

Project: Barriers to Access, Disclosure, and Identification in Healthcare for Potentially Trafficked Youth in Vermont

Community Agency: Give Way to Freedom

Abstract:

Introduction.

Human trafficking affects victims' physical and psychological health. This study aimed to identify the barriers to access, disclosure, and identification in a healthcare setting for potential trafficked youth in Vermont.

Methods.

Literature review followed by different surveys administered to Vermont healthcare providers(HCP) and at-risk youth(ARY) from state drop-in centers.

Results.

Of the 104 HCP respondents, 51% were unaware that human trafficking was a potential issue in Vermont, 77.9% indicated the need for education, and 19.2% interviewed patients alone <50% of the time.

98 ARY responded to the survey. Of youth who participated in activities suggestive of human trafficking, 69% did not go to the doctor and they listed the following as reasons why: 78% were scared and 44% were told not to go. Only 11% of youth who were hurt for other reasons did not go to the doctor. Additionally, 13% of previous foster care youth(FCY) were forced to do something they did not want to and 22% needed to have sex for something as compared to 2% and 10% respectively of non-FCY.

Conclusion.

ARY participate in activities suggestive of human trafficking and increased awareness among HCP regarding human trafficking is needed. Barriers to care listed by ARY (being scared, etc.) coupled with <50% of ARY being interviewed alone by physicians may further prevent ARY from seeking care. Furthermore, FCY may be at greater risk for trafficking, survival sex and fear of accessing medical care.

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