



## Human Trafficking in **AMERICA'S SCHOOLS**



### - Human Trafficking Webinar Series -

## Emerging from Trafficking: Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Survivors

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*Wednesday, May 25, 2022 | 3:00 – 4:15 PM ET*

*SPEAKER BIOS*

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### Ruth Ryder

Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Policy and Programs, U.S. Department of Education



Ms. Ruth Ryder is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Policy and Programs – Formula Grants in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) at the U.S. Department of Education. In this role, Ms. Ryder oversees a broad range of management, policy, and program functions related to formula and discretionary grant programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESEA). Ms. Ryder was previously the deputy director of the Office of Special Education Programs in the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, which she joined in 1988. Prior to joining the Department, Ms. Ryder was a program administrator in a Washington state school district. There she had responsibility for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title 1 and Title II programs, state-remediation, gifted education, outcome-based education, and state- and district-wide testing programs. Ms. Ryder has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Elementary Education and a Master's degree in Special Education.

## Nikki Valila

Director of Training My Life My Choice – a program of JRI (MA)



Ms. Nikki Valila, LCSW is the Director of Training and Partnerships at My Life My Choice where she leads a nationally recognized training team of eight who train more than 3,000 youth-serving professionals annually on the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Ms. Valila also oversees community engagement and strategic partnerships at My Life My Choice that include various statewide task forces, coalitions, committees, and comprehensive training contracts—all with the aim to create systemic shifts in the support and services available to commercially sexually exploited young people and youth at disproportionate risk of exploitation. Ms. Valila has worked with and on behalf of commercially sexually exploited youth since 2004. First at the Suffolk County District Attorney’s office in the Child Abuse Unit as the lead Victim Witness Advocate on the teen exploitation cases. She went on to serve as Program Director of an eight-bed group home for sexually exploited adolescent females outside of Boston. Ms. Valila has been co-facilitating My Life My Choice Exploitation Groups for adolescent girls for ten years, training on behalf of My Life My Choice for eight years and joined the My Life My Choice team full-time in 2015. During that time, she has helped expand My Life My Choice’s national training footprint and co-developed three new trainings, including a six-week online course for congregate care programs looking to decrease risk of exploitation for their residents. Ms. Valila is a dynamic trainer, consultant, and advocate working on behalf of trauma-impacted youth. She received her master's degree in Social Work from Boston University in 2021. Ms. Valila is also a Licensed Certified Social Worker.

## Charisma De Los Reyes

Project Specialist, Student Wellness & School Culture Department, San Diego County Office of Education (CA)



Ms. Charisma De Los Reyes, MSW, is a Project Specialist for the San Diego County Office of Education, Student Support Services Division. Her area of practice is student wellness and school culture. Ms. De Los Reyes has over 15 years of social services experience and has been recognized for her advocacy and dedication to children who have experienced child abuse and neglect, in addition to her efforts to develop cross-system procedures for collaboration and coordination in child protection. And for these efforts she received the California Senator Pro Tempore Toni Atkins’ Woman of the Year award. She’s been a community organizer and activist with 20+ years of experience engaging in social justice and advocacy work.

## Tamara Clark

Director of Survivor Services, Love 146 (CT)



Ms. Tamarra Clark, MS, serves as the Connecticut Survivor Care Director for Love 146. She is responsible for overseeing all aspects related to service coordination and implementation within the Connecticut Survivor Care Program. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Human Services and a Master's degree in Nonprofit Management. Ms. Clark brings her 15 years of experience providing direct service and managing family systems such as early childhood education, home-visiting, parenting education, care coordination, and homelessness systems to this important work. She believes everyone has a life purpose and is passionate about helping others recognize their strengths and work towards addressing barriers that hinder their purpose-filled lives.

## Suleman Masood

Council Chair, U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking



Mr. Suleman Masood is a subject matter expert on domestic labor trafficking and male victimization. Since 2013, his advocacy experience allowed him to work extensively with state and federal government agencies and non-profit organizations. Mr. Masood's expertise includes collaborating with victim service providers and task forces on advocating for ways to improve the quality of services for trafficking survivors. Mr. Masood currently serves as Council Chair for the United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking. Through Mr. Masood's leadership, the Advisory Council provides recommendations on federal anti-trafficking policies to the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (PITF). Mr. Masood graduated magna cum laude with a degree in Criminology/Victimology from Fresno State University and currently attends the University of the District of Columbia – David A. Clarke School of Law, where he aspires to create meaningful change within the criminal justice system.