

From “The Life” to My Life: Sexually Exploited Children Reclaiming Their Futures

**Suffolk County Massachusetts’ Response to
Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)**

**Suzanne Piening, LICSW, PhD
Theodore Cross, PhD**

May 2012

Supported by a grant to the Children’s Advocacy Center of Suffolk County from the
[Gardiner Howland Shaw Foundation](#)

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	3
Introduction	4
Executive Summary	5
Appendix A Profile of SEEN Clients as of January 2012	14
Appendix B List of Interviewees	16
Appendix C SEEN Partners	17
Appendix D SEEN Multidisciplinary Team Protocol	18
Appendix E CSEC Fact Sheet from Legislative Hearings	19

Acknowledgements

This report would not have been possible without the cooperation of the entire Support to End Exploitation Now (SEEN) Steering Committee. The multi-disciplinary collaboration they have nurtured and developed was evident in their interest in and assistance with the entire project. They made themselves available for interviews and follow-up, clarified issues, and welcomed us at trainings and other SEEN-related events. Their openness made it possible for us to capture an in-depth picture of their work, the lives of exploited girls, and the dedication of service providers across the region to build bridges that will advance their common goal of offering viable alternatives to “the life” of sexual exploitation. The participation of girls from a local service program in a focus group on CSEC was invaluable. We would especially like to thank Susan Goldfarb, Lisa Goldblatt Grace, Nikki Valila and Rebecca Dufur for their openness, encouragement, and guidance with the project and their extra effort in providing information. Rebecca Dufur also provided special data analysis for this report. Thank you also to Elizabeth Cross for assistance with the preparation of this text.

Our special appreciation to the Gardiner Howland Shaw Foundation for their commitment to youth. This report would not have been possible without their support.



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER
of suffolk county

The Children's Advocacy Center of Suffolk County is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization providing coordinated, multidisciplinary support and services to child victims of abuse & exploitation and their families.

989 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
cac@suf.state.ma.us
617.779.2146

www.suffolkcac.org

INTRODUCTION

The commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is a crime of systemized brutality and sexual assault that is deliberately waged on children with prior histories of neglect, abuse, isolation and vulnerability. In recent years, hundreds of girls in the Boston area have been drawn into “the life” of commercial sexual exploitation; countless others remain at risk. These child victims are typically groomed by their exploiters with initial promises of the love and protection that they so deeply crave. Over time, through an incremental process of isolation and abuse, this child becomes the dehumanized possession of her exploiter; repeatedly assaulted physically, sexually and emotionally for her exploiter’s economic gain.

In the pages to follow, the reader will learn of one young survivor’s story. Like so many children who are vulnerable to CSEC, Sasha (not her real name) suffered abuse and neglect in her home that was so severe that she was left wounded, deeply distrustful of adults, profoundly lonely, and starved for stability, love and nurturance. This drove Sasha out of her home, into the streets. As is often the case, Sasha’s difficulty trusting caregivers and oppositional response to structure were viewed as behavioral problems rather than a response to trauma. What follows thereafter is nothing short of devastating: a childhood of neglect and instability that gives way to an adolescence punctuated by rape and violence at the hands of pimps and johns. Thankfully, the story does not end here. After four years of this brutal existence, when Sasha was just 16, a network of professionals, connected through the Support to End Exploitation Now (SEEN) Coalition, came together to intervene in a coordinated fashion on her behalf. This intervention, and her participation in its many elements, would serve to re-set the trajectory of Sasha’s young life. It is this coordinated and sensitive response to Sasha and to children facing similar difficulties that defines the work of the SEEN Coalition.

This report describes efforts in Suffolk County to identify high risk and sexually exploited children and to provide a path to safety and recovery. Based on interviews and focus groups with professionals from the Boston area’s 35+ agency Support to End Exploitation Now (SEEN) Coalition, this report profiles the problem of CSEC in Suffolk County and describes service models and legislation that are having a positive impact. In addition, it outlines recommendations for continued development, expansion and coordination of these efforts, and the undeniable fiscal constraints that must be surmounted in order for these improvements to be realized.

Executive Summary

Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSEC)

Obtaining credible estimates of the number of children involved or at risk of commercial sexual exploitation is challenging because of the hidden nature of the crime¹. Since 2005, in Massachusetts at least 480 children from Suffolk County have received services related to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC). The vast majority of these victims (98%) have been girls; a majority (65%) girls of color. Most girls have been runaways and most have a history of child abuse. Ten percent of these girls have been arrested for prostitution, and over 4 in 10 have confirmed or suspected involvement in out-of-state trafficking. The median age of a child victim is 15. The youngest victim was age 11; 70 (15%) were age 13 and under. Hundreds of other young people in Massachusetts are likely to be involved in CSEC; and are likely to have little access to services. Boys and transgendered youth are also involved in CSEC but less visible.

