

# For Minnesota's Sexually Exploited Youth

Starting August 1, 2014, Minnesota youth who engage in prostitution will no longer be seen as criminals, but instead as victims and survivors. The **Safe Harbor** law treats these youth with dignity and respect, and directs them to appropriate supportive services, including shelter and housing.

Through **No Wrong Door**, all service providers can learn to better understand juvenile sexual exploitation and how to respond. Regional Navigators across the state can offer training and tools to increase your understanding and activate a response.

## Partner agencies' role

Partner agencies are already a part of a network that supports youth who are struggling. We recognize it's very common for sexually exploited youth to be misidentified as youth dealing with truancy, addiction, mental health, gangs, and other adolescent issues. However, if you know or suspect sexual exploitation, it's time to refer that youth on to a Safe Harbor Regional Navigator.

## Accessing Regional Navigators

Regional Navigators, listed on the reverse side, are based at organizations across the state and help coordinate care for victims while building a community-based response. You can also access a 24-hour hotline to assist victims with their needs.

## About sexually exploited youth

In almost all cases, youth are not choosing this life. Traffickers/pimps, recruit youth who may also be struggling to escape from poverty or unsafe living conditions.

**They are victims** – exchanging sex for money, food, shelter, drugs, or other payments. They are not – and should not be referred to as – child prostitutes. They might also be a part of sexual performances like stripping or child pornography.

Victims of sexual exploitation come from every background, race, gender, sexual orientation and economic status. These youth may not appear to be victims. They may be hostile, not telling the whole truth, or struggling with mental health or addiction issues. It is likely that they've had troubles in their lives that have led to being victimized. Our job is to consider and respect that history and get them the support they need.

For more information about Safe Harbor and No Wrong Door please visit [www.health.state.mn.us/injury/topic/safeharbor/](http://www.health.state.mn.us/injury/topic/safeharbor/)

## What is sexual exploitation?

A sexually exploited youth is someone under the age of 18 who may be subject to sexual exploitation because they engaged, agreed to engage, or were forced into sexual conduct in return for a fee, food, clothing or a place to stay.

A youth also can be sexually exploited if he or she has engaged in exotic dancing, been filmed doing sexual acts, traded sex for drugs, or has been found guilty of engaging in prostitution or prostitution-related crimes.

For the purposes of Safe Harbor/No Wrong Door the means of exploitation is irrelevant in determining eligibility for services.

