



IMPROVING RESPONSES AND OUTCOMES FOR SURVIVORS OF CSEC IN FOSTER CARE

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ABOUT US



The Children's Advocacy Centers of Georgia (CACGA) Commercial Sexual Exploitation Response (CSEC) Team is the State of Georgia's Recognized Enhanced Collaborative Model for responding to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. The mission of the Team is to serve as the central point of contact for victims of CSEC and the agencies that support them, for a more coordinated and effective system response to commercial sexual exploitation. The Response Team provides direct services for victims in the form of assessment, intensive case management, and advocacy; and facilitate training and outreach to help build infrastructure and community capacity.



The Wilbanks Child Endangerment and Sexual Exploitation (CEASE) Clinic is the first of its kind in the nation, representing survivors of child sexual abuse, exploitation, and trafficking in civil lawsuits, juvenile court dependency proceedings, and post-conviction relief matters. The clinic not only provides direct representation to survivors, but also serves as a teaching, training, policy, and research center as part of the University of Georgia School of Law.

REFERRAL

Hotline or Website

Intake Specialist will receive all referrals
and disseminate to the appropriate
Regional Coordinator.



THE ASSESSMENT PHASE

Conflict check all referrals on Collaborate.
Contact referral source to conduct CSE-IT.
Determine MDT partners involved with youth.
Gather history/information from MDT and family
Work with CAC to set up forensic interview medical exam.



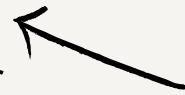
CSEC RESPONSE TEAM PROCESS

CONFIRMED

remain open for a
minimum of 4 months to
ensure risk reduction.
CSEC response team
can assist with
placement finding for
CONFIRMED youth.
Confirmed youth are
staffed at Statewide
MDT.

NONCONFIRMED

May remain open for 60
days after decision to
ensure services are
provided.



ADVOCACY & COORDINATION

Regional Care Coordinator
will work with Family
Advocate and MDT partners
to assist in service
coordination



THE DETERMINATION PHASE

Regional coordinator will use information gathered from MDT
partners and information gathered during the forensic
interview to make a CSEC determination
Determination is based on a totality of information is not
dependent on youth disclosure
Assessment form is completed and sent to MDT partners

DEFINITIONS



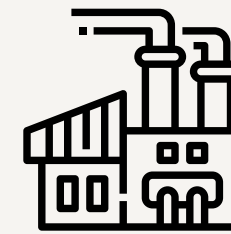
HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Umbrella term for both labor and sex trafficking. \$150 billion industry worldwide. \$99 billion profits stem from CSEC



SEX TRAFFICKING

The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act



LABOR TRAFFICKING

The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery

CSEC DEFINED



DEFINITION

A range of crimes and activities involving the sexual abuse or exploitation of a child for the financial benefit of any person or in exchange for anything of value (including monetary and non-monetary benefits) given or received by any person.

O.C.G.A. § 15-11-2 (70)

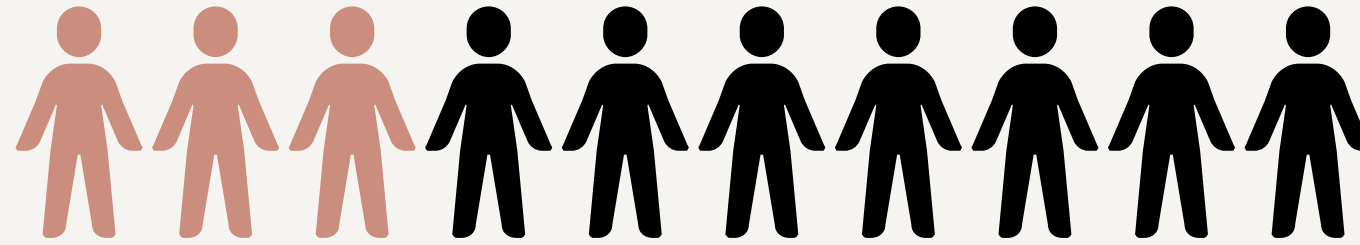
Conduct by a caregiver or other person responsible for the care of a child who allows, permits, encourages, or requires a child to engage in sexual servitude or sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing any medium depicting such conduct.

O.C.G.A. § 16-5-46(a)(8)(B)

Sexually explicit conduct or performance involving sexually explicit conduct for which anything of value is directly or indirectly given, promised to, or received by any individual, which conduct is induced or obtained by coercion or perception from an individual who is under the age of 18 years.

Where a victim is under 18, the elements of force, fraud, or coercion do not need to be present.

CSEC



3 OUT OF 10 CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

One study of girls ages 12-18 who were adjudicated delinquent and were victims of CSEC reported that 35% had been in foster care.

72%

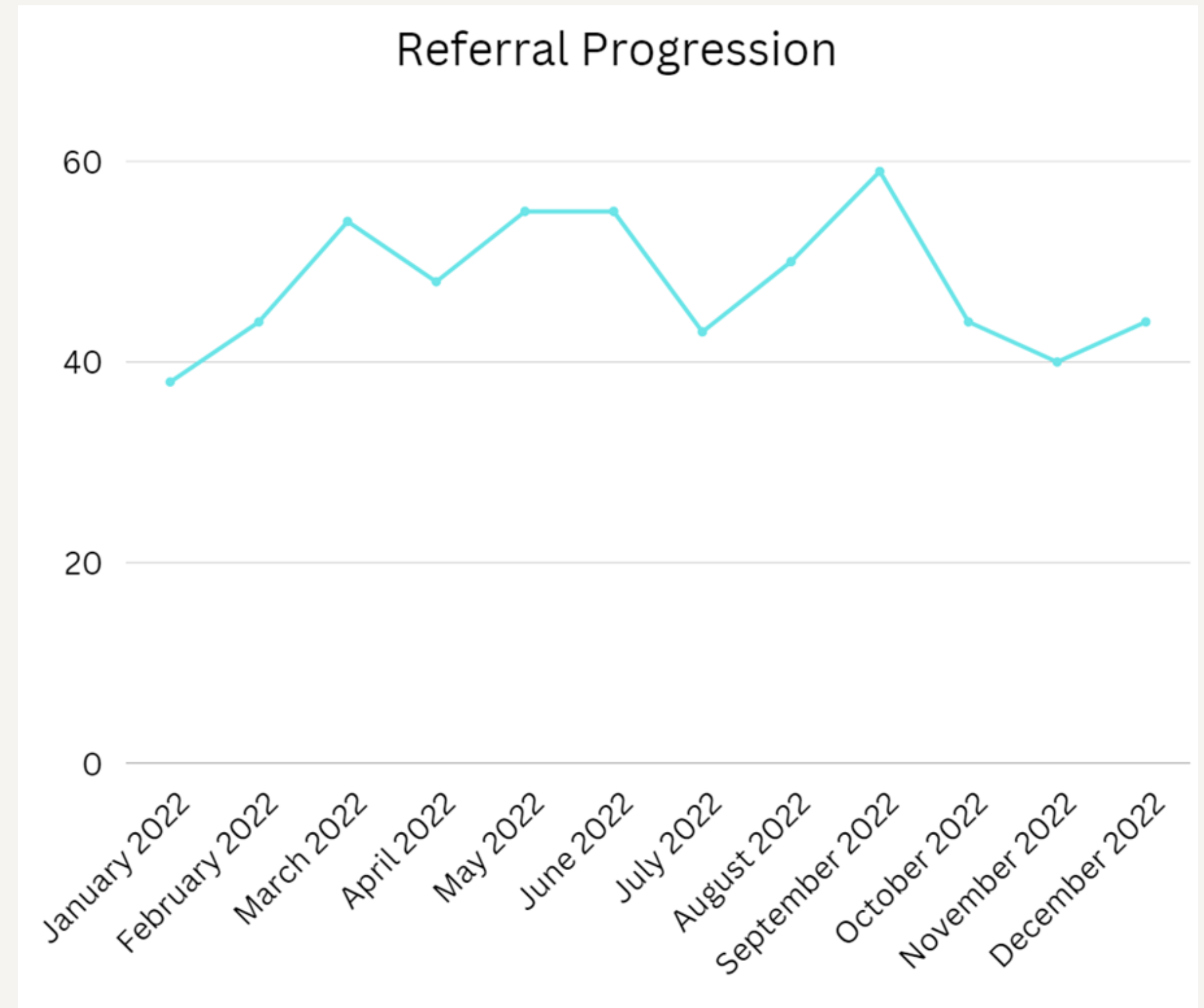
VICTIMS OF SEX TRAFFICKING WHO ARE IN THE AGE RANGE OF 14-17

