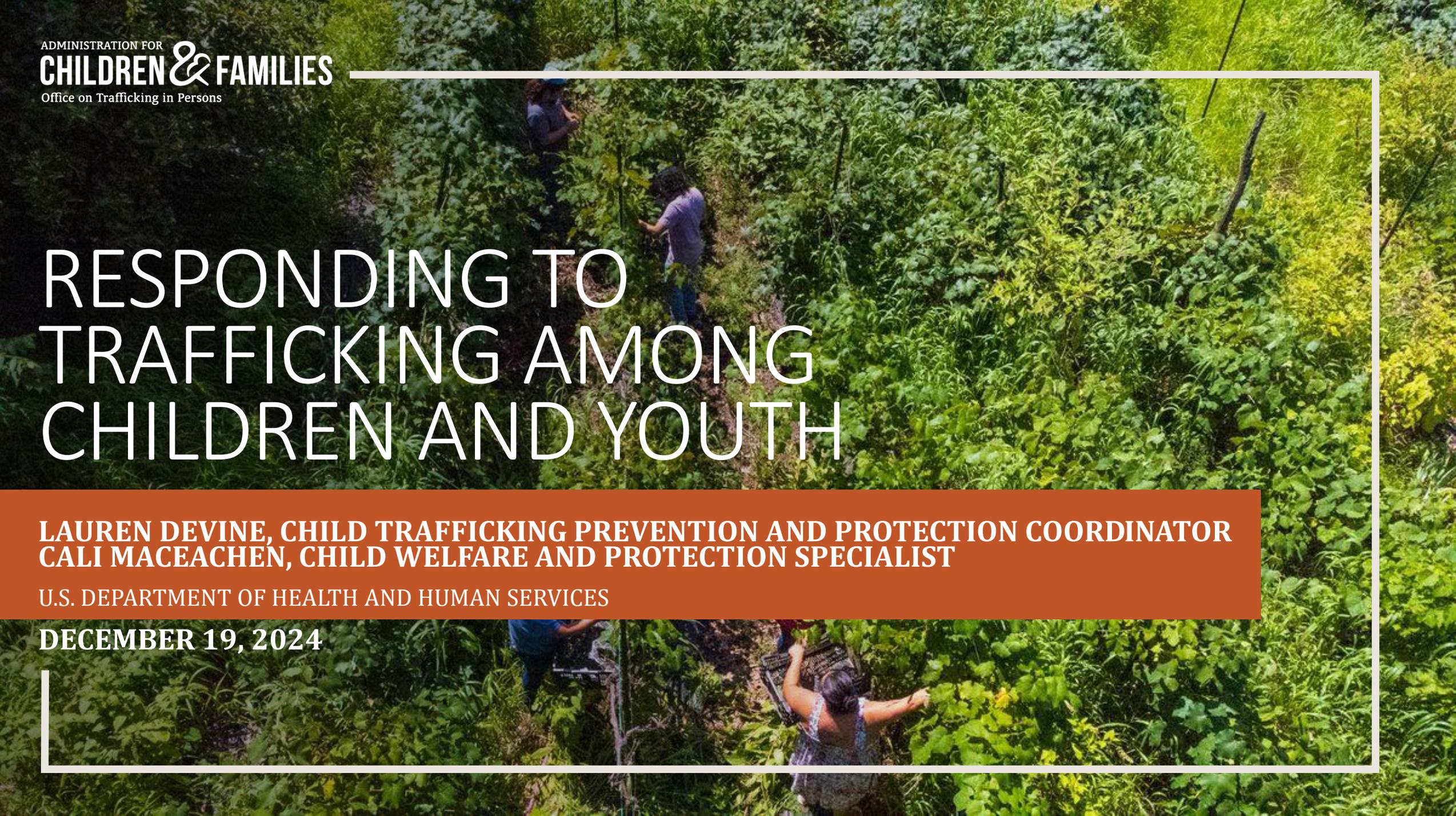


RESPONDING TO TRAFFICKING AMONG CHILDREN AND YOUTH

**LAUREN DEVINE, CHILD TRAFFICKING PREVENTION AND PROTECTION COORDINATOR
CALI MACEACHEN, CHILD WELFARE AND PROTECTION SPECIALIST**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

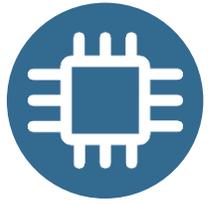
DECEMBER 19, 2024





Office on Trafficking in Persons

Mission, Goals, and Organization



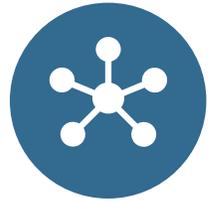
Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP)

Mission: To address human trafficking by supporting and leading systems that prevent trafficking and protect survivors, helping them rebuild their lives and become self-sufficient.

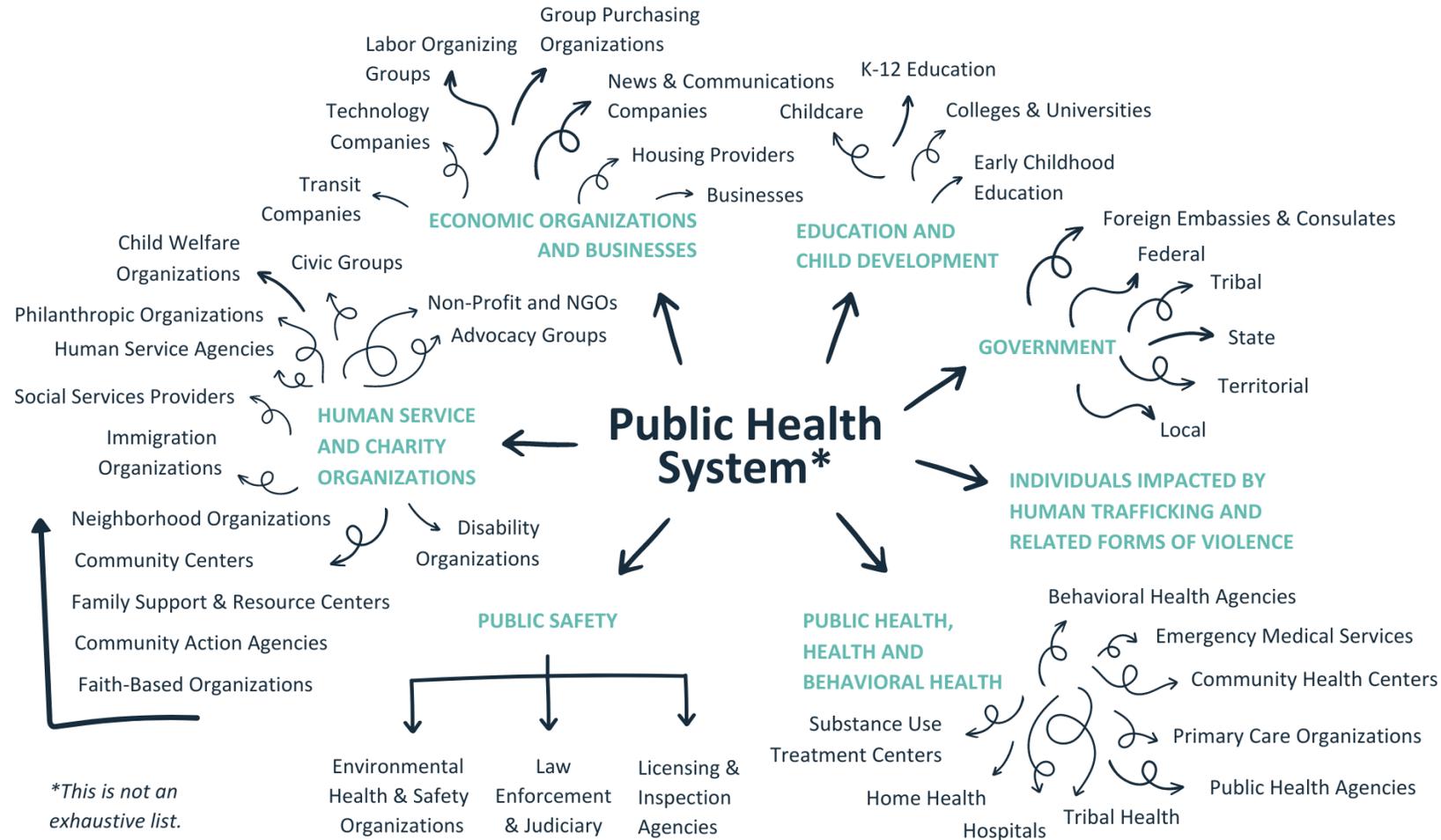
Responsibilities:

