



# What is the *Improving Outcomes for Child and Youth Victims of Human Trafficking* Grant Program, and How Can It Improve our State's Response to Child Trafficking?

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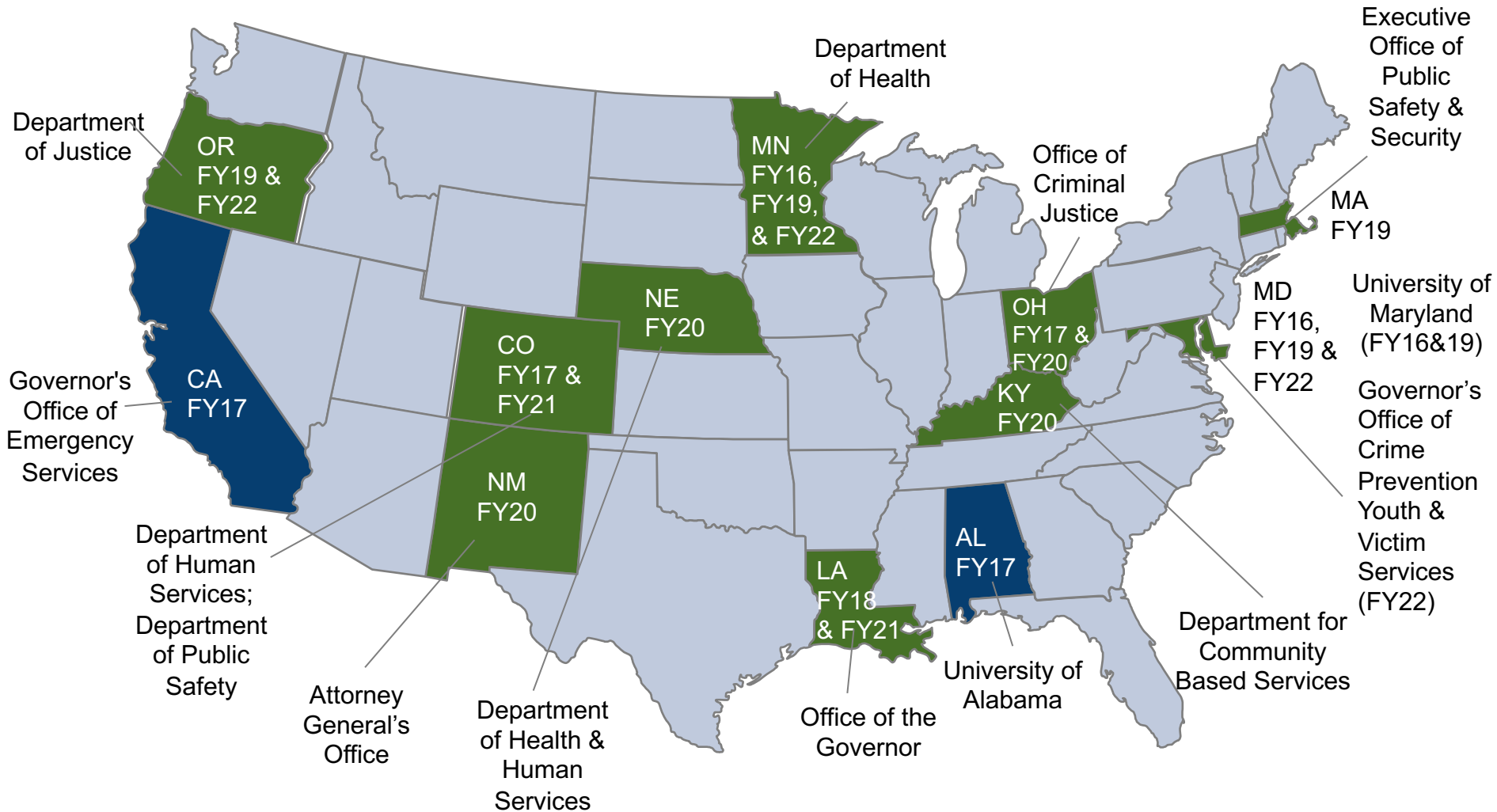
# Overview of the Improving Outcomes Grant Program