Common risk factors among girls who have been exploited include poor attachments with primary caregivers, inadequate supervision or care at home, sexual abuse, poverty, homelessness, witnessing domestic violence, frequent running away, early substance abuse, and family or community history of exploitation². These girls have historically been treated as delinquents and dealt with primarily by the juvenile justice system, but there is increasing recognition that children and teens are manipulated or seduced by exploitive adults³.

A lack of parental love and attention in their lives leads girls to be vulnerable to the attentions of pimps. Men interested in making money through pimping will frequent neighborhood hang-outs and transportation centers where young girls on the run are often found, or seek out girls at schoolyards or malls who are not on the run but otherwise vulnerable. Girls will be won over by the “love” and attention these young men seem to offer. They can also be attracted to the perceived glamour associated with receiving gifts, going to parties and attracting the attention of an older man. Ultimately, the biggest lure for many girls is the promise of becoming part of a “family”, the acceptance they appear to receive, and idea that they are of value⁴. The men will then use their hold on the girls to involve them in commercial sex, often starting small and then escalating to regular work that is usually marketed on the Internet⁵. Eventually the men will exert rigid psychological and physical control over these girls; often beating them, starving them and depriving them of sleep; making it difficult for girls to leave “the life”. Effective intervention with CSEC requires substantial knowledge of the problem, non-judgmental empathy, persistence, and effective teamwork among the multiple agencies that have contact with these girls. Given

¹ Finkelhor, D., & Stransky, M. (2008). *How many juveniles are involved in prostitution in the U.S.? Crimes Against Children Research Center*, University of New Hampshire. Durham, NH: UNH. Retrieved from http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/prostitution/Juvenile_Prostitution_factsheet.pdf

² Estes, R., & Weiner, N. (2002). *The commercial sexual exploitation of children in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania; Nandon, S.M., Koverola, C. & Schludermann, E.H. (1998). Antecedents of prostitution: Childhood victimization. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 13, 206-221; Reid, J. (2011). An exploratory model of girl's vulnerability to commercial sexual exploitation in prostitution, *Child Maltreatment*, 16, 146-157. doi: 10.1177/1077559511404700. Silbert, M..H.. & Pines, A.M. (1983). Early sexual exploitation as an influence in prostitution. *Social Work*, 28, 285-28.

³ Reid, J. (2010). Doors wide shut: Barriers to the successful delivery of victim services for domestically trafficked minors in a southern US metropolitan area. *Women & Criminal Justice* 20(1 & 2), 147—166. doi: 10.1080/08974451003641206; Shared Hope International. (2009). *The national report on domestic minor sex trafficking: Americas prostituted children*. Retrieved from http://www.sharedhope.org/dmst/documents/SHI%20National%20Report_without%20cover.pdf

⁴ Estes & Weiner, 2002, *ibid*; Herman, J. (1992). *Trauma and recovery*. NY: Basic Books; Reid, 2010, *ibid*.

⁵ SHI, 2009, *ibid*

their history and the strong pull of the exploitive relationships they are enmeshed in, the youths often resist help and have ambivalent relationships with helping professionals. They need a coordinated response from the multiple agencies that are involved with them, and support and services that recognize their victimization and draw on their strengths to help them begin a new life.

The Need for a Comprehensive CSEC Response Strategy

Over the past several years professionals who work with commercially sexually exploited youth have recognized that law enforcement approaches are important for achieving justice and preventing individuals from exploiting girls, but that law enforcement alone is not effective in stopping CSEC. Very few girls are detained or arraigned on a prostitution charge, though law enforcement may charge them with a delinquent act to hold them in detention temporarily. Often, when identified as child victims of CSEC, girls are neither emotionally ready nor feeling safe enough to participate in a criminal prosecution of their exploiter. Aggressive law enforcement directed at pimps and johns holds exploiters accountable and can help to identify victims; however, relying on a child victim’s participation in a prosecution adds to their burden, and does not prevent girls from becoming attached to new pimps. Emotional support and services, in combination with efforts to address demand and offender accountability, are necessary to help girls leave “the life.”