2021 Child Maltreatment Report

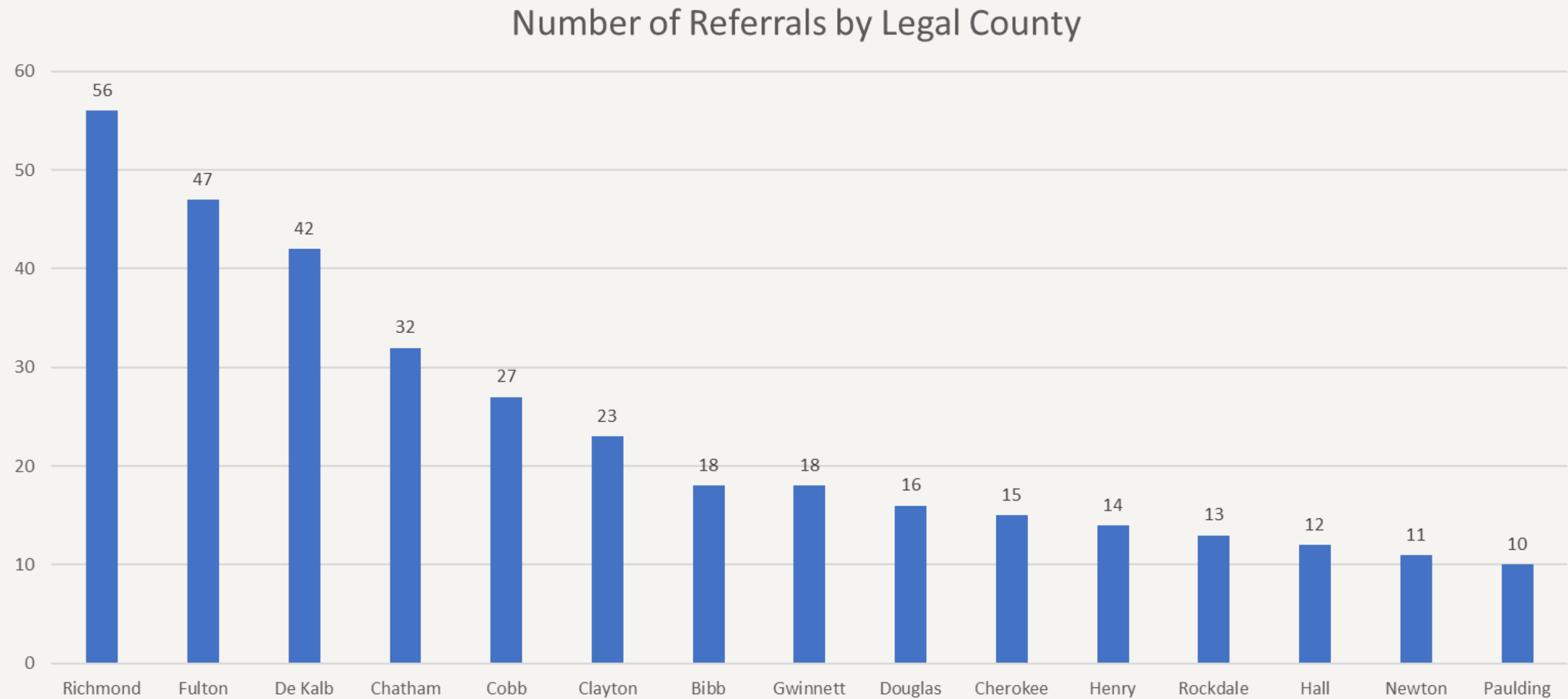
2022 HOTLINE CALLS & REFERRALS

CSEC Response Team

- The Hotline received 213 calls.
- The CSEC Response Team received 574 referrals.



