

## Building an Effective Response to Sex Trafficking in Wisconsin

Presentation to the Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force

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## What is sex trafficking?

- Sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, **or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age** (22 USC § 7102).
- This is not a new phenomenon, but it is a growing concern nationally and in Wisconsin
- Occurs in communities throughout the state, including urban, rural, and Tribal areas
- Involves both boys and girls across the age spectrum
- While some minors who experience sex trafficking are from foreign countries, many—if not most—are U.S. citizens

## Federal legislation

### o Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 (PL 113-83)

- Requires child welfare systems to screen and identify youth who may be at risk for or experiencing trafficking
- Provide services to youth who have been trafficked
- Report cases to local law enforcement and track data to report to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- Report missing children to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)
- Create protocols for locating missing or runaway children

## Federal legislation

### o Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (PL 114-22)

- Changes to criminal liability for buyers of commercial sex from individuals who are being trafficked
- Created a survivor-led U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking
- Created a domestic trafficking victim's fund to support victim assistance programs and grants to deter child trafficking
- Amended Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) to note that youth who are victims of severe forms of trafficking are eligible for services under RHYA
- Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) amended to add HT and child pornography as forms of child abuse
- **All cases must be screened and assessed, whether or not the caregiver is involved**

## State legislation

### o Wisconsin Act 367

- Child welfare agencies must investigate all allegations of children alleged to have experienced sex trafficking, including cases where a non-caregiver is the maltreater
- Aligned the state definition with the federal definition
- New requirement went into effect May 29, 2017

## State legislation

### o Wisconsin Act 368

- Child welfare agencies must report information and photograph of missing children to local law enforcement within 8 hours of determining child is missing
- Must also report to NCMEC within 24 hours and record child's experiences while missing
- DCF made changes to missing children protocol
- Already in effect

## Individual and Family Level Risk Factors

- o Several known risk factors place youth at higher risk of being trafficked
  - Age
  - Race
  - Poverty
  - Physical and sexual abuse
  - Family substance or physical abuse
  - Youth substance abuse
  - Learning disabilities
  - Loss of a parent or caregiver
  - Running away
  - Sexual identity issues
  - Lack of social support systems

## Community and Societal Level Risk Factors

- o Other risk factors can also make a youth more vulnerable to trafficking
  - o Community poverty
  - o Lack of job opportunities
  - o Gang affiliation or presence in the community
  - o Lack of safe after-school activities
  - o Prevalence of alcohol and drugs
  - o Weak neighborhood and community connections
  - o Racial, economic, and gender inequalities
  - o Normalization of violence in the media
  - o Overly sexualized cultural messages
  - o Acceptance of violence towards certain groups of people
  - o Glorification of the "pimp lifestyle"

## These cases are complex...

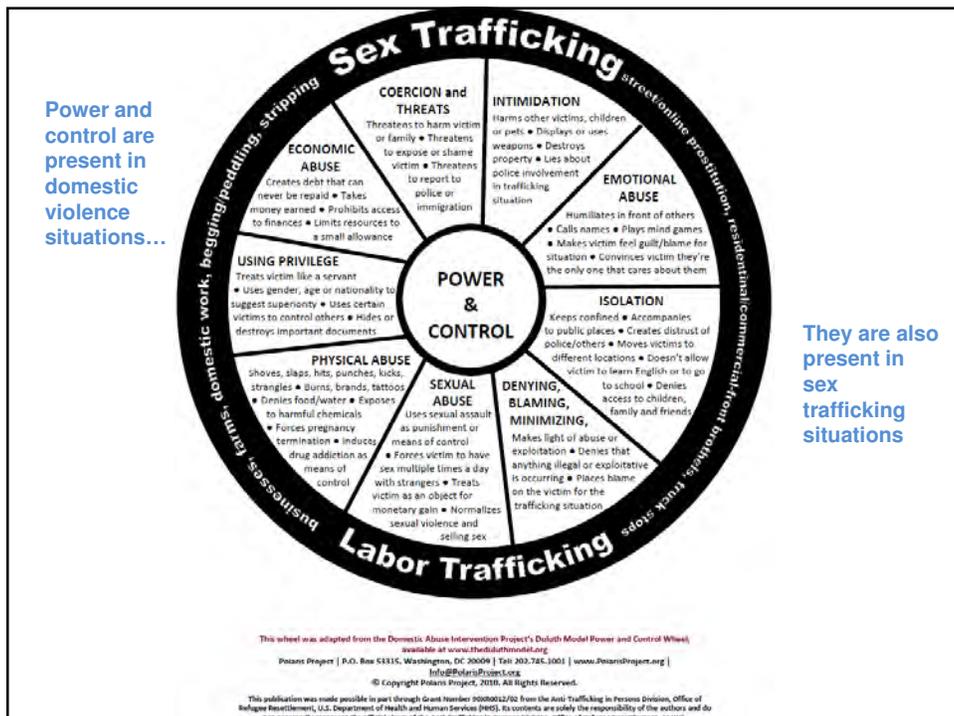
- o Vulnerability to being trafficked has its origins in previous traumas
  - o Youth often require intense case management and coordination of services across multiple systems: safety planning; advocacy; educational support; mental health services; and, job training
  - o These are generally youth we are already serving in some capacity, but we may not be aware that they are also being trafficked
- o Often difficult to engage youth who have been trafficked
  - o Do not see themselves as "victims"
  - o Have difficulty trusting systems, especially if they have received negative or punitive responses from them in the past
  - o Seeing them through the lens of the traumas they have experienced can help us make sense of their responses

