

Human Trafficking: Online Safety June 17, 2020

Shauna Knox:

Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to the second presentation in our webinar series on Trafficking in Persons in America's Schools. This webinar series commemorates the 20th anniversary of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act which was first enacted in the year 2000 and now serves as the national framework for the federal response to human trafficking in the United States of America. This webinar, as the title suggests, will offer support on how to implement measures to keep students safe online, and protected from the risks of human trafficking. My name is Dr. Shauna Knox, I serve as a lead on all human trafficking related workstreams at the U.S. Department of Education and I will be moderating today's event.

Before moving on, let's discuss a few technical details for today's event. The black bar illustrated on the slide is located at the bottom of your webinar screen. Through this menu bar, you will be able to access the chat function which is the left most option in the center of the screen. The "raise your hand" function which indicates that you are requesting assistance and as a center option. And finally, the Q&A function which allows you to send a question directly to the presenter, this is the option on the right. On the far-left side of the black bar you can click the arrow facing up to adjust your audio settings. And on the far-right side of the bar you can click the words "leave meeting" if you need to exit the webinar prior to its conclusion. If during this webinar you experience any technical difficulties, please reach out to ncssle@air.org or call 800-258-8413 and a staff member who's there will be standing by to assist you. We do have close captioning available. They can be viewed using the link in the chat pod and we will post the web link in the chat pod continuously during the event. We encourage you to enter questions at any time by typing them into the Q&A pod mentioned earlier. There is a designated Q&A session nearing the end of the webinar, during which, we will address as many questions as possible. Because we may not have time to answer all the questions submitted, the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environment will prepare a document that includes the presenters' responses to all the questions raised during today's webinar. To receive this document, email ncssle@air.org. This email address is shown on the screen right now, and the document will be sent to you once it is publicly available. The composite Q&A document will also be archived on NCSSLE's website along with the recording of today's webinar. Finally, at the conclusion of today's

session, you will be directed to a brief feedback form. Please, take a few minutes to respond to the form to let us know how well this event met your needs.

As you can see on your screen, this is our agenda for today. We are now in the first section illuminated on your agenda, welcome, and logistics. After this, we'll hear more on online safety and the national context, we'll then move into the Department of Education specific response to human trafficking in this contemporary moment, then we'll speak about institutional principles for being safe online, as well as the role that parents and caregivers can play in addition to how students can be protected and how survivors would like to speak to the issue. Once we've concluded that presenting section, we'll move into answering your questions and we'll hear the closing remarks. The content of this event does not necessarily represent the policy or views of the U.S. Department of Education nor do they imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education.

We begin today's webinar with a look at the national context for online safety. It's a privilege to introduce to you now Katherine Chon to provide opening comments and give us the national context. Katherine Chon is the founding director of the Office of Trafficking in Persons and senior adviser on Human Trafficking at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. A full biography for Katherine is available on the [NCSSE website](#) at the link posted in the chat pane. Katherine?

Katherine Chon: Thank you, Shauna. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm grateful for the opportunity to be here with you all today. I want to thank Deputy Assistant Secretary Ruth Ryder and her team for hosting this webinar series. I also want to thank all of you who are joining us. One of this is your first engagement with this issue or you're an expert in the field, you are a critical part of our nation's effort to combat human trafficking and we welcome you as partners in this work. Human trafficking, either in the form of compelled labor or commercial sexual exploitation is a crime and a public health issue that affects individuals, families, and communities across the country. Within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Office on Trafficking In Persons or OTIP, assists survivors of human trafficking and works to prevent human trafficking before it occurs. We work closely with the CDC Division of Violence Prevention and other partners to adapt lessons learned from other violence prevention fields into this issue.

When it comes to human trafficking prevention, there is conclusive evidence that multiple types of violence often co-occur, and individuals who experienced one form of violence are at much greater risks of experiencing other forms of violence. This research aligns with literature that documents that poly-victimization experienced by survivors of human trafficking. To achieve long-term change, we must increase our focus on what is happening upstream prior to victimization or perpetration. It is imperative to create opportunities for children to receive information and develop skills that can help reduce the likelihood that they will experience trafficking and other forms of violence. It's also essential to help caregivers, families, communities, schools and organizations to understand how to foster safe and supportive environments that will help children thrive. I wanted to note that the National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States has provided preliminary recommendations to states on how to strengthen anti-trafficking efforts, and their recommendations include the engagement of educators and schools. These recommendations are available on our website.

In regard to online exploitation, I want to start with a focus on the importance of primary prevention and how that helps to broaden our perspective and consider the causal factors and pathways that lead to human trafficking including online grooming, recruitment and sexual exploitation of children and youth. Online sexual exploitation can include human trafficking but also includes many of the other issues listed on the slide including harassment and exchange or solicitation for child sexual abuse material. These additional forms of violence are often precursors to human trafficking victimization can happen - can co-occur and happen afterwards, and experiencing such trauma increases a young person's vulnerability to exploitation which many traffickers take advantage of.

Technology can help young people access important information, reach out for help, and meet their basic needs for human connection, yet they can also serve as a portal for traffickers and other individuals seeking to target, recruit, and groom a child for trafficking and other forms of abuse. While this type of exploitation occurs across all ages, genders, races, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, studies show that both labor and sex trafficking disproportionately impact communities of color. Generally, risk factors include having a history of abuse and neglect, social disconnection, experience of social stigma, and it's not on the slide but I would add in housing and economic instability, and all of these factors are being exacerbated under the current conditions as the world and nation respond to COVID-19.