- Develop anti-trafficking strategies, policies, and programs to prevent trafficking
- Build health and human service capacity to respond to trafficking
- Increase victim identification and access to services
- Strengthen health and well-being outcomes of individuals who have experienced trafficking





Public Health Approach





OTIP Major Functions

Protection

Victim service and assistance activities, grant programs, Child Eligibility and Adult Certification programs, child victim coordination activities, and the National Human Trafficking Hotline

Prevention

Training and technical assistance, survivor engagement, public awareness, regional coordination, and prevention education

Research and Policy

Identification, coordination, and implementation of anti-trafficking research agenda, and supports program and policy development



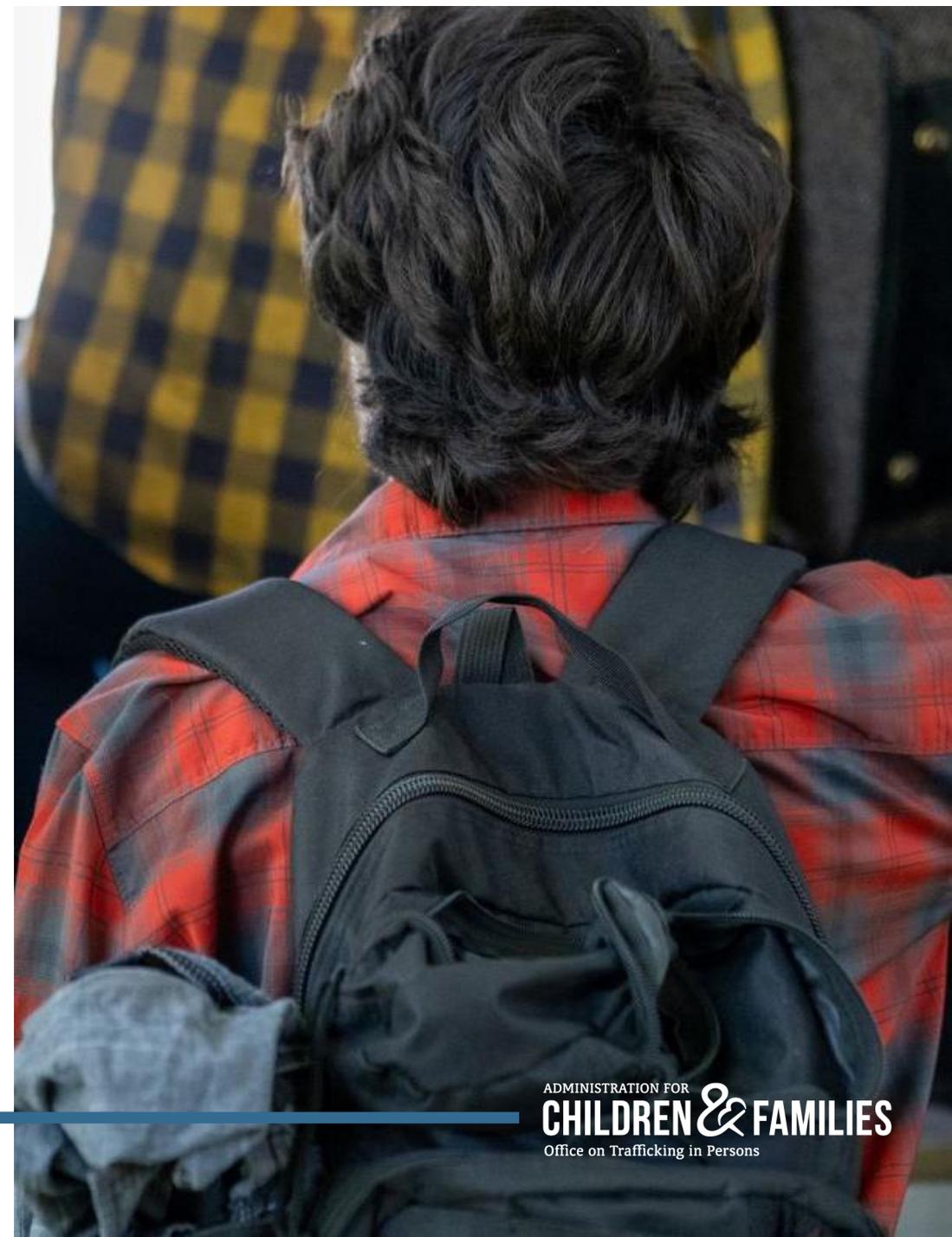
Child Trafficking Overview

Definitions



Definitions

- **Labor Trafficking** (*forced labor*)
The recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining of a child for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery (22 USC. § 7102 (11)).
- **Sex Trafficking** (*commercial sex*)
The recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, obtaining, soliciting, or patronizing of a child for the purpose of engaging in a commercial sex act (22 USC. § 7102 (12)).





