

Maine Human Trafficking Needs Assessment

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Maine Human Trafficking Needs Assessment

Produced for
Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MECASA)

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Purpose of This Report

“Prevalence” is simply the proportion of a population who have a specific characteristic in a given time period. Assessing the prevalence of a community problem and the needs of people who have experienced that problem is challenging when the problem itself is hidden, its definition is subject to interpretation and its treatment touches multiple service systems. That is the challenge encountered with human trafficking. Whether labor or sex trafficking, victims are unlikely to identify themselves, and generally do so only when they encounter problems with law enforcement or are accessing services. Even then, many do not recognize that they are victims or fear the reprisals that may result from admitting victimization. On the other hand, law enforcement and service providers have varying definitions and protocols for using the label “victim,” and those definitions often become blurred across the multiple interactions with the person accessing services and the person who is controlling, coercing or manipulating his or her actions.

Concerned citizens in Maine are attempting to determine the extent to which human trafficking does exist and the extent to which the available services are meeting the needs posed by this specific population. This report discusses the challenges associated with measuring the prevalence of human trafficking, which overlaps with the complication of defining and identifying victims and perpetrators. The report also provides examples of how Maine could estimate rates of commercial sexual activity and exploitation to provide a more accurate picture of prevalence. Identifying prevalence informs program development and planning, and ensures that providers will be more likely to reduce future exploitation. Therefore, the report also synthesizes the current service landscape in Maine, outlining what is available to meet victims’ needs, and what is missing. The work will ultimately better equip providers with the information and resources needed to support potential and known victims.

In January 2015, Hornby Zeller Associates, Inc. (HZA) received a contract from the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MECASA) to conduct a needs assessment with the following objectives:

1. To provide a snapshot of the prevalence of trafficking and exploitation across diverse geographic and issue-related areas of the state, as determined by law enforcement and direct service providers working with impacted and at-risk populations.
2. To determine the impact of trafficking exploitation on State systems as well as the effect on citizens and families.
3. To determine strengths and gaps in capacity of Maine’s service providers and law enforcement agencies to respond to trafficking and exploitation.
4. To recommend action steps to highlight strengths and address needs in the coming years.

Following the Methodology this report consists of the following sections: Understanding Human Trafficking, Maine’s Human Trafficking Landscape, Prevalence of Sex Trafficking in Maine, Maine’s Response to Human Trafficking, Service Gaps and Needs, and Recommendations.

Methodology

HZA researchers used a mixed-methods approach to identify the prevalence of human trafficking and the capacity of Maine's service providers and law enforcement agencies to respond to trafficking and exploitation. Each method is described below. The majority of activities conducted through the needs assessment focused on sex trafficking and exploitation, although there are other types of human trafficking such as labor trafficking. For this short-term study, it was not possible to investigate the labor system to the degree that it deserves. However, HZA completed a review of current literature and consulted stakeholders about labor trafficking and challenges related to treatment and rights of workers. For this report, an emphasis was placed on the experience of females in human trafficking, although males can also be trafficked.

Key Informant Interviews

Starting with a list of community partners and participants from various anti-trafficking efforts across the state, the research team contacted individuals who were available and interested in providing their perspective on the issue through one-on-one, in-person interviews. Respondents for the first round of interviews were selected from a list compiled by MECASA and the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Workgroup. These interviews often prompted connections with other providers who might be willing to share their perspective, and where time permitted, additional interviews were conducted.

Between March and August of 2015, HZA conducted 46 structured and semi-structured interviews with:

- Advocates
- State leaders
- State agency administrators
- Local government leaders
- Law enforcement
- Criminal Justice staff
- District Attorneys and legal counsel
- Service providers with experience working with trafficking victims
- Substance abuse and mental health clinicians
- Victims of sexual exploitation (including young adults)
- Survivors of commercial sexual exploitation
- Women currently "in the life"
- Refugee and Immigrant Services
- Other Coalition members

HZA conducted individual interviews with five survivors to help tell their stories. Too often victims of trafficking remain one-dimensional figures whose stories are condensed and simplified. Survivor interviews involved an unstructured, "open response" format, allowing the survivors to share as much or as little detail as they were comfortable with. These interviews helped researchers gather the participants' perspective on what services were available to them, the impact human trafficking has had on their lives, and what services they continue to need or would have wanted in the past.

Analysis of interview data involved assigning three members of the research team to review transcripts and audio recordings of all interviews. The reviewers developed and agreed upon themes that could be categorized by perspective (e.g., survivor, law enforcement or service provider), examining records for trends and discrepancies in responses. Results of the interviews are woven throughout this report without identifying information to assure confidentiality of respondents; where possible, direct quotes are included as well.

Focus Groups

HZA also conducted focus groups and facilitated discussions with survivors and victims of sexual exploitation and violence. The purpose was to gain their insight on the impact of sexual exploitation, services available, and perception of laws and other protections in place. Participants were asked to describe the extent to which they had been exposed to human trafficking; what challenges they faced prior to being exploited and/or abused; what happens for victims and survivors at different phases of being “in the life,” including how they access services and family support; and how laws and services help or hinder them before, during and upon leaving their abuser. A great deal of discussion was generated about the cycle of abuse, criminal activity, arrest and incarceration. These activities proved invaluable to the needs assessment process as they provided a unique opportunity to hear directly from women in the community with first-hand knowledge of the issue. Combined with information provided by advocates and service providers, talking directly with women provided a greater understanding of the conditions that make someone vulnerable to being trafficked, as well as her needs if she was to ever leave the situation.

Similar to the informant interviews, the results were synthesized and themed by the evaluation team, and direct quotes are included in the report to illustrate the assessment findings.

Online Law Enforcement Survey

HZA conducted an online survey of law enforcement officers (including the state police and federal officers) over a two-month period during the summer of 2015 to determine the extent to which the responding agencies knowingly served trafficking victims. The survey also examined how well law enforcement officers are equipped with the knowledge and resources to detect human trafficking and exploitation and to assist victims and their families. In total, 182 officers completed the survey.

The survey questions were developed based on a questionnaire previously used in a Department of Justice study on human trafficking (Clawson, Dutch & Cummings, 2006), including questions related to: knowledge of trafficking, the volume of human trafficking in Maine and in their own communities, and awareness of trafficking for sexual exploitation or for forced labor. If persons suspected of, or victims of, trafficking are encountered, respondents were asked what action was taken, if any. The officers were also asked to identify what they perceive as gaps in the system.

The survey results were analyzed using simple descriptive and correlational techniques. Responses were examined to see how they differed based by particular respondent characteristics, such as familiarity with the subject, years of experience and geography.

Estimation

Prevalence estimates of human trafficking in Maine were calculated by compiling existing data from organizations such as the Polaris Project and MECASA, as well as the number of cases reported by law enforcement in the survey described above. Polaris counted the number of incoming signals (*i.e.*, phone calls, text messages, online tip forms, or emails) made to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center from Maine, while MECASA collected the number of self-reported sex trafficking victims who made contact with any of the six sexual assault crisis response centers in Maine. The online survey of local law enforcement agencies provided a count of the number of trafficking cases seen by the responding officers in the past year.

Data from both law enforcement and service provider sources cited above represent *reported* cases of human sex trafficking. However, since human sex trafficking is a covert crime, the researchers needed to go beyond reports to estimate the number of total (*i.e.*, reported and unreported) cases. The method was to estimate what proportion of all cases is represented by the known cases. HZA used newly-released estimates from the 2015 Maine Crime Victimization Survey (MCVS) (Dumont & Shaler, 2015) and applied two estimation models (described in more detail later in this report), to derive a range of estimates of the total annual number of reported and unreported sex trafficking victims in Maine.

● NHTRC

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) is a national anti-trafficking hotline and resource center serving victims and survivors of human trafficking and the anti-trafficking community in the United States. Its mission is to provide human trafficking victims and survivors with access to critical support and services to get help and stay safe, and to equip the anti-trafficking community with the tools to effectively combat all forms of human trafficking.

A toll-free hotline for
Maine is available 24/7

1-888-373-7888

<http://www.traffickingresourcecenter.org/>



Understanding Human Trafficking

In response to developing international knowledge, the United States has taken steps in the past two decades to mitigate human trafficking; in 2000 Congress passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), the first federal law comprehensively to address the issue of human trafficking in the United States (Polaris Project, 2008). As illustrated below, the TVPA defines human trafficking as labor, services or commercial sex induced through force, fraud or coercion, with all commercial sex involving minors considered human trafficking.



Sexual exploitation is the exchange of sex acts for anything of value where the individual is coerced or manipulated into the agreement through addiction or desperation. Differentiating commercial sex work, sexual exploitation and trafficking often depends on how a person identifies. Subjects of sexual exploitation or trafficking may not immediately recognize themselves as victims. Trafficking “status” is determined by how a victim identifies, how the law defines the alleged acts committed, and whether there is a known trafficker. Coercion is not always obvious; moreover, coercion and choice are controversial factors within many aspects of “survival sex” as well as within relationships. It can be difficult to know with certainty when someone is involved in commercial sex or trading sex or sex acts as a strategy to secure basic needs (typically housing and food), drugs, and social support, and whether he or she can actually secure what is needed to survive through other means.

Labor trafficking is an area where there appears to be inconsistent or incomplete regulations across numerous industries, including the fishing and hospitality industries, less so in agriculture and the use of migrant labor; certainly more exploration and focus is needed to fully understand the extent of trafficking in those areas. Sex and labor trafficking can and often do overlap, however, and the issues related to force, fraud and coercion in the commercial sex arena serve as a starting point for discussing all human trafficking challenges.


It is also important to point out that human trafficking is different than human smuggling, and both are clearly defined by U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Investigations. Whereas human trafficking focuses on exploitation, smuggling focuses on transportation and is generally defined as, “Importation of people into the U.S. involving deliberate evasion of immigration laws. This offense includes bringing illegal aliens into the country, as well as the unlawful transportation and harboring of aliens already in the U.S.” (U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement, 2013).

Magnitude of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking around the world is estimated to generate \$150 billion in U.S. dollars annually with a total of 20.9 million projected victims. The number of victims illustrates a rate of three out of every 1,000 people being involved in some aspect of forced labor (ILO, 2014; ILO, 2012). Although there is no official count of the number of human trafficking victims in the United States, informal estimates range from 100,000 to 150,000 women and children being sex trafficked as defined by law (Hopper, 2004; Schauer & Wheaton, 2006). This estimate accounts for only one side of the human trafficking coin, leaving the possibility that the inclusion of labor trafficking could put the number of victims into the hundreds of thousands.

In the decade preceding implementation of the TVPA, a review of local and national newspapers from 1990 to 2000 was conducted whereby 38 sex trafficking cases were identified (Farquet, Mattila, & Laczko, n.d.). In that same span of time—1990 to 2000—the International Organization of Migration (IOM) listed 51 worldwide studies published on human trafficking, while over the course of the next four years there would be an additional 209 published studies (Laczko & Goździak, 2005). More recently, between 2007 and 2014, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) identified 17,345 victims and survivors of human trafficking within the United States (Polaris Project, 2014), providing evidence that awareness about the topic has grown exponentially since the turn of the century. The constantly expanding awareness of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation has led to the formation of non-governmental organizations dedicated to reducing trafficking, such as: Girls Education and Mentoring Services (GEMS), My Life My Choice, Project Safe Childhood, and the Polaris Project. However, the rapid expansion means that in 2015, we still lack common definitions, language and data collection expectations by which to unify the varying perspectives that multiple stakeholders bring to the issue.

In addition to providing a federal definition of trafficking, the TVPA implemented a multi-faceted approach to prevention, protection, and prosecution. The purpose of this approach was to build awareness of the subject of human trafficking while protecting the victims and punishing the traffickers. The prevention approach has led to the creation of the Department of State's annual *Trafficking in Persons Report*, which is used as a diplomatic tool to engage foreign governments on human trafficking. Along with these formal activities is the growing attention to the subject and a shift in how community providers talk about an issue that in reality has been a part of our culture for a long time.



Our constantly expanding awareness of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation has led to the formation of non-governmental organizations dedicated to reducing trafficking, however we still lack common definitions, language and data collection expectations by which to unify the varying perspectives that multiple stakeholders bring to the issue.

Maine's Human Trafficking Landscape

The population and geographical characteristics of Maine have allowed human trafficking to occur largely “under the radar” as Maine does not possess the stereotypical characteristics of trafficking seen in other states such as foreign women being brought to large cities and forced into prostitution or menial labor. However, Maine has a large number of migrant workers, estimated around 10,000 to 12,000, who take part in the yearly blueberry harvest (MCEP, 2009). Furthermore Maine is a border state and agencies located in states along the U.S. border are more than twice as likely to have investigated cases of human trafficking as non-border states (Farrell, McDevitt, & Fahy, 2008).

Recognition of the potential and actual existence of human trafficking in Maine is growing, yet it remains an underreported crime. In 2014, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) received 37 calls from Maine, with 11 reported cases. Of the 11 reported cases, only one was related to labor trafficking. There were 80 calls placed to the NHTRC in 2013, of which ten were reported cases of trafficking. In both 2013 and 2014 the cases included both labor and sex trafficking, males and females, United States citizens and foreign nationals, as well as adults and minors (NHTRC, 2015).

Legal Framework

Formed in 2002, Polaris is a national organization that seeks to mitigate human trafficking both in the United States and around the world. Its funders include government, corporations, foundations and individuals. It operates a 24-hour hotline, a data analysis program, monitors state and federal laws and advocates for change. Its work has led to the passage of landmark bills through Congress and legislation in 48 states that protect victims and punish perpetrators (Polaris Project, 2015).