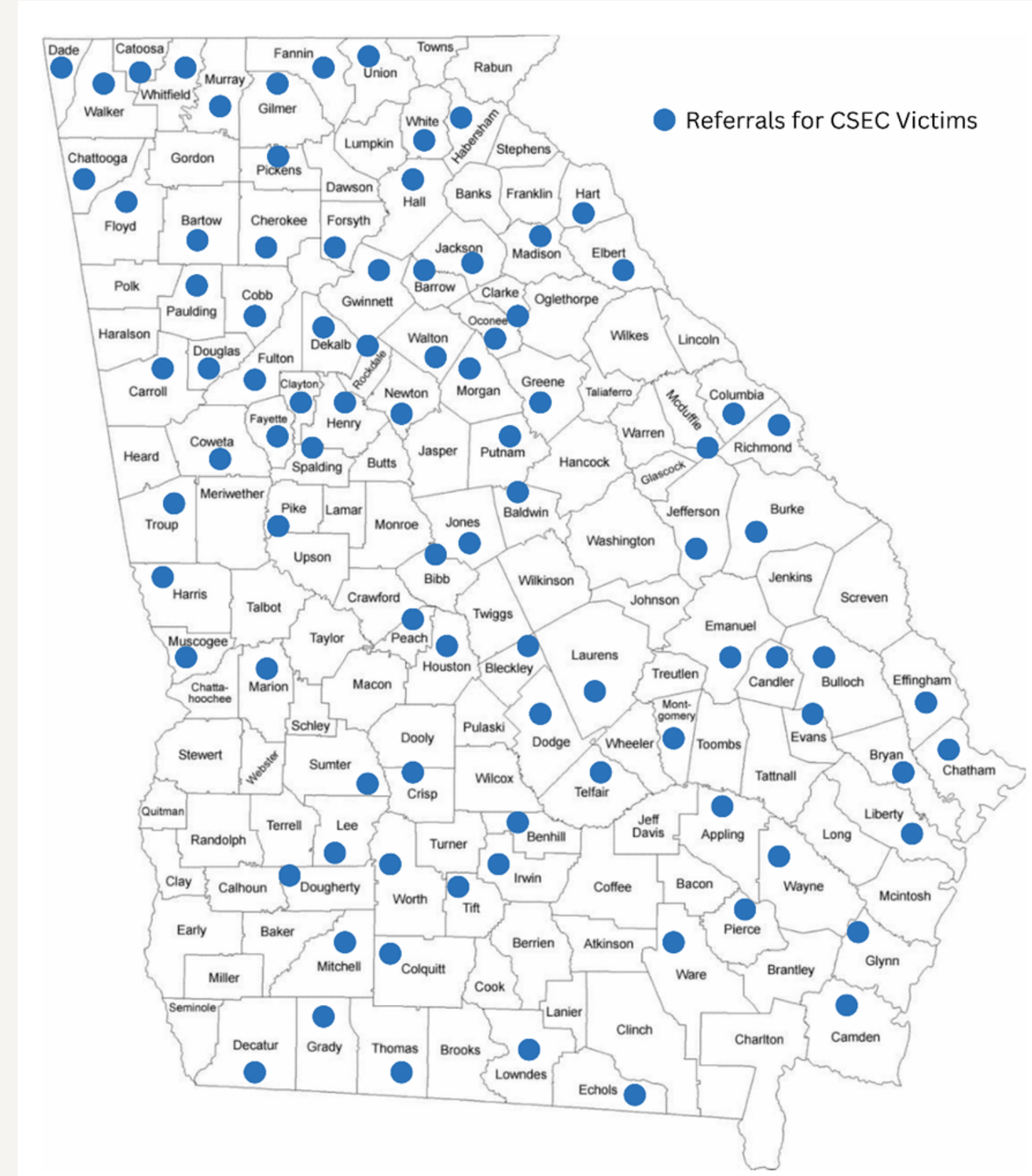
REFERRALS BY LEGAL COUNTY



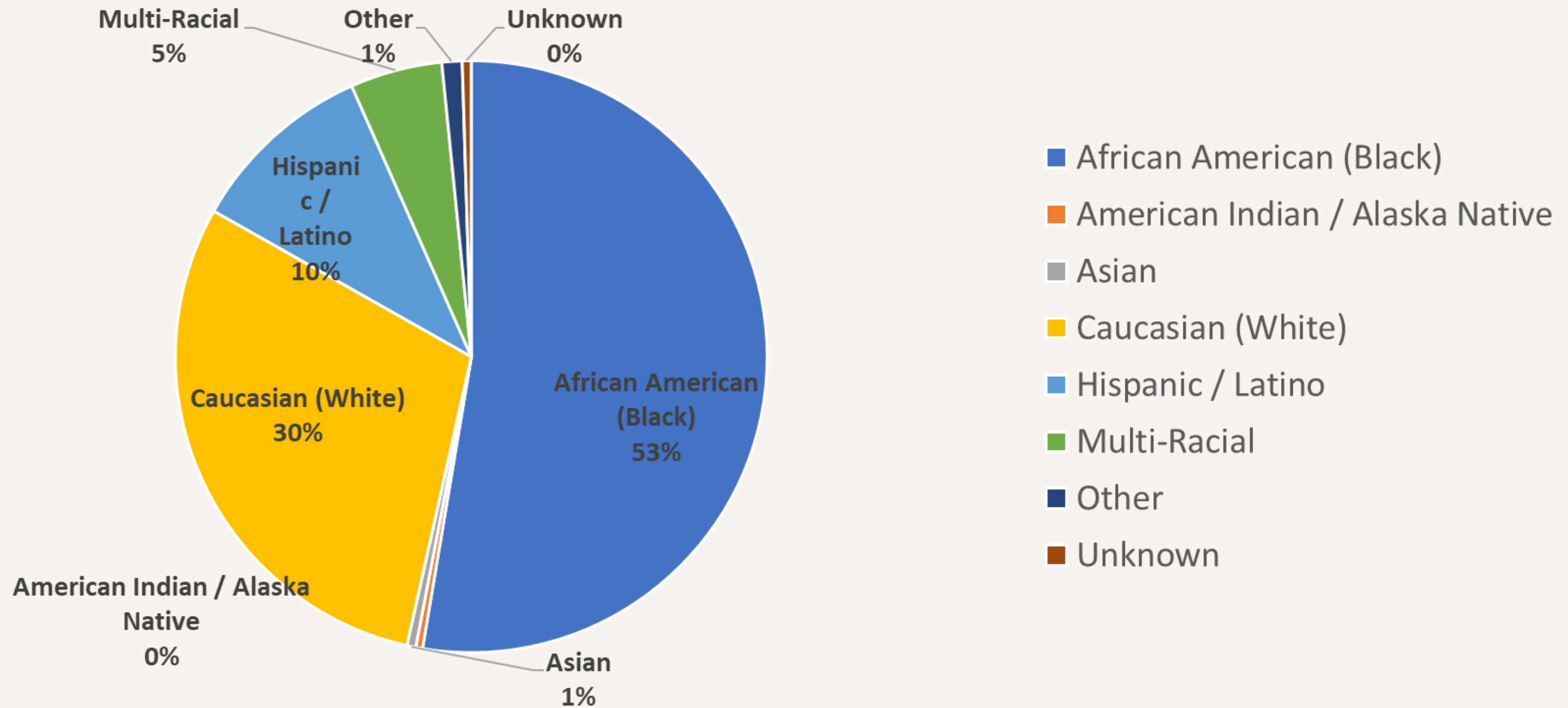
WEB REFERRALS

Web referrals received from 95 counties throughout the state of Georgia, with the highest number of referrals coming from:

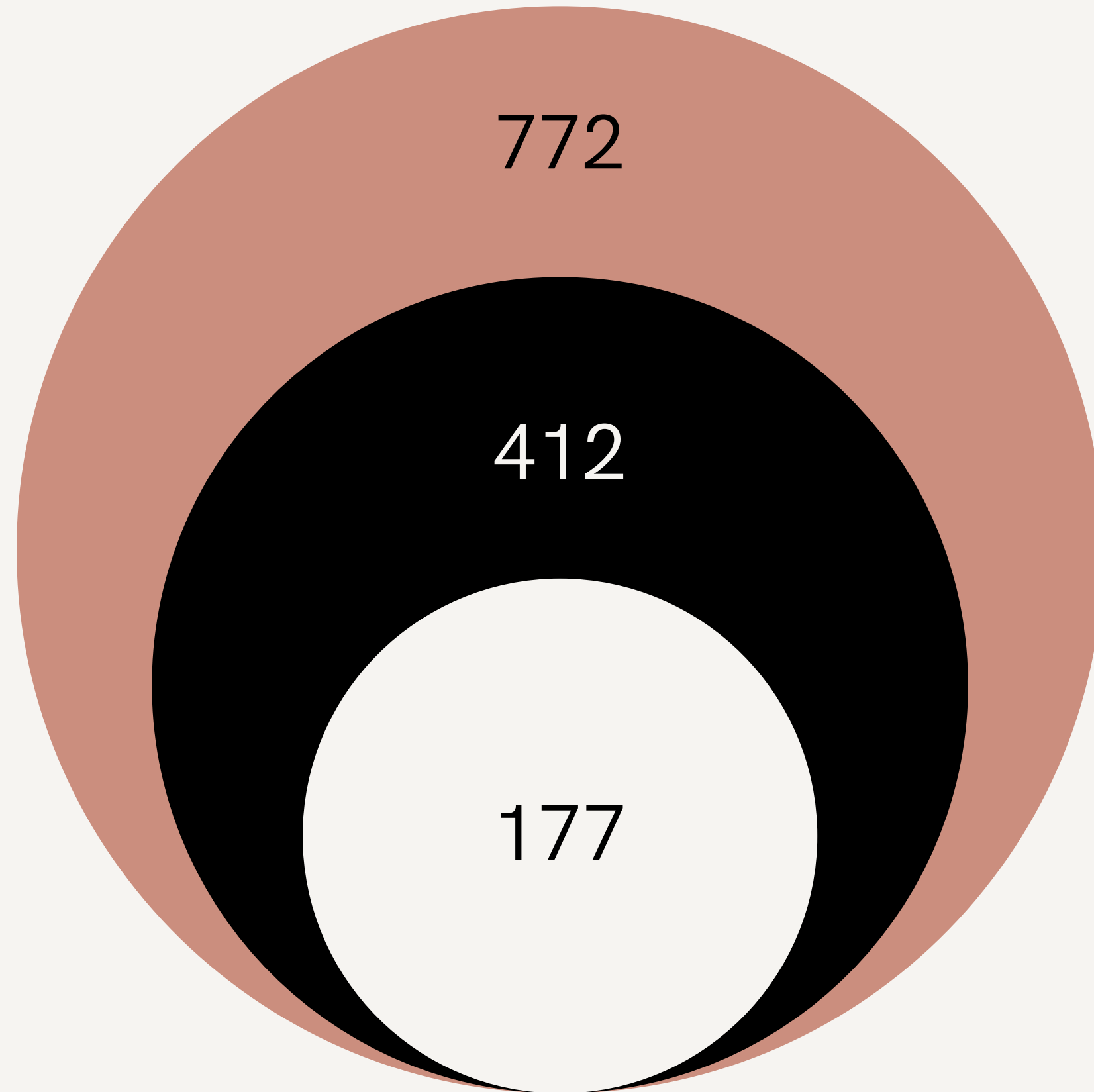
- Richmond (62)
- Fulton (50)
- Dekalb (39)
- Chatham (32)
- Cobb (25)






ETHNICITY OF YOUTH SERVED



CSEC CONFIRMATION



-  Youth served in 2022
772
-  Received comprehensive CSEC assessment
412
-  Youth confirmed as victims of CSEC
177

CONFIRMATION V. HIGH RISK

NON-CONFIRMED HIGH RISK DOES NOT MEAN THE CHILD IS NOT A VICTIM

CONFIRMED

Indicates that there are numerous indicators present that suggest a high level of risk for sexual exploitation. This outcome should immediately trigger actions to address sexual exploitation of the youth.

CONFIRMATION V. NONCONFIRMATION

HIGH RISK

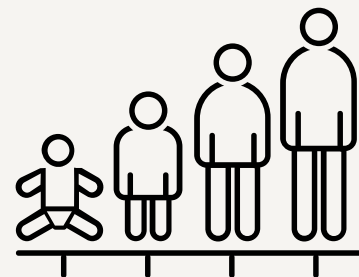
Indicates that the youth may be at risk for CSEC, but there is either not enough information available or the current behaviors and circumstances do not clearly indicate the presence of exploitation.

Youth should be actively monitored, needs fully assessed, and preventative services should be put in place.

SERVICES PROVIDED



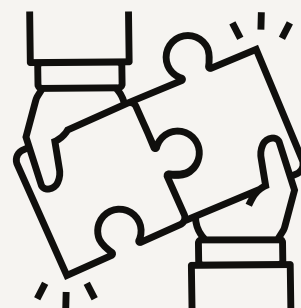
12,628
UNITS OF SERVICES PROVIDED



14
AVERAGE AGE OF YOUTH
SERVED



326
UNITS OF SERVICE TO ENSURE
SAFE HOUSING

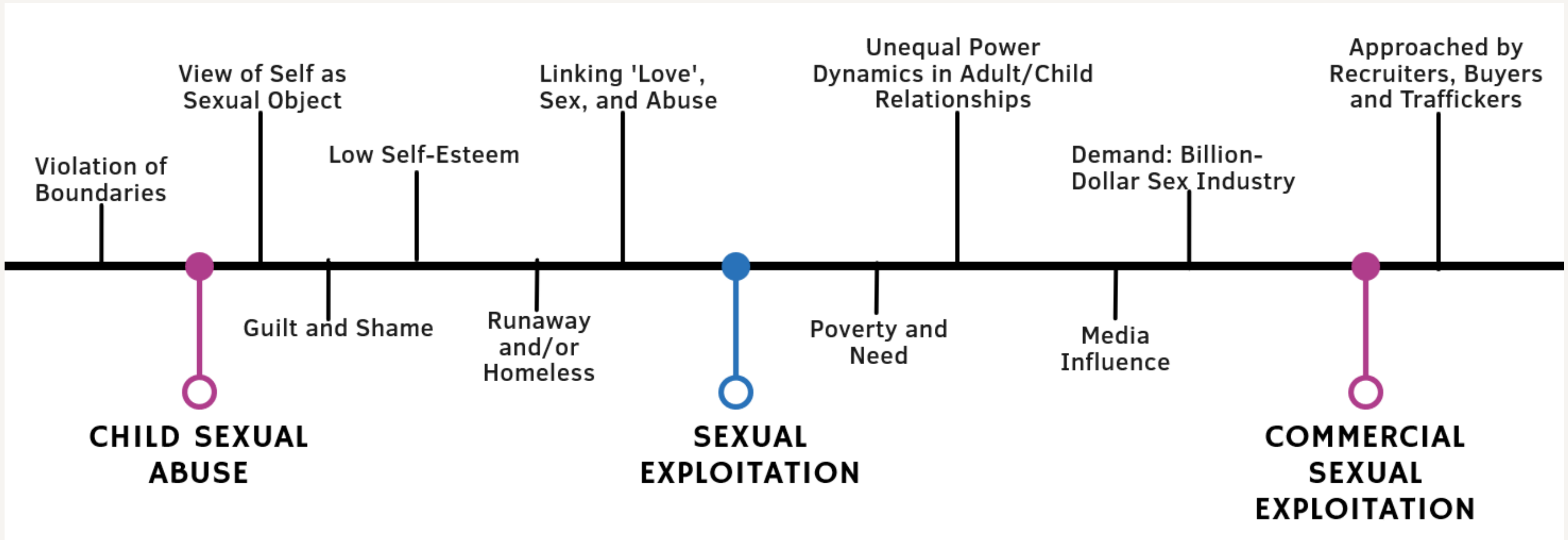


10,475
UNITS OF SERVICE INVOLVING
INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION



1,827
UNITS OF SERVICE TO ENSURE
ONGOING SAFETY & WELLBEING

CONTINUUM OF SEXUAL ABUSE & CSEC



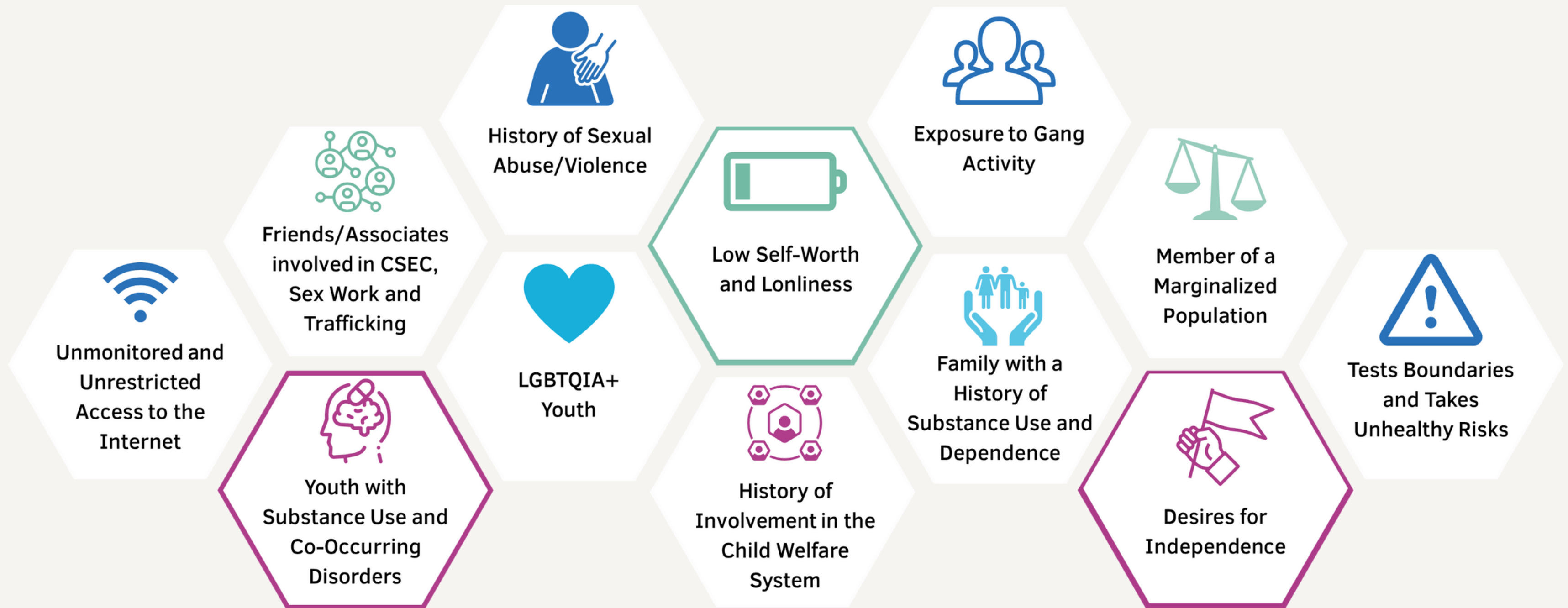
SEXUAL ABUSE- TO-PRISON PIPELINE

"Treating victims with undue skepticism and hostility creates disincentives for victims to report abuse which, in turn, reduces opportunities for them to receive critical forms of support. It can also bias investigations and thwart the investigation of gender violence—and, by extension, place more women and girls in the community at risk of harm."

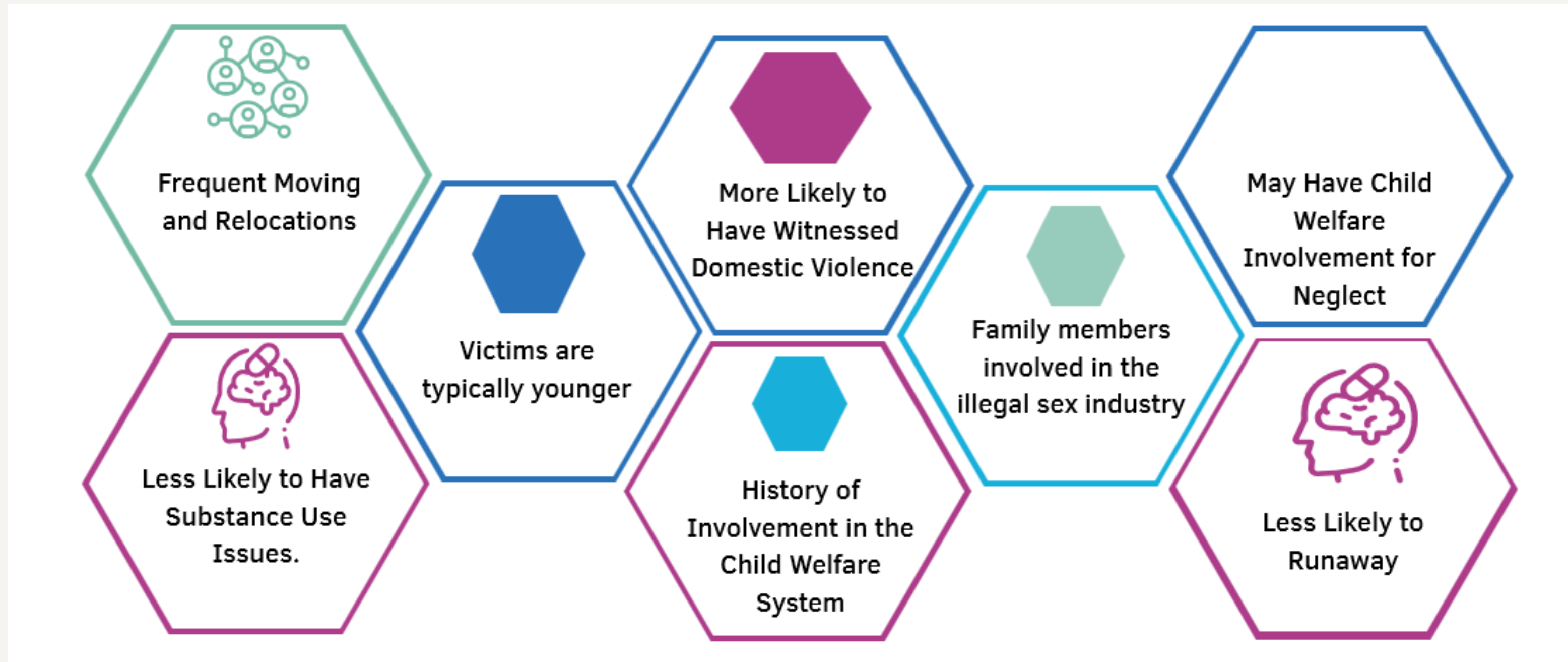
-Yasmin Vafa & Rebecca Epstein, Criminalized Survivors: Today's Abuse to Prison Pipeline for Girls (2023).