## ...the adolescent brain makes it more difficult

- o Youth can be impulsive
  - o Their ability to think through short- and long-term consequences is still developing
  - o Peer pressure and the desire to fit in and/or feel wanted are important motivators
- o Early traumas can affect brain development and reactions
  - o What looks like impulsivity can also be masked "trauma response"
  - o Youth who have been touched inappropriately by other people may have extreme reactions to being touched, even when it's to help
  - o It's adaptive for the brain to disassociate from trauma as a way to protect the self from overwhelming emotional and physical pain—this can present as anger/defensiveness or withdrawal/blank stares

## Awareness is growing, but still lacking

- Public awareness of human trafficking activity varies based on several factors
  - Geographic location
  - Community culture
  - Involvement of local community, civic, and faith-based organizations
  - Training and education opportunities
- Awareness of the issue often focuses on international human trafficking and organized crime
  - Other trajectories into trafficking, including those perpetrated by non-primary caregivers who develop intimate relations with youth, are often less known by the public



## Gaps in the literature

- We have evidence of what works for individuals who have been sexually abused and assaulted, but are still gaining knowledge about what works best for sex trafficking
- Similarly, we have some idea of what works for adult populations who have experienced sex trafficking, but limited research on youth populations
- Males are a known risk group and yet often remain invisible in the literature and to some providers

## What is the state response to the issue of sex trafficking?

**The answer requires simultaneous layers of planning and action.**

Internal partners

External partners

Evidence-based  
theory and practice

## Wisconsin response plan

Serving youth who are at risk of or have experienced sex trafficking requires a continuum of care

Prevention

Community-based services

Residential treatment

In order to be successful, all strategies must be:

- ❖ Trauma-informed
- ❖ Culturally and developmentally appropriate
- ❖ Individualized
- ❖ Support multiple needs (social-emotional, mental health, job training, education, family engagement)
- ❖ Responsive to the differing and unique demographic, geographic, cultural, and governance characteristics of the state

## Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Campaign

- o Purpose: to inform the public that sex trafficking of Wisconsin youth is an issue in urban, suburban, rural, and Tribal communities
  - o Bring awareness to the indicators that a youth is being sex trafficked or may be at risk of being sex trafficked
  - o Disseminate information about the risk factors that may make youth more vulnerable to being trafficked
  - o Implement an effective statewide media/social marketing campaign that reduces demand and prevents sex trafficking of youth in Wisconsin
- o JSI Research and Training Institute, Inc. awarded contract April 2017
  - o Conducted listening sessions with youth, adults, and survivors around the state
  - o Will use information learned to inform the messaging and marketing tools
  - o Conducting focus groups with youth, adults, and survivors to test message effectiveness
  - o Campaign will launch in January 2018, to coincide with Human Trafficking Awareness Month

