



Health Needs of Trafficked Youth

SARAH BEAUMONT, MD

MEDICAL DIRECTOR, HOMELESS YOUTH OUTREACH

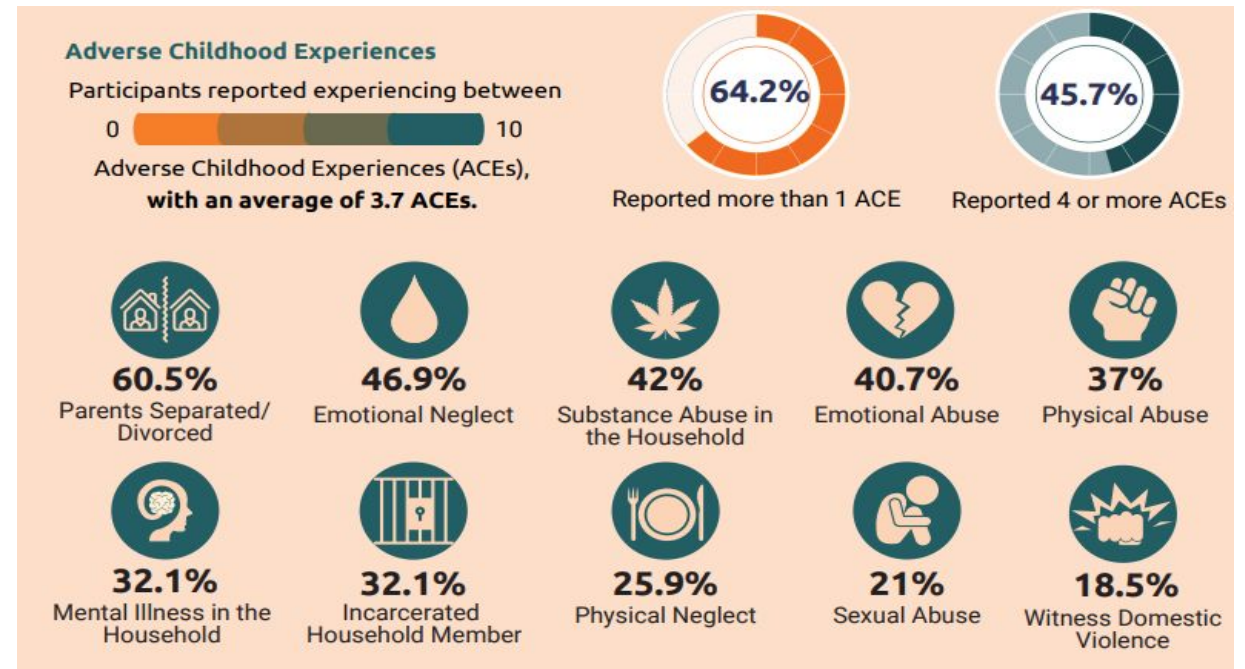
PHOENIX CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Numbers

- ▶ Estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults experience homelessness each year
- ▶ 1/3 Adolescents living on the street are recruited for sexual exploitation within 48 hours of becoming homeless
 - ▶ Foster care youth
 - ▶ Youth involved in Juvenile Justice
 - ▶ LGBTQ youth
 - ▶ Unaccompanied minors

Predisposing Factors

- ▶ History of substance abuse
- ▶ History of mental health problems
- ▶ Complex Trauma
 - ▶ Trauma on top of trauma
- ▶ Increased stress->changes in the brain



Predisposing Factors

- ▶ Biologic factors
 - ▶ Limited life experiences
 - ▶ Immature brain development
 - ▶ Affects decision making
 - ▶ Inhibition
 - ▶ Planning and Reasoning



Where are they seen?

- ▶ 88% of victims have come into contact with a medical professional while involved in trafficking
 - ▶ Very few are reported
 - ▶ Lack of education and training of providers and staff
 - ▶ Patients not self identifying
- ▶ Emergency Departments
- ▶ Clinics
- ▶ Urgent Cares
- ▶ School Health Clinics

Presentation

- ▶ Traumatic experiences impact their life and behavior
 - ▶ Hypervigilance
 - ▶ Mistrust of health care providers
 - ▶ Anxiety
 - ▶ Anger
 - ▶ Withdrawal
 - ▶ Fearful of procedures

Medical Concerns

- ▶ Sexual assault
 - ▶ Infections
 - ▶ Physical Injury
 - ▶ Exacerbation of chronic conditions
 - ▶ Issues related to substance abuse
- ▶ YES Survey, 2020
 - ▶ Vision concerns
 - ▶ Asthma
 - ▶ Dental problems
 - ▶ Chronic pain

Medical Concerns

- ▶ Chronic Pain
 - ▶ Headaches
 - ▶ Chronic Abdominal Pain
 - ▶ Fibromyalgia
 - ▶ Can be somatic presentations of emotional pain/abuse



Mental Health Concerns

- ▶ Mental Health
 - ▶ Depression
 - ▶ Anxiety
 - ▶ PTSD
 - ▶ Mood Disorders



Physical Exam Findings

- ▶ Drug related health issues
- ▶ Bite marks
- ▶ Evidence of sexual trauma
- ▶ Cigarette burns
- ▶ Bruising, fractures
- ▶ Tattoos



Physical Exam Findings

- ▶ Malnutrition
- ▶ Bladder damage
- ▶ TMJ problems
- ▶ Hearing loss
- ▶ Bald patches
- ▶ Recurrent STIs, PID, HIV



Needs of Trafficked Youth

- ▶ Trained medical professionals and staff
 - ▶ Learn how to Identify
 - ▶ Learn how to provide trauma informed care
 - ▶ Training for those that provide acute care as well as those who provide ongoing care
- ▶ Increased access and availability of mental health resources

References

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- ▶ **Committee on Health Care for Underserved Women. Human Trafficking.** Veronica Gillispie, MD, Jennefer A. Russo, MD, MPH, and Kavita Shah Arora, MD, MBE, MS.
- ▶ **2020 Youth Experiences Survey**, October 2020. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz, MSW, PHD. Kristen Bracy, MA, MSW. Arizona State University, Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research