

2021 Report

Human Trafficking in Louisville, Kentucky



Surveying the Landscape



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- Kentucky Department for Community Based Services
- Kentucky Department of Education
- KentuckianaWorks
- Louisville Free Public Library
- Louisville Metro Government- Emergency Medical Services
- Louisville Metro Government- Housing Authority
- Louisville Metro Government-Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods
- Louisville Metro Police Department
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Foreword

During the spring of 2020, Metro United Way was presented with the unique opportunity to partner with United Way Worldwide (UWW) and United Parcel Service (UPS) to serve as one of four local United Ways (LUWs) engaged in a new national initiative, United Against Human Trafficking. The purpose of this initial two-year project is to pilot community-based anti-trafficking interventions at a local level in four cities: Atlanta, GA; Louisville, KY; Brownsville, TX; and Las Vegas, NV. The goal of this initiative is to identify promising practices and impactful strategies that can be scaled, shared, and/or replicated in other communities across the country.

During the first year of this project, Metro United Way focused on conducting a comprehensive landscape analysis of the current state of human trafficking and anti-trafficking efforts in our local community. We hope that this report will reveal precise needs or gaps in which Metro United Way and its various stakeholder groups (volunteers, donors, and partner businesses and organizations) may add value and play a meaningful role in preventing trafficking and supporting survivors.

This analysis shines a light on an important issue that plagues communities across the country and the world. It ignites a more significant conversation about the underlying conditions and root causes of human trafficking in our backyard. Metro United Way hopes to use our assets including, voice, brand, and expansive network of community partners to draw greater attention and resources to the individuals and organizations working every day to prevent human trafficking in Louisville, Kentucky.



Executive Summary

Overview

During the spring of 2020, Metro United Way was presented with the unique opportunity to partner with United Way Worldwide (UWW) and United Parcel Service (UPS) to serve as one of four local United Ways (LUWs) engaged in a new national initiative, United Against Human Trafficking. The purpose of this initial two-year project is to pilot community-based anti-trafficking interventions at a local level in four cities. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to identify promising practices and impactful strategies that can be scaled, shared, and/or replicated in other communities across the country. During the first year of this project, Metro United Way focused on conducting a comprehensive landscape analysis of the current state of human trafficking and anti-trafficking efforts in our local community.

The Project

The overarching objective of this project was to produce a comprehensive landscape analysis of the phenomenon of human trafficking and youth exploitation in Louisville, Kentucky. We utilized a participatory approach and a mixed methods research design to realize this objective. This project specifically highlighted exploration of the experiences, gaps, and needs of young people in the city and state, with an eye toward systems-level efforts. With the focus on youth and young adults at risk or impacted by exploitation and trafficking, we centered our questions on prevention, awareness, training, assessment, service provision, public policy, and organizational practice. We widened the lens throughout the project to examine the landscape of all forms of human trafficking in Louisville and Kentucky to complete a credible survey analysis of this complex issue in our local landscape.



The focus areas of the report include the following:

- Awareness, education, and training
- Survivor/victim services and needs, with a particular focus on housing needs
- A focus on children and young adults
- Collaboration and coordination.

Executive Summary Cont.

Highlights

Themes identified during this research include the following:

- There are gaps in available, safe, and affordable housing for human trafficking survivors.
- Human trafficking education and training opportunities are available in the community.
- Existing prevention services in our region offer opportunities.
- There is a need to explore the connection between human trafficking, other social problems, and community issues specific to our landscape with more depth.
- Children and young adults are vulnerable to trafficking in our community and need more comprehensive services and interventions.
- Some groups of children and young adults seem to be falling through the safety net due to various gaps in our network of services.
- Funding for prevention and direct services at multiple levels—local, state, federal, private—is fragmented and sometimes absent.
- Survivors need more specialized attention and trauma-informed services, and trauma-informed people caring for them. We also uncovered some community strengths to leverage as trauma-informed care is an integral part of existing services in some areas.
- Collaboration is happening, yet there is also consensus that there is a need for improving cooperation and coordination in anti-trafficking efforts in the city. Several systems are not connected and/or on the same page about what is needed to prevent and respond to human trafficking in the landscape.
- The Louisville community needs more understanding of available resources and procedures after identifying people who have experienced or are experiencing human trafficking.
- There are strengths and gaps in services for victims and survivors of human trafficking.
- There is a clear need for increased opportunities for awareness and education about human trafficking for service providers and systems in the landscape.

Executive Summary Cont.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered to the community as potential ways to address the social problem of human trafficking in Louisville, Kentucky:

- Implement trauma-informed training in all systems and all social service agencies serving human trafficking victims and survivors.
- Implement universal screening procedures to identify survivors of human trafficking.
- Implement broad training to multiple systems, organizations, staff, and volunteers.
- Ensure a commitment to training for law enforcement.
- Increase access to services that assist with basic needs.
- Continually engage survivors at every level.
- Focus on racial equity in the provision of all services and systems change.
- Create an urgent and intentional focus on system-involved youth and risk factors for youth.
- Improve access to emergency and safe housing specific to trafficking victims.
- Ensure adequate and appropriate levels of public and private funding.
- Improve cross-agency coordination and collaboration among partners in the anti-trafficking community.
- Support and uphold organization and system capacity-building efforts.
- Future research is needed to explore other issues intertwined with the causation of human trafficking in Louisville and the state of Kentucky.
- Commit to improving data collection.
- Build collaborative coalitions to push for policy changes to address system-level issues.

The Issue

Human trafficking, also known as *trafficking in persons*, is a complex global social problem and a crime that involves the exploitation of humans for monetary gain or personal benefit for the traffickers and buyers (U.S. Department of State, 2020). Victims' human rights are routinely violated in numerous ways, as traffickers and buyers view and treat trafficked persons like commodities. Human trafficking has been identified as the fastest growing and most lucrative organized crime in the 21st century (Elrod, 2015). Human trafficking is often referred to as a “hidden crime”, in which perpetrators take advantage of power imbalances and coerce, control, and intimidate their victims into silence (Department of Homeland Security, 2021). Many victims of this crime are vulnerable, marginalized, oppressed, and/or living in poverty. These factors, coupled with the ongoing demand for labor and sex services, fuel the success of the human trafficking industry (Zimmer & Gournelos, 2014). Human trafficking is driven by a high reward, low risk dynamic.

Human trafficking is an ever-present and growing crime in the United States. It is frequently hidden from the public and professionals who encounter or interact with victims (Department of Homeland Security, 2021). The United States serves as a source, transit, and destination country for human trafficking. Human trafficking is a crime plaguing both legal and underground illegal industries, affecting foreign nationals and U.S. born citizens, minors, young adults, and adults. In the U.S. federal and state laws recognize that human trafficking is the exploitation of another individual for labor and/or commercial sex through fraud, force, or coercion. The exclusion of the requirement of “force, fraud, or coercion” applies to any U.S. child citizen or foreign-born child involved in a commercial sex act under 18.

Traffickers prey on the economic and psychological vulnerabilities of victims to keep them in their control. Traffickers can be parents, other relatives or family friends, intimate partners, employers, government officials, service providers, peers in victims' communities, gangs or criminal networks, other trafficked persons, smugglers, or strangers. These individuals or groups are skilled at using tactics to avoid detection of the crime from governments, law enforcement officials, and the general public. Victims are often unaware they are victims of a crime or have limited opportunities to escape their traffickers or seek help (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020).

Populations Impacted

Victims of human trafficking can be of any age, including minors, young adults (18-24) and adults; come from cities, suburbs, and rural areas; hold citizenship in the U.S. or are classified as an immigrant and/or undocumented person; and identify with any race, socio-economic category, ethnic group, nationality, religion, sexual orientation and/or gender.

Certain demographic groups in the United States have been identified to be at increased risk of human trafficking. Individuals vulnerable to human trafficking include children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, including foster care; runaway and homeless youth; unaccompanied foreign national children without lawful immigration status; individuals seeking asylum; American Indians and Alaska Natives, particularly women and girls; individuals with substance use issues; racial or ethnic minorities; migrant laborers, including undocumented workers and participants in visa programs for temporary workers; foreign national domestic workers in diplomatic households; persons with limited English proficiency; persons with disabilities; LGBTQ+ individuals; and victims of intimate partner violence or other forms of domestic violence.

In the United States, traffickers compel victims to engage in commercial sex and to work in both legal and illicit industries and sectors, including hospitality, agriculture, janitorial services, construction, restaurants, factories, salon services, massage parlors, retail services, drug smuggling and distribution, and childcare (U.S. Department of State, 2017).



Root Causes of Human Trafficking

As with any social problem or social phenomena, there are a set of “root causes” that contribute to the perpetuation of the problem and unless addressed, the problem will likely not be solved.

- Lack of social or economic opportunities
- Poverty
- Gender and Race-Based Discrimination
- Structural Inequalities
- Demand for inexpensive labor and commercial sex
- Marginalization
- Family and/or Social Disruption
- Family or community systems impacted by abuse, neglect, violence, addiction, and/or cultural discrimination.

Data on Human Trafficking

Due to the hidden nature of the crime and the assumption that trafficking occurrences in the U.S. are likely still frequently underreported, generating accurate numbers of victims is challenging. There is debate on the accuracy of repeated statistics from peer-reviewed literature, advocacy groups, and the media. Some claim these numbers are inflated and unreliable, while others claim the actual numbers of trafficking occurrences in the U.S. are underreported. We recognize this dialogue.

As this debate continues, we draw on the data we currently have available to keep moving forward in order to attempt to answer important questions. We recommend a focus on continuing to answer the need for improving the collection of quality data in the United States for all forms of human trafficking.

This report references and cites a variety of available research and data. We share information from diverse sources related to human trafficking and intersecting issues to strengthen this analysis.



Research and Data Initiatives in Kentucky

There have been several important research and data initiatives in Louisville and Kentucky on human trafficking and child trafficking over the past decade, produced by both researchers and community efforts. The University of Louisville houses the Human Trafficking Research Initiative ([HTRI](#)), a vital community resource. Several organizations have also published data for the community in reports and public releases. Some of these recent local research and community reports on human trafficking include the following:

- [Project Pivot](#): Prevention and Intervention for Victims of Human Trafficking (2021) by Jennifer Middleton, Emily Edwards, Jennifer Cole, Rianna Ayala, and Victoria Dobson
- Kentucky Statewide Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking: [Evaluation of Grant Period, 2017-2018](#) (2019) by Theresa Hayden, Jaime Thompson, and Josh Bowling
- [Analysis and Recommendations: Kentucky](#) (2019) by Protected Innocence Challenge
- Kentucky Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force- [Annual Report](#) (2017) by Kentucky Office of the Attorney General and Catholic Charities of Louisville Enhanced Collaborative Model Grantee Committee
- Labor Trafficking in Kentucky: What We Know So Far (2017) released by the Kentucky Human Trafficking Task Force
- [Youth Experiences Survey \(YES\)](#): Exploring the Scope and Complexity of Sex Trafficking (2016) by Jennifer Middleton, Rebecca Ghent, Maurice Gattis, Dominique Roe-Sepowitz, Rebecca Goggin, and Laura Frey
- [Sex Trafficking of Minors in Kentucky](#): A survey of Kentucky Professionals' Awareness, Knowledge, and Experiences Working with Youth Victims of Sex Trafficking (2013) by Jennifer Cole and Elizabeth Anderson

Laws and Policies in the United States and Kentucky

As understanding of the scope and impact of human trafficking has evolved in the 21st century, international and United States laws and policies have been established to respond to the phenomenon. This brief overview of federal, state, and local policies and laws is provided to increase knowledge related to the importance of laws and policies created to address human trafficking. Descriptions are brief, and this list is not comprehensive. Yet, this information intends to increase understanding and thinking related to current efforts to combat the crime at each level.

Federal Policy

The passage of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act ([TVPA](#)) in 2000 became the first primary contemporary federal law addressing human trafficking in the United States. The U.S Congress reauthorized the TVPA in 2003, 2005, 2008, 2013, and 2019. The TVPA is aligned with the “3P” paradigm—prosecution, protection, and prevention—which continues to serve as the fundamental framework used worldwide to combat human trafficking.

The TVPA strives to create more robust tools for prosecutors, including increased penalties, mandatory restitution for victims, and funding for victim services. Recent reauthorizations gained more traction in promoting victim-centered laws and restitution for victims. Yet, the actualization of funds and services that survivors require remains a challenge for the states across the country. Advocates in the anti-trafficking community suggest using the law for a more rigorous approach to identifying and helping victims and prosecuting traffickers. Using the law to hold perpetrators and consumers accountable and helping liberate and support the victims of human trafficking have seen varying levels of success (Office for Victims of Crime, 2021).

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) launched the [Blue Campaign](#) in 2010 to bring together the components of public awareness, training, victim assistance, and law enforcement investigations.

Federal Policy Cont.

[The Violence Against Women Act of 1994](#) allowed for enhanced sentencing of repeat federal sex offenders; mandated restitution to victims of specified federal sex offenses; and authorized grants to state, local, and tribal law enforcement entities to investigate and prosecute violent crimes against women, among other things. VAWA was reauthorized three times, most recently in 2013. The fundamental goals of VAWA are to prevent violent crime; respond to the needs of crime victims; learn more about crime; and change public attitudes through a collaborative effort by the criminal justice system, social service agencies, research organizations, schools, public health organizations, and private organizations (Congressional Research Service, 2019).

[The Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014](#) requires [title IV-E agencies](#) to develop policies and procedures to identify, document, and determine appropriate services for children under the placement, care, or supervision of a child welfare agency and who are at risk of becoming sex trafficking victims or who are victims of sex trafficking. Under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, states, territories, and tribes are entitled to claim partial federal reimbursement for the cost of providing foster care, adoption assistance, and kinship guardianship assistance to children who meet federal eligibility criteria. The Title IV-E program provides support for monthly payments on behalf of eligible children and funds for related case management activities, training, data collection, and other costs of program administration.

[The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015](#) amends the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) and multiple other federal statutes. It expands the federal response to trafficking in four broad areas: victims' services and benefits; criminal justice; domestic sex trafficking of children; and inter-agency coordination and training, and related areas.

Recent federal legislation passed in 2018 brought new laws regulating the online activities of companies and their involvement in sex trafficking. The Stop Enabling Sex Trafficking Act (SESTA) and Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (FOSTA) amends the Communication Act of 1934 to allow for criminal charges for providers and users of interactive computer services that promote or allow the sexual exploitation of children and sex trafficking of minors and adults.

Federal Policy Cont.

[The Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018](#) represented the most significant reform to federal child welfare policy in decades. The Act includes critical elements that support children and families and aim to prevent a whole host of issues that arise from involvement in the child welfare system, such as being at risk for human trafficking:

- Federal investments in prevention for children at risk of foster care;
- Federal funds specifically for children in foster family homes, or in qualified residential treatment programs, or other unique settings;
- Help to address opioid addiction and other substance abuse;
- Supports youth transitioning from care; and
- Promotes permanent families for children.

The Office on Trafficking in Persons at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families strives to establish a national system that serves survivors of all forms of trafficking by empowering existing service systems, forming partnerships, and coordinating federal and local responses.

[The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000](#) called for the creation of the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons to coordinate anti-trafficking efforts among U.S. federal government agencies. The task force, which consists of 20 agencies across the federal government, is responsible for coordinating U.S. government-wide efforts to combat trafficking in persons.



Federal Government Agencies Involved in Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking:

- Department of State
- Department of Defense
- Department of Justice
- Department of the Interior
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Labor
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Education
- Department of Homeland Security
- Office of the Director of National Intelligence
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- U.S. Agency for International Development
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- Department of Housing & Urban Development

State Policy

Kentucky has had anti-trafficking laws on its books since 2007, yet the efforts to address the issue were strengthened with the passage of the Human Trafficking Victims Rights Act ([HTVRA](#)) in 2013. The HTVRA is meant to equip law enforcement and others in the criminal justice, legal, and child protection systems with training and investigative tools. The law was written with the intent to improve the identification of victims, reduce their trauma, and connect them with the appropriate agencies and organizations that are designed to meet their needs and promote their recovery. A highlight of the law is the inclusion of the “safe harbor” component. This component aims to protect minor victims from prosecution, decriminalize the acts exploited children engage in, and mandates services (child protective services and advocacy services) for their recovery.

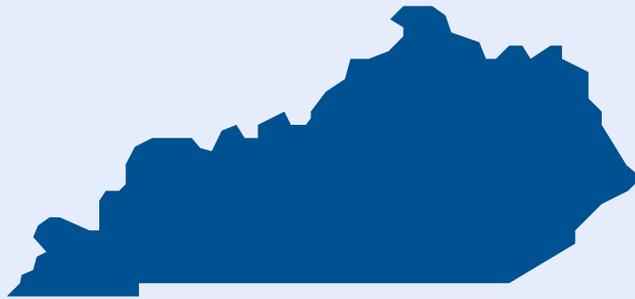
These state entities are essential players in enforcing the statutes indicated in the law:

- The Kentucky Department of Community Based Services is required under the Human Trafficking Victims Rights Act to report to the Legislative Research Commission each year that includes the number and age of children reported as victims of labor and sex trafficking.
- The Department of Kentucky State Police has designated a unit within the department to receive and investigate complaints of human trafficking. They have also taken the lead as a primary channel to field calls made to the national hotline and work with other law enforcement agencies across the state.

The passage of [Kentucky House Bill 2](#) during the 2020 session offers the newest Kentucky legislation to address human trafficking. The new law, which took effect on July 15, 2020, makes it easier to charge and prosecute traffickers and includes a mandate that requires airports, truck stops, bus stations, and train stations to post signs displaying the [National Human Trafficking Hotline](#) number. The Louisville Airport is a central national and international hub, and signage is now posted throughout its facilities. This initiative is just one example of awareness-raising for victims and the general public that the law aims to achieve.

State Policy Cont.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) is significantly involved in combating human trafficking and is connected to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and the Office of Victims of Crime (OVC), which supports Anti-Human Trafficking Task Forces in the individual states in this country. These task forces are composed of state and local law enforcement, investigators, victim service providers, and other key stakeholders. These multidisciplinary anti-human trafficking task forces across the country work to create collaborative action among sectors, disciplines, and entities. [Kentucky's Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force](#) was formed in 2013 to assist in the implementation of the Human Trafficking Victims Reauthorization Act (HTVRA) and improve collaboration between federal, state, and local law enforcement, state agencies, victims and survivors, and other relevant social services.



In 2016, [a grant from the DOJ](#) was the first awarded to Kentucky with the objective to enhance collaboration amongst lead agencies and other stakeholders to address human trafficking at the state level. This federal grant, known as the “Enhanced Collaborative Model (ECM)”, provided support to the Kentucky Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force in its efforts to develop a process for collecting and interpreting data on human trafficking, model protocols for a victim-centered response, increase capacity for investigation, and prosecution of human trafficking cases in Kentucky. The lead law enforcement agency was the KY Attorney General’s Office, and the lead victim service provider was Catholic Charities of Louisville. The federal grant dollars allowed for hiring a specially trained human trafficking investigator and project task manager, money for victim service providers, and funding for the development of a data and research subcommittee to improve and enhance efforts related to data collection on human trafficking in the state. Funding from this grant was not renewed in 2019. The Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force is currently active, although COVID-19 has impacted this group’s pre-COVID-19 meeting schedule and work structure.

Local Policy

There are no local ordinances in the city of Louisville that specifically address human trafficking. Laws for the mandatory reporting of all forms of child maltreatment are impactful to promote awareness of child trafficking in the city.

Several law enforcement entities and investigative bodies are actively involved in response to human trafficking in the city of Louisville and Jefferson County, including the following:

- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI Louisville),
- Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services,
- Kentucky Labor Cabinet,
- Kentucky Office of the Attorney General's Department of Criminal Investigations,
- Kentucky State Police (KSP),
- LMPD Crimes Against Children Unit (CACU),
- LMPD Special Victims Unit and Sex Crimes Squad,
- U.S. Attorney's Office Western District of Kentucky, and
- U.S. Department of Labor District Office (Louisville).

Additionally, the [Metro Louisville Human Trafficking Task Force](#) has been active since its formation in 2007. This multidisciplinary group meets to discuss local protocols, cases, resources, and pinpoint gaps in identifying victims and the provision of services for survivors.



The Project

The overarching objective of this project was to produce a comprehensive landscape analysis of the phenomenon of human trafficking and youth exploitation in Louisville, Kentucky. We utilized a participatory approach and a mixed methods research design to realize this objective. This project specifically explored the experiences and needs of young people in the city and state, with a particular focus on systems-level efforts. With this focus on youth and young adults at risk of or impacted by exploitation and child trafficking, we developed questions to explore prevention, awareness, training, assessment, service provision, public policy, and organizational practice. We widened the lens through the course of the project to examine the landscape of all forms of human trafficking in Louisville and Kentucky to complete a thorough examination of such a complex issue in our society and local landscape. Both a detailed description of the research framework and methods that guided this project are in the appendix.

