



Examining SafetyNet: Understanding the Need for a Child Sex Trafficking Database and Interagency and Collaboration

*This research was conducted by Jessie Lizak, Research Analyst & Data Manger at the Alameda
County District Attorney's Office.*

A special thanks to Isabella Ross, a 2014 summer intern with H.E.A.T. Watch at the Alameda County District Attorney's Office.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Abstract.....4

II. Introduction.....4

 a. Research Problem.....5

 b. History of Human Trafficking.....5

 c. Alameda County District Attorney’s Approach.....7

 i. SafetyNet.....7

III. Literature Review.....10

 a. Problems with Existing Human Trafficking Data.....10

 i. Reasons for the lack of reliable data.....10

 ii. Limitations to existing human trafficking data.....13

 b. Existing Human Trafficking Databases.....13

 i. Thorn.....15

 ii. HTRS.....15

 iii. Georgia Cares.....15

 iv. Johns Hopkins University Database.....16

 v. DNA Databases.....16

 vi. UNESCO’s Database.....17

 vii. IOM’s Database.....17

 viii. UNODC’s Database.....17

 ix. University of Southern California.....18

 x. Google.....18

 c. Data Sharing and Interagency Collaboration.....19

IV. Limitations.....21

V. Interviews with Participating Agencies.....22

 a. Methodologies.....22

 i. Interview Sample.....22

 b. Agency Interview Findings.....23

 i. Benefits of Sharing Data in SafetyNet.....23

 ii. Benefits of Building Relationships through SafetyNet.....24

 iii. Quarterly Outcomes Meetings at SafetyNet.....25

 iv. Probation’s Participation is Crucial to Success of the Meeting.....26

 v. Social Services in SafetyNet.....28

 vi. Outreach to other Counties and States.....29

VI. Statistical Analysis of Current Data in the SafetyNet Database.....30

 a. About the Database, Data Collection, and Data Findings.....30

 i. Race, Sex, Residence, and Age.....30

 ii. Risk Factors.....37

 iii. Services.....40

 iv. Education.....45

 v. System Involvement.....47

 vi. Recidivism.....51

VII. Conclusion and Recommendations.....52

VIII. Works Cited.....54



Abstract

Human trafficking is an increasing problem globally, nationally, and locally in the San Francisco East Bay especially as children are targeted victims of this crime. In the last two decades, there has been an increased response through government approached solutions. A lack of systemically collected and analyzed data has led to slippery statistics published on human trafficking. These statistics most often lack methodology and are highly criticized by researchers. Despite this fact, these human trafficking statistics are leading policy discussions. By examining the Alameda County District Attorney's "SafetyNet", this paper will look at the collection and maintenance of data on commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC) within the SafetyNet database as well as interagency data sharing among participating SafetyNet partners in Alameda County. This research will take a multi-method approach using qualitative and quantitative methods to better understand the need for a human trafficking database and interagency data sharing. Interviews with the multiple agency representatives who attend the weekly SafetyNet meetings help better understand the importance of interagency data sharing. An analysis of existing data in the SafetyNet database will show what can be learned by tracking this phenomenon in a database.

Introduction

Today, there is an ever increased awareness of human trafficking; however, government agencies are still learning how to grasp the problem and find solutions. Under the direction of District Attorney Nancy O'Malley, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office (ACDAO) created H.E.A.T. (Human Exploitation and Trafficking) Watch. The mission of H.E.A.T. Watch is to develop an effective, comprehensive, collaborative, and regional response to human trafficking of all forms; to provide tools, education, and community engagement to change societal, legal, and institutional approaches; and to support victims and hold their offenders accountable. A flagship program within H.E.A.T. Watch is SafetyNet, an interagency meeting where partners share information about at-risk victims and victims of child sex trafficking. SafetyNet is also a database that maintains data on the youth discussed at SafetyNet.

This research uses interviews with SafetyNet agency representatives and a quantitative analysis of existing data in the SafetyNet database to learn if collecting, maintaining, and analyzing data on commercially sexually exploited minors as well as interagency data sharing helps agencies better support and identify safety plans for CSEC and children at-risk of sex trafficking.

There are six main findings that emerged from the interviews. First, sharing data on CSEC is highly beneficial to the youth and the agencies who work with them. The information shared at the meetings helps the agencies better advocate for CSEC victims. It also helps with consolidating resources and ensuring that different groups do not duplicate efforts. Second, important relationships are established through collaboration that ultimately benefits CSEC. Interviewees described trusting relationships they were able to build through SafetyNet. Third, Probation's participation is crucial to the success of the meeting. Their data is needed and they also need the information from these meetings in order to properly make recommendations to the court. In addition, interviewees expressed a desire for a CSEC representative from Probation who is properly trained on the specific needs of these clients. Fourth, data sharing among Social Services is highly critical. Interviewees hoped for a higher level representative who could answer more of the questions that arise for Social Services. An assigned CSEC representative would be useful. More information is also needed from Social Services. Also, quarterly outcomes meetings without cases on the agenda could help participants to step back and take a holistic view of the cases they previously discussed in order to brainstorm needed policy and protocol changes. Finally, more counties need interagency and collaborative groups like SafetyNet. CSEC are highly transient and if each county had a SafetyNet, then counties could refer minors to the jurisdiction in which they reside.

The research also included an analysis of the SafetyNet data collected since 2011. There are several limitations to this data, including that it is Alameda County specific and that the only data collected is data that is available to the ACDAO through SafetyNet, Girls' Court, and files the DA's office has on minors who are adjudicated. Several patterns and trends emerged from the data analysis including the fact that the clients' race and sex appear to be becoming slightly more diverse in 2014. The percent of male clients went up and the percent of African American clients slightly started to decrease while Caucasian and Latino clients began increasing. Only 2 percent came from states outside of California and 98 percent were from California. Of the 98 percent from California,

60 percent resided in Alameda County, 13 percent from neighboring Contra Costa County, and six percent came from Sacramento County. Of those from Alameda County, 57 percent resided in Oakland. Drug use, chronic absenteeism, and runaway history are the three most common risk factors for CSEC and at-risk CSEC. Only six percent of SafetyNet clients were not connected to any service. Those without services are clients who refused services or clients transferred to other jurisdictions where there were not appropriate services available. Castlemont High was the most common school among clients. Clients are very likely to be involved in the system. Only 10 percent do not have system-involvement while 40 percent are currently or have previously been in the custody of Social Services and 63 percent are currently or have previously been in the custody of Probation. Finally, of the 482 youth, 84 percent have a juvenile arrest history, and 22 percent re-offend into the adult system. Of the 22 percent who re-offended into the adult system, 34 percent were arrested for violations of California Penal Codes 647b and 653.22.

This research points to four main recommendations. First, interagency collaborative meetings that respond to and create safety plans for CSEC should be mandatory for all counties. Second, Probation, Social Services, School districts, District Attorney's Offices, and law enforcement should be required to collaborate and share data. An easy way to share data would be to create a statewide or even a nationwide database where systems are required to enter their own data. This way, data would not only become more reliable, but it would also help other jurisdictions respond to each individual CSEC case properly when they are identified. Third, Probation and Social Services should be required to have designated CSEC-specific staff. Finally, the definition of human trafficking should be re-visited in order to make it easier for researchers to measure and analyze this phenomenon.

Research Problem

One of the main problems in addressing human trafficking is the lack of reliable data. In addition, interagency collaboration has appeared to improve the response to child sex trafficking in Alameda County; however, there has not been empirical evidence to back up this claim. This study will attempt to address the problem of reliable data by analyzing SafetyNet data. Informal interviews

will help explore whether interagency collaboration has assisted in addressing child sex trafficking in Alameda County. As this research is exploratory in nature, the overall guiding question will ask:

By collecting, maintaining, and analyzing data on commercially sexually exploited minors as well as interagency data sharing through SafetyNet meetings, are Alameda County agencies better able to support and identify safety plans for CSEC and children at-risk of sex trafficking?

History of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is not a new problem. Origins of the human trafficking debate date back to the end of the nineteenth century when feminists such as Josephine Butler brought forced prostitution into international dialogue with the term “White Slave Trade” (Derks 2000; Gozdzia and Collett 2005). By 1902, the first international agreement on “white slavery” was drafted in Paris. But it was not until 1910 that the *International Agreement for the Suppression of the White Slave Trade* did not equate “white slavery” with “prostitution” when language broadened to include the traffic of women and girls within national borders (Wijers, Lin, and Vrouwenhandel 1997). By 1921, the trafficking of boys was also incorporated into the agreement (Gozdzia and Collett 2005). By 1933, a new convention was signed in Geneva called *The International Convention for the Traffic in Women* that condemned all prostitution in other countries (Gozdzia and Collett 2005).

Credit for this renewed interest in human trafficking is thanks to developments in migration flows, the feminist movement, the AIDS pandemic, and child prostitution and child sex tourism in the 1980s (Doezema 1999; Gozdzia and Collett 2005; Wijers et al. 1997). In the 1990s, human trafficking re-appeared on the agenda of the UN (United Nations) General Assembly, the Commission for Human Rights, and the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993, and the 1995 World Conference on women in Beijing. In 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted the *UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in persons, Especially Women and Children*. Other international agreements followed and many international organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the International Organization on Migration (IOM) as well as the European Union (EU) have engaged in anti-trafficking efforts (Gozdzia and Collett 2005).

In the late 1990s, human trafficking came into dialogue in the United States government, leading to President Bill Clinton signing the *Trafficking Victims Protection Act* (TVPA) into law in 2000. The final version of the TVPA was based on three bills introduced during that legislative session. With bi-partisan compromise on the different bills, the TVPA passed by a vote of 371-1 in the House and 95-0 in the Senate (Chacón 2006). The TVPA of 2000 and the *Trafficking Victims Re-authorization Act* of 2003 are considered two of the main national laws that help combat human trafficking (Gozdziak and Collett 2005). Today, President Barack Obama and the U.S. Department of Justice are involved in the fight against human trafficking. In September 2012, President Obama announced several initiatives to combat human trafficking including training federal and state law enforcement to better identify trafficking and providing financial assistance to victims (California Department of Justice 2012).

In 2012, California voters passed Proposition 35, the *Californian's Against Sexual Exploitation Act* (CASE Act) through the initiative process - legislative changes brought by the People for the People of California. The CASE Act is by far the strongest legislative response to human trafficking in California. It was passed by popular vote with an overwhelming 81 percent. The change in law included dramatic increases in punishments and fines for those convicted of human trafficking, it redefined the conduct that constitutes human trafficking in California and required mandatory registration for those convicted of sex trafficking.

With progress in recent years toward the development of a collective understanding of human trafficking and the establishment of legal norms regarding trafficking in persons, more research has started to take place. It is imperative that more databases containing information on victims of trafficking and traffickers are established so that empirical evidence can continue to guide policies in the future. Likewise, it is important for agencies to begin to work together, break down barriers, and start sharing data in order to gain a better understanding of this phenomena locally, regionally, nationally, and globally (Epstein and Edelman 2013; Walker 2013).

Alameda County District Attorney's Approach

Three of the nation's thirteen "High Intensity Child Prostitution areas" are in California and include: San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego metropolitan areas (U.S. Department of Justice 2009). Since January 2006, H.E.A.T. Watch has achieved tremendous success convicting traffickers. According to a 2012 report by California Attorney General Kamala Harris, between January 1, 2007 and September 30, 2012, ACDAO has prosecuted 46% of all cases prosecuted under California's human trafficking statute, Penal Code section 236.1 (California Department of Justice 2012). Alameda County District Attorney Nancy E O'Malley created and developed H.E.A.T. Watch, to be much more than a prosecution strategy. H.E.A.T. Watch is a five-point collaborative strategy that provides a comprehensive response to effectively combat human trafficking. The five components are:

- 1) Robust community engagement
- 2) Training for and sensitization of law enforcement
- 3) Vigorous prosecution
- 4) Education of and advocacy to policy makers
- 5) Wrap around services for victim and survivors

SafetyNet

SafetyNet is a term that will frequently be used throughout this research. For the sake of measurability, SafetyNet will have a two-part definition. First, it is a database that contains individual profiles of child sex trafficking victims and children at-risk. Second, it is a weekly interagency meeting where different agencies come together and share confidential data to improve responses and safety-plans for victims.

Prior to 2011, there was not a viable collaborative model in Alameda County that addressed needs and safety concerns of sexually exploited minors and those at risk for exploitation. The ACDAO took lead in forming SafetyNet to help with the complex needs of this population. A *Memorandum of Understanding and Confidentiality Agreement* was created allowing agencies to share confidential information. In 2011, the group started with representatives from five agencies

including the District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, a forensic interview center, a rape crisis center, and a hired juvenile justice consultant. Throughout the course of its first year, the group expanded to include more agencies, including local hospitals, Social Services, various community based organizations (CBOs) and Probation. They would expand to include representatives from 15 agencies who all interact with CSEC and those at-risk of exploitation. These agencies now include the ACDAO, the Alameda County Public Defender's Office, private attorneys who represent the minors being discussed, law enforcement, Probation, Social Services, hospitals, CBOs, Oakland Unified School District, and Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services.

The ACDAO prepares a weekly agenda of about 15 youth which include at-risk victims and victims of commercial sexual exploitation. When SafetyNet clients are added to the agenda, they are also added to the database. SafetyNet clients can be referred by anyone. They are often referred by SafetyNet partners, or sometimes referrals come through the H.E.A.T. Watch tip line. Additionally, the ACDAO will also refer minors who are arrested for CSEC related activity in Alameda County including California's PC 647(b) and CA PC 653.22. The ACDAO maintains the database of the clients discussed at SafetyNet and facilitates discussion. The agenda is attached to a packet exported from the database that includes a profile on each minor. A hypothetical example of one of these printed profiles is shown in Figure 1. The packets are turned back into the ACDAO at the end of each meeting. The profiles in the packet include demographic information, risk factors, services received, prior victimization, system involvement, arrest history, education, work history, information on cases where the minor is involved in the adult courts as a victim or witness, outcomes, a short qualitative summary, safety plan, and follow up questions on each minor.

At the meeting, agencies share information and address specific safety concerns. The overarching goal is to create a safety plans for CSEC and at-risk CSEC. The agencies involved work together to develop safety plans, make referrals to service providers, and connect the youth to agencies who can assist with benefits such as Social Security, Medi-Cal, Women, Infants and Children benefits (WIC), state-funded housing and services though AB12, transitional housing, and other relevant services and resources. SafetyNet also looks into family dynamics that may affect the minor's success. Additionally, SafetyNet develops aftercare plans if youth are removed from their homes. While this is primarily the responsibility of the Probation Department and the partners in

court, the group is familiar with the challenges that the victim will face post-release. SafetyNet partners make recommendations to the court, assist the partners in court and support the family with continuity of care. An added benefit of SafetyNet is the ability to gather localized data on the population, and piece together information received from the different agencies.

SafetyNet Packet					
Doe, Jane(AWOL)		DOB: 01/01/2000	Race: MX	Gender: F Oakland / Alameda	
Date Discussed	Risk Factors	Services	Victim Hx/CALICO/VCCC	JV LE Hx	Level 2 (HEAT Case)
01/13/2013	CSEC	BAWAR	CALICO	Police Report	Current Case: N
03/05/2015	Mental Health	MISSEY	CPS	10-111111	Docket No: 11-111111
07/01/2014	Substance Abuse	WCC	01/01/2003	Arrest Date: 03/02/2015	DA: Joe Schmo
08/15/2013	Pregnant/Parenting	Guidance Clinic		Charge	DefendantInfo:
01/13/2013	Gang	YWSP		PC 647(B) M	Defendant Name: Fake
	Tattoo	BALA			Defendant
	Truancy	Project Permanence			Charge: PC 236.1 Human
	Runaway	YEP			Trafficking
	Family Drug Hx	Youth Uprising			Case Status: PX 6/1/15
	Mother	CASA			
	Family CSEC Hx	CVS			
	Mother	Highway to Work EBCS			
	Recruiter				
	Deceased (Father murdered 3/8/2012)				
System Involvement					
300Hx 602 Family Preservation Unit Hx Foster Care Hx GPS Hx Out Of State Placement 241.1 4C Order Hx 3C Order Placement: MMA (10/1/14 - present), I/c (8/1/14 - 10/1/14), AWOL (5/1/14 - 8/1/14), Step-Dad's Home (1/1/14 - 5/1/14) Probation Officer: John Smith 555-555-5555 John.Smith@email.gov Defense Attorney: Sue Jane Fake Law Practice 555-555-5555 Sue.Jane@fakelawpractice.org					
School					
Fake High School Oakland TWELFTH GRADE IEP GED					
Work					
Safety Status Summary					
-First paragraph gives an update of minor's current situation and whereabouts as well as the next court date.					
-Second paragraph explains any criminal history.					
-Third paragraph reports updates from service providers as well as school information.					
-Fourth paragraph talks about the family situation and any child welfare history such as past allegations to Child Protective Services (CPS).					
-Fifth paragraph gives detail on any adult cases where minor is a victim.					
Safety Plan					
In this space, the SafetyNet coordinator makes suggestions as to what can be done to support the minor to help spark discussion at the meeting.					
Follow Up					
03/19/2015	Questions are asked here. Questions might include areas where data is missing. Such as, what school is the minor currently attending? Did the minor receive her GED? Is there any CPS history?				

