

Transcript for Webinar 1:

Trafficking of Youth with Disabilities: What Providers Serving Youth with Disabilities Need to Know

JODY HASKIN: Welcome and thank you for joining us today for this important webinar on the intersection of human trafficking and youth with disabilities. I am Jody Haskin. And with me today is Jae Jin Pak. We're with the International Organization for Adolescence or IOFA. And we will be co-presenting the training today on the trafficking of youth with disabilities.

This webinar is brought to you as a partnership between IOFA, The National Human Trafficking and Disabilities Working Group, The National Resource Center for Reaching Victims in vision 21. This is an Office of Victims of Crime Funded Project. We are very happy that you're joining us today and we'd like to take a moment to just introduce ourselves and our work on the topic of today's webinar.

My role at IOFA for the past seven years has focused on youth who have experienced sex or labor trafficking. My work centers on partnering with direct service organizations and helping them to build capacity and to be better equipped overall to understand

human trafficking, identify young people who might be trafficked, and to provide appropriate services or referral for young people.

JAE JIN: Hi there, everybody. My name is Jae Jin Pak. I've worked in the areas of gender based violence prevention, crisis intervention, disability, cultural competency, and anti-trafficking. I'm grateful to be the coordinator of this project. I am also a person living with multiple disabilities, vision impairment and epilepsy. So supporting people with disabilities is very important to me.

JODY HASKIN: As you learn today, human trafficking is a complex crime and addressing it requires communities to work together, together in ways that they may not have done before. And we know that no single agency can provide comprehensive care alone. This project is also a collaboration of various organizations with expertise including addressing the trafficking of children and youth, working with persons with disabilities, and addressing violence and crime.

Jae Jin and I represent IOFA, which is a US-based non-profit organization working globally since 1999 to address human trafficking and exploitation, and also the National Human Trafficking and Disabilities Working Group. The working group's mission is to prevent the trafficking of individuals with disabilities and deaf individuals and to advance the health and well-being of trafficking survivors with disabilities and deaf survivors of

trafficking through research, policy analysis, technical assistance, and training. The presentation that you will see today was created in collaboration with survivors of trafficking, advocates, and self-advocates, and the disability community.

JAE JIN: So this webinar is meant to be an introduction to the intersection of human trafficking and disability. Our learning objectives today are an increased knowledge of sex and labor trafficking including types and methods, an increased understanding of how the disability community may be impacted by human trafficking, an increased understanding of the role of a provider serving youth with disabilities in addressing human trafficking, and an improved ability to identify and support potential or confirmed youth survivors of human trafficking with disabilities.

JODY HASKIN: Thanks, Jae Jin. Throughout the presentation, we will be using terms like youth, children, or child, and minor. For the most part, we will be using the term youth because it is the broadest way to define young people with regard to the communities that we all serve. We know that young people of all ages are trafficked. However, the guidance that we're giving today will fit best with the definition of youth that includes young people from grade school through their mid 20s.

We will use the term minors to describe youth under the age of 18. This term is important when defining human trafficking

because there's a special clause for minors who are sex trafficked. For example, a minor youth who trades sex for anything of value is automatically considered a victim of a crime of human trafficking. And we'll talk more in depth about this later.

JAE JIN: Thanks, Jody. So you may be wondering, why providers serving youth with disabilities need to learn about human trafficking? What is the connection? As providers serving youth with disabilities and their families, you are in a unique position to help prevent, identify, and address potential human trafficking situations. We want to arm you with information and resources so you are equipped to support the youth you serve, which will empower them to live healthier and positive lives.

JODY HASKIN: I hope that has worked for over 20 years to help organizations respond to youth trafficking. Though there is a lot of information that currently exists to train professionals who work with youth in various systems like child welfare or with various youth communities like Runaway Homeless Youth, LGBTQ plus Youth. There are many other programs that serve specific communities of young people. But we found that there are significant gaps in the systems and the protocols available to specifically identify and serve youth with disabilities who may have experienced trafficking.

Now we know anecdotally that this crime is happening to youth with disabilities and we understand that there are many identifiers and promising practices to address youth trafficking that can be applied to all youth. We also know the traffickers target groom and control young people based on various needs that young people have. In this presentation, we discussed some of the ways that youth with disabilities are trafficked, some universal red flags that can be applied to all communities of youth.

Now remember this is still an introduction. We are very new at this intersection so we are really looking for work from you to help to identify some of these universal factors so you become familiar with some of the changes that the youth that you're serving are going through and perhaps find some unique identifiers of youth trafficking that we can use in the future. Let's start by discussing some most common misconceptions about youth, sex trafficking, and youth labor trafficking in determining what is factual and what's a myth. Jae Jin?

JAE JIN: Thanks, Jody. Though almost everybody, almost everyone has heard of human trafficking in popular media including in movies, viral online posts. However, many of these claims of human trafficking are either not a case of human trafficking at all or such rarity that we do not use them in any of

the cases that are served within the human trafficking provider community.

