

CASE STUDY

FINDING A SILVER LINING IN A YOUNG WOMAN'S TRAGEDY

AT A GLANCE ...

The costs of inadequate training to properly assess victims is beyond tragic. And it's preventable.



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TRAGIC

A teenaged female growing up in a dysfunctional home met a 33-year old man through her cousin. This man, recently released from prison, began to groom her with gifts and attention, very quickly leading to sexual exploitation and assault. This went on for 3-months which resulted in many physical injuries, including burns, scratches, cuts, bruising – evidence of all manners of violence that would take a forensic nurse over an hour to photograph them all.

What was later uncovered was that this teenager had encountered our healthcare system on **10 different occasions** through multiple facilities, before one of our SANE nurses identified her as a trafficking victim. No screening tools, and certainly nothing close to the CSEC Screening Protocol was in place at any of the primary care clinics,

so no identification was made despite a number of concerning statements she had made to the staff who had seen her.

The failure in the healthcare system to protect this girl was tragic. A series of additional events involving her trafficker ultimately put the girl in juvenile detention where a forensic nurse finally had an opportunity to examine her. It was with this nurse that the girl felt safe enough to disclose the details of her abuse and exploitation.

The silver lining to this incident is that several of the facilities mentioned in my incident report have implemented screening programs and updated protocols. In addition, we had mandatory education for all of our social workers in the entire hospital because of this case.

It's naive to believe that generic awareness training will capture these incidents, as many of the providers at the clinic had an hour long training on trafficking. The reality shows that is not the case. It's why the CSEC Screening Protocol exists.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TRAINING
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CSES SCREENING PROTOCOL,
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