As a result of a search in consumer access to technology in recent years, we've seen significant increases in cases involving the online exploitation of children and youth. You'll hear from our colleague from the Department of Justice soon, but over the last 10 years, they reported 160% increase in cases involving the production of child sexual abuse material. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children identify or receives 16.8 million cyber tips regarding suspected child sexual abuse material offenses just last year.

A quick note on what we've been gathering regarding data on the impact of COVID-19. In addition to increases in technology access and disruptions, we've all been experiencing disruptions to school and other regular activity, decreases in socialization, increases in housing and economic instability, increases in social disconnections in some ways, these are all vulnerability factors that have been exacerbated based on data available from the first month of the national response to COVID-19, there are indications for increasing concerns of online exploitation. For example, there's nearly a threefold increase in the number of cyber tips received by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. In mid-March, it was right around under 300,000, and that increased to more than 1.1 million cyber tips reported by mid-April, a month later.

The number of crisis trafficking situations reported into the National Human Trafficking Hotline has also increased by more than 40% during this time. So, opportunities for educators, and this is why we're so grateful to be participating on the webinar today, as educators and professionals working within schools, your role in the lives of students often extends beyond academic instructions. You're often among the first to recognize changes in the emotional well-being, behavior, or academic performance which may indicate a significant life change and need for additional support or intervention. For some children and youth, you may be the only adult they trust for accurate information or support. As a result, you may be in optimal position to build up protective factors that can reduce the student's risk for human trafficking and other forms of abuse. These factors include normalizing conversations about online safety and other topics, helping students build skills to identify and respond to high-risk situations, and working to keep them engaged in school and encouraging connection with healthy adults and peers.

As with other forms of abuse and neglect, if you suspect human-trafficking, you should follow your state's mandatory reporting guidelines, and if you need additional support or assistance, you can contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline. At OTIP, we are committed to providing resources that will assist you in your efforts to safeguard students. To this end, we launched the store for school-based professionals training module, which is a on-demand, free accredited training module available online and designed to equip participants with a better understanding of human trafficking and how it impacts you, and then how to respond in a trauma informed way.

We also recently published a new funding opportunity announcement for the Human Trafficking Youth Prevention Education Demonstration program. This is the first time HHS is funding local education agencies who will work with a non-profit or a non-government organization to develop and implement programs around human trafficking training and education for school staff and students. Please note that applications are due on July 31st.

Finally, any school or community can download free public awareness materials on human trafficking as part of the HHS Look Beneath the Surface campaign, there are resources for children and youth and many of these materials could be co-branded with your own organization or school theme.

In closing, I wanted to note the importance of preventing child trafficking and exploitation, and that's an effort that will require engagement from all of us. Thank you again for your participation and for all that you do to safeguard children and youth.

Shauna Knox: Thank you, Katherine. Next, we'll explore the role of the Department of Education in addressing online safety related to human trafficking specifically. At this time, it's my pleasure to introduce my colleague at the Department of Education, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Ruth Ryder. A more detailed bio for Ruth can be found at the [NCSSLE website](#).

Ruth Ryder: Thank you, Shauna, and thank you, Katherine, for your informative presentation. We appreciate our partnership with your office. On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education, I extend a warm welcome to all of you on the call today. This event is a reflection of the Department of Education's commitment to addressing human

trafficking, and the role educators can play in supporting students impacted by it. The work we are now undertaking to address trafficking is an extension of our ongoing focus on nurturing a safe and supportive school learning environment, one in which all students feel safe and connected to meaningful adult and peer relationships.

Today, we focus on online safety as a way of reducing sex and labor trafficking of our youngest citizens. As our nation has weathered the COVID-19 pandemic, online time for students has increased as instruction has moved predominantly to the virtual space. Increased online time can bring parallel increased vulnerability to trafficking predators. Keeping our youth safe online is a significant issue at any time, but the concern is magnified in our current reality. In recognition of the 20th anniversary of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, and as a result of the department's role in the interagency task force to monitor and combat trafficking in persons, we are committed to helping educators support students affected by trafficking. Throughout 2020, the department will be leading a series of projects to strengthen that support.

First, we're producing a series of four webinars addressing human trafficking. Today's webinar is the second of these events. The [first webinar](#) conducted in January focused on identifying and supporting students affected by human trafficking. We are planning a future webinar focusing on tier 1 universal prevention efforts to reduce trafficking of students. In addition, we are preparing a webinar addressing support at special populations that may be of higher risk of grooming for trafficking and also reintegration of students into educational settings following interventions. Additional details will be provided about future events as they become available. We hope you'll check out the archived version of the January webinar at the address now appearing in the chat box and join us for the remaining two events.

Second, we are revising a popular resource, Human Trafficking in America Schools, to bring it up to date with recent developments in the field. This downloadable resource will support school personnel in their role as caring principal adults who can monitor for warning signs of trafficking and involvement of students and engage appropriate interventions as warranted. We will be making this resource broadly available later in the year.

Third, we are preparing a dedicated human-trafficking webpage which will be housed at the Department of Education's website. This webpage will be committed to

providing key resources and reference documents to educators who are supporting students impacted by trafficking on a daily basis in America's schools. We will ground all these resources in the latest research and best practice information available while drawing from the wisdom of trafficking survivors and advocates. Our work on these efforts is well underway and we look forward to bringing the additional resources to you in the months to come.

