

# Diverting Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation From Juvenile Detention: Development of the InterCSEcT Screening Protocol

Journal of Interpersonal Violence

2015, Vol. 30(7) 1247–1276

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DOI: 10.1177/0886260514539846

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## Abstract

Identifying victims of commercial sexual exploitation in the juvenile justice system is a challenging complexity requiring concerted organizational commitment. Using a three-tiered, trauma-informed screening process, a 3½-month pilot intervention was implemented in Clark County Juvenile Court (Washington) to identify victims in an effort to connect them to community youth advocates and sexual assault resources. A total of 535 boys and girls ages 9 to 19 were screened during intake; 47 of these youth reported risk factors associated with commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and were subsequently referred to community advocates. Six youth (all girls) were confirmed CSEC victims and were successfully diverted from juvenile detention. Study results suggest that despite the lack of reliable data surrounding the prevalence of CSEC, juvenile justice agencies need to become educated on the risk factors to triage victims to services.

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**Keywords**

treatment/intervention, child abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse, prostitution/  
sex work

The issue of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), similarly referred to as domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST), has begun to receive significant attention in the United States. Increased enforcement from local and federal agencies, the creation of state and local human trafficking task forces, and campaigns to increase public awareness and education have served to bring attention to the issue. For instance, in September 2012, President Obama announced increased federal resources for monitoring and combating human trafficking, including domestic sex trafficking (U.S. White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2012).

Under 22 U.S.C. § 7102, “the term ‘sex trafficking’ means the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act” (Trafficking Victims Protection Act [TVPA], 2000, p. 8). A *commercial sex act* is defined as “any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person” (TVPA, 2000, p. 7). Within 22 U.S.C. § 7102, sex trafficking is considered a “severe form of trafficking in persons” and is defined as, “sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age” (TVPA, 2000, p. 8). As the crime involves a commercial sex act, it is considered an act of commerce, thereby bringing the age of consent under the federal U.S. Code wherein a minor is defined as a child under the age of 18 (Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], n.d.). Because a minor cannot legally consent to a commercial sex act, force, fraud, or coercion are not necessary elements of CSEC. Therefore, any minor who is induced to perform a commercial sex act is considered a victim.

Among the research literature investigating DMST<sup>1</sup> or CSEC (terms that we use synonymously in this study), most involve qualitative studies providing detailed accounts of victimization. Thus far, qualitative research has shed light on how youth are procured for sexual exploitation (Ashley, 2008; Boxill & Richardson, 2007; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention [OJJDP], 2002; Smith, Vardaman, & Snow, 2009), the nature and types of sexual exploitation youth experience (Ashley, 2008; Smith et al., 2009), and risk factors that may increase the likelihood of sexual victimization (Ashley, 2008; Boxill & Richardson, 2007; Clawson, Dutch, Salomon, & Grace, 2009; OJJDP, 2002; Smith et al., 2009; Spangenberg, 2001; Tyler, Hoyt, & Whitbeck, 2000).

Despite the qualitative evidence, there are very little valid and reliable data demonstrating its prevalence across the United States. Many, if not most, existing prevalence estimates are “crude” and “scientifically indefensible” (Mitchell, Finkelhor, & Wolak, 2010, p. 31). The few available estimates on the number of alleged victims or sexually exploited children in the United States vary greatly from a low of 100,000 annually (Smith et al., 2009) to a high of 500,000 to 10 million annually (Boxill & Richardson, 2007). However, given the numerous methodological problems with current data, citing such figures runs the risk of contributing to the “Woozle Effect.” First identified in family violence research and subsequently found in hard to measure or new phenomenon,

The Woozle Effect begins when one investigator reports a finding, often with qualifications (e.g., that the sample was small and not generalizable). A second investigator then cites the first study’s data, but without the qualifications. Others then cite both reports, and “the qualified data gain the status of an unqualified, generalizable truth.” (Gelles, 1980, p. 880; Weiner & Hala, 2008, p. 8)

Indeed, fact checking the above 500,000 to 10 million annual estimate cited by Boxill and Richardson (2007) reveals that the figure is actually an estimate by Willis and Levy (2002) of the number of prostituted children *worldwide*. Boxill and Richardson (2007) removed the context and cited the figure as an estimate of child prostitution “in America today” (p. 139).

Similarly, in an extensive literature review of human trafficking research publications from 1990 through 2006, Weiner and Hala (2008) found a total of 114 prevalence estimates cited in 45 different publications of which only one was an original study. Most notably, they found that even “the estimates featured in U.S. government reports . . . resemble [what is known as] a ‘quantifact,’ a figure whose ‘value and veracity accumulates as it circulates,’ despite its uncertain basis” (pp. 9-10; Comaroff & Comaroff, 2006, p. 210).

As the above quotation implies, official data do not provide much insight into the prevalence or scope of CSEC in the United States. In their national study on juveniles involved in prostitution, Mitchell et al. (2010) found that only 5% of law enforcement agencies in 2005 arrested or detained a juvenile for prostitution. FBI Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data indicate that 1.5 million juveniles were arrested in 2009, accounting for 14.9% of violent crime arrests and 24.4% of property crime arrests. Fewer than 1,100 juveniles were arrested for prostitution or commercialized vice, of whom 844 (78%) were female (U.S. Department of Justice [USDOJ], 2010). In terms of those deemed most at risk for sexual

victimization in 2009, there were 73,794 recorded arrests for runaway, of whom 55% were female (USDOJ, 2010).

On the surface, such low numbers may give the impression that prostitution involving juveniles or CSEC is not a common problem in the United States and relatively few are at risk of victimization. However, a study by Farrell, McDevitt, and Fahy (2010) concluded that the relatively low numbers of general human trafficking cases identified by law enforcement may be attributable to both a lack of training and ability to properly identify and investigate such cases. Tyldum and Brunovskis (2005) assert that the number of general human trafficking "cases registered by law enforcement might be an indicator of the functionality of the law enforcement apparatus" rather than a good estimate of the actual number of victims (p. 23). A similar argument can be made for cases of juvenile prostitution or CSEC.

Further complicating prevalence estimates, official UCR arrest data also primarily reflect juveniles involved with street prostitution, the most visible and easiest form to detect. However, street prostitution only represents less than 20% of all prostitution (Scott & Dedel, 2006). An OJJDP report by Finkelhor and Ormrod (2004) noted that upon arrest, law enforcement may charge youth engaged in prostitution with masking charges rather than with prostitution as a way to detain them and get them connected with social services. In addition, most youth engaged in prostitution were not properly identified as such during their arrest. One reason was that youth were often arrested and adjudicated on prostitution-related charges (or masking charges) such as loitering, violating curfew, running away, or possessing alcohol as a minor (Ashley, 2008; Smith et al., 2009).

