Identification, Intervention, and Prosecution of Sex trafficking of Youth: Lessons from Science and the Field in Orange County

Co-hosted by the UC Adolescence Consortium

Wednesday, May 6th
12:00 - 1:00pm

In light of the community concerns regarding COVID-19, this talk will be given as a webinar. The link will be provided on Tuesday, May 5th to those that have registered by 5:00 pm on Monday, May 4th at uccs.ucdavis.edu.

Faculty from the University of California, Irvine, will highlight their ongoing collaborative efforts to identify and intervene on behalf of child and adolescent victims of sex trafficking in Southern California. Due in part to an active and creative task force in Orange County supporting efforts to combat trafficking, the county has been a leader in innovative and collaborations designed to improve locating and protecting victims. Challenges remain, however, in terms of how best to elicit clear and complete disclosures from victims in order to address their needs and prosecute perpetrators; and in terms of how to keep victims tied to services over time. Dr. Jodi Quas, Professor in the Department of Psychological Science, will discuss the state of scientific work, including findings from her new investigation on legal questioning of trafficked youth, on victim disclosures and criminal prosecution of traffickers. She will point to new needs for training on interviewing victims. Dr. Corey Rood, Assistant Professor in the Department of Pediatrics and Medical Director of the Child Abuse Services Team in Orange County, will discuss his ongoing efforts to increase involvement of the medical community in investigations and service delivery for trafficking victims. He will also describe gaps in identification and service delivery that remain difficult to address and that may impede victim participation in services over time. Overall the presentation will highlight the value of collaborations across the university, and with local public and non-profit agencies, for improved victim identification and service delivery and for improved prosecutions of traffickers.

Jodi Quas, Ph.D., is Professor of Psychological Science in the Interdisciplinary School of Social Ecology at the University of California, Irvine. She is recognized across the globe for her work on children’s eyewitness capabilities, abuse disclosure, and consequences of legal involvement on child victims and witnesses. She has received numerous awards for her research and student training, including the Scientific Early Career Contributions in Developmental Psychology from the American Psychological Association and Nicholas Hobbs Award for Career Contributions from the Society for Child and Family Policy and Practice. She is dedicated not only to pursuing rigorous science on crucial topics relevant to identifying and intervening on behalf of victimized children, but also to disseminating findings to diverse audiences. She conducts workshops for law enforcement, legal professionals, educators, and social service professionals in the U.S. and abroad. As a Fulbright Specialist in 2018, she worked in Asunción Paraguay training professionals in medicine, government, and non-profit organizations, and the public on the effects of maltreatment on children, families, and communities, and on improved methods of identifying and protecting victimized children.

Corey J. Rood, MD, is the newest Child Abuse Pediatrician with the Department of Pediatrics at UC Irvine, CAST, and Miller Children’s and Women’s Hospital in Long Beach. He is an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics with the UC Irvine School of Medicine. As a child abuse pediatrician, his work focuses on the diagnosis, care, and management of potentially abused and neglected children. Dr. Rood’s clinical and research interests and expertise include commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC) including human trafficking, both international and domestic. Dr. Rood’s research endeavors include recent studies on sexting and online sexual solicitation exposure amongst adolescents with suspected sexual abuse, and human trafficking screening of adolescent patients. Dr. Rood received his bachelor’s degree in zoology from Weber State University and his medical degree from Oregon Health & Science University. After completing his pediatric residency training at the University of New Mexico Hospital, he completed a three-year Child Abuse Pediatrics fellowship program at Nationwide Children’s Hospital in association with The Ohio State University. At the completion of his fellowship training, he joined the faculty at the University of Utah in their Department of Pediatrics and at Primary Children’s Hospital where he spent 3 years prior to coming to UCI. Dr. Rood is an active member of many professional organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, its Section On Child Abuse & Neglect, and the Ray Helfer Society. He has spent time as medical representation on the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force and on Utah’s Trafficking in Persons (UTIP) Task Force Executive Board and Co-Chair of the UTIP Medical Subcommittee for the state.

For questions contact Brooke Miller-Jacobs at (916) 445-5161 or bmillerjacobs@ucdavis.edu

The views and opinions expressed during this lecture are those of the speaker and do not necessarily represent the views of UCCS.