



Human Trafficking in **AMERICA'S SCHOOLS**



- Human Trafficking Webinar Series -

Human Trafficking & Exploitation Prevention Strategies for Vulnerable Students

Wednesday, March 27, 2024 | 3:00 – 4:30 PM ET
Transcript

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to today's webinar, Human Trafficking and Exploitation Prevention Strategies for Vulnerable Students. This is the latest in our series focused on human trafficking and child exploitation prevention. This webinar is sponsored by the United States Department of Education, who has been sponsoring this series since January of 2020, to focus on the critical role that America's schools play in addressing human trafficking and child exploitation. We're so pleased to have you with us today. My name is Cindy Carraway-Wilson, and I am a training specialist for the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, or NCSSLE. NCSSLE is funded by the Office of Safe and Supportive Schools in the office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education. To learn a little bit more about NCSSLE, we encourage you to visit our website. Our goal is to help build the capacity of state education agencies, districts, and schools to make school climate improvements, foster school safety, and maintain supportive, engaging, and healthy learning environments for all students to support their academic enrichment and the success of all students.

To learn more about NCSSLE, you may visit our website. And to give you an idea of our website on the right, you see a picture of our home page, and on the left side of the slide you may see the various, some of the more popular resources that we offer. In addition, we share the latest resources and events coming out of the field via social media. So please do follow us. Please note also, that all of the materials you see today, including the slides, all of the referenced resources and the archived version of this recording will be available on the web page within this website. And in fact, right now, the slides have already been posted, if you wish to have those to follow along with. And our speaker bios have been posted as well. Please also note that you may access previous webinars in this

series by visiting the human trafficking webinar web page. That link is also being posted in our chat.

This slide shows us the agenda that we have planned for today, beginning where we are now with our introduction and logistics. In just a moment, we'll move into a welcome from the Department of Ed and then into three context setting presentations. We'll come into the panel discussion, where we'll learn concrete ideas of how to implement some of the strategies, and finish up by a live Q&A at the end. So please stick around. Now it's my pleasure to bring to your attention that we have our three context-setting speakers, Dr. Beth Bowman, Diane Smith-Howard, and Cali MacEachen, who will each be speaking before we go into the panel. And here is the link for that bio page if you choose to look at their bios. Now, please join me in welcoming Ms. Nicole White, who is a member of the webinar planning team and a program specialist in the Office of Safe and Supportive Schools in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education. Nicole.

Nicole White:

Thank you, Cindy, and welcome, all. Happy Wednesday. On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education, we extend our sincere appreciation to you all for joining today's webinar, Human Trafficking and Exploitation Prevention Strategies for Vulnerable Students. This webinar is part of our Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation webinar series, which was originally launched in 2020, and has been broadened this year to include child exploitation prevention. The U.S. Department of Education is committed to addressing human trafficking and childhood exploitation. We have developed several resources that can help you recognize that respond to human trafficking in your schools, including this webinar series. You can view recordings of archived webinars by going to the webinar series web page that Cindy referenced, now being posted in the chat. Additionally, we have produced several guides to build your knowledge and skills on human trafficking prevention.

They are pictured at the top left of the slide and include human trafficking in America's schools, what schools can do to prevent, respond, and help students to recover from human trafficking, addressing the growing problem of domestic sex trafficking on minors through PBIS, and how schools can combat human trafficking in partnership with people with lived experience. Pictured at the bottom left is the Human Trafficking in America's School's staff development series, which complements the Human Trafficking in America's School's Guide. These brief informational online videos are paired with discussion questions individual staff or teams can explore further. All of these resources are available on the human trafficking webpage. At the link now being shared in the chat, we are excited to announce the launch of the shared learning sessions. These sessions will provide participants with the opportunity to discuss the information presented at specific webinars, share their experiences in small group discussions, begin building implementation plans and support one another in anti-trafficking work. Learning sessions will be offered following the webinars listed on this slide with the first session happening next week, Wednesday, April the third, from 3:00 to 4:30 PM Eastern Standard Time.

This learning session will be based on the material in this webinar. We hope that these sessions will move this webinar series from informational to actionable. This webinar and the associated shared learning session will focus on gaining a better understanding of what vulnerability is and how we can create environments that reduce student vulnerability. Our speakers and panelists will discuss how to reduce vulnerability for students with disabilities, students who are experiencing homelessness or unstable housing, and students who are new to the United States, all circumstances and situations that can increase a student's risk to being trafficked or exploited. I hope you find the content helpful in your continued efforts to build safe, supportive learning environments for all students, including those who have been impacted by human trafficking or child exploitation. I would like to thank you again for joining us today. I and the entire team at the U.S. Department of Education recognize the important work you are all undertaking to create safe supportive environments for all students. Now back to Cindy, who will begin us in the webinar.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Thank you so much, Nicole, for your ongoing participation in the planning and support of the webinar series. We greatly appreciate that. Now it's my pleasure to introduce Dr. Beth Bowman, the CEO of Restoring Ivy Collective, and a professor at Gallaudet University, and the person with lived experience who will provide a presentation on the concept of vulnerability. Dr. Beth.

Beth Bowman: Thanks, Cindy. Thanks so much for having me. So I'm going to talk a little bit about what vulnerability means. So I, as it says in my bio, I teach social work here at Gallaudet University and have integrated quite a bit of the content around how to work with survivors of trauma, specifically trafficking in a number of different areas of social work practice, particularly folks with varying intersectional vulnerabilities. So we'll talk a little bit more about what that means, but as a person who was a vulnerable youth and then was exploited by adults, this is something that's very important to me. But I also worked in DC Child Welfare for a very long time, so got to see how it looked in a number of other families and homes, and we're starting to get more recognition of what that looks like in deaf communities as well.

So vulnerability. This essentially means, very broadly, the quality of being exposed to the possibility of being harmed physically or emotionally. This comes from a lack of protection. So it's not to say that I am vulnerable because of something deficient about me, but thinking about it more in terms of, we all have vulnerabilities. If I'm on a bicycle and I'm riding down the street, and I'm not wearing a helmet. My head, because I'm a human being, is squishier than the road, and therefore vulnerable to breaking open if I fall. If I put a helmet on, my head is safe.

We need to think about this in all types of vulnerabilities. So when we're thinking about vulnerability, if I have a disability, if I'm in an impoverished situation at home, if I have a history of trauma or maltreatment, attachment issues, all kinds of stuff can make a person vulnerable, we want to think about it more in terms of, so where do we need an accommodation? Where do we need to, as a social system, as members of a community and a society, where do we

need to step in to fill the gap so that that person has equitable access to everything that they need, so that their vulnerability is reduced?

