

Understanding the Vulnerability of Runaway, Forced Out and Homeless Youth

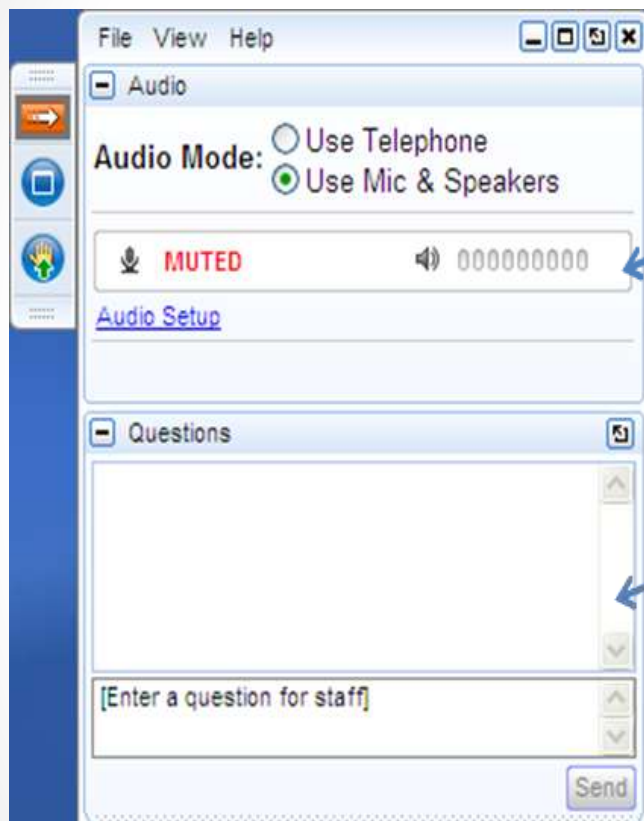
Tammy L. Hopper, LCSW



OJJDP's MECP

- MECP offers assistance to local, state and tribal law enforcement, nonprofit organizations, and other juvenile justice practitioners to:
 - strengthen their responses
 - increase the use of evidence-based practices
 - identify and address operational and programmatic needs
- Coordinated by Fox Valley Technical College
- For more information or to submit a training and technical assistance request:
 - www.mecptraining.org
 - mecptraining@fvtc.edu
 - 1-888-347-5610

Webinar Housekeeping



Audio Support:

- Use Telephone or Mic & Speakers
- Check 'Audio Setup' for problems
- All callers will be on mute throughout the webinar

To ask a Question:

- Type a question in the box; click Send
- Staff will respond in the 'Questions' box



WE ARE PROUD TO OPERATE



FYSB Family & Youth
Services Bureau

Runaway and Homeless
Youth Training & Technical
Assistance Center

Partner with organizations in the 50 States and US territories in one or more of the following ways:

- Federally funded Training and Technical Assistance for grantees funded by the Family and Youth Services Bureau to serve runaway, homeless and street youth.
- Licensed agencies operating as a Safe Place community for youth (public/private sector partnership) – one sign as an access point for help across the country.
- National Safe Place Network Membership – Memberships for Organizational Development, Training and Professional Development Opportunities.
- Fee for Service Training and Consultation



Federally funded RHY Programs in Action –

According to RHYMIS data for the time-period of 30 September 2013 and 7 September 2014:

14,643 RHY entered BCPs (short term shelter for youth under the age of 18)

1,396 RHY entered TLP/MGH (18 – 24 month transition services for youth ages 16 – 22)

210,683* contacts with RHY were made by Street Outreach Programs with 10,522 of those contacts leading to a RHY entering shelter (* this is a duplicated count – i.e. a youth may have been contacted multiple times prior to accepting shelter)

https://extranet.acf.hhs.gov/rhymis/custom_reports.jsp



How has our world changed?

