Panel 5: Addressing the Substance Use Needs of Trafficking Survivors and Exploring the Nexus With the Opioid Crisis

This panel highlights the role of substance use and connection to trafficking, impact of the opioid crisis, challenges and strategies for treatment, harm reduction and prevention strategies, multidisciplinary coordination between criminal justice and community health stakeholders, and next steps.

Following the PowerPoint presentation is a list of resources suggested by the HHS Health and Human Trafficking Symposium moderators and panelists. The list includes a wide variety of resources, ranging from published research, fact sheets, and tools such as trainings and curriculum.
Addressing the Substance Use Needs of Trafficking Survivors and Exploring the Nexus With the Opioid Crisis

Moderator/Panelists

- Moderator:
  - Audra Stock, Director, SAMHSA Center for Substance Abuse Treatment

- Panelists:
  - Dr. Elizabeth Hopper, Director, Project REACH and the New England Coalition Against Trafficking
  - Dr. Ginny Sprang, Professor of Psychiatry/Executive Director, University of Kentucky College of Medicine; Executive Director, Center on Trauma and Children
  - Tara Hughes, LCSW-R, Coordinator for Human Trafficking Programs, International Institute of Buffalo
  - Dr. Carole Warshaw, Director, National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma and Mental Health
  - Viann Barnett, Program Director, Cincinnati Union Bethel

Learning Objectives

- Investigate the nexus of substance use for individuals at risk of, currently experiencing, or recovering from trafficking.
- Examine individualized trauma-informed care for trafficked individuals with co-occurring conditions that address individual risk and long-term care needs.
- Spotlight new partnerships and community collaborations between the trafficking and substance use fields to deliver trauma-informed care.

Multiple Pathways to Human Trafficking and Substance Use

- Self-medication, Coerced use, sabotaged recovery
- Limited access to comprehensive trauma-informed Treatment/pain management; overprescribing of opioids
- Continued entrapment; systems involvement (CJ, immigration, CPS)

Substance Use Coercion and Opioids: Mechanisms of Control

- Introducing survivor to opioids and other drugs
- Threats of withdrawal
- Forcing or coercing survivor to use
- Controlling their supply
- Physical injuries and pain management needs
- Using drug and/or trafficking history as threat
- Controlling access to treatment
- Sabotaging recovery efforts
- Blaming abuse on partner’s substance use

Trauma, Trafficking, and Opioid Use

A lifetime journey with trauma...

- Pre-trafficking trauma exposure
- Trauma exposure during trafficking
- Re-victimization
- Substance use and the cycle of trauma
Intersections Between Trafficking and Opioid Use

It's more than sex trafficking......

The Intersection of Opioid Use and Child Sex Trafficking: State Perspective

Parental OUD

Family Ecology

Community Context

Child/Youth Opioid Use


A Pathway to Recovery

Components of Trauma-Informed Care

Creating a Safe Environment

Building Relationships and Connectedness

Supporting and Teaching Emotional Regulation

Challenges in Recovery: Trauma-Informed Care

- Substance use as a regulatory tool
- Triggering element of losing a relationship with the substance
- Trauma memories/symptoms emerging

Promising Practices: Integrated Accessible Care

- Safety Considerations
  - Harm reduction
  - Risk of re-trafficking
- Accessibility of Care/Medication-Assisted Treatment/Multidisciplinary Care
- Treatment Frame that Addresses the Interconnection between Trauma and Substance Use
- Support for Providers

Partnerships to Address Human Trafficking and Substance Use

- Trauma-informed Policy Development
- Partnership Development
- Screen and Refer
- Training and TA
- Collaborative Outreach
- Survivor Leadership
- Service Delivery Partners
**Panel 5: Addressing the Substance Use Needs of Trafficking Survivors and Exploring the Nexus with the Opioid Crisis**


National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health. (2014). Substance Use/Abuse in the Context of DV, Sexual Assault, and Trauma. 


https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/resource/nhttacopioidcrisis

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/resource/htla2018