## Human Trafficking Prevention Video

- o Purpose: to raise awareness that sex trafficking of youth is occurring throughout Wisconsin by featuring different trajectories into trafficking
  - o Feature Wisconsin residents who were trafficked as youth or affected directly by a youth who was trafficked (e.g., parent of a child who was sex trafficked)
  - o Will be filmed in high definition documentary style; we will develop an accompanying listening guide
  - o Online streaming and hard copy DVDs will be available throughout the state
- o Twelve Plus Media awarded contract May 2017
  - o Filmmakers collaborated with providers throughout the state to find participants who represent Wisconsin's diversity
  - o Ideal participants will feel empowered, not traumatized, by sharing their story
  - o Final film will debut spring 2018

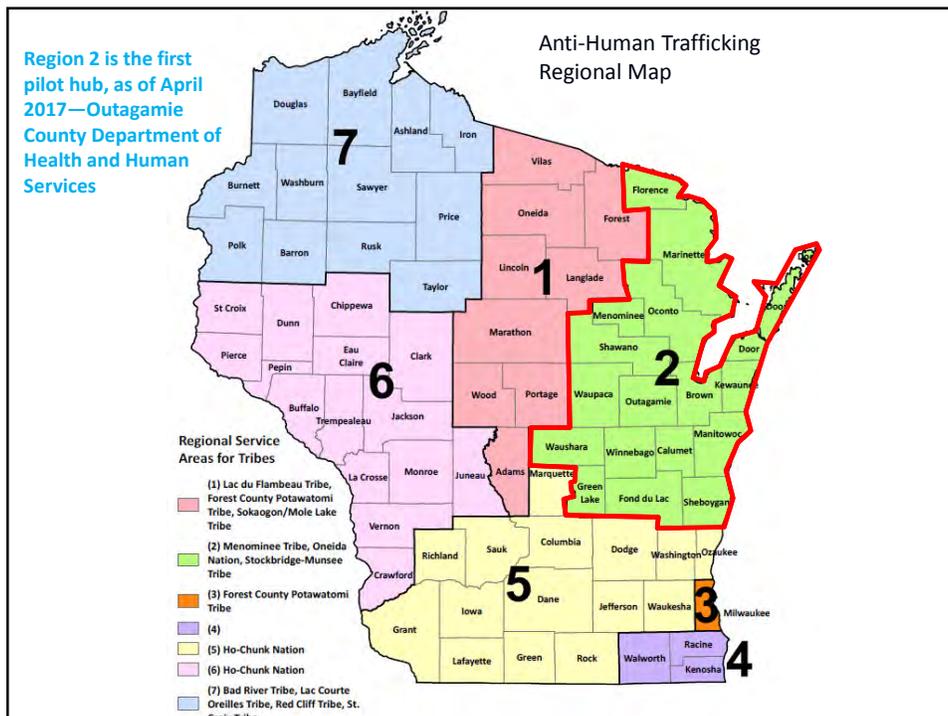
## Anti-Human Trafficking (AHT) Regional Hubs

