

# 2021 HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIM REPORT

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP BY ANAHEIM POLICE DEPARTMENT AND WAYMAKERS



## PARTNERING AGENCIES:



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Letters from Participating Organization</b> .....       | <b>Page 4</b>  |
| Waymakers  |                |
| Anaheim Police Department                                  |                |
| The Salvation Army   |                |
| Orange County District Attorney’s Office                   |                |
| Orange County Probation Department                         |                |
| Orange County Social Services Agency                       |                |
| <b>2019 &amp; 2020 Victim Demographics</b> .....           | <b>Page 15</b> |
| <b>2019 &amp; 2020 Victim Service Considerations</b> ..... | <b>Page 18</b> |
| Volunteering Through the Pandemic                          |                |
| Victim Impact Statements                                   |                |
| Rising Above Scholarship                                   |                |
| <b>Highlighted Community Partners</b> .....                | <b>Page 26</b> |
| Public Law Center  |                |
| Women’s Transitional Living Center                         |                |
| Orangewood Foundation                                      |                |
| Global Center for Women and Justice at Vanguard University |                |
| <b>Key Findings in 10 Years</b> .....                      | <b>Page 33</b> |
| 10-Year Victim Demographic                                 |                |
| Comprehensive Victim Services                              |                |
| International Trafficking                                  |                |
| “First” U.S. Victim  |                |
| People v. Moses—California Supreme Court Ruling            |                |
| Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children                 |                |
| Recommendations for the Next 10 Years                      |                |





## About the 2021 Human Trafficking Victim Report

Since 2004, the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force (OCHTTF) has assisted nearly 1,224 victims of human trafficking. Currently, the lead agencies include the Anaheim Police Department, California Highway Patrol, Irvine Police Department, Orange County District Attorney's Office, Orange County Probation Department, Orange County Social Services Agency, Santa Ana Police Department, The Salvation Army, U.S. Attorney's Office, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and Waymakers.

*Note on the 2021 OCHTTF Victim Report: The seventh release of the OCHTTF's Human Trafficking Victim Report attempts to project the best estimated collective data for Orange County, using figures of those identified and assisted by members of the OCHTTF. Due to the logistics of data collection and the allocation of time within different periods for various agencies throughout the 10 years, the numbers may fluctuate as there is no universal data measurement tool. Waymakers and The Salvation Army's human trafficking victim services program provide equal rights and opportunity for all qualified persons identified as a victim of human trafficking in Orange County, California regardless of race, color, religion, economic status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, age, or disability.*

In 2004, very few members of our community had an understanding of human trafficking. If it was on their radar at all, it was something that happened in foreign countries, certainly not something that happened in Orange County. Fortunately, Waymakers had strong alliances with individuals like Sherri Harris, then working for The Cambodian Family and Derek Marsh, then at Westminster Police Department who had a deep understanding of the issues surrounding human trafficking. Together, the three of us established the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force (OCHTTF), which in 2010 was recognized as one of the first Enhanced Collaborative Models to Combat Human Trafficking in the country.

This designation validated OCHTTF's enduring commitment to a multi-disciplinary and community based approach that combines the efforts of victim services, law enforcement, and community. Through an ever-growing network of partners, we have built strong relationships that cross disciplines and work together to meet these common goals: to identify and support victims through work that is victim-centered and trauma informed; to investigate cases and hold perpetrators accountable; and to create awareness of the reality of human trafficking in communities through education and volunteer engagement.

Over the years, it has taken creativity, determination and resilience to continue along this path. The following quote from the Bureau of Justice Assistance and Office for Victims of Crime regarding successful enhanced collaborative models speaks true for OCHTTF.

**“ We believe lasting societal change is achieved through both collaboration and meaningful disagreement. Living the value of collaboration inspires us to accomplish more together . . . When you reach areas of disagreement, it is usually a sign that you are progressing as a collaborative body. ”**

OCHTTF has certainly endured those times of disagreement when the best intentions of victim services, community, and the criminal justice partners led us to differing conclusions. The beauty of this collaborative effort, and a testament to the individuals who do this work every day, is that we did not walk away. We worked through those challenges and the OCHTTF is stronger today because each partner took the time to focus on the big picture.

Recognition for the outstanding work of OCHTTF spans well beyond the confines of Orange County. Communities throughout the country regularly call upon OCHTTF leadership to provide technical

assistance on how to build a task force. Foreign delegations from numerous countries have made Orange County a stop on their tours to gather information on best practices for combating the scourge of human trafficking. OCHTTF team members also regularly train victim advocates, law enforcement and other professionals throughout California on signs of trafficking and best practices for serving this unique victim population and prosecuting perpetrators.

This year we at Waymakers celebrate ten years as an Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking and ten years working in direct partnership with the Anaheim Police Department as co-chairs of the Task Force. Reflection on our journey serving human trafficking victims evokes memories of joy and sorrow, learning, and growth. In both 2004 and 2010, we began journeys into the unknown that have proven to have untold challenges. When I look at the positive and lasting change for the victims we serve, I would not change a thing. Here's to the next ten years!

Sincerely,  
Ronnetta Johnson  
Executive Director  
Waymakers



The Anaheim Police Department began the battle against human trafficking in 2010 when it first partnered with Waymakers, a victim services organization. This was the birth of the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force (OCHTTF) in its enhanced and multi-agency collaboration as it stands today. The partnership began the process of police personnel looking at the human trafficking problem from a completely new, holistic perspective. This new concept was referred to as the Victim Centered Approach. It required a complete change in mindset from law enforcement in addressing the problem. For countless decades, law enforcement across the nation, Anaheim being no exception, viewed it as a prostitution problem. The sex workers were the visible blight on the street and needed to be arrested. A complete paradigm shift was required, and Anaheim Police rose to the challenge.

The change was neither easy nor quick. A true understanding of the problem needed to occur before change could take place. Collaborating and partnering with Waymakers afforded law enforcement the opportunity to truly understand the victims' plight. With this newfound knowledge, Anaheim investigators set a course to address the pimping and human trafficking problem through the Victim Centered and Trauma Informed approach. Everything had to change, from how victims were contacted, how they were interviewed and how their after-care needs were met. The focus of the investigations switched from the sex workers to the apprehension of the exploiters. New investigative techniques were developed to match the new focus.

Once the new approach was embraced and implemented, the massive extent of the problem became clear to both partners. We realized we needed more stakeholders to partner with the task force, and steps were taken to accomplish this. After much work and effort, by 2014, the multi-agency law enforcement team was created. Orange County Social Services, Orange County Probation Department and the Orange County District Attorney's Office came on board to what is now referred to as the core members of the OCHTTF collaborative. Each partner came in with an understanding of the Victim Centered Approach, and each instituted major changes within their respective organization to align with the new values.

With this phase of the OCHTTF complete, the work began to increase the identification and recovery of victims, especially the recovery of minors. More importantly, when victims were recovered, they experienced the Victim Centered Approach practiced by each member of the collaborative. This new approach has proven to be a great success in accomplishing the law enforcement core mission of recovering victims and bringing perpetrators to justice.





The Anaheim Police Department is proud of its decade long commitment to the mission and the new approach becoming a department philosophy. We will continue to be the lead law enforcement agency for the task force. However, we could not have done it alone and very much appreciate our law enforcement partners over the years represented by the following agencies: California Highway Patrol, Costa Mesa PD, Irvine PD, Newport Beach PD, Santa Ana PD, OC District Attorney's Office, OC Sheriff's Department, and our federal partners, FBI and Homeland Security Investigations.

Sincerely,  
Jorge Cisneros  
Chief of Police  
Anaheim Police Department





In 1880s, Mrs. Josephine Butler was an advocate and saw The Salvation Army as the answer to her prayer and wrote to Bramwell Booth saying:

**“ Nothing but a mighty spiritual power permeating as well-considered, wisely organized scheme, will prevail against this passion in men to subdue armies of women for the service of lust; and in The Salvation Army is that wonderful spiritual power. ”**

Bramwell Booth was stirred to take bold action. The story of “Britain’s Maiden Tribute” and the important role the Army played is well known. It is worth noting that the strategy to deal with the evil was to use friends and influential supporters of the Army, including the press, to gather evidence, publishing, and shaming the monsters perpetrating the trade and being prepared to lobby, petition, and ultimately suffer imprisonment to change the law. The effects and influence of this action has had far reaching impact upon the rights of women and children to this very day.

The Salvation Army’s work was not confined to what now would be called “advocacy”, but it was matched by its practical work with refuges for women and girls across the world. This pragmatism has marked The Salvation Army’s activities through the years.

The Salvation Army has taken a leadership position within the United States. We were among a coalition, some organizations were faith-based and others not, but we worked together to pass the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, a measure which became law in October 2000. In addition, The Salvation Army has assumed the leadership of the Initiative Against Sexual Trafficking, (IAST), a partnership of faith-based, human rights, child and women’s rights advocacy organizations, and is working very closely with the U.S. Government and others attempting to tackle the problem. Moreover, there is active engagement to develop recovery services for survivors of sexual trafficking.

In such places as India, Tanzania, Switzerland, Australia, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Canada, Bangladesh, and Ghana, the Salvation Army is working with women caught up in commercial sex. In these programs, there is likely to be women and girls involved in trafficking, but they are not specifically targeted (this may be a silent ministry due to the nature of the problem).

In some countries, the problem is not even recognized. It would also be true to say where poverty alleviation, income generation, and micro credit programs are underway, The Salvation Army is offering an alternative to communities vulnerable to the lures of the traffickers.





The Salvation Army Orange County continues in the tradition of our forefathers in fighting against the human trafficking with our partnership with the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force (OCHTTF) to provide direct services for all victims, foreign, and domestic, identified in or living in the Orange County.

OCHTTF and The Salvation Army Orange County has been able to serve hundreds of victims in our community. Our efforts were used to locate, rescue, and restore victims of labor and sex trafficking, foreign and domestic, adult and minors. The implementation of case management, training, 24 hour emergency response, and paths to long term sustainability have kept our efforts going.

As OCHTTF reaches this 10 year milestone, we look forward to continuing our long term partnership and continue to Transform Lives and give Hope to those being trafficked.

Yours Sincerely,  
Captain Nesan Kistan  
Divisional Secretary (CEO)  
The Salvation Army Orange County





The Orange County District Attorney's Office is a proud member of the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force (OCHTTF). We would like to thank all members of the OCHTTF and members of the community who support the OCHTTF for working together to combat Human Trafficking and related crimes. This collaborative, multi-agency team allows us to take a victim-centered approach to Human Trafficking prosecutions and ensures that victims who have endured great trauma are provided with both justice and resources. Community awareness is key. The more knowledge the community has about Human Trafficking, the more likely we are able to successfully protect vulnerable victims within our community from this criminal industry.

Those who engage in the trafficking of victims for their own commercial gain prey upon the most vulnerable victims within our community. Traffickers and pimps force their victims to experience a life of deprivation where they are forced to endure sexual assault, physical abuse, and manipulation day after day. Traffickers and pimps recognize the specific vulnerabilities of their victims, target them based on these vulnerabilities, and remain willing to exploit them for conscience. These individuals must be held accountable.

The Orange County District Attorney's Office is committed to prosecuting traffickers, pimps, and sex purchasers while educating the community and working collaboratively to support vulnerable victims. Together, we will continue to combat the horrors of Human Trafficking.

Sincerely,  
Todd Spitzer  
District Attorney, Orange County  
Orange County District Attorney's Office





The Orange County Probation Department is proud of our partnership with The Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force (OCHTTF) over the past 10 years. The Probation Department's mission of A Safer Orange County through Positive Change aligns supportively with the goal of OCHTTF to end Human Trafficking in Orange County. In 2014, the OCHTTF transitioned into a multi-law enforcement agency task force investigative unit led by the Anaheim Police Department and included personnel from the Orange County Probation Department, California Highway Patrol, Irvine Police Department, Santa Ana Police Department, Department of Homeland Security, Orange County District Attorney, and the Orange County Social Services Agency. This multi-agency partnership has solidified a countywide collaboration that brings a multidisciplinary approach to serving the victims of Human Trafficking as well as identifying and prosecuting the perpetrators.

Many Human Trafficking victims become justice involved which brings them under the supervision of the Probation Department. With the support and training provided by our partners in the OCHTTF, Probation staff can aptly and promptly identify victims of Human Trafficking and provide services and resources that are victim and trauma informed. Additionally, perpetrators that come under our supervision are managed in the community using best practice supervision techniques and provided resources that target the reduction of criminal behaviors.

Juvenile Hall intake staff are trained to identify and assess Human Trafficking victims brought into detention. Youth identified as victims or at risk of becoming a victim are linked to services provided by our partners in the OCHTTF. Staff at each of our detention facilities are trained to provide treatment specifically targeting Human Trafficking victims.

In the community, Deputy Probation Officer Lisa Carpenter supervises probation youth identified as Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) and youth identified as high risk for CSEC. She is Orange County Probation's authority on CSEC cases and assists institutional administration and line staff in the assessment, care and treatment of exploitation victims. She represents probation in the collaborative court established to serve CSEC victims, Generating Resources to Abolish Child Exploitation (GRACE) court and on numerous committees in Orange County. Further, Deputy Probation Officer Jose Gomez has been affiliated with the OCHTTF since 2015. As an AB 109 Deputy Probation Officer he developed and created a caseload of AB 109 Human Trafficking/ Pimping & Pandering cases by reaching out to the other units in the AB 109 Division. Over the





course of approximately 5 years, Deputy Probation Officer Gomez, has supervised approximately 15+ Human Trafficking cases per month in addition to his regular AB 109 caseload.

The Orange County Probation Department looks forward to a continued partnership with the OCHTTF. As we continue our efforts to provide supportive resources to victims and provide effective community supervision to the perpetrators, we recognize we cannot do this work alone. It requires intentional collaboration from each member of the OCHTTF to effect a positive change in the lives of victims and we are honored to be part of this effort.

Congratulations on 10 years of making a difference!

Sincerely,  
Steven J. Sentman  
Chief Probation Officer  
Orange County Probation Department



In 2004, when the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force (OCHTTF) was established, youth engaging in sex acts for money were often arrested for the crime of prostitution. Prior this time, the County of Orange Social Services Agency (SSA) had built solid partnerships with law enforcement, by having social workers stationed in jurisdictions throughout Orange County for cases involving child abuse and neglect.

Shortly thereafter, Lieutenant Derek Marsh of the Westminster Police Department engaged the social worker stationed in his department to collaborate with him when a minor was identified as part of a “prostitution” case, beginning a true collaboration between SSA and law enforcement that focused on combating issues related to trafficked youth, now known as commercially sexually exploited children, or CSEC youth.

Those early days of working together, however, were not without concern and frustration. While the laws at that time directed law enforcement to arrest a child, we knew arrest was not the answer to this issue. When Anaheim Police Department took over as the lead law enforcement agency for the OCHTTF, the social worker who worked with Detective Marsh then connected with then Sergeant Craig Friesen. At this time SSA began its collaboration with Waymakers victims’ advocates; the first steps in building a multi-disciplinary team.