To help get a better understanding of what human trafficking is and isn't, we will start with a few true or false questions. As I ask each question, you can jot down your answer or jot on your response to compare to the answer. The first statement is human trafficking only takes place in large cities or other countries.

Take a moment to consider whether this is true or false. Now we'll reveal the answer, which is false. Human trafficking takes place all around the world, including throughout all communities in the United States. In cities, suburbs, and in rural areas, cases of human trafficking have been identified in every state in the nation and no community is immune including the disability community.

Human trafficking happens in our schools, our malls, our restaurants, and even within people's homes. OK, let's try another, right? The second statement is in order to be considered trafficking, a person must be moved across city, state, or county border. Take a moment to consider whether this is true or false.

Now we'll reveal the answer. It's false. Human trafficking does not require any movement. The term trafficking may seem misleading in this case because we may be used to hearing the

term trafficking in conjunction with moving illegal items across the border.

Let's try another. So here is statement number 3. Most youth who experience trafficking were initially kidnapped by their trafficker. Take a moment to consider is this true or false. Now we'll reveal the answer, which is false. Basically, taking someone rarely happens in a trafficking situation. In most trafficking situations, traffickers used tactics to trick or coerce a young person into the trafficking situation. They want the youth to be compliant and easily controlled so the trafficker can use them to make money.

OK, one more. Only we have statement number 4. Youth under the age of 18 who trade sex acts for something of value are considered victims of sex trafficking. Take a moment to consider if this was true. Now we'll reveal the answer, which is true. The crime of sex trafficking includes youth under the age of 18 who trades sex acts for something of value.

These youth are a victim of a crime. Now if you didn't get all the answers, these statements correctly, that's fine. We hope that you learned something new. Now let's learn exactly what youth trafficking is.

JODY HASKIN: Thanks, Jae Jin for the fun and informative little quiz, all right? Now let's talk about what human trafficking is. So

generally speaking, youth trafficking is the exploitation of an individual by a trafficker for the purposes of gaining either labor or sex at the expense of the victim. It is a crime both at the federal and state levels.

Now before we move on, I'd like to take a moment to make a note on language we'll use in this presentation. Human trafficking, as I mentioned, is a crime. The youth, children, and adults who are trafficked are victims of a crime. So the word victim may sometimes be used in order to ensure that the individuals are not seen as complicit in any criminal acts that they may have been forced to be involved with. It's also a legal term that we may use when we're talking about definitions.

However, when we are referring to individuals who have experienced trafficking, the term victim may take over the narrative of who the whole individual is and can put a focus on trauma without realizing a person's resiliency. So when discussing those who have been trafficked, there are several times that there are several different terms that we can use that we have gotten input from those individuals who've experienced trafficking including a person with lived experience or survivor among others.

And based on input from our partners that we work with, for this presentation, we will be using the term survivor. OK, now let's talk about the definition of human trafficking and make sure that

we're all on the same page and we understand exactly what this crime looks like. And to start out with, this is an excerpt from the Federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act, or the TVPA This is the definition of human trafficking that makes it a crime in the United States.

Each state in the US also has its own state level trafficking laws but often state laws are not consistent and may not have as severe penalties for traffickers as the TVPA does. And we know that the federal definition is something that we can use universally within for all states. And that's why we'll use the federal definitions for the purposes of this presentation.

Trafficking can take the form of either sex trafficking or labor trafficking and these types can also be combined. In adults force, fraud, or coercion is used to exploit a person to perform sex acts or to provide labor for the benefit of the trafficker. Benefits can be money or they can be another item of value.

An individual under the age of 18 force, fraud, and coercion don't need to be present in a sex trafficking situation. However, force, fraud, or coercion does need to be present where all ages of an individual who is in a labor trafficking situation. Now it's really less important that you understand the definition of trafficking but more important that you get a sense of what these cases look like and feel like so you can intervene or report if you suspect that a youth you work with might be in a trafficking situation.

So first we'll talk about the elements of trafficking and this will help you to recognize not only the actions associated with trafficking but also to identify some other risk factors in the youth that you serve. OK, so here we have three circles. And these are the three elements of human trafficking. So in most cases of trafficking, we need to have an element of each of these.

So in the process circle, we consider forms of process to be recruitment or harboring or provision of or transportation or obtaining a person. So in order for a situation to be considered trafficking, one of those must be included for the process part. And for the means, this is force, fraud, or coercion. And force means any physical force, torture, could be beating, sleep or food deprivation. Fraud is the act of deceiving somebody. And we know there are common example of fraud in trafficking situations, is when a trafficker tricks a youth that they're in a relationship or that they're in a friendship or maybe promises a job that doesn't really exist as they advertise it.

Coercion refers to attempts to get someone to do something including blackmail or threats. In the case of youth with disability, this often means exploiting trust within relationships or insecurities in general. So an example would be that a trafficker might say to a young person, you don't have any friends. If you were to do this thing for me, you will get a lot of friends. Or

through threats like, I won't get your mobility device unless you do this one thing for me.

Coercion can all often include threats of things like violence to the young person or to somebody they love. An example might be, if you don't have sex with this person, I will hurt your younger sister. And then the last part is the end. So that's either sex or labor trafficking.

