

Department of Family and Children’s Services
Response to Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth

Last Updated November 19, 2019

Since 2010, the Department of Family and Children’s Services (DFCS) has been working to clarify and understand issues relating to Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC). A core group of dedicated social workers began looking at youth that were exhibiting behavioral issues and difficulties in their placements, often resulting in running away from their placements. These dedicated social workers were extremely concerned about the children/youth running away and being vulnerable to becoming or continuing to be Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC).

In 2016, California began providing grants to those counties that would provide matching funds dedicated to working on CSEC issues and Santa Clara County received such a grant. The focus was children/youth that fit the State of California Department Social Services’ definition of a CSE Child. The definition; “A child who is sexually trafficked, as described in Penal Code (PC) §236.1 or who receives food or shelter in exchange for, or who is paid to perform, sexual acts as described in Penal Code §236.1 or §11165.1 including pornography”. The State of California defined “at risk” for CSE as exhibiting, at a minimum, one of the following indicators (California Department of Social Services All County Letter (ACL) 16-49:

One of the following indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child/youth exhibits behaviors or otherwise indicates that she/he is being controlled or groomed by another person • Child/youth spends time with people known to be involved in commercial sex • Child/youth’s use of internet, cell phone, or social media involves social or sexual behavior that is atypical for his/her age
Or exhibiting, at a minimum, 2 of the following indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child/youth has a history of running away, unstable housing, including multiple foster care placements, or periods of homelessness including couch surfing • Child/youth has had prior involvement with law enforcement or the juvenile justice system, • Child/youth is frequently truant • Child/youth ‘s relationships are concerning, placing him/her at risk or in danger of exploitation • Child/youth has a history of substance abuse, specifically narcotics, opiates, crack/cocaine and amphetamines

Funds provided were to look at “at-risk” children, prevention, demand reduction (the efforts aimed at reducing the public desire for Commercial Sexual Exploitation) and education regarding issues relating to CSEC. Children/youth who are “at risk”, suspected or confirmed CSEC can obtain mental health, public health and advocacy services anywhere in the county.

Transformation Team

The Department of Family and Children’s Services (DFCS) was designated the lead agency to receive funds from California’s Department of Social Services, with a directive that a Steering Committee and an Implementation meeting be in place with stakeholders. Santa Clara County used grant funds in conjunction with County funds to create dedicated positions. It also created a Transformation Team to address the needs of children involved with the DFCS and Juvenile Probation. This team includes a coordinator and social worker III for DFCS; a probation supervisor (part-time) and coordinator from Juvenile Probation; four Behavioral Health Therapists and a supervisor (part-time who started mid-year) and a public health nurse from the Public Health Department. The County Transformation Team works in conjunction and partnership with Community Solutions who provide advocates, training and demand reduction services. Community Solution subcontracted with the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA), to provide additional advocates, training, mental health services and demand reduction. Demand reduction refers to efforts intended to reduce the demand for commercial sex.

As this group worked on prevention services with “at risk”, suspected or confirmed CSEC and youth, the team acknowledged that the acronym CSEC was triggering for our youth. The team learned that our youth did not identify as victims of CSE and often associated the term with “prostitution”, which would result in our youth declining services to avoid the stigmatizing term and label. During a team meeting while discussing our vision it was obvious that our team’s goal was to empower, inspire, give hope and lift our youth up by giving them unconditional support and tangible tools to transform their lives to be the phenomenal person that we know they are capable of being. Thus, Transformation Team is now the name of the County of Santa Clara’s CSEC Program.

The grant funds are for prevention as well as intervention. The prevention programs offered in 2018 included the Youth Empowerment Summit (YES): My Kind of Confidence offered to all identified female youth in the spring and a painting party for youth to plan the 2019 YES in the fall.

