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Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Groups for Youth

Cyber Safety and Stress Relief Workshop for Teens. An original 4 module model by Selina Higgins. Each module is 60 to 75 minutes depending upon group size and interaction. Due to COVID-19, sheltering in place has become a way of life and recreational escape has become a virtual reality, resulting 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 was created and launched in May. The model, *Cyber Safety and Stress Release Workshop*, focuses upon online child trafficking awareness coupled with Dialectical Behavioral Therapy distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness skills. The model provides four facilitated sessions on (1) Online Sexual Abuse, (2) Sextortion and Consent, (3) Media and Human Trafficking Vulnerability, and (4) Cyberbullying, each concluding with a DBT skill to help cabin fevered youth enhance their stress tolerance and interpersonal skills. The model has received excellent feedback from the three residential facilities at which it was facilitated and has ongoing commitments from additional agencies to help youth understand the dangers inherent with influential websites, social media exposure and cyber pseudo-friends.

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. Two members of the Child Trafficking Prevention Team have been certified by Love 146 to facilitate this model.

"I AM LITTLE RED" 2 hours (10-minute video with group model). I AM LITTLE RED is a 10-minute animated short aimed at children most at-risk for sex trafficking (e.g. foster-care, runaway, LGBTQ, 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.

“I am Phenomenal” An original creative arts therapy model by Latesha White, LCAT. Designed by a licensed clinical Art Therapist, this 8-session group work model focuses on creating a safe space for welcoming, learning, and emotional growth by helping youth to express their feelings through art therapy. During each session, each youth has the opportunity to express themselves through a creative medium, addressing topics such as trust, self-esteem development, identifying strengths, human trafficking awareness, self-love and self-care. Youth will leave with the art they have created to serve as anchor to remind them they are important to themselves and to others.

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.

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy and Trafficking Awareness for Youth: A 12 session group skills model for 4 youth (with an individual therapy component)

An adaptation of Dr. Marsha Linehan's Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) model for vulnerable youth, developed by Selina Higgins, LCSW-R.

ACS' Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy licensed social work, art therapy and school counselor professionals provide DBT coupled with trafficking awareness to youth at residential facilities and group homes.

- 12-week program consisting of weekly individual therapy (60 minutes) and a skills group for all youth together (90 – 120 minutes). Youth must attend both individual and group sessions to participate.
- Each cohort consists of concurrent groups of youth from residential and/or group homes.
- Groups provided virtually for each facility via Microsoft Teams.
- DBT Team will provide skills related support for group involved youth who are temporarily located at the ACS Children's Center.
- Group covers skills from four DBT modules:
 - Mindfulness (2 weeks)
 - Distress Tolerance (3 weeks)
 - Emotional Regulation (4 weeks)
 - Interpersonal Effectiveness (3 weeks)coupled with Human Trafficking focused topics which build sequential awareness and prevention skills.
- Each youth will receive a \$10 gift card for each week of participation and a \$50 gift card upon course completion (total of \$170 possible).