VULNERABILITIES



VULNERABILITIES- FAMILY FACILITATED CSEC



MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

“My job is to make sure she has what she needs, personal hygiene, get her nails done, take her to buy an outfit, take her out to eat, make her feel wanted...but I keep the money.”

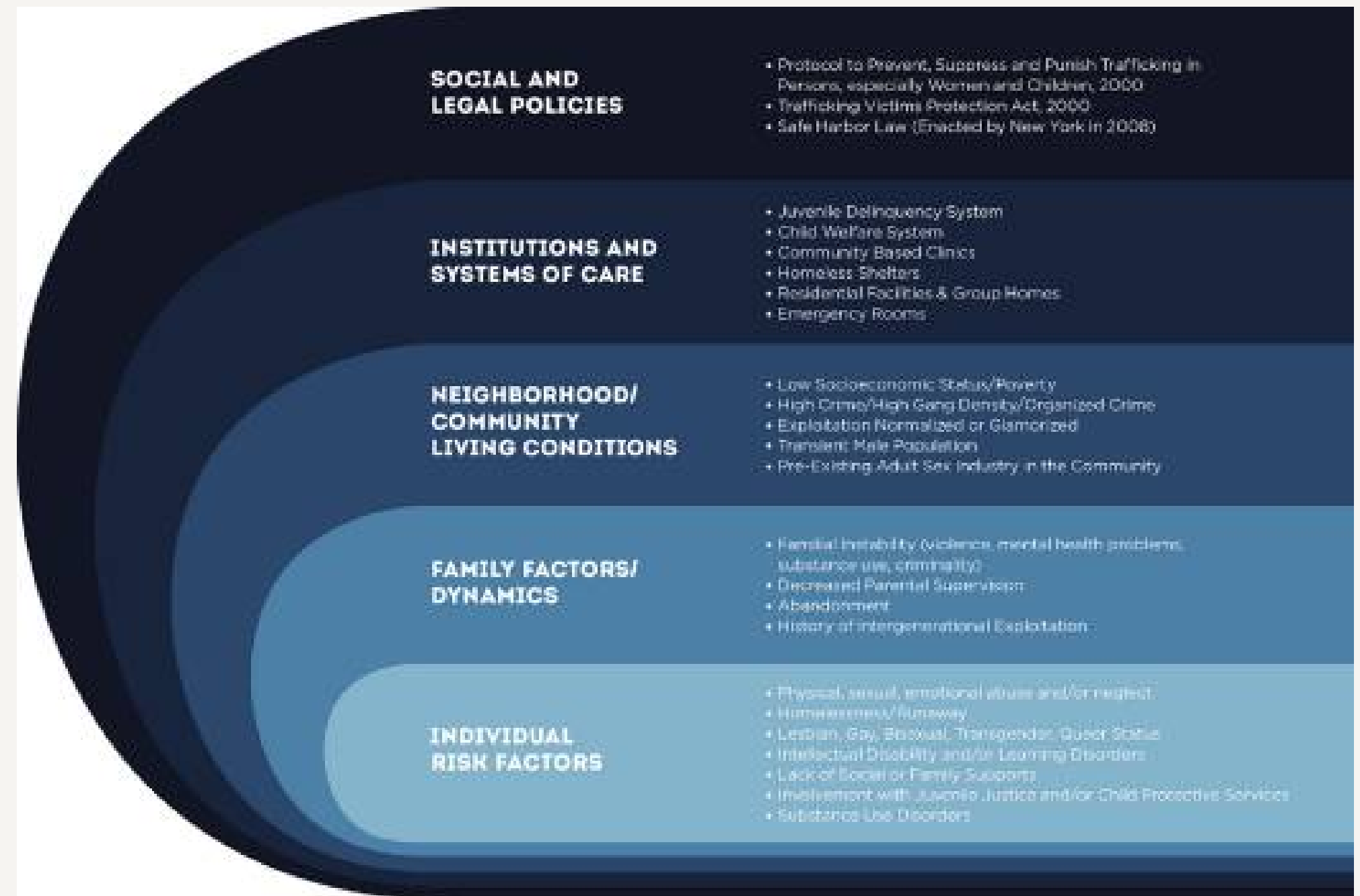
–Convicted pimp, Antoin Thurman, as quoted in the New York Times investigative series, Running in the Shadows: Children on Their Own (2009)



SOCIAL- ECOLOGICAL MODEL

"The ecological perspective acknowledges the distinct connection between the youth and the physical and sociocultural environment in which the youth interacts. The connection between and the interdependence of these risk outcomes are inextricably tied to interactions between each level: individual risk factors, family factors/dynamics, neighborhood/community living conditions, institutions and systems of care, social and legal policies."

-Roya Ijadi-Maghsoodi, MD, et al., Understanding and Responding to the Needs of Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth, 25(1) Child Adolesc. Psychiatr.Clinic. N. Am. 107, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4725731/> (2016).



STAGES OF CHANGE

"Contrary to traditional approaches, harm reduction instead prioritizes long-term safety; recognizing lasting change is not immediate, building trust takes time, and that returning to exploitative situations does not prevent a youth from making progress toward healing. Harm reduction is grounded in the principle that short-term incremental gains will lead to long term stability and safety."

Harm Reduction Series: Caregiver, Child Trafficking Response Unit and the California Dept. of Soc. Serv.,
https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lac/1125790_CaregiverHarmReductionI-31_22.pdf (2021).