Thank you again for joining us today. During this event, we have the privilege of hearing from several subject matter experts regarding online safety for today's students. I know you'll find the information presented helpful in strengthening your own efforts to protect America's children and youth from online recruitment and victimization. I and the entire Department of Education recognize the important work you are all undertaking in these times of pandemic reality. Thank you for all you do. Back to you, Shauna.

Shauna Knox:

Thank you, Ruth. Next, we'd like to take just a minute to get a better sense of those of you joining us today. Please make your selection from among the options provided to the first of the two poll questions. Our first question is, which of the following best describes your role: "safe education agency staff," "local education agency staff," "federal grant recipient," "school administrator," "classroom teacher," "specialized instructional support personnel," "community stakeholder," "parent," "student," or "other"?

Looks like we have a number of specialized instructional support personnel, school counselors, school nurses with us today. We also have a good number of people who did not fit into any of the listed categories. Let's move along to our next polling question. It's now showing on the screen. Which of the following best describes your primary reason for participating in this webinar? "I have a leadership responsibility to address human trafficking within a state education agency," "I have a leadership responsibility to address human trafficking within a local education agency," "I am a part of a team that is addressing human trafficking within a state education agency," "I am a part of a team addressing human trafficking within a local education agency," "I have a personal interest in addressing human trafficking," or "other"?

Looks like a number of us have a personal interest in addressing human trafficking and have joined for that reason. And also, a number of us have reasons that were not listed as an option. Thank you for providing that information. It really gives us

good insight into who is joining us, who's in our audience, and it forms details for our next speaker.

Now, we'll look at the effort to develop and promote a set of institutional principals for online safety. To provide an overview of these key principles, we are joined today by Stacie Harris, Associate Deputy Attorney General and National Coordinator for Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking at the Department of Justice. Stacie?

Stacie Harris:

Thank you, Dr. Knox and thank you to Assistant Secretary Ryder and your team for pulling today's webinar together. Good afternoon. As a career federal prosecutor, I am deeply committed to seeking justice for victims and survivors of child exploitation and human trafficking, and I'm honored to serve in this leadership role, coordinating the many partners across the Department of Justice and beyond who are working together to protect victims and bring offenders to justice, which is one of the highest priorities of the department. Most of you work daily with our most vulnerable population, our children, and we are grateful that you have joined today's webinar to learn how we can work together to strengthen our shared commitment to combatting crimes against children.

Even prior to COVID-19 pandemic, the online threat to children around the world had never been greater. The challenges we face then and continued to encounter in combatting these threats continue to increase with no end in sight. Online child sexual exploitation and abuse is a global crime that demands a global response. In an increasingly digital and borderless world, this crime is unfortunately, becoming easier to commit, more extreme in nature, and growing in numbers. These crimes have a devastating and lasting impact on victims and survivors. As technology rapidly evolve, offenders are continuously adapting and diversifying their methods. Keeping children safe from online sexual exploitation and abuse and limiting their revictimization by stopping the sharing and viewing of their sexual abuse images can only be achieved through robust collaboration. To that end, the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security, along with the governments from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom consulted and worked with a wide range of stakeholders, including a leading group of technology industry representatives to develop a set of voluntary principles to counter online child sexual exploitation and abuse. These principles aim to provide an aspirational standard of care for the Internet.

Industry leaders, to include Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Roblox, Snap, and Twitter were involved in creating these principles and agree that each and every principle is important. Because every country has different laws and every technology company provides different products or services, these principles are voluntary, and it is up to the company to determine what implementation of each principle looks like. It is also our hope that parents, guardians, caregivers, teachers, and members of the community will use these voluntary principles to hold technology companies accountable for what is happening online. If you or a child you love uses an Internet platform or technological device that doesn't seek to prevent and remove child sexual abuse material, take meaningful efforts to target online grooming or live streaming, or adopt enhanced safety measures to protect children. We hope that you will not use that product or service. As law enforcement, we can only do so much to protect your children online. As technology evolves, and encryption and anonymization becomes more prevalent, we are losing our ability to effectively investigate and prosecute these cases. We hope these voluntary principles will help you better protect your children and students online.

Now, I'm going to quickly go through the voluntary principles with you and give you a little background as to why each principle is important. The Cyber Tip Line Modernization Act requires electronic service providers to alert the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, otherwise known as NCMEC, if they are aware of violations of federal law pertaining to child exploitations. When electronic service providers locate child sexual abuse imagery on their sites, they contact NCMEC through the cyber tip line. Although U.S. tech companies are subject to this law, if a company is not aware of sexual abuse images on its site or the child exploitation is actually occurring on their platform, they have no duty to report it.

Fortunately, some of the largest U.S. tech companies, to include Facebook, recognize their social responsibility to create and maintain a safe space for all users, and they began actively monitoring their platforms for child exploitation material. There are companies, however, that choose to be lawfully blind and not monitor their Internet platforms, and therefore, do not report very few abuses - do not report at all or report very few abuses to the cyber tip line.

Going back to the previous slide, the cyber tip line received over 1 million cyber tips from around the world for the first time in 2014. Four short years later, in 2018, the number of global cyber tips increased to well over 18 million. On average, that is 34

cyber tips a minute. Of those 18.4 million cyber tips, over 70% alone came from Facebook Messenger. Once Facebook fully encrypts its platform as it has announced, they will no longer be able to see or report these millions of cyber tips to NCMEC. We know the conduct won't go away, but our knowledge of the conduct and our ability to investigate it will.