Process

Collaborative community-based research projects can take many forms. This project grew and flourished in multiple ways throughout the conceptual development of the study design, data collection, and analysis phases. One of the first tasks was to convene a knowledgeable steering committee to act as co-researchers throughout the process. The main objective of the steering committee was to steer the landscape analysis design and process. The steering committee shared knowledge and expertise about human trafficking, at-risk and impacted populations, current structures, and gaps. It provided perspectives and observations on the treatment and engagement of survivors. The involvement of these dedicated members served to strengthen a vital process to identify research focus areas, research questions, and the generation of a list of key informants who were invited to participate in the study. Each member's area of expertise contributed to shaping the research framework. The steering committee actively assisted with developing and carrying out the research by connecting with survivors and other stakeholders, gathering information, and being key informants. The group also helped in data analysis and report framing.

The expectations of members included the following:

- Actively participate in steering committee meetings,
- Respond and assist during the project as necessary,
- Provide information needed for landscape analysis,
- Share thoughts about landscape analysis objectives,
- Help process the data, and
- Act as a reference point and source of information on the current landscape.

Community engagement and feedback were an integral part of this project. We sought community input through six steering committee meetings, individual interviews, group interviews, and the distribution of an electronic survey. Data collection for this project occurred during January-June 2021. Compensation payments in the form of a gift card were offered to all research participants who completed individual or group interviews. Because we were conducting research that involved community members, we developed ethical procedures and protocols. See appendix for our informed consent procedure.

We utilized trauma-informed practices when survivors shared their lived experiences, perspectives, and observations. A survivor and survivor advocate consulted with the research team to create this protocol. Survivors who did complete interviews were checked on a few days after their interviews, and care was given to honor their sharing and choice to participate in the research. Engaging survivors in research and conversations about their lived experiences requires purposeful attention related to ethics and power.

Participants

A diverse group of members of the anti-trafficking community, key stakeholders, service providers, young adults, and survivors were invited to participate in this research. All individual key informants and group interviews were conducted via Zoom because this project was conducted entirely during the COVID-19 pandemic. All participants were informed of their rights before agreeing to participate and were required to complete an informed consent form.

Key Informant interviews were conducted with identified members involved in anti-trafficking efforts in the city and state, community stakeholders, local service providers, survivors, advocates, and (at-risk) youth. In total, 61 informants completed in-depth, semi-structured individual and group interviews. A total of seven survivors participated in interviews, and nine youth (ages 18-24) participated in interviews. There were four focus group interviews with staff and youth at two different local agencies serving youth who were system-involved as minors, living as adults with strength and resilience.

Participants represented various systems and sectors in the landscape, including social services, legal, education, physical and mental health, housing, community, faith-based, child welfare, and criminal justice.

Online survey respondents represented a range of folks working in the landscape, including a diverse group of service providers serving children and adults in the city, faith-based and community groups, leaders in nonprofit agencies, and individuals in organizations who provide direct services to human trafficking survivors. In total, 204 respondents completed the survey. Survey data was cleaned upon survey closure. Of the respondents, the largest category of participants were management-level leaders of Louisville nonprofits and organizations (29% of all respondents); this included executive directors, directors, managers, and supervisors. Other respondents included advocates, community members, and direct service provider staff. The least represented groups included young adults or survivors themselves. (Survivor input, including from young adult survivors of human trafficking, was collected through the above-mentioned key informant interviews.) Respondents' perspectives were informed by the various sectors in which they currently work in, including substance abuse treatment, emergency services and/or food services, senior services, foster care system, veterans' services, criminal justice, and legal services. However, more than half of all respondents worked in three key areas: children and families services, social services, or youth-serving organizations. The sectors least represented by respondents included grassroots or survivor-led organizations, the business sector, and faith-based organizations. [These sectors need to be included in future conversations and research.]

Research Questions

The steering committee designed these research questions to explore for the landscape analysis:

- What are agencies, groups, organizations, and communities doing to address and combat human trafficking in Louisville? Who is doing work in this area, and what does it involve (look like)?
- What are the strengths, challenges, and gaps in these efforts related to the prevention of, and response to, the crime of human trafficking in Metro Louisville?

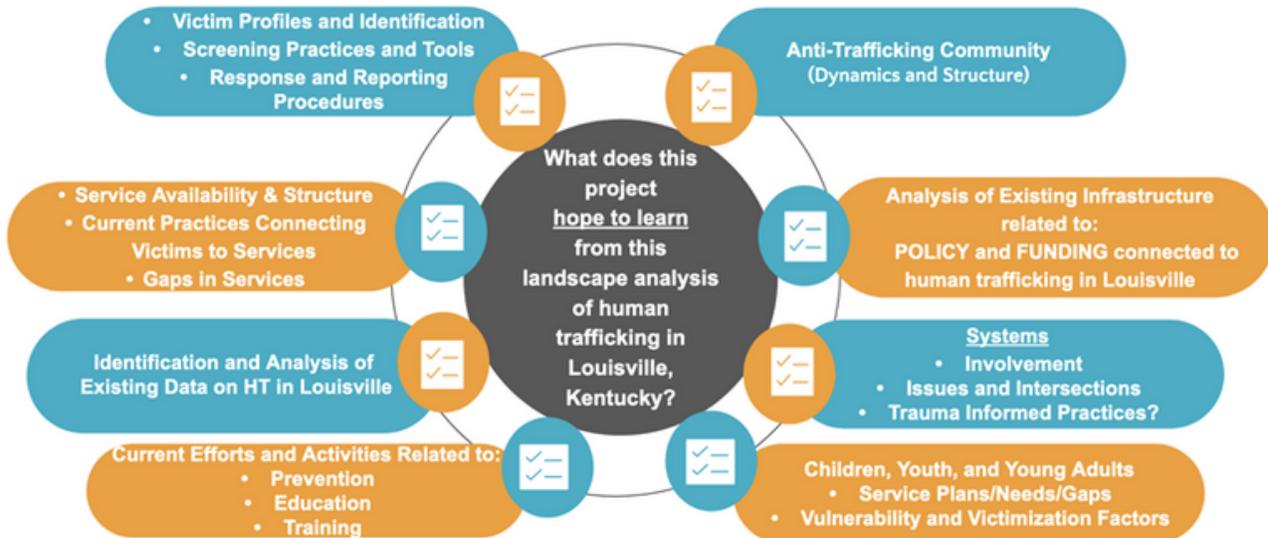
Research Focus Areas

The areas and scope of human trafficking warrant much attention and research. Given the project's parameters, the steering committee chose the following research focus areas for this project. These research focus areas, the research questions, and the commitment to a participatory approach formed the project's foundation.

Research Focus Areas

Overarching Objectives:

We want to understand what currently exists and highlight gaps.



We aim to identify what services and structures Louisville (and Kentucky) have in place to prevent and respond to human trafficking.

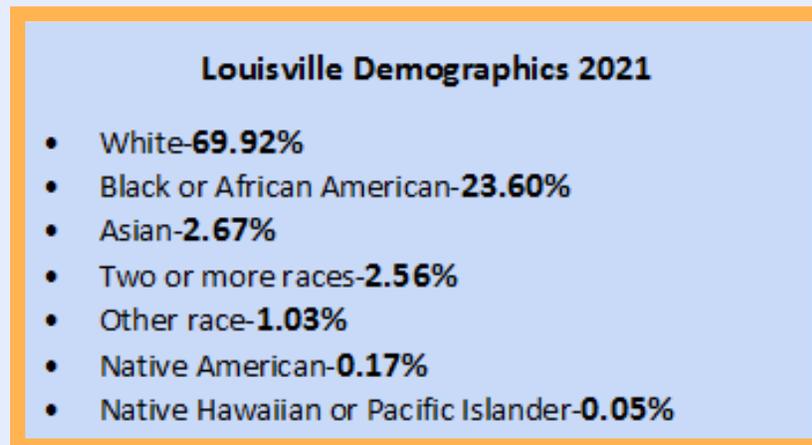
Systems Explored

There are many systems involved in the prevention of and response to human trafficking and, in turn, impact the journey for survivors after they are liberated from their trafficking situations. The steering committee identified over a series of several meetings several systems that are involved in Louisville, Kentucky's landscape. Learning about each system's role in human trafficking was a primary goal of the project. The process revealed learning about many of these systems, but future research will have to fully inform the landscape, as timing, scope, and resources constrained a complete look into each of these systems.

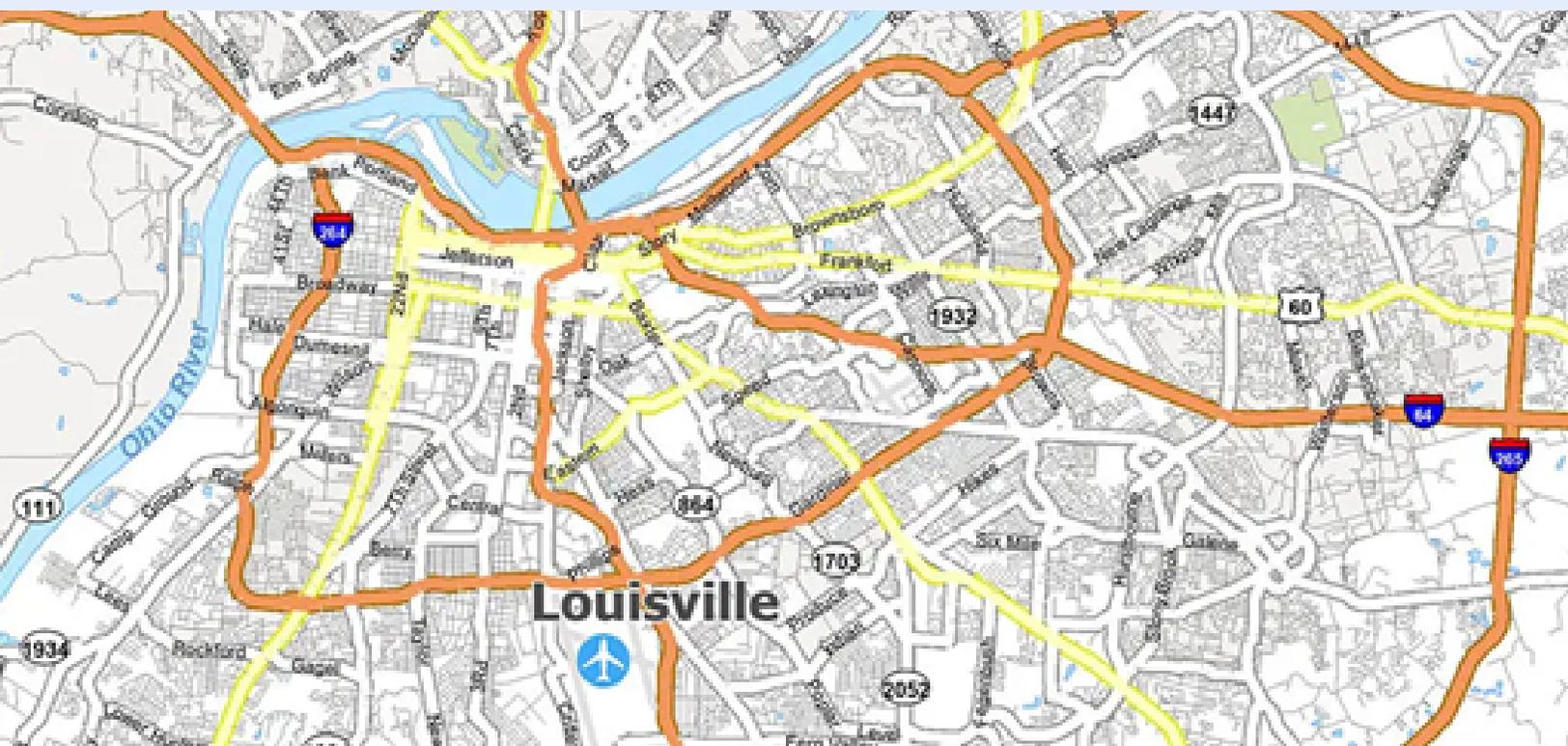


Overview of the Landscape

- **Population:** Louisville is the largest city in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, with a 2021 population of 615,924. Census Bureau data shows a diverse population of Louisville/Jefferson County residents.



- **Location:** Louisville's [map](#) contains multiple interstates, including I-65, I-75, I-64, and I-71, and is also host to several high-profile events, including the Kentucky Derby and NCAA Basketball Championship. It has been posited that these factors increase traffic in the commercial sex market and lead to increased trafficking of adults and youth for labor and sex in the city.



- **Public School System:** With the largest public school system in the state, Jefferson County Public Schools operates 150 schools with more than 101,000 students, making it the 27th largest school district in the United States.
- **Poverty:** High poverty zip codes and underserved communities are in the landscape, with historical inequities continuing to plague identified populations. According to a Metro Human Relations Commission [report](#), Louisville is a deeply segregated city, with about half of all residents surrounded by people of the same race. Kentucky had the fourth highest child poverty rate in the U.S. in 2019. Rural and urban children in Kentucky are growing up in impoverished communities and are facing many barriers associated with poverty and the low-incomes of their families. Black and Latinx children in Jefferson County are four times as likely to be living in poverty in comparison to the white children they live near and go to school with.
- **Louisville’s Social Service Agencies Sector:** The Louisville nonprofit infrastructure is a crucial part of the service sector. Recent surveys show that the COVID-19 pandemic lost the sector's earned revenue and reduced staff numbers. They have had to readjust and shift how they deliver services due to COVID-19. According to the [Center for Nonprofit Excellence](#), some of these changes will hinder the social services sector from having the desired reach and impact planned for in strategic plans made before the pandemic.
- **Louisville Metro Government:** Louisville Metro Government (LMG) oversees and provides multiple services in the landscape, including the administration of the Mayor and City Council. Louisville Metro’s Strategic Plan states that “Louisville Metro Government is the catalyst for creating a world-class city that provides all its citizens with safe and vibrant neighborhoods, great jobs, a strong system of education and innovation, and a high quality of life. The stated [vision](#) is that “Louisville is a safe city of lifelong learning and great jobs, wellness, and compassion.” In a [2021 State of the City address](#), Louisville's Mayor shared that the city’s main challenges include eliminating COVID-19, rebuilding Louisville’s economy, advancing the city’s racial equity and justice goals, reimagining public safety, and reducing gun violence. Louisville Metro Council is made up of 26 districts.

- **Relevant Commercial Industries:** The travel, hospitality, transportation, and service industries are essential players to engage in anti-trafficking efforts in the United States. Additionally, Louisville’s and Kentucky’s historic horse industry and agricultural sectors have known ties to human trafficking. Each of these industries has a responsibility in helping to end human trafficking in our city. UPS and TARC (Transit Authority of River City) both provide training to employees on human trafficking. These practices are a good start, but there is much more to be done. In 2018, the Kentucky Senate passed a resolution ([Number 149](#)) encouraging residents, employees, and agencies in Kentucky to book travel and events signatories of the Tourism Child Protection Code of Conduct, which requires companies to develop measures to combat child/human trafficking. Kentucky does not currently have a law addressing the issue of training employees of lodging facilities about human trafficking, but some hotel chains have created internal training procedures. Delta and American Airlines are also actively delivering education and training to employees regarding the potential signs to look for in order to recognize when a trafficker is traveling with a victim.
- **Legal and Underground Sex Industries:** A snapshot of the legal sex industry in Louisville includes close to 30 strip clubs with options for nude, topless, and bikini dancers; escort services; phone/live social media sex lines; and at least five sex shops and adult stores. The illegal or underground industries in Louisville include illicit massage and spa businesses, websites advertising sexual services (which are also ranked and reviewed) that connect the buyer with various populations, including minors, and at least 70 options for erotic massage locations featured on publicly available websites.



Trafficking of Children and Youth

Globally, one-third of victims of human trafficking are children (under age 18 years old), an alarming number that has tripled over the past 15 years, according to the [UN Office on Drug and Crimes](#). This trend is further impacted by the increased vulnerabilities of the COVID-19 pandemic, including increases in poverty, loss of housing, food insecurity, increased isolation, increased domestic violence, and school closures. Early in the pandemic, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children [noted](#), for example, an increase from 2 million to 4.2 million reports of online exploitation from March to April 2020. As [reported](#) in the Journal for Medical Pediatrics Network, "The COVID-19 pandemic not only exposed inequities, but it also exacerbated them."

For many mandated reporters of child trafficking, including educators, early educators and childcare workers, pediatricians, and social workers, in-person interactions with children were [vastly reduced and restricted during the pandemic](#), resulting in under-reported case counts.

This report distinguishes human trafficking of children (ages 0-17 years old) and young people (ages 18-24 years old) and the human trafficking of adults (all age groups 18 years old and over) to allow for the exploration of differences in risk factors, prevention, victim identification, and service delivery in the Louisville area. Specifically, this is to allow for addressing the increased vulnerability of children and youth and any gaps in services. Preliminary interview and survey findings demonstrate fragmentation of the system of care, which may result in a gap in services for young persons transitioning from children's services to adult services (especially ages 18-21 years old), including screening and identifying victims of human trafficking, services, or prevention efforts. The report further addresses different forms of human trafficking: exploitation of labor, human trafficking for sexual exploitation and abuse, and human trafficking for both labor and sexual exploitation and abuse, as victims' needs and service delivery will differ accordingly.

Trafficking of children and young adults is happening in Louisville and Kentucky. In this report, researchers focus on children, youth, and young adults in the findings and recommendations section of this report.

Sex and Labor Trafficking

Sex and labor trafficking cases have been identified in the landscape. Statistics provided by the National Human Trafficking Hotline ([NHTH](#)) show that there has been a total of 2,829 contacts from Kentucky (2007-2019), resulting in 1,734 victims and survivors identified. Law enforcement agencies are increasing investigations and prosecuting traffickers in Kentucky (Hayden, Thompson, and Bowling, 2019). The Bakhita Empowerment Initiative reports that from 2016-2019 there were 108 program participants, with 95 adults and 13 minors receiving services. Of the 108 survivors, 82% were female, 15% were male, and 2% were transgender; type of trafficking reported was 67% sex, 31% labor, and 1% both; and citizenship status was 66% U.S. and 34% foreign national. The Kentucky Attorney General's Office [reported](#) they identified and investigated 139 cases of human trafficking in 2020.

We found a rich landscape of services available to sex trafficking survivors during our study, some of which were funded with federal dollars and other service programs funded locally. Survivor-led programs fill gaps with drop-in centers, housing and substance abuse programs, and offer a community with other survivors. We discovered programs that provided mental health services and legal assistance specific to sex and labor trafficking survivors. Faith and community organizations have been at the forefront of addressing human trafficking in the city since the 2010s, adding advocacy, awareness, prevention, and provision of essential services to the services landscape. Gaps in comprehensive treatment services for sex trafficking survivors were noted and discussed frequently during the project.

Currently, there is a limited understanding of labor trafficking and its prevalence in Louisville and other Kentucky cities and communities. This was reflected in interviews and survey data collected throughout the project. Anti-human trafficking awareness, training, and service efforts in the landscape continue to focus primarily on sex trafficking involving U.S.-born individuals and minors who have been trafficked for sex. Few service organizations are supporting foreign-born survivors of human trafficking in Louisville and throughout Kentucky. Survivors of labor trafficking often seek access to critical public benefits (e.g., housing, medical care, food stamps, transportation) and immigration crime victim visas ([U visas](#) and [T visas](#)), which they are qualified for if they are willing to cooperate with law enforcement and meet other criteria listed in the federal laws.

Labor trafficking cases that have been identified in the landscape have been connected to agriculture, domestic service, restaurant or food services, construction, and hospitality.

Findings

The main findings presented in this report reflect four identified themes that aligned with deductive methods and strategies established during the study design and identification of research focus areas established by the steering committee and research team.

We interpreted connections in the data collected with the study's established guiding research questions, research focus areas, peer-reviewed literature, and other data sources. Themes and subthemes were assigned to the rich data during analysis using deductive coding procedures, primarily descriptive and pattern coding (Saldana, 2009).

Focus Areas (Themes)

- Awareness, Education, and Training
- Survivor/Victim Services and Needs, with a Particular Focus on Housing Needs
- Focus on Children and Young Adults
- Collaboration and Coordination

Although some of the landscape structures and systems were only identified and not examined or analyzed during the project, we heard about them during data collection. We confirmed their connections to the response to and prevention of human trafficking in the city. We are purposeful to note these observations and weave them into the discussion.

Recommendations

Highlighted recommendations in this report include information obtained from community input during this study, research on best practices, insights related to promising practices, and challenges to address questions that need more investigation. Several recommendations are included for the community to consider in future planning, funding cycles, and policy conversations. These recommendations are for all members of the systems that we explored and for all sectors of our community. They are rooted in equity, compassion, and accountability.

The anti-human trafficking field has only recently matured to a place where promising practices can be identified. Key findings from this analysis hold important implications for future research and policy change efforts. Each section of this report includes various recommendations, and many of these could also be codified in policy at the organizational, local, state, or federal levels to ensure their implementation. Recommendations in this report are presented with a call to action to examine current practices and improve our efforts as we move forward in addressing this social injustice.

Resources

References are at listed at the end of the report.

Each section of this report contains hyperlinks for resources and connections with additional information that readers may consult or review as they work to improve their knowledge and better inform their response to human trafficking in the city and state.