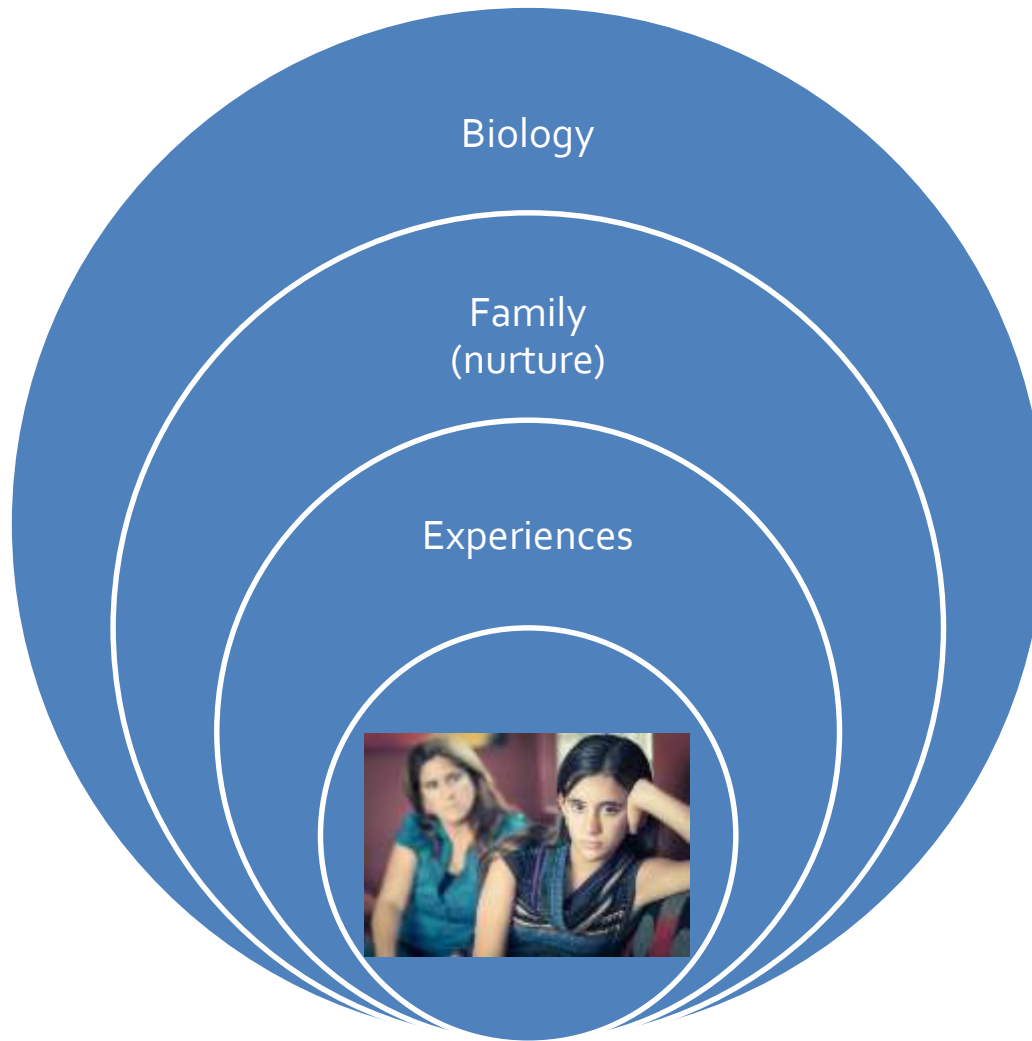
Our Youth

- Histories of abuse, neglect, trauma, exposure to violence
- Substance abuse (as youth or familial)
- Domestic and/or Relationship Violence
- Victims/Survivors of Trafficking (Most common DMST and CSEC)
- Mental Health Concerns
- Education/Social Delays
- LGBTQ Disconnected from Families and Communities
- Status and Delinquent Offenders
- Youth in and out of child welfare system
- Easily hidden, misunderstood or overlooked



