

# LOVE146.ORG

## United States Programs



► To end child sex slavery and exploitation, Love146's U.S. Programs provide intervention, mentoring and education services to at-risk adolescents, as well as training for adults who work with them.

**Love146's U.S. Programs have developed and utilize the T.I.M.E. Model (*Training, Intervention, Mentoring, Education*), offering:**

### → Training

Love146 offers comprehensive training for adults working with youth in order to ensure that they can identify and assist high risk or exploited teens. Through our trainings, adults become better equipped to prevent commercial sexual exploitation of children and to intervene appropriately when victims may be identified.

### → Intervention

Love146's US Programs rely heavily on the support of local service providers, law enforcement, medical professionals, and youth outreach agencies to help intervene appropriately when victims are identified.

### → Mentoring

During the transition from victim to survivor, children affected by commercial sexual exploitation need specialized mentoring services to be successful in their restorative journeys.

### → Education

#### (2 levels of curricula)

In order to train and educate at-risk adolescent girls and the adults who work with them, Love146 utilizes two prevention education curricula. The primary-level curriculum *Tell Your Friends* & the intensive-level curriculum *My Life My Choice*. See these curricula on pages 2-4.

## BACKGROUND

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children estimates at least 100,000 American children are victimized through commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) every year. CSE of any minor under the age of 18 is legally a form of human trafficking under the Trafficking in Persons Victim Protection Act. Tragically, the U.S. Department of Justice estimates the average age of girls recruited into commercial sexual exploitation in the U.S. is 13.

Human traffickers and pimps play on the vulnerability, lack of knowledge, and desires of children to lure them into the dark world of CSE, including prostitution and pornography. Though all youth, especially girls, are at risk of recruitment solely by their age and gender, there is a subpopulation of youth who are most vulnerable. This includes but is not limited to those with a history of family dysfunction, trauma & sexual abuse, running away from home or various settings and substance abuse.

Love146's work in Connecticut is motivated by documented cases of domestic minor sex trafficking in the state. In early 2005, Corey Davis was found to have recruited several minors into sex slavery and forced them to work as dancers and prostitutes. He took all of the money they earned and "controlled the girls through physical and psychological coercion, beatings, rapes, confinement, threats of serious harm, intimidation, and humiliation" (U.S. Attorneys Office District of CT Press Release, 2007). Two of Davis' victims shared their stories at his sentencing hearing:

**"He would decide what I ate, how my hair would look, and what I wore. I felt like a slave. I wanted to be loved. That's what I was searching for. I wanted someone who would always be there for me because I never, ever had this."**

**"When I went to clubs, I had to tell people I fell off stage because I had so many bruises on my ribs, face, and legs. He would watch me or have me watched by someone else to make sure that I was working and not trying to runaway."**

# **MY LIFE MY CHOICE**

## **INTENSIVE-LEVEL PREVENTION EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

### **FOR ADOLESCENTS IN GROUP HOMES & DETENTION CENTERS**

*Created by: My Life My Choice*



## **Overview**

Love146 utilizes the My Life My Choice (MLMC) curriculum in group homes, congregate care/treatment programs, Department of Children and family offices, community based settings and juvenile justice centers. Lisa Goldblatt-Grace and survivors of commercial sexual exploitation created MLMC and designed the curriculum to reach adolescent girls most vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation or for those who have already been exploited to prevent re-victimization. The curriculum also works well with girls who have no specific risk factors for exploitation. MLMC provides a concrete, well-researched method for preventing commercial sexual exploitation among vulnerable adolescent girls.

## **The Program**

M Life, My Choice is a ten-session curriculum. Each session is 75 minutes long (can be adapted and changed) and is created to dispel myths about commercial sexual exploitation, build awareness of recruitment tactics by pimps, provide information on sexual health, understand the link between substance use and exploitation—how it can pull you in and how it can keep you there, raise awareness of resources and a path out of “The Life”, and help to improve self-esteem. MLMC is meant specifically for agencies or organizations in which the adolescents have a therapist to follow up with after the group as the curriculum can be quite intense for some. The program also trains the staff that works directly with the children that are about to receive the group so they can identify victims and they are properly educated around the issue should a girl chose to disclose abuse.