The project's *Online Survey Tool* can be accessed using this [link](#).

There are 5 appendices in this document, which include:

- Appendix 1: Research Framework and Methods
- Appendix 2: Key Informant Informed Consent Form
- Appendix 3: Key Informant Interview Protocol
- Appendix 4: Types of Questions Explored in the Research
- Appendix 5: Steering Committee's Organizational Spotlights

Please contact us at mcnarygroup.com for inquires about this project's methodology and process.

Focus Area # 1

Awareness, Education, and Training

Awareness

Public outreach to expand general awareness in Louisville and statewide continues to trend upward, with a wide variety of groups and organizations championing these efforts. Since 2007, the year human trafficking laws were passed in the legislature, Kentucky and Louisville experienced a substantial increase in attention to human trafficking and the development of programs and efforts to increase awareness and support for survivors.

Misinformation and “myths” continue to undermine efforts to identify and assist victims and at-risk individuals and groups. Human trafficking is sometimes misunderstood and misrepresented by the media and other influential individuals in various communities, which results in others perpetuating false or distorted narratives of the different actors involved in the crime (Zimmer & Gournelos, 2014). This was discussed frequently by participants in the project, with some reporting that they had only recently learned more about the dynamics of human trafficking in the United States and Louisville. There were also comments on recent conspiracy theories and false information shared on social media about child and human trafficking in this country during the 2020-2021 period. Louisville is at a critical juncture in the continuing work to raise awareness, and findings from this analysis reflect both successes and challenges with these efforts.

An example of a recent [awareness campaign in Kentucky](#) was disseminated through Attorney General Cameron's Office of Trafficking and Abuse Prevention and Prosecution (TAPP). In January 2021, they launched the statewide human trafficking awareness campaign called "Your Eyes Save Lives." The campaign combats human trafficking by raising awareness of the signs of human trafficking and empowers citizens, law enforcement, and community leaders to report suspected trafficking.

“I work in tourism and hospitality so I am aware of trafficking, but I am not very educated on how my industry and business can help.”- Survey Respondent

Researchers asked key informants about their understanding of the definition of human trafficking. We asked participants, "How do you define and describe 'human trafficking' to those you communicate with?" Of the 61 key informants, 56% reported knowledge of the federal law's definition of force, fraud, and coercion; 41% were able to articulate the definition of both labor and sex trafficking; 34% referenced only sex trafficking in their response; and 16% said they did not have a clear understanding to respond to the question.

Of the 204 survey respondents who answered a question about their awareness, a mean score of 3.4 was reported out of 5 on a level of awareness of human trafficking.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with five being the highest, how would you rate your level of awareness regarding human trafficking?



0 1 2 3 4 5

"We serve thousands of people a year but do not ask about trafficking experiences, so I am not sure how many people we've served have actually experienced trafficking."

- Survey Respondent

"I just learned about sex trafficking a couple years ago, and I do see it in the west end community. (Black) girls and women are often taught that their bodies are commodities. There is a lot of victim shaming and victim blaming. It's hard to know how to handle it when we see it...even after it is recognized. I don't know how to address it or help these women escape it. It hurts. We have to do more about the sex/power dynamic and address the poverty and violence. Traffickers and buyers just keep at it because they know they can get away with it." - Key Informant

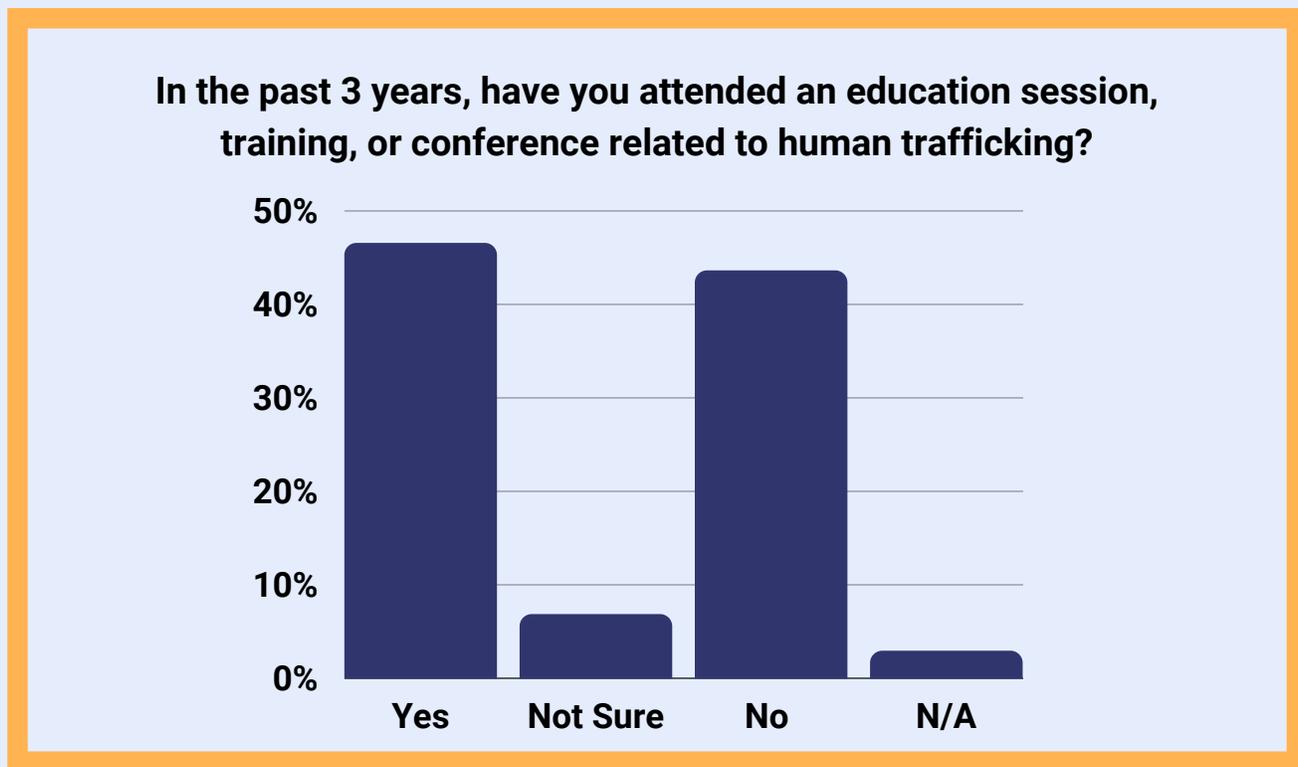
Education

There was high consensus that more efforts and energy should be executed to increase education in the city and state. We recognize that “education” and “training” are often used interchangeably to describe participation in knowledge building. We separate training in its own category in these findings to reference skill building to increase capacity to recognize and serve victims and survivors.

Informants and survey participants shared that they have engaged in different education sessions and gained information from awareness materials offered in the landscape. A common term for some education initiatives is “Human Trafficking 101” Generally, this education's content and focus builds general foundations for the participants.

Of the 61 key informants who participated in interviews, 55% reported participating in an education session or training.

Of all the participants in the survey, only about half of respondents reported that they had attended an education session, training, or conference related to human trafficking.

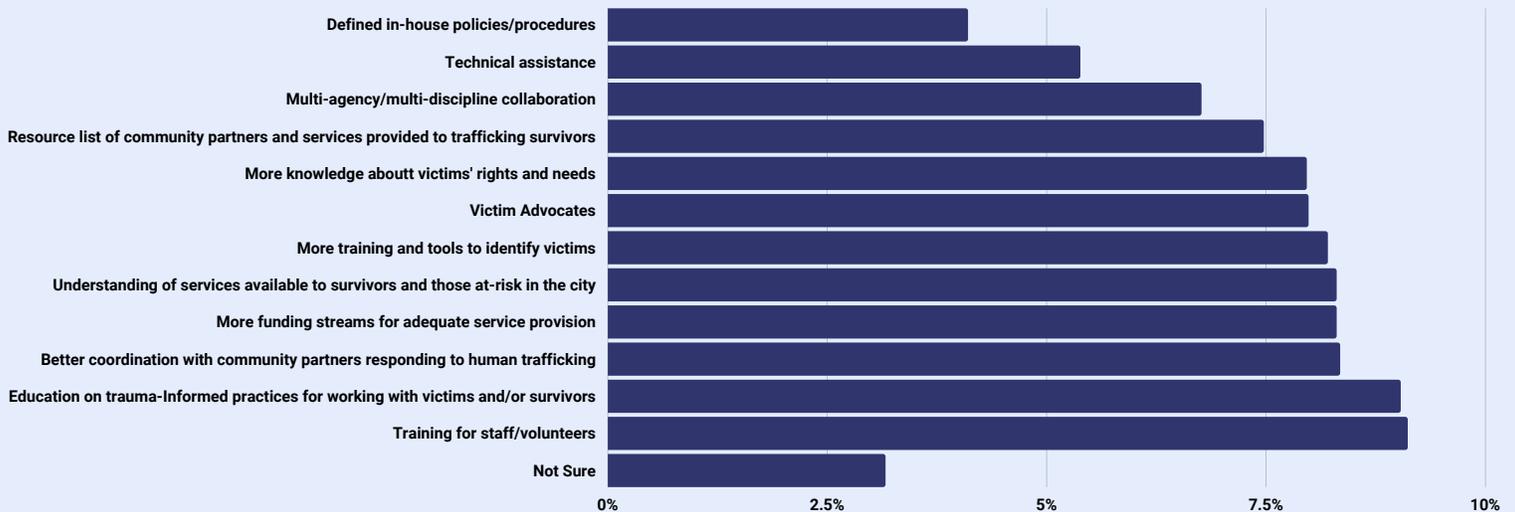


“Community orgs seem to be ahead of the game. It is the criminal justice system professionals who need the very basic training on identifying signs of human trafficking.”
- Survey Respondent

Training

Information from federal agencies, research published in peer-reviewed literature, data from those who intervene with trafficking victims, and voices of trafficking survivors themselves show that focused evidence-based training in anti-trafficking efforts and interventions are needed across a broad sector of systems. Federal agencies involved in combating trafficking recommend targeted training and technical assistance for allied professionals who are likely to encounter victims of human trafficking. The figure below shows that some of the most significant areas of identified needs in Louisville include staff and volunteer training on human trafficking, education on trauma-informed practices for working with victims of human trafficking, more training and tools to identify victims, and more knowledge about victims' rights and needs.

What do agencies and organizations in our community MOST need to improve the services they provide to trafficking victims and/or at-risk populations?

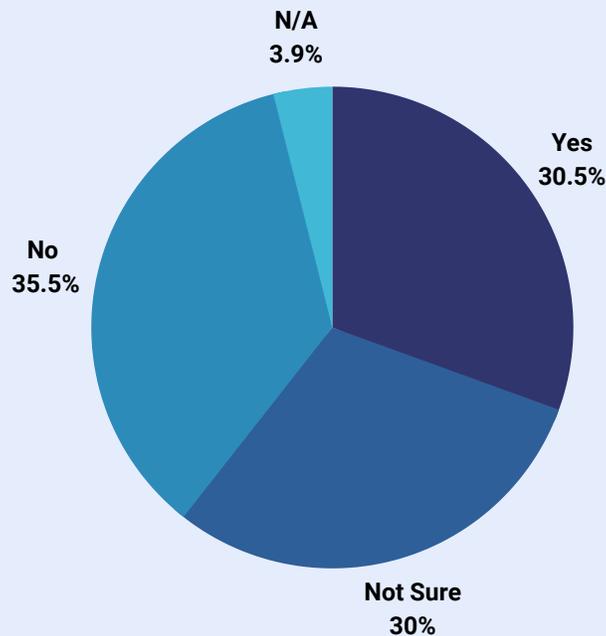


“Trafficking is often talked about around Derby, but it should be a comprehensive public awareness campaign throughout the year, a commitment by organizations to provide training and increase access to services for victims.”-Key Informant

“Community education and awareness does not have a focus on violation of human rights or exploitation of vulnerability. Community education and awareness focuses primarily on sex trafficking and most recently the trafficking of minors. These forms of human trafficking gain attention because they violate our sense of decency. The community is less interested in the exploitative sources of our food and products that make life easier and convenient. These forms of human trafficking do not seem to raise an uncomfortableness that is seen with sex trafficking.” - Key Informant

Researchers asked key informants and survey participants about training specific to their understanding and reporting activities of human trafficking. The figure below displays responses from those who participated in the survey. Just 31% of the survey respondents answered yes to this question. More training on recognizing and reporting suspected human trafficking occurrences is needed for staff and volunteers serving children and adults in the city.

Have staff and/or volunteers at your agency received training to recognize and report human trafficking and child trafficking?



"Since I first attended the UNA human trafficking conference in 2018, I have had my eyes opened to the problem of human trafficking. I go to as many events about trafficking as I can, and I am proud to say I have helped two victims understand their situation was sex trafficking." - Key Informant

"I am a firm supporter of providing comprehensive education about sex, boundaries, and human rights for children and young people in the city and state. Our kids in this state suffer due to lack of information that will equip them with vital information to help them grow in healthy ways... and you know, protect themselves. This is something I have been advocating for since the late 90's when I started this work. Sex is still taboo, talking to adolescents about sex is still taboo, but now more than ever, with the way kids are exposed to so much on the internet, we have to take urgent action." - Key Informant

Training on human trafficking is happening in the landscape, and the information provided in this project offers a glimpse into the strengths and gaps in these activities.

Survey participants were asked, “In the past three years, have you attended an education session, training, or conference related to human trafficking?” They were also asked to indicate the category or type of human trafficking focused on if they answered yes to the question.

Survey respondents indicated they had received education or training on the following topics:

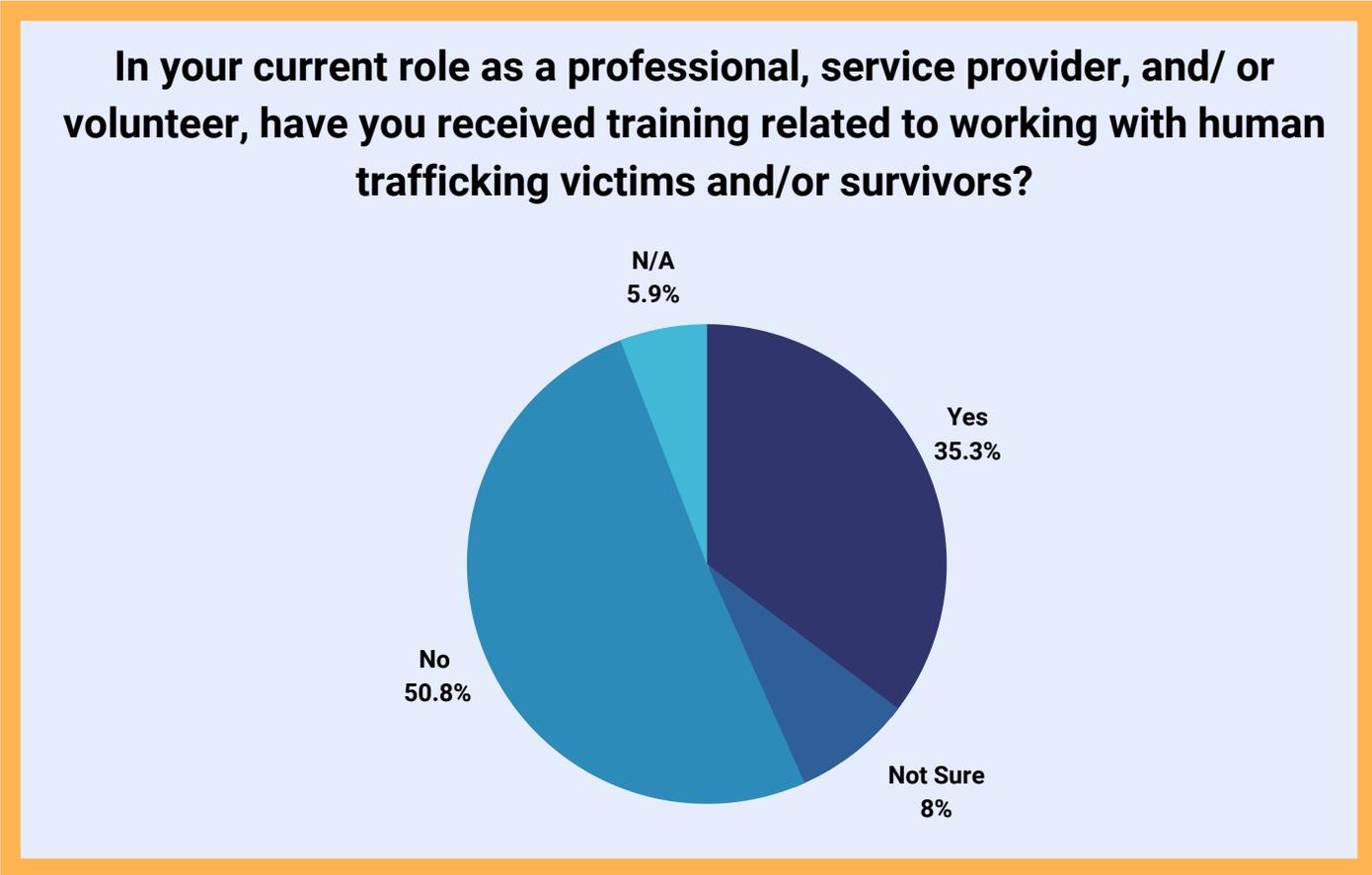
- Human Trafficking 101 - 40%
- Adult Sex Trafficking - 31%
- Child Labor Trafficking - 21%
- Human Trafficking Conference - 21%
- Adult Labor Trafficking - 20%
- Specialized Local/State training - 15%
- Specialized National Trafficking - 10%

When participants noted they had received organizational training for staff and volunteers on human trafficking, participants’ responses included learning about human trafficking: 1) as part of induction training or provided in-house by the organization, 2) as part of in-service or one-of training provided by external organizations, or 3) annual / ongoing training. Examples of the content in these training pieces included assessing and identifying survivors, training for supervisors, or as part of core staff curriculum (e.g., 40-hour training curriculum on human/child trafficking).

[The Southeast Regional Human Trafficking Advisory Group](#) an initiative of the [Administration of Children and Families](#), Region 4 Office, developed and adopted the *Guiding Principles for Agencies Serving Survivors of Human Trafficking*. This resource includes 15 principles, including ensuring a survivor-centered approach that is culturally and linguistically appropriate. It also provides guidance for ethics and professionalism for those in the sector to refer to and commit to implementing with clients. This resource includes a self-assessment for departments or agencies to provide additional support in evaluating policies and procedures specific to implementing the *Guiding Principles for Agencies Serving Survivors of Human Trafficking*.

Eight key informants reported that they are actively using this “valuable tool” for informing the anti-trafficking work in their organizations. Three key informants expressed encouragement that more agencies use this tool to develop and implement agency standards of care, qualify agencies' certification, and inform research initiatives. The Guiding Principles training has been provided in Louisville through Catholic Charities of Louisville and the HHS Region 4 Human Trafficking Advisory Board. Please contact these organizations to connect to training, to learn about these principles, or to find additional resources to better implement them in practice.

Recognizing the limited capacity to address labor trafficking, Catholic Charities of Louisville collaborated with the HHS Region 4 Human Trafficking Advisory Board to host the first national [Labor Trafficking Conference](#) in October 2018, to build capacity locally and nationally to identify and support survivors of labor trafficking. The second Labor Trafficking Conference was held in Louisville, Kentucky, in October 2021 to continue addressing gaps and lack of awareness specific to labor trafficking.



*Analysis of these findings in this section paints a picture of awareness, education, and training related to human trafficking being delivered within the local landscape.

Organizations Cited as Offering Human Trafficking Awareness, Education, and/or Training

The following organizations were reported to be actively facilitating awareness campaigns, education sessions, conferences, and/or trainings that address broad or specific topic areas on human trafficking for various audiences in Louisville. This list is not exhaustive, yet we report all organizations and groups identified during data collection.

- Catholic Charities of Louisville Bakhita Empowerment Initiative
- Centerstone
- Coalition for the Homeless
- Exploited Children's Help Organization (ECHO)
- Free 2 Hope
- Indiana Protection for Abused and Trafficked Humans
- Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Kentucky Department of Education
- Kentucky Refugee Ministries
- Louisville Metro Office for Women
- Louisville Metro Police Department
- Office of Kentucky Attorney General: Office of Trafficking and Abuse Prevention and Prosecution
- People Against Trafficking Humans (PATH) Coalition of Kentucky
- Safe Passage
- Salvation Army
- Sisters of Charity of Nazareth
- United Nations Association of Kentucky
- University of Kentucky
- University of Louisville Hospital
- University of Louisville Kent School of Social Work
- University of Louisville Women's Center
- University of Louisville Medical School

Recommendations

Louisville and Kentucky must continue to support and build the capacity of all systems and stakeholders to identify and respond to the complex needs of all survivors of human trafficking.

Implement Broad Trauma-Informed Training to Multiple Systems, Organizations, Staff, and Volunteers

Training can significantly be improved among first responders, legal representatives, and other social service providers to know what signs to look for to identify victims, traffickers, and increase knowledge in order to respond to possible trafficking situations. Law enforcement, social service agencies, and health care providers are providing training specific to their purpose. These training and education sessions could be improved with information that presents why it is essential to work together to prosecute, protect, and prevent.