Trafficking vs. Smuggling

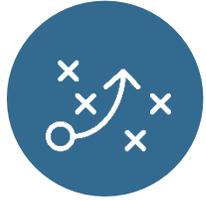
Trafficking	Smuggling
Trafficking is a crime against a person.	Smuggling is a crime against a country.
Victims either do not consent to their situations or, if they initially consent, the situation shifts and they are made to engage in forced labor or commercial sex.	The transaction is typically mutual and ends upon arrival at predetermined destination.
Exploitation of victims to generate illicit profits for the traffickers.	Can be a business arrangement between smuggler and person entering the country.
Trafficking does not need to involve physical movement of a person (but must involve a person being subjected to forced labor or commercial sex).	Smuggling always involves transnational physical movement.

An individual being smuggled is at greater risk of experiencing trafficking.



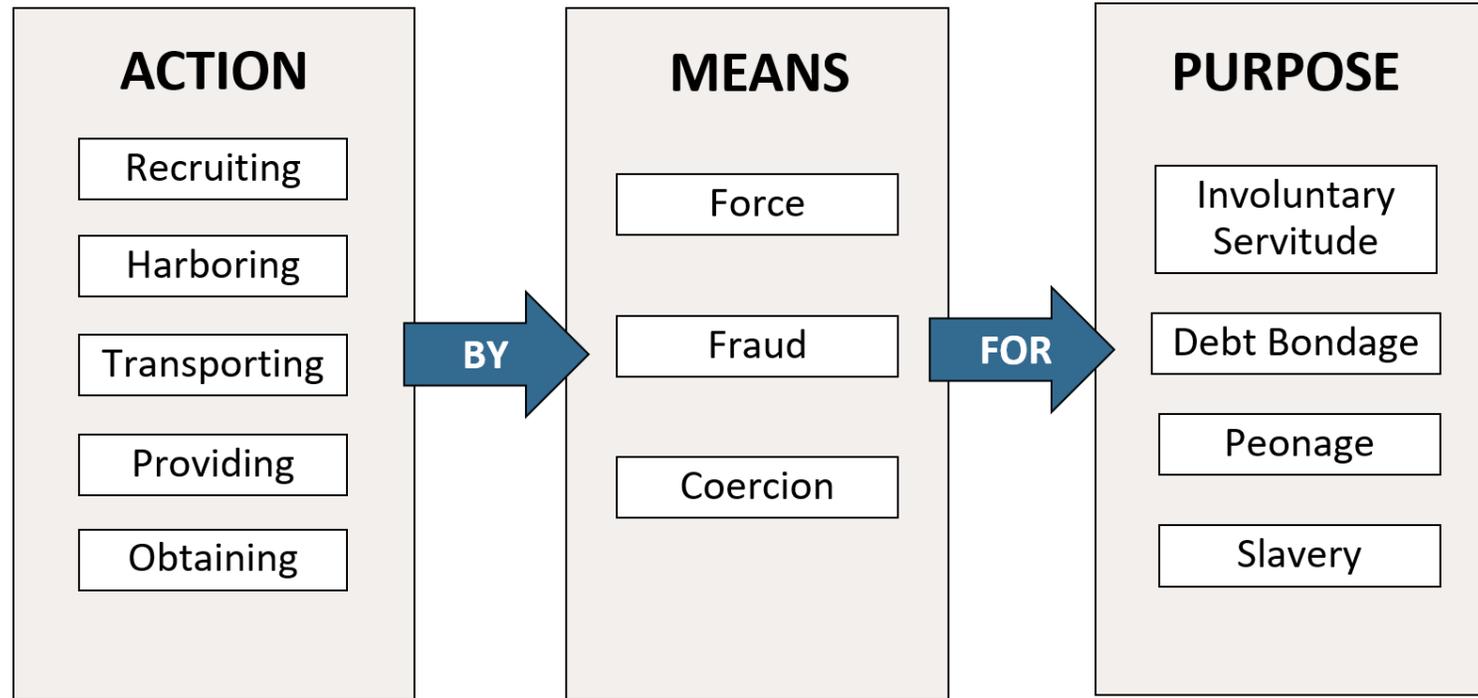
Trafficking vs. Ransom

Trafficking	Ransom
Trafficking involves forced labor or commercial sex.	Ransom involves an individual being held against their will for the purpose of an organization or perpetrator receiving money.
Trafficking does not need to involve a person being held against their will.	Ransom typically involves the person being held against their will.
Includes forced labor or commercial sex to pay off debt or money owed to an individual or organization.	Ransom is paid directly to an individual or organization holding a person.
When a ransom payment for a child is met through a commercial sex act or the child is forced to work while held for ransom, then the child has likely experienced human trafficking.	



Labor Trafficking AMP

The recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.



22 USC. § 7102 (11)



Spectrum of Labor Exploitation

Labor Exploitation

- Paid less than promised
- Withheld pay
- No written earnings statement

- No meal breaks
- Hazardous work environment
- Lack of safe water or toilet

- Movement to work controlled

- Individual lives at work site

- Threats related to debt or expenses
- Threats or use of violence
- Demoralizing
- Held against will