In her study of prostituted juveniles in Illinois from 1994 to 2004, Ashley (2008) found that prostituted youth had an average of 10 arrests for such masking charges. Moreover, juveniles engaged in prostitution were sometimes not properly identified as juveniles by law enforcement upon arrest. Juvenile victims often had identifications taken away by their third-party exploiters (i.e., pimps) and were provided with false identification (Smith et al., 2009) and even fraudulent social security numbers (Spangenberg, 2001) to conceal their identity, resulting in being processed as adults (Ashley, 2008). Such phenomena clearly blur the true prevalence of the problem and contribute to the difficulty in accurately identifying victims.

The OJJDP's National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMAART) are an additional source from which to gauge the annual number of youth at risk of CSEC victimization. The most recent series of NISMAART reports are based on surveys of a nationally representative sample of caretakers, children, and juvenile facilities covering a 12-month period from 1997 to 1999. According to their estimates, in 1999,

there were nearly 1.7 million runaway or “throwaway” children in the United States (Hammer, Finkelhor, & Sedlak, 2002).

This statistic is cited by various authors of DMST/CSEC-related studies to suggest the potential number of victims (Ashley, 2008; OJJDP, 2002; Smith et al., 2009). However, what these studies fail to mention is that only 0.4% (6,300) of children had not returned home during the course of the study (Hammer et al., 2002). Furthermore, to be considered a runaway, the child must have been gone for at least one night and if over the age of 15, at least two nights. What the NISMART reports found, however, is that “most runaway episodes . . . [were] brief, lasting no longer than a day or two” (Hammer, Finkelhor, Sedlak, & Porcellini, 2004, p. 3). In fact, of the nearly 1.7 million runaway/throwaway children identified, only 2.3% were considered at risk of sexual endangerment or exploitation (Hammer et al., 2002). Nevertheless, this percentage still reflects 38,600 children at risk.

In sum, available estimates that attempt to describe either the annual number of victims of sexual exploitation or those at risk are unreliable and even contradictory (Mitchell et al., 2010). In their final report on the bibliography of research-based literature on general human trafficking, Gozdziaik and Bump (2008) strongly stated that “the dominant anti-trafficking discourse is not evidence-based...[and has] taken place without a clear idea of the extent of the problem or a uniformed methodology for determining the scope of the issue” (p. 43). Furthermore, they found that “reliance on unrepresentative samples is widespread . . . [and] the well known dangers of generalizing from small convenience samples and from anecdotal stories are routinely ignored in the literature about human trafficking” (p. 44).

Despite the numerous limitations of available prevalence research, what has been sufficiently established is that sex trafficking or exploitation is a crime that does, in fact, occur domestically in the United States, albeit in unknown numbers. Whether there are 1,000 victims or 1 million, further research is both justified and necessary. Thus far, victims have been identified in a haphazard and unsystematic way. There is a clear need for instrumentation and identification protocol that are evidence-based. Otherwise, practitioners and policymakers run the risk of implementing interventions that are ineffective, and perhaps even harmful, to those they are designed to help.

In response, the current study presents results from an intervention protocol that sought to identify and divert youth victims of commercial sexual exploitation from juvenile detention to advocacy and community resources. To our knowledge, this study is the first of its kind. All youth taken into custody over a 3½-month period received a short screening assessment as part of their standardized intake process to strategically identify those most

at risk of victimization and in need of additional assessment. The expectation was that such a process would increase the timely and accurate identification of victims to divert them from the formal juvenile justice system and connect them to appropriate social, mental, and health services in the community.

## **Profile of Victims**

Thus far, qualitative studies have consistently found that many, if not most, victims prior to being sexually trafficked or exploited experienced child physical abuse (Ashley, 2008; OJJDP, 2002; Spangenberg, 2001; Smith et al., 2009), psychological abuse (OJJDP, 2002; Spangenberg, 2001), repeated abuse or neglect (Ashley, 2008; Boxill & Richardson, 2007; OJJDP, 2002), and had a history of sexual abuse (Ashley, 2008; Boxill & Richardson, 2007; Clawson et al., 2009; OJJDP, 2002). In a study of 361 female homeless and runaway youth, Tyler et al. (2000) found that early sexual abuse in the home had both direct and indirect effects on later sexual victimization once on the streets.

Many youth victims also come from dysfunctional homes (Ashley, 2008) characterized by poor family functioning (Boxill & Richardson, 2007), family disruption (Clawson et al., 2009), or parental substance abuse and violence (OJJDP, 2002; Smith et al., 2009). Youth under these conditions often experience poor school performance or school-related problems (Ashley, 2008; Boxill & Richardson, 2007; Clawson et al., 2009) and are chronic runaways with periods of homelessness (Ashley, 2008; Clawson et al., 2009; OJJDP, 2002).

However, not all confirmed victims are runaways or homeless youth. Contrary to the findings of other researchers, in their national study of juveniles involved with prostitution, Mitchell et al. (2010) found that a majority of the juveniles were not homeless. Smith et al. (2009) in their collaborative research with 10 USDOJ-funded human trafficking task forces across the United States found that many victims were previously involved in the child welfare system with a history of Child Protective Services (CPS) involvement. They even identified out-of-home CPS placements to be a source for exploitative recruitment.

Indeed, victims come from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds, races, and ethnicities (Smith et al., 2009; Spangenberg, 2001) and often mirror the demographic characteristics of the local community (Boxill & Richardson, 2007). In their investigation into the lives of victims at ages 9 to 11 prior to their victimization, Boxill and Richardson (2007) found that the girls "would have been difficult to distinguish from those in your family

album” (p. 142). Despite the possibility that seemingly any youth, especially those in custody settings, could be a victim of sexual exploitation, Smith et al. (2009) identified the most common indicators to be homelessness, chronic running away (3 or more times), having an older boyfriend, tattoos or brands, access to material goods that the youth would not be able to afford, physical signs of trauma or violence, delinquency charges (i.e., masking charges) such as loitering, curfew violations, or other status offenses, and being accompanied by an older male who is not a guardian.

The relationship between the youth and the third-party exploiter (when one is involved) also complicates identification. Work by Spangenberg (2001) found that while prostituted boys often worked on their own, most girls were under the control of a third-party (i.e., a pimp), a finding supported by Finkelhor and Ormrod (2004). The tactics used by the exploiters mirror those of power and control used by batterers in domestic violence (Smith et al., 2009). Social isolation, economic dependency, intimidation, control, and other power coercive tactics make leaving the life of prostitution extremely difficult and dangerous (Ashley, 2008).

In general, victims of commercial sexual exploitation either do not or are unable to self-identify (Leitch & Snow, 2010; Smith et al., 2009). Reasons include denial, fear of law enforcement, and fear of retaliation by a trafficker/pimp (Stolz, 2010; Weiner & Hala, 2008). In addition, trauma bonds are often formed, resulting in the juvenile perceiving the exploiter to be a boyfriend (OJJDP, 2002; Smith et al., 2009). In this situation, trauma bonding manifests itself as the love that juveniles come to associate with their exploiter and has parallels to Stockholm Syndrome. “Psychologically these women develop strategies to justify, minimize, and create illusions of control, choice, and purpose” to rationalize their situation (OJJDP, 2002, p. 15).