So in labor trafficking, a person is forced to work or provide services without compensation or for an adequate compensation. Labor trafficking usually occurs in low paid or unregulated industries like landscaping, agriculture, and carnivals, but it can really happen in any industry or fields. And sex trafficking, the end is commercial sex acts.

So commercial sex act is any act in exchange for money or something else of value. An example of commercial sex acts can include pornography, webcams, and exotic performance. This could be a situation where a youth is being photographed nude and the pictures are distributed for money or drugs or something else with value attached to it. We will go over some cases shortly. But first, let's consider some of the social structures that put you and youth with disabilities at risk for trafficking in the first place.

So first of all, why are youth at risk for trafficking and sex of labor? There are some characteristics that are common with

young people. And if you look at this list, maybe it will sound familiar to a young person that you know, maybe that you work with, maybe your own children. Some of these maybe you can relate to from when you were a young person yourself.

Some of these common situations and characteristics of youth include having access to the internet, the desire to connect with others, feeling misunderstood by family, family conflicts, the craving of independence, some risk-taking behaviors, and lack of life experience in general. Now it's important to understand some of the risk factors of trafficking and youth overall because all youth can be targeted and exploited for these reasons that you see. And we know this is of course, not an exhaustive list.

I would especially like to highlight what is often unsupervised access to the internet coupled with the desire to develop romantic relationships or simply to connect to others that really understands them, perhaps better than the young person feels that their parents can. Traffickers may pose as a friend or romantic interest online to build rapport during the grooming process.

OK, so now specifically, let's look at some communities of youth who may be at a higher risk of being targeted by traffickers. These include undocumented youth, runaway and homeless youth, youth with disabilities, LGBTQ plus youth, youth who are in foster care or group homes. Though young people who've been

in the justice system are connected to the justice system, who've had multiple placements, young people who have experienced abuse, and neglect and young people who are persons of color.

Now many of these young people are even more vulnerable because they have been historically marginalized. The systemic disenfranchising of these communities often happens today and traffickers exploit the fact that these young people belong to chronically underserved communities. You can see that youth with disabilities here has been highlighted. And that's why we're here today to talk a little bit more about specific risk factors that make it more likely for youth with disability to be targeted. Jae Jin.

JAE JIN: Thanks, Jody for that great introduction or review of human trafficking. Well, let's talk about the reality. And the reality is that all youth are at risk of being exploited by traffickers. Our research indicates that youth with disabilities are at least three times more likely than children without disabilities to be sexually abused. Children with intellectual and mental health disabilities appear to be at the most risk, at 4.6 times the risk.

Many of the same factors that put young people at risk for sexual exploitation also puts them at risk for trafficking. We understand through anecdotal evidence and research that trafficking is happening in our disability communities. We know the risk

factors. We know the traffickers are targeting young people with disabilities but we are still at the formative stages of research, identification, and programming for youth with disabilities impacted trafficking.

The literature suggests although the number of exploited children with disabilities is increasing, we still have very few programs that can adequately and confidently meet the unique care and service needs of this population. This is where you come in. By gaining an understanding of what trafficking is and what its impact on young people with disabilities do will help identify and connect those youth who have or are currently trafficked in need of valuable support.

Question of why are youth with disabilities at higher risk? Talk about the aspects of society that contribute making youth with disabilities a higher risk target for traffickers. In the first box, you see that youth with disabilities are socialized to follow an able-bodied authority. A common message sent to youth is that everybody who is adults and shears know better and you shouldn't trust their judgment simply because they are able-bodied while you are not.

And on a personal note, I can share for me personally that I have-- I can remember sharing and hearing these types of messages both subtly and as explicitly as a child as well. On a second box, there is also a number of myths and negative

stereotypes surrounding the disability community. Let's talk about some of the stereotypes.

A negative picture of dependency is often painted of these individuals and this reinforces the incorrect message that people with disabilities are somehow less than their able-bodied peers and/or require an able-bodied person to take care of them.

Another concerning myth is the youth with disabilities don't need to be taught about their bodies because they will not be sexually active. This often can mean that a youth will have never been taught about body autonomy. And a 97% to 99% of abusers are known and trusted by their victims.

By not informing all use of their rights and boundaries is incredibly dangerous. Myth and stereotypes also serve to promote the authoring of disability, which allows for disabled youth to be seen as an outsider, that is different from, and should be ignored by society. And moving on. This brings me to the third factor, which is social powerlessness and isolation.

Social powerlessness is a concern with all youth but is especially problematic in youth that have been disenfranchised or historically viewed and treated as less valuable. Society does not often see youth, especially those with disabilities or intellectual or developmental disabilities as having power. This may lead to overall experiences of social powerlessness which might be exploited by the trafficker or maybe responsible for the youth not

reporting their region because they have been socialized in a climate where they are often not believed or told that their situation is normal because of their disability.

