



Family and Youth Services Bureau

Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services to Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States: Commitments from the Family and Youth Services Bureau

Background

In January 2013, President Obama issued a [Presidential Proclamation](#) that declared January National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month to shed light on the exploitation of nearly 27 million women, men and children worldwide¹; these victims are often overlooked, and those who routinely interact with victims and survivors may lack awareness or tools to properly identify and assist them. Therefore, many victims go without help. Building on the strong record of the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, the [Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States](#) (SAP) was developed in 2013 to support the ongoing battle against modern-day slavery to ensure that all victims of human trafficking in the United States have access to the tools and services they need to escape exploitation and rebuild their lives. The Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) and all of its grantee partners are crucial to that effort.

Strategic Action Plan Objectives

In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, the Obama Administration asked federal agencies to develop a plan to strengthen services for victims of human trafficking. The SAP is a part of ongoing Federal efforts to combat human trafficking at home and abroad. The plan strengthens collaboration across the Federal government, increases coordination with other stakeholder partners, and builds capacity to empower survivors. The vision of the SAP is to produce coordinated efforts to ensure that every victim of human trafficking receives access to the services they need to recover and rebuild their lives through the creation of a responsive, sustainable, comprehensive, and trauma-informed victim services network that leverages public and private partners and resources effectively.

The plan lays out four goals, each associated with action items for victim service improvements to achieve over the next five years. The four goals include:

1. Increase coordination and collaboration at the federal, regional, state, Tribal and local levels;
2. Increase awareness of human trafficking among government and community leaders and the general public;
3. Expand access to services for victims of human trafficking; and
4. Improve outcomes related to health, safety, and well-being.

As a key ally in the implementation of these goals, FYSB is proud to support the SAP as a part of its mission to promote safety, stability and well-being for people who have experienced or been exposed to violence, neglect or trauma. In particular, FYSB grantees providing services to runaway and homeless youth and survivors of domestic violence will play an important role in developing a coordinated, comprehensive victim services network for trafficking survivors.

Intersections with Runaway and Homeless Youth & Domestic Violence

Though trafficking can and does affect individuals from all walks of life— regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or citizenship status— traffickers frequently prey on individuals who are poor, lack stable social or familial support, or are in search of a better life². The populations that FYSB serves are particularly at risk to exploitation by traffickers, who take advantage of these vulnerabilities.

- It is not uncommon for a young person to be lured into trafficking by an older individual who builds their trust in the context of an intimate partner relationship.
- Individuals at risk for abuse and neglect, such as runaway and homeless youth, foster youth, LGBT youth, and Native American youth, are also at high risk of being trafficked.
- Like domestic violence, the trafficking of youth is an abuse of power; though victims come from a variety of backgrounds and circumstances, communities with lesser access to resources are the most vulnerable.
- Human trafficking intersects with domestic violence. It is not uncommon for victims of trafficking to be coerced into sex or labor by intimate partners who use threats of violence or intimidation.

¹ See: [2012 Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report](#).

² See: [Risk Factors for and Consequences of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Minors in the United States](#), a Report by the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council.

Advocates across the fields of domestic violence, runaway and homeless youth, and human trafficking observe that survivors have endured multiple dimensions of abuse through emotional, verbal, physical and sexual violence, and economic exploitation. The partnerships strengthened by the Federal Strategic Action Plan will enable advocates from each of these fields to leverage their collective expertise and resources to assist the millions of women, men and children who are victims.

FYSB Resources

In addition to supporting the goals of the SAP, FYSB will continue to support the work of grantees of the Family Violence Prevention and Services Program (FVPSA) and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program (RHY). FVPSA supports training, services, and advocacy for both domestic and foreign victims of trafficking who come in contact with domestic violence programs through 1,600 shelters, 1,100 non-residential service sites, 56 state and territorial coalitions, and the National Domestic Violence Hotline. The RHY Program supports the work of more than 700 projects across the country that come into contact with trafficking victims almost every day. Listed below is a selection of resources for grantees:

- [Guidance to States and Services on Addressing Human Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States](#), published by the Administration on Children, Youth and Families with guidance from FYSB grantees.
- [Trafficking: Considerations & Recommendations for Battered Women’s Advocates](#) and [Health Issues Affecting Trafficked Individuals](#), published by the Asian Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence, a FYSB grantee.
- [Resources on Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation for Family and Youth Workers](#), published by the National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth.
- [Special Collection on Human Trafficking](#) on VAWnet.org, published by the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, a FYSB grantee.

National Crisis Lines

FYSB and the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) support several national crisis lines, serving victims 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Advocates answer the calls of thousands of individuals seeking support and safety each year, and are equipped to refer callers to local and national resources.

- **National Human Trafficking Hotline**
1-888-373-7888
Or text BeFree (233733)
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline**
1-800-799-SAFE
Or live chat online at: <http://www.thehotline.org/what-is-live-chat/>
- **National Runaway Safeline**
1-800-RUNAWAY

To view the Federal Strategic Action Plan, visit:

<http://www.ovc.gov/pubs/FederalHumanTraffickingStrategicPlan.pdf>

For additional information on the Federal Strategic Action Plan, visit:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/endtrafficking>

For additional information on the anti-trafficking resources in the Family and Youth Services Bureau, visit:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/acf-response-to-human-trafficking>