Figure 1



Literature Review

Problems with Existing Human Trafficking Data

Annually, human trafficking, which includes the commercial exploitation of children, is a \$32 billion industry worldwide (Belser 2005). Human trafficking continues to be debated by researchers and policymakers, in particular its definition. Some of the debates argue that legal definitions are not easily tested by researchers. Discrepancies include the differences between sex and labor trafficking, as well as smuggling of migrants, the connection of human trafficking with prostitution and the significance of the consent of victims (Gozdziak and Collett 2005; Laczko 2005; Langberg 2005). However, there is one area of consistent agreement – there is a lack of reliable statistical data on human trafficking (Adepoju 2005; Ali 2005; Goodey 2008; Gozdziaak and Collett 2005; Kangaspunta 2003; Kornbluth 1996; Laczko and Gramegna 2003; Langberg 2005; Tyldum and Brunovskis 2005).

Reasons for the Lack of Reliable Data

Different agendas from different lobbying groups could be blamed for the complex definition of human trafficking (Gozdziaak and Collett 2005). The U.S., like the international community, has grappled with creating a comprehensive definition of human trafficking (Gozdziaak and Collett 2005). The legal definition of human trafficking that was created under the TVPA, defines trafficking as:

- A. **Sex trafficking** is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age, (22 USC § 7102; 8 CFR § 214.11(a)); and
- B. **Labor trafficking** is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery, (22 USC § 7102).

A great deal of research has focused on trafficking for sexual exploitation, to the detriment of investigating labor trafficking (Gozdziak and Collett 2005). Gozdziaak and Collett (2005) attribute this emphasized focus on sex trafficking to the American religious and feminist groups as well as to the close ties policymakers have with the business community. Individual states have also come up with their own definitions of human trafficking. While California Legislature's definition of human trafficking is very similar to the TVPA, perhaps one of the most significant differences of the two is that while the TVPA focuses heavily on compensation for victims, California's Penal Code 236.1 includes more specific punishments for those found guilty of trafficking, it defines human trafficking as the following:

- A. **Sex Trafficking:** All acts involved in the recruitment, abduction, transport, harboring, transfer, sale or receipt of persons, within national or across international borders, through force, coercion, fraud or deception, to place persons in situations of slavery or slavery-like conditions, forced labor or services, such as forced prostitution or sexual services, domestic servitude, bonded sweatshop labor, or other debt bondage.
- B. **Labor Trafficking:** Forced labor or services include labor or services that are performed or provided by a person and are obtained or maintained through force, fraud, or coercion, or equivalent conduct that would reasonably overbear the will of the person (California Penal Code 2014).

The definition of human trafficking is complex and therefore it is not simple to measure. Few governments, including North American governments, systematically collect data on human trafficking and when they do provide statistical information, they often combine data related to trafficking, smuggling, and illegal migration (Laczko 2002). For example, in some areas all undocumented migrants assisted in crossing the US border are counted as having been trafficked (Gordy 2000). Other reports reserve the term "trafficking" exclusively to victims of sexual slavery (Chapkis 2003). As a result, available data is unreliable. Wijers, Lap-Chew, and Vrouwenhandel (1997) explain:

Finding reliable statistics on the extent of trafficking in women is virtually impossible, due to a lack of systemic research, the lack of a precise, consistent, and unambiguous definition of the phenomena and the illegality and criminal nature of prostitution and trafficking.

During the interview process of a study done in the Latin American and Caribbean region, the general confusion between migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings became clear (Langberg 2005). Two main factors accounted for the confusion: first, the translation from English to Spanish of the word “trafficking” confused interviewees because the word for trafficking in Spanish “tráfico” is in reference to drug and gun trafficking while the term “trata de personas” is used to refer to human trafficking. Second, the absence of a clear understanding of the difference between “trafficking” and “smuggling.”

Some blame the lack of reliable data on the fact that human trafficking is inevitably a surreptitious criminal activity (Adepoju 2005; Ali 2005; Goodey 2008; Gozdziaik and Collett 2005; Kangaspunta 2003; Kornbluth 1996; Laczko and Gramegna 2003; Langberg 2005; Tyldum and Brunovskis 2005). For sex trafficking, this means victims are intimidated and less likely to report information regarding their experiences in fear of traffickers.

Tyldum and Brunovskis (2005) point out that one of the most challenging problems facing researchers is the fact that most of the populations relevant to the study of human trafficking are part of a “hidden population.” Laczko (2005) explains that it is almost impossible to establish a sampling frame and draw a representative sample of the population. Given that many trafficking cases remain undiscovered, or that victims and survivors are afraid to talk, it is difficult to obtain first-hand information from those who have been exploited.

Human trafficking data is also unreliable because the focus on action-oriented or applied research has meant studies are often conducted within a fairly short time frame, usually six to eight months, and with limited resources (Laczko 2005). Human trafficking victims can be very transient and the mobility of victims can also make it hard to collect and maintain data (Ali 2005). Much of the research done on trafficking is based on relatively small samples of survivors that are usually identified by law enforcement agencies, NGOs, or international organizations. The actual ratio of assisted survivors to the total number of victims is unknown, meaning that studies based only on assisted cases are not representative of the total number of trafficked victims (Laczko 2005). There is also very little extensive fieldwork that is done on human trafficking. Most studies are also based on research conducted at one point in time. This means there is little longitudinal research

investigating the circumstances of individuals before, during, and after trafficking, this includes research to assess the extent to which survivors can achieve long-term self-sufficiency (Laczko 2005). Another explanation for the unreliable data is that law enforcement agencies give low priority to combating human trafficking (Laczko 2005). If a country does not have a specific anti-human trafficking law, trafficking crimes may be reported as something else. It is also noted that developing countries capacity to collect data is very weak (Laczko 2005; Langberg 2005). Finally, the already scarce collected data is often lost in inadequate management and in the lack of systems coordination (Langberg 2005).

Limitations to existing human trafficking data

The unreliability of human trafficking data leads to several limitations. Most of the information reports are on individual cases or victims, or were prepared for advocacy (Goodey 2008; Kangaspunta 2003) rather than for research purposes. Even though some high-quality research exists on human trafficking, most of the data are based on “guesstimates,” which, in many cases, are used for advocacy or fundraising purposes (Gozdziaik and Collett 2005; Kangaspunta 2003; Laczko 2005). If figures on trafficking are given, they are usually based on published estimates of the level of trafficking and in most cases there is no explanation of how those figures were calculated (Laczko 2002). The existing data are most often general estimates created on the basis of unclear methodologies or administrative data kept about the various victims they assist (Laczko 2005). The US State Department, for example, has produced estimates of the size of the trafficked population yet they have not released information regarding the methodologies used to obtain the baseline data (Gozdziaik and Collett 2005; Kelly 2005).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has undertaken a trafficking statistics project to attempt and trace the origins and methodologies of these estimated statistics and evaluate their validity (UNESCO Bangkok. n.d).

Mexico was often listed by the UN as a number one source of young children trafficked to North America (Hall 1998). Mexico is the largest source of undocumented migrants and a major transit point for third-country migration to the United States. However, statistics on this population usually refer to illegal and smuggled migrants without making any attempt to even hypothesize

whether any of them might actually be victims of trafficking (Gozdziak and Collett 2005). Reports suggest that Mexico is a major destination for sex tourism from the United States (Shirk and Webber 2004) and that as many as 16,000 Mexican children are subject to commercial sexual exploitation annually (Correa 2001). The latter statement erroneously equates sexual exploitation of children with trafficking, while child abuse, an equally horrific and punishable offence, might have been a more accurate classification of the crime. It is interesting for any conscientious social scientist that the discrepancies in the most commonly quoted estimates of human trafficking would be a cause for considerable suspicion of the reliability of the research, yet when it comes to data on trafficking, “few eyebrows are raised and the figures are easily bandied about without questions” (Kempadoo 2003).

Laczko (2005) points out that most research on trafficking sets out to show trafficking is a problem but tends to be limited to mapping routes and the identification of main countries of origin and destination. In actuality, traffickers change routes frequently for fear of being intercepted (Ali 2005). Laczko (2005) suggests that researchers move beyond the “snapshot,” short-term approach typical of much existing research, and studies that only focus on one type of exploitation; he says we need longer-term research, using a more comprehensive approach, and involving both countries of origin and countries of destination.

These limitations mentioned are often noted by researchers; however, it is also noted that some databases are bringing more reliability and methodology to data, and an overall better understanding of human trafficking. Technology could be one way to help improve statistics on human trafficking.

Existing Human Trafficking Databases

Technology can both enable and help combat human trafficking (Dixon 2013). Advances in technology mean traffickers are constantly finding new methods of trafficking victims. This is why it is important for those working to combat human trafficking to keep up with these advances. Similarly, technology can be utilized to combat trafficking. There are some anti-trafficking databases today. Below is a description of some of them.



Thorn's Spotlight Database

Spotlight is a web-based tool. It provides law enforcement with intelligence and leads about suspected human trafficking networks and individuals in order to identify victims and connect them to resources. Spotlight is a web application powered by Digital Reasoning's Machine Learning software deployed in Amazon's AWS Cloud that can be accessed from any browser. Spotlight is able to search and filter digital images of victims who are trafficked through online advertisements. This type of search is able to help law enforcement improve their effectiveness and efficiency of domestic sex trafficking investigations and increase the number of trafficked victims who are identified and connected to resources. Spotlight launched a beta phase in October of 2014 (Istook 2015).

Human Trafficking Reporting System (HTRS)

The HTRS is a human trafficking web-based database, funded by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). The specific data in HTRS includes data on human trafficking incidents, suspects, and victims from human trafficking task forces across the United States that are funded by the U.S. Department of Justice (California Department of Justice 2012; U.S. Department of Justice 2011; Walker 2013). A report issued by the BJS in April 2011, explained that the HTRS was the only system that captured information on human trafficking investigations conducted by state and local law enforcement agencies in the United States (U.S. Department of Justice 2011).

Georgia Cares

Georgia was the first state in the U.S. to develop a statewide approach to CSEC that also includes a database. The Governor's Office for Children and Families (GOCF) created a CSEC Task Force that collaborated with the Georgia Cares Connection (GCC) office. Initially, GCC started collecting data and maintaining a database for the CSEC and at-risk CSEC clients they serve. Today, Georgia Cares Connection is called Georgia Cares. It is no longer a state agency, and now operates as an independent 501(c)(3) organization. When GCC was created, they worked with both CSEC

and at-risk CSEC. Today, they work solely with identified CSEC and no longer work with youth at-risk. Georgia Cares partners with the Department of Family and Child Services (DFCS) to access DFCS data on the youth they serve jointly. Georgia Cares provides case management to CSEC. They have an extensive intake process where they collect a majority of the data that is maintained in the database (Trouteaud 2015).

Johns Hopkins University Database

The Protection Project at the Johns Hopkins University School of International Studies in Washington DC attempts to produce an overview of global trafficking trends by creating one of the only existing human trafficking databases in the U.S. (Gozdziak and Collett 2005; Kangaspunta 2003). As part of this work, the project has produced maps of commonly used trafficking routes worldwide, yet there is no reference of how these routes have been determined. The database has other human trafficking data including a collection of international conventions, domestic legislation, charts comparing laws, over 50 testimonies of trafficking survivors, updates on the status of investigations, prosecutions, and convictions, as well as other stories, events, and activities relevant to human trafficking around the world.

DNA Databases

Joyce Kim and Sara H. Katsanis (2013) explain that DNA databases can and should be used for the purposes of human trafficking. There are several ways DNA databases can track victims of human trafficking by collecting and maintaining data collected by civilians, military personnel, family members, children, arrestees, immigrants, and refugees (Kim and Katsanis 2013). Kim and Katsanis (2013) point to two programs currently using a DNA database for human trafficking. One program, DNA-Prokids, is profiling DNA from children reported to be trafficked or kidnapped. DNA-Prokids is an international collaboration to establish cross-border DNA registries that was started at the University of Granada Genetic Identification Laboratory in Spain where it is currently headquartered. The University of North Texas Center for Human Identification (UNTCHI) partnered with the University of Granada to develop and expand DNA-Prokids. Another program is the Dallas Prostitute Diversion Initiative (DPDI), which collects DNA specimens through law enforcement to

facilitate postmortem identification of sex trafficking victims. Both the DNA-Prokids database and the DPDI High Risk Potential Victim database are collaborations among law enforcement, healthcare providers, academic institutions, and NGOs.

UNESCO's Database

UNESCO, with its “Trafficking Statistics Project” based in Bangkok, produced a practical Internet tool to provide worldwide data on trafficking (UNESCO Bangkok. n.d). This project aims to assemble trafficking statistics from multiple sources and also discusses the methodologies used to obtain them (Laczko 2005).

IOM's Database

Since 1999, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been collecting data and maintaining the data in the Counter-Trafficking Module (CTM) database. The CTM was created to facilitate the management of assistance and voluntary return/reintegration activities for the victims as well as increase the understanding about the causes, processes, trends, and consequences of trafficking (Laczko 2005). The data collection for CTM first began in the Balkans and therefore the data is skewed toward that region. By 2004, the database contained data on 2,791 victims, representing some 35 nationalities (Laczko 2005).

RCP in the Balkans

In the Balkans, a database was started in 2002 by the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings called the Regional Clearing Point (RCP). The “Clearing Point” had the first annual report on victims of trafficking in south-eastern Europe. The report provides verified figures on the number of victims of trafficking identified and assisted in the seven countries and two areas - Kosovo and Montenegro (Laczko 2005).

UNODC's Database

Another technological innovation is a global database on human trafficking trends which was established under the *Global Programme Against Trafficking in Human Beings* (GPAT) of the *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime* (UNODC). This database aims at collecting and combining open-source quantitative and qualitative data that can be compared between countries and regions. By June 2004 they had 500 sources, most originating from industrialized countries. Their sources included research reports and statistics compiled and published by authorities, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, academic institutions, and the media. The database could divide data into country reports, profiles, data on victims of trafficking and traffickers, and trafficking routes (Laczko 2005).

University of Southern California

Since 2010, the Technology and Human Trafficking initiative at the University of Southern California (USC) has been engaged in looking into how communication and technology plays a role in the fight against human trafficking. A group at USC consisting of partners between the Information Sciences Institute and their Annenberg Center of Communication Leadership & Policy (CCLP) developed prototype software designed to detect possible cases of online sex trafficking, particularly cases with minors. The group conducted research on data mining, computational linguistics, and mapping tools to monitor trafficking on social networks and online classified advertisements. What they found is that law enforcement can use this type of technology and data to combat human trafficking (Latonero 2011; Maza 2013).

Google

At the Google Ideas INFO Summit, experts, technologists, and survivors of human trafficking came together and asked the question, “what if local, regional, and national anti-trafficking helplines across the globe were all connected in a data-driven network that helped disrupt the web of human trafficking?” Google worked with the Polaris Project, Liberty Asia, and La Strada

International to build an international information-sharing collaboration between anti-trafficking hotlines and nonprofits. The hope is that this will help case coordination and victim protection across borders through the development of a shared platform for information exchange (Google Ideas Info Summit 2012).

Google is currently part of the development of a mobile app called SafeNight. This app would connect individual donors and victims in need of a hotel room to stay for a night, when appropriate. SafeNight assists victims and victim-centered organizations in the anti-trafficking field in providing a safe shelter when there is none otherwise available. The app is still in its pilot phase (Google Play 2014).

Data Sharing and Interagency Collaboration

Much more could be done to fully analyze the existing information and make it more widely available. First by promoting the sharing of data among agencies. The lack of data sharing between agencies is partly because they are reticent about sharing what is most often confidential data. Laczko (2005) thinks agencies that work with individuals caught in human trafficking should both collect data systemically and share data. Laczko (2005) uses the Experts Group as an example and says they recommend the establishment in each EU country of a National Rapporteur or national focal point to pool existing data from a wide range of sources and to promote the sharing of information between different agencies involved in combating trafficking.

Lebloch and King (2006) illustrate how a multi-agency response helped address child sexual exploitation in London, England. A multi-agency steering group called CATSE (Children Abused Through Sexual Exploitation) set out to recognize the problem of child sex trafficking, treat children primarily as victims of abuse, safeguard children and promote their welfare, work together on prevention and recovery, as well as to investigate and prosecute those who groom, coerce and abuse children through sexual exploitation. CATSE faced several challenges including how to best identify the exploited youth and how to establish the extent and level of risk and actual abuse in order to properly respond. They found that while some children were involved in traditional exchange of sex for money, many more were being abused through “older boyfriends,” others through initiation into

drug culture. They also found a significant emergence from peer/gang exploitation. Lebloch and King (2006) describe a widespread professional agreement that the best systems are only as good as the multi-agency endeavor to make them work. They also explains that cooperation and commitment to form policies is also essential to addressing child sex trafficking (Lebloch and King 2006).

