

Maryland's Response to Child Sex Trafficking

Who are the Regional Navigators?

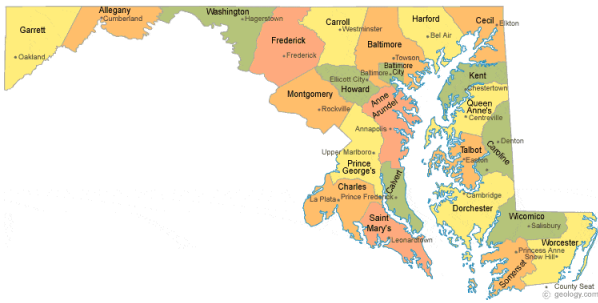
They are a group of highly trained human service professionals from Child Advocacy Centers, Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Programs, & Specialized Victim Service Providers.

What do the Regional Navigators do?



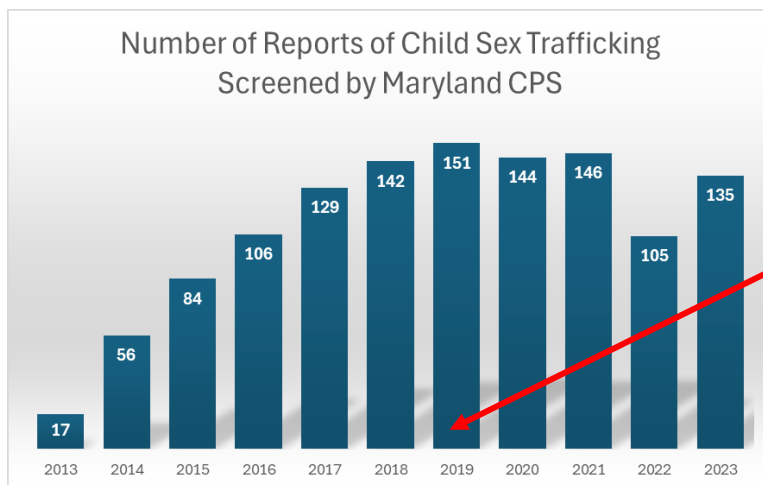
Conduct Risk Screenings/Assessments, Help Develop Safety Plans, Assist in Providing Emergency Responses, Provide Resources for Basic Living Needs, Connect Survivors to Trauma Counseling, Mental Health & Legal Services, Provide Case Management Support and Victim Advocacy, etc.

Where are the Regional Navigator Programs?



As of February 2024, there are 14 Regional Navigator Programs serving the 24 jurisdictions in Maryland.

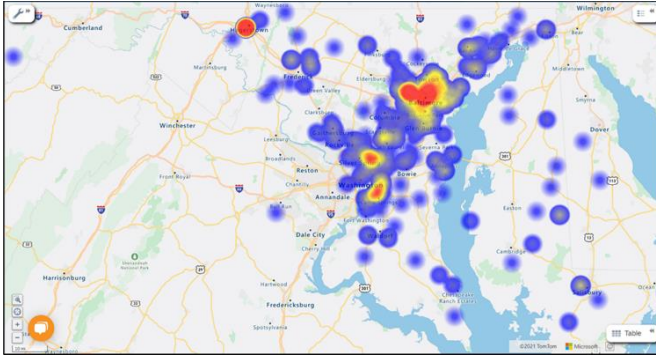
Scope



Between June 2013 and December 2023, there have been **1,215** reports of alleged child sex trafficking screened by Maryland Child Protective Services.

In October 2019, the Regional Navigator Program (RNPG) was launched in three pilot counties.

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There have been reports of alleged child sex trafficking screened in almost every jurisdiction in our state. Up until 2019, there was no single point of contact to work with the Local Departments of Social Services and Law Enforcement to coordinate services for these children.

In 2023, Maryland's Regional Navigator Programs received **128** referrals from local Dept of Social Services (i.e., child welfare) offices concerning youth who were identified or suspected to be a victim of sex trafficking.

Testimonials from the Regional Navigators

"A youth was referred to us through DJS after unfortunately being charged with solicitation, even though they are a minor. We were able to provide intensive case management, mental health services, and get them connected to our employment readiness program, which they completed. They were able to find healthy employment and we are happy to report that they completed their probation."

"We work collaboratively with our Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Partners to provide services for trafficking victims in our county. I coordinated an MDT meeting with the Department of Juvenile Services, Local Law Enforcement, the Local Department of Social Services, and States Attorney's Office, to plan for the successful recovery of a youth victim. Once recovered, it was necessary for DSS to take custody and placement of the youth in a specialized facility. This survivor has since been discharged to a regular foster home and is thriving in school, in mental health treatment, and is engaging in age-appropriate activities and interactions."

"A client was able to get connected with us through the Trafficking Victims Assistance Program. We were able to help this person enroll in high school and begin taking classes and were also successful in connecting them to long-term assistance through the Office on Trafficking in Persons. As a result, the client was able to apply for a social security card, obtain medical benefits, and receive mental health therapy."

"I assisted the Maryland State Police Child Exploitation Unit to locate and navigate the return of a missing youth from foster care who had run away to another state. It was arranged for the youth to be transferred back to Maryland and placed in a specialized facility for trafficking victims. The MSP officer and I worked together to ensure that the child was interviewed and had a voice in her placement following her discharge from the facility."

"We lead a Child Trafficking Multidisciplinary Team Case Review where different stakeholders/partners involved in the case review the presenting dynamics with a trauma responsive lens, work together to best support the youth, and provide necessary information to aid an investigation."

"We were able to assist a youth in obtaining important documents such as their birth certificate and Maryland State ID. Once obtained we assisted the youth with financial literacy (opening a bank account and drafting a savings plan). We also conducted a mock interview for future employment interviews."