Organizational policy and protocols, tools, and training are needed to identify human trafficking. Creating initiatives to train local businesses to identify and respond to human trafficking is also critical. The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families offers trauma-informed [Resources Specific to Victims of Human Trafficking](#).

This resource provides an overview of the effects of trauma on trafficking victims, enhancing resilience, and widely supported trauma-informed approaches. These tools can increase the likelihood that responses and services do not retraumatize victims and can be used to improve internal practices and organizational policy. All organizations serving clients in this landscape should examine this resource guide and implement trauma-informed practices in their work. Local, state, and federal agencies offer training on trauma-informed practices with youth and adults who have experienced trafficking.

“Where do we need to be? A broad focus on human trafficking through the lens of violating human rights by profiting through sex or labor services requires deeper conversations. These dialogues would necessitate examining the intersectionality (poverty, injustice, discrimination, gender inequity, etc.) of exploitation and demand for power (profit, status, control, oppression). The important thing is that we keep asking the questions. Understanding and examining the landscape of human trafficking will be a non-stop process.” - Key Informant

Recommendations

Create Policy and Structures that Mandate Training and Access to Information

Sometimes to ensure that those who need updated and sustained training on a topical area is to codify the requirements in public policy. Several entities in the state and Louisville could benefit from new or updated public policy in this regard. These trainings would increase awareness, bring basic training on identifying human trafficking, explore ways the system can respond to human trafficking, and how we can build or bring awareness to youth and other at-risk populations. For instance, Kentucky does not have a comprehensive program or state mandate to provide human trafficking education to school personnel in secondary or high schools. Training for educators on risk factors for vulnerable children and learning about the signs of trafficking is available from the Kentucky Department of Education ([KDE](#)) and the Kentucky Attorney General's Office. However, this analysis showed that KDE delivers or connects training to only pockets of groups in the JCPS system, without a structured and inclusive dissemination plan to include all staff, employees, and partners. Other populations who would benefit from training include law enforcement, prosecutors, elected officials, and legislators, among many others.

"I think it is great that this project is happening, but forgive me, I gotta say that we are not going to make any progress until the city's leaders and elected officials wake up to the problem of sex and labor trafficking going on in the city. They are numb to it. People don't want to face it because it means they will have to address it...and that means all the other issues in the city too... like racial unrest and the zip codes facing poverty and violence." - Key Informant

"One of my clients who is an adult woman who was sex trafficked...pretty severe, for years by her uncle...told me that she had been retraumatized multiple times by bad experiences with law enforcement, and a therapist that actually told her she could no longer see her (in the role as therapist) because she couldn't handle it (survivor's trauma). Then she had to put up with the stigma associated with her having HIV, and that she caught it when she was "in the life." She is doing much better, but it just makes me feel for her, because you know it's just wrong how she was retraumatized so much."- Key Informant

Focus Area # 2

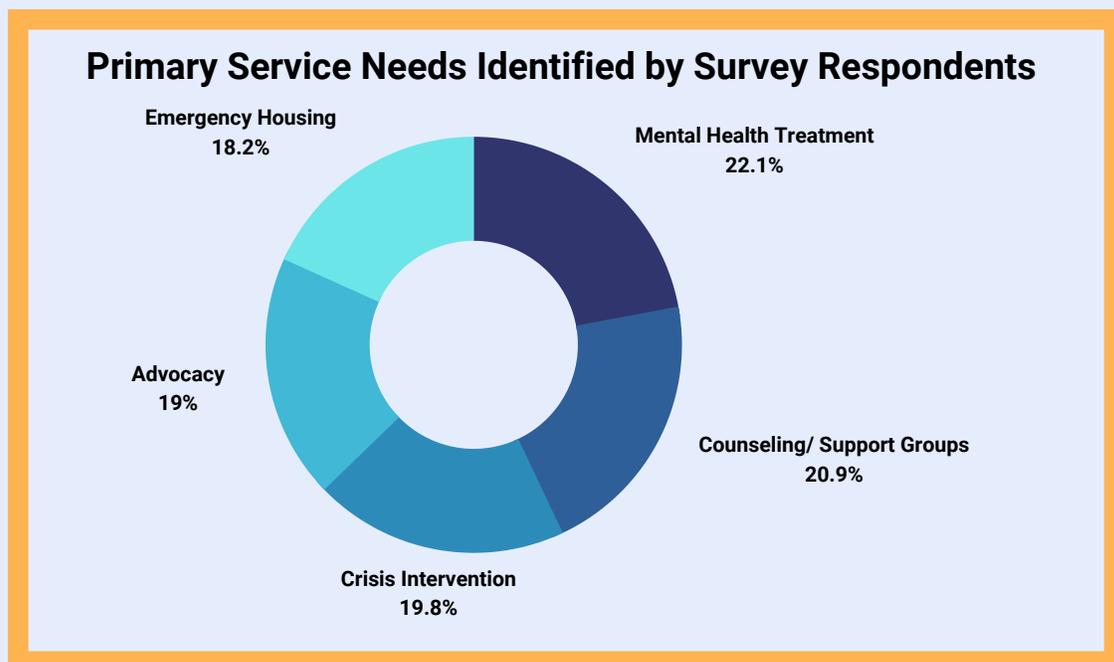
Survivor/Victim Services and Needs

A large percentage of the key informants and survey respondents who provided data for this research project are directly involved in providing services in human service organizations in the landscape. This analysis revealed a real need for an improved understanding of the type of services trafficking survivors require and the availability and identification of services in the landscape.

“Providers in the housing and homelessness field are likely already serving survivors of trafficking without knowing it. Not all survivors will disclose their trafficking experience, and some may not be aware that their exploitation is considered trafficking.” - Key Informant

Availability and Access of Services for Victims and Survivors

The availability of services specific to the needs of child and adult survivors of trafficking is growing in the landscape (city and state). Yet, information collected and analyzed in this research revealed frustration and concerns about the apparent absence of adequate recommended services. The participants frequently shared gaps in services for sex and labor trafficking survivors in this research. An overwhelming number of key informants noted or mentioned the desire to form a more streamlined and connected referral system to assist with supporting and providing for survivors’ needs. Survey respondents also addressed the need for more knowledge and information about connecting survivors to needed services.



Support Services for Human Trafficking Victims

Kentucky's Department for Community Based Services Jefferson Service Region Child Protection Team is the lead agency serving and supporting **minor victims** of sex and labor trafficking. For victims of substantiated human trafficking cases, DCBS provides basic needs, trauma counseling, housing support, medical services, drug treatment, legal services, and many other services. In addition, they refer to the FBI, LMPD's Crimes Against Children Unit, Family & Children's Place, and Catholic Charities for advocacy and investigation.

Catholic Charities is the lead service provider for **adult victims** of human trafficking in the landscape. In addition to traditional case management services (e.g., housing, financial assistance, access to medical care, etc.), they also offer legal services, language access, safety planning, crisis intervention, and victim advocacy.

Trafficking survivors need extensive and ongoing support and resources after leaving their trafficking situation and the control of their trafficker. Comprehensive services and treatment that span a continuum of care from emergency to long-term, ongoing assistance are essential for children and adults who experience human trafficking. Trafficking survivors' needs can be myriad, ranging from housing, safety and fulfillment of basic needs, medical and mental health care services, substance abuse recovery, legal advocacy, and help in connecting to family members and supportive communities. Researchers asked about these needs in interviews and the project survey. We identified the primary services needed by survivors through survey responses: mental health care, support groups, advocacy, safe emergency shelter, and housing. Key informants identified housing, mental health care, substance abuse recovery, and advocacy as the primary service needs of the children, youth, and adults they work with or have identified as potential victims in their current work role.

"Clear path to housing and resources for survivors, like what exists for homeless people through the Continuum of Care." - Survey Respondent

"Resources are really limited, especially with housing needs for victims. We need safe/secure settings outside of hospitalization to address trauma with therapeutic housing." - Survey Respondent

“These women and these young girls who have been hooked on drugs by their traffickers or do it to cope need a safe and trauma-informed program to heal. We don’t have that, and it is really needed.” -Key Informant

***“It’s really only been Bakhita (for referrals). We’ve worked very closely with them for years. Seeing folks in healthcare, you know we see all kinds of things, including trafficking. Things have shifted. I have been doing this before extensive health insurance...so oftentimes in the past we had folks that had no health insurance. With more coverage with Medicaid, it’s been different because we can get more folks referred and get them connected to different providers...I have referred a number of survivors to different psychiatrists and LCSW’s.”
-Key Informant***

Even when victims are identified, many first responders, including law enforcement and victim service providers are unfamiliar with the range of services available. They are regularly not in compliance with current laws. This concern was noted frequently among key informants during interviews. Another frustration expressed by 22 key informants centered on the absence of funding and services to provide the recommended and required services called for by state and federal laws. This gap was identified and will require a more profound examination to analyze barriers and challenges in this area. Lack of funding and capacity to deliver services were the top areas discussed during key informant interviews.

“The laws are complicated. Navigating them can be frustrating and challenging. Time is a major issue.” - Key Informant

“We need more cooperation with law enforcement; training with police to prevent arrests of human trafficking survivors.” - Survey Respondent

“We need a ‘system process’ for people who are experiencing trafficking where they get all their needs met (immediate access to housing, medical services, mental health services, legal, childcare, etc.)” - Survey Respondent

Key informants and survey respondents reported that funding streams to address human trafficking in the city, for the most part, are not strategically coordinated. Federal funding is present for [some areas](#), with the city and other private funding filling gaps in Louisville.

Researchers heard about some state-specific funding streams for victims of the crime during the project. The "[Human Trafficking Victims Fund](#)" was created as a separate revolving fund within the Office of the Attorney General's Office. [The Kentucky Child Victims' Trust Fund](#) and [Kentucky Crime Victims' Compensation Fund](#) are also current funding sources for human trafficking victims/survivors. Child victims of trafficking who receive services at Family and Children's Place/Kosair Charities qualify for all their care through the Child Victims Trust Fund. Researchers note these victim funding streams were identified during the project. Yet it should be noted, that this research project did not provide enough information to detail how these funds are or are not being effectively utilized in the landscape.

There is a clear need to organize and come together to better understand the complex system of funding. There is also a need to identify connections of funding specific to trafficking survivors.

Researchers in this project discovered that victims of human trafficking would be better served if service providers were trained on services available in the landscape. There was also consensus that more services specific to the needs of victims of all forms of human trafficking are urgently needed in Louisville.

Policies and Procedures/Standards of Care

A common theme identified was a need for intentional screening tools and assessment instruments to identify victims of human trafficking.

"Help providers understand if/how it is an issue facing the families we see. We know our families have risk factors (race, poverty) but we don't see it among our families as far as we know. But what are we missing?"

- Survey Respondent

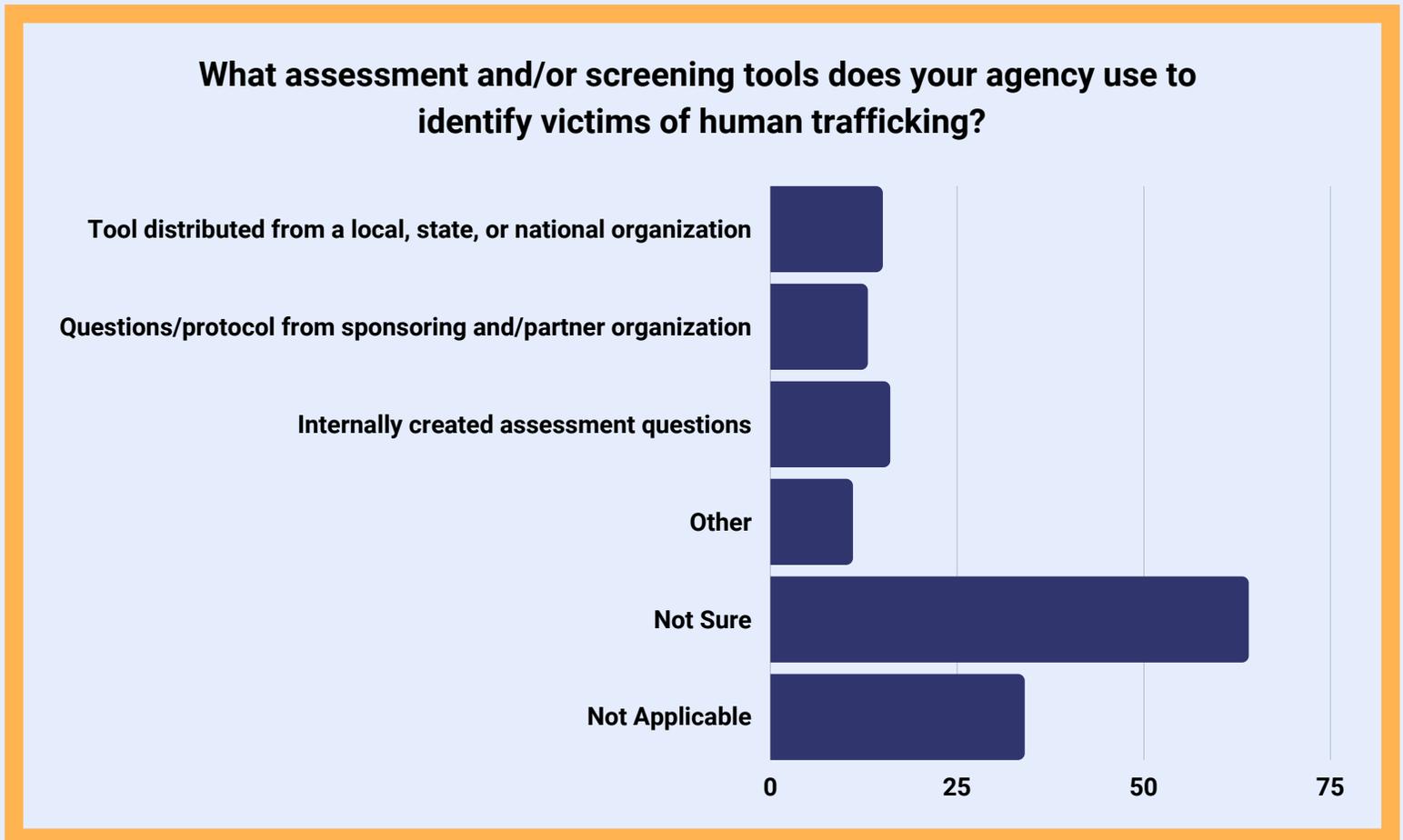
"The onus of identifying victims of human trafficking is on us as service providers, not on the survivors to self-assess, self-identify."

- Survey Respondent

We discovered a gap in screening policies and procedures connected to human trafficking in the landscape during this project. Furthermore, in the agencies that are screening for child or adult trafficking, evaluating the effectiveness of the types of tools being used needs further examination. One human trafficking subject matter expert key informant shared that we need to address the following questions:

- Who is screening for human trafficking in Louisville?
- Does screening include both labor and sex trafficking?
- What screening tools are being utilized?
- Are organizations utilizing validated screening tools? If so, which ones?
- Are there data on the outcomes of screening? If so, where are those data?
- Is human trafficking being differentiated from consensual commercial sexual activity? (That is, is prostitution being conflicted with trafficking?)

We had the capacity to address only the first question. As shown in the figure below, just a small minority of providers identified that they screen for human trafficking. While this is an encouraging sign, more work is needed to fully understand the utility of the tools, including their reliability and validity and how regularly they are used.

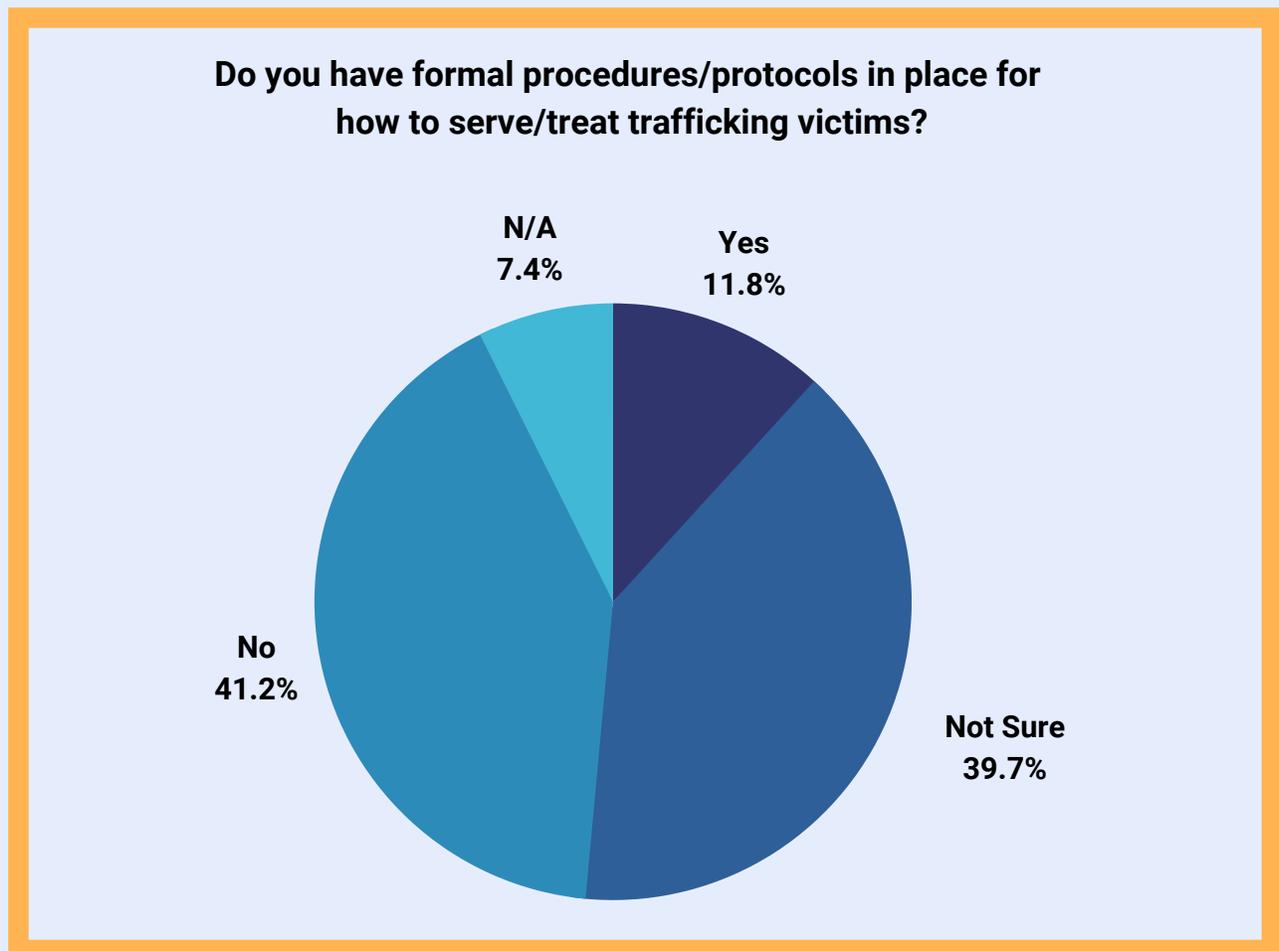


There is agreement amongst stakeholders and advocates in the city and state that we should be intentional and patient when engaging trafficking victims after a trafficking situation has been suspected or confirmed. Trauma-informed care and practices are highly recommended for this population. These individuals often have histories of complex trauma, which means they are not likely to share all their life experiences during the first few encounters with receiving assistance or interventions. They may also exhibit behaviors that some professionals do not fully understand.

A significant area of discussion during interviews centered around how victims are identified and how they are served and treated after the discovery of alleged trafficking.

After victims/survivors of human trafficking are identified, they must receive trauma-informed interventions. The need for effective mental health treatment for survivors was a prominent theme in interviews with informants and in focus groups with staff serving youth who have experienced trauma.

Only 12% of survey respondents reported that formal procedures or protocols are in place for treating victims.



Where protocols were reported to be in place, participants identified these protocols including the following:

- “We are asked to report to police, VOCA specialist if one is available, follow up with face-to-face visit after client experiences victimization, make APS report (if a witness), and provide all other services as needed”
- “We follow the best practices set by the South Eastern Conference for serving human trafficking victims (2018)”
- “DCBS Standard Operating Procedures: 2.15.9 Investigations of Human Trafficking”
- “Human Trafficking Assessment, Medical Exam if required, CPS if new information is given, Safety Plan created, and TF-CBT or Silver Leaf referral”
- “Assessments medical forensic interview therapy”
- [“Crimes Against Children Unit”](#)

“There's an assumption that folks who have experiences with trauma are manipulating or there's not an understanding of their survival behaviors, and how those survival behaviors aren't just going to go away. There's still a lot of questioning of law enforcement and judges and attorneys in response to this. Because we say, okay, we, the system is safe, we'll help you and then they are not treated with trauma-informed practices. Survival behaviors come from trauma, and they don't just disappear when they are identified as needing help. They need productive support, time to really generate a sense of safety.”

