Rapid Response Teams: Multi-disciplinary Community Emergency Response for All Victims of Human Trafficking

Presenters:
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And
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• Purpose of NC Coalition Against Human Trafficking (NCCAHT)
• Define and Describe the Role of Rapid Response Teams;
• Necessary Components of a Rapid Response Team;
• Collaborative Efforts Needed in Establishing Rapid Response Teams;
• Discussion on Lessons Learned
Sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age, (**22 USC § 7102 (9-10)**)

Labor trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery, (**22 USC § 7102(9)**).

• In 2008 Reauthorization, maintaining and obstruction were identified as punishable offenses

Safe Harbor/Victims of Human Trafficking Act

• SB 683, seeks to eradicate sex trafficking of minors in NC. SB 683 focuses heavily on prosecuting the demand for commercial sex by increasing the penalties for those that engage in it, whether through solicitation, pimping, trafficking or sexual acts. Providing prosecutorial protection to children between the ages of 16 and 17 is the essence of the NC Safe Harbor law.

• Increase of Penalties
  • Makes selling an adult a felony in North Carolina.
  • Makes the offense of engaging in sexual acts with a prostituted person a Class A1 misdemeanor for 1st offense and a felony for 2nd or subsequent offenses.
  • Increases felony penalties for trafficking of minors as well as those over the age of 18.
The North Carolina Coalition Against Human Trafficking (NCCAHFT) is a group of professionals from multiple fields (including law enforcement, legal services, social services, policy, etc.) that works to raise awareness about human trafficking across North Carolina, support efforts to prosecute traffickers, and identify and assist victims. The Coalition was established in 2004 originally as RIPPLE.
What is a RRT?

- Rapid Response Teams are an outgrowth of NCCAH to be regional and local responses.
- Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) in North Carolina are multidisciplinary teams of direct service agencies, emergency responders, and law enforcement that assist in the first 24 to 72 hours of an identified victim of human trafficking’s recovery and rehabilitation process.
Why Is a RRT Needed?

• Complexity of Human Trafficking Cases
• Complexity of Victim Needs
• Lack of Understanding and/or Awareness Within the Local Community
• Identify and Coordinate Available Resources
• Identify and Build New Resources
• Crossover with Multidisciplinary Teams
Who should make up RRTs

- Primary Responders and Direct Service Agencies
  - Victim Advocates/Case Managers
  - Law Enforcement Officers
  - Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners/Physicians
  - Prosecutors/District Attorneys/Civil Legal Attorneys/Immigration Attorneys
  - Mental Health Professionals
  - Agencies with Emergency Shelter
  - Child Advocacy Centers
  - Child Protective Services

- Expanding Membership: Other Agencies to Consider
  - Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
  - Adult Protective Services
  - Probation, Parole, and Correctional Officers
  - Department of Labor
  - Culturally Specific Organizations
  - Substance Abuse Programs/Professionals
  - Survivors
  - Interpretation Services
Core Competencies

- Can communicate non-judgmentally (regarding sexuality, gender identification, religion, nationality, etc.) and compassionately with [human trafficking] victims, their families, and friends.

- Understands the importance of survivors’ rights to self-determination.

- Knows state and national laws, rules, and regulations regarding [human trafficking], including mandatory reporting responsibilities.

- Knows the laws and ethical principles that apply to medical, legal, and advocacy responders.

- Knows how to provide assessments, interventions, and prevention programming that are culturally competent.

- Is aware of factors that increase vulnerability to [human trafficking] (e.g. disability, age, nationality, etc.) while in no way blaming victims for these vulnerabilities.

- Knows developmentally appropriate questions for interviewing victims.

2015, Toolkit to Develop A Rapid Response Team, NCCAHT; adapted from material via The Ohio Department of Health. Authored by Debra Seltzer.
Forming a RRT

- Toolkit
- Designate a RRT Coordinator
- Member roles and responsibilities
- Membership application
- Define RRT Jurisdiction
  - Available Resources
  - Service Area Considerations
- Assess Community Readiness
  - Perception of Human Trafficking
  - Current Services or Resources for Victims
- Identify Opportunities for Collaboration
  - Find Partners
  - Integrate Community Services
Common Barriers

• Turf Issues
• History of Collaboration
• Isolation
• Meeting Fatigue
• Addressing Conflict within RRTs
• Funding
• Lack of Public Awareness
Team Development

- Mission Statement
- Case Protocols
- Communication
- Confidentiality and Consent to Release Forms
- Recording Cases
  - Statistics
- Meeting Structure
  - Meeting Location
  - Case Review
- Training & Education

Triangle RRT Mission Statement

Our mission is to identify and to connect recently liberated victims to needed services in the community as quickly and efficiently as possible with an emphasis on service provision during the first 72 hours after identification. The Rapid Response Team of the Triangle currently covers Wake, Durham, and Orange Counties.
Training & Education Topics

- How to Secure and Maintain Digital Evidence (FBI or other Law Enforcement Agency)
- Gangs and Human Trafficking (Gang Unit of Law Enforcement Agency)
- The Foster Care System Explained (Department of Social Services)
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder/Other Effects of Trauma Explained (Mental Health Professional)
- Rights of Migrant Farm Workers and/or their Employers (Farmworker Unit, Legal Aid of NC)
- Appropriate Terminology and Practices for Working with LGBTQIA Survivors (Representative from LGBTQIA Center at local College/University, and/or Victim Advocate)
- Post-conviction relief for HT Victims (Legal Aid of NC/Second Chance)
- Trauma-informed investigations
- Comprehensive case management
- How to work with an interpreter, and in building a prosecution
When is Your RRT Ready?

To Do List:

- Review the ‘Toolkit to Develop a Rapid Response Team’
- Designate a RRT Coordinator
- Define the RRT Jurisdiction
- Assess Community Readiness
- Identify Collaboration Opportunities
  - Find Partners
  - Integrate Community Services
  - Overcome Common Barriers
- Decide Core Membership
- [Consider Outside Agencies]
- Write Your Mission Statement
- Develop Your Team Protocol
- Decide Meeting Structure
  - Location
  - Frequency
  - Case Review
- Hold your first official meeting!
To connect regarding membership and resources, please contact: NCCAH@gmail or via Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/nccah

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