Taken together, qualitative research has identified three principle ways that youth are procured for sexual exploitation: (a) runaway/throwaway youth solicited or recruited for prostitution/exploitation (Cohen, 1987; Priebe & Suhr, 2005; Smith et al., 2009); (b) youth tricked, lured, or kidnapped (Ashley, 2008; Boxill & Richardson, 2007; OJJDP, 2002; Smith et al., 2009); and (c) youth exploited by their own family (Ashley, 2008; Smith et al., 2009). It is, therefore, important to develop identification measures that are flexible and sensitive to the various ways that youth become sexually exploited. Unfortunately, the correlates of child commercial sexual victimization also mirror those of juvenile delinquency in general and do not, in and of themselves, indicate victimization, even though they may increase the likelihood or risk of victimization.

## Current Study

This study is the first of which we are aware to systematically identify and divert youth victims of commercial sexual exploitation in a juvenile custody setting. All youth taken into custody over a 3½-month period at the Clark County Juvenile Detention Center in Vancouver, WA, received a short screen interview as part of their standardized intake process to strategically identify those most at risk of victimization and in need of additional interviewing for victimization. The entire identification process consisted of a three-tiered screening approach, with each tier progressing in level of question invasiveness. The goals of the study were to (a) determine the efficacy of a DMST/CSEC identification procedure and protocol by juvenile detention and probation staff, (b) triage victimized youth from juvenile detention to appropriate social services in the community, (c) gain a snapshot understanding of the prevalence of youth victims of sex trafficking at a local level, and (d) identify patterns in the social characteristics of confirmed victims.

During the months leading up to and throughout the course of the study, several meetings and training sessions took place involving the research team and juvenile detention and probation staff. A mandatory in-service training was held at the Clark County Juvenile Court. The majority of staff were in attendance, representing all levels of both the juvenile probation department and juvenile court, including senior management. The training provided a brief overview of DMST/CSEC and explained the intake screening interview (*InterCSECT*; see “Method” section) that was to be used by juvenile detention staff at intake. The training also covered staff responsibilities in the event of a DMST/CSEC disclosure or other forms of victimization.

A subsequent training was conducted for specific detention and probation staff who comprised a volunteer Response Team. Members of the Response Team were previously trained in DMST/CSEC and were responsible for (a) reviewing the completed intake screening interviews (*InterCSECT*, also known as Tier 1) for risk factors, (b) making the determination of whether to refer the youth to a second interview (Tier 2), and (c) conducting the Tier 2 interview with the youth, if necessary, within 24 hours.

In addition to identifying potential victims, administrative policies and procedures were developed by the Clark County Juvenile Court to establish protocol if and when a youth disclosed victimization. Such policies included, but were not limited to, mandatory reporting to CPS, DNA and sexual assault kit timelines, notification to local law enforcement, the FBI, and victim advocates. Great lengths were taken by the Clark County Juvenile Court to establish a multidisciplinary team to ensure that youth who disclosed victimization received any necessary treatment, services, and referrals.

**Table 1.** Demographics of Full Cohort Sample ( $n = 535$ ).

	<i>f</i>	%
Sex		
Male	380	71.0
Female	152	28.4
Missing/unknown	3	0.6
Race		
White	390	72.9
Black	59	11.0
Hispanic	50	9.3
Other	13	2.4
Missing/unknown	23	4.3
Age ( $M = 15.65$ years)		
9-12	15	2.9
13	21	3.9
14	72	13.5
15	103	19.3
16	137	25.6
17	154	28.6
18	25	4.7
19	5	0.9
Missing/unknown	3	0.6

## Method

### Participants

The study consisted of a cohort sample of all youth entering the Clark County Juvenile Detention Center in Vancouver, WA, beginning October 11, 2010, through January 31, 2011. Youth arrived in detention by (a) being brought in by an arresting agency, (b) being taken into custody following court, or (c) turning themselves in. All three circumstances resulted in the same standardized intake procedure.

A total of 535 youth ages 9 to 19 entered detention during the 3½-month study period. Each of these children was screened with a brief instrument developed to assess CSEC risk factors.<sup>2</sup> Demographic characteristics of the 535 youth were obtained from the Clark County Juvenile Court System (JCS) database and are provided in Table 1. Of the 535 youth, a majority were White (72.9%) and male (71.0%), which is consistent with the total population of juvenile detention admissions in Clark County. In 2008, Clark County

had 2,106 juvenile admissions to its detention facility. Of those youth, 78.5% were White and 74.4% were male (Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Partnership Council of Juvenile Justice, 2009). The average age of the total sample was 15.65 years.

These sample demographics are relatively consistent with national juvenile court cases processed in 2010, with the exception of race: More Whites were represented in the study sample in comparison with the national population, which is not surprising given the generally higher proportion of Whites residing in the Pacific Northwest in comparison with other parts of the country. In 2010, 64.1% of juveniles processed in U.S. juvenile courts were White, 72.1% of juveniles were male, and 44.5% were between the ages of 13 and 15 years old (Puzzanchera & Kang, 2013).

### Procedure

Upon arrival in detention, youth were processed out in the open at a counter designed to accommodate more than one youth intake at a time. The intake process began with the detention officer completing a Clark County Juvenile Court Detention Risk Assessment to determine whether the youth were qualified to be held in detention. Regardless of the decision to hold the youth, the intake officer then completed an intake report that updated and/or confirmed the youth's demographic, home, school, and guardian information, basis for detention, and detention hold or release actions taken. Following these two steps, each and every youth received an *InterCSECT* Tier 1 Detention Screening Interview (see "Measures" section below). Officers were provided with the option to complete Tier 1 either electronically or by hand. At this point, the intake process was complete for youth who qualified for release. Youth who were being held continued with the intake process.

Once per day, a Response Team member from the Clark County Juvenile Court reviewed all Tier 1 interviews completed during the preceding 24-hr period to determine whether any youth needed additional screening for CSEC. The goal was to have Tier 2 interviews completed within 24 hours of Tier 1. To assist in this decision, at the bottom of each Tier 1 form, the assigned interviewer was instructed to indicate whether the youth was a "self-disclosed victim," "non-disclosed; suspected victim," or "non-disclosed; not suspected."

Youth who were deemed to be at risk by the *InterCSECT* Tier 1 interviewer, Response Team member, or both, were subsequently referred to a Tier 2 interview that included more in-depth questioning surrounding possible victimization (see "Measures" section below). Prior to administering Tier 2, the trained Response Team member reviewed an assent form with the

youth. As minors, juveniles are not able to give legal consent. Per the researchers' university Human Subjects Research Review Committee, data from Tiers 2 and 3 could only be collected for youth who had signed an assent form and who were at least 12 years of age. The assent form was not required until Tier 2 because Tier 1 was not designed to facilitate victimization disclosure (i.e., its items are not invasive).

