



Office of the Texas Governor Child Sex Trafficking Team

Greetings,

As we approach the winter holiday season, we express our continued gratitude and thanks for your tireless work throughout 2023 to prevent, identify, deter, and prosecute child sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation in Texas. We also express our heartfelt thanks to those of you who have worked to empower survivors to realize and sustain autonomy from their trafficker, and to begin their healing journeys. This can be an especially hard time for many who are being, or have been victimized, and we send along a special message of support to you. Know that the State of Texas is committed to ending child sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, and that the Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team (CSTT) will continue to dedicate our staff and leadership to this fight with renewed vigor in 2024. This December, we celebrate that together, we are helping to make Texas a safer place for children and youth and others vulnerable to trafficking.

In this edition of our newsletter, we welcome our newest Regional Advisor, Rebecca Uresti, who will be serving the North Texas region. We also provide information on newly released funding opportunities, training opportunities and CSTT Webinars.

Thank you again for your partnership! Be safe and well this holiday season,

CSTT

New Team Member: Rebecca Uresti

We are pleased to welcome and introduce Rebecca Uresti, the newest member of the Child Sex Trafficking Team, now serving as Regional Advisor for North Texas!



Rebecca Uresti, North Texas Regional Advisor

Rebecca is a graduate of Texas Woman's University in 1993 with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and earned her Master's degree in Organizational Management in 2003 from the University of Phoenix. Rebecca retired as a Special Agent from the Texas Department of Public Safety (TXDPS) after a more than 28-year career including both covert and overt operations. She also served as a TXDPS Public Information Officer, completing the Advanced Public Information Officers Training in Maryland. Rebecca received an award from the Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation: 2016 Top 10 Investigation, Transnational Organized Crime. Rebecca served as a Highway Patrol Trooper, Motor Vehicle Inspection Trooper, Safety

Education Trooper and a Driver License Sergeant. For the last 14 years of her career, she served as a TXDPS Special Agent in Dallas' and Houston's Criminal Investigations Division. Rebecca was often sought out to lead and assist in sex offender compliance operations and investigations, which involved the coordination of large-scale, multi-agency sex offender checks and warrant round-up operations that attained highly effective results. In her tenure with TXDPS, Rebecca also led and assisted human trafficking investigations and operations.

Rebecca brings a lifelong commitment to protecting survivors of sexual violence and a collaborative, community-based approach to addressing systemic issues of exploitation to her role with the CSTT. We are incredibly fortunate to count her among our team!

Contact information for Rebecca, along with all CSTT Regional Advisors and their county coverage, is linked below.

[CSTT Regional Advisors](#)

Funding Opportunities

The Office of the Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team is pleased to share the below funding opportunities for Fiscal Year 2025, released December 11, 2023. Active funding opportunities can be found on the [Funding Opportunities](#) tab of the eGrants website. Interested applicants should read these carefully.

Applicants must access the Public Safety Office (PSO) eGrants grant management website at <https://eGrants.gov.texas.gov> to register and apply for funding. The final date to submit and certify an application is **February 8, 2024, at 5:00 PM CST**.

Funding opportunities through the Office of the Governor are listed below. For more information on each of these funding opportunities, please visit the [eGrants homepage](#).



Community-Based Services for Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth, FY2025

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to support programs for children and transition-age youth through age 24 who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation and support their healing through community-based direct services. These programs include:

1. Drop-in centers including street outreach for children and transition-age youth.
2. Emergency residential placements for children and transition-age youth, including programs that build placement capacity within existing residential programs.
3. Innovative direct service projects that advance recovery of, and support healing for, survivors. [View Opportunity](#)

County Solutions to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation, FY2025

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to support solution-driven projects from county governments to prevent, investigate, and prosecute commercial sexual exploitation in Texas. **This solicitation is specific to county projects that are not specialty court programs.* [View Opportunity](#)

General Victim Assistance Grant Program, FY2025

This grant is administered by Victim Services within the Public Safety Office. The purpose of this solicitation is to provide services and assistance directly to victims of crime to speed their recovery and aid them through the criminal justice process. Services to *adult victims of human trafficking* are eligible through the general victim assistance program. This includes survivors of *all forms* of trafficking including sex and labor. [View Opportunity](#)

Specialized Advocacy for Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth, FY 2025

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to support Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth (CSEY) Advocacy programs. CSEY Advocacy programs provide individualized 24/7 crisis

response, ongoing trust-based relational support, and case management for children and transition-age youth who are survivors of commercial sexual exploitation. For this solicitation, children are considered individuals 0–17 years of age and transition-age youth are individuals 18–24 years of age. **This solicitation is specific to CSEY Advocacy programs.* [View Opportunity](#)

Specialty Courts Grant Program, FY2025

This grant is administered by State Justice Programs within the Public Safety Office. The purpose of this announcement is to solicit applications for specialty court programs as defined in Chapters 121 through 130 of the Texas Government Code as well as the continuation of a training and technical assistance resource center. Commercially Sexually Exploited Persons (CSEP) Specialty Courts, are eligible for funding under this grant program. [View Opportunity](#)

Statewide Solutions to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation, FY2025

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to support a select number of projects to provide statewide training and technical assistance to service providers on the topic of commercial sexual exploitation, and to support statewide tools to aid in the identification of victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