The continued promotion of powerlessness and lack of voice maybe may lead to a youth with disabilities to be isolated by peers, providers, and even family. If they have communication differences as well, this also leads to further lack of social integration and increases the risk of experiencing powerlessness and isolation as well as feeling-- as also having the challenges of not speaking out or disclosing or asking for help to the one that is able to support.

JODY HASKIN: Thanks, Jae Jin for sharing some really important aspects of society that can contribute to youth with disabilities to be at risk for trafficking. We do want to continue looking at some risk factors of young people with disabilities to be trafficked. And some ways we can work to prevent crimes like human trafficking of happening that the young people that we serve is through filling gaps in education for youth with disabilities.

Now the boxes you see here was some of the areas that we could improve on to help decrease some of the risk factors of trafficking of youth with disabilities. So let's go ahead and start and talk about the implications of each of these. And I want you to consider what works within your agency and maybe what works

with your own personal practice and really challenge yourself to determine if you are tackling some of these gaps in education.

First of all, let's start out with a question. How many of you feel that the youth you serve have a solid understanding of personal safety? Now personal safety can mean a lot of things. But in general, do you feel comfortable that the youth that you serve have a good understanding of what it is as well? You have at your agency, do you provide specific teaching to youth for very specific things around personal safety?

Some of these topics for teaching could be learning about safe touch, body anatomy, physical boundaries, and consent. And a lot of this goes along with relationships with others but really focuses on autonomy of the young person and safety in general. A youth that knows that no one should be asking them to provide sex in exchange for something of value or even how to exit a situation that feels uncomfortable will considerably more protected from traffickers if they have this understanding and education.

Another gap that we could consider is online safety. And the importance of this type of training cannot be overstated. Traffickers have used the internet to groom young people on social media like Instagram and interactive video games. Do the youth you serve know how to be safe online? Some of the topics

for teaching youth to be safe online is that they should know that not to share passwords or personal identifying information.

Traffickers specifically look for people who share locations, private information, and are willing to share details of their personal life. That can then be turned around and use to exploit the person during the grooming process or can be used to connect or bond with the youth. Youth with disabilities like any other youth should be taught to navigate social media safely. Education should cover topics like what images are safe to share, how to make an account private, and when to report inappropriate behavior, and what images are appropriate to share.

And this leads to the topic of healthy relationships in general. And this is for both online relationships and off. Youth with disabilities may use the online or physical world to reach out to connect with others. In either setting, a young person must be taught what a healthy relationship looks like. This would be a really great opportunity for peers or other youth to speak both with young people about what red flags would look like and friendships along with physical relationships.

The misconception that youth with disabilities do not have or are not interested in sex is false and it should never be assumed. If youth are not educated unhealthy relationships in both the romantic and even in worst workplace situations, a trafficker may

be able to convince the youth that they are not a victim but a girlfriend or boyfriend a friend or an employee. Many youth with disabilities may find themselves isolated from their peers and looking for friendship and love.

It's important to remember that. Because of the stigma that is often placed on disability community, these individuals may have been cast out by their families if their care needs became too great for the family to handle. In situations like these, the trafficker may be the first person to tell the youth with disabilities the words, I love you. Gaslighting or convincing somebody that something untrue is factual is commonly seen in both sex and labor trafficking.

Something else to focus on is that youth should be educated in human trafficking. Some topics for teaching should be that young people should know what human trafficking is, that it's a crime, and what to look for. They should also learn how to report a crime, how to get help if they were already involved in the trafficking situation, and it's important to remember and reiterate the trafficking is a crime and it's not the youth's fault. It's never the youths fault. The youth who is trafficked is a victim of a crime.

Now while many individuals with disabilities understand their rights and serve as advocates to empower others in the community, youth with disabilities may be less likely to know

what their rights are. Without this information, a trafficker can say almost anything to the potential victim and justify it as normal or fair. So these rights include legal rights to education, supports, and the rights of all people. An example of this, especially in labor trafficking is the right to be paid the same as all other employees.

And this brings me to the last point, which is education on the value of labor. And this means that youth with disabilities should learn what they must be paid under the law along with what typical wage would be for the job to which they're applying. In the anti-trafficking community, some of the first known cases of trafficking that date back several decades include youth with disabilities were forced to beg on the streets of New York and also to sell trinkets. Some other initial cases from decades ago included adults with developmental disabilities who were separated from their social connections and Texas to live in Iowa on site at a Turkey processing plant where they worked every day in debt bondage.

It's essential to talk about things like labor laws and to describe what a typical workday looks like. And these typical work day should also include breaks and meals. Helping youth with disabilities to learn more about the labor market, how to interview for a job, what to expect in the workplace, and more

will set them up for a truly successful future while avoiding dangerous criminal situations like labor trafficking.

JAE JIN: Actually that is great information. Let's talk into risk factors and support. So we just covered some areas where we as providers may be lacking in how we serve youth with disabilities. There are also risk factors that are related to the supports we do provide as these are also known to traffickers and may be exploited at any opportunity.

