

COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

YOUTH INVOLVED
IN PROSTITUTION,
PORNOGRAPHY &
SEX TRAFFICKING



BOOKLET No. 3 IN A SERIES ON INTERNATIONAL YOUTH ISSUES
YOUTH ADVOCATE PROGRAM INTERNATIONAL

COMMERCIAL
SEXUAL
EXPLOITATION
OF CHILDREN

YOUTH INVOLVED IN
PROSTITUTION,
PORNOGRAPHY AND
SEX TRAFFICKING

BY LAURA A. BARNITZ

WITH RESEARCH
ASSISTANCE FROM
NIESHA LOBO
CARRIE McVICKER
KATY GALLAGHER



ABOUT YOUTH ADVOCATE PROGRAM INTERNATIONAL

The mission of Youth Advocate Program International is to promote the rights and well-being of youth on a global basis, giving particular attention to the plight of troubled and needy youth and to those victimized by armed conflict and by state and personal violence.

The Youth Advocate Program International was incorporated in 1994 and is an affiliate organization of the National Youth Advocate Program, Inc. (NYAP). NYAP is a private, nonprofit youth advocacy organization that develops and implements community-based services for troubled and needy youth. It is the parent organization of state affiliate programs in Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana, South Carolina, Georgia, Kansas, Illinois, and Arizona. Youth Advocate Program International is registered in the United States as a 501(c)(3) organization.

Second printing, 2000. Copyright © 1998 by the Youth Advocate Program International. All rights reserved. Reprinting by permission.

ISBN 0-9663709-2-9

Contributors: Nancy Nye, Lilian Peters, William Espinosa
and Jeffrey Greene

Graphic Design: Fine Points Multimedia Services

Photos: Front: Dario Mitidieri. Note: The child shown here—Chaya, age 7—is not a victim of commercial sexual exploitation, but is one whose family life makes her susceptible to entering the sex trade. Her mother is a prostitute, and her father has a drinking problem and does not support the family. Her family lives on a railway station platform in Calcutta, India. This little girl was photographed while visiting the CINI (Child in Need Institute) ASHA Drop-in Centre. This center provides facilities for washing, personal lockers, health care, food, banking, informal schooling and games for children who live and work on the station platforms. CINI is a local nongovernmental organization, and the activities of the center have been supported in part by Save the Children, UK.

Back: Patrick Aviolat, Agence France Presse

First edition printed by Master Print, Inc.

The views and opinions expressed in this booklet are solely those of the Youth Advocate Program International. **To order copies of this booklet**, please contact Youth Advocate Program International, 4545 42nd St., NW, Suite 209, Washington, DC 20016 USA • Tel: 202/244-1986 • Fax: 202/244-6396 • Email: yapi@igc.org • Web: <http://www.yapi.org>
Cost per booklet is \$6.00US.

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	v
Why should we discuss the commercial sexual exploitation of children?.....	1
What is commercial sexual exploitation?.....	3
What is the impact of commercial sexual exploitation and whose children are vulnerable?.....	9
Who are involved in the commercial sexual exploitation of children and why?	18
How can the commercial sexual exploitation of children be stopped?	26
Conclusion	31
<i>Endnotes</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>To learn more about the commercial sexual exploitation of children....</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>Resource organizations.....</i>	<i>40</i>

About This Series

Youth Advocate Program International carries out research and publishes material on international youth issues as part of its mission to improve the lives of children. Booklets are published periodically to introduce readers to issues that demand world attention.

Booklet #1 Child Soldiers: Youth who Participate in Armed Conflict
Booklet #2 Child Labor: Exploited and Abused Youth at Work
Booklet #3 Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children:
Youth Involved in Prostitution, Pornography and Sex Trafficking

INTRODUCTION

This booklet, the third in a series on international youth issues, explores the degrading and demeaning abuse of children who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Although there are often strong links between children who are sexually abused and those who end up in the sex trade, this booklet will cover only the latter—the abuse of children who are involved in prostitution, pornography and sex trafficking. Youth Advocate Program International (YAP-I) recognizes that there are many adult victims of the sex trade, but this booklet focuses solely on children under age 18.

