



**Office of Children  
and Family Services**

# **Policy and Practice: Child Welfare's Critical Role in Addressing Child Sex Trafficking**

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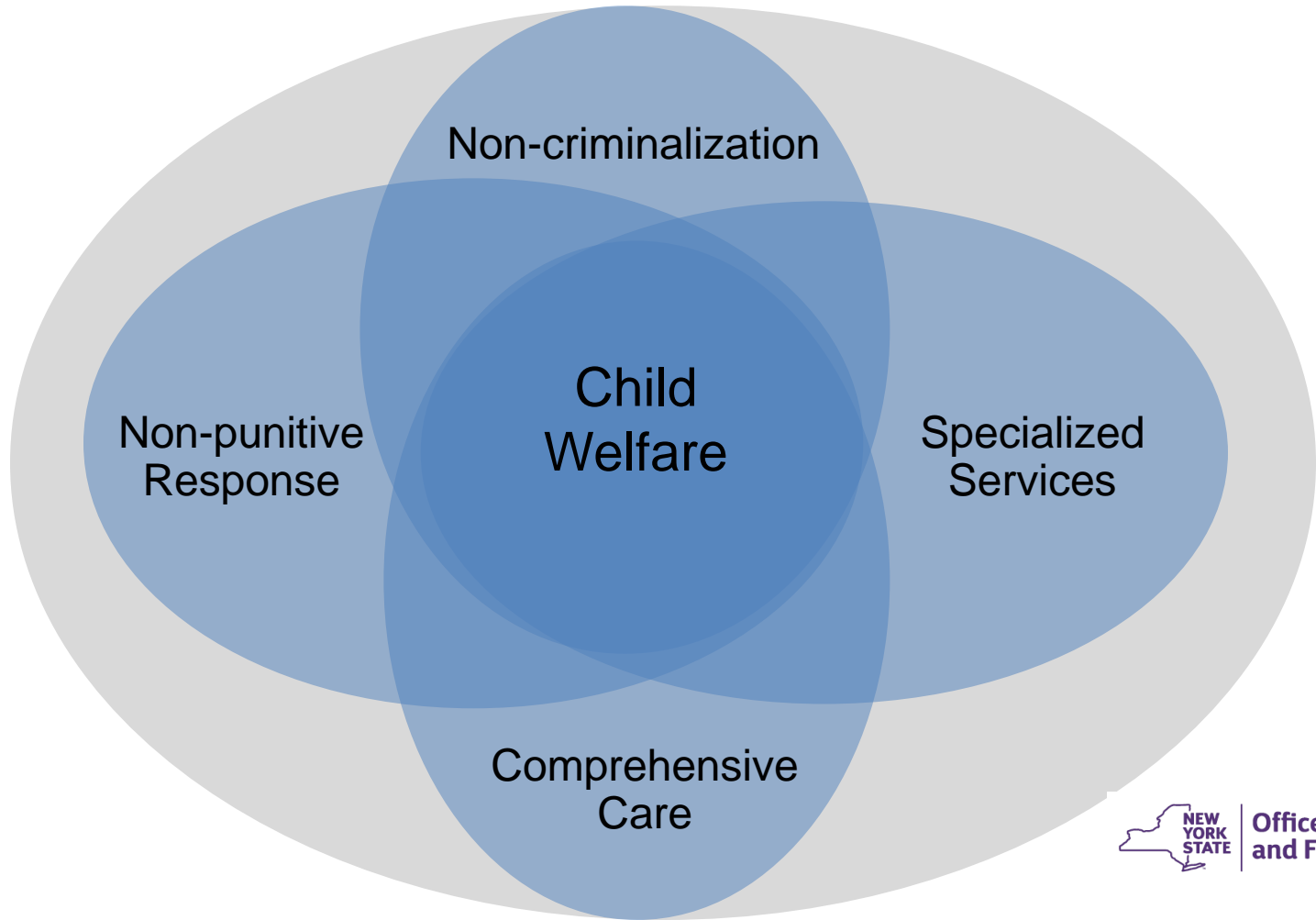
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# Objectives

1. Address the role of child welfare in responding to sex trafficking and/or the commercial sexual exploitation of children.
2. Review the federal laws directing child welfare's role in serving sex trafficked youth.
3. Provide an overview of key areas of child welfare response to child sex trafficking.
4. Highlight state response models for addressing sex trafficking, including policy and practice, in Florida and New York.





