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## Anti-Trafficking Group Work for Youth

NYC's Administration for Children's Services' Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy (OCTPP) offers a variety of trafficking awareness and prevention trainings and groupwork models for professionals, communities and youth. Due to the COVID-19 influenced shift to virtual platforms and staff availability, not all trainings and groups are currently available. Please email [Trafficking.training@acs.nyc.gov](mailto:Trafficking.training@acs.nyc.gov) with inquiries.

## Trafficking Awareness & Prevention Trainings and Groups for Youth

**Cyber Safety and Stress Survival for Teens.** An original 4 module model by Selina Higgins. Each module is 60 to 75 minutes depending upon group size and interaction. COVID-19 sheltering in place has resulted in greater amounts of screen time than ever before for both vulnerable youth and predators. Child rights groups, law enforcement officials and international organizations have recently reported greater demands for online sexual abuse material and online grooming. Recognizing the risks of increased, unsupervised screen time, a new groupwork model for teens, *Cyber Safety and Stress Survival*, was created to highlight online child trafficking awareness coupled with Dialectical Behavioral Therapy distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness skills for youth to learn positive methods for stress relief in these difficult times. The model provides four facilitated sessions on (1) Online Sexual Abuse, (2) Sextortion and Consent, (3) Media and Human Trafficking Vulnerability, and (4) Cyberbullying to help youth understand the dangers inherent with websites, influencers, social media exposure and cyber pseudo-friends. Each session concludes with a DBT skill to help youth enhance their distress tolerance and interpersonal skills.

### **Be SEA: Be Safe, Be Empowered, Be Aware: A Dialectical Behavioral Therapy and Trafficking Awareness 12-Session Group Model for Youth.**

Be SEA is a strength-based 12-week DBT skills-trafficking awareness model, developed by Selina Higgins, LCSW-R, to combine universally applicable skills for everyday life situations with trafficking awareness psycho-education and strategies in a safe environment for the expression of feelings, disclosure, empowerment and validation.

- 12-week program consisting of a 90-minute weekly skills group for youth, introducing:
  - Mindfulness skills to help build concentration and focus
  - Skills to help tolerate difficult situations (staying calm and moving on)
  - Skills to help increase communication effectiveness (get what you want and learn how to say no politely while maintaining self-respect and relationships)
  - Skills to help identify and change the emotions that you want to change

- Trafficking Awareness and Prevention: recruitment, red flags, safety planning, sextortion, cybersafety, cyberbullying, resources and who to contact for help
- Groups provided virtually for each facility via Microsoft Teams.
- Up to \$340 in gift card incentives available for participation:
  - \$20 gift card incentive per week
  - \$50 additional if 9 of 12 weeks are completed
  - Another \$50 if 12 of 12 weeks completed
- All group facilitators have completed Behavioral-Tech's 65-hour DBT Intensive Course.

### **Mitigating Trauma through Drama: Developing Positive Pathways for Lives Through Expressive Arts – 10 session psychodrama model for 8 to 10 youth**

An original model created by Melody Centeno, LMSW, Founder and CEO of Foster Care Unplugged and Selina Higgins, LCSW-R, Executive Director of ACS' Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy, with review and feedback by trafficking survivor-leaders.

This grant funded 8-session model for 8 to 10 youth per group utilizes psychodrama, a performance-based approach, to provide a trauma-informed mechanism to identify and express feelings and learn positive strategies to heal from past experiences. The model focuses upon trauma mitigation and mental health support through therapeutic expressive arts group work for trafficked and at-risk girls and young women within NYC's child welfare system.

- Three 8-week cohorts per year for two years, with eight to 10 youth participating in each cohort to ensure adequate time and attention for each group member's needs.
- 2-hour sessions held 1x/week, scheduled conveniently for youth.
- Survivor-led therapeutic drama and writing exercises serve as mediums for youth to safely express and process their life stories, allowing them to identify strengths and strive towards supportive and positive alternate pathways. Psychodrama provides an active, experiential approach that facilitates the ability to unpack and explore personal life stories, solve problems, set goals, express feelings appropriately, improve interpersonal skills and relationships, and strengthen the ability to perform personal life roles and in many cases, achieve catharsis.
- Each session will introduce trafficking related topics to assist youth in developing awareness in a safe milieu. Youth can find and share their voices by working together through vulnerable scenario opportunities to develop strategies to heal traumatic experiences, build upon their strengths, and help develop resilience.
- Group members will never be encouraged to progress beyond their current limits. If any group member does not want to use trafficking related topics, they will be encouraged to select an alternate relational experience.
- Youth will receive gift card incentives for participation.

**Love146's "Nota#number" Trafficking Prevention model.** 3 days, 2.5 hours/day. Nota#number is an interactive, five-module prevention curriculum designed to teach youth how to protect themselves from human trafficking and exploitation through information, critical thinking, and skill development. Not a #Number uses a holistic approach focusing on respect, empathy, individual strengths, and the relationship between personal and societal pressures that create or increase vulnerabilities. Group facilitators have been trained and certified by Love 146 to provide this model.

**"I AM LITTLE RED"** 2-hour session. (10-minute animated video with groupwork component). I AM LITTLE RED is a 10-minute animated short aimed at children most at-risk for sex trafficking (e.g. foster-care, runaway, LBGTQ, homeless, and adopted children), with the goal of prevention and awareness. The film, written by 10 survivors of sex trafficking (aged 14-21) along with Alec Sokolow (Academy Award nominated writer of Toy Story) and Mary Mazzio (director/Producer of I AM JANE DOE), is a contemporary re-imagining of the classic fairy tale, Little Red Riding Hood. I AM LITTLE RED addresses the four tactics a "wolf" (trafficker/pimp) will typically use to lure a Little Red off their path. I AM LITTLE RED was created especially for middle school students (ages 11-14) of all genders. When coupled with the teaching guide's 75-minute lesson plan, I AM LITTLE RED is a primary prevention tool aimed at reducing the risk of commercial sexual exploitation among children. Group facilitators have been licensed by 50 Eggs Productions to provide this model to youth.