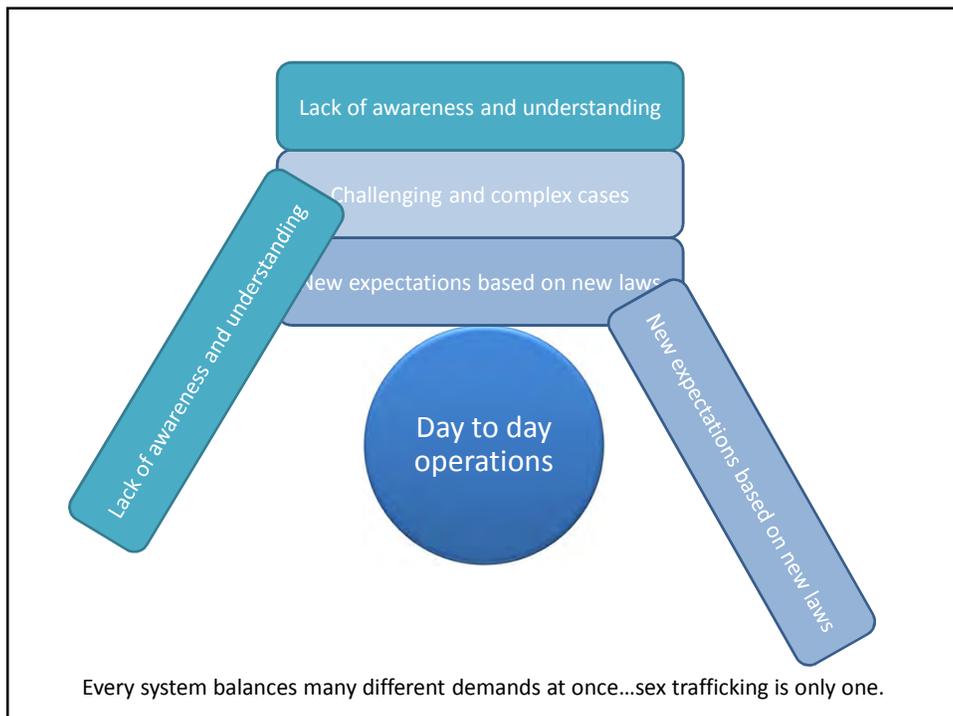
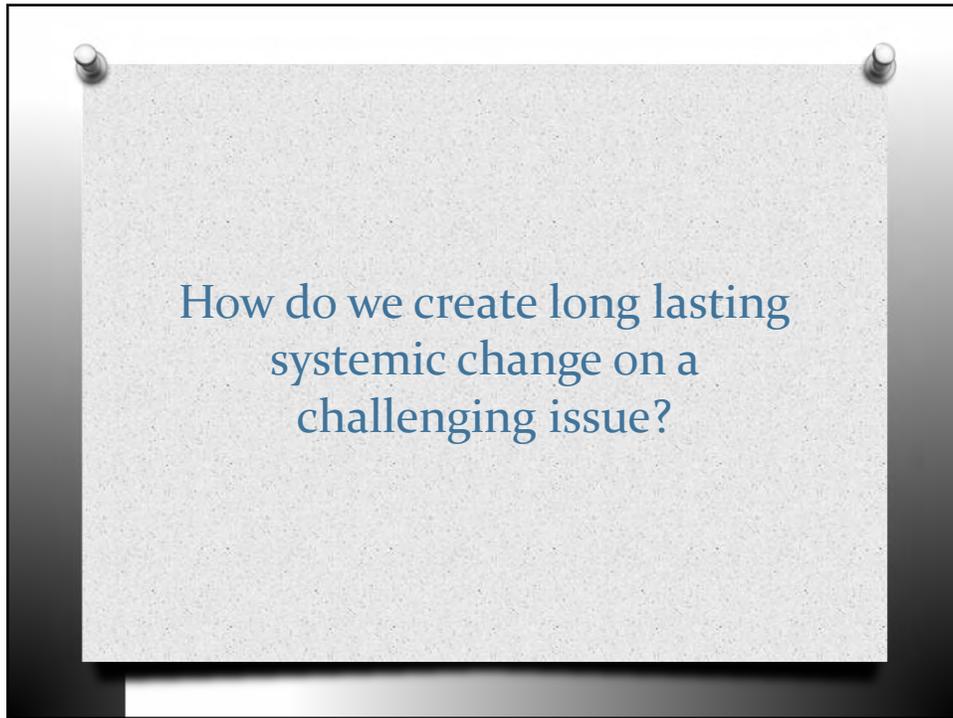
- o Create an AHT regional hub service delivery system to support counties, Tribes, and agencies serving youth who are at risk of or have experienced trafficking
  - o Anticipate creating up to 7 regional hubs, with staggered implementation over the next several years
  - o Will be informed by cross-system service delivery systems (e.g., law enforcement, courts, education, health services)
- o Will support hiring of AHT Regional Specialists
  - o Specialists will become experts in their respective regions by helping to coordinate services for youth and families
  - o Will not replace CPS caseworkers
  - o Will work with the Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinator to increase service capacity across the region

# Anti-Human Trafficking (AHT) Regional Hubs

## Expectations of regional hubs

1. Assist county or Tribal child welfare workers, when requested, with developing a response plan for potential cases of sex trafficking;
2. Assist with coordinating multi-system service delivery for youth who are at-risk of or have been sex trafficked;
3. Support increased service capacity in areas where it is lacking;
4. Provide certain direct services;
5. Promote public awareness and prevention of trafficking activities in the region; and,
6. Strengthen cross-system collaboration across the region to address sex trafficking.