So I'm not going to go too deep into this, because this is a very brief presentation, but just this is to say vulnerability is inherent. We are human beings, therefore, we are vulnerable. And in different situations, different people are vulnerable in different ways. I would say that an interesting thing that a hearing person that doesn't know ASL, or anything about deaf culture, or may experience coming to Gallaudet is that feeling of, oh, I can't communicate. I can't access what I need to access. And now, granted, we're very good about supporting language access and helping folks that may be non-signers, because members of the deaf community know what that feels like out in the world, where it is mostly hearing people, but in different situations, there are different vulnerabilities for different people. And so, those can be just, I don't know the culture, I don't know the area where I am when I travel to a new place, or I am a young person, and maybe there could be brain development stuff, that I'm not equipped for this particular situation. So anybody, the point here, anybody can be vulnerable depending on the circumstances.

So this is where we as society, as community members can step in. So we have a responsibility, we can be the protective factors. We can stand in the gap. So if I am a young person who doesn't have enough money to buy food and I'm living on the street, or my parents kicked me out, or I ran away from home, I'm at very high risk of being exploited because there's so many vulnerabilities in that situation. There are many, many, many gaps in what I have and what I need. It's very easy for an exploiter. We think about people that are lurking, waiting for vulnerable youth. They absolutely exist. They don't look like what you think they look like, right? They're often just the people in positions of power and all sorts of folks. But looking to take advantage of a youth, we're seeing a lot more of this in the online spaces. That is a topic for another day. But because kids will say, "I'm hungry. I need X, Y, and Z, I need a place to stay." This means I am going to be looking for that out in the world.

And so, it's easy for someone with bad intentions to come forward and say, "I can fill this gap." So what this means for us as providers and as community members, and I will say teachers, social workers, people in education environments, you are interacting with kids on a daily basis. So you have a lot of opportunities to create protective factors, both with those kids, their support networks, their family members, their friends, their peer groups, and the school environment as a whole. In my high school, there were a lot of girls that were recruited and exploited. Once sort of one or two kids found their way into this sort of becomes a domino effect. And so, knowing where those gaps are, even if it's not commercial sexual exploitation, there are a lot of other ways that kids can be exploited and the gaps are all the same. So thinking about when a kid's in foster care, why is that a vulnerability? Well, there's a lot of reasons.

It's not just that something about being in foster care is inherently related to trafficking, but that kids in foster care may have less supervision. If they move around from home to home a lot of the time, they may not have the same

consistent people knowing where they are at given times. The history of maltreatment and trauma. If you're not getting mental health treatment, that in and of itself can, it feels normal when somebody is mistreating you, right? This feels comfortable, this feels familiar.

And so, we want to make sure that kids that we are working with, wherever they're living, in whatever environment that they're in, that we're working to create supportive connections for those kids that they have a safe person they can contact, that they know where they can go to get those needs met. If I'm hungry, where do I go? And not just like, oh, there's a food pantry that's open on Tuesdays. But beyond that, having some safe adults in their network that they can call, and helping them to find those people. It may not be that it's the caregivers, or the family members, or the parents, right? But it could be any number of other social support networks that are available in your communities.

And then, in terms of having healthy coping skills, we want to not only create ecosystems where kids have supportive networks, but that they have internal resources for managing when they're triggered, managing their trauma, and addressing any underlying mental health issues that may lead to wanting to self-medicate. And again, to not seeing the danger for what it is, because it feels familiar, because it feels like a normal attachment relationship. So for those of you with the social work background, you may know a little bit about the Bronfenbrenner Ecosystems framework, but essentially what we're saying here is that there's layers. There's layers to the way that these different parts of a child's ecosystem interact. Having the immediate environment with those family, friends, peers, that's where we're developing our healthy attachments. That's where we're learning how to manage conflict, how to set boundaries, and those are things that in the day-to-day and in a school environment may be tricky to do with a big classroom, but you can set up, there's some really great interventions out there that have been run out of schools.

One that I've been looking into is the Runaway Prevention... It's RIP, runaway prevention curriculum, but it's developed to work with youth who have a history of runaway behavior. Runaway Intervention Program, and that was created by Bensussen-Walls and Saewyc in 2001. But ultimately, it's been applied for working with CSEC Youth. And one of the key components is an empowerment group that takes place in the school. So there's these nurses and other intervention prevention folks that go out and meet with the family, meet with the child, do all the psychoeducation work, and the school has this key part, which is an empowerment group, building healthy peer relationships, building social emotional skills, and helping the kids to have more resources here and in their peer groups, so that when they go out in the world and they're interacting, they can have more healthy relationships.

So there's all different things that can make a person vulnerable to trafficking. So when we think about personal characteristics that need accommodation, we think about family risk factors like maltreatment, having a family member who has been exploited or is currently engaged in sex work, or in domestic violence

relationships. Friend groups that are engaged in commercial sex. Now, just to be clear, this includes online, OnlyFans, other online forums, and any stripping, exotic dancing, any other kind of commercial sex work becomes a risk factor for trafficking for youth, normalization throughout the culture. And then in terms of macro factors, we may be thinking about if I am not getting my needs met, if I am not able to access programs, even though they're out there, be there because of transportation, maybe I'm in a rural environment and there just isn't much in the way of programming. If I don't have money for the things that I need, it's a lot more likely that somebody can come in and say, "Hey, I've got these things and all you have to do is y, or z."

Or, potentially and usually, it starts not quite so transactionally, and then over time develops that there's an expectation like, "Oh, you could stay with me, but you must do X, Y, and Z to stay here." So in terms of the micro system, this is something that I think that really in teacher interactions with kids and families, you really have a lot of opportunity here. So keeping in mind when you're seeing attachment stuff that maybe needs intervention, we also really like the Mom Power curriculum over at Restoring Ivy, which is out of the University of Michigan. It's DBT and PCIT, and Attachment Theory based, and it is an intervention for parenting after trauma, but also for the kids. And this one's for littles. So we like it for moms regardless. But the side for littles has sort of how do they also interact with mom in a healthy way? And so, giving parents who have trauma resources so they can respond to their children in a way that doesn't create intergenerational trauma and maladaptive communication. Parents need support, and I'm sure that many of you see that in working with families, that the parents need support as well. And so thinking about the family as a whole system and if there's no active maltreatment in the home, how do we help reinforce and ballast some of these parent-child relationships so that a trafficker can't come in and intervene and essentially offer this child something that they're not getting at home.

So in the notes, there will be more references and resources. If we could jump ahead to the resource page. One more. There we go. So here are some resources I wanted you guys to have. Here's some good resources for working with deaf populations. There very specifically because hopefully there's some schools for the deaf representing here. I know I reached out to a whole bunch of you guys, so I don't know how many were able to make it, would love to see in the chat or in the Q&A or some thumbs ups. But very hopeful that you guys were able to represent.

But these are some resources for deaf. Oh, yay. Seeing lots of thumbs ups. Okay, so there's obviously the Vera Institute and... to them as activating change resources. We've got ADWAS, Deaf Dove, Deaf-Dawn, Deaf-Hope and some other general disability resources. And then my organization, Restoring Ivy Collective, has some support groups as well. And we partner with some of these other organizations for survivors who need connection.