Los Angeles County in California has a multi-system approach to CSEC with five full-time staffers who work directly with CSEC and coordinate efforts among the participating agencies (Walker 2013). The Los Angeles Probation Department and Child Welfare Department joined the FBI's Anti-Trafficking initiative to establish a comprehensive emergency response team. In 2011, the FBI's Innocence Lost task force invited the L.A. Probation Department and the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS), the L.A. Police Department, and the District Attorney's office to join an emergency anti-trafficking response team. The Probation Department collected data and reviewed cases to improve identification of trafficking victims. Later, a new grant allowed the Probation Department and Juvenile Court to create a collaborative court specifically designed for child victims of sex trafficking called STAR (Succeeding Through Achievement and Resilience). The court uses a multi-disciplinary approach and makes decisions about treatment, placement, and school re-enrollment. It also determines which agency will take the lead on each individual case (Epstein and Edelman 2013).

In Suffolk County, an independent, not-profit organization, called the Children's Advocacy Center of Suffolk County spearheaded SEEN (Support to End Exploitation Now) along with the District Attorney. It was an open group and included the juvenile court system, law enforcement, school system, CBOs, Department of Children and Families, Department of Mental Health, Probation Department, Department of Public Health, Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the FBI, Governor's Commission on Sexual and Domestic Violence, Medical providers, the District Attorney's Office, the United States Attorney's Office, and survivors. These agencies share information about the child and the trafficker. Under state law, team members are considered employees of the department for purposes of confidentiality, which facilitates the sharing of necessary information. Over time, the SEEN Coalition developed several sub-committees to work on longer-term trafficking issues. An advisory committee was also established and made up of

management personnel. SEEN also leads human trafficking training programs around the community (Epstein and Edelman 2013).

In Connecticut, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) built a comprehensive anti-trafficking team in 2009. This team included a psychiatrist, the DCF hotline manager and supervisor, legal directors, and the agency's director of pediatrics. Together, the group created a screening tool for the hotline staff as well as developed new codes that enabled hotline staff to accept sex-trafficking cases even when the report did not meet statutory definitions of abuse and/or neglect. The team became known as HART (Human Anti-Trafficking Response Team). HART developed protocols for response including direct actions and partners to engage when victims are identified. This protocol on response involved the victim being picked up, taken to the emergency room, where they are immediately met by DCF staff or family, as appropriate. Services needed are then determined and medical evaluations are undergone. Then, there is a conference with multiple agencies including law enforcement, advocates, medical professions, and family to determine a safety plan for the victim. HART meets monthly to discuss larger picture issues and to revise emergency plans. HART initially reviewed all child sex-trafficking cases, but overtime concern grew regarding confidentiality. Now the group no longer reviews individual cases.

Limitations

The methods used to address the overall exploratory question include interviews with SafetyNet agencies to better understand what is gained from the collaborative weekly meetings and a statistical analysis of the existing data in the database to find what is learned from collecting and maintaining data. It is important to note that the nature of this research holds limitations. A limitation to the interviews is that not all of the active SafetyNet partners participated. There were not any law enforcement representatives, including Probation, interviewed. Although the statistical analysis will yield a great deal of information, it will only be information based on cases that have reached the ACDAO or the offices of participating SafetyNet. The criminal nature of trafficking and being a clandestine problem means victims can make a strong attempt to stay off of the radar of the District Attorney's office and participating SafetyNet agencies.

As it will be further revealed in the statistical analysis section, once a SafetyNet client is identified and added to the database, it can be a challenge to keep and maintain updated information about them in the database. Also in the statistical analysis, the data by year is not a snapshot of the data that is updated per year. Instead, clients were analyzed by the year they were referred. Since 2011 was the year the database was created, there were far more clients referred to SafetyNet in that year than any other year. This does not mean there were fewer discussions of clients in 2014 than in previous years, it means clients referred in 2011, 2012, and 2013 were being revisited in discussions more often in 2014. In 2012, 2013, and 2014, SafetyNet partners still discussed those referred in 2011, but by then, those clients were no longer new. It should also be noted that data entered was only data that could be accessed by the ACDAO.

This research will also be limited regionally to cases that come through Alameda County. Researchers often face a choice between conducting an in-depth study of a particular geographic region, perhaps skewing the results toward a certain profile of trafficker and victim, or a more scattered approach, which risks forgoing ethnographic richness. Being that the statistical analysis will only be looking at minors who have been referred to SafetyNet, this data will geographically skew toward a certain population with Alameda County being either their location of origin or location of destination.

As with other research done on human trafficking, another limitation faced is that the existing data in the database only incorporates minor victims of sex trafficking; leaving out adult victims of sex trafficking as well as all victims of labor trafficking. Likewise, the weekly Interagency SafetyNet meetings only include agencies who work directly with minor sex trafficking victims or those at-risk.

Interviews with Participating Agencies

Methodology

Interviews with agency providers were an easy and safe way to start accessing information about SafetyNet. These were informal interviews and each interviewee signed a confidentiality form allowing the researcher to voice record their interviews and guaranteed a commitment that the interviewee's names and agencies would not be shared outside the ACDAO.

Interview Sample

Since January 2012, SafetyNet attendance has been recorded. An average of 12 participants attends SafetyNet each week. The mode number of SafetyNet meeting attendees is 19 and the median is 11. Interviewees were invited by a letter sent via U.S. mail on December 11, 2013. There were a total of 57 individuals invited to participate in the interviews. Not all of the 57 individuals attend SafetyNet regularly, but these 57 who were invited to participate in the study attended at one point in time. Then, 30 of the most active SafetyNet partners who did not respond to the mailed invitation also received a follow-up email requesting their participation in the research interview. Of the 57 who were invited, 14 individuals from nine different agencies participated. The nine agencies that were interviewed included six lawyers from legal agencies, one non-lawyer from a legal agency, one hospital representative, two therapeutic providers, and four service providers from CBOs that work directly with CSEC in Alameda County. No law enforcement agencies participated in the interviews. All the interviews took place between January and February 2013.

Agency Interview Findings

Throughout the agency interviews, there were several emerging patterns repeated from different interviewees. Overall, the interview participants were satisfied with SafetyNet and felt that it helped them respond to and support their CSEC clients. Some of the most repeated responses among interviewees including: 1) the exchange of information through SafetyNet has been highly beneficial to their roles and to their agencies, 2) relationship building occurs at SafetyNet, 3) participants believed there needed to be some sort of quarterly or biannual outcomes or policy meeting, 4) participants believed Probation's participation is crucial to the success of the meeting, 5) participants hoped for supervisor-level participation from Social Services or that the current participants from Social Services would share more data, and 6) participants wanted more outreach around the Bay Area and state to inspire other counties to hold SafetyNet meetings.

Benefits of Sharing Data at SafetyNet Meetings

Interagency data sharing became one topic that all the interviewees thought was a very positive aspect of SafetyNet that is a major benefit they take away each week. There are proper Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements that all the agencies have signed allowing them to share information with each other at SafetyNet. The MOU outlines rules such as that information shared at SafetyNet is not to be used against the minors. In the beginning, some of the defense attorneys were skeptical about sharing data because they were afraid they might be violating their client/attorney privilege. With proper measures, such as the MOU, and time, they became comfortable with SafetyNet and started to understand how it benefited their clients. For confidentiality purposes, the interviewees have all been assigned numbers. Interviewee 6 said:

“I feel like the information that I get from SafetyNet helps me to make better decisions. I’m able to be a better advocate in court, because of SafetyNet, and I think it’s just also good that we all share a trust.”

Interviewee 9:

“Yeah I mean all in all. I think it’s a useful place to disseminate useful information, to get useful information. Um to try and consolidate resources... It’s a useful place to exchange information and to kind of advocate what our goal is in working with them to people they trust or like or are already involved with... So I find that it’s a very useful place to find people who have good relationships with girls that I’m trying to build a relationship with.”

Interviewee 11:

“Information is power. You know? And so if you don’t know then there’s nothing you can do about it. If you do know, you can at least try and do something about it... So SafetyNet is really helpful to me in that we are better able to serve our clients with the information and relationships we gain from SafetyNet.”

Benefits of Building Important Relationships through SafetyNet

Almost all the participants mentioned that SafetyNet helped them build relationships that better allow them to serve their CSEC clients. Walker (2013) explained “trust and relationship building” was one of her six components of promising services and strategies identified by providers who serve CSEC. According to the responses from the interviewees, SafetyNet has been successful in helping its representatives from multiple agencies build relationships. Interviewees also described trusting relationships they were able to establish with partner agencies because of SafetyNet. As partners build relationships they get a better sense of each other’s roles and are then able to connect on cases and work together outside of the meeting. This is revealed best in their language below.

Interviewee 5:

“Now I know better where to go to for a resource or at least I can come to the [SafetyNet] table and kind of brainstorm with people which is really helpful.”

Interviewee 11:

“Um, well, hah. I was not a believer in SafetyNet at first [giggles]...we don't trust the prosecution. Period. Anything that the prosecution is doing. That's the attitude I came with. We were going to come and just observe, essentially, and um [pause] I never experienced anything like this before. What I found out, which was surprising to me, is that there really is good stuff that happens at SafetyNet ... I'm very circumspect about what I say and what I don't say um, but as I go through this process I have learned to trust people who are sitting at that table and understand that they are there ultimately to help my client, which is really my main concern. I hold very dear the um the confidentiality aspect of it. Also, in the end, I think by benefit of the fact that we were heard, we were able to have an impact on the way SafetyNet was moving. So as a result of that, as it is with anything, when you have that relationship over a period of a year and you feel like you are being heard and your thoughts are being respected, um then you trust. So I've grown to feel like it's a very helpful tool for us to use and very important, and very unique. So I'm kind of excited about it...So I feel like I've come full circle...So I think it's a good thing. I'm a believer.”

Quarterly Outcomes Meetings at SafetyNet

A common theme among interviewees is that they would like to have occasional meetings without minors on the agenda where they can discuss outcomes, statistics, patterns, and findings that they can take back to their organizations and supervisors to address. One participant explained that she already takes what is discussed in SafetyNet back to her agency where they then address them with Social Services and Probation.

Interviewee 2:

“One thing I think would be nice to come out of the meeting might be a quarterly report at a quarterly meeting that doesn't have kids names on it, but has some of the information that we've seen over and over and over again. For example, this quarter we've seen nine kids who were otherwise set to go home, but needed alternative forms of housing and we needed to look for either a group home or THPP or some other form of housing because that's something that everybody can take to the table and go back to their provider and say we need beds for this or we need funding for this....Just sort of information about what were the prevailing issues on the cases we've been looking at the last three months. We're looking at a lot of kids coming back from Mingus Mountain Academy without education records, okay well lets work on where the hole is on that. You know, everyone go back to their agency and let's fix that. Does everybody know where the proper forms are, does everybody know what the plan has to be, who do you have to alert in the schools? Some of them are little and might be easy fixes you know. How do we catch kids with [CPS allegations of] sex abuse unfounded, that's a bigger thing I'm not sure we can do in a quarterly report, but streamlining education records or trying to work on Probation placements and getting Probation Officers trained to see that they can utilize AB12 placements even before their 450 status comes in...One of the benefits of doing these quarterly reports might be the people feeling like they have to take some ownership stake because maybe those reports go back to the heads of these agencies who signed off on someone going in the first place. That's a harder thing to overlook if you know it's going to your boss.”

Interviewee 6:

“I don't want to say expand SafetyNet, but we could I guess maybe have... I don't know maybe we could just dedicate a Tuesday to talk about certain policy issues that we would like to see and then appropriately get that information to the right agencies.”

Interviewee 7:

“[Sigh] One thing that I would suggest and I think that really really needs to happen...is that we have a review once a month.”

Probation’s Participation is Crucial to the Success of the Meeting

The most re-occurring topic among the interviewees was about Probation’s involvement. All the interviewees expressed the importance of Probation’s involvement with SafetyNet. They not only wanted Probation involved but they hoped that a Probation representative at the supervisor level who could attend because often times the minors discussed at SafetyNet have multiple Probation Officers. A child on Probation will most often have several different Probation Officers assigned at different phases. In January 2014, around the time of the interviews, a Probation representative started attending the SafetyNet meetings consistently for the first time in six months. This Probation representative is neither a Probation Officer nor a supervisor, but is a representative that works solely with placement. Interviewees described that this Probation representative could only speak about placement and that she could not communicate with other Probation Officers.

Not only did the interviewees find it important for a Probation representative to be present at the meetings, but they also believed that if Probation sent someone who was knowledgeable and engaged on child sex trafficking in Alameda County the youth would greatly benefit. Ideally, this would be someone specifically assigned to Girls’ Court or CSEC cases who could attend SafetyNet regularly. Without a consistent Probation representative who understands this population, often times the appropriate service referrals are not always made, and there are often gaps in the aftercare plans for these youth. A lack of communication between SafetyNet partners and Probation causes concern for interviewees especially in regards to youth returning from placement. SafetyNet partners discuss a safety plan for each child returning from placement, and pertinent information is shared regarding a child’s safety that does not always get back to the Probation. The effectiveness of the meeting could be improved by having a consistent Probation representative at the table who works with the minors on the agenda or who is willing to go back and communicate with the other Probation Officers assigned to those cases.

Interviewee 2:

“I think Probation needs to be there. I also found it totally insane that this new person they are sending came and they were like ‘I can only talk about placement’. It’s like I know they are all separated into units but could we maybe send someone who is willing to address things outside their unit who is willing to talk to your own people? That means no one you send will be addressing maybe 30% of the kids we’re addressing. You know, I don’t work with all these kids either, but I don’t sit here and pretend I can’t try to do something if asked. That’s problematic for me. I wish people, when they did come to the meeting had more of a commitment to try and do something. I’m not sure at Probation that they would send right now. Probation seems like it’s so compartmentalized.”

Interviewee 5:

“Well I definitely think there needs to be a Probation representative at the table because I feel like from my understanding as far as disseminating information to the courts, Probation is really supposed to be taking the lead on that, and so if we have all this information and we are not getting it to Probation then it feels like we’re hitting a bit of a brick wall there.”

Interviewee 4:

“It would just be great to know, you know, what Probation is doing and planning, what they are implementing. Is this kid leaving? So we know we need to get clothes together [for the minor leaving], or you need to, you know, make sure this kid is enrolled in school, so we need to make sure who is going to be tracking what, you know.”

Interviewee 5:

“Well I do see a problem with the girls going to group homes and then coming back and then not being connected to services immediately or coming back and finding out oh they’re not enrolled in school, I just think that that’s a huge time for girls when they’re coming back to their own, you know, hunting grounds or whatever, or their old area where they are at risk to kind of jump right back into those old behaviors and that’s the time we really need to be wrapping them around with services and connecting them to activities, school especially is a huge one so I think that there needs to be a lot better communication between Probation and the SafetyNet partners so that we can plan ahead of time.”

Another theme that occurred along the topic of Probation was the idea of having an assigned CSEC or “Girls Court” Probation Officer. Interviewees 2, 4, 6, and 12 thought it would be beneficial to the youth to have an assigned CSEC Probation Office who could attend SafetyNet meetings. Interviewee 1 believed Probation was working on creating such a position. Consistency is extremely important for exploited children and interviewees found it to be difficult for the children when they are constantly being assigned new Probation Officers. As this youth is likely to lack consistent adults in their life, as it is, it becomes even more challenging for the minors to build a positive relationship with a Probation Officer when that official is always changing. It was also mentioned that it could be beneficial if the Probation Representative who came to the SafetyNet meeting was trained on the items, services, resources, and issues being discussed. Interviewees repeatedly mentioned the lack of communication with Probation around the children’s aftercare plans when they were coming back from placements. If there was a consistent SafetyNet representative who was a Probation Officer for these minors, then it would be easier to make aftercare plans, and ensure that appropriate services and resources are in place.

Interviewee 6:

“I think that we could probably all agree that when you have consistency and designated people who work with this population that it's going to be a better outcome. I think at least what I've experienced is that [pause] I think that this population deals with a very specific set of issues and challenges and the way the system is now, you have a different Probation Officer for each step.”

Social Services in SafetyNet

Like Probation, Social Services mentioned several times by the interviewees. Some of the interviewees took issue with Child Protective Services (CPS) and their frustrations with seeing allegation after allegation always being “unfounded” or “evaluated out” and what that meant for the children. Interviewees felt that several allegations were just not getting past the “screeener” at CPS. A suggestion that came up was that there needed to be a point person at CPS on child sex trafficking matters. One interviewee was frustrated because she felt she received different answers from CPS based on the fact that she was constantly talking to different CPS employees. Two major findings

that could potentially improve the dynamic and the outcomes of SafetyNet includes a desire to have a higher level representative at the table that could address more of the questions that arise.

SafetyNet partners often find themselves at road blocks on certain cases that result in questions for high level individuals at Social Services. Secondly, interviewees expressed frustrations about Social Services not always sharing information. Interviewees complained that they share information about their clients, but that they do not feel that data sharing is being reciprocated by Social Services.

These sentiments are stated clearly in the quotes below from interviewee 2 and 11.

Interviewee 2:

“I wish that in addition to someone who sort of had the knowledge of what happened within CPS, there was someone with a little more authority to make some of the changes that are sometimes needed at the meeting... Maybe think about every couple of meetings and sending someone who can address the issues that have come up repeatedly.”