As the people changed within each department, the approach and relationships also evolved and changed. In 2014, as the social worker assigned to the Westminster Department and Sergeant Friesen moved on to other positions, new relationships, protocols and procedures were developed. This also marked a milestone year: when Senate Bill 855 clarified that children are not criminals, but victims of exploitation to be served by the child welfare system, designed to protect and serve abused and neglected youth. This new legislation led to SSA designating a Senior Social Worker to work in direct collaboration with the OCHTTF. Further, a specialized team of social workers were trained to respond to calls from law enforcement when a child was suspected of being sex trafficked; a 24/7 response that often occurred late at night and alongside other multi-disciplinary partners, like Waymakers. But not everyone understood the value of SSA’s involvement in these cases, and it took time and dedication to demonstrate that SSA was an integral part of assessing for child safety and welfare.

The relationship today between the OCHTTF and SSA is a strong one, with each collaborative partner understanding the others’ roles, responsibilities and goals; and developing a respect for

the specialized expertise and work each brings to collectively achieve the mission of treating these youth as victims, using a trauma-informed approach.

We congratulate Waymakers and the Anaheim Police Department for their ten years of work as an Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking. We are honored to work alongside them in this fight to protect CSEC youth and help them to heal. Looking back, SSA has grown a lot through this collaboration and we look forward to continuing to make a difference in the lives of children and their families with whom we serve together.

Sincerely,  
Anne Bloxom  
Division Director, Children and Family Services  
County of Orange Social Services Agency

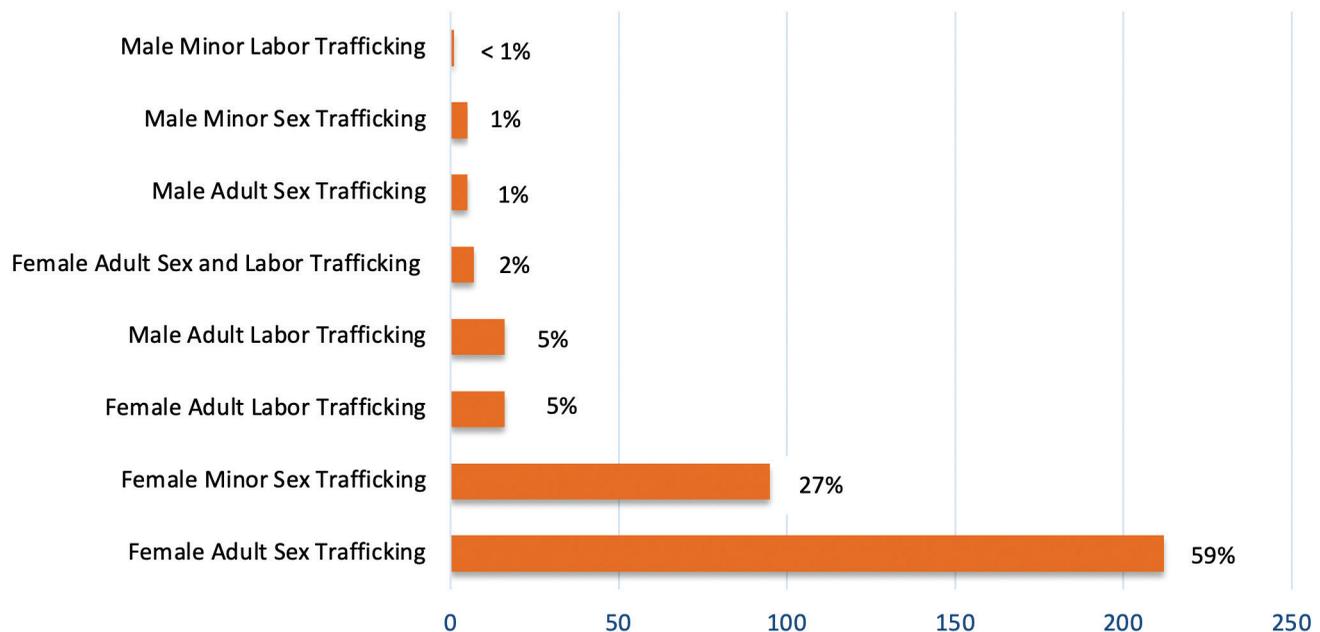


# I. 2019 & 2020 VICTIM DEMOGRAPHICS

|               |                 | Labor Trafficking | Sex Trafficking | Labor & Sex Trafficking | TOTAL      |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------|
| <b>Age</b>    | Adult           | 32                | 217             | 7                       | <b>256</b> |
|               | Minor           | 1                 | 100             | 0                       | <b>101</b> |
| <b>Gender</b> | Female          | 16                | 307             | 7                       | <b>330</b> |
|               | Female Adult    | 16                | 212             | 7                       | <b>235</b> |
|               | Female Minor    | 0                 | 95              | 0                       | <b>95</b>  |
|               | Male            | 17                | 10              | 0                       | <b>27</b>  |
|               | Male Adult      | 16                | 5               | 0                       | <b>21</b>  |
|               | Male Minor      | 1                 | 5               | 0                       | <b>6</b>   |
|               | <b>Race</b>     | Asian             | 18              | 17                      | 1          |
|               | Black           | 0                 | 91              | 1                       | <b>92</b>  |
|               | Hispanic/Latino | 9                 | 90              | 3                       | <b>102</b> |
|               | White           | 0                 | 79              | 0                       | <b>79</b>  |
|               | Other           | 6                 | 40              | 2                       | <b>48</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  |                 | <b>33</b>         | <b>317</b>      | <b>7</b>                | <b>357</b> |

In 2019 and 2020, the total number of victims assisted by Waymakers and The Salvation Army was 357. In the two-year period, 49% or 174 were new victims assisted. Of the total, 15% were foreign nationals and 85% U.S. nationals.

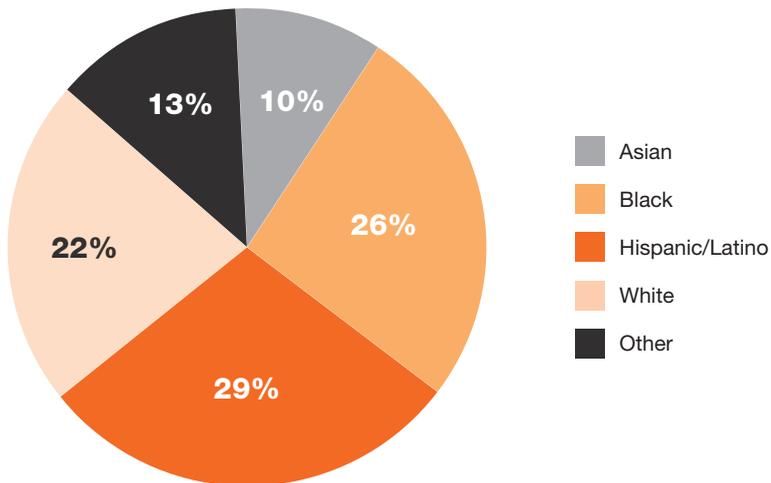
## HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS 2019 & 2020



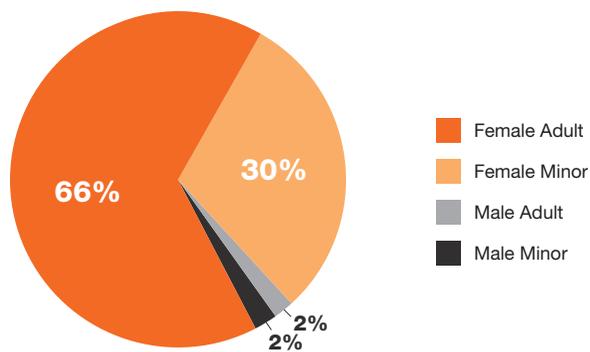


## 2019 & 2020 Victim Demographics Continued

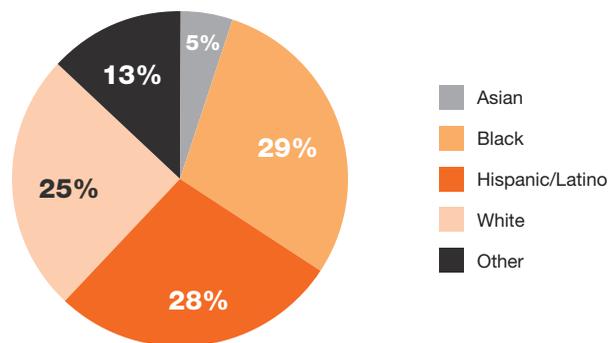
### HUMAN TRAFFICKING—RACE



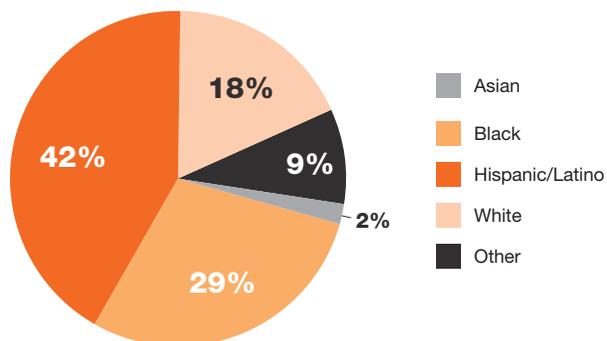
### SEX TRAFFICKING—AGE & GENDER



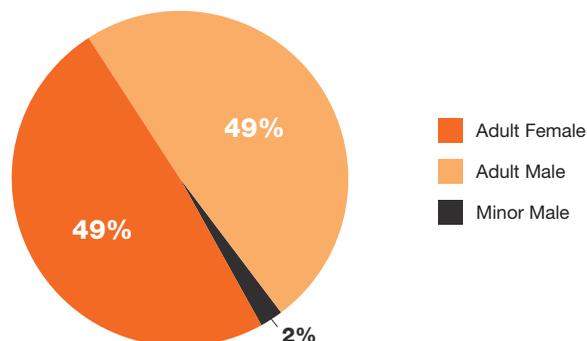
### SEX TRAFFICKING—RACE



### SEX TRAFFICKING OF MINORS—RACE



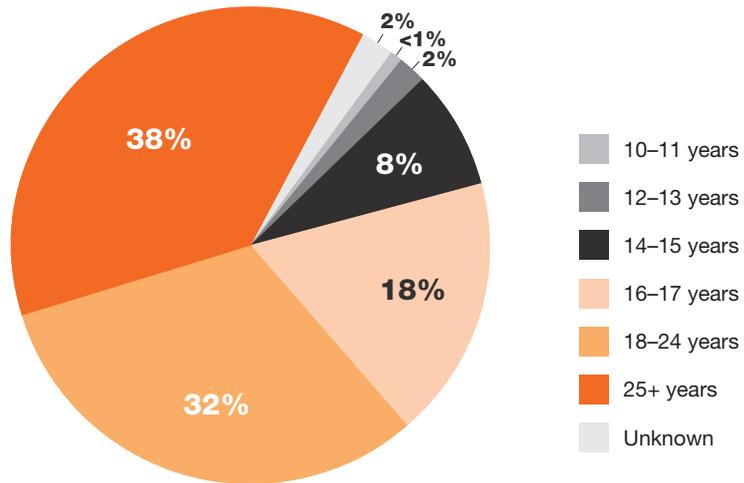
### LABOR TRAFFICKING—AGE & GENDER



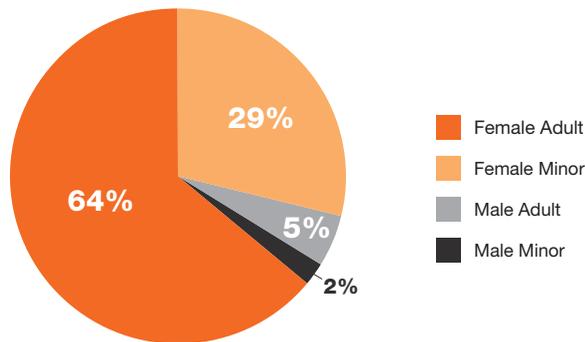


## 2019 & 2020 Victim Demographics Continued

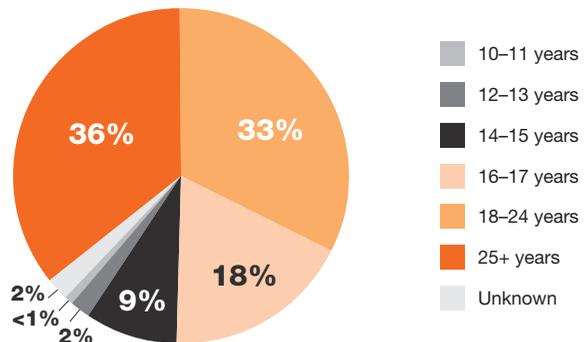
### AGE—ALL



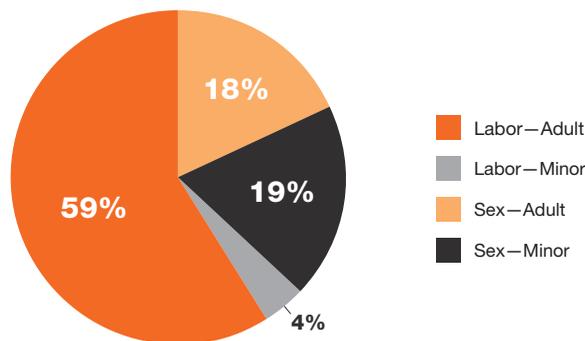
### FEMALE—AGE & TRAFFICKING



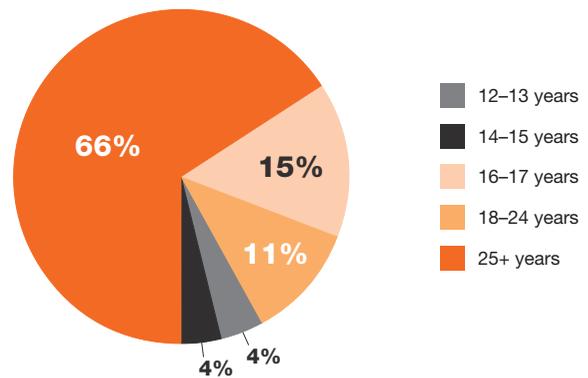
### FEMALE—AGE



### MALE



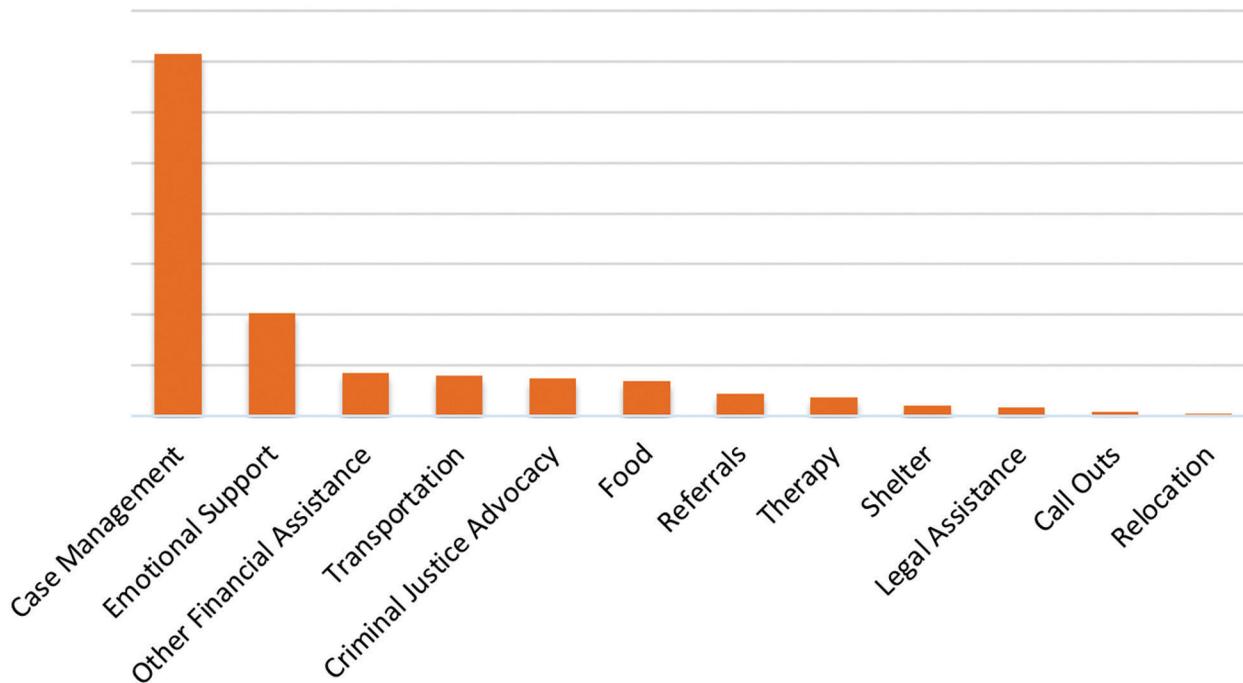
### MALE—AGE





## II. 2019 & 2020 VICTIM SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS

### VICTIM SERVICE PROVISIONS



The **Victim Service Provisions** chart reflects the main types of assistance provided by the Victim Advocates/Case Managers with Waymakers and The Salvation Army. The assistance can vary from emergency assistance for a day, such as food and shelter, to short/mid-term supplemental assistance for victims who engage in comprehensive case management services for the purpose of independent living and self-sufficiency. Ranging from the most to least time spent assisting victims in 2019 and 2020: case management (53%), emotional support (15%), other financial assistance (6%), transportation (6%), criminal justice advocacy (5%), food (5%), referrals (3%), therapy (3%), shelter (1%), legal assistance (1%), call outs (1%), and relocation (1%). This does not include other types of assistance made possible through community donations and the volunteer program.



