

Academy Forum

Continuing the Message of the Roper Victim Assistance Academy

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue #27 - July 2012

Just a Thought

An estimated 100,000 youth are exploited through sex trafficking each year in the United States. Melissa Snow, Director of TurnAround, Inc., presents a summary of the problem nationally, and in Maryland and what we can do to stop it

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Web Links

You never know what resources await you on the world-wide web ...come see what our latest surfing expedition uncovered

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Save the Date!

Find out what trainings and events are just around the corner. It looks like there are lots of ways to keep you busy this summer!

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Alumni Updates

Always find yourself thinking, "I wonder what happened to..." Check out what your fellow Alumni are up to!



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Just a thought...

Human Trafficking

Last month over 400 professionals in law enforcement, service provision, community-based groups, and community members came together to attend the first annual Governor's Conference on Human Trafficking in Maryland. This two-day conference highlighted the efforts of the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, and state and non-profit organizations in their progressive efforts to address this crime against humanity that is occurring within our state's borders. To many conference attendees, this was a huge walk-up call on a crime that few were even aware existed.

Sadly, American women and children as young as 12 years old are being sold by traffickers into sexual slavery. According

to the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act (2000) and Maryland Criminal Law Section 11-303 (2007), any juvenile exploited through commercial sex (prostitution and/or stripping) is a victim of sex trafficking. And due to its geographic location in the United States, Maryland is a hotspot for human traffickers and operates as a source, transport hub, and destination location for this illegal trade in human beings.

One of the most important themes that echoed throughout the conference was redefining the way law enforcement and service providers view prostitution. Historically, women and children were targeted and treated as *offenders* of prostitution, however a closer look reveals startling statistics and patterns of victimization that require us to reconsider that approach. Experts in the field discussed the manipulation and recruitment tactics used by traffickers (aka, pimps) to target vulnerable youth - especially runaways, throwaways, and youth in the foster care system. Traffickers offer false promises such as love, protection, and basic needs -

all things that a young person naturally wants and deserves. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children estimates that at least 100,000 American youth are exploited through sex trafficking annually in the United States. According to the Maryland State Police, 13,500 youth are reported missing annually - which creates a large pool of vulnerable youth for traffickers to prey on.



Increased awareness is leading to victim identification and rescue. Additionally, the Maryland Human Trafficking

Task Force's multi-disciplinary team works aggressively to keep victims safe while bringing the criminals to justice. Community awareness and education is critical to the Task Force's efforts to be able to identify and save these vulnerable youth. An example of this was reported in the Baltimore Sun (dated Sunday, June 11th, 2010) "This week, the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force removed a 12-year-old girl from one Laurel hotel and three women, including a 16-year-old,

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EDITOR'S CORNER

Summer Greetings Alumni!

So we have completed another successful Academy! This makes nine Academies to date - can you believe it!! This year's was wonderful, I met so many great people. I look forward to working with each and every one of you! I would like to thank everyone who volunteered their time and talents at this year's Academy. A very special thank you to Deb Stanley, Heather Pfeifer, Elaine Witman, Dave Thomas, and Linda Fair - none of this would be possible without them! It is so exciting that we will be celebrating our 10th anniversary in 2013 - make sure to watch for all the special celebrations the Academy Staff will be putting together to mark this special achievement!

I think you will find this issue of the Academy Forum very informative. I know that I learned a lot about Human Trafficking this quarter that I did not know. I am just so amazed that this is something we would even have to deal with in this day and age! The field of victim services is always changing, so I truly hope these newsletters help to bring to light some areas and issues that you might not be as familiar with and can provide you with some assistance in your career. As always, I would love for you to share any insights or suggestions for our newsletter, so please feel free to email me at anytime!

I hope you all have a wonderful and safe summer, and I look forward to catching up with you soon!

Debbie Bradley, C.A., Editor

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Web Links

Although we have a virtual library at our fingertips every time we turn on the computer, we often lose sight of the forest through the trees just trying to navigate the world-wide web. Here are a few sites that relate to this issue's "Just a Thought" ... happy surfing!

