



Human Trafficking  
Policy & Research  
Analyses Project



# Process Evaluation of the 2020–2023 Human Trafficking Youth Prevention Education (HTYPE) Demonstration Program: Final Report



September 2024

OPRE Report 2024-275

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## Overview

Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers have increasingly emphasized the importance of a proactive, multidisciplinary approach to preventing human trafficking—one that involves all systems responsible for protecting children and youth, including schools. In fact, several states have passed mandates requiring students and/or educators to receive sex trafficking prevention education. However, limited guidance exists on how to best equip educators, other school staff, and students to prevent human trafficking and on how schools can or should respond to human trafficking concerns.

### Introduction

In 2020, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP) established the Human Trafficking Youth Prevention Education (HTYPE) Demonstration Program. The purpose of the HTYPE Demonstration Program is to fund local educational agencies (LEAs) to partner with a nonprofit or nongovernmental organization (NGO) to create, implement, and build the capacity of schools to deliver prevention education and skills-based training to educators and other school staff and students and to establish a Human Trafficking School Safety Protocol (HTSSP) that addresses the safety, security, and well-being of staff and students. Eight HTYPE Demonstration Program projects were awarded in September 2020 with a performance period of 36 months. In partnership with OTIP, the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) oversaw a process evaluation of the HTYPE Demonstration Program, conducted by RTI International.

This report summarizes findings from the process evaluation of the HTYPE Demonstration Program, including the growth of program activities across the period of performance, Year 3 activities and sustainability planning, and the experiences of

educator and staff participants across program activities. This report concludes with implications of these findings for future school-based human trafficking prevention programs.

### Primary Research Questions

- How did the HTYPE projects implement their primary activities across the 3-year period of performance?
- What were educator and staff participants' experiences across program activities?

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to summarize findings from 3 years of project activities conducted by the eight HTYPE projects. Specifically, this report provides the following:

- a cross-project synthesis describing program accomplishments, growth, and reach to intended audiences in its four primary activities: delivering student prevention education, delivering educator and staff prevention education, training qualified staff to deliver prevention activities, and creating and implementing an HTSSP;
- a summary of Year 3 project activities and accomplishments, including sustainability planning;
- a summary of educator and staff participant experiences and feedback in key program activities; and
- implications based on these findings for other school-based human trafficking prevention programs, including schools considering implementing prevention activities and creators of prevention education materials.

## Key Findings and Highlights

- Award recipients implemented HTYPE activities in more than 700 schools, delivering human trafficking prevention education to more than 10,000 educators and staff and 38,000 students. They did so in partnership with key community-based organizations, criminal justice and child welfare agencies, and people with lived experience.
- In Year 3, award recipients continued implementing key program activities (delivering prevention education to students and educators/ staff, training qualified staff to deliver prevention activities, and activating their respective HTSSPs). Additionally, award recipients planned for continuing program activities after the end of the HTYPE Demonstration Program.
- Educators and staff who participated in program activities shared varying perspectives and experiences regarding student prevention education (e.g., who should deliver it, how instructors should be trained and supported to deliver it, and modifications to make during delivery), educator prevention education, and HTSSP training and activation.

## Methods

The information in this report is informed by both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data sources consisted of both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data included semi-structured interviews with HTYPE project staff and partners in all eight project sites, interviewed at the conclusion of each project year; focus groups with educators and staff who participated in program activities; and interviews with educators and staff who used the HTSSP. The quantitative data consisted of a survey of educators and staff who delivered prevention education to students. Secondary data sources consisted of award recipients' performance progress reporting data, which they submitted quarterly to OTIP, and prevention education curricula materials (10 student prevention curricula and 5 educator and staff prevention education curricula).



## Executive Summary

The purpose of the Human Trafficking Youth Prevention Education (HTYPE) Demonstration Program was to fund local educational agencies to partner with a nonprofit or nongovernmental organization to build the capacity of selected schools to provide skills-based human trafficking prevention education for educators, other staff, and students. Award recipients were also required to establish a Human Trafficking School Safety Protocol (HTSSP) that addresses the safety, security, and well-being of staff and students.

The HTYPE Demonstration Program comprised four project objectives that contribute to a comprehensive, whole-school response to prevent human trafficking and provide age-appropriate responses to reported risks and incidents of human trafficking. When implemented together, the four project objectives will build individual students' skills and resiliency to human trafficking and prepare educators and other staff to recognize and respond to signs of human trafficking and support students who may have increased risk of experiencing human trafficking.

Under the HTYPE Demonstration Program, the following activities were required:

- Provide human trafficking prevention education to educators and other staff.
- Deliver human trafficking prevention education to students.
- Train qualified individuals employed by the local educational agency to implement and replicate project activities throughout the school district or one or more identified target areas.
- In consultation with local law enforcement, develop and implement the HTSSP for reporting trafficking concerns and referring individuals to supportive information and services.

The purpose of this report is to summarize efforts across HTYPE projects during all 3 years of project implementation, including program accomplishments, growth, and reach to intended audiences in its four primary activities; summarize Year 3 project activities and accomplishments, including sustainability planning; summarize educator and staff participant experiences and feedback in key program activities; and provide implications of these findings for other school-based human trafficking prevention programs, including schools considering implementing prevention activities and developers of prevention education materials.

The findings in this report are informed by primary data sources (HTYPE project staff interviews, focus groups and interviews with educator and staff program participants, and a survey of student prevention education instructors) and secondary data sources (award recipients' performance progress reports and project sites' prevention education curricula materials).

**Growth and Evolution of HTYPE.** Across the 3-year project period, award recipients implemented HTYPE activities in more than 700 schools, delivering human trafficking prevention education to more than 10,000 educators and staff and 38,000 students. During this time period, project partnerships with community-based organizations, criminal justice and government agencies, and people with lived experience also evolved. Partners' roles shifted in response to program stages (e.g., startup vs. implementation phase of curricula and HTSSPs) and students' needs.

**Year 3 Activities.** In Year 3, award recipients continued implementing key program activities (delivering prevention education to students and educators/staff, training qualified staff to deliver prevention activities, and activating their respective HTSSPs). Additionally, award recipients planned for continuing program activities after the end of the Demonstration Program.

**Educator and Staff Experiences in HTYPE.** Educators and staff who participated in program activities shared their perspectives and experiences regarding student prevention education (e.g., who should deliver it, how instructors should be trained and supported to deliver it, and modifications to make during delivery), educator prevention education, and HTSSP training and activation.

**Implications for Other School-Based Human Trafficking Prevention Programs.** The varied implementation of the HTYPE Demonstration Program’s activities across eight project sites and hundreds of schools, and therefore varying school contexts, provides important lessons and considerations for other schools and districts intending to deliver human trafficking prevention activities.

### **The Human Trafficking Youth Prevention Education (HTYPE) Demonstration Program**

Established in 2020 by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP), HTYPE funded eight local education agencies to

- create, implement, and build the capacity of schools to deliver prevention education and skills-based training to educators and other school staff and students; and
- establish a Human Trafficking School Safety Protocol (HTSSP) that addresses the safety, security, and well-being of staff and students.

In partnership with OTIP, the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) oversaw a process evaluation of the HTYPE Demonstration Program, which was conducted by RTI International.



## Introduction

Over the past several years, K-12 schools across the United States have increasingly included human trafficking prevention education as part of their efforts to ensure students' safety and wellbeing. Some schools are required to teach about human trafficking in health classes, while others have school leadership and staff champions who bring human trafficking prevention education into schools. The role of K-12 schools in preventing human trafficking is a natural one: not only are educators and school staff already building long-term trusted relationships with students, but they are trained to recognize and report signs of maltreatment and abuse experienced by children within a supportive school environment and under existing reporting protocols. However, not all K-12 schools and school districts are implementing human trafficking prevention education and related activities.

In recognition of the important potential of schools to recognize, respond to, and prevent human trafficking among students, OTIP funded the HTYPE Demonstration Program. This report describes the first cohort (2020-2023) of eight HTYPE projects across the country, the growth of key program activities across the 3-year grant period, and projects' plans for sustaining prevention programming.

### Overview of the HTYPE Program

The HTYPE Demonstration Program features four key goals: deliver human trafficking prevention education for educators and school staff; deliver prevention education for students; train qualified school staff to teach prevention education for educators and students or train others to do so; and create and implement an HTSSP. **Table 1** provides an overview of these four activities.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 1. HTYPE Programs Overview**

Activity	Description
Educator and staff prevention education	Equip educators and school staff to identify and respond to students who are experiencing or are at high risk of human trafficking, to report concerns, and to respond to student disclosures. Central to this program is the HTSSP, which guides educator/staff response to human trafficking concerns.
Student prevention education	Educate students about human trafficking risk factors and build student resilience to labor and sex trafficking by strengthening students' knowledge and skills, increasing their perception of risk, and encouraging the adoption of healthy behaviors.
Training of trainers	Train qualified individuals employed by the local education agency to implement and replicate project activities throughout the school district or identified target area(s).
Human Trafficking School Safety Protocol	In consultation with local law enforcement, develop and implement an HTSSP that outlines procedures for reporting trafficking concerns to the appropriate authorities (e.g., child welfare, law enforcement); notifying parents, guardians, and caregivers, when appropriate; and referring students to supportive, person-centered, trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and linguistically appropriate services.

<sup>1</sup> For detailed summaries of Year 1 and Year 2 HTYPE activities, please see [HTYPE Demonstration Program: Year 1 Reflections and HTYPE Demonstration Program: Year 2 Reflections](#).



Eight federally funded local educational agencies (LEAs), in partnership with local nonprofit organizations who were subaward recipients, implemented the first cohort of the HTYPE

Demonstration Program across the country. **Table 2** provides a summary of the eight projects from 2020 through 2023.

**Table 2. HTYPE Cohort 1 Demonstration Program Projects**

Education Agency	Location	Nonprofit Subaward Recipient(s)	Student Curricula
<b>Brentwood Union Free School District</b>	Brentwood, NY (New York metro area)	ECPAT-USA	Y-ACT
<b>DeKalb County School District</b>	Stone Mountain, GA (Atlanta metro area)	Love146	Not a Number
<b>Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD)</b>	Fort Worth, TX	Unbound Fort Worth; 3Strands Global Foundation (3SGF)*	PROTECT
<b>Granite School District</b>	Salt Lake City, UT	3SGF*	PROTECT
<b>Kent Intermediate School District (regional agency)</b>	Grand Rapids, MI	Solutions to End Exploitation (SEE) (Years 1 and 2); Wedgewood Christian Services; 3SGF*	PROTECT
<b>Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) (regional agency)</b>	Downey, CA	iEmpathize	Empower Youth Program
<b>Oakland Unified School District (OUSD)</b>	Oakland, CA	MISSEY, Inc. (Years 1 and 2); BAWAR (Year 3)	Let's Talk About It (Years 1 and 2), Healthy Oakland Teens (Year 3)
<b>San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) (regional agency)</b>	San Diego, CA	Global Communities; 3SGF	PROTECT Project ROOTS, kNOw MORE

\*3SGF is national organization that developed the human trafficking prevention curriculum PROTECT. 3SGF partnered with multiple education agencies for their HTYPE projects. Three of the four HTYPE projects that partnered with 3SGF also partnered with local nonprofits.

## Data and Methods

Findings in this report come from the process evaluation of the HTYPE Demonstration Program conducted by RTI International, overseen by a partnership between OTIP and OPRE. The goals of the evaluation were to investigate and document how HTYPE projects approach and accomplish program objectives and inform the refinement of future implementation and evaluation strategies.

RTI carried out its process evaluation of HTYPE from 2020 through 2023 using four primary methods: primary qualitative interviews and focus groups, primary quantitative surveys, analysis of secondary program data, and review of prevention curricula.

### Qualitative Interviews and Focus Groups

We collected three types of qualitative data: (1) interviews in Years 1 through 3 with award recipients (project directors, project coordinators, and nonprofit partners) at each of the eight project sites; (2) focus groups in Year 3 with educators and

school staff who participated in program activities at any time; and (3) HTSSP walk-through interviews in Year 3 with educators and staff who had used the HTSSP in response to a suspected incident of student human trafficking. In Years 1 and 2, we conducted award recipient interviews virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In Year 3, we conducted interviews and focus groups both virtually and in-person. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by either a member of the research team or by a professional transcription company. **Table 3** provides an overview of data sources by HTYPE program year.

We used the flexible in-depth coding process<sup>2</sup> to analyze qualitative data from Years 1 through 3 in QSR NVivo 12.0, a qualitative data analysis software. After data collection completion in each respective year, a team of two coders applied a set of descriptive index codes to all transcripts. Then, a larger team took on a small number of large index codes and broke out subcodes by analytic themes.

**Table 3. Overview of Qualitative Data Collection**

Program Year	School Year	Data Sources
Year 1	2020–2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEA program director (N=8)</li> <li>• Nonprofit partner representative (N=9)</li> <li>• Law enforcement partner (N=3)</li> </ul>
Year 2	2021–2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEA program director (N=7)</li> <li>• LEA program coordinator (N=8)</li> <li>• Nonprofit partner representative (N=8)</li> </ul>
Year 3	2022–2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEA program director (N=8)</li> <li>• LEA program coordinator (N=5)</li> <li>• Nonprofit partner representative (N=8)</li> <li>• Focus groups with educators and staff participants (N=18 focus groups with 72 participants)</li> <li>• HTSSP walk-through interviews (N=12)</li> <li>• Review of prevention curricula (N=10 student curricula across 8 project sites with some project sites using separate curricula by specific grade levels; N=5 educator/staff prevention curricula, with 4 of 8 project sites using the same curricula for educators/staff)</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Deterding, N. M., & Waters, M. C. (2021). Flexible coding of in-depth interviews: A Twenty-First-Century approach. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 50(2), 708–739.

### **Quantitative Surveys**

We also conducted two surveys: a survey of educators and staff who taught the student prevention curriculum (implementer survey) and a survey of school administrators at HTYPE participating schools (administrator survey). We fielded both surveys during the summer of 2023, after the end of the third year of program implementation.

To create a sampling frame for each survey, we asked a main point of contact at each HTYPE project—typically the project director or project coordinator—to provide a list of names and email contact information for every educator/staff who taught the student prevention education across the three years of the program and one school leader per participating school who was most informed about the HTYPE program at their school. This posed two key challenges. First, many of the educators, staff, and administrators at HTYPE participating schools were no longer employed by their respective districts. Second, HTYPE project directors and coordinators had a difficult time identifying one administrator per school who could answer a survey about the program. These challenges impacted survey response rates.

A member of the RTI team programmed each survey using the Voxco online survey platform. We launched the survey with respondents from each project site as they finalized their survey respondent lists. We fielded the surveys between June 2023 and August 2023.

The response rate was 7% for the administrator survey. Due to the very low response rate of the administrator survey and inadequate representation of administrators across all project sites, we do not report findings from this respondent group in this report.

We administered the implementer survey to 551 school staff who were identified by a project director or coordinator as being involved in the delivery of HTYPE prevention education for students. A total of 126 respondents submitted a completed or partially completed survey (a response rate of 22.8%). Each project site, except for DeKalb, had representation from at least one respondent (Brentwood=8; Fort Worth=37; Granite=44; Kent=10; Los Angeles=1; Oakland=3; San Diego=23). Respondents identified themselves as general education or physical education/health teachers (26%); school counselors, psychologists, or social workers (62%); prevention, intervention, or behavioral health specialists (6%); or other roles/not specified (6%).

We conducted descriptive analysis of data from the implementer survey by examining frequency distributions and summary statistics (i.e., means, standard deviations, and ranges) for each item. In some cases, we recoded variables to create meaningful categories or to simplify results. For example, one item collected information on the respondent's job title, which we collapsed into three categories: teachers; counselors, social workers, and other mental health support staff; and all other staff roles. We reviewed responses to open-ended questions and categorized them into groups based on similarities in themes or observations (e.g., challenges of implementation, positive feedback about curricula).

We also conducted a series of regression models to assess whether there were statistically significant relationships between two or more theoretically related variables. For example, we tested for statistically significant differences across job title categories for multiple items of interest (e.g., whether the respondent reported that they had reviewed their school's HTSSP or knew where to access the HTSSP; respondents' perceptions of the appropriateness of the program curriculum for the students' age and comprehension levels).

We also tested whether respondents' perceptions of their preparedness to teach the prevention curricula to students was statistically associated with several outcomes, including levels of student engagement and understanding. We employed ordinary least squares regression when the outcome variable of interest was continuous or ordinal in nature, and we used logistic regression for binary outcomes. Because respondents were nested within project sites, all regression models incorporated a cluster correction to account for the possibility that observations were correlated within project sites. Coefficients from regression models were considered statistically significant at  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , or  $p < .001$ . These analyses are representative of only the respondents in the sample and cannot be generalized to all implementers of human trafficking prevention education.

### **Secondary Program Data**

We analyzed performance reporting data submitted by project sites for both FY2022 (Year 2;  $n=7$ ) and FY2023 (Year 3;  $n=8$ ).<sup>3</sup> Award recipients did not submit performance reporting data in Year 1 because they did not begin implementation efforts until Year 2. For Years 2 and 3, project sites reported quarterly totals across several performance measures related to HTYPE prevention education for educators (e.g., number of educators and other staff trained to recognize and respond to human trafficking); prevention education for students (e.g., number of students who completed the HTYPE curriculum); training of trainers (ToT) activities (e.g., number of trainers trained to implement HTYPE for students); and the HTSSP (e.g., number of students identified as potential victims of human trafficking). We summed quarterly totals to produce total counts for Year 2, total counts for Year 3, and overall program totals (the sum of counts from Years 2 and 3) for project sites from which we received performance reporting data.



<sup>3</sup> Of the eight project sites, we did not have performance reporting data for one site in Year 2.



## HTYPE Across the Years

Across the 3-year period of performance, award recipients across all eight project sites made significant progress toward their program goals (**Table 4**). In Year 1, HTYPE projects struggled with initial project startup due to the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic but were still able to develop LEA-nonprofit relationships, create and revise their prevention curricula, and create and revise their HTSSPs. Project sites moved from the startup phase to initial delivery of prevention curricula and activation of HTSSPs in Year 2 and made important modifications to program activities based on this

initial implementation phase. By Year 3, almost all project sites were maintaining or increasing their delivery of key program activities (e.g., providing prevention education to students) and planning for program sustainability for after the completion of the Demonstration Grant period.

In the following subsections, we focus on three key accomplishments and their evolution across the 3-year project period: the growth in curricula delivery, the development and content of student and educator/staff prevention curricula, and the evolution of project partnerships.

**Table 4. HTYPE Major Accomplishments Across Years 1–3**

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hiring key project staff</li> <li>• Establishing and enhancing partnerships</li> <li>• Revising student and educator/staff prevention education programs</li> <li>• Developing and revising HTSSPs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering prevention education to students</li> <li>• Delivering prevention education to educators/staff</li> <li>• Training qualified staff to deliver project activities</li> <li>• Using the HTSSP</li> <li>• Maintaining and developing new partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing delivery of prevention education to students</li> <li>• Continuing delivery of prevention education to educators/staff</li> <li>• Training qualified staff to train other staff to deliver project activities</li> <li>• Continuing use of HTSSPs</li> <li>• Planning for program sustainability</li> </ul>

## Growth of HTYPE Over 3 Years

All project sites submitted performance reporting data for Year 3, and all but one submitted data for Year 2. Using data that was provided by project sites, we summed and analyzed quarterly counts for numerous performance measures to identify the total number of schools, educators, and students that participated in the HTYPE program and the number of students identified as potential victims of human trafficking subsequent to HTSSP implementation (Table 5). Performance measures indicated that across seven project sites that provided Year 2 data, and eight project sites that provided Year 3 data, 715 schools delivered prevention education

**Award recipients implemented HTYPE activities in more than 700 schools, delivering human trafficking prevention education to more than 10,000 educators and staff and 38,000 students.**

for more than 10,000 educators and school staff, and 658 schools delivered prevention education to approximately 38,000 students (64% of whom were middle and high school students, 36% were elementary students). Additionally, 120 staff members were trained to implement HTYPE for educators and other staff (primarily in two project sites), and more than 1,300 were trained to implement HTYPE for students.

**Table 5. Year 2 and 3 Counts for Primary Program Activities**

Primary Activity	Count by Measure	Y2 Total*	Y3 Total	Total
Prevention Education for Educators and Staff	Schools implementing HTYPE for educators/staff	266	449	715
	Educators/staff trained to recognize and respond to HT	9,106	1,145	10,251
Prevention Education for Students	Schools implementing HTYPE for elementary students	182	142	324
	Elementary students who completed HTYPE curriculum	6,031	7,650	13,681
	Schools Implementing HTYPE for middle and high school students	148	186	334
	Middle and high school students who completed HTYPE curriculum	8,937	15,398	24,335
Training Qualified Staff to Deliver Program Activities	Trainers trained to implement HTYPE for educators/staff	82	38	120
	Trainers trained to implement HTYPE for students	1,012	333	1,345
Human Trafficking School Safety Protocol	Schools implementing the HTSSP	167	373	540
	Students identified as potential victims of human trafficking	48	59	107
	Potential human trafficking cases reported to child welfare	24	31	55
	Potential human trafficking cases reported to law enforcement	17	24	41
	Students referred to community resource or service providers due to potential human trafficking concerns	49	41	90

\*Y2 total excludes counts for one site whose performance reporting data was not available.

More than 500 schools were reported to have implemented an HTSSP, and 107 students were identified as potentially having experienced or experiencing human trafficking across project sites since the beginning of Year 2. Additionally, educators and staff contacted child welfare, law enforcement, and community resource or service providers for dozens of students who were identified as potentially having experienced or experiencing human trafficking. Specifically, 55 potential human trafficking cases were reported to child welfare, and 41 potential human trafficking cases were reported to law enforcement; 90 students were also referred to community resources due to safety concerns.<sup>4</sup>

By analyzing annual totals from Year 2 to Year 3, we also identified patterns in the timeframes for which various HTYPE activities were conducted. Year 2 activities were most likely to involve the delivery of prevention education to educators/staff, as well as ToT efforts (i.e., training staff to deliver prevention education for staff or students). Specifically, 89% of educators and other staff who received prevention education received it in Year 2 (compared to 11% in Year 3). Likewise, more than two-thirds of staff trained to deliver prevention education for educators/staff and students received this training in Year 2. Conversely, activities that were more common in Year 3 included delivering prevention curricula for students and activating the HTSSP. Of the students who completed the HTYPE curriculum, 61% did so in Year 3. The number of elementary school students who received prevention education increased by 27% from Year 2 to Year 3, whereas the number of middle and high school students who received prevention education increased by 72%.

**More than 100 students were identified as potential victims of human trafficking since the beginning of Year 2, resulting in dozens of cases being reported to law enforcement or child welfare agencies. Ninety students were also referred to community resources due to safety concerns.**

Sixty-nine percent of schools activated their respective HTSSP in Year 3 (compared to 31% in Year 2). Despite substantially more schools implementing the HTSSP in Year 3, the number of students identified as potential victims of human trafficking was only marginally higher in Year 3 (55% were identified in Year 3, compared to 45% in Year 2).

### **Review of Student and Educator/Staff Prevention Curricula**

We conducted a systematic review of both student and educator/staff prevention education curriculum materials to summarize the key content and components of the HTYPE Demonstration Program's human trafficking prevention education. We developed a structured review form to guide the project team's review of five educator/staff prevention education curricula and 10 student prevention education curricula.<sup>5</sup> Our review of curricula materials included PowerPoint slides, facilitator guides, videos, and supplementary materials (e.g., handouts, worksheets, resource guides). The review of both educator and student prevention curricula involved the documentation of multiple topics that could have been covered in each project site's materials (e.g., prevalence

<sup>4</sup> Performance reporting data forms for the HTYPE Demonstration Program award recipients ask for four separate metrics: the number of students identified as potential victims of human trafficking, the number of students referred to law enforcement, the number of students referred to the child welfare system, and the number of students referred to community resources due to potential human trafficking concerns. The three questions regarding referrals to sources outside of schools are not asked as subsets of the total number of students identified as potentially experiencing human trafficking, and it is possible that a given student could have been referred to none, all, or a subset of these referral sources.

<sup>5</sup> Four project sites used the same educator/staff prevention education curriculum; therefore, a single review of this curriculum applied to all of these project sites. The other four project sites used distinct curricula, and each one was reviewed by the project team. Within project sites, separate curricula were sometimes implemented with different grade levels of students. Specifically, the 10 student curricula included two 6th-12th grade curricula used by two different project sites, an 8th-12th grade curriculum used by one project site, a 7th-8th grade curriculum used by four project sites, a 9th-10th grade curriculum used by four project sites, an 11th-12th grade curriculum used by four project sites, and four separate curricula customized by grade level (4th-5th grade, 6th-8th grade, 9th-10th grade, and 11th-12th grade) used by one project site.

of trafficking, negative impacts of trafficking victimization, barriers to leaving a trafficking situation, and protective factors).

The educator/staff and student prevention curricula covered many of the same topics, including definitions of human trafficking, risk factors and warning signs of human trafficking, recruitment and grooming strategies used by traffickers, and actionable steps to getting help for trafficking and related incidents amongst students. The primary differences between educator/staff and student curricula included a more primary focus on healthy and unhealthy relationships in the student curricula; the stronger interactive nature of the student curricula and incorporation of multiple opportunities for students to engage in a variety of activities (whereas the interactive components of educator/staff curricula were mostly limited to group discussions and scenario-based exercises); the emphasis on the impact of trauma and trauma-informed principles and strategies in the educator/staff curricula; and discussions of the HTSSP and formal procedures for responding to a student disclosure or concern about a student in the educator/staff curricula.

### ***Educator/Staff Prevention Curricula***

Each educator/staff curriculum covered multiple topics in varying degrees, but several areas were especially likely to be covered in depth in all project sites. These included the following:

- definitions of sex and labor trafficking and the use of force, fraud, and coercion as mechanisms for perpetrating trafficking;
- characteristics that make individuals vulnerable to trafficking (i.e., “risk factors”);
- indicators or signs students may be experiencing human trafficking (i.e., “red flags”);
- recruitment and grooming tactics and processes used by traffickers;
- protective factors against trafficking victimization; and
- procedures for responding to disclosure or suspicion that a student is experiencing trafficking.

**Table 6** summarizes several key topics covered in educator/staff curricula.

**Table 6. Common Topics in Educator/Staff Curricula Across HTYPE Project Sites**

Common Warning Signs	Characteristics of Individuals Who May Disproportionately Experience Trafficking	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained absenteeism</li> <li>• Signs of physical trauma</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Hunger</li> <li>• Isolation</li> <li>• Having an older partner or friend</li> <li>• Working long hours</li> <li>• Suddenly having expensive possessions (e.g., jewelry, clothing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of trauma and abuse</li> <li>• Homelessness or unstable housing</li> <li>• Being LGBTQ+*</li> <li>• History of involvement in the juvenile justice or child welfare systems</li> <li>• Having disabilities</li> <li>• Experiencing problems at home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections with supportive and trustworthy adults and friends</li> <li>• Positive self-image</li> <li>• Self-control</li> <li>• Knowing how to use social media and online platforms safety</li> </ul>

\*At the time of curricula development, award recipients were instructed to use “LGBTQ+” as the preferred initialism for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer and questioning people; therefore we use LGBTQ+ when referring to the curricula.



### **Student Prevention Curricula**

Student curricula used multiple videos to discuss or illustrate core concepts and safety strategies, including animated videos depicting trafficking or exploitation-related scenarios, clips from television shows, music videos, interviews with survivors of trafficking, and dramatic reenactments of dangerous situations.

Topics most likely to be covered in student prevention education curricula included healthy and unhealthy relationships; vulnerability and risk; online safety; protection strategies and resources for getting help; trafficking; and recognizing and responding to human trafficking.

Other terms related to trafficking or exploitation commonly discussed in the student curricula included abuse, isolation, image-based sexual abuse, and neglect.

All 10 student curricula also described strategies for engaging with online social media and other virtual platforms safely. Students were prompted to read or watch scenarios depicting unsafe online behaviors and then discuss what their inner voice tells them about the situation and what steps could be taken in that scenario to prevent danger or to get help.

With one exception (a curriculum for elementary level students), all curricula also discussed recruitment and grooming tactics, including identification of a target, gaining trust and access to a victim, isolation of the victim, abuse, and control. All 10 curricula also covered characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships and discussed concepts related to trust, consent, personal boundaries, and empathy.

Collectively, the student curricula presented numerous strategies for promoting engagement and comprehension of materials, including the use of videos and illustrations to describe difficult subject

matter (e.g., an animated video depicting a scenario in which a young girl is tricked into performing a sex act, followed by an opportunity for students to journal their reactions and answers to guided questions); interactive activities to apply information and practice safety strategies (e.g., role playing activities, group discussions, opportunities to analyze and react to song lyrics); and worksheets for applying information they have learned. Trainings in many project sites also used various strategies for helping students feel safe and comfortable during lessons, including anonymous question boxes, mindfulness exercises, and the incorporation of trauma-informed principles into facilitator guides.

### **Examples of Human Trafficking in Student Prevention Curricula**

#### **Sex Trafficking**

- A young person is kicked out of their home and engages in sexual acts to earn money for food.
- A person is subjected to physical abuse and forced to have sex in exchange for a safe place to sleep.
- A person responds to an advertisement about a job opportunity but is tricked into having sex for money.

#### **Labor Trafficking**

- A young person starts a new job but is asked to work for less than minimum wage and is threatened by the employer if they try to quit.
- Someone is forced to sell drugs by someone else who uses physical, emotional, or sexual abuse to control them.
- Someone is recruited online to sell magazines but works long hours without pay.

### **Curricula Development and Feedback**

In addition to the primary review of prevention education curricula using final, approved materials submitted by project sites to OTIP, RTI also reviewed multiple draft versions of curriculum materials prepared by the project sites that contained comments, tracked changes, and other types of feedback provided by OTIP and the National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center. The RTI team used a structured form to conduct reviews of feedback materials and asked reviewers to document whether materials contained tracked changes or other suggestions relating to grammar, formatting, or the inclusion or modification of visual or graphical representations (e.g., charts, graphics, images). Likewise, reviewers documented instances in which project sites were asked to clarify or rephrase specific terms or definitions related to various subject matter; add terms, definitions, additional information, or examples related to various subject matter; or align terms or definitions to language used by federal, state, or other agencies/organizations.

All project sites were asked to make at least one clarification or to add at least one term or topical area in each of their student and staff curriculum materials. Across suggested revisions to add, clarify, or align core terms in the curricula, project sites were most likely to receive suggestions to add, clarify, or align content around human and labor trafficking, exploitation, vulnerability, gender pronouns, and LGBTQ+ inclusive language.

Project sites also received suggestions to clarify or add content related to activities and exercises, resources and supplementary materials, procedures, and teaching strategies. Most commonly, project sites were asked to add or clarify content related to how the instructor would teach or facilitate a specific topic or module, adding scenario-based exercises in both student and staff/educator curricula, adding resources for learning more information or for getting help, adding to or

clarifying content provided in supplementary materials (e.g., posters, handouts), and adding to or clarifying information related to reporting procedures.

### **Evolution of Project Partnerships**

A key feature of the HTYPE Demonstration Grant Program was developing project partnerships between not only the LEA and their nonprofit partner, but also between the HTYPE project and other community-based organizations, government organizations, and people with lived experience in human trafficking. Below, we summarize how these partnerships evolved over the 3-year program based on interviews we conducted with project directors (N=8 in Year 1, N=7 in Year 2, and N=8 in Year 3), project coordinators (N=8 in Year 2, N=5 in Year 3), and nonprofit partners (N=9 in Year 1, N=8 in Year 2, N=8 in Year 3).

#### **LEA-Nonprofit Partnerships**

The primary partnership in each HTYPE project was between the LEA award recipient (represented by the HTYPE project director and project coordinator) and the nonprofit partner subrecipient. As discussed in the Year 1 and Year 2 Reflections reports, the collaboration between LEAs and nonprofit partners evolved from establishing partnerships to more intensive collaboration creating and revising prevention education curricula and HTSSPs.

#### **Primary Types of HTYPE Partnerships**



Criminal justice agencies



Child welfare agencies



Community-based organizations



People with lived experience

By Year 3, many award recipients reported less collaboration with their nonprofit partner once their curricula had been fully approved and delivery had begun. Although nonprofit partners may play a role in making any additional revisions or adaptations to curricula materials and providing support and troubleshooting for curricula delivery issues, for the most part, it was school-based educators who were delivering student prevention activities or educators and staff who were self-administering their intended prevention trainings. Project sites where prevention education for educators was delivered in person had higher rates of nonprofit partner engagement because they were often co-delivering these trainings. There was also one instance in which the award recipient changed their primary project partner and two where the project's nonprofit partner organization had closed operations or key contacts had left the organization by Year 3.

The primary element in which nonprofit partners were involved was the creation and development of additional ToT activities. These new ToT activities were to train other educators and staff on how to teach other educators to teach student prevention curricula, or, in other words, to replicate what the nonprofit partners themselves were often doing in the HTYPE Demonstration Program.

In Year 3, award recipients and project partners were also planning for program sustainability. In some project sites, award recipients did not feel like they needed to partner formally with their nonprofit partner in the future because their partners primarily supplied the curricula and had successfully trained school-based educators to deliver it. Others expressed the desire to continue partnering with their nonprofit partner but felt they could not because the end of the grant meant the end of funding to compensate them as subrecipients or consultants. In other project sites, award recipients and nonprofit partners were actively discussing continuing their partnerships in informal or formal ways after the end of the HTYPE Demonstration Program.



**ON CONTINUED  
PARTNERSHIPS:**

*[Project Coordinator] and I will still communicate on a scheduled basis, perhaps not every week as we do so now under the grant, but perhaps twice a month, coming together to see possible visits to the school district just to see if there's a greater need for collaboration... So, if there's any way of collaborating under a specific grant, we would be more than happy to.*

— **NONPROFIT PARTNER**

### ***Other Community-Based Organizations***

Another key partnership in each HTYPE project site was the relationship between other nonprofit community-based organizations (CBOs) and the HTYPE team. In Year 1, project directors, coordinators, and nonprofit partners engaged a range of CBOs primarily in the creation of their respective HTSSPs. Because creating the HTSSP involved identifying supportive services for students who had experienced human trafficking and other challenges, HTYPE staff identified many CBOs as referral sources for their HTSSPs. Some of these CBOs were partners of the HTYPE nonprofit partner from existing human trafficking task forces or other coalitions, and others had previous experience working with specific schools and school districts. The new HTYPE grant and its HTSSP requirement often solidified informal collaborations with these CBOs. In Years 2 and 3, project sites continued drawing on these relationships with CBOs, but several project sites reported less active involvement apart from referrals to these CBOs as a result of educators activating their respective HTSSPs. Some project sites reported engaging new CBOs to meet emergent student needs, such as a CBO that serves immigrant community members to support a noncitizen student who may have experienced trafficking. Some of these CBOs became potential new partners once the HTYPE Demonstration Grant period ended.

### ***Criminal Justice and Child Welfare Agencies***

HTYPE project sites collaborated with criminal justice and child welfare agencies primarily to inform development of their respective HTSSPs in Year 1 and as referral sources for students identified as experiencing trafficking or other harms in Years 2 and 3. Like their relationships with CBOs, nonprofit partners often had preexisting partnerships with criminal justice and child welfare actors as part of existing human trafficking task forces and other work

outside of schools and districts. Some HTYPE project sites brought in law enforcement representatives as part of their prevention education for educators or ToT activities. A few project sites were in schools and districts that were undergoing active conversations about the role of law enforcement on their school campuses; in one project site, the HTYPE project director sought relationships with other government agencies, such as an agency focused on community violence, in lieu of formal law enforcement. Other project sites had relationships with district-based school resource officers or local law enforcement agencies and interfaced with them as part of activating their HTSSPs.

### ***People with Lived Experience***

Almost all HTYPE award recipients engaged people with lived experience of human trafficking in the development and implementation of their prevention activities and programming across all 3 years. The involvement of people with lived experience varied across project sites, with some project sites engaging them through the nonprofit partner as one-time consultants, and other project sites engaging a lived experience expert as a core member of the HTYPE team.

As discussed in the Year 1 and Year 2 Reflections reports, it was common for people with lived experience to provide feedback and input on prevention curricula for educators and staff, HTSSPs, and other program activities. In Year 2, people with lived experience in some project sites also played a role in delivering prevention education by sharing their personal stories or takeaways on how schools can play a role in human trafficking identification and prevention in the form of live storytelling or recorded videos. Playing a part in the delivery of prevention education continued into Year 3 as the vast majority of award recipients continued their program delivery.



## Year 3 Activities and Accomplishments

In Year 3, many award recipients increased their delivery of educator/staff and student prevention education, supported additional HTSSP activation by educators/staff in response to potential human trafficking incidents amongst students, and planned for post-HTYPE Demonstration Program sustainability. Below, we summarize findings from interviews with project directors (N=8), project coordinators (N=5), and project partners (N=8) conducted in Year 3.

### Continuing Primary Program Activities

Based on Performance Progress Report data, in Year 3, several project sites greatly increased their implementation of primary program activities. Although many project sites delivered prevention education for educators/staff in Year 2, two project sites substantially increased delivery in Year 3 by at least 90%. Growth in delivery of educator/staff prevention education in some project sites may be in part due to the incorporation of prevention education in regular professional development and other staff training opportunities. Likewise, although most ToT training efforts were completed in Year 2, three project sites began or increased ToT to deliver curricula for students in Year 3.

Of the two project sites that delivered prevention education to elementary students, one project site educated a substantial number of students in Year 3, contributing to an overall increase of 27% in the number of elementary students educated from Year 2 to Year 3 across all project sites. Additionally, the number of middle and high school students who received prevention education increased by 72% from Year 2 to Year 3, driven largely by substantial increases made in five of the eight project sites. This increase was likely possible due to the investments

made in ToT trainings for implementing prevention education with students in Year 2 (and, to a lesser extent, early in Year 3). Of the seven sites that had performance reporting data for Years 2 and 3, five also experienced substantial growth in the number of schools implementing the HTSSP in Year 3 (an overall increase of 123% from Year 2 to Year 3). In Year 3, award recipients also continued to monitor curricula delivery and support educators who were delivering student prevention activities and revised curricula as appropriate. These estimates are based on data provided by seven project sites for Year 2 and eight project sites for Year 3; because one project site did not submit Year 2 data, these estimates may not reflect the totality of events or percentage changes from Year 2 to Year 3.

### Creating and Delivering Additional Curricula

In addition to increasing delivery of student and educator/staff prevention education, some project sites created additional student prevention curricula targeted at a specific age group or grade. Project sites also created an additional ToT curricula (referred to by different names across project sites, such as teacher-to-teacher training or “triple T training”) intended for educators to train other educators on how to deliver student prevention activities. The goal of this additional ToT curricula was to replicate training activities that project staff—often the nonprofit partner who developed the student curricula and trained educators to deliver it—had been delivering during the first 2 years of the project. After the conclusion of the Demonstration Grant, there would then be educators/staff at schools within each participating LEA who could continue these activities.

## Supporting HTSSP Activation

Award recipients also continued to support educators' and staff's activation of their respective HTSSPs in Year 3. In some project sites, the HTYPE project staff reported serving as the primary points of contact for educators in the district who suspected potential human trafficking among students. Instead of the educators referring to the HTSSP itself, they initially contacted the project coordinator for support in either using the HTSSP or reporting the incident to relevant school and non-school authorities. In other project sites, award recipients were not primary points of contact for suspected incidents of trafficking and therefore reported knowing of potential HTSSP activations but not the details about how that experience went for the educators/staff who reported the incident.

## Looking Ahead: Sustainability Planning

Project sites, particularly LEA-based project directors and project coordinators, spent a significant part of Year 3 planning for the continuation of program activities after the end of the HTYPE Demonstration Grant. As previously discussed, new ToT activities in each project site had the express intention of equipping school staff with the ability to train other staff to deliver prevention activities. In addition to ToT activities that were originally intended to encourage program sustainability, project sites reported two other primary considerations when planning for sustainability.

### ***Continued Use of Prevention Curricula***

First, project directors and coordinators were actively deciding how to continue using the prevention curricula that they had used over the past 3 years. In every project site, the prevention curricula for students and educators/staff were primarily created by the nonprofit partner. Considerations identified by project directors and

coordinators included who held the rights to use the curricula in the future, whether to license curricula from the nonprofit partners, how much that would cost, and whether the grant or schools would pay for it. Not all LEAs agreed with their nonprofit partners regarding who held the rights to use the curricula or the cost of licensing the curricula for schools in the future.

Some award recipients also considered making significant modifications to or changing their curricula in the future, including switching to a different set of curricula that had different features (e.g., shorter in length, virtual instead of in-person delivery). These modifications were all considered with the goal of being able to feasibly continue providing human trafficking prevention programming in their schools once the grant funding for their programs ended. One project site planned on switching to a new nonprofit partner in the future because they had a much shorter prevention curricula for students than the one they used for HTYPE, which the project director felt would be more feasible for schools to use.

### ***Other Sustainability Considerations***

Second, project directors and coordinators considered how to incorporate programming into school settings to encourage ongoing prevention activities after the end of the Demonstration Grant. In a few project sites, there were already plans to transition an HTYPE-funded project coordinator into a full-time, district-funded staff member. This would encourage continuity of activities given that the person most responsible for HTYPE programming and human trafficking prevention knowledge would stay on within the school district. In other project sites, there were plans to transition HTYPE program responsibilities onto different, district-funded staff who may be a natural fit, such as student wellness staff. Both of these methods would mean the continuation of not only prevention education

activities but also training and support for schools that wanted to continue programming or schools that newly wanted programming.

However, not every award recipient felt it was feasible to incorporate HTYPE-funded staff into regular staff or to transition HTYPE responsibilities onto existing staff. They cited challenges to program sustainability, including the lack of school and district leadership support due to other school and district priorities, turnover of both school/district leadership and educators they had trained to deliver prevention activities, and the ongoing lack of educators interested in delivering programming in addition to their existing educational responsibilities. Some strategies to counteract these challenges were to incorporate human trafficking prevention into a meaningful regular course offering, such as a health class, instead of it being taught as a separate activity or by counselors and social workers who “pushed into” or took time away from regular classes. Other project sites discussed potentially applying for new grants, including new rounds of HTYPE funding, and continuing their partnerships with their nonprofit partners or creating new partnerships, all in the service of helping continue HTYPE activities into the future.



**ON PROGRAM  
SUSTAINABILITY:**

*How do I fit human trafficking prevention in with other districts' multi-tiered systems of support? How can I...present it to our districts in ways that it's perceived as part of a bigger system and not just a standalone project that's gonna go away in 3 years?*

**— PROJECT DIRECTOR**

## Educator/Staff Participant Experiences in HTYPE

As part of Year 3 evaluation activities, RTI conducted 18 focus groups of 72 participants across the 8 project sites. Participants consisted primarily of educators and school staff who had been trained to and ultimately delivered the human trafficking prevention curricula for students in their respective project sites. These same participants often also received the prevention education for educators. In this section, we summarize their key experiences participating in the HTYPE Demonstration Program.

### Importance of Human Trafficking Prevention Education in Schools

Participants generally agreed that HTYPE activities, particularly the prevention education for students, were important and necessary in their schools. Some participants cited anecdotal incidents of abuse or trafficking in their community or school. Others expressed interest in program activities because they perceived their students to be particularly vulnerable to experiencing human trafficking due to socioeconomic and recent migration status.

**92% of survey respondents agreed that the HTYPE program addresses problems facing students in their community, and 96% believed it was important to continue implementing the program in the future.**

Participants also recognized that there were many misconceptions about trafficking that make it difficult for students and adults alike to identify realistic situations. In fact, some participants expressed believing these misconceptions until they were taught to deliver student prevention curricula, as this Year 3 focus group participant articulated: “That was my big perception of it. I mean, before this class, it was just someone that, like you said, look for that white van, someone come throw them into a van.”

Educators and staff also identified students’ use of social media as another need for student prevention activities, often emphasizing how their students were conversing with strangers online who were not age appropriate. They emphasized how the HTYPE prevention education and its focus on healthy relationships and trusted adults could help prevent harmful situations, including human trafficking.

**Survey respondents highlighted online safety and healthy relationships as the most engaging parts of human trafficking prevention education for students.**



*Our kids are meeting people from all over the place, and they feel like they’re in intimate relationships with people that they’ve never met. But they would leave their house and go meet them. And they don’t understand the fears. And their parents don’t either, because it’s not something that their parents really experienced when they were their age.*

**ON THE NEED FOR  
STUDENT PREVENTION  
EDUCATION:**

**— FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT**



## Instructors of Student Prevention Education

Schools within HTYPE project sites varied in who delivered prevention education to students. The three main instructor groups were student support staff (e.g., counselors and social workers), core curriculum teachers (e.g., English class teachers), and specialized curriculum teachers (e.g., health class teachers). Focus group participants across the eight HTYPE project sites represented each of these three primary instructor groups and echoed project staff's sentiments regarding which type of instructor was best equipped to teach the student prevention curricula.

**Survey respondents were primarily school counselors, psychologists, or social workers (62%), followed by general education or physical education/health teachers (26%), and all other staff (12%).**

### ***Benefits and Challenges of Counselors and Social Workers***

Although educators and staff did not typically make decisions regarding who would teach the curricula, counselors and social workers believed they were selected because they would in theory be more comfortable with the subject matter and could better respond to student disclosures of trafficking and other harms. One instructor in a Year 3 focus group mentioned that, because they had prior experience with certain students, "I was in a position to know which students were already struggling with something like this, then I could kind of let them know ahead of time it was coming up and give them an option to opt out." This instructor felt that the prevention education curricula fit well into the

other topics they regularly taught or facilitated as professional development sessions for teachers. Another benefit of having counselors and social workers teach the curriculum by "pushing into" classrooms was standardizing content delivery.

However, counselors and social workers also reported certain challenges with regards to teaching the prevention education curricula to students. Because they were pushing into classrooms, they faced challenges in scheduling prevention education sessions with classroom teachers. They also did not know students as well as their teachers did, and therefore could struggle with building rapport and relationships with students, which was important when teaching a complex and potentially difficult topic like human trafficking.

### **Following the Facilitator's Guide**

- Two-thirds of survey respondents reported that they followed their student curriculum facilitator's guide very closely when delivering prevention education to students.
- Counselors and other mental health staff were significantly more likely than teachers and other staff to report following the guide very closely.
- Respondents who felt almost or fully prepared to deliver prevention education to students were significantly more likely to report following the curriculum guide very closely than those who felt somewhat, barely, or not at all prepared.

### **Benefits and Challenges of Classroom Teachers**

Classroom teachers of both core and specialized curriculum classes often cited concerns over having counselors and social workers as instructors because they saw themselves as potentially a better fit to teach the student prevention curricula. They had existing, in-depth relationships with their students, had more developed classroom management skills, and more autonomy over the scheduling of curricula modules. On the other hand, teachers may not have the requisite skills or comfort to teach students about a topic like human trafficking.

Instituting the student prevention education in a core curriculum also benefitted from almost universal reach of a specific grade or class of students. For example, schools that selected one specific subject in which to teach the students chose subjects like English or health because, as

one focus group participant explained, “everybody gets an English class.” Some schools had a required class for freshman to introduce them to high school, which also served as a good setting for curriculum delivery. Focus group participants who were educators in elementary and middle schools reported being good instructors of the curriculum because they were already teaching multiple subjects to the same groups of students.

### **Preparation to Deliver Student Prevention Education**

#### **Receiving ToT**

Educators and staff identified to deliver the student prevention education in their schools participated in a ToT training, often delivered by HTYPE project staff and nonprofit partners who designed the curricula. The format of these trainings varied across and even within project sites: some participants reported



**ON COUNSELORS  
DELIVERING THE  
STUDENT PREVENTION  
CURRICULA:**

*The people that you're choosing to work with the program need to have a basic knowledge and a basic interest and it's just not a one-stop, just all of a sudden this is something you do...We are trained as school counselors to understand all of this... it helps us to have been trained and know the things that the children need to be aware of as they matriculate through elementary, middle, through high, through college or whatever.*

**— FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT**



**ON TEACHERS  
DELIVERING THE  
STUDENT PREVENTION  
CURRICULA:**

*The training that I received in person was we had our curriculum, we practiced our curriculum, we all took a piece of the curriculum. So it was a practice of the curriculum. I mean, it was okay. With my teaching background, I was able to take that curriculum. I just did a big middle school one. And I had so much fun with it and we tore it apart. We did little fun activities with it. And it felt so awesome. And the kids have been talking about it since they're coming in my office. But I wonder if that teaching background wasn't there, if it would mean something different.*

**— FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT**

taking this training virtually, while others took it in person. The length also varied, with participants reporting their ToT as short as 2 hours and as long as 2 days.

Participants highlighted several key characteristics of ToT that they felt effectively prepared them to deliver prevention education to students. Participating in smaller groups was effective, because it allowed educators and staff to be more engaged and ask honest questions. Opportunities to practice delivering content or “teach back” material to each other was also appreciated across project sites. Many participants felt their ToT experience was positive, their instructors effective and responsive to questions, and the materials they received to be comprehensive and well-organized. This was true for some participants regardless of delivery method: both virtual and in-person trainings alike could be effective.

Others had more constructive feedback for their ToT experiences. Some participants criticized the unengaging nature of the ToT, citing a lack of interactive elements, long length, and virtual delivery to be ineffective preparation for them to later teach prevention education to students. Not all participants left their ToT feeling prepared or confident to deliver prevention education; these participants often described figuring out the details and logistics of delivery by themselves or with their colleagues outside of the training, often without significant additional support from HTYPE staff.

Reading through curricula slides, re-organizing content into a familiar order, and printing off their own materials were ways in which participants, regardless of satisfaction with their ToT, familiarized themselves with curricula content before delivering material to students. Some participants also described shadowing or observing their colleagues in delivering curricula to students, including making modifications to improve delivery methods.

### Feeling Prepared to Deliver Prevention Education

- More than two-thirds of survey respondents felt almost or fully prepared to implement student prevention education following the training they received, with no statistically significant differences across different types of job titles.
- When asked to describe what would have helped them feel more prepared to implement HTYPE, nearly one-third of respondents who answered noted that it would have helped to have had more time for practicing, planning, and observing implementation.
- Staff were more likely to report feeling fully prepared to deliver prevention education to students when they received in-person training rather than virtual or hybrid forms of training.



**ON COUNSELORS  
DELIVERING THE  
STUDENT PREVENTION  
CURRICULA:**

*Our first counselor, when he [taught the curricula in] the first ever health class, pretty much our whole counseling team came in to follow and watch him. And he basically read the script line by line. And the kids were just like cellphones, just checking out, not even paying attention. So after that point in time, the rest of us counselors kind of did more—covering the curriculum, but improvising to trying to get the kids more engaged than just sitting there reading the script that came in the manual at that time.*

— FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

### Receiving Support for Curricula Delivery

Instructors generally felt prepared to present the curriculum, but they had concerns about not being able to answer students' questions appropriately or accurately or not being able to notice distressed students. This was often remedied by having a second trained professional, such as an HTYPE project coordinator or other educator experienced in delivering the curricula, observe curricula delivery and respond to students who may have difficult-to-answer questions or emotional responses to content. Others appreciated having an observer as extra validation that they were delivering the curriculum well. Apart from support for active education delivery, participants also cited regular convenings of small groups of supportive colleagues who were also teaching the student prevention curricula and ongoing support from HTYPE staff and partners as effective support for curricula delivery.

**84% of staff who were observed during an HTYPE lesson found the feedback and support they received to be somewhat or very helpful.**

### Delivering Student Prevention Education

#### Curricula Modifications

Educators and staff who delivered prevention education to students were aware that they were to deliver curricula as written to ensure fidelity.

Although some instructors reported doing so, often out of unfamiliarity with the material and a desire to follow delivery content and guidance as written, others reported making modifications to curriculum materials. The most commonly reported modification was to cut curricula material due to time constraints. Some reported making non-substantive changes, such as editing provided slides to be more visually appealing and cohesive or to remove grammatical errors. Other instructors chose to spend extra time on activities and topics that they knew would resonate with their students, like social media and labor trafficking. They also customized content to be more relevant to their students' lives and local communities, such as specifying locations mentioned and changing example names to be more culturally and geographically relevant. The goal of doing so was to improve student engagement and retention with the material.

**When asked what types of changes they made to the curriculum, respondents were most likely to report that they skipped or shortened sections (33%), delivered lessons at a frequency different from what the program recommended (14%), changed the format of program activities (13%), or changed the order of activities or lessons (9%). Reasons for making changes included having a lack of time, increasing student comprehension or engagement, and trying to minimize disruptive student behavior.**



**ON SUPPORT FROM  
HTYPE PROJECT STAFF  
DURING PREVENTION  
EDUCATION DELIVERY:**

*The reason I wanted them there is because I had never presented this before, and I didn't know how the students would react. We have a lot of students who have past traumas, and so I wanted the psychologist there so that as I was presenting, if they needed to go out and have someone to speak to that, they had someone that could take care of that.*

**— FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT**



### **Student Feedback**

Although we did not speak directly with students in elementary, middle, and high schools about their experiences receiving prevention education, we did ask focus group participants to reflect on the reactions they noticed from students in their classrooms. According to focus group participants, elementary students were receptive to content on healthy relationships and identifying trusted adults. Some educators shared that some activities or discussions were more age-appropriate for older students, but others were surprised that content they thought would be a better fit for middle schoolers still resonated well with elementary school students.

Middle schoolers were also generally receptive to the curriculum, perhaps because the topic was relatively new and different for them. Instructors appreciated that the curriculum starts off slow with basic introductions and definitions before getting into the heavier topics. Middle schoolers particularly liked the more involved activities of the curriculum, such as skits and group brainstorming sessions.

High schoolers appeared less engaged in the curriculum based on their questions and participation in interactive sections, although many instructors acknowledged that high schoolers often appear less interested in lessons than middle schoolers in general. Some instructors also noted that female students seemed more interested in the curriculum than male students, perhaps due to the perceived vulnerability of female students to human trafficking.

### **Feeling Prepared to Deliver Prevention Education**

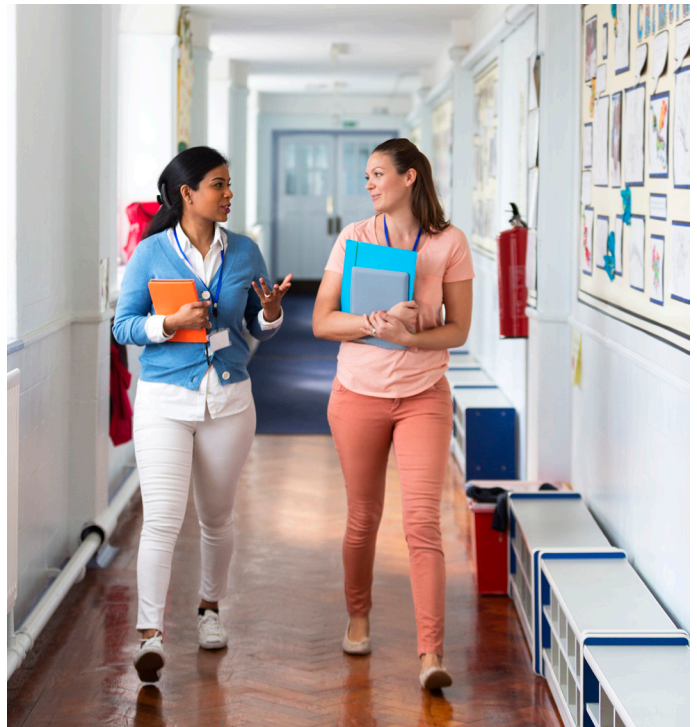
- 55% of survey respondents reported that students were almost fully engaged or fully engaged during program instruction, whereas 45% reported that students were only somewhat or not at all engaged.
- The odds of staff reporting that students were almost fully or fully engaged were 6.7 times higher among staff who reported feeling almost or fully prepared to teach the program. Staff who felt almost or fully prepared to teach the program also reported statistically significant higher levels of student understanding of curriculum content.
- The odds of staff reporting that students had a good or excellent understanding of program content were 4.4 times higher among staff who felt almost or fully prepared to teach the program relative to those who felt less prepared.
- Staff who taught elementary students reported higher levels of student engagement and understanding than those who taught only middle or high school students.

## Receiving Educator/Staff Prevention Education

Although all educators and staff who participated in focus groups across project sites had, in theory, taken the prevention education for educators/staff at some point over the past 3 years, participants had less feedback and experiences to share regarding receiving prevention education than their feedback for delivering the student prevention education. This may be because educators and staff typically only completed it at one point in time and had trouble recalling a training they took potentially over a year ago.

Those who recalled completing the training reported doing so during a professional development or other regular training, and some compared it to or thought it was incorporated alongside mandated reporter trainings with which they were familiar. These trainings were often self-administered in a virtual, asynchronous format, such as a pre-recorded lesson. Some participants received live but virtual trainings. Participants varied in what delivery format they preferred. Although some preferred the flexibility and convenience of a virtual option, others felt more engaged with an in-person or live training but recognized that it was more logistically difficult to incorporate into their schedules.

Educators and staff who received the curriculum noted that they were aware of general, big-picture issues related to human trafficking but were less familiar with the nuances of how it may manifest for students or their community. Counselors and social workers felt they gained more from the curriculum than curriculum teachers, as these participants had exposure to human trafficking and related topics in the past.



**ON THE NEED FOR  
MORE EDUCATOR/  
STAFF PREVENTION  
TRAINING:**

*It's so hard, right, with school stuff because the [professional development time] is already at a premium. There's never enough time to go through stuff. So I think refreshers and smaller doses is more realistic and more likely to have greater impact than having another all-day training, now that the staff have mostly been trained.*

**— FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT**

## HTSSP Training and Activation

A key component of the Educator and Staff Prevention Education curriculum is the overview of the HTSSP, which serves as guidance for educators and staff to identify and respond to suspected incidents of human trafficking among students. Although participants in focus groups often could not recall specific details of their respective HTSSPs, they reported knowing where or how they could find the HTSSP document if needed: “I think I would have to review it again. But I know that there’s someone here at the district who can guide me and help me and support me and get the right resources”. Some specified they would refer the incident to a main point of contact, such as the HTYPE project coordinator, instead of or in addition to referring to the HTSSP. Participants appreciated how the HTSSP included not only steps to follow in response to a trafficking incident, but also community resources to which they could connect students.

**28% of survey respondents indicated they did not know where to access the HTSSP if they needed to refer to it, and nearly one-third reported that they were not clear on what to do if they had concerns about a student, did not understand how the HTSSP applied to them, or were not aware of an HTSSP at all. The odds of teachers reporting that they were aware of the HTSSP and knew what to do if they had concerns about a student were three times higher than the odds for mental health and other staff.**

Most focus group participants had not activated, or used, their respective HTSSP in response to a potential human trafficking incident in their schools.



**ON HTSSP TRAINING:**

*Something that is helpful is having the list of the risk factors, which is incorporated in the training, and then also just the emergency numbers or numbers of who to contact in different situations. And something that’s like a one-pager [is] really handy that teachers can have or staff members can have with them.*

**— FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT**



**ON TEACHERS  
DELIVERING THE  
STUDENT PREVENTION  
CURRICULA:**

*It still makes me very nervous when we’re looking at different situations and there are some things that we’re noticing about the situations, and I think that just kind of comes with it. However, what helped me get over that little bit of nervousness is because I know I can go to the protocol, and I feel like the training has helped me to understand the protocol. It has been very effective in that. So, I can go to the protocol. I can look at the next best steps.*

**— FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT**

## Implications for School-Based Human Trafficking Prevention Programs and Research

This process evaluation documents the first cohort of the HTYPE Demonstration Program and the creation and delivery of school-based human trafficking prevention education for students and educators and school staff across eight project sites. Although each project site accomplished four primary activities (delivering prevention education for students, delivering prevention education for educators and other school staff, training qualified staff to deliver prevention activities, and implementing a Human Trafficking School Safety Protocol), how schools and school districts within each project site implemented these activities had significant variation. In this section, we describe what schools and school districts, prevention program creators, and researchers and evaluators can learn from the HTYPE award recipients when considering school-based human trafficking prevention.

### Implications for Schools and Districts Deciding to Implement Human Trafficking Prevention Programs

A key source of variation in implementing program activities was the local context of individual schools, school districts, and LEAs. How HTYPE activities were implemented was often dictated by the needs of their students and local communities, protocols and procedures in their schools and districts, and staff and resources on which they could draw. In this section, we offer key considerations for school and district leadership when deciding to implement school-based human trafficking prevention activities that are appropriate for their specific educational community and the particular contexts, resources, and constraints they may face.

### *Prevention Education for Students*

Students are one of the key intended audiences of prevention activities, but schools often faced challenges in delivering these important curricula when faced with other educational demands. School and district leadership can consider the following elements when deciding to implement prevention education for students:

- **Which students should receive prevention education?** Given time and labor constraints, schools participating in HTYPE typically chose students in a particular grade (e.g., all 9th graders) or classroom setting (e.g., 9th grade health class) in which to deliver prevention education. Districts and schools also decided whether elementary, middle, or high school students would receive this information. Some schools focused on a particular population of students (e.g., English language learners).
- **Who should teach the prevention education to students?** Some schools chose counselors or social workers, while others chose a classroom teacher. Although the intent of HTYPE was to equip qualified educators and school staff with the ability to continue program activities after the end of the HTYPE Demonstration Program, other prevention programs exclusively use instructors from local nonprofit and other organizations.
- **Will students' parents and guardians need to provide consent for students to receive prevention education? If so, how will parent/guardian permission be achieved?** Schools in states or districts with active parental consent policies face additional challenges in getting this permission, while other schools did not require permission at all.



- **What should prevention curricula teach and how should it be taught?** Most HTYPE prevention education for students covered the same core content (e.g., knowledge on human trafficking and related exploitation, healthy relationships, identifying trusted adults) intended to equip students with the skills to prevent trafficking and turn to a trusted adult if they or a peer experienced harm. The curricula varied in length, the number of modules, and specific types of multimedia content and interactive activities. These elements also varied by age group, grade, and classroom context. In practice, instructors often modified curricula elements in response to student engagement and scheduling constraints.

### ***Prevention Education for Educators and School Staff***

Equipping educators and school staff with knowledge of human trafficking and the skills to respond to potential incidents among students is another key goal of the HTYPE Demonstration Program. However, educators and staff themselves face similar constraints on their time and responsibilities. Schools and districts considering delivering prevention education for educators and staff can consider the following:

- **How should educators and staff receive prevention education?** Schools delivered prevention education for educators in a wider range of ways than they did for students. Although some schools incorporated prevention education into educators' and staff's regular professional development offerings, others delivered it as standalone trainings. Some were virtual and asynchronous self-administered trainings, while others were live virtual or in-person activities. Schools also varied in the time of year they delivered prevention education for educators and staff, as well as whether this training was mandatory. There are trade-offs to various delivery methods that schools could carefully consider.

- **What is the process of incorporating additional trainings for educators and staff in a particular district or school?** Award recipients in Year 2 described many roadblocks to implementing prevention education for teachers given constraints on their professional development availability and teachers' union guidelines on the number of hours educators could spend on these trainings, among other contract guidelines.

### ***Human Trafficking School Safety Protocol***

Another key activity in the HTYPE Demonstration Program was creating an HTSSP and training educators and staff in participating schools to use this tool. Once trained, educators and staff could use or activate the HTSSP in response to suspected incidents of human trafficking among students. Educators and staff were often trained on the HTSSP as part of their prevention education for educators. As educators/staff and students alike learned about human trafficking and how to identify it among students, the HTSSP provided educators/staff with actionable steps for notifying school leadership and reporting to external government authorities. Schools that intend to deliver human trafficking prevention education could equip educators and staff with skills to respond to human trafficking by considering the following:

- **Should the steps within an HTSSP be a standalone protocol or incorporated into existing school safety and mandated reporting protocols?** In some schools and districts, the HTSSP was a standalone protocol that existed alongside other safety and mandated reporting protocols. In others, HTSSP steps were incorporated as part of other school safety protocols and not designated as a separate tool. Some educators and staff who referred to the HTSSP were often not clear on the difference between a standalone protocol and their existing reporting procedures.

- **How often will the HTSSP be updated, and who will update it?** The HTSSP for participating schools included sources for community-based referrals, including nonprofit service providers who could provide advocacy, legal services, victim services, and other care for students. Award recipients shared that as new student needs emerged and as contacts at referral agencies changed, however, this information needs to be updated and re-disseminated to educators and staff.
- **Who are the intended users of the HTSSP? How can the HTSSP be usable, familiar, and accessible to intended users?** In some schools, educators and staff members were the intended users, while other schools specified counselors, human trafficking leads, or HTYPE staff as the primary intended users of the HTSSP. In focus groups with educators and staff who had received prevention education and, in theory, received training on the HTSSP, participants often could not recall specifics about the HTSSP, including where it was located. They did, however, feel confident they could find it or ask a point of contact for additional guidance. HTSSP walkthrough interview participants did not always feel confident about using the HTSSP. Refresher trainings, reminders, checklist versions that linked to the full protocol, and digital and hardcopy versions were all strategies award recipients used to keep educators and staff updated about their respective HTSSP.

For additional detailed guidance on how schools can create and implement an HTSSP, please see the [Human Trafficking School Safety Protocol Toolkit](#).

### Implications for Creators of Human Trafficking Prevention Education Curricula

Our review of student and educator prevention curricula revealed many common themes in content and activities across all HTYPE project sites: They provide foundational knowledge of human trafficking and provide adults and students alike with the skills to prevent and respond to human trafficking.

In this section, we summarize some additional considerations that came out of interviews and focus groups with HTYPE project staff and program participants.

- **How has prevention curricula incorporated the feedback, perspectives, and experiences of people with lived experience into curricula content, scenarios, and activities?** Award recipients and their project partners, including people with lived experience, emphasized the importance of incorporating the experiences of people with lived experience in designing meaningful scenarios for curricula and motivating intended audiences about the importance of this topic.
- **How does curricula incorporate and respond to diverse student experiences, including those of students who may disproportionately experience human trafficking (e.g., students with limited English proficiency, newcomer students, LGBTQIA2S+ students, students with disabilities and other learning needs)?** Some schools reported high numbers of newcomer students, for example, who they identified as especially in need of trafficking prevention education. However, only one project site had translated curricula materials and delivered it in a language other than English. Other award recipients described making small modifications to curricula content to reflect their local community and the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of their students.
- **How are student curricula materials organized and formatted to facilitate effective delivery?** Educators and staff who delivered student prevention education often complimented the professional nature of prevention education materials. However, there were instances in which they noticed small errors such as typos, misnumbering, and disorganized facilitation materials. These errors, while not substantive, were noticed by educators and staff who felt these errors hindered their ability to teach the curricula given their limited time and other responsibilities.

## Conclusion

The eight project sites in the first cohort of the HTYPE Demonstration Program accomplished their key program activities across the 3-year program. All eight project sites created and revised prevention curricula, developed necessary project partnerships, created and adopted HTSSPs, and secured buy-in from a variety of school and district leaders, educators and staff, and students' parents and families. Despite important challenges across the project period, particularly those in Year 1

during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, award recipients and their participating districts and schools ultimately delivered prevention education in over 700 schools to over 10,000 educators and staff and 38,000 students. The lessons they learned and the variation by which they implemented project activities can inform other ongoing and future school-based human trafficking prevention programs.

This report was developed as part of the process evaluation of the HTYPE Demonstration Grant Program. Broadly, the goals of the evaluation are to investigate and document how projects approach and accomplish the goals of the HTYPE Demonstration Grant Program, and to inform the refinement of future implementation and evaluation strategies.

The evaluation is part of the [Human Trafficking Policy and Research Analyses Project](#), which aims to advance the scope of knowledge and data around human trafficking by identifying priority areas for learning, and conducting a series of studies that can immediately impact practice. All studies are overseen by the ACF Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in collaboration with OTIP, and conducted by RTI International.

For additional information about the Human Trafficking Policy and Research Analyses Project or the evaluation of the HTYPE Demonstration Program, please contact OPRE Project Officers Mary Mueggenborg ([Mary.Mueggenborg@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:Mary.Mueggenborg@acf.hhs.gov)) and Kelly Jedd McKenzie ([Kelly.McKenzie@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:Kelly.McKenzie@acf.hhs.gov)) or RTI Project Director Rebecca Pfeffer ([rpfeffer@rti.org](mailto:rpfeffer@rti.org)).