



Louisiana Child and Youth Sex Trafficking Identification Tool

Name or Case Number: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: The purpose of this tool is to support the identification of children and youth (under 21 years old) who may be victims of sex trafficking. This tool is to be used as a narrative assessment. The indicators outlined in the tool should not be asked directly to the child/youth. To determine if a child or youth may be a victim of sex trafficking, **please complete the tool in its entirety.** Regardless of the tool's findings, if you have any suspicion or concern of sex trafficking involving a child, please make a report to the DCFS Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 855-452-5437. *For the complete instructions, please refer to the Supplementary User Guide.*

SECTION 1: Commercial Sexual Activity

Has the child/youth ever engaged in sex or sex acts for anything of value?

Items of value may include money, food, a place to stay, drugs, gifts, transportation, or something else. Select all that apply.

Exploitation Indicators

The child/youth has:

- ☐ Engaged in sex or sex acts in exchange for something of value or to pay a debt.
- ☐ Provided sexually explicit/suggestive photos or videos of herself/himself in exchange for something of value or to pay a debt.
- ☐ Participated in conversations, either in person or through electronic messages, about the exchange of sex, sex acts, or sexually explicit photos or videos for something of value.
- ☐ Appeared in photos or videos online intended to sell sex, sex acts, or other sexual content.
- ☐ Worked in the commercial sex industry (e.g., strip clubs, escorting, private sex parties, or prostitution/sex work).
- ☐ Been present when another person (friend, parent, family member, etc) has engaged in sex or sex acts for something of value.

Total
number
of boxes
checked:

Vulnerability Indicators

The child/youth has:

- ☐ Suspicious or unaccounted money or goods (e.g., cell phones, expensive gifts, hotel keys).
- ☐ A relationship with an age-inappropriate boyfriend or girlfriend.
- ☐ Branding-style tattoos, symbols, markings, or attire that show ownership.
- ☐ Discussed spending time at places where trafficking or recruitment is known to occur (e.g., specific hotels, clubs, houses).
- ☐ Recently traveled across state lines without authorization from their parent or guardian (e.g. in the last year).
- ☐ A recent history of running behaviors or regularly missing from care (e.g. in the last year).

The child/youth is:

- ☐ Connected with known or alleged trafficking victims.
- ☐ Working for little or no pay in exchange for basic needs (food, housing, transportation, clothing, etc.).
- ☐ Homeless or experiences frequent housing instability.
- ☐ Truant or frequently misses school.
- ☐ Involved with a gang or has gang associations.
- ☐ Other: _____.

Total
number
of boxes
checked:

- ☐ I am not aware of these circumstances applying to the youth/child.

No boxes
checked.

Section 1 Status: **Indicated** ☐ **Concern** ☐ **Not Enough Information**

Under Exploitation Indicators: Select “indicated” if one or more boxes are checked. If no boxes are checked under this section, consider the number of Vulnerability Indicators checked.

Under Vulnerability Indicators: Select “Concern” if 2 or more boxes are checked. Select “Not Enough Information” if one or no boxes are checked.

Proceed to SECTION 2

SECTION 2: Perpetrator Actions

Has someone facilitated, enticed, or benefitted from the sexual activity of the child/youth?

This may be a parent, family member, friend, employer, or romantic partner. Select all that apply.

Exploitation Indicators

Someone has:

- ☐ Purchased sex, sex acts, or sexually explicit/suggestive photos or videos from the child/youth.
- ☐ Forced, tricked, or coerced the child/youth to engage in commercial sex to make money or to receive other items of value.
- ☐ Asked the child/youth to engage in sex or sex acts with another person in exchange for something of value
- ☐ Forced or coerced the child/youth to recruit a peer for commercial sex.
- ☐ Benefitted or profited from the child/youth having sex or a sexual contact with another person (i.e., a buyer).
- ☐ Distributed or posted online explicit or sexually-suggestive images or videos of the child/youth.
- ☐ Threatened to distribute or post online explicit or sexually-suggestive images or videos of the child/youth.
- ☐ Knowingly permitted or consented to the child/youth engaging in commercial sexual (i.e., the child’s parent or caregiver).

**Total
number
of boxes
checked:**

Vulnerability Indicators

Someone is:

- ☐ Exerting excessive control over the child/youth (e.g., prevents the child/youth from speaking, closely monitors their movements and communication, or isolates them from trusted adults).
- ☐ Prohibiting the child/youth from regularly attending school, eating, sleeping, or meeting other basic needs.
- ☐ Asking the child/youth to lie about their name, age, relationships, or other activities.
- ☐ Withholding the child/youth’s important documents (e.g., IDs, debit card, birth certificate, passport).
- ☐ Other: _____.

**Total
number
of boxes
checked:**

- ☐ I am not aware of these circumstances applying to the youth/child.

**No boxes
checked.**

Section 2 Status: ☐ **Indicated** ☐ **Concern** ☐ **Not Enough Information**

Under Exploitation Indicators: Select “Indicated” if one or more boxes are checked. If no boxes are checked under this section, consider the number of Vulnerability Indicators checked.

Under Vulnerability Indicators: If one or more boxes are checked, increase the screening status of Section 1 by one level. If no boxes are checked, select the same status as Section 1. [Not Enough Information → Concern; Concern → Indicated; Indicated→ Indicated.]

Proceed to SECTION 3

SECTION 3: Current Abuse

Is the child/youth currently experiencing abuse, neglect, or other forms of harm?

Please select which types of abuse, neglect, or other forms of harm (from the last 90 days) you have knowledge of or concerns about for this child/youth.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Sexual abuse or assault | ☐ Threatened with violence. |
| ☐ Multiple instances of pregnancy, abortions, sexually transmitted or urinary tract infections, or other injuries consistent with child sexual abuse. | ☐ Witnesses harm to others. |
| ☐ Physical harm. | ☐ Mental, emotional, or verbal abuse. |
| ☐ Stalking. | ☐ Forced drug or alcohol use. |
| ☐ Other: _____ | ☐ Denial of medical care or medication. |
| | ☐ Malnourishment. |
| | ☐ Neglect. |
| ☐ I am not certain, but I am concerned that someone is abusing, neglecting, or otherwise causing harm to the child/youth. Please explain. _____ | |

Total
number
of boxes
checked:

No boxes
checked.

- ☐ I am not aware of these circumstances applying to the youth/child.

Section 2 Status: ☐ Indicated ☐ Concern ☐ Not Enough Information

If one or more boxes are checked, increase the screening status of Section 2 by one level. If no boxes are checked, select the same status as Section 2. [Not Enough Information → Concern; Concern → Indicated; Indicated → Indicated.]

FINAL SCREENING RESULTS AND ACTIONS: _____

Final Screening Result should match Section 3 Status

If the child/youth is in immediate danger or if there is an active safety concern, immediately call 911 and report to law enforcement. Review the User Guide for additional actions and guidance.

- ☐ **INDICATED [Report]**: The child/youth is considered “indicated” for sex trafficking. As a result, this case warrants review by a Louisiana Human Trafficking Regional Care Coordination Team. **Immediately call the DCFS Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 855-452-5437 (option 4) to report human trafficking involving a child under the age of 18 years old.** If the youth is aged 18 years or older, provide them with the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 888-373-7888 and offer to make a referral to a local service provider with expertise in human trafficking. If the suspected victim is an adult with a disability, report also to Adult Protective Services at 800-898-4910.
- ☐ **CONCERN [Re-Screen]**: There is concern for possible sex trafficking. *If you are a mandatory reporter and have suspicion or knowledge of child abuse (ex: physical or sexual abuse) or neglect (ex: malnourishment), you are required by law to make a mandatory report to DCFS or law enforcement.* **Screen again in 90 days or upon learning new information.** Consider referring the child/youth to additional services as needed and appropriate.
- ☐ **NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION [Monitor]**: There is not enough information to determine whether the child/youth is experiencing sex trafficking. **Continue to monitor the child/youth;** upon learning more information, re-screen the child/youth.



DO I NEED TO MAKE A MANDATORY REPORT? Any suspicion or knowledge of sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, or maltreatment or trafficking of child by any person requires a report to Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 855-452-5437.