## Statistics

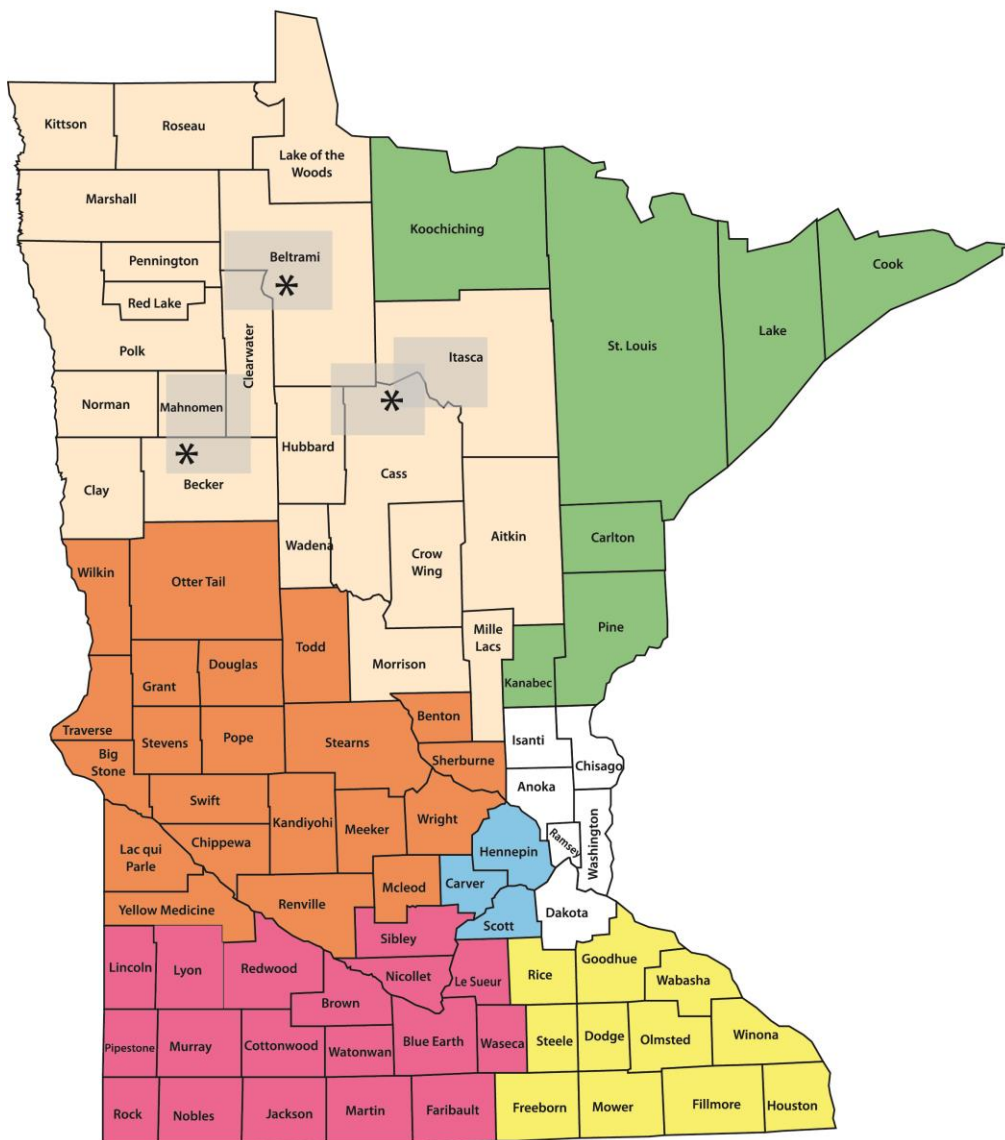
In 2013, respondents to the Minnesota Statewide Human Trafficking Survey reported that they had worked with the following number of victims in the past 12 months. Because sexual exploitation is a clandestine crime and many victims go unidentified, misidentified and unreported, these numbers represent an under-counting of the extent of sexual exploitation in Minnesota:

- 13 adult male victims of sex trafficking
- 202 adult female victims
- 35 minor male victims
- 119 minor female victims

# Regional Navigators

Through Safe Harbor/No Wrong Door, any youth under age 18 who is being sexually exploited can gain access to supportive services. Regional Navigators are available to connect youth with trauma-informed resources in their area including housing, basic needs, mental health, chemical health, education, and employment services.

Youth, educators, service providers, law enforcement, and community members are encouraged to contact the navigator in your area if working with a young person who may be sexually exploited or to be connected with trainings to learn more about the sexual exploitation of youth.



**\* American Indian Navigator:**  
DOVE (Down On Violence Everyday)  
White Earth, MN  
218-983-4656  
Crisis Line: 1-877-830-3683  
[whiteearthdove.com/](http://whiteearthdove.com/)

**West Central:** Heartland Girls Ranch  
Benson, MN  
320-979-9481  
[heartlandgirlsranh.org](http://heartlandgirlsranh.org)

**Metro West:** The Link  
Minneapolis, MN  
612-767-4467  
**mobile** 612-636-4260  
[thelinkmn.org](http://thelinkmn.org)

**Metro East:** Breaking Free  
651-645-6557  
**mobile** 651-347-3723  
[breakingfree.net](http://breakingfree.net)  
breakingfree@breakingfree.net

**Northeast:** PAVSA (Program to Aid Victims of Sexual Assault)  
Duluth, MN  
218-726-1442  
Crisis Line: 218-726-1931  
[pavsa.org](http://pavsa.org)

**Northwest:** Support within Reach  
Bemidji MN  
Crisis Line: 218-444-9524  
[supportwithinreach.org](http://supportwithinreach.org)

**Southeast:** Olmsted County Victim Services  
Rochester, MN  
507-328-7270  
Crisis Line: 507-289-0636  
[www.co.olmsted.mn.us/cs/victimservices](http://www.co.olmsted.mn.us/cs/victimservices)

**Southwest:** Southwest Crisis Center  
Worthington, MN  
Crisis Line: 1-800-376-4311  
[mnsbcc.org](http://mnsbcc.org)

**Day One:** Providing services to all victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or sexual trafficking: 1-866-223-1111.