## Volunteering Through the Pandemic

Waymakers' volunteer program supports the direct efforts of victim services, as well as community-based activities to help enhance the goals of the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force which also includes prevention and education. Since 2010, a unique part of the volunteer program has been the ability to help fill in the “gaps in services.” Much of what drives the success of the volunteer program would not have been possible without the flexibility and understanding needed from the volunteers to see the big picture of the anti-trafficking work within the communities that they live within and amongst; and is often times done without a volunteer ever interacting with a victim themselves. The volunteer program is responsible for many of the creative avenues explored, that go beyond traditional victim services and the limitations of government funded services. Working through a pandemic has only made this aspect of the program more valuable for the “out of the box” thinking needed to adapt to the needs of the victim/survivors that we serve.

---

### Volunteer Story 1

The Salvation Army Anti-Trafficking Support Group for foreign national victims is a safe place where they can share their stories and feelings or quietly listen to others if they don't feel ready to share. For most, the support group is the only space where they can openly speak about their trafficking and express their emotions. Due to staff capacity limitations, the support group had to be suspended for some time. However, through the amazing contribution of our volunteers, the support group was revived. A lead volunteer took on the role of developing the meeting topics, activities, and leading the group meetings. Prior to COVID-19 restrictions, the other volunteers would provide transportation to the meeting location, since transportation continues to be one of the biggest obstacles for victims to function independently. If it were not for the volunteers, the victims and survivors would not have had this safe space to share and find a common sense of community amongst each other. Knowing that stability of human connection was important, volunteers helped to provide laptops with camera access so that participants could transition into attending the support group in a virtual setting.

**“ I missed you. I missed all the volunteers. I am thankful to have had all of you. Your support helped us a lot. The love that you give to us. The time that you spend with us. I won't forget those moments. ”**

**—Survivor, who graduated the victim services program to live an independent life free of trafficking and continues to build skills needed to reduce vulnerability to trafficking.**



---

## Volunteer Story 2

The dinner club has always been a favorite among many victims. Other than providing the value of basic nutritional habits for maintaining health, the gathering has become an emotionally, socially and spiritually supportive space for healing around a shared meal. At the start of the pandemic, we were unsure on how to transition something so intimate and personable to remote connection. The volunteers were up for the challenge. Since they were no longer able to physically come together to cook the meals, the volunteers explored the world of food delivery apps. After some initial restrictions lifted, the volunteers spent hours preparing, cooking and coordinating meals to be delivered to the victims to their front door steps. They were also able to move the social aspect of the dinner club to a virtual setting. After the meals were delivered, they were able to share mealtime together over Zoom. The volunteers took it one step further to offset any Zoom awkwardness or Zoom fatigue by introducing fun, innovative activities to do while eating and Zooming. Painting pumpkins, building gingerbread houses, and Bingo are just a few of the activities that our victims got to experience. The victims have felt the isolation of the pandemic to its fullest, so our volunteers coming up with a way to transition the dinner club remotely in a successful way has been crucial to their health and mental wellbeing. Because of the dinner club, the victims get to continue to look forward to something fun and consistent in their life to feel a sense of normalcy again.

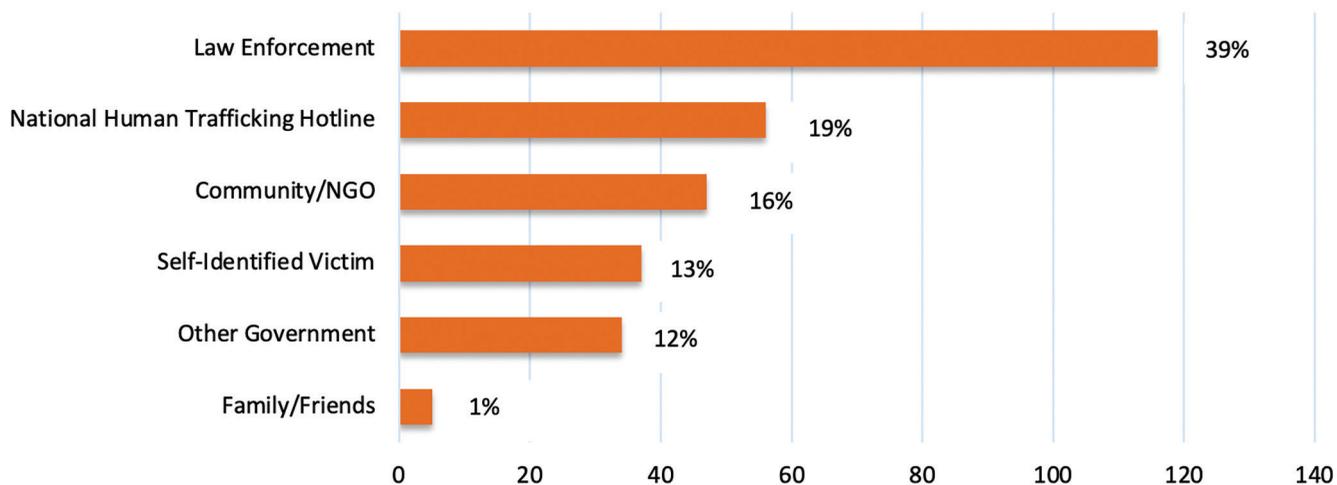
---

## Volunteer Story 3

The victim grew up in a broken home and was in and out of shelters and group homes her entire childhood. She got involved in gangs and violence as a result. At 16, she was trafficked out for commercial sex for almost a year until her trafficker was arrested. She was arrested soon after due to her continual engagement with gang activity, and she became a part of juvenile hall's youth guidance program. She is a smart girl and loves to read books. She excelled in her unit to be number one and started taking college classes. The advocate and victim were very grateful to the volunteers who donated books to keep her spirits up while enduring a hard life situation for someone so young. The victim has never received gifts in her entire life and was so appreciative of the love and support given to her from "strangers" in the community. She read the books three times and shared them with the other girls in her unit to get them into reading too.



## VICTIM REFERRALS



The *Victim Referrals* chart reflects new referrals for victim assistance made to Waymakers in 2019 and 2020. There were approximately 294 total referrals made within the 2-year period. In 2019, the average was 10 new referrals per month with a high month of 18 and low month of 5. In 2020, the average was 14 new referrals per month with a high month of 20 and a low month of 7.



## Victim Impact Statements



*I have had my childhood robbed from me. Instead of going to school dances and having my first boyfriend, I was half naked on your local street corner. I was exposed to domestic violence, drugs, and put my health at risk. I was a sophomore with a B average. My life took a plunge for the worse when I met the Defendant. I remember him being very angry and often times displaced his aggression on the other female. I remember being scared to tell my honest and truthful opinion to the Defendant in fear that I too would be beaten. There were times when the Defendant would have sexual intercourse with me. Even if I was too tired to engage I would submit to him in fear of being beaten. I believe because the Defendant had glamorized this unhealthy and unethical lifestyle I continued to take part in this inhumane way of life. Often times I didn't get a chance to pick something as simple as where I ate.*

*I was the average girl next door. Just like your neighbor's daughter, your niece, or even your own daughter. There's not just one person who could potentially damage another girl the way the Defendant has damaged me. There are many demons in the shape of men who could do what the Defendant did to me, if not worse. These damages don't just disappear overnight or with one therapy session. I have to deal with these damages for the rest of my life.*

*As for the Defendant specifically, I hope you can live knowing you completely changed my life for the worse and not for the better. Although you have ruined me and left permanent emotional and mental scars, I still hope your kids don't go through anything you've put me through. There is no hatred in my heart towards you, and I will not allow you to keep me in this mental trap forever. I forgive you. I hope God can set you free from your troubles and help you become an angel, instead of being a rottweiler in chihuahua's clothing and get the help you need. ”*



“ Good morning Your Honor,

*The person sitting before you is guilty of more than just the crime that he is being charged with. The defendant is guilty of multiple crimes. Those crimes include trafficking of a minor, theft, child abuse, exploitation and rape!!! Not only did the defendant STEAL my only child from me, he stole her childhood from her. He took my above average 15-year-old who should have been focused on making memories in high school and turned her into a drug addicted child of the streets that I no longer knew. He took her childhood by force and made her sell herself for money which he also took. The defendant also mentally and physically abused my child which in turn has cost me thousands of dollars in therapy for her and emotional damage which is beyond monetary value or repair. He also RAPED my child. The defendant may say it was consensual sex, but there's no such thing as consensual sex with a minor especially one who was more likely than not under the influence of drugs which he also gave to her.*

*I too am a victim in this case because of these heinous crimes. The defendant has also stolen a piece of my life. He has stolen my happiness and peace of mind, which has also caused me to have to attend therapy. At this time I am asking Your Honor and this court to prosecute this defendant to the full extent of the law and impose the maximum sentence possible. He deserves to lose years of his life that he can never get back as we have lost the same. May God have mercy on your soul for what you have done to us. I pray that you will never have to experience any of this in your own life and that you never do this to another child or woman.*

*Thank you for your time. ”*



## Rising Above Scholarship

In 2015 and 2016, with the fundraising efforts initiated in partnership with Southlands Church Brea, the Rising Above Scholarship fund was created. Approximately, \$25,000 was raised to help support survivors who wanted to return to school or pursue education as part of their longer-term goals and dreams. In the following years, Skateboard Moms and Sisters of Shred helped add to this fund with their annual charity fundraiser. In the past five years, 54 percent went towards tuition fees, 25 percent school supplies, and 21 percent living costs. The following is a thank you letter sent by an award recipient of this scholarship.

“ *Two years ago, I was rescued by the wonderful people at the Salvation Army’s Anti-Trafficking Services from a human trafficking situation. While they are working with my case, I started taking (ESL) English as a Second Language. The counselor comes to our school once a week. Each of us has to talk to him for counseling. During our conversation the counselor shared with me that I could also take classes at NOCCCD North Orange County Community College District to get a certificate. I was happy and excited that this opportunity was being provided to me. This gives me hope and opens a new opportunity for me. I started taking classes at NOCCCD in 2019. I took a medical assistant and business information along with ESL.*

*As a student we are advised to meet with the NOCCCD student counselor. The counselor guided me on what classes I’m going to take and when I’m going to finish the classes. The classes were paid by the government, but did not cover any other costs like books, uniforms, school supplies and medical assistant stuff. Each class needs a book, computer, Microsoft software and supplies for a medical assistant. I couldn’t afford to pay for those items. The cost of many of these items were beyond my ability. I couldn’t work, because I had not yet received my work permit and social security number. Not being able to pay for all the items that I need for those classes gave my life a lot of stress and challenges.*



*Then my case manager at The Salvation Army told me about the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force's Rising Above Scholarship Fund. I had the opportunity to apply for it. I was so happy when I found out that my application had been approved. I received my first scholarship of \$600 on September 24th, 2019. I was so honored and proud to have received such a large amount of scholarship that I made a copy of the check and hung it in my room. The check on the wall was a reminder to me that there are people in the world caring for people like me.*

*The check allowed me to buy my own books, medical assistant stuff, my scrubs, shoes and the school supplies that I need for the classes that I'm taking. Most of my grades in all the classes are A's. The scholarship helped me reach my goal without stress. It helped me focus on studying instead of worrying on how to buy those stuff that I need for my studies. I am very grateful and thankful to those people who funded this scholarship to help people like me. You make my life easier and give me a chance to change my future.*

*Two months ago, I got my medical assistant certificate and business information certificate. ”*



### III. HIGHLIGHTED COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Part of our enhanced collaborative efforts is to not only assist the victims of human trafficking, but also work in partnership with those in the community who help enhance the Task Force’s mission goals to address prevention and education. The following four community partners each address a key area to help Orange County achieve those goals. Public Law Center—immigration assistance, Women’s Transitional Living Center—housing, Orangewood Foundation—at-risk/prevention, Global Center for Women and Justice at Vanguard University—education.

The Public Law Center (PLC), a non-profit pro bono law firm located in Santa Ana, California, promotes access to justice for low-income and vulnerable residents of Orange County through the provision of free civil legal services. PLC was a founding member of the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force and continues to work closely with partner organizations such as Waymakers and The Salvation Army to serve the civil legal needs of foreign nationals who have survived human trafficking in Orange County. Since 2004, PLC has assisted 363 survivors of human trafficking, most of whom have been referrals through OCHTTF partners. PLC assists survivors in the following areas of law:

*Immigration (T-Visas, including Adjustment of Status and Derivative T-Visas)*  
*Consumer Law and Housing Law*  
*Post-Conviction Relief (Vacatur and Dismissal)*

### **Impact of PLC's Work:**

PLC recently assisted “Blanche,” a survivor of labor trafficking from the Philippines who had not seen her daughter since being trafficked to the United States 14 years earlier. Blanche had worked as a nanny in her home country for a family whom she considered to be her friends. When that family brought her to the United States, the family instructed Blanche to lie to immigration officials, confiscated her passport, and forced her to work over 12 hours every day, paying her inconsistently and often less than the minimal \$200 per month that they had originally promised her.

The family kept Blanche isolated at their home and forbade her from even speaking to any guests who happened to visit. They repeatedly threatened Blanche with deportation and refused to allow her to return to the Philippines to visit her child over the next 14 years. Eventually Blanche worked up the courage to report her situation and was able to escape from the family's home. PLC assisted Blanche with obtaining a T Visa, which provided her with legal immigration status in the United States, allowed her to reunite finally with her daughter, enabled her to get an education as a medical assistant, and set her on a path towards building a new, free life in the United States.

