



## WISCONSIN ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE



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The Placement and Services Workgroup was charged with developing competencies needed for service providers to serve sex trafficked minors in a trauma-informed, victim-centered, and culturally competent manner.

The workgroup concluded that two separate categories of competencies are necessary. Core Competencies shall guide the service and work of all agencies, organizations, and providers that interact with and serve *any* child or youth. In addition, Advanced Core Competencies shall guide agencies, organizations, and providers that specialize in serving children and youth who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation or sex trafficking.

The following Core Competencies are adapted from “Core Competencies for Serving Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)”, developed by the Child Welfare Council (CSEC) Action Team in partnership with the California Department of Social Services.

### **Core Competencies**

**Targeted Audience: Agencies, organizations, and service providers that serve and interact with children and youth.**

#### *I. Core Knowledge*

Competency 1: Working knowledge of the issue of sex trafficking, including but not limited to risk factors, indicators, and dynamics at the individual, family, and community levels that make children and youth vulnerable to sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Competency 2: Working knowledge of child-serving systems, such as child welfare, mental health, education, youth justice, law enforcement, and how various agencies and multi-disciplinary teams intersect to identify, screen, and serve children, youth, and families.

#### *II. Impact and Dynamics of Abuse, Neglect, and Trauma*

Competency 3: Working knowledge of the causes, associated consequences, and mandatory reporting requirements of child abuse and neglect and how they apply to children and youth who have experienced sexual exploitation or trafficking.

Competency 4: Working knowledge and understanding of complex trauma, polyvictimization, and toxic stress, and how these factors impact children and youth who have experienced sexual exploitation or trafficking.

Competency 5: Employment policies that reflect an understanding of how vicarious trauma affects employees working with youth who have experienced sexual exploitation or trafficking.

### *III. Informed Application of Skills*

Competency 6: Applying evidence-based skills used with children and youth who have experienced trauma to children and youth who have experienced sexual exploitation or trafficking.

#### Specific Skills:

- i. Rapport-building: focus on establishing a foundation of trust through youth engagement
- ii. Trauma-awareness: employ a trauma-informed approach to avoid re-traumatizing the child or youth
- iii. Individual-focused: engage the child or youth in developing their individualized safety and case plans, to the extent possible, so they feel empowered throughout the process
- iv. Strengths-based: build on the individual's strengths while also addressing the individual's needs
- v. Social support: understand the importance of engaging the individual's social support networks, including family, peer, and cultural networks, and building capacity when it is lacking
- vi. Clear communication about healthy relationships and sexuality: discuss healthy relationships and sexuality openly with youth, acknowledging and affirming each child's sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) without bias or judgment
- vii. Flexibility/adaptability: be flexible when developing an individualized treatment plan, to allow the child or youth to progress at their own pace in a way that does not overwhelm or lead to disengagement from treatment
- viii. Cultural humility: exhibit openness and emphasize an understanding and support of the child or youth from within their own worldview, as informed by their personal identities and experiences with culture, race, ethnicity, class, gender, faith, and SOGIE
- ix. Recognition of implicit bias: identify and act against implicit biases to avoid drawing conclusions or defining case planning based on stereotypes of a child's culture, race, ethnicity, class, gender, faith, and/or SOGIE
- x. Commitment to self-care: seek supervisory and/or personal support to prevent or cope with compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma
- xi. Demand awareness: Have a working understanding of the demand that exists in local communities and society as a whole that leads to sexual exploitation and trafficking of individuals

## Advanced Core Competencies

**Targeted Audience: Agencies, organizations, and service providers that specialize in serving and working with children and youth who have experienced or are at-risk of experiencing commercial sexual exploitation or sex trafficking.**

### *I. Specialized Working Knowledge*

Advanced Competency 1: Working knowledge of strategies to engage and effectively communicate with youth who have been sex trafficked.

Advanced Competency 2: Working knowledge of the terms and definitions common to different forms of commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking, including terms used by youth.

Advanced Competency 3: Working knowledge and understanding of the multiple entry points to commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking, which includes recruitment by pimps or bottoms, getting survival needs met, encouragement by peers, and solicitation by adults for sexual contact.

Advanced Competency 4: Working knowledge of youth experiences while sexually exploited and sex trafficked, including experiencing repeated traumatic events and day-to-day realities.

Advanced Competency 5: Working knowledge on the varied experiences and forms of commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of youth.

Advanced Competency 6: Working knowledge of the exit process for youth who are or have been commercially sexually exploited and sex trafficked.

Advanced Competency 7: Working knowledge on reducing stigma and judgment of staff towards youth being served by programs, in addition to helping youth handle potential stigma from family, friends, and the community.

Advanced Competency 8: Working knowledge of common family reactions to commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking and how to provide support and education to family members.

Advanced Competency 9: Working knowledge of safety planning and harm reduction, including but not limited to assistance in terminating or managing relationships with people who have or could harm them.

Advanced Competency 10: Working knowledge of the importance to keep program details and location private and safe, in addition to active plans that abide by this working knowledge.

Advanced Competency 11: Working knowledge in the prevention of youth running away from home or placements.

Advanced Competency 12: Working knowledge of recruitment methods utilized and a specific plan to interrupt recruitment within programs, placements, or other services.