But the goal here is access. The goal here is creating awareness and ensuring that folks, regardless of language, regardless of circumstances in their life,

family, what have you, that they are able to understand what trafficking is and build up their own resiliency to reduce the ability of a trafficker to come in and take over their life. We also recently, out of Gallaudet, had an HT-101 that came out a couple of months ago, so if anybody needs that, feel free to email me. My information will be in the slides that are shared that. But that's a signed Human Trafficking 101 training. So that's available for anybody who would like to have a copy of it to share. It's about 20 minutes. And thank you so much for listening to me talk.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. Thank you so much, Dr. Beth, for all of your information. I love that framing of vulnerability as it not being about the individual, but about how the individual is seen, heard, supported within a community. It's a beautiful way of framing it. I also appreciate it that you talked, and I'm going to hopefully use this quote, hopefully you don't mind, about us being the protective factors and that we can stand in those gaps so that the trafficker can't occupy those gaps, but we do instead. I think that's a beautiful way of framing it all. So thank you so very much.

Beth Bowman: Thank you. And I will say one thing just for the interpreters, we tend to use the sign human trafficking HT instead of anything to do with kidnapping because kidnapping is almost never related to human trafficking. So HT is the preferred sign and exploiter. Thank you.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Yes. And thank you for that correction for sure. Because that is still a myth that people sometimes still believe that it's about kidnapping and taking people from one place to another. So thank you. Now I hope that everybody can please join me in welcoming Ms. Diane Smith Howard, who's the Managing Attorney of Institutions and Community Integrations at the National Disability Rights Network. Diane.

Diane Smith Howard: Thank you. And thank you for having me. It's exciting to see so many school staff and administrators and others interested in this really important topic. I'm going to start by talking about vulnerabilities of kids with disabilities and also those who are members of other protected classes and the intersection there. But I want to make sure we spend some time talking about how we can help protect kids in those situations and go on the offense. So I am a Managing Attorney at National Disability Rights Network. NDRN is the membership organization for the P&As. And the P&As are federally funded nonprofit agencies, one in each state and territory, that provide free legal representation and advocacy to people with disabilities throughout the lifespan. And it's important to note that because there are 57 P&As, we have hundreds of attorneys and advocates out there in the network and they helped inform my presentation today.

We're going to talk first about the key issues of vulnerability and isolation in the context of intersectionality. So we're going to talk about disability some in this conversation, but also how important it is to look at disability in the context of individuals who are also Black and brown, people who are migrant and refugees, folks who are new to the US and their income level, as well as some other vulnerability pieces. What we find is that kids who have greater challenges tend

to need more adult contacts and more oversight and protection and end up usually getting less. So some of the isolation protective factors we see in our work is the amount of adult involvement diminishes for kids who are in state custody.

And by that, I don't use the term foster care because kids with disabilities often don't end up in family-based foster homes, they end up in group homes and residential facilities. They end up in juvenile detention and hotels and a variety of other settings. And when we use the term foster care, it gives a sense of children in the bosom of a warm nuclear family. And that just tends not to be the reality for our clients. So we call them youth in state custody and youth without parents or guardians. So that's one factor is that kids who by definition don't have parents watching over them. The location of their residents. So kids who are unhoused, kids who are transient, and those who are residents of group homes and residential treatment facilities.

Kids in group homes are especially vulnerable. One of the things that we know from our work is that oftentimes exploiters work with kids who are already in the group home to recruit other kids. Sometimes they know the addresses of group homes and they hang around outside, looking for runaways and kids who are eloping. There's a lot of issues around group homes. So keeping kids out of group homes and residential treatment is ideal whenever possible. Prior trauma is definitely an isolation factor and a concern. Exposure to the juvenile justice system. And language. As Dr. Beth was saying, being in a situation where you do not understand what's being said is critical, whether that's because you have a sensory issue or because you don't speak fluent English or any of the number of issues including specific learning disabilities.

So disabilities. Sometimes people think of kids with disabilities as this discrete group of individuals who know who they are, they know what their needs are, they have an IEP. That is the case for some children with disabilities. But in this particular group of kids, the kids who are intersectional and who are vulnerable, they tend to not have been evaluated. There are sometimes cultural or religious factors that impede the ability of a child to be considered a child with disability in the context of US law.

And also, kids may be unaware of their disability status, even if the adults in their world know about it. Either because they haven't been told, they can't understand it, they can't articulate it or it's just not part of their understanding of themselves. Also, many kids are misidentified. I think that's one of the most important things that we see. Kids are often categorized under the IDA as having a specific learning disability when they really have IDD, a sensory issue, they're on the spectrum and so forth. ADHD is often a misdiagnosis for traumatic brain injury or fetal alcohol disorders, anxiety or trauma. So there's a lot of issues just around what is the disability that that child has and what do we do about it?

Also, I think another misnomer out there in the world or a misunderstanding is what is trafficking? What we see oftentimes is, especially for kids with

disabilities, a mush of different situations. Particularly for kids who have traded their vulnerability for housing. Domestic situations, kids who are domestic servants or kids who just have traded vulnerability for just a bed to sleep in. Oftentimes, you're going to see a combination of labor trafficking. In other words, they need to do laborist tasks. They're emotionally and physically abused. They're videotaped for the purposes of porn to be either traded or sold. And they also are expected to provide sexual services. So I think it's really important when we talk about these kids, when you're talking about a kid you may have identified at school who has been trafficked for labor, for example, to also look at is that child being asked to hand over their Social Security payment?

Are they being videotaped and their images traded in any number of settings? Are they being expected to provide sexual services either covertly or overtly? There's usually a lot of different pieces going on at once. And in the media, we portray these situations that are either labor trafficking or the traditional sense of white slavery and so forth, but that isn't really how it works. It's much mushier than that and much more complicated. Also for individuals with disabilities, they may be in a situation where they are given housing and expected to work for minimum wage. And in doing so, also to sign over their Social Security payment, like the case of Henry's Turf Service, I've provided a link there. They are in a sheltered workshop setting that is usually quite dangerous. So there's a lot of situations there also just for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

And then I talked to the P&As about what's the most important thing for me to share with school staff about the kinds of trafficking situations you see? And they talked about this cycle that leads to greater isolation. So kids who are exposed to trauma sometimes act out that trauma at school or in the community. And then they're further removed from adult protection because they're suspended from school, they're arrested, they're committed involuntarily into psych hospitals and they're taken away from their homes. And a number of touch points. As you all know, kids at school have a lot of eyes on them and a lot of caring people who surround them.

So when kids are informally or formally removed from school, they're suspended, they're expelled, they're put on home bound or virtual learning, they're put on a certain day or they just stop attending. That's when they become extremely vulnerable because they've lost all of those adult touch points. And then in addition, they may be exposed to negative role models, as Dr. Beth talked about, the factors of peers and who you're hanging out with and what they're doing. Also then increased trauma if they're trafficked, leading to additional isolation. So it's a cyclical problem that only becomes worse the more isolated kids become. School settings. Also, kids living with the trauma being trafficked for labor, especially migrant children with disabilities, may have trauma behavior and status issues, which can lead to even greater isolation.