*For more information about PLC or to seek legal assistance, please visit [www.publiclawcenter.org](http://www.publiclawcenter.org) or call 714.541.1010.*

# MAKING AN IMPACT ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING, ONE LIFE AT A TIME.

Since 1976, WTLC has provided housing, legal, clinical, prevention, and holistic services for domestic violence and human trafficking survivors.



## 72 HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS SERVED IN 2020

### WHAT IS WTLC DOING IN ORANGE COUNTY?

#### TRAUMA INFORMED

In 2016, WTLC was the only domestic violence service provider in Orange County to implement a trauma-informed approach to our services.

#### WELCOMING TO ALL

We welcome populations who typically struggle to find services, including re-entry survivors coming from the prison system, survivors with ongoing mental illness or substance misuse, LGBTQIA survivors, elder and dependent, differently abled, and survivors of all genders and ages.

#### SURVIVOR DRIVEN

WTLC implements a Survivor-driven approach, meaning the survivor's priorities create the safety and healing plan and can include family members as well as the person who caused them harm.



We did not feel alone here. There is love here. To all the lovely heroes that took care of us - **THANK YOU.** You all are my superhero!

-Kailyn, HT Survivor

\*Statistics reflect numbers from 2019-2020 specific to WTLC's HT programming



**3**  
HT Survivors successfully graduated from Emergency Shelter and moved into Transitional Housing.



**166**  
Mobile Advocacy services were provided, allowing WTLC Advocates to meet survivors wherever most comfortable.



**159**  
Counseling services provided for 24 participants including individual and group therapy, psychiatric services, and more.



**66**  
Legal services provided including assistance with family law proceedings, protective orders, immigration work, and more.



**45**  
Group and Parenting services provided to help survivors foster and build healthier relationships.



**34**  
Life Skill services provided including job search assistance, resume tailoring, and interview preparation.

Project CHOICE (Creating Healthy Opportunities & Inspiring Change through Empowerment) is a program managed by Orangewood Foundation and funded by the County of Orange County Social Services Agency (SSA) that specifically supports Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) and youth survivors of sex trafficking. Having already established The Lighthouse Transitional Housing Program in 2016, the introduction of Project CHOICE has addressed significant service gaps within Orange County, CA, by providing specialized support and preventative services to youth ages 11–21, involved in or at-risk of sex trafficking.

Project CHOICE is modeled on nationally recognized Best Practice Frameworks for working with CSEC, including Trauma-Informed Care, Harm Reduction and Survivor Centered strategies. Recognizing that each youth's personal experience with sexual exploitation, victimization and the factors placing them at risk are unique, Project CHOICE tailors its support to meet their individual needs.

The Project CHOICE Drop-In Center, open 6 days a week, provides youth a safe space and a comprehensive range of services essential to support a youth's effort to safely leave their trafficking situation and reduce entry or re-entry into sexually exploitative situations. These services include access to: hot meals, clothing, personal hygiene items, a shower, laundry facilities, a place to rest, peer mentorship, crisis assistance, housing linkages, education navigation, employment support, health and wellness care, therapy, nurse consultations, health education workshops, a healing arts program that includes creative expression (art), yoga, drumming, mindfulness, meditation and equine therapy. Project CHOICE also provides recreational activities, case management and support to caregivers of CSEC (Note: Services have continued during COVID-19).

To raise community awareness of sex trafficking and the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and enhance the skills of service providers working with CSEC, Project CHOICE staff provide consultation and trainings, as well as community outreach presentations.

During Fiscal Year 2019/2020, Project CHOICE supported 77 individual youth through the Drop-In Center; 71 percent of these youth had experienced or were experiencing sex trafficking or sexual exploitation and 29 percent were considered at-risk. Youth ranged in age from 14 to 21, 16 years being the average age and 98 percent identifying as female. Hispanic youth (47 percent) made up the highest percentage, followed by Black/African American youth (22 percent). Over half (52 percent) of these youth are experiencing system involvement, including Foster Care (70 percent), Probation (8 percent) or Dual Involvement (22 percent).

## OUR IMPACT 2020/2019



### BASIC NEEDS PROVIDED



### CASE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT



### COMMUNITY OUTREACH





## Global Center for Women and Justice at Vanguard University

Greetings from the Global Center for Women and Justice at Vanguard University. My name is Dr. Sandie Morgan, and I am the Director of the center. I am also a nurse, educator, and expert on human trafficking. As a partner with the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force, Associate Director Derek Marsh and I are honored to share about our work to end human trafficking.

The Global Center for Women and Justice (GCWJ) was founded in 2003 and is a Christian-based, non-profit organization housed within Vanguard University of Southern California (VU). We exist to advance the global status of women, children, and at-risk and vulnerable populations, and to end human trafficking through research, education, advocacy, collaboration, and hope (REACH).

Our research promotes promising practices, data-driven decision making, and collaborative efforts with students, faculty, and community partners to become a clearinghouse on women and justice issues. Education through GCWJ serves to conduct and share the research so it becomes a theoretical and practical foundation for our courses. We support the federal advocacy model, which insists on victim-centered, trauma-informed approaches when engaging with victim-survivors. Collaboration is the key to any multi-jurisdiction and multi-agency response, and we model this by building sustainable coalitions to address human trafficking and women and violence issues. And, throughout our efforts, we strive to engender hope to empower at-risk persons and vulnerable communities to achieve greater restorative justice.

GCWJ is dedicated to educating and training students and professionals locally and globally on collaborative strategies to prevent and counter human trafficking, equitably address immigration and migrant challenges, advocate for victims, and promote human rights. We do this through our teaching at VU, training first responders in law enforcement, victim service agencies, faith-based communities, medical organizations, businesses and local, state, and federal agencies. We offer an Anti-Human Trafficking Certificate taught by professionals experienced with hands on service, offer a Women and Justice Minor for VU's undergraduates, and publish the Ending Human Trafficking Podcast with over 230 topics to date.



GLOBAL CENTER *for*  
WOMEN *and* JUSTICE

*Vanguard University*



The GCWJ operates under three major assumptions. First, global criminal acts with local consequences require multi-sector, sustained transnational responses. Second, it is better to prevent violence and slavery than to treat its consequences. And, finally, we believe we are all called to intervene and advocate for others: “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed” (Proverbs 31:8). Our challenge is to assist in building community solutions that address the scope and complexity of violence and slavery.

This year has offered a variety of unique challenges for anti-human trafficking work. While the pandemic exacerbated risk factors for potential victims of trafficking, it also destabilized the economic conditions of many survivors. However, the Global Center has risen to meet these challenges through providing online training events, listening to survivor voices, and engaging in the national dialog to better care for survivors and prevent exploitation.

We offer many more services and educational opportunities. If you would like to learn more about GCWJ, please visit our website at [www.gcwj.org](http://www.gcwj.org). If you would like to contact us, please call 714.966.6360. We look forward to hearing from you.



## IV. KEY FINDINGS IN 10 YEARS

In 2010, the Anaheim Police Department and Waymakers was awarded the Enhanced Collaborative Model (ECM) to Combat Human Trafficking grant project otherwise known as the ECM Task Force by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). This pilot grant was the first to seek out a collaborative partnership between a local law enforcement agency and victim services organization across the United States. The partnership would be challenged to create something that had never been attempted before, to address all forms of human trafficking in the communities that they serve. One grant, one collaborative to address all forms of human trafficking: labor trafficking, sex trafficking, foreign national victims, U.S. victims, adults, minors, females, males and everyone in between.

In 2004, the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force (OCHTTF) began as a collaborative. Victim services and ethnic-specific services were working collaboratively alongside the Westminster Police Department assisting foreign victims of labor and sex trafficking. When the Anaheim Police Department transitioned into the lead law enforcement partner of the OCHTTF in 2010, much of what was learned and valued through the previous six years of collaborative work was honored and leveraged to grow a more expansive collaborative capable of including identification and service provision to victims of all forms of human trafficking. This pivotal year in the growth of the OCHTTF marked the beginning of the multi-jurisdictional structure willing to use a victim-centered and trauma-informed approach to combat human trafficking through protection, prevention and prosecution.

Orange County was one of three sites awarded the pilot ECM Task Force grant to combat human trafficking. Without the support and innovation of BJA and OVC to help fund these initial projects, the OCHTTF would not have been able to successfully move forward with the work and stand where we are today. In those early years across the country, it was critical to find the dedicated people and agencies needed who were not afraid to jump into the unknown and find out what was happening to the victims of human trafficking; and to assess the ability to assist victims as well as investigate and prosecute human trafficking crimes. Those findings were reported to the federal government. Today, there are 45 ECM Task Forces combating human trafficking across the United States.

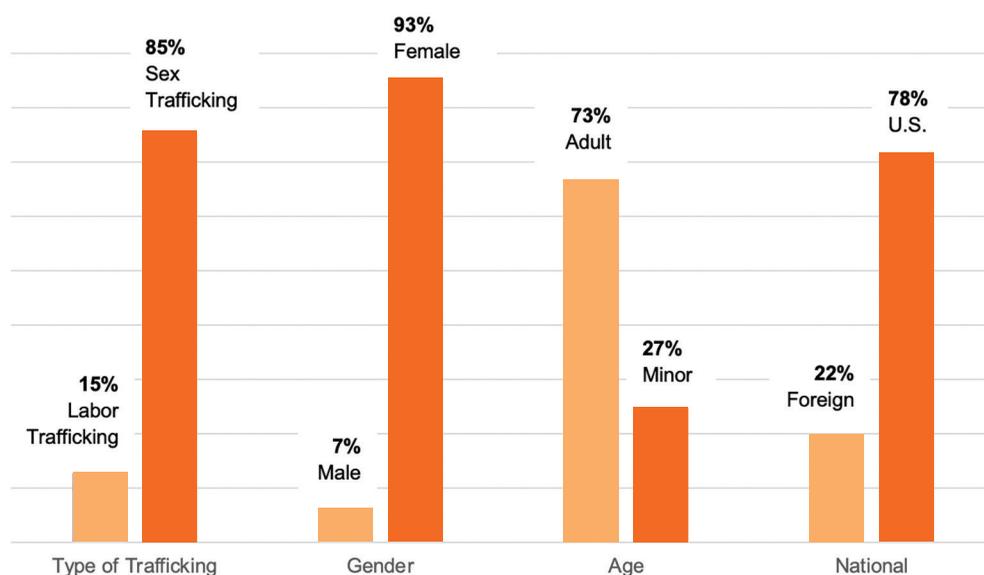
The key findings in this section are a result of the committed work from the men and women, with the support of their respective agencies, who have been a part of the Task Force efforts throughout these 10 momentous years which enabled a 24/7 focus on the subject matter from all angles. These findings are intended to share what the OCHTTF has learned, as well as to share the small and large changes made over the course of time, moving from theory to practice. To begin, it is important to share the primary objectives of the OCHTTF:

- Establish and sustain effective leadership and a structure that will marshal the resources necessary to support the successful identification of victims of all forms of human trafficking, service delivery, and investigation and prosecution of trafficking perpetrators.
- Make data-driven decisions based on a shared understanding of the prevalence, scope and nature of human trafficking within Orange County.
- Address the individualized needs of victims through the provision of a comprehensive array of quality services. Ensure provision of high quality and timely comprehensive services to meet the individualized needs of all victims of human trafficking.

The **10-Year Victim Demographic** charts reflect the best estimates for victims of human trafficking assisted by the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force, in specific regards to cases handled by Waymakers and The Salvation Army between 2010 and 2020. This does not reflect all victims of human trafficking that may exist in Orange County or have been supported by other service providers.

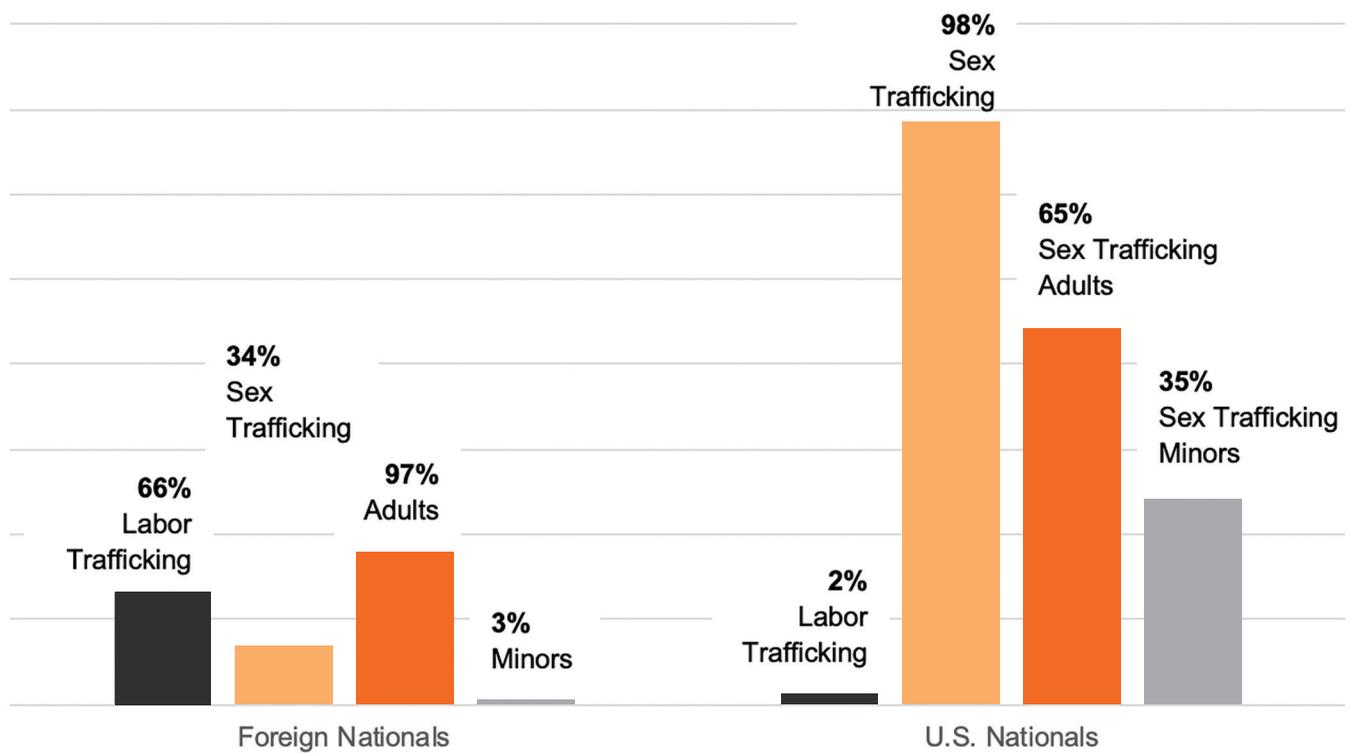
**Key Findings:**

- Victims of labor trafficking consisted mostly of foreign nationals.
- Victims of sex trafficking consisted mostly of U.S. nationals.
- Minor victims consisted mostly of U.S. national victims of sex trafficking.
- Victims of human trafficking have overwhelmingly been female.
- Proactive investigations by law enforcement focused on domestic sex trafficking, and prioritizing minor victims, has resulted in more U.S. sex trafficking victims identified in comparison to labor trafficking and foreign victims.



