

Highlights from the Fourth Biennial Safe Harbor Evaluation

Selected Findings and Recommendations

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Evaluation questions



- Which services and supports are needed and being provided, and are these services and supports culturally appropriate for all who need them?
- What factors contribute to Safe Harbor's impact?
- What are the gaps and challenges that impede the work of Safe Harbor?
- What are the opportunities for improvement?
- How has COVID-19 impacted Safe Harbor services?

Methods

- Youth surveys (N=46)
- Youth interviews (N=19)
- Community respondent interviews (N=56)
 - County, state, and federal government
 - Education and social services
 - Advocacy and Regional Navigators
 - Law enforcement, juvenile justice, and child protection
- Guidance throughout the project from Chris Stark, a consultant with lived experience and Anishinaabe and Cherokee ancestry
- Feedback from American Indian youth with lived experience (N=5)



Youth survey and interviews

Every time I need help, they help me with stuff and have a positive attitude. If I need someone to talk to, they're there.

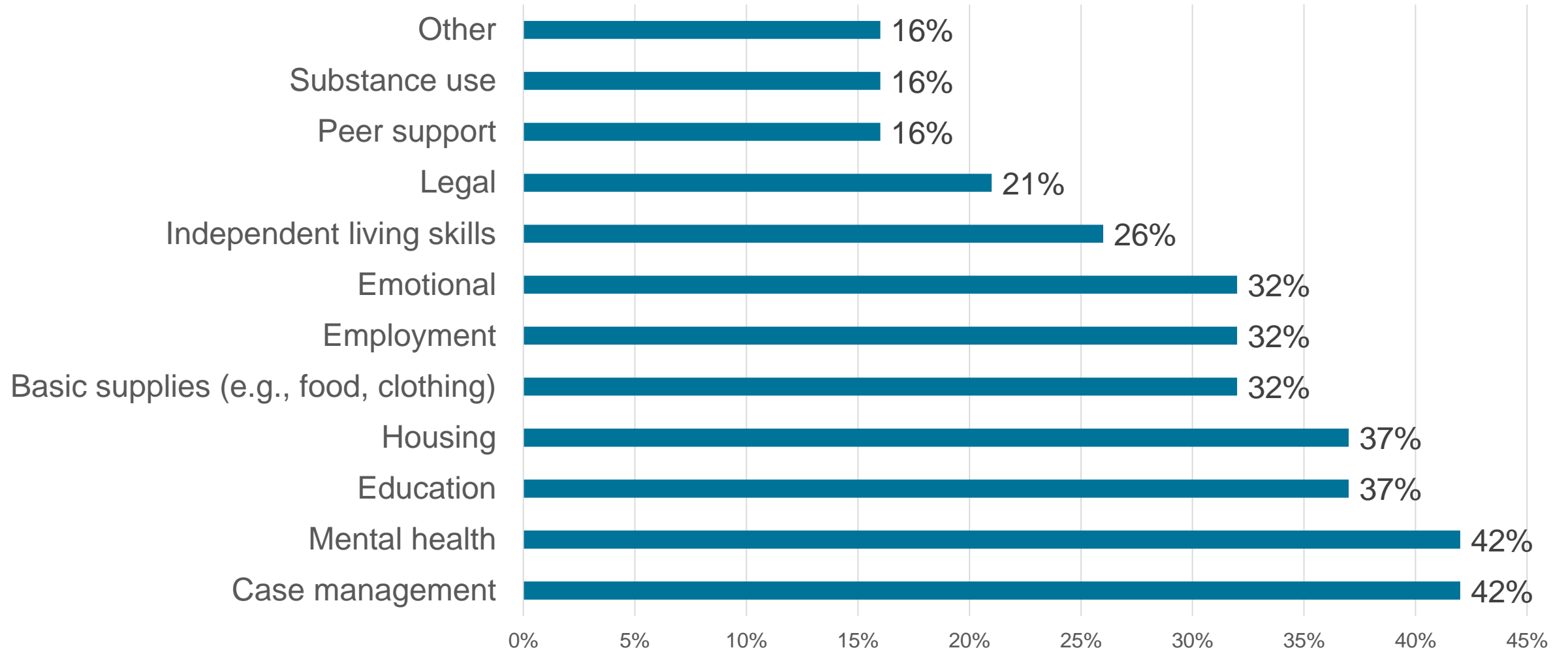
- Youth felt **safe and respected**
- Youth were **satisfied** with the assistance they received
- Youth **felt more hopeful** about the future
- Youth learned about **available resources** and how to access them
- Youth feel **prepared to meet their needs** in safe ways, **access services, reach their goals**, and have **healthy relationships**
- Services felt **supportive of youth cultures**, and program staff provide the opportunity to learn about and practice aspects of their culture