Please note, this grant program does *not* support projects for the provision of direct services to survivors of commercial sexual exploitation. Funding is intended for statewide training and technical assistance and tools. [View Opportunity](#)

Application Resources



Recorded: FY 2025 Pre-Application Workshop Webinar
[View this Webinar](#)



eGrants User Guide to Creating an Application
[View Guide](#)

Training Opportunities

Recorded Webinar: Meeting the Needs of Texas Children and Youth Experiencing Commercial Sexual Exploitation: Research Findings and Recommendations for Youth Housing and Homelessness Services Providers

Texas Network of Youth Services

Youth homelessness and housing instability are primary risk factors for the commercial sexual exploitation of youth (CSEY). As a result, youth housing and homelessness services providers are likely to encounter exploited youth in their work, putting them in a unique position to prevent, identify, and address CSEY. Over the past year, TNOYS held listening sessions with youth and young adults and service providers across Texas to inform the development of guidance for youth housing and homelessness services providers on how to meet the needs of CSEY experiencing homelessness. In this webinar, we will present youth informed research findings and recommendations that can help providers better serve this vulnerable population. While our research is focused on youth housing and homelessness services, the key learnings and recommendations are highly relevant to providers across youth-focused systems.

[Watch this Webinar](#)

Child Sex Trafficking for First Responders

National Criminal Justice Training Center

January 16, 2024

[Register for this Training](#)

Child Sex Trafficking Investigations: Strategies to Increase Prosecutions of Traffickers of Missing Children

National Criminal Justice Training Center

February 20-21, 2024

[Register for this Training](#)

Resources



**Project Protect Our Children
YOUTH ACTION BOARD**

At Project Protect Our Children, we believe that youth have the capacity to become champions in the fight to end human trafficking, if only given the opportunity. We conceptualized the Youth Action Board Program to ENGAGE, EDUCATE, and EMPOWER today's youth to become part of the solution.

WHY Students who feel called to action and are ready to join in the fight to end human trafficking.
Middle School - Grades 7 and 8
High School - Grades 9 through 12


WHY We believe in the power of youth voices. Human trafficking campaigns, events, and activities that are created and championed by students can substantially reach and impact their peers in a way that cannot be attained otherwise.

WHY Through the online Youth Action Board Community of Practice platform, you will be given the resources needed to bring this student-led/created, scalable, and replicable club program to your school campus or community **AT NO COST**, including a school campus sponsor stipend. Youth Action Board members collaboratively collaborate, brainstorm, and reflect on solutions and next steps to fill the gaps that allow human trafficking to persist and raise awareness about human trafficking amongst their peers, school staff, and community members. The Youth Action Board is a collective body of students with diverse perspectives, experiences, identities, and cultural differences that come together to work towards the same shared goal - to end human trafficking.

WHY I think it is really important for all of us young people to have more about this subject. We can't talk about this at school, and not many adults do either. The more we know the more we can fight this crime.

Youth Action Board Member

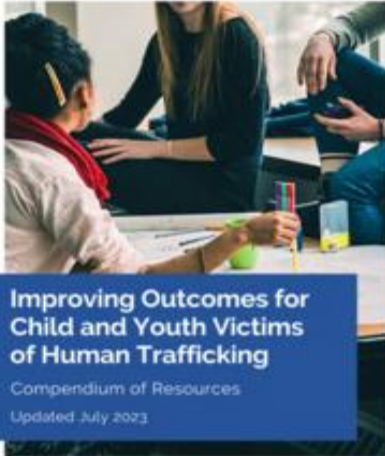
The Youth Action Board (YAB) program is age-appropriate, research-based, survivor-informed, trauma-informed, and available to school campus sponsors at no cost through their online Community of Practice (CoP) platform. The online CoP is a powerful space for collaboration and knowledge sharing amongst the YAB campus sponsors, harnessing their collective intelligence while providing invaluable resources for sustainable impact across the nation within schools and communities.



Meeting the Needs of Children and Youth Experiencing Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
A National Network of Youth-Centered Guidance Manual for Youth Housing and Homelessness Services Providers in Texas

TNOYS
TEXAS NETWORK OF YOUTH SERVICES

Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS) has published [*Meeting the Needs of Children and Youth Experiencing Commercial Sexual Exploitation*](#), an actionable manual to equip housing and homelessness services providers to identify, address, and fight CSEY in their communities.



[This Compendium of Resources](#) compiles materials developed by grantees of the *Improving Outcomes for Child and Youth Victims of Human Trafficking* (Improving Outcomes) program, funded by the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) from 2016 - 2023. These materials were designed by grantees as part of their Improving Outcomes projects, which aim to improve the identification of and coordinated response to child and youth victims of human trafficking within their states.



SUPPORTING STATES TO
IMPROVE OUTCOMES
FOR CHILD AND YOUTH VICTIMS
OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING



Human Trafficking Prevention Month

January 2024 is right around the corner! We look forward to observing Human Trafficking Prevention Month alongside our fellow Texans. The month of January will be full of activities, so keep an eye out for a Special Edition newsletter from our team at the start of the new year.



This email furnished by Child Sex Trafficking Team,
a division of the Office of the Texas Governor.
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