- Key Informant

“There's still a great deal of perception that being trauma-informed is about knowing the technical pieces about trauma. And not so much about shifting your perspective of how you respond to another person.” -Key Informant

Trafficking victims usually do not seek counseling or mental health treatment independently and have likely endured intense, ongoing victimization. They may present with depression, dissociative reactions, suicidal ideation, post-traumatic stress disorder, feelings of guilt, shame, and self-mutilation (de Chesnay, 2013). Research indicates that human trafficking victims are often exposed to captivity, ongoing physical and sexual violence, or threats of violence, and brainwashing at the hands of their traffickers (CdeBaca & Sigmon, 2014). Victims may suffer from major depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, panic disorder, eating disorders, suicidal thoughts/ideation, self-harming behaviors, and substance abuse disorders (Macy & Graham, 2012). The key informants in this research study expressed a wide variety of observations and perspectives concerning the mental health needs of victims of trauma (including human trafficking victims).

One key informant shared that our approach to standing with survivors during their healing must include “Choice, Safety, Trust, Peer/Partner Support, and Empowerment” to move forward with addressing mental health for survivors of trauma in the landscape.

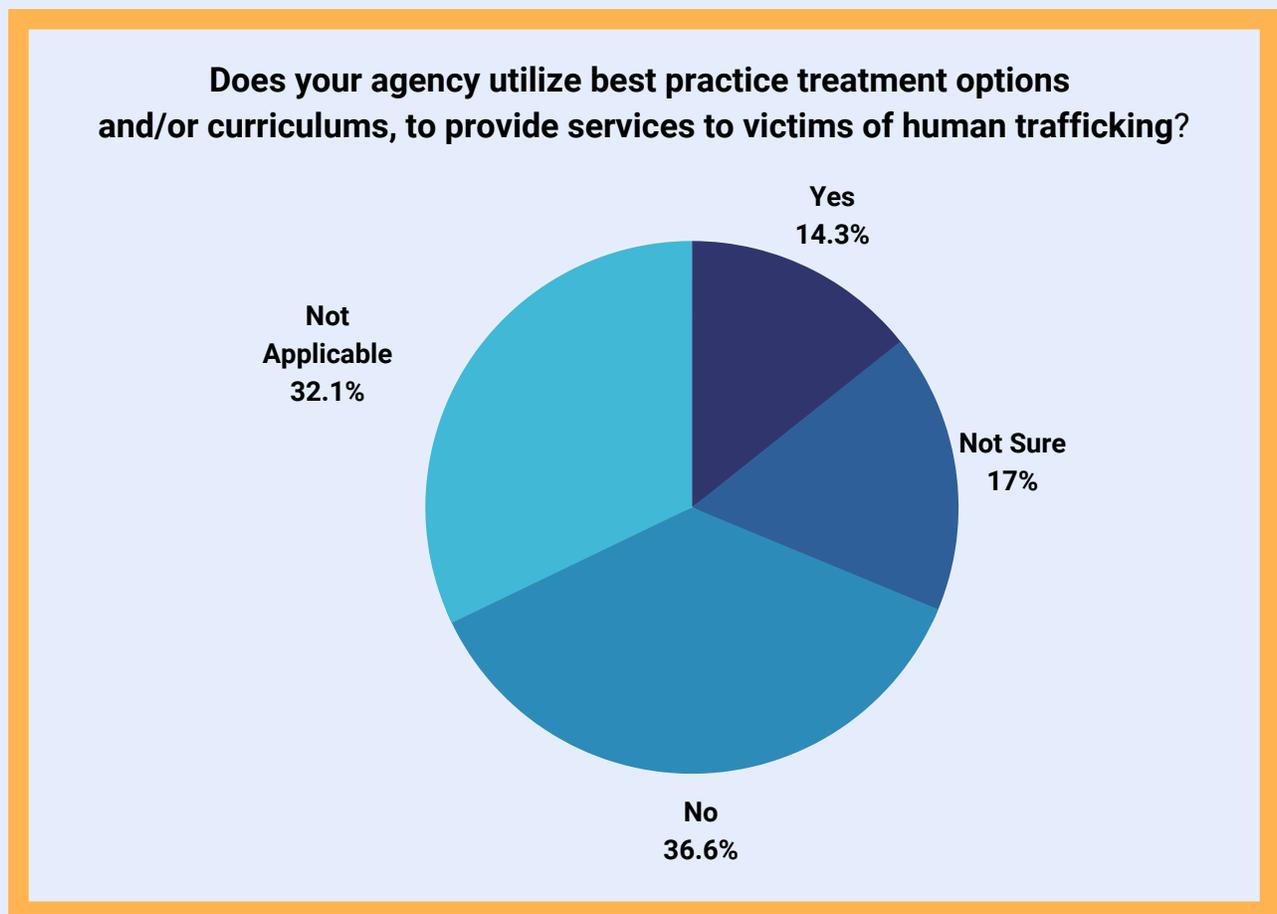
“I came to the U.S. with the thinking I was going to work for a company. I brought my kids. I believed it was legitimate cause they had connections with the Embassy in my country. It was only a couple weeks after I arrived in [city in Florida] that we were sent to Louisville on a bus. We were picked up by my trafficker that night. He had our documents, and we didn’t have nothing but our clothes. No phones. We were taken to his house in the south end of Louisville. I was kept there for 2 years taking care of his house and family members. I was in terror.” - Key Informant [Survivor of Labor Trafficking]

“As a survivor of human trafficking as a child, I have a unique view of the other side and as a survivor who was taken across multiple state lines and a U.S. border for sale... I bring not just a regional pain, but the feelings of a larger scale issue for human trafficking.”
- Survey Respondent

In the field of human trafficking, best practice models and approaches are recommended. One such model, the Sanctuary Model, is being used in our landscape.

[The Sanctuary Model](#) is a widely accepted approach to working with victims/survivors of trauma. Several key informants and survey respondents reported the adoption of this model in their organizations. This model is a non-hierarchical, highly participatory, “trauma-informed and evidence-supported” operating system for human services organizations, which helps them function in a humane, democratic, and socially responsible manner and thereby provide effective treatment for clients in a clinical setting. The model is entirely congruent with restorative practices in that it is about working with people instead of doing things to them or for them.

The Sanctuary Model has been adapted for use in [multiple types of human service settings](#), including residential treatment, schools, juvenile justice, domestic violence and homeless shelters, outpatient treatment settings, day treatment, partial hospitals, community-based programs, and drug and alcohol treatment programs. Responses from key informants identified agencies such as Home of the Innocents and Sycamore Farm currently utilizing the Sanctuary Model. Information in this project revealed that best practice models are in the landscape and will require further evaluation.



One of the survey questions posed to the community inquired about participants' current role and asked them to indicate if they had received training related to working with human trafficking victims/survivors. We asked this question to gain a snapshot of the training happening in the landscape.

Results show a variety of topical areas relevant to serving human trafficking survivors being focused on within organizations and agencies in the city. Researchers learned that 35% of the survey respondents reported that they have participated in specialized training.

The top 3 identified training areas included trauma-informed practices or care, guiding principles, and assessment and interviewing.



Among survey participants, only 11.4% reported using a system of tracking trafficking victims and the services they receive. Eight survey participants provided detail that indicated how their organization included human trafficking as part of their client data tracking system. The systems respondents described using in their organizations included:

- Records and court briefings
- Victims of Crime Act grant or grant reporting
- KYGFIS - guardianship services for adults
- Child Referral – includes a specific question on Human Trafficking
- ServicePoint database
- “Using HMIS and reporting tools that capture this information for our funders”
- “It is a selection in our investigation and ongoing protocol”



Across the anti-trafficking field in our local landscape and nationwide, there is a call to action for improved data collection and tracking of human trafficking victims identified in all systems.

Organizations Cited as Offering Survivor / Victim Services

One objective of this project was to chart the landscape of services available to victims of human trafficking.

This list of organizations, while not comprehensive, is a compilation of organizations identified by our participants as resources for survivors/victims.

- Americana Community Center
- Bakhita Empowerment Initiative (Catholic Charities of Louisville)
- Center for Women and Families
- Family & Children's Place Kosair Charities Child Advocacy Center
- Free 2 Hope Inc.
- House of Ruth
- Jefferson County Attorney Victim Advocates
- Kristy Love Foundation
- Lifehouse Maternity Home
- Louisville Metro Police Department
- Maryhurst
- Refuge for Women
- Safe Passage
- Salvation Army
- Southeast Christian Church
- St. Vincent de Paul Louisville
- Survivors of Torture Services (Family Health Centers)
- Sycamore Farm KY Inc.
- Threshold Services Inc.
- United Partners for Women and Children
- University of Louisville Hospital's SAFE Services
- Women of the Well

Special Focus Area: *Housing*

Housing was a significant theme that emerged from data. Please note that 18 key informants worked in housing-specific agencies. However, we found that other informants also indicated that housing is essential for trafficking survivors. Survey respondents also identified housing, specifically emergency housing and safe housing, as needs for human trafficking survivors and those vulnerable to trafficking.

“Trafficking victims are generally left financially destitute, which in turn makes them susceptible to re-exploitation. Individuals who lack safe housing are more likely to engage in dangerous employment to meet their needs, making them vulnerable to trafficking.”
- Key Informant

Survey respondents and key informants indicated that emergency and short-term housing options for child and adult survivors of human trafficking is a glaring gap in the landscape. Some key informants working in social services and other sectors expressed a desire for a more structured system for ensuring a clear path to housing and resources for survivors, like what exists for houseless people through the Continuum of Care. They shared that those resources are really limited, especially with housing needs for victims, and there is a huge need for safe/secure settings outside of hospitalization to address trauma with therapeutic housing.

Safe housing and drop-in centers for human trafficking survivors were listed repeatedly as gaps, and confirmations that being homeless is a real problem regarding increasing the chances of human trafficking (especially with young adults).

“I want to reiterate again the need for safe housing (and drop-in centers) for human trafficking survivors. Being homeless is a real problem in regard to increasing the chances of human trafficking, especially with young adults.”- Survey Respondent

Need for Emergency and Safe Housing

Safe and stable housing is critical for survivors of human trafficking. Emergency homeless and domestic violence shelters are available in the landscape, but there is a need for more stable, long-term options. Trafficked youth almost always need immediate safe shelter. Louisville Metro allocates funding in its annual budget for outreach, case management, and other housing services. Louisville also receives housing funds from three U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) streams. As these quotes demonstrate, our participants indicate that funding and availability of safe housing are insufficient to meet the housing needs of trafficking victims.

***"When I was out on the street and stayed at a shelter, I was sexually assaulted there the 2nd night. I just left the next day, after I took a shower. I was (expletive) scared because the guy was still in there... but I was tough and I was 18...just left state care. When I got into this (youth) program here in Louisville, I finally got a safe apartment that is mine."
- Key Informant [Youth]***

"The Center for Women and Families is the city's primary Victim Service Provider and has emergency shelter for victims. Unfortunately, this VSP's emergency housing spots are always full and rarely, if ever, are homeless services providers able to refer a client to their shelter and actually get the client into that shelter. They do have some community outreach workers though that help DV victims that are not in their shelter. However, the Center is sometimes difficult to coordinate with because of the confidential nature of their services and clientele. This has been an ongoing issue for many years." - Key Informant

Currently, there is only one HUD-funded program that solely serves victims of human trafficking. St. Vincent DePaul's Domestic Violence project provides transitional housing and rapid re-housing assistance. It is dedicated to victims of domestic violence (DV), but HUD defines victims of DV to be those who have suffered sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. This project began in October 2020 and has consistently been full since its inception.

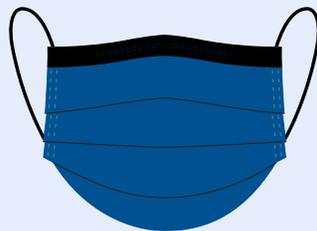
Currently, at least 20 people are waiting on a referral to this program.

“St. Vincent DePaul has a youth program similar to their DV one, that provides transitional housing and rapid rehousing assistance. However, the property they use for that is a tax credit property which comes with a myriad of restrictions (i.e., criminal background check, the youth has to pay 30% of income to stay there, strict adherence to homeless definitions, etc.). These restrictions can delay a youth getting housed on that property by up to a week (that’s the average amount of time it takes for SVDP to process the paperwork for move-in). If the youth doesn’t meet all their criteria, doesn’t have an ID, owes money to them from a previous shelter stay, then they won’t be accepted. The Salvation Army has some beds dedicated to youth, but for female youth (18-24), they are just in the general population room with all the other adults.” - Key Informant

Another emerging theme in this study was homelessness and the current response to moving the unhoused to affordable housing in the city. Louisville faces multiple challenges to address its goal to end homelessness in the city. The 2020 Annual Homeless Street Count, conducted by the Coalition for the Homeless on January 30, 2020, counted 141 people outdoors compared to 118 estimated in January 2019 (nearly an 18% increase). Louisville’s FY2020 Unsheltered Homeless Initiative Report presented by the Louisville Metro Office of Resilience and Community Services reports that advocates and outreach teams provided services to 6,986 unduplicated homeless people (both unsheltered and sheltered) between Oct. 1, 2017 and Sept. 30, 2018, which was a 4.3% increase from the 6,695 served in the previous year. Presently, there are over 18,000 on the waiting list for Section 8 subsidies in Metro Louisville.

We know that despite recorded decreases in numbers of homeless youth and families in the city in the past couple of years, a startling number of individuals and families are still sleeping in shelters and on the city’s streets on any given day/night in 2021.

The challenges and impacts of COVID-19 should also be considered, as eviction moratoriums are nearing an end, and families and children continue to be impacted by financial instability due to multiple effects of the pandemic.



Seven of the key informants actively worked or volunteered in positions serving homeless individuals in the city through outreach activities. LMPD's Community Engagement Unit, case managers in housing programs, and grassroots' 'boots on the ground' advocates reported they are active in the landscape's homeless camps and other areas in the city where unhoused people are residing. Data from this project revealed several unsanctioned homeless camps in the city and that unhoused people are also living in abandoned buildings or other places like parks and sidewalks.

These key informants offer a glimpse at some significant initiatives in the city to reach these folks and provide opportunities to enhance their well-being, health, and safety. For example, one informant shared that they work with over 26 different agencies or grassroots organizations in the city to provide services such as food distribution, needle exchange, health screenings, hygiene and period products, clothing, assistance with applications for identification documents, and many other services these members of the community can benefit. As indicated in this analysis, homelessness and economic insecurity are fundamental risk factors for human trafficking occurrences. The key informants engaged in these various outreach initiatives all agree that more education about human trafficking for those experiencing homelessness and economic insecurity and for the service providers and faith-based or grassroots organizations serving them would be a benefit for all.

An essential resource for the landscape to address moving homeless individuals and families to safe and affordable housing is The Coalition for the Homeless. They are the lead advocate for people experiencing homelessness in Louisville; their mission is to prevent and end homelessness in Louisville.

The Coalition for the Homeless is responsible for administering HUD funds, which is the primary federal funding for housing and homeless services. Louisville receives three types of HUD funding that supports programs for homeless and housing insecure individuals. These include Continuum of Care (CoC), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).

Organizations Cited as Offering Housing Support for this Population

The following organizations and agencies in the landscape are involved in providing emergency shelter, emergency housing, and short- or long-term housing assistance for adults and youth in the city.

There are no youth or adult shelters or housing programs with a designated focus on serving human trafficking survivors in the city, with only a couple of facilities offering “youth beds.”

- Bakhita Empowerment Initiative (Catholic Charities of Louisville)
- Center for Women and Families
- Choices, Inc.
- Free 2 Hope
- Ekklesia Christian Life Ministries (Family Day Shelter)
- Jefferson Street Baptist Center (Day Shelter)
- Kristy Love Foundation
- Re: Center Ministries (Day Shelter for Women and Children)
- Salvation Army
- Southeast Christian Church
- St. John Center for Homeless Men
- St. Vincent De Paul
- The Coalition for the Homeless
- The Healing Place (Veterans Program)
- Uniting Partners for Women and Children Day Shelter
- Volunteers of America Family Emergency Shelter
- Wayside Christian Mission
- Women of the Well
- YMCA Safe Place Services

Recommendations

The UN Human Rights Office is at the forefront of efforts to promote a human rights-based approach to trafficking in persons. They have developed [Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking](#) intending to help all involved in anti-trafficking efforts fully integrate human rights into their analysis and responses to trafficking. A human rights approach to trafficking means that all those involved in anti-trafficking efforts should incorporate human rights into their analysis of the problem and their responses. This approach requires us to consider, at every stage, the impact that a law, policy, practice, or measure may have on persons who have been trafficked and persons who are vulnerable to being trafficked. It means rejecting responses that compromise rights and freedoms (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights).

Universal Screening Procedure to Better Identify Survivors of Human Trafficking

As mentioned earlier in this section, very few organizations in Louisville are using screening tools to identify victims of human trafficking. In addition, we do not know the efficacy of the tools being utilized. To optimize our landscape, we recommend identifying and implementing a validated screening tool.

The Vera Institute of Justice created a universal screening tool for adults called the [TVIT \(Trafficking Victim Identification Tool\)](#). This tool was reliable in identifying victims of sex and labor trafficking. Using this tool and other promising methods is a recommendation for all agencies serving adults in the landscape. The Office on Trafficking in Persons Office with the Administration for Children & Families offers [a toolkit](#) and guide for adult human trafficking screening. This comprehensive tool is for use across various healthcare, behavioral health, and social service settings. It is survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and a culturally appropriate intervention tool. It is not yet validated but draws from evidence-based practices available on screening tools currently used in the field.

Increase Access to Services that Assist with Basic Needs

If we are to be successful in promoting effective, trauma-informed, culturally appropriate services that improve the short- and long-term health, safety, and well-being of victims, we must create the structures (with adequate funding) to be able to deliver all the services specific to human trafficking survivors that have been analyzed and identified in this project. Improving victim identification and connecting them to services, with the long-term goal of establishing evidence-based and trauma-informed practices, is a desired outcome for the landscape.

“I (victim advocate) usually go first with my friend who is a survivor, and we will go and meet with the woman, whether it's at the KYAG office, or whether it's another law enforcement call, we've been in many different places. Whether it's at a jail, or a courtroom, hotel room. Whatever her next step might be, I am with her to help her meet her needs to be where she needs. I give her support in any way I can.” - Key Informant

Improve Access to Emergency And Safe Housing Specific To Trafficking Victims

Louisville needs more emergency and affordable housing across the city, but trafficking victims are a particularly vulnerable group with additional needs. Homeless shelters in their traditional form are inappropriate for this population because of the high risk of re-traumatization. Participants in our study recommended an increase in funding for housing specifically for trauma victims.



Continually Engage Survivors at Every Level

Louisville needs more available and trauma-informed structures to engage survivors at every level. Survivor empowerment programs are emerging in the landscape, including the following two initiatives that reveal promising practices:

- The Bakhita Advisory Board was formed keeping in mind the diverse populations served by the Bakhita Empowerment Initiative at Catholic Charities of Louisville. Programming focuses on services and support for sex or labor trafficking survivors, including case management services with individuals of all genders, foreign-born and domestic, adults and children. The Advisory Board was formed intentionally to promote diversity and representation of the populations served by the program.
- Survivors' Corner exists to create a supportive network for trauma survivors while bringing an end to cycles of violence and inequity. Their programs and classes are designed to impart knowledge about trauma, promote resilience, and advance community cohesiveness. They envision a world where all people can fully experience wellness by having adequate resources to reach optimal physical, mental, and emotional health. Accessibility to these resources is provided through multiple program and class offerings for both trauma survivors and multi-disciplinary professionals. These programs and offerings include peer-based support groups; Speaking Out Safely Workshop; brain science, stress, & resiliency training; yoga & meditation classes; youth mental health first-aid; and the Cultivating Youth Resilience Project.



Focus on Racial Equity in the Provision of all Services and Systems Change

A large majority of trafficked persons in the U.S. for labor and sexual exploitation are people of color. It is past time in Louisville and across the country to proactively collect data and end the ambiguity about the various characteristics of people at risk and victims of human trafficking. We know what gets measured gets changed, and by being more explicit about the populations most affected, policymakers and other leaders can begin to make specific and measurable progress. While it is true that anyone can be a victim of human trafficking, most victims are people of color. This truth needs to be acknowledged and dealt with. Traffickers take advantage of societal stereotypes and systemic racism, which dehumanize some racial groups. This ingrained institutional racism manifests in what groups of people get protection from law enforcement, how the criminal justice system responds to different populations, and who seeks and gets help. Service providers and systems need to “draw from the courage, expertise, and leadership of communities harmed by the interlocking cruelties of systemic racism and human trafficking” to address the history and legacy of racism and its effects on human trafficking (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2021).