# Federal Law Impacting Child Welfare

## Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), 2000

- Established that all minors (under 18) engaged in commercial sex are victims of sex trafficking, including those with no third-party control.

## Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA), 2015

### Modified the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)

- Redefined “child abuse and neglect” to include human trafficking and commercial sex
- Directed child welfare to collect and report the number of children determined to be victims of sex trafficking
- Required state plan – identification and training efforts
- States can define “child” as someone age 23 or under



# Federal Law Impacting Child Welfare

## Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, 2014

- Required the state CW agency to develop policies and procedures around identification, documentation, determining services for children *under state child welfare supervision* that are victims of sex trafficking or at risk of victimization.
- State option to identify and document anyone under the age 26
- Modified AFCARS to include sex trafficking

## Family First Prevention Services Act, 2018

- Limited federal payments for foster care placements unless the child is placed in an allowable setting
- Included, as an allowable setting, specialized group homes for sex trafficking victims or those at-risk of becoming victims.
- Emphasized high-quality residential care and support services.

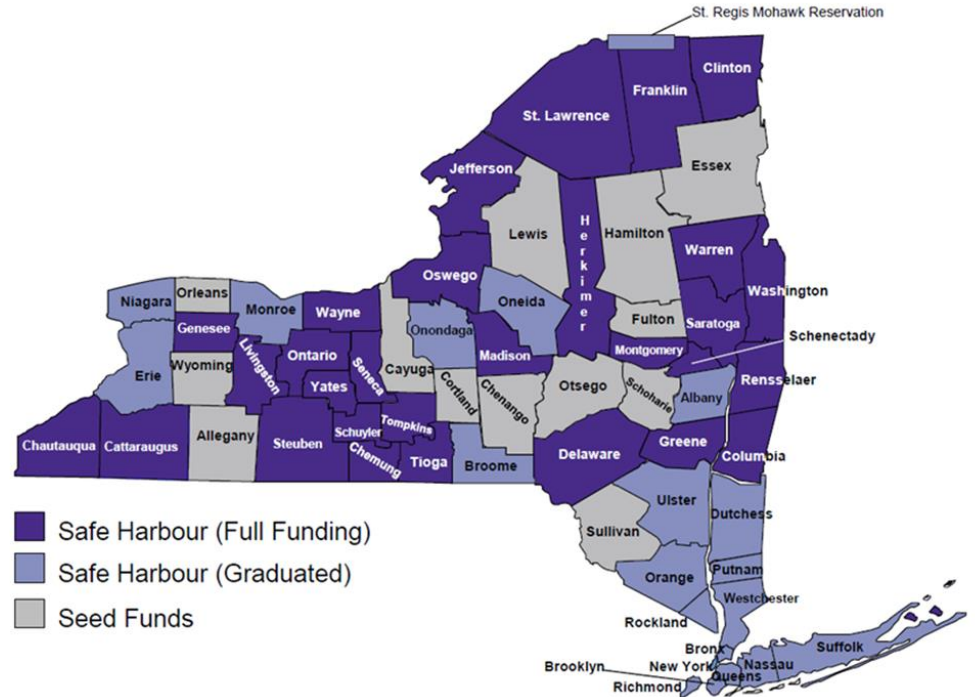


# State Child Welfare Response to Child Sex Trafficking

- Maltreatment Types
- Screening
- Child Protective Services Investigations
- Multidisciplinary Teams
- Specialized services
  - Community
  - Residential
- Training and technical assistance