Interviewee 11 explained:

“It would be better if we had someone from CPS who was higher up that could share more information than the referrals. [Social Services] doesn't need to be there... [Social Services] does not give us anything, [Social Services] doesn't bring anything to the table other than information that is worthless information. ‘We had 55 referrals and they were all, whatever that is, sited out, I mean over and over.’ It's like okay, but bring some more information to the table about that. [For example] well there's 21 referrals and so we look at them and investigate them, and that's when I said now wait a minute, are you just looking at these one piece at a time and not, if you are talking about general neglect are you not looking at the fact that there are 21 referrals? Maybe you can't prove it on number 19, and maybe you can't prove it on number 23, but you got a little bit more, do you ever put it all together? It's very frustrating...so if we had someone a little higher that could actually a) give us more information and b) have more influence within Social Services to bring the concerns of the SafetyNet table back to the organization and say maybe we need to change this. You know because I just see this as a two way street, it's not just what you're going to get.”

Outreach to Other Counties and States

Some interviewees explained that they would not like to see the number of participating agencies expanded and that they thought the appropriate players were already at the table. Further, some interviewees mentioned that they refrain from sharing information when new people attend the meeting. Interviewees explained similar situations where new agencies came into the room and how it made them “shut down” and share less information.

When it comes to growing, SafetyNet participants would like to see more outreach and education done to other communities about the benefits of having interagency collaborative groups to address CSEC as SafetyNet does. If other counties had SafetyNet meetings then each county would have another body to communicate with when child sex trafficking victims or children at-risk of sex trafficking are trafficked across county lines and state lines.

Statistical Analysis of Current Data in the SafetyNet Database

By reviewing data collected and maintained in the SafetyNet database from January 2011 to March 6, 2015, ACDAO is able to paint a picture of the current state of commercial sexual exploitation of children in Alameda County. The sections from the database that are described below include race, sex, residence, and age, risk factors, services, education, system involvement, and recidivism.

About the Database, Data Collection, and Data Findings

Since 2011, the ACDAO had at least one person assigned to SafetyNet data collection. This person’s primary responsibility is to present the data at the meetings in the format shown before in Figure 1. At the minimum, 15 minors being are discussed at SafetyNet each week and this person researches and updates these client profiles. Data is collected at SafetyNet meetings, Girls’ Court, and from files that the ACDAO has on adjudicated youth. Data collection is constant and ongoing as this population is always evolving.

Race, Sex, Residence, and Age

Race, sex, residence, and age are often found in police reports, probation documents, or found in court. The breakdown of the clients' race is presented in figures 2 and 3.

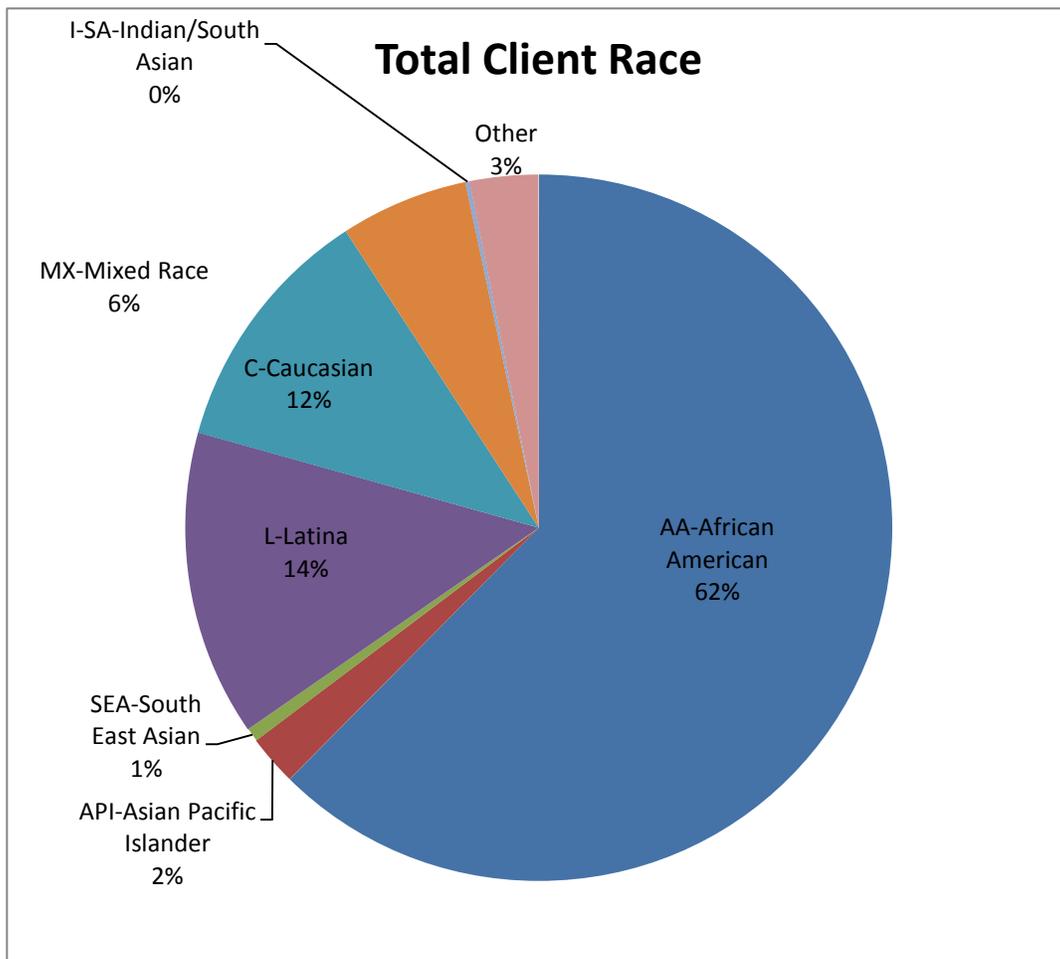


Figure 2 (Race)

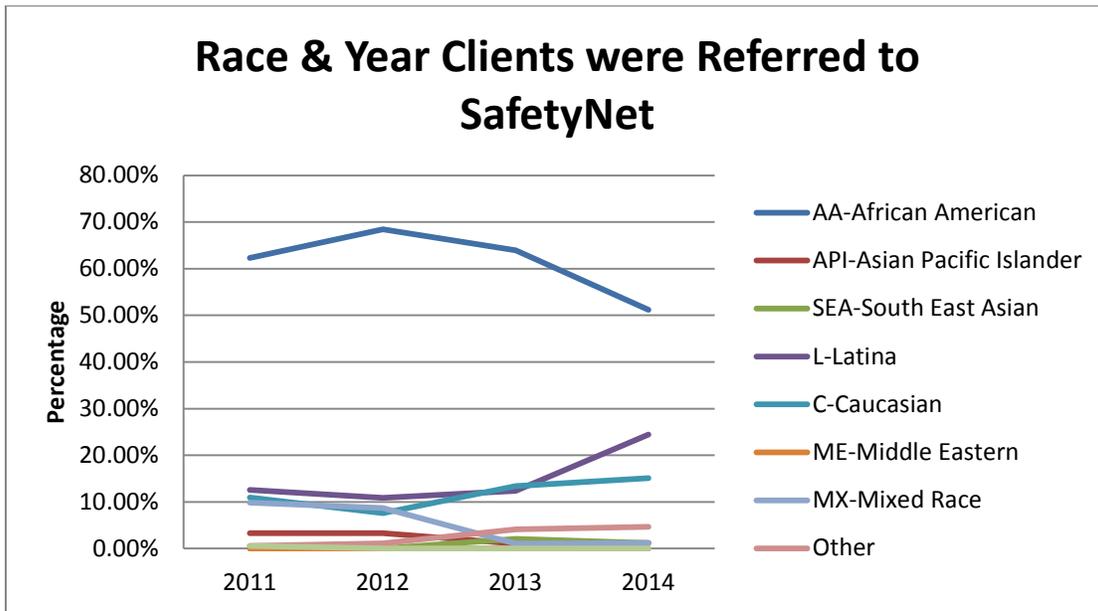


Figure 3 (Race and Year Referred)

By looking at the data in Figures 2 and 3, it is easy to see there are much higher percentages of African American victims of child sex trafficking and those at-risk for such exploitation. Figure 3 breaks down this data by the year clients were referred. It shows that this population slowly started becoming more diverse in 2013 when the percent of African American children started to decline while the percent of Latinos, and Caucasians started to increase.

Sex does not typically need, except on a few occasions when clients preferred to be identified with the opposite gender. Unfortunately, those changes were not captured in the client profile section. Instead, this was most likely captured in the general summary that is drafted each time the minor is discussed at the SafetyNet meeting. Moving forward, the database should also track transgendered youth in addition to male and female so that this information can be easily quantified.

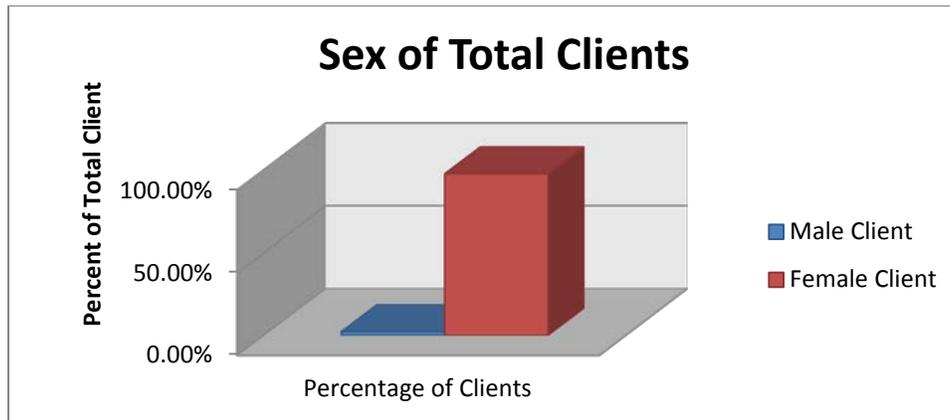


Figure 4 (Sex)

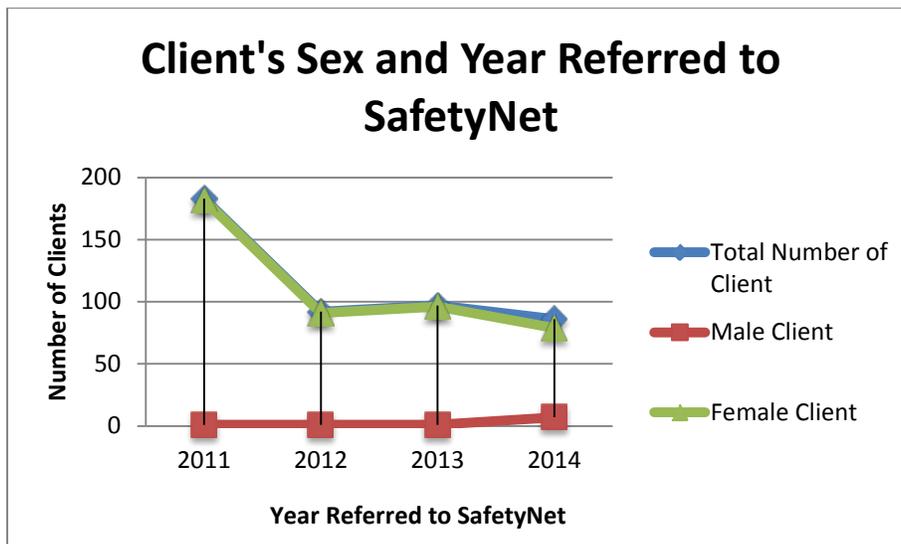


Figure 5 (Sex)

As displayed in Figure 4, almost 98% of the SafetyNet clients are females. Figure 5 shows how the number of males and females changed based on the year they were referred to SafetyNet. As explained earlier, being that 2011 was the first year of SafetyNet, the number of new clients was much higher than following years. As with race, in 2013, sex also appears to be on the way toward becoming more diverse as the number of males started to increase and the number of females began to decrease. This could be because SafetyNet partners are becoming more aware of the risk factors for male clients and becoming better at identifying male CSEC. A future study could try and find out why the number of male clients is starting to increase.

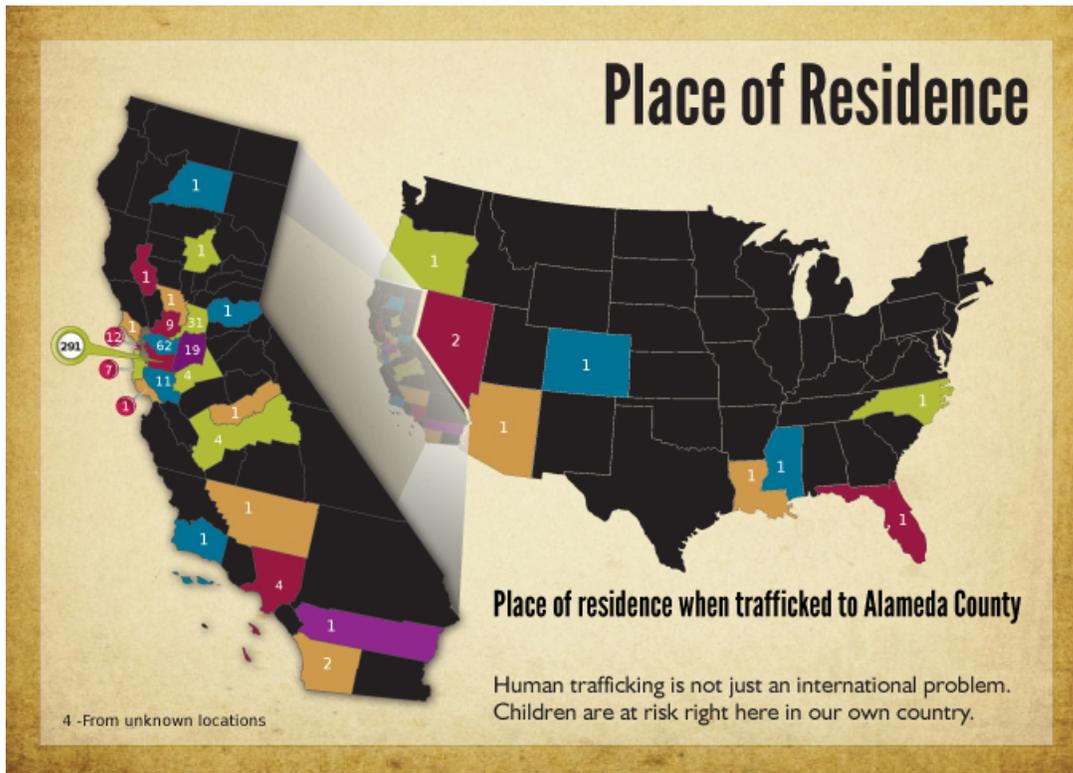


Figure 6 (Residence)

The place of residence for these exploited youth can and does often change, but the data that is maintained as their “residence” is the city, and county the child resided at the time they were first referred to SafetyNet. The residence data has several limitations because of the fact that this population is so transient. Other than the first city and county that is collected as their original place of residence, other residences or placements are only kept in a large text box as qualitative data. Meaning, the ACDAO does keep information, when it is available, in regard to where and when their residence changes, but this data has not been maintained in a way that is easily quantified.

Placement: ROP Mount Ruby (9/18/14 - present), I/c JJC (8/6/14 - 9/18/14), Santa Clara I/c (date unk - 8/6/14), Saratoga Sheriff (date unk), AWOL (7/29/14 - 8/2/14), the Nest (date unk - 7/29/14), AWOL (7/16/14 - date unk), the Nest (7/16/14), i/c jjc (6/10/14 - 7/16/14), i/c CoCoCo (6/10/14), AWOL (6/4/14-6/10/14), Aunt's home (6/3/14-6/4/14), Turning Point in Ukiah (12/13/13 - 6/3/14), i/c JJC (11/19/13 - 12/13/13), AWOL (10/19/13 - 11/19/13), Janus Youth (10/17/13 - 10/19/13), i/c in Portland (10/16/13) Willow Rock (9/24/13 - 10/16/13), Highland Hospital (5150d as of 9/24/13); AWOL (9/18/13 - 9/24/13); In care of CPS, possible group home??? (7/29/13-9/18/13), AWOL (6/28/13-July 2013), previously aunt's home

Figure 7(Residence)

Figure 7 shows an example of how the placement data is kept in a qualitative text box within the SafetyNet database. A content analysis of this placement data would be required in order to quantify this data. Looking at residence and the places these youth are often trafficked would be worthy of a future study in itself.

Figure 8 shows the residence for all the clients in the SafetyNet database. Figure 6 maps out this data and specifies the out-of-state data. Figure 8 clearly shows the majority of minors being discussed at SafetyNet are from Alameda County. In fact, 60% of the clients are from Alameda County. The next highest is Alameda County's neighboring county, Contra Costa County, then Sacramento County, and San Joaquin County is the fourth highest. Figure 9 shows the breakdown of Alameda County cities where these minors resided when referred to SafetyNet. Of the 291 Alameda County clients, 57% of them are from Oakland and the next highest is Hayward at 11%. An interesting future study would be to look at where these Oakland residents resided to see if there are specific pockets in neighborhoods with higher CSEC activity. It is possible that a majority came from one or two neighborhoods, especially when considered the school data that is later shown.