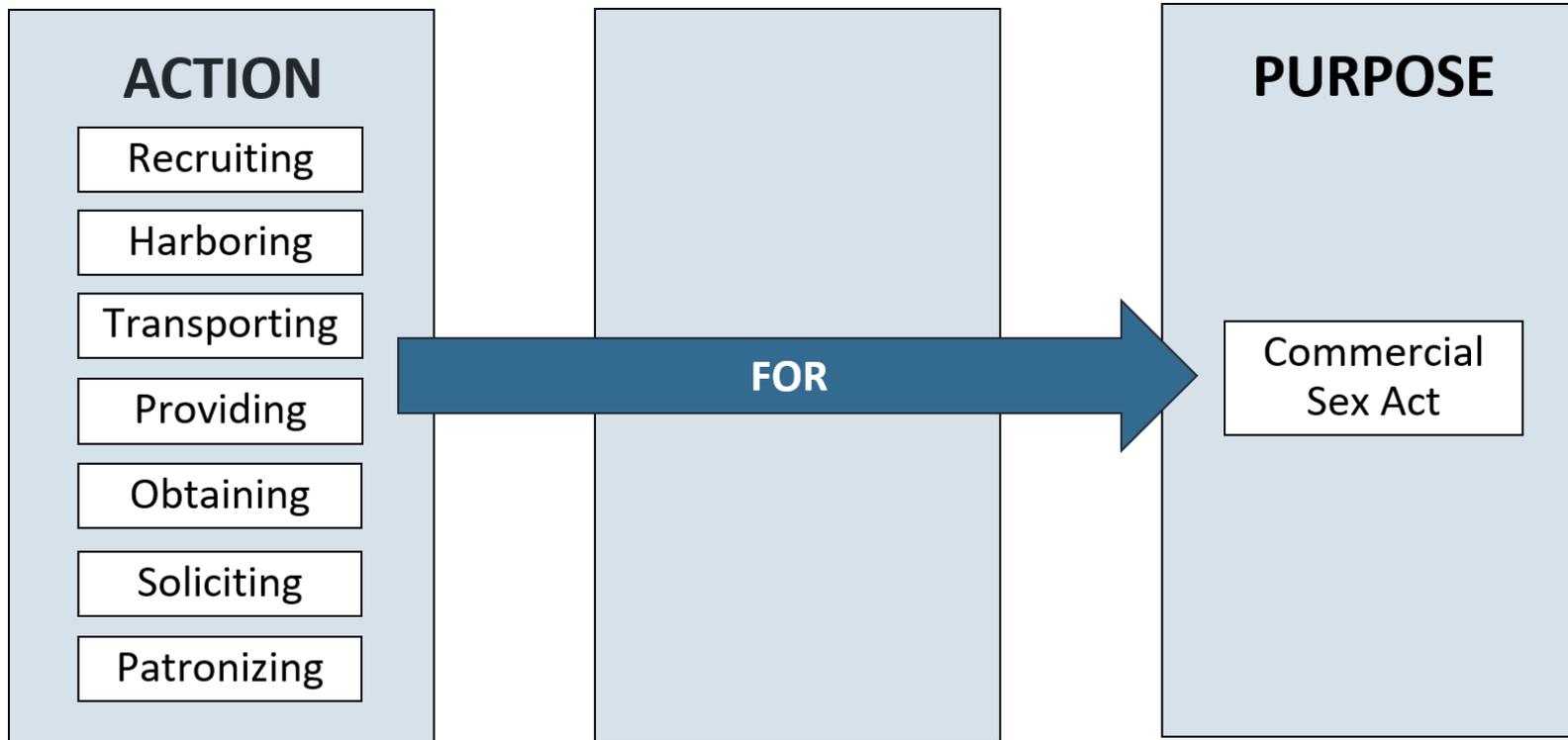
- Intimidation and control
- Sexual assault
- Use or threatened use of law
- Physical beatings

Labor Trafficking



Sex Trafficking of Minors AMP

The recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, obtaining, soliciting, or patronizing of a child for the purpose of engaging in a commercial sex act.



22 USC. § 7102 (12)



Sex Trafficking of Minors

The “**something of value**” can include money, food, shelter, gifts, transportation, etc.

Offers of something of value for **videos or images of a minor** must include knowledge that the minor would be **depicted or made to engage in a sexual act** in the images or videos to be considered sex trafficking.

Sexual Act as defined in federal law, 18 U.S.C. § 2246.

Even if the sex act or exchange never occur, **solicitation for a commercial sex act alone may be considered sex trafficking of a minor.**



(A) Action: Labor & Sex Trafficking

- **Recruitment of a child**
Did the person have a vulnerability that was then used against them for the purpose of exploitation? Did the person fit a specific profile?
- **Harboring of a child**
Was the person taken away from others (family, friends) or isolated? Was the person confined to a specific location? Was the person's movements or communications monitored?
- **Transporting of a child**
Was the person moved from one location to another for purpose of forced work? Travel arrangements provided to person?
- **Provision of a child**
Was the child given to another individual for the purpose of forced labor? Was the child given to a third-party employer?
- **Obtaining of a child**
Was the child forcibly taken by an individual? Was the child grabbed for the purpose of being subjected to forced labor?
- **Soliciting of a child***
Was the child offered or promised money or something of value in exchange for a sex act?
- **Patronizing of a child***
Was any person offered or given money or something of value in relation to the child engaging in a sex act?
**Soliciting and patronizing are only for cases of sex trafficking.*



(M)Means: Labor Trafficking

- **Force** (*physical*)
Sexual assaults, beatings, physical confinement, isolation
- **Coercion** (*psychological*)
Threats of serious harm or psychological manipulation, climate of fear, threatening the life and safety of a person or their family and friends, withholding legal documents, increasing or compounding debt that is impossible to pay off, witnessing harm to others, abuse or threatened abuse of the legal system
- **Fraud** (*deception*)
False promises about work and living conditions, use of fraudulent travel documents, fraudulent employment offers, withholding wages, changes in agreement or nature of relationship



(P) Purpose: Labor & Sex Trafficking

- **Involuntary Servitude** (*forced labor with threat of harm for non-compliance*)
Any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that, if the person does not enter into or continue in such condition, that person or another person would suffer serious harm or physical restraint; or the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process. This can also include “involuntary sexual servitude”.
- **Debt Bondage** (*labor connected to a debt that increases or never decreases*)
The status or condition of a debtor arising from a pledge by the debtor of his or her personal services or of those of a person under his or her control as a security for debt, if the value of those services as reasonably assessed is not applied toward the liquidation of the debt or the length and nature of those services are not respectively limited and defined.
- **Peonage** (*labor with threat of harm for non-compliance that is connected to a real or fake debt*)
A status or condition of involuntary servitude based on real or alleged indebtedness.
- **Slavery** (*labor associated with a person being owned for the purpose of performing labor or services*)
A person is made to perform labor or services with no pay or exchange of any goods. There is a sense of ownership of the person for the purpose of them performing labor or services. This can also include “sexual slavery”.
- **Commercial Sex Act** (*sex act in exchange for something of value*)
Any sex act on account of anything of value given to or received by any person.



Common Types of Trafficking among Foreign National Children and Youth

Commercial Sex and Smuggling

Child solicited to engage in sex acts in exchange for cost of journey, shelter, immigration documents, food, etc.

Domestic and Sexual Servitude

Child held against will and forced to perform sex acts and household duties

Forced Criminality

Child forced to perform services for gangs or cartels with threat of harm for non-compliance

Forced Labor and Smuggling

Child forced to work by individual connected to smuggling situation (often to pay off a debt or other expenses)

Forced Labor by Caregiver

Child forced to work for caregiver(s) in home country or in the U.S. (often to pay off a debt or other expenses)

Forced Labor on Journey

Child forced to work on journey while held for other purposes (ransom, extortion, kidnapping)



The minor disclosed that since he started living with his cousin, he has had to pay for rent, food and other basic needs. The minor feels that he has to work or he won't be able to live with his cousin. The minor is not enrolled in school because he is working during school hours. The minor reports that he is working voluntarily because he wants to be able to send money back home to his family in Guatemala.



The minor reported that she has been approached multiple times at school by gang members pressuring her to sell drugs. The minor reported that they have threatened to harm her and she thinks they would kill her if she doesn't do what they ask. She reports that she has refused, but she is afraid to go to school because they continue to approach her.



The minor disclosed that he was contacted by a man through social media offering to pay for his journey to the United States. The minor stated that at first, he was asked to send nude photos, and later, he was told that he would have to engage in sex acts with the man upon arrival in the U.S. The minor reported that he feared the man because he owed him a debt for his journey and felt that he didn't have a choice.