“Building a just world, where traffickers can no longer capitalize on and abuse systemic inequities, requires addressing the underlying causes of those inequities by first acknowledging the structures of power and historical context behind unequal distribution of privilege and protection, including the government’s role.” - *Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons*

Comprehensive standards of care are recommended to ensure the development of programs and interventions that are effective, trauma-informed, culturally appropriate, and gender and age-appropriate. Attention to these standards increase and protect the physical and psychological safety of victims/survivors. Providing ethical solid guiding principles in work with victims and survivors is one way to ensure racially and ethnically competent practices. Following ethical guidelines and principles can better ensure quality care and provide services that are steeped in social and racial justice. Given the ties to slavery in the United States and the resulting disproportionate rates of poverty, abuse, food, and housing insecurity among Black people and other communities of color face, offering informed anti-racist services and practices is not optional. Human trafficking is described as a “living legacy of the systemic racism and colonization globalized during the transatlantic slave trade through chattel slavery and regional practices of indigenous dispossession” (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, 2021).

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights produced [*“Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking”*](#) which highlights many practices aimed at areas such as:

- Promotion and protection of human rights
- Identification of trafficked persons and traffickers
- Research, analysis, evaluation, and dissemination
- Ensuring an adequate legal framework
- Providing a proper law enforcement response
- Protection and support for trafficked persons
- Preventing trafficking
- Special measures for the protection and support of child victims of trafficking. Access to remedies
- Obligations of peacekeepers, civilian police, and humanitarian and diplomatic personnel
- Cooperation and coordination between States and regions

Address Demand

It is suggested by some scholars and advocates that to understand why traffickers are often operating with impunity, despite existing laws and legislation, it is necessary to think more critically and put sex trafficking into the broader context of capitalism, patriarchy, and misogynistic practices that generate enormous economic profits and social benefits for men.

Analyzing sex trafficking and prostitution as parts of an interlocking system reveals how the components are linked. Studying the dynamics of supply and demand for victims reveals what keeps the system working (Hughes, 2004). This lens can be used to examine labor trafficking and wage exploitation as well.

Trafficking in persons exists because it is lucrative and driven by the demand for sexual services and cheap labor (Busch-Armendariz et al., 2014). Hughes (2005) details that the demand for victims to be used for commercial sex acts can be divided into three mechanisms that sustain the crime. The first factor is the men (and occasionally women) who seek out women, children, and sometimes men, for the purpose of purchasing sex acts; the second factor on the demand side is the profiteers in the sex industries (including the traffickers, pimps, corrupt officials, and brothel owners); and the third factor is the culture that creates a demand for victims by normalizing prostitution and “buying sex” as an accepted practice (p. 2). Hughes (2005) and other researchers who are looking at “supply and demand” aim to examine human trafficking in an economic context that necessitates those victims be enslaved for profit, while at the same time also exploring and highlighting the social context that allows such exploitation. Researchers in this project recommended that more purposeful discussions and attention are given to addressing demand as part of the efforts to combat human trafficking in Louisville.

“So how do we end the demand? As you all know, the demand is overwhelmingly male, overwhelmingly white. And so how do we both develop services and programs to work with buyers to get them to stop... and to hold them accountable for their buying behavior and the harms that are caused by their buying?”- Key Informant

“Unfortunately, the young women working in this business (sex industry) are employed as independent contractors which makes them responsible for paying for their own healthcare, dental benefits, taxes and planning for retirement. It is not uncommon that the women do not get an hourly rate or wage. They are totally dependent on a customer giving them money for dancing (i.e., no customer interested, no pay). Many of the women working in this industry are single mothers with less than a high school diploma. This work should be considered by all as high risk (for potential trafficking situations) due to the exposure to drugs, alcohol, violence, abuse (emotional, physical, mental) and physical stress. One of the legal gaps that is most concerning to me is the fact that a customer has to be 21 to enter a strip club, but only 18 years old to work there.” -Key Informant

Focus Area # 3

Children and Young Adults

Homelessness, involvement in the juvenile justice system, and being in foster care all put children and young adults at increased risk for human trafficking in our landscape (Middleton, Ghent, Gattis, Roe-Sepowitz, Goggin, & Frey 2016; Middletown, Edwards, Cole, Ayala, & Dobson, 2020). Though estimates vary, the data available on children and young adults in Louisville and Kentucky who are being exploited for labor or sex should raise concern. The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services Department of Community Based Services recently released its [eighth annual report](#) regarding child victims of human trafficking. The report noted that from 2013-2020 there were 222 confirmed cases of child trafficking in Jefferson County. Child victims of human trafficking in the Louisville area may receive services from one of the six residential treatment facilities for minors and youth in out-of-home care: Maryhurst, Home of the Innocents, St Joseph Children’s Home, Boys and Girls Haven, Bellewood, and Brooklawn. These facilities offer community programs and residential services aimed at healing and treatment for children and youth who have suffered from traumatic experiences from physical, sexual, and verbal abuse or neglect (Kentucky Department for Community Based Services, 2020).

To be clear, it is not that a child or group of children is more vulnerable to human trafficking based on any one factor of their identity or background as much as it is shaped by the social exclusion and systemic discrimination of groups of children that creates vulnerability. In other words, the responsibility for keeping children safe is not on vulnerable groups of children; the responsibility for keeping all children safe from trafficking, abuse, and exploitation is with the whole of society, and there must be accountability for ensuring equity and inclusion across systems (whether foster care or juvenile justice, education, health, or public safety). It is the systems of care that do or do not reflect or perpetuate institutionalized racism, determine if and when victims are believed, and judge victims’ perceived worthiness for services.

Findings from the interviews with young adults with experience --all identified as system-involved as children--and the survey responses/key informants from this project reveal that populations identified as at-risk and excluded populations deserve attention for increased risks of exploitation, including human trafficking.



Yeah, I have been homeless on the streets. I squatted for a bit in the old building in Old Louisville. I have been at a camp for a while too. I was 19 and I will say, yeah I did some stuff to get food and also a cell phone. Some of the people in the camps are running things like a gang, that is real." -Key Informant [Youth]

"I was begging around the west end and downtown (Louisville) when I was 15. I gave my money to my uncle and he bought me stuff...but I brought in some money for sure because more people give money to kids. I don't think it was trafficking or anything, but I hear what you are saying about adults taking advantage of kids. I was already in a gang by then. I know how to survive in the streets... but you know I never went without anything."
-Key Informant [Youth]

Key informants and survey respondents provided a wealth of information and essential perspectives about how organizations and other structures in the landscape are working to prevent and respond to child and youth trafficking in Metro Louisville and across the state.

Of the youth who participated in this research, four self-identified as survivors of human trafficking. The resulting data from these interviews offer an opportunity to highlight their voices in the discourse and gain a more nuanced understanding of their experiences. We also engaged nine youth (identified as at-risk) in group interviews. All the youth who participated in this research were youth of color with histories of child maltreatment and involvement in the child welfare system. We honor the survivors of trauma who shared their lived experiences and perspectives during individual interviews.

"I was sexually violated by my aunt's boyfriend when I was 11... and I just shut down when I was in school. Even now, I don't really socialize much. I have, I guess, social anxiety. I told my aunt (what he was doing) and she told me that I should avoid being alone with him and that we would not have a place to live if it came out. It did come out though, when I was 15, he raped me and it got reported because I told my friend. He took pictures of me in nighties and naked too... so he was charged with pornography. But he ran from Louisville, and I don't know where he is. That bothers me a lot."
- Key Informant [Youth Survivor]

At-Risk Child Populations

Children and young people, especially those with identified risk factors, are vulnerable to human trafficking. Minors and young adults (18-24) are preyed on by traffickers due to various vulnerability factors (Family and Youth Services Bureau, 2020). The intersection of human trafficking with child welfare is known. Children in out-of-home care are at a particularly high risk of being trafficked (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2017). Victims of human trafficking as children in our landscape in Kentucky have higher levels of involvement in the juvenile justice and foster care systems than the general population (Middletown et al., 2020). These youth are often lured with false promises of love or money; provision of basic needs (e.g., food, housing, etc.); or are offered the opportunity to escape other negative situations in their lives (Countryman-Roswurm & Bolin, 2014). Traffickers are skilled at using various techniques to ensure that the youth remain under their control.

"I didn't know what happened to me when I was 16 was human trafficking. I just thought this guy I was with was helping take care of me when I ran from my (residential) placement. I was really shocked later when I learned I was sex trafficked. Yeah, you know, I just thought it was rape with his friend... and that really did mess me up because I was acting out and (expletive). I only shaped up when I was trying to help other girls when I got back...told them to not go out on these streets and to follow the rules until you are 18...and you know that was how I got my life turned around. It was me wanting to."

- Key Informant [Youth Survivor]

In the United States, youth who run away from home or their residential placements/foster homes may exchange sex for food, shelter, drugs, or other things of value, often described as "survival sex" (Gibbs, et. al, 2018). Research has shown that housing options for homeless/runaway youth are limited to residing at youth or adult shelters, living directly on the streets, squatting in abandoned buildings, living in host homes, or couch surfing in friends' or acquaintances' homes (Wolfe, Greeson, Wasch & Treglia, 2018). We know populations of marginalized youth are in our landscape, and some have been identified as being exploited and/or trafficked.

"We send the most vulnerable kids, the ones with behavioral issues, to "alternative schools" and they aren't doing well there."

- Key Informant

"Something we learned during a recent investigation of an alleged sex trafficker affiliated with a gang in Louisville is that he would go to funerals in the area and approach victims who were mourning the loss of a loved one due to violence. He would prey on their grief and then groom these girls who were in a vulnerable state." -Key Informant

The recent research initiative in our local landscape known as "Project PIVOT" (Prevention and Intervention for Victims of Trafficking) has revealed a concerning number of children in our state who are being trafficked by their families. Findings from the research indicate that after a comprehensive case review of 698 cases involving alleged victims of human trafficking within the Kentucky DCBS system, 42% of the substantiated and or founded cases of child trafficking were controlled by a family member (Middleton et al., 2020).

"A lot of the trafficking that we see is inter-family; for example, a family member exchanging sexual acts of their daughters or sisters for goods/services."
- Survey Respondent

"I don't think anyone thought I was being sex trafficked by my own mom, but I was. I wanted to get out of foster care and live with her, and then when I did, she pimped me out to her friends. The thing that makes me really mad is she did it to my sister too, and now she (sister) is "in the life." This program I am in helped me get my education going, and now I have a chance to be a nurse. I stay focused on my daughter. I wish my sister would have had the chance. I mean, it really is luck to get out of bad situations."
Key Informant [Youth Survivor]

Child pornography is always human trafficking. Using the internet to conduct illicit business transactions, such as solicitation for labor or sexual services, further obscures victims from the public eye (Ross-Sheriff & Orme, 2015). Even with existing policies designed to identify and respond to sex trafficking in the United States, the challenges of sufficiently tackling the crime can seem impossible within the context of globalization and rapid technological advances. The increase of cybersex trafficking and the digitalization of pornography of trafficking victims have led to the proliferation of online material depicting trafficking victims being distributed and consumed across the world. This area was a topic of discussion in multiple key informant interviews and was primarily a prominent area of discussion with the youth key informants.

"We are finding youth engaging in risky online behavior which eventually, most often, turns into trafficking and exploitation. Among these youth we have found a common thread relating to extremely low self-worth, self-esteem, self-respect, and self-love. We have also noticed loneliness and depression, among other mental health issues. These behaviors drive them to engage with strangers online. Pair this with a very sexualized online environment and a desire to explore romantic relationships and sexuality and we find youth meeting up with traffickers they barely know but have built a strong emotional attachment to."- Key Informant

"I have never shared nudes on Only Fans, but I have 2 friends who have. You don't judge them. They are making money and right now it's rough, you know that. I have kids and that is what stops me because you put it out on social media and it's there forever. But women make money because the guys will pay."-Key Informant [Youth]

"Most of the LGBTQ+ kids really just want to be accepted and if they get told by a perpetrator, they are accepted by them, it opens that door for grooming and eventually exploitation." - Key Informant



"Recent data from DCBS shows we are investigating at least 200 cases of child trafficking annually in Kentucky and 94% of these victims already have a history with child welfare, which tells us our most vulnerable children are at serious risk of becoming trafficked. Youth who are homeless, runaway, poor, abused, and neglected are most at risk for the worst things in life, especially for human trafficking. We face a reality where these unfavorable (and uncontrollable) socio-economic factors tie directly into child trafficking. A child is more at risk to human trafficking if they have a history of abuse, drug use, or come from the child welfare system. Unfortunately, Kentucky has some of the highest numbers in the nation when it comes to these very risk factors. Kentucky is #1 for child abuse and neglect, we have over 10,000 children in the child welfare/foster care system, and we rank among the top ten worst states for opioid and drug use. All of these factors are interrelated when it comes to child trafficking, which tells us one thing; When we have spiked, record high-risk factors on a national scale, you can be sure that we have a child trafficking problem."

-Cara Starns with Kentucky's Safe Passage

Prevention and Intervention

This analysis revealed a diverse group of programs, initiatives, and activities in the structures identified with prevention and intervention when responding to child trafficking in the city and state. For child trafficking survivors in Jefferson County, and across the state for that matter, there are no residential treatment facilities, alternative housing options, or specialized long-term treatment programs specifically for this population. Louisville's Maryhurst and Home of the Innocents do provide specialized treatment within their program delivery, including their ["My Life My Choice"](#) curriculum for girls who have experienced sex trafficking.

"We are getting traction in setting up the right services for youth who age out, but there are still many who are falling through the cracks. It is really heartbreaking...and these kids just want to be out of a "system". We know what we need for them, there just isn't enough money and we are working in silos here in the city." - Key Informant

"We are delivering services to at-risk and disconnected youth in the city, but we are doing this in a fragmented and disorganized way. We could do better together... because we do have good evidence about the necessary intervention and needs. We need support networks for these youth. We need life coaches and mentors. We need financial literacy and life skills education. We need to focus on upstream solving and include everyone at the table. Youth voices need to be involved. The CSYA (Coalition Supporting Young Adults) is a good start to better coordination. We need more conversations and collaboration because the intersections are not being addressed."
- Key Informant

The discussions with key informants serving youth in the city and the youth informants who participated in the project revealed multiple strengths and gaps related to the work going on to support, empower, and protect at-risk youth in the landscape. All the youth who participated in this research were youth of color with histories of child maltreatment and involvement in the child welfare system. Some of the significant topic areas that emerged from the interviews with youth key informants were their experiences with systems, specifically education, child welfare, and social services.

"Well, you know, you ask about youth voices and that's good and all, but things don't change much. I talk to my friends; we have all been struggling as adults because we are just constantly trying to make it. We need more money because these costs are just way too much with going to school and working, and you know I have two kids."

-Key Informant [Youth]

"I think probably one of the greatest strengths I see is how resilient they are. A lot of the young adults that I work with come with a great deal of trauma history. And so, you know, just sometimes hearing their story and how they continue to move forward to keep on keeping on is pretty amazing".

-Key Informant

Another emerging theme was the desire to have more peer and mentoring groups to serve as another therapeutic tool for survivors of all ages. A glimpse of the landscape shows promising practices in achieving trauma-informed practices and treatment, yet there was resoundingly strong agreement that there are significant gaps in this area. Youth key informants in this project often referenced how satisfied and grateful they were for having peer supporters and mentorship. The two focus groups of youth service providers who participated in group interviews indicated that the youth they serve possess many strengths and face various challenges due to their past trauma and life experiences. These case managers and support staff are key figures in these young adults' lives and provide mentorship and support for these young adults.

"I didn't used to like therapy because I had to change therapists a lot, and it just made me sad to think about things that happened to me. I do like therapy now... and I love my case manager because she also helps me when I get down or stressed."

- Key Informant [Youth]

"Before Safe Passage began its programming, Kentucky had no services that specialized in serving trafficked youth through long-term survivor mentorship and support services. They are meeting an absolutely critical need in Kentucky." - Key Informant

Regarding the challenges with youth and their access to safe shelter options and challenges of young adults being housed with adults, there is a lack of emergency housing options dedicated solely to young people and those who have experienced human trafficking.

There are some resources for emergency hotel stays, but those are limited and only offered for up to five days. Hotel stays for up to a month would be a better option for youth applying for other services, such as housing and move-in support. Current restrictions on eligibility can delay a youth getting housed by up to a week to 21 days (under some program timelines). Researchers learned that if the youth does not meet all the criteria, lacks an ID, or owes money from a previous shelter stay, then they won't be accepted. During interviews, three key informants mentioned Host Homes as a promising option in our city if we adopt and operate a successful model. Host homes are a growing model in some cities in the U.S. to provide short-term housing intervention for young people experiencing homelessness.

"A shelter can be a scary place to stay for youth and with the way the Louisville shelters are set up, they are not trauma-friendly environments. Youth have vastly different needs and habits than their adult counterparts, so offering them the same housing/services as adults that are 50 years of age or older, is not conducive to meeting the youth's needs."

- Key Informant



Organizations Cited as Offering Support for Children and Young Adults

The following organizations and agencies in the landscape are involved in providing support and services for children and youth.

- Americana World Community Center
- Bounce Coalition
- Boys and Girls Haven
- Brooklawn and Bellewood
- Coalition Supporting Young Adults
- Home of the Innocents
- Jefferson County Public Schools
- KentuckianaWorks
- Kentucky Department of Community Based Services (CHFS)
- Louisville Youth Group
- Louisville Metro Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods
- Louisville Metro Office of Youth Development
- Maryhurst
- Safe Passage
- Seven Counties Services - TAYLRD
- Survivors' Corner
- YMCA Safe Place Services
- YouthBuild

Recommendations

Create an Urgent and Intentional Focus on System-Involved Children and Youth

Child welfare agencies across the United States are increasing their capacity to support children who are victims of human trafficking and build more practices for protecting children who are at greater risk for future victimization. Researchers learned that Kentucky's Department for Community Based Services is making strides in building capacity to protect and care for our most vulnerable minors in the landscape. The research conducted by Project PIVOT regarding child trafficking victims in Kentucky serves as a call to action to our community. Key recommendations resulting from the research (Middleton et. al, 2020) include:

1. Develop and implement a standardized trauma-informed training across all professionals and community members involved in ending child trafficking in Kentucky;
2. Implement a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) to promote cross-agency communication and collaboration;
3. Create a universal, statewide screening and identification process inclusive of overlooked populations (e.g., male victims, LGBTQIA+ victims, victims in rural areas); and
4. Offer victim-centered resources that are inclusive of overlooked populations.

The findings reported from Project PIVOT can aid in increasing awareness of the issue of child trafficking in Kentucky and improve the ability of systems to respond to child trafficking (Middleton et al., 2020). One of the funded initiatives from the \$1 million grant awarded to Kentucky is a new validated screening tool to identify high-risk children in the state. This is a significant step forward for the state of Kentucky and minors in the child welfare system and the child welfare workers and others charged with their protection.

Researchers in this project surveying the landscape recommend that this screening tool or another appropriate screening tool be implemented for young adults (ages 18-24). This group of youth is especially vulnerable, especially those with identified risk factors that have been noted in this landscape analysis. Young adults who have exited the child welfare system or are still engaged in some services require the same focused attention as minors in the state. We encourage more dialogues and intentional focus to protect this age group of young people who count on the community to enhance and build their protective factors and reduce risks of victimization by traffickers.

Specialized Attention to Addressing Risk Factors for Youth of Color

Researchers in this project learned more about at-risk groups of youth in our landscape. One specific group we highlight here is youth of color, specifically girls and women. We answer the call to action to better understand the high rates of sex trafficking among Black women and girls in our landscape and across the United States. Socioeconomic status is one of the top contributors in increasing the chances of sex trafficking, and Black girls and women in our landscape are at-risk due to higher poverty rates and multiple structural inequalities they face due to discrimination and marginalization.