It is difficult to ascertain which youth/children are being groomed or involved in CSEC issues. Therefore, it is important to be as inclusive as possible with youth to educate them about CSEC. One of the reasons it is difficult to identify confirmed CSEC and youth is their own recognition (or lack thereof) of the situation. In a West Coast study (Alameda County), “75%” of clients did not recognize that they were being exploited and therefore did not seek help. “Most youth view their trafficker(s) as operating with their best interest in mind”¹ There are numerous studies that indicate that most trafficked “youth have experience prior abuse or neglect, with some estimates as high as 93%” and that “85% in some studies-

¹ Psychotherapy for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children: A Guide for Community-Based Behavioral Health Practitioners and Agencies, p.7

are involved in the child welfare system.”² As youth do not recognize that they are being trafficked and if they do recognize it they are often ashamed and do not want to discuss the situation with their social worker. Prevention and Education is critical to this work to prevent and break the cycle of sexual exploitation.

The Department of Family and Children’s Services provides six major services to address this community problem: Consultation, Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings, implementation of the Commercially Sexually Exploited-Identification Tool (CSE-IT), to educate staff and community partners and the YES-My Kind of Confidence Annual Conference. The following section will discuss each of the six services that the DFCS Transformation Team has provided.

Consultations

The chart below indicates the number of consultations provided by the Transformation Team in 2018. Consultations were provided to DFCS staff in the Child Abuse a Neglect Center (CANC), Emergency Response, Dependency Intake, Safety and Well-being (previously known as Continuing), Informal Supervision, Non-Minor Dependent Unit, as well as to partner agencies. Juvenile Probation also contacted DFCS to see if a child/youth they are working with was known to DFCS. Some youth were reported to the CANC due to CSEC behaviors or at risk of CSEC behaviors, while some cases were discovered during the investigative process. There were also Dependent Children of the (Juvenile) Court that displayed signs of being “at risk”, suspected or confirmed CSEC youth.

The following chart indicates when CSEC Transformation Team was notified of a CANC referral by email or when a call was received from the CANC without a verbal consultation.

Notifications from the Child Abuse and Neglect Center (CANC)

Notifications from CANC	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
# of calls/Voicemails	2	1	0	2	2
# of Email	19	15	15	17	69
Totals	21	16	15	19	71

The following chart shows verbal or written consultations between the CSEC Transformation Team and the Social Worker/Partner who may have concerns related to a youth who may be "at risk" for exploitation, suspected CSEC or confirmed CSEC. This includes when JPD requests information to assist in their case reviews. A NEW consultation is the first time the youth has crossed paths with the CSEC Transformation Team. An ongoing consultation is every time thereafter that a verbal or written consultation occurs on behalf of an already identified youth.

² Ibid., p7

Children who are reported to CANC as being suspected or confirmed CSEC youth, often receive Voluntary Services or Informal Supervision service to address the CSEC concerns if the parents are cooperative and reliable and are willing to work with the DFCS. These children can become Dependent Children of the Court in certain situation (e.g. such as a parent not utilizing services for themselves and their child) using the California Welfare and Institutions Code, which is very rare in Santa Clara County.

Consultations in 2018

Consultations Completed (phone/email w/ DFCS and/or Partners)	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
Number of New Consultations	20	13	12	15	60
Number of Ongoing Consultations	21	35	7	14	77
Totals	41	48	19	29	137

The following chart shows Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings recommended for identified youth who would benefit from the intervention of The Transformation Team. This chart also breaks down what type of consultation the recommendation came from and if the family declined services despite the recommendation.

Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Meeting Recommended

MDT Recommended	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
Number of New Consultations	5	6	2	2	15
Number of Ongoing Consultations	4	5	1	1	11
New Consult-Youth/Family declined engagement with Transformation Team	0	0	1	0	1
Ongoing consult-Youth/Family declined engagement with Transformation Team	0	2	0	0	2
New Consult-Youth/Family not located during ER Investigation	0	0	0	0	0
Total	9	13	4	3	29

The following chart shows when a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting was not recommended through the consultation process with The Transformation Team. This chart breaks down the type of consultation that occurred to determine the recommendation and the reasons thereof. During this reporting period (Q3, August 2018), The Transformation Team implemented Transformation Staffing meetings to discuss identified youth in an effort to coordinate engagement and services. This staffing now occurs before a Transformation Team MDT is recommended for the identified youth in an effort to consolidate Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings that are already in place to support the youth. If the identified youth already has a large team in place than our team will identify a primary support person to attend the ongoing CFT meetings that are already occurring through the Department and/or Wraparound provider. Indicated below are the CFT meetings attended by The Transformation Team which address various case needs such as; safety, placement, runaway behaviors, transitions and MYTIME (Moving Youth Toward Independence and Meaningful Emancipation).