On the next slide, principles one and two address the prevention of child sexual abuse materials. Companies, NGOs and law enforcement agencies have done significant work to identify and catalogue child sexual abuse material. This process can prevent the continued circulation of this material and avoid further revictimization of the children depicted. These children suffer ongoing and additional trauma each time the materials depicting their abuse are reviewed. By companies reducing the availability of no material, it can also help avoid further offending. The threat to children depicted in new materials is very different. Newly generated material is more likely to indicate current and ongoing offending, such as against an unidentified victim who continues to be abused or a child being groomed and coerced in producing new abusive images. Technology companies, identification of these materials and their referral to the appropriate authorities is time-critical in saving children.

We'll next talk about new technologies. In the last 10 years, law enforcement has seen the emergence of new crimes and methods due to the advancement of technology. Offenders go where the victims are. Consequently, we know the offenders' frequent apps like Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok. Also, initial sex trafficking space on the next slide, online grooming is often used as a preparatory phase in which someone builds trust and rapport with a child or a third-party, such as their guardian or sibling, and they do that in order to gain access to that child for the purpose of sexual activity. A large percentage of the minor sex trafficking cases that we investigate and prosecute originate online. Traffickers often use social media to make contact with and recruit victims into human trafficking. Many minors have no idea they are even being preyed upon.

In the next slide, principles three and four address online grooming and preparatory behavior. We expect companies to attempt, to identify, and disrupt grooming actions happening on their platforms in an effort to prevent more serious harm from occurring to children. Now that the Internet has brought the world closer together,

an offender anywhere around the globe can reach into your home and to your family and can cause catastrophic harm.

In sextortion offenses, the production of images is only one part of the crime. Offenders then use photos to force children to produce additional images, many of which escalate in severity. We know that the sextortion of children causes extreme psychological harm, and oftentimes, law enforcement's ability to stop offenders from publishing sexually explicit images is low because we cannot determine the offender's identity or location. Unfortunately, that constant fear of exposure and embarrassment causes feelings of hopelessness would sometimes sadly lead to suicide. This screenshot is from a video made by a Canadian victim who committed suicide after being sextorted by a Dutch national who also exploited a dozen American victims.

On the next slide, we're going to look at live audiences. Unfortunately, within the last few years, offenders have been using business meeting technology to meet live online in groups to participate in and view the sexual abuse of a child. With this technology, the offenders can make special requests and record the abuse as it occurs.

Similarly, on the next slide, when we talk about cybersex trafficking, live on-demand technology makes live streaming of real-time sexual abuse possible no matter where you are in the world. It has unfortunately created a market where affluent offenders can easily exploit a poor and vulnerable on the other side of the world from the comfort and privacy of their living rooms. Children in countries like Cambodia, Vietnam, and the Philippines are suffering higher incidences of abuse because of their poverty.

Principle five on the next slide seeks to address the harm of live streaming. Live streaming is particularly complex because it allows offenders to engage in child sexual abuse production in real time which leaves very limited evidence, if any evidence at all. It is important that companies work to identify and prevent live streamed child sexual exploitation and take appropriate action under their terms of service and report it to authorities.

In the next principle, principle six, we address offenders' ability to search and locate child sexual abuse material on different platforms. Prevention efforts that address

access to child sexual abuse material are fundamental to ending this abuse. Going back to the previous slide, when searching for child sexual exploitation and abuse using related terms, it gives current or potential offenders an easy way to access this material. Mainstream ways of accessing CSA material normalizes the process of seeking it out. On top of that, algorithms that suggest child sexual abuse material can have the effect of encouraging or inspiring new offending, as well as increasing the revictimization of those who have been abused. Providing users with details of how to report illegal material and information on support services for those who are at risk of offending is critical and something we hope technology companies will assist us then.

Next, we'll talk about crowd sourcing which is where groups of offenders will search for victims online and work together to lure them into private chat rooms and then trick them into self-reporting explicit videos. These offenders will often exploit hundreds of victims. However, the victims often do not realize what has happened as they believe they were chatting and exchanging video with age appropriate partners when really the offender is using a false persona. These offenders have defined roles and tasks including those who find the target, those who pose as minors when chatting with a target, and those who create videos to use as a part of the lure.

The next principle, principle seven, points out that there are identified risks that are unique to children online. Tech companies must consider risks - these individual risks when thinking about safety of its users and consider implementing processes like age verification to understand whether children are using their platforms.

Next, we look at production cases. The production of child pornography is a federal charge prosecutors use for the worst of the worst. This is a statute that's used when offenders who create or produce horrific images of child sexual abuse. Although this offense just criminalizes the images, it is far more despicable because it actually includes voyeurism, grooming of children to take sexually explicit images, as well as hands on molestation and rape. Over the last 10 years, we've seen a drastic increase in the number of offenders from transmitting images to actually creating and engaging in hands-on abuse in creating these photos and videos. Between 2008 and 2018, the number of production charges filed in federal cases has increased by 160%, and we know this is largely due to the accessibility of cameras that everyone has in

their pocket. Unfortunately, all of these new production charges represent a child who has been abused.

Principle eight deals with these victim-like considerations and identifying steps, appropriate actions that companies can take to reduce new and ongoing opportunities for revictimization. We know that self-generated images can indicate a child is being groomed and coerced into producing images, and we want tech to be proactive in eliminating that.

Next, when we look at new technology, as a society we have deemed it inappropriate for adult men to play on playgrounds, or at museums, or in parks alone with children they do not know. However, we have allowed this to occur online. We are starting to see more and more combined platforms that bring kids and adults together with no oversight or meaningful protection. Unfortunately, as a result, we are seeing more and more kids being targeted on gaming platforms. Principles nine through 11 look at how we can work together with technology to respond effectively to the evolving threat and changing behaviors that we are seeing online.