So let's talk about some solutions, some things that we can do to help kids be protected and safe. Sort of the offense here. So staying connected to school. Preventing informal removal, truancy, really making sure that kids are as

connected to the regular classroom or an appropriate and full-time school setting as possible. If school is hard for them, adding connections in areas of strength. Really looking for big brothers, mentors, extracurriculars, anything that works, wherever the kid is feeling good about themselves.

Transition services, really providing hope. It's so important that kids with disabilities see themselves as individuals who will go out in the world of work and be successful. And it's especially important for kids on the spectrum and kids with traumatic brain injuries, fetal alcohol, those kids tend to be very disconnected from transition services. And one of the things I wanted to note is that one of the other misconceptions in the press, which was really perpetuated by the character of Sheldon Cooper, is that somehow individuals on the spectrum are super protected, that they have a number of skills that would prevent them from being exploited. And unfortunately, that is not true. That group of kids really is particularly vulnerable.

So when school is hard, finding connections in areas of strength. Really thinking about from age 14 on, connecting to a transition plan, we'll make sure that, and I am wrapping up, Cindy, I saw your note, that they have connections to the McKinney liaison at school. So that even if they're home moves, if they are migrant or their family is homeless, that they stay connected with those really important school connections. Summer jobs and vocational education. And it's funny, this doesn't come up very often, but especially for our kids in rural areas who are isolated and vulnerable to exploitation, having a driver's license. Or at least even knowing how to drive a car, even if they don't have access to a car, it gives that sense, again, of dignity, of hope, of feeling like a respected member of the community who has an exit plan, that there's a way out.

I mean, there's a reason that Tracy Chapman's song rings true to so many people. The ability to get in a car and go someplace instead of being a victim and being transported across state lines. That sense of independence is also tremendously important. And that's an important part of transition planning, of course, as well. And then lastly, just wrapping up, the legal options. Making sure that students have access to special education related services and the transition services IDEA and Section 504 require they stay in school and are not removed. And McKinney. But also I think the last piece is really looking at the child welfare system and making sure that kids in the child welfare system have access to Medicaid, making sure that they have therapy services wraparound. Again, bringing as many knowing, loving and also watching adults into their lives so that they are less likely to have those gaps that Dr. Beth talked about. Thank you.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: All right. Thank you so much, Diane for all of those pointers and about that overview about other ways kids can be vulnerable. I also appreciate all the resources and we are getting some questions about some of the ways we can address the legalities of it. So definitely, I think, we'll come back to that element in the Q&A. Now, I'd like everybody to please join me in welcoming Ms. Cali MacEachen, who's a program officer with the Aspire program at the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants. Cali.

Cali MacEachen:

Thank you so much. Of course, this is a topic we can talk all day about, but over the next few minutes, I'm just hoping we can feel a little bit more oriented in discussing the resources that are available to you all when we're working with foreign born population. The foreign born children who have experienced trafficking, either experienced trafficking here or in home country. So as Cindy mentioned, I'm with the Aspire Program, which is housed here at the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants. And for context's sake, we are a program that's funded by OTIP, the Office on Trafficking in Persons, which is an office within the Department of Health and Human Services. And here at Aspire, a lot of what we're doing is providing direct case management to this population, foreign-born survivors. As well as a lot of that same technique that Diane mentioned of learning from our subgrantees, listening to feedback about what kind of obstacles this population is up against and trying to build these solutions. So a lot of what we're doing is offering that kind of TA, which we'll get a little bit more into.

Again, Aspire versus TVAP. If you guys had heard of TVAP previously, the Trafficking Victim Assistance Program, Aspire is a much newer program serving minors exclusively. Previously, this was one program lumped together, now we're two. Aspire is built to be a lot more child-friendly, meaning we do a lot more direct collaboration with CPS agencies, with school districts, with different post-release services that are available to those minors who have come through the OR system on their journey to the United States. We'll get a little bit more into the eligibility process, which is available to minors that you all could be coming across, identifying those minors potentially for the first time. So when we're talking about a kid that you might come across in school, you're noticing maybe that minor is not attending school as regularly as we would hope or any other vulnerabilities or red flags that you all are seeing. We touched on what some of those vulnerabilities might look like.

Of course, we want to comply with all the state and local child welfare mandatory reporting requirements that you guys are so familiar with. But in addition, when we're working with a UC or a former UC, we also want to comply with this additional federal reporting requirement that states that within 24 hours of coming across someone who's under 18, whom you suspect has potentially experienced trafficking, you want to make that report to HHS to submit that request for assistance on behalf of the minor. And again, if you're not familiar with this process, I'm going to leave you with a ton of resources to help you through that process if you find yourself in this position. But as a really brief overview, you might be having those concerns around any potential red flags for a minor. You are submitting that required report in the form of a request for assistance in a system called Shepherd.

Again, lots of words. Which is a case management system that's run by OTIP. So that report that you're submitting in Shepherd on behalf of that minor is being received by the OTIP Child Protection Specialist Team. They're taking that report and they're saying, "Yes, okay, this looks like trafficking. This sounds like trafficking. And we're going to issue what's called an HHS Eligibility Letter." The other forms of letters that they might be issuing is an interim assistance letter,

which is good for 120 days. Or if they don't have enough information to make a determination or if it doesn't quite sound like trafficking, they could also issue a denial letter. For any specifics on that process, again, plenty of resources available. I would direct you to the OTIP Child Protection Specialist Team. That letter looks like this. You potentially could have come across one in the past. But if you ever are seeing this presented by a child, which could totally be the case, you know that this is what we're talking about. And this HHS Eligibility Letter grants that child access to public benefits to the same extent that a refugee would have.

So again, so much information, but if you have further questions on the child eligibility process, there is a monthly webinar presented by that Child Protection Specialist Team I mentioned, it's the first Wednesday of the month, so it'll be next week. And they are best poised to talk through any more specific cases of, "I have suspicions that this is trafficking." Or, "I'm seeing a lot of red flags, I don't know if I should submit a request for assistance." Or, "I suspect that this child has been victimized in the past. I'm wondering if they've already been issued an HHS Eligibility Letter." All these are really common questions on that monthly webinar call. There's also the SOAR training modules, which are super comprehensive, free, available online, sponsored by HHS. Furthermore, you can see in these bottom boxes, the Shepherd online system is relatively user-friendly. If you've never used it before, you don't need to be nervous. Very easy to go on and sign right up to use it. So again, that eligibility letter, we talked about being accessible to public benefits. Again, very brief overview of the benefits that might be available to someone. A lot of these benefits are state by state, so I don't want to cast too wide of a net. But some things like refugee cash assistance might look different in Illinois than it would in Alabama, for example.