The recent Snapshot on the State of Black Women and Girls: Sex Trafficking in the U.S. (Davey, n.d.) conducted by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, recommends the following to address the disproportionality of black women and girls as victims of sex trafficking:

- Enforce laws in place decriminalizing sex trafficking - This is due to the adverse effects of the laws that criminalize the victims. Findings from The Project PIVOT (Middleton, Edwards, Cole, Ayala, & Dobson, 2020) also noted this and discussed how these laws become lifetime barriers to jobs, education, and more.
- Replace zero-tolerance in schools with restorative justices' policies
- Educate law enforcement on how to identify victims of sex trafficking
- Extend more resources to Black girls in the foster care system
- More development of diverse workforces in childcare services
- Create partnerships between communities, agencies, and other organizations to address racial disparities
- Educate communities about sex trafficking
- More legal services and protections extended to Black women and girls



Focus Area # 4

Collaboration and Coordination

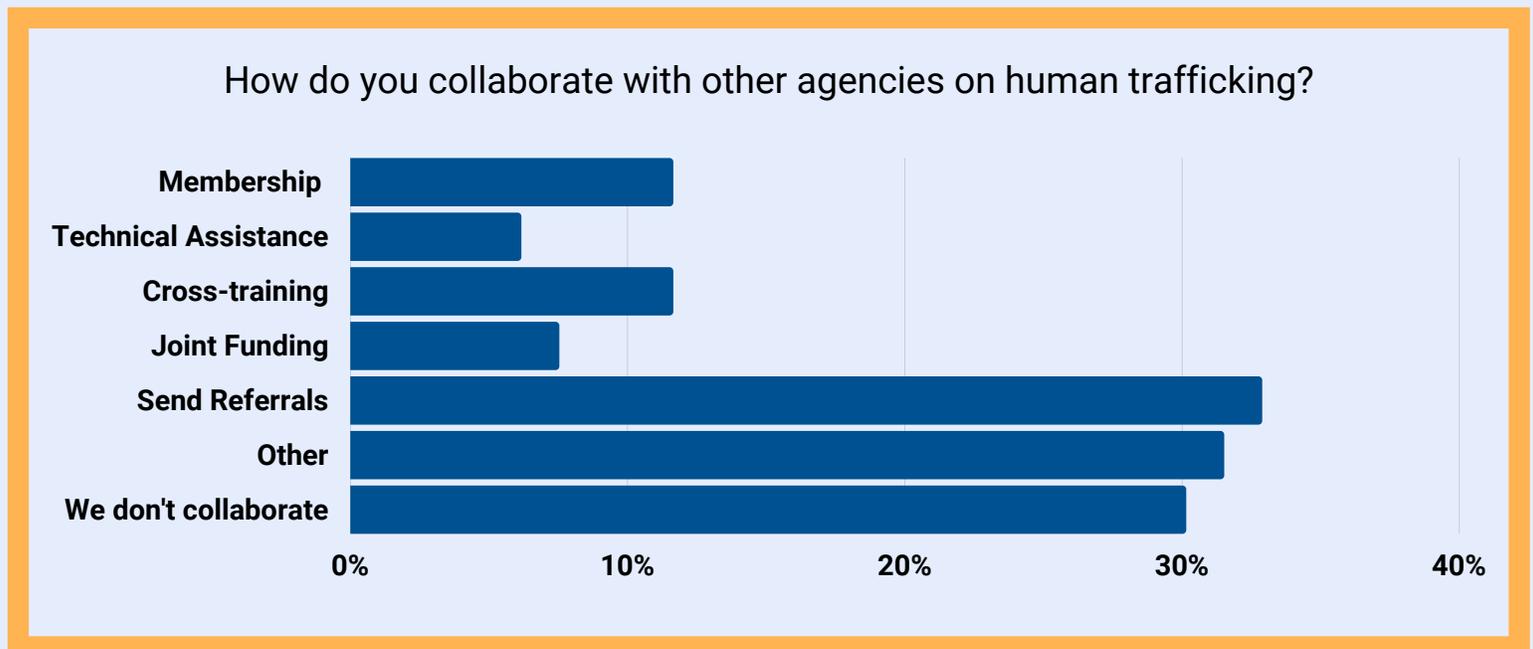
Stakeholders and informants involved in this project resoundingly agree that there is a clear need for more effective communication and coordination among the anti-trafficking community in Louisville. Resources are available, but they are not optimally and efficiently being utilized.

“How many organizations are tackling the issue of human trafficking in Louisville? Are any of them duplicating services? If so, is it due to capacity? Could they apply for funding together? Could they divide responsibilities?”

- Survey Respondent

More robust collaboration is needed across organizations and across sectors to provide a trauma-informed, whole-person response to victims of human trafficking. When asked about the most significant needs in Louisville, better coordination was listed as the number three priority area (see Figure in Focus Area # 1 section). When asked about how they collaborate, the following data was revealed.

- 30% of respondents indicate their organization does not collaborate on human trafficking
- Another 30% noted collaboration was not applicable, or it was achieved transactionally through referrals (33% of yes responses).
- Of the participants that indicated their organization collaborated on human trafficking, (24%) of respondents described what collaboration looked like, which is captured below.



Multiple systems are essential in the prevention of and response to human trafficking

Effectively responding to human trafficking demands an increased awareness and clearly defined policies, protocols, and procedures. These must be supported by collaborative efforts to be successful across multiple systems. In Louisville, collaboration is working in some areas and not effective in others. Data collected in interviews and surveys show some of these strengths and gaps.

The Louisville Metro Human Trafficking Taskforce membership on the current e-mail thread (2021) contains 126 individual e-mail addresses. However, not all members are active in working with this multidisciplinary team based on prior attendance records when meeting regularly before the COVID 19 pandemic. Some members attended a couple of virtual meetings organized during 2020. A newsletter was released in January 2020. The impact of COVID-19 lockdowns and changes in leadership (Co-Chairs terms have expired, and currently one of these leadership positions are vacant) were discussed as factors impacting the current functioning of the group. Some key informants that have served or are current members acknowledged that tensions exist between law enforcement and social service providers connected to the response system for human and child trafficking in the landscape. There was also discussion from survivor key informants and advocates for survivors that harm and hurt have occurred in various ways regarding survivors' engagement and treatment in the multidisciplinary group and the anti-trafficking community at large. An urgent need is upon the landscape to address these challenges and come together to do better. A significant strength for this group is that passion and drive to improve how we prevent and respond to human trafficking is a shared objective. This observable common thread for the diverse representation of folks working in the city on this complex social problem is promising.

“I think the task force membership is diverse and includes reps from a variety of sectors. All members have a passion for addressing this issue and want to help. The biggest gap I have observed is that it is a volunteer-based committee, and therefore people don't have much capacity to help since they all have other full-time jobs. There is no funding or authority tied to this task force, so its influence isn't as great as it could be...I also think task force leadership could be strengthened, and there is a need to have multiple people on the task force responsible for certain things. The structure has weakened since COVID-19.”
- Key Informant

I am still on the email listserv. I haven't met with the task force for years. They haven't been holding meetings, I don't know about anything since COVID-19. There isn't a real structure on any goals right now with the group. We had some committees, but I was never invited to meet with the one I volunteered for. We need to get back at the table to do what a task force should be doing." - Key Informant

"Improved leadership and structure of our local and state human trafficking task forces (currently not productive, data/outcomes of task forces are not tracked/reported annually, etc.). Enhanced collaboration and coordination among all human trafficking service providers and partners, starting with a common trauma-informed framework, values, and language, and eventually resulting in the embedding and embodying of trauma-resilient practices and policies." - Survey Respondent

Cross-agency collaboration in the landscape in Louisville and the state of Kentucky is active, yet glaring gaps were revealed during data collection in this project. Some key informants working in social services mentioned themes such as “working in silos” and “turf conflicts” as potential barriers to establishing collaboration that works.

"I entered into work around human trafficking a decade ago, and I have seen growth in interest among agencies and activism in the community, yet a lack of unity with effort at resolving the crime. I have found a considerable amount of "turf war" in this field and in Louisville and Kentucky. The TVPA goals to Prosecute, Protect, and Prevent seem to operate in a vacuum." -Key Informant

"Reinforce that this is not about "rescuing little girls" but respecting the need for safety, autonomy, and dignity of those identified and served. Recognize that "traffickers" are the result of lack of opportunity/poverty and possible exploitation of youth who are in general victims themselves and they become abusers to make money and survive themselves. Whether people are facilitating the sale of drugs, guns, or people, the underlying causes are the same, and this is where I believe a vast amount of money and resources should be going." - Survey Respondent

Recommendations

Improve Cross-Agency Coordination and Collaboration among Partners

Cross-agency coordination in the landscape in Louisville and the state of Kentucky is active, yet glaring gaps were revealed during data collection in this project. More vital collaboration would allow organizations and sectors to provide a trauma-informed, whole-person response to victims of human trafficking. Part of this collaboration and coordination effort must also include intentional identification of key or “missing” sectors: businesses, faith-based, youth groups, etc., with an emphasis on grassroots and non-white led organizations. More cooperation with law enforcement; training with police to prevent arrests of human trafficking survivors.

Meaningful opportunities for survivors to point out gaps in service provisions--addressing those gaps through organizational collaboration, is necessary. Including input from survivors or persons with lived experience should be part of all planning and implementation efforts. As the saying goes, “nothing about us, without us!”

One way to enhance collaboration and coordination among all human trafficking service providers and partners is to start with a common trauma-informed framework, values, and language, eventually embedding and embodying trauma-resilient practices and policies. Coordination between the court system to get victims help instead of criminalization.

***“A holistic approach is critical in order for all of a client's various needs to be addressed and met. There are a lot of great agencies doing great work in this city. However, sometimes services can be provided in literal and figurative silos. The physical actions my clients need to take to get to another service provider- transportation, navigating directions, phone access, language access-- can all be huge obstacles. And there is a huge need for funding so that those in the community who provide case management, like Bahkita, can do so more fully. Caseworkers take on so many tasks for so many clients
- Survey Respondent***

Support Organization and System Capacity Building Efforts and Adequate Funding Levels

To thrive and be even more effective in service provision and advocacy for system change, the eco-system would benefit from cohesion and collaboration. Enhancing the viability, leadership, and structure of local and state human trafficking task forces was recommended so that efforts to push for change, better collect and analyze data and determine collective outcomes can be realized and sustainable. Building empowering and equitable community partnerships is an ideal goal for the anti-trafficking community in Louisville. A collaborative initiative would allow regular in-person meetings between service providers, mental health counselors, health care providers, law enforcement, hotel/motel managers, landlords, and other stakeholders. Of course, having a solid and sustainable collaborative model would require increased community resources, funding, and capacity to allow effective collaboration and informed infrastructure.

Key informants shared a desire for a more streamlined referral system recognizing the connection of all the players in response to the issue. One way of collaborating to achieve this objective would be a better usage of the Unite Us platform through Metro United Way to better serve clients and connect the various providers more coherently. This could also serve as a central point of coordination. Having a platform like this could also create more of a "system process" for people who experience trafficking to get their needs met, such as immediate access to housing, medical services, mental health services, legal, childcare, etc.

Additionally, adequate funding and attention are needed to strengthen business and public-private partnerships to address human trafficking. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, with increased demands for delivery of goods, [UPS created a program](#) to educate drivers to identify potential signs of human trafficking in communities using the [Truckers Against Trafficking](#) module. Adequate funding would also increase access to much-needed training, such as ensuring system stakeholders can participate in [national and local training on human trafficking](#).

Commit to Improving Data Collection

The crime of human trafficking is complex and dynamic. We need to prioritize more attention and efforts to collecting reliable and high-quality data in multiple areas. We need to do more to document and understand victims' service needs, their experiences using services, and barriers to services. Stakeholders need to develop a culture of data-informed anti-trafficking programming and policymaking. There is a clear need for more data on best practices, support services, prevention, program effectiveness, and the identification of gaps and needs in multiple areas. There must be a commitment to increasing and improving data collection, backed up with investments in funding for various research initiatives.

"We need to collect and use data to demonstrate the significance of the problem in Louisville. There is a real need for us to learn more about labor trafficking, sex trafficking of queer youth and understanding more about the traffickers and buyers' tactics."

-Survey Respondent

Engage Survivors in the Prevention and Treatment of Human Trafficking

Direct experience of survivors of human trafficking is needed to guide effective prevention and treatment efforts tailored to the Louisville landscape. Currently, there is limited information, guidance, policies, or procedures specific to standards of care in supporting survivors of human trafficking. Survivor-informed standards of care are needed. Survivors and advocates alike involved in this project noted both positive and negative changes over the past 15 years regarding how survivors are engaged in the anti-trafficking work in the city.

"There should be representation of the diverse populations impacted, including members with lived experience of sex trafficking and labor trafficking, who represent diversity in gender identity, race, nationality, language, and culture. It is common for the experiences and lives of survivors to be exploited, however unintentionally, by community members, the press, service organizations, government agencies, and others, as survivors engage in advocacy and participate in public-facing ways. We must model intentional meaningful survivor engagement that is not exploitative, but instead supports and empowers survivors as they engage in public-facing activities in the community and the larger anti-trafficking field."-Key Informant

Conclusion

This landscape analysis of human trafficking in Louisville, Kentucky resulted in talking with and listening to about 300 people from various identified systems. The goal was to uncover and shine a light on the landscape. The hope is that the community can learn about what exists, and from there, build collaborative solutions for prevention, screening, and intervention. There are so many opportunities in Louisville to get this right. It is up to the community to take these learnings and craft systemic solutions to stem the tide and assist survivors in healing and being successful.

We recognize that voices were left out of this project and encourage continued community dialogue to highlight and strengthen shared objectives of the anti-trafficking work happening in the landscape.

The following recommendations are offered to the community as potential ways to address the social problem of human trafficking in Louisville, Kentucky:

- Implement trauma-informed training and universal screening procedures to better identify survivors of human trafficking.
- Implement broad training to multiple systems, organizations, staff, and volunteers.
- Ensure a commitment to training for law enforcement.
- Increase access to services that assist with basic needs.
- Continually engage survivors at every level.
- Focus on racial equity in the provision of all services and systems change.
- Create an urgent and intentional focus on system-involved youth and risk factors for youth.
- Improve access to emergency and safe housing specific to trafficking victims.
- Ensure adequate and appropriate levels of public and private funding.
- Improve cross-agency coordination and collaboration among partners in anti-trafficking interventions.
- Support and uphold organization and system capacity-building efforts.
- Advocate for future research that explores other issues in human trafficking in Louisville.
- Commit to improving data collection
- Build coalitions to push for policy changes to address system-level issues.

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Appendix # 1

Research Framework and Methods

Research Framework

Utilizing a participatory approach was a solid methodological fit for this landscape analysis's overarching goals and vision. Participatory methods prioritize learning from local communities (such as the existing anti-trafficking community in Louisville), seeking out a diversity of opinions (providers, advocates, survivors, policymakers), modifying goals as participants recognize their needs (aligning with the exploratory aims of this project), focusing on community strengths (essential for “working smarter and not harder” to combat human trafficking in a city already working to address the crime), and sharing decision-making power (well-suited for elevating “survivor informed” voices) (Bromley et al., 2017).

Implementing a mixed methods research design to guide the data collection was prioritized in this landscape analysis. Mixing qualitative and quantitative research methods was a sound choice when the aim was to better understand the phenomenon of human trafficking in Louisville. Researchers in the field of human trafficking agree that if we are to make progress in better understanding the complexity of the problem, we must conduct more studies that offer opportunities to yield both quantitative results and qualitative findings (Dank, et al.,2014).

Qualitative inquiry methods allow researchers to collect rich and descriptive data from the sample in the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). An established strength of qualitative research rests in providing layered textual descriptions of how people experience particular social problems or lived experiences. Knowledge gained in qualitative inquiry can be utilized to build theories and guide future research related to humans and the social issues that impact outcomes related to their health, well-being, and functioning (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). An established strength of qualitative research rests in providing layered textual descriptions of how people experience particular social problems or lived experiences. Quantitative methods give the opportunity to collect and analyze numerical data. Quantitative methods emphasize objective measurements and statistical analysis (Creswell, 2013).

Answering the research questions posed in this study lent itself suitably to both quantitative and qualitative methods during the data collection phase and during the analysis and interpretation of the data collected.

Community-Based Participatory Research

Conducting empirical research on different aspects of human trafficking requires access to key informants, including victims and survivors of human trafficking, policymakers, advocates, representatives of law enforcement agencies, mental health, and health providers, and social service providers engaged in anti-trafficking activities and service provision to victims.

Utilizing a participatory research framework is one way that these perspectives can be articulated. This assumption is supported by the features of this methodological approach, which emphasizes participants involved in the research inquiry are active and influential during the entire research process (Creswell, 2018). Guided by the foundations of community-based research principles, we took a collaborative research approach that involved identified stakeholders throughout the research process. Collaboratively establishing the research objectives, developing data collection tools and question protocols, and setting plans to analyze and disseminate findings for audiences.

Data Collection

Accessing various data sources enhanced the comprehensiveness of the landscape analysis. In alignment with the key community strategies defined in this project's implementation plan, McNary Group used a variety of data-gathering methods to access and collect information, including:

- In-depth interviews (structured and unstructured)
- Surveys (Web-based)
- Focus group discussions
- Review and analysis of secondary data sources (e.g., document review)
- Literature and Best Practices reviews
- Policy Analysis (e.g., laws, agency, provider, etc.)

Sample

We adopted a purposeful sampling strategy and process. Purposeful sampling is strategic and simply means that individuals are purposefully chosen to participate in the research for specific reasons; these reasons could include that they have had a particular experience, have knowledge of a particular phenomenon, reside in a specific location, or some other reason (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

An additional sampling technique known as snowball sampling (or chain sampling) is another sampling technique utilized in this research project. We contacted several key informants that were not initially noted on our list of potential participants using this technique.

Data Analysis

Review of the data collected in this project's individual and group interviews required categorization by using codes, which helped identify the main themes that emerged from this research study. Qualitative coding is a process of systematically categorizing excerpts in your qualitative data to find themes and patterns. Review of the electronic survey required inductive and deductive analysis.

Ethical Procedures

McNary Group devoted purposeful attention to the ethical issues, considerations, and challenges of participatory research and this specific project. Preparation for being accountable to follow expectations addressing the protection of human subjects in research was fluid. The steering committee and research team developed survivor protocols. This research project is ready for a "voluntary" review, which is a norm for community research.

In this project, priority attention was given to the ethical concerns related to power, partnership, and participation. Determining informed consent procedures, specific protocols for engaging vulnerable persons and groups, and enacting measures to guarantee confidentiality and protect the identity of some research participants were included.

The informed consent form for this study is attached as an Appendix.

Limitations and Challenges

There were multiple limitations and challenges in this study that require attention and discussion.

- We were not successful with gaining access to essential voices in the community due to barriers to achieving successful connections and identification of these voices. Of the 130 invitations sent to request key informants to participate in the project, we successfully engaged 61 of those informants in interviews.
- We did not have a large enough or diversified sample size to capture analysis of the entire landscape in Louisville adequately.
- Implementation of the entire research project happened during the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in new unique barriers and challenges.
- Diversity and representation of voices sought for involvement in the project was not realized due to various challenges and barriers in connecting with desired populations and key stakeholders.



Appendix # 2

Informed Consent Form

Metro United Way
"United Against Human Trafficking"
Landscape Analysis Research Project: Louisville, Kentucky

Informed Consent Form - Key Informant

Purpose of Study: This study will utilize a participatory approach for the research design to create a comprehensive landscape analysis of the phenomenon of human trafficking and youth exploitation in Louisville, Kentucky. The main deliverable for Year One (Summer 2021) is an analysis report that identifies data, service/policy/funding gaps, recommendations for possible solutions, and desired community outcomes that are aligned with current efforts.

Nature of Participation: As a member of the community, you have been identified as a Key Informant who can provide information relevant to the project's goals and objectives. If you agree to take part in an interview, your involvement will last approximately 75-90 minutes. All interviews will be virtual (using the Zoom platform) or by phone conference options. You will be in your chosen physical environment during the interview. A video camera and/or audio connection will be required. The research team may also request a follow-up check-in with you via phone for a 15-20 minute period to confirm information or expand on data collected from you and others in the community. You have the right to decline to answer any questions or to share information around certain topic areas during the interview discussion. You have the right to terminate the interview at any time. Participation is always voluntary.

Compensation: Key Informants will be offered compensation for their time, expertise, and engagement in this research project. A payment of \$150.00 will be issued to you at the conclusion of the interview. This payment will be in the form of a cash gift card and will be mailed to your address. Please allow two weeks after the interview for receipt, and before initiating inquiry of your compensation.

Benefits: Through your participation in this research project and landscape analysis of the phenomenon of human trafficking in the city of Louisville, it is predicted that knowledge gained from the research activities you will contribute to will benefit the greater community. It is expected that findings and discoveries will benefit the work of the diverse members of the anti-trafficking community in our city. Personal benefits are possible and could include satisfaction in taking part in realizing the project's objectives and pleasure in sharing information about your work and knowledge areas. Financial benefit resulting from compensation for participation in the interview is assumed.

Foreseeable Risks: There are limited risks related to participation in this research project. There could be a low risk to moderate risk for psychological discomfort occurring during the interview and conversation. The interviewer and interviewee will be sharing, discussing, and listening to information related to the exploitation of other humans. It is known that many people have their own experiences in some capacity with trauma. Thus it is foreseeable that these conversations could trigger emotional and/or physical reactions and feelings that may cause discomfort, sadness, and other responses.

To address these possible responses during the conversation, please consider this research team's suggestion to mitigate risks. It is perfectly acceptable to take a moment to exercise self-care strategies, either alone or with a support partner, to honor and ground oneself before continuing with the topic at hand. Proactively identifying a resiliency and safety plan may help identify these strategies for recognizing and addressing strong responses. Knowing how to respond to overwhelm rather than avoid it promotes cohesiveness, authenticity, and collaboration for this project.

Right to Terminate Participation in Project: You have the right to withdraw from participation in the live interview (by indicating verbally you wish to stop) or cease participation in any other phase/communication during the data collection period. Once the research team is made aware of your choice to withdraw this consent and terminate your involvement, we will provide you with communication confirming your request has been fulfilled.

Confidentiality: Your name and identity will not be published in any documents or made available to any persons outside of the research team and MUW Steering Committee members involved in the project.

At the conclusion of the project, findings and recommendations will be distributed to a variety of audiences. Your anonymity and involvement in the project cannot be guaranteed due to the nature of the community involvement framework being utilized to achieve this project's objectives. A description of the Key Informant's affiliations and/or job titles will be listed in some publicly available and published materials. However, the detailed information you provide during the interview will not be associated with your name or the specific name of your organization when data is made available to others outside of the research team.