Prostitution and pornography are visible throughout the world although many people are not aware of the degree to which children have been pulled into these businesses. Sex trafficking, on the other hand, is a lesser-known business of the sex trade. People are familiar with the trafficking of drugs and weapons from one region of the world to another. What is not commonly known is that women and children are trafficked also. How many children are involved? It's impossible to determine, but it is certain that too many lives are broken and scarred.

Often times children who are sexually abused are seen as victims while children in commercial sex businesses are considered perpetrators of criminal acts. YAP-I takes the position that all children who are sexually exploited, whether in homes and schools or in hotels and brothels, are victims. We hope this booklet will help the reader to better understand the plight of these children. And we hope that more people will join the effort to end this crime against the most vulnerable members of our global family.

Nancy Nye
Director
Youth Advocate Program International

WHY SHOULD WE DISCUSS THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN?

Few forms of exploitation are more degrading and destructive than commercial sexual exploitation. Discussing this kind of exploitation as it impacts children is particularly sensitive. Nevertheless, this booklet attempts to explore dimensions of the topic, including the forms of commercial sexual exploitation, whose children are vulnerable, who are the exploiters, and how people can work together to stop this intolerable abuse of children's human rights.

This booklet advocates stopping the commercial sexual exploitation of children as a social and ethical responsibility. It is the duty of all people to uphold human rights and the best interests of children everywhere. The children quoted below, all involved in the sex trade before age 18, can speak best about the necessity to end this form of exploitation.

I found myself dancing at a club at the age of eleven.... I have had different kinds of customers, foreigners and Filipinos. I tried suicide but it didn't work so I turned to drugs. I don't know about tomorrow. I want to die before my next birthday.¹

—Poppy, from the Philippines

I told them [three pimps/traffickers] they would have to make me [work for them]—and they did. They beat me unconscious. I ended up working on a Seattle street corner for three months. The entire

time, there was this guy, sitting in a doorway on the other side of the street, with a gun pointed at me.²

—Nicky, from Canada

I was so small. They gave me hormone injections so that I'd grow breasts faster. These injections hurt so, so much. When I tried to struggle, the madame beat me on the chest with a metal kitchen spoon.³

—Maya, from Nepal

The definition of childhood

At the heart of this issue is the definition of childhood. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines a child as a person under age 18, unless national laws recognize the age of majority earlier. Because the CRC is the most widely ratified convention addressing children's rights in the world—to date every country has ratified it except the United States and Somalia—that definition appears to be acceptable as a global standard. The provisions of the CRC are goals that ratifying states agree to seek to accomplish.

Article 34 of the CRC states that national governments should take all appropriate measures to prevent children from engaging in unlawful sexual activity and from being sexually exploited.⁴ An optional protocol (an amendment or addition) to the CRC is being discussed that would exclusively deal with the issue of the commercial sexual exploitation of children. It currently includes language that would make the sexual exploitation of and trafficking in children a crime against humanity.⁵

The CRC and other international treaties and conventions that address the issue of commercial sexual exploitation, do not supercede national laws. Most countries have laws regarding sexual abuse and the sex trade that could be used as starting points to increase the protection of children from commercial sexual exploitation. However, in many countries, this issue has not been publicly addressed because people are uncomfortable with the stigma attached to the issue in general and because sexual activity often is viewed as the de facto passage into adulthood. Also, the variety of ages and conditions stipulated in the legal protections for children is enormous. Many laws rely upon poorly defined words and concepts.

WHAT IS COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION?

- *The commercial sexual exploitation of children consists of the businesses of prostitution, pornography and trafficking for sexual purposes.*

Commercial sexual exploitation consists of practices that are demeaning, degrading and many times life-threatening to children. In 1996, in Stockholm, Sweden, the issue of the commercial sexual exploitation of children was discussed by government representatives, local, national and international nongovernmental organizations, and concerned individuals from 125 countries around the world. The Declaration of the World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children provided this definition of the practice in general—

...It [commercial sexual exploitation] comprises sexual abuse by the adult and remuneration in cash or kind to the child or a third person or persons. The child is treated as a sexual object and as a commercial object. The commercial sexual exploitation of children constitutes a form of coercion and violence against children and amounts to forced labour and a contemporary form of slavery.⁶

Forms of commercial sexual exploitation

There are three primary and interrelated forms of commercial sexual exploitation that comprise the sex trade: prostitution, pornography and trafficking for sexual purposes. Frequently children in the sex trade participate in all three forms of business simultaneously.

