

CAST's Youth Program was created in 2014 as a response to the increase in referrals of youth survivors of human trafficking, and the specialized needs of minor and transition aged youth (TAY) survivors. The Youth Program's mission is to provide youth-centered services to survivors of trafficking 24 and under by empowering youth and their support system to transform their trauma into their own story of healing and to build a future of hope and resiliency. The youth program engages youth from crisis care to long term case management and advocacy support, applying youth-centered engagement interventions and celebrating EVERY success along their journey. The youth program collaborates with youth-focused partners in the community, including service providers, government systems, mentorship and educational opportunities to further support each youth's goals and dreams. The youth program is committed to creating a safe and nonjudgmental space for survivors while conducting outreach and awareness in the community and revolutionizing programming to encourage successful graduation from the youth program.



Youth survivors attending USC's Women's Empowerment Conference.

*"I'm no longer quiet. I speak up and I'm **confident**. I've learned to **trust**."*
- Ashlee, 16, Youth Survivor

Youth Empowerment Events

CAST's Youth Program hosts monthly activities focused on self-empowerment, positive experiences, and personal development to connect youth survivors of trafficking with one another in fun and supportive ways. The Youth Program began these group activities after youth survivors expressed wanting opportunities to connect with other youth who have experienced similar stories. The monthly activities have included spoken-word, yoga, indoor rollerblading, film screenings, empowerment conferences, and self-care/wellness events. CAST continues to collaborate with community partners and agencies to host monthly youth activities in order to increase the breadth of positive experiences for youth survivors.



Shivakali Yoga facilitating a yoga class at the park

*"They help **connect** me with others like me, so it is easy for us to get along."*
-Brandi, 21, Youth Survivor

Every Step Counts

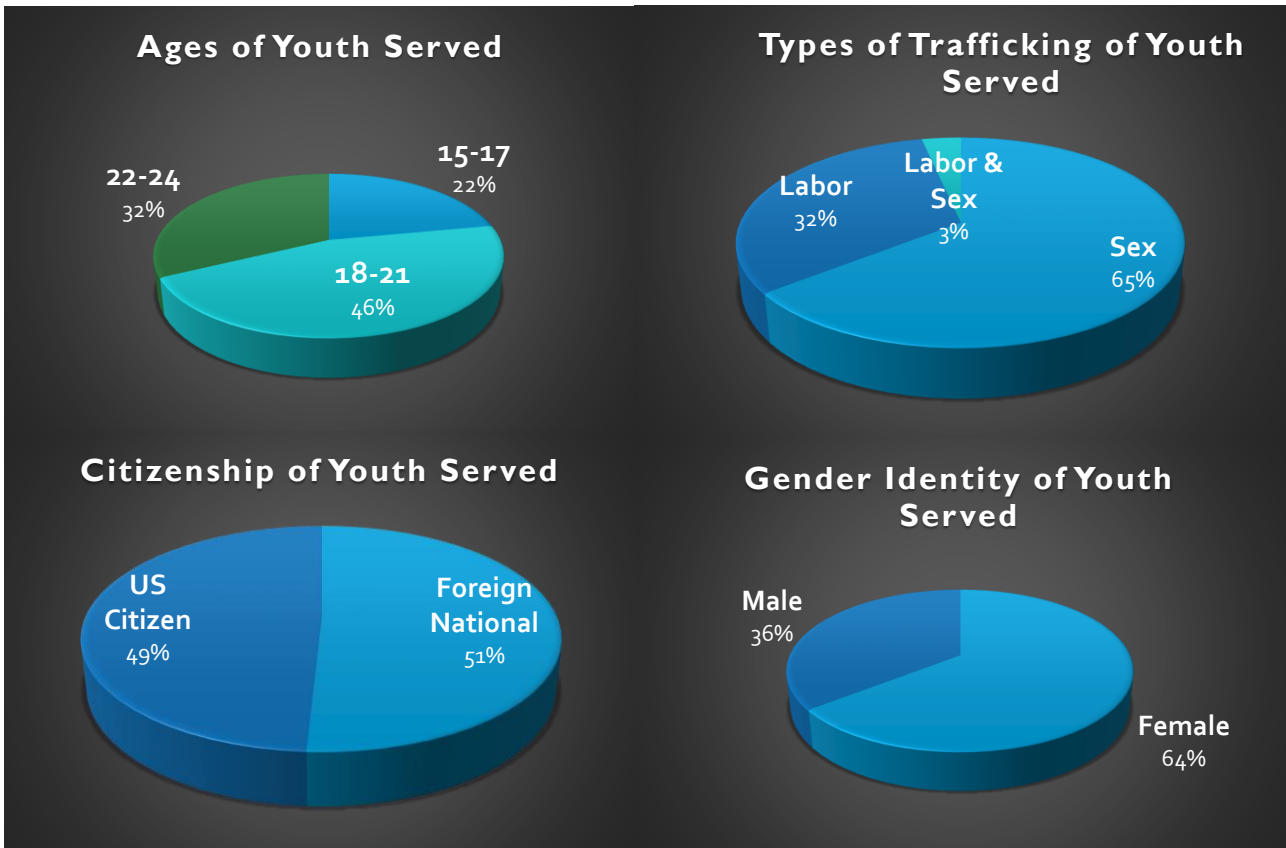
Tania was 15 years old when her mother became ill and entered the foster care system in California. By the time Tania turned 17 years old, she had lived in several homes and was not close to anyone in her family. She met Tony, a 35 year old who promised to take care of her and love her. Tania remembered previous false promises from adults, but she thought this would be different. Soon after, Tania left everything behind and moved to Los Angeles with Tony. After a few weeks, Tony beat Tania and would call her names to dehumanize her. Tony forced Tania into sex trafficking, and made her believe she had no way out. The abuse worsened, and Tony constantly threatened Tania that if she ran away or stopped doing what he told her to do, he would kill her.

Tania was connected to CAST's Youth Program through the L.A. Sheriff's Department and began working with a Case Manager intensively to help keep her safe and reclaim her power and sense of self. Today, Tania is working at a restaurant, has her own apartment, and is taking college classes with the goal to help others, as her dream is to become a nurse. Tania is enrolled in a mentorship program, and in the future, wishes to help other youth who have gone through similar journeys as hers.

*"I didn't know what resiliency meant before. I now know I **AM RESILIENT**."*

2017 Youth Program Highlights

59 YOUTH SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING SERVED IN 2017



A Brief Look at the 13 Youth Graduates of 2017:

⚙️ **100%** are in safe housing

📁 **84%** currently have a job

📖 **92%** are either employed or are attending school

🌟 **100%** have built supportive relationships to continue their growth through connection

✂️ Youth Graduate Average Length of Time in Services: Approx. **2** Years

IMPACT ON COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN/YOUTH (CSEC/Y) CLIENTS:

With the increased youth-specific programming over 2017, the impact on CAST's CSEC/Y clients was tremendous. In 2017, there was a 233% increase in CSEC/Y clients that graduated the youth program. Of the seven CSEC/Y youth that graduated in 2017, 100% of them were in safe housing by the end of the program. In addition, over 2/3rd of the graduated youth were employed, and almost 60% of the youth were in school. In addition, 100% of the graduated youth built supportive relationships, strengthening their network of support to continue their growth and connection.