## First- and Second-Order Change

- First-order change: when smaller, individual changes occur, but the larger system does not change. **Focus is on achieving balance, rather than changing the way the system operates.**
- Second-order change: requires a new, multi-systemic way of operating, often involving transformational and non-linear progression. **More likely to lead to long-lasting change.**

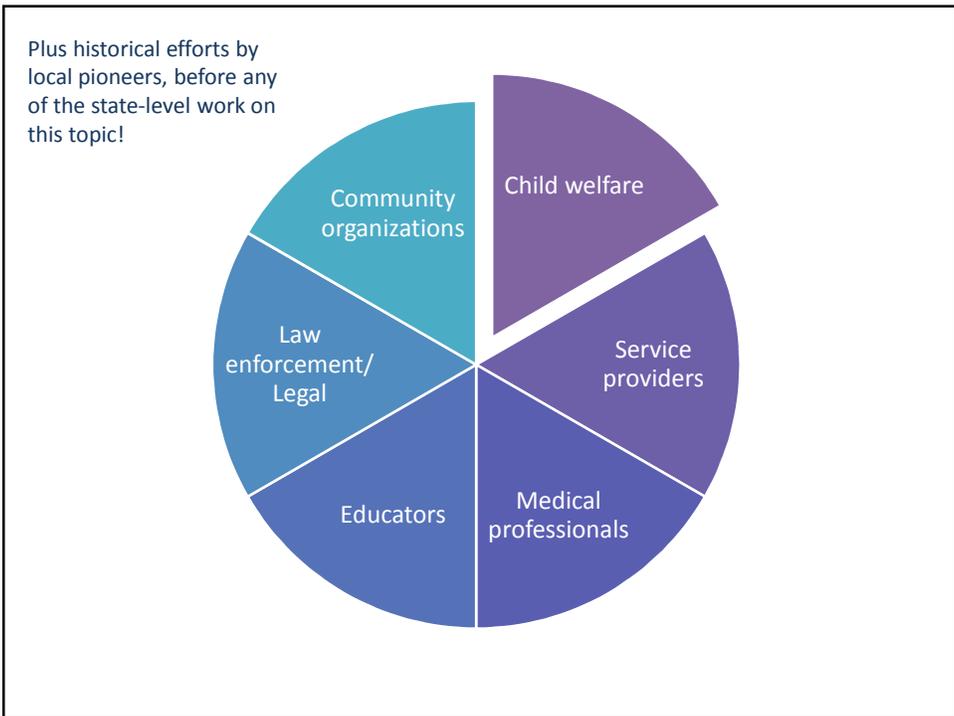
Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974

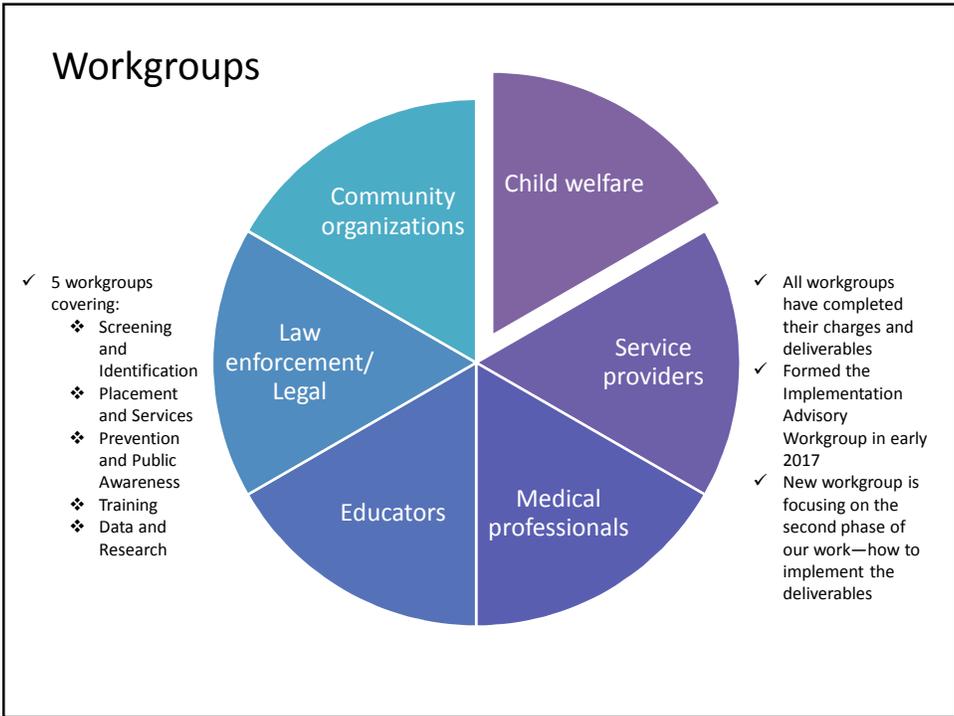
What does this mean for the response to sex trafficking of youth?