Total Client Residence

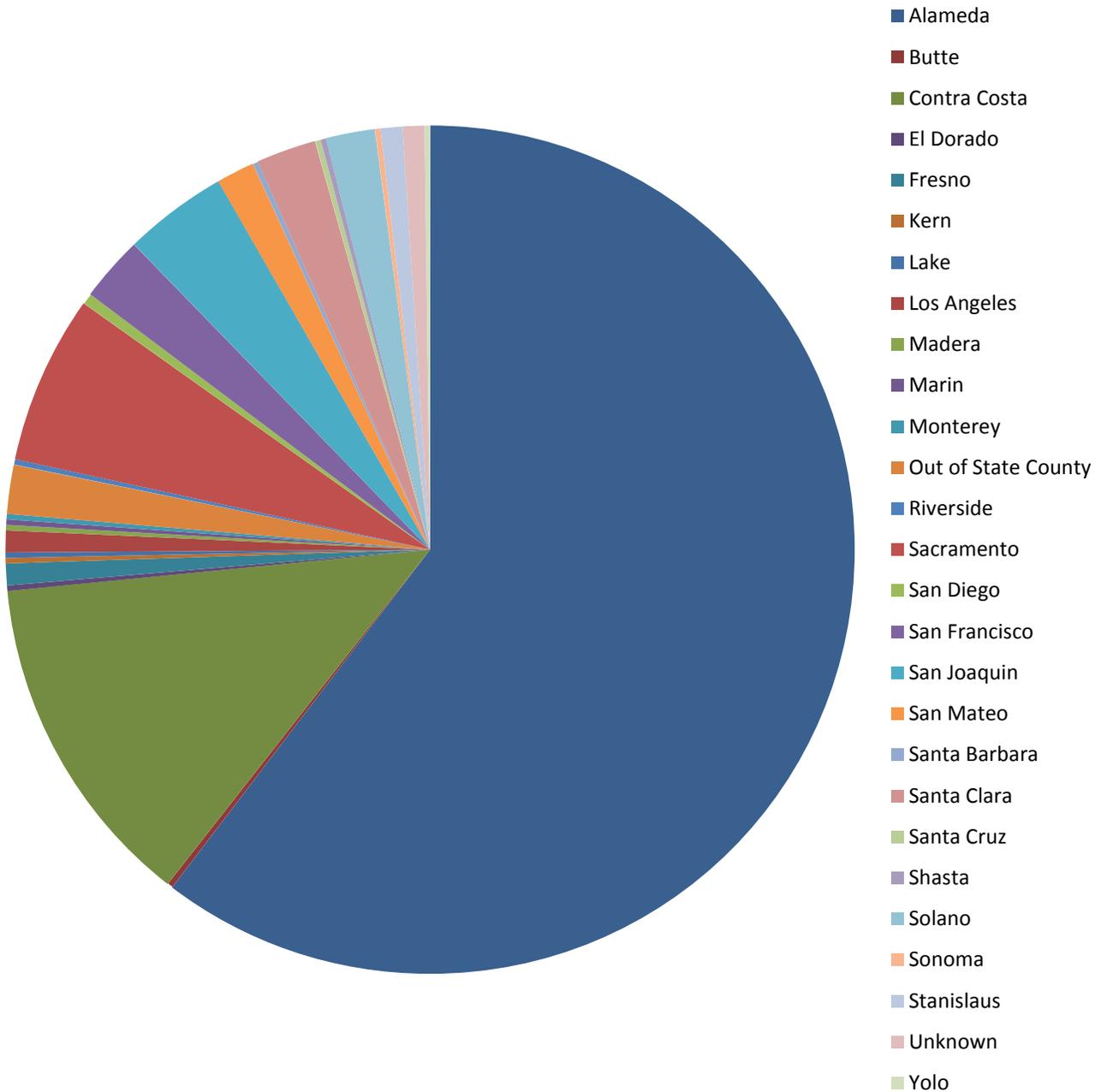


Figure 8 (Residence)

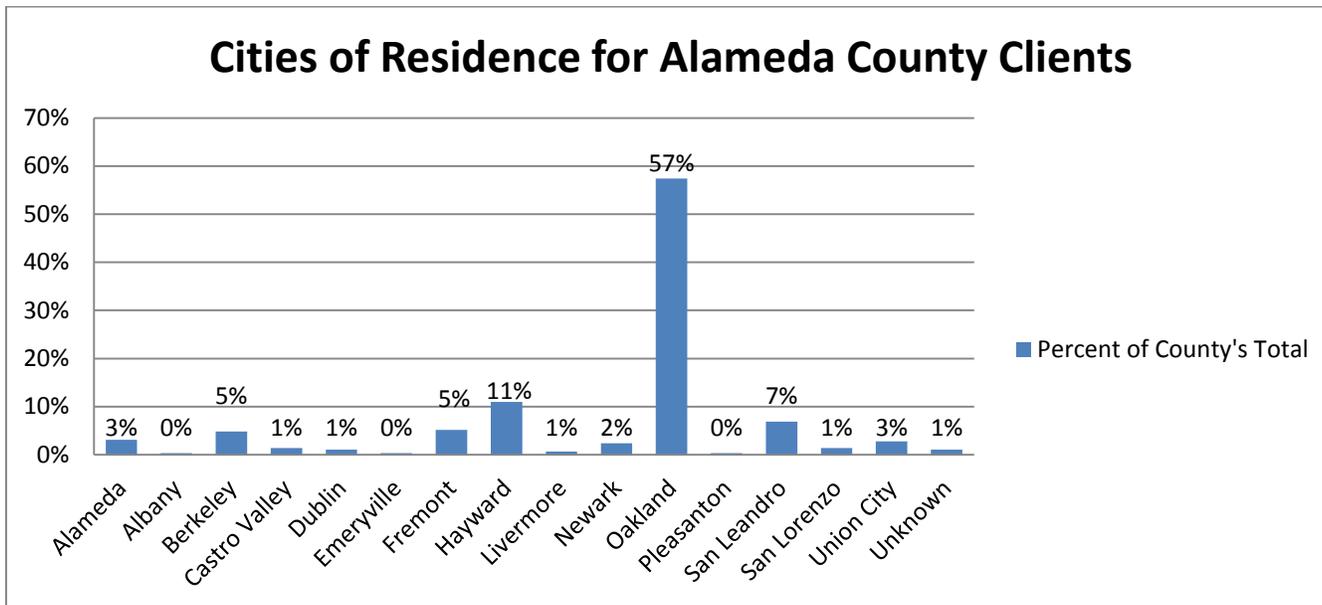


Figure 9 (Residence)

The age of the clients in the SafetyNet database is constantly changing, just as the youth's age changes every year. The database automatically calculates the age for each client based on their date of birth. As previously explained, the ages shown in this study are based on how old the client was when they were first referred to SafetyNet. By looking at the current age of the clients, you would get an unclear depiction as several of them are now adults. Analyzing their age by the date when they were first referred yields more accurate description of how old they were as victims of child sex trafficking or at-risk of such exploitation. However, it is unknown as to when a lot of these minors were first introduced to child sex trafficking and not all of these minors were referred to SafetyNet until months and even years after they were first trafficked or at-risk of being trafficked.

Figure 10 shows the age of all the SafetyNet clients, but also breaks it down by CSEC and at-risk CSEC. As previously

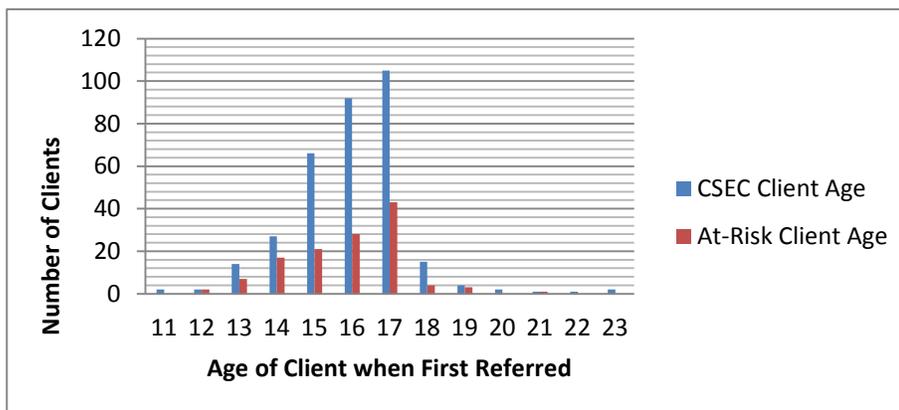


Figure 10 (Age)



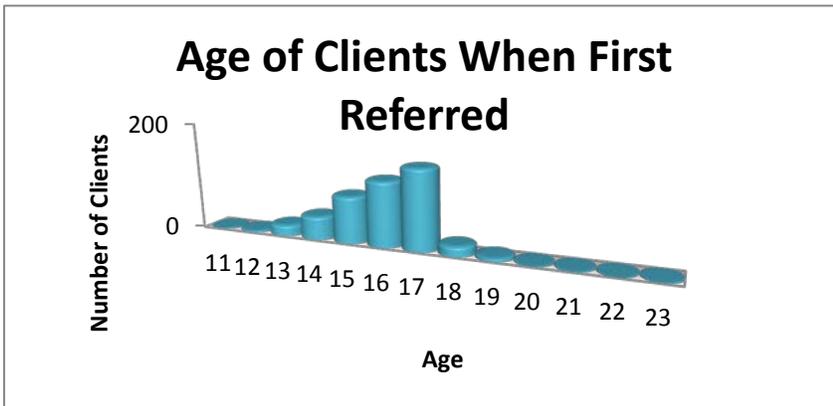


Figure 11 (Age)

mentioned in this paper, minors who are referred to SafetyNet are all identified as CSEC or at-risk CSEC. This table shows that both groups have the same trend in age. This confirms that 17 is the largest age group being

referred to SafetyNet. Figure 11

combines the ages for CSEC and at-risk CSEC and gives a total age breakdown of clients.

Risk Factors

Figure 12 shows risk factors that are maintained, and the total number of clients who have each risk factor. These risk factors include mental health problems, behavioral issues, drug use, pregnant/parenting, gang involvement, having tattoos, being LGBTQ, chronic absenteeism, runaway history, family criminal, drug, CSEC, gang history, being a recruiter, having a deceased relative or friend, and developmental delays. Recruiters are minors who work with their traffickers in attempt to lure other children into sex trafficking. The data on deceased relative or friend shows that many of these minors have someone close to them who has passed away and grief counseling may be necessary. For the family CSEC, gang, criminal, and drug history, family is defined as mother, father, step-mother, step-father, guardian, biological sibling, half sibling, biological aunt, biological uncle, grandmother, and grandfather. All of these risk factors help SafetyNet participants identify CSEC before it is known that a child is being trafficked. As Figure 12 displays, runaway history, drug use, and being chronically absent from school are three common risk factors among SafetyNet clients. Figure 13 shows these three risk factors in closer detail. These numbers are potentially much higher in reality because data entry is only as good as data collection. A lot of times, SafetyNet partners are unaware of any mental health risk factors, drug use, or any other risk factor that is displayed in these figures. The same trend is true in Figure 16 that breaks down the percent of clients with each risk factor by year referred.

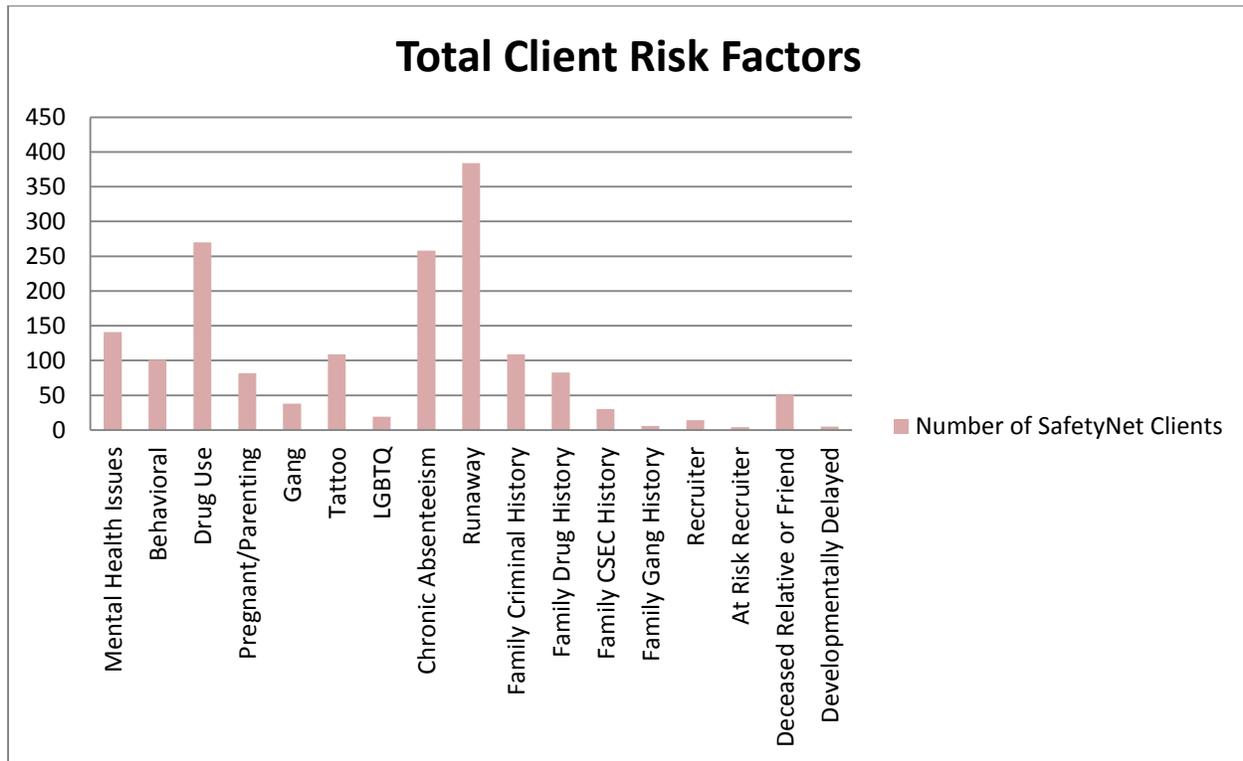


Figure 12 (Risk Factors)

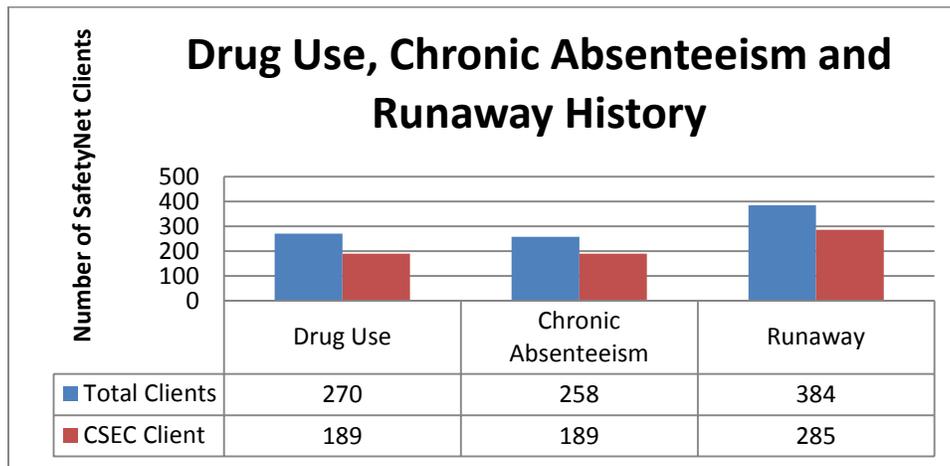


Figure 13 (Risk Factors)

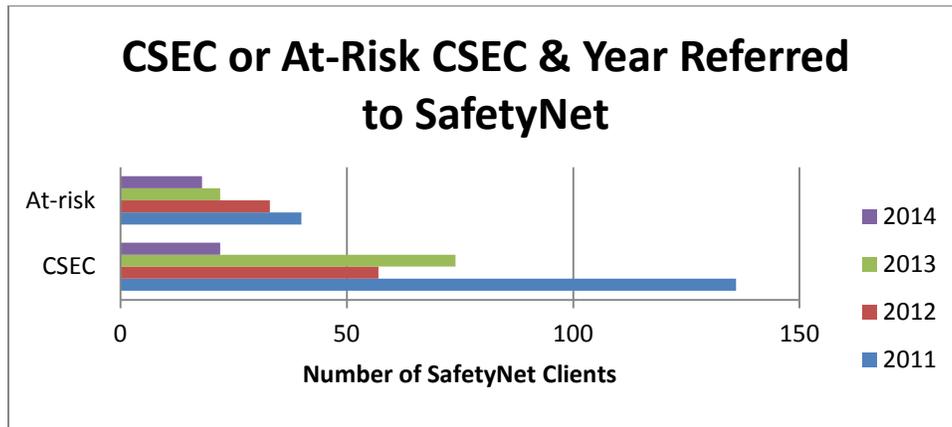


Figure 14 (Risk Factors)