The Polaris Project - Named after the North Star that guided slaves towards freedom along the Underground Railroad, Polaris Project has been providing a comprehensive approach to combating human trafficking and modern-day slavery since 2002. Polaris Project is a leading organization in the United States combating all forms of human trafficking and serving both U.S. citizens and foreign national victims, including men, women, and children. It operates the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline 1.888.3737.888, and provides services



to help our clients and all victims of human trafficking.

For more information about the Polaris Project, go to

<http://www.polarisproject.org>

The Defender Foundation - The Defender Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to both educating the community and advocating for victims on the issue of human trafficking. The Foundation operates both shelters and safe houses for victims. To learn more about this organization, go to

<http://thedefenderfoundation.org/>

The Maryland Human Trafficking

Task Force - The Maryland U.S. Attorney's Office has made the fight against human trafficking a top priority. The Task Force works with state, federal, and private agencies to accomplish two goals: a) to discover and rescue victims of human trafficking, and b) to identify and prosecute offenders. To learn more, go to the Task Force's website at

<http://www.justice.gov/usao/md/Human-Trafficking/index.html>

Save the Date

National Stop Modern Slavery Walk

September 29th, 2012. National Mall by Washington Monument, Washington, D.C.

Join Team TurnAround to raise funds to support direct services for survivors of trafficking in Maryland! Interested parties should go online and select "Join a Team" and then choose "TurnAround, Inc."

For more information, go to:

<http://sms.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1012952&lis=1&kntae1012952=F50EF81E6C47415A9AA3DEA5C924FAD1>



Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center's 9th Annual Chocolate Affair

Saturday, October 20th, 2012, 7:00-11:00pm. The Heritage Room, Mitchellville, MD.

Join MCVRC for a wonderful evening that will honor some of the special individuals who have dedicated their lives to assisting victims of crime in our community, and will offer some magnificent prizes through auctions and raffles.

Reservations are required - \$75 for a single ticket; \$130 for couples tickets. For more information, please contact (301) 952-0063 or email

mail@mdcrimevictims.org

Maryland Children's Alliance - Mid-Atlantic Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect

October 24th - 26th, 2012, Doubletree Hotel, Annapolis, MD

This year's conference will offer over 40 workshops with expert presenters from around the country. Enjoy some exciting networking events, meet other professionals, and take time to visit the sights of downtown Annapolis. Registration will open in just a couple of weeks, so please check the MCA website for updates on the workshops that will be offered.

To make reservations at the Doubletree call (410) 224-3150. Hotel Rate is \$110.00 per night. For more information on this event, go to <http://www.mdcha.org/midatlanticconference.html>

2013 RVAAM Academy

April 14th - 19th, 2013 at Bon Secours Spiritual Center, Marriottsville, Maryland

Help us celebrate our 10th anniversary by recruiting for this year's Academy. We will be marking the occasion with some special events for alumni and new students during the week of the Academy, so be sure to hold these dates on your calendar!

The application will be posted on the RVAAM website in early fall, so please be sure to check <http://www.rvaam.org> in the next month; or you can email Dr. Debra Stanley with any questions you may at dstanley@ubalt.edu.

Alumni Updates

It seems like only yesterday when we were all together at the Academy. But in a blink of an eye another year has passed us by. Here's just a snapshot of some of the special events and milestones our alums have experienced since we last met...

Look at Our Movers & Shakers!

Dianna Abramowski (Class of 2007) - Be sure you congratulate Dianna on her new job the next time you see her! Dianna just joined the Baltimore County State's Attorney's Office as a law clerk. Congratulations Dianna!



Lauren Brown (Class of 2008) - A happy belated birthday to Lauren! She celebrated her special day on June 17th. And what's more exciting is she was just accepted to the University of Maryland's School of Social Work! Congratulations Lauren - we are so happy for you!

Eva Marie Kenealy (Class of 2010) - We also want to extend birthday greetings to Eva Marie who celebrated her birthday in June. We hope you did something fun to mark your special day!

