

HSD'S Current Response To Commercial Sexual Exploitation

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Agenda

- HSD Overview
- HSD Mayor's Office on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault (MODVSA)
- Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Terms
- Survivor-Centered CSE Services
- CSE Investments
- Considerations
- Coordinated Effort Against Sexual Exploitation (CEASE) Workgroup
- Next Step



HSD Overview

The Human Services Department's (HSD) mission is to **connect people with resources and solutions during times of need** so we can all live, learn, work and take part in strong, healthy communities.

HSD's six impact areas are:

- Preparing Youth for Success
- Supporting Affordability and Livability
- Addressing Homelessness
- Promoting Public Health
- **Supporting Safe Communities**
- Promoting Healthy Aging



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HSD MODVSA

- Since 1989, has led the City's response to gender-based violence
- Convener, funder, and thought leader in response to Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Facilitates Sex Buyers Intervention Program
- In 2024, MODVSA focused its efforts on leading dialogue with community partners, law enforcement, and relevant stakeholders around the topic of CSE in Seattle



CSE Terms

Commercial Sexual Exploitation: The exchange of sex acts, often driven by force, fraud, or coercion, for resources like shelter, money, or affection.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC): Any minor who trades sex is considered a victim of CSEC – regardless of force, fraud, a third party.

Sellers: Often called survivors of exploitation, trafficking victims, sex workers, prostituted persons, or those who trade sex (also escorts, dancers, etc.).

Buyers: Referred to as johns, customers, or solicitors.

Traffickers/Pimps: Known as exploiters, pimps, 3rd party facilitators, or promoters.

Survivor-Centered CSE Services

- **Autonomy and Empowerment**
 - Survivors lead their own healing journey
 - Can make informed choices without pressure (i.e., voluntary participation)
- **Confidentiality and Transparency**
 - Establish transparency in decision making to build trust
 - Clear boundaries and protect client confidentiality
- **Trauma-informed Care**
 - Behavior as an intelligent response to trauma or way to get needs met
 - Services do not re-traumatize clients
- **Culturally Appropriate**
 - Emphasizes survivor-led programs, all services are inclusive and affirming
 - Any approach must balance enforcement with survivor-centered, trauma-informed services



Investments for Survivors of CSE - \$3,338,454

Funded Strategies:

1. Mobile Flexible Advocacy
2. Shelter/Housing
3. Outreach and Education and 24-hour hotlines
4. Therapeutic and Medical Advocacy

Contracted Providers

1. Real Escape from the Sex Trade (REST)
2. Organization for Prostitution Survivors (OPS)
3. Aurora Commons
4. Aurora Commons (S.H.E) Clinic
5. YouthCare
6. Sex Workers Outreach Project
7. YWCA



Considerations

1. Holistic Solutions:

- A coordinated, city-wide response is critical to addressing both immediate safety concerns and the systemic drivers of exploitation.
- Balance enforcement with survivor-centered, trauma-informed services.

2. Actions:

- **Survivor Support:** Expand shelter, advocacy, and harm-reduction services.
- **Demand Reduction:** Focus law enforcement efforts for online buyers and traffickers.
- **Public Awareness:** Implement campaigns to educate the public and reduce stigma around survivors.
- **Collaboration:** Utilize CEASE and other coordinated efforts to align stakeholders and strategies.



Coordinated Effort Against Sexual Exploitation (CEASE) Workgroup

History

- Led and facilitated by HSD MODVSA, in partnership with the Seattle Police Department (SPD), the Seattle City Attorney's Office (SCAO), the Seattle Municipal Court (SMC), and other stakeholders
- Formerly known as Seattle-KCSERN

Purpose

- Organize a unified approach to addressing CSE in our community.

Next Step: Human Trafficking Prevention Month Proclamation

- January is National Human Trafficking Prevention Month.
- Established in 2010, this observance affirms our ongoing commitment to protecting the freedom and equality of all individuals and strengthens our efforts to root out human trafficking in all its forms.
- Next week, the Mayor and Council will proclaim January as **Human Trafficking Prevention Month in Seattle**.