Let's start with communication. Some agencies are highly accessible and provide interpreters, translators, speech and language pathologist, and other team members that can communicate in a variety of individual ways in order to support the unique challenges experiences by some youth with disabilities. In both labor and sex trafficking, the trafficker is always in control. They control documents, money, emotions, and options.

When youth live with a disability, lacking their communication, the trafficker may very well present as an interpreter possibly even stating that the youth speaks a language or signs in a way that no other person can understand. The trafficker controls aspects of communication but also support. In general, any use that needs an assistive device to communicate or manage sensory and/or mobility needs will be at risk for exploitation by a trafficker. Initially, the trafficker may try to relate to the youth by

saying that they don't care if the youth has a wheelchair or that it's totally cool that the youth has a hearing aid. They might shame other people for bullying the youth or their differences and treat the youth as if they are one person who will never see them as different or less valuable.

Once the bond is created between the youth and the trafficker, having the need for any kind of assistive support may be exactly what the trafficker exploits. If the youth does not do as they are told, their trafficker can then threaten to not allow the youth access to what they need in order to see, hear, walk, or communicate until they comply. Personal care may also be a need for some youth with disabilities. And this goes back to the importance of educating youth about safe touch and physical boundaries.

A trafficker may abuse or allow others the opportunity to abuse the youth requiring personal care. They may also withhold necessary personal care, such as changing the soil brief, or feeding or helping you transition from a bed to a chair, again, threatening to withhold those services to force the youth to comply. So the last three boxes that we'll discuss are very much related. Youth with disabilities are entitled to a fair education, safe housing, and benefits to pay for whatever supports they may need to live successfully and have happy lives in the community.

A trafficker may exploit this supports virtually with regard to benefits. They may set up direct deposit to elect a youth disability benefits check or force the youth to sign checks over to them in exchange for living in a house run by the trafficker. They may also tell the youth that they don't deserve to go to school or that they will be caught and treated as a criminal if they tell anyone about their job or a living arrangement. A youth living in a group home that is unhappy, they may be offered a quote, "better living arrangement" unquote by the trafficker and then not be allowed to leave.

JODY HASKIN: Thanks, Jae Jin. That's really important information to take note of as far as the risk factors for young people who may be targeted for trafficking. Next, we're going to talk about who the traffickers are. And when you think of somebody who is a human trafficker, often what comes to mind is not what we normally see for traffickers in general. So when we talk about trafficking, people are very surprised to know that anyone can be a trafficker. And this means men, women, caregivers, persons of all backgrounds can be traffickers.

What's key here, however, is that the trafficker is very oftentimes someone who is known to the youth or gets to know the youth very well so that the youth trust them. Let's take a look at a case that highlights this fact. Here, the trafficker was the survivors mother and full time caregiver.

In this case, the trafficker was charged with sex trafficking. She forced her 14-year-old daughter who lives with mental and physical disabilities to provide sex acts to men in exchange for drugs. This case is also an example of what is called interfamilial trafficking because the trafficker is a family member. Even outside of the family, however, we know that caregivers can be traffickers and use the role of authority and trusted relationship to break down barriers with youth as they bathe, dress, and assist with other hygiene needs. In this case, the trafficker provided all care for her daughter and so targeted her for trafficking.

Young people who depend on a parenteral caregiver may also be isolated from others much more easily as they already lived with their trafficker and the trafficker happens to have control of their documents and mobility and potentially their communication with others. This also means that there might be bonds or even trauma bonds that are formed because they do spend so much time together and it makes it more difficult for the young person to seek help or for professionals to know any red flags of abuse. This case also highlights that the trafficker only needs to receive something of value in order to meet the trafficking definition.

Receiving drugs as a form of payment would still be considered trafficking even without money being involved. In cases in which the trafficker knows the victim such as the last case or is

targeting a young person to traffic, the action of grooming is used to build rapport and build trust with the young person. Control is also involved to ensure compliance and that the youth will not try to leave their situation.

Once the trafficker identifies a youth to target either in person or online, the traffickers will get to know the youth through befriending them and acting like they care. Traffickers will build that trust and learn more about the youth the needs and desires and gain necessary information so that they can determine what would be easiest to exploit. So at this point, they're often making promises of whatever the youth needs or desires the most whether it's love, family, friendship, independence, a sense of belonging, housing, food, or simply a better life.

Traffickers may make false promises, offer gifts, or pay for things in order to in debt the youth to the trafficker. Blackmailing or gaslighting are common tactics used by traffickers to control the youth. Youth may be told that they're now criminals and can't tell anyone or they'll be arrested. And youth are often convinced that they got themselves into this situation and feel intense guilt and self-blame. Traffickers may also use force or threaten to hurt a family member or someone that the youth cares about in order to coerce the young person to do as they're told.

Now using your understanding of grooming elements and control elements in a trafficking situation, I'm going to share a vignette

with you based on a real case that took place recently in the United States. As I share some of the main points of this case, take a moment to think about and take note of which tactics the traffickers use to both groom the youth and how they used control to keep the youth in the trafficking situation. In this case, three traffickers targeted young men at a youth home for youth without developmental disabilities and substance abuse rehabilitation programs.