# Background

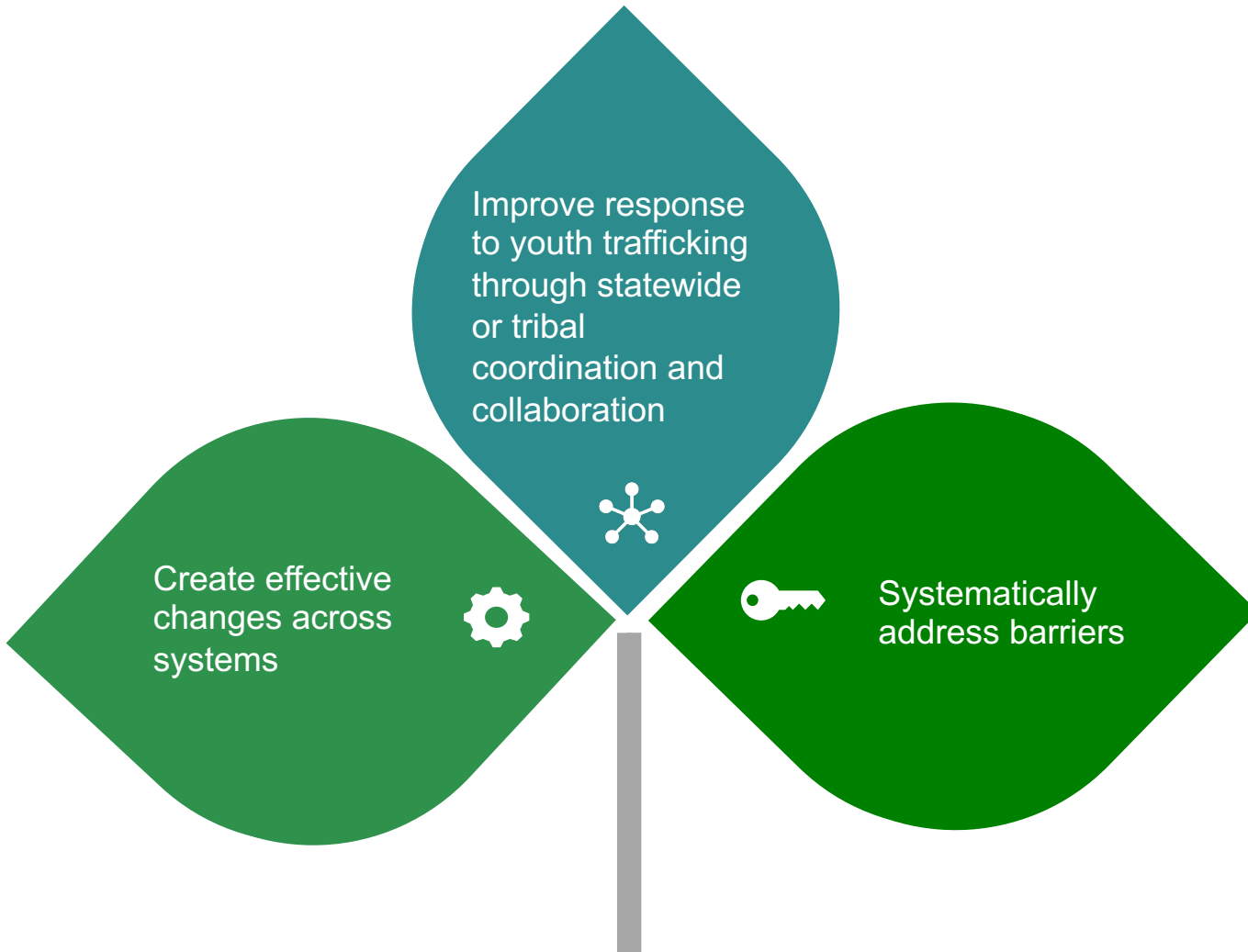
- Program established in FY16
- Funded through Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) and Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA)
- Focus is not direct services
- Statewide or tribal jurisdiction-wide approach
- Lead applicant: State government representative
- 10 current grantees



# Improving Outcomes Grantees



# OVC's Improving Outcomes for Child and Youth Victims of Human Trafficking Goals



# OVC's Improving Outcomes for Child and Youth Victims of Human Trafficking Strategies



# Assessing Readiness



## What activities are underway in your state around addressing trafficking?

- Grantees described existing efforts that their project launched from and/or coalesced
- Grantees had existing relationships with other state agencies, tribes, law enforcement, and/or direct service providers
- Examples:
  - Task force or enhanced collaborative models
  - Coordination with child welfare, juvenile justice, or health and human services
  - Strong statewide non-profit partners
  - Connections to tribal partners

## Who has the capacity to champion the effort?

- Grantees collaborate with a wide range of state and local agencies, community organizations, service providers, tribes, and evaluators under this grant, but **it is important for the lead organization to identify a key champion** and to have strong support within their agency, including from their leadership



- “The Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force began in 2015 and is led by the Nebraska Attorney General’s office, with a goal to create and build upon a statewide approach to combat trafficking.
- Funding was needed to sustain the work and so Nebraska applied for the iO grant.
- Nebraska DHHS partnered with the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF), who is an active partner that has experience and knowledge for successful grant outcomes and completion.”