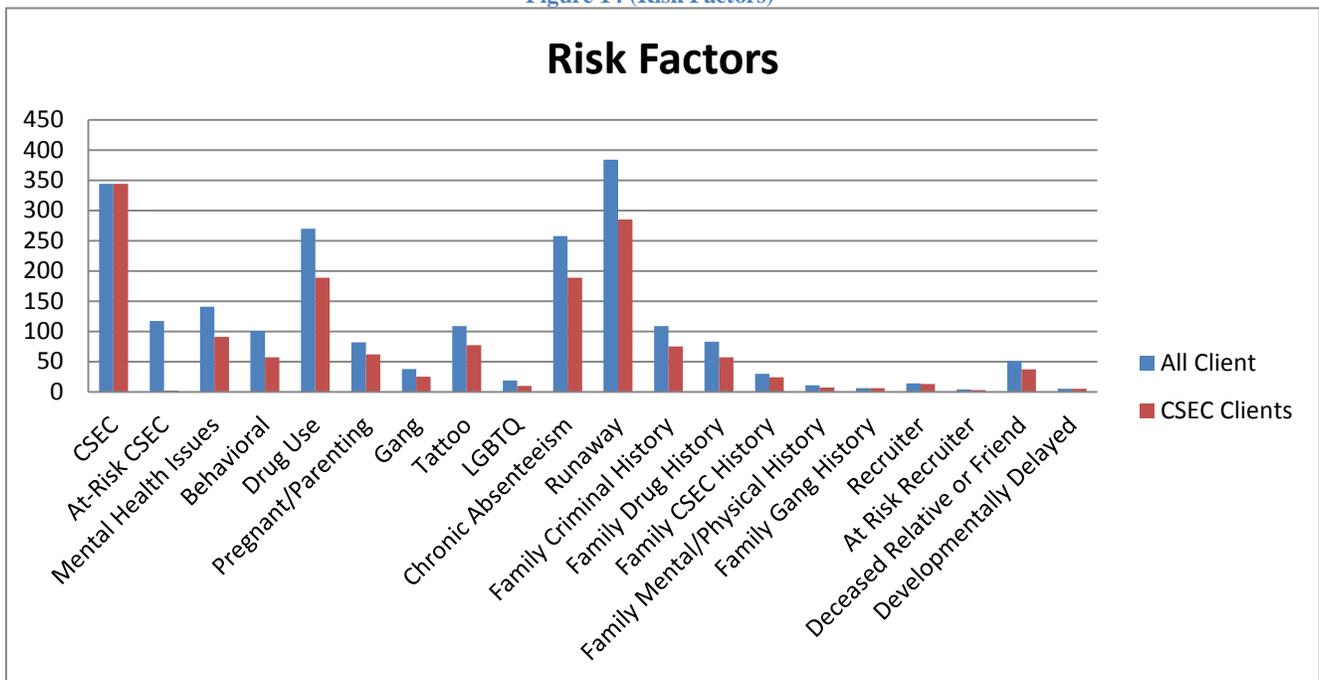


Figure 15 (Risk Factors)

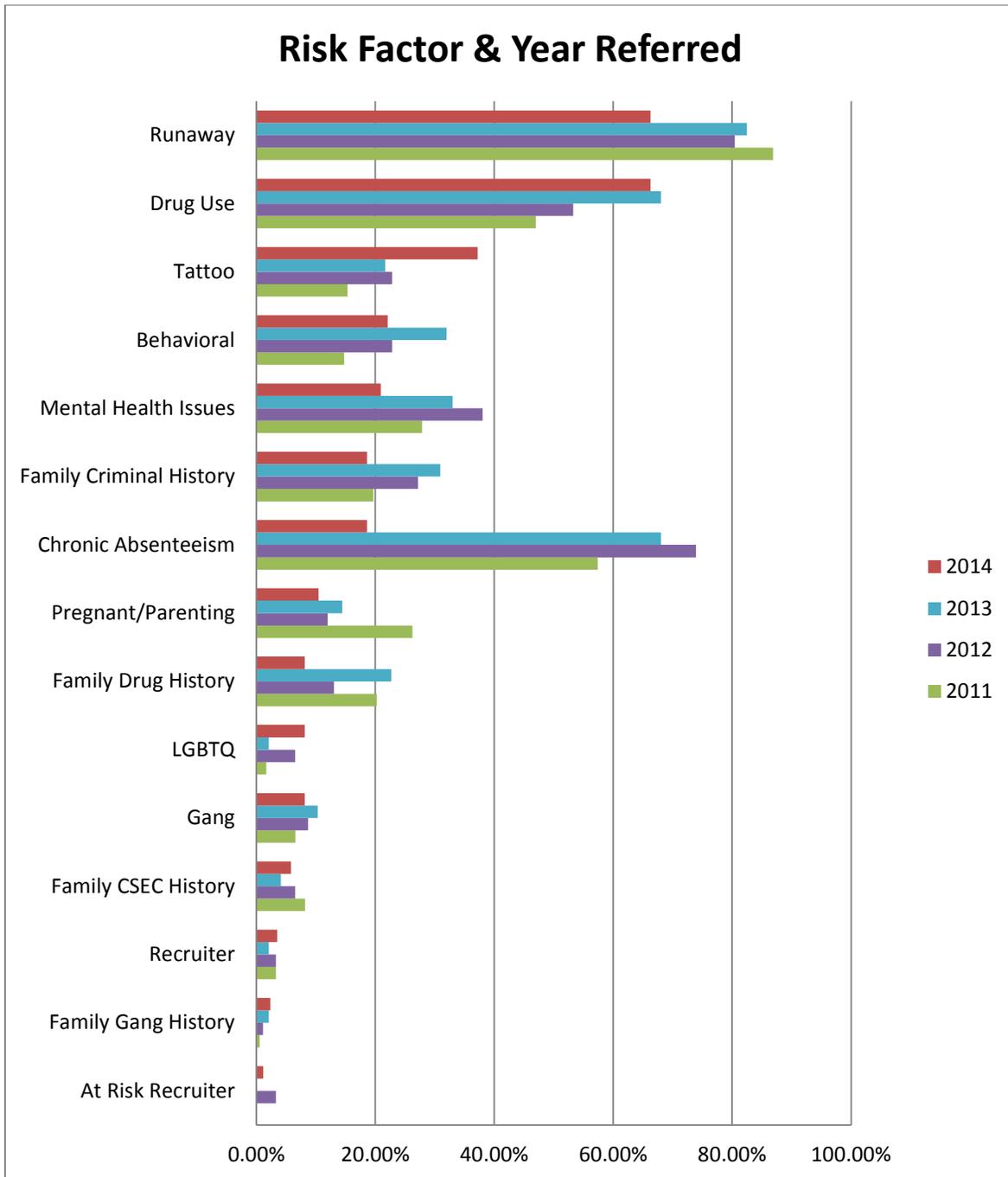


Figure 16 (Risk Factors)

Services



A history of what services work with SafetyNet clients is also maintained in the database. Out of the 482 total clients entered in the database from January 2011 to March 6, 2015, only 30 clients do not have services listed. This means 93% of SafetyNet clients had at least one service at one point in time. Those without services are mostly clients who refused services or clients who were transferred to another county where appropriate services did not exist.

As seen in Figure 17, BAWAR (Bay Area Women Against Rape) works with most clients. In Alameda County, there is an unwritten protocol that BAWAR is contacted by law enforcement when CSEC are identified. BAWAR comes to the scene and provides services on the spot. In stances when BAWAR is not called by the arresting agency then Probation's in-take refers BAWAR upon the minor's entry into the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center. If in-take does not make the referral, it is often made by the SafetyNet coordinator, attorney assigned to the case, or other agencies that work with the client. BAWAR, the nation's first rape crisis center, was formed in 1972 to provide 24 hour services for survivors of sexual assault and their significant others. In 2009, BAWAR implemented a new program to support commercially sexually exploited children and adults. They offer immediate crisis stabilization and advocacy for victims (BAWAR 2009). WCC (WestCoast Children's Clinic) started their C-Change program, an intensive mental health program that helps children recover from sexual exploitation. C-Change staff provides a consistent adult in the clients' lives who build relationships with them. It also provides therapy where children learn to understand themselves and their situations differently and helps connect clients to safe housing, health care, and educational resources (WestCoast Children's Clinic n.d.).

MISSEY (Motivating, Inspiring, & Supporting Sexually Exploited Youth) provides mentorship and case management to SafetyNet clients. They also have a foster youth program and SPA (Safe Place Alternative Drop-in Program). MISSEY case managers help clients develop and implement personal goals and help them connect to other resources (MISSEY n.d.). These are only some of the services that work with CSEC and at-risk CSEC in Alameda County. BAWAR, WCC, BALA (Bay Area Legal Aid), Project Permanence, YWSP (Young Women's Saturday Program), and the Guidance Clinic are all SafetyNet partners who attend the weekly meetings. The Young Women's Saturday Program is run by the ACDAO and the program facilitator attends SafetyNet as well. These services are displayed in Figures 17, 18, 19, and 24.

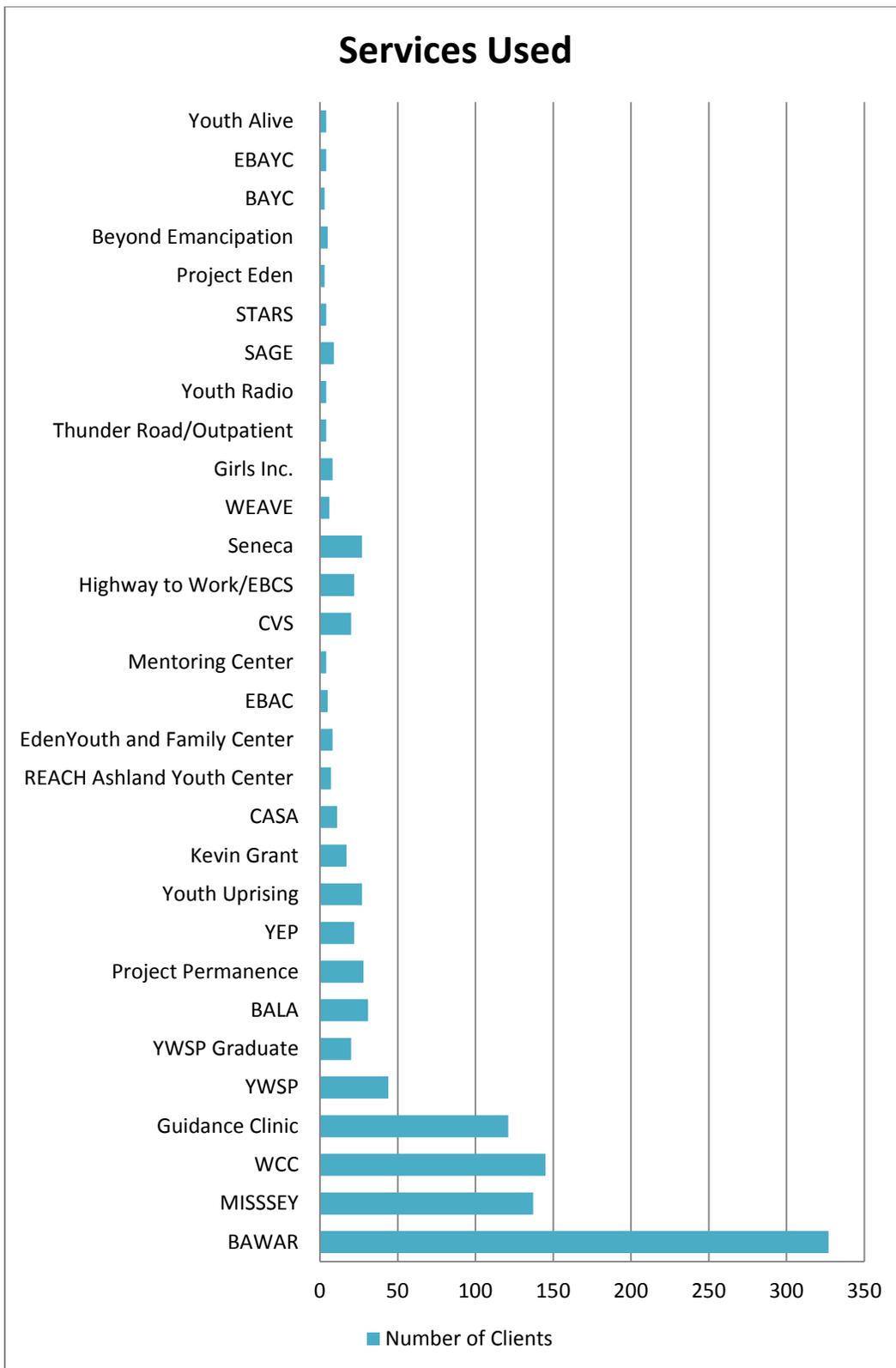


Figure 17 (Services)

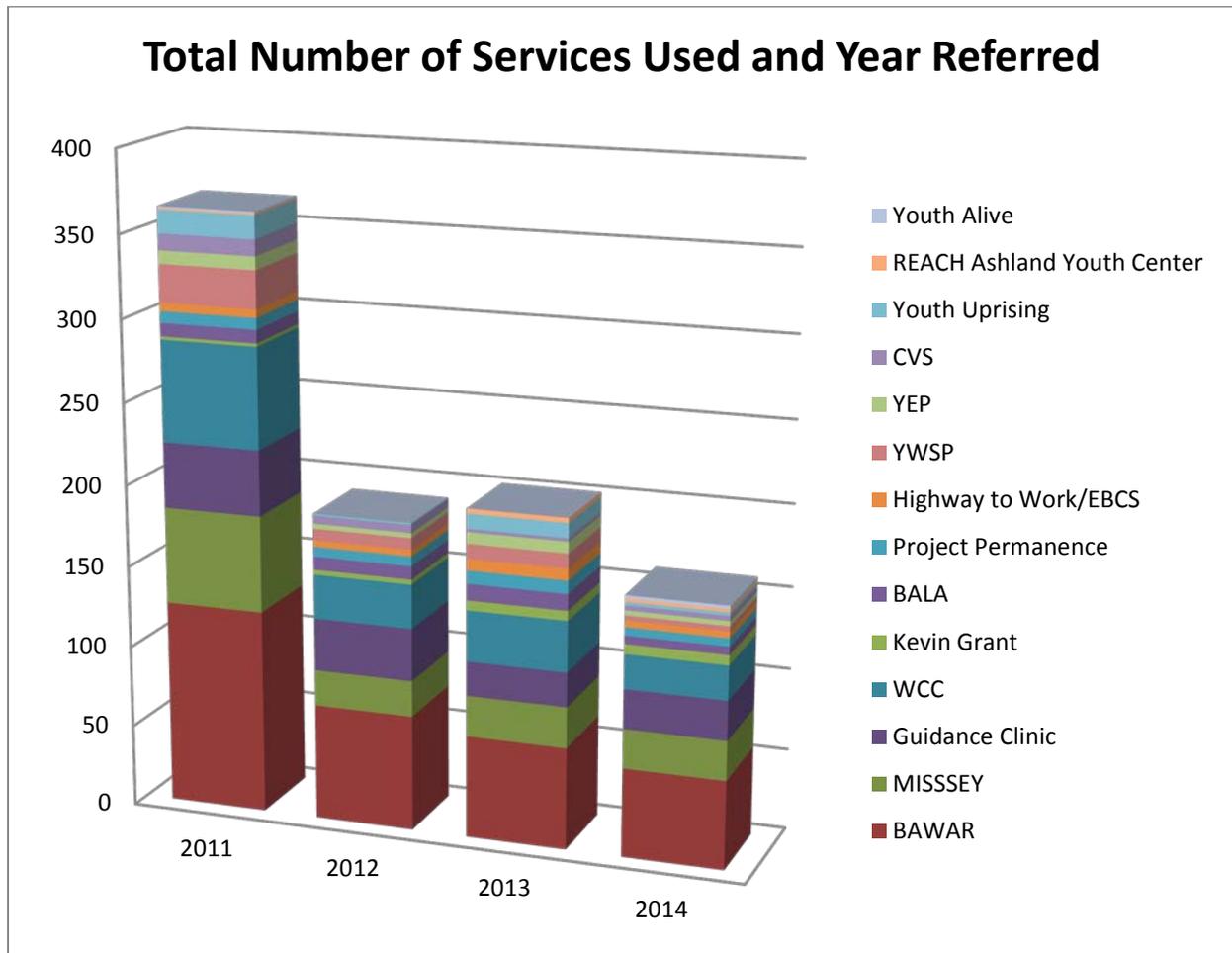


Figure 18 (Services)

Figure 18 shows the breakdown of services referred and the year clients were referred to SafetyNet. Again, the total numbers in 2011 appear higher because there were more clients referred in the first year of SafetyNet than any other year. In 2011, it appears that more clients were referred to BAWAR, MISSEY, WCC and also the Guidance Clinic. The Guidance Clinic is a service provided by Alameda County Behavioral Health Care and is located in the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center in San Leandro. The Guidance Clinic provides mental health services to children who are wards of the Juvenile Court. The services include court ordered psycho-diagnostic evaluations, assessment, crisis intervention, individual, group, and family therapy. The Clinic has a day treatment unit in juvenile hall. In addition, the Guidance Clinic provides mental health consultation to the

Juvenile Court, the Probation Department, and to their associated institutions and programs (Guidance Clinic 2008).

Figure 19 portrays the same information but uses the percentage of the client who worked with each service per year they were referred to SafetyNet. Although there was a higher total number of clients referred to SafetyNet, about the same percent of clients worked with each individual service year to year. This shows that in 2012, there were a higher percentage of kids working with BAWAR and the Guidance Clinic compared to other years. These differences in the services used year to year could be caused by a number of reasons including the different needs of children each year, funding available, or based on how each service was promoted year to year.



