

## **Support to End Exploitation Now (SEEN) Coalition Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Mandated Reporting and Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSEC)**

#### **1. *Is a child who is being commercially sexually exploited a victim of child abuse?***

Yes. The prostitution of a child or commercial sexual exploitation of a child is a form of child abuse, and therefore a report of child abuse must be filed in accordance with Chapter 119, section 51A-f. In accordance with established procedure, all mandated reporters should

- make an oral report to the Department of Children and Families when they know or suspect a child under the age of 18 years is being commercially sexually exploited. This may include:
  - if the reporter suspects sexual exploitation of the child, including if the child is found in or frequents an area known for prostitution;
  - is affiliated with a known pimp or prostituted person; and/or
  - reports frequent interstate moves with boyfriend/pimp/friend.
- include any known information about the pimp/perpetrator including street name, vehicle information and any known addresses
- 51A reports should be filed regardless of whether or not the identity of the pimp/perpetrator is known
- submit a written report to DCF within 48 hours of the oral report

Non-mandated reporters should also file when they become aware of a child being commercially sexually exploited. Non-mandated reporters are only required to file an oral report.

#### **2. *What is “prostitution” or commercial sexual exploitation of a child (CSEC)?***

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children defines the prostitution of children as “the sexual exploitation of a child for remuneration in cash or in-kind, usually but not always organized by an intermediary such as a procurer, family member, pimp, or madame.” In other words, a child is being exploited if he/she is exchanging sexual acts for money, drugs, clothing, food, shelter, or other basic needs.

#### **3. *Who victimizes these children?***

Adults and teens recruit children/teens into prostitution. An analysis of current research indicates pimps meet/seek out young teens at malls, bus stations, video arcades, schools, and target young girls who are isolated, vulnerable, and often with a history of trauma. In addition, runaway youth are disproportionately vulnerable to recruitment.

#### **4. *Should I be concerned if the perpetrator is not a caretaker?***

No. DCF was created to deal with caretakers who abuse children. Perpetrators of children who are being prostituted/sexually exploited tend not to be caretakers, however the law requires that a report of child abuse is necessary regardless of the caretaker status.

#### **5. *Are these reports any different from other 51A's?***

No. As with other reports of child abuse, mandated reporters should contact the DCF area office serving the child's residence to make an oral report. If the report is being filed after business hours (i.e. business hours are Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm), the reporter should call the DCF Child-at-Risk Hotline at 1-800-792-5200.

You will also be required to mail or fax your written report to the Department within 48 hours after making the oral report.