Multi-disciplinary Team (MDT) Meeting Not Recommended

MDT Not Recommended	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
New Consult-Need More Information	13	4	3	0	20
Ongoing Consult-Need more information	3	1	0	0	4
Youth not located during ER investigation	0	0	0	0	0
Out of County Youth-referred to advocate pending transport back to county of origin	1	1	0	0	2
Referral Close-Evaluate Out	0	0	1	0	1
Youth does not meet the State's definition of "At Risk" for Exploitation	4	3	1	0	8
MDT already recommended for an Ongoing Consult	11	26	6	0	47
Totals	21	9	5	0	35
Other CFTs Attended by Transformation SW	12	5	15	8	40

Multidisciplinary Team Meetings

As indicated above, The Transformation Team conducted Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings in 2018. The charts below will identify the types of MDTs that occurred, an Immediate Crisis Response (ICR) MDT, Initial MDT and Ongoing MDT. An Immediate Crisis Response MDT is when the investigating Emergency Response social worker responds to the scene through a Joint Response with Law Enforcement (LE) due to a CSE incident. To support the youth, an Advocate is dispatched to the scene. The Immediate Crisis Response is separate from the DFCS and LE investigations and is a collaborative response with DFCS, the Advocate and youth, to develop a safety plan that will address the immediate and basic needs of the youth.

An Initial and Ongoing MDT is a non-emergency meeting that includes the social worker, the youth, family (if appropriate), any supports and the Transformation Team. This meeting is a platform to empower the youth's voice and to develop an Action Plan that they are willing to engage in and make happen. These Action Plans are not a typical case plan blue print and often reach out of the box to meet the youth's needs. At times, MDT meetings with the youth can be challenging, however, our team utilizes a trauma informed, client-centered model that focuses on the Stages of Change to embrace the youth where they are at in that moment.

These MDT meetings are powerful and only work when the youth is present and engaged in the process. When the youth is not physically and mentally present, the process is not effective. Below there is a chart that highlights reasons for MDT cancellations. Of the 27 MDT meetings canceled during this reporting period, 17 were due to the youth being on runaway status, youth refusing to participate/choosing not to participate/no show, youth in crisis or a scheduling conflict for the youth. Of the four instances when a youth refused/chose/no show, three of the instances were when a youth came to the MDT and "chose" to reschedule the meeting during the initial check-in because they were self-aware that they were not mentally present. The youth wanted to be fully engaged in the process but knew that they were not in a place to do so. Instead, they were empowered to use their voice and make a plan to have their MDT meeting at another time. Our team honors these "a-ha" moments and do not challenge or force the process. Instead, we coach and celebrate their choices, especially when they are positive.

Lastly, a MDT Staffing occurred without the youth prior to the Initial/Ongoing MDT that served as a provider meeting so that all the professionals attached to the youth were on the same page. In Q1, program leadership removed this meeting from the process by due to excessive meetings. As stated above, in August 2018 (Q4) Bi-Monthly Transformation Team Staffing's were implemented. This staffing is when the Transformation Team comes together to discuss the needs of the youth and what services the youth is interested in. The staffing meeting helps to coordinate services and everyone is updated on the youth until the youth is stabilized.

The following chart shows completed MDT meetings, as well as the provider meetings in Q1 that eventually transitioned into the Transformation Team Staffing in Q4 as mentioned above. It is also important to note the limited number of Immediate Crisis Responses is suspected to be a result of LE not initiating a Joint Response in the field for a CSE incident. Instead, they are transporting the youth directly to the Receiving Center (RAIC) without the coordinated response agreed upon in the protocol. It is suspected that The Transformation Team is not being notified when an Immediate Crisis Response MDT has occurred. The four ICRs that occurred in Q4 were initiated by the Transformation Team Social Worker.

