

STAGE OF CHANGE:

I. PRE-CONTEMPLATION

Your Child may:

1. Deny being sexually exploited
2. Disclose involvement in “the life” but does not present it as a problem
3. Is defensive
4. Does not want your help, wants you to “stay out of my business”

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE WITH CSEC VICTIMS

1. Not ready to talk about their abuse
 - “I love my ‘daddy.’ He takes care of me.”
2. Will defend or protect their abuser/trafficker
 - “I’m happy making money.”
3. Does not want help or intervention
 - “I’m good with the way things are.”
 - “I make money doing what other people give away for free.”
 - “I don’t need to change.” or “I can’t change.”

PARENT/CAREGIVER’S GOALS

1. Build trust and understanding
 - “I can understand why you feel that way.”
2. Ensure that your child feels heard and understood
 - “How do you feel when...?”
3. Encourage your child to see the pro’s and the con’s of the behavior
 - “I want you to know that I love you no matter what, and that I am here for you.”
4. Encourage exploration of underlying needs, not action
 - “Why don’t we do something fun today? Have any ideas?”
5. Express your worry and concern for their safety
 - “What do you like about your relationship with him/her? Is there anything you don’t like about him/her?”
6. Express that you want them to be happy and do the things they really want to do in life
 - “I am feeling worried because _____. Is there anything that worries you?”
7. Help envision possibility of change
 - “Know that if you are ever in danger, that I am here for you. I want to be able to protect you from any harm”.
8. Find your child’s strengths and interests and help them develop and build upon those strengths and interests
 - “I am sorry about _____. What can I do to make things better? (Then LISTEN.)
9. Create a safety plan with your child
 - “I have hope for our future...what are your hopes for the future?”
10. Remain strength-based and solution-oriented
 - “I noticed you are really good at _____. Would you like to learn more about it? I hear there is a class being held at _____.”
11. Choose your battles wisely

STAGE OF CHANGE:

II. CONTEMPLATION

1. Acknowledges that being in “the life” is painful and probably not what they want for themselves
2. Not yet ready to leave but processing the abuse and the effects of the abuse
3. Ambivalent about actually leaving
4. Open to self-reflection, weighing consequences, and talking about feelings

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE WITH CSEC VICTIMS

1. Often an external event or “reality” has confronted the pre-contemplative youth.
 - “I didn’t think it was going to turn out this way.”
2. Incidents can include: violence, rape, assault, getting pregnant, diagnosis with a STD, new girls in the placement, getting arrested, and not getting bailed out.
 - “I feel like I don’t deserve this.”
3. Fears the consequences of leaving such as: violence, retribution, threats to self and family, being homeless, and having no money
 - “I don’t want this for my daughter.”
 - “I’m afraid that if I try to leave he’ll just track me down and find me. There’s no point.”
4. Thinking of leaving but feels isolated from the “square” world
 - “This is what I’m good at. I’m not good at anything else.”

Stages of Change (continued)

PARENT/CAREGIVER'S GOALS

1. Actively listen to your child
 2. Encourage them to list out the pros and cons
 3. Reflect change talk
 4. Affirm processing of problems
 5. Validate their ability to make changes
 6. Assist them in problem-solving obstacles
 7. Help them identify sources of support
 8. Talk about dating relationships
 9. Help your child identify values
 10. Help your child recognize options
 11. Continue to reevaluate safety plan
 12. Talk with your child about their education
 13. Talk with you child about situations or things that triggers them and coping skills
 14. Identify personal and familial characteristics and strengths that could help you and your child overcome difficulties
- “When are the times you feel really good? When are the times you feel really bad?” (make lists)
 - “What do you feel is holding you back the most?”
 - “I think you should be proud of yourself for...”
 - “I’m proud of you. You’re taking big steps right now. Be proud of yourself!”
 - “We can work together at solving problems that come our way...I’ll walk right by your side while we put our hearts and minds together and try and figure things out.”
 - “Can you help me understand...” (then actively listen)

STAGE OF CHANGE:

III. PREPARATION

1. Has made a commitment to leave
2. Has thought a lot about leaving, and now begins to “test the waters”
3. Exhibits signs of independence by taking small steps to be able to leave
4. Researches and is open to resources

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE WITH CSEC VICTIMS

1. Regularly attends groups or activities of interest to them; may attend counseling
 2. Brings clothes or belongings to the agency
 3. Starts GED classes
 4. Thinking about a part-time job
 5. Exploring ways to become independent
- “Continue to actively listen to your child and seek understanding; share your worries as well and remain solution-focused and strength based.”
 - “Continue to work with your child on identifying triggers and coping skills while your child is in a calm state.”
 - “Find ways to help your child become involved in healthy social groups (i.e., sports, exercise groups, running clubs, church group, etc.)”
 - “Help child decide what things she would like to change/improve upon the most (top three). Help your child experience early success to motivate your child to keep moving forward.”
 - “Praise your child for any progress made, even if it is a small change!”
 - “Continue to help your child communicate effectively and to advocate for her/himself.”

PARENT/CAREGIVER'S GOALS

1. Create a safety plan
 2. Case management: find housing, education, employment, and regular therapy
 3. Encourage small initial steps
 4. Validate fear of change
 5. Introduce youth to new experiences where he/she can gain new skills and increase self-esteem
 6. Affirm underlying skills for independence
- “You should be really proud of yourself for doing ... You are doing something healthy for yourself.”
 - “It’s normal to be nervous about the changes you’re making.”
 - “What kinds of things are you interested in? What are your dreams for the future?”
 - “I’m proud of you. You’re taking big steps right now. Be proud of yourself!”

Stages of Change (continued)

STAGE OF CHANGE:

IV. ACTION

1. Leaving “the life”

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE WITH CSEC VICTIMS

1. There are often stages of exiting (may feel the need to rely on a few regular “johns” until financial situation is stable)
 2. Child is more stable, less AWOLs/running away behaviors
 3. Starts part-time job
 4. Cuts off contact with pimps/johns
 5. Moves from area of exploitation
- *“It’s so hard and it’s taking so long to get everything together.”*
 - *“I’m so glad I left. I hate him...but I miss him.”*
 - *“I can see myself going to college and getting a good job.”*
 - *“It’s so weird being in the ‘square’ world. I feel different from everyone else.”*

PARENT/CAREGIVER’S GOALS

1. Support and validate the effort it takes to leave
 2. Address safety concerns
 3. Discuss self-care
 4. Create system with youth for short-term rewards he/she can give to him/herself
 5. Process feelings of anxiety and loss
 6. Reiterate long-term benefits of change
 7. Continue to praise and reinforce progress that your child has made
 8. Find ways for your child to increase her social skills in the community (i.e. volunteer at an animal shelter, discuss how to handle conflict with a peer at school)
 9. Support your child in increasing a healthy support system
 10. Continue to bring out your child’s strengths and continue to build on them
- *“It’s going to take a while to get things in your life in order. Try to be patient and not do everything at once.”*
 - *“It’s completely normal to love and hate your ex at the same time. Let’s talk about your feelings before you act on them.”*
 - *“I’m proud of you. You’re taking big steps right now. Be proud of yourself!”*

STAGE OF CHANGE:

V. MAINTENANCE

1. Remains out of CSEC
2. Develops new skills for a new life
3. Avoids temptations and responding to triggers

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE WITH CSEC VICTIMS

1. May maintain job/school
 2. Living in a stable environment
 3. Develops new relationships (intimate and social), often struggles with this
 4. Develops network of support
 5. Begins to address trauma of experiences
- *“I can’t believe I wasted so many years. It’s like I never had a childhood.”*
 - *“I could never go back to the ‘track’/club.”*
 - *“I feel bad for other girls/boys who are still in it.”*
 - *“Sometimes I’m bored and kinda miss the drama.”*
 - *“It’s hard starting relationships because they only want one thing.”*

CAREGIVER’S GOALS

1. Plan for follow-up support
 2. Reinforce internal rewards and self-care
 3. Discuss coping with relapse
 4. Discuss triggers and temptations, creating coping strategies
 5. Continue to help look for opportunities to develop new skills and invest in supportive communities
 6. Recognize progress and validate strengths
 7. Be patient and realistic
- *“Can you tell me the times you most feel like going back? What do you miss the most?”*
 - *“How can you find ‘excitement’ and ‘attention’ in other ways?”*
 - *“What kinds of people are you attracted to? Why do you think that is?”*
 - *“I’m proud of you. You’re taking big steps right now. Be proud of yourself!”*

Stages of Change (continued)

STAGE OF CHANGE:

VI. RELAPSE

1. When talking about relapse, it is important to note that under the **Trafficking Victims Protection Act**, anyone under the age of 18 is being revictimized when they engage in CSEC-related activities
2. Returns to “the life”

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE WITH CSEC VICTIMS

1. Runs away from placement
 2. Re-establishes contact with exploiter (exploiter gets out of jail, runs into exploiter or someone from “the life” on the street, seeks exploiter out to reconnect)
 3. Returns to strip club or escort agency
 4. Begins to see “johns” regularly
- *“He really loves me.”*
 - *“I’m always going to be like this. This is who I am.”*
 - *“I’m so ashamed. I don’t want to come back.”*
 - *“You don’t understand. I missed him and besides, it’s different now.”*
 - *“It was too hard. I just couldn’t do it.”*

CAREGIVER’S GOALS

1. Address feelings of failure
 2. Reassure that most people experience relapse
 3. Revisit subsequent stages of change (hopefully preparation or action, but sometimes contemplation)
 4. Evaluate the triggers that resulted in relapse
 5. Reassess motivation to leave again and barriers to leaving
 6. Plan stronger coping strategies and make modifications to the safety plan
- *“It’s ok. It’s normal to struggle with making really big changes. I still love you no matter what.”*
 - *“What did you feel like you needed that you weren’t getting?”*
 - *“Perhaps we can talk about why it was so hard.”*
 - *“Are things better this time? Why do you think that? What changed?”*
 - *“I still support you and believe in you.”*