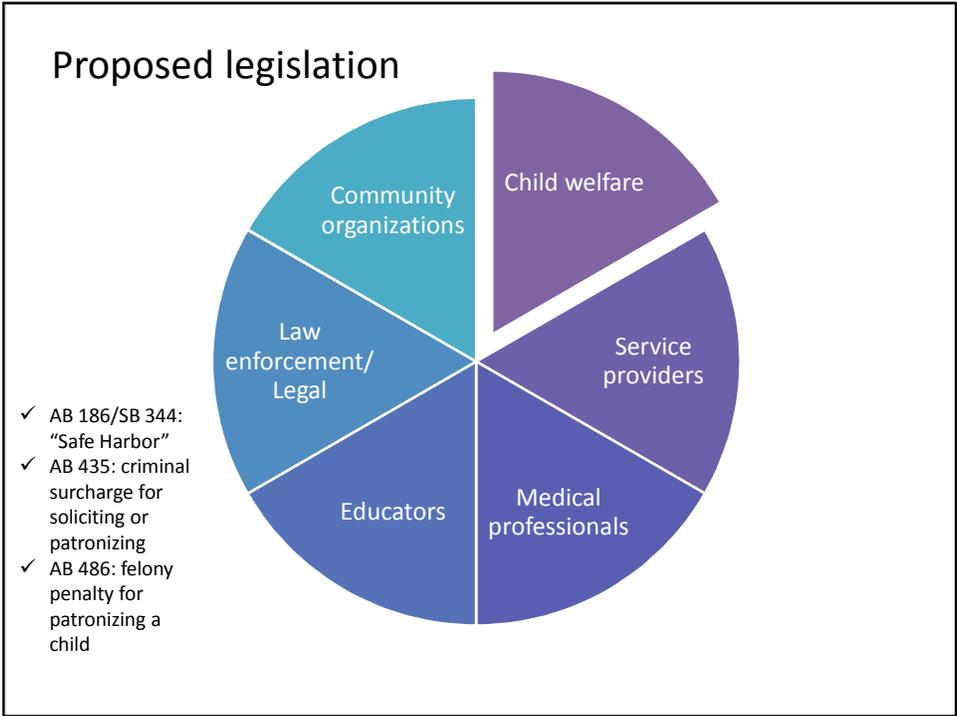
**IT TAKES A VILLAGE!**

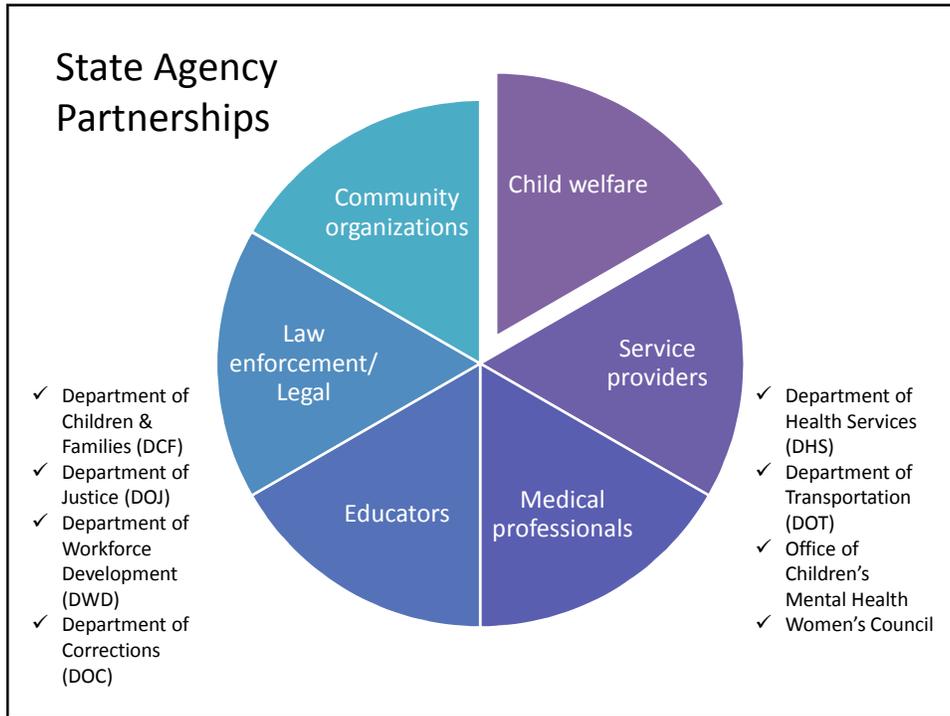


# Child & Youth Sex Trafficking









## Diffusion of Innovation Theory

- o Often used in public health to promote change or the uptake of a new behavior
- o Initial goal is to identify the **key opinion leaders** within a system—those individuals who are held in high regard and therefore have the ability to influence others
- o Key opinion leaders then take the “innovation” and promote change to other stakeholders, thereby “diffusing” it throughout the system