The United Nations defines child prostitution as follows. “Child prostitution is the act of engaging or offering the services of a child

to perform sexual acts for money or other consideration with that person or any other person.”⁷

The discussion of pornography in this booklet refers to the material representation (media include film, print, photos, audio tape, and digital representations carried via computer) of children engaged in sexual acts, real or simulated, intended for the sexual gratification of the user. The United Nations considers involvement in the production, distribution and/or use of such material to constitute participation in the business of pornography.⁸

Sex trafficking is defined as “... a pernicious form of slavery; it is the purchase of a body for sexual gratification and/or financial gain.”⁹ Children who are the victims of sex trafficking are transported across borders or within countries, across state lines, from city to city, or from rural to urban centers. The use of force is often, but not always, a feature of trafficking.

Identifying businesses that use children

The sex trade has prospered quietly throughout history without much public acknowledgment and very little information about the number of children involved. Today, with increased global travel and information, there is growing awareness of the problem. The businesses of sexual exploitation are more organized and openly marketed than they used to be. It has come to the attention of many people that opportunities to engage children in sex—although less visible than the commercial sexual exploitation of adults—are being arranged in a variety of ways.

Some of these opportunities are created by sex tourism businesses. Travelers are enticed to use the services of tour organizers who arrange for the sex tourist’s use of local people for sex. The owner and operator of one U.S.-based sex tour business promised that customers “never sleep alone on this tour” and recommended that customers have sex with a different *girl* [emphasis added] every day—“two if you can handle it.”¹⁰

Because engaging in sex with children is illegal in the United States, and traveling abroad with the intent to engage children in sex is illegal as well, sex tour operators are very careful about being

CHILDREN
ARE
CONTACTED,
CONTROLLED
AND SERVICE
CUSTOMERS
THROUGH
THE USE OF
CELLULAR
PHONES AND
COMPUTERS,
AMONG
OTHER
METHODS.

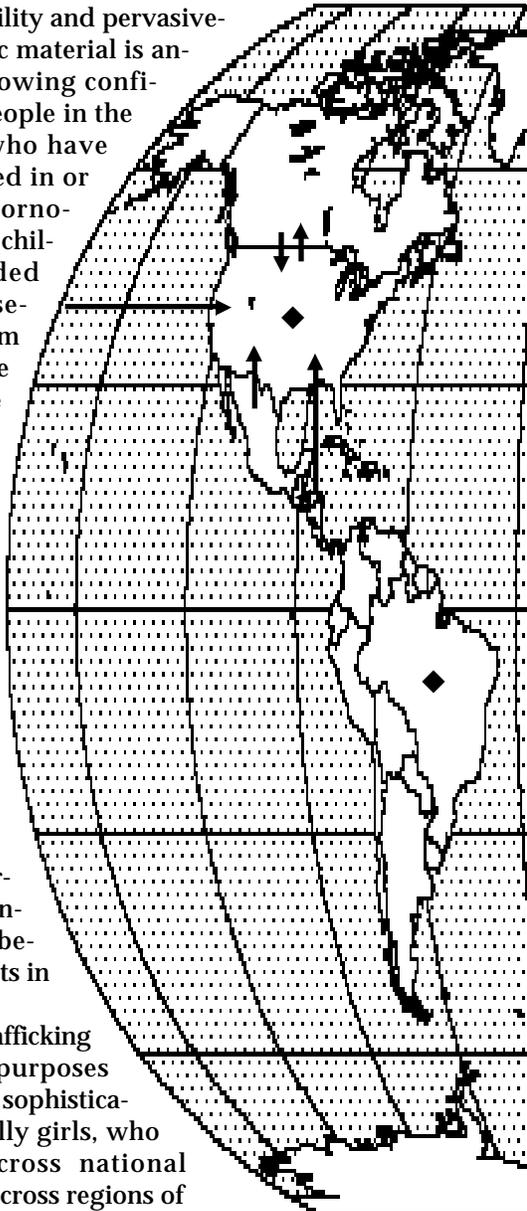
caught explicitly advertising the abuse of children. Euphemistic phrases, such as “fresh young ladies” and “beautiful unspoiled girls” are often used to communicate to the customers that underage girls are available for sex. Even those sex tourists not specifically seeking children may abuse them when they are readily provided through tour contacts.