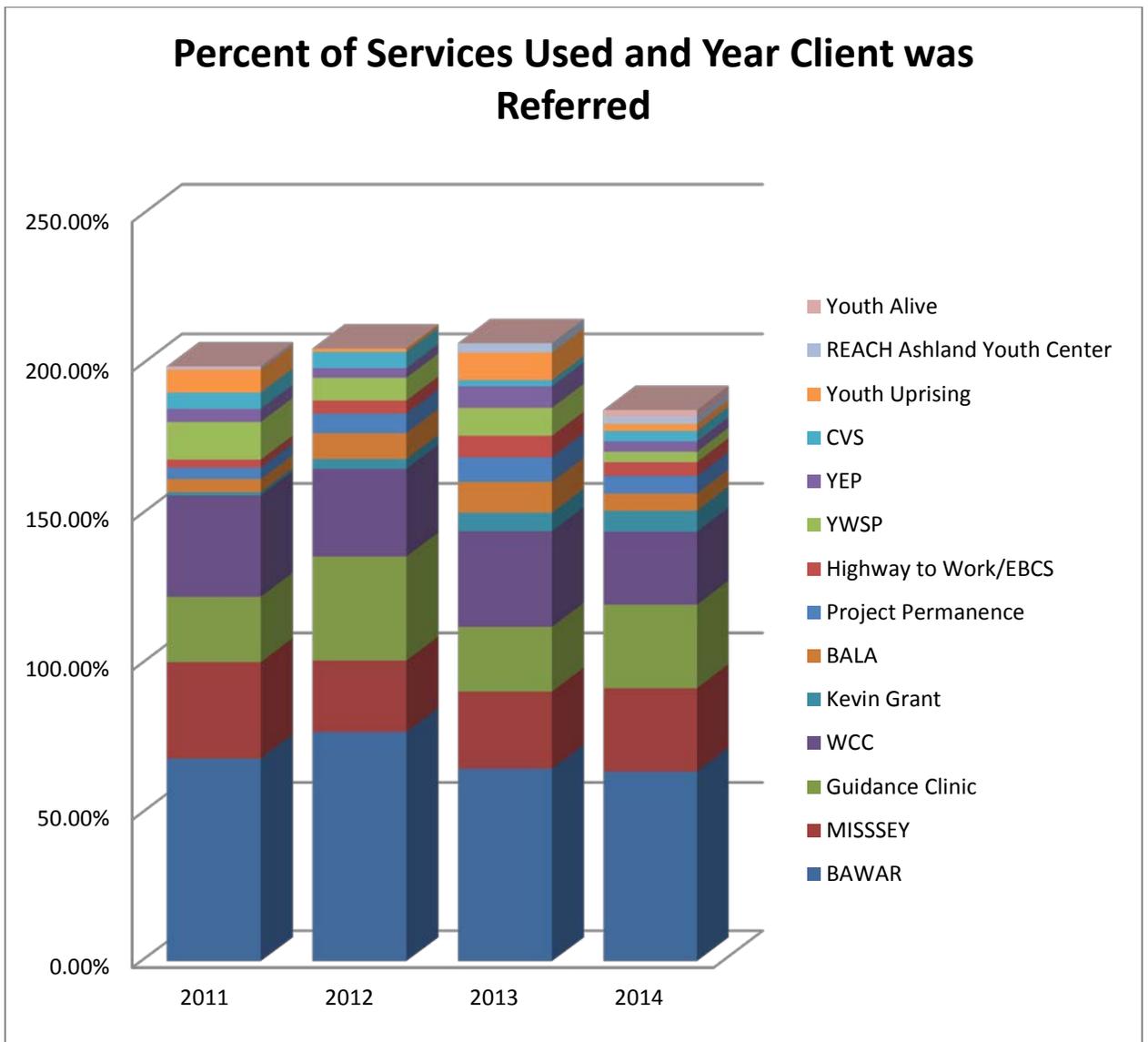


Figure 19 (Services)

Education

The education section of the database allows those inputting data to enter and track the schools each minor attends. It is difficult to maintain reliable school data. Probation reports do not always include updated school information nor is education always discussed in Girls’ Court or even at SafetyNet. In the summer of 2014, the SafetyNet coordinator tried to work with the Alameda

County Transition Center to obtain school data on all the minors in the database. The Transition Center assists in providing warm hand-offs to youth who transition from the Juvenile Justice Center to the community including helping children get re-enrolled into school. The Transition Center sends a representative to SafetyNet who is also a partner with the Oakland Unified School District. This person tried to assist in providing all school data on SafetyNet clients, but ran into an internal, technical roadblock in doing so. The coordinator sent a list of all SafetyNet clients in hopes of receiving a list of schools that each one attended, but was told there was not a simple way to provide this data. The school data is typically collected from the time the minor comes to the attention of SafetyNet and therefore does not always include schools with earlier grade levels. Out of the 482 clients in the SafetyNet database, there are only 320 clients with any school information. Of those 320 clients, there is an average of 1.54 schools known for each minor. Figure 20 shows a list of the schools that clients attended with Castlemont High as the school that has had the most SafetyNet clients enrolled.

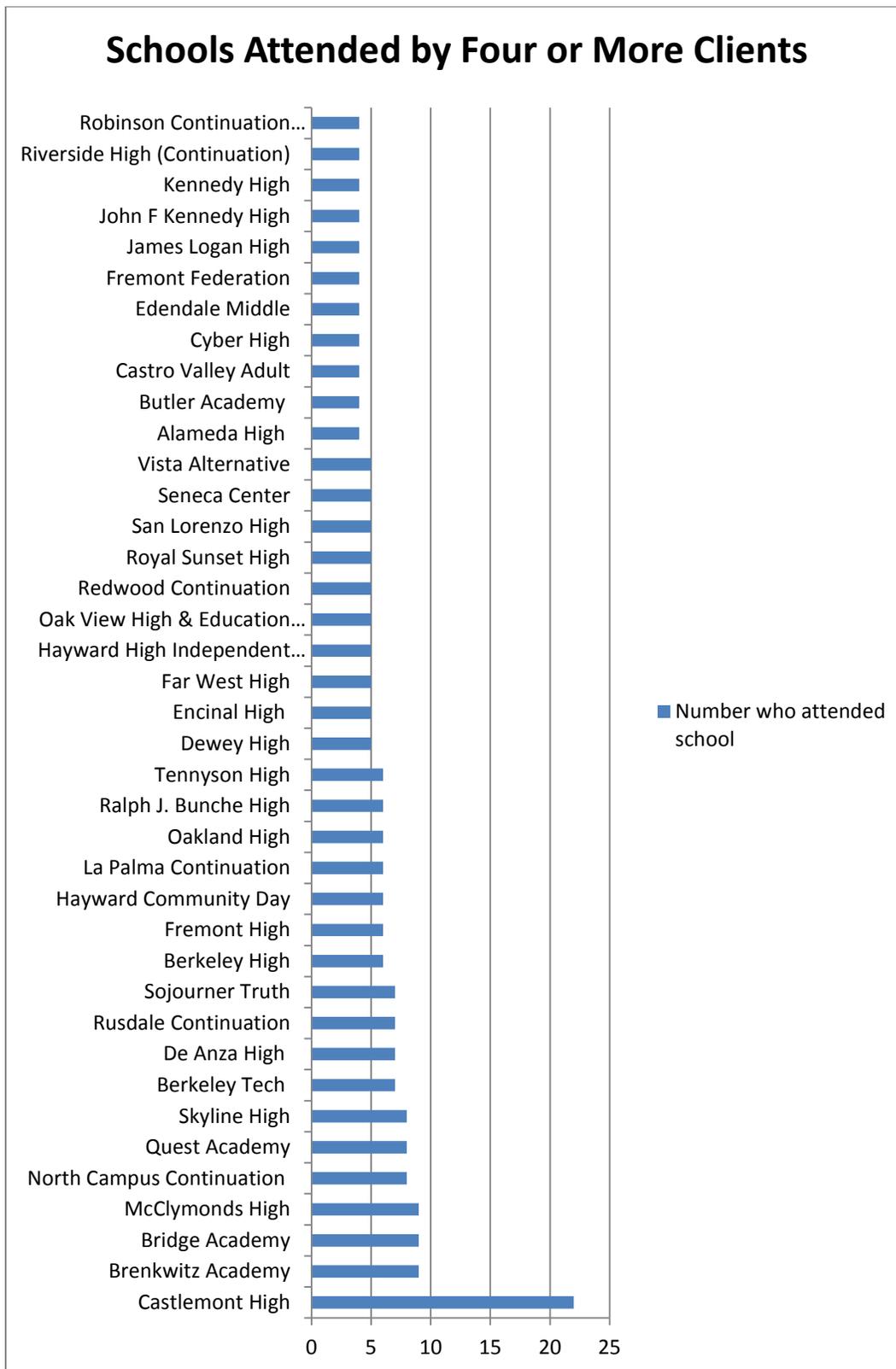


Figure 20 (Education)

System Involvement

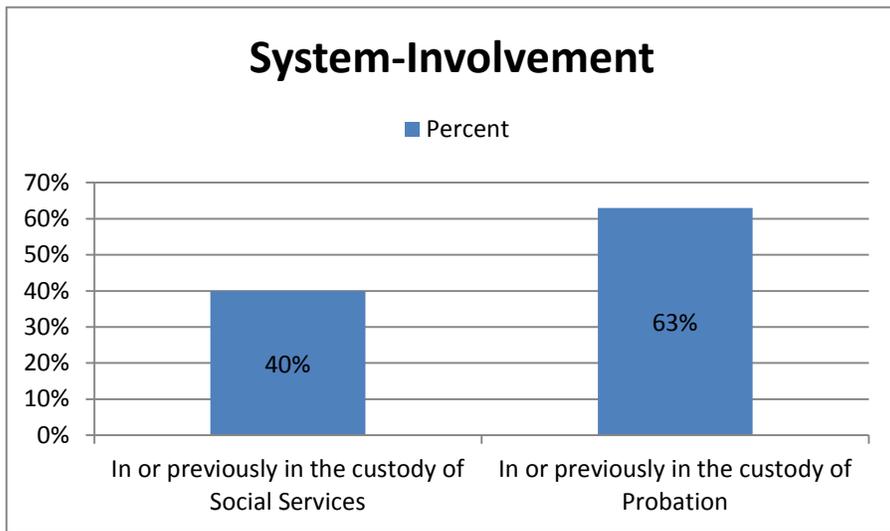


Figure 21 (System Involvement)

System Involvement is the section of the database that is most frequently updated. Many factors contribute to this, including that their statuses with Probation and Social Service frequently change. SafetyNet clients are often in the custody of Social Services or Probation. If they are on Probation, their Probation status can change depending on the

situation and if the Juvenile Court decides it is best to place minors in facilities across California, or out-of-state. The same can be true for children in the custody of Social Services who are placed in facilities around the state. It is very rare that Social Services will place a minor out of state, although it has happened. Figure 21 shows the breakdown of SafetyNet clients who are in or previously in the custody of Social Services or Probation. As Alameda County does not have dual jurisdiction, children cannot be in the custody of both Probation and Social Services at the same time. Youth who fall under the descriptions of both systems get placed on the 241.1 court calendar in the Juvenile Court where it is then determined if the child should be in the custody of Social Services or Probation.

Figure 22 illustrates the percentage of clients from 2011 to 2014 who have active cases with Social Services and Probation as well as inactive cases with these systems. This shows us that the percentage of new SafetyNet clients with active Probation cases went up from 2011 to 2014 while the percentage of those with inactive cases went down. The active and inactive Social Services cases all stayed between the 15 to 25 percent range. The percent of active and inactive Social Service

cases stayed consistent in 2011, 2012, and 2013, but in 2014 the active cases went up while the inactive cases went down.

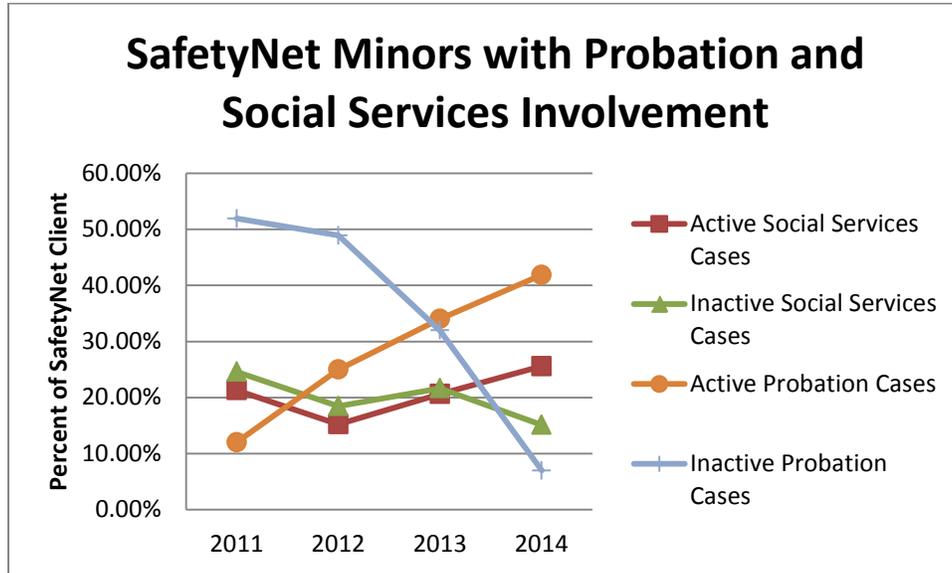


Figure 22 (System Involvement)

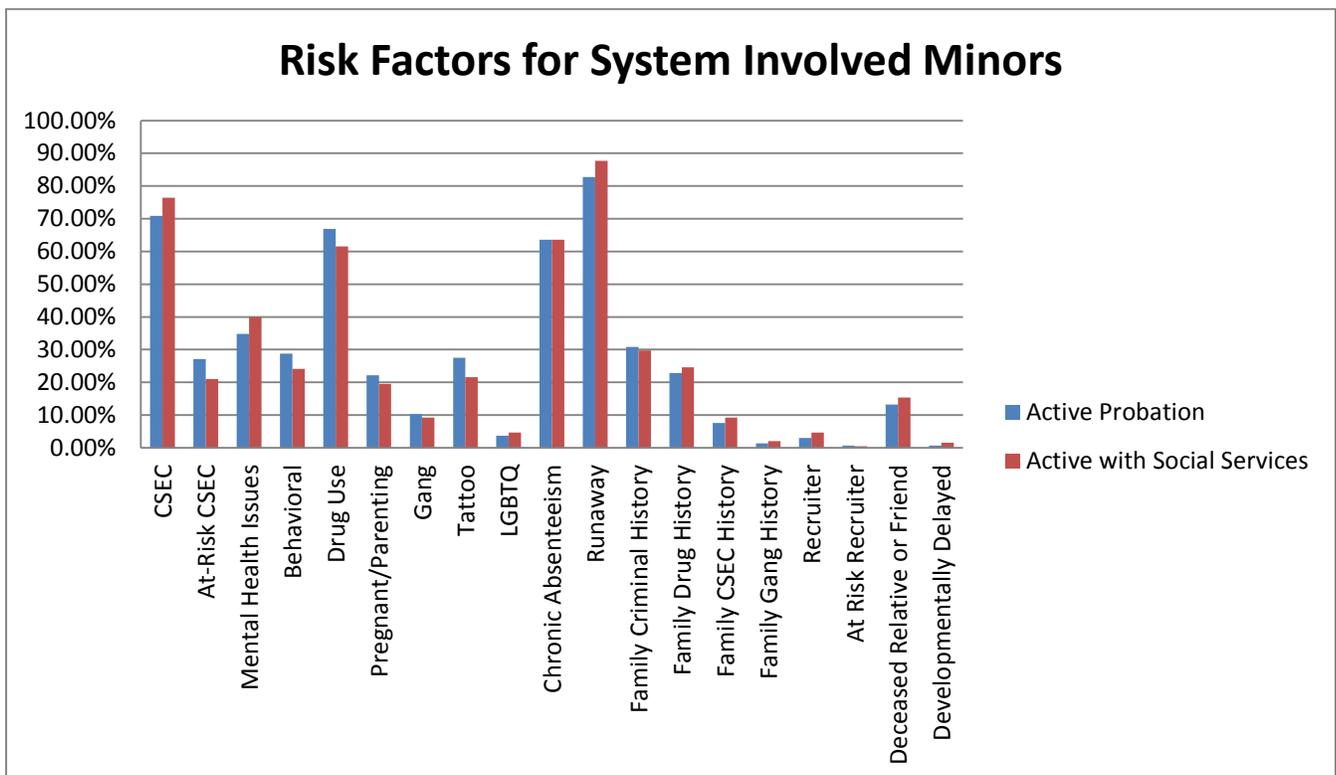


Figure 23 (System Involvement)

As seen earlier in Figure 15, different clients had the same risk factors at about the same rate. The same is true when looking at risk factors for Probation and Social Service clients. Figure 23 shows that the same risk factors apply to both groups of clients. Probation clients had slightly higher percentage increases under the following risk factors: at-risk CSEC, drug use history, behavioral problems, pregnant/parenting, gang history, having tattoos, and family criminal history. Figure 24 tells us the same thing in regard to system involvement and services.

