serve up to 1,000 families per year at each location. The West Center started its pilot operation in 2011 at a temporary location and will move into its permanent home, located at 256 24th Street, Richmond, CA, in June, 2015. To date over 1,500 clients have been served with over 18 on site and off partners providing integrated services. The Central Center, at 2151 Salvio Street, Suite 201, Concord, started operations in March, 2015. In its first weeks of operation serving 61 clients, hosting 130 visitors and responding to 230 calls. In addition, discussions to assess readiness for a center in East/Far East County began in January 2015.

B. Progress to Date

The objectives of the Contra Costa Family Justice Alliance planning process led by the Zero Tolerance for Domestic Violence Initiative include establishing by June 2016, an effective shared governance structure and a sustainability plan for new, existing, and future Family Justice Centers in the county.

Shared governance and sustainability structures provided by the Family Justice Alliance will maximize efficiency and result in even greater return on investment over time. Milestones in the planning process led by Zero Tolerance to date (December 2014 – April 2015) include:

- Convened planning group to guide strategic planning: Glen Price Group was selected as consultants out of a competitive process.
- Researched various models of governance for the Family Justice Alliance: The initial recommendation is to consider a hybrid model of governance with an emphasis on public/private partnerships. A 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization will be established as part of this structure.
- Transitioned the interim advisory board serving as part of the existing fiscal sponsorship governance (provided by the Tides Foundation) for West Center to include oversight of Central Center.
- Convened initial discussions about establishing a family justice center in East/Far East County.
- Supported the opening of the Central Center.
- Engaged County departments to work towards participating fully as on-site and off-site partners.
- Garnered strong support from city governments.
- Supported investment in the Family Justice Alliance by leveraging funding (federal grants, private foundations and in-kind support).

Immediate next steps include (June 2015- May 2016):

- Robust engagement of cities throughout the County in supporting centers. Presentations to city councils are scheduled.
- Continue to engage County departments in working towards full participation as on site and off site partners.
- Complete proposed governance proposal and receive input.
- Complete sustainability plan.