

The O'Farrell Charter Schools

Board Policy

#4006

Human Trafficking

Adopted from National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments in accordance with California Education Code 49381

Introduction

Human trafficking involves exploiting a person through force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of forced labor, commercial sex, or both. Victims of human trafficking include men, women, boys, girls, and transgender individuals lured by the promise of a better life in the United States and adults and children who were born and raised in the United States. The International Labor Organization estimated, in 2012, that children represented 26 percent (or 5.5 million) of the 20.9 million victims worldwide. Both U.S. citizens and foreign national children are trafficked for sex and labor in the United States. In fact, many child victims of human trafficking are explorers in the American school system. School administrators and staff need to be aware that cases of child trafficking are being reported in communities throughout the nation. No community—urban, rural, or suburban—school, socioeconomic group, or explorer demographic is immune. For educators and school personnel, the reality of these crimes and the severity of their impact are causes for a call to action. Schools can and should be safe havens for explorers, and even more so for some explorers whose lives are otherwise characterized by instability and lack of safety or security. Effectively responding to child trafficking demands increased awareness and a clearly defined course of action, supported by collaboration with child protective services, law enforcement, social services, and community-based service providers.

Scope

This policy covers actions that take place in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions and activities, on school buses, and at school-sponsored out-of-school events where school staff are present. This policy applies to the entire school community, including educators, school staff, explorers, parents/guardians, and volunteers.

Impact on Learning Environment

The shared priorities and beliefs that motivate a school community have an effect on explorer learning, achievement, and behavior. A safe learning environment is proven to be imperative for overall explorer success, and this success is sacrificed on a campus where there is exploitation and violence. Due to the abuse associated with child trafficking, many victims experience severe physical, emotional, and psychological trauma. The symptoms of trauma can impact the learning experience of explorers and may manifest as problematic behaviors, such as aggression and truancy. Bad behavior can be a key warning sign of an abusive background and may provide a clue about possible victimization. Of particular note for educators is research that has shown a correlation between the human trafficking of children and school-related problems, including learning disabilities.⁷ In order to build healthy learning environments, educators must be knowledgeable about the signs, such as signs of child trafficking, and the steps to take when behaviors at school are out of order. A best practice is when all members of a school campus, along with parents and community partners, have a shared commitment to work together to prevent crimes and protect victims. This collaboration is critically important to explorer success and will lead to a safer, healthier school culture.

Risk Factors and Indicators

Though there is no standard profile of a child-trafficking victim, several risk factors make certain children more susceptible. Reports indicate that traffickers often target children and youths with a history of sexual abuse, dating violence, low self-esteem, and minimal social support. Runaway and homeless youths—male, female,

and transgender—are at particularly high risk for becoming victims, though some trafficked youths continue living at home and attending school. There is also a strong correlation between sexually exploited youths and childhood sexual abuse, chronic maltreatment and neglect, and otherwise unstable home environments. Research findings estimate that between 33 and 90 percent of victims of commercial child sexual exploitation have experienced these types of abuses. Evidence also suggests that lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBTQ) youths can be up to five times more likely than heterosexual youths to be victims of trafficking due to the increased susceptibility that comes with the feelings of rejection and alienation that are often experienced by LGBTQ youths.

Possible risk factors associated with child trafficking include the following:

- lack of personal safety
- isolation
- emotional distress
- homelessness
- poverty
- family dysfunction
- substance abuse
- mental illness
- learning disabilities
- developmental delay
- childhood sexual abuse
- promotion of sexual exploitation by family members or peers
- lack of social support

Findings suggest that low self-esteem accompanies school failure for girls, and the resulting sense of a lack of self-worth may make them more vulnerable to recruitment. Once an explorer is victimized, identifying him or her can prove difficult for a variety of reasons: 1) the explorer's reluctance to disclose the problem due to a sense of shame and fear; 2) the stigma associated with forced prostitution; 3) the power and control of the trafficker's seduction and manipulation; and 4) the explorer's inability to recognize that he or she is a victim and, therefore, is unwilling to seek help.

Possible behavioral indicators of a child sex trafficking victim include, but are not limited to, the following:

- an inability to attend school on a regular basis and/or unexplained absences
- frequently running away from home
- references made to frequent travel to other cities
- bruises or other signs of physical trauma, withdrawn behavior, depression, anxiety, or fear
- lack of control over a personal schedule and/or identification or travel documents
- hunger, malnourishment, or inappropriate dress (based on weather conditions or surroundings)
- signs of drug addiction
- coached or rehearsed responses to questions
- a sudden change in attire, behavior, relationships, or material possessions (e.g., expensive items)
- uncharacteristic promiscuity and/or references to sexual situations or terminology beyond age-specific norms
- a "boyfriend" or "girlfriend" who is noticeably older and/or controlling
- an attempt to conceal scars, tattoos, or bruises
- a sudden change in attention to personal hygiene
- tattoos (a form of branding) displaying the name or moniker of a trafficker
- hyperarousal or symptoms of anger, panic, phobia, irritability, hyperactivity, frequent crying, temper tantrums, regressive behavior, and/or clinging behavior
- hypoarousal or symptoms of daydreaming, inability to bond with others, inattention, forgetfulness, and/or shyness