By tracking the arrests of SafetyNet clients, you can see which agencies most often arrest SafetyNet clients. Figure 25 shows us the agencies that made at least five or more arrests of SafetyNet clients. These arrests include any type of arrest such as warrants, battery, burglary, and

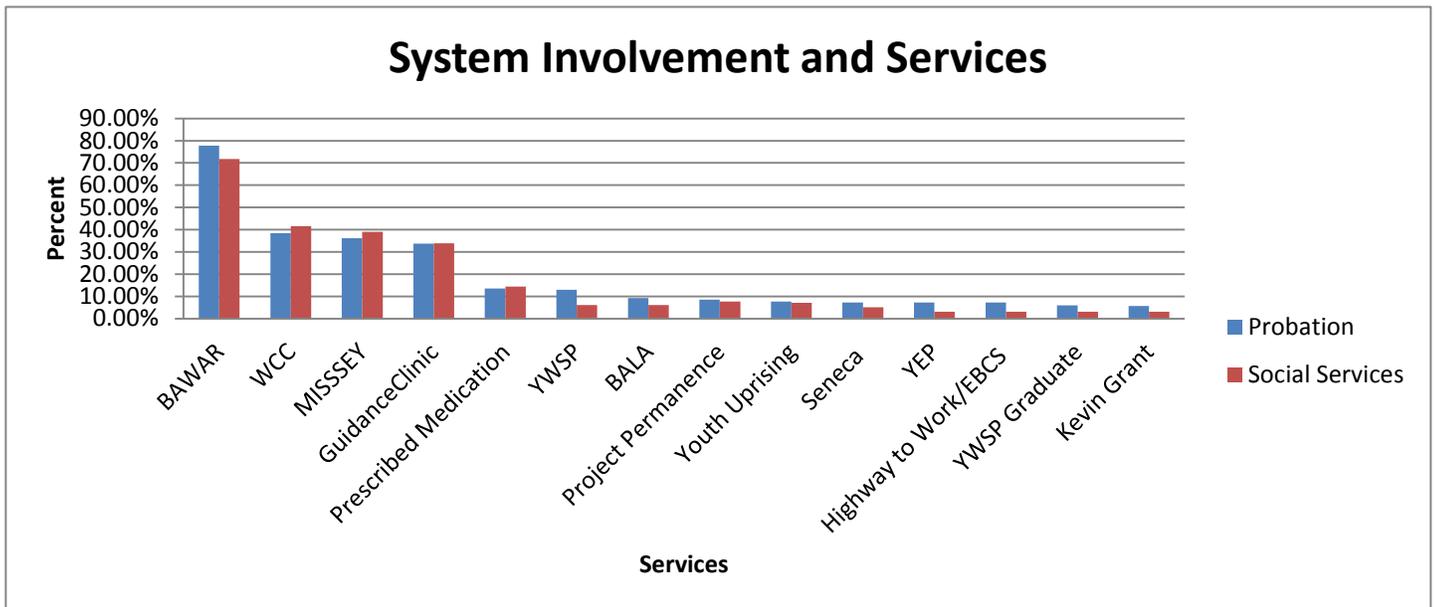


Figure 24 (System Involvement)

not just CSEC related arrests. Figure 26 shows all the agencies that arrested any SafetyNet clients for PC 647b and PC 653.22 (CSEC related arrests) and the Oakland Police Department has, by far, made the most of these arrests.

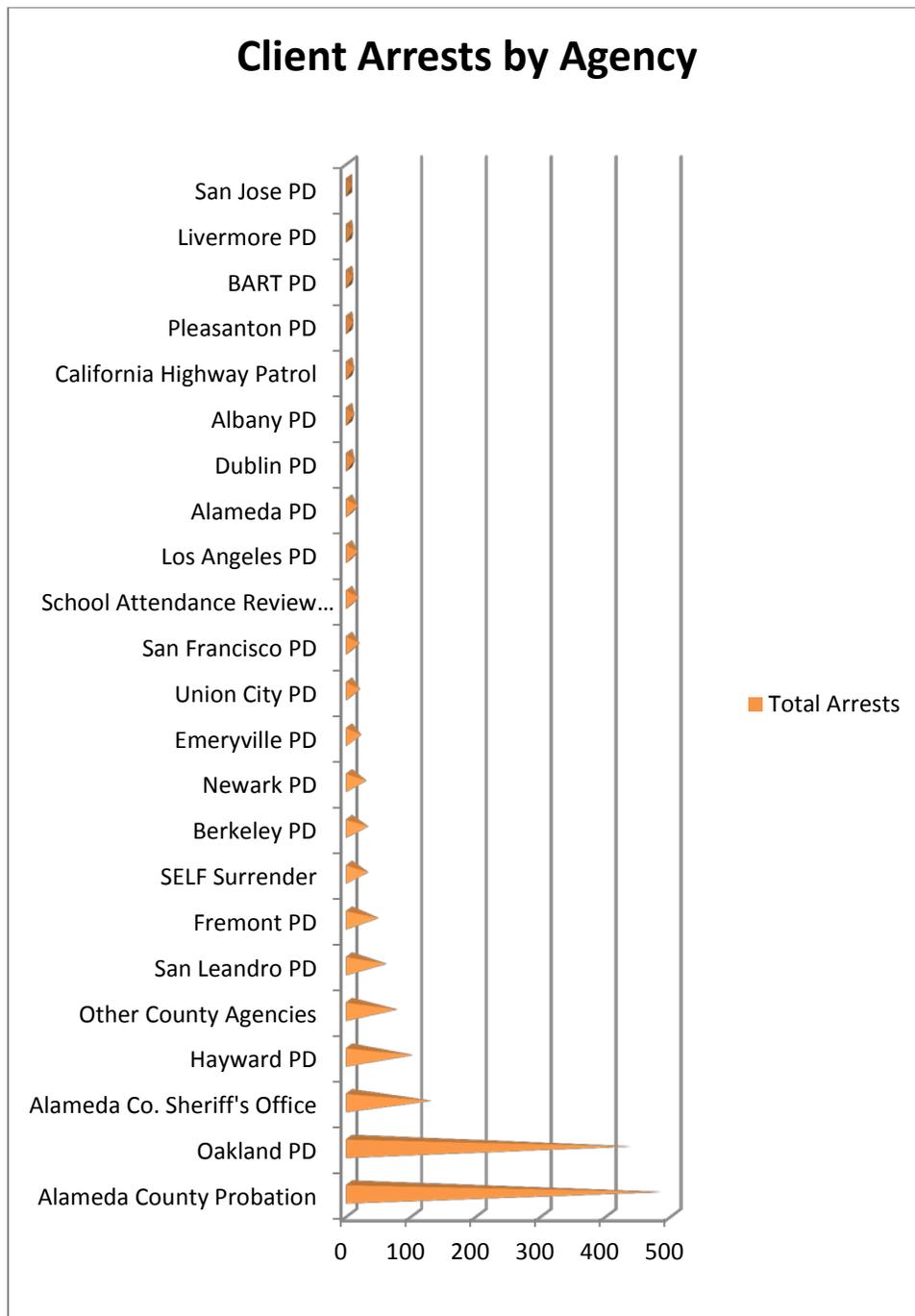


Figure 25 (system involvement)

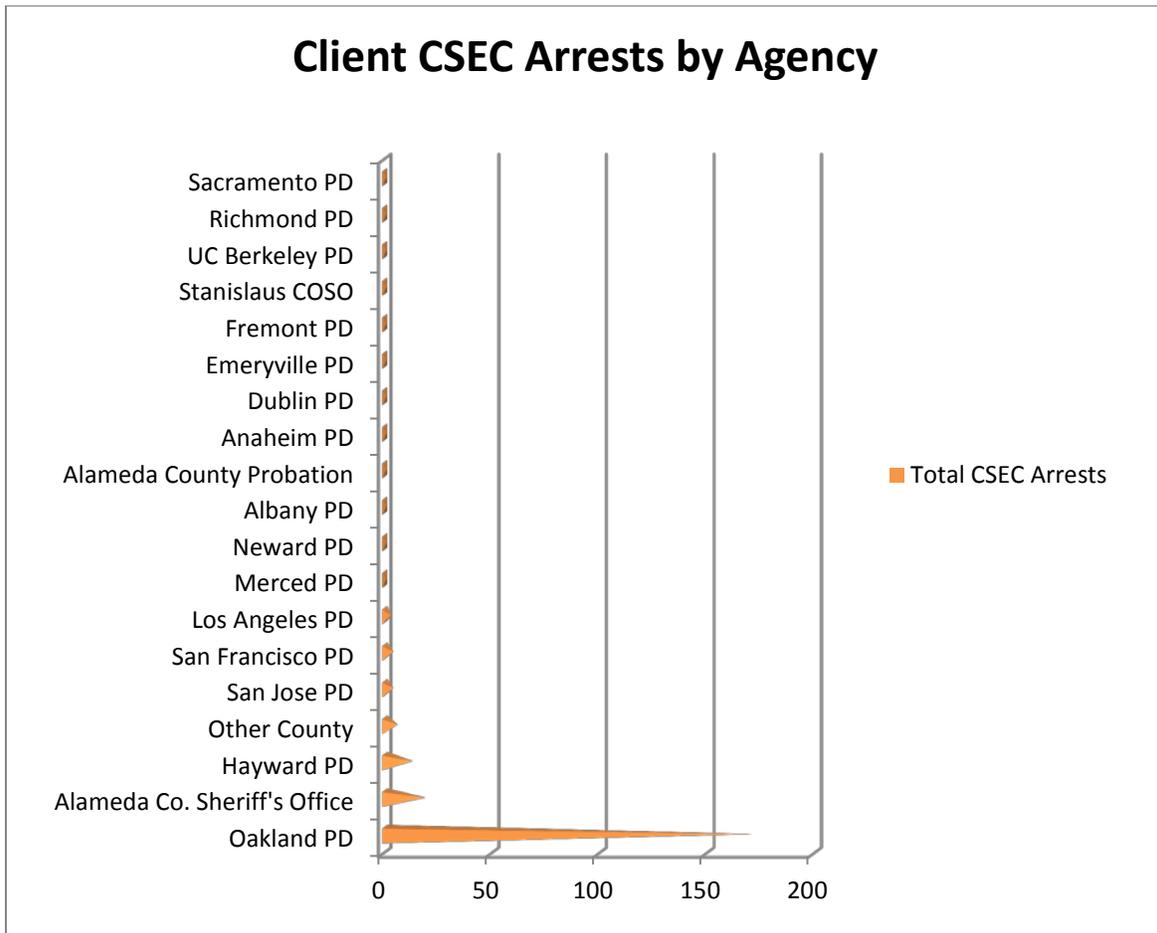


Figure 26 (System Involvement)

Recidivism



Figure 27 (Recidivism)

Recidivism, being a person’s relapse into a criminal behavior, can be defined many ways. For the purpose of this research recidivism is defined as clients who turn 18 and are re-arrested into the adult system. Figures 28 show the total number of clients who were arrested into the adult system and of those arrests, how many were under sections 647b and 653.22. Some clients were re-arrested with multiple charges.

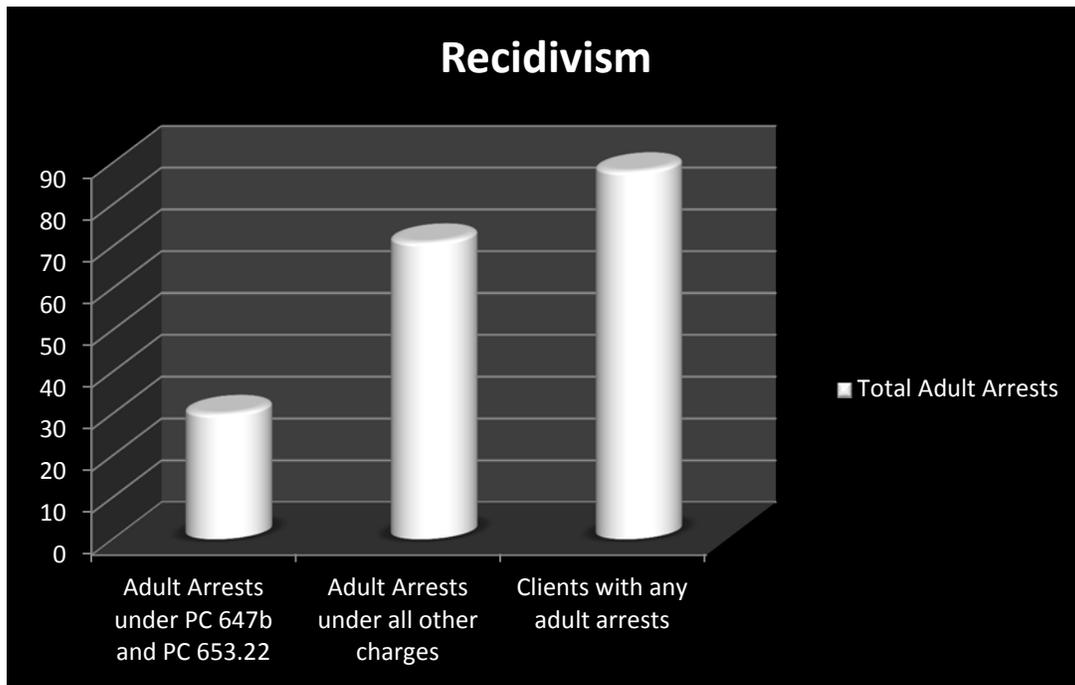


Figure 28 (System Involvement)

Policy Recommendations

Counties around the state and even the country should be required to hold collaborative interagency meetings to create safety plans for CSEC identified in their jurisdictions. This population is extremely transient and if all counties had a collaborative meeting then it would be easier to piece together the information necessary from county-to-county in order to keep the child safe. Additionally, statewide or even nationwide databases that track child sex trafficking data should be established. All agencies involved should be required to enter their own data. This way, data would not only become more reliable, but it would also help other jurisdictions respond to each

individual CSEC case effectively when they are identified. Probation, Social Services, school districts, District Attorney's Offices, and law enforcement should be required to collaborate and share data. Probation and Social Services should be required to have designated CSEC-specific staff. CSEC trained staff who work directly with this youth could also attend and support SafetyNet or other county equivalent. It would be beneficial to this population to have more consistent adults in their lives rather than several different adults who frequently change as they are re-assigned throughout the different phases of their system involvement. Finally, the definition of human trafficking should be re-visited in order to make it easier for researchers to measure and analyze this phenomenon. A more clear definition could help researchers increase the reliability of the numbers that are often reported on trafficking.

Conclusion

SafetyNet is very worthwhile to those involved and as the interviews revealed, Alameda County agencies are better able to support and identify safety plans for CSEC and those at-risk. Agencies and their clients highly benefit from sharing information. This type of information sharing requires trust among partners. This trust leads to relationship building that allows partners to work together in achieving their shared goal of helping these children.

It would also be advantageous if agencies could share data on a larger scale to improve the reliability of the data and help them better understand this population. It would be most useful if there was a centralized statewide or even a nationwide database, like SafetyNet, where all agencies involved could log in and import their own data. Then, when communities identify CSEC or at-risk CSEC they could easily access information about their history and residence so they are better able to respond and create safety plans for these children. With data, agencies are better equipped to identify and respond to this population. The more people there are to upkeep data, the more reliable it will remain. Budgets might not always be available for additional staff which is why it is extremely important for agencies to start sharing data on a larger scale.

The data presented in this study are only a starting point. Several studies could and should be gleaned from the data presented in this study. For example, being chronically absent from school should be looked at closer to find solutions as should runaway history and drug use. We should also

try to understand why the data is appearing to become more diverse. Transgendered youth should be tracked and made easy to quantify as should the placements and residences of this transient population. We could also try and learn more about trafficking routes that exist in California and the United States.

Furthermore, Probation and Social Services are two huge agencies that have a lot of influence over this youth and their outcomes. Identifying budgets for specialized CSEC staff is important for all agencies involved, but especially Probation and Social Services. Within these agencies, CSEC trained staff who work directly with this youth would be worthwhile. Designated CSEC staff could also attend and support SafetyNet. It would be beneficial to this population to have fewer adults who are more consistent in their lives rather than several different adults who get changed and re-assigned throughout the different phases of their system involvement.

In the future, SafetyNet should become better at tracking mapping data with trafficking routes. Right now, only one place of residence is captured and it would be helpful to better capture where these minors are trafficked. It would also be useful to find the addresses for all the Alameda County residents in order to see any concentrated pockets of this population within specific neighborhoods. This could help direct programs and education. Similarly, the school information should be addressed by increasing programs and training at Castlemont High School in Oakland and other schools, as budgets allow, with higher numbers of SafetyNet clients. There should also be focus given to tracking outcomes and measuring success.

SafetyNet could benefit from having quarterly or bi-annual meetings where they can review statistics and trends to get a holistic understanding of the population they are discussing week-to-week. It could also help if supervisors could attend this meeting to hear the concerns or gaps in the system that need addressed at higher levels.

Finally, the ACDAO should continue serving as a model for counties who are trying to create their own local collaborative models to address child sex trafficking. All agencies involved should try and help education other regions of data sharing and collaboration. Additionally, policies should encourage collaboration among agencies who work with CSEC. The more regions that have groups like SafetyNet, the easier it will be to respond and create safety plans for trafficked youth in the future.

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