



Responding to Trafficking in a Shelter Setting: One Agency's Journey of Learning to see People vs. Problems



Land Acknowledgement

The land on which we are currently gathered is the ancestral homeland of the Chitimacha tribe. These lands were colonized by the Cajun French and the American colonies without the Chitimacha people's consent. We hold this knowledge with sorrow and seek to honor the Chitimacha people and the land of which they have been stewards during our time here.

We thank them from our hearts for their hospitality.



Heather Hagelberger



Heather Hagelberger is Boricuan, with her family originating from the ancestral island of Boriken, whose colonized name is Puerto Rico. She is a wife, mother to two adult children and her cat, Lulu. She was raised in Florida where she spent many years on the beach or at Disney World. She currently holds the role of Trafficking Prevention and Intervention Program Manager at Covenant House Alaska (CHA). Heather has been working with adult and minor victims of trauma for over 20 years within the medical field, social services and ministry settings, with 10 of those years spent advocating for and working directly with victims of human trafficking.



Jessica Raymond

Jessica Raymond is a lifelong Alaskan who has worked in urban and rural communities across the state to promote connection and wellness for Alaska's peoples in various capacities including chemical dependence support, suicide prevention and intervention, family advocacy, crisis intervention, and trafficking prevention/intervention. She currently works as the Talent Development & Training Specialist for Covenant House Alaska. She and her husband have three children at home and one grown. They love to have adventures together, in state, out of state, and around the world.



Our Agreements

- We agree to put aside common stereotypes or myths when discussing today's topic
- We agree to respect and learn from experiences different from our own
- We agree to reflect on how we can apply the information we learn in this training to everyday life
- We agree to listen
- We agree to create a safe place for every identity
- We agree to contribute and participate
- We agree to be present
- We agree to seek out support if the topic becomes overwhelming





Covenant House Alaska

Our Five Principles

- ❖ **Immediacy:** Covenant House immediately meets the basic needs of youth experiencing homelessness through a nourishing meal, a shower, clean clothes, medical attention, and a safe place to sleep.
- ❖ **Sanctuary:** Covenant House provides a safe haven from the hardships of homelessness. We recognize the fundamental worth of every human being, and create a safe setting where all youth – regardless of life experience or identity – are served without judgement.
- ❖ **Value communication:** Covenant House leads by example to demonstrate that caring relationships are based on love, trust, respect, and honesty.
- ❖ **Structure:** Covenant House provides the stability and structure necessary to build a positive future.
- ❖ **Choice:** Covenant House fosters confidence; encouraging young people to believe in themselves and make informed choices for their lives.

ALASKAN CONTEXT

“ALASKA HAS the highest rate of sexual assault in the nation, nearly four times the national average. About one third of women in Alaska have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. Yet it is a secret so steeped into everyday life that to discuss it is to disrupt the norm.”- UNHEARD, 2020