The best way if you're working, if you come across an HHS eligibility letter or a minor who you want to guide through this process, the best way to request assistance on this is to reach out to us here at ASPIRE. We have regional coordinators across the country and we have case managers across the country who know these processes really well. And again, these processes are super complicated. Benefits applications can get tricky. But they are super, super rewarding. It does so much to help out not only the minor, but the family unit to access these benefits. So we really want to help families be able to access these resources to make things a little bit easier, again, not just for the minor, but also for the family unit.

If you're having any questions of where a minor might be at in this process, if they're already involved in this process, or if you know that a family has been trying and striking out to apply for benefits, or if they have other needs and you're not sure if benefits haven't yet been accessed, or they need a case manager, any of these crazy questions that come up when we're working in these cases, you can reach out to us. Again, if you're not super positive if it requires a referral to our program, just give us a call. Again, I'll leave you with our contact information. But we are definitely here to help.

We would potentially ask you to fill out a referral form to our program, which would look like this. It's password protected so that we're not sharing any of the minor's personal identifying information loosely over email. You can also call us. Again, phone number on the referral form. You can give us a call and we are happy to talk through that referral, troubleshoot any crisis scenarios that are coming up. Again, we are doing this pretty often. We are super happy to assist.

Furthermore, USCRI also hosts the UC Resource Center, which the landing page resembles this. All these resources are in both English and in Spanish. If you click this little hands icon, you'll come across some more trafficking specific resources that are both available for you as providers, but also are more family client oriented.

In particular, we have three really wonderful toolkits, all of which I think are super underutilized. The first being safety planning with foreign national children, the second being trauma informed case management, and the third touching on some more special considerations and some special populations. These are easy reads and they're super, super informative. I think if you browse through them, you'll find some really great resources on recognizing crisis, and safety planning that's appropriate for all ages versus safety planning strategies that might be a little bit more helpful for younger children and some that might be more helpful for teenagers. Some strategies that might be more helpful when it comes to kids who have maybe been in some gang related trafficking versus familial trafficking. All these big topics are really well broken out in these three toolkits, which are all available both in the links in this PowerPoint and available on our website. Again, I know that this is a huge topic we could talk about all day, but I will pass it back over.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Cali, thank you so very much for that overview of all the work that you're doing at the ASPIRE program. We greatly appreciate it. Just as a reminder to all of our audience members that her resources that she mentioned here, as well as all the other resources, are linked on the webpage. So you can do a quick link and a quick download to check out all of these resources out.

Now I'd like to welcome, joining Cali, who's going to stay with us, our panelists, and also Dr. Beth and Cali are going to come back as well. Our panelists who are our new voices are Ms. Lina Caswell, who is from World Church Services in New Jersey; Katie Talbott, who is an intervention specialist at Kettering City School District in the Orchard Park Elementary in Ohio; and Kaitlyn Zedalis, who is the associate director of research learning and advocacy at Covenant House, also in New Jersey. So welcome, everybody. We're going to get Dr. Beth as well back on, and Kelly, you're here.

Our first question that we'd like to start with our panelists today is actually based on Dr. Beth's presentation a bit. We'd like to hear from Katie, Lina, and Kaitlyn a little bit about this concept of vulnerability. When you think about the work that you're doing and the students that you're engaging, how do you see vulnerability affecting the young people you engage? Katie, I'd like to begin with you.

Katie Talbott: Hello. So I work with students with special needs. These students are especially vulnerable. We know that vulnerable children are at a higher risk for being trafficked. So when I think about this, I'm thinking that we know that these students are often isolated and sheltered. What they really want, from my experience, is they want attention from their typical peers, and really anyone, but they don't always know the good guys from the bad. That need for attention affects them, making them easy targets for traffickers who would prey on that vulnerability.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Absolutely. So the traffickers step into that gap that Dr. Beth mentioned of that need for attention to feel included or belonging, and they give them a place to belong and that attention that they're seeking. And so if we can fill that gap with peers and with ourselves, we can help to reduce that vulnerability. Lina, what would you like to add to the conversation?

Lina Caswell: Thank you. I work with unaccompanied minors arriving at the US Mexico border and other territories, and also with refugee children, SIVs, and other kids who are other visa holders. So they have a different level of vulnerability. Mostly what we are seeing in the field with children and youth who are migrants is really not having even access to free and public education, not being able to enroll to school freely like other children do, even though they have a constitutional right to do so. So we are not even getting them into the schools, having that challenge.

The other way in which vulnerability shows up for us is that children and youth are experiencing long periods of wait for their immigration cases to be heard before a court. What happens with that is that kids go into this state of liminal legality where there's really no status for them. What happens is with no status or no understanding of that status, then children and youth become even more vulnerable. The other thing that we are seeing often is that school districts are often also declining access to education to youth who are 16 and older because they're already past the age of compulsory education for any given state or territory. That makes these youth who are already vulnerable because we make them vulnerable through immigration policies, and then now they're finding themselves outside of school, which increase the level of vulnerability.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: That's a lot there. I didn't even realize that there were some denials happening for 16 and older. That's really good information. We've also heard from people with lived experience in the past who speak about how their traffickers or exploiters held their paperwork, kept their paperwork away from them, which they couldn't even prove that they did have legal status if they had it. These are all really hard pieces for folks who are new into the country. Kaitlyn, would you like to add to the conversation?

Kaitlyn Zedalis: Absolutely. Thank you, Cindy. At Covenant House New Jersey, we serve young adults experiencing homelessness. We've also in the past conducted a regional McKinney-Vento needs assessment. I always just like to highlight that one in 10 students experiencing homelessness are youth on their own. I think there's a large overlay in terms of vulnerability between youth experiencing

homelessness and human trafficking. We know that it's nationally, about 20% of youth experiencing homelessness have had a trafficking experience at some point in their life. I think this vulnerability, a big part of the reason that it's there is that youth experiencing homelessness need to find some avenue to have their basic needs met, and that's what traffickers often exploit. They're offering to meet a young person's basic needs in some way, and that's a big part of what's making them so vulnerable to exploitation. Young people experiencing homelessness often also have trouble accessing services, either because they're a minor and can't consent or because they're fearful that if they ask for help, they're going to be reported to child welfare. So there's really just a lot of barriers to accessing the services they need.

The other thing I always like to highlight is that one of the most important protective factors against youth homelessness is having a high school diploma. It really opens up a lot of opportunities for employment and ability to meet your own financial needs that isn't available if you don't have a high school diploma. Which, again, so there's just so much. When a person isn't able to access their high school diploma, it really can make them more vulnerable to exploitation as well because they are going to try to find a way to meet their financial needs. So really, identifying students experiencing homelessness and making sure that they're able to successfully graduate is so important in developing young people's protective factors.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. Thank you so much for that overview of the vulnerabilities. You spoke a little bit about a way to support them and helping them to get in school, stay in school, and complete school. What else is Covenant House doing to address some of the vulnerabilities that you mentioned?