Youth survey and interviews

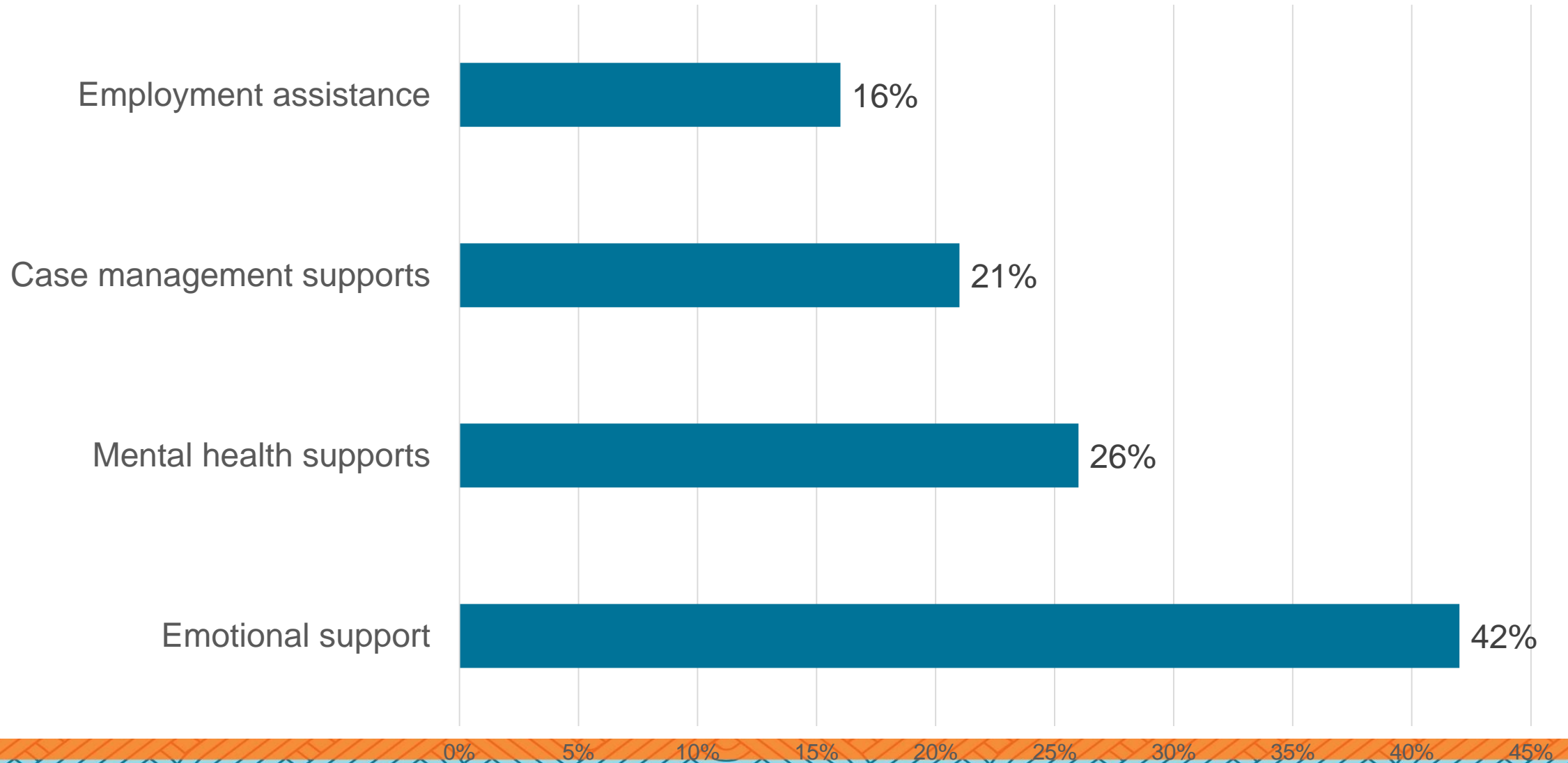
- Staff are **relatable**
- Staff are **dependable**, or there when youth need them
- Staff help youth **meet their needs**
- Staff are **accepting**
- Staff are **emotionally supportive**