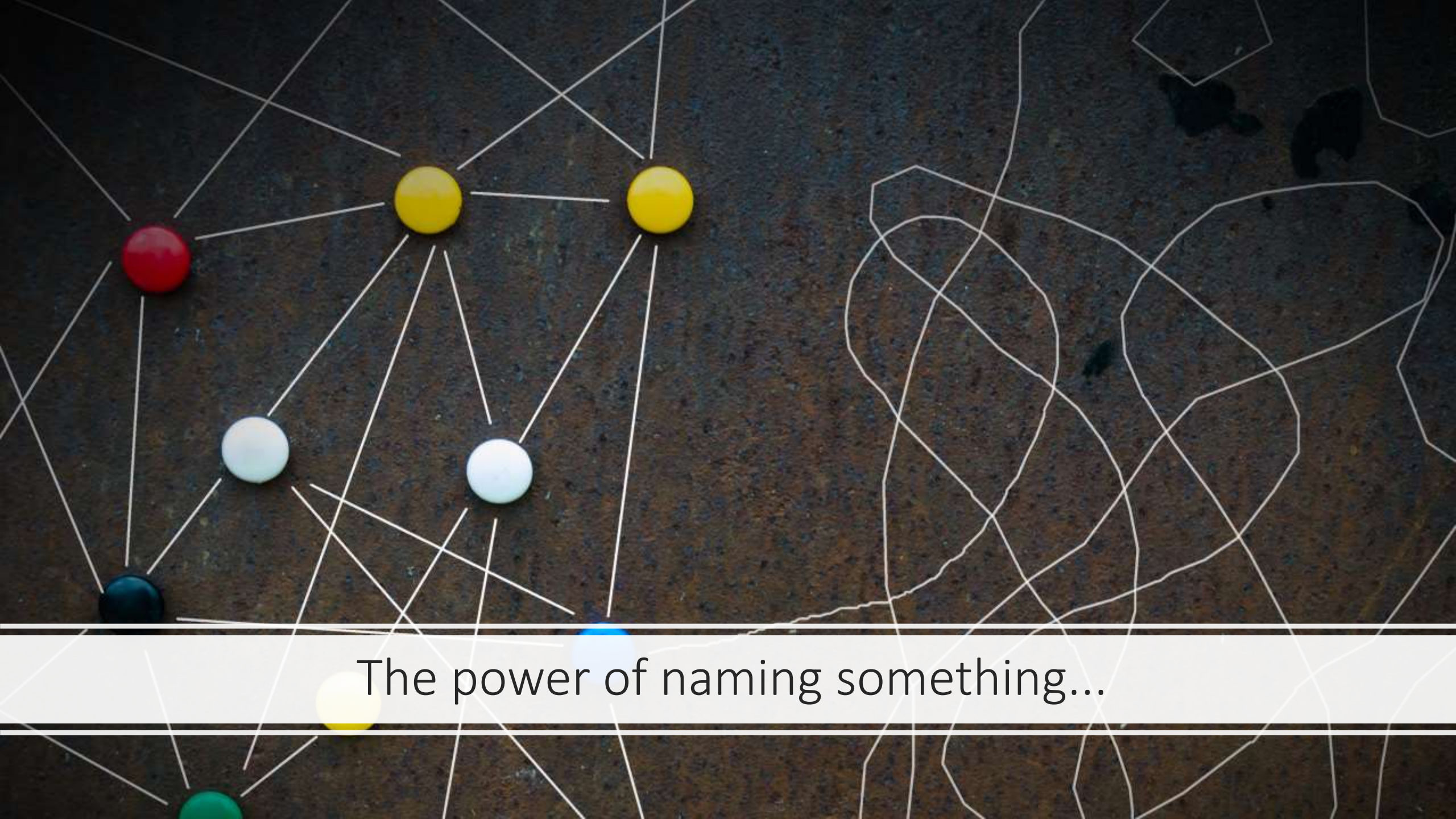
- Population with high amounts of historical trauma
- Transient male dominated industries placed in rural areas next to communities with high amounts of historical trauma
- High rates of physical abuse, sexual abuse, substance abuse and suicide.
- Celebrated history of prostitution

We learned that trafficking was a reality in our community...





The wolves are at the doors



The power of naming something...

OUR RESPONSE



“Rescue can’t be a plan for anyone’s life...That’s not a long-term plan. It has to be about empowerment, about opportunity, about building on the inherent strengths that someone has.”