Kaitlyn Zedalis: Just to speak a bit more about our work, Covenant House New Jersey is a subsidiary of Covenant House International, which is the largest organization serving youth experiencing homelessness in the US. We've been in existence since 1989. We have two short-term shelters in New York and Atlantic City, and then we also have services throughout the continuum of care across the state. In addition to that, we're also the statewide provider for human trafficking victim services. We serve all victims and survivors of human trafficking in the state regardless of their age or housing status.

Just to speak a bit more about some of... Dr. Beth, I think, spoke really well in highlighting the multiple vulnerabilities someone can experience, that there can be these multiple factors that make them vulnerable. What we know from our research that we've done at Covenant House New Jersey is that some of these associated factors that increase a young person's risk of having a trafficking experience are things like having an IEP or 504 plan can make a young person more at risk of experiencing homelessness. We've also seen some indications that parenting youth are at increased risk of having a trafficking experience, particularly in situations of labor trafficking by forced criminality, as well as things like history of arrest.

One I really want to highlight too is this history of abuse and foster care experiences as an associated factor for trafficking. One thing that we've identified as a protective factor against human trafficking is caring adult relationships. That's so important in protecting young people from human trafficking. We know if young people are in foster care, if young people experience abuse or neglect, if young people are experiencing homelessness, there's much less likely for them to have that caring adult relationship in their life. So really, one of the key things we really do at Covenant House New Jersey when we welcome young people through our doors is that we're providing a network of caring adults around them to really offer them that support.

The other thing we do to try to address that vulnerability is offering supports to help them stay in school if they're in school or help them return to school, help them with job readiness skills and to find employment. Having income is going to be a really important protective factor because that need to meet your basic needs is often going to place a lot of pressure on a young person. That can make them more vulnerable to a trafficking experience.

The last thing I just want to highlight that we do at Covenant House New Jersey to identify trafficking experiences among our young people is we do universal screening with our young people. We use Quick Youth Indicators for Trafficking, or QYIT, which is a tool that was scientifically validated by Covenant House New Jersey. That tool, we use that to identify trafficking experiences so we can really wrap around supports to young people who have had a trafficking experience in order to prevent re-victimization.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. That's a lot of information about what you're doing and the ways in which you're trying to address that victimization. Thank you so much for that. I'd like to come over to Lina next.

Lina, we know that new immigrant young people and families might be at increased risk of exploitation and trafficking. Can you tell us a bit more about the work that you're doing at the World Church Service Organization that you are with around addressing helping young people get into and stay in schools as a protective factor? I know that that really struck me when we first talked.

Lina Caswell: Yes, yes. Just like Kaitlyn, CWS or Church World Service has been around for quite some time, about 76 years. We are a fairly well-established refugee resettlement agency. I have a responsibility to support all of the refugee and newly arriving children with that particular immigration status. But in the past two years, Church World Services has now opened its portfolio of support to unaccompanied minors arriving to the United States, both through the US Mexico border or in other territories.

Part of the work that we do is to engage heavily with school districts and engage in advocacy to ensure that kids are being registered in school. I know that sounds easy, but it's one of the most complicated tasks that we often have. Which is basically going district by district, ensuring that paperwork is going into place, that families understand their rights and responsibilities, and really

bridging the gap between our newly arrived families because of linguistic and cultural differences with school districts. For all of you who are listening to this, your refugee resettlement agencies are your allies. So find in your state or territory who is the refugee resettlement agency so that you can provide support and assistance to your students once they go into school.

The other thing that we do is we advocate heavily with the State Department of Education to address some of these issues, because we have federal and state laws that actually give rise to the children to have access to education. But often, school districts choose to put these bureaucratic barriers to make it more difficult for kids and parents to access that. So we engage heavily in advocacy with our partners, like Covenant House and other organizations, to ensure that children who are newcomers who are also in this intersection that are often housed insecure, also have a difficult time entering school districts. We also partner with our McKinney-Vento liaisons across the state to ensure that our kids, if they need to be identified as McKinney-Vento, they're identified as McKinney-Vento so that they can receive the support services that they need.

And we are educating, we provide professional development to schools on child and adolescent migration. What to expect, who's coming to the state, what are their needs, what are the different immigration statuses. Because one of the biggest challenges for schools is that they cannot ask. They cannot ask parents or children, what is your immigration status? But they can be informed about immigration in general so that they can understand, why is this parent or why is this child not wanting services? Why are they afraid? Why are they not coming to parent teacher conferences? This child doesn't have a guardianship, but this child has a sponsor and not a guardian. What is the difference between these things?

All of those unknown statuses and nuances make children and families vulnerable because then they tend to retreat and not want to participate with the schools because they're afraid. So a big part of our challenge with immigrant families is fear, because there are repercussions to their immigration status when they access services, and because overall, there is a sense of concern for what can happen to them should they ask for help. So we try to alleviate all of those concerns.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: It must be incredibly challenging, I can imagine, for a person who's uncertain about their status and wanting to stay and not sure what will happen to reach out. I appreciate the efforts of everyone that works with these students to be able to help them feel secure and engaged and connected into the schools.

Next, I'd like to come back to Katie. Katie, I have a two part question for you. When we spoke, you had mentioned that your journey in working around human trafficking issues started about 10 years ago when a student asked you to sponsor a club. I'm wondering if you could tell us more about that, what you did there and how that happened and the kinds of things that evolved into.

Katie Talbott:

A student learned about trafficking in her social studies class. She was sent to me and she wanted to help spread the word about trafficking, so we ended up forming a club. At the time, the University of Dayton had an anti-trafficking club, so we invited them to come and help us develop this thing. It was great having the peer to peer thing, the college students working with high school students. It gave my high school students a ton of confidence, a ton of more knowledge just in general that they weren't getting from, say, their history class. So that was great.

What we decided to do is we started talking to other clubs. The students would go and give presentations, and we would lead awareness materials behind. We would talk to the teacher about the hotline number and how easy it was and that it's anonymous and that they work with your local authorities. That was super helpful. I would get a lot of questions like, should I call if this is what I see? I'm always going to tell you to call because I think that if you can go home and you're still thinking about that kid, then there's a problem. You need to call. Go with your gut.

So back to the club really quick. As a finale for her senior year, we put on a big event, and the event was open to the public. We had a survivor speak, we had interactive simulations going, we had poster sessions about fair trade and livable wages. It was really cool. We ended up having 300 students and community members there. And then after that, she graduates, and then we had this new group come in. They weren't nearly as focused or really as enthusiastic, I guess I would say, and so we changed gears at that point. We became involved with our yearly Human Kindness Day, so we got a spot there. And again, we invited those college students back out and they co-presented to the high school students. That went on for a while, and then that fizzled out, and then COVID hit, and then I moved to work in an elementary.