Best Practices

Human Trafficking 101: A Guide for Service Providers

Twenty seven million are enslaved today. That is more than at any other time in history! Human trafficking is modern-day slavery; and it happens everywhere in the world - including in our own neighborhoods. According to the last United Nations report, human trafficking is the sec-

ond largest organized crime in the world, grossing over \$33 billion last year. That is more than the profits of Apple, Nike, Reebok, and Google combined.

Human trafficking is victimization involving labor and sex. A victim need not be physically transported from one location to another (as implied by the term "trafficking") in order for the crime to fall within these definitions.

* Examples of labor trafficking in Maryland include the work of migrants, debt bondage, domestic servitude, crab picking, the work of those in the chicken industry, and the use of unpaid labor in the hotel and food service industries.

* The federal definition of sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining a person under the age of 18 for the purpose of a commercial sex act as induced by force, or fraud, or coercion. Examples of force, fraud, or coercion include beatings, sexual assault, confinement, false or deceptive employment, false marriage/promises, lies, coercion via direct or implied threats to family, coercion via direct or implied threats of criminal process or deportation, and drugs.



* Commercial sex acts may include prostitution, stripping, and pornography.

The profile of sex trafficking victim is complex. The majority are teens who have been victims of some type of abuse - especially sexual abuse within the home - who are runaways or "throwaways" who have been recruited into "the life" by a pimp or madam. ("The life" and "the game" are what victimized teens and

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their abusers call teen sex trafficking in the United States.) In Maryland, the average age of children entering prostitution is 12. The pimp “breaks them in” through rape or violence, and sometimes they have already been “turned out,” a term used for the first time a victim is put out for prostitution, by a parent or guardian. Traffickers often use drugs to better control and coerce victims; therefore many of these victims have chemical dependency issues.

Many of these victims got ensnared in this life because they were looking for “family” - sadly many of these girls refer to their pimps as “boyfriend” or “daddy.” Pimps exploit this situation and keep their girls “in line” through a combination of love and fear, a process known as “trauma bonding.” Similar to Stockholm Syndrome, this phenomenon makes victims extremely loyal to their abusers/kidnappers. Furthermore, traffickers isolate their victims and may even use threats against the victim’s children or family. Continued physical and mental abuse by the trafficker and buyers causes mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder, and depression.

Many service providers may have already unknowingly had sex trafficking victims as clients. These sometimes difficult clients will not share their whole life readily and are especially ashamed of their life in prostitution. How can we help these victims? Teen sex trafficking victims refuse to see themselves as victims and may refuse help. Victims of trafficking have been brainwashed to believe that “the life” is their own choice and that they are owned by their trafficker. Thus they may have an attitude of mistrust of anyone who is outside of “the game.” Thus service providers need to approach these victims with a great deal of understanding and patience. Sex trafficking victims need more extensive attention in the beginning of their

recovery. Strength-based advocacy, wherein a service provider concentrates on the strength of the client and their ability to adapt and survive under extreme conditions, is a must. The strengths perspective emphasizes the individual’s capacities, talents, competencies, possibilities, visions, and hope. Key concepts include empowerment, resilience, and membership to a viable group or community. Important sources of strength are personal and cultural stories, narratives, and lore. Therefore, it is wise to begin to empower these victims by helping them set small, attainable goals - such as, taking a shower each day, eating at least two meals a day - and then having them text the service provider once they have completed an agreed upon task.

Another critical step to these victims recovery is to have multiple service providers collaborate to create and implementing the client’s service plan. Advocates must build trust and respect with the victim in the first few weeks, and the client must believe that the providers will be available for them through their struggles. In order to provide the best level of care it is critical that all providers involved on a particular case communicate with one another while the client is present. Sex trafficking victims are accustomed to playing the game and may use their skills to play service providers against one another. Most of these clients have lost all sense of hope and do not believe they have any future or that they could ever live a healthy, productive life. Thus they may respond to efforts to help in a manipulative or destructive manner. Thus clients need to know that each person on the team is working together for the sole purpose of helping him/her secure a better future. The client must always have a buy in to his/her future and be included in every decision. Advocates and providers should never make any false promises or unsure plans. These vulnerable clients will stop accepting

services if they feel lied to or played by the system.