10-year Victim Demographic Chart 1.1





10-year Victim Demographic Chart 1.2

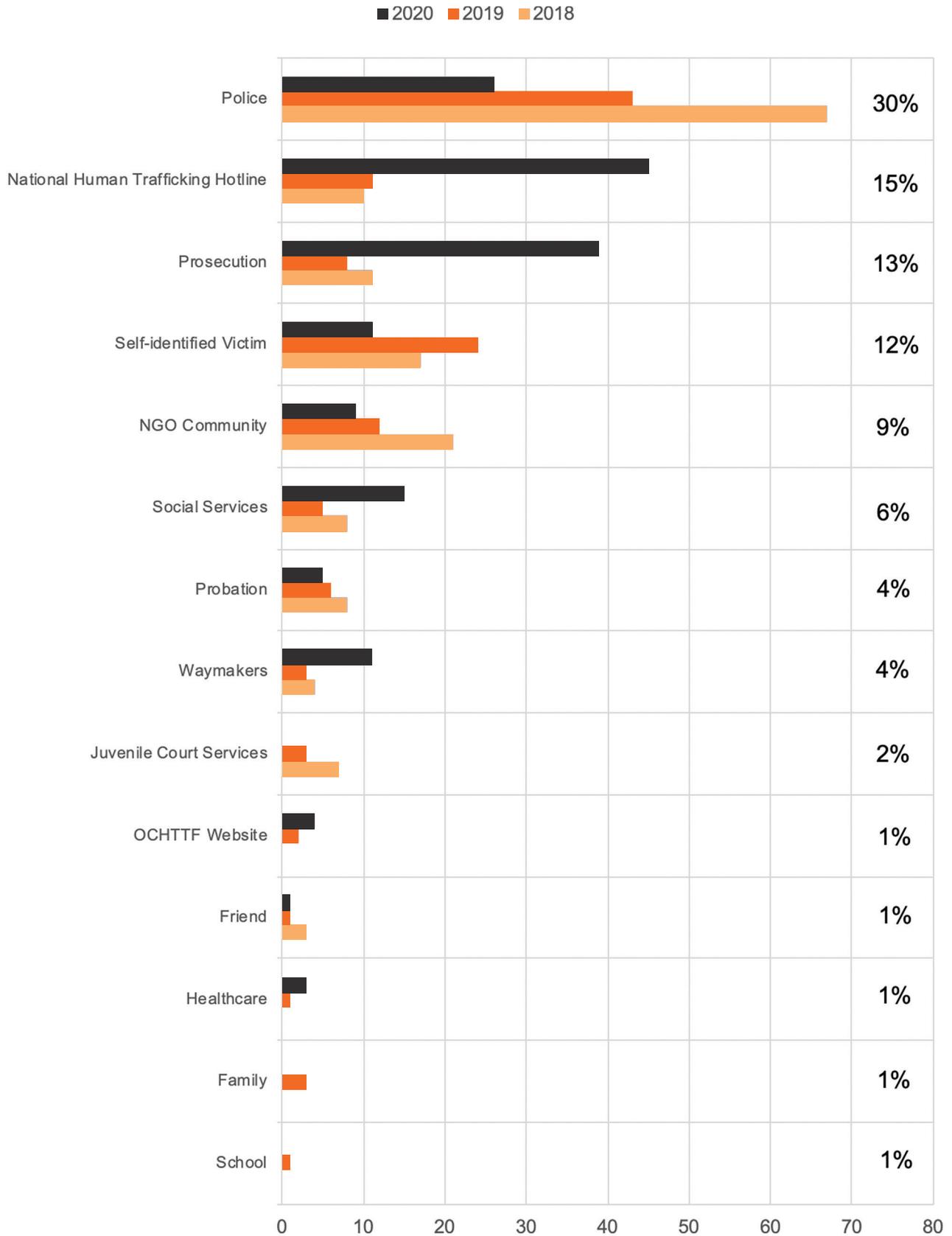
The **All Victim Assistance Referrals** chart reflects all referrals made to Waymakers’ Human Trafficking Program from 2018 to 2020 for victim assistance and broken down by field or profession. The vast majority of the referrals have been for U.S. victims and includes both adults and minors needing assistance. This does not capture referrals made to other partnering organizations, such as The Salvation Army, who takes the lead for assisting foreign victims.

**Key Findings:**

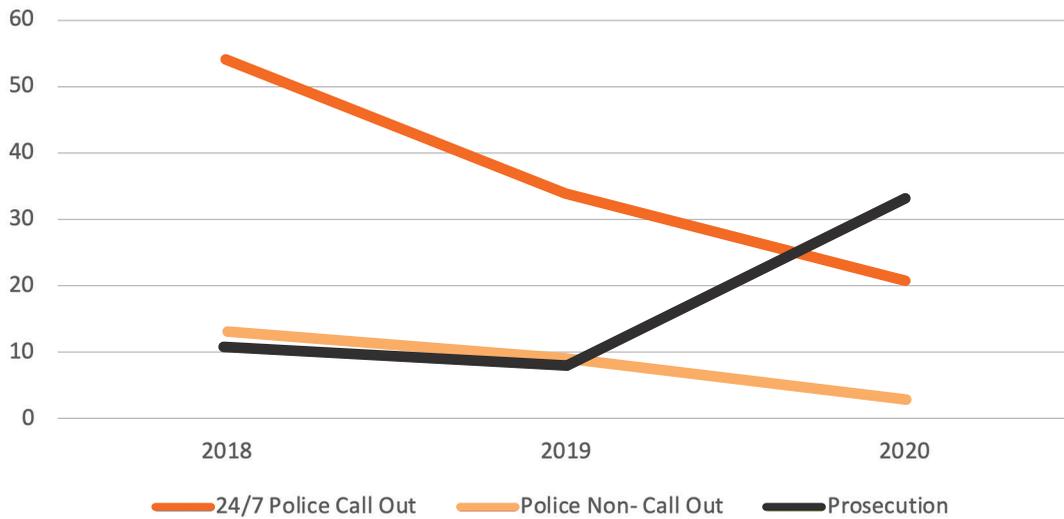
- With 88 percent of potential victims identified and referred by someone other than the victim, awareness and training for human trafficking is universally important across all sectors.
- Local law enforcement has consistently been the top referral source for 10 years.
- Family and friends as a referral source, continues to remain very low. These findings are not surprising when one considers the fact that foreign national victims have often left family behind in hopes of finding a way to provide a better life and U.S. victims have often come from abused and neglected home situations.



## ALL VICTIM ASSISTANCE REFERRALS

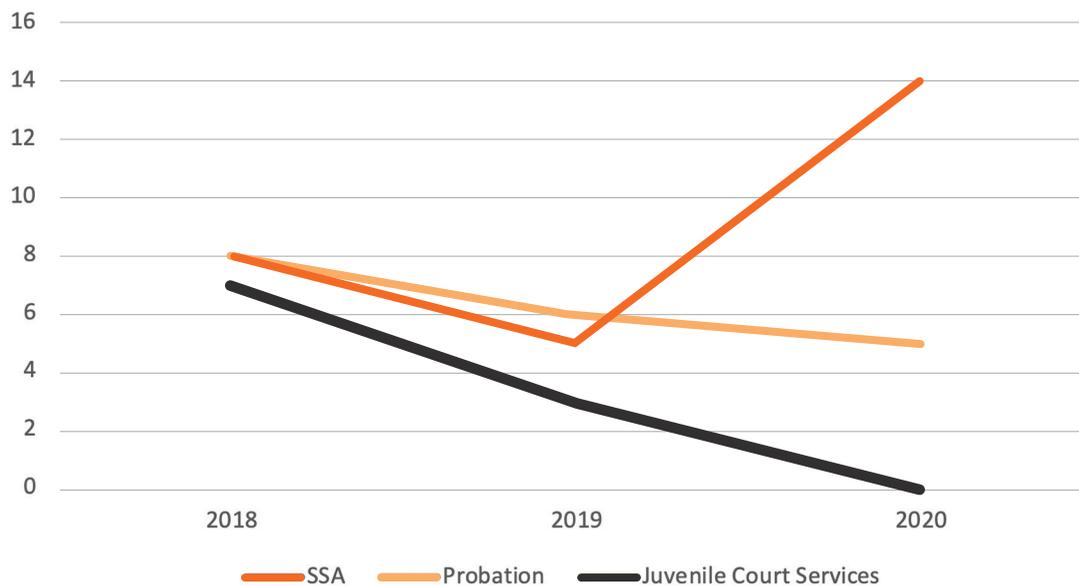


## LAW ENFORCEMENT

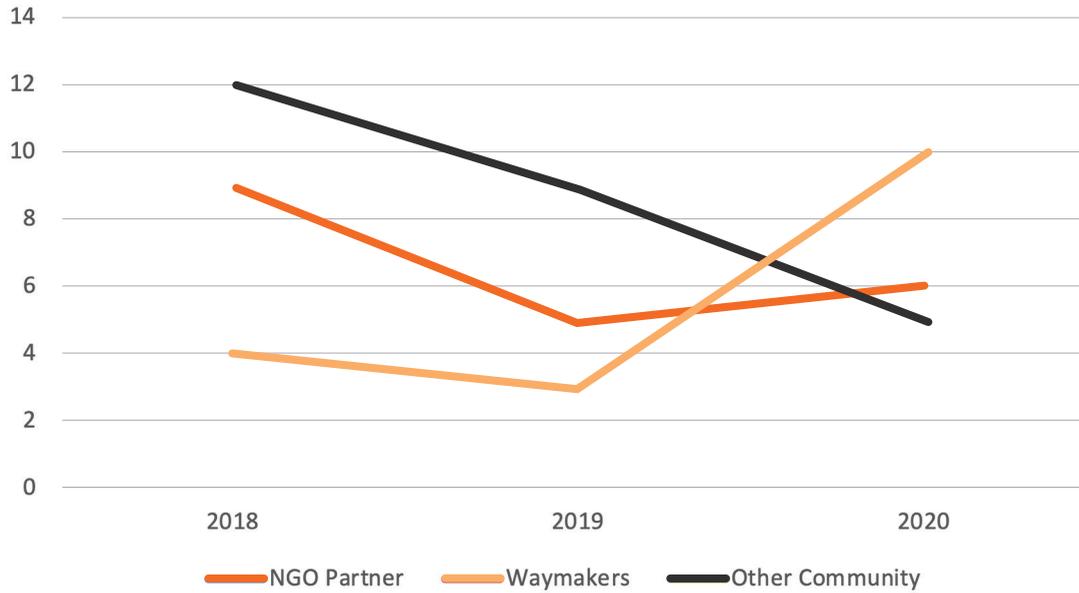


- In 2018, a high of 67 victim referrals were made by the police, which composed of 43 percent of all referrals that year. In 2019, the decrease was impacted by lesser investigative bodies and more attention to cases that required longer-term investigations.
- In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic affected the police’s ability to be proactive with human trafficking investigations and victim identification. Call-out response consisted of 13 percent in comparison to 27 percent in 2019 and 35 percent in 2018. The pandemic, however, increased the volume of calls from the National Human Trafficking Hotline with 29 percent of calls coming from victims who resided outside the service area of Orange County needing assistance.

## OTHER GOVERNMENT

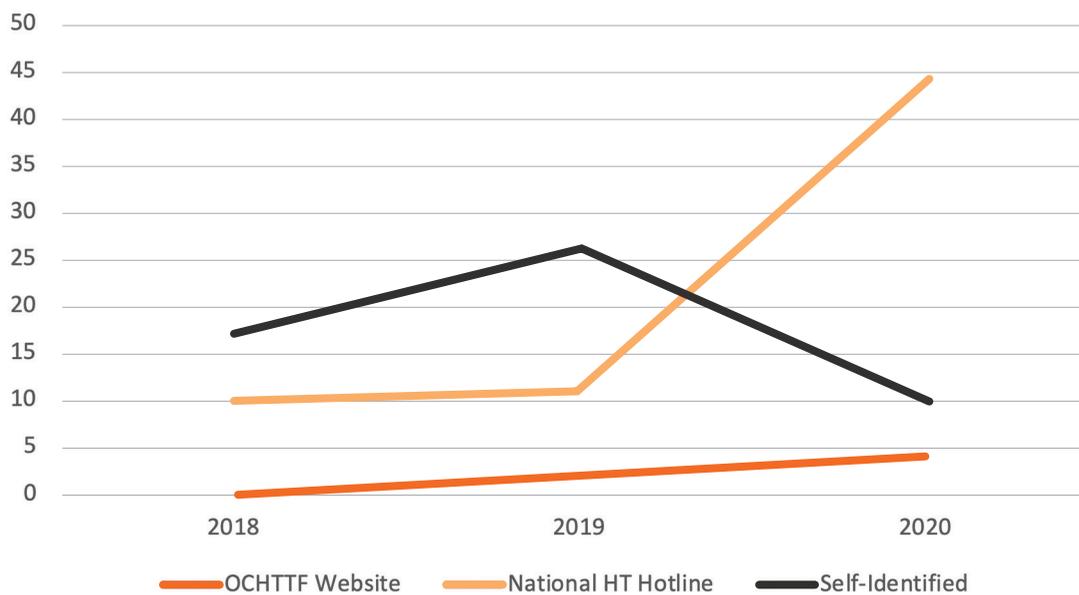


## COMMUNITY



The Waymakers referrals in the above chart is in reference to other Victim Assistance Programs units within the agency making referrals, including the Victim Witness Court Centers, the Child Abuse Services Team, and Sexual Assault Victim Services. As it is not uncommon for victims of human trafficking to also be victims of other crime types, the above chart shows the positive impact of awareness and trainings on the ability to identify victims of human trafficking.

## OTHER



The **Comprehensive Victim Services** charts reflect services provided to victims between 2013 and 2020. The 2017 and 2018 data are missing in these comparative analyses, because there was a different data collection and measurement tool used those years. Even though comparative analysis was not possible, a review of the data from those years revealed similar results and trends.