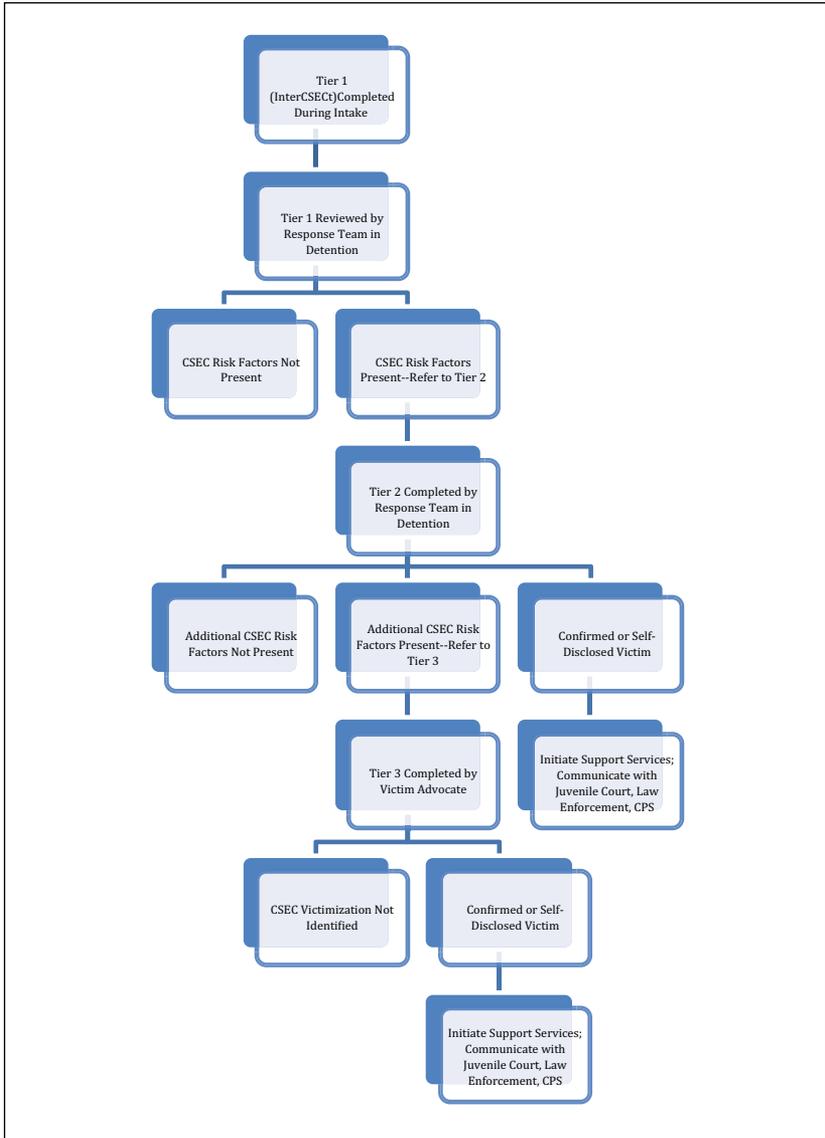
Youth who remained "non-disclosed; suspected victim" following their Tier 2 interview were subsequently referred to a Tier 3 interview, which was the most detailed and behaviorally specific in the series (see "Measures" section). Trained third-party advocates from the local YWCA in Vancouver, WA conducted Tier 3 interviews in a private room in juvenile detention. The decision to have trained victim advocates administer the interview was made primarily because these questions were most invasive and intrusive. For a visual representation of the procedure and protocol, see Figure 1.

## Measures

*InterCSECT* Tier 1. The *InterCSECT* Tier 1 Screening Interview was developed for the purposes of this study and was informed by the prior qualitative research conducted on the indicators of DMST/CSEC victimization, trauma-informed interviewing, as well as the general juvenile delinquency intake process. The instrument was a semi-structured interview and official file record review. It consisted of 14 interview questions and 18 line items. Four interview questions assessed where each youth lived, with whom, and if they currently slept there. Information obtained from these questions was used to create a dichotomous variable indicating "living situation risk." Youth deemed to have a living situation risk included those who were homeless, transient, currently on the run, or not sleeping at home consistently.

Two questions assessed youth runaway history and one question assessed if the youth had ever been in foster care. In addition, a line item completed by the interviewer indicated whether CPS/Department of Social and Human Services (DSHS) was currently involved with the youth. Four questions assessed the youth's prior contacts with law enforcement, one of which asked the cities in which the youth's police contacts occurred. From this question, new variables were created to assess if the youth reported any contacts outside of Clark County, WA, any contacts in a state other than Washington, any contacts in Oregon, and any contacts in Portland, OR, which is in the greater metropolitan area.

Additional staff observation line items completed by the interviewer indicated whether the youth had any visible brands or tattoos, any evidence of abuse (ligature marks, burns, bruises, etc.), and any personal property items



**Figure 1.** DMST/CSEC identification procedure and protocol.

Note. In instances where child abuse/victimization was identified, but not necessarily DMST/CSEC victimization, agency staff were instructed to initiate support services and communication with appropriate legal authorities. DMST = domestic minor sex trafficking; CSEC = commercial sexual exploitation of children; CPS = Child Protective Services.

of concern (i.e., hotel keys, large amounts of cash, Viagra pills, condoms, etc.). At the end of the Tier 1 interview, the interviewer was asked to indicate whether the youth was a “self-disclosed victim,” “non-disclosed; suspected victim,” or “non-disclosed; not suspected.” Tier 1 interviews took approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

*Tiers 2 and 3.* Shared Hope International (SHI), in partnership with “a multi-disciplinary committee of experts in the field of service provision to DMST victims,” developed a “practitioner’s training guide and intake tool specific to the identification of potential or current child/adolescent victims of sex trafficking” for youth aged 12 to 20 (Leitch & Snow, pp. 1 and 19). The SHI instrument is comprised of two interview tiers (Tiers 2 and 3 in the current study) modeled after a strengths-based and trauma-informed approach. The approach “attempts to reorganize invasive questions into an empowerment memory framework . . . [while] inserting positive and less invasive questions within a disclosure” (Leitch & Snow, pp. 19 and 20). The challenge posed by Shared Hope’s instrument for the current study was that it was not designed for, and had never been used in, a custody setting. Thus, the SHI instrument was modified for this study.

Tier 2 represents SHI’s first interview as found in their publication “Intervene: Identifying and Responding to America’s Prostituted Youth.”<sup>33</sup> The interview consisted of 34 questions exploring runaway/homelessness, traveling/transportation, delinquency, relationships, and tattooing. Administration of the Tier 2 interview ranged between 5 and 45 minutes depending on the youth’s level of cooperation and types of risk factors identified.

Tier 3 reflected SHI’s second interview as found in their publication “Intervene: Identifying and Responding to America’s Prostituted Youth.”<sup>32</sup> The interview consisted of 46 questions that more deeply explored the youth’s living situation, relationship with parents, runaway history, traveling, sources of and control over money, and partner history including physical and sexual assault. Tier 3 was administered by victim advocates from the local Vancouver, WA, YWCA.