Finally, the Department of Justice, the Protect Act of 2008 asked the Attorney General to create and implement a national strategy for child exploitation. This is a public facing report to Congress, and the document is an opportunity to educate Congress as well as the global community on these threats to children. In formulating the national strategy, we have met with a variety of subject matter experts to include child victims and survivors of sex trafficking, and they provide a unique perspective including contacts with schools, their teachers, their guidance counsellors, and intervention points that in their opinion were missed. The national strategy that will be released this year and we hope that you will be able to use it as a tool in your schools going forward. Thank you.

Shauna Knox: Thank you, Stacie, for that invaluable information on how to hold technology companies accountable for keeping our students safe. Parents and caregivers also play an essential role in protecting children and youth from online trafficking risks. We'll explore this topic in more detail with our next presenter.

We're pleased today to be joined by Savannah Sanders, trafficking survivor and founder of Sex Trafficking Prevention. As a parent herself, Savannah is keenly aware

of the need for parents and caregivers to provide a layer of safety for students. Savannah?

Savannah Sanders: Thank you so much. So, in 2017, in collaboration with Freedom Forward, we conducted a focus group that spoke to youth and adults about online safety and where they would want to receive this information from. And we asked them a series of questions about - from their parents, from their friends, from their church groups, their school, and overwhelmingly, the children said that they wanted to receive this information and have these conversations with their parents, which was actually a little astonishing to us when we did these focus groups.

The kids want to talk to their parents about these - and have these conversations, and what we found out from the parents in a lot of these situations is that the parents also want to have these conversations with their kids, but they just don't have the tools or resources or education to have these conversations in a way that they'd then feel comfortable. Some parents feel that they are afraid to have these conversations because they will then incite them to be curious and go look at different things. There's a lot of different fear, and what we found is that by parents being educated on various topics and being able to engage in healthy conversations with their youth, that they're able to then help guide those conversations, and when they have the information first, they can then have the conversations with the kids.

The rules for parents and caregivers is to engage in proactive and healthy conversations and avoid fear-based narratives. When there's a focus on fear, what happens is there - it's kind of like the stranger danger mentality where we're not talking to kids about the whole picture, we're only telling them to be afraid of people in vans or otherwise. Online, what we're telling them is to fear a lot of the stuff we've already seen, and that's why these conversations have to start very early on. They need to be aware of age-appropriate information for each stage of the child's development and provide youth with information and education beyond trafficking, on topics such as body safety, healthy relationships, identifying safe people in their lives, and being able to address all aspects of prevention by targeting the topics that we've talked about that are important to prevention.

So, what parents and caregivers need is to be equipped with knowledge and activities required to have these conversations. This needs to be beyond a short video or information that they read, this needs to be information about what sexual abuses,

what physical abuses, how poverty impacts youth, access to services, access to education and information that's creating a widespread net of information for them to then use to provide to their children. Opportunities to engage in activities that promote healthy families and address generational cycles of abuse, therapy, parenting classes, understanding adverse childhood experiences, and information that matches the developmental levels of the youth. So, for younger youth, we're going to be wanting to provide information that is about body safety and boundaries.

Parent and caregiver engagement is often hard for school systems because a lot of teachers and educators have said that the parents that are coming to the school for the information are usually the ones that want - need it the least. Parents who need the information the most are often the ones that are unable to attend school events because of barriers, this is why it's so important for community partnerships, school social workers and comprehensive response protocols, for us to be able to engage in the community effectively and get this information to the parents and caregivers that helps them.

One of the things that would be most important for the education system to be aware of is not necessarily all of the information that parents need as far as resources, but deciphering what those resources are. There's a lot of information out there on online safety and prevention, and what is most important for the educators and school systems is to understand what's the most important information within those systems, such as instead of using fear-based approaches, using information that is comprehensive, looking at the whole picture of the family system, and giving parents and caregivers the information to have conversations with their youth to build resiliency and safety. This way, youth is able to look at what they're seeing online, create safety plans. A perfect example of this would be not to shame them away from looking at porn but talk about the impacts of porn. Talk about the dangers of pornography, and also be able to give them a safety plan when and if they came across pornography online so that they know who their safe person is to talk about it, why it could be dangerous, and what they need to do, and then using that type of mindset in all aspects of online safety so that we're equipping youth with education and empowerment versus shaming and fear-based information that scares them away or causes them to go into hiding to be looking at different things that they might come across online.

And then, as a school community and education system, enhance what you're already currently using that includes trauma and human trafficking, to include these conversations in. Because it cannot be a silo issue, we need to be talking about all aspects of trauma and domestic violence, poverty, and keeping all of these conversations together and building on those conversations with online safety and bullying, and incorporating everything together so that people understand the systems that create these issues. Thank you so much.

Shauna Knox: Thank you for enlightening us about the types of conversations parents and caregivers need to engage in in order to keep students safe online. Thank you, Savannah. With the institutional principles in light and having considered the role of parents and caregivers in addressing online safety, we now turn our attention to strategies to protect students directly in ways that reduce chances of them falling prey to online trafficking.

To help us explore this more completely, we are joined today by Erin Williamson. Erin is the U.S. programs director for Love146, a major resource for trafficking prevention resources. Erin?