HARM REDUCTION

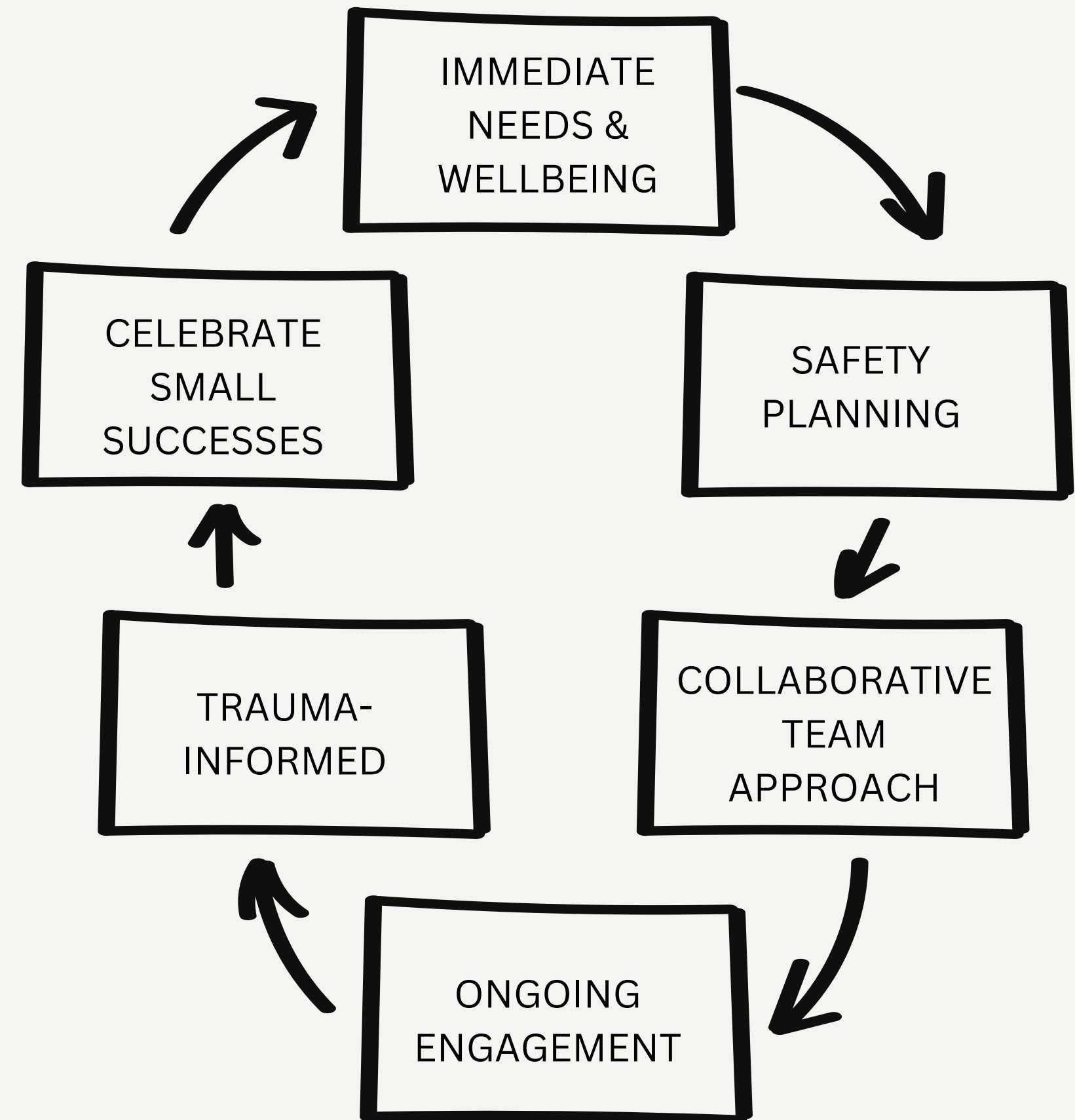


Aim for "Safer", not "Safest"

HARM REDUCTION

Victims of CSEC "may perceive sexually exploitative relationships and encounters as the primary means by which to get needs met, albeit in abusive ways, and so may not want to receive support or may be suspicious of support from helping professionals... A harm reduction approach allows professionals interacting with sexually exploited young people to see these beliefs and behaviours as developmentally and practically necessary for young people who have not been able to otherwise get their needs met."

-Kristine Hickle & Sophie Hallett, Mitigating Harm: Considering Harm Reduction Principles in Work with Exploited Young People, 30 Children & Society 302, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/chso.12145> (2016).





SAFETY PLANNING

Safety plans provide concrete strategies to help a youth navigate through or out of unsafe situations.

They can be short term or long term in nature but should include the following information:

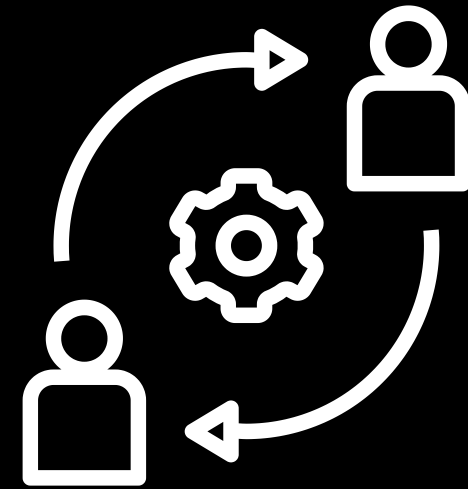
- Identify safe(r) ways to communicate
- Identify sources of support
- Identify and practice coping strategies
- Identify safe(r) harm reduction strategies.





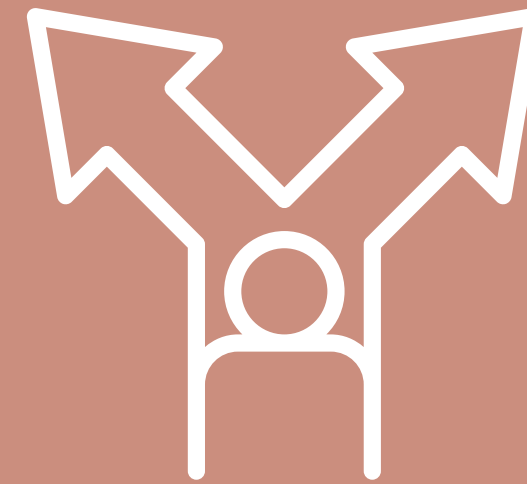
RELATIONSHIPS

Relationship building and trust are vehicles through which social support is provided. Those are also the building blocks to buy in.



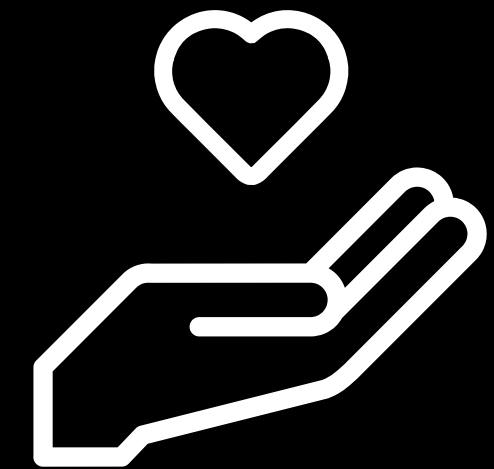
STAGE OF CHANGE

Intervention must be tailored to the specific youth and will look differently dependent upon what state of change they are in.



CHOICES

Offer choices as much as possible. Allow spaces where the youth can see/feel they have autonomy and provide spaces that allow them to have a voice in their own lives



NATURAL SUPPORTS

Who does the child trust?
Who do they go into stressful/uncertain times?
How do they handle situations where they do not feel safe?