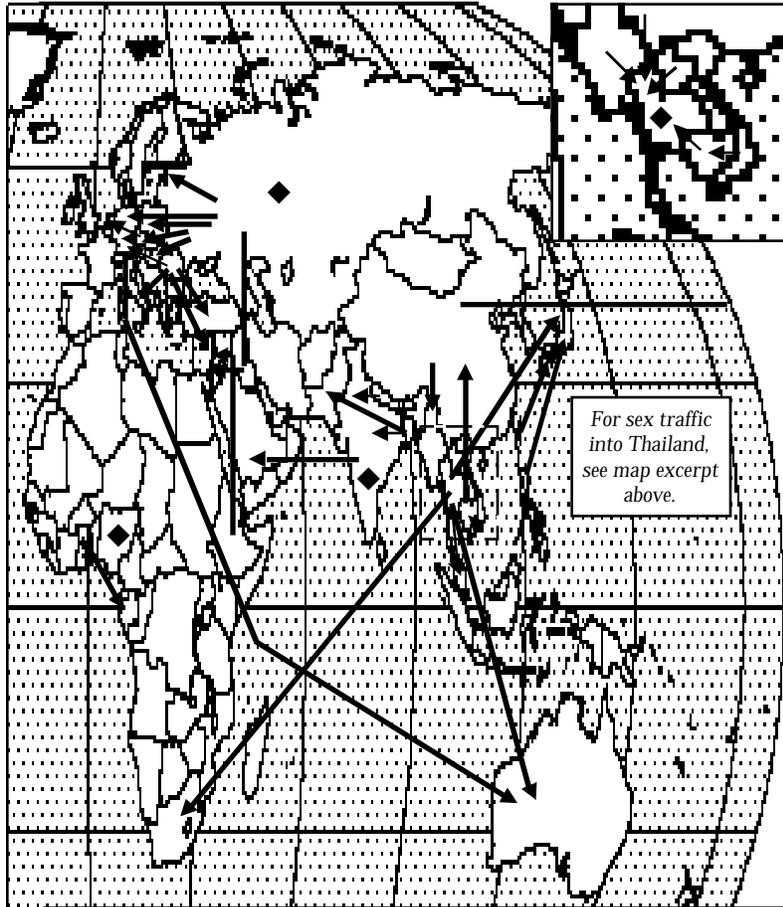
Most prostituted children are not housed in brothels. Many street children are prostituted by adults in return for the children’s food and shelter. Other prostituted children are contacted, controlled and service customers through a variety of arrangements using technology such as cellular phones and computers. Business storefronts, including domestic cleaning services and escort services, sometimes are covers for prostitution. Participants in a symposium organized by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of State discussed the following examples of business fronts used to hide the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Examples of these types of establishments include restaurants, where boys and girls wait on tables but may also be available to keep the customer company in the restaurant or be rented by the hour or night. Domestic workers or baby sitters may also be expected to provide sexual services to the employer and his friends. Beauty salons, in addition to their traditional beauty services, may provide private rooms for commercial sex work or a telephone service through which customers request sex workers to visit their hotel or home. Young women in bars, cafes, pool clubs, game rooms or karaoke establishments are often available to keep customers company and may also be rented by the hour to accompany customers elsewhere... Young women are often available in guest houses, hotels and motels to provide room service or to act as a “friend” to the guest for the period of their holiday.¹¹

The easy accessibility and pervasiveness of pornographic material is another sign of the growing confidence of business people in the sex trade. People who have never been interested in or sought out the pornographic depiction of children are bombarded with email advertisements coming to them directly over the internet, such as the following electronic message—"Are You A Peeping Tom? Do You Like Young Girls? Well—It's Your Fantasy Come True! ...CLICK HERE For A FREE Password!"¹² This message, like many others, was distributed to hundreds if not thousands of email addresses. Mass electronic advertising is very inexpensive and easy to do because of developments in computer software.

The business of trafficking children for sexual purposes also