They're a great place for at risk teens or teens in general to be able to build up themselves and their confidence, and gain that work experience and learn about different things in the community. I wouldn't be where I am now without them being there every step of the way.

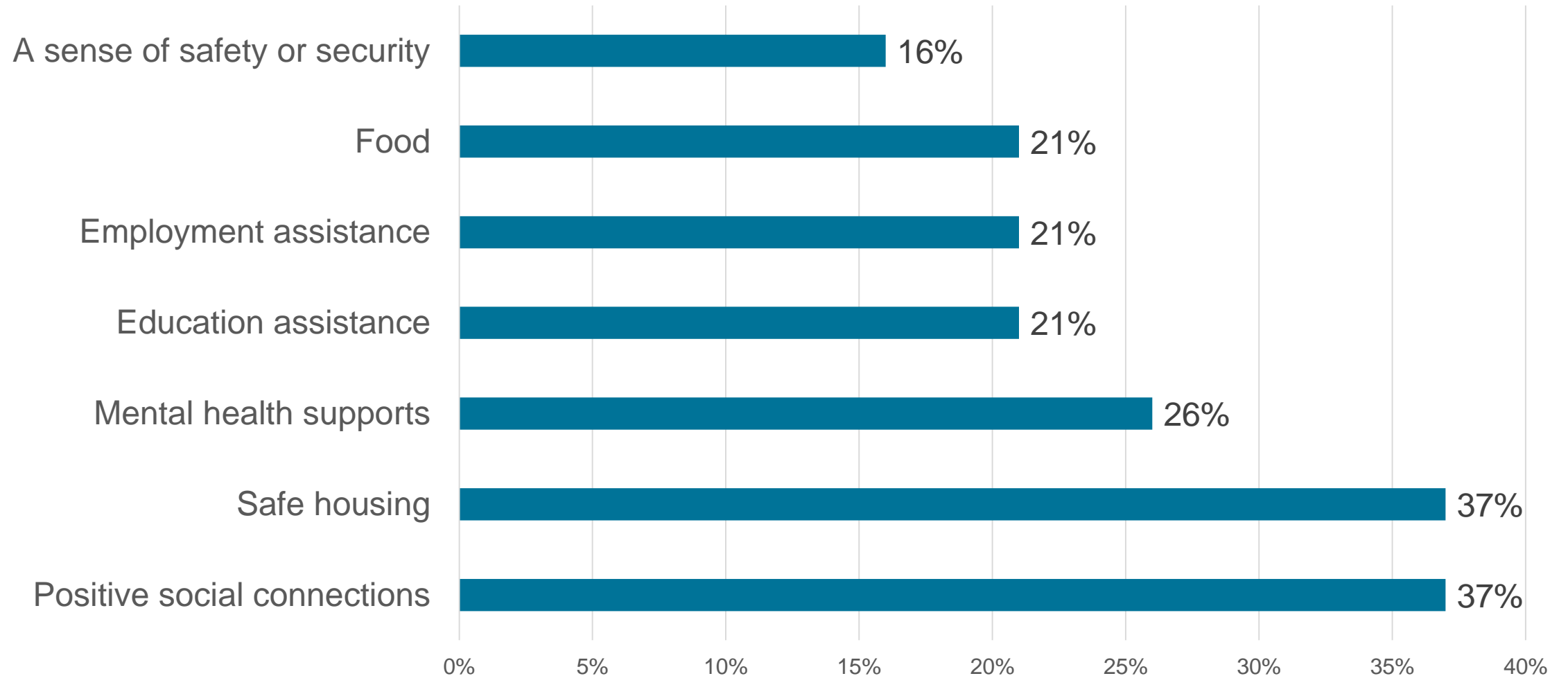
Youth interviews: Services/supports received