Since 2011, Polaris has rated all 50 states and the District of Columbia based on ten categories of laws that provide a basic legal framework to address human trafficking. The rating of a state is based on the number of statutes established, with states then being placed into one of four tiers. The first tier demonstrates that a state has passed significant laws to address human trafficking, while the fourth demonstrates that no element of the legal framework has been completed. In 2014 the first tier was comprised of 39 states, with Maine as well as eight other states making up tier two, and the last two states falling within the third tier.

The table below provides Polaris' statutory framework for human trafficking, encompassing three dimensions:

- Assisting Victims
- Prosecuting Traffickers
- Building State Capacity

For each dimension it provides topics that should be covered and then references the current status in Maine. For the five dimensions associated with assisting victims, Maine has one covered, that relating to civil remedies. In the realm of prosecuting traffickers Maine's statutes address all four dimensions at some level, though not sufficiently from the perspective of this analysis. For the third area, building capacity, Maine has not committed any of the three dimensions to law, however this has been an area of focus for MECASA and the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Workgroup over the past few years. Note that the dimension of “Comprehensive Model Law” is not part of Polaris' ranking of the states but is included here.

Table 1. Human Trafficking Legal Framework–2014

	Recommended Features	Maine's Status	Need
Assisting Victims			
Safe Harbor	State law 1) protects victims from prosecution for prostitution; 2) provides them with specialized services.	HR 4980 Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (Maine currently developing under Federal Law)	Not yet addressed
Victim Assistance	State law protects victims from being punished for crimes they were forced to commit while being trafficked.	Maine has <i>some</i> victim's compensation available. § 3360. Victims' Compensation Fund	Not fully addressed
Civil Remedy	Survivors may be able to seek: compensatory damages, punitive damages, injunctive relief, and attorney's fees. Some statutes allow courts to award treble damages in cases where the defendant's actions were willful and malicious.	§ 4701. Remedies for human trafficking	
Vacating Convictions	State law authorizes courts to vacate convictions that were the result of being trafficked.		Not addressed – not possible within Maine's criminal code
Hotline Posting	State law creates a public hotline to provide referrals for victims seeking assistance, tips to law enforcement, and general information about human trafficking to the public.		Not addressed
Prosecuting Traffickers			
Labor Trafficking Provisions	State law criminalizes labor trafficking and enacts felony-level penalties for non-payment of wages.	§301. Kidnapping §302. Criminal restraint	
Asset Forfeiture/Investigative Tools	State is authorized to seize the assets that are used for or are the result of criminal activity. The federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) also provides for asset forfeiture. The Uniform Law Commission (ULC) includes a section on asset forfeiture in its Uniform Act on the Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking (Uniform Act).	Category 3(a): Asset Forfeiture §5821. Subject property Category 3(b): Investigative Tools	Not addressed
Combatting Sex Trafficking of Minors	Statute ensures that knowledge of age and coercion are not required elements of the crime.	See §852(1)(b).	
Combatting Sex Trafficking of Adults	Statute criminalizes sex trafficking.	§852. Aggravated sex trafficking §853. Sex Trafficking	
Building State Capacity			
Training and Task Forces	Create a statewide task force with one or more of these responsibilities: investigating human trafficking and evaluating the current approach; coordinating law enforcement activities and the provision of social services; collecting and report on data.	Not addressed by statute, but Attorney General's Workgroup established in 2006	
Comprehensive Model Law	A comprehensive law (model available from Polaris) addresses the "three Ps:" prosecution, prevention and protection of victims.		Not addressed – not possible within Maine's criminal code
Law Enforcement Training on Human Trafficking	Statute encourages or mandates human trafficking training for law enforcement officers.	Mandatory training in 2010; currently available statewide	

In the 126th Session of the Maine Legislature, *HP1238-LD 1730* and *HP 824-LD 1159* were enacted to expand the definition of sex trafficking to include aggravated sex trafficking, as well as imposing additional fines for those convicted of trafficking to pay into a victims' assistance fund. With the two bills signed into law in 2013 and 2014, Maine is proactively addressing issues relating to support of minors and adults who identify as victims of commercial sexual exploitation. As will be discussed throughout this report, it is the status of "victim" that is at the center of much discussion and debate when stakeholders and advocates are working on improving supports to those being sexually exploited according to the law.

● Currently, there are no laws in Maine specific to labor trafficking.

Currently, there are no laws in Maine specific to labor trafficking as there are for sex trafficking; however, two current criminal statutes are used to prosecute labor trafficking. The first statute defines kidnapping as a person knowingly restraining another person by confining a person, limiting his or her access to immigration or government documentation, or causing the person to believe he or she will suffer serious harm if he or she does not perform labor or services. The second statute addresses criminal restraint, which involves intentionally or knowingly taking, retaining or enticing another person into an act. Polaris credits Maine for prosecuting labor traffickers under these statutes. More information about the Maine Statutes can be found on the MECASA and Maine Legislature websites (MECASA, 2015; M.R.S., 2014).

Trajectory of Sex Trafficking in Maine

This section presents the trajectory of sex trafficking in Maine, starting with the social, psychological and economic factors that may lead to victimization or increased risk of victimization, followed by women's experiences "in the life," the process of leaving and adjusting to a more safe, stable and secure life. Included in this trajectory is the sometimes complex interaction with law enforcement and other services while "in the life" and after the victim has reentered the community.

Vulnerability Factors

People who are most likely to be trafficked are economically and socially marginalized. They can be anywhere on the spectrum of disadvantage from subtly struggling financially to living in extreme poverty or even experiencing homelessness. Familial and social issues related to domestic violence, childhood abuse (including sexual abuse) substance abuse and mental illness (or a combination of the three) also place individuals at risk of being trafficked and often occur alongside the socio-economic factors.

Vulnerabilities and risk factors to sex trafficking have been well documented in the literature across gender and age. A review by Reid (2012) found vulnerability factors of females to be as follows: prior sexual abuse, family violence, disruptive or dysfunctional home or absence of parent, homelessness or precarious living conditions, limited schooling, low self-esteem, foster care, physical or mental disability, and curiosity and attraction to fast money. For males, lack of employment, homelessness, history of sexual abuse, dysfunctional family, limited schooling, curiosity and attraction to fast money, delinquent behavior, and foster care were among vulnerabilities identified (Azaola, 2000; Clawson, et al., 2009; Curtis, et al., 2008; Farrow, 2005; Dorias, 2005; Flowers, 2001; Saewyc, et al., 2008).

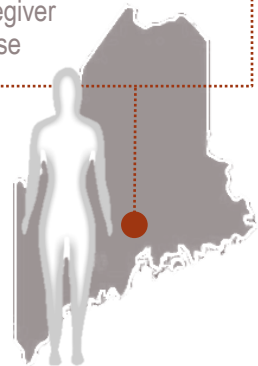
By age, literature describing vulnerabilities of children and vulnerabilities of adults were also reviewed in Reid (2012). Vulnerabilities of children included: history of physical or sexual abuse, runaway behavior, perception of prostitution as empowering, minority status, limited education, parental substance abuse, need of money for basic needs, new parent/partner in home, homelessness, and early initiation of substance abuse.

For adults, vulnerabilities included: drug habit, lack of resources to meet basic needs for self and children, pregnancy at early age, displacement, dependent children, and selling drugs (Cobbina & Oselin, 2011; Kramer & Berg, 2003; Loza, et al., 2010; Maxwell & Maxwell, 2000; and Saewyc, et al., 2008). Additionally, poverty in general has been identified as a major risk factor (Orme & Ross-Sheriff, 2015; Bryant-Davis, et al., 2009).

According to qualitative evidence compiled during this needs assessment, victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking in Maine are typically white girls and women from within the state, living in both urban and rural communities, who are between the ages of 14 and 30. Most have a history of sexual or physical abuse, have been involved in the child welfare and/or juvenile justice system, and have substance abuse and mental health issues. In many cases, homeless or runaway youth are picked up by traffickers who have targeted locations where they look for potential victims.

Profile of Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Maine

White
Female
Between 14-30 years old
Rural or urban living situation
History of sexual abuse or domestic violence
Absence of supportive caregiver
Strong possibility of drug use



These vulnerable groups lack both basic needs and an emotional support system. Survivors frequently linked their current issues and challenges with their childhood, particularly those involved in foster care or state custody. They also recognized and discussed their own histories of domestic violence, mental health needs, and substance abuse issues, either personally or through parents or close family members.

While women and children are more likely than men to be trafficked, male victims of trafficking are known, and their situations are complicated by gender stereotypes and stigma surrounding masculine identity and feelings of shame that accompany the physical and emotional trauma. In focus groups conducted for this needs assessment, participants described an “underground” online network promoting and enabling the trafficking of men. Participants believed it was harder to see sex trafficking of men because men cover it up even more than women, and when confronted, men are less open about their victimization.

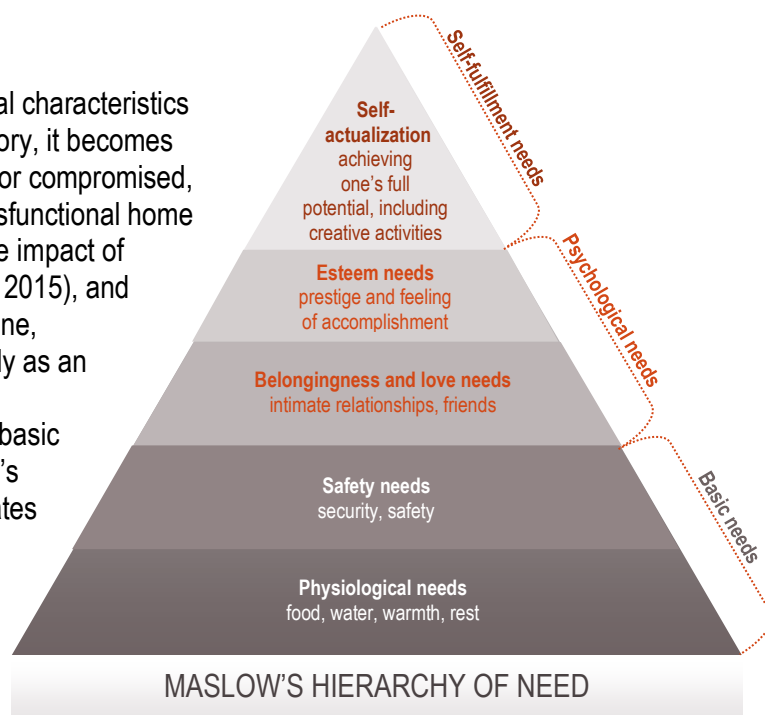
Many interviewees identified that people who had a history of trauma or prior abuse, especially sexual abuse, were far more likely to end up trafficked. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of victims and survivors spoke about their childhoods spent in numerous foster homes, the abusive relationships their parents were in, experiences of sexual and physical abuse, and the substance abuse surrounding them growing up. As summarized by well-known author and survivor Rachel Lloyd, founder of Girls Education and Mentoring Services (GEMS), “The vast majority of commercially sexually exploited/trafficked children and youth have experienced prior trauma and abuse, thereby making them extremely vulnerable to the seductive tactics of pimps and traffickers” (Lloyd, 2011).

Many interviewees identified that people who had a history of trauma or prior abuse, especially sexual abuse, were far more likely to end up trafficked.

This is not to say that people in healthy or stable households cannot become trafficked (in fact, a small number of victims and survivors interviewed for this study stated they grew up in what they call “regular” or “normal” families); the National Human Trafficking Resource Center is careful to describe typical conditions and vulnerabilities of potential victims alongside the possibility of becoming exploited (trafficked) even if a person comes from higher socioeconomic status (Polaris Project, 2015). Advocates and service providers, law enforcement and legal counsel, and women who are victims of sexual exploitation in Maine all described exceptions to the expected situations.

“In the Life” of Human Trafficking

Upon closer examination of the familial or personal characteristics associated with a sexually exploited person’s history, it becomes clear that when healthy relationships are missing or compromised, people attempt to find fulfillment outside of the dysfunctional home environment. According to literature describing the impact of poly-victimization and complex trauma (Swaroop, 2015), and affirmed by survivors and service providers in Maine, trafficking victims see their abusers not necessarily as an “abuser,” but as a person capable of providing for something they have been missing, ranging from basic needs to emotional support and intimacy. Maslow’s (1943) well-known Hierarchy of Need aptly illustrates the scope of needs from basic survival to psychological and emotional well-being that all survivors, law enforcement and service providers alluded to during interviews.



Victims may also operate with a misperception of the abuser’s intentions and their own personal choice, ultimately becoming trapped in a cycle of dependence without actual control over their situation. This type of dynamic, described in current literature and educational materials, was reiterated by survivors and service providers in Maine throughout the needs assessment.

One survivor spoke of coming to the realization that none of the clothes, shoes, phones, and other belongings her trafficker had provided actually belonged to her. They were given in a way that made her believe they were gifts and that he cared about her, but in reality, they were a means to control her and the other girls with whom she was trafficked. Service providers, authors and survivors commonly characterize these individuals as “Romeo pimps.” This particular survivor talked about how the trafficker would use personal belongings (as well as food, beds, and bathroom privileges) to control actions, pit women against each other, and to strengthen and maintain his control.

Pimps known as “Romeo pimps” trick victims into believing they are in a relationship. Survivors stated pimps know who to prey on: runaways, people who were abused as children, and other “lost souls.” Romeo pimps provide victims with clothing, housing, drugs, and an escape from their current situation, things they later use to control the trafficking victim. When victims leave, they are left with nothing but the clothes on their back.