Louisiana Child & Youth Sex Trafficking Identification Tool (LSTT)

Supplementary User Guide

August 2025



The Governor's Office of
**HUMAN TRAFFICKING
PREVENTION**

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Overview of the Tool

The purpose of the *Louisiana Child and Youth Sex Trafficking Identification Tool* (“Louisiana Sex Trafficking Tool” or LSTT) is to assist in the identification of children and youth who may have experienced sex trafficking up to 21 years of age. This screening tool assesses the presence of research-based indicators associated with sex trafficking among children and youth. The result or “conclusion” of a completed screening helps Users identify next steps for further monitoring, assessment, service referral, and/or reporting.

The tool was developed for use by children and youth-serving professionals (referred to as *Users* in this guide) in Louisiana as a narrative assessment, rather than a questionnaire or interview guide. While this tool is not validated, it has been developed based on the latest research and best practices for identification of child/youth victims of human trafficking. All indicators were chosen for use with children and youth up to age 21 years old.¹ A paper copy of this tool can be found in Appendix B.

For the most effective use of this guide and tool, Users should:

- Study the contents of the guide.
- Review the tool and its indicators and consider whether additional training in the tool is needed.
- Develop and implement a screening protocol within the agency.
- Identify the local resources for human trafficking victims in their local community.

Though this simple check-box tool does not require prior training, the developers of this tool highly recommend that anyone who intends to use this tool seek training on human trafficking identification and response prior to using it. For more information and training resources, please visit www.humantrafficking.la.gov or email humantrafficking@la.gov.

What is Sex Trafficking?

Under Louisiana law, sex trafficking is the knowing recruitment, enticement, harboring, transporting, providing, obtaining, advertising, selling, purchasing, isolating, or maintaining the use of a person by force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of commercial sexual activity, or the knowing recruitment, enticement, harboring, transporting, providing, obtaining, advertising, selling, purchasing, isolating, or maintaining the use of a person under the age of 21 for the purpose of commercial sexual activity. The element of force, fraud, and coercion does not need to be shown when the trafficking involves a child/youth (LA RS 14:46.2 and RS 14: 46.3). Put more simply, child and youth sex trafficking is the crime of inducing a child/youth under 21 to engage in commercial sexual activity.

¹ For the purpose of this tool, children are people under the age of 18 years of age, and youth are people between the ages of 16 and 20 years old. For a list of definitions used in this guide, see Appendix A: Definitions. “Child/youth” is used throughout this document to refer to this population.

This tool was created in partnership between the Louisiana Alliance of Children’s Advocacy Centers, the Louisiana Child and Youth Trafficking Collaborative, the Louisiana Governor’s Office of Human Trafficking Prevention, the Louisiana Dept. of Children and Family Services, and a working group of experts in Spring 2021, under 2021-63005, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this guide are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Purpose and Limitation of Screening

Human trafficking is an under-identified crime in Louisiana. Screening tools improve victim identification by using evidence-based indicators to weigh risk of possible trafficking. This tool was designed specifically with the view of Louisiana state law on child/youth sex trafficking (Revised Statute 14:46.2 and 46.3). The purpose of the *Louisiana Child and Youth Sex Trafficking Identification Tool* is to assist child/youth-serving professionals to identify possible victims and to provide clear next steps for reporting, service referral, and/or monitoring.

This tool is appropriate for children and youth. This tool's indicators were chosen for use with children and youth up to age 21. Louisiana's law on human trafficking provides special protection and variation in the law for child/youth victims. The tool incorporates indicators that are specific to sex trafficking of children and youth. Therefore, children and youth under the age of 21 years old should be screened using the tool.

This tool is not a "red flags" checklist. "Red flag" checklists have been commonly used by the human trafficking field for years. However, the presence of one or more "red flags" does not necessarily mean trafficking – or another form of child abuse – is occurring. Instead, indicator or "red flag" checklists should serve as quick reference that helps professionals recognize circumstances that suggest possible abuse. This tool is more than a red flag checklist. The tool cross references *evidence-based* indicators with the legal requirements of human trafficking to predict possible human trafficking.

This tool is not a questionnaire or interview tool. This tool should not be read verbatim to a child/youth. Instead, it is a narrative assessment tool. However, the tool may provide a helpful guide for you to incorporate topics in your conversations with the child/youth. In your interactions with the child/youth, it is important that you take time to build rapport with the child/youth and not press them for a disclosure, even inadvertently.

This tool is not a diagnostic tool and cannot confirm human trafficking is occurring. Screening is the first step in identifying children and youth with indicators of trafficking. A screening result of "indicated" prompts a mandatory report and a comprehensive assessment to determine whether the child/youth has experienced or is experiencing human trafficking. The tool, by itself, cannot confirm or validate child sex trafficking. This tool does not replace an investigation of the allegation by law enforcement or child welfare.

"The goal of screening is not to arrive at an unambiguous determination of a child's trafficking status, but to prompt an in-depth assessment of the child's needs."²

² Perry, David T., Danna Basson, and Hannah Haley. "Universal Screening Makes Exploitation Visible." West Coast Children's Clinic (2022).

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Methodology of the Tool

The Louisiana Sex Trafficking Identification Tool adapts the Ends-Means-Process (EMP) Model to guide the process of identifying the potential victim of child/youth sex trafficking in Louisiana. The EMP Model was created by the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) to help attorneys and legal providers identify human trafficking under the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act in 22 USC § 7102.³ The EMP model is similar to the Action-Means-Purpose Model (AMP) first publicized by Polaris.⁴ To view an EMP model worksheet, please see Appendix C.

Under the EMP Model, human trafficking is broken down into three components to meet the legislative definition of human trafficking: the Ends, Means, and Process. The “ends” category identifies the purpose of the victimization, whether for commercial sexual activity or for labor and other services. The “means” category identifies the presence of force, fraud, and/or coercion by a perpetrator in compelling the victim to engage in commercial sexual activity or labor. Finally, the “process” category identifies the specific actions, or recruitment tactics, the perpetrator took to compel the victim into the trafficking situation.

The EMP model was adapted to conform to Louisiana law. While the tool does not use the headings of “Ends,” “Means,” and “Process,” this legal analysis is incorporated into the tool. The sections build upon each other with the first section asking the threshold question: is the child/youth involved in commercial sexual activity? The second section explores the role and actions of a possible perpetrator, who benefits, entices, or facilitates commercial sexual activity. Finally, the last section considers whether the child/youth is experiencing other abuse or vulnerability that would heighten the concern for possible sex trafficking.

Contributors

This tool was created in partnership between the Louisiana Governor’s Office of Human Trafficking Prevention, Louisiana Alliance of Children’s Advocacy Center, and the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services. Special thanks to Mary Kate Andrepont of the Governor’s Office of Human Trafficking Prevention, to Krystle Mitchell and Jasmine Gardner, to Christy Tate and Lauren Brocksmith of the Department of Children and Families Services, and to Holly Tupper of Unbound Now, and Debbie Solcher of BCFS Common Thread for their role in developing and informing this tool. Additional thanks to the Regional Care Coordinators for piloting the tool and providing feedback for its improvement. We are grateful to the experts at several agencies who reviewed the final product of this tool: U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and RTI International.

³ Learn more about the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) at <https://www.castla.org/>

⁴ For more information on the AMP model, visit <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/sites/default/files/AMP%20Model.pdf>

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Contact Information

For information regarding the development of the tool or this supplementary guide, you can reach out to the Office of Human Trafficking Prevention at humantrafficking@la.gov, or Mary Kate Andrepont, Deputy Director of The Office of Human Trafficking Prevention at humantrafficking@la.gov.

This content was produced in part by the Louisiana Child and Youth Trafficking Collaborative under 2021-63005, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this guide are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

How to Use this Tool

This tool was created for use by child/youth-serving professionals in Louisiana who may encounter victims of human trafficking. This tool does not require advanced training on child and youth sex trafficking, though training is encouraged.

Implementation of this tool includes four steps:

1. Assess [Pre-Screening Criteria](#)
2. [Gather Information](#) about the topics outlined in the tool.
3. Fill out a [copy of the Tool](#). You may fill out the tool in a paper copy, fillable PDF version, or online through the Lighthouse Platform. To sign up for Lighthouse, email lighthouse@alliesagainstsavery.org with the subject line "Louisiana Screening New User." We recommend you keep a record of the completed tool(s).
4. Assess the [Final Screening Results and Actions](#) for next steps recommended by the Tool (see below for instructions).