Youth interviews: Most helpful services



Youth interviews: Biggest needs



Youth survey and interviews: Service gaps

- Employment assistance
- Housing
- Mental health supports
- Independent living skills
- Transportation
- Legal support
- Childcare
- Education support
- Healthcare
- Chemical health support
- Avoiding people who have hurt me in the past
- Some youth reported outreach gaps



Youth survey

What was the most important thing you accomplished with help from the program?



Community respondent interviews

- Changes since 2019:
 - Increased **awareness, understanding, and opportunities to learn about** exploitation and trafficking
 - Increased **collaboration and communication** across organizations

Safe Harbor is doing a lot to build awareness about what trafficking actually looks like.

People are slowly starting to understand that trafficking is not necessarily like the movie “Taken.”

We have improved lines of communication and points of contact... It's not just that we know each other's faces. We [know which] particular agency to reach out to if we have questions or concerns.

Community respondent interviews

In order of
frequency

- Changes since 2019:
 - Improved **access to and quality of services**
 - Expanded and enhanced **protocol development**
 - **Systems are better** at addressing trafficking

There are more resources out there [and they are] becoming more and more widely known.

Minnesota has done very well with helping counties develop their protocols.

Prior to 2019, people were still struggling with whether it was actually in Minnesota; they didn't believe it... As time passed, that changed completely. I don't have providers hesitate anymore, asking me what trafficking is.

Community respondent interviews

In order of
frequency

- Challenges:
 - Difficulties **identifying** trafficked youth
 - **Lack of services** and inconsistent **staffing**
 - **Lack of understanding** of trafficking

Recognizing the signs of trafficking... It's not something that's instructed in law enforcement skills training.

The lack of targeted services... There are limited beds and appointments.

I think the stereotypes still exist that [it's] young white girls in white vans in suburban Walmart parking lots... No one is talking about the 16 year-old youth of color who is trading sex for a place to live.

Community respondent interviews

- Suggestions for improving cultural responsiveness:
 - Provide youth with **more opportunities to see their identities** in services and staff
 - Offer more **culturally-specific and culturally-responsive services**
 - Ensure efforts are **community-led**

In [county], we don't have culturally appropriate services in general... [Accessing services in the metro] is a long trip on a bus.

BIPOC and LGBTQ+ voices need to be included at the start of the planning process. And not just performative solicitation of information. Not just, "Oh, we asked this group."

Community respondent interviews

- Suggestions for improving cultural responsiveness:
 - Increase **professionals' knowledge** of different cultures
 - Provide **more outreach to and relationship building** with specific cultural communities
 - **Eradicate racism and white supremacy** in systems

I absolutely know that there are people that are out there doing the work with culturally diverse populations that aren't culturally competent.

It's about being intentional... Finding a [culturally-specific] organization and working with them to provide Safe Harbor services.

Community respondent and youth data: Impact of COVID-19

- New challenges related to the shift to **remote service provision and communication**
- **Accessing services** was more difficult
- Some services, processes, and efforts were **anceled or postponed**
- Created a **conducive environment** to exploitation and trafficking
- **Identification** was more difficult (e.g., social distancing)

Overall recommendations

- Support efforts to improve the **identification of youth** experiencing trafficking
- **Expand protections and services** to all, regardless of age
- **Increase access** to services, especially for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth and youth in Greater Minnesota
- Support **more diverse and consistent staffing**



Overall recommendations

- Increase the **amount of** and **ensure cultural responsiveness within** the technical assistance, education, and training provided
- Increase **prevention efforts**, including addressing demand and risk factors
- Support the implementation of a more continuous, comprehensive, and robust **outcome and process evaluation**



Thank you!!!

For more information about the past evaluations, visit:
<https://www.wilder.org/wilder-research/research-library/safe-harbor#study-reports>



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