Erin Williamson: Thank you so much. I'm so glad to be speaking with all of you today, and I'm going to, as was previously mentioned, be focusing on how do we address this topic with students and children. I think there are some important things to consider as we begin this conversation. One is that, the conversations have to start much younger than we think that they do. They really do need to start in kindergarten and then move in advance in an age-appropriate and cumulative fashion as youth gets older. First, we need to be talking about healthy boundaries, healthy friendships, and then as they get older or talking about things like online safety and what's appropriate. I also think it's really important that we keep in mind that these are not one-time conversations. It's not a one-time assembly where you can check a box and say okay, "I've covered that with my student body" or "I've covered that with my child and therefore, I'm done." These need to be regular and ongoing conversations.

In terms of roles and responsibilities, you guys have already heard a lot about that. Education providers and service providers do really play a critical role in terms of providing information to this population. First of all, they're oftentimes trusted adults. They're trusted adults that youth look to, to provide them accurate information. We hear a lot - a lot of times these are getting misinformation or getting

conflicting information, and oftentimes, it's the educators in their lives and the service providers in their lives that they know will provide them with accurate information. So, it's really important we're having these conversations.

Also, at distance learning, really does provide a natural opening to talking, having these conversations and talking about online safety. The thought being that we might be engaging in some distance learning come to fall, I think it would be wonderful if we could incorporate online safety and those discussions into curricula as we return to school, especially if we are going to continue with some of the distance learning that we've been seeing.

In terms of parents, I think it's wonderful when parents are able to have these conversations and certainly, I think that a parent should be encouraged to have these conversations, but it's also really important for us as educators and service providers to remember that not every parent is going to have these conversations. Not every parent, as was previously mentioned, feels equipped or has the capabilities to have these conversations, and also, not all homes are safe and not all parents are safe. And so, again, this needs to be an ongoing conversation. There's no harm coming from both the home and the school system and service providers and from youths hearing this information from multiple different sources and at multiple times.

Finally, as we think about prevention education, I think it's really important for us to recognize the difference between awareness and prevention. The key differentiating factor in that being skill building. We know from even looking at some of past preventative efforts, namely if you look at kind of preventing use and using drugs, that telling kids not to do something, telling kids that drugs are bad and will harm them, that doesn't stop drug use. And we can't expect that telling kids to be safe online and not providing them the skills with how they do that is going to stop them from engaging in risky behavior online, and potentially being approached. So, we really need to teach them the skills to improve their ability to respond if and when they are approached online, or if and when they find themselves in a dangerous situation. I also want to emphasize, and I know Katherine previously mentioned it, but OTIP, the Office of Trafficking In Persons, is really doing a comprehensive review of prevention education curriculum. And as you guys go and look for prevention education curriculums to implement in your classes, in your schools, in your organizations, a lot of people are saying that they're doing prevention education, but there is varying quality out there, and it's something to be mindful of as you

select your curriculum. So, we're really excited to see this review of curricula come out and we hope that in general, it will elevate the quality of prevention education that is being implemented out there in the field.

On the next slide, I just want to talk a little bit about, how do we open this conversation with the youths that we're working with. One of the things I think it's really important for us to all acknowledge is that social media and gaming can be very, very positive for our children, and very normal. We can't approach this as in "I'm never going to let our child go on social media. I'm never going to let them engage in gaming. All of this is bad." As educators, as parents, as service providers, it's important for us to normalize the desire, especially among adolescents and younger children to want to be connected with each other. Their peers are so important, and in this generation, connecting over social media and gaming is very, very normal. So, we need to normalize that and validate that.

We also can open a conversation by simply asking questions. What social media do you use? How long do you use it for? What's your favorite game? What's your favorite app? They may tell us about new apps that we're unaware of, and it's okay for us as adults to allow our children to teach us things we're not aware of. Apps are changing constantly. Even if you think you know an app, it may have been updated recently and have new features. So, this is a great opportunity. We have found that the adolescents we work with, they love being the experts in this area. So, ask them to show you, ask them to walk you through it. The one really critical thing in asking questions is to not be judgmental, either in how you ask the question or in how you respond to their answer. If you have concerns about things they're telling you, you can simply say, "Tell me more. Can you explain this a little?" Try to understand their perspective and where they're coming from.

On the next slide, we'll talk about once the conversation has been opened, this is really where you have the opportunity to provide some of the information that you know. Again, framing it generally, one of the things that we have found that's really effective in working with adolescents is simply saying, "We're not saying this has or will happen to you, all we want to do is share some of the things that had happened with other adolescents that we worked with so that you know the possibilities out there, and you have the skills and resources to protect yourself." Again, taking it off of them makes them much less defensive and much more willing to hear the information. Also, you can frame it as, "This maybe things that your friends go

through, that your friends talk to about, and so we want to make sure you have the information to help inform your friends if they come to you for resources or help.”

One of the analogies we sometimes use - this won't work if you're in New York City but you could choose another location, is we wouldn't necessarily bring you to New York City and drop you off on a street corner and say, “We'll be back in three hours. Good luck.” But virtually, that is what we do with the Internet, right? We allow our youths to go online, we don't really monitor them, they go down different streets and alleyways and they explore, and then three hours later, we take the tablet away. I think it's really important for us to explain that to youths, and an analogy like that can really help them understand.

Provide information on privacy settings and parent controls. A lot of times, the youths might not even be aware that they have the ability to change their privacy settings on various apps and games. I mean, what they are able and how they do it does depend on the specific app and game, but in general, we want to encourage youths to keep their settings private and to turn off their location so predators can't easily locate them and find them and figure out more information they want out there.