Pre-Screening Criteria

To ensure that The Indicator Tool is implemented with all appropriate children/young people, we recommend considering several pre-screening criteria.

Screening must be implemented consistently and systematically. Without clear criteria and protocols, Users run the risk of missing vulnerable children and youth. While universal screening is widely considered a best practice for screening and assessment tools, selective screening may be utilized where it is implemented *consistently*. To promote early intervention and to mitigate inconsistent use of the tool, implementation of this tool is warranted when any of the following criteria is present during intake.

1. A concern of human trafficking has been expressed by a family member or caretaker, law enforcement officer, medical provider, juvenile probation officer, or other individual close to the child/youth.
2. The child/youth discloses exchanging sex for something of value (i.e., commercial sexual activity).
3. The child/youth discloses a harmful work situation (e.g., not being paid, unsafe work conditions, working during school hours, threats or physical abuse).
4. The presence of a prostitution-related or sexual offense in the child/youth's current offense record or offense history. This includes: prostitution, soliciting, prostitution by massage, pandering, or others.
5. Any history of running away from home or periods of homelessness.
6. Any history of sexual abuse.
7. Any history of gang involvement.

Following intake, a report of new information involving the above criteria should also prompt a screening via this tool.

Gathering Information

This tool is designed as a narrative assessment, not an interview guide. This means that Users should engage in organic conversation with the child/youth, while probing for the topics outlined in the tool as appropriate. While gathering information to complete the tool, Users should familiarize themselves with the indicators in the tool and consider various sources of information, such as:

- Your conversations with the child/youth
- Your observations of the child/youth and their circumstances
- Internal client records
- Child welfare records
- Medical history
- Criminal History
- Social media use by or regarding the child/youth
- Conversations with family members or other providers/advocates close with the child/youth.

Conversation Starters

Before engaging children and youth in conversations about personal (and potentially sensitive) topics, it is important to first build trust and rapport with that child/youth. However, for those who serve children and youth and wish to integrate conversation topics to assist in completing the tool, the following prompts offer relevant conversation starters and recommended questions. These questions should be integrated into your regular conversations with the child/youth and not administered as a structured interview. As a reminder, this tool does not require direct

questioning of the child/youth to complete it. **Direct questions to the child/youth regarding trafficking or exploitation is not advised. The goal is not to elicit a disclosure of human trafficking.**

School: Where do you go to school? What grade are you in? What do you like or dislike about school? Do you attend school regularly? If not, what keeps you from going? Have you missed school because you were working?

Family/Home: Where do you live/call home? Who do you live with? Do you live with your parents/guardians? If the child/youth does not live with their parent/guardian (i.e., an adult with custody), do you have to pay to live there? How much do you pay, and how do you pay? How is your relationship with the people in your home? Do you feel safe and supported in your home? Do you stay at your home most nights? If not, where do you go or who do you stay with? Have you run away or left your home without permission in the past year? If yes, how long were you gone? Where did you go? While you were away, how did you support yourself? Who were you with while you were away? While you were away, did you experience anything that made you uncomfortable? Did you ever check in with your family (parent, guardian, or other family member) while you were away? Did someone ever not allow you to go back home?

Work and Employment: Are you working? What do you do for work? Do you like your job? How do you get paid for your work (check, direct deposit, cash, food, a place to live, etc)? How often are you paid? Do you keep the money you earn? Does any part of your pay go toward paying off a debt? If so, how much of your pay is taken and what are you paying off? What do you spend your money on? Have you ever been hurt, threatened, or felt unsafe at work? If you were hurt, how did your employer or boss respond? Can you quit your job if you wanted? Do you ever sleep at your jobsite? Has work made it difficult to go to school or stay engaged with school activities? Is someone else making you miss school/homework for work?

Hobbies/Extracurriculars: When you are not in school or working, what do you like to do? Where do you and your friends typically hang out? Are there places or people in the community you try to avoid? If so, why? How do you cope when you are stressed or scared? Who do you talk to or who helps you when you are stressed or scared? Do you drink alcohol or use any drugs? Who do you do this with? Where do you get alcohol and/or drugs? Has anyone ever made you feel like you needed to do something in exchange for drugs? Has anyone ever asked you to hold alcohol or drugs for them?

Romantic Relationships: Are you dating anyone? Can you tell me about them? How old are they? How did you meet them? How do you normally spend time together? Tell me about what a healthy/safe relationship means to you. Who do you talk to about your relationships (to vent or to seek advice)? Do you feel safe in your relationship(s)? Has

your boyfriend/girlfriend/partner promised you anything for being with them (or others) romantically or sexually? Have they ever pressured you to do something you do not want to do? Has there ever been a time when they (or someone else) crossed a sexual boundary with you or physically hurt you?

***Social Media:** Are you on social media? What kind of apps are you on (Instagram, Snapchat, X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, gaming platforms, Only Fans, dating apps, etc.)? Do you ever talk to people online that you don't know in person? Have you ever been asked to send nude images or videos of yourself to someone you met online? If so, how were you treated by the person after you sent them the images or videos? Did they threaten you to send more images or videos? Have you ever sold nude or sexually explicit images or videos of yourself? Has anyone ever taken or shared nude or sexual images/videos of you without your consent? Has anyone you met online asked to meet in person? If so, why did they want to meet?*

Finally, in conversations with a child/youth, child and youth-serving professionals should utilize a **trauma-informed and victim-centered approach** and carefully consider the limits of **confidentiality**.

Instructions

The purpose of this tool is to provide indicators to assist in the identification of children and youth (under 21 years old) who may be victims of sex trafficking. The result of a completed screening identifies next steps for monitoring, service referral, and/or reporting as needed. The screening results are “not enough information,” “concern,” and “indicated.” This tool is to be used as a narrative assessment. The indicators outlined in the tool should not be asked directly to the child/youth.

To determine if a child/youth may be a victim of sex trafficking, complete the tool in its entirety. Check the boxes of indicators that are present based on your reasonable belief, existing documentation, first-hand knowledge, child/youth disclosure, or other evidence. Follow the procedures outlined under “Screening Results and Actions.” Regardless of screening indicators, if you have any suspicion or concern of sex trafficking involving a child, please make a report to the DCFS Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 855-452-5437.

Indicators

The following sections review the list of indicators and provide a description of each indicator. Indicators are observable conditions, behaviors, or circumstances that may suggest that a person is at risk of being trafficked, is being trafficked, or has been trafficked. The tool is comprised of two types of indicators:

- (1) **Vulnerability Indicators** – evidence-based risk factors associated with an increased likelihood of trafficking.
- (2) **Exploitation Indicators** – descriptions of conduct that meets the legal definition of human trafficking.

Vulnerability Indicators do not, on their own, prove that trafficking is occurring. Instead, they signal the need for continued monitoring, additional assessment, and a contextual understanding of the child or youth’s situation. Exploitation Indicators, by contrast, will result in a finding of “indicated” for human trafficking within the tool.

SECTION 1: Commercial Sexual Activity

This section considers whether a child or youth has experienced or is vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation. To complete this assessment, users will consider whether the child/youth has engaged in sex or sex acts for anything of value, to include money, food, a place to stay, drugs, gifts, transportation, or something else. The user should review both the **Exploitation Indicators** and the **Vulnerability Indicators**. Users will be prompted to select all circumstances that apply to the child/youth.

Has the child/youth ever engaged in sex or sex acts for anything of value?

Items of value may include money, food, a place to stay, drugs, gifts, transportation, or something else.

Note. Louisiana Revised Statute 14:46.2 defines commercial sexual activity as “any sexual act performed or conducted when anything of value has been given, promised, or received by any person, directly or indirectly, including the production of pornography.” Commercial sexual activity, as it relates to children under the age of 18, also means “any lewd or lascivious act upon the person or in the presence of any child when any thing of value has been given, promised, or received by any person.