But in saying all of that, I just want other teachers to know that you don't have to do a big club. The club was a lot. It was hard. We weren't the popular people, I'll tell you that. But you can do other things like go to abolitionohio.org and there's a ton of resources there. I got ideas from that where we could have a film screening or a poster session. A book club, that was super... Would be easy to do, I feel like with the staff. Train the staff and then maybe from there you can have a book club with the students. So there's a lot more ideas that you could do besides what we ended up doing with the club.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Yeah. Well what I think is interesting about what you're saying, Katie, is not just that there are lots of little activities and things like that that you can do, but also that the concept of human trafficking can be inserted into other classes within the academic day. To be talking about it in a social studies class, I think that that is pretty progressive, pretty advanced. You don't always hear about that kind of information in a social studies class in many schools. So I appreciate that you said that. And I also love the fact that a student came to you for this. It didn't exist, you didn't know much about it, and yet you jumped in with both feet. I mean, that's just a wonderful adult youth partnership there that happened on an important topic.

Katie Talbott: Well, I did know about it because we kind of live it at the Talbot's house because my husband is Abolition Ohio, so he runs an organization. So I knew about it, I just didn't know how to bring it into the schools so, anyway.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Yes, thank you for that correction. As soon as I said that, I remembered the connection.

Katie Talbott: That's okay.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Now, you did also mention to us if you, when we spoke that you have provided support or made some calls around suspicions of trafficking. Can you very briefly just talk to us a little bit about what that was like? You don't have to go into super big detail, but how did you support, or what was it like to do that process.

Katie Talbott: So for me, I was a support, I would say for sure. Teachers would come once they knew who I was and stuff and knew... And so we had those awareness posters now because we had just done the club and we got them in places and people would ask me, and I ended up working with a counselor pretty closely, "Is this trafficking?" And I'm like, there's a lot of signs there, let's just call. So I think if you support each other, it won't be a scary thing. And they do make it really easy once you're making the phone call. So that was really my role, I would say at the high school is just more of support and okay, let's dial the number, let's go through this. And at my new position, I just really feel like my whole school needs trauma training and trafficking training so that they can know that those types of... There's things out there that they can call and do.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Right. Especially for little ones. People don't often think about it in the elementary school, but the reality is that for some young people, trafficking starts very, very young. We've had people with lived experience who have no memory of not being trafficked, which speaks to the need to have those younger people, the K5 population also being well-educated and supported for sure.

Katie Talbott: Absolutely. Yep.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Thank you so much for that, Katie.

Katie Talbott: Thanks.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Cali, I'd like to come back to you if you can take a minute or two to talk to us about just a little bit more detail on the resources and particularly maybe even the trauma one because we have a question here from the audience about the trauma piece.

Cali MacEachen: Absolutely. Like I mentioned, we have three really wonderful handbooks or guidebooks here, toolkits that are super helpful when you're thinking about foreign-born populations. As you just mentioned, even this can start really young for a lot of our survivors that are being served through our program. So we talk about even in that first toolkit, we talk about the ways that safety

planning can look really different from someone who's the five or six range to someone who's 17. Those are living two very different lives. So again, in terms of safety planning, if that's a new concept or if you've never walked through the safety planning journey with a potential client, I would definitely go ahead and recommend that one to everyone. Again, those strategies can look really different. The core principles is that we really want to let the survivor or potential survivor dictate what is safety.

We never want to assume. We don't want to make any assumptions. We don't want to assume that home is a safe space or the parent is the safest adult in their life or that they have access to a safe telephone. We want to make sure that we're asking, who makes you feel safe? What does a healthy relationship look like to you? Is this person pressuring you to do things you don't want to do? Or is this person encouraging you to meet your goals of attending school every day? Whatever the case might be. And same again, I know I'm kind of harping on this first one, but we also have some really tangibles like do's and don'ts around safety planning. We never want to promise safety. That's kind of a tough promise to deliver on.

We do want to say that your safety means a lot to me, and I do want to help you achieve safety, and we want to really work on rapport building and building out that trust, getting into that more raw trauma-informed care piece. We do have some really great do's and don'ts around identifying what crisis might look like. Like you said, this can start early. So crisis might look really different to a five-year-old than it does to a seventeen-year-old who all of a sudden is behaving differently than they were last week. We also really want to just again, build that rapport. We don't want to make promises that we can't keep, we don't want to like... Disclosure is never really the goal. We don't want to dig when it comes to a minor's experience.

We call, the way that we approach these kind of conversations is like the TED approach. It's T for tell me about this experience. Explain, kind of explain what's kind of going on or D, describe. Again, only even when necessary. We don't want to promote digging unnecessarily. We don't need access to that information unless we need it for the sake of kind of a referral if we think that there's something going on at home that we need to be aware of to make that mandatory report. So instead of kind asking for explicit details, we want to leave those questions kind of open-ended so that the minor can kind of... And only after a certain level of rapport building. So that minor is free to disclose in a safe space what they're willing to disclose with you, what they feel comfortable disclosing.

And then in that same kind of second toolkit that you brought up, we get into what goal planning can look like. Again, we really want to build those protected factors, and a lot of that comes from self-worth and achieving goals. So a lot of that is goal planning on the front end of what we often call smart goals. So defining and meeting goals so that the minor is progressing through their life and building that confidence, which again, raising protective factors and lowering vulnerabilities wherever possible. So again, I would encourage you all

to breeze through all three of those toolkits. I think that first safety planning toolkit that I mentioned, especially if it's that feeling new as a concept, definitely worth checking out. A lot of tangibles, a lot of reframing of language that is really helpful, I think.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. There's a lot in those toolkits for sure, and I think that they're easily downloadable. You just go to the website, click the link, click the download, and there you have it. So I think it's wonderful to have that tool. So we're going to go into what we call a lightning response one here. So I'd like to try to hold responses to about one minute each if possible. So for this one, what changes come to mind for you when you think about decreasing vulnerabilities? What changes can people make to school climate, the environment or the culture that will decrease vulnerability of trafficking and exploitation? Katie, I'd like to come to you first for some ideas.

Katie Talbott: Okay. So currently the thought process is let's teach our students with special needs how to fit into a typical peer's world, but we're not teaching the typical peers how to fit into their world. So I really feel like if we could foster those relationships that we would have... The typical kids would protect these students with special needs. And then because we know that these kids are isolated and not well-informed, so it puts them at higher risk of being trafficked. And if they had peers, they wouldn't be so vulnerable to outside attention when a trafficker... That's what they look for, the trafficker is looking for. "Oh, you want friends, I'll be your friend." So I feel like if we could foster those relationships and help the typicals realize what great kids these are. These are great kids with great gifts, and I think that that would bridge that gap.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Wonderful. So do two-way education for both sides of these groups.

Katie Talbott: Absolutely. Yeah.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Thank you so very much. Kaitlyn, what would you like to add?