### Key Findings:

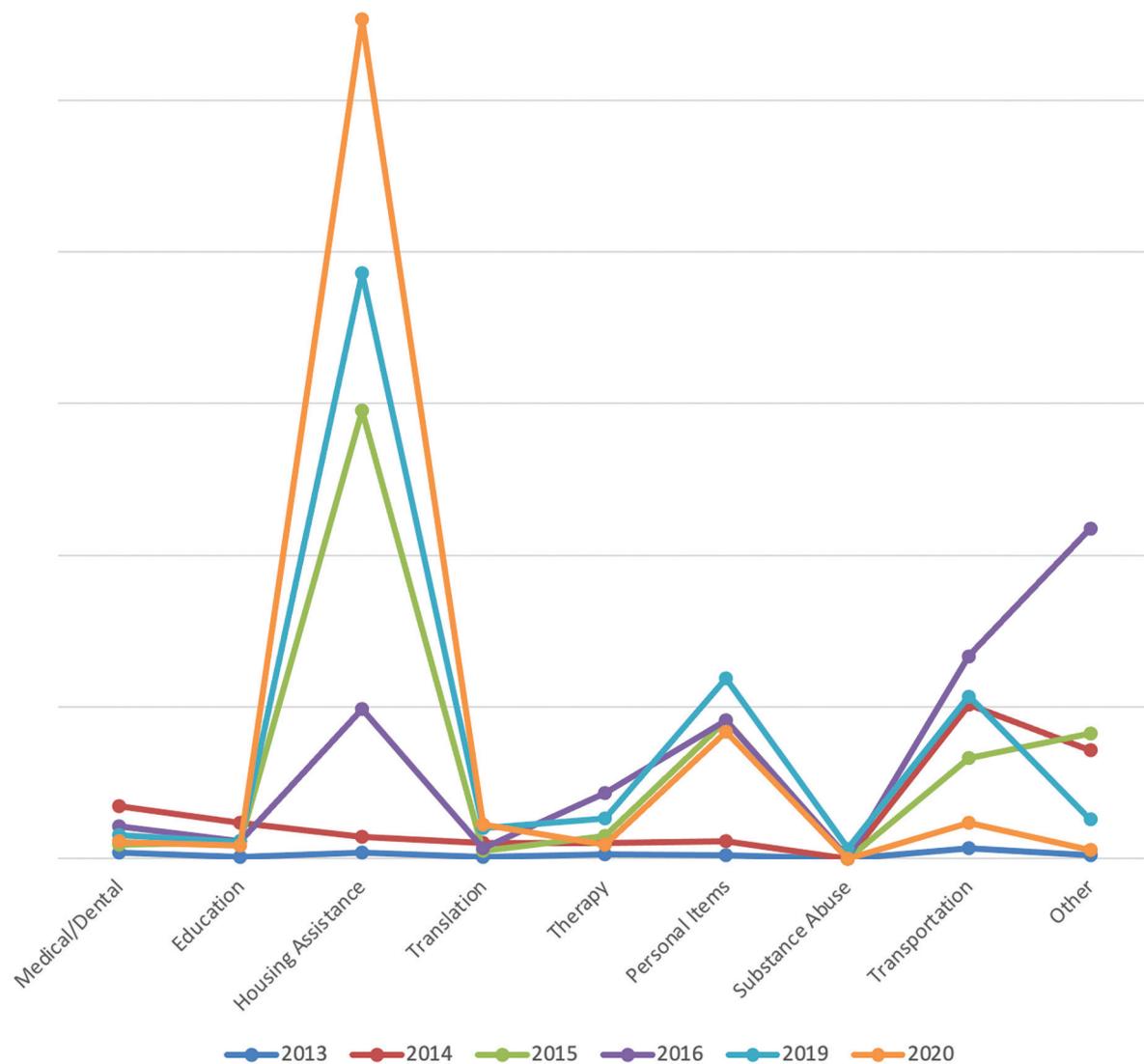
- Legal immigration relief services for foreign victims of human trafficking was in the top five until 2015. The number of foreign victims assisted has not significantly changed from year to year. The steady increase among the U.S. victims shifted the victim demographic percentage significantly, which also correlates to the types of service needs that may differ between foreign and U.S. victims in response.
- Criminal justice advocacy started off as one of the bottom needs, but gradually climbed over the years. It broke into the top five in 2016 and remained there until 2020. Although the number of referrals made from prosecution was high in 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, much of the work helping victims navigate the criminal justice system process was slowed significantly as investigations and the court system were unable to move at the same pre-COVID-19 levels.
- Therapy services increased in 2020. At this time, the reasons remain unknown for this increase and more time is needed to see if it continues to grow, or if it was just a result of the pandemic affecting mental health more than usual. Therapy is an area that needs to continue to be explored and to get a better understanding on why it is not higher on the services list that victims want to engage in, as the mental and emotional health and well-being of victims are very apparent in the aftercare process.
- In the years that housing assistance was higher, transportation assistance was lower. This potentially shows that when access to housing in Orange County was limited, the need for relocation assistance and transportation assistance increases. This correlation is important for the OCHTTF to consider as Orange County is a destination location for human trafficking victimization; approximately 80 percent of victims are not from Orange County.

The assistance provided to victims are delivered within either an emergency response or case management framework. All of the victims are provided emergency services, with typically beginning basic physiological needs such as food, clothing, shelter, and emotional support. Not all of the victims will then proceed with comprehensive case management services with the purposes of moving them closer towards goals of independent living and self-sufficiency. Some victims will begin to take part in criminal court cases. All services are provided in the style of community case



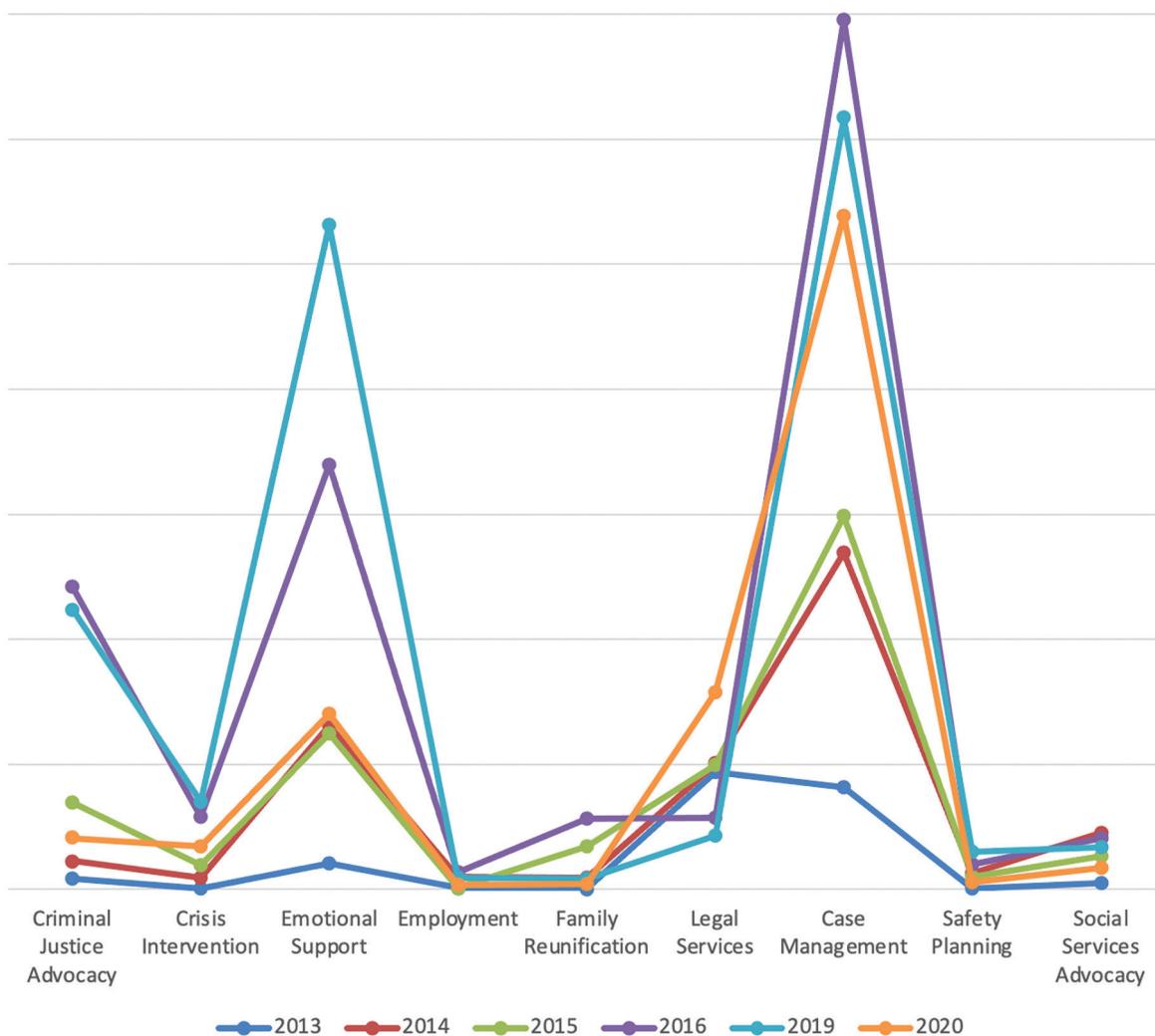
management, where the ability to receive services is not contingent or attached to being part of a housing program and/or a criminal case. In any criminal case, Waymakers and The Salvation Army will continue to work with the victim no matter where they are placed and remain as a consistent anchor and support system. If a victim is not involved in a court case and is relocated outside of the county, the OCHTTF service providers will work with the destination location to identify support systems.

The top two service needs provided to all victims of human trafficking over the past 10 years has been case management and emotional support/crisis counseling. These services have remained consistent throughout the years and Victim Advocates and Case Managers have spent the most time and attention on these service needs. Fluctuating throughout the years, but still considered high victim service needs, include financial assistance, housing assistance, transportation assistance, and other referrals to community partners for resources to help support the comprehensive case management.



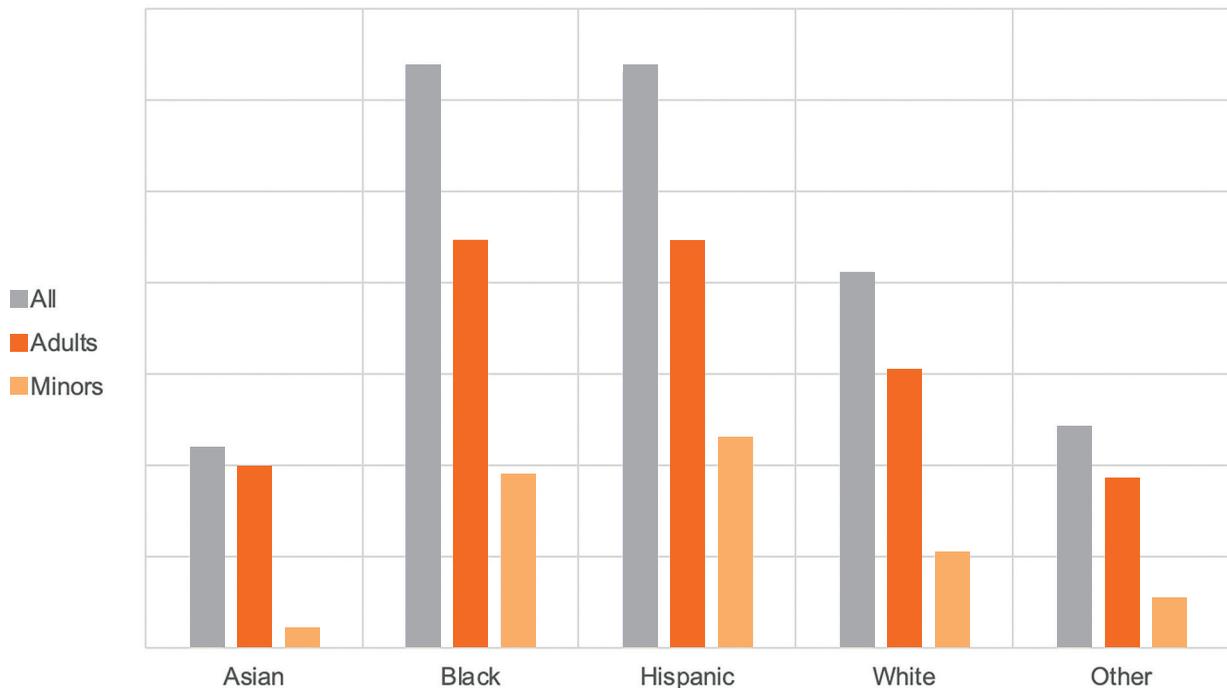
Comprehensive Victim Services Chart 1.1





*Comprehensive Victim Services Chart 1.2*

The **Victim Racial and Ethnic** chart and table reflect victims assisted between 2016 and 2020. Human trafficking crosses all racial, ethnic, gender, socio-economic and cultural lines. Human trafficking is about profit and abuse, it does not discriminate as long as it can sell. While it is important to emphasize that anyone can be a victim of trafficking or a targeted demographic based on their background, it is equally important to understand how racial and cultural dynamics intersect with human trafficking. An effective victim-centered and trauma-informed delivery of services must take into account both the collective history of trauma within a social, ethnic, and/or racial group and continue to prioritize individualized services rather than a one-size-fits-all model.



|              | Asian & Pacific Islander | African American/ Black | Hispanic/ Latino | Caucasian/ White | Other/Mixed Race |
|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>All</b>   | <b>10%</b>               | <b>30%</b>              | <b>30%</b>       | <b>19%</b>       | <b>11%</b>       |
| <b>Adult</b> | 13%                      | 29%                     | 26%              | 20%              | 12%              |
| <b>Minor</b> | 4%                       | 31%                     | 38%              | 18%              | 9%               |

*Victim Racial and Ethnic Chart and Table*

**Key Findings:**

- Human trafficking crosses all racial and ethnic lines; however, African Americans or Blacks have been the victims most identified especially in regard to sex trafficking.
- Hispanic and Latino victims are equally vulnerable to labor and sex trafficking.
- Cultural and language barriers make it very challenging to investigate and assist foreign national victims, in particular foreign national victims from Asian countries.



*Human Trafficking International Map*

The **Human Trafficking International Map** reflects the 39 countries of origin of all victims identified in Orange County. The **Human Trafficking International Table** reflects the 38 countries outside of the United States where foreign national victims originated. It also compares the foreign delegation country representation that have been trained by the OCHTTF as part of a training and technical assistance exchange program with the U.S. State Department. The TIP (Trafficking in Persons) Report tier rank column states latest country tier rankings from the 2020 TIP Report. The countries are measured in Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 2 Watch List or Tier 3 based on the work made in the areas of protection, prosecution, and prevention. Tier 1 level are countries whose governments fully meet the Trafficking Victim's Protection Act's (TVPA) minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking. Tier 3 level are countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards and not making significant efforts to do so.



## Key Findings

Of the foreign national victims identified in Orange County, the top two countries are Mexico and the Philippines.

- Fraud and “debt bondage” often go hand in hand in the initial stages of a trafficking scheme. Debt bondage refers to the supposed debt incurred by a foreign national (e.g. fees for transportation, boarding, food, interest, fines for missing quotas, and charges for “bad behavior”). The amount of the debt is not controlled by the victim, and the perpetrator manipulates the distribution of any “income” in such a way that the individual is trapped in a cycle of debt that he or she can never pay down.
- Most foreign victims are undocumented by the time they are identified. However, for many it did not start out that way, as they had legal paperwork to come to the U.S. often arranged by the smuggling and trafficking networks. Traffickers have no intention of renewing the legal status of their victims; traffickers understand that once the paperwork expires, the undocumented status of their victims makes them easier to control.
- Labor trafficking victims identified in Orange County have mostly been embroiled in domestic servitude or forced restaurant work.
- There continues to be a lack of understanding between labor exploitation and labor trafficking that would move a matter to be addressed civilly or criminally.
- Difference between human smuggling and human trafficking still being confused and words interchanged as if the same meaning, including by media and professionals.