A comprehensive CSEC response strategy includes 3 critical components:

- 1) Cross-System Collaboration:** Each commercially sexually exploited girl becomes involved with estimated 3 to 4 agencies, including child welfare, juvenile justice, criminal justice, health care, family support and others⁶. No one agency has all the information or resources to completely address a girl’s circumstances and her needs. Exploited youth are at high risk to slip through the cracks that exist among agencies, jurisdictions, and service providers. There is a pressing need for consistency, communication and coordination across agencies and systems as well as a youth development approach that empowers youth in their recovery.

- 2) A Trauma-Informed Continuum of Care:** CSEC victims need an array of services to address needs in multiple domains of life (e.g., support, life management, education, housing, health and mental health, and more). Each of these services must be trauma-informed and responsive to the severity of trauma that CSEC victims have experienced.

- 3) Training:** Youth serving professionals including educators, police, child welfare, behavioral health and medical providers, juvenile courts, residential programs, emergency shelters and others need training about CSEC risk factors, screening and identification of CSEC, the effects of CSEC and other trauma, and effective interventions with commercially sexually exploited youth⁷. Continual staff turnover in agencies means that training must be repeated and integrated into ongoing training curricula.

⁶ Georgia Care Connection Office. (2011). *About GCCO*. Retrieved from <http://www.georgiacareconnection.com/AboutGCCO.html>

⁷ SHI, 2009

Support to End Exploitation Now (SEEN): A Promising Model in Suffolk County, MA

A 2001 murder and a growing recognition of an invisible and underserved population spurred The Children’s Advocacy Center (CAC) of Suffolk County and the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office to lead an effort resulting in the Support to End Exploitation Now or SEEN Coalition. SEEN is a network of over 35 public and private agencies organized to provide effective coordinated interventions for young people involved with CSEC and to enhance policy and programming to improve the system response to CSEC. The SEEN Coalition represents a major advance in the response to commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Metro Boston area, and much of this report focuses on it. However, the SEEN Coalition and its network are limited geographically; almost all of the specialized services for victims of commercial sexual exploitation are centered in and around Boston. An additional theme of this report therefore is the need to extend the system for responding to CSEC so it serves all children involved in or at risk of commercial sexual exploitation in the Commonwealth.

The SEEN Coalition’s core tenets are at the heart of its collaboration and have helped establish the common ground on which partners come together. These tenets include:

- the notion of shared responsibility: “These are our kids”;
- the conviction that sexual exploitation of youth is child abuse;
- the principle that exploited youth should be treated as victims with diverse needs rather than as offenders;
- the commitment to a coordinated multidisciplinary response for exploited youth;
- the belief that pimps and exploiters should be identified and prosecuted as child abusers;
- the perspective that an effective response needs to draw on knowledge of youth development and be informed by an understanding of the effects of trauma on young people’s lives.

The multidisciplinary intervention model developed by the SEEN Coalition has evolved over the last seven years and now operates with several components:

- **The SEEN Steering Committee** is chaired by the Children’s Advocacy Center of Suffolk County and comprised of a cross-section of multidisciplinary agency leaders. The Steering Committee is responsible for SEEN’s overall strategic direction and operations, including the implementation of SEEN’s multidisciplinary intervention guidelines⁸, oversight of the SEEN Multidisciplinary Team, and identification of changes in policy and practice that can better serve exploited youth. The SEEN Steering Committee played a key role in the drafting of Safe Harbor legislation for Massachusetts.
- **The SEEN Advisory Group** is a larger multidisciplinary group comprised of individuals and organizations addressing commercial sexual exploitation of children. In SEEN’s first years, Advisory Group members participated in training together and established task groups or subcommittees to inform the development of SEEN’s multidisciplinary response model. Currently, the SEEN Advisory Group meets quarterly to discuss topics that impact CSEC victims, to provide information regarding program initiatives and activities, and to offer an opportunity for networking and sharing resources

⁸ SEEN Coalition (2006) *Responding to Youth Exploited through Prostitution: Guidelines for a Multidisciplinary Intervention*. Boston: Children’s Advocacy Center of Suffolk County.

**From “The Life” to My Life: Sexually Exploited Children Reclaiming Their Futures
Suffolk County Massachusetts’ Response to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)**

- **Case-specific CSEC Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs)** are case conferences conducted on CSEC referrals to SEEN. Professionals working with exploited youth meet to share information and recommendations regarding individual exploited and high risk girls and to develop coordinated, multi-agency service plans. CSEC MDT plans typically include provisions for emotional support, shelter, medical and school services, education and/or employment, perpetrator management, as well as other needs.
- **The SEEN Case Coordinator** is the one professional in the Coalition with full-time responsibility for the day-to-day operation of SEEN and its response to CSEC victims. The coordinator receives referrals, coordinates the MDT response, records and disseminates the service plan, conducts follow-up to insure its implementation, and manages data about the cases.
- **The SEEN database**, established in 2005 and maintained at the Children’s Advocacy Center of Suffolk County, facilitates case management and provides a statistical profile on the girls that have received SEEN services.