This holistic approach has been implemented by the Safe House of Hope (SHO Hope), a non-profit organization in Baltimore which provides services to former and current sex trafficking victims. SHO-Hope trains volunteers to conduct community outreach initiatives in areas known for prostitution, such as distribution of free condoms, or offering free health screenings, to help break the isolation these women often feel. SHO-Hope also operates a drop-in center located in Southwest Baltimore, 901 Hollins Street, near Hollins Market which provides clients with the space to be valued, nurtured, and to become part of an accepting community. As our clients realize their intrinsic value we offer healing to grow and dream again. We support and empower our clients to attain their goals and change their lives. Finally, SHO-Hope maintains a 24-hour talk/call line that also refers women to the drop-in center and other local available services.

Most recently, SHO-Hope has piloted a program which brings sex trafficking victims together with volunteer host families who received special training and continual support, to provide victims with new, healthy support systems so that they can grow and begin to dream again. To date, five host families have been paired with five survivors of sex trafficking, with some of the clients only remaining with their host family for three weeks while others have remained with their family for nine months. All five victims have successfully matriculated back into the community - some have returned to school (both high school and community college) and others have gotten legitimate jobs; most importantly, all five survivors have reported no desire to return to the life of prostitution, and all plan on keeping in contact with their host family after moving out.

** Essay contributed by Denene Yates, Executive Director, Safe House of Hope*





News From the Field

Everyone knows that the field of victims services is always evolving. The challenge is to find a way to keep on top of all the changes ... we're here to help! Here's an overview of the Bills currently in session:

* **House Bill 607/Senate Bill 352 - Posting of the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline** - This bill requires privately-owned bus stations and truck stops to post a sign with the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline information. If a business owner fails to post this sign within 24 hours of receiving a notice of failure to comply, a civil fine not to exceed \$1,000 may be assessed.

* **House Bill 860/Senate Bill 1082 - Child Abuse - Human Trafficking** - This bill amends the definition of "sexual abuse" to specifically include human trafficking, child pornography, and prostitution of a child. This change in the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Code allows a domestic minor sex trafficking victim to be considered an abused child, and in turn could allow a victim to be considered a "Child in Need of Assistance" [CINA]. A CINA may be taken into custody and may receive shelter care. A CINA may not be committed to a correctional facility or one used to confine delinquent children. Additionally, the amended definition will affect the Family Law Code which will now require the reporting and investigation of human trafficking, child pornography, and prostitution as specific forms of abuse.

* **Governor's Conference on Combatting Human Sex Trafficking in Maryland - Resource Guide** - This guide has been compiled by the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention and the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force as supporting material for the statewide conference that took place May 21-22, 2012. A copy of this resource guide can be downloaded from <http://www.goccp.maryland.gov/victim/documents/human-trafficking/combating-human-trafficking-resource-directory.pdf>

Just a Thought (Cont.)

from another motel less than half a mile away. Two men have been charged with sex trafficking in the apparently unrelated cases. Police believe the tip about the second incident stemmed directly from publicity about the first case."

Furthermore, to provide a snapshot of recent efforts by TurnAround's Anti-Trafficking Program, since July 2011, the program has served 75 females, of which 27 were juveniles. Some interesting facts about these women and girls:

- * 71 are U.S. Citizens; 4 were foreign-born
- * Over 65% had experienced childhood sexual abuse prior to the sex trafficking victimization. For many of the girls, the childhood sexual abuse was carried out by an immediate family member.
- * 12 girls were first sold by a family member. Of those 12 girls, 8 were later targeted by another trafficker who continued the cycle of victimization.
- * At least 75% of the girls in our program had contact with a state agency, law enforcement, or service provider during the course of the victimization but were not properly identified. This resulted in a missed opportunity for rescue and assistance.

* All of the girls under pimp control reported being violently beaten or threatened with a deadly weapon during their enslavement.

Pimps prey on the innocence of youth because it provides them with a target that can be groomed, tricked, and then brutally forced into the sex trafficking market. Once a youth is locked into this pattern of exploitation, it is extremely difficult to exit. Pimps control every movement of their victims, both physically and psychologically. He will tell his girls what to wear, how much to charge, and who to serve, and they will not be allowed to come home until their quota is met. All of the money earned for the night is then turned over to the pimp each night, thus making the girls financially dependent upon their pimp.