Completed Multi-Disciplinary Team

Types of MDTs Completed	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
MDT Staffing w/o Youth (08/2018-Transformation Team Staffing)	2	0	0	60	62
Immediate Crisis Response	0	0	0	4	4
Initial	3	6	0	3	12
Ongoing	7	3	1	3	14
Total	12	9	1	70	92

The following chart shows MDT outcomes. The Action Plan is developed within the MDT meeting with the youth's voice. This Action Plan highlights strengths, as well as the youth's Hopes and Dreams. The team utilizes these strengths, Hopes and Dreams to courageously address the youth's worries and challenges. The worries and challenges will drive the action items that are most important to the youth with concrete tasks assigned to the youth's support team and youth. A follow-up Ongoing MDT meeting will be scheduled within 30, 60 or 90 days if the youth chooses to continue the Transformation Team intervention or the youth can decide to just have the Transformation Team join their ongoing CFT meetings through DFCS and/or Wraparound provider.

Multi-Disciplinary Team Outcomes

MDT Outcomes	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
Action Plan with Youth's Input	10	9	1	10	30
Follow Up MDT Scheduled	10	3	1	10	24

The following two charts show cancelled MDT meetings and the reasons for cancellation.

Types on Multi-Disciplinary Team Cancelled

Types of MDTs Cancelled	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
Immediate Crisis Response	0	0	0	0	0
Initial	9	1	3	0	13
Ongoing	6	3	1	4	14
Total	15	4	4	4	27

Reasons for Cancellation

Reason for Cancellation	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
Youth was on runaway status	3	1	0	0	4
Youth refused/chose not to participate/ "no show"	2	1	1	0	4
Youth in crisis	2	0	1	0	3
Scheduling conflict for youth	2	1	1	2	6
Scheduling conflict for Transformation Team	4	0	0	0	4
Scheduling conflict for Social Worker	1	1	1	1	4
Scheduling conflict for partner	1	0	0	0	1
Case transferred out to another county	0	0	0	0	0
Participated in CFT instead of MDT	0	0	0	1	1
Total	15	4	4	4	27

The following chart shows that a Transformation Team referral closed and the reasons thereof. It is important to highlight that several of our “at risk” youth have declined services which is an ongoing challenge with this population because they do not recognize their vulnerabilities and how their high risk behaviors place them “at risk” for exploitation. Although the youth decline services, The Transformation Team continues to monitor them within the Bi-Monthly Transformation Team Staffing to strategize engagement efforts.

CSEC Transformation Team Referral Closed

CSEC Transformation Team Referral Closed	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
Number of youth not identified as "at risk" or CSEC Victim	0	3	0	1	4
Number of Out of County Youth	1	1	0	0	2
Number of Youth "at risk"-Declined services	2	5	2	2	11
Number of Youth "at risk"-Youth/Family not located during ER Investigation	0	0	1	1	2
Number Referral Evaluated Out	1	3	0	0	4
Number of youth no longer "at risk"	0	0	3	0	3
Total	8	12	6	4	26

This chart shows the identified youth who have transitioned out of the Department who were receiving supportive services through The Transformation Team.

Closed Cases/Referrals

Closed Cases/Referrals	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
Number of youth who were NMD-Court terminated	0	0	0	0	0
Number of youth who reached the Age of Majority	0	0	2	0	2
Number of youth with Family Maintenance, Family Reunification-Court Terminated	0	0	2	1	3
Number of youth with Voluntary Family Maintenance Closed	0	1	1	0	2
Case closed-Transferred out to another county	0	0	0	0	0
Number of youth with referral Closed	3	6	11	5	25
Total	3	7	16	6	32

As previously mentioned if deemed appropriate and the youth is in agreement, The Transformation Team will join a youth’s current team and attend ongoing CFT meetings. This chart shows the CFT meetings attended by the Transformation Team Social Worker.

