

CASE STUDY

USING THE CSES SCREENING PROTOCOL TO HELP A TRAFFICKING VICTIM

AT A GLANCE ...

Healing is not linear for victims, including young men; it is imperative that contact with healthcare workers results in adequate care provided to help alleviate the trauma.



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BACKGROUND

I'm often asked if we see young men who are trafficked. The answer is indeed yes, even if they do not disclose as often as females.

Take for instance a case where a young teenager, who was brought into the emergency department by his mother. With some time and the CSEC Screening Protocol, we learned that he had been sexually abused from the age of 9 to 11 by a family member. The incident had been reported to law enforcement who "investigated" the incident, which consisted only of asking the family member if he had abused the boy. When the family member denied the accusation, the rural police dropped the matter.

Sadly, children suffering the trauma of sexual assault, who are not believed nor protected, often act out in overtly sexualized ways. This young man did just that. He began sending photos and having sexualized conversations with older men online, eventually going so far as to meet with men at their invitations.

During one of those meetings, the boy was violently assaulted and the event filmed by the abuser. Later that evening, his mother caught him sneaking back into the house. He disclosed the abuse to his mother and it was at that point they found their way to the emergency room.

The CSEC Screening Protocol integrally involves relationships with community partners, including law enforcement. In this case, we contacted our expert law enforcement officers who shared our concerns. From the information the boy provided, law enforcement officers were able to uncover an entire pedophile ring, the "ringleader" being the one who had violently abused the boy. The ringleader pled guilty to second degree sodomy, and was sentenced to prison.

NO JUSTICE

Unfortunately, no matter how much “justice” an abuser gets, the trauma children like this boy must face does not just magically correct itself. In fact, we saw this young man a few months later when he attempted suicide. And a few months after that for further incidents relating to his trauma.

Healing rarely happens in a linear pattern, and these children must lead the long, slow and painful road to recovery, and in all likelihood live with trauma for the rest of their lives. This case also reminds us that victims often need multiple points of contact before real healing can begin. And that makes it even more important that any and all points of contact be met with adequately trained staff. Since medical facilities are often a point of contact for victims, it is imperative that they have adequate training to properly serve communities.



It is so important that healthcare professionals be ready for all points of contact with potential victims. The unfortunate reality is that since most healthcare professionals do not have adequate training in human trafficking, it is often the case that multiple points of contact are made before healthcare can properly intervene to use the trauma.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TRAINING
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WORKERS, AND THE
CSES SCREENING PROTOCOL,
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