

# MY LIFE MY CHOICE

EMPOWERING YOUTH. ENDING EXPLOITATION.

## PREVENTING THE EXPLOITATION OF GIRLS: The My Life My Choice Curriculum



### WHO IS THE "MY LIFE, MY CHOICE" PROGRAM FOR?

This curriculum is for any girls between the ages of 12-18 years old.

MLMC groups can be held anywhere, but are most commonly implemented in **middle and high schools, group homes, residential treatment facilities, Child Protective Services offices, probation departments, juvenile justice facilities, and community-based organizations.**

#### Participants' feedback:

*I think today's lesson really helped because self-esteem is something that I deal with every day and I'm glad we did this because it made me feel better about myself."*

*"It teaches us what to do, what not to do, help our kids in the future and how to help our friends."*

*"This group taught me how to stand up for myself. I used to have trouble saying no to boys when it comes to sex. I just want to say thank you. This group really helped me. Now I feel like I have power."*

### WHAT INFORMATION DOES THIS GIRLS EMPOWERMENT GROUP COVER?

MLMC's 10 session Exploitation Prevention curriculum is designed to change girls' perceptions of the commercial sex industry. Our curriculum includes interactive activities, journaling, and is infused with the authentic testimonies from survivors.

### GROUP TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Understanding Predators and Recruitment
- Girls Empowerment
- Healthy Relationships
- Substance Abuse
- Understanding Women's Issues
- I Come First: Developing Self-Esteem
- Making it Real: Stories from "The Life"
- I'm Not Alone: Finding Help and Safety

*"I'm so excited to hear the girls love this program! So many times we have programs presented that are ineffective...this has been amazing! I would really like to continue the program."*

*~ School Personnel*



## GROUP GOALS:

The MLMC curriculum is based on a public health model of altering behavior through a shift in participants' attitudes, knowledge and skills.

### ATTITUDES

Challenge girls' ideas about commercial sexual exploitation (including prostitution) emphasizing that the commercial sex industry is dangerous and debilitating, not glamorous.

### KNOWLEDGE

Share information about what makes girls vulnerable to exploitation and what tactics pimps use to recruit girls.

### SKILLS

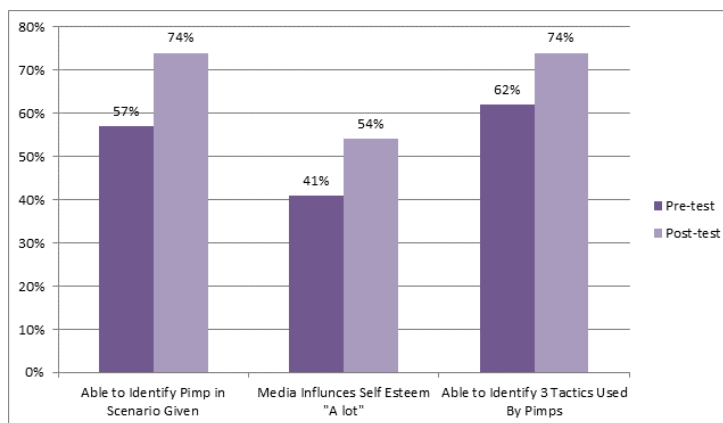
Empower girls to identify and avoid recruitment tactics or identify supports and resources in exiting the life.

How was this curriculum developed?

My Life My Choice (MLMC) at JRI in Boston is a national leader in the prevention of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC). This nationally acclaimed ten session curriculum, which provides concrete, well-researched methods for reaching vulnerable adolescent girls, was created in 2003. MLMC continues to maintain the curriculum as a relevant and effective tool to prevent exploitation. In 2013, Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey (PCANJ) became the New Jersey state leader for the MLMC prevention curriculum.

## HOW DO WE KNOW IT'S WORKING?

We use pre and post surveys to evaluate group participants' progress over the course of the program. These surveys assess the curriculum's relevance and effectiveness in changing girls' attitudes and knowledge of the commercial sex industry and skills developed to avoid being recruited.



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