*JCS.* JCS is one of several databases used in the State of Washington to track juveniles and their court cases across the state. Demographic information, criminal histories, and non-offender referrals were recorded from JCS for each *InterCSECT* Tier 1 interview that was completed. Youth’s race was recorded on all Tier 1 interviews by detention intake officers based on their own perceptions of the youth’s physical features. As a result, these data may not have been an accurate reflection of the racial distribution of the sample. Thus, the decision was made to use race as it was recorded in the

**Table 2.** Number of Times Youth Received an *InterCSECT* Tier 1 Interview ( $n = 535$ ).

	<i>f</i>	%
Once	389	72.7
More than once	146	27.3
2 times	103	19.3
3 times	33	6.2
4 times	7	1.3
5 times	2	0.4
6 times	1	0.2

JCS database. For the purposes of analysis, race was collapsed and coded as Hispanic if there was any indication that the youth was Hispanic. This included Hispanic–Whites, Hispanic–non-Whites, and Hispanic–Unknown.

## Results

A total of 738 *InterCSECT* Tier 1 interviews were completed during the course of the study, representing 535 total youth. Just over a quarter of the youth entered detention more than once (27.3%) in the 3½-month study period. Tier 1 frequencies are presented in Table 2.

During the course of the study, 47 youth (8.8%) were referred to a Tier 2 interview. Demographic characteristics of the 47 youth referred to a Tier 2 are provided in Table 3. A majority were female (72.3%), White (83.0%), and arrested/detained for a probation violation and/or warrant (59.6%). The first column in Table 4 indicates that an overwhelming majority had previously run away from home (89.4%). A third of the youth were currently on the run or not sleeping at home consistently (33.3%) and nearly half had previously been in foster care (42.6%) or were currently involved with CPS/DSHS (47.7%). A significant proportion of youth reported police contacts outside of Clark County, WA (37.2%), and a quarter had visual evidence of brands/tattoos (25.0%).

Two-way contingency table analyses were conducted to evaluate whether *InterCSECT* Tier 1 risk factors were related to a youth being referred to a Tier 2. Such analyses indicate whether staff were able to adequately refer at-risk youth for further assessment. All variables were dichotomous so that “0” indicated the absence of a risk factor and “1” indicated the presence. Of the 10 DMST/CSEC risk factors examined from Tier 1, all were found to be significantly related to a youth being referred to Tier 2. As seen in Table 4,

**Table 3.** Demographics of Youth Referred to a Tier 2 Interview ( $n = 47$ ).

	<i>f</i>	%
Sex		
Male	13	27.7
Female	34	72.3
Race		
White	39	83.0
Black	3	6.4
Hispanic	3	6.4
Unknown	2	4.3
Age ( $M = 15.39$ years)		
13	4	8.5
14	5	10.6
15	11	23.4
16	15	31.9
17	11	23.4
18	1	2.1
Reason for youth's arrest/detention		
New charge(s)	13	27.7
Probation Violation and/or warrant	28	59.6
Serving a sentence	4	8.5
Other	2	4.2

girls comprised 25.8% of the total cohort sample, yet they comprised 72.3% of those referred to Tier 2,  $\chi^2(1, n = 708) = 56.78, p < .001, r = .283$ . Youth who were currently on the run or not sleeping at home represented 9.3% of the cohort sample but comprised 33.3% of those referred to Tier 2,  $\chi^2(1, n = 474) = 24.36, p < .001, r = .227$ . Youth who reported having run away from home at least once represented 39.9% of the cohort sample, yet they comprised 89.4% of those referred to Tier 2,  $\chi^2(1, n = 710) = 51.45, p < .001, r = .269$ . Youth currently involved with either CPS or DSHS represented 12.7% of the cohort sample, compared with 47.7% of those referred to Tier 2,  $\chi^2(1, n = 679) = 52.29, p < .001, r = .278$ .

Statistically significant differences were also found for prior foster care placement, having prior law enforcement contacts both outside of Clark County and in a state other than Washington, visual evidence of brands/tattoos, and evidence of abuse. These results suggest that detention and probation staff identified the presence of DMST/CSEC risk factors in the *InterCSECT* Tier 1 screen interviews and were making referral decisions based on the presence of those risk factors.

**Table 4.** Statistical Comparisons Between Tier 2 Referrals and Non-Referrals Based on InterCSEct Tier 1 Risk Factors.

	% of Tier 1 Referred to Tier 2 (n = 47)	% of Tier 1 Not Referred to Tier 2 (n = 664)	$\chi^2$	r
Sex (n = 708)			56.78***	.283**
Male	27.7	77.5		
Female	72.3	22.5		
Living situation risk (n = 474)			24.36***	.227**
No	66.7	92.5		
Yes	33.3	7.5		
Ever run away from home (n = 710)			51.45***	.269**
No	10.6	63.7		
Yes	89.4	36.3		
Ever been in foster care (n = 707)			34.08***	.220**
No	57.4	88.0		
Yes	42.6	12.0		
CPS/DSHS currently involved (n = 679)			52.29***	.278**
No	52.3	89.8		
Yes	47.7	10.2		
Police contacts outside of Clark County (n = 590)			17.29***	.171**
No	62.8	86.5		
Yes	37.2	13.5		
In a state other than Washington (n = 586)			11.24**	.138**
No	72.1	89.3		
Yes	27.9	10.7		
In Oregon (n = 586)			11.89**	.142**
No	74.4	91.0		
Yes	25.6	9.0		
Visual evidence of brands/tattoos (n = 688)			6.50**	.097*
No	75.0	88.2		
Yes	25.0	11.8		
Evidence of abuse (n = 685)			4.33*	.080*
No	93.0	98.0		
Yes	7.0	2.0		
Status as perceived by Tier I Interviewer (n = 445)			82.76***	.431**
Non-disclosed; not suspected	65.4	98.6		
Non-disclosed; suspected victim	34.6	1.4		

Note. Coding Scheme (0 = male, 1 = female); (0 = no, 1 = yes); (0 = non-disclosed; not suspected, 1 = non-disclosed; suspected victim). CPS = Child Protective Services; DSHS = Department of Social and Human Services.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Over the 3½-month period of research, a total of 47 youth were referred to a Tier 2 interview. However, 35 youth assented and participated in the Tier 2 interview. Five youth referred to Tier 2 were released from custody prior to being interviewed. Two youth who were referred to Tier 2 refused participation. Two youth participated in the Tier 2 interview but refused to sign the assent form. Three additional youth participated in Tier 2 but no assent was documented by juvenile court staff. If the five youth who were released from detention before being interviewed are removed from the analysis, the response rate equals 83.3%.

During the Tier 2 interview, interviewers indicated that two youth self-disclosed DMST/CSEC victimization. These two youth received the Tier 3 interview conducted by advocates from the local YWCA. Five cases remained “non-disclosed; suspected victim.” Of these five youth, three received the Tier 3 interview. The other two youth were not referred to Tier 3 by staff, unfortunately for unknown reasons. However, one became a confirmed DMST/CSEC victim 3 days after her Tier 2 interview when her victimization was revealed by another detained youth. Of the 35 youth who received a Tier 2 interview, 11 (31.4%) went on to receive a Tier 3 interview by a community advocate.

