

**Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool (CSE-IT) Pilot Test**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**How is the identification tool structured?**

* The CSE-IT includes items that research has shown to be correlated with exploitation, or that were identified by practitioners and survivors as being important indicators.
* There are 10 key indicators, each with supporting questions to assist users with assessing a youth’s involvement in exploitation.
* Scoring the supporting questions will help determine what is essential for identifying a youth’s involvement in exploitation. They also help practitioners familiarize themselves with what to look for when screening, minimize subjectivity when identifying exploited youth, and help practitioners screen more consistently.
* Once providers are more fluent in using the tool, they will be able to quickly score the key indicators on the CSE-IT.
* The tool provides a guide to scoring, indicating the level of concern regarding a youth’s potential involvement in exploitation and if further action is warranted. The scoring method may change during or after the pilot.

**How do I gather information to complete the tool?**

* The tool is for use by professionals who work directly with youth. Such professionals already collect information needed to complete the CSE-IT through conversation with the youth, observing the youth’s appearance or behavior, and by collecting information from other sources, including the youth’s history, documentation and people involved in the youth’s life (e.g. social workers, teachers, caregivers, etc.).
* The CSE-IT is an information organization tool to be completed after the routine interviewing, screening, observation, or assessment processes that providers are already conducting at their organizations.
* The tool is not meant to be a survey questionnaire and the items are not intended to be read directly to the youth as an interview.

**Who should screen and when?**

* All youth over age 10 should be screened, regardless of gender. Providers should not wait for suspicion of commercial sexual exploitation to screen. However, if younger youth are considered to be at high risk for exploitation for whatever reason, they should be screened.
* The CSE-IT can be used even if providers only meet with clients once. Survivors noted there were many missed opportunities during even brief encounters for service providers to notice the signs and intervene on their behalf.
* Screening can occur at different points in time, depending on the setting. We will work with sites to determine when youth should be screened in the context of services provided.

**What is the purpose of pilot testing? What about validation and standardization?**

* Pilot testing allows a site to test implementation on a smaller scale before implementing something agency-wide. Piloting the tool will allow us to learn what works and make improvements before full implementation.
* Because there is no validated screening tool currently available, piloting also helps build the evidence to determine the validity of the tool. Having an evidence-based tool takes the subjectivity out of what is a “good” tool.
* Validating a tool is a way of holding it up to a quality standard. Without validation, even if the tool developers are experts, the tool does not necessarily meet a minimum standard of being relevant and appropriate, having clear definitions, and able to accurately discriminate between youth who are and are not exploited.
* Standardization facilitates interagency collaboration and ensures that agencies are using the same tools and measuring things the same way. Absence of standardization across agencies can result in inconsistent estimates, and it remains impossible to compare trends over time or across jurisdictions.

**What do I need to do as a Pilot Site?**

* Decide what units or staff would pilot the tool, and at what point in time youth should be screened. WestCoast will work with pilot sites to develop a protocol.
* Secure agency leadership approval and sign a Memorandum of Understanding to share data with WestCoast.
* Designate a Site Coordinator to be the primary contact person for the pilot, and manage the data sharing with WestCoast.
* Have all staff that will be using the tool participate in the WestCoast training.
* When necessary, have service providers obtain assent from youth to participate in the study.
* Support staff in participating in two debriefings (onsite and/or via conference call) to discuss implementation successes and challenges.

**What training and technical assistance will be provided by WestCoast?**

* The user manual accompanying the CSE-IT includes information on the items and how to score the tool.
* Pilot sites will receive a 3-hour training for users on:
* **How to use the CSE-IT:** Training on using the screening tool and how to score it.
* **How to have the conversation:** Suggestions on how to engage youth in a conversation on their involvement in sexual exploitation.
* **Data collection:** Training for end-users on the data collection and the tool’s validation process.
* Technical assistance will include:
* **Site assessment:** WestCoast will work with agency leadership to integrate the tool into existing processes and protocols.
* **Ongoing consultation**: Consultation to the sites will be available to address questions regarding the CSE-IT.
* **Interim reports:** Summary information on the data from the tool as well as the progress of the pilot will be provided by WestCoast on a periodic basis.