NOTE: Recordings of interviews and meetings (via the Zoom conferencing platform) will occur for the duration of this phase of the project. These recordings will not be made available for viewing outside of the research team at McNary group. By signing this consent form, you agree to video and audio recordings of you being captured on a digital platform.

Contact Information: For questions or concerns about this research project, please contact: Lacey McNary, MSW, CEO, 502-419-7335, lacey@mcnarygroup.com

Consent:

- I have read and understood all the above-mentioned areas in this consent form.
- I have been offered the opportunity to have any questions about my involvement in this research project answered.
- Any answers or explanations provided to me have been satisfactory.
- I have been provided with a copy of this consent form.
- By signing this consent form, I agree to voluntarily participate in this research project in the role of "Key Informant".

Appendix # 3

Key Informant Interview Protocol

Key Informant Interview Guide Guiding Questions

Metro United Way: Human Trafficking Landscape Analysis-Louisville, Kentucky

1. Name, Position (s) and Agency or Organization Affiliation:
2. What is the service focus and mission at your agency or organization?
3. What populations (demographics) are served at your agency or organization?
4. How do you define and describe “human trafficking” to those you communicate?
5. Do you identify as a member of the anti-trafficking community in Louisville, Kentucky? If so, briefly share your current and/or past roles and activities? Also, based on your connections and observations, would you briefly share descriptive information about other members of this community?
6. Do you think both sex and labor trafficking are occurring in Louisville? If so, can you share what you know and how you know it?
7. Do you think child and youth trafficking is occurring in Louisville? If so, can you share what you know and how you know it?
8. What is the guiding philosophy that informs your work on human trafficking? Does your agency follow a guiding philosophy or approach?
9. Does your organization focus on serving victims of human trafficking or exploitation? Please detail these services. (If answer is NO, move to question 13). (Ask if they have referred victims identified at their agency or org).
10. How do agency workers identify victims? Screening tools? Assessment interview? Self-identification? Other?
11. What are the demographics of individuals served? Type of trafficking experience; Ages; Racial/ethnic populations; Gender; LGBTQ identified?
12. What specific services are provided for HT victims/survivors at your agency? What are some of the services you refer to clients? Can you provide the names of the service providers that you refer clients to?
13. What do you know about the direct services provided to HT victims/survivors by agencies (including your own) in Louisville? Comment on availability of services, considering factors such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, immigration status, etc.)
14. What are the strengths you have observed in connecting HT victims to services? What are the challenges in connecting HT victims to services? What are some of the gaps and problems with getting HT victims connected to the services they require to exit or be liberated from their trafficker/and or exploitative situation? Do you have information about members of at-risk groups (e.g., youth and young adults) that are not being identified as a HT victim, or if they are not getting appropriate services?

Interview Protocol (Cont.)

Key Informant Interview Guide

Guiding Questions

Metro United Way: Human Trafficking Landscape Analysis-Louisville, Kentucky

1. Have there been any issues in your organization or program in getting an alleged HT victim the services that will keep them {safe} and/or meet their immediate needs? Crisis and short-term needs? What, if any, technical assistance does your organization utilize? What systems (such as medical, criminal justice, etc.) do you see are or are not working to improve in this area?
2. What have you observed regarding the “standards of care” offered to HT survivors, including any of the following (ethics, trauma informed, non-discriminatory, interpreters available, choice and empowerment models, etc.)?
3. What do you know about trainings and education being delivered in Louisville that are related to, or that are relevant to, human trafficking? (Include statewide and national trainings if applicable). Please describe content and focus of these efforts and which groups are responsible for delivering these trainings and education sessions.
4. What kind of funding structure supports your agency or organizational work? Do you receive compensation and/or agency funding for your work related to human trafficking? If yes, is it, Federal funding; State funding Foundation funding; Corporate funding; Other Grant Funding; Private donors; Charitable/Faith Community funding; Other?
5. Based on this interviewer’s knowledge of your area of work and expertise in the community of Louisville (-fill in with Job or Volunteer position of interviewee), I would like to request you share the strengths and gaps in the prevention and service areas relevant to the needs of human trafficking victims /child trafficking victims in the city.
6. Based on your experiences and observations, what assistance and resources do agencies and organizations need to improve the services they provide to trafficking victims/survivors?
7. If you are, or have been, active in the anti-trafficking community, can you briefly describe your perspectives and observations about the successes and challenges in this community, when aiming to meet the collective goal to combat and respond to human trafficking in the city?

Closing (Options):

1. Would you share any other information to assist us with this landscape analysis by considering this project’s overarching questions?
2. What are agencies, groups, organizations, and community folks doing to address and combat human trafficking (child and youth trafficking) in Louisville?
3. Who is doing work in this area and what does it involve (look like)?
4. What are the STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, and/or GAPS in the efforts related to the prevention of, and response to, the crime of human trafficking in Metro Louisville?

Interview Protocol (Cont.)

Key Informant Interview Guide

Guiding Questions

Metro United Way: Human Trafficking Landscape Analysis-Louisville, Kentucky

Specific Questions for:

SURVIVOR LED ORGANIZATIONS and/or SURVIVORS WORKING IN COMMUNITY and/or

ADVOCATES for SURVIVOR VOICES

1. What methods are being followed by survivor-led organizations (or other organizations serving survivors) to ensure their approaches are trauma informed? Can you share what “trauma informed” means to you?
2. How is trauma informed framework integrated into programming, staff training, volunteer training, etc.?
3. How do they measure successful program completion and growth of the individuals they serve?
4. Are clients interviewed about past traumas? Is this data kept at an aggregate level to help inform future projects that address the intersectionality between childhood traumas and exploitation? How is this information analyzed and by whom?
5. What are their techniques and standards for which they hold themselves, staff, and volunteers to a high level of accountability? How is this measured? To whom is this reported?
6. Do they have a mentorship program survivors may enter upon graduating initial programming? What does this look like? What is the trajectory forward?
7. Which organizations are partnering with survivor led organizations and what are the goals of these partnerships?
8. Is there an opportunity to form a coalition of grassroots survivor led programs to enhance stability of programming and streamline use of funding?

Interview Protocol (Cont.)

Key Informant Interview Guide

Guiding Questions

Metro United Way: Human Trafficking Landscape Analysis-Louisville, Kentucky

Specific Questions for: YOUTH INVOLVED ORGANIZATIONS

Training

- a. Are agencies trained to recognize and report?
- b. Are they trained to screen?
- c. Are they trained in the “guiding principles” and other best practices?
- d. Why aren’t they training?
- e. How could we get agencies to implement a training plan?

Screening

- a. Who is screening? Who isn't?
- b. What are they using / doing?
- c. Why aren't they screening?
- d. How can we get people to implement screening?

Recognizing and reporting

- a. How are we processing reports?
- b. **Are trafficked or potentially trafficked victims being prioritized into a specialized service plan, or are they being treated like other child victims?

Service plan

- a. What service plans are agencies and the state prioritizing?
- b. Are they prioritizing specialized care for victims of child trafficking?
- c. What services are being provided?
- d. What services are lacking?
- e. What are the gaps / pitfalls in the continuum of care?

Appendix # 5

Types of Questions Explored in the Research

Guiding Questions for Victim Identification, Screening Practices and Tools, and Response and Reporting Procedures

- Are agencies trained to recognize and report?
- Are they trained to screen?
- If not, are there barriers easily identified?
- Are system/service providers where they should be on identifying HT and connecting victims/survivors with appropriate services?
- What agencies are trained in the “guiding principles” and other best practices?
- How are we identifying and challenging biases about trafficking victims?
- Who are the organizations providing services that are not specialized or restricted only for HT, but may Also be utilized for HT survivors (including populations served and specific services provided)?
- Are clients interviewed about past traumas?
- Is this data kept at an aggregate level to help inform future projects that address the intersectionality between childhood traumas and exploitation?
- How is this information analyzed and by whom?

Guiding Questions for Service Availability & Structure, Current Practices Connecting Victims to Services, and Gaps in Services

- Who is providing specialized services for survivors of human trafficking?
- Can we create a “map of the community” to capture where victims and survivors are accessing services?
- What organizations provide case management services to survivors?
- Do they have a mentorship program survivors may enter upon graduating initial programming. What does this look like?
- What limitations do agencies have regarding populations served or services available?
- Who are the organizations providing services that are not specialized or restricted only for HT, but may also be utilized for HT survivors (including populations served and specific services provided)?
- Are direct services provided by agencies in Louisville available to any survivor of human trafficking (considering factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, immigration status, etc.)?

Guiding Questions for Identification and Analysis of Existing Data on HT in Louisville

- What major demand markets have been identified?
- What data do we have about human trafficking and anti-human trafficking efforts in Louisville?
- What data do we have about human trafficking cases in Louisville?
- Number of individuals identified as survivors of labor or sex trafficking served by Louisville area providers. What additional info do we know about demographics: (not PII) such as gender, country of origin, age, labor or sex trafficking, typology of trafficking, location of trafficking (Louisville or elsewhere).
- Number of proactive law enforcement actions targeting human trafficking in Louisville, and outcomes of those actions (identified victims, types of trafficking, resulting charges, services accessed by victims, etc.)
- Number of HT cases investigated in Louisville and related information (charges, etc.)
- Number of HT cases prosecuted in Louisville and related information (outcomes, etc.) Number of civil lawsuits in Louisville for human trafficking and related information (outcomes, etc.)
- What data do we have to show who in our community profits off human trafficking? What ways are they profiting?

Guiding Questions for Current Efforts and Activities Related to: Prevention, Education, and Training

- What do we know about human trafficking prevention efforts in Louisville and what gaps exist in prevention?
- What audiences are being reached?
- Who is facilitating prevention education and/or training in Louisville?
- What materials/mediums are being used for public awareness?
- Are prevention efforts being used to address system issues that increase vulnerability to trafficking, such as homelessness, substance misuse, racial and gender inequities, etc.?
- Which curricula are being used? Do curricula address sex and labor trafficking?
- Is curricula primary prevention, secondary prevention, other approaches? What outcome information do we have regarding prevention efforts?

Guiding Questions for Anti-Trafficking Community (Dynamics and Structure)

- What local coalitions and coordinated task forces exist to address human trafficking issues in Louisville?
- What work do these coalitions/task forces do?
- Who are the members?
- How are survivors engaged in anti-trafficking work in Louisville?
- Which organizations are partnering with survivor led organizations and what are the goals of these partnerships?
- What does communication look like, as it relates to services, announcements, news, etc.?
- What methods are being followed by survivor-led organizations to ensure their approaches are trauma informed?
- How is trauma informed framework integrated into programming, staff training, volunteer training, etc.?

Guiding Questions for Analysis of Existing Infrastructure related to Policy and Funding connected to human trafficking in Louisville

- Does the city or county fund any efforts related to prevention or response?
- What funding is available locally to support anti-human trafficking efforts or services?
- Who is engaged in human trafficking policy work in Louisville?
- What do “agency” policies around human trafficking look like in specific systems?
- What are the rules, regulations, policies, loopholes that allow trafficking to remain profitable?

Guiding Questions for Systems Involvement Issues and Intersections and Trauma Informed Practices?

- Are there efforts to address system issues that increase vulnerability to trafficking, such as homelessness, substance misuse, racial and gender inequities, etc.?

Guiding Questions for Children, Youth, and Young Adults, Service Plans/Needs/Gaps, and Vulnerability and Victimization Factors

- How are we assisting youth in out of home care/disconnected youth/homeless?
- How are we reducing their risks?
- What services are being provided?
- What services are lacking?
- What are the gaps / pitfalls in the continuum of care?
- Are trafficked or potentially trafficked victims being prioritized into a specialized service plan, or are they being treated like other victims?
- Are providers that have any role in Foster Care and/or working with “at risk” youth populations process been trained in trauma?
- Are there common characteristics or life experiences for young people most at-risk, such as low-income, level of parental engagement, victims of prior abuse, etc. that are strongly correlated?
- What service plans are agencies and the state prioritizing? Are they prioritizing specialized care for victims of child trafficking?
- What services are being provided?
- What services are lacking?
- What are the gaps / pitfalls in the continuum of care?
- Are trafficked or potentially trafficked victims being prioritized into a specialized service plan, or are they being treated like other victims?

Appendix # 6

Steering Committee's Organizational Spotlights

Bakhita Empowerment Initiative (BEI): Catholic Charities established The Bakhita Empowerment Initiative in 2008 and is the only federally funded comprehensive service provider supporting survivors of labor or sex trafficking in Kentucky. Bakhita builds capacity to identify and support survivors of human trafficking throughout the Commonwealth, provides prevention education, and empowers survivors as they make their own choices about their lives, providing resources that improve their health and well-being for the long-term. BEI has come alongside hundreds of survivors of human trafficking since 2008, providing either crisis intervention support or long-term case management services. BEI provides comprehensive services, specialized services for foreign-born survivors, and independent housing services for survivors of human trafficking. Comprehensive services may include language access, emergency housing, transitional housing, long term housing, legal advocacy, assistance with basic needs such as food, clothing, and personal care items, family reunification, and assistance with accessing benefits, among other services.

Coalition for the Homeless: The Coalition for the Homeless is the lead advocate for people experiencing homelessness in Louisville, KY. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to prevent and end homelessness in Louisville. Our company was formed over 30 years ago, when in 1984 citizens and officials of the City of Louisville and Jefferson County sought a coordinated community response to homelessness. The grassroots initiative was sparked by two associate priests from the Cathedral of the Assumption and Christ Church Cathedral. Witnessing countless numbers of people in need and people who had died on the streets, the priests convinced the mayor, Harvey Sloane, to establish a community-wide task force to examine the issue of homelessness. The task force became the Coalition for the Homeless in 1986. Since our inception, the Coalition for the Homeless has been a leader in addressing homelessness. Our job is to strategically evaluate the needs of the homeless and of our 30+ member agencies, and to implement smart, long-term solutions. Our strategic priorities include: Educate the community about homelessness; Advocate for system changes and inspire action; and Coordinate the community response to homelessness through efficient use of resources and funding.

Department for Community Based Services: The mission of the Department for Community Based Services is to build an effective and efficient system of care with Kentucky citizens and communities to:

- Reduce poverty, adult, and child maltreatment and their effects;
- Advance person and family self-sufficiency, recovery and resiliency;
- Assure all children have safe and nurturing homes and communities; and
- Recruit and retain a workforce and partners that operate with integrity and transparency.

The Department for Community Based Services is an innovative, solutions-focused learning organization built on a foundation of transparency in action and with accountability for results. Both in the organization and among our partners, we thrive on a culture of respect for diversity of opinion that is nurtured through open communication. Highly performing and committed, we are unified in our goal of excellence in achieving outcomes for those we serve with the level of quality we would demand for our own families. The department provides family support; childcare; child and adult protection; eligibility determinations for Medicaid and food benefits; and administration of an energy cost-assistance program. The department administers the state foster care and adoption systems and recruits and trains parents to care for the state's children who are waiting for a permanent home. With offices in every county, the department provides services and programs to enhance the self-sufficiency of families; improve safety and permanency for children and vulnerable adults; and engage families and community partners in a collaborative decision-making process. The department was formed in the Cabinet for Families and Children in 1998 to give local offices more decision-making authority and the ability to collaborate more effectively with other community service providers.

Pathways HOME Program: Vision: The Pathways HOME Team services young adults experiencing homelessness through a low barrier, trauma-informed, inclusive approach with the goal of building resilience and self-sufficiency. The Home of the Innocents Pathways HOME program is primarily funded via four HUD grants and serves approximately 70 formerly homeless young adults at one time. All program recipients are required to meet the Federal HUD definition of homeless at program entry. The priority upon entering the program is identification of a new apartment in the community. Program participants receive up to 24 months of rental assistance while working with a case manager to address specific barriers and ongoing needs. Additionally, Pathways HOME utilizes a current Economic Independence grant provided by the Kentucky Dept. of Community Based Services (state funding) to provide young mothers with children who are on KTAP/TANF additional supportive service assistance. Pathways HOME also has an ongoing partnership with the Louisville Metro Housing Authority for annual Housing Choice Vouchers/Section 8 assistance for young adults who graduate from the Pathways HOME program. All Pathways HOME program recipients are offered a Life Skills curriculum as part of the program. Classes are offered around budgeting/financial empowerment, cooking and food preparation, driver's education, young mother's support group, housing 101/how to be a good tenant, and health/wellness. The goal of the program is self-sufficiency and skill building so that homelessness is never encountered again.

People Against Human Trafficking (PATH): PATH agreed on two goals: 1) Education and outreach regarding human trafficking, and 2) The long-term goal of establishing a home/shelter for survivors of human trafficking. In the spring of 2015, the group decided to apply for non-profit status. The application was mailed on Sept. 16, 2015, and received non-profit status on Oct. 8, 2015. PATH hired a part-time program coordinator to assist with the continuing growth. PATH focused on the development of a “digital and online safety training” concentrating on keeping safe on apps, smartphones, and other areas online where youth are active. During the 2019-year, PATH developed a 3-Phase Strategic Plan guided by the expertise of the Center for Nonprofit Excellence. PATH revised our mission to foster awareness of the realities of human trafficking and to cultivate collaborative efforts with agencies and individuals who provide healing and hope to those affected by human trafficking. PATH is currently operating in Phase 1 and becoming a recognized agency for training and education on human trafficking.

Safe Passage: Founded in 2018, Safe Passage is Kentucky’s leading organization that is dedicated to the issue of child trafficking. Our mission is to support today’s victims while also working to prevent any more children from being victimized tomorrow. Support services are key for ending present victimization and breaking the cycle of trauma, while prevention efforts work to reach youth before abusers do. By employing both prevention and intervention, Safe Passage is working to entirely end child abuse and trafficking by getting ahead of the issue. Intervention ends today’s abuse, while prevention blocks tomorrow’s abuse. Programs include: Community Awareness; Youth Prevention; and Family Support Services.

Scarlet Hope: Scarlet Hope exists to share the hope and love of Jesus with women in the adult entertainment industry. Because the demographic of women we serve are impacted by the adult entertainment industry, our primary outreach efforts begin exactly there: in strip clubs, massage parlors, and on the streets. Each Thursday, volunteers take home cooked meals into clubs where they connect with women to form relationships and connect them with resources to help any need they may have. In addition to Thursday outreach, Scarlet Hope is also home to a robust career development program (CDP) to offer women the opportunity to experience the life-changing love and grace of Jesus, increase their emotional, physical, educational, spiritual, and financial stability, and gain the life and job skills training necessary to function and retain meaningful employment. The program is 30 hours/week for 14 months and each woman in the program receives an hourly wage for her time spent working in the classroom and in job training. This model provides the time and space necessary to heal, stabilize, and plan for their lives while surrounded by a gospel-centered community. New in 2020, Scarlet Hope launched a new Hope for Her program for women seeking support outside of the sex industry but may not be ready to step into a career development program. Hope for Her provides women with the resources she needs in a safe, non-judgmental, and supportive setting with women of similar backgrounds. In 2021, our goal is to enroll each of these women in a care plan, in which she can set and achieve SMART goals pertaining to her personal, professional, and spiritual life. Ideally, the Hope for Her program will serve as a stepping stone to prepare a woman for our Career Development Program if she desires. In addition to our Outreach efforts, we have also partnered with other local organizations that have direct contact with the women in our population.

Survivors' Corner: Survivors' Corner exists to create a supportive network for trauma survivors while bringing an end to cycles of violence and inequity. Our programs and classes are designed to impart knowledge about trauma, promote resilience, and advance community cohesiveness. We envision a world where all people can fully experience wellness by having adequate resources to reach optimal physical, mental, and emotional health. Accessibility to these resources is provided through multiple program and class offerings for both trauma survivors and multi-disciplinary professionals. Programs include: Peer-Based Support Groups; SOS: Speaking Out Safely Workshop; Brain Science, Stress, & Resiliency Training; Yoga & Meditation Classes; Youth Mental Health First-Aid; Cultivating Youth Resilience Project.

YouthBuild Louisville: Since established in 2001, YouthBuild Louisville has been providing the necessary and complex services youth and young adults, ages 16-24, need to overcome crippling barriers to success. Our young people, more than 500 in eighteen years, have confronted homelessness, educational disruption, a family history of poverty, exposure to trauma and structural racism, and involvement with child welfare and justice systems. Annually, 25% are still living with parents or family. More than 60% are parenting, 92% have been African American, 15-20% per year are LGBTQIA, 90% are living in poverty and 75% or more have left high school before they graduated. With intensive case management, leadership training, educational training and tutoring, resource rich deployment, and workplace skill development, the young people we serve have overcome these challenges to become homeowners, college graduates, proud parents, and active community leaders. All staff trained in Implicit Bias, Trauma Informed Care, and member of BLOCS program through Metro United Way which is constant quality improvement to youth development. While many of the young people we serve at YouthBuild Louisville have familiar challenges, their backgrounds and goals require highly individualized services and supports. Our comprehensive services include: Case Management, Career Training in Construction Trades, Career Training in Nursing, and YouthBuild Louisville students can finish a secondary credential while getting ready for college, technical training, or an apprenticeship.