### *Confirmed Victims*

Six youth were identified and confirmed as DMST/CSEC victims during the course of the study. A comparison of their *InterCSECT* Tier 1 characteristics can be found in Table 5. A comparison of their official criminal history data can be found in Table 6. All six victims were female, between the ages of 14 and 17, and had histories of running away. Five girls were White (83.3%), and one girl’s race was unknown. Most confirmed victims were in detention for a probation violation and/or warrant (83.3%), had between four and six court cases on file (83.3%), and were currently involved with CPS/DSHS (66.7%). Half of the youth had one or more truancy petition on file, were not originally from Washington State, had previously been in foster care, had visual evidence of tattoos, and did not report any law enforcement contacts outside of Clark County.

Discussed below are the characteristics from the *InterCSECT* Tier 1 interviews and official JCS data of youth confirmed as DMST/CSEC victims during the course of the study ( $n = 6$ ). The information reported corresponds to the Tier 1 interview that was associated with the youth’s victimization confirmation. All six confirmed victims were diverted from juvenile detention and given access to community advocates and appropriate health and mental health resources.

**Table 5.** Demographics and Risk Factors of Confirmed DMST/CSEC Victims.

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5	Case 6
<b>Demographic characteristics</b>						
Age	14	17	15	14	14	15
Race	White	Unknown	White	White	White	White
Sex	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female
<b>InterCSEcT Tier 1 risk factors</b>						
Prior foster care placement	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Currently on the run or not sleeping at home consistently	Yes	Unknown	No	Unknown	Yes	Unknown
Number of times ran away	6+	10	3	4	10+	6
CPS/DSSH currently involved	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes	Yes	No
Locations youth reported police contacts in	Vancouver, WA; Idaho	Vancouver, WA	Vancouver, WA	Unknown	Vancouver, WA; Battle Ground, WA; Portland, OR	Vancouver, WA
Suspicious brands/tattoos	Yes	None	Yes	None	Yes	Yes
<b>Tier 2 risk factors</b>						
Travel uncovered during screening	Portland, OR; Colorado; Idaho	California; Tennessee	Salem, OR	Idaho	Portland, OR; Vancouver, WA	None

Note. DMST = domestic minor sex trafficking; CSEC = commercial sexual exploitation of children; CPS = Child Protective Services.

**Table 6.** Criminal Histories of Confirmed DMST/CSEC Victims.

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5	Case 6
Reason for current arrest/detention	P.V. and/or warrant	P.V. and/or warrant	P.V. and/or warrant	P.V. and/or warrant	P.V. and/or warrant	New charge: Theft 3
No. of prior warrants	3	2	1	4	4	3
No. of prior P.V.s	5	2	2	4	6	3
No. of court cases on file	5	7	4	5	5	5
Prior non-offender referrals	1 Truancy	1 Truancy 2 Dependency 1 CHINS	1 Truancy	None	None	None
Number of times in detention	8	8	7	8	8	5
Number of days served in detention	46	62	51	53	74	39
Detention cost (US\$200/day)	US\$9,200	US\$12,400	US\$10,200	US\$10,600	US\$14,800	US\$7,800
Cost to parent(s) (US\$40/day)	US\$1,840	US\$2,480	US\$2,040	US\$2,120	US\$2,960	US\$1,560
Prior criminal charges	Theft 3 MIP	Criminal impersonation 1	Theft 3 Assault 4 (×2) Obstructing an officer Malicious mischief	Theft 3 (×2) Assault 4 Obstructing a Law Enforcement Officer Malicious mischief MIP	Theft 3 Assault 4 Resisting arrest MIP	Theft 3 (×3) Assault 4 Taking a vehicle without permission

Note. DMST = domestic minor sex trafficking; CSEC = commercial sexual exploitation of children; CHINS = child in need of services; MIP = Minor in Possession.

**Case analyses.** Case 1 was a 14-year-old White female. During the course of the 3½ months, she came through detention twice, once in October and once in November. Her Tier 1 interview in October indicated that she was kicked out of her home, was not living anywhere, had run away more than 6 times, had previously been in foster care, did not have anyone who took care of her when she needed help, had police contacts in both Vancouver, WA, and Idaho, visual evidence of tattoos, and CPS/DSHS was currently involved with her. Her Tier 1 interview did not indicate the possession of any personal property items of concern, evidence of abuse, or gang affiliation. The Tier 1 interviewer marked her disclosure status as “non-disclosed; not suspected.” Despite this conclusion by the Tier 1 interviewer, a Tier 2 Response Team member referred her to Tier 2 during which she disclosed both familial trafficking and being “pimped,” or exploited by someone other than a family

member. Case 1 was in custody for a probation violation and/or warrant, had three prior warrants, five prior probation violations, five court cases on file, one truancy petition, and was currently living with foster parents. Prior to her disclosure, she had been in detention 8 times and had served 46 days in custody.

Case 2 was a 17-year-old female of an unknown race/ethnicity. During the 3½ months, she came through detention 3 times, once in October, once in November, and once in January. Her Tier 1 interview in October indicated that she was currently living in foster care and had run away from home approximately 10 times. CPS/DSHS was currently involved with her, and she was high on methamphetamine during intake. Her Tier 1 interview did not indicate police contacts outside of Vancouver, WA, the possession of any personal property items of concern, or any evidence of brands, tattoos, abuse, or gang affiliation. The Tier 1 interviewer did not indicate a disclosure status, but she was referred to a Tier 2 interview by a Response Team member during which she disclosed being trafficked (i.e., “pimped”) and engaging in “survival sex.”<sup>4</sup> Case 2 was in custody for a probation violation and/or warrant, had two prior warrants, two prior probation violations, seven court cases on file, one truancy petition, one dependency petition, and one child in need of services (CHINS) petition. Prior to her disclosure, she had been in detention 8 times and had served 62 days in custody.

Case 3 was a 15-year-old White female. During the 3½ months, she came through detention twice, once in October and once in November. The only risk factor identified in her Tier 1 interview in October was that she had run away from home approximately 3 times. She was currently living at home and had never been in foster care. Although she had three prior contacts with police, they were all within Vancouver, WA. There was no possession of any personal property items of concern, no evidence of brands, tattoos, abuse, gang affiliation, and no indication of whether CPS/DSHS was currently involved. The Tier 1 interviewer in October did not indicate a disclosure status, but the youth was referred to a Tier 2 interview by a Response Team member, likely because of her known prior history in detention by the Response Team. During her Tier 2 interview, she disclosed engaging in prostitution. Case 3 was in custody for a probation violation and/or warrant, had one prior warrant, two prior probation violations, four court cases on file, and one truancy petition. She was also listed in the JCS database as having a tattoo/scar of two letters on her right wrist. Prior to her disclosure, she had been in detention 7 times and had served 51 days in custody.