# State Case Studies



# Anti-Trafficking Approach

## Guiding Philosophies

- Persons who have experienced trafficking or CSEC are survivors, not criminals
- Survivors should not be detained for their own safety
- Successful engagement of youth requires a risk tolerant approach
- Survivors and youth at-risk are entitled to services (Safe Harbour can support youth aged 0-21)
- Service needs are best met when systems embrace a “no wrong door” approach embedded in a multi-disciplinary response
- Developing a service continuum can allow systems to best meet the needs of survivors “where they’re at”





# Spectrum of Services — County Level

## Low to High Threshold Services

**Low:** Easy to access, no commitment:

*EXAMPLES: Drop-in centers; Street outreach, crisis shelters; etc.*

**Medium:** Youth are engaged in services and have autonomy.

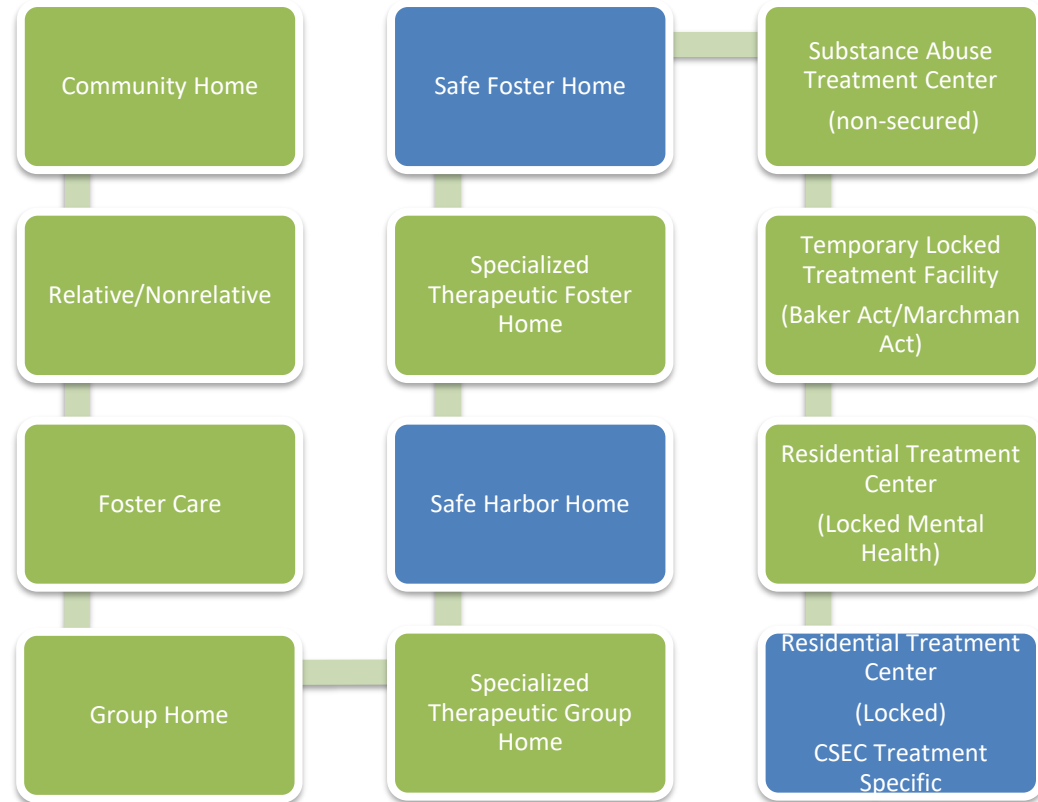
*EXAMPLES: Victim advocacy; creative therapies; transitional living programs; respite; etc.*

**High:** Commitment to consistent and intense services.

*EXAMPLES: Wrap-around community based services; Trafficking-responsive placement; etc.*



# Florida's Specialized Placements for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (Under 18)





# Facilitated Discussion



# Contact Information

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