The very relational dynamics that put individuals at risk of exploitation are reinforced and perpetuated by abusers (*i.e.*, traffickers). Traffickers win over victims by offering safety, comfort, love, and attention to their needs and interests. In a similar fashion to perpetrators of domestic violence, traffickers play up their relationship with victims, alternating kindness with manipulation. One woman who had recently left her abuser described the romantic attention and glamorous materials that she was provided, filling a void she felt coming from experiences in

countless foster homes and her struggles with self-esteem. When describing the subsequent abuse and requirement to engage in sexual activity with other men, she explained that she regarded that as her trade-off for all that the abuser had given her. Other survivors stated that their self-esteem was so low, they did not feel they deserved to be anywhere else than in the trafficking situation.

“Because of my experience I feel less than people with families and ‘real jobs.’ So you stay with the people who you think ‘get’ you and will understand. People outside of the life need to respect us. People will say ‘you choose to live like that,’ but a lot of us didn’t choose this life.”

● Survivor

This perspective is not uncommon among survivors of all forms of exploitation and trafficking; providers and victims alike have recounted situations where victims have a sense of obligation to repay the generosity of the abuser. Any act of kindness can be inflated by the victim, in a form of bonding to their abuser where keeping on their good side becomes their first priority (Swaroop, 2015).

Another common link between the world of commercial sexual exploitation and potential victimization is substance abuse. Providers from legal services and law enforcement across Maine described the co-occurrence of drug-related and sex crimes, with the drug crime often the element that brings the trafficking situation to their attention. Since both drug use and commercial sex (particularly when involving minors) are illicit activities, abusers and traffickers go to great lengths to keep operations covert and keep their businesses protected from discovery by law enforcement.

Service providers and survivors of trafficking in Maine described with great detail the tactics and strategies used by traffickers to keep people in their compromised and powerless positions, including extreme violence, withholding food and medical care, and manipulating trafficking victims in such a way that the only person the victim trusts is the trafficker, excluding even other victims under the same trafficker. They discourage individuals from developing connections with each other or outsiders, and encourage competition for their attention. They use blackmail, threatening to cause harm to them or their families if they left or revealed their situations. They take their cell phones, sometimes destroying them. They drug the victims and arrange for them to “serve” or work for other traffickers, both for the trafficker’s own gratification and to produce revenue.

“When you’re addicted to drugs you get sick from the drugs or not having the drugs and you need someone to take care of you.

Are you going to be in the street or will do you whatever it takes to have a house to live in?”

Survivor ●

There are numerous social networks and websites such as Backpage that enable traffickers to promote and monitor commercial sexual activity without being discovered. One tactic used by traffickers involves using the victims’ names to operate accounts and conduct business online; this keeps the trafficker’s identity completely concealed. The victim, used as the “front,” will often carry the legal burdens if discovered by law enforcement. It is also very common for traffickers to use fictitious names or nicknames; in some cases described to the researchers the women never knew the true identity (or history of criminal activity) of their abuser or “boyfriend.”

The actions described by the women in Maine have been identified by others, even as applied to other contexts such as domestic violence and prisoners of war, and are summarized in “Biderman’s Chart of Coercion” (Renick, 2012; Amnesty International, 1973). The matrix illustrates eight general power and control tactics that include (but are not limited to): threats, occasional positive affection, physical assault, force in completing demeaning actions; unpredictable behavior, and financial constraint and control. Each of these methods of control was reported by women and service providers in Maine. For example, victims and survivors described how even if they did know of a service from which they could benefit, their trafficker would deny access, including access to basic medical services. When asked about the medical care available, they said they did not go to a doctor or hospital for fear of being judged or arrested; they characterized medical care in a trafficking situation as consisting of drugs and ice packs. Similarly, one service provider described a situation where she needed to confirm a woman’s identification to

process an application. The woman stated that her boyfriend had her documents and the worker had to convince the woman's boyfriend to produce them.

BIDERMAN'S CHART OF COERCION This tool was developed to explain the methods used to break the will or brainwash a prisoner or war. Domestic violence experts believe that batterers use these same techniques.	
Methods	Effects and Purposes
Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deprives victim of all social support for the ability to resist Allows victim to be present at all times to keep home environment stable and non-threatening Makes victim dependent upon abuser
Control or Distortion of Perceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixes attention upon immediate predicament; fosters introspection Eliminates information that is not in agreement with the abuser's message Punishes actions or responses that demonstrate independence or resistance Manipulates by being charming, seductive, etc. to get what is wanted from the victim and becomes hostile when demands are not met
Humiliation or Degradation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weakens mental and physical ability to resist Heightens feelings of incompetence Induces mental and physical exhaustion
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates anxiety and despair Outlines abuser's expectations and consequences for noncompliance
Demonstrating Omnipotence, Superiority or Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates to the victim that resistance is futile Uses financial constraint and control Uses mental and physical actions to suppress victim
Enforcing Trivial Demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demands are often trivial, contradictory and not achievable Reinforces who has power and control
Exhaustion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses food and sleep deprivation to keep victim in a state of confusion and low functioning
Occasional Indulgences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides positive motivation for conforming to abuser's demands (can be using an unpredictable pattern) Victim works to "earn" these indulgences in an effort to increase self-esteem

Balancing Support, Protection and Prosecution

Conflicting values exist among service providers, law enforcement and victims. The conflict arises from the need to support and protect on one hand, and the requirements to report and prosecute on the other. Sometimes the people who need protection are also those who are committing offenses. One of the laws recommended by Polaris is to allow courts to vacate convictions that were the result of being trafficked. Maine does not have such a provision. Service providers are aware of the victims' tendency to mistrust law enforcement and the dynamics of their relationships with the abuser; they often see their role as providing options but emphasizing personal choice and control. Law enforcement officers themselves want to protect the victim but also need their cooperation to obtain information to prosecute; sometimes their tactics are perceived as coercive by the victims. Many stakeholders

discussed ways they attempt to balance the legal ramifications of supporting clients who have committed illegal acts with developing trusting relationships that can benefit the victim's ability to make positive changes.

"In order to serve this group, you need to be aware of the uneven power dynamic between victims and any perceived authority."

● Service Provider

This tension between prosecution and protection perpetuates a challenge in human trafficking research identified throughout the literature: that of gathering reliable information from so called hidden populations who may go to great lengths to avoid contact with police, especially if they are involved in stigmatized or illegal behavior and may want to protect their privacy (Tyldum & Brunovskis, 2005). The women interviewed in Maine reported feeling ensnared by law enforcement officers who want them to inform on the trafficker. One

survivor said, “The police make you feel trapped. They play into your vulnerability and make you feel like you have no other options. They think this is the best or only way to help. They make promises that if you give us information [to help build a case], then ‘we will help you.’ They can be very overwhelming. You are vulnerable and need what they are giving you.”

How Victims Leave

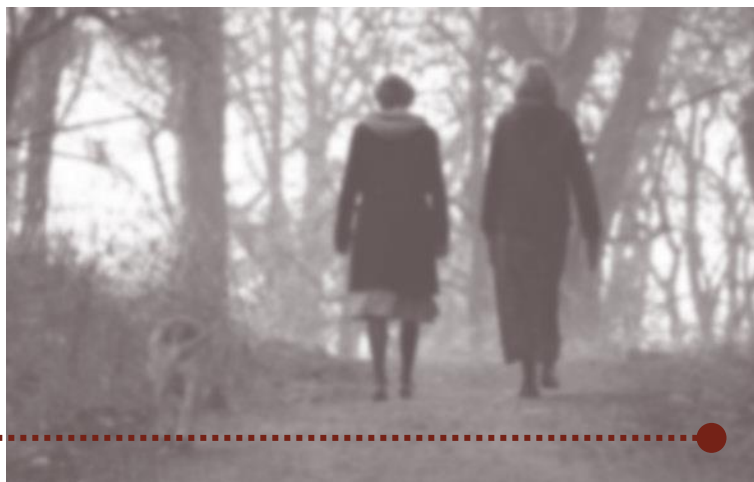
As GEMS founder Rachel Lloyd says, “Regardless of the circumstances, what makes the most difference in whether a girl leaves or not is if she believes she has options, resources, somewhere to go and the support she’ll need once she’s out” (Lloyd, 2011). One survivor who was interviewed stated “women need to not only have the desire to change, but have the ability to change.” Other survivors in Maine also acknowledged that for many a lack of desire to leave their circumstances may reflect their inability to understand how it would be possible. They frequently stated they did not know any services were available to them. “You don’t know where to go until you end up in jail and meet [the Family Crisis Services Incarcerated Women’s Advocate],” one survivor stated while other focus group attendees nodded in agreement.

“Women need comfort and someone who will stand by them no matter what. If you tell a woman she has a choice, you need to accept her choice even if it is ‘no, I don’t want [services, help, etc.] right now. If they aren’t ready now, women need someone who will still be there.”

● Survivor

To assist and support those being trafficked with getting out, providers do not necessarily need to be designated as a “human trafficking” service provider. Many interview participants reflected on the range of services currently available in Maine that can and do support victims and survivors; however, in most cases their primary responsibility is not in serving trafficking victims, exclusively. Family support, crisis services, housing and homeless service providers, and substance abuse treatment providers, to name a few, have all been providing for trafficking victims for many years.

What is crucial, however, is that providers who aim to support survivors and trafficking victims consider the full context of each person, their unique experiences, and what strengths and challenges they bring to every interaction. They need to address the complement of needs as represented in Maslow’s hierarchy, starting with the basic (immediate) and moving to the psychological (longer-term). As one survivor stated, “What women really need is help and support, daily contact with people who check in on you. Women need to be taken out of their comfort zone, they need to be taken out of the place they live, take their phone away for a period of time, and be introduced to new circles of people outside of their life in trafficking.”



“Regardless of the circumstances, what makes the most difference in whether a girl leaves or not is if she believes she has options, resources, somewhere to go and the support she’ll need once she’s out.”

Survivor & Author
Rachel Lloyd ●

Labor Trafficking in Maine

Labor trafficking consists of the recruitment, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining of people for forced or coerced labor. Under federal law, coercion is defined as: “(1) Force, threats of force, physical restraints or threats of physical restraint to that person or another person; (2) serious harm or threats of serious harm to that person or another person; (3) the abuse or threatened abuse of law or legal process; or (4) any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause the person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against that person or another person.” Violations of wage payment laws, health and safety standards, and criminal acts such as physical and sexual assault and false imprisonment often accompany labor trafficking.

In 2014, only one known case of labor trafficking was identified by the NHTRC in Maine. Four of the people interviewed represented organizations who work with migrant workers and on labor issues. Much of the current focus on labor trafficking in Maine is concentrated on the agricultural aspect, with migrant workers coming to harvest fruit and vegetables, most notably blueberries during the summer months.

The federal Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA) protects migrant and seasonal agricultural workers by establishing employment standards related to wages, housing, transportation, disclosures and recordkeeping. The MSPA also requires farm labor contractors to register with the U.S. Department of Labor. To assist in upholding the MSPA, Maine’s Department of Labor has a State Monitor Advocate whose responsibilities include conducting field checks to ensure farms are complying with appropriate housing, fair wages, and other regulations. The Advocate also provides information and informs workers of their rights including topics such as wages, housing, and discrimination and services available to them.

Labor trafficking frequently falls under the areas being monitored by the state with indicators including: denial of breaks, requiring different work than contracted, being forced to meet daily quotas, being forced to turn over wages to another person, denial of pay directly to the worker, and withholding exorbitant fees and deductions from the paycheck. Because many people from other countries work in these settings, many of whom are undocumented, the opportunity for labor trafficking abounds. However, those taken advantage of may comply because they see themselves benefitting from the *status quo*, and tend not to report issues of forced labor, subsistence wages, or other forms of coercion.

While migrant workers in the agriculture arena in Maine have the support of advocates to help them connect to a wide variety of services ranging from education, legal help, mental and physical health services, housing, and transportation, the same cannot be said for other industries where people at risk of being taken advantage of frequently work. Interviewees discussed concern regarding the lack of regulation and oversight when it comes to hotels (and other hospitality-based workplaces), restaurants, and fish processing. They cited the lack of regulation as a barrier to accessing workers in these industries and said if there were complaints, they would currently not have the same rights to investigate as they do in the agricultural industry. **This is an area where more work is needed to determine the reality of labor trafficking in other Maine industries and what services are needed to assist victims.**



Prevalence of Sex Trafficking in Maine

Contrary to the common misperception that victims of trafficking are likely foreign nationals coming to the United States over the five-year period of 2007 to 2012, 41 percent of sex trafficking cases and 20 percent of labor trafficking cases involved U.S. citizens (Polaris, 2013). Another study cited 83 percent of confirmed sex trafficking incidents as U.S. citizens (Banks & Kyckelhahn, 2011); placing the estimate from nearly half to three-quarters of sex trafficking cases being comprised of U.S. citizens, not foreign nationals.

Currently, two data sources from service providers report the number of human trafficking victims in Maine. The Polaris Project examined the number of incoming signals¹ made to the NHTRC in calendar year 2014, and reported a total of 37 signals from Maine, which represented 11 cases. MECASA collected data from the sexual assault response network in Maine and reported in 2014 that 2.81 percent (48) of their clients were victims of human trafficking² identified either through a telephone hotline or directly receiving services from a sexual assault response team. Both of those numbers are undoubtedly low given the recent review of cases in York and Cumberland counties as part of Preble Street's federally-funded anti-trafficking grant; in the first year the project identified 64 individuals as trafficking victims in that area alone. Moreover, all these sources reflect only the cases that have been identified, and it is possible to miss individuals who are from Maine but are currently displaced.

Challenges to Measuring Prevalence

Perhaps the most challenging factor in measuring prevalence is that most of the populations relevant to the study of human trafficking, such as those engaging in commercial sex, sex and drug traffickers, victims or survivors of sexual exploitation, or illegal immigrants, are part of more hidden populations. A hidden population is a group of individuals for whom the size and boundaries are unknown, and for whom no sampling frame exists. Furthermore, these individuals are often involved in stigmatized or illegal behavior, causing them to be unwilling, unable, or uncomfortable cooperating, or they may give unreliable answers to protect their privacy (Heckathorn, 1997).

