

## MIDDLESEX COUNTY'S MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM RESPONSE TO CHILD EXPLOITATION

**Child Exploitation Suspected**

**51A Report Filed with DCF  
Call 911 if an emergency**

**DCF Makes Immediate Notification to the DA/CAC**

**MDT members Identified and Confer to discuss Re-  
sponse Strategy, Agency Mandates, and Timeframes,  
including:**

- Family Notification
- Youth Interview
- Medical Exam
- Risk & Safety
- Collateral Contacts
- Jurisdiction
- Interview with Alleged Perpetrator

*(MDT may convene by phone or in-person)*

**MDT Develops Recommendations**

*(based on information sharing info & evaluation of youth's situation)*

**Youth  
Involvement**

**Placement/  
Shelter**

**Psychological  
Treatment**

**Interpersonal  
Support/  
Mentoring**

**Threats/Dangerousness  
of Alleged Pimp/  
Perpetrator**

**Medical  
Evaluation/  
Health Care**

**Investigation Conclusion**

*(case can be placed back on investigation track if appropriate in future + TRACE protocol will be restarted upon filing of a new 51A)*

## CONTACT US

The Middlesex Children's Advocacy Center ("MCAC") is housed within the Child Protection Unit of the Middlesex District Attorney's Office.

**Middlesex District Attorney's Child Protection Unit**  
781-897-8400

**Middlesex Children's Advocacy Center**  
www.middlesexcac.org

**Department of Children and Families Hotline:**  
800-792-5200 (open after-hours and holidays)

**National Human Trafficking Hotline**  
1-888-373-3888  
Text "BE FREE"

**"TRACE is committed to improving information sharing and building stronger collaboration within and between agencies so together we can respond more effectively to CSEC cases."**

*— Marian Ryan, Middlesex District Attorney*

**USING TEAMWORK TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**



**I AM  
NOT  
SALE**

**TRACE**  
TEAM RESPONSE AGAINST CHILD EXPLOITATION

MIDDLESEX  
CHILDREN'S  
ADVOCACY CENTER

## TRACE

TRACE is a collaborative response to the commercial sexual exploitation of children (“CSEC”) in Middlesex County. Ultimately, this program was created to encourage CSEC-involved youth to feel safe, break ties with their exploiter, and seize opportunities to regain control of their lives and futures.

The use of a youth-centered, multidisciplinary team (“MDT”) approach minimizes the number of times a youth is interviewed, streamlines the coordination of services for the youth, cultivates trust and respect among agencies, and ensures decisions can be made that are in the best interest of the youth.

The MDT is comprised of representatives from:

- Law enforcement
- Child protection agencies
- Victim services
- Medical professionals
- Outside providers
- Survivor Mentorship Program
- Youth’s attorney and/or parent (if appropriate)

By fostering creativity in our MDT response, the TRACE Program will enhance our efforts to identify and hold those who sexually exploit and traffic children accountable.



**MINOR VICTIMS  
ARE SOLD  
FOR SEX AN  
AVERAGE  
OF 10 TO 15  
TIMES A DAY**

## IDENTIFYING CSEC-INVOLVED YOUTH

A CSEC-involved youth is one who has disclosed or is suspected of having exchanged sexual activity for shelter, food, money, drugs, education, care, or anything of value.

A trafficker/pimp targets and lures vulnerable youth into the commercial sex industry using psychological manipulation to make them believe he loves and cares for their well-being. After establishing trust and allegiance, the pimp uses physical control such as threats, violence, or drug addiction to make the youth feel trapped and powerless. This “trauma bond” is difficult to break and ensures the youth will remain loyal even in the face of severe victimization.

**1 IN 3 TEENS WILL BE  
SEXUALLY EXPLOITED  
WITHIN 48 HOURS OF RUNNING AWAY**

## RED FLAGS

Red flags that may indicate a youth is CSEC-involved include:

- History of or current status as a runaway from home or a program
- Frequently truant from school
- Access to unaccounted-for goods, such as cell phones, beauty products, jewelry and clothing
- Tattoos, scars, or other physical brandings the youth is reluctant to explain
- Visible signs of abuse
- New “friends” who are older teens or adults
- Behaviors consistent with PTSD
- Repeated sexually transmitted infections or pregnancies

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SUSPECT CSEC

- Use your professional judgment and training to assess the presence of red flags.
- Immediately file a 51A Report with DCF if you suspect a youth is CSEC-involved. You should not fully investigate before doing so.
- Any questioning of the youth should be victim-centered and non-judgmental, focusing on building trust:
  - One person should conduct the questioning in a private setting.
  - Ideally, this person should be trained in recognizing and responding to CSEC.
  - The questioning should not be investigatory; rather, any questioning should be minimal and aimed at establishing whether there is reasonable suspicion to believe the youth is CSEC-involved.
  - Never ask “why” questions.
  - The youth should not be asked to make a written statement.
- In coordination with the MDT, initial screening should be geared toward establishing rapport and safety as well as meeting the youth’s basic needs (e.g., food, shelter, medical care).
- Efforts should be made in coordination with the MDT to obtain a recent photograph of the youth.



**13  
YEARS OLD**



**THE AVERAGE AGE OF ENTRY INTO  
THE COMMERCIAL SEX INDUSTRY**