EXPLOITATION INDICATORS

The indicators listed under **Exploitation Indicators** provide a strong indication of human trafficking. Further description of each indicator is listed below. Users should review each description prior to selection, to explore whether each circumstance applies to the child/youth.

Indicators	Descriptions
The child/youth has:	
Engaged in sex or sex acts in exchange for something of value or to pay a debt.	This refers to the definition of “commercial sexual activity,” in which sexual acts are exchanged for anything of value. “Anything of value” means any item with economic value and may include money, food, a place to stay, drugs, gifts, transportation, or something else. The child/youth need not have actually received the thing of value, if a thing of value was promised. This also includes commercial sexual activity in payment toward or satisfaction of a debt. In this instance, the child or youth is required to engage in commercial sexual activity and provide any earnings to the other party. The debt could arise from: housing/shelter, food, phone, drugs, transportation, human smuggling fees, or anything else. 💡 Sometimes these actions are referred to as “<u>survival trafficking</u>” (or survival sex) which occurs when a child or youth trades sex to meet their basic needs. A child/youth who receives something of value in exchange for sexual

	activity is considered a victim of human trafficking, regardless of any force, fraud, or coercion.
Provided sexually explicit/suggestive photos or videos of herself/himself in exchange for something of value or to pay a debt.	This occurs when a child/youth sends another person a sexually-explicit or sexually-suggestive photo or video of herself/himself, and in return for the photos or videos, another person pays the child/youth with something of value (such as money, food, clothing, drugs etc.) This does not involve situations where a child/youth is consensually distributing their own explicit images (i.e., sexting) to another child/youth of similar age and where no thing of value was exchanged. 💡 Sexually-explicit or sexually-suggestive photos or videos of a child/youth may amount to <u>child sexual abuse material (called CSAM)</u>. When this material is exchanged for something of value, it is a type of commercial sexual activity. Child sexual abuse material (previously pornography involving juveniles) is a crime under Louisiana Law and defined in La. 14:81.1.
Participated in conversations, either in person or through electronic messages, about the exchange of sex, sex acts, or sexually explicit photos or videos for something of value.	This means that a child or youth is having conversations or offering to others sex, sex acts, or sexually explicit photos or videos for money, gifts, drugs, or other items of value. This may occur over text message, phone call direct message on social media, chat rooms, or in person.
Appeared in photos or videos online intended to sell sex, sex acts, or other sexual content.	This refers to situations where the child/youth is depicted in a commercial sex ad or in photos or videos that indicate the child/youth is <i>selling</i> sexual content. The images or videos may not be sexually-explicit but instead may include suggestive text and/or coded “emojis.” 💡 Commercial sex advertisements refer to online postings for the solicitation of commercial sexual activity. These ads are commonly found on commercial sex

	websites, social media, or other online marketplaces and typically include a photograph or video of the child/youth with sexually-suggestive text.
Worked in the commercial sex industry (e.g., strip clubs, escorting, private sex parties, or prostitution/sex work).	This means that a child or youth is working as an entertainer in strip clubs, escort services, or private sex parties, or is involved in sex work or prostitution. This indicator should be marked even if the child/youth is getting paid and even if there is no evidence of third-party (i.e., trafficker) control. 💡 Children and youth under 21 years of age are not permitted to engage in exotic dancing or stripping at sexually-explicit businesses. La. R.S. 26:286.
Been present when another person (friend, parent, family member, etc) has engaged in sex or sex acts for something of value.	This means that a child/youth is present and witnesses a commercial sex act between two other parties, or where a child/youth is propositioned to watch a sex act between two parties in exchange for something of value. The exposure to commercial sexual activity may indicate that the child is being groomed for sex trafficking. 💡 Under La. R.S. 14:46.3, commercial sexual activity includes “lewd or lascivious act” in the presence of any child when any thing of value has been given, promised, or received by any person.

Users should tally the number of boxes checked, then proceed to the Vulnerability Indicators.

VULNERABILITY INDICATORS

The indicators listed under **Vulnerability Indicators** are situations that may indicate vulnerability for sexual exploitation. The individual indicators may not indicate human trafficking but, in combination, they may suggest heightened concern for possible victimization. Further description of each option is listed below. Users should review each description prior to selection, to explore whether each circumstance applies to the child/youth.

Indicators	Descriptions
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This tool was created in partnership between the Louisiana Alliance of Children's Advocacy Centers, the Louisiana Child and Youth Trafficking Collaborative, the Louisiana Governor's Office of Human Trafficking Prevention, the Louisiana Dept. of Children and Family Services, and a working group of experts in Spring 2021, under 2021-63005, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this guide are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The child/youth has:	
Suspicious or unaccounted for money or goods (e.g., cell phones, expensive gifts, hotel keys).	This refers to situations where the child/youth has money or items like cell phones, expensive clothes, or hotel keys that they can't explain or that seem out of place for their age or situation. In combination with other indicators, there is a concern for possible grooming or sexual exploitation.
A relationship with an age-inappropriate boyfriend or girlfriend.	This refers to situations where the child/youth is in a relationship with someone older and the age gap is such that it raises concerns about possible grooming, a power imbalance, or a violation of statutory sexual offenses. Whether a relationship is "age-inappropriate" depends on the circumstances and your professional opinion..
Branding-style tattoos, symbols, markings, or attire that show ownership.	"Branding" refers to markings (permanent or semi-permanent) that indicate ownership by a possible trafficker, pimp, or gang-association. The presence of a tattoo on a child/youth by itself is not enough. The tattoo or other marking should suggest that the child/youth is associated with a criminal network or include common representations of prostitution/sex work or exploitation (e.g., references money and sex, pimp phrases, a name that child/youth is reluctant to explain.)
Discussed spending time at places where trafficking or recruitment is known to occur (e.g., specific hotels, clubs, houses).	This means a child/youth visits places known for prostitution, trafficking, or recruitment into commercial sex. This may include: specific hotels, clubs, houses, brothels, or known "tracks" (a specific area where street-based sex work/prostitution frequently happens).
Recently traveled across state lines without authorization from their parent or guardian (e.g. in the last year).	This means that the child/youth is traveling long distances without apparent authority from their parent/guardian. The child/youth may be reluctant to explain– or simply not know– where they are or why they are in the town. In combination with other indicators, there may be concern that a perpetrator is facilitating the child/youth's movements. For the purpose of this

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	indicator, the unauthorized travel should have occurred within the last year.
A recent history of running behaviors or regularly missing from care (e.g. within the last year).	Children or youth who run away or are missing from care are at an increased risk of trafficking or exploitation. This indicator should be marked where the child/youth has recently run from home or has been missing from care (e.g., foster home, residential facility) in the last year.
The child/youth is:	
Connected with known or alleged trafficking victims.	This may indicate that the child/youth is also a victim of trafficking or is being groomed or recruited. This indicator should be marked if the child/youth is believed to be in communication with another child/youth who is missing or who is known or suspected to be a trafficking victim.
Working for little or no pay in exchange for basic needs (food, housing, transportation, clothing, etc.),	This means that a child/youth is not receiving wages or is receiving below-minimum wage and is working to meet their basic needs (housing, food, clothing, hygiene, transportation, phone/internet use). This may indicate either sex trafficking or labor trafficking but more information is needed.
Homeless or experiences frequent housing instability.	This means that a child/youth is currently homeless or has experienced housing instability (e.g., within the last year). Lack of stable housing makes children and youth highly vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation in order to survive.
Truant or frequently misses school.	Truancy refers to habitual unexcused absenteeism or tardiness from school. This may indicate that the child/youth is prevented from attending school, may be missing from home/their placement, or may be working during school hours.
Involved with a gang or has gang	Gang involvement may be linked to an organized network of illegal activity, including human trafficking. A

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associations.	female child/youth involved in a gang from a young age particularly may be cause for concern.
Other:	This section provides a space for you to write-in any additional concerning factor(s) that are not included in the list. If you check off “other,” you must provide a written description of the other indicator or factor.

Users should tally the number of boxes checked under Vulnerability Indicators, then proceed to Section 1 Status determination. It is possible that no indicators will be checked under either Exploitation Indicators or Vulnerability Indicators. If so, users should select the below option, indicating that no boxes are checked.