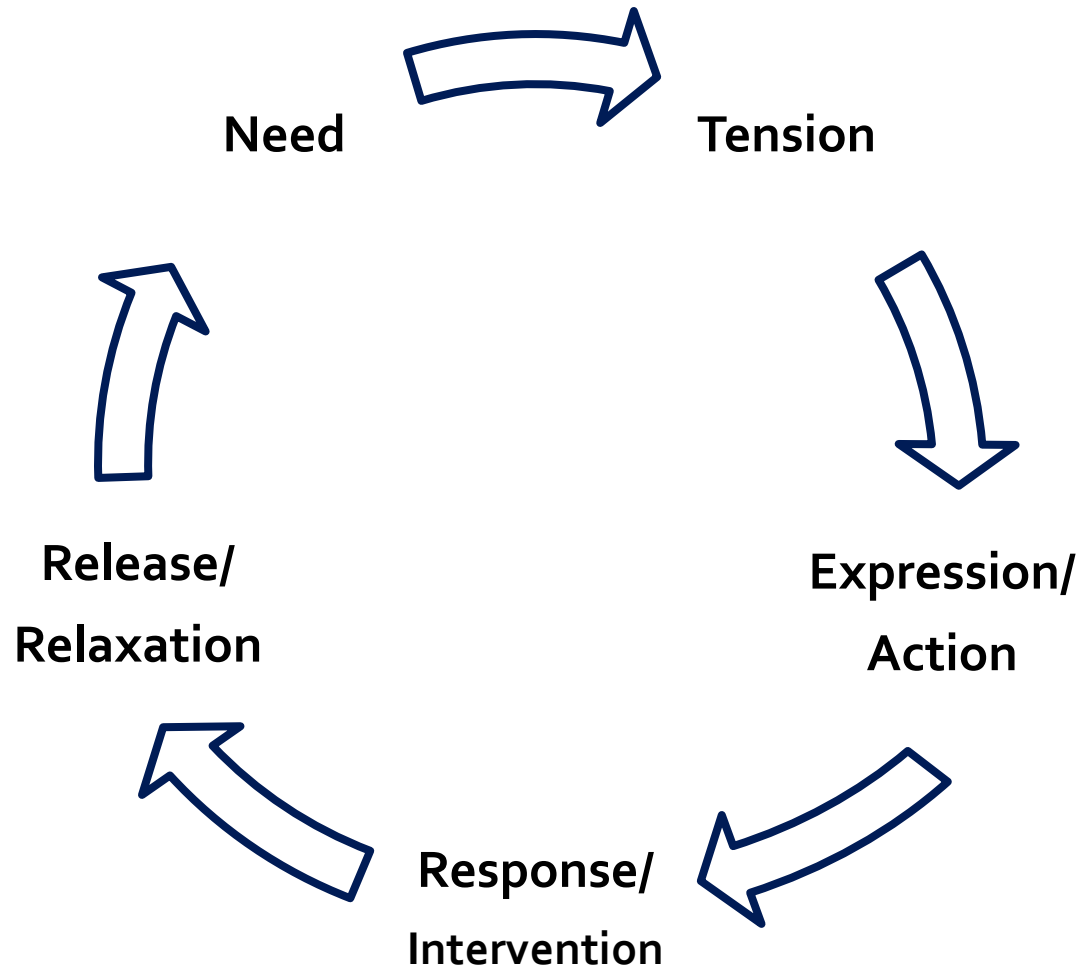
Our Society...

- Varied tolerance levels for differences
- “Social Issue” of the moment drives resources and attention
- Perceptions of runaway and homeless youth
- Consumption levels of negative media
- Demand exceeds supply for most services and tangible resources
- Territorialism and communication gaps are real