- o Generally takes some time to diffuse all the way through a system—early adopters and early majority will buy in quickly, but late adopters and laggards will be reticent to accept the innovation

## Finding the Opinion Leaders

- o Active involvement and oversight of Task Force and Workgroups
- o Attending meetings of local task forces and other advocacy groups
- o Participating in regional supervisor and director, Wisconsin County Human Service Association (WCHSA), and Tribal child welfare directors meetings
- o Presenting at system-specific and statewide conferences
- o Reaching out to stakeholders who are from non-represented systems

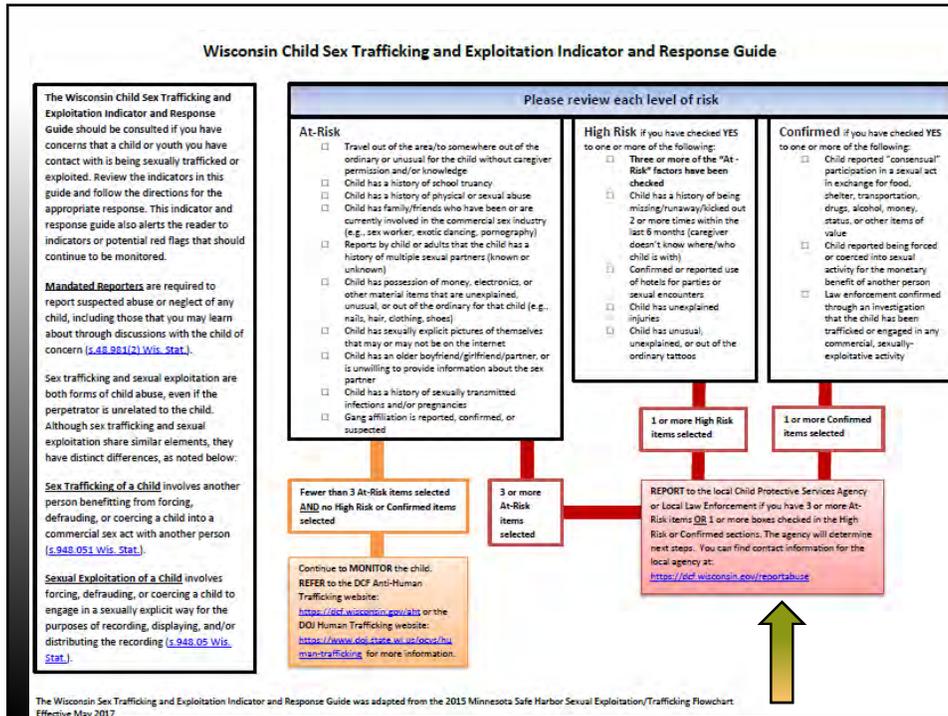
## Bringing the message to other systems