I am not aware of these circumstances applying to the youth/child.	No boxes checked.
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Section 1 Status

- ☐ **Indicated.** Select “Indicated” if one or more boxes is checked under Exploitation Indicators.
- ☐ **Concern.** Select “Concern” if 2 or more boxes are checked under the Vulnerability Indicators.
- ☐ **Not Enough Information.** Select “Not Enough Information” if only one box is checked under the Vulnerability Indicators or no boxes are checked in this section.

Section 2: Perpetrator Actions

The second section explores the role and actions of a possible perpetrator who may be benefitting, enticing, or facilitating commercial sexual activity with the child/youth. The alleged perpetrator refers to both a trafficker or purchaser (buyer). The actions, or methods, that the alleged perpetrator takes to compel the child/youth into a trafficking situation includes, but is not limited to, the recruitment, purchase, harboring, obtaining, threatening, restraining, and/or enticing of the child/youth.

Has someone facilitated, enticed, or benefitted from the sexual activity of the child/youth?
This may be a parent, family member, friend, employer, or romantic partner. Please select all that apply.

Note. The complete list of actions as outlined in RS 14:46.2 and 14:46.3. is: recruit, harbor, transport, provide, solicit, receive, isolate, entice, obtain, patronize, procure, purchase, hold, restrain, induce, threaten, subject, or maintain the use of another

person. The actions must be taken for the purpose of commercial sexual activity. In Louisiana, individuals who “purchase” commercial sexual activity from a child/youth under age 21 may be prosecuted for human trafficking. It is not a defense to prosecution that the person did not know the age of the victim or that the victim consented.

Note. Force, fraud, and coercion describes the methods of abuse and control perpetrators exercise over their victims to keep them in a trafficking situation. Force, fraud, and coercion is a legal requirement of the crime of human trafficking, but there is an important exception for children and youth under Louisiana law. Force, fraud, or coercion does not need to be proven in cases involving sex trafficking of children or youth under 21 years of age. This means that the law considers a child/youth a victim of human trafficking, even if they appear to consent or engage voluntarily in commercial sexual activity. Therefore, an alleged perpetrator of child/youth sex trafficking may be prosecuted if they force, trick, or coerce their victim into commercial sexual activity or if they facilitate, entice, encourage, or benefit from the child/youth’s participation into commercial sexual activity.

EXPLOITATION INDICATORS

The indicators listed under **Exploitation Indicators** provide a strong indication of human trafficking because the alleged perpetrator’s actions are linked with an instance or suspicion of commercial sexual activity. Further description of each option is listed below. Users should review each description prior to selection, to explore whether each circumstance applies to the child/youth.

Indicators	Descriptions
Someone has:	
Purchased sex, sex acts, or sexually explicit/suggestive photos or videos from the child/youth.	This means that someone has given money or something else of value to a child/youth in order to engage in sex or sex acts with the child/youth. As a reminder, something of value includes: shelter/rent, food, drugs, clothing, phones, among others. 💡 This person is commonly referred to as a “buyer,” as they are the purchaser of the commercial sex act.

Forced, tricked, or coerced the child/youth to engage in commercial sex to make money or to receive other items of value.	This means that someone is coercing, manipulating, threatening, or using physical violence to compel the child into commercial sexual activity. The perpetrator may exert actual force upon the child/youth or the child/youth may perceive that they are “forced” to keep working because they cannot stop or leave the relationship without bringing harm to themselves or others. Other types of force, fraud, or coercion include: withholding food, blackmailing, or threatening to call the authorities (law enforcement, child welfare, or immigration).
Asked the child/youth to engage in sex or sex acts with another person in exchange for something of value	This refers to situations where someone asks a child or youth to have sex or perform sexual acts with <i>another</i> person. The person requesting the child/youth to engage in the sexual activity may receive something of value from the other party (i.e., a buyer) or may provide something of value to the child (e.g., a gift or drugs) for their compliance. This also includes situations where someone is recruiting a child/youth into the commercial sex industry. Recruitment can occur in a direct or more subtle manner, including: persuading the child/youth with promises of riches or a better life or teaching the child/youth how to engage in commercial sexual activity. The child/youth may be recruited by the perpetrator or another victim (including another child/youth).
Forced or coerced the child/youth to recruit a peer for commercial sex.	Though there may not be enough information to determine whether the child/youth is engaging in commercial sex, a child/youth who is recruiting their peers for commercial sex is a likely indicator of their own victimization. Traffickers sometimes require their victims to participate in recruitment to evade detection.
Benefitted or profited from the child/youth having sex or a sexual contact with another person (i.e.,	This means that there exists evidence or suspicion that someone is financially benefiting or receiving some other advantage as a result of the child/youth having sexual

a buyer).	contact with another person. The advantage or benefit may include: money, drugs, rent/utility payments, gift and/or safety/security.
Distributed or posted online explicit or sexually-suggestive images or videos of the child/youth.	This means that someone is posting sexually explicit photographs or videos of the child/youth online, which is child sexual abuse material. This may also include advertisements with photographs or videos that are not explicit but that contain sexually-suggestive language or implication. The photographs and videos may be posted for the purpose of soliciting commercial sex, embarrassing the child/youth, or distributing the content to other perpetrators. Regardless of the intent, mark this indicator where there is evidence that someone is distributing child sexual abuse material of this child/youth or where it is used to solicit sex. 💡 In recent years, there has been an increase in subscription-based platforms for sexually explicit content. Children/youth who appear on these platforms should be reported for possible trafficking.
Threatened to distribute or post online explicit or sexually-suggestive images or videos of the child/youth.	This indicator refers to “sextortion” (i.e., sexual extortion) or blackmailing. While sextortion is not human trafficking, it is grounds for concern that trafficking may be occurring because it involves the distribution of child sexual abuse material. 💡 Sextortion commonly occurs when someone creates a friendship or relationship with a child/youth, the child/youth voluntarily sends the person nude images, then the person threatens to release the images unless the child/youth complies with their demands. The blackmail may include: demands for money or credit card information, the production of child sexual abuse material (i.e., the child/youth sends additional explicit photos of themselves or of another child), or some other advantage.

Knowingly permitted or consented to the child/youth engaging in commercial sexual activity (i.e., the child's parent or caregiver).	This means that a parent or caretaker is involved in the trafficking situation, whether directly by facilitating the commercial sexual activity or by knowing about the abuse and allowing it to occur.
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Users should tally the number of boxes checked, then proceed to the Vulnerability Indicators.

VULNERABILITY INDICATORS

The indicators listed under **Vulnerability Indicators** provide instances of controlling or abusive behavior by a possible perpetrator. In combination with the indicators in Section 1, the abuse may be a concern for possible trafficking. Further description of each option is listed below. Users should review each description prior to selection, to explore whether each circumstance applies to the child/youth.

Indicators	Descriptions
Someone is:	
Exerting excessive control over the child/youth (e.g., prevents the child/youth from speaking, closely monitors their movements and communication, or isolates them from trusted adults).	This is a common sign of abuse. The child/youth's autonomy may appear noticeably restricted. The child/youth may demonstrate fear if they do not comply with the other party (e.g., a romantic partner, employer, friend, or family member). Use your professional discretion in determining whether parental authority rises to the level of abusive control.
Prohibiting the child/youth from regularly attending school, eating, sleeping, or meeting other basic needs.	Preventing or purposely withholding a child/youth's basic needs is evidence of possible abuse or neglect. It may also be a punishment tactic to manipulate and control the child. If this is currently occurring and involves a minor, you should make a mandatory report to DCFS or law enforcement.
Asking the child/youth to lie about	Someone asking a child or youth to lie about personal details—such as their age, identity, or relationships—from

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their name, age, relationships, or other activities.	figures of authority may indicate that the individual is involved in illegal or abusive activities.
Withholding the child/youth's important documents (e.g., IDs, debit card, birth certificate, passport).	This means that someone has confiscated and is purposely withholding the child/youth's documents to prevent the child/youth from leaving or to find help. This is a common tactic experienced by foreign national victims. This indicator does not merely mean that a parent or guardian is keeping a child's personal documents for safekeeping. The circumstances should indicate a pattern of control and possible abuse.
Other.	If you have a serious and reasonable belief that someone is abusing the child, this section provides a space for you to write-in any additional concerning factor(s) that are not included in the list. If you check off "other," you must provide a written explanation.