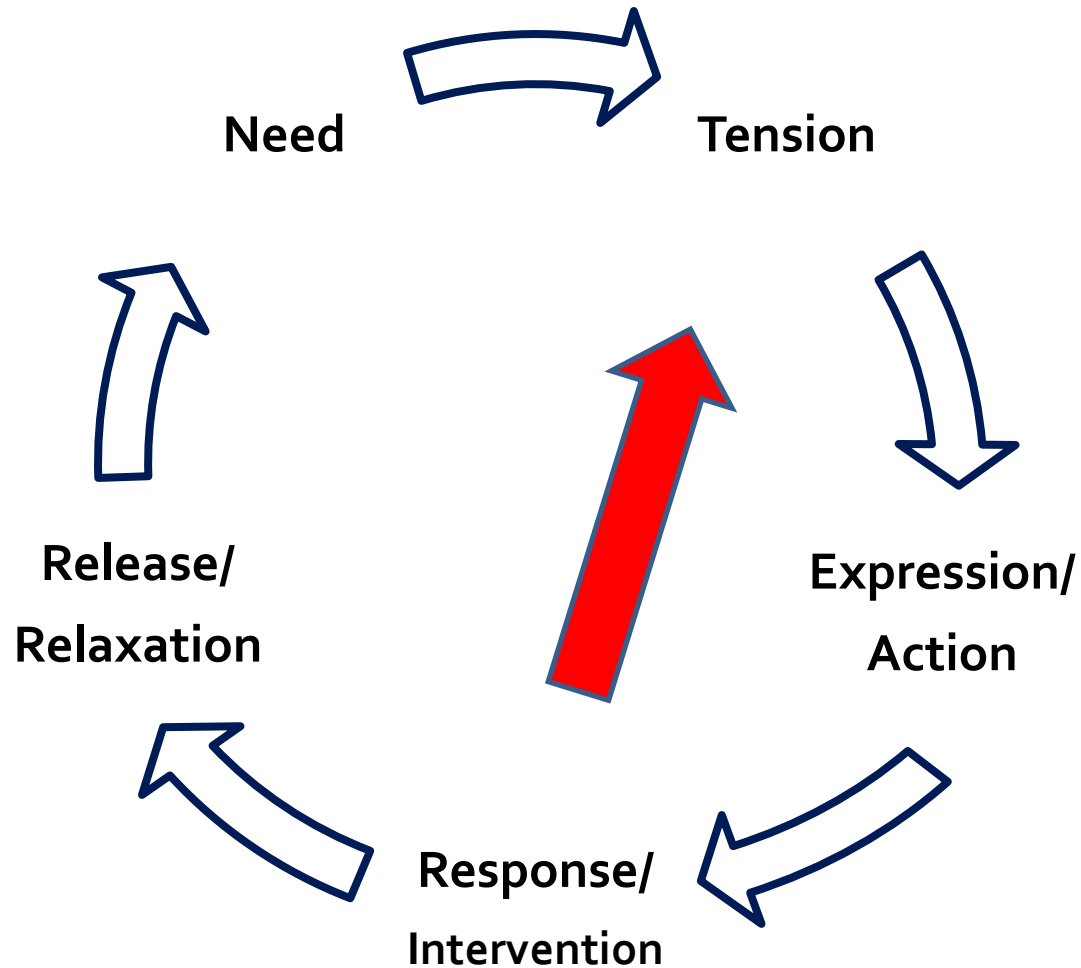
What makes each youth unique?

CYCLE of NEED



Hopper, 2002

CYCLE of NEED



Hopper, 2002

How does need contribute to vulnerability?

- Seeking release from negative feelings (a little is better than none)
- Varies from “willingness to believe anything” to “unwilling to believe anything” – either extreme sets the stage for increased victimization
- Changing understanding or awareness of needs can lead to challenging behavior for providers which may result in youth being excluded from services
- Need may be misinterpreted which may lead to ineffective or mismatched services – youth disengage – opens door to manipulation from predatory figures

"People get ready, there's a train a coming'... you don't need no ticket, you just get on board"

- Individual Needs versus Systemic Responses
- Interdisciplinary cooperation, understanding and support (law enforcement, education, social services)
- No time or tolerance for blame – seeking solutions to the issue and acknowledging system limitations is critical

What can organizations/agencies/systems do?