Case 4 was a 14-year-old White female. During the 3½ months, she came through detention 4 times, once in November, once in December, and twice in January. Her Tier 1 interview in November indicated that she was now

living back at home, had run away approximately 4 times, had previously been in foster care, and CPS/DSHS was currently involved with her. Her Tier 1 interview did not indicate police contacts outside of Vancouver, WA, the possession of any personal property items of concern, any evidence of brands, tattoos, abuse, or gang affiliation. The Tier 1 interviewer indicated that she was a “self-disclosed victim.” Yet, for unknown reasons, the Response Team member did not refer this youth to a Tier 2 interview. When the youth entered detention a second time during the study period in December, another Tier 1 interview was conducted and the youth was referred to the Tier 2 interview. The story uncovered behind Case 4 is that she voluntarily entered a stranger’s car while waiting at a bus stop during which time she was kidnapped and sexually exploited across multiple states over a period of several months. Case 4 was in custody for a probation violation and/or warrant, had four prior warrants, four prior probation violations, five court cases on file, and no prior non-offender referrals/petitions. Prior to her disclosure, she had been in detention 8 times and had served 53 days in custody.

Case 5 was a 14-year-old White female. During the course of the study, she came through detention once in November. Her Tier 1 interview indicated that she was not living anywhere in particular, had run away from home more than 10 times, had prior police contacts in Vancouver, WA, Battle Ground, WA, and Portland, OR, had visual evidence of tattoos, visual evidence of possible abuse (bruises on her arms), and CPS/DSHS was currently involved with her. Her Tier 1 interview did not indicate any prior foster care placement, the possession of any personal property items of concern, or gang affiliation. The Tier 1 interviewer marked her disclosure status as “non-disclosed; suspected victim.” She was referred by a Response Team member for a Tier 2 during which she disclosed having a “pimp.” Case 5 was in custody for a probation violation and/or warrant, had four prior warrants, six prior probation violations, five court cases on file, and no prior non-offender referrals/petitions. Prior to her disclosure, she had been in detention 8 times and had served 74 days in custody.

Case 6 was a 15-year-old White female. During the course of the study, she came through detention twice, once in October and once in January. Her Tier 1 in January indicated that she had run away approximately 6 times and had tattoos of four words on her wrists that suggested sexual exploitation.<sup>5</sup> Her Tier 1 interview did not indicate police contacts outside of Vancouver, WA, any prior foster care placement, the possession of any personal property items of concern, any evidence of brands or abuse, gang affiliation, or CPS/DSHS involvement. The Tier 1 interviewer marked her disclosure status as “non-disclosed; not suspected.” Despite this conclusion, she was referred to a Tier 2 by a Response Team member during which she was very evasive and

did not disclose. Shortly after her Tier 2 interview, she was implicated by another youth in custody, which resulted in a referral to the FBI, after which the youth disclosed having a trafficker, or “pimp.” Case 6 was in custody for a new charge of Theft 3, had three prior warrants, three prior probation violations, five court cases on file, and no prior non-offender referrals/petitions. Prior to her disclosure, she had been in detention 5 times and had served 39 days in custody.

## Discussion

The study results suggest that detention and probation staff generally were successful in identifying the presence of DMST/CSEC risk factors as assessed by youth screen interviews and made referral decisions based on the presence of those risk factors, although there were some missed opportunities for further referral. Prior to the study’s implementation, 17 victims of DMST/CSEC were identified and confirmed by the Clark County Juvenile Court. As a result of this study, 6 additional victims were identified, representing 3.9% of girls and 1.1% of all youth taken into custody over the 3½-month period.

The study specifically examined risk factors associated with DMST/CSEC both among youth who were identified as “at risk” and victims confirmed during the research process. Overall, the results support the need for a brief screening process that includes a systematic approach to identify victims in a juvenile custody setting. A thorough, in-depth assessment for DMST/CSEC victimization of all youth entering custody would be too time intensive, unnecessary, and likely unreliable given the lack of privacy, youth’s state of mind, and risk of re-traumatization. *InterCSECt* was intentionally designed to be short, relatively non-invasive, and not facilitate any type of victimization disclosure because of the setting in which the interview was being conducted (at intake with little privacy).

Youth identified as at greater risk through their *InterCSECt* Tier 1 screen interview were referred to a Tier 2 interview, developed by Shared Hope International, which was designed to facilitate disclosure of victimization, if present. As a result, five of the six victims confirmed during the study disclosed their victimization during the Tier 2 interview. This supports the decision to use Shared Hope International’s Intervene Tool only as a secondary assessment, administered by staff specifically trained in DMST/CSEC and trauma-informed interviewing, rather than as a primary assessment incorporated into the detention intake process. Although the three-tiered process worked effectively for this study’s purposes, to truly be victim-centered, we only see the need for agencies to use the *InterCSECt* screen at intake, have appropriately trained staff review the screens, and immediately refer youth to

community advocates who are trained to work with this population for additional assessment, if needed. Having a juvenile court staff conduct a Tier 2 assessment in-house created a time delay to advocates that was unnecessary.

In examining the characteristics of confirmed victims, a considerable amount of variation was found among specific risk factors. Aside from all youth being female and mostly White, with prior runaway and criminal histories, no definitive pattern emerged. Further complicating matters is how the same risk factors were found within the cohort sample in general. Certainly, there is a strong possibility that some DMST/CSEC victims were missed in the process. However, the proportion of false negatives, or missed identifications, cannot be determined.

An examination of the risk factors identified within the *InterCSECT* Tier 1 interviews of confirmed victims reveals wide variation. Although some confirmed victims had multiple risk factors, others had relatively few. For example, the only risk factor identified in the Tier 1 interview of confirmed Case 3 was that she had previously run away 3 times. It is unclear why this youth was identified as at risk and subsequently referred to a Tier 2 assessment when other youth were not. This suggests that other factors not captured in the screening interview may have influenced staff member perceptions of the youth and corresponding referral decisions. Perhaps staff were familiar with certain youth and aware of other factors not captured in the Tier 1 interview that explained the presence of certain risk factors. A complication in identifying this population of victims is the large proportion of youth in the juvenile justice system who have risk factors that mirror those of DMST/CSEC victims.

To our surprise, no male victims were identified or confirmed during the study. Official data (USDOJ, 2010), juvenile prostitution studies (Finkelhor & Ormrod, 2004; Mitchell et al., 2010; OJJDP, 2002; Spangenberg, 2001), CSEC studies (Ashley, 2008; Curtis, Terry, Dank, Dombrowski, & Khan, 2008), and studies of runaway and homeless youth (Greene, Ennett, & Ringwalt, 1999) consistently indicate that male youth are involved in, and are victims of, commercial sexual exploitation, particularly gay, bisexual, or transgender youth (Irvine, 2010). In light of prior research, it is plausible to assume that male victims came through detention and were subsequently not identified.

In fact, two male youth with prior prostitution charges entered detention during the course of the study. According to probation staff, the two males were arrested by Washington State Patrol at a truck stop in the same incident where they were said to be holding a sign indicating they would have sex for money. Although prostitution was not the presenting charge for these youth at the time of their intake, they were known to probation staff for this incident,

and the prostitution charge was on their record. The prior prostitution charge alone arguably should have flagged the Tier 1 interviewers and Response Team members to refer to Tier 2, but no one did.