Only recently has human trafficking data been collected by law enforcement agencies. Starting in 2013, the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program began collecting data regarding human trafficking as mandated by the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008. UCR is a data collection program managed by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) which publishes annual tallies of reported crimes and arrests generated from law enforcement agencies (city, university and college, county, state, tribal, and federal) from across the country. Law enforcement agencies participating in UCR can now submit offense and arrest data for human trafficking in two new categories: commercial sex acts and involuntary servitude. The UCR program defines these offenses as follows:

Commercial sex acts—Inducing a person by force, fraud, or coercion to participate in commercial sex acts, or in which the person induced to perform such act(s) has not attained 18 years of age.

Involuntary servitude—Obtaining of a person(s) through recruitment, harboring, transportation, or provision, and subjecting such persons by force, fraud, or coercion into involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery (not to include commercial sex acts).

Unfortunately, UCR data on sex trafficking from law enforcement agencies in Maine are not available for this report because data reporting systems across the state have not been updated to incorporate the new crime types. Even if there was a count of cases in the UCR, it is unlikely to be accurate. One reason is that the number would depend in

¹ Signals refer to incoming communications with the NHTRC and can take the form of phone calls, online tip reports, or emails.

² The number of victims who said they were a victim of Sex Trafficking, Sex Exploitation, or Commercial Sex Trafficking.

part on how well local law enforcement agencies are identifying cases for what they are. The second is that UCR data is displayed by incident so it is impossible to determine whether a single victim is counted multiple times. Thus, it remains difficult to determine if the identified cases represent a small portion of victims, or close to all of the incidents of trafficking.

Another issue in using law enforcement or service provider data for measuring prevalence is selection bias. Cases that are reported to law enforcement are different from all other cases of trafficking because they were actually discovered and subsequently verified by the police. This leads to the question of how well police and/or law enforcement agents recognize trafficking when confronted with it. Reporting to police also will depend on whether the victims are willing to ask for support when they have the opportunity, or whether they are actively avoiding contact with police as many in Maine have reported (Brunovskis & Tyldum, 2004).

The same selection bias may also be found with victims who come in contact with service providers. It is generally believed that this group constitutes a small proportion of those who are trafficked. Seeking help is a realistic option only for victims who are aware of an active organization in their community that can help and have the means to reach it. Therefore, areas with many service providers are potentially more likely to identify victims of trafficking. For these reasons, instead of using straight counts, this study has employed estimation methods to project the prevalence of human sex trafficking in Maine.

Estimation Model

Operating under the assumption that current counts of human trafficking cases represent only a portion of all trafficking victims, HZA conducted two estimation processes to generate new estimates in Maine, each described below. Researchers then applied them to four Maine-specific data sources.

- **Apply the percentage of victims of sexual assault who reported to the police (14%) to the number of reported sex trafficking cases.** This estimation methodology presumes that the percentage of sex trafficking victims reporting to police is equivalent to the reporting *rate* of sexual assault victims. Data from the 2015 Maine Crime Victimization Survey suggest only 14 percent of sexual assault victims report their crime to police.³ To estimate the number of sex trafficking victims, HZA applied the 14 percent reporting rate to the reported totals from the Polaris Project, MECASA and the law enforcement survey.

$$\frac{\text{Number of sex trafficking cases reported}}{0.14} = \text{All sex trafficking cases}$$

- **Apply the estimated percentage of victims of sexual assault who were victims of human trafficking in Maine (2.81%) to the estimated number of sexual assault cases in Maine.** This estimation method assumes commercial sex trafficking is a subset of the larger category of sexual assault. As noted earlier, the sexual assault response network in Maine identified almost three percent of its clients as victims of human trafficking either through a telephone hotline or from those accessing or receiving services from a sexual assault response team in 2014. This proportion was applied to the estimated number of sexual assault cases as reported in the 2015 Maine Crime Victimization Survey. Thus, the final formula for this estimate is as follows:

$$\text{Number of sexual assault cases reported} \times .0281 = \text{All sex trafficking cases}$$

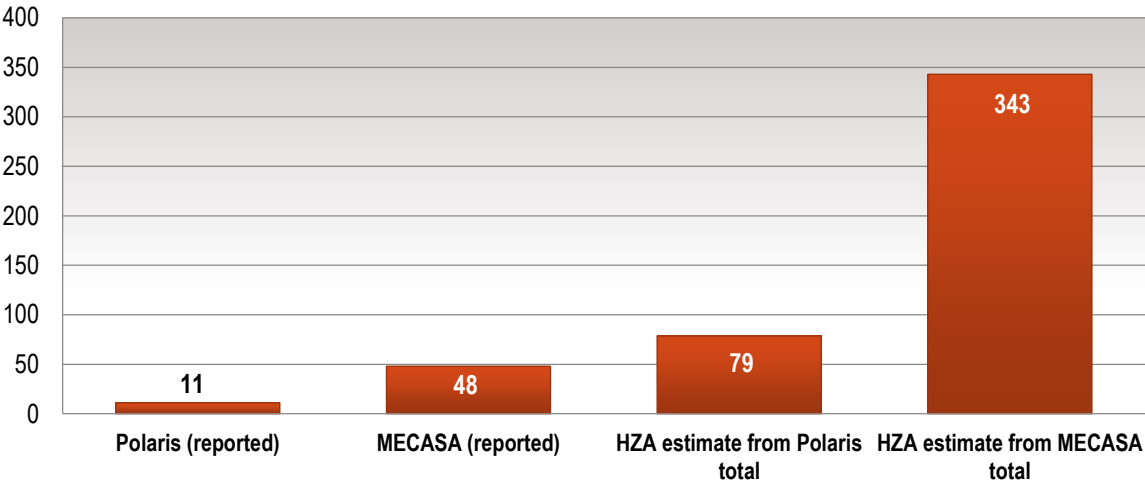
³ This statistic was provided by special request from the authors and was not included in the final MCVS report (Dumont & Shaler, 2015). Due to a wide confidence interval, HZA used only the midpoint estimate.

By triangulating data from all the available sources and using the above methods, HZA produced a reasonable range of estimates for the annual number of victims of commercial sexual exploitation or trafficking in Maine. The subsequent sections describe the results stemming from this approach.

Estimate 1: Polaris Report and MECASA

Assuming the 37 signals reported by Polaris were 11 individual victims and were known to police, the estimation method assumes the 11 victims represent 14 percent of all sex trafficking victims in Maine. To determine the number of victims that represent 100 percent of cases, HZA divided 11 cases by 14 percent, resulting in an overall estimate of 79 cases. Similarly, MECASA identified 48 clients as victims of sex trafficking. Again assuming sex trafficking victims report crime at similar rates to victims of sexual assault (14%) the model produces an estimate of 343 victims of human trafficking across the state. The results of both these estimates are presented below, where the first set of bars represents the official count, and the second set represents the estimated total.

Figure 1. Number of Victim Estimates based on Polaris Project and MECASA Reports (2014)

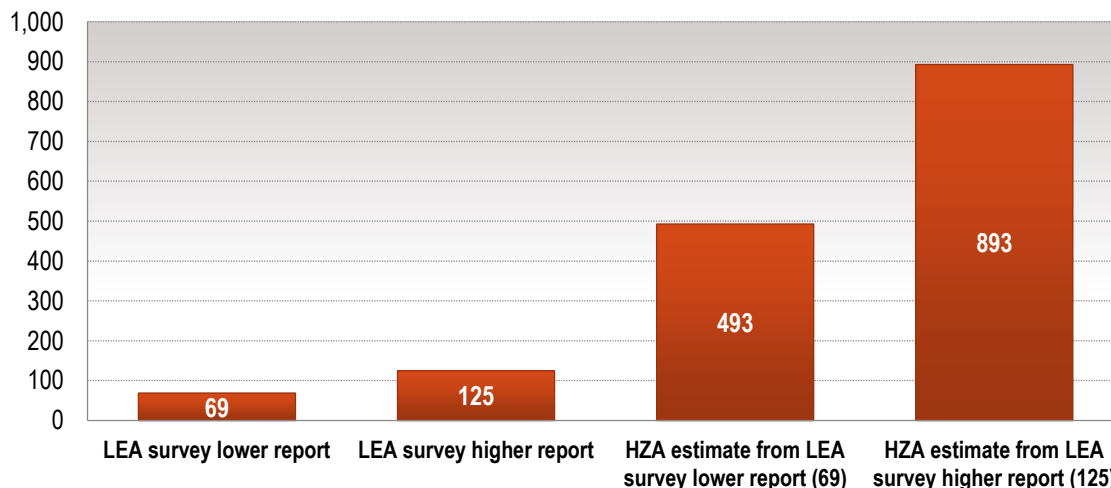


Estimate 2: Maine Law Enforcement Survey

Another estimate of human trafficking can be generated from the Maine law enforcement survey conducted by HZA as part of this assessment. The survey results represent 182 law enforcement officers who responded from all 16 counties in Maine. Representatives from both the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) also participated. Of those responding, 38 percent (69 officers) said they had seen personally at least one case of human trafficking in the past 12 months and most of these (56 officers) said they had seen more than one case; some reported seeing as many as five. Using conservative assumptions, the number of sex trafficking victims reported by law enforcement officers ranges from 69 (one victim for every officer) to 125 (one victim for the 13 officers who said they only saw one case, and two victims for the 56 officers who said they saw more than one case; the number two is conservative because some officers have seen up to five cases but it helps to account for officers who may be referring to the same case). The survey results alone produce a far greater number of annual cases (125) than the numbers reported by either the Polaris Project or MECASA.

As Figure 2 shows, applying the 14 percent reporting rate to the actual numbers reported by law enforcement officers produces an estimate of 493 human trafficking victims (assuming 69 reported cases) to 893 victims (assuming the higher count of 125).

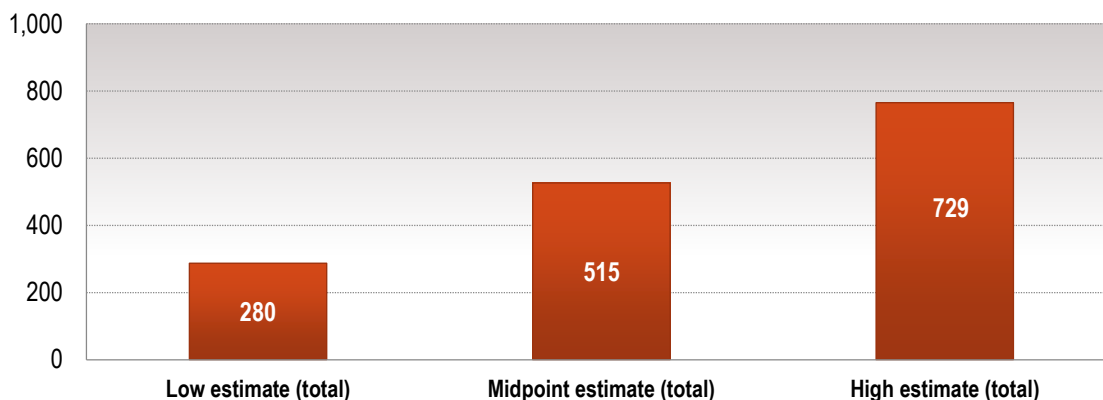
**Figure 2. Number of Victim Estimates Based on
Maine Law Enforcement Survey (2015)**



Estimate 3: Maine Crime Victimization Survey

A final estimate of human trafficking can be generated from the recently completed 2015 Maine Crime Victimization Survey (MCVS). The MCVS estimates the rate of victims of sexual assault at 2.2 percent or 18,320 individuals across the state. The MCVS also provides a low estimate of 1.2 percent (9,993) and a high estimate of 3.2 percent (26,648). Since 2.81 percent of the sexual assault response network clients were victims of human trafficking, HZA applied that rate to the MCVS sexual assault estimates. This produces a conservative estimate of 280 (2.81% of 9,993), a midpoint estimate of 515 (2.81% of 18,320) and 729 for the higher end (2.81% of 26,648).

