

Caregivers Trafficking Children

Presented by:
Julie Kenniston, MSW, LISW
kennisto@fvtc.edu

Defining Child Sex Trafficking

“Child sex trafficking refers to the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a minor for the purpose of a *commercial sex act*.”

-USDOJ, justice.gov

Defining CSEC

“Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children refers to an act of sexually abusing a child for economic gains....

Accordingly, a child is sexually abused by an adult for remuneration in cash or kind to the child or a third person or persons. Here, the child is treated as a sexual and a commercial object.”

-USLegal.com

Defining Commercial Sex Act

“any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person”

-USLegal.com



Simply put...

-offering a sex act with a child in exchange for goods, services, commodities or money

-the key is the *exchange*

-in caregivers cases it involves incorporating a third party



Issues

- These cases might be reported as CSA without any information about an exchange
- The child might not have any idea about the exchange
- The caregiver is gaining something for the exchange but we might not ever obtain this information



CPS Questions

- If the perp is not a caregiver...
- If the sex act is child pornography...



What might caregiver receive?

- Money
- Drugs/alcohol
- Rent/utilities
- Food
- Transportation/vehicle
- Clothes
- Electronics
- Gifts...



Dynamics

- The caregiver's role is to protect and care for the child
- Caregivers have control over children in a way nonfamilial pimps do not
- Children might just do what the caregiver says to do
- If child knows about the exchange, the child might want to protect the caregiver
- The exchange might be a benefit to the family as a whole or to the child
- The caregiver might also be sexually offending the child
- Trauma



The Forensic Interview

- Follow your process (hourglass approach)
- Inquire about conversations with caregiver
- Provide the child an opportunity to discuss positives about the caregiver
- Do not characterize the caregiver negatively
- Assess roles of family members and how members contribute to the family



Topics to Explore

- What was child told regarding the perp?
- How did the child get to the perp?
- What was the child told to do?
- How did the child know what to do?
- What did the perp say about the caregiver?
- Did the perp give the child anything to deliver to caregiver?
- Drugs/alcohol, dynamics of diminishing capacity
- Witnesses, other victims, additional perps
- Photos or videos



FI Considerations

- Asking questions regarding the exchange might seem suggestive, so how do we ask? (discuss with prosecutor)
- Asking child what others know could be complicated
 - Fact vs supposition (we tell them not to guess)
 - Age of child matters
- Should we routinely screen CSA cases for trafficking?
- Get as much information as possible so that CPS and LE can conduct informed interviews with caregiver



MDT follow up

- The information about the exchange might have to come from the caregiver
- The exchange might come from the suspect interrogation of the perp



Uncharted Territory

- Team discussions are important
- Multiple hypotheses should be generated and tested through narratives
- Talk with prosecutor about direct questions
- Corroboration is important
- CPS is crucial in these cases/these children are very vulnerable
- Recantation once child sees outcome with caregiver