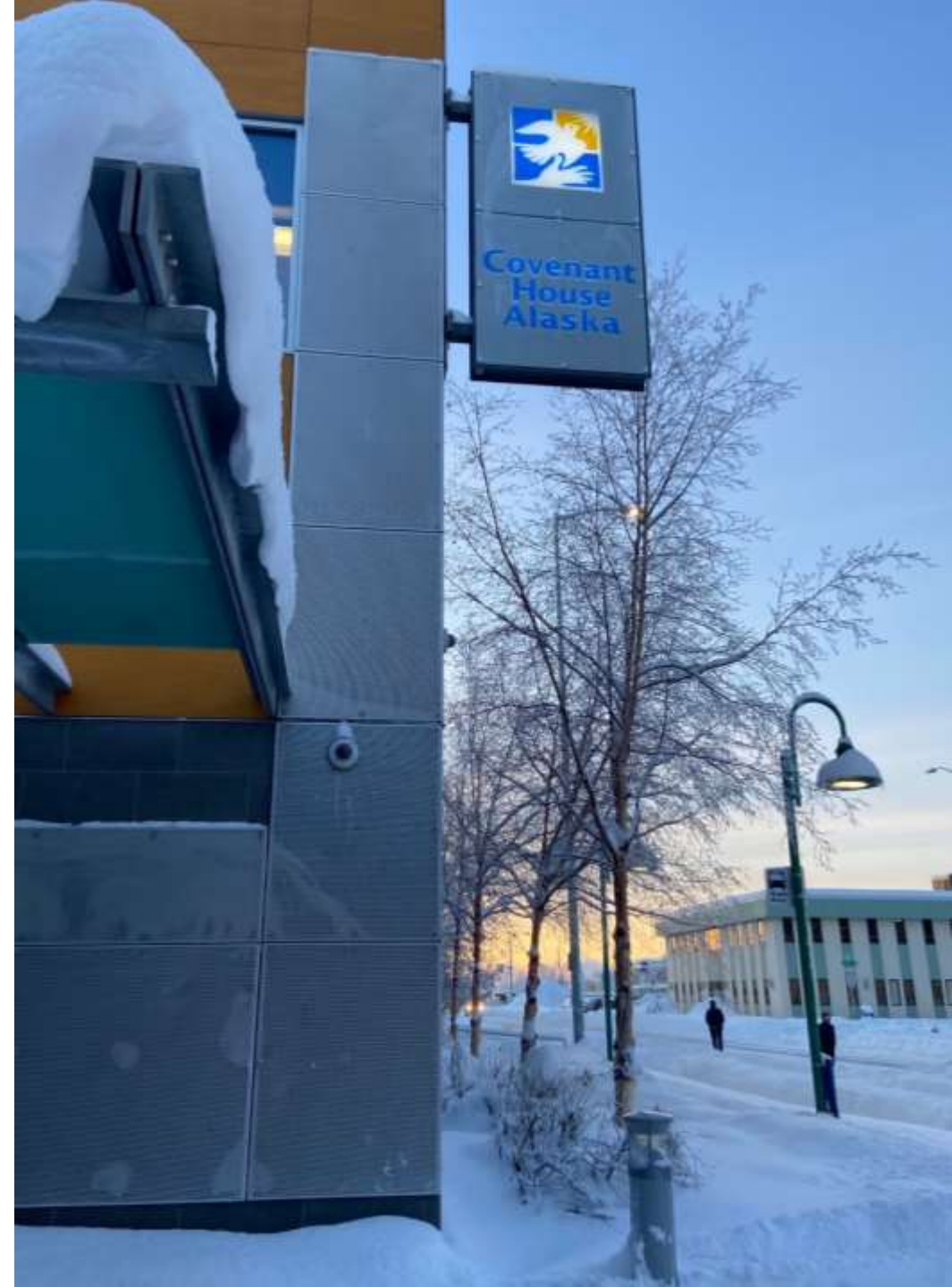
– Rachel Lloyd

"When asked what they needed in order to escape traffickers or to quit engaging in unwanted transactional sex or the drug trade, several youth actually indicated that the shelter, food, and support Covenant House provided was precisely what they needed to be able to leave the sex trade and the drug trade. Several youth with whom we spoke were living in the shelter precisely because it provided a safe haven from situations of force and coercion."