**Figure 3. Number of Victim Estimates based on Maine Crime
Victimization Survey (2015)**



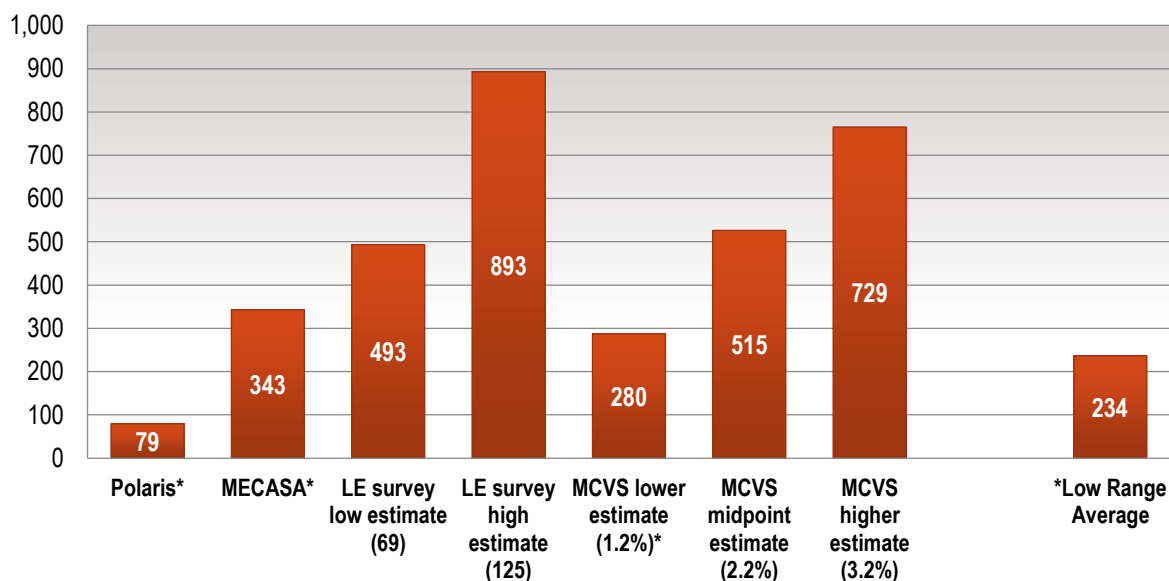
Summary of Prevalence

The prevalence estimates included in this report are not meant to provide a precise number of human trafficking victims in Maine but rather to show the potential scope of the problem. They can help demonstrate to service providers and law enforcement the probable reality that many human trafficking victims are unknown to them. Using all the data sources available in Maine, the estimated number of sex trafficking cases in Maine ranges from a low of 79 to a high of 893. The results of all these models are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of Human Trafficking Estimates by Model			
	Number Reported	Applied Proportion	Estimated Total
Estimation Model 1 Human Trafficking Cases			
Polaris	11	14%	79
MECASA	48	14%	343
ME Law Enforcement Survey	69–125	14%	493–893
Estimation Model 2 Sexual Assault Cases			
ME Crime Victimization Survey	9,993–26,648	2.81%	280–729

Figure 4 shows the seven estimates generated by the reported numbers of human trafficking victims by data source, as well as the average of the three lowest estimates which are indicated with an asterisk (234). Even the most conservative assumptions generated annual estimates that are greater than the current number of reported cases, which range from 11 to 64 (Polaris and Preble Street, respectively). Taking into consideration the results of all the estimation methods herein, HZA conservatively estimates that the prevalence of sex trafficking in Maine ranges from between 200 and 300 cases annually.

Figure 4. Summary of Estimates of Trafficking Victims by Data Source



Maine's Response to Human Trafficking

A small group of agencies and services have emerged in Maine or reconfigured their approaches to serve the population of people, mostly women, who are the subject of this report. There are some variations based on whether the person is under age 18 or not. This section addresses Maine's responses to human trafficking, starting with those services directed specifically to youth and then describing the roles of service providers and law enforcement for adults.

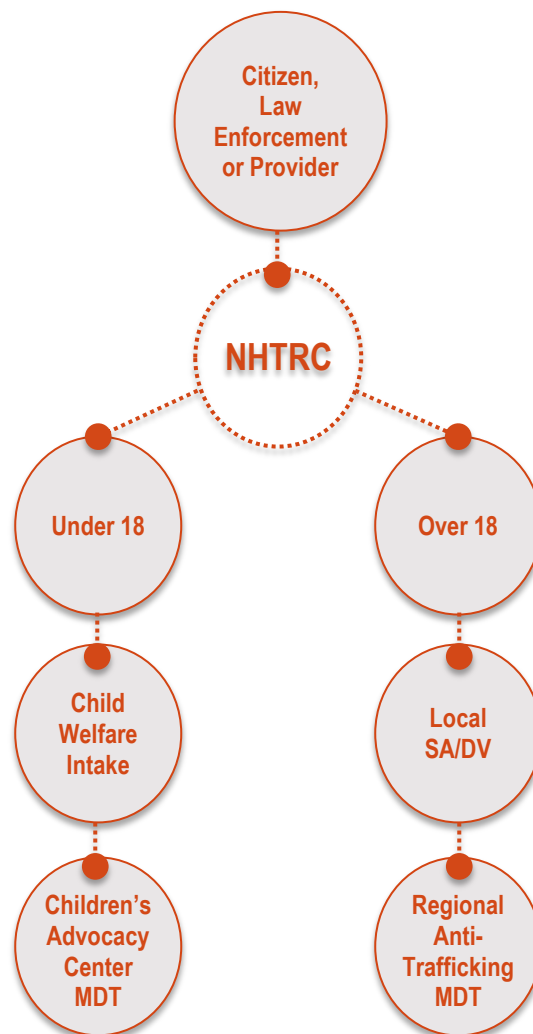
The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC), which operates the 24-hour hotline that routes callers to their local response teams, is the single point of contact for trafficking. The NHTRC routes calls according to each state's requirements. Maine has completed a county-by-county referral protocol for the hotline, largely utilizing local domestic and sexual violence providers, as they have 24-hour hotlines available. Training and response protocols for local advocates have been made available. In Cumberland and York Counties, calls can be made directly to the Preble Street Anti-Trafficking Coalition (PSATC) team during business hours, and calls at any time of day to the NHTRC will be routed automatically to PSATC. The image to the right shows the flowchart from the call that comes in to where it gets routed, depending on the situation.

Youth Under Age 18

The child welfare system is designed to protect children from abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse, if the perpetrator is a family member or has caregiving responsibility for the child. Child welfare was raised infrequently in this study as a source of protection because the traffickers generally are not family members with direct caregiving responsibility. However, a call to Maine's child abuse hotline could trigger an investigation if the allegations met the state's criteria governing child maltreatment.

More likely, if an underage person is arrested for illegal activities at a certain level of severity, the arresting officer will refer him or her to the Division of Juvenile Services within the Maine Department of Corrections. If off-hours, the on-call Juvenile Community Corrections Officer (JCCO) makes an immediate determination to release or detain, and meets with the youth within 24 hours. If during regular hours, the JCCO meets with the youth as soon as possible and again makes the determination to detain or release, but based on a face-to-face meeting and—if needed—administration of a Detention Risk Assessment. JCCOs can detain the youth before any court action.

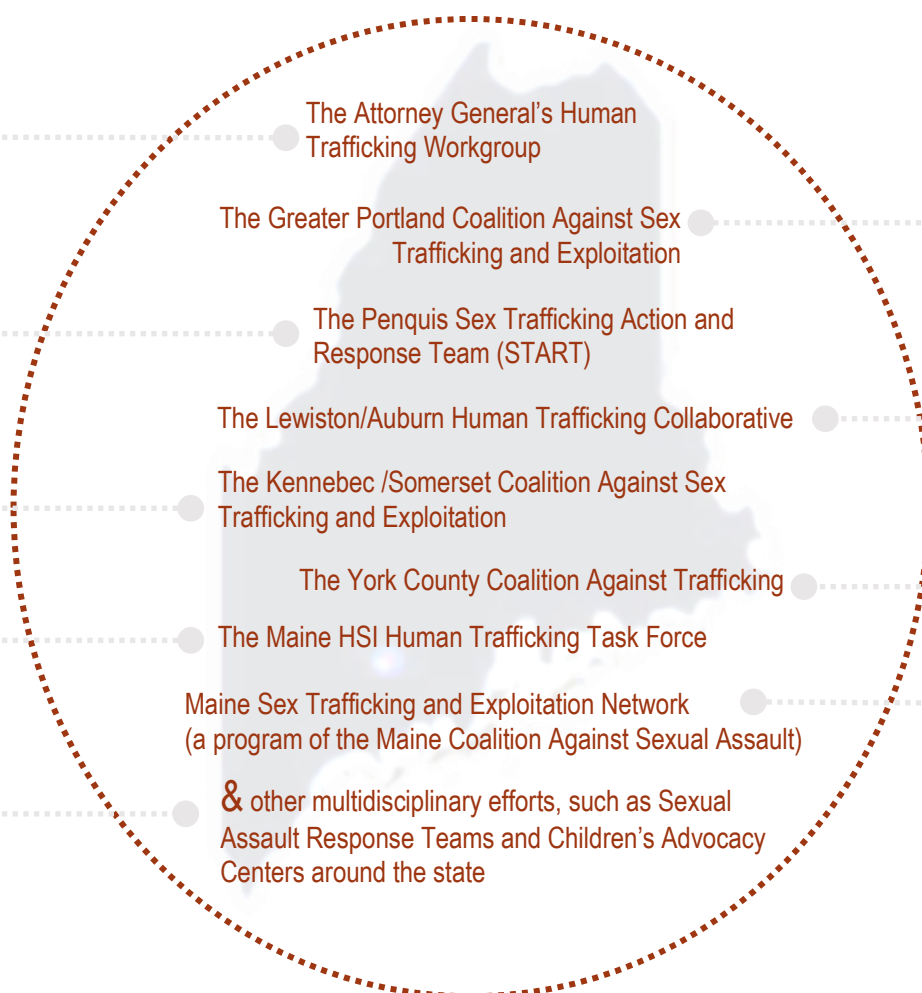
Detention, when required, has to be in the least restrictive residential facility available. One of the reasons detention may be required is to provide physical care and to protect the young person from immediate threat of bodily harm. Young people engaged in sex trafficking would likely fall under this category if they did not have a home or even a foster home to which to return. Detention also is required if the person is already under state supervision and escaped or failed to appear at a hearing, or is suspected of committing a Class A, B or C crime which includes manslaughter, kidnapping, gross sexual assault, drug trafficking, burglary, perjury or theft of \$1,000 to \$5,000.



If the young person does not meet the criteria to be detained, he or she is either released unconditionally or with conditions related to the offense. The conditions may include house arrest, requiring the person not to have contact with the victim or perpetrator, participation in a community alternatives program or some other community alternatives. JCCOs have been trained in motivational interviewing and are sensitive to the issues associated with sex trafficking and exploitation of minors. Their biggest challenge is finding an alternative placement if the young person has no family or home. They report that they may resort to sending the young person to a youth detention facility due to lack of safe alternatives. JCCOs have a great degree of discretion when working with young people in the community. However, if there is an adjudication the judge will ultimately determine if the young person must stay in the youth detention center and for how long.

Advocates and Service Providers

There are at least nine coalitions and task forces working throughout Maine to address human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Some operate on the policy level while others deliver direct services. This interconnected network of providers and organizations includes:



The Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MECASA), which is the sponsor of this study, has represented and served Maine's sexual violence service providers for over thirty years. MECASA works toward ending sexual violence by providing public policy advocacy, assistance to Maine's sexual violence service providers, public awareness and prevention activities, and statewide training. Its efforts primarily focus on training and technical

assistance to service providers, communications and awareness building related to sexual violence and exploitation, and victim-centered public policy advocacy.

The Maine Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Network (Maine STEN) is a component of MECASA. Maine STEN provides training, technical assistance, and resources to direct service providers engaged in anti-trafficking efforts in Maine, as well as community awareness and public policy support. A statewide Sex Trafficking Provider Council helps to inform its efforts, which include:

- **Training and technical assistance** for local anti-trafficking efforts, direct services providers and multidisciplinary teams across the state regarding nationally-recognized best practices, including staffing the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Work Group.
- **Tools to support more effective provision of services** to anti-trafficking providers, such as a statewide volunteer databank, a trafficking victim support fund, a bi-monthly electronic resource round-up, and resources such as shared screening tools.
- **A web-based collection of resources** with links to Maine anti-trafficking efforts, Maine and national statutes related to trafficking, and outreach materials and model policies and protocols.
- **Public policy advocacy** to support a Maine-based anti-trafficking response that is informed by effective nationally-recognized practices and which meets the needs of the Maine community.

The Maine Attorney General's Human Trafficking Work Group is a team of state and local providers representing law enforcement, service provision, and public education. The group exists to target statewide policy and infrastructure opportunities and to provide a statewide platform for sharing local trafficking resources and coalition development. The Work Group has been instrumental in getting laws passed in Maine to support victims and ensure prosecution of the perpetrators of human trafficking. Between 2007 and 2010 the Work Group developed many recommendations which are still needed today, as reflected at the conclusion of this report. These included training for law enforcement and community organizations; outreach and public awareness campaigns; options and initiatives for data collection; determining the need for victim and witness laws, victims' services and obtaining special visa status for victims who are undocumented immigrants; the coordination of services and the coordination of state and federal victim services programs for benefits, programs and licenses; monitoring the actions of international matchmaking organizations to determine if state intervention or regulation is necessary; and determining whether a special tolling statute⁴ based on cultural and linguistic isolation would be appropriate for pursuing civil remedies under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, chapter 337-C.

The Greater Portland Coalition Against Sex Trafficking and Exploitation (GPCASTE) is a multi-disciplinary team committed to ending sex trafficking and commercial sex exploitation in southern Maine by changing the public perception of the problem, building an effective response system, strengthening enforcement and prosecution of trafficking and sexual exploitation and ensuring quality services for survivors. Agencies associated with GPCASTE are Catholic Charities of Maine; Family Crisis Services, Day One, Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Pine Tree Legal Assistance, the City of Portland Police Department, Preble Street Anti-Trafficking Coalition, Salvation Army–Northern New England Division, Crossroads, Maine Behavioral Health, Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine, and the City of Westbrook Police Department. These agencies provide a victim-centered coordinated community approach to preventing and responding to human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation in Southern Maine.

Among the initial activities of the GPCASTE was outreach services and training. Members have either facilitated exploitation prevention/intervention groups or provided outreach to Preble Street Teen Center, Maine Correctional Center, Cumberland County Jail, Oxford Street Shelter and Salvation Army/street outreach. Some of the recipients

⁴ A legal doctrine which allows for the time period set forth in a statute of limitations to be delayed based on special circumstances or conditions; for example, if a plaintiff is a minor or deemed legally insane.

of training have included City of Portland Immigrant and Refugee Services, Sweetser Mobile Crisis, The Opportunity Alliance Young Parent Program and Crisis Workers, Penquis START, Maine Pretrial, Caring Unlimited, Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner Program, My Sister's Keeper, and Portland Family Shelter staff. The list of organizations accessing training on this topic provides a sense of the wide range of agencies and organizations that are serving this population in some capacity.