The SEEN model includes a network of governmental and non-governmental youth serving agencies, including partners with specialized CSEC services:

- **My Life My Choice**, a program of Justice Resource Institute, based in Boston, offers prevention groups for young teen girls at various sites; individual survivor mentors for girls who have been commercially sexually exploited or are at risk of it (aimed at helping girls find a path to safety and stability); and training on CSEC for various audiences.
- **Gaining Independence for Tomorrow (GIFT)** is a community-based program at Roxbury Youthworks that is funded by the Boston Region of the Department of Children and Families. Built upon an intensive case management model in which GIFT Life Coaches have daily contact with girls, it facilitates education and services, and provides the support girls need to remain out of “the life”. GIFT serves 48 girls at any one time.
- **MA Department of Children and Families (DCF) – Boston Region** has been vigorously addressing commercial sexual exploitation since 2001. Since that time, Boston DCF has funded mentoring by adult survivors, street outreach to engage exploited girls, My Life My Choice for training in CSEC for all the Boston Area Offices and the Roxbury Youthwork’s GIFT program. Each of the Boston Area DCF Offices has also taken additional steps to address CSEC. The Park Street Office has incorporated CSEC training into its Multidisciplinary Assessment Team the Harbor Office has developed a specialized unit to work with exploited youth, and the Hyde Park and Dimock Street Offices run My Life My Choice groups in their area offices for at risk young women.
- **Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office, Child Protection Unit** is a lead partner in the SEEN Coalition. Central to SEEN’s approach is the core belief that children exploited through prostitution are victims and should not be treated as delinquents. At the inception of SEEN’s development, Suffolk County District Attorney Daniel F. Conley

**From “The Life” to My Life: Sexually Exploited Children Reclaiming Their Futures
Suffolk County Massachusetts’ Response to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)**

committed his office to not charging exploited youth, but instead working with the multidisciplinary team to support victims and hold adult exploiters accountable.⁹

- **Boston Police Human Trafficking Unit** is located within the Boston Police Department’s Family Justice Division. Established in 2005, it leads the Boston Human Trafficking Task Force (one of 42 task forces funded by the United States Justice Department). Staffed with specially-trained detectives and a victim advocate, the Human Trafficking Unit’s activities include rescuing and supporting victims, investigating and prosecuting human traffickers, and providing training to law enforcement and others regarding human trafficking.
- **MA Department of Youth Services** is the juvenile justice agency for the Commonwealth and has been a partner in the SEEN Coalition since 2005. DYS trains staff to identify and respond to CSEC victims and works in collaboration with the multidisciplinary team to move exploited girls out of detention into more appropriate settings and provide responsive services to youth committed to their care.
- **Youth Advocacy Department** of the Committee for Public Counsel Services provides legal representation to victims of CSEC who are charged with crimes, and has regularly collaborated with the SEEN coalition over a number of years. The Youth Advocacy Department takes a youth development approach, seeking to build on resources in young people’s lives and in the community to advocate for young people’s needs; it understands that achieving legal success depends in large part on promoting life success for its clients. The department has participated in numerous SEEN Multidisciplinary Team Meetings to represent youths’ interests (while maintaining attorney-client privilege).
- **The Acknowledge, Commit, Transform (ACT)** group home at the Germaine Lawrence School provides a home-like environment for girls affected by CSEC that also includes systematic methods and structures to promote change¹⁰. ACT links girls with staff and MLMC mentors, provides psychotherapy, teaches independent living skills, involves them in school and often part-time work, and fosters positive connections with girls’ communities. ACT uses Stages of Change and motivational interviewing methods that recognize that girls are at different levels of readiness to change. Research tracking 13 girls in the ACT program showed that most girls achieved their treatment goals.
- **Kim’s Project** is technically not a CSEC service, since it serves women 18 and older. However, it works in partnership with the SEEN Coalition and is very much an extension of services for commercially sexually exploited young women, whose exploitation and challenges overcoming it do not change magically when they turn 18. Serving more than 165 women since its inception, it provides support for harm reduction, intervention to shift courts to a service emphasis, recovery methods, and help for women to rebuild their lives.