Reporting and Assistance

Supportive Services for Foreign National Minors who have or may have Experienced Labor or Sex Trafficking



Child Trafficking Federal Reporting Requirements

HHS OTIP Child Eligibility Process

Federal, state, and local officials must refer all cases of potential trafficking among foreign national minors to OTIP for assessment within 24 hours.

(Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (TVPPRA))

Child Protective Services

Human trafficking is included in the definition of child abuse in CAPTA. Therefore, mandated reporters are required to comply with child welfare reporting requirements and report labor and sex trafficking of minors accordingly. accordingly.

(Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 and TVPPRA)



Partnering with Child Welfare

The OTIP Child Protection Team is available to support in the following ways:

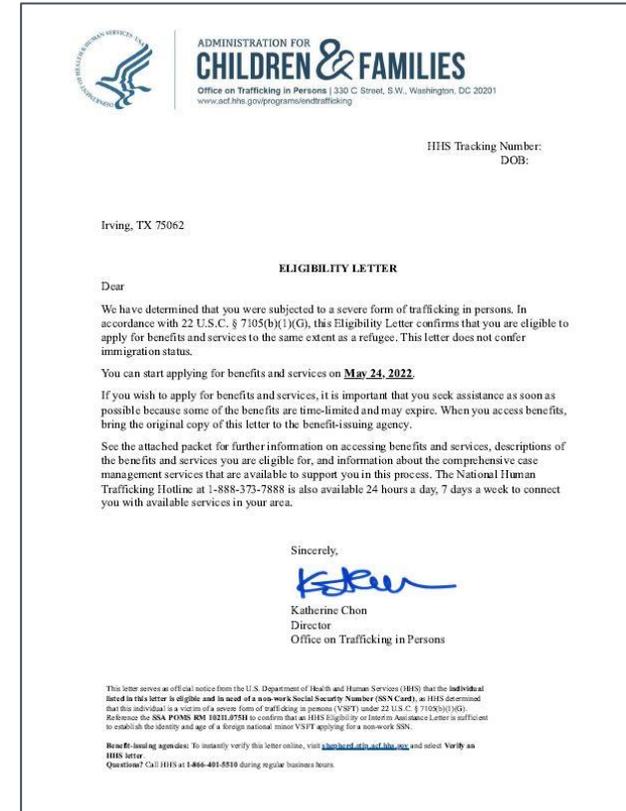
1. Coordination and advocacy with state and local child protective services and other entities to support safe placement of minors
2. Consultation with requesters and case staffings to support individuals in understanding when to submit a case to OTIP
3. Provision of virtual, module-based, and in person trainings on the Child Eligibility process and support for minors accessing benefits and services





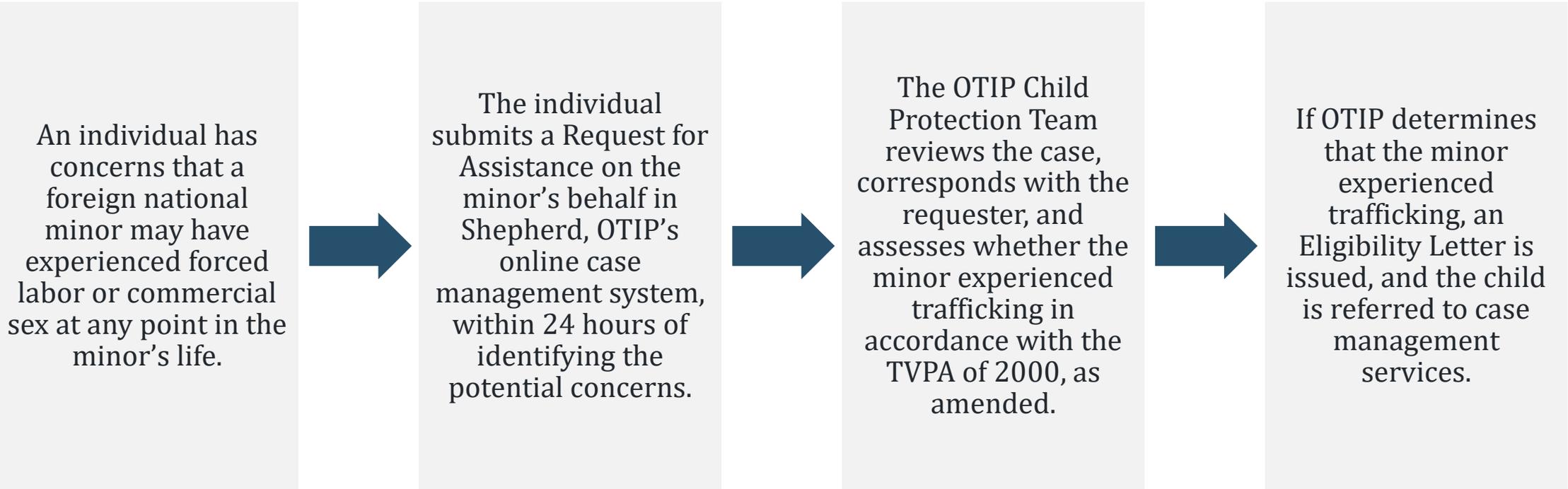
OTIP Child Eligibility Process

- **Federal reporting and requesting assistance:** The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, as amended requires all federal, state, and local officials to report potential trafficking concerns on behalf of foreign national minors (including unaccompanied children) to HHS within 24 hours (22 U.S.C. 7105(b)(1)(H)).
- **Benefits letter:** Upon receipt of credible information that a foreign national minor experienced human trafficking, OTIP issues an Eligibility Letter to the child, making them eligible to apply for benefits and services to the same extent as a refugee (22 U.S.C. 7105(b)(1)(G)).





OTIP Child Eligibility Process





Determination Types

- **Eligibility**

OTIP determines that there is credible information that the child has experienced forced labor or commercial sex, making the child eligible to apply for benefits and services to the same extent as a refugee. This letter does not expire.

- **Interim Assistance**

OTIP requires more information to determine if the child has experienced forced labor or commercial sex, but the child is still eligible to apply for benefits and services to the same extent as a refugee for up to 120 days.