The Penquis Sex Trafficking Action Response Team (START) is a multidisciplinary team committed to ending sex trafficking and commercial exploitation and serving its victims throughout Piscataquis and Penobscot Counties, Maine. Its goal is to increase public awareness of the problem, build an effective response system, strengthen enforcement and prosecution of trafficking and sexual exploitation and ensure quality services for survivors.

The Lewiston/Auburn Human Trafficking Collaborative is associated with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services of Androscoggin County. Members include law enforcement, domestic violence educators and advocates, medical providers and residential treatment services.

The Maine HSI Human Trafficking Task Force was established in 2014 to address trafficking between Maine and its Canadian neighbors. Recognizing U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) recently-commissioned Human Trafficking Task Force, Governor Paul LePage declared September 26, 2014, as Human Trafficking Task Force Recognition Day. Nearly 80 law enforcement officers from 30 Maine and Canadian agencies are partnering with the HSI task force to combat trafficking across borders. The task force is designed to bring together the expertise, training, experience and law enforcement authorities of the partnered agencies to help identify human traffickers, and prosecute them while also protecting and aiding victims.

Additionally, there are local multidisciplinary efforts related to sexual assault or domestic service in every region of the state, as well as Children's Advocacy Centers in many regions. At each of these, the intersections of trafficking and exploitation with sexual abuse, sexual assault, and domestic violence are addressed, with representation from social service providers, law enforcement officers, health care providers and prosecution.

Some individual agencies have exemplified themselves in serving victims of human sex trafficking, most notably Preble Street in Portland. A social services agency, Preble Street received \$400,000 in federal funding in 2013 specifically to work on identifying and helping victims of sex trafficking in Cumberland and York counties. This two-year grant, which is being managed through the Preble Street Anti-Trafficking Coalition (PSATC) is the first project of this scope, coordinating law enforcement, the judicial system, social services, sexual assault and domestic violence services, medical care and substance use services through a central case management system. The group has served over 64 clients, only 13 of whom had stabilized housing at intake. It is instructive to know that the ages of the clients ranged from minors (4); 18 to 24 year olds (19); 25 to 30 year olds (25); and over 31 (31). With nearly half the group being over 30, this problem affects women of more mature age as well as younger ones.

One new residential resource in Maine is provided by Saint Andre Home, the location of which is not publicly disclosed to ensure the safety of both clients and staff. "Hope Rising" is a residential treatment program for survivors of the crime of human trafficking. It provides a safe, secure place for survivors to heal, receive treatment and start to rebuild their lives. Taking a *whole person approach* to treatment, a key focus of Hope Rising is to help clients enhance their self-sufficiency skills by addressing health needs, managing recovery, and pursuing vocational and educational interests. Maine's first residential safe house dedicated solely to survivors of human trafficking, Hope Rising provides substance abuse treatment and counseling, offers individual and group mental health counseling, and addresses the educational needs and vocational interests of each client on an individualized basis. Saint Andre Home received a start-up grant of \$400,000 from *The Next Generation Fund* to open Hope Rising.

Law Enforcement

In addition to interviews, HZA conducted a statewide online survey of law enforcement officers to inform both the prevalence of human trafficking and the response of law enforcement. As Table 3 shows, law enforcement respondents covered all 16 counties in Maine, ranging from eight officers in Piscataquis and Sagadahoc counties to 50 respondents in Cumberland County. Although there were 182 respondents, many of them worked in multiple counties leading to a county response of 287. Of the respondents that completed the demographics section of the survey, 89 percent were male and more than three-quarters had been in their jobs for more than 10 years. Finally, nearly half (48.9%) of the respondents were line officers, compared with 27 percent who had supervisory responsibilities and 16 percent who were the highest-ranked officer in their location.

Half the respondents viewed human trafficking, defined in the survey as the exchange of commercial sex or labor through force, fraud, or coercion, as an issue in their jurisdiction. Perceptions were different in Southern Maine compared to the rest of the state, however. Examining counties with larger urban populations such as Androscoggin, Cumberland, Penobscot and York found that over 63 percent of officers said trafficking was an issue in their jurisdiction, and in Cumberland and York Counties alone it was 76 percent. Only 37 percent of officers outside the two southern counties (York and Cumberland) said trafficking was an issue. Although not statistically significant, a higher percentage of female respondents (63%) believed human trafficking was an issue than did male respondents (50%).

As noted in the prevalence discussion, nearly 40 percent of respondents said they had seen a trafficking case in the last 12 months. Once again, respondents in Southern Maine had a different experience than those in other counties. More than half (54%) of the respondents in Southern Maine had seen a trafficking case compared to only 28 percent in other counties. The differences in perception of human

trafficking may reflect, in part, the work of the Preble Street Anti-Trafficking Coalition which has provided outreach and case management to victims of human trafficking in Southern Maine.

"The laws that protect victims are better than they were years ago. Our DA is getting very creative of how to prosecute traffickers. I appreciate that. They've done a lot to make the laws work."

● Law Enforcement

Although roughly 60 percent of the officers said trafficking was increasing every year in Maine, less than half (49%) believed additional laws are needed to address trafficking. An officer's belief about the need for additional laws on this topic correlated with how many cases the officer had seen in the last 12 months. More than three quarters (76%) of officers who had seen more than five cases believed additional laws were needed at this time. Conversely, a majority of officers (57%) who had not handled a

Table 3. Law Enforcement Survey Respondents by County

(N=182)		
	Number	%
County		
Androscoggin	36	12.5
Aroostook	11	3.8
Cumberland	50	17.4
Franklin	15	5.2
Hancock	11	3.8
Kennebec	31	10.8
Knox	11	3.8
Lincoln	11	3.8
Oxford	17	5.9
Penobscot	19	6.6
Piscataquis	8	2.8
Sagadahoc	8	2.8
Somerset	16	5.6
Waldo	9	3.1
Washington	8	2.8
York	26	9.1
Gender		
Male	154	89.0
Female	19	11.0
Years in Job		
3 to 5 years	12	6.8
6 to 10 years	20	11.3
Less than 3 years	10	5.6
More than 10 years	135	76.3
Role		
Law Enforcement Agency Top Administrator (Chief, Sheriff)	28	15.7
Non-Supervisory Law Enforcement Officer	87	48.9
Supervisory Law Enforcement Officer (Not agency top administrator)	48	27.0
Other	15	8.4

trafficking case were far more likely either to disagree or not be sure about the statement. A majority of respondents in Southern Maine (54%) agreed that additional laws were needed compared to 44 percent from the rest of the state.

Figure 5. Additional Human Trafficking Laws Are Needed by Number of Cases Handled

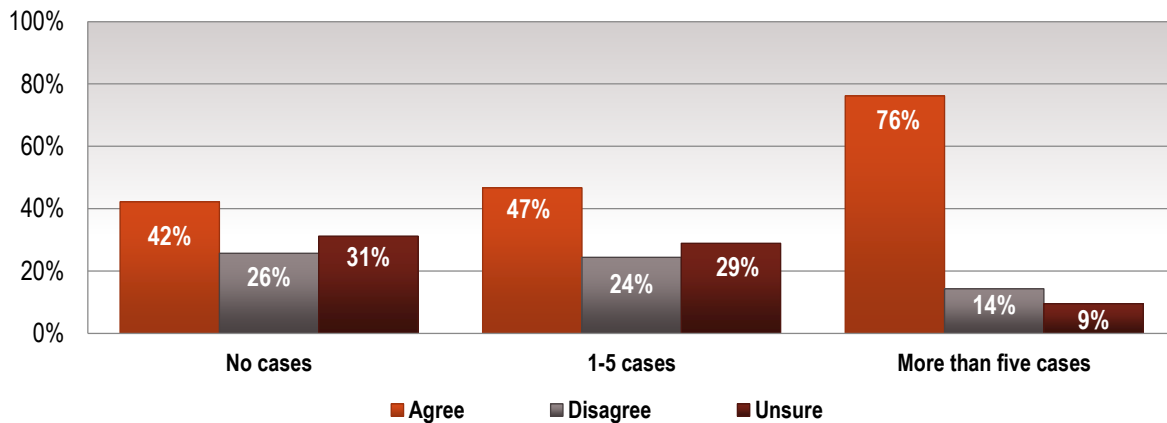
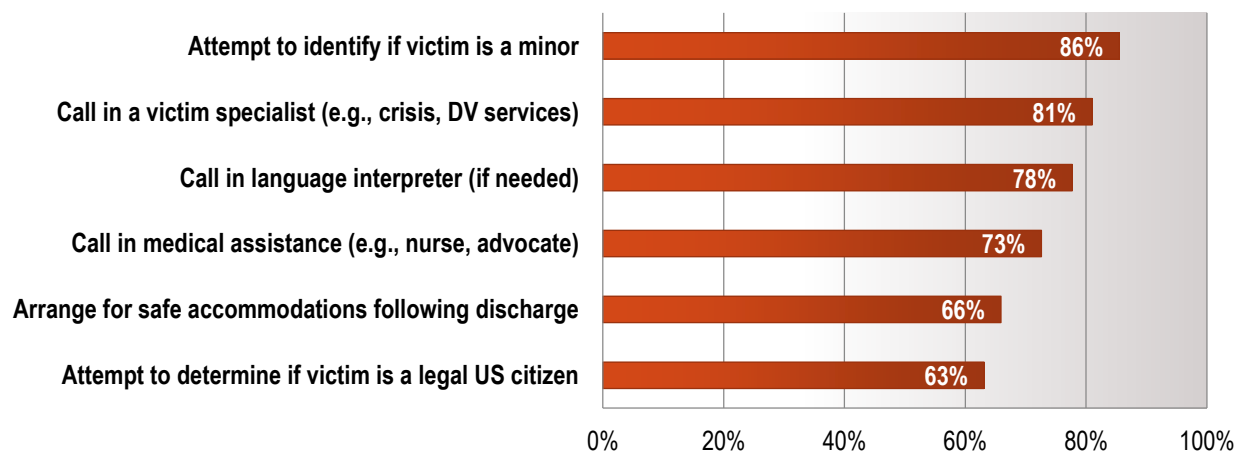


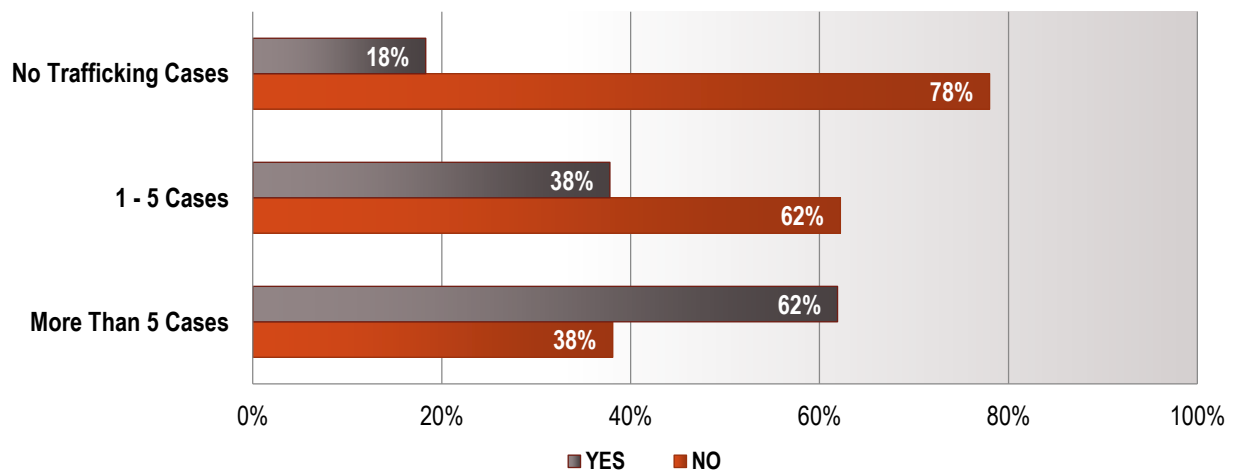
Figure 6 displays the actions that officers take if they suspect human trafficking. When faced with a potential case, the first response would be to determine if the victim was a minor (86%), followed by calling in a victim specialist (81%). Lower response rates were found for arranging services such as medical assistance (73%) or arranging for safe accommodations (66%). Using a separate screening process was the least likely of actions, which is not surprising given that law enforcement officers in Maine do not have assessment tools to identify a trafficking victim.