⁹ Meisner, T.G. (2009). Shifting the Paradigm from Prosecution to Protection of Child Victims of Prostitution. *National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse Update*, 21 (8). Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from http://www.ndaa.org/pdf/update_vol_21_no_8.pdf

¹⁰ Thomson, S., Hirshberg, D., Corbett, A., Valila, N., & Howley, D. (2011). Residential treatment for sexually exploited adolescent girls: Acknowledge, Commit, Transform (ACT). *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33, 2290-2296.

Preventing and Intervening in CSEC Through Legislation

On November 21, 2011, Governor Deval Patrick signed An Act Relative to the Commercial Exploitation of People, human trafficking legislation that includes Safe Harbor language drafted by the SEEN Steering Committee and Suffolk County District Attorney Daniel F. Conley. Massachusetts is one of eight states to pass Safe Harbor legislation. The statute establishes as standard practice for commercially sexually exploited youth many of the principles and methods currently followed by the SEEN Coalition. The act defines CSEC as a form of child abuse that professionals are mandated to report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF), which must for its part refer cases to law enforcement and the district attorney’s office. The law authorizes the court to treat a prostitution-related charge against a child as a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) petition, thereby treating exploited youth as child victims rather than delinquents. It also directs the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Mental Health, and other state agencies to provide for the service needs of commercially sexually exploited children. In addition, the law requires that a multidisciplinary team of professionals from agencies involved with the youth convene rapidly to develop an individualized service plan responsive to the youth’s needs. This legislation is a major step toward developing systems that are responsive to the needs of victims of CSEC, but needs to be followed by the development of effective policies, coalitions and service programs throughout the Commonwealth. The Attorney General’s Task Force convened in February 2012 provides an opportunity to advance these objectives.

Challenges to Providing an Effective Response to CSEC

Interviewees were asked to identify the major needs and gaps for supporting and protecting commercially sexually exploited youth in Suffolk County. A general theme was that resources for serving this population are in short supply, and budget constraints make it difficult to bridge the gap between need for and delivery of services. Yet demand for services is expanding because, with the growing awareness of CSEC as a form of victimization, more victims are being identified.

Needs and Gaps were identified in two domains: **Direct Services** (services delivered directly to exploited children), and **System Capacity** (systems that support a coordinated response model).

1. Needs and Gaps: Direct Services

Respondents most frequently identified the following areas of need for child victims of commercial sexual exploitation:

- a. **Nurturing Role Models:** While nurturing role models such as My Life My Choice mentors and GIFT life coaches help repair young people’s attachment difficulties, offer ongoing support, and promote healthy relationship as girls move away from “the life” these services are based primarily in Boston and demand for services exceeds program capacity;
- b. **CSEC Assessment Centers:** Rapid assessment and stabilization is key to supporting CSEC victims. Massachusetts does not yet have any CSEC assessment centers where youth can receive immediate crisis intervention, support, and medical and mental health care, as well as links to support groups and other services;

**From “The Life” to My Life: Sexually Exploited Children Reclaiming Their Futures
Suffolk County Massachusetts’ Response to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)**

- c. Shelter & Housing:** Access to dedicated, CSEC-specific short-term (emergency) and long-term housing (group homes, foster homes and residential treatment programs) to meet the complex needs of exploited youth;
- d. Mental Health Care:** There is limited availability of trauma-informed, evidence-based mental health treatment provided by professionals who understand CSEC and trauma;
- e. Education and Employment Training:** Access to education and employment including tutoring, home schooling options, advocacy to enroll victims in schools rapidly when they change placements, and connections to employers;
- f. Youth Aging Out:** Increased services are needed for youth involved in CSEC who are aging out of the youth-serving system yet continue to have needs once they turn 18;
- g. Boys & Transgender Youth:** The needs of exploited boys and transgender youth have yet to be addressed. As of the writing of this report, Boston GLASS, a program of Justice Resource Institute, has recently been funded to developed Survivor Mentoring services for this population.

2. Needs and Gaps: System Capacity

To sustain a coordinated response model for CSEC victims, the following systemic gaps must be addressed:

- a. Funding for SEEN Case Coordination:** The SEEN Case Coordinator position is essential to the operation of the multidisciplinary CSEC response in Suffolk County. To date, the position has been grant-funded rather than part of any regular budget. Existing funding will be exhausted within a year. If the SEEN MDT model is to be sustained, a stable source of funding for the Case Coordinator position is needed to prevent disruptions in service delivery and data collection.
- b. Increased Training:** Training is a critical element in developing a service system that responds effectively to CSEC, and the need for training is ongoing and substantial given the number of professions involved and the continuing stream of new professionals who come into contact with current and potential victims of CSEC. There is a gap, however, between the number of professionals who need training and the number who receive it.
- c. A Statewide Service Delivery System:** At this time, Suffolk County is the only community in Massachusetts with an established multidisciplinary CSEC response model. Service systems for CSEC need to be developed in communities across the Commonwealth and connected to one another. The CSEC service system should be widespread and flexible so that geographic boundaries are not barriers to services. Statewide service availability is especially needed given the mobility of the CSEC population.