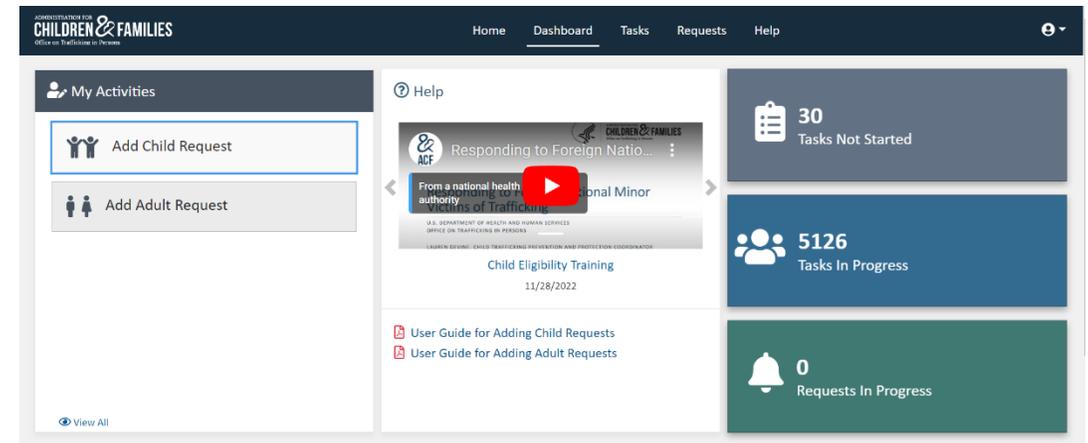
- **Denial**

OTIP determines that, with the information provided in the Request for Assistance (RFA), it does not appear that the child experienced forced labor or commercial sex. If at any point there is new information about a potential trafficking experience, the requester (or any person) can submit a new RFA on a child's behalf, as long as OTIP receives it before the child's 18th birthday.



Shepherd Case Management System

- Case requesters can use Shepherd as a secure platform to report trafficking concerns and submit electronic Requests for Assistance (RFAs) on behalf of foreign national minors in order for them to receive Eligibility Letters and be connected to needed benefits and services.
- Shepherd is also used by OTIP grantees to connect individuals to case management services, by DHS to submit T visas and Continued Presence, and to consult with federal law enforcement and non-governmental organizations during the Interim Assistance process.





Shepherd Reporting

1. Create an account in OTIP's online system, Shepherd.

2. Submit a Request for Assistance to OTIP in Shepherd.

3. Monitor email and Shepherd for updates and requests for additional information.



- Report and request assistance through OTIP's online [Shepherd Case Management System](#).
- For questions or to staff a case, contact the Child Protection Team by email at ChildTrafficking@acf.hhs.gov or by phone at 202-205-4582.



Child Eligibility Benefits

Monetary Assistance	Nutrition	Medical Services	Education	Employment	Housing	Multiple Needs Assistance
Refugee Cash Assistance	Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program	Children's Health Insurance Program	Title IV Federal Student Financial Aid	Job Corps	Public Housing Program	Refugee Social Services and Targeted Assistance
Supplemental Security Income		Medicaid				Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Foster Care Program
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families		Office of Refugee Resettlement Medical Screenings				Voluntary Agency Matching Grant Program
		Refugee Medical Assistance				



Aspire & TVAP Coordination

Regional Coordinators

Assist individuals with troubleshooting access to benefits, connecting to services, assisting with trafficking-specific placement breakdown concerns, and identifying trafficking-specific contacts in the local jurisdiction.

Aspire Case Management

Available for foreign national minors who have or may have experienced human trafficking and are not already receiving federally funded case management services.

TVAP Case Management

Available for foreign national youth and adults 18+.

1-800-307-4712

Aspire@uscrimail.org

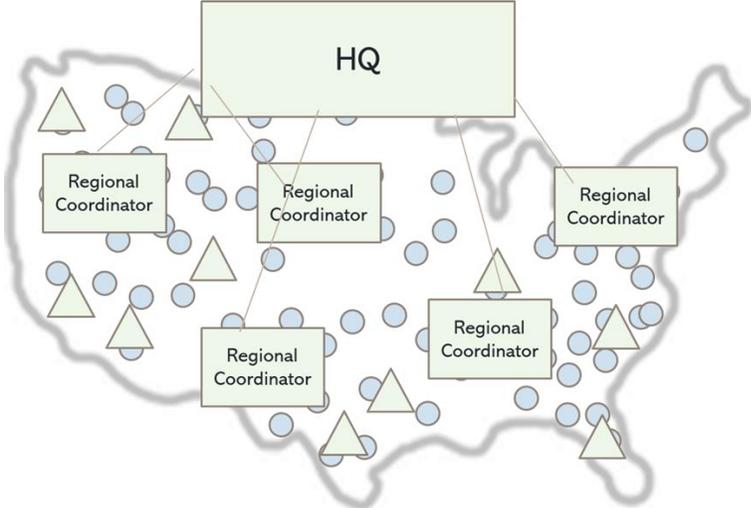
TVAP@uscrimail.org



Aspire

Aspire is a national programs that provide **trafficking-specific comprehensive case management services and regional coordination support** through a nationwide network of providers for foreign national minors who have experienced human trafficking. Case managers help minors access a range of supportive services, including but not limited to the following:

- Emergency needs
- Housing, rent, utilities
- Education
- Transportation
- Medical expenses
- Mental health counseling
- Food and clothing
- Personal care items
- Cell phone
- Legal rights
- Employment
- Life skills training
- Interpretation and translation
- Financial support





Resources

Resources for Children and Youth who have Experienced Trafficking



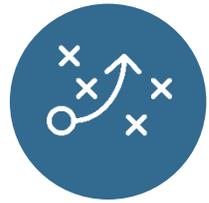
Child Eligibility Resources

Training and Technical Assistance	Recorded Child Eligibility Webinar (45 minutes)	This webinar provides an overview of the child eligibility process, including screening and identification, reporting, benefits and services, and case trends.
	Overview of Child Eligibility Process (3-minute video)	This informational video provides a brief overview of the child eligibility process, including referring, benefits and services, and determination letters.
	Monthly Child Eligibility Webinar	These webinars occur the first Wednesday of every month from 2:00 -4:00 p.m. ET on Zoom.
	SOAR Training Module: Working With Foreign National Minors Who Have Experienced Trafficking	This is an advanced training designed for providers who work with children and youth under the age of 18 who are foreign nationals and who may have experienced human trafficking before, during, or after their journey to the United States.
Screening and Reporting	Shepherd	Shepherd provides a secure, streamlined way for individuals to request assistance for victims of human trafficking and check the status of their request.
	Case Staffings	To discuss a potential case of trafficking on behalf of a child, individuals can contact the OTIP Child Protection Team at by phone at 202-205-4582 or by email at ChildTrafficking@acf.hhs.gov .
Prevention, Public Awareness, and Benefits	Unaccompanied Children Resource Center: Child Trafficking Resources	The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) Unaccompanied Children Resource Center provides information and resources to support unaccompanied children with trafficking concerns, including three toolkits specific to working with foreign national child and youth survivors of trafficking.
	Look Beneath the Surface Campaign	Through the HHS Look Beneath the Surface campaign, OTIP works with grantees and partners to raise awareness of human trafficking and risk factors for human trafficking.
	Child Eligibility Benefits Handout	This document explains how to use an Eligibility Letter or Interim Assistance Letter to apply for benefits and services. This handout is also available in other languages.