In this case, the traffickers would befriend the youth and learn that they felt lonely, disconnected, and were struggling with addiction to drugs. When the traffickers discovered this, they began to offer a sense of belonging by communicating often and being friendly toward the youth. They also supplied the young men with drugs.

Youth were reminded that if they talk to anyone else about their relationship, it would be found out that they were doing drugs illegally and they could not only get kicked out of their program but get in trouble with the police as well. When the youth built up enough debt to the trafficker because of the drugs that the trafficker provided to them, the trafficker then would force the young men into performing commercial sex acts to strangers and the traffickers kept the money. Soon the traffickers began to withhold the drugs that they were providing to the youth.

While youth will experience withdrawal, the traffickers would then withhold drugs from the youth until they agreed to perform additional commercial sex acts. This continued this cycle, including using their addiction to drugs to consider to continue the commercial sexual exploitation.

OK, so this was an actual case that took place over decades with multiple men who were targeted as victims of sex trafficking. Let's take a look at some of the grooming tactics that the trafficker used over the years. First, he identified group homes for young men. He knew that the young men in the group homes were already struggling so the next part of this was to target and befriend some of the youth. He used friendship and drugs to get close to them by providing something that they desired.

He that same tactic of providing drugs as a control tactic. Another tactic was to tell the youth that he would snitch that they were using drugs. Once the young men were hooked on drugs, the trafficker would force them into sex trafficking to pay off their debt. When the young men refused, he would withhold their drugs until they complied. And we were able to identify a lot of those elements of grooming and control.

Let's try another one to determine if in this case it's an actual case of youth labor trafficking or if it's a case of exploitation or another crime. Now remember, in order ever to be labor trafficking, there needs to be an element of process, means, and

an end. So because this is a potential labor trafficking case, if we wanted to prove it's labor trafficking, it doesn't matter the age of the young person. We need to have an element of force, fraud, or coercion to be present.

As we discuss this case, consider if there is an element of process, means, and end. In this case, a group of school administrators at a school for youth with disabilities on the east coast identified students who wanted to get a job. The administrators deceived these students into thinking that we're not good enough to work anywhere else and the jobs at the school would be their only option.

The administrators forced the students to assemble tag bag and sell jewelry for a nearby factory. The students sometimes made at most between \$0.50 to \$2 per hour. The administrators told the students they would not be able to find jobs even after they graduated so they needed to stay there. So was this a case of labor trafficking?

Let's have a look. In this case, the process involve recruitments. The administrators targeted and recruited their own student body to exploit for the administrators game. As you will recall, the next element is the means of trafficking. And again, although they were minors or started out as minors, labor trafficking still requires an element of force, fraud, or coercion to be present in order for it to be considered specifically a trafficking situation.

In this case, fraud was used to deceive the students into thinking that they weren't good enough to work anywhere else and these jobs would be their only option. And at the end of course is labor. Here, labor was provided for free or for very little compensation with students making very little money. The youth were controlled through gaslighting techniques where administrators told the students that they would not be able to find jobs after they graduated.

JAE JIN: Thanks, Jody. The case examples was really helpful and insightful. So now let's move on to the role of the provider. And that's you, the audience. So now that you may have identified a trafficking situation, let's talk about your role as a provider. Education and awareness for staff and clients of the elements of human trafficking and understanding how it impacts youth is an important first step.

The next role is identification. Having knowledge of the risk factors and a red flags to watch for will allow young people to receive appropriate services. You will be a good support system for them. Upon identification, a suspected case of human trafficking, please remember to follow your agency's protocol. That protocol should include safety procedures and mandated reporting requirements. There is not a protocol in place, followed, established, mandated reporting guidelines in your state.

Aside from reporting to your local agency, you can also report that the National Human Trafficking Hotline. There will be additional information about this resource of-- Finally, you will offer support and referrals. It is incredibly important. Support used by letting them know that you care and that you will do what you can to support them. Let them know it's not their fault. Please tell them that it wasn't their fault. Refer them to appropriate services for themselves and any non-offending family members. Connect with anti-trafficking agencies in your area to join local human trafficking task forces, to connect to trauma-informed services and youth-centered services.

Moving on talking more about disability provider role around prevention. So it's very important as a service provider for youth with disabilities-- you are again, in a key position to help prevent trafficking of youth in your care. You should use your connections and trust the youth that you serve. The most important thing you can do to prevent trafficking is educate youth and their families. Be sure to include information about safety, healthy relationships, human trafficking, legal rights, and the value of youth labor as Jody talked about earlier.

This list may seem short but should look somewhat familiar. Again, these topics are generally those that have been identified as being gaps in education for youth with disabilities. Please ensure that you are giving this education directly to the youth

you serve in a way that is accessible and inclusive or make sure to provide referrals to youth and their families on where they can obtain and learn about how to stay safe.

That prevention role is extensive even if it is mostly consists of education. You do not have to provide all of this knowledge yourself. We encourage you to help the youth there to learn where to find other places in the community that can help support accessible and inclusive as they provide more specific learning opportunities about the topics identified on the slide. The youth may not always be in your care but by helping them to find other places that are also safe, they will have other options that they need to find themselves in a situation where accessible help is needed.