- Be Trauma Informed
- Examine policies and procedures for stereotype based assumptions
- Engage youth advisory personnel
- Host or participate in a “systems sit-in” – Sit together and share challenges, liabilities, PoV, needs, expectations
- Build on common ground

Available Training and Technical Assistance

- All FYSB funded (Federal) RHY Programs receive FREE training and technical assistance – www.rhyttac.net
- E-Mail and phone technical assistance available daily.
- Other partners, members or those seeking resources can visit www.nspnetwork.org

Types of Training and Technical Assistance

- Web-Based Learning
- Site-Based Technical Assistance
- Events
- Emphasis on Trauma Informed Care, Culturally Competent, Evidence-Based Interventions focused on assisting youth in the areas of:
 - Wellness
 - Safety
 - Employment and Education
 - Permanent Connections to Caring Adults



Questions or Clarifications

Thanks for your attention
and for your dedicated
efforts to youth and families
in your community!

Investigative Response For High-Risk Victims/Homeless Youth

Investigative Strategies for Missing and Abducted Children

Overview

- Defining the High Risk Victim
- Understanding the problem
- Solutions (ownership of the problem)
- Road map for change

Homeless Youth “Perfect Victims”

- Perceptions
 - Victim
 - System
 - Society
- Off the “Grid”
 - No runaway reports
 - Appear and pass themselves off as adults

Homeless Youth “Perfect Victims”

- Shelters
 - Other adult clients
 - Protections
 - Help before hurt
- Streets
 - Preferential offenders
 - Traffickers
 - Drug Dealing

Homeless Youth High Risk Victim

Defining the High Risk Victim

- High Risk Victims:
 - Chronic Runaways
 - Age
 - Repeat victims
 - Victims of child sex trafficking

Profile of the High Risk Victim

- Prior physical/sexual abuse
- Chronic runaway
- Drugs
- Fear distrust in system
- Health problems
- Highest potential for victimization
 - Exploitation/Trafficking/Abduction
- Highest level of lethality

Pathway to Victimization

- Family conflict
 - First runaway episode
- School problems – Truancy
- Becomes chronic runaway
 - Deviant peers/Substance abuse
- Street life
 - Exploitation
 - Meets “pimp” trafficker
 - Recruits others
- Life of crime, addiction

System Response

- Whose job is it to deal with Homeless Youth?



Your Agency's Response

- How would you rate your agency's response to HRV/Homeless Youth
 - Reactive
 - Proactive
- What is the "Investigative Mindset" regarding HRV in your agency

Challenges Dealing with Identified Homeless Youth

- Unique victim issues
- Lack of specific investigative responsibility
- Traditional investigative models and techniques
- Lack of streamline method of identifying and reporting

Solutions (Ownership of the Challenge)

- Assign specific investigative responsibility
- Arrange training on dynamics
- Implement departmental/system investigative and intervention protocol
 - Identify high-risk victims/runaways
- Establish departmental/juvenile justice system investigative and intervention team

Increased Reporting

- Training on dynamics for stakeholders:
 - Vice
 - Patrol
 - Juvenile department
 - CPS
 - Shelters

Identifying/Locating the HRV/Homeless Youth

- High Risk Victim Model
 - Victim centered approach
 - Intervention
 - Prevention
 - Suppression

Identifying/Locating the HRV/Homeless Youth

- Work with the Stakeholders
 - Patrol officers
 - Shelter workers
 - Hospitals
 - Businesses
- Provide a system of reporting

FRONT



Juvenile Prostitution Unit

**Dallas Police Department
Jack Evans Police Headquarters
1400 S. Lamar, 3rd Floor
Dallas, TX 75215**

214-671-

After Hours 214-687-

When a juvenile is found involved in or connected with prostitution or a juvenile is found violating curfew in a high prostitution area, contact a Juvenile Prostitution Unit detective at 214-671- . After hours call 214-687- . If there is no answer have dispatch page the on-call Child Exploitation/Juvenile Prostitution detective.

- **Child Exploitation 214-671-**
- **Juvenile Prostitution Unit cell phone 214-687-**
- **Page Child Exploitation/Juvenile Prostitution detective through dispatch at 214-670-5250**

Questions