Users should tally the number of boxes checked under Vulnerability Indicators, then proceed to Section 2 Status determination. It is possible that no indicators will be checked under either Exploitation Indicators or Vulnerability Indicators. If so, users should select the below option, indicating that no boxes are checked.

I am not aware of these circumstances applying to the youth/child.	No boxes checked.
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Section 2 Status

If no boxes are checked in Section 2, the status remains the same from section 1.

☐ **Indicated.** Select "Indicated" if one or more boxes is checked under Exploitation Indicators. If the Section 1 Status is "concern" and if one or more boxes is checked under Vulnerability Indicators, increase the screening status to "Indicated."

☐ **Concern.** If the Section 1 Status is "not enough information" and if one or more boxes is checked under Vulnerability Indicators, increase the screening status to "concern." If no boxes are checked under Vulnerability Indicators and the Section 1 Status is "concern," the status will remain "concern."

☐ **Not Enough Information.** Select "Not Enough Information" if the Section 1 Status is "not enough information" and no boxes are checked under either Exploitation or Vulnerability Indicators.

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Section 3: Current Abuse

The third section considers whether the child/youth is *currently* experiencing any form of abuse, neglect, or other harm. The indicators by themselves may not demonstrate possible human trafficking but will demonstrate a heightened concern when combined with indicators of the previous sections. When completing Section 3, users should consider abuse from **the last 90 days**.

Is the child/youth currently experiencing abuse, neglect, or other forms of harm?

Please select which types of abuse, neglect, or other forms of harm you have knowledge of or concerns about for this child/youth. Select all that apply.

- Sexual abuse or assault.
- Multiple instances of pregnancy, abortions, sexually transmitted infections, urinary tract infections, or other injuries consistent with child sexual abuse.
- Physical harm.
- Stalking.
- Threatened with violence.
- Witnesses harm to others.
- Mental, emotional, or verbal abuse.
- Forced drug or alcohol use.
- Denial of medical care or medication.
- Malnourishment.
- Neglect.
- Other.
- I am not certain, but I am concerned that someone is abusing, neglecting, or otherwise causing harm to the child/youth. *If checked, this requires an explanation from the user.*

Users should tally the number of boxes checked under Section 3, then proceed to Section 3 Status determination. It is possible that no indicators will be checked under either Exploitation Indicators or Vulnerability Indicators. If so, users should select the below option, indicating that no boxes are checked.

I am not aware of these circumstances applying to the youth/child.

No boxes
checked.

Section 3 Status

If one or more boxes are checked, increase the screening status of Section 2 by one level. If no boxes are checked, the status remains the same from section 2.

☐ **Indicated.** If the Section 2 Status is “Indicated,” the section 3 Status is also “Indicated.” If the Section 2 Status is “concern” and if one or more boxes is checked in Section 3, increase the screening status to “Indicated.”

☐ **Concern.** If the Section 2 Status is “not enough information” and if one or more boxes is checked under Section 3, increase the screening status to “concern.” If no boxes are checked in Section 3 and the Section 2 Status is “concern,” the status will remain “concern.”

☐ **Not Enough Information.** Select “Not Enough Information” if the Section 2 Status is “not enough information” and no boxes are checked under Section 3.

Screening Result Quick Guide

Screening Matrix		
SECTION 1 Screening Status		
Indicator Type	# of Boxes Checked	Section 1 Screening Status
Exploitation Indicators	≥ 1	Indicated
Vulnerability Indicators	2 or more	Concern
	0 or 1	Not Enough Information
SECTION 2 Screening Status		
Indicator Type	# of Boxes Checked	Section 2 Screening Status
Exploitation Indicators	≥ 1	Indicated
Vulnerability Indicators	≥ 1	Increase Section 1 status by one level.
	0	No change to Section 1 status.
SECTION 3 Screening Status		
Indicator Type	# of Boxes Checked	Section 3 Screening Status
Abuse/Neglect Indicators	≥ 1	Increase Section 2 status by one level
	0	No change to Section 2 status

Final Screening Results and Actions

The Section 3 Status will be the Final Screening Result.

If the child/youth is in immediate danger or if there is an active safety concern, immediately call 911 and report to law enforcement.

INDICATED

The child/youth is considered “indicated” for sex trafficking. As a result, this case warrants review by a Louisiana Human Trafficking Regional Care Coordination Team.

Actions: *If the individual is a **child** (0-17 years old)*

#1 Assess the situation for immediate safety concerns requiring a law enforcement response.

If the child/youth is in immediate danger or if there is an active safety concern, immediately call 911 and report to law enforcement.

#2. Report immediately to the DCFS Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 855-452-5437 (option 4) to report human trafficking involving a child under the age of 18 years old.

If the child is a non-U.S. citizen or non-lawful permanent resident, report to HHS Office of Trafficking in Persons (OTIP) by submitting a Request for Assistance (RFA) through Shepherd. (Contact the OTIP Child Protection Specialists by phone at 202-205-4582 or email at ChildTrafficking@acf.hhs.gov.) Consider referring the child to an attorney to help assess qualifications for legal relief as a potential trafficking victim.

#3. Refer to additional services.

→ If the child is experiencing a crisis (e.g., urgent mental health needs, medical needs, housing needs), contact a human trafficking advocate. [Unbound Now](#) and [BCFS Common Thread](#) provide crisis response services to youth of all genders, ages 17 and younger, who are victims of human trafficking.⁵

- BCFS Common Thread Crisis Line (statewide): 1-888-884-7323
- Unbound Now Baton Rouge area Crisis Line: (225) 475-9635
- Unbound Now New Orleans-area Crisis Line: (504) 285-9865

→ Make a referral to Care Coordination services at a local Child Advocacy Center. Find your Regional Care Coordination Team at lacacs.org/collaborative/. DCFS will likely

⁵ A crisis includes a mental health emergency, law enforcement recoveries, a child/youth reporting to hospital/urgent care for emergency care, among others.

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facilitate this process when you make a report. However, you may still refer the child for a quicker service response. If you refer to Care Coordination, please include a copy of your screening tool.

Actions: If the individual is between the ages 18 and 20 years old.

#1. Assess the situation for immediate safety concerns requiring a law enforcement response.

If the youth is in immediate danger or if there is an active safety concern, immediately call 911 and report to law enforcement. Otherwise, do not report to law enforcement without the consent of the individual.

#2. Report to Louisiana Adult Protective Services only if the youth is an adult with a disability.

If the individual is an adult with a disability, report also to Adult Protective Services at 800-898-4910. The Adult Protective Services Reporting Law, Louisiana R.S. 14:403.2, requires all Louisianans to report abuse, neglect, exploitation, and extortion of adults with disabilities. For more information, visit <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/faq/category/15>.

If the individual wishes to make a report to law enforcement, you may assist them in doing so. Do not initiate a report to law enforcement without first discussing it with the individual.

#3. Refer or provide information for services.

If the youth is aged 18 years or older, offer to make a referral to a local service provider with expertise in human trafficking. Visit humantrafficking.la.gov/resources/services-map/ to locate resources in their area. You may also provide them with the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 888-373-7888.

CONCERN

There is concern for possible sex trafficking, meaning that there is not specific indication or disclosure of trafficking but enough indicators have been selected to warrant additional screening monitoring and follow up. Because this indicator tool may reveal information about other forms of harm being experienced by the child/youth (i.e., sexual abuse), as mandatory reporter, you may be required to report other forms of abuse or neglect.

Actions:

#1 Assess the situation for immediate safety concerns requiring a law enforcement response.

If the child/youth is in immediate danger or if there is an active safety concern, immediately call 911 and report to law enforcement.

#2 Report other non-trafficking concerns involving a minor, if necessary.

→ Report other child abuse or neglect involving a minor to DCFS.

- Review the indicators you marked to determine whether there are any concerns of other forms of abuse.
- If you are a mandatory reporter and have suspicion or knowledge of child abuse (ex: physical or sexual abuse) or neglect (ex: malnourishment or other mistreatment), you are required by law to make a mandatory report to DCFS or law enforcement.