Child and Family Team Meetings

CFTs Attended by Transformation SW	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
Placement	5	0	7	1	13
MYTIME	0	1	2	1	4
Safety Planning	1	0	3	3	7
Runaway	4	1	0	0	5
Follow Up	2	3	3	3	11
Total	12	5	15	8	40

Commercially Sexually Exploited-Identification Tool (CSE-IT) TOOL

The Commercially Sexually Exploited-Identification Tool (CSE-IT) is a validated identification tool used to identify and help determine the risk of a child/youth for CSE. The CSE-IT utilizes eight key indicators to help identify and within these key indicators are supporting statements to score the youth’s level of risk as No Concern, Possible Concern, or Clear Concern. It is important to note that a child or youth may score “Clear Concern” on the CSE-IT, but that does not confirm that a child or youth is CSE, but rather numerous indicators are present that suggest a high level of risk for CSE. This tool gives our team a baseline to support further exploration and consultation to determine the identified youth’s level of risk and/or victimization. The Transformation Team’s social worker and Juvenile Probation’s coordinator are trained to use this identification tool for identification. In addition, during this reporting period, at the end of Q3 through Q4, the Transformation Team’s Social Work Intern, who is also trained to use the CSE-IT, was able to complete CSE-ITs for identified youth who were referred to the Transformation Team.

CSE-IT Tool Continuum of Concern	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	Q1-4 Total
No concern (0-3)	2	0	0	0	2
Possible Concern (4-8)	2	2	1	5	10
Clear Concern (9-23)	13	15	8	10	46
Total Number of CSE-IT Tools Administered	17	17	9	15	59

The demographics of the above chart:

Sexual Identity

Sexual Identity	Number
Transgender	1
Male	6
Female	52
Total	59

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Transgender	Male	Female	Total
Latino/Latina/Hispanic	0	5	30	35
White	0	1	11	12
African-Ancestry	1	0	6	6
Asian and Pacific Islander	0	0	5	5
Total	1	6	52	59

Age

Age	Transgender	Male	Female	Total
10	0	0	1	1
11	0	0	1	1
12	0	0	3	3
13	1	0	3	4
14	0	1	5	6
15	0	2	10	12
16	0	1	14	15
17	0	2	14	16
18	0	0	1	1
Total	1	6	52	59

The following is a snapshot of the 57 identified youth who scored a “possible “ and “clear” concern on the CSE-IT, were referred to and worked with the Transformation Team in 2018. It is also important to note that the Transformation Team Social Worker continues to be engaged with 13 identified youth who were identified in prior years.

- 23 worked directly with the Transformation Team (TT) Social Worker (SW)
- 14 worked directly with the Santa Clara County Public Health Nurse (PHN) who is assigned to the Transformation Team
- 9 worked directly with the Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Therapist who is assigned to the Transformation Team
- 5 worked directly with BHS and PHN assigned to the Transformation Team
- 4 worked directly with TT SW, BHS and PHN
- 6 worked directly with TT SW and PHN
- 2 worked directly with TT SW and BHS
- 30 of the youth also worked with Community Solutions or the YWCA.

During this reporting period, the Transformation Team continues to navigate the challenges with youth who are not willing to engage and despite them and/or their families declining services, our team continues to monitor their at-risk behaviors and strategize engagement. The following is a list of challenges that have prevented service delivery.

- Youth declines Transformation Team engagement.
- Family declines Transformation Team engagement (DFCS ER referral or DFCS Voluntary case).
- Youth declines full Transformation Team engagement but is open to a component of the team whether it is the TT SW, BHS Therapist, PHN or Advocate.
- Youth is taken into protective custody and transported to the RAIC and then AWOL prior to Transformation Team engagement.
- Youth is taken into protective custody and transported to the RAIC. Upon further investigation it is determined that they youth is from another County. If the youth does not AWOL prior to engagement, the Transformation Team will provide stabilization that will include an Advocate to support a warm handoff to an Agency in their County of origin.
- Youth is demonstrating high risk behaviors that meet the State’s definition of “at-risk” for exploitation, but the case carrying social worker does not identify CSEC as a concern and declines Transformation Team engagement.