But pimps alone do not create this marketplace of victimization. Demand for commercial sex, especially of young girls, is the driving force that creates an illicit job opportunity for a pimp/trafficking. And sadly there is an overwhelming amount of demand. Most girls are forced by their pimp to fulfill a quota of 5-15 men an evening. If we even take a conservative estimate of 5 men a night x 5 days a week x 1 year of exploitation, this would equal 1,200 men who have sexually exploited a child. At an estimate \$100 per sex act, this would equal over \$120,000 for each girl that the trafficker is controlling.

While recently talking with a 14 year old survivor in our program, she said "Not being sold should be the First Amendment in the Constitution!" I couldn't agree more. Building awareness of this issue is the first step we can take to stop this horrible pattern of exploitation and victimization from continuing.

Essay contributed by Melissa Snow, Director of TurnAround, Inc. and Chair of the Victim Services Committee, Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force.

The 20 / 20

Each newsletter we pose twenty questions to one of our members to get an inside look at who they are ... this month get to know Tamara Hatcher, a graduate of the 2012 Academy

My favorite book is ...

“Living Beyond Your Feelings”
by Joyce Meyer

The quality I appreciate the most in another person is ...

Advocacy

My favorite professional sports team is ...

Ravens

My most memorable birthday was ...

My 35th because 10 days prior to that I had my twins!

My favorite TV show is ...

King of Queens

The technological device I would love to get rid of is ...

The TV remote

The quality I appreciate the least in another person is ...

Arrogance

The best piece of advice I've been given is ...

To maintain my character and integrity, and to treat others with respect

My favorite flowers are ...

Calla Lillies and Tulips

My two most favorite colors are ...

Burgundy and Peach

The Super Hero that best represents my personality is ...

Wonder Woman

The thing I like best about my current job is ...

Being able to assist victims daily

The three adjectives that best describe my personality are ...

Spiritual, loyal, funny

If I had to pick an animal that best represents my personality, it would be ...

A lioness because I am fierce and protective when I have to be

My favorite way to unwind from a rough day is ...

Spend quality time with my family

When I was a child, I wanted to be a _____ when I grew up

A lawyer

The most challenging thing about my job is ...

To tune out the negativity

My favorite sound is ...

My children's voices

If I could go anywhere in the world on vacation, I'd go to

France or Italy

Let's Give a Big Welcome!

On June 8th, the Victim Services Professional Network [VSPN], the alumni organization of RVAAM, welcomed its newest members as they graduated from the Roper Victim Assistance Academy. Please extend a welcome and congratulations to each of these individuals - we are looking forward to working with them in the upcoming year:

Rose Albert, Rosario Alston, Lindsay Bradshaw-Atkins, Damon Bailey, Nicole Barber, Frances Bell, Suzan Boisclair, Heather Brantner, Tammy Cline, Leslie Connolly, Jamie Dansicker, Michelle Epps, Ariel Ervin, Ashley Fundack, Christian Fox, Maresa Goggins, Tamika Gooden, Kimberly Gunishaw, Carolyn Harris, Barbara Harvard, Tamara Hatcher, Sharon Henry, Amy Jarkiewicz, Stephanie Lansey, Mark Livingston, Hajar Martin, Shamija Moncur, Mary Moore, Sonja Morgan, Lauren Moskowitz, Rian Hart, Gale Seaton, Keyya Simons, Dasha Smith, and Teah Wedlock

Editorial Board

Debbie Bradley — Editor
Jessica Winpigler — Assistant Editor
Dianna Abramowski — Assistant Editor
Heather Pfeifer — Managing Editor

Alumni Directory

The 2012 Alumni Directory, which includes the addition of the most recent Academy class members, is available for distribution. However, we still would like your help to keep the Alumni Directory up to date! If any of your personal and/or professional information changes, please contact Debbie Bradley via email at bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org or by phone at (410) 836-5490.

Watch for the next edition of the Academy Forum in October 2012