Toolkits

<p> U.S. COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS</p> <p>TOOLKIT Safety Planning with Foreign National Children and Youth Survivors of Trafficking FEBRUARY 2021</p> <p>USCIR-TWAP TRAFFICKING TOOLKIT SERIES</p>  <p>DOWNLOAD</p>	<p> U.S. COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS</p> <p>TOOLKIT Trauma-Informed Case Management with Foreign National Children and Youth Survivors of Trafficking JUNE 2021</p> <p>USCIR-TWAP TRAFFICKING TOOLKIT SERIES</p>  <p>DOWNLOAD</p>	<p> U.S. COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS</p> <p>TOOLKIT Special Considerations for Foreign National Children & Youth Survivors of Trafficking January 2023</p> <p>USCIR-TWAP TRAFFICKING TOOLKIT SERIES</p>  <p>DOWNLOAD</p>
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New Handout: Step-by-Step Benefits Guide

- OTIP launched a new [guide](#) that walks through the process for children to apply for benefits and services with their [Eligibility or Interim Assistance Letter](#).
- Foreign national children who experienced human trafficking and received an [Eligibility or Interim Assistance Letter](#) from OTIP can access benefits such as cash and food assistance, medical insurance, and case management services. This new guide was developed to equip these children and the adults supporting them to navigate this benefit process with greater ease and understanding of the steps required to obtain available resources.
- [Access the new Child Eligibility benefits handout.](#)

Help is available to you.

Use the letter you received to apply for benefits and services.

You have received this letter because the Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP) determined that you qualify to apply for benefits and services to the same extent as a refugee.

- If you have an Interim Assistance Letter, you can access benefits for 120 days.
- If you have an Eligibility Letter, the letter never expires.

Your Benefits Start Date is bolded and underlined in the middle of your letter. You can apply for benefits beginning on the date.

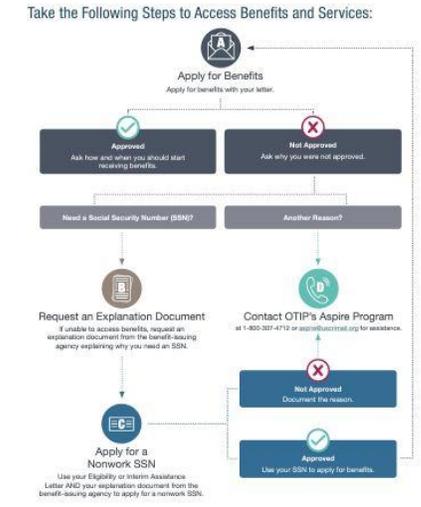
* Remember to keep your letter in a safe place! You will need your original letter to apply for benefits and services.

Benefits and Services

For more information on the refugee benefits and services for which you may be eligible, visit: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/trafficking-agents>.

<p>FOOD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Assistance program used to help to pay for most grocery items. 	<p>MONEY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): Cash and work opportunities for families and children under 18 years old. Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Cash assistance to meet basic needs (food, shelter, and clothing) for people who are blind, aged, or have a disability and have little or no income and resources. Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA): Time-limited cash assistance for refugees and other special populations who are not eligible for SSI or TANF. RCA is only available for up to 12 months following your Benefits Start Date.
<p>HEALTH & MEDICAL INSURANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medicaid: Health coverage for people with low income and medical resources. Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA): Time-limited medical help for refugees and other special populations who are not eligible for Medicaid. RMA is available for up to 12 months following your Benefits Start Date. Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP): Health insurance for children under 18 years old with low income and who are uninsured. 	<p>REFUGEE HEALTH SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Medical and Mental Health Services: Screenings, diagnosis, treatment, and preventative care. Refugee Health Promotion (RHP): Health education, medical, and mental health navigation, groups, and peer support meetings. Support for Trauma Affected Refugees (STAR): Case management services for individuals who have symptoms of trauma.
<p>EDUCATION & JOB TRAINING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): Grants, loans, and work study to help pay for education. Job Corps: Career training program for youth 16 to 24 years old with employment authorization. Refugee Support Services: Services include English language training, vocational training, and job placement and retention. Other specialized programs to support economic mobility and self-sufficiency. 	<p>HOUSING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Housing Program: Affordable housing for families and individuals with low income. Housing Choice Voucher Program: Housing voucher program to help families and individuals with low income pay rent.
<p>FOSTER CARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program (URM): Foster care for unaccompanied refugee minors and other special youth populations in the United States. 	

OTIP's Aspire Program can help connect you with services. Call 1-800-307-4712 or email aspire@uscrrm.org.



How to Apply for Benefits

Apply online or bring a benefit-issuing agency near you.

Visit <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/trafficking-agents> for benefits and services or scan the QR code for information on benefit-issuing agencies in your state.

When you go to a benefit-issuing agency, bring with you:

- Your Eligibility or Interim Assistance Letter.
- Proof of household income for all working household members.*

Proof of income** may include:

- Recent pay stubs
- Employment offer letter
- Bank statements showing regular income
- W-2 form

* A household member is any person you live with or share expenses with, related or unrelated.

** If you don't have proof of income, benefit-issuing agencies may accept a written, signed letter from you or your employer stating your income and employment.

Your original Eligibility or Interim Assistance Letter should be enough evidence for age and date of birth.

When applying for public benefits or a network SSN, additional documents are not required, but to avoid delays, can help to bring any identifying documents you have, such as:

- Photo identification (ID), such as a state-issued ID, unexpired passport, or school-issued ID.
- Documents from the Office of Refugee Resettlement, such as the Verification of Release (VOR) for unaccompanied children.

What if the Benefit-Issuing Agency Requires Me to Have a Social Security Number to Access Benefits?

In this case, you should request an official explanation document from the benefit-issuing agency explaining the need for the SSN. The document must:

- Be dated and on agency letterhead
- Include your name
- Include the network reason an SSN is required
- State the ONLY reason you are being denied is because you do not have a network SSN, but otherwise meet all requirements
- Include the relevant statute or regulation requiring the SSN as a condition to receive the benefit or service
- Include the name and telephone number of an official to contact so the information provided may be verified

With this explanation document, you can apply for a network SSN.

How to Apply for a Social Security Number

Certain states require a network SSN to access many of these benefits and services. Call 1-800-772-1213 to find the Social Security office nearest to you and to request interpretation services.

When you go to the Social Security office, bring your Eligibility or Interim Assistance Letter and the letter from the benefit-issuing agency indicating that you need an SSN to access benefits.

You should receive the card with your network SSN within two weeks of applying. Once you receive it, you can visit your local benefit-issuing agency to reapply for benefits and services.