So moving on for prevention to identification so identification can be complex in terms of human trafficking and perhaps more so when we think about youth with disabilities. Everyone is an individual and all youths, regardless of abilities may present a little bit differently. There are, however, some indicators that are commonly seen in trafficking that give us a good place to start from.

At this time, we are still learning and adding to the discussion concerning the intersection of trafficking and youth with abilities. Because of this we acknowledge that an ideal accessible tool have yet to be developed. Even outside of your understanding risk

factors for trafficking in youth with disabilities and knowing what red flags to look for, in general, can be very helpful. We do recommend that you should always be aware of potential red flags. If you become concerned, talk to the youth to learn more about their situation in order to determine what the youth needs are.

Be sure the youth understands the implications of mandated reporting and your role as a reporter. Even if a youth does not disclose trafficking, there may be needs that the youth need services for. Now let's move on to the red flags you should be looking for that may indicate trafficking.

JODY HASKIN: Right. Thank you, Jae Jin. When considering red flags, keep in mind that trafficking can be happening and ongoing as youth is receiving services from your organization. We know that there are youth who are being trafficked too still go to school, who are still living at home with their families. And we know that also that trafficked youth often don't understand or believe that they're victims of a crime. They also may have been convinced that they got themselves into the situation.

As mentioned before, there are some red flags to be on the lookout for in youth with disabilities and youth in general. And while these red flags are more commonly seen in young people in general, keep in mind that instances of mistreatment in youth with disabilities might actually be an indicator of a more complex

crime of human trafficking. So maybe as we go through some of these red flags, you might think back to a time that you have made a report for a young person and you might realize that there could be something deeper going on in terms of human trafficking.

Because we're still learning about red flags specific to youth with disabilities, you might notice that something might be off about a youth but a red flag isn't listed here. So even if you just have suspicions about sex or labor trafficking, you might notice some elements of grooming or elements of control but you're unsure if what's happening is a crime, please feel free to reach out. We're going to provide a hotline in the resources at the end of the presentation in which you can confidentially explain the situation to help determine if exploitation or sex trafficking or labor trafficking is taking place.

OK, let's talk about behavioral changes first. The most important thing to look for are changes in behavior. So we can make a list of different elements of what red flags might look like, but when it comes to behavior, it's really important that you have good rapport with youth you work with then you understand if there has been a change in their behavior. So think of the individual youth and decide if there's been a change for their specific behavior patterns or maybe their appearance, is there an

explanation for what you see? Missing school or not being home is a red flag. And all youth.

And especially at the youth is normally home at a certain time and now they don't show up until hours later, how do they explain that behavior to you? If the youth does not have a pattern of missing school, it's important to also look at truancy. Another significant red flag is a reduction or change in the way a youth communicates. Did the youth demonstrate a reduction or change in communication with trusted family, friends, or caregivers? For youth with disabilities, this may be challenging to determine. However, if you notice that a youth previously was very open with you and now they're not, it's important to find out why.

Something to think about that is specific to youth with developmental disabilities are tasks which they have achieved. So if the youth who has achieved toilet training for example is now having an accidents, this could be an issue that would warrant for their assessment. If youth is suddenly asking questions about their bodies or very graphic questions or telling very graphic stories about sex and relationships but it may not be age appropriate or developmentally appropriate for them to do so that may also be a red flag.

With situational signs of trafficking, you don't necessarily need to be familiar with the youth typical pattern of behavior. But these

situations should always trigger further investigation by a trained professional. If, for example, a youth has a much older partner if they mention a friend or a boss or a partner who shows signs of controlling behavior, if the youth has new possessions such as slippers, watches, phones, or other items of value that they may not have the capacity to purchase on their own, these could all be red flags for trafficking.

Now when we look at physical red flags of trafficking, these can slightly be more obvious but not always. Any injury or illness that has no explanation should be treated by a medical professional and reported as per your state's mandated reporting guidelines. But as we explained earlier, sometimes physical injuries can be an indication of trafficking. So not only does reporting need to happen but it might be important to call the hotline and find out if this truly is a red flag. They might ask more questions about a situation in which you can get a better understanding of it, it might be a trafficking situation as well.

Because youth may have many sexual partners if they're being commercially sexually exploited, they may have sexually transmitted infections or females may be forced to terminate pregnancies. Keep in mind that when you report an abuse of youth to pause and consider if it's abuse, if the abuse itself is a red flag. Now as previously mentioned, you'll want to be sure that any agency protocols are accessible and to consider the needs of

all youth. Safety should be your highest priority. And if the suspected trafficker is present, please practice discretion.

If a youth or staff or you are in imminent danger, please call emergency services 911. Please remember that trafficking situations can be extremely dangerous and you should never attempt to remove someone from a trafficking situation. If you are a mandated reporter, it's important to tell the youth that you are a mandated reporter and explain what it is, why you must do it, and who you required to share any further disclosed information with. It's very important that you maintain the trust, sorry. It's important that you maintain the trust of the youth through your transparency.