Conclusion

Commercial sexual exploitation has devastated the lives of hundreds of young people in Suffolk County and throughout Massachusetts. In the last several years, over 35 governmental and non-governmental agencies in Suffolk County have come together to make dramatic progress to respond to the problem. The SEEN Coalition and its member agencies have trained hundreds of professionals to see CSEC as victimization and understand the needs of young women ensnared in “the life”. They have made great strides in developing a comprehensive, systemic response among the many agencies that interact with CSEC victims. They have served hundreds of victims through a coordinated intervention model tailored to the specific challenges and needs of young people. They have been in the forefront in developing new legislation that mandates a set of responses designed to move the state systematically away from a punitive response to CSEC victims and toward a compassionate, comprehensive service response to the problem. Without these efforts, young people involved in CSEC could continue to be treated as criminals and would be unlikely to receive the support and services they need to overcome their victimization. But the service system for these girls (and boys and transgendered youth) still needs development and the need far outstrips current service capacity.

Recommendations

The SEEN response to CSEC needs continued support and increased resources. Greater investment in the work of the SEEN Coalition would enable it to develop a complete continuum of care and enable it to make a major impact in preventing CSEC and repairing its impact on young people’s lives.

Our analysis suggests the following recommendations:

1. Establish stable funding of the SEEN Case Coordinator role in Suffolk County.
2. Maintain and improve SEEN data collection and analysis to better track cases and assess outcomes.
3. Address the gaps in the CSEC continuum of care including
 - a. Expansion of mentoring and intensive case management services.
 - b. Establishment of an emergency assessment center with CSEC-trained staff to provide immediate stabilization and comprehensive initial assessment.
 - c. Expansion of evidence-based, trauma-informed mental health services for exploited youth.
4. Expand CSEC training and integrate a core CSEC curriculum into in-service training of agencies (public and private) that come into contact with exploited youth.
5. Address underserved CSEC victims:
 - a. Conduct a needs assessment of commercially sexually exploited boys and transgendered youth to inform development of effective services.
 - b. Expand resources and services for victims age 18 – 25 who continue to be victimized and face the same challenges as younger victims.

**From “The Life” to My Life: Sexually Exploited Children Reclaiming Their Futures
Suffolk County Massachusetts’ Response to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)**

6. Utilize lessons learned from the SEEN Coalition and other promising programs to implement the Safe Harbor provisions in Massachusetts’ recently-passed anti-human trafficking legislation and to establish a statewide CSEC response model in the Commonwealth. SEEN partners have considerable hard-won expertise that could be shared with other Massachusetts communities through trainings and technical assistance.
7. Develop and implement a funding strategy to adequately support the development of CSEC service systems in Suffolk County and throughout the state. The strategy should include public and private funding for services and coalition building, and support at the state level for the networking needed to develop statewide, interagency relationships and service mechanisms.

Appendix A

Profile of SEEN Clients from the SEEN Database as of January 6, 2012
 (N=482 Cases)

Variable	Count	%
Year Reported to SEEN		
2005	75	16%
2006	57	12%
2007	65	13%
2008	96	20%
2009	51	11%
2010	39	8%
2011	95	20%
Missing/Unknown	4	1%
Gender		
Female	471	98%
Male	7	1%
Transgender	0	0%
Missing/Unknown	4	<1%
Age		
11	1	<1%
12	12	2%
13	57	12%
14	83	17%
15	128	27%
16	112	23%
17	73	15%
18	16	3%
Race/Ethnicity		
White	121	25%
Black/African American	186	39%
Hispanic/Latino	109	23%
Asian	10	2%
Middle Eastern	1	<1%
Other/Mixed	8	2%
Missing/Unknown	47	10%

From “The Life” to My Life: Sexually Exploited Children Reclaiming Their Futures
 Suffolk County Massachusetts’ Response to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)