Figure 6. Actions Taken With Suspected or Known Victims



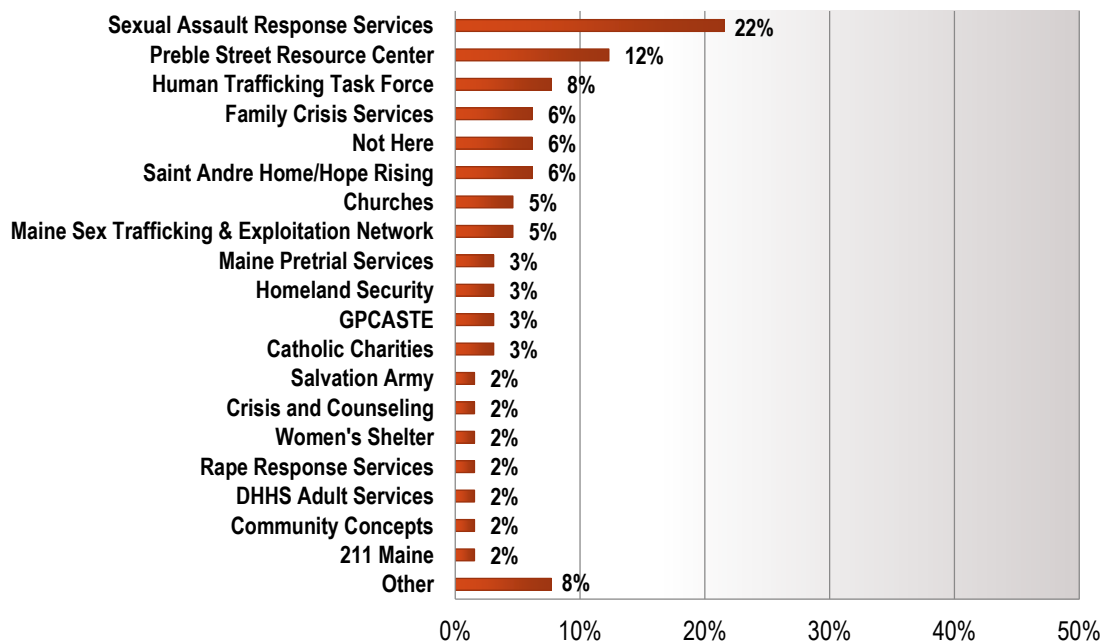
The most common type of service that victims were actually referred to were a crisis or emergency service (n=50) followed by behavioral health counseling (n=36), health assistance (n=36) and housing (n=25). The vast majority of officers, 71 percent, were not familiar with any non-profit or faith-based organizations that work to address human trafficking. Those that did know of an organization referenced primarily providers of sexual assault response services, followed by Preble Street Resource Center (and affiliate programs such as Florence House). Fortunately the officers' knowledge correlated somewhat with the number of cases they handled as shown in Figure 7, ranging from 78 percent with no knowledge to 38 percent for those who had seen more than five cases last year. Those with less experience also wanted clear definitions and help knowing how to identify cases.

Figure 7. Law Enforcement Familiarity With Organizations Addressing Trafficking by Experience Indicated



As a follow up, officers were asked whether they were familiar with organizations that provide resources to human trafficking victims within or near their jurisdiction. Of all respondents, 36 percent indicated they were familiar with organizations that provide resources, while the majority (64%) were unfamiliar with any organization in their jurisdiction. Figure 8 shows the local and statewide agencies and organizations that officers named on the survey.

Figure 8. Service Providers Known to Law Enforcement



As to whether officers thought their department/agency/office was adequately prepared to handle trafficking cases involving minors, less than half (44%) said yes. Slightly more than half (51%) said their organization was adequately trained to handle any cases involving sex trafficking; 58 percent said their organization was adequately trained to recognize signs of human trafficking. Only 39 percent were adequately prepared to handle labor trafficking. Service providers in Maine have developed specific and structured training for law enforcement that can be delivered to any area of the state; many agencies have already taken advantage of this resource. Starting in 2017, the Maine Criminal Justice Academy will require human trafficking training for all full-time personnel.

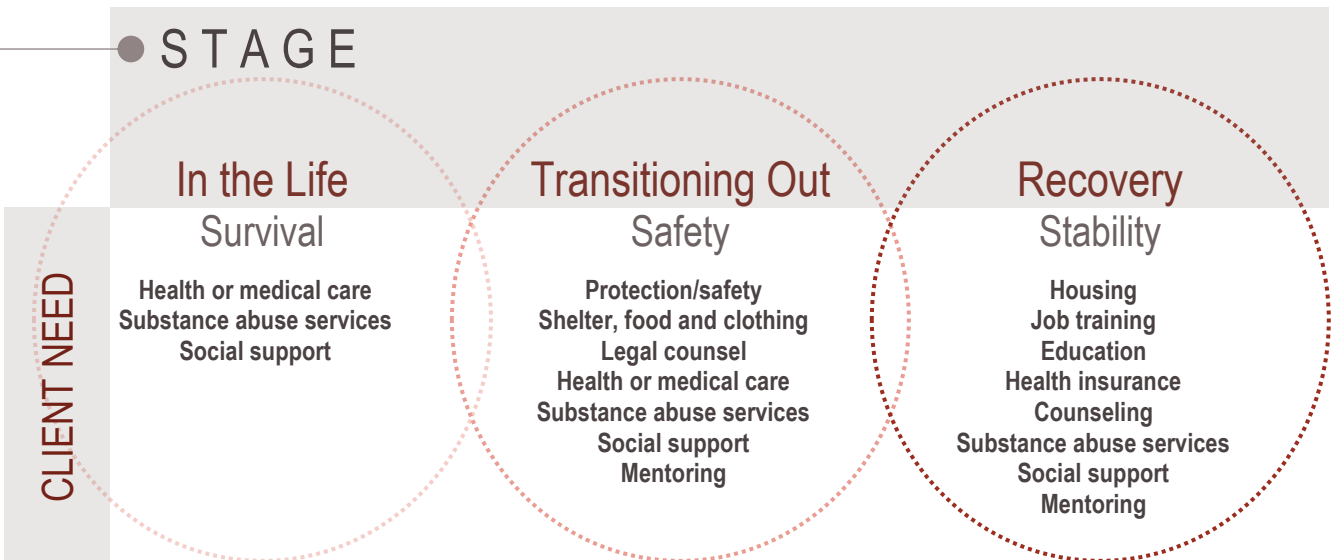
Service Needs and Gaps

Human trafficking is not a new issue for law enforcement, service providers or citizens; rather, the language has changed and the ways to respond or reduce the incidence of exploitation have evolved. Suppliers of domestic violence and sexual assault services (including direct supports, community awareness and training) are the primary organizations that are supporting trafficking victims and survivors. The general public may not be fully aware that trafficking victims require very similar services, mostly because the terminology has shifted in the last few years. It appears that movement to use of the terms “commercial sex” and “sexual exploitation” has helped reduce the prior stereotype of human trafficking pertaining largely to the transportation of foreign nationals across borders, to the reality of circumstances in Maine. This speaks to the importance of continuing to streamline messages and clarify definitions.

Understanding Victims’ Support Needs

The needs of sex trafficking victims vary and are based on the perspective of the person being asked; these needs overlap and can change over time. There are system needs and client needs and client needs change. There are different goals at each stage, ranging from survival for those in the life, to safety for those who are trying to transition out, to stability for those in recovery. Figure 9 presents a thumbnail of the clients’ needs in relation to three stages of victimization: In the Life, Transitioning Out and Recovery. Across all of these stages, trust and choice are essential to victims. Providers assure clients that they can articulate their individual needs to inform the kinds of support they want and identify what helps them feel safe.

Figure 9. Client Needs by Stage of Involvement in Trafficking



Many survivors of sexual assault and commercial sexual exploitation have expressed their gratitude and appreciation for support that they received from different providers. Among survivors interviewed in Maine, these testimonials were somewhat similar, but not necessarily common and not necessarily shared consistently. Speaking with survivors to understand the strengths and gaps in services currently in Maine forces a summary from two distinct perspectives: one from women who were incarcerated because of crimes often associated with their trafficker, and the other from those who were never arrested and did not engage with law enforcement.

Victims Engaged with Law Enforcement

“We don’t want to penalize the women but support them. But law enforcement doesn’t always know how to work with service providers...”

The service providers, though, need to understand what it means to be a witness in a case.”

● Law Enforcement

People who are trafficked are likely to be arrested for prostitution or drug-related charges. They may or may not opt to disclose who their abusers are. They also may or may not regard them as abusers; it is common to engage in what providers consider commercially exploitive sexual activity, but the victims have been conditioned to believe is a relationship. In the past, providers in Maine would take the word of the victim that they had a “boyfriend” who happened to be abusive. With more training and awareness about trafficking red flags, services providers are now asking different questions about the relationship and living conditions. It is now clear that in many cases the supposed boyfriends ask them (force them) to perform sex acts with others.

This increased awareness about the issues (both on the part of service providers and law enforcement), as well as the differing interests in providing safety for a victim on one hand, and compiling evidence for charging the trafficker on the other, can put service providers and law enforcement in varying positions of alliance and opposition, depending on the situation.

Services available to arrested or incarcerated individuals are improving in Maine. For many years, Sexual Assault Support Services and Domestic Violence Services have provided confidential support to victims of any form of abuse, both in short and long term correctional facilities and in the community. The great majority of the incarcerated women interviewed said that they benefitted from the consistency, predictability and respect from the groups attended and services offered by sexual assault and domestic violence staff. However, some voiced concern about the power dynamics and consistency of correctional staff.



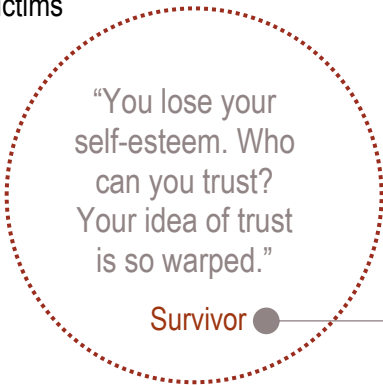
*The consistency, support and connection to services, including [protection from abuse orders] is helpful. They make the group fun and we are able to forget why we are here [in jail]. **The group leader treats us like humans.***

Correctional officers are on power-trips and disrespect us. The rules seem to change with each shift and we are always walking on eggshells.

● Victim

Victims Not Engaged with Law Enforcement

This group of people do not engage with law enforcement and may not identify as “victims of trafficking;” however, they are seeking services for peripheral reasons such as domestic violence, sexually transmitted infections or other illness, sexual assault, poverty or homelessness. Services are indeed available for all of the above needs, and typically individuals connect with one provider who then helps them with other services. For instance, women calling a sexual assault crisis response service, a low-barrier, voluntary program, will be connected with an appropriate medical examination (if they would like), shelter, clothing and food, and support through developing a safety plan, (again, if they would like).



“You lose your self-esteem. Who can you trust? Your idea of trust is so warped.”

Survivor ●

The challenge for individuals in this group is with accessing services as “trafficking victims” which would afford them rights under the law. As noted, many do not think of themselves as trafficking victims, and they may be apprehensive about discussing the details of their abuser. It takes time and sometimes multiple interactions to develop trust between the victim and the service provider. In this type of scenario, the services are available, but the individuals who could benefit from the support are afraid, ashamed, self-critical, fearful and often do not feel worthy of leaving their abuser. One survivor said, “You lose your self-esteem. Who can you trust? Your idea of trust is so warped.”

Service Availability and Access

Many service providers described in this report have been working with victims of sexual assault and exploitation for a long time; with the relatively new focus on human trafficking, the providers have needed to understand the laws that protect victims and how these laws affect their work. Service providers were able to describe the connection between the victims’ personal history and traumas and the trajectory of involvement in commercial sexual exploitation. They are reportedly sensitive to the stigma surrounding sexual violence. About 17 out of 41, or 41 percent of the interviews were completed with providers who had experience or education in providing services to high-risk groups, victims of violence, and/or specifically sexual assault. This factor is important because it demonstrates that the existing infrastructure appropriately can support or at least understand those being trafficked. Moreover, providers were well-versed in the cycle of violence that the victims tend to experience, along with the complexities of substance use, addiction, and poor physical health.

Over the last two to three years, service providers in Maine have developed better connections to serve victims of sexual exploitation, and specifically trafficking, a crucial aspect of serving this population (Clawson & Dutch, 2008). While the organizations are confident in their abilities to work with victims in most cases, it is clear that there is no one agency or even *type* of service provider that can ameliorate the multifaceted issues that victims present. The severe violence and traumatic conditions to which they have been exposed require navigation of many service systems including:

- **Emergency response services** that include alternatives to jail in the community for safe havens, particularly during the off hours;
- **Basic needs services** such as housing, food and clothing;
- **Medical services** that use a trauma-informed approach while maintaining careful protocol for evidence collection;
- **Legal services** that incorporate a personal level of advocacy and respect of confidentiality and privacy;
- **Law enforcement services** that assures protection for the victim while gathering more information to arrest or prosecute the perpetrator, all the time being sensitive to the power dynamic;
- **Mental health and/or substance use services**, access to which overlaps with health care and insurance system requirements.

Generally these services are available, particularly in larger communities, although not in every area of the state. However, it is not always clear to the victims how to access them; in fact a number of people who identified as being trafficked said that they became aware of all that was available only after they had been incarcerated. One inherent challenge is that providers of domestic violence or sexual assault services, by nature of protecting those accessing services, need to be discreet and covert in some types of support. For many years, the providers in Maine have worked on strategies that promote awareness of services available such as posting signs in places women may frequent without an abuser (e.g., restrooms or health clinics) and handing out small cards that can be concealed or discarded if necessary. These efforts should be continued and expanded to include nail and hair salons, laundromats and other places any potential victims (including males) frequently visit.

"We've been working with trafficking victims for a long time but we just weren't asking the right questions. We would just get the first layer of information from them, but they've already been taught to not give out information."

Service Provider

Service Gaps

Aside from the challenge of victims' awareness of what is actually available to them, the most significant gaps in services were related to accessing social supports and to meeting basic needs such as housing or shelter. This includes transitional residential facilities for those "exiting the life" or completing time in jail. Currently, there is more funding and infrastructure available to support trafficking victims in Cumberland and York Counties than elsewhere in the state; stakeholders and coalition members continue to work on the feasibility of promoting efforts in other regions, and are keeping in mind what has been effective thus far.

While victims of sex trafficking experience the same multitude of challenges that many have when trying to access services in Maine (e.g., waiting lists, transportation, lack of insurance coverage, eligibility requirements), some service needs that are unique to this population are not adequately available. The gaps most commonly identified by the people interviewed for this needs assessment and by law enforcement officers who responded to the survey are summarized below.

Shelter, residential facilities and longer-term affordable housing

Despite the number of shelters and housing resources across the state, it is clear that what is in place is not sufficient. This may be a result of long wait lists, requirements for admission such as being substance free or a certain age or demographic, or could be related to inadequate security or safety measures that are required for handling trafficking cases. This gap in services is known, though it is challenging to address with limited funds and small staff supports.