It's also important to really talk to youths about who are you going to accept into your network online? How do you determine who you're going to “be friends with” or be connected with? And again, this can be phrased in the form of a question. How do you decide who you're going to connect with online? And a lot of times, youths will say to us, they have to have mutual friends. They have to be “not old” upon which we ask, “Well, how do you define that? Because we may define that a little differently.” You and I, typically we hear, they can't be older than 30. There's certain things. “They must be close and within the state.” And then you want to help a youth to understand how someone could meet all of those criteria and still be a stranger online, or still be pretending that that is who they are online. One of the simplest ways that we can encourage youth is to just not accept a request from people they haven't met in person. And if somebody says, “Oh, yes, we did meet. Remember, we met at this party.” You can encourage the youths to say, “Tell me about that. I don't remember that party. What did we talk about? Remind me,” before accepting them into their networks.

Also, we want to examine with youths what information do you share online versus in person or on the phone? Reminding youths that really, anything that they share online can be screenshot and shared out. Whereas if they pick up a phone, if they go talk to somebody in person, that can't happen. And really, explaining to them the difference between providing information in those different areas of their life.

Finally, on the last slide of my presentation, it's really important that we engage in proactive safety planning, and this is really where the skill building part also comes in. We want to ask youths, "Who are people that you can turn to if you need to share," information especially sensitive information. "If you have a problem in your life, who could you go to that's not online?" And ask them to actually state the names of those individuals. It's also important to ask, are any of those individuals an adult? We find that many times, youths who have 3,000 or 5,000 friends online, they're connected with thousands and thousands of people, really struggle to name three people that they felt they could turn to if they found themselves in an emergency, and it's even harder for many of them to name an adult. So, that's an important question to ask that you can help facilitate a relationship with a trusting adult.

You also want to help youths think about creating an exit strategy. "What do you do if you find yourself in a difficult situation, what do you do if you did share too much information or you did share an explicit figure or image." Do role playing, talk about various scenarios; really get them to realize that this could be a reality so that they know what to do when they find themselves in a situation like this.

Finally, it's really important for you to assure our youths that they can always, always tell somebody. Telling somebody is the first step to stopping it. So, if they don't feel like they have an adult in their life or you don't have a relationship with them where they can come to you, it's also really important just to provide them with 1-800 numbers, and talk to them about those 1-800 numbers, whether it'd be for human trafficking, domestic violence, sexual assault, suicide, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, runaways - giving youths a list of the 1-800 numbers they can call and talking to them about when they might want to call them and why it can really empower them to take actions to protect themselves. Thank you so much.

Shauna Knox:

Thank you, Erin. That was very important information and very practical and actionable for how we can teach our youths to protect themselves from incidence of

online trafficking. If you have questions for Erin, or Savannah, or Stacie, please enter them into the Q&A pod now. We'll be addressing them very shortly.

Before we move to questions and answers, it is critical to us that we provide an opportunity for a response from a trafficking survivor for today's content. Savannah, who spoke earlier to the role of parents and caregivers, is also a survivor of human trafficking and she'll be sharing with us now based on this perspective. Savannah?

Savannah Sanders: Thank you again. I just want to share a few stories about some of the information that has been shared today and how it particularly would've pertained to my life, although I'm quite a bit older than what the kids are using online for now, although I was around for the AOL days as a teenager. One of the things that was really important for me that as I reflect back on my life and why I was trafficked, and how that happened, and what my parents and educators would've needed during that time, I had one parent that had experienced a lot of trauma. And so, prevention information for them would've been a lot different than from my other parent who did not grow up with a lot of trauma. So, for my parent that had a lot of trauma, the number one reason that I most likely was exposed was sexually abuse and living in poverty, and then eventually trafficked, is because that parent experienced all of their own trauma which they never got help or support or services for to be able to overcome. It had a trickle-down effect in my life.

The most important type of prevention information and education for that parent would've probably been in some type of intervention that help them understand the cycles of abuse and poverty that were being continued within our family system, so that they could've recognize their own story and their own healing process, is to be able to break that generational cycle within our family. My other parent was very much engaged in a very safe person for me, which is probably the reason that I was able to be so resilient and overcome my history through lots of hard work. Because that parent was my rock, was my safe person, the person that I could go to, even though they did not know all of the abuse that I was experiencing, their love and affection and stability was what built resiliency in me. That parent needed information on signs of abuse, safety tips, things like that that they could've easily integrated into the home and opened up conversations, but we're lacking the information that they needed to have those important conversations with me.

For my educators - I move around a lot. So, I went to nine different schools by the time I was an eighth grade - or 13 different schools by the time I was in eighth grade. I moved around a lot and didn't really have the opportunity to build relationships with the educators in my life. However, I had all of the textbook signs and symptoms of sexual abuse, domestic violence, physical abuse, poverty, all of those different kinds of things, and given the right kind of information or having conversations with my parents or me and having the right tools to open up those conversations would have been aspects of prevention in my life at those times. Unfortunately, because in those three systems in my life, those things were missing. I wasn't able to come forward with my story until I was 25. So, there were a lot of missed opportunities, and that's why it's so important for me and for all of this information, everything that was shared today, it's the information that helps real-time prevention when we're able to have these conversations.