Variable	Count	%
Year Reported to SEEN		
Exploitation Status		
Exploited	225	47%
Exploitation suspected	98	20%
High risk	144	30%
Missing/Unknown	15	3%
Arrested for Prostitution		
Yes	40	8%
No	354	73%
Missing/Unknown	88	18%
Trafficked Out-of-State		
Yes	55	11%
Suspected	139	29%
No	213	44%
Missing/Unknown	75	16%
Runaway		
Yes	301	62%
No	127	27%
Missing/Unknown	53	11%
Maltreatment Report Regarding Exploitation Filed with Child Protective Services		
Yes	261	54%
No	124	26%
Missing/Unknown	97	20%
Child Protective Services Current or Prior Involvement		
Yes	336	70%
No	113	23%
Missing/Unknown	33	7%

Appendix B
List of Interviewees

Agency/Affiliation	Name
Children’s Advocacy Center of Suffolk County	Susan Goldfarb Rebecca Dufur
Massachusetts Department of Children and Families	Valerie Lovelace-Graham John Renzi Marcia Donovan
Massachusetts Department of Youth Services	John Hughes
Suffolk County Assistant District Attorney’s Office	Leora Joseph Jacqueline Lamont
Massachusetts Department of Probation (Juvenile)	Steve Siciliano
Boston Police Department Human Trafficking Unit	Sgt. Det. Donna Gavin
My Life My Choice	Lisa Goldblatt Grace Audrey Porter Ann Wilkinson Tanee Hobson Latiana Appleberry
Boston Public Schools	Maureen Starck
Massachusetts Committee for Public Counsel Services, Youth Advocacy Department	Cecely Reardon Laura Alfring
Massachusetts Office of the Child Advocate	Elizabeth Armstrong
Children’s Hospital Boston, Child Protection Team	Allison Scobie-Carroll
Roxbury Youthworks	Mia Alvarado Katie Carlson
Germaine Lawrence	Beth Everts Amy Corbett Nikki Valila
Kim’s Project	Cherie Jimenez
Georgia Care Connection Office, Decatur, GA	Dale Alton
Project Gold, Kristi House, Miami, FL	Trudy Novicki
Midwest Children’s Resource Center, St. Paul, MN	Laurel Edinburgh
Victory Program, Georgia Baptist Home, GA	Tracey Busse

Appendix C

SEEN Partners (2006 Signers of SEEN Memorandum of Understanding)

Arts Incentive Program
Boston Area Rape Crisis Center
Boston Medical Center, Department of Pediatrics
Boston Juvenile Court
Boston Police Department
Boston Public Schools
Boston Ten Point Coalition
Bridge Over Troubled Waters
Chelsea Police Department
Children’s Advocacy Center of Suffolk County
Children’s Hospital Boston
City of Boston
Dimock Community Health Center
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Germaine Lawrence, Inc.
Girls’ Coalition of Greater Boston
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Police
Massachusetts Executive Office of Health & Human Services
Massachusetts Department of Education
Massachusetts Department of Mental Health
Massachusetts Department of Probation
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Massachusetts Department of Social Services (now Department of Children and Families)
Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance
Massachusetts Department of Youth Services
Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance
Massachusetts Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program
Massachusetts State Police
Office of Refugees and Immigrants
Revere Police Department
Roca, Inc.
Roxbury Youthworks
Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office
My Life My Choice
United States Attorney’s Office
Winthrop Police Department