"Some [service providers] go home at 5 o'clock, and this is a 24-hour issue. There need to be 24 hour services. If you can't provide the basics (food, shelter, clothing) right when you bring them in, then you cannot get them out."

Law Enforcement

After-hours response capacity

Although there is a 24-hour hotline and various crisis response supports (including law enforcement and emergency rooms), many service providers do not have capacity to provide after-hours services to sex trafficking victims. The business hours for sex and drug trafficking are the opposite of standard business hours for services providers. Law enforcement officers have identified this as a gap that impacts their ability to support victims when they are responding to an emergency situation involving sexual assault and trafficking. They note the inadequacy of their standard short-term solutions, which

often consist of providing the victims with a hotel room for the night without clinical or staff support available until the next day.

Mentorship and social support

Survivors in Maine stated they would not be where they are today without the support they received from their advocates who provided them with non-judgmental support regardless of the time of day. This sentiment was echoed by law enforcement officers who had experience with repeated trafficking cases, as well as other service providers. The officers noted that victims who were supported by an advocate had greater success transitioning back to life after trafficking. Indeed, there is a growing body of literature about the effectiveness of peer supports in mental health and substance abuse recovery. At this time Maine has a limited number of advocates or case managers who can provide this type of support to victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking.

“I have the greatest support system that I have ever had in my life right now. I have an advocate, case manager, law enforcement that I can rely on.”

Survivor

Systemic Coordination and Challenges to Service Delivery

Effective collaboration and communication between service providers, law enforcement and the justice system are essential to supporting victims at any stage of exploitation (Clawson & Dutch, 2008). Over the past few years, providers have increased collaboration across sectors to serve victims’ needs better. However, there are often complicating legal factors such as prostitution and drug trafficking charges that inhibit cooperation or raise issues about the reporting responsibility of providers. For example, is the primary goal to protect victims, even if they do not want it; to prosecute victims for crimes they have also committed; or find and charge the trafficker?

There are different opinions in Maine about how to support individuals at various phases of involvement. Some providers in Maine view their work as that which will save a woman from the dangers of the sex trade, grounded in moral values that see commercial sex as a societal problem that needs fixing. Other providers promote their programs as being available to individuals who self-select those services, grounded in an empowerment philosophy that clients need to be given more options, be aware of what those options are, and then can opt to seek support, with the choice ultimately resting with the client. Each sector believes it is operating with the best intentions. Yet the differences contribute to confusing messages and disconnected systems.

“In my opinion, in order to prevent crimes again a person you have to make the person stronger. They’ve been groomed to be victimized; they need time to learn to think of their lives differently...to build up resilience to the victimization.”

Law Enforcement

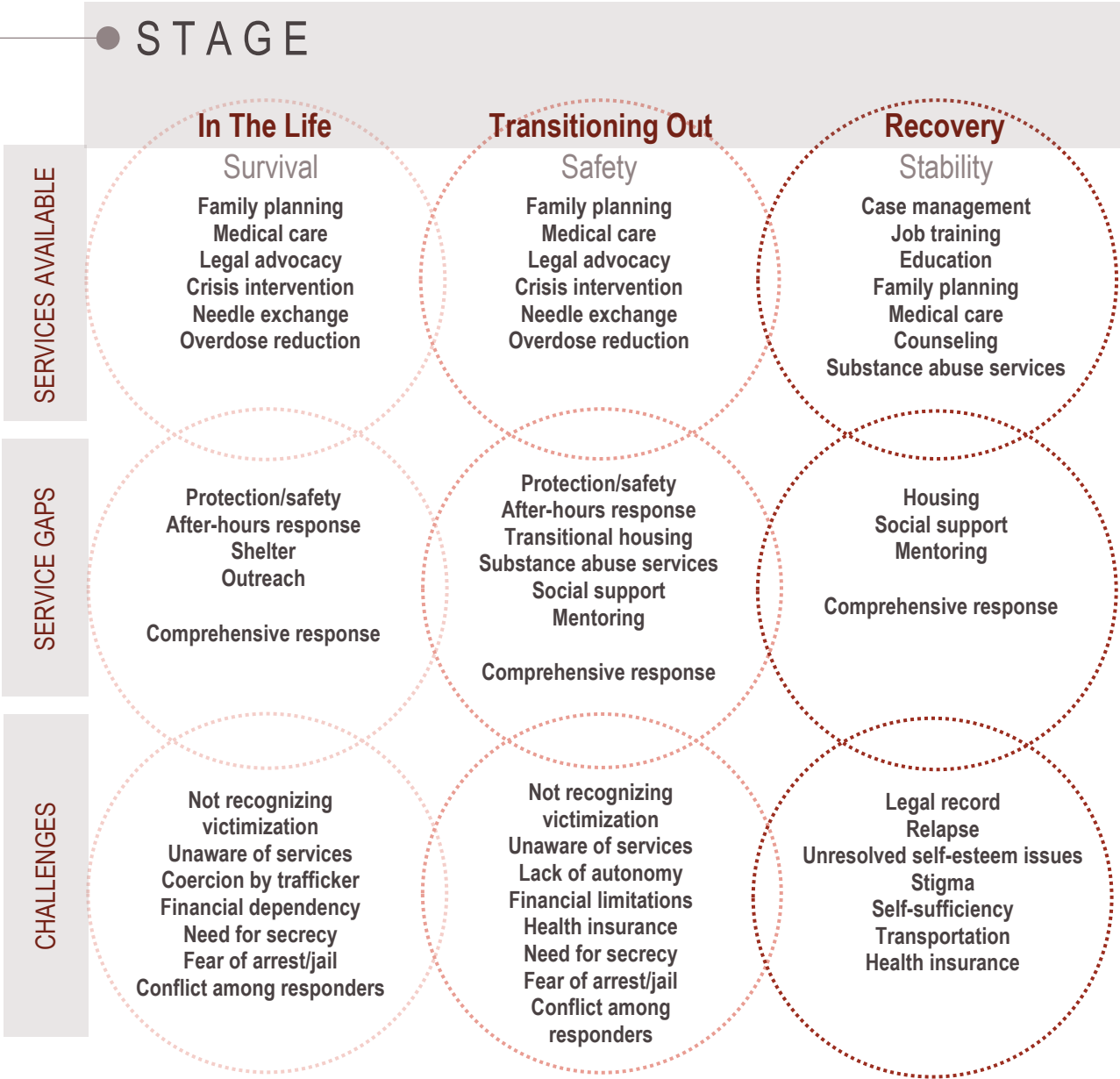
The efficient coordination of services and support with law enforcement and legal systems working cases to dismantle the traffickers came up as another area to improve. It was not unusual for officers interviewed to discuss at length the gaps in services, given the great spectrum of need at different phases of involvement and multiple contacts required; as one officer put it, “We are still trying to develop a better system of how to handle victims. In a perfect world, we’d have a service provider ready to go for the woman brought in [arrested]. Right now, there’s no ‘policy’ or ‘best practices for how to work with victims’ really... We’re figuring out how to work a case and make sure she gets what she needs.” One area of focus should be ensuring law enforcement officers are aware of services, since 38 percent of survey respondents with more than five cases last year were not familiar with the organizations, services and supports in the community available to trafficking victims.

It is clear that Maine is making progress toward aligning its laws with the values of its people. And yet the complexity of serving victims of sexual exploitation while imposing more stringent penalties on traffickers and consumers proves challenging. Currently, the laws protect minors and those who identify as “victims.” They do not sufficiently prohibit consumers from soliciting commercial sexual activity. The problem is compounded by the difficulty in identifying and building cases against traffickers when the victims are reluctant or unwilling to speak up. Providing immunity to the victims is one step that can help.

Summary of Service Needs and Gaps

When considering the range of needs for those who have been the victim of sex trafficking, it is clear that a great amount of resources are necessary across all stages of involvement. During this needs assessment process, all interviewees felt Maine had some gaps in the availability of necessary services to victims. Figure 10 summarizes the discussions of services available, gaps and challenges by each stage of involvement in trafficking. Across all these services, however, it is clear that increased collaboration and communication will improve supports for victims and move towards the goal of providing a seamless system of services.

Figure 10. Services and Gaps by Stage of Involvement in Trafficking



Recommendations

While the concept of providing victim-centered responses with a trauma-informed lens was suggested by interviewees throughout the needs assessment, it cannot be stressed enough to assure potential victims and those who have been sexually exploited are treated with respect. Within each recommendation here, service providers, law enforcement, advocates and others working to address trafficking can examine their practices to ensure they are operating with the person's best interest in mind. This translates to adding a preliminary (or cautionary) step of checking the language and definitions used in both the prevention and intervention/services sectors, and then considering these four principles of trauma-informed care (Markoff, et al., 2005) in every interaction:

- **Physical and emotional safety**
- **Empowerment, choice and control**
- **Trustworthiness**
- **Recognition of unequal power dynamic**

Organized by three main topic areas—Community Awareness and Education, Services, and Infrastructure—this report concludes with seven recommendations for the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Work Group to consider as it continues toward its goal to target state policy and infrastructure to support responses to trafficking. In addition to these recommendations, the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Work Group should set its own agenda, deriving from this report the topics of greatest concern and ways to address them.

Community Awareness and Education

1. Streamline guidance, materials and language to use.

In Maine, different providers define trafficking in various ways and do not always use the same criteria to identify a trafficking situation; likewise, people who are actually being exploited may not identify as “survivors” or “victims.” This makes it nearly impossible to determine the scope of the problem. One way to address the inconsistency is to commit to a set of shared definitions and consistent messaging for the range of activities related to human trafficking. The Maine Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Network (Maine STEN), for instance, “produced guidelines for reporting on trafficking to provide clarity and support for journalists, including the most up to date resources for the Maine community.” Numerous providers described the importance of agreeing on and using common language to shift public perceptions. To that end, coordinated training across disciplines is also encouraged. The influence of mainstream and social media on community awareness is particularly important and could be useful.

2. Increase community awareness of red flags and how to respond appropriately.

There are certain industries, and/or local businesses that are unknowingly frequented by traffickers and people being exploited. Service providers and law enforcement officers were well-aware of the typical locations, yet the employees at these locations may not be aware of the trafficking activities, or they are not sure what to do in response. These industries, such as the hospitality, health and beauty service sectors could benefit from learning about the “red flags” and supports available and where to get more information. Increasing community awareness can reinforce that human trafficking is affecting many populations across the state, and work to reduce the stereotype that this issue is exclusive to urban areas and limited to foreign nationals. The effort should increase visibility of the issue and help to reframe perceptions.

3. Continue to expand prevention efforts through connecting with schools.

Young adults, especially those in high-risk environments, need to learn about personal relationships, self-empowerment, choice and control, and healthy sexuality. In Maine, Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Services reach about 60,000 students per year through education and outreach efforts. These efforts can continue to help increase visibility of the issue while reframing perceptions of students and teachers alike. Concrete information about “red flags” and warning signs of abuse and violence can be extended to adults, teachers and other caregivers working with children and families.

Services

4. Enhance support services available to victims 24/7.

Maine does benefit from the NHTRC 24-hour response that automatically routes calls from Maine to the appropriate service location closest to the caller. Aside from crisis and emergency response services, the complex needs of trafficking victims extend beyond the traditional workday. Many situations require carefully assembled response teams with safety and personal integrity the priority. Shelter and basic needs are always necessary. There is also 24-hour in-person support, referral, and accompaniment to hospital or law enforcement available, if the person needing assistance knows to call for help through her local sexual assault or domestic violence services, or if he or she is aware of the hotline services. Next steps would include increasing staffing support to manage the teams once victims are connected with needed services.

5. Consider mentorship as an interim plan of support.

Individuals who are being trafficked or sexually exploited are often in unstable living situations, complicated by the threat or fear of being coerced back into working for the trafficker. Interviewees described the challenges with communicating with victims at different phases of involvement or post-incarceration. However, the presence of a positive influence (e.g., mentor or survivor) is thought to be an option for those in between intensive services. Given the transient nature of victims, and the frequent interaction with law enforcement, organized advocates and mentors can be trained to work alongside designated service providers to assure support at whatever stage of being in or getting out of the life.

Infrastructure

6. Designate a state lead to coordinate improved data collection.

Service providers around the state would benefit from using a standardized data collection (or screening) tool. Similarly, law enforcement would benefit from implementing the UCR typology. One entity should be designated to coordinate data improvement efforts, decide what to count, and help providers implement the process. The appointed lead could compile, analyze, and distribute data to all involved agencies. The table below shows examples of variables that are currently collected by Sexual Assault or Domestic Violence Services, along with other measures that would assist in Maine’s ability to more accurately measure prevalence.

Table 4. Recommended Data Elements

Variable by Location (e.g. Sexual Assault Response Team)	Currently Collected	Recommended Addition
Total number served	✓	
Number under age 18	✓	
Number over age 18	✓	
Was the incident flagged as related to trafficking?	✓	
Was the incident the first call/contact or duplicate?		✓
Was law enforcement contacted?	✓	
Was medical treatment provided?	*	✓
Was there an arrest or other case result (e.g., Protection From Abuse, conviction)?		✓

** Some programs currently collect limited medical documentation.*

7. Expand state oversight and service support for labor trafficking.

While there is extensive regulatory oversight related to agricultural workers in Maine, the same cannot be said of other manual labor industries. The lack of regulation limits the rights and safety of labor trafficking victims, as well as the state's response. The next step to address the needs of exploited workers should be engaging the various stakeholders within state government as well as community-based advocates in a meaningful discussion about expanding the state infrastructure and to examine existing standards related to workers' conditions, such as wages, housing and transportation. To the extent possible, stakeholders should explore whether labor trafficking victims could benefit from a response that mirrors the case management and multi-disciplinary approach to serving those being sex trafficked, particularly given the potential overlap between these two different groups of trafficking victims.

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