Training by the Department of Family and Children's Services

The California Department of Social Services grant requires a staff and community partners (persons who work directly with DFCS and/or Probation youth) training component. During this reporting period, DFCS staff and community partners participated in CSEC 101 and CSEC 102 trainings. CSEC 101 is a State mandated training for DFCS and is the foundation training of CSEC. CSEC 102 is voluntary 2-day for DFCS staff and encompasses engagement with CSEC youth and self-care for the practitioner.

Last year, Rachel Thomas, a survivor/leader presented two CSEC 101 trainings, held on May 9, 2018 and October 2, 2018. At these trainings, 70 DFCS Staff and 81 Community Partners attended. Ms. Thomas presented a CSEC 102 training on March 5, 2018 and March 6, 2018. At these trainings, 23 DFCS staff and 19 Community Partners attended. Nola Brantley Speaks presented a CSEC 102 training that included a survivor leader on September 25, 2018 to September 26, 2018 and December 3, 2019 to December 4th. At these trainings, 52 DFCS staff and 45 Community Partners attended.

CSEC 101 Training

Class	Date	DFCS Staff	Community Partners	Total
CSEC 101	5/9/18	37	41	78
CSEC 101	10/2/18	33	40	73
Total CSEC 101		70	81	151

CSEC 102 Training

Class	Date	DFCS Staff	Community Partners	Total
CSEC 102	3/5/18-3/6/18	23	19	42
CSEC 102	9/25/18-9/26/19	18	17	35
CSEC 102	12/3/18- 12/4/19	11	9	20
Total CSEC 102		52	45	97

Education, Training and Prevention by Community Solutions and Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA)

The Department of Social Services contracts with Community Solution who subcontracts with the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) to offer community prevention services and demand reduction services. These services include stakeholder trainings, parent support groups, Promotora model outreach (a group that offers outreach and training to key stakeholders identifying on demand reduction), media advocacy, Report John (a program where the community can make anonymous reports of possible sex buyers to law enforcement) demand reduction workshops, bill board campaigns, Honest Open Positive Environment (H.O.P.E.) prevention groups and they also subcontract with Rachel Thomas for CSEC 101 trainings.

Youth Empowerment Conference

In 2015, Santa Clara County joined San Mateo County in planning their annual Rise Above Youth Empowerment Conference for At-Risk and CSE youth who identify as female between the ages of 14-21 and who are system involved with DFCS or Juvenile Probation. The Conference held in San Mateo County, at Cañada College, grew every year for three years.

In 2018, the County of Santa Clara chose to host their own Youth Empowerment Summit (YES) at West Valley College. Prior to planning, the Transformation Team facilitated a youth focus group to highlight the youth’s voice for how they wanted their YES to be. During this focus group is where the youth named YES as My Kind of Confidence. In 2018, 84 youth attended My Kind of Confidence YES!2018 where they were showered with SWAG, giveaways, positive energy, encouragement, fun and given a safe space to reconnect with old friends, make new friends, explore their self-esteem, share their talents, dance, and “be myself.” When responding to the feedback form about the keynote speakers, workshops, and “my favorite part of today was,” the youth shared the following:

“The way she said things made me feel comfortable.”	“There is hope.”
“I can relate to her story.”	“I can be someone no matter what my past is.”
“How important it is to believe in yourself.”	“Follow my dreams.”
“Self- love.”	“I am the architect of my life.”
“Be yourself don’t listen to other people.”	“Thank YOU! Loved it! It was BeYOUtiful.”
“She made me feel confident about myself.”	Everything, seriously fun!
“All the positivity.”	“Encouragement to achieve my goals.”
“I learned something about myself. Thank you.”	“Liked everything, personality, vibes, everything positive, I don’t have enough words to say how wonderful my day was!”