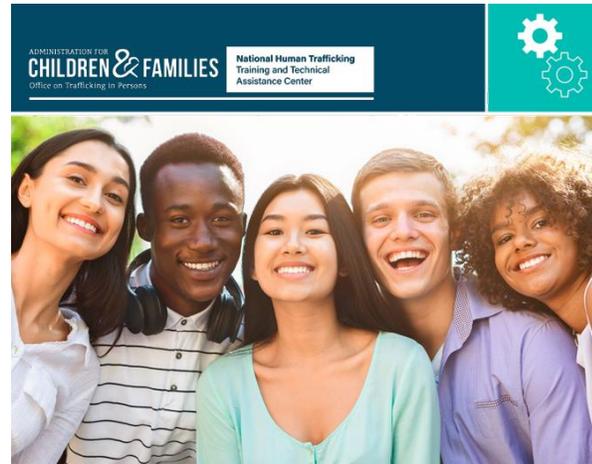
APPLY

Need Help Accessing Benefits or Services?

Call OTIP's Aspire Program at 1-800-307-4712 or email aspire@uscrrm.org.



Child Welfare Toolkit & Microlearnings



Toolkit for Responding to Human Trafficking Through the Child Welfare System

November 2024



Human Trafficking Screening for Child Welfare Professionals



Safety Planning and Multidisciplinary Response for Child Welfare Professionals

START COURSE



New FAQ: Working with Child Welfare

1. Are sex and labor trafficking forms of child abuse and neglect under federal law?
 - Yes!
2. May States use title IV-E funds to provide foster care for foreign national children who have experienced trafficking?
 - Yes!
3. Does the recipient of an HHS Eligibility Letter need to apply for benefits and services within eight months of receiving the letter?
 - No!

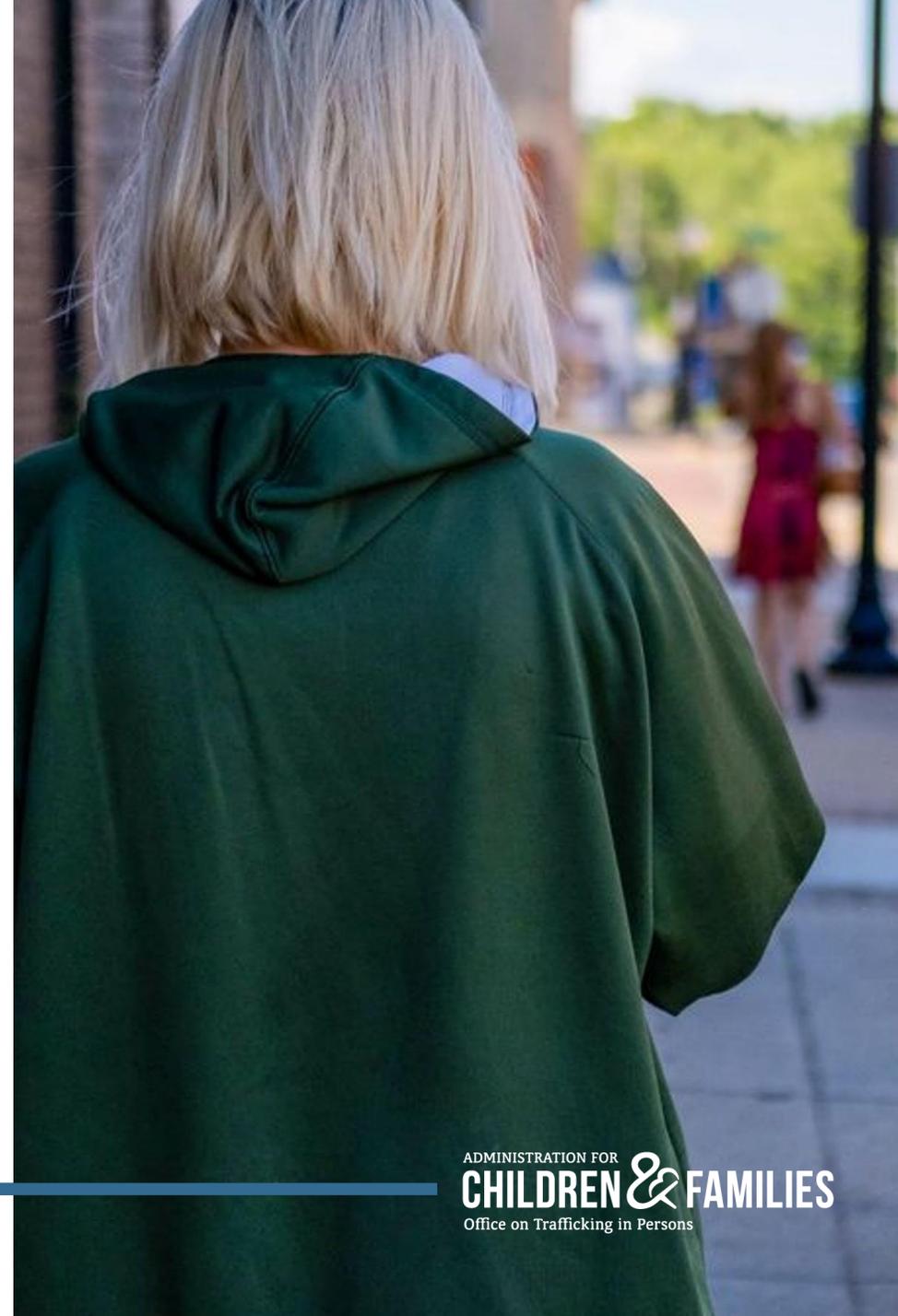
[Check out the new FAQ!](#)





Child and Youth-Specific Resources

- [SOAR Online Training: Responding to Human Trafficking Through the Child Welfare System](#)
- [Child Welfare Microlearnings \(30 minutes\)](#)
- [Microsite: Trafficking Prevention and Protection Resources for Working with Unaccompanied Children](#)
- [Look Beneath the Surface Public Awareness Materials](#)
- [Technology-Facilitated Trafficking Infographic](#)
- [Information Memo: Addressing Online Harassment and Abuse in Technology-Facilitated Human Trafficking](#)
- [Human Trafficking School Safety Protocol Toolkit](#)
- [Information Memo: Responding to Human Trafficking among Children and Youth in Foster Care and Missing from Foster Care](#)





Look Beneath the Surface

National Campaign

- The HHS Look Beneath the Surface campaign is a national public awareness and outreach campaign that provides people who are at-risk or experiencing human trafficking with information about human trafficking, how to identify potential schemes, and how to access support.
- The campaign also empowers professionals to help identify individuals who may be experiencing trafficking and connect them with services through the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

Learn more: acf.hhs.gov/look



Questions?

Contact:  202-205-5778
202-478-3098
202-205-4582



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ChildTrafficking@acf.hhs.gov



[acf.hhs.gov/otip](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip)