

Human Trafficking and Serving American Indian and Alaska Native Populations

July 22, 2021

Agenda

The Human Trafficking Capacity Building Center Human Trafficking in Tribal Communities

- **Youth and Foster Care Systems**
- **Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women**
- **Partnerships**
- **Resources**

The Human Trafficking Capacity Building Center

The Center is a coaching and development hub assisting tribes and organizations with—

- Building their capacity to respond to human trafficking,
- Navigating resources to support their human trafficking programs, and
- Strengthening human trafficking service networks.



Working with the Center

Tribes are working with the Center to develop—

- Community outreach plans and culturally-appropriate materials to educate tribal communities on human trafficking;
- A collaborative and community-based response to human trafficking; and
- Strategic plans for community response teams focused on human trafficking.

The Center works with tribes to increase their ability to assist victims of human trafficking while supporting tribal sovereignty in addressing the issue.

Customized Coaching Aligned to Needs

The Center's free services are intended to provide immediate and sustainable benefits with minimal demands on a tribe's time.



Tribal Victim Service Set-Aside Formula Program

NON-COMPETITIVE, FLEXIBLE FEDERAL FUNDING

OVC administers this funding annually.

Federally recognized tribal governments (applying individually or as consortia) and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act regional corporations, and their designees are eligible to receive TVSSA Formula Program funding.

Funding amount is based on population size.





Human Trafficking in Tribal Communities



Chris Stark, MSW & MFA

Anishinaabe and Cherokee

Author

- Fiction, *Nickels: A Tale of Dissociation*, Lambda Literary Finalist & Carnival Lights, MMIW novel
- Numerous published non-fiction essays & poems

Research

- Garden of Truth: The Prostitution & Trafficking of Native Women in Minnesota (research report)
- Gathering Our Stories: Trafficking of Native Women in the Duluth Harbor (exploratory project)
- Lifelong Wellbeing for Survivors of Sex Trafficking: Collaborative Perspectives from Survivors, Researchers, and Service Providers (research report)

Editor

Not for Sale: Feminists Resisting Prostitution and Pornography

Speaker and Trainer

Law Schools, universities, conferences, rallies
Minnesota MMIW Task Force member

Educator

Universities, colleges, and non-profits

Chris Stark, MSW & MFA

Carnival Lights

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and sex trafficking novel, Ojibwe cultural strength, set in Minnesota in 1969

“Chris Stark is a masterful storyteller and Carnival Lights is an unforgettable book.”

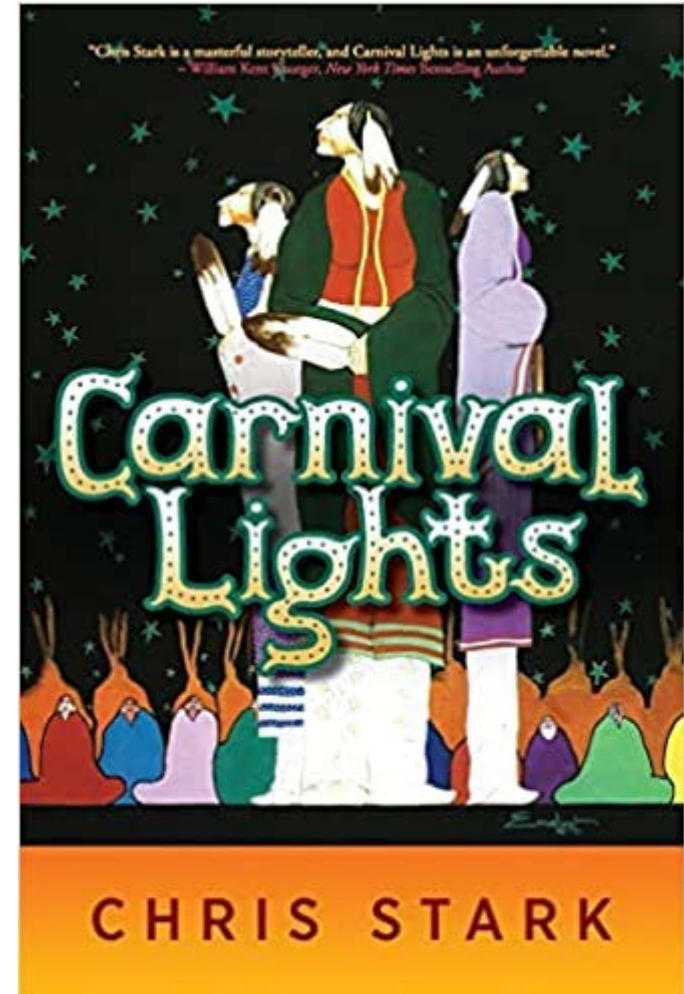
--William Kent Krueger, *NYTimes* best-selling author

Available on Amazon and anywhere else books are sold

Strategies to Restore Justice for Sex Trafficked Native Women

Article about history, Duluth, Superior sex trafficking of Native women

https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-3-319-63192-9_123-1



Historical Sex Trafficking of Native Women

Columbus and Slavery

"A hundred castellanoes (a Spanish coin) are as easily obtained for a woman as for a farm, and it is very general and there are plenty of dealers who go about looking for girls; those from nine to ten (years old) are now in demand."

--Christopher Columbus



As Columbus began exporting Tainos for slavery, sex slavery became an important aspect of his slave trade.

The Taino resisted their enslavement, so Columbus cut off their hands and set dogs on them as punishment.



Historical Sex Trafficking of Native Women

Columbus and Slavery

- European enslavement of Indians “constitutes an obvious antecedent to the sex traffic that occurs today.” (Resendez, 2016)
- Columbus and his men were the first known sex traffickers of the Americas, making the sex trafficking of Indigenous girls and women a central component of the colonization of the Americas.
- Sex trafficking is not part of traditional Indigenous cultures.
- Women are sacred.
- Children are gifts from the Creator—many tribes opposed to corporeal punishment.



Historical Sex Trafficking of Native Women

Colonial Era and American Revolution

- The social, political, and cultural instability during the colonial era and American Revolution involved ongoing warfare, shifting allegiances among Indigenous and European nations, enslavement, and relocation of Indigenous people.
- Indigenous women and girls were particularly at-risk “...as females during wartime, colonial expansion, and slavery...[are] especially vulnerable to the sexual violence that so often accompanied conquest...” (Miles, 2008)
- Brothels were prevalent throughout the Colonies (Burrows & Wallace, 1999)



Historical Sex Trafficking of Native Women

Colonial Era and American Revolution

- George Washington ordered troops to “lay waste” to Native people, except some younger Native women who were given to troops for sexual use and then murdered (“From George Washington,” 2002).
- Story of Nancy—an abducted, enslaved Cherokee girl in Virginia (Miles, 2008)
- Boarding schools



Historical Sex Trafficking of Native Women

Colonial Expansion and Christianity

- As colonization expanded, taking Native land and the sexual exploitation of Native women were justified by Christian leaders who pronounced the untamed land and Native people living on it were part of Satan's kingdom. (Pierce, 2015)
- Native women were often equated with being "whores". (Bird, 1999 & Merskin, 2010)
- In Canada during colonial times, the treatment of First Nation women was described as worse than Britain's worst brothels; First Nation women were enslaved and traded at fur trade posts; and First Nation women were taken as payment for a male relative's debt. (Pierce, 2015)
- Canadian men took Anishinaabe women by force and made "great profit, the Masters in the Traffic of Females for the men's uses". (Bourgeault, 1989)

Historical Sex Trafficking of Native Women

Boarding Schools

- The U.S. and Canadian governments created boarding schools to assimilate Indigenous children and tribes.
- “[O]fficials and agents recruited, forced, or coerced children into government schools”. (Booth 2009)
- Some families gave children to schools due to starvation on reservations.
- Sometimes police kidnapped children.
- Schools unsanitary, underqualified teachers, forced Christianity.
- Children were severely punished, ran away, used as child labor, malnourished, and died of disease. (Booth, 2009)



Historical Sex Trafficking of Native Women Boarding Schools

- The schools committed institutionalized abuse of Indigenous children:
 - sexual and physical violence
 - murder; starvation; strangulation
 - medical experimentation
 - electroshock
 - other kinds of torture (Truth Commission Report, 2015)
- Pedophile and sex trafficking rings run by clergy, government officials, businessmen, and police used Native children in boarding schools. (Farley & Lynne, 2004 & Truth Commission Report, 2015)



Boarding Schools

- Destroyed, distorted, and disconnected many Native cultural ties.
- Impact on Native families, communities, and children.
- Created divisions of whole families and communities.
- Ruptured Native families and communities.
- Introduced violence against children as norm in Native communities.
- Created thousands of Native children who didn't know culture, language, and many struggled to belong anywhere.
- Institutionalization of labor and sex trafficking and other forms of violence against Native children.
- Murdered Native children.
- Buried thousands in unmarked graves.



Historical Homelessness of Native People

- Chronic homelessness of American Indian people is the direct result of the creation of the reservation system which was accomplished through treaties.
- Poverty, starvation, and contagious diseases, some intentionally inflicted by the military, were prevalent among Native people due to the loss and theft of their land. The attempted genocide of Indigenous people resulted in a 90-92 percent reduction in population.
- At the core of colonization is loss of land, or home.
- '60s scoop resulted in unstable families, communities, and homelessness.



Contemporary Homelessness

- Homelessness/precariously housed is widespread among Native people.
- Homeless Native women are particularly vulnerable to all forms of sexual and physical violence.
- A profound link between homelessness and prostitution and trafficking of Native women is evident in the “Garden of Truth: The Prostitution and Trafficking of Native Women,” which found that 98 percent of the 105 Native prostituted and sex trafficked women interviewed were previously or currently homeless. (Farley et al., 2011)



Contemporary Sexual Violence

- A contemporary result of colonization is violence.
- Native women experience the highest rates of violence of any group in the U.S., including Black men. (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000)
- Native women have the highest rate of domestic violence and rape of any group of women (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000 & Center for Disease, 2008). (Primarily committed by non-Native men)
- On some reservations Native women are murdered at more than ten times higher than the national average rate. (Perrelli, 2011)

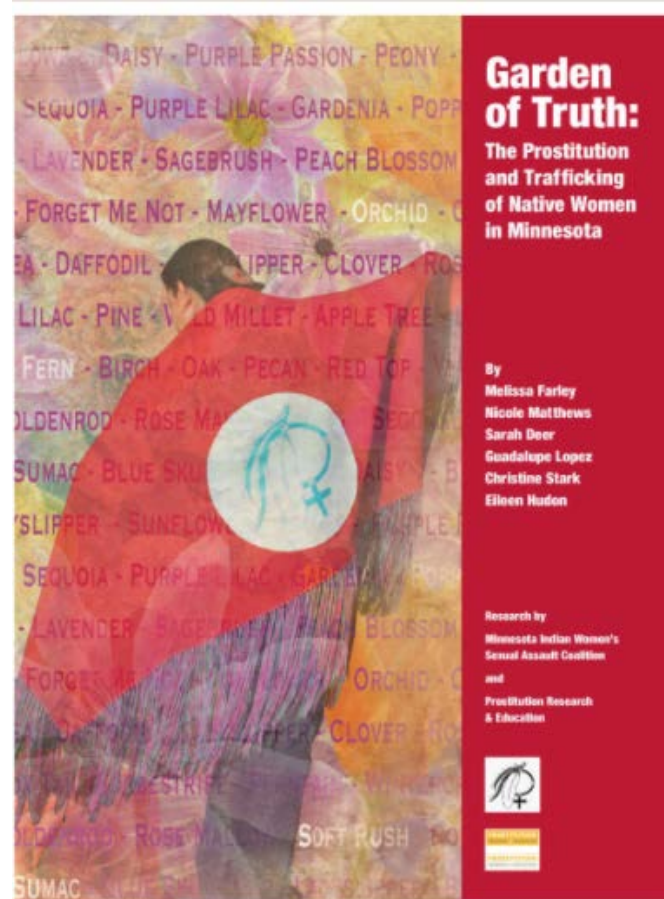
Contemporary Sexual Violence

- Many exist in a revolving door of homelessness, domestic violence, rape, abduction, stalking, and sexual exploitation and torture in prostitution and sex trafficking.
- The links among these disparities is evident in the number of Native women in prostitution and trafficking who are in their 40s, 50s, and 60s. While advocates and women in prostitution and trafficking often talk of “aging out,” the high number of older and elderly Native women in prostitution is indicative of the extreme difficulty Native women have in finding alternatives to escape prostitution.
- Prostitution is not a choice for the women, but rather a cycle of entrapment due to a variety of violent and coercive barriers that are a violation of the human rights of Native women.

Garden of Truth: The Prostitution and Trafficking of Native Women in Minnesota

Interviewed 105
prostituted
and trafficked Native
women in Minnesota

Snowball Sampling



Cover image and report can be found on the [National Indigenous Women's Resource Center website](http://NationalIndigenousWomen'sResourceCenter.org)



Garden of Truth Findings

- 98 percent were currently or previously homeless.
- Racism was an emotionally damaging element in these women's lives and a source of ongoing stress.
- 62 percent saw a connection between prostitution and colonization and explained that the devaluation of women in prostitution was identical to the colonizing devaluation of Native people.
- 33 percent spoke of Native cultural or spiritual practices as an important part of who they were.



Garden of Truth Findings

- 79 percent of the women we interviewed had been sexually abused as children by an average of 4 perpetrators.
- More than two-thirds of the women had family members who had attended boarding schools.
- 46 percent had been in foster care.
- 52 percent arrested as minors an average of 8 times.
- 92 percent had been raped.
- 48 percent had been used by more than 200 sex buyers during their lifetimes. 16 percent had been used by at least 900 sex buyers.
- 84 percent had been physically assaulted in prostitution.
- 72 percent suffered traumatic brain injuries in prostitution.



Garden of Truth Findings

- 52 percent had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) at the time of the interview, a rate that is in the range of PTSD among combat veterans.
- 71 percent had symptoms of dissociation.
- 80 percent had used outpatient substance abuse services. Many felt that they would have been helped even more by inpatient treatment.
- 77 percent had used homeless shelters.
- 65 percent had used domestic violence services.
- 33 percent had used sexual assault services.
- 92 percent wanted to escape prostitution.

Modern Child Welfare System in U.S.

- Mid-century decades of removing Native children.
- In 1958 the Child Welfare League of America and Bureau of Indian Affairs launched a campaign to promote the adoption of American Indian children into middle class white homes. It was seen as saving them to remove them from their impoverished families adopt them out and assimilate them.
- Morphing of the boarding schools policy.
- In 1970s it was found that 25 to 30 percent (H.R. Rep. No. 95-1386, p. 9 (1978)) of all Indian children were taken and adopted mostly to white families.
- 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act.

Modern Child Welfare System in U.S.

Current impact of child welfare on Native communities

- American Indian children are 15.5 times more likely to be placed in out of home care. (Minnesota Child Welfare Report 2013: 2014 Minnesota Legislature, 2014)
- American Indian children are 3.2 percent more likely than white children to have rights terminated.
- Multiethnic are 3.6 percent higher.
- Nationally 2 percent of the foster care population is American Indian.
- In Minnesota American Indian children make up 8.2 percent of all children in placement.
- American Indian children make up 1.9 percent of the population in Minnesota but nearly 19 percent of American Indian children are in out of home placement.
- Minnesota has the highest rate of American Indians in out of home placement than any other state. More than double the next highest state.



Modern Child Welfare System in U.S.

Current impact of child welfare on Native communities

- 30 percent of Native families live in poverty. This is 5 percent for white families.
- Families of color are more likely to be assigned to family assessment based on discretionary reasons.
- Racial disparities in out of school suspensions, leading to more children of color in educational neglect and truancy court.
- American Indian children are 5 times more likely to be reported for abuse and 10 times more likely to end up in foster care—the rate is higher than in 1978.
- American Indian children also stay longer in foster care than any other group—move around to more homes and once sent home are removed again more often than white children.

Modern Child Welfare System in U.S.

- Child Welfare + Sex Trafficking = Children as Commodities
- Orphan Trains
- The videos below include survivors of child welfare and sex trafficking discussing how foster care groomed and made them vulnerable to sex trafficking:

Domestic Child Sex Trafficking and the Child Welfare Response

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLjXUqrXMUw>

Child Protection Services Found in Human Trafficking

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXUGMntxWRg>

Modern Child Welfare System in U.S.

- Continuing to remove American Indian children despite ICWA.
- “American Indians comprise less than 9 percent of South Dakota’s population, 52 percent of the children in the state’s foster care system are American Indians.” (Pevar, 2017)
- “An Indian child is 11 times more likely to be placed in foster care than a white child in South Dakota.” (Pevar, 2017)
- “In March 2015, Chief Federal District Court Judge Jeffrey L. Viken confirmed what our ACLU complaint had alleged: State employees were removing children from their homes and then holding hearings in state court within 48 hours, in which parents were not assigned counsel to represent them, were not given a copy of the petition accusing them of wrongdoing, and no state employee was called to testify. Moreover, the parents were not permitted to testify, call witnesses, or cross-examine any state employee. The hearings typically lasted fewer than five minutes — some were done in 60 seconds — and the state won 100 percent of the time.” (Pevar, 2017)
<https://www.aclu.org/blog/racial-justice/american-indian-rights/south-dakota-officials-defied-federal-judge-and-took>



Modern Child Welfare System in U.S.

- “740 Lakota children are removed to foster care each year and 90 percent are placed in white homes and institutions.” (Bender, 2013)
- “South Dakota receives \$79,000 from the federal government per year per child for every Native youngster it removes but provides only \$9,000 to a white foster home. The remaining \$70,000 is deposited in state coffers.” (Bender, 2013)
- The Department of Social Services makes up 53 percent of the entire budget for the state of South Dakota every year, right on the backs of the Native people.



Modern Child Welfare System in U.S.

South Dakota Exposed

<https://medicalkidnap.com/2015/02/14/south-dakota-commits-shocking-genocide-against-native-americans-by-abducting-their-children/>

Federal Bureau of Investigation “roundup” of 168 trafficked children found, one-third were never reported missing.

Modern Child Welfare System in U.S.

“From Foster Care to Trafficking,” by Christian O’Neill

- A large percentage of minors who survived the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) have experience with the child welfare system, particularly foster care. O’Neill supports this with a slew of statistics, including:
 - “The FBI reported in 2013 that 60% of children recovered from CSEC incidents had previously been in out-of-family care.”
 - “In 2015, California Attorney General Kamala Harris reported that 59% of children arrested on prostitution-related charges in Los Angeles County had previously been in foster care.”
 - “A 2014 Department of Justice report estimated that 85% of girls involved in CSEC were previously involved in the child welfare system.”

Modern Child Welfare System in U.S.

“From Foster Care to Trafficking,” by Christian O’Neill

- **Placement in a foster home is inherently traumatizing.** Children may lose their connections to their family. They also lose their connection to the places and people they are familiar with, like their school, friends, and teachers.
- **Foster parents are paid by the government.** Children in foster care are often all-too aware that their presence brings their foster parent a government paycheck. They can feel their caregivers have them just for the money.
- **Many foster children are frequently uprooted and moved around.** Children often feel that they are moved from home to home arbitrarily, and without warning.
- **Families are torn apart unnecessarily.** 78 percent of children who Child Protective Services deemed victims in 2012 suffered only neglect at home, without physical, sexual or psychological abuse. Many neglect cases are largely due to poverty. Instead of being split up, many of these families could have been better helped by family preservation services. These include training in budgeting and nutrition.



Sex Trafficking & Prostitution in Indian Country


- Numerous social injustices result in Native women, children, and Two-Spirit people being disproportionately used in sex trafficking and prostitution.
- Prostitution and sex trafficking of children and women are interconnected
- Colonization
- Racism
- Sexism
- Homophobia
- Transphobia
- Homelessness
- Poverty
- Other forms of gender-based violence including domestic violence, rape, incest, stalking, pornography.
- Sex trafficking is a considerable component of MMIW and Relatives



Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Human Trafficking

Operation Lady Justice

- The Center's work supports the efforts of Operation Lady Justice.
- Operation Lady Justice is a Presidential Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives, established in 2019.
- Operation Lady Justice offers—
 - Links to public awareness materials,
 - Fact sheets and resources, and
 - Readouts from listening sessions and consultations.



Several human trafficking factors appear to correlate with Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW), including—

- Domestic and sexual violence
- High rates of adverse childhood experiences
- Homelessness
- Poverty
- Substance abuse

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force

About the Task Force

The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force is charged with helping fight the abduction, homicide, violence and trafficking of Indigenous women in Wisconsin.

<https://www.doj.state.wi.us/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-task-force>

Wisconsin Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force

The task force focuses on examining the—

- factors that contribute to missing and murdered Indigenous women and
- response from social service organizations, understanding the roles federal, state and tribal jurisdictions play, and improving and implementing robust data collection and reporting methods.



Partnerships

Bridging Gaps in Services

A COORDINATED RESPONSE TO TRAFFICKING

Meeting the safety, security, and healing needs of all victims of human trafficking requires a coordinated response.

Partnerships and taskforces play an important part in focusing on victim needs.



Human Trafficking Screening Tools


BUILDING A REFERRAL NETWORK

Human trafficking is an underreported crime.

Those who suffer are not likely to self-identify and often blame themselves for their situation.

Victims rarely self-report.

A collaborative, community-based response to human trafficking can increase victim identification, assisting the survivor of trafficking in reclaiming their life.



The Center can assist your tribe or organization with developing custom screening tools and working with partners to develop a collaborative, community-based response to human trafficking.

Your Human Trafficking Work...

- Identify training and resources to build knowledge of human trafficking?
- Develop and distribute human trafficking informational and outreach materials?
- Identify potential partner organizations and connect with federal, state, local, and other tribal government agencies?
- Navigate the range of financial resources available for human trafficking?
- Develop human trafficking screening tools?
- Offer a coordinated response to human trafficking?



...contact the Center

contact@htcbc-ovc.org

Question and Answer



Tribal Human Trafficking Resources

PUBLIC AWARENESS MATERIALS

Know the Faces of Human Trafficking

"It was people saying that 'I see you and I care'—that was the thing, I think, that turned things around for me most."

— Jeri Williams, Co-Founder Survivor 2 Survivor

You don't need to specialize in human trafficking to serve its many victims. By knowing what human trafficking is, looking for indicators in the clients you serve, and referring potential victims to appropriate services, you can play an important role in identifying and supporting victims.

For more information, visit the human trafficking section of the Office for Victims of Crime website at www.ovc.gov/trafficking or call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 888-373-7888.

TEMPLATES AND OUTREACH MATERIALS*

Maggie's House/TLP

Maggie's House Transitional Living Program and Training

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Month Day, Year

INFORMATIONAL DOCUMENTS

Office for Victims of Crime - Human Trafficking Capacity Building Center

PROTECTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESOURCES

Overview

American Indian and Alaska Native people are two and a half times more likely to experience violent crimes and at least two times more likely to experience rape or sexual assault crimes in comparison to all other ethnicities.¹ Nearly half of tribal law enforcement agencies believe that more human trafficking is occurring in their jurisdictions than is reported.²

Free Human Trafficking Resources

The Human Trafficking Capacity Building Center offers free coaching to assist tribes with—

- Identifying training and resources to build knowledge of human trafficking.
- Creating human trafficking informational and outreach materials;
- Helping identify potential partner organizations and connect with federal, state, local, and other tribal government agencies;
- Navigating the range of financial resources;
- Developing a human trafficking screening tool to use across program areas; and
- Assisting with strategic planning and developing policies and procedures on human trafficking support and response.

Who We Are

The Human Trafficking Capacity Building Center is a coaching and development hub assisting organizations and tribes with: (1) building their capacity to aid victims of all forms of human trafficking, (2) navigating the broad range of resources available to support their missions, and (3) strengthening human trafficking service networks.

Presidential Task Force

The Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indian and Alaska Native Women, established by Executive Order on November 26, 2019, aims to address American Indian and Alaska Native murdered people—particularly women and girls—force to combat sex and labor trafficking.

Resources to Respond to Human Trafficking

The Center is available to assist with starting, support work. The Center's assistance can be coordinated cost human trafficking support is intended to provide tribes with minimal demands on their time include

¹MMIW Crisis Institute before the Subcommittee on Indigenous Peoples, Committee on Indian Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, 116th Congress, 1st Session, 2019, www.dhs.gov/indian-affairs.

