



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES PROBATION DEPARTMENT

9150 EAST IMPERIAL HIGHWAY – DOWNEY, CALIFORNIA 90242  
(562) 940-2513



**GUILLERMO VIERA ROSA**

Chief Probation Officer

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TO: Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell  
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath  
Supervisor Janice Hahn

FROM: Guillermo Viera Rosa   
Chief Probation Officer

SUBJECT: **LOS ANGELES COUNTY CHILD TRAFFICKING LEADERSHIP TEAM  
REPORT**

The last report to the Board from the Los Angeles County Child Trafficking Steering Committee was provided on October 1, 2024, which addressed the Five-Year Strategic Plan to Prevent and Address Child Trafficking among other initiatives. The current Child Trafficking Leadership Team (CTLT) report will cover the following updates:

1. CTLT Overview, Guiding Principles and Approach, and Strategic Plan Integration
2. Strategic Plan Subcommittees and Year One Priorities

## **1. CTLT OVERVIEW, GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND APPROACH, AND STRATEGIC PLAN INTEGRATION**

### **CTLT Overview**

On August 6, 2024, the Board adopted a motion establishing a new reporting and accountability structure for the Five-Year Strategic Plan to Prevent and Address Child Trafficking (Strategic Plan) and created the CTLT. Since then, the CTLT has met monthly with partners from all required agencies and entities. In the first six months of implementation, the CTLT has focused on establishing subcommittees, developing detailed implementation plans that outline specific tasks, deliverables, budgets, and timelines for the Strategic Plan Year One priorities, and engaging with stakeholders and partners. To this end, the CTLT is actively collaborating with County agencies to align efforts and maximize resources as set forth in the Strategic Plan. To date, the CTLT has engaged with Tamara Hunter, Interim Executive Director of the LA County Prevention &

Promotion Systems Governing Committee, on the Mandated Supporting Initiative; Fernando Reyes from the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs Office of Labor Equity on labor trafficking; and Dr. Erika Reynoso from the LA County Department of Mental Health's Prevention and Child Wellbeing Bureau on services and supports for Transition Age Youth (TAY). The CTLT will continue collaborating with various county and community agencies throughout the year.

## **Guiding Principles and Approach**

The CTLT recognizes trafficking as a public health issue affecting individuals, families, and communities. A public health approach addresses risk factors that make individuals vulnerable to trafficking while promoting protective factors that reduce those risks. It also shifts away from reliance on juvenile justice and child welfare systems by emphasizing prevention and community-based services and supports.

The CTLT's overall efforts to prevent and address child trafficking will focus on three levels of prevention: **primary prevention** to stop trafficking before it occurs, **secondary prevention** to provide immediate trauma-informed responses when trafficking happens, and **tertiary prevention** to prevent re-exploitation while supporting long-term healing. Through the subcommittees described below, the CTLT will work closely with communities, youth, families, lived experience experts, and a wide range of partners, including schools, healthcare providers, social services, law enforcement, businesses, and faith-based organizations. By strengthening multidisciplinary partnerships, the County can expand resources and improve responses for those at risk or impacted by trafficking.

## **Strategic Plan Integration**

In the October 6, 2024, report to the Board on the Strategic Plan, two separate plans were presented—one addressing Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and the other focusing on labor trafficking, including forced criminality. In response, the Board requested, and the CTLT committed to, integrating both plans to ensure a more comprehensive approach to human trafficking in Los Angeles County.

A public health approach to violence recognizes that different forms of trafficking—both sex and labor — can be interconnected in some cases and often stem from common root causes such as poverty, racial and gender-based discrimination, family separation, and childhood trauma. The intersections between trafficking, child abuse, domestic violence, and sexual violence are complex, with many victims experiencing multiple forms of harm. By integrating these strategies, the County aims to address trafficking more holistically and effectively.

As noted in the Strategic Plan, while there is some intersectionality among youth experiencing CSE and labor trafficking, more learning and capacity building is needed in order to fully understand the scope and dynamics of labor trafficking in Los Angeles

County, as well as to appropriately tailor services and supports to meet the needs of youth with this experience. As the County undertakes this work over the next five years, we aim to apply the lessons learned from CSE prevention and intervention efforts from the last decade, to build on what has worked well, and to avoid replicating mistakes and minimizing unintended harm in the way we identify and serve youth and families impacted by labor trafficking.

In some areas, integration of sex trafficking and labor trafficking efforts will be more straightforward and is already beginning, such as with respect to expanding training, resource mapping, and broadening community-based outreach and partnerships. In others, more learning and research is needed, such as identifying specific types of services needed and currently available, identifying gaps in knowledge and skills needed to effectively serve youth and families, and determining the appropriateness and types of system responses. Additionally, the subcommittees are undertaking further work to determine how existing policies, protocols and practices might be adapted to serve youth and families impacted by labor trafficking, while maintaining the commitment outlined in the Strategic Plan of avoiding separating families and serving youth and families in their communities, rather than in the child welfare and probation systems.

## **2. STRATEGIC PLAN SUBCOMMITTEES AND YEAR ONE PRIORITIES**

To advance this work, the CTLT has established three subcommittees, which have begun meetings to address key priorities defined in the Strategic Plan. These subcommittees have engaged community members and individuals with lived experience to participate in the subcommittees to ensure diverse perspectives are included in the prioritization, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation of the subcommittee deliverables. Also, all identified priorities will be analyzed to guard against net widening to the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, reducing further harm, and ensuring youth and families access to services without fear of collateral consequences (e.g., immigration-related familial separation, deportation, etc.) that might deter people from reaching out for support.

Below is an overview of the three subcommittees and their Year One priorities that have been preliminarily defined.

**Education and Awareness Subcommittee** – Lead by the Department of Public Health (DPH) and Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE)

The Education and Awareness subcommittee year one priorities will focus on identification and/or development of inclusive human trafficking curricula to be piloted in select schools, which will include training components for students, educators, other identified school staff, parents and caregivers. The curricula will address the prevention of commercial sexual exploitation and labor trafficking of children, including trafficking for forced criminality.

Selection of curricula presents certain challenges given that most curricula used throughout the U.S. focus only on child sex trafficking and few curricula are structured for delivery to all three stakeholder groups. The committee, which includes several trafficking education experts, is reviewing a list of curricula put together by California's Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking (PACT) program, with subcommittee members examining modules and bringing them to the committee for discussion and consideration. The committee is enlisting the assistance of other local and state experts that include colleagues, survivor leaders, and are incorporating lessons learned from other jurisdictions that have worked on child labor and sex trafficking, including Oakland Unified School District and the Minnesota Department of Health. Currently, the committee anticipates developing at least a portion of the curriculum rather than adopting an existing one, including the creation of online video modules to enhance accessibility for parents and caregivers with busy schedules.

The subcommittee has selected Antelope Valley as the target area for pilot training. Antelope Valley given its small population, limited number of school districts, and its general lack of violence prevention and intervention services combined with its rural location and economically disadvantaged population. Challenges that may arise in Antelope Valley, include opposition to comprehensive sex education, which is a crucial component of trafficking prevention education, as it enables youth to understand bodily autonomy and consent.

Year one priorities will also include support to schools by LACOE in the development of a school safety protocol to assist in the (1) identification of students that may be experiencing trafficking or have an increased risk for trafficking, (2) ensure educators and other staff comply with mandatory reporting laws, (3) ensure the safety of students, educators, and other staff when reporting human trafficking and other forms of violence, and (4) help students connect to service providers and/or programs intended to reduce further exposure to violence and victimization.

**Community Resources and Services Subcommittee** – Lead by the CTLT Coordinator and the National Center for Youth Law (NCYL)

The Community Resources & Services Subcommittee was launched on December 10, 2024, for an initial meeting to review the Strategic Plan areas and recommendations for Year One priorities. The larger subcommittee met on February 3, 2025, and was facilitated by the CTLT Coordinator and NCYL. Committee members include: Lived experience experts, Alliance for Children's Rights, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST), Department of Labor Los Angeles LGBT Center, Optimist, Olive Crest, Para Los Ninos, Saving Innocence, There is Hope Foster Family Agency, Vista Del Mar, Young Women's Freedom Center, ZOE International, Sunita Jain Anti-Trafficking Initiative, PACT Program, Los Angeles County Probation Department (Probation), Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Youth Commission, DPH, Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Health Services (DHS), and the Department of Youth Development (DYD).

The goals of this subcommittee are to: (1) continue to center youth, family and community voices in the implementation of the Strategic Plan, (2) bring together and expand the network of community based service providers who are ready and able to support youth and families at risk of or experiencing trafficking, (3) build a community pathway to support outside of the child welfare and juvenile justice system. These are primarily aimed at achieving Strategic Priority Areas 2, 3, 4, and 5 but will feed into all of the areas of the Strategic Plan.

The Year One priorities of the subcommittee include:

**Community resource mapping** – The subcommittee has already begun and will continue to undergo a process of community resource mapping to identify trusted and vetted service providers in the community in all areas of identified need for youth and families, and to build relationships among those providers. This mapping process will also seek to identify and fill service gaps and opportunities for increasing accessibility to services.

**Learning Opportunities** - The subcommittee will host learning opportunities highlighting specific programs or areas where gaps in knowledge have been identified among community members and providers to build community capacity to respond to trafficking without system involvement.

**Youth, Family & Community Engagement** – The subcommittee plans to host community summit(s) to further the community resource mapping by region, as well as to engage youth and other community members through ongoing listening sessions and committee meetings.

Additionally, under the umbrella of the Community Resources and Services subcommittee, three working groups have been established to carry out specific action items within the Strategic Plan.

**Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Empowerment Event and Listening Sessions** – Lead by the Los Angeles County Youth Commission (LACYC)

In support of the Strategic Plan implementation, LACYC hosted their inaugural CSEC Empowerment Event led by Commissioner Brittianna Robinson. The event was held on Saturday, January 25, 2025, at the DMH Vermont-Corridor Building in Los Angeles, CA. The event was focused on uplifting survivors of child trafficking, fostering peer-to-peer development, and empowering youth to become leaders within the CSEC community.

The event featured a powerful keynote speaker, LaToya Green, who shared her insights on transformation and resilience. Attendees also participated in a workshop from the "Becoming Me" curriculum, which focused on guiding young girls and young women through their transition out of exploitation, helping them embrace new healthy

experiences. A highlight of the event was the CSEC Panel, where four women from different generations shared their personal stories, offering a range of perspectives on survival, growth, and empowerment.

The event included a resource fair which brought together 13 vendors, including key County departments such as the DMH, DCFS, and Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), alongside community-based organizations such as Treasures, Give Mentor Love, the Violence Intervention Program, Qualified Women, Loving Me Unconditionally, RightWay Foundation, and more. To close the event, youth participated in a shopping spree, where they received generous donations, including clothing, jewelry, Love Me Boxes, shoes, hygiene kits, and more from various partner agencies.

The event was a tremendous success, with over 45 youth and approximately 50 supporting guests in attendance. Through a partnership with Probation, girls from the Dorothy Kirby Center and the Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall joined virtually, participating in workshops, listening to the panel discussion, and hearing directly from each tabling guest about the specific services available to them upon release.

In addition to the CSEC Empowerment Event, the LACYC will continue to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan by incorporating child trafficking awareness in their 2025 district listening sessions.

### **Parent Empowerment Program (PEP) Workgroup – Lead by DMH**

Given the emphasis on parent and caregiver supports of the Strategic Plan, Year One will also prioritize a comprehensive review and enhancement of the existing PEP curriculum. This process will involve consulting with previous PEP facilitators and curriculum developers to assess the current structure and determine how to integrate a stronger prevention focus. Through these discussions, the team will explore the need for two distinct curriculum versions, one tailored to prevention efforts and another designed for parents of youth who have already experienced trafficking.

To ensure data-driven improvements, the work group will conduct a thorough review of past PEP exit surveys, analyzing participant feedback to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Additionally, engagement with community partners and parents will be a key focus and be facilitated through surveys and focus groups to gain insight into their top concerns and priorities. Resource mapping will also be conducted across various service areas to determine whether existing parent groups could be leveraged, by enhancing current programs already in place to expand support for parents of both exploited and non-exploited youth.

Also, during Year One, the curriculum will be revised and packaged in both English and Spanish to enhance accessibility. Partnerships with community agencies are being strengthened to support the second-year pilot, which will focus on implementation for both system-involved and non-system-involved youth. These efforts aim to ensure that

parents receive the necessary tools and knowledge to support their children effectively, whether through prevention strategies or interventions for those who have been impacted by trafficking.

### **Safe Youth Zone (SYZ) Workgroup - Lead by DHS**

On June 9, 2020, the Board approved the expansion of the existing SYZ initiative to various law enforcement agencies, medical centers and medical facilities, and other County Departments. SYZ provides a network of temporary havens for any youth who face a potentially threatening situation and need a safe place to go, particularly those in danger from exploitation and other forms of abuse. These youth often have no place to go for assistance and are at risk of returning to unsafe spaces, traffickers, or other situations where they may be subjected to more abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Efforts to date: Phase One implementation of the SYZ initiative commenced on March 15, 2022, with Probation, DCFS, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, DHS, DPH, and DMH, including DMH-operated community mental health sites. Phase Two, which began in May 2022, included expanding the SYZ to the Department of Public Social Services, LA County Fire Department, and LACOE. Phase Three of SYZ began in June 2024 and includes outreach to other County Departments, the City of Long Beach, community clinics, faith-based organizations (FBO), and other potential partners. The County of Los Angeles Library implemented SYZ at all 85 Library facilities and is in the process of finalizing the protocol/policy. Safe Youth Zone was also approved by Long Beach City Council to adopt SYZ for the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services Ron Arias Health Equity Center and the Office of Youth Development. They are also exploring other youth centers in Long Beach to assist with presentation and implementation for SYZ with these youth centers. Plans are to present to Long Beach City Library, a minimum of three community medical centers and a minimum of three faith-based organizations in LA County by June 30, 2025.

The Strategic Plan goals include expanding the SYZ network to additional county agencies, hospitals, clinics, schools, FBO's, and community-based organizations, as well as creating and distributing signage and quick reference guides, which coincides with the on-going efforts in Phase Three. The SYZ workgroup's Year One priorities will focus on updating the SYZ Poster and Quick Reference Guide, developing a toolkit for non-county organizations, expanding county partnerships to include Parks and Recreation, producing a training video for community partners, and conducting focus groups with system-involved youth, trafficking survivors, the LACYC, and DYD to develop an effective youth-focused messaging strategy.

### **Systems and Protocols Subcommittee – Lead by DCFS and Probation**

The Systems and Protocols Committee was launched on December 10, 2024. The committee members discussed and established consensus on those strategies and goals that would be the focus for the first year of implementation. Committee members

include DCFS, Probation, CAST, PACT, Loyola Law School, DMH, District Attorney's Office, Children's Law Center, Vista Del Mar, Optimist Children and Family Services, LA Dependency Lawyers, and lived experience experts.

The Systems and Protocols Committee will focus on the following three priority areas throughout calendar year 2025:

**Policy and Protocol Development:** DCFS will update the language in relevant internal policies to be inclusive of all forms of child trafficking: child sex trafficking, child labor trafficking and labor trafficking by forced criminality. Policies that will be taking priority for review and updating include the DCFS Assessment of Exploitation, Child Protection Hotline policy, and the Multi-Agency Response Team policy. In addition, the Desk Guide for Social Workers will be updated to the Child Trafficking Desk Guide for Social Workers to include guidance on assessment of child trafficking and best practices when working with children, youth, and families impacted by all forms of trafficking. The goal by the end of the year is for 100% of all DCFS policies that address trafficking and identified in the first year implementation plan will comprehensively address all forms of trafficking.

Probation is not updating policies at this time in light of the ongoing development of the Mandated Supporting Initiative and in order to allow for additional community engagement about the appropriate approach for youth and families impacted by labor trafficking, however the department is committed to serving youth impacted by all forms of trafficking who come into Probation's care.

**Integrated Training/Curriculum Development:** The Systems and Protocols Committee will develop and expand comprehensive training on child trafficking for DCFS/Probation staff that is based on a public health prevention approach. Training will be developed to address the specialized needs of under-served populations, including LGBTQ+ youth, foreign-born, immigrant and Native American youth through a culturally responsive and linguistically relevant lens. The goal is to have a Child Trafficking integrated curriculum for DCFS/Probation staff, parents, law enforcement, County agency partners, and community-based entities developed and launched by December 15, 2025.

**Education and Awareness training for DCFS/Probation Youth:** DCFS currently has a Human Trafficking Training contract with the CAST that will be extended for a fifth and final contract year covering May 1, 2025, through April 30, 2026. A new request for proposal will be released by June 2025, in order to establish a new installment of a Human Trafficking Training contract. The Training Contract will be utilized to support the delivery of human trafficking prevention curriculum to both systems involved, and non-system involved youth, parents and multi-sector partners.

DCFS and Probation will provide prevention education and awareness in an effort to divert youth from becoming victims of trafficking and exploitation. Youth living at home, in placement, transitional housing, and detention facilities will have the opportunity to engage and participate in education and awareness activities. The goal is to launch by August 1, 2025.



The Los Angeles County CTLT will provide the following updates in the next report scheduled for October 2025:

- Integrated Strategic Plan
- Strategic Plan Subcommittee Year One Priority Updates

Should your Board have any questions or require additional information, please contact CTLT Coordinator Michelle Guymon at (323) 797-1598.

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c: Fesia Davenport, Chief Executive Officer  
Edward Yen, Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
Dawyn R. Harrison, County Counsel  
Lisa H. Wong, PSY.D., Director, Department of Mental Health  
Christina R. Ghaly, Director, Department of Health Services  
David J. Carroll, Director, Department of Youth Development  
Brandon Nichols, Director, Department of Children and Family Services  
Barbara Ferrer, Director, Department of Public Health  
Tiara Summers, Executive Director, LA County Youth Commission  
Family & Social Services/Child Welfare Deputies