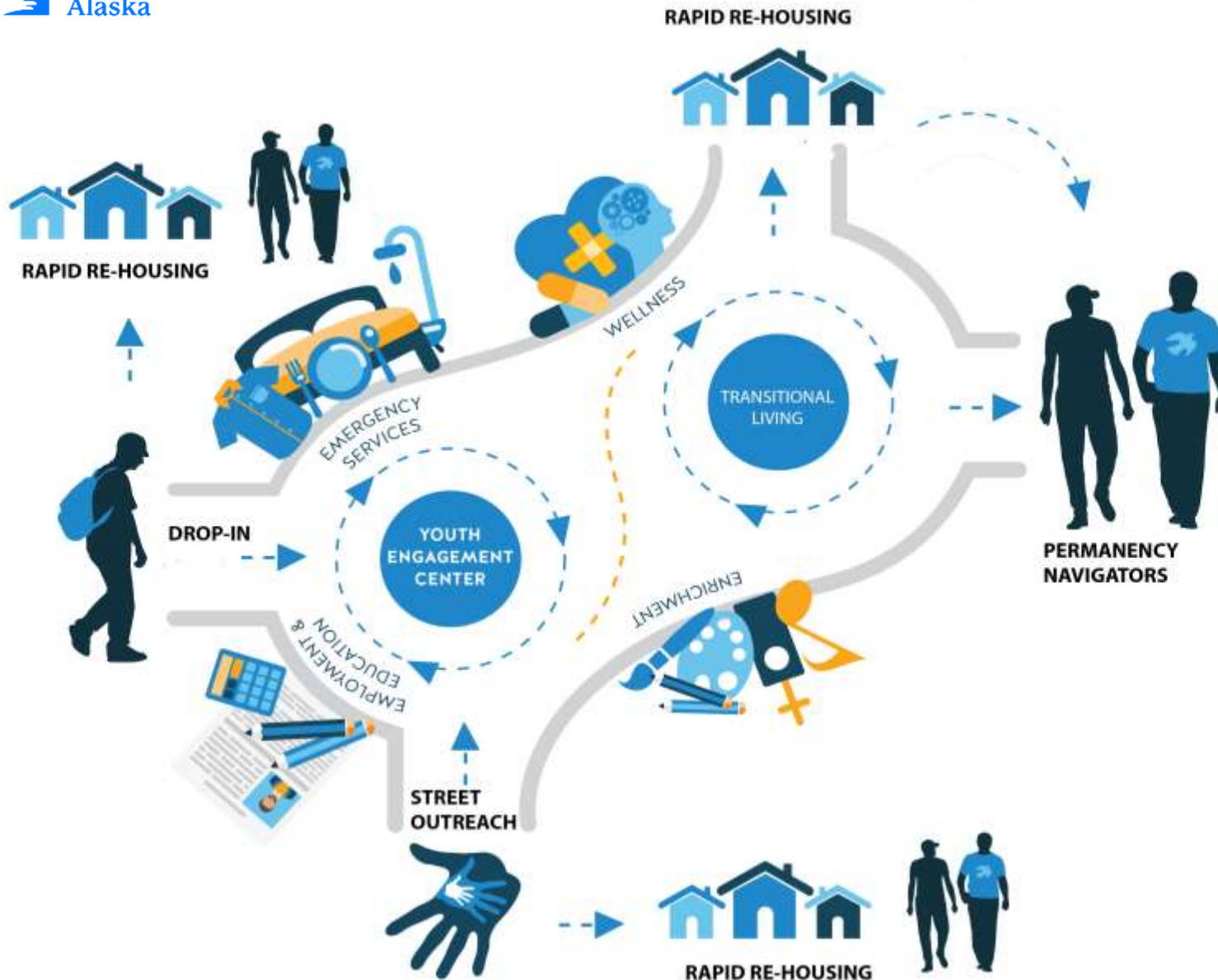
Laura Murphy, researcher for Loyola University's
Modern Slavery Research Project



- 2013 - We began our collaboration with the newly formed State Human Trafficking Task Force
- 2016 - Began specific anti-trafficking collaborations
- 2019 – Received first anti-trafficking specific funding
- 2021 – Invited into Bethel, AK for youth needs assessment
- 2022 – Members of data, CSEC, and victim service provider subcommittees for Alaska Governor's Council on Human Trafficking
- 2022 – Member of leadership for in process Strengthening Services Through Action joint task force



Continuum of Care



CORE SERVICES

(RHY PROGRAMS)

- Street Outreach/Drop-In
- Basic Center
 - Youth Engagement Center
- Transitional Living Programs
 - Passage House MGH
 - Rights of Passage TLP

COMPREHENSIVE CONTINUUM

- Education & Employment
 - Jobs for America's Grads
- Wellness Services (SCF)
- Enrichment & Youth Voice
- On-site partners

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

- Rapid Re-Housing
- Permanency Navigators
 - Mobile, client-centered
 - Relentless Engagement



Quick Youth Indicators for Trafficking (QYIT)

QYIT was implemented as part of a groundbreaking study conducted by Covenant House New Jersey, Mount Sinai Hospital researchers, and HEAL Trafficking that shed new light on the growing crisis of human trafficking among youth experiencing homelessness in New Jersey.

"This is the first screening tool that is validated for the recognition of labor and sex trafficking. QYIT is a success largely born of the data collection efforts of the dedicated staff of Covenant House New Jersey and the young people at CHNJ who shared their stories. I'm honored to be a part of this important service to homeless young people across the US,"

-Dr. Makini Chisolm-Straker, Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at Mount Sinai.