→ Report other abuse or neglect involving a youth with a disability to Louisiana Adult Protective Services.

- If the individual is an adult with a disability, report also to Adult Protective Services at 800-898-4910.
- The Adult Protective Services Reporting Law, Louisiana R.S. 14:403.2, requires all Louisianans to report abuse, neglect, exploitation, and extortion of adults with disabilities. For more information, visit <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/faq/category/15>.

#3. Screen for sex trafficking, using this tool, in 90 days or upon learning new information. Please keep a record of this screening to compare to future screenings.

In the meantime, consider referring the child/youth to additional services. Call 211 to find resources in your area or to locate specific victim services online at <https://humantrafficking.la.gov/resources/services-map/>.

NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION [Monitor]

There is not enough information to determine whether the child/youth has or is experiencing sex trafficking.

Actions:

#1 Assess the situation for immediate safety concerns requiring a law enforcement response.

If the child/youth is in immediate danger or if there is an active safety concern, immediately call 911 and report to law enforcement.

#2 Report other non-trafficking concerns involving a minor, if necessary.

- Report other child abuse or neglect involving a minor to DCFS.
 - Review the indicators you marked to determine whether there are any concerns of other forms of abuse.
 - If you are a mandatory reporter and have suspicion or knowledge of child abuse (ex: physical or sexual abuse) or neglect (ex: malnourishment or other mistreatment), you are required by law to make a mandatory report to DCFS or law enforcement.

- Report other abuse or neglect involving a youth with a disability to Louisiana Adult Protective Services.
 - If the individual is an adult with a disability, report also to Adult Protective Services at 800-898-4910.
 - The Adult Protective Services Reporting Law, Louisiana R.S. 14:403.2, requires all Louisianans to report abuse, neglect, exploitation, and extortion of adults with disabilities. For more information, visit <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/faq/category/15>.

#3 Monitor the child/youth for additional indicators related to human trafficking and abuse. Upon learning new information, re-screen the child/youth for sex trafficking using this tool..

In the meantime, consider referring the child/youth to additional services. Call 211 to find resources in your area or locate specific victim services online at <https://humantrafficking.la.gov/resources/services-map/>.

DO I NEED TO MAKE A MANDATORY REPORT?

Mandatory reporters should follow the following instructions, regardless of the screening outcome. Learn more about your mandatory reporting requirements by visiting www.dcf.louisiana.gov/.

- (1) Any suspicion of child sex trafficking by any person requires a report to Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 855-452-5437 (option 4).
- (2) Any suspicion or knowledge of sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, or other maltreatment of a child requires a mandatory report to DCFS or law enforcement.

Report cases involving in-home perpetrators to the DCFS Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline 855-452-5437.

Report cases involving out-of-home perpetrators to the law enforcement agency where the incident occurred.

Additional Considerations

Utilizing a Trauma-Informed, Victim/Survivor-Centered Approach

In speaking with child/youth, it is important to remember that conversations regarding potential experiences of human trafficking or other abuse may trigger a trauma or emotional response. A professional who is speaking with a child/youth in order to complete this tool should be well-prepared, comfortable working with victims of trauma, and recognize the need to ask questions in an appropriate manner that is sensitive to the needs of youth.

Trauma-informed care is a critical component of engaging potential victims of crime.⁶ Trauma-informed approaches acknowledge that trauma impacts all aspects of a person's life, including physical, social, and emotional impacts. **Trauma-informed approaches seek to minimize re-traumatization during the initial engagement with a potential victim of crime and throughout the provision of services.** Safety of the victim, choice, and autonomy in services and service planning, and trust between victims and those working with them, are all paramount to a trauma-informed approach.

Victim-centered or survivor-centered approaches prioritize the needs, safety, well-being, and wishes of the child or youth in all procedures and services. Like trauma-informed approaches, victim-centered approaches seek to minimize re-traumatization and empower victims of crime as engaged participants in their service planning and provision. When engaging children and youth in conversations to identify potential trafficking, a victim-centered approach will prioritize the child/youth's feelings of safety and comfort and may require flexibility in interview locations, interview timing, and other accommodations based on needs and wants expressed by the child/youth.

Consider the following trauma-informed and victim-centered guidelines:

- Meet the child/youth where they are at in terms of their understanding of their experience.
- Be clear about your role and what will happen next. Be transparent about any mandates to report any abuse that they have disclosed.
- Create a physical environment that feels safe for the child/youth away from parents/guardians, family, friends, or possible traffickers. Do not question a child/youth in front of a suspected trafficker or other individual who is exhibiting controlling behavior over the child/ youth.
- Provide choices to the child/youth such as: allow the child/youth to choose where they sit; provide the child/youth with food, drink, or other needs; ask them if they need to take a break. Allow the youth to lead the direction of the conversation.

⁶ For the purpose of this tool, the term "victim" is used to describe the people who have experienced sex trafficking. This is due to the legal protections and rights that these people have as victims of crime. However, many people who have experienced this crime prefer terms such as "survivor."

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- Limit the number of times the child/youth is asked to share their story or experiences. You should always attempt to obtain the information from another source if possible.
- Monitor signs of distress and minimize the risk of re-traumatization.
- If an interpreter is necessary, he/she should be trustworthy, unknown to the youth being interviewed, and able to use the language that mirrors both the child/youth and child-serving professionals language use. Do not allow a family member, friend, or other person close to the child/youth to translate. Use of an agency or certified interpreter is required.
- Avoid touching the child/youth without their permission.

Creating a safe and supportive environment by using both approaches is key to minimizing harm and ensuring traumatic responses can be immediately addressed in a healthy way. Furthermore, these approaches better facilitate a trusting relationship with the child/youth and enhance efforts to gather information and engage children and youth in services.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the act of protecting private information relating to a person who is being served. State and federal laws, as well as professional codes and agency protocols, provide guidance about when information can and cannot be shared. For the safety of all involved, it is critical to protect the confidentiality of the youth's information whenever possible. Mandatory reporting is an important exception to this rule of confidentiality. When speaking with child/youth under 18 years of age, professionals should also be transparent about the limits of their confidentiality by letting the child know that they are a mandated reporter and what that means. Transparency allows the youth to make an informed decision—that is, with all the facts at hand—about what and how much to share. Users should refer to their organization's protocols for disclosure and ensure they are following mandated reporting protocols.

Applying Professional Judgement

This tool draws upon evidence-based indicators and the legal components comprising human trafficking in Louisiana. Some indicators (i.e., the vulnerability indicators) are traditional indicators or risk factors of trafficking; other indicators (i.e., the exploitation indicators) are *per se* trafficking – meaning it describes conduct that meets the legal definition of the crime. When selecting the indicators and interpreting the tool's findings (results and actions), use your professional judgement. If unsure, consult a supervisor or trained trafficking professional.

The Vulnerability Indicators should be interpreted within the broader context of the child or youth's unique circumstances and in light of findings in the other sections. A finding of "indicated" may result from the presence of three or more such indicators. However, it is important to recognize that non-trafficking explanations may account for these patterns. For example, a combination of truancy, gang associations, and large amounts of unexplained cash may indicate gang-related criminal activity. However, it could also reflect forced criminal activity,

a form of labor trafficking. Similarly, a relationship with an older boyfriend, excessive control, and a recent sexual assault may be evidence of child sexual abuse—but could also indicate child sex trafficking. In either case, the User should report the situation for further assessment to determine whether trafficking is present.

If a case screens as “*indicated*” for human trafficking, but the User has verified information that the child is *not* a trafficking victim (and is experiencing another form of harm or crime), the User may determine that a report of human trafficking is not appropriate. However, the User is still required to make a mandatory report for any new or related concerns. By contrast, if a case screens in as “not enough information” or “concern,” but the User has a strong suspicion that trafficking is occurring, the User should report the case and follow the actions set out under “Indicated.”

Ultimately, the tool is designed to support—but not replace—professional judgment in identifying and responding to potential human trafficking.

Resources for Victims

When Users report a potential trafficking or child abuse case to investigators, it is recommended that they concurrently refer the victim to available services.