In addition, Male 1 entered detention 3 times during the 3½-month study period, again, with no Tier 2 recommended or conducted. In his three Tier 1 interviews, Male 1 indicated he was living “on the run” with “friends,” had run away 3 times, and had approximately 10 to 20 local police contacts. Male 2 came through detention once during the study period and had fewer risk factors than Male 1. Male 2 indicated he was living with his stepparents, had never run away from home, and had 2 to 3 police contacts. Nevertheless, the prostitution charge coupled with the knowledge of the truck-stop incident should have perpetuated an additional Tier 2 interview for both youth.

The reason these boys were not referred for additional screening cannot be determined. It is possible that staff bias contributed to this failure, despite training at the outset of the study discussing the possibilities of sexual exploitation with boys. Regardless, agencies should ensure CSEC training includes the emerging research on the risk factors for males, especially gay, bisexual, and transgender youth.

Finally, it may be tempting to conclude that DMST/CSEC is not as prevalent as certain sources claim it to be, given that relatively few victims were identified and confirmed during the study ( $n = 6$ ). However, a portion of youth deemed at risk and subsequently referred to Tier 2 did not receive one because they were released from custody and did not later return during the study. As a result, it is possible that a small number of victims were not identified (up to 11 youth). On the contrary, the low number of victims identified by this study may be a reflection of the difficulty in identifying such youth. To this end, only three youth in the entire sample had prior prostitution charges. Prior research has found that victims of DMST/CSEC either do not, or are unable to, self-identify (Ashley, 2008; Smith et al., 2009) and are arrested on masking charges (Ashley, 2008; Finkelhor & Ormrod, 2004; Smith et al., 2009). As a result, identification is extremely difficult.

The Clark County Juvenile Court, where this study was conducted, is located roughly 10 miles north from downtown Portland, just off of what has been termed the “I-5 corridor” on “the northwest circuit.” The number of victims identified during the 3½-month study period is consistent with both the low number of victims identified by expansive, multi-agency sting operations and the low number of victims known to social service agencies.

For example, the FBI Operation Cross Country sting operation in Portland, OR, in November 2010 only led to the recovery of three DMST/CSEC victims over a 3-day period (FBI, 2010). Portland, within Multnomah County,

has gained a national reputation as being “a hub for the sexual exploitation of children,” in fact, “a Pornland” (Rather, 2010) even though there are no reliable data to suggest this. According to the Oregon Department of Human Services, Multnomah County has identified 165 youth who have either been pimped, trafficked, or otherwise been involved in the sex trade since 2007 (Hannah-Jones, 2011). A more recent archival data analysis of records from the Oregon Department of Human Services and the local Sexual Assault Resource Center identified 469 unduplicated CSEC victims in the Portland metro area in the 4 years between 2009 and 2012 (Carey & Teplitsky, 2013).

## Conclusion

The present study was the first of its kind to systematically identify DMST/CSEC victims in a juvenile detention setting and facilitate the identification of six new victims. In addition to youth disclosing sexual exploitation, the screening process also resulted in a portion of youth disclosing a variety of maltreatment including physical abuse, sexual abuse, sexual assault, and domestic violence allowing staff to make proper referrals to services and resources. This is important to consider in future attempts to identify similar victims.

Screening youth in juvenile detention for sexual exploitation has important implications for both juvenile departments and the youth they serve. Many at-risk youth are arrested each year and never go on to receive either formal probation or a sentence. For some youth, juvenile detention is a one-time occurrence. According to the 2009 Washington State Juvenile Justice Annual Report, of the 46,962 cases referred to the prosecutor in 2008, 38% were handled through diversion and an additional 9% had no action taken. Detention officers have unique access to youth brought in by arresting agencies who (a) do not qualify to be held (i.e., screen and release), (b) are later handled informally through diversion, or (c) have their charges dropped. Screening all youth during intake, as opposed to only those detained in the juvenile justice system, provides the opportunity to screen a larger number of at-risk youth who would not otherwise be screened. Nevertheless, because two thirds of the confirmed victims were currently involved with CPS/DSHS, it is important to consider implementing a similar screening process in child welfare settings as well, which may serve to foster even earlier identification.

Early identification is also fiscally responsible. Each youth cost Clark County an average of US\$200 per day to detain and parents US\$40 for each day their child is in custody. The six victims, prior to being identified in this study, had collectively spent 325 days in custody at a cost of US\$65,000 to

the county (not including court costs) and US\$13,000 to the parents. Although it cannot be determined, the extent to which their detentions were a direct result of their victimizations, the financial expenses associated with unidentified youth are high. Moreover, the trajectory of delinquency would have likely continued had it not been for the identification of their victimization.

When youth are delinquent as a result and manifestation of their victimization, traditional approaches are not effective because they target the youth's delinquency and not the underlying causes. Although this claim can be made for juvenile delinquents in general, unidentified DMST/CSEC youth are often viewed, classified, and treated as delinquents when, in reality, they are actively being victimized and deserve a multitude of services. Furthermore, releasing these youth back to settings where they were exploited increases the likelihood of continued victimization, especially for those being sexually exploited by their own family.

### **Acknowledgments**

The authors would like to thank the Clark County Juvenile Court for access and support for the study, particularly Pat Escamilla, Eric Gillman, and Nicole Steinman. We also extend sincere gratitude to the YWCA of Clark County for serving as sources of support and advocacy for detained youth who needed it, including Laurie Schacht, Kai Hill, and Joan Renner. We also recognize Sarah Lazzari and Meghan Lee who assisted with data entry as Criminology and Criminal Justice students at Portland State University. In addition, Esther Nelson at the Sexual Assault Resource Center (SARC) informed the early development of the project and was willing to serve as an additional resource and advocate for youth.

### **Declaration of Conflicting Interests**

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### **Funding**

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### **Notes**

1. Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) is a term coined by Shared Hope International to "identify the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) under 18 years of age who are U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents" (Smith, Vardaman, & Snow, 2009, p. 9). Prior to this label, the phenomenon

- was known, and often still is, as child prostitution, or the CSEC. Regardless of the name, the exchange is considered exploitative because “it comes about in a relationship of unequal economic, cognitive and psycho-social power” (Spangenberg, 2001, p. 3) that is both emotionally and physically detrimental to the youth.
2. Because the university Institutional Review Board had concerns regarding the nature of interview questions, youth aged 12 or younger were not further screened for victimization as part of this study even if initial risk factors were present. Nevertheless, juvenile court staff reviewed these cases and referred youth to advocates if necessary.
  3. For a copy of this study’s Tiers 2 and 3, also known as Shared Hope International’s “Intervene” instrument, please contact Shared Hope International directly at 1-866-437-5433 ([www.sharedhope.org](http://www.sharedhope.org)).
  4. According to Estes and Weiner (2001), “survival sex” reflects the fact that, “Many youth involved in the exchange of sex for money or other considerations (e.g., food, shelter, drugs, etc.) do not perceive themselves as engaging in prostitution but rather as doing ‘whatever is necessary’ to ensure their survival” (p. 11).
  5. The specific words in the tattoos have been deleted to protect the identity of the victim.

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