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING INTERNATIONAL TABLE

| VICTIMS        | DELEGATIONS  | TIP REPORT TIER |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Armenia        |              | 2 Watch List    |
| Australia      |              | 1               |
|                | Afghanistan  | 3               |
|                | Algeria      | 3               |
|                | Bangladesh   | 2               |
| Brazil         |              | 2               |
| Bulgaria       |              | 2               |
| China          |              | 3               |
| Costa Rica     |              | 2               |
| Egypt          | Egypt        | 2               |
| Eritrea        |              | 3               |
| Ethiopia       |              | 2               |
| Finland        |              | 1               |
| France         |              | 1               |
|                | Germany      | 2               |
| Ghana          |              | 2               |
| Guatemala      |              | 2               |
| Guinea         |              | 2 Watch List    |
| Honduras       |              | 2               |
|                | Hong Kong    | 2 Watch List    |
| India          | India        | 2               |
| Indonesia      |              | 2               |
| Iran           |              | 3               |
| Iraq           | Iraq         | 2               |
| Japan          |              | 2               |
| Jordan         | Jordan       | 2 Watch List    |
| Kenya          |              | 2               |
| Korea, North   |              | 3               |
| Korea, South   | Korea, South | 1               |
|                | Kosovo       | 2               |
|                | Kuwait       | 2               |
|                | Lebanon      | 2               |
|                | Libya        | Special Case    |
| Lithuania      |              | 1               |
|                | Malaysia     | 2 Watch List    |
| Mexico         | Mexico       | 2               |
| Nepal          | Nepal        | 2               |
| Nicaragua      |              | 3               |
| Nigeria        |              | 2 Watch List    |
|                | Oman         | 2               |
| Panama         |              | 2               |
| Philippines    |              | 1               |
|                | Qatar        | 2               |
| Romania        |              | 2 Watch List    |
|                | Saudi Arabia |                 |
| Spain          |              | 1               |
|                | Sri Lanka    | 2 Watch List    |
| Sudan          | Sudan        | 2 Watch List    |
| Taiwan         | Taiwan       | 1               |
| Thailand       | Thailand     | 2               |
|                | Tunisia      | 2               |
| United Kingdom |              | 1               |
| Vietnam        | Vietnam      | 2 Watch List    |
| <b>38</b>      | <b>26</b>    |                 |



The Anaheim Police Department's partnership with Waymakers to combat human trafficking was entirely new territory for APD's Special Operations Bureau. The two organizations working together could not be more different in philosophy, communication style and mission on how to approach the problem of human trafficking. And yet, working together became the first goal. Despite systemic differences, investigators and advocates set on a course to learn from each other to find ways to best serve victims and hold perpetrators accountable. Finding common ground was a priority. The initial strategy was through

a problem-oriented policing approach which included an examination of calls for service related to prostitution. Using the problem analysis triangle, which reflects on the offender, place, and victim as the "walls" of the triangle, APD scrutinized their data and gathered information from Waymakers and arrived at a groundbreaking realization. What they thought was prostitution, or females exchanging sex for money; was actually human trafficking, a violent crime when a person compels, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion another person to engage in commercial sex acts. With APD moving into an understanding that, while prostitution does indeed exist in their community, the problem that they had been missing all along was bigger, fiercer, and hiding in plain sight. APD boldly moved into an arena where very few police departments had gone before, or frankly, even since. They formalized their commitment to combating human trafficking in all of Orange County and joined Waymakers as co-chairs of the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force and have continued this collaboration for the past ten years.

The course change did not come overnight as any systemic change often moves at an incredibly slow rate. In 2010, the assignment of working with Waymakers landed with the Anaheim Vice Detail. Initially, the vice detail's strategy for addressing the pimping and human trafficking problem was to continue to conduct "prostitution stings." They would inquire of those detained if they were being pimped or trafficked. Inevitably the strategy failed as nothing had changed from the sex worker's perspective. The victims continued to follow their pimp's direction to not cooperate with law enforcement and any negative experience that their pimp told them to believe would happen to them was unknowingly reinforced by the police to make the pimp and traffickers come off as the ones who were right all along. The victim's mistrust of the police remained, when they found themselves being arrested at the end of the police contact. Any ground gained for any future attempts to gain a victims' cooperation was lost.



## “First” U.S. Victim

This strategy remained until April 2011 when the vice detail conducted a sting specifically in an attempt to find human trafficking victims. They ultimately contacted a young-adult sex worker. Not surprisingly, the victim did not disclose having a trafficker and was arrested for solicitation. Vice investigators noticed the victim had several injuries during the jail booking process. They conducted further investigation and the victim eventually disclosed her nightmare at the hands of her trafficker. She described how he lured her from out of state with promises of a relationship and a good life in Southern California. Her dream was shattered when he told her he was a pimp and expected her to prostitute herself for his financial benefit. She was now away from home, away from any immediate support system, and under 24/7 direct monitoring by her trafficker to avoid seeking help from anyone. Any resistance in following the rules resulted in unspeakable violence. She believed she would die at the hands of her trafficker, yet at the same time remained fearful for her life if she disclosed her situation to the police when they initially contacted her. For these victims, it was like taking a gamble with life and death situations every day no matter which way it went, because nothing ever seemed within their control. There was no easy way out that helped them feel safe. Like many victims, the post-traumatic stress disorder and healing process is something that they have to live with for the rest of their life. Now a decade later, that “first” U.S. sex trafficking victim discovered shares:

**“ I thank the Anaheim Police Department greatly for saving my life. Police are what you make them out to be. They are a great help to society. I also want to thank my Victim Advocate who helped me in every way possible. Most of all, I want to thank law enforcement and victim advocates now for giving me the opportunity to come train and speak about my story. ”**

As the human trafficking laws for law enforcement and prosecutors was still too new at the time and had never been tested before in criminal court, charges of human trafficking were not filed in this case. However, other felony charges including torture and attempted murder were added to the list of crimes inflicted on the victim. The trafficker was found guilty by a jury and will be spending a very long time in state prison.

The investigative strategy was reexamined after this case and changes had to be made quickly if further victims were to be prevented from falling through the gaps. Investigators moved forward in



developing new techniques when contacting victims and APD joined Waymakers for trainings to improve their understanding on how best to work with this victim population. Trainings included information on push and pull factors impacting victims of human trafficking, the cycle of violence, and how trauma impacts the brain and behavior. These were the formative years in transitioning into today's best-practice model of a victim-centered approach. This new approach called for a complete reversal in attitude upon initial contact. The vice detail was to treat anyone engaged in commercial sex acts as a potential victim of human trafficking until proven otherwise. It was not the perfect solution, but the partners were faced with the experiential truth that the first victim that they identified was more cooperative when they showed some understanding of her trauma. While many victims remained uncooperative, and still do so to this day, more are now disclosing with investigators compared to the past. Enhanced victim cooperation coupled with new investigative techniques, allowed APD to focus on the exploiter and facilitate more arrests for pimping, pandering, and human trafficking. The work was so transformative that specific chatter amongst the trafficking networks stated, "Orange County had it backwards. They were arresting the pimps and letting the hoes go." The paradigm shift had taken place and the traffickers had been warned; APD, in cooperation with Waymakers, were now poised to make the biggest impact on human trafficking that Orange County had even seen. This report is our ten-year story.

### Key Findings:

- Even when victims remained uncooperative after using a victim-centered approach by law enforcement, new investigative techniques revealed that the vast majority were under a pimp or trafficker's control and not independent sex workers.
- Victims are required to work every day with no days off, including during their menstrual cycle. Daily money quotas can range from \$500 to \$1,200 with 5 to 15 customers per day. Quotas were set based on the wealth of the communities the victim worked out of or the customers in that area. Orange County usually demanded a higher price in comparison to neighboring counties. Traffickers kept the money.
- When victims followed the rules, they were rewarded with food, rest, a nice manicure, and "words of positive affirmation and affection." Tattoo branding is a means of control by the pimp but can also be viewed as a form of acceptance and value by the victim that they belonged somewhere and to someone who "wanted" them.



- Narcotics such as cocaine, heroin and meth are rarely used as a means to control the victims identified in Orange County. Due to the highly addictive qualities, these drugs will eventually have more control over the victim than the trafficker which causes problems for “business stability.” The physical manifestations from habitual usage of these drugs appear on the face and body and make it more difficult for the victim to be a viable “product” to bring in money. Substances such as marijuana, however, are commonly used to provide a calming and sedating effect to numb out feelings, including the feelings associated with rape trauma syndrome.
- Traffickers de-humanize victims by mentally breaking them down further (knowing their prior abusive history) and then rebuilding them back up as the victim’s savior. The trafficker’s control of every aspect of a victim’s life and decision-making was commonplace, including how much to ask sex purchasers to pay for, what to wear, when they can eat, and when they are allowed to sleep. This complete dependency for all means of survival and emotional connection, is often referred to as trauma bonding, and is difficult to break between a trafficker and victim.

Overcoming jurisdiction issues that pimps and traffickers are able to take advantage of to stay ahead of law enforcement called for a county wide response. After much work and effort between law enforcement and prosecutors to figure out ways to work these types of investigations and prosecutions, the Anaheim Police Department agreed to be the lead law enforcement agency for the multi-agency law enforcement team created in 2014.

The new team of Task Force Investigators began the work with a firmer understanding of the victim-centered philosophy and the mission set by the existing collaborative. With the problem at such a large scale, priorities had to be set. However, just because certain parts of the system had changed in its response it did not mean victims understood it. The following case example illustrates the extent victims are willing to go to protect their trafficker and the new focus by investigators to continue to bring perpetrators to justice.

In 2018, the Task Force was conducting operations on the street to look for victims. A young female was observed by investigators who they thought was a minor and immediately contacted. She was 18-years old and uncooperative. She declined any assistance offered by law enforcement and victim advocates. She was released and the investigation continued in an attempt to identify her pimp. A short time later, a male picked her up and was detained. Both were interviewed separately; the female was a bit more cooperative with investigators and described the male as her boyfriend.



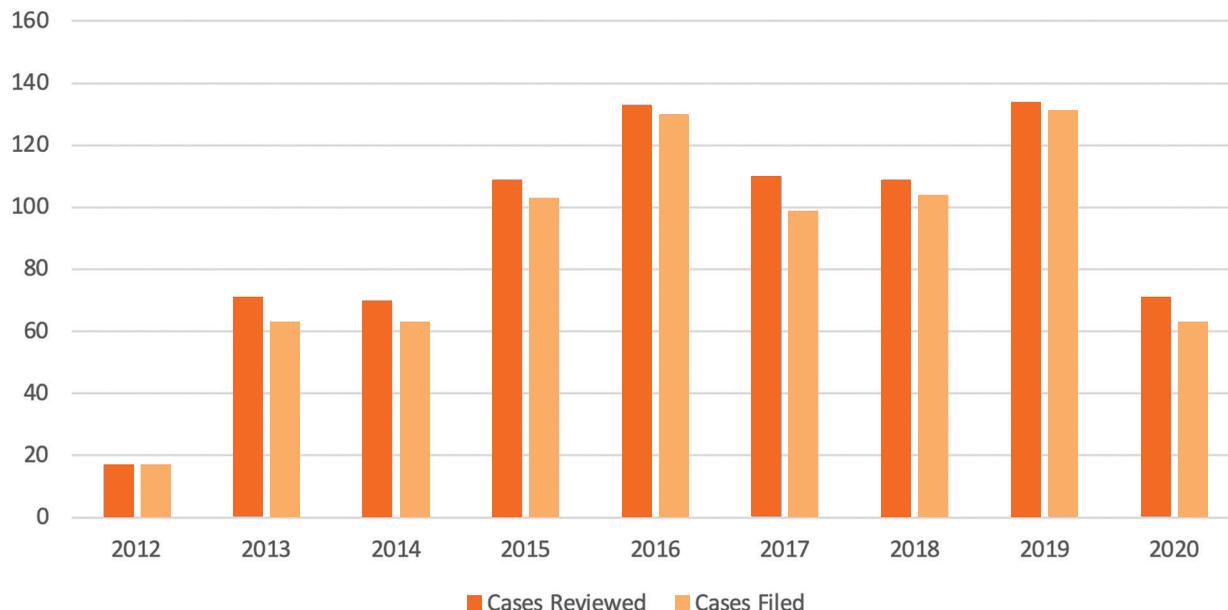
However, at some point she realized her boyfriend may go to jail, so she grabbed her cell phone out of the hands of the investigator and threw it into oncoming traffic. She then fought with police in an attempt to leave. The male ended up being arrested for pimping, and she was transported to the police station where a victim interview room was created as part of the victim-centered approach. In the subsequent interview, she told investigators they were ruining her life because he was the best thing that had ever happened to her. This was not an unusual response from victims, especially young adult and minor victims. However, using both the victim-centered and trauma-informed approach, investigators were able to exhibit more patience in their interaction; and cause to wonder what horrific experiences she has been exposed to or survived through that the current violence perpetrated against her is perceived as a better life. While not all contact with law enforcement will result in a success story; the new approach does not go unnoticed. A young lady was brought into the victim-centered interview room at APD, and when she noticed the painted walls, the couch, the stuffed animal and blankets, she confusedly stepped back out of the room and exclaimed, “What kind of police department is this?!”



In the past decade, the growth of everyone’s understanding of the victims and their response to human trafficking has been nothing short of monumental. It has been a long and hard journey. The work put forth by victim advocates, social workers, victim/survivors, law enforcement, and prosecutors to learn from each other, challenge each other, teach each other, and support each other, in the name of the anti-human trafficking movement in Orange County has been instrumental in our success. A paradigm shift is only possible when dedicated people are willing to set aside differences, willing to work together, because they see the need for change as a moral imperative. These are the foundational principals of the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force and that has made all the difference for victims and our community as a whole.



## HUMAN TRAFFICKING PROSECUTION UNIT



As pimps and traffickers are being arrested, requests for filing of charges sent to the District Attorney’s Office revealed the next systemic barrier. Prosecutors viewed the cases through the lens of having to convince the court and jury to find the defendants guilty. All major barriers for prosecutors to prove a case by the high standard of “Beyond a Reasonable Doubt,” as well as working with a highly traumatized and uncooperative victim population not surprisingly found these cases being rejected. Two initial prosecutors from the felony panel attempted to understand the problem and embraced the new approach proposed by APD’s Vice Detail. They worked with law enforcement to further fine tune the investigative techniques being implemented to increase the chances for effective prosecutions, while at the same time learning to understand the role of human trafficking victim advocates outside of their main function in criminal justice advocacy. This new enhanced partnership proved to be successful.



The human trafficking prosecutions at the Orange County District Attorney's Office (OCDA) began in 2012 with only two prosecutors. Less than a year later, the DA's Office created a vertical prosecution unit, Human Trafficking and Exploitation (HEAT), in 2013. The closing act had formally joined the Task Force to hold perpetrators accountable. The diligent work and reputation of Orange County's law enforcement and prosecutors hit the streets as pimps and traffickers continued to warn each other to "Stay away from Orange County. They ain't no joke." Since 2012, the OCDA's Office has prosecuted an estimated total of 773 cases for felony charges of human trafficking, pimping and pandering. Between 2012 and 2020, 94 percent of cases reviewed were filed, and of the cases that went to jury trial 95 percent received a guilty verdict.

### Key Findings:

- Physical violence was not at the level or scale as originally believed to be, at least in the form of obvious and sustained injuries in visible areas. It was discovered that a common technique of traffickers was to instill fear in the victim through various means. In this way, the need for continuous acts of physical violence was not needed. Violence was most often committed as punishment for not following the rules, not making the daily money quota, or used as an example for other victims to observe the consequences; not unlike practices exerted by American slave owners in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Task Force learned that visible injuries made it more difficult to put a victim "on the market" further validating the need for alternative means of control and punishment. Common forms of punishment or torture included submerging victims in ice baths and then forcing them to sleep naked and uncovered on the floor or locking victims in a closet for days to sit in their own urine and feces.
- Movement is not required to prove trafficking, but it is part of the method of operation of this crime. Depending on the locations where sex trafficking may be occurring (e.g., street, hotels, residential brothels, massage parlors, etc.) the victims are brought into Orange County for a couple of days to several months before they are moved again.
- Advancements in encrypted technology that hindered investigations, social media platforms, and phone apps as tools of "human interaction" at the fingertips of vulnerable adults and unsupervised children created a space that predators could thrive. A single internet-based device introduced regular interaction with people across the globe; families inadvertently "allowed" strangers into their home and into their child's bedroom with the door closed.