- Reports of child sex trafficking made to the DCFS Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline are immediately referred to care coordination services at local Children Advocacy Centers. Locate your local CAC and care coordination team by visiting <https://lacacs.org/collaborative/>.
- Make a referral to Advocacy Services for children under the age of 18. Unbound Now and BCFS Common Thread provides crisis response and advocacy services to youth of all genders, ages 17 and younger, who are victims of sex trafficking.
 - Unbound Now provides advocacy services in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Make a referral by calling Baton Rouge advocates at (225) 475-9635 and New Orleans:advocates at (504) 285-9865. Visit unboundnow.org/louisiana to learn more.
 - BCFS Common Thread provides advocacy services to all parishes in Louisiana. Make a referral by calling 1-888-884-7323 or emailing Commonthread@BCFS.net. Learn more by visiting: bcfstrafficking.org/programs_posts/common-thread/.
- Visit <https://humantrafficking.la.gov/resources/> to find additional services and resources in your region.
- Call the 24/7/365 National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-3737-888 or text them at 233733 with the words "HELP" or "INFO", or visit their website at <https://www.humantraffickinghotline.org/>

Definitions

The following is a list of the definitions used throughout this guide and in the identification tool.

Adult: A person eighteen years old or older.

Advertisements (or Sex Ads): promotional content, usually online, that advertises explicitly or implicitly sexual services or sexual content for a fee.

Age-Inappropriate Girlfriend or Boyfriend: the child/youth is in a relationship with someone older and the age gap is such that it raises concerns about possible grooming, a power imbalance, or a violation of statutory sexual offenses.

Anything of Value (or Something of Value): any conceivable thing of the slightest value, see La R.S. 14:2. This may take the form of money, food, clothing, gifts, a place to stay, drugs, medicine, or other services (such as visits to a nail salon or hair salon).

Branding: a tattoo, carving, marking, or symbol (permanent or semi-permanent) that indicates ownership by a possible trafficker, pimp, or other criminal-association.

Child: A person under the age of eighteen years of age. Children are a legislatively protected class of people who have special rules and regulations that must be followed if they are suspected of being a victim of crime or abuse.

Child Sexual Abuse Material: imagery or videos which show a person who is a child and engaged in or is depicted as being engaged in explicit sexual activity.

Coercion: A form of control that a trafficker may use over a victim through psychological, mental, or emotional control over a victim.

Commercial sexual activity: any sexual act performed or conducted when anything of value has been given, promised, or received by any person, directly or indirectly, including the production of pornography. Also, includes any lewd or lascivious act upon the person or in the presence of any child when any thing of value. See R.S. 14:46.2 and 14:46.3.

Force: A form of control that a trafficker may use over a victim that involves physical control, physical harm, or restraint.

Forced labor: When a person is compelled against their will to provide work or service through the use of force, fraud, or coercion.

Fraud: A form of control that a trafficker may use over a victim through tricks, lies, or defrauding.

Human trafficking: when a person is compelled, either through force, fraud, or coercion, to provide sex or labor services, or to induce a person under the age of 21 into commercial sex acts.

Indicators (Human Trafficking Indicators): observable conditions, behaviors, or circumstances that may suggest that a person is at risk of being trafficked, is being trafficked, or has been trafficked.

Parent/ Caregiver: "Caretaker" means "any person legally obligated to provide or secure adequate care for a child, including a parent, tutor, guardian, legal custodian, foster home parent, an employee of a public or private day care center, an operator or employee of a registered family child day care home, or other person providing a residence for the child" as defined in Children's Code Article 603(3). This can also be a person who maintains an interpersonal dating or engagement relationship with the parent or caretaker, or a person living in the same residence with the parent or caretaker as a spouse whether married or not.

Screening tool (also known as an identification tool): A tool designed to screen a person for a specific experience or criteria. For the purpose of this tool, the screening uses indicators that meet the state of Louisiana's definition of sex trafficking, per Louisiana Revised Statute 14:46.2 and 14:46.3.

Sex Trafficking: The crime of inducing a person by force, fraud, or coercion into commercial sexual activity, or to induce a person under the age of 21 into commercial sexual activity. The element of force, fraud, and coercion does not need to be shown when the trafficking involves a child or youth under the age of 21 (Louisiana RS 14:46.2 and RS 14: 46.3).

Survivor: A person who has experienced a crime and has survived that experience. Many people who have experienced trafficking prefer to use this word to describe themselves. Some people who have experienced human trafficking also prefer to describe themselves as a victim/survivor or survivor leader. When working with potential victims, we recognize the importance of using terms that the individual prefers when describing their experience.

Trafficker: The person who is the perpetrator causing harm to a victim for the purposes of commercial sex or labor acts. To the victim, the perpetrator/trafficker may be an employer, abuser, enforcer, boyfriend/girlfriend/partner, parent, or manager. It is important to honor the words that each victim uses to describe their experience of human trafficking.

Trauma-informed: An approach that acknowledges that trauma impacts all aspects of a person's life. Trauma-informed services are those that realize that trauma impacts all aspects of a person's life, and the services seek to minimize re-traumatization through the provision of services. The focus should always be to do no harm.

Victim: A legal term for a person who has experienced a crime and has rights within the criminal-legal system.

Victim/survivor-centered: An approach that centers victim/survivors at the heart of all activities intended to support their healing from the crime they experienced. Victim-centered or survivor-centered services are those that prioritize the needs and well-being of the client in all services.

Work: Employment in a traditional industry—such as retail, restaurant, construction—or an informal or less traditional industry such as: stripping, prostitution, running drugs, child care, begging/panhandling, or anything else where services are exchanged for something of value.

Youth: A person between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one years old for the purposes of this screening tool.

Frequently Asked Questions

The following is a list of frequently asked questions about the Louisiana Child and Youth Sex Trafficking Identification Tool (LSTT).

Who may use this tool?

This tool was created for use by professionals in Louisiana who work with youth or who are likely to encounter possible trafficking victims; this includes but is not limited to: human services, public health, behavioral health, juvenile corrections, residential programs, and/or schools. The tool is not designed to be self-administered by youth, nor is it for use by parents, caregivers, or community members with no professional experience working with children or youth.

Who do I screen?

The tool is intended for use with children and youth up to age 21. The tool incorporates indicators that are specific to sex trafficking of children and youth.⁷ A list of pre-screening criteria is outlined in the following section.

Are there requirements for administering the tool?

Utilize the tool as intended and outlined in the User Guide. Advanced training in child sex trafficking is not required to use this tool, but it is recommended. It is also recommended that before using the tool within your organization, you establish specific internal policies and protocols to guide the implementation of the tool. An internal policy and protocol should identify the screening tool(s), outline the recordkeeping process, include a comprehensive community service/resource list for referrals, and layout clear reporting and confidentiality procedures in compliance with state and federal law.

How do I administer the tool?

You may fill out the tool in a paper copy, fillable PDF version, or online through the Lighthouse Platform. To sign up for Lighthouse, email lighthouse@alliesagainstslavery.org with the subject line "Louisiana Screening New User." We recommend you keep a record of the completed tool(s).

What information do I use to administer the tool?

Consider various sources of information such as: your conversations with the child/youth or individuals close to the child/youth.; your observations; client records; child welfare, medical, or juvenile justice records; or social media.

Do I only check the indicators that the child/youth discloses?

No, a disclosure by the child/youth of the indicators on this tool is not required to complete the tool. It is important to recognize that victims often do not realize that they are victims, or they

⁷ Under Louisiana law, victims of sex trafficking under the age of 21 are provided special protections under the law. Force, fraud, or coercion is not a required element if the victim is a child or youth under the age of 21. See: La. R.S. 14:46.2(A)(1)(b).

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may be fearful to share information about their abuse. In interacting with potential victims, use a sensitive, trauma-informed and victim/survivor-centered approach, and avoid the implication of shame or blame on the child/youth.

What if the child/youth is not currently being victimized but there is evidence of a history of human trafficking victimization?

You should weigh potential trafficking situations over the lifetime of the child/youth, including sex trafficking that happened previously in other states or countries or that was a one-time occurrence. Victims of human trafficking are eligible for services regardless of when, where, or how long the trafficking situation occurred. If a child is already receiving human trafficking services (such as care coordination or advocacy services), Users may want to consult with these trafficking service providers to determine whether a new report needs to be made to DCFS.