



**The Parent
Empowerment
Program (PEP)**

PEP PARTNERS



Parents/Caregivers with
Commercially Sexually
Exploited Children



The Need

Youth Survey:

- Youth expressed a need to have their parents understand what happened to them, how they feel, and why.
- Youth don't want their parents to judge them and make them feel worse.

Parent Survey:

- Parents wanted to understand how this happened and why it continues to happen.
- Parents wanted to know what they can do to help their child because they expressed feelings of helplessness.

Stakeholder feedback:

- Parents are feeling isolated; need support and education on what they can do to help their child.
- There are no specific CSEC services for parents/caregivers who have a youth impacted by CSE.

Structure of PEP

10 week program: Psycho-Ed. and Support

90 minute sessions each week

2 Facilitators (Preparing a parent to co-facilitate)

2 Administrative Staff

Purpose of PEP

The purpose of the curriculum is to educate, equip, and empower parents and caregivers with the knowledge and understanding of CSEC dynamics:

- Pathways and vulnerabilities that lead a child to becoming a victim of CSE;
- Barriers to leaving an exploitive relationship;
- Impact of trauma on development, brain and behavior, as well as impact on family, siblings, and parenting;
- Engagement strategies that parents can utilize with their children to reconnect and build a trusting relationship;
- Safety planning;
- Ways parents can help their child towards healing, recovery, and growth

PEP Curriculum - Example

Session 6 – Breaking the Cycle: Communication, Engagement Strategies, Being Trauma Responsive

- Parents take a Self-Assessment on their communication style
- Discussion on communication obstacles and their alternative solutions
- Behavior Makes Sense – Interpreting the meaning behind behaviors
- Functions of behavior (safety and getting a need met)/Translating Behaviors
- Engagement Strategies (i.e. manage your own affect, empathize, validate feelings, timing is everything, give space, don't push, active listening, ask what they need, engage in problem solving with the youth's voice and choice taking center stage)
- Reflection Exercise
- Scenarios – discuss and think of ways to handle the scenarios

Elements of PEP

INCENTIVES

REFRESHMENTS

PRE/POST TEST

BINDERS/
HOMEWORK

GUEST SPEAKERS

TRANSPORTATION
SUPPORT

CHILD CARE

SELF-CARE
EXERCISES

Trauma-Informed

Strength-Based

Cultural Humility

PEP Pre/Post Test and Survey

Results for the class held from June 8, 2018 to August 3, 2018

Parent Likert Scale Ratings on Support, Relations with Child, and CSEC Competency								
Average Rating Scores (N=8)								
1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Mostly Disagree; 3=Slightly Disagree; 4=Neutral; 5=Slightly Agree; 6=Mostly Agree; 7=Strongly Agree								
	Have others who support me	Aware of resources	Have crisis support	Talk and solve problems with child	Child and I take time to listen and understand	Understand how child became CSE	Know how to help my child	Child misbehaves to upset me
Pre-Test Average	5.6	5.1	5.6	3.8	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.3
Post-Test	6.8	5.6	6.2	3.8	4.1	6.2	5.5	3.6
Average Percent Change	21.4%	9.8%	10.7%	0%	0%	29.2%	44.8%	9.0%

Feedback Survey: What did you appreciate most about the program?

“Sharing information with other mothers”

“The feeling of stress relief by expressing emotions that everyone understood”

“The support given in class”

What are the most important things you learned?

**“Sex trafficking is not the
child’s fault”**

**“I learned I have a big support system
in the legal system and in this group and that
my daughter was a victim”**

**“I learned a lot from the
Survivor’s story”**

What can we change or improve for the next group?

**“Allow parents to bring their adult children
and family so
they can understand too”**

“Have another round of classes”

**“More mental health
services for us”**

Lessons Learned

- Remain flexible throughout the session in order to meet the needs of the participants; some groups will need more time to share and process their feelings.
- Though childcare was not used much, have the option available.
- Incentives help maximize participation.
- Allow parents to complete the PEP program again...and again.

Challenges

- Participation by parents/primary caregivers
- Need to build capacity for CBOs across L.A. County to implement curriculum so that the groups are held consistently.
- Need to adapt a lot of materials so that they are more appropriate for parents/caregivers
- Translating materials, videos into Spanish

QUESTIONS?