- The trafficking networks have been savvy and responsive. During periods when law enforcement and prosecutors were paying close attention to, and addressing human trafficking on the streets, activities appeared to have adjusted and decreased. During these times, fewer minor victims were identified and older victims, more attached to their trafficker, were sent in their place. The money to be gained by traffickers in Orange County has been too good to avoid permanently, and the minor victims return. Over the past ten years, an average of 27 percent of all victims identified have been children and teens.

In November 2012, California voters overwhelmingly passed Proposition 35—Ban on Human Trafficking and Sex Slavery. Eighty-one percent of the voters supported Prop 35, which increased prison sentences for human traffickers, added sex offender registration and some extra protection measures for victims. In 2014, the new human trafficking laws under Prop 35 were tested in the case of *People v. Garcia & Robinson*. This case involved the sex trafficking of a 14-year-old runaway girl from Arizona. The jury returned with a guilty verdict on felony charges of human trafficking. This was the first human trafficking case that helped gauge the new laws used by law enforcement, as well as the public perception of sex trafficking versus prostitution. Today, the prosecution team has expanded to include five Deputy District Attorneys, three DA Investigators and a paralegal. Currently prosecuting approximately 125 felony cases, the OCDA's Office is committed to protecting human trafficking victims and the community by prosecuting human traffickers, pimps and sex purchasers. By working collaboratively to support vulnerable victims and to educate the community, the OCDA strives to elucidate the horrors of this type of victimization with the goal of prevention.

As reflected in the *Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit* chart, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected the number of cases submitted to the Human Trafficking Unit. While the ability to investigate these cases was limited, the filing percentage remained steady. The pandemic crisis increased the vulnerability of victims and at the same time, decreased the ability of law enforcement to identify them. While 2020 presented many challenges, one extraordinary victory is worth noting; the California Supreme Court made a ruling on the OCDA's brief on *People v. Moses*.



## People v. Moses—California Supreme Court Ruling—December 2020

This case tested the boundaries of California’s trafficking of minor laws. In 2016, the OCDA prosecuted a perpetrator who attempted to prostitute out a minor over the internet. The controversial element was that the minor, was really an undercover officer; so was this a “completed count” of human trafficking under the law or could it only qualify for the lesser charge of “attempt”? Under Prop 35, human traffickers can be sentenced to a maximum 12 years in state prison for completing the act of prostituting out a minor without the use of force.

In *Moses*, an undercover officer posed on social media as a fictitious 17-year-old female, and the Defendant subsequently recruited the victim to work for him. The Fourth District Court of Appeal ruled that because there was never a minor actually involved, Moses could only be sentenced to a maximum sentence of six years in state prison. The Orange County District Attorney’s Office sent a letter to the California Supreme Court asking the Court to review the case on its own, and the Supreme Court accepted that invitation. In December 2020, the California Supreme Court unanimously upheld the verdict in the case.

**“ We believed in this law all along, and we believed in the intent of California’s voters to increase penalties for human trafficking, including those who prey on children. The Orange County District Attorney’s Office has been unwavering in its commitment to investigating and prosecuting human traffickers and protecting our children. The California Supreme Court unanimously interpreted a voter initiative in the way it was intended—to allow law enforcement to continue to have the strongest tools possible to combat child predators. Children across California will be safer as a result. ”**

**—Todd Spitzer, Orange County District Attorney**



The number of victims identified by law enforcement went from zero in 2010 to well over a hundred in the following years, with an unexpected number of children and teens forced into commercial sexual exploitation. Through the leadership of APD, law enforcement involved in the OCHTTF began to gain a more confident understanding of the crucial difference between prostitution and human trafficking. The collaborative educated us and then began to train others to avoid the common mistake of using the terms “prostitution” and “trafficking” interchangeably. With a firm

grasp of the legal and criminal definitions of trafficking, combined with the passage of Prop 35, the law enforcement and prosecution arms of the OCHTTF had the necessary tools to change the fight against human trafficking in Orange County forever.

At this same time, Waymakers revealed the results of an internal review of cases to share and better understand the needs of victims served in Orange County. Part of what prompted the need to take a deeper look was the rise in minor victims (victims under the age of 18); trends in pre-trafficking stories; and Waymakers’ desire to address the distorted illusions of the commercial sex industry as portrayed in the media and popular culture imagery.



### Key Findings of the 2012 Study:

- 63 percent of all reviewed cases were minors when they were first trafficked or forced into a commercial sex act
- History of abuse was consistently prevalent: sexual, physical, substance, and psychological/emotional
- Sexual abuse was the leading abuse risk factor with 48 percent disclosing to their advocates
- For those who revealed child sexual abuse, 57 percent did not disclose it to a parent or guardian
- 67 percent grew up in single-parent homes
- 58 percent had run away from home and/or had been homeless at some point
- 29 percent dropped out of high school
- 71 percent were recruited by someone they knew, with 40 percent stating that the recruiter was someone that they thought was their boyfriend
- Complex trauma is pervasive, as 92 percent had touched at least three of the five risk assessment categories with most of the victims hitting all five categories

Orange County Probation Department's role in the collaboration started very informally. CSEC (commercially sexually exploited children) was not yet truly understood, and minors were still being arrested and charged with prostitution, resulting in placement in juvenile hall. The early-working relationship between the OCHTTF and Probation was to find a way to provide services and support for these young girls while in juvenile hall. Victim Advocates were soon cleared for visitation and began regular visits to provide emotional support. As it turned out, in most instances, the youth were not visited by any family or other support people.

Continuous collaboration and the ongoing exchange of education, training and technical assistance amongst Task Force peers, brought about institutional change. Minors began to be assessed for human trafficking victimization and risk assessments for minors observed under Probation's care promptly began. Active communication between Probation and service-providing partners occurs



once a CSEC youth is booked into custody so that coordinating for an advocate and other needed services can begin immediately. With this notification system a Waymakers Human Trafficking Victim Advocate can respond usually within 24 hours. All partners are aware, that for many of the identified CSEC youth, they have learned that adults poised to support and love them, are capable of abuse, neglect, and deception. These youth have lived childhood experiences and trauma that have negatively impacted their development including, but not limited to, a distorted understanding of relationship dynamics, normalizing of violence and sex, inability to form trusting attachment, and negative self-worth. As such, in addition to victim services, each CSEC minor is assigned a dedicated CSEC Deputy Probation Officer who makes contact with the youth immediately while in custody and helps link the youth to services, as well as communicate with other agencies and services outside of the county when there is cross-jurisdiction issues. The Probation Department also implemented youth guidance programs inside juvenile hall with other non-profit organizations working to help improve the well-being of youth while in custody, including Ending the Game curriculum, art therapy, and CSEC programs with substance abuse.

In 2017, California law changed and prevented minors from being arrested and charged for prostitution. However, by that time the Task Force Investigators had already begun investigating cases through a human trafficking lens and had stopped making juvenile prostitution arrests by 2014. It was inconsistent with the victim-centered philosophy that was shaping the task force's response and did not sit well with other members of the task force to arrest minors on criminal charges of prostitution. This also meant that juvenile hall could no longer hold minors on those same charges. The law change did not, however, solve the on-going issue that still stands today; how to protect and keep minors safe...especially when their trafficker is not in custody. Probation's participation as a core Task Force partner was essential in helping to figure out plausible avenues to take into consideration that placed the life of a minor in the delicate balance between safety and freedom. Neither answer felt like the right one nor an easy one to make amongst partners. This was our impasse that we all agreed to disagree on and work out on a case-by-case basis. Even in disagreement, it did not stop the collaborative work.



**“ Children continue to be trafficked not only internationally, but in our own backyard. Even after being removed from their traffickers, the trauma and pain these children have suffered is very real, very complex, and unparalleled. Because of this, it is essential for the community to openly discuss and collaborate with each other in identifying our human trafficking victims and providing them with the space, support, and services to help them heal. Our goal should not only be to support these children and restore their voices, but to also bring awareness, prevention, and intervention to the discussion in order to break this cycle of abuse. ”**

**—Honorable Joanne Motoike, Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court,  
Orange County Superior Court**

In 2006, when Chief Justice Ronald M. George first appointed the California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care, he charged it with providing recommendations to the Judicial Council of California on the ways in which the courts and their child welfare partners could improve safety, permanency, well-being and fairness outcomes for children and families in the state. In 2011, the Blue Ribbon Commission invited the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force to provide education on the Human Trafficking of minors.

Early response from child welfare partners to the Task Force was informal and included a dedicated social worker who was helpful with important information whenever a minor was recovered. As the number of minor victims increased and the lack of information accessible to law enforcement and victim services needed to help identify the legal guardians became more and more apparent, the need for Social Services to join the Task Force became critical. Furthermore, in 2014, Senate Bill 855 clarified the Welfare and Institutions Code—WIC Section 300 to include CSEC as dependents who must be served by the child welfare system. SB855 also provided an optional CSEC Program, which provided California counties with funds for expenditures related to the costs of implementing prevention and intervention services for CSEC. The initial requirement for funding was to have a CSEC Committee establish a County Plan. Currently chaired by the SSA Children and Family Services Division Director as well as the Presiding Judge of Juvenile Court, this committee embarked to formalize collaborative response and support services to CSEC identified in Orange County. The OCHTTF, once again, came across a landscape of hurdles as we pushed the need



for systemic change. Jurisdiction issues relating to minors from other counties, legal rights of minors, protocols around emergency response, and capacity issues generated contentious debate over how, or even if, we could proceed. Leveraging the long-established partnerships with law enforcement and victim services, the overarching goal to improve services to CSEC and to better protect children prevailed. Social Services (SSA) folded in its expertise and leadership on CSEC, and they began to provide critical information regarding the child-welfare system history of an identified exploited minor; determined legal guardianship for these youth; and were able to secure quick placement and medical assessments. SSA mobilized a team of specialized social workers to respond to calls from the child abuse hotline and law enforcement. SSA also dedicated a Senior Social Worker whose role is committed to working with youth that have run away from their placement, many of which are victims of commercial sexual exploitation. This new partnership, together with the creation of GRACE (Generating Resources to Abolish Child Exploitation) Court, raised the bar on identifying and providing supportive services to children and teens who had become victims of human trafficking. GRACE Court, established in 2015, is overseen by the Presiding Judge of Juvenile Court and creates space for a multidisciplinary approach to meet the unique needs of each minor. The creativity of GRACE Court's approach includes the presence of a therapy dog, who sits inside the courtroom as a comforting presence for the youth.

In Orange County, the CSEC Steering Committee continues to engage stakeholders in Orange County working with children and youth affected by commercial sexual exploitation and is focused on finding better solutions to address the challenges that youth and caregivers face, and prevent those who are at risk to this very real issue. The CSEC Steering Committee has developed and implemented creative solutions for awareness including the recent relaunch of the Orange County Transportation Authority's (OCTA) "Be the One" campaign in 2017 with a specific focus on the sex trafficking of minors. The campaign deliverables included a press conference, bus tail signage on 10 OCTA Access buses, a video message in the John Wayne Airport



baggage terminal, the development and distribution of posters to campaign partners, social media messaging and the creation of a dedicated campaign website. The campaign is ongoing and continues to gain momentum throughout the community.

As a result of the expertise of the CSEC Steering Committee participants, a contract was created to provide specialized resources and support for children and transitional aged youth that are at risk of and those already identified as commercially sexually exploited. The

contract was awarded to Orangewood Foundation, which created Project CHOICE (Creating Healthy Opportunities and Inspiring Change through Empowerment). Project CHOICE empowers youth ages 11–21 years to take back their power of choice, through a survivor-centered and strengths-based approach, prioritizing the health, safety and stability of CSEC youth.

Currently the CSEC Steering Committee stakeholders are working on prevention curriculum in schools and developing medical protocols for CSEC and supporting caretakers. We continue to make great strides in serving these children. Through ongoing inter-agency collaboration, we will continue to identify and protect children who have been, or are at risk of, being lured into a life of exploitation. There is still much work to be done.



### Key Findings:

- In 2019 and 2020, 95 percent of youth suspected of being commercially sexually exploited had prior child welfare history.
- Increasing awareness and education on human trafficking and CSEC within social services and other fields that often intersect with youth increased the number of CSEC reported to the Orange County Child Abuse Registry.
- We know that any child can become a victim of commercial sexual exploitation; however, children who have a history of abuse or neglect, especially sexual abuse, are the most vulnerable and are at greater risk of being exploited. In Orange County in 2019 and 2020, all of the children recovered by law enforcement had a history of abuse or neglect in their background. Furthermore, in those same years, 30 percent of newly identified youth were already under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court.



### Recommendations for the next 10 years:

- Enhance the capacity of the current efforts from victim services, law enforcement, prosecution, social services, probation and all disciplines who are in a position to come across victims. Lack of institutional knowledge on this subject matter and heavy reliance on subject matter experts with credible experience are far and few between. Identify and distribute funding to expand and support training for the multi-disciplinary partners; hire and sustain experienced, bicultural staff; and development of specialized units and staff until institutional knowledge becomes more universal.
- Public health focus on prevention, exit strategy options and community reintegration is needed to reduce recidivism and the revolving door of victimization. Human trafficking is a serial crime versus a one-time occurrence and prevention strategies need to be built accordingly. Prevention education must include both male and female youth. Prevention programs only aimed at educating female youth on how to prevent themselves from sexual violence and trafficking without including strategies to divert youth from committing these acts of power, control, and violence is insufficient.
- Survivor input is crucial. Provide accessible and safe platforms for victim/survivors to provide feedback; have a voice in building and changing programming; actively participate in training service providers, law enforcement, and the community; and to speak out in order to advocate for others. Create space for victim/survivors to support each other and to share successful resiliency practices with one another.
- Human trafficking work that is victim-centered and trauma-informed requires every-day intentional efforts including debunking myths and correcting misinformation shared through social media; collecting, analyzing, and sharing data to improve service provision; offering opportunities to local media to learn more about human trafficking; and highlighting underserved trafficking populations. Male victims of sex trafficking and individuals affected by labor trafficking are often overlooked when it is necessary to allocate scarce resources to proactive investigations. Additional funding to support an increase in capacity to grow the breadth of services is an ongoing need.



## A Note of Thanks

Many thanks to all of the individuals and organizations who have helped to lead or support the work needed to combat human trafficking in Orange County with the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force. Each area of the work as it relates to protecting victims, prosecuting offenders and preventing the cycle of further victimization is equally important.

We knew we could not have done it on our own in 2004, again in 2010 and still today in 2021. It may have started with a small group of professionals who aligned together and reached across the table to expand everyone's expertise and working knowledge, but it has expanded into an entire community response filled with purpose and graciousness.

On the difficult days, when we all have wondered if we've done enough or made a difference, it is reassuring to know we were not alone in this fight. We are all in this together — we help to pick each other up when needed, so that we may all stand strong to fight another day.

Our sincere thanks!