

About this Guide and Tool:

Shared Hope International has documented that victims of domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) continue to be misidentified in the field.¹ Misidentification often occurs due to the DMST victimization being masked by other behavior—such as delinquency or status offenses – which is often a direct result of their exploitation through sex trafficking. As a result, child and adolescent survivors of sex trafficking often do not receive services specific to their DMST victimization. In response, in 2009, Melissa Snow, Director of Programs at Shared Hope International, and Laurie Leitch, Ph.D., Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Trauma Resource Institute, convened a multidisciplinary committee of experts in the field of service provision to DMST victims. The outcome was the development of a practitioner’s training guide and intake tool specific to the identification of potential or current child/adolescent victims of sex trafficking. The original publication was the result of collaboration and insight from the following contributing authors: Sidney Ford, LCSW-C, Founder and Executive Director, You Are Never Alone; Sandy Skelaney, Program Manager for Kristi House; Nina S. Brathwaite, M.A., Clinical Psychology Doctoral Practicum Student, UNLV; Tina Frundt, Survivor of DMST and Founder and Executive Director, Courtney’s House; Joan A. Reid, LMHC, CRC, Sexual Trauma Therapist, APPLE Services; Vickie Ernst, Chief Operating Officer, and Michelle Orta, Child Forensic Interviewer, both of ChildSafe Child Advocacy Center. Also, former Shared Hope International intern Renae Post, MSW, made significant contributions to the initial concepts and format of this resource.

The Intervene Resource Package has been implemented in a variety of settings in which victims of DMST have been identified. As trends have changed and new forms of sex trafficking have emerged and proliferated, an update to this resource became needed. Elizabeth Scaife, Director of Training at Shared Hope International, worked with a team of experts to revise the content to include new trends in sex trafficking as well as updated research on trauma. A close collaboration and review by the following experts in trauma and interviewing techniques with adolescents was critical: Bonnie Martin, LPC; and Rita Farrell and Stephanie M. Smith, National Child Protection Training Center. Expertise specifically in the growing area of gang-controlled sex trafficking was provided by Detective Bill Woolf, Fairfax County Police Department and Deepa Patel, CSOTP, LCSW, Multicultural Clinical Center. The revisions provide an understanding of trafficking within gang organizations and family structures, and the Intake Tool incorporates questions geared towards identifying sex trafficking victimization within the gang-involved youth population. As Shared Hope International continues to identify gaps within identification and service provision, the Intervene Resource Package will experience revisions to account for new research and insight.

¹Smith, L., Vardaman, S.H., Snow, M. The National Report on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: America’s Prostituted Children (Shared Hope International: 2009), pg.10.