### Previous (2016 & 2017)

- o Wisconsin Association for Homeless and Runaway Services
- o [Slave Free Madison](#)
- o Fierce Freedom keynote dinner address
- o [WAFA Leadership Summit](#)
- o Family Based Services Association Conference
- o [DCI Human Trafficking School](#)
- o Mayo Clinic-La Crosse Child Maltreatment Conference
- o [Foster Parent Advisory Council](#)
- o Serving Victims of Crime Conference
- o [The Changing Face of Adoption Conference](#)

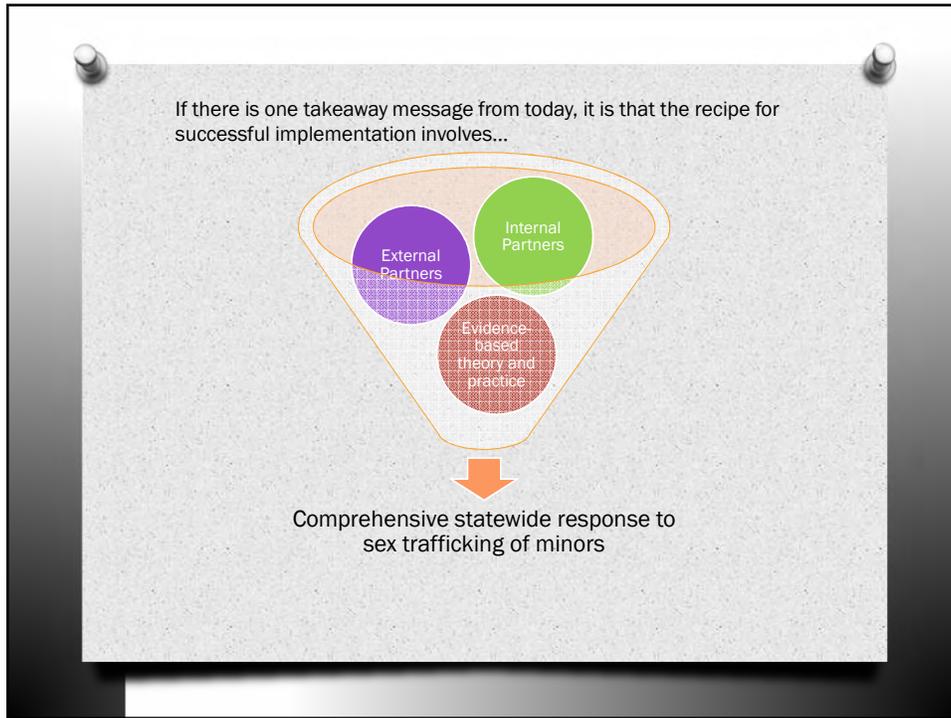
### Upcoming (2017 & 2018)

- o Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Directors Meeting
- o [Wisconsin Corrections Association Conference](#)
- o Dane County CSEC training panel
- o [Wisconsin Juvenile Detention Association Conference](#)
- o Stateline Foundation Women's Fund Luncheon keynote
- o [Child Welfare and the Courts Conference](#)
- o Statewide Human Trafficking Conference
- o [DPI pre-conference on Human Trafficking](#)
- o Together for Children pre-conference on Human Trafficking



## Other Training Mechanisms

- o DCF trained all child welfare and youth justice workers on the new state statute change
- o Developed an online *Human Trafficking 101* training using workgroup materials
  - o Training for child welfare workers available May 2017
  - o Training for other systems, such as law enforcement, service providers, educators, and medical professionals forthcoming, with stakeholder assistance
- o DCF and DOJ are recording a webinar series for the hospitality industry, with support from several industry stakeholders
- o Meetings with DOJ, DHS, and DCF staff to determine practices for implementing the Core and Advanced Core Competencies adopted by the Task Force
  - o DOJ: VOCA, VAWA, SANE, Children's Justice Act grants
  - o DCF: Licensing, Runaway and Homeless Youth programs, DV programs
  - o DHS: Public health clinics, behavioral health



- ### Many thanks to those who assist behind the scenes
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