The Questions

- The QYIT assessment tool is implemented as part of our arrival process, each youth will be asked to complete this assessment at each arrival.
- It is normal and expected for answers to change at each arrival
- Validated tool out of Covenant House NJ that is 4 questions long for labor and sex trafficking designed with YOU in mind – it does not require an anti-trafficking expert to administer it
- An affirmative answer to at least one of the QYIT questions is at least 86.7% sensitive to identifying a trafficking experience
- Answering yes or no to these questions does not identify a youth as a survivor of human trafficking
- Youth are not required to answer these questions, should you feel that a youth is not comfortable with these questions you may end the assessment at any time



QYIT Questions

It is not uncommon for young people to stay in work situations that are risky or even dangerous, simply because they have no other options. Have you ever worked, or done other things, in a place that made you feel scared or unsafe? Yes No Skip

Sometimes people are prevented from leaving an unfair or unsafe work situation by their employers. Have you ever been afraid to leave or quit a work situation due to fears of violence or threats of harm to yourself or your family? Yes No Skip

Sometimes young people who are homeless or who have difficulties with their families have very few options to survive or fulfill their basic needs, such as food and shelter. Have you ever received anything in exchange for sex (e.g. a place to stay, gifts, or food)? Yes No Skip

Sometimes employers don't want people to know about the kind of work they have young employees doing. To protect themselves, they ask their employees to lie about the kind of work they are involved in. Have you ever worked for someone who asked you to lie while speaking to others about the work you do?

- Needs to be trauma informed
- Strength focused, avoid pity statements
- Stress that the questions are just yes or no, they do not require additional information
- Questions do not need to be read word for word, they can be presented as part of a conversation
- Be mindful of your nonverbal communications and reactions
- Just because you have a good relationship with a youth does not mean that they will necessarily answer these questions honestly, do not push for a different answer even if you suspect that the one they gave you is not true
- Mandated reporting still applies to minors

HOW TO ASK QYIT QUESTIONS

Trafficking Victims Identification Tool (TVIT)

- Evidence based, trauma informed assessment tool
- Accounts for foreign and domestic trafficking
- Yes or No questions with space for comments on client disclosures and non-verbal cues
- Asks questions on labor and sex exploitation
- Created so that interviewer makes determination without numerical value added to answers
- Long and short versions

TVIT

When Navigators were completing assessments

- Time spent building relationships felt transactional
- Assessments were incomplete for longer periods of time
- High incidence of vicarious trauma

With clinician completing assessments

- Assessment completed in a therapeutic setting
- Clinician spends time building rapport with holistic approach
- Staff can focus on meeting needs and case management

Trafficking Prevention, Protection and Intervention (TPIP) at Covenant House

ANCHOR Team

Community Partnerships with Law Enforcement and Local Non-Profits



Southcentral
Foundation



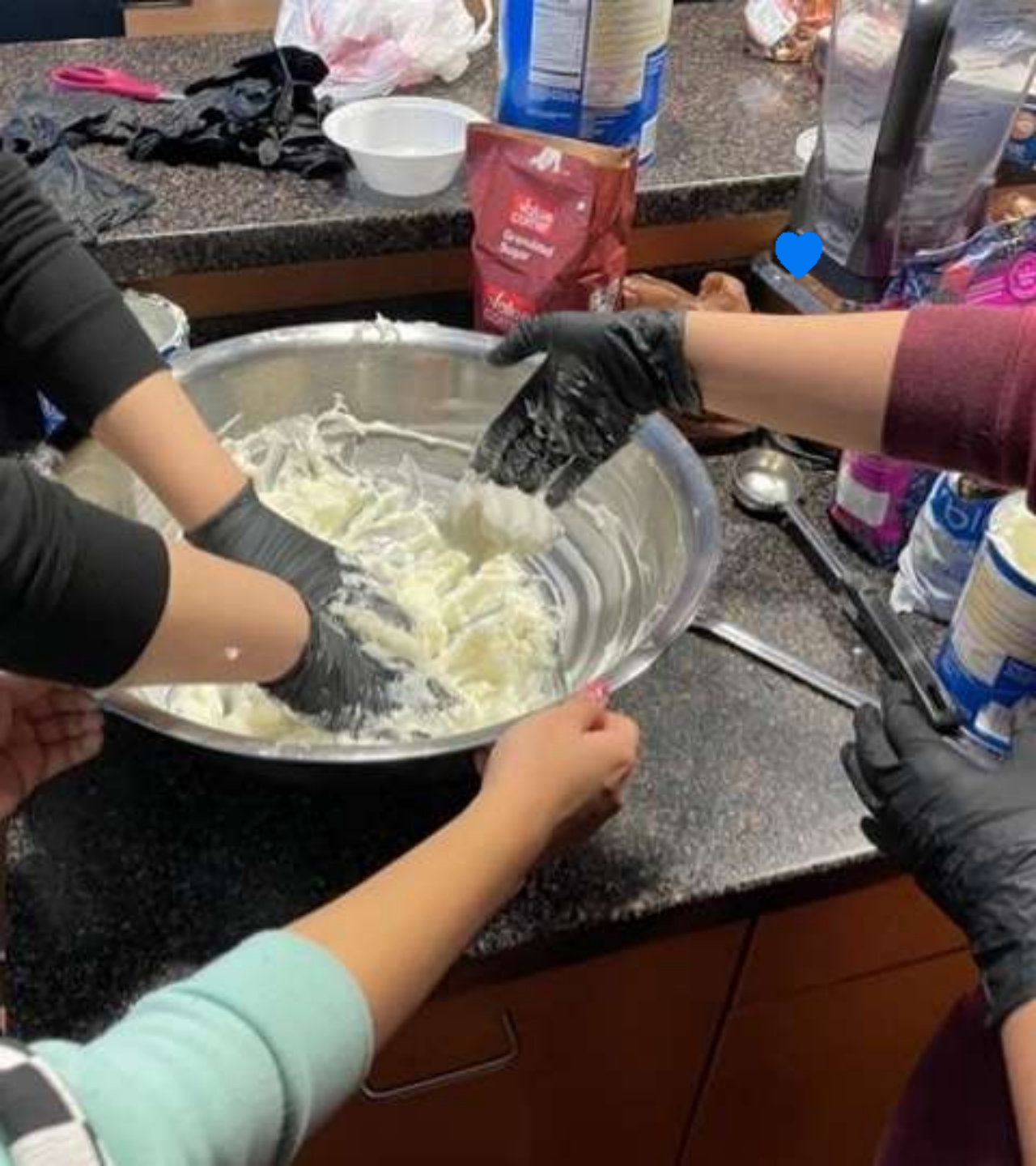
JAG





Mentoring Can Communicate Traditional Values

Show Respect to Others
Share what you have
Know Who You Are
Accept What Life Brings
Have Patience
Live Carefully
Take Care of Others
Honor Your Elders
Pray for Guidance
See Connections



Mentoring at CHA

Akutaq

Frybread

Fish Camp

Jarring Salmon

Kusbuk Sewing

Beaded Earrings

Guitar

Hiking

Berry Picking

Storytelling

Shopping for drift boat gear

Making burial wreaths

Types of Mentoring

Groups

Teams

One-on-one

Youth-initiated



WHAT COMES NEXT?



INSERT QUOTE OR SOMETHING

Support rural Alaskan efforts

- By invitation only
- Prioritize traditional healing modalities and providers
- Cultural humility in making recommendations

More training for all of our direct service staff

- Human Trafficking 101
- QYIT training
- Care for the Care Givers

Further increasing community collaboration

- Strengthening Services through Action Joint Task Force
 - Anchorage Police Department and Alaska Native Justice Center
- Expanding collaborations for minor youth
 - Alaska Cares
 - McLaughlin Youth Center
- Garden of Roses Camp for indigenous adult females who have experienced sexual trauma
 - Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium



Anchored by the values that unite our community.

Sources

Alaska Native Values, Alaska Native Knowledge Network, <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/ANCR/Values/>

Strengthening Native Community Commitment through Mentoring Guidebook, Introduction, pg. 5, Ya'Ta'L'whet (Giver of self). Anna M. Latimer (Sechelt, B.C.)

Supporting and Inspiring Native Youth, Mentor.com, funded through a grant from ODJJP, <https://www.mentoring.org/resource/supporting-and-inspiring-native-youth/>

Murphy, L. T. (2016). (rep.). *Labor and Sex Trafficking Among Homeless Youth* (p. 22). (2013). *Final Report and Recommendations* [Review of *Final Report and Recommendations*]. <http://www.law.alaska.gov/pdf/admin/021513-TaskForceFinalReport.pdf>