## **SNAPSHOT OF THE MY LIFE MY CHOICE CURRICULUM**

### **Session 1: Introduction and Welcome**

This session will introduce participants to the content and structure of the program as well as the style of the facilitators. Participants will have an opportunity to develop the ground rules which will govern the sessions. Participants will discuss common myths related to prostitution and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) and be presented with an overview of the important issues. Further, the participants will complete a questionnaire that covers their attitudes and knowledge associated with CSE. Participants will retake this questionnaire at the end of the program to assess their individual growth.

### **Session 2: Game Recognizes Game: Understanding Predators and Recruitment**

This session will increase participants' awareness of the presence of pimps in their communities and online and the ways pimps try to recruit young women. Further, participants will develop an understanding of the language and structure of “The Life” including the specific vulnerabilities and settings that put them at the greatest risk for predators. Participants will have an opportunity to explore the feelings associated with being a victim of CSE.

### **Session 3: Do You Really Want to Hurt Me: Reducing Your Risk of Exploitation**

This session will give participants the opportunity to increase their ability to reduce their risk of exploitation. Participants will discuss the risks to physical safety inherent in “The Life.” Participants will examine the differences between being passive, aggressive, and assertive and see where they fall on the continuum. Participants will make the links to how this relates to their risk for being commercially sexually exploited. Furthermore, participants will think critically about the demand for exploited girls.

### **Session 4: Makin' the Link: Substance Abuse and Exploitation**

This session will expose participants to the links between substance abuse and exploitation through prostitution and other forms of CSE. Participants will discuss the most commonly used drugs (including alcohol) and their impact on one's physical and emotional health. Further, participants will explore how to recognize the signs and symptoms of addiction and how to identify resources for help.

## **Session 5: I Come First: Developing Self Esteem**

This session will afford participants the opportunity to think critically about their self-esteem. Participants will discuss the links between low self-esteem and CSE. Participants will examine the influences by the media on how they see themselves and work on deconstructing these messages. Further, participants will strategize about healthy ways to handle the difficulties in their lives that impact their self-esteem and identify ways to take care of themselves. Participants will build on their own inner strength and further develop a sense of their own unique value

## **Session 6: Sexual Health Part 1: Knowing What's Out There**

This session will increase participants' awareness of the risks to their sexual health associated with prostitution. Further, participants will review the relevant information on STDs, Including HIV, such as symptoms, treatments, transmission, and long-term impact. Participants will learn about the relative risk associated with various means of sexual expression. Participants will have their questions answered concerning these topics and leave the session equipped with the knowledge to keep themselves safer. Further, the participants will develop an understanding of the absence of control over their sexual health associated with prostitution.

## **Session 7: Sexual Health Part 2: My Body My Choice**

This session will challenge participants' attitudes and help them build the skills necessary to make healthy decisions in terms of their sexuality.

## **Session 8: Making it Real: Stories From “The Life”**

This session will give participants the chance to hear first hand from women who have been involved with prostitution. This panel will further bring the information from previous sessions to life. Participants will have the opportunity to get any remaining questions answered associated with CSE.

## **Session 9: I'm Not Alone: Finding Help and Finding Safety**

In this session, participants will have the opportunity to explore the myriad of resources available to keep them from being exploited through prostitution or other forms of CSE AND to help them if they ever find themselves being commercially sexually exploited. Participants will then practice synthesizing what they have learned in the previous sessions in order to avoid or escape involvement in CSE. Furthermore, participants will think critically about adults and peers in their own lives whom they can trust and whom they could turn to in a crisis situation.

## **Session 10: Celebration and Farewell**

This session will afford the participants the opportunity to reflect on their personal growth over the course of the ten sessions. Participants will complete the same questionnaire as at the first session and compare their answers over time to assess what they have learned. Further, participants will celebrate their completion of the program with their peers and with the facilitators in a way which honors their journey since session 1.

## **Interested in learning how you can bring these curricula to your youth center, or youth program/setting?**

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