Within the education field, there were so many in my teachers even though that I only knew them for a little bit that I felt seen and heard from. In my life, I think the thing that I want people to walk away with the most is I had 17 abusers by the time I was 18 throughout my whole life, and the people that I remember the most in my life are my first grade teacher, my eighth grade teacher, one of my parents, a neighbor, and the reason I remember them more than anything else that happened in my life is because whether it was for a very short time or a long time, those are the people that I felt seen and heard by. Even though they didn't know what was going on with me or knew what was happening, I felt valued and seen and heard, and those seeds are what kept me going through all of the things that I would go on to experience, and those are the foundation and building blocks for my healing process as I was an adult, and the things that I held on most to, to pass down to my children. So, your voice, your presence, and everything that you do in these interactions with the kids that you get to serve are so important and really do create lifelong changes. Thank you so much.

Shauna Knox: Thank you, Savannah. It's now time to address your questions. To lead us through this section of the webinar, I will turn things over to Tim Duffy, the training specialist for the National Center for Safe and Supportive Learning Environment. Tim?

Tim Duffy: Thank you, Shauna. We have a lot of questions that have been coming in throughout this presentation. It's clear in the time remaining, we won't be able to get to them all, but just a reminder that as Shauna mentioned in the beginning, all questions will

be catalogued and we'll put together a comprehensive list of them, and we will be working with presenters to provide responses to all of them and make that available on the NCSSE website following this event. So, let's get a couple in here in the time we have remaining. There's a kind of a - both a comment and a question, and it has to do with - see, one kind of mentioning that there's a real need for programs for children in the younger ages, like four and up, and that some of that content they know of being available from Canada programs. They mentioned T3 tells program there, but they're wondering if there's specific recommendations that you all might have for younger children about supportive materials or resources. Does anyone have an idea there that you might want to speak to? Erin, I'm thinking that you may know of something, but that's a shot in the dark.

Erin Williamson: Yes, [Laughter] hi. Thanks. I was actually thinking, I am deferring a lot to OTIP these days, and people are asking for the recommendations of curriculum just because they are doing this really great and thorough review of them. I'm not sure because it's not public, if they can yet speak to that. I do know that NCMEC have some stuff online about Internet safety and net smart and things like that, but my hope is that OTIP will also be able to answer this question when they come out with their review.

Katherine Chon: Erin, this is Katherine. Thank you for that linkage. Our full assessment is not out yet, but just to note that we're aware of a couple of - at least a couple of organizations that addressed the earlier ages including 3Strands Global and the Monique Burr Foundation. Then the other note within OTIP in addition to the assessment for the K-12 programming, we've been doing work with our colleagues within the administration for children and families, particularly within their early childhood program, and will be coming out with a joint resource soon for - in the earliest years in support for parents in early childhood development regarding trafficking prevention.

Tim Duffy: Thank you for that, Katherine. That's good to know and we will certainly all be keeping our eyes out for the report about the curriculum assessments that you all are doing there at OTIP. Thank you for that. We actually had a question that came in prior as people were registering that I think we might want to check on. This is someone who is an international service club member, and annually, they hold community awareness events around the issue of trafficking, and they involve a variety of people, survivors, law enforcements, service agencies, and so forth. They're trying this year to put their emphasis on reaching out to high school age,

young people, and to get information into their local high schools. Would any of you have - they're asking if any of you would have suggestions about the best format when working with that age, young people, in terms of informational content around the issue of trafficking? Any recommendations or suggestions there?

Savannah Sanders: I can speak a little to it. As a survivor, I've been asked to speak a lot of high schools for presentations and information, and what I would want to caution people against is the reason I stopped doing it was actually because there needs to be comprehensive protocols put in place before presentations like that are shown, because often, I would take crisis counselors with me to the presentations in case there were any disclosures afterwards, but I wound up stopping those presentations and not doing them anymore because what I was seeing is that there were a lot of disclosures and there wasn't a system to really - there was a lot of disclosures for a lot of different types of abuse after my presentation, from sexual abuse, homelessness, all sorts of things, and the school wasn't set up to handle - they weren't set up to handle the after effects of the presentation and it was triggering for the students even when I kept the information very kid friendly and not traumatizing. [Laughter] So, I want to put that out there, that's something that - because some of these presentations seemed really impactful from doing it one time, and it has to be regular ongoing conversations as Erin said, that happen throughout every aspect of their life, at the doctor's office, in the nurse's office, with the school social worker, within the classroom, with their parents, they need to be ongoing conversations and when we do presentations that are just kind of like lots of information and highly impactful, there's no long-term follow-up with those, and it can cause more harm than good.

Tim Duffy: Thank you for that cautionary tale and a reminder about that important work. We will again, catalogue all remaining questions and route them through the presenters to address them for those of you who attended today. Unfortunately, at this point, I need to turn it back to Shauna to close up. I'm continuing to capture the questions you're raising right now though. We will make sure that we get to those. So, Shauna, back to you.

Shauna Knox: Thank you, Tim. As we wrap up today, I will just take a moment to let you know about the upcoming efforts by the department to sustain support to your good work in addressing human trafficking. As you can see on the slide, there will be two additional webinars in this year 2020 that are specifically related to human

trafficking. We will be revising and updating a resource document that addresses the role of educators in supporting students that have been impacted by trafficking. We want to thank you again for your attendance today. We, at the Department of Education, deeply appreciate your commitment to America's students, and the meaningful role that you play in safeguarding their health and well-being even in this case of our current pandemic.

As we close, let me remind you about the webinar evaluation process that I mentioned earlier. At the conclusion of this webinar, you'll be directed to a short feedback form, you can see it on the screen. This is what it will look like. Please provide us with your feedback to inform future webinar developments so that we will be better able to meet your needs. Should you fail to receive this survey link, you may use the link that's currently visible on the screen to access the evaluation form. Thank you again so much for your participation today. Have a great rest of your day.