A close-up photograph of several hands holding and pointing to yellow sticky notes. The sticky notes have hand-drawn diagrams, including rectangles with internal lines and boxes. The background is a light-colored surface with a grid pattern, possibly a tablecloth or a large sheet of paper.

SAFETY PLANNING

LOCATION

If you need to get away from something, are there locations or business that are safe for you to go?

EXPERIENCE

What have you done in the past to stay safe or get through the situation.

MINDFULNESS

When you get stressed out, what are some ways you can get grounded?


CONNECTION

If you need support who will you contact? How will you contact them?


EXAMPLES OF HARM REDUCTION STRATEGIES

REMEMBER:


- REDEFINE SUCCESS
- GO FOR SAFER, NOT SAFEST




Last time you left home, you did not take anything with you. This time, would you consider packing a bag that would include change of clothes, snacks, etc.?




Providing youth with local resources they can access if they leave home (i.e. health department, hospital, Safe Places, etc.).




Youth making a plan for possible sexual encounters (i.e. birth control, condoms, etc.).



Encouraging youth to put the phone number of an adult they trust somewhere other than in their phone in case they can't access it.



Helping youth safely plan around drug usage if identified as a concern. What to do if they consume too much, the environment in which drug usage is occurring, and utilizing the buddy system.



Providing the youth with information on transportation resources (i.e. buses, MARTA, Uber/Lyft).

ENGAGEMENT WITH SURVIVORS



LACK OF TRUST/SUPPORT

Frequently cited reason for youth leaving home/placement



SAFETY PLANNING

When safe to do so, caregivers should be integrally involved with safety planning measures



ACTION ITEMS

Create action items for that can help ensure safety and action if new concerns arise, such as notifying DFCS, calling NCMEC, checking social media



TRAUMA INFORMED LANGUAGE

Victim-blaming language will only reinforce a child's feeling that they are not safe



CELL PHONES

Don't take away a child's survival strategy without giving them a replacement



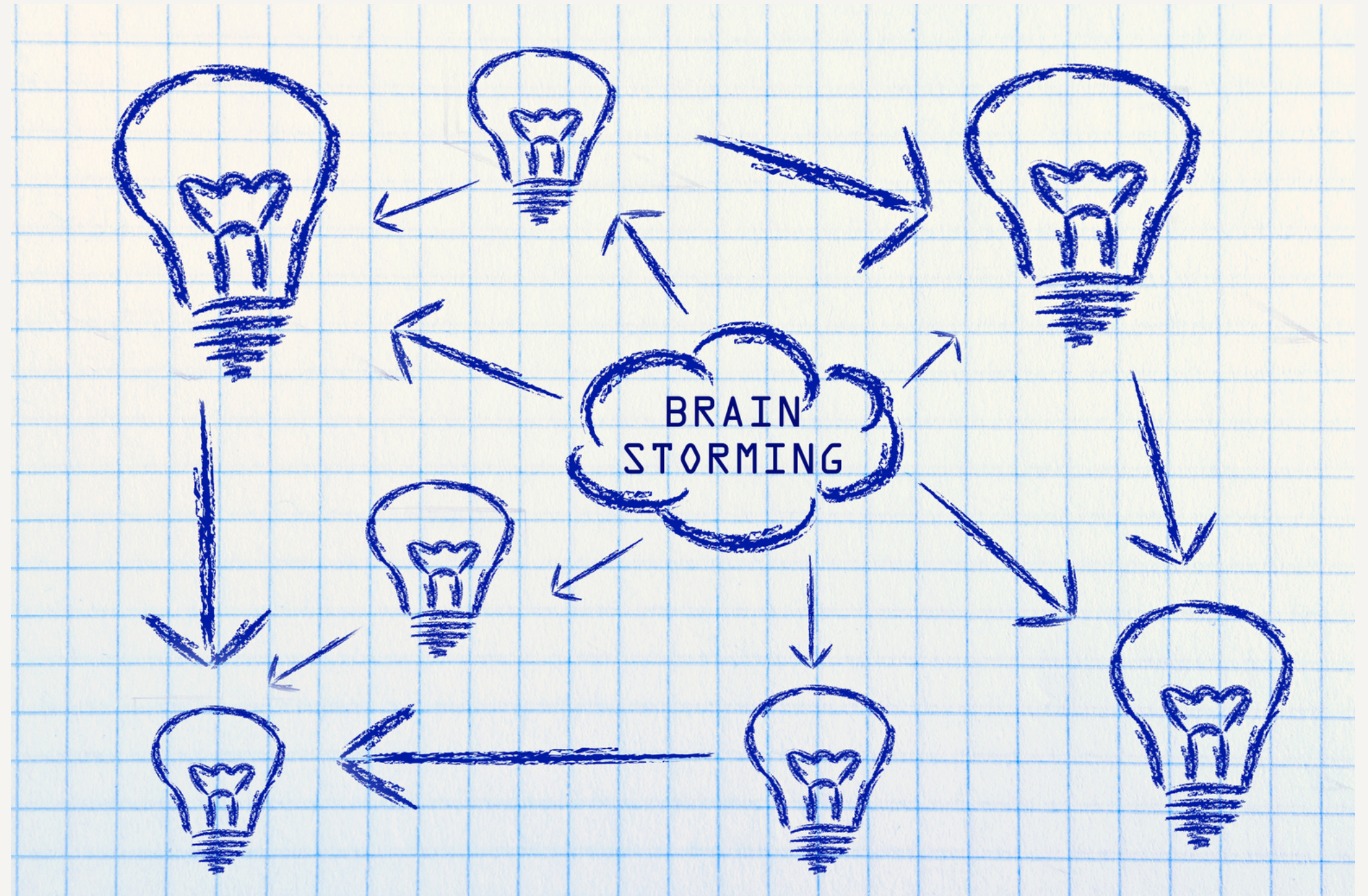
SELF-REGULATION

If we are not calm and regulated, we cannot expect children to be.

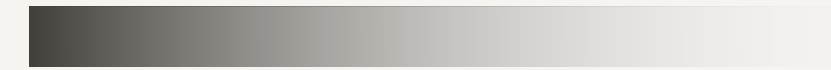
BRAINSTORMING

What are some examples of times you felt like the only solution involved consequences, taking cell phones, detention and other punitive approaches?






How can we reframe the scenario under the lens of a Harm Reduction model?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Links to resources can be found throughout the presentation, but here are a few more.

-  HARM REDUCTION STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH COMMERCIALLY SEXUALLY EXPLOITED CHILDREN AND YOUTH - YOUTUBE
-  SAFETY PLANNING SLIDES.PDF
-  HARM REDUCTION INTRODUCTION
-  EXAMINING THE LINK: FOSTER CARE RUNAWAY EPISODES AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMIZATION (HHS.GOV)
-  CMFC 2019 ANALYSIS- FINAL (MISSINGKIDS.ORG)

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Websites

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<https://www.cacga.org/csec-response-team/>

CEASE:

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