Kaitlyn Zedalis: So I think the one thing I'd like to highlight is really for schools to bolster the work they're doing around student homelessness and really identifying and making sure those students are well-served is so important. And then sort of adjacent to that, I would say schools building out structures and systems that support the development of caring adult relationships. So especially for students experiencing homelessness, especially for unaccompanied youth. So really building in be it mentoring systems where somebody's checking in with those students on a regular basis. I think a lot of the time in terms of the role of homeless liaisons, it's often somebody's 17th job is to be a homeless liaison for a school district. So finding ways to bolster homeless liaison capacity is really important. I know a lot of schools have been doing a lot of great work around this with American Rescue plan funding, but so really I think for schools just to make sure that that group is being supported is really an important way to address vulnerability.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. Thank you so much. Yeah, we know that homeless young people are oftentimes invisible even when they are living right there in the streets and in our neighborhoods. So it's important from that connection. Thank you. Cali, what would you like to add?

Cali MacEachen: From where I'm sitting and kind of the aspired perspective, I would say language access. Off the top of my head, I'm thinking I've seen quite a few cases, maybe nine deep-ish percentage of our population is Spanish-speaking, Spanish is their primary language, and I've definitely seen it be the case where minors are placed for the sponsor and they go to school and there's maybe trouble at home. Maybe there's just past experiences that they need to talk about or they need to seek resources on, and there's maybe not a single Spanish-speaking person available to them in the school or maybe no, not even Spanish-speaking resources on the wall, anything like that. And that is anecdotally, that feels like the quickest way to get minor detached from school and not feel safe in school. So that seems like even kind of just posters, pamphlets available in Spanish to support that minor seems like a low-hanging fruit.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Yeah. So whatever your community looks like, whatever new immigrant or newcomer population is coming into your community, making sure that language is represented. Thank you. And Lina, how about for you?

Lina Caswell: Yeah, I want to even push further from Cali's comment because linguistic isolation of course is one of our biggest challenges, and not just to Spanish, but other languages that we're seeing arrive, particularly indigenous languages from Central America, but also kind of reminding everybody that the US Department of Education is engaging in bilingualism as a superpower and that multilingualism is the way to go. So really continue to foster those translanguaging spaces in schools because remember, it's not just the kids, it's also the parents and the sponsors and the other adults that are, quote unquote, in charge or responsible for this youth and even for those youth who are on a company.

So like creating and fostering that curriculum, that environment that is both multilingual, bilingual and translanguaging so that children and parents and anybody that comes in contact with the school feels welcome. And again, that is again, fostering that sense of belonging somewhere and to be seen for the first time. I know for sure that very few children will remember the social worker that helped them, but they will for sure remember the teacher that changed their lives. And for a lot of our kids, is that ESL teacher or is that homeless liaison person who's often a teacher as well. So just to remember that language is critical in curriculum instruction in the environment of the school.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Right. And so language is a superpower and why not take advantage of a strength that a student is already bringing in. Absolutely. Thank you. And Dr. Beth, how about for you?

Beth Bowman: So I will say my exploitation happened not in the school itself, but the first experiences that I had of exploitation were in my middle school and it was as a result of other girls that were my close friends who were being exploited. And

so I was sort of pulled in through the exploiters that had gotten hold of them. And it's so important to know when you see a child's behavior changing, there were so many signs that there was something going on with me that nobody did anything about. And noticing grades dropping, noticing kids starting to self-harm, noticing kids starting to use substances, noticing clothing changes, friend group changes, those sorts of things are... And it doesn't necessarily mean that exploitation is taking place. A lot of the stuff that we say are red flags of trafficking... And I'm speaking specifically of sex trafficking because that was my lived experience.

But in terms of CSEC, the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, which does intersect, somebody brought up earlier CSAM so Child Sexual Abuse Materials, which were formerly known as child pornography, but it is the documented sexual abuse of a child that we see kids that are being pulled into online environments, it's being normalized by their friends and it's normalized in pop culture and some of these other things. And so the parents were absent for a lot of these kids. My parents were not neglectful, but they were really very distracted and had a lot of things that were going on in their marriage at the time and so forth. But I think they also just didn't know what to make of what was going on with me.

And so this is to say that if something is happening with a child, it isn't a, necessarily the parent's fault. It isn't necessarily... Now we do know that familial trafficking is one of the most common kinds of trafficking, and so that is definitely something to look out for in the intersection with maltreatment cannot be overstated, but those peer groups are so, so, so important in those formative years for adolescents and so kind of having a finger on the pulse of what's going around, what's being normalized among the kids. If there's things happening on Instagram, if there's teen pregnancy... I mean, my high school, I can't even tell you how many girls were pregnant in my high school and had babies in ninth and 10th grade and stuff so these sorts of things risky sexual behavior at a really young age, that's a huge red flag for something that at a minimum, sexual violence.

So these sorts of things are red flags for child maltreatment that also could be exploitation. But when in doubt your mandated reporters call it in, you can call the National Human Trafficking Hotline. They are not a tip line. I believe the blue campaign runs the tip line, but the National Human Trafficking Hotline out of Polaris can give you directions on what to do and what you're seeing. They also have a really great resource on their website, the National Human Trafficking Hotline website that gives resources specifically for human trafficking by state. So you can narrow by your state and look up what the resources are there by state if you need youth mentors, if you need support groups, if you need housing, all sorts of resources are available there.

Cindy Carraway-Wilson: Excellent. Thank you so much for all those resources and we managed to get through several of our questions in our question queue based on all of your responses. I want to take the time now. We're almost at time. We could keep talking about this I think, but I'd like to take the time now to close us out of the

webinar to be respectful of everyone's time. We want to remind everybody that we have several upcoming events including the shared learning session for this webinar. So if you want to talk about more about what you heard, and if you want to turn the knowledge and what you heard into actual implementation plans for your school, please join us. And the QR code to register for that will be coming up soon. And you'll get a follow-up email from us as well. Starting in April, we are launching our gun violence prevention miniseries, and you can see that we have four of those.

So we hope to see you at that event. Our next Human Trafficking Child Exploitation webinar is going to be focusing specifically on how you can have those conversation with young people. How can you begin to talk with young people about this very real issue that might affect them or their friends? And then our next human trafficking webinar will be happening in July, and that is all about survivor resilience. And we hope to have people with lived experience come in and talk about what they did to sort of go beyond the trafficking experience, move beyond that. And we're going to include in that how to leverage resources. We want to thank you and all of our speakers and panelists for all the information that you shared. Please remember to go to the website where you can download the resources and check out the recording for this webinar.

We also hope that you can take a few moments to complete our feedback form. This is really important because it helps us to guide content development. We're going to bring this link back up in a moment, but we also want to bring up another link, that link to that shared learning session. The shared learning session is scheduled for next Wednesday, April 3rd from 3:00 to 4:30. And you can click on the QR code here or enter the link and you can register for that event. And we will be following up with an email at the end as well. But for now, we're going to say thank you all for being here. A big thank you to our panelists and speakers for all the work that you've done and continue to do to protect our students. And to each and every one of you in our audience who spent your time with us to learn more about this important issue and for all the work you're doing with our young people in our schools. Thank you so much and we hope to see you at the next event.