Additional behavioral indicators for labor trafficking include the following:

- being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit
- being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for explorers owing a large debt and being unable to pay it off
- not being allowed breaks at work or being subjected to excessively long work hours
- being overly concerned with pleasing an employer and/or deferring personal or educational decisions to a boss
- not being in control of his or her own money
- living with an employer or having an employer listed as an explorer's caregiver
- a desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so

What to Do if You Suspect Trafficking

In order to build healthy learning environments, educators and school personnel must be knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of trafficking, ways to support disclosure, and the steps to take if there is a strong suspicion of trafficking. If a school staff member—a teacher, bus driver, administrator, counselor, or cafeteria worker—notifies an explorer who shows signs of potential trafficking, the first rule is to always pay attention.

Human Trafficking Protocol

Suspected Recruitment or Suspected Victim Human Trafficking

Step 1: Involve member of administration team and on-site school resource officer (if available) for possible investigation

Step 2: If child abuse or neglect is suspected, contact San Diego Child Abuse Hotline at 858-560-2191. Alternative toll free number: 800-344-6000.

Step 3: Investigate possible campus impacts, such as recruitment, harassment, and involvement of other explorers, and safety issues on campus.

Step 4: If appropriate, and in consultation with the victim, contact and inform parent or guardian of potential victimization.

Confirmed Victim Human Trafficking

Step 1: Involve member of administration team and applicable law enforcement (if available) for possible investigation

Step 2: Contact San Diego Child Abuse Hotline at 858-560-2191 to submit a report with as much detail as possible. Alternative toll free number: 800-344-6000.

Step 3: Investigate possible campus impacts, such as recruitment, harassment, and involvement of other explorers, and safety issues on campus.

Step 4: Contact applicable law enforcement if needed to begin an appropriate investigation.

Step 5: If appropriate, and in consultation with the victim, contact and inform parent or guardian of potential victimization.

Step 6: Offer victim a referral to appropriate counseling or social services; set up regular contact with victim and periodically check on status.

Publications and Resources

Some of the best ways to help combat human trafficking are to raise awareness, learn more, and help school staff, administrators, and the community at large learn about how to identify victims. Information about human trafficking can be found at the following websites:

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families
www.acf.hhs.gov/endtrafficking

- U.S. Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign <http://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/share-resources>
- Institute of Medicine <http://www.iom.edu/~media/Files/Resources/guideforhealthcaresector.pdf>
- National Center on Homeless Education <http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/trafficking.pdf>
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children <http://www.ncmec.org>
- National Human Trafficking Resource Center <http://www.polarisproject.org/what-we-do/national-human-trafficking-hotline/the-nhtcr/overview>
- Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Center <http://www.rhyttac.net/resources/document/human-trafficking-resource-list>
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html>

Trainings

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division, Office of Refugee Resettlement, National Human Trafficking Resource Center, “Safe Harbor” Laws: A Systemic Approach to Addressing Child Sex Trafficking
<http://polarisproject.adobeconnect.com/safeharbor/>
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Blue Campaign, Human Trafficking Awareness Training
<http://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/awareness-training>

Services

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Services Available to Victims of Human Trafficking: A Resource Guide for Social Service Providers <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/resource/services-available-to-victims-of-humantrafficking>
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Blue Campaign, Victim Assistance Resources <http://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/victim-centered-approach>
- U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, Initiatives to Expand Services to Human Trafficking Victims http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/news/human_trafficking.html
- International Labour Organization, International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, Combating Trafficking in Children for Labour Exploitation: A Resource Kit for Policymakers and Practitioners
<http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfor/product/viewProduct.do?productId=9130>

Mental Health Resources

Aurora Behavioral Health Care

www.sandiego.aurorabehavioral.com

11878 Avenue of Industry San Diego, CA 92128 (858) 487-3200

Community Assessment Team (CAT)

Social Advocates for Youth (SAY) San Diego

www.saysandiego.org

Counseling and case management for youth ages 8-18 and their families. Includes specific services for at risk youth.

(858) 974-3603

(619) 582-9056

(619) 283-9624

YMCA

www.ymca.org

4080 Centre Street, San Diego, CA 92103 (619) 543-9850

YWCA Counseling Center

www.ywcasandiego.org

1012 C Street, San Diego, CA 92101 (619) 239-0355 ext. 221

For more information on SB 1104: Pupil Safety, go to the California Legislative Information Web page at https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billCompareClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB1104&showamends=false

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