² United States Government Accountability Office, 2017, Human Trafficking: Information on Cases in Indian Country or that Involved Native Americans, Washington, DC. Retrieved March 3, 2020, from www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-246.

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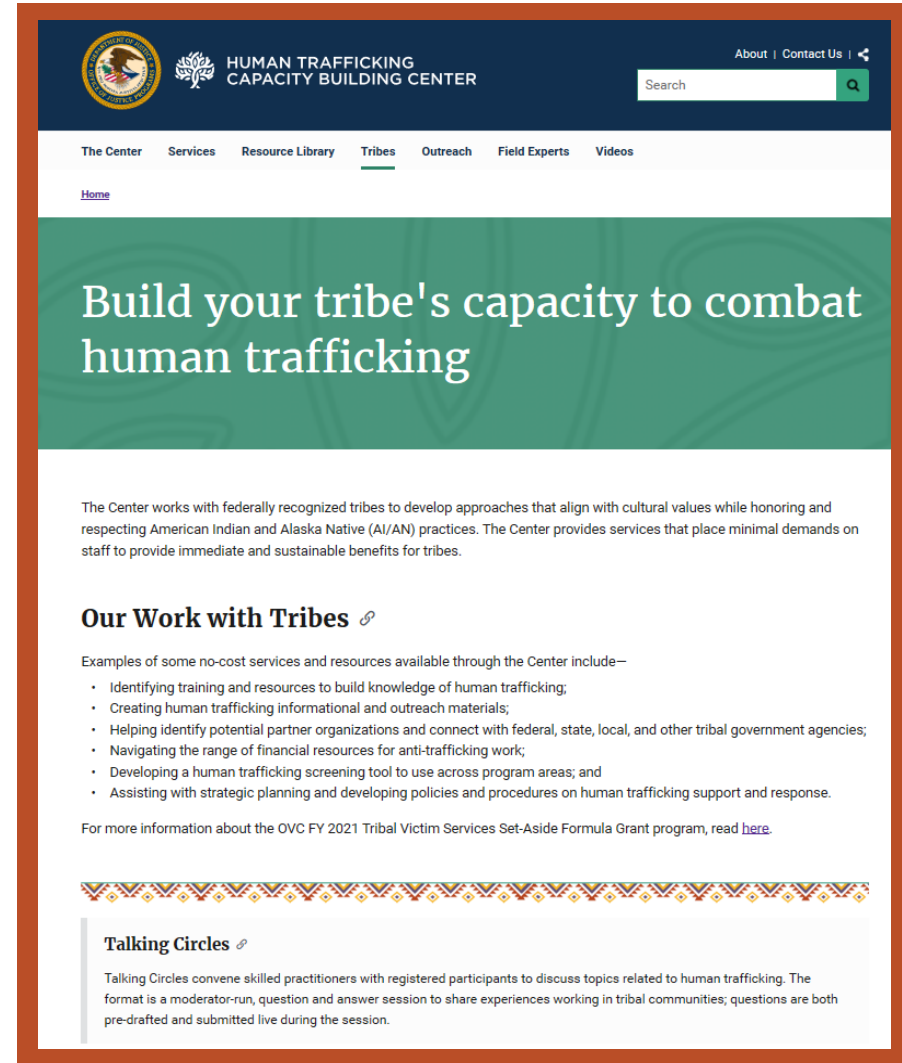
Contact the Center at contact@ovc-hcbc.org or 1-844-682-0411.

Human Trafficking Capacity Building Center Website


htcbc.ovc.ojp.gov/tribes

includes the following—

- One pagers, sample documents, Q&As located in the Resource Library;
- Resources specifically developed for tribes; and
- Talking Circle videos.



Talking Circles



A new webinar series from the Human Trafficking Capacity Building Center called "Talking Circles" convenes skilled practitioners with registered participants to discuss topics related to human trafficking.

Launched in January 2021, the Talking Circle series* have convened American Indian and Alaska Native panelists to discuss the following topics—

- Human Trafficking in Tribal Communities
- Funding Healing
- Start, Sustain, or Grow: Using federal funding for victim services

To view these recordings, visit—

htcbc.ovc.ojp.gov/videos

* Email contact@ovc-htcbc.org to receive notifications for upcoming Talking Circle discussions.

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