As you explain this process, stop and check for understanding. Take your time. The purpose of sharing your mandated reporting requirements early on in a relationship with the youth you serve is so the youth can choose what they share with you. If they do not want to continue a conversation with you, they don't have to. A youth with disabilities might disclose trafficking or you may suspect it. In either case, be ready. Have translators, assist said technology, mobility devices, and any other potential support devices accessible to you if possible at any time so that youth can have this already difficult conversation free of barriers.

If the youth does decide to continue the conversation with you, use trauma-informed language that is supportive and

empowering. Do not make promises to them that you're unable to keep such as offering help that you can't provide. The conversation may need to take time and the youth deserves patience and empathy during this process.

We'll cover this in greater detail when we talk about referring youth with disabilities to supports in the community. But during your conversations with you, it's a good idea to consider any functional barriers that they might encounter within the community and what might support and what supports might be required in order for referrals to be accessible. If you require any assistance during this process of working with young people who may be trafficked, please remember that you're not alone. We know the anti-trafficking community that it takes a giant collaborative mindset to support youth survivors of trafficking and we know that it can't be done by itself, there are very complex issues, and we want to make sure that every youth gets all of the necessary services that they deserve. You can contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline for further assistance. And toward the end of our presentation, we will explain more about the services that they provide.

JAE JIN: Thanks, Jody. So now let's talk about support and referrals. So in the case that you learn that youth you work with may maybe trafficked, it is important to understand their immediate needs while engaging the youth with a plan in their

path. They have rights to autonomy and to be engaged in the process of their services. The idea as youth providers, youth with disability providers now it's similar to the mantra of nothing about us without us in disability community to have them involved in the process.

Not all organizations are in a position, however, to provide comprehensive services to youth who may be trafficked. As mentioned previously, it takes an entire community of connected groups and individuals to support a youth with disabilities who has been trafficked. And you can help by ensuring a connection and a referral to an appropriate service.

This list includes some of the supportive needs a survivor of human trafficking might require. We encourage you to assess the resources you refer to for their needs for accessibility and ask providers, as disability providers, you also are in a unique position to share your expertise as of being knowledgeable about access compared with other providers in your community. Please get to know your community and be sure to have a way to assess for accessibility, or access information when you call out to new services or community support.

It is important to note that some group homes transitions services and many others may not be able to accommodate the youth you wish to refer. So be sure to call ahead to confirm available support services for the youth and his individual needs.

Having prior relationships with community-based support can help ensure timely referrals and successful warm hand-offs. Warm handoff is acting as a bridge for additional services while following the lead of the youth. Making sure the youth understands what a referral means and every detail of the people, place, and services that they might receive within that referral allow the youth the autonomy of choice, space, and read and even refusal of additional therapies.

JODY HASKIN: Right. Thanks Jae Jin. Now when we're looking for additional referrals, a good source is the National Human Trafficking Hotline. And you can contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline at anytime. It's toll-free and confidential but there are interpreters available and there is a TTY line. You can call 1-888-373-7888. You can text the word help to 233733 or you can contact them online at [humantraffickinghotline.org](https://www.humantraffickinghotline.org).

The hotline has call center agents who can provide information and resources. They can assist in assessing whether you should suspect human trafficking in a potential victim. They can help to identify local resources to help individuals who may have experienced trafficking. And they can help you to coordinate with local services and organizations to further support the youth that you serve.

This trafficking hotline is not only for service providers but members of the community who may want to learn more about

human trafficking, who may want to confirm if they see red flags of trafficking within their community. And it's also for those who may be in a trafficking situation or in an emergency situation for those who are being trafficked in order to get resources to lead their trafficking situation. It's also important to understand that the National Human Trafficking Hotline is not affiliated with law enforcement. And again, your calls are confidential.

And here are a couple of other resources that we want to leave here for you. This one is a really great resource for health care professionals. Also we have the National Human Trafficking in disabilities Working Group, which is a collaboration of individuals who have experienced trafficking of self-advocates and of professionals from across the country who work to identify gaps and to improve services, policy, research, and training on adults and children with disabilities who have experienced trafficking. We invite anyone to become involved in the work that we do.

It's free to join and we encourage you to learn more or apply by emailing us at nhtdwg@iofa.org. Finally, we'd like to thank you for attending this introductory webinar on supporting youth with disabilities who may have experienced trafficking. We hope this information helps you to consider some of the ways that you may improve your services to be open and accessible to youth with disabilities who may have experience trafficking. We at IOFA are

always more than happy to answer any questions you may have about the content of this training.

Please feel free to contact us at info@iofa.org with questions or if you want to learn more information. And finally, we'd like to thank our partners for the opportunity to create and coordinate this material to advance the work you all do for youth with disabilities who may experience trafficking. And these partner organizations include the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims and Vision 21, an OVC-Funded Project. Jae Jin and I would both like to thank you again for watching. And have a great day.

JAE JIN: Thanks, everybody.