

SURVIVOR MENTORING RESULTS FROM A 3 YEAR EVALUATION



The My Life My Choice evaluation study was a longitudinal, multi-site evaluation funded by the National Institute of Justice. It was conducted by researchers from the Boston University School of Public Health and the Northeastern School of Criminology and Criminal Justice. The purpose was to assess whether youth who participate in the My Life My Choice Survivor Mentoring Program benefit from it. The Survivor Mentoring Program pairs a survivor of commercial sexual exploitation with a child who has experienced exploitation or is very high risk for commercial sexual exploitation, with the goal of helping them recover from trauma, re-stabilize, and empowering them to move from victimhood to a position of leadership and strength. My Life My Choice is the longest anti-trafficking organization using a comprehensive survivor mentoring model.

KEY OUTCOMES

- Youth were **3 TIMES LESS LIKELY** to report having been commercially sexually exploited in the past six months after having been involved with My Life My Choice mentoring for one year.
- After one year with My Life My Choice, crime perpetration by mentees **DECREASED BY 35%** and there was a **54% DECREASE** in the percent of youth arrested or detained by the police.
- After one year with My Life My Choice, illicit drug use **DECREASED BY 30%**.
- Youth were **4 TIMES LESS LIKELY TO REPORT PARTICIPATING IN SEXUALLY EXPLICIT BEHAVIOR** in the past six months after having been involved with My Life My Choice mentoring for six months.
- After one year with My Life My Choice, youth were **1.4 TIMES MORE LIKELY** to have adequate social support.



EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

To our knowledge, this is the first study to evaluate the efficacy of a survivor mentor program for commercially-sexually exploited youth using data directly collected from youth over a longitudinal period.

The positive results of the evaluation suggest that the My Life My Choice Survivor Mentor Program may have helped to bring about positive changes in the lives of children receiving mentoring services with regard to commercial sexual exploitation, drug use, coping skills related to stress, mental health, social support, sexually explicit behavior and involvement with law enforcement. Results show the Survivor Mentoring Program may have reduced commercial sexual exploitation and decreased adverse experiences for high-risk youth.

"MY MENTOR TAUGHT ME WHAT HOPE WAS. SHE TAUGHT ME HOW TO TRUST. SHE INSPIRED ME TO WANT TO BE THE BEST PERSON I CAN BE."

-MENTEE

METHODOLOGY

A total of 41 youth participated in the evaluation of the Survivor Mentoring Program in the greater Boston area. Youth who received survivor mentorship were surveyed prior to starting services, six months after being connected to a survivor mentor and again one year after starting mentoring services. Youth engaged in mentoring also participated in qualitative interviews so that researchers could better understand their experiences. The My Life My Choice Exploitation Prevention Curriculum was also evaluated and results show that participation in the program is associated with reduced risk of commercial sexual exploitation. The results are posted on our website.

DEMOGRAPHICS

GENDER	
Female	96%
Male	2%
Transgender or Nonbinary	2%
RACE/ETHNICITY	
Native American or Alaskan Native	2%
Black/African American	10%
Hispanic/Latina	29%
Multi-racial	20%
White/Non-Hispanic	29%
Other	10%
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	
Heterosexual	58%
LGBQIA+	42%

Rothman, E.F., Preis, S.R., Bright, K.T., Paruk, J., Bair-Merritt, M., Farrell, A. (2019). A Longitudinal Evaluation of a Survivor-Mentor Program for Child Survivors of Sex Trafficking in the United States. Child Abuse and Neglect.