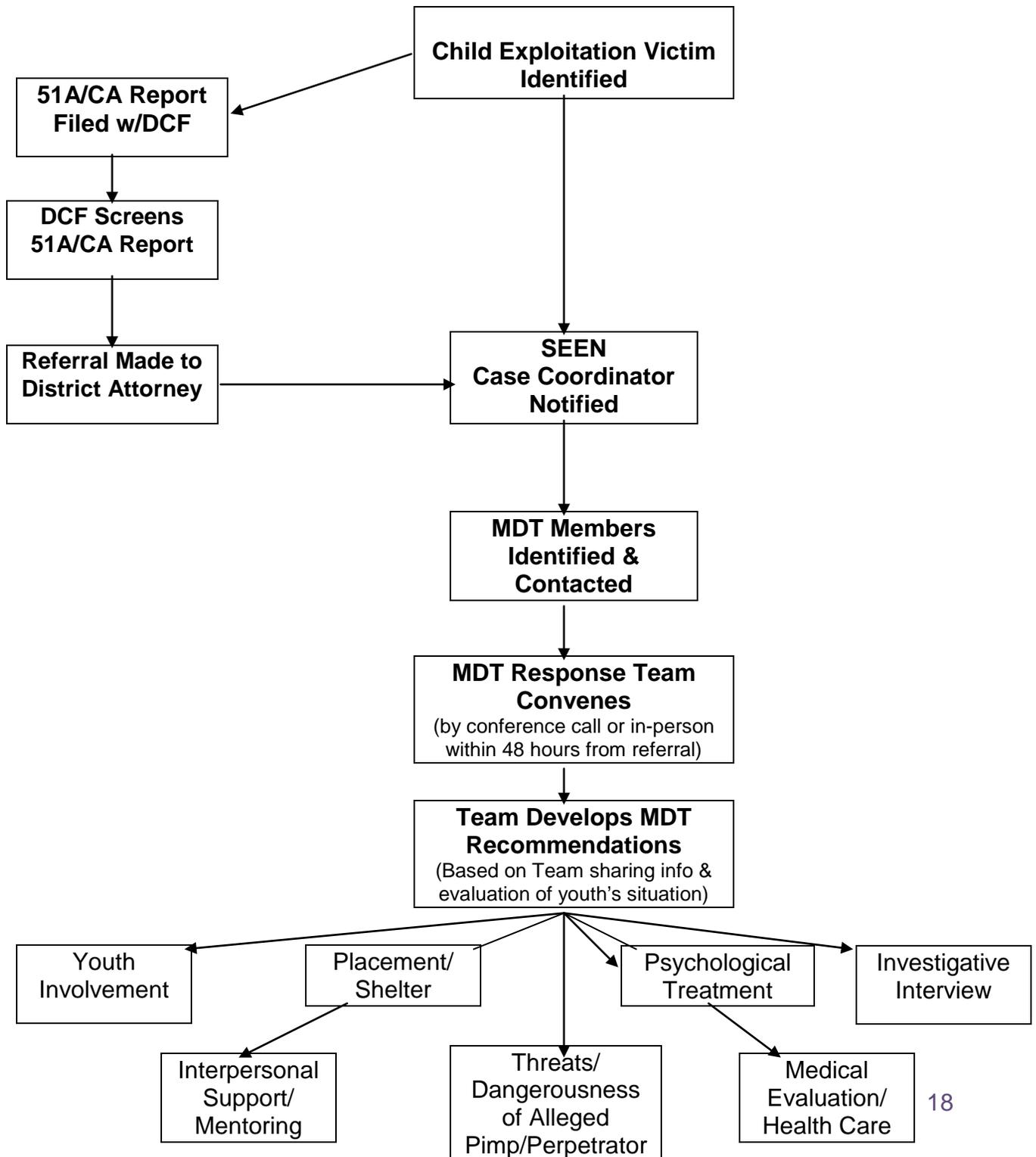
Letter of Support

Youth Advocacy Department, Committee for Public Counsel Services (statement of support only)

Appendix D

SEEN Multidisciplinary Team Protocol

SUPPORT TO END EXPLOITATION NOW (SEEN) Child Exploitation – Multi Disciplinary Response Model



Appendix E

Fact Sheet on CSEC Used in Legislative Hearings (Spring 2011)

THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN (CSEC)

- The commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is sexual abuse of a minor for economic gain (U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. December 2007). CSEC is child abuse and a form of violence against children.
- It is estimated that more than 100,000 children are at risk for commercial sexual exploitation each year in the United States (Estes & Weiner, 2001).
- 70–90% of commercially sexually exploited children have a history of child sexual abuse (Murphy, 1993).
- The most frequent age of entry into the commercial sex industry is 12-15 years old.
- The vast majority of girls who enter the commercial sex industry are recruited by a pimp. Pimps prey on the vulnerabilities of marginalized girls.
- Child victims of commercial sexual exploitation experience violence and degradation as a day to day reality.

The Support to End Exploitation Now (SEEN) Coalition is a Suffolk County partnership among more than 35 public and private agencies dedicated to a multidisciplinary response to commercial sexual exploitation of youth. SEEN strives to increase awareness and identification of CSEC victims, to increase access to safety and needed services, and to hold accountable the adults who exploit youth.

Since its establishment in 2005, SEEN has received over 450 referrals of exploited and high risk youth (18 years and younger)*:

- 98% of the children referred were female
- 52% were 15-16 years of age at the time of referral
- 26% were white; 40% black; 23% Hispanic/Latino
- 47% were known to be victims of CSEC; 50% were at high risk of exploitation
- 62% had a history of running away from home
- In only 54% of these cases, had a mandated reporter filed a report of suspected child abuse (51A) on the youth’s behalf.

***Exploited youth have been identified throughout the Commonwealth. To date, there has been no comprehensive effort to identify these youth and document the scope of this victimization. SEEN supports *legislation* to ensure that child victims of commercial sexual exploitation throughout Massachusetts are identified and afforded the services and safety that they deserve. Children’s Advocacy Center of Suffolk County www.suffolkcac.org**