- “To grow the program and work towards our goals: I needed help and knew I couldn’t do it with just my position...
- We’d started our plan to use VOCA to fund county Human Trafficking Task Forces, but actually needed Improving Outcomes [grant funding] to be able to elevate and organize them.”



# How Can You Assess Readiness?

Equity

Existing  
Efforts

Knowledge  
of Efforts

Leadership

Community  
Climate

Community  
Knowledge  
of Issue

Resources  
related to  
the Issue

# Grantee Panelists

## Phase 1

- Expand team
- Standardize training
- Create and implement statewide response protocol
- Move from awareness to identifying, reporting, and responding

## Phase 2

- The Trafficking Response & Intervention Program Team
  - Trafficking Coordinator
  - Trafficking Criminal Justice Analyst
- Protocols
- Training

## Phase 3

- Expand focus on Labor Trafficking
  - Labor trafficking coordinator
- Incorporate survivor leaders
- Establish data uniformity
- Develop more task forces

The Maryland Governor's Office of  
Crime Prevention, Youth and Victim  
Services

University of Maryland School of  
Social Work

Develop Maryland's strategic plan for addressing human trafficking of children and youth, which encompasses:

- Providing TTA for key stakeholders
- Developing protocols and procedures to ensure children and youth receive evidence-based services
- Strengthening data collection across systems of care

Key project activities include:

- Enhancing TTA for the MD Regional Navigator Program
- Implementing a child welfare and RNP response to child labor trafficking
- Developing a unified training strategies for professionals in MD



# Discussion: Assessing Readiness

# Panel Questions

- How did you assess your readiness to apply for this grant?
- After you received the grant and started doing the work, what was foundational to have in place to support this effort?

# Lessons Learned

# What Have Been Some Keys to Success?



# Lessons Learned from Current Grantees



- “The work requires that you get embedded into it and remain active”
- “Standards are important, but [you] must have an approach that can be customized to different parts of the state”
- “Remain open and flexible- you will need to adapt to survivor and community input in order for this work to be successful”

# Lessons Learned from Current Grantees

- State-level change takes time; allow for that.
  - Account for the time needed to coordinate and strengthen relationships across sectors, communities, and with folks doing related work across the state; find common ground and start there
- Save yourself time by doing your homework.
  - “Beg, borrow, and steal” by building off existing resources, work. Do not reinvent the wheel!
  - Leverage the first year to listen, learn, plan, strengthen existing relationships; this will ultimately create efficiencies and greater buy-in, catapult your success



# Lessons Learned from Current Grantees



- Hire or contract with survivor leaders
  - Consider your projects' needs and how to leverage survivor expertise and input from start to finish; start in your, go national if need be.
- Share the funding with, e.g., tribes, community partners

# Additional Takeaways

- Alignment in goals and objectives helps advance collaboration
- Perspectives, opinions, and goals vary greatly by different sectors and individuals; find common ground
- Trauma-informed and victim-centered approaches are critical
- Trainings should be designed and tailored to the stakeholders, audience
- Youth- and child-serving agencies are over-burdened, but change is feasible; it takes time
- State agencies have credibility and power but face additional barriers
- Coordinating data systems can be impactful, but challenging and expensive





# Discussion: Lessons Learned

# Panel Questions

- What did you learn during the planning year that was unexpected? How did that shape your strategy?
- How has your project adapted over time?
- What has the IO grant taught you about state-level efforts to address trafficking about trafficking?
- How does this grant help with sustainability? How is it helping you plan for the future?

# Group Discussion

- What questions do you have about the IO grant program?
- Does your state have a state-level response to trafficking?
  - If not, what would it take to develop this?
- What information or resources do you feel you need in order to be ready to take on a project like this?



# Start Assessing Readiness Now 😊

Equity

Existing  
Efforts

Knowledge  
of Efforts

Leadership

Community  
Climate

Community  
Knowledge  
of Issue

Resources  
related to  
the Issue

FY 23 Solicitation:

<https://ovc.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/o-ovc-2023-171585>

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# Resources

- iO Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/improvingoutcomesTTA>
- Sign up for the iO Newsletter!
- NHTTAC Community Readiness Guide:  
[https://nhttac.acf.hhs.gov/system/files/2021-09/FINAL\\_HT%20Community%20Readiness%20Guide\\_508\\_0.pdf](https://nhttac.acf.hhs.gov/system/files/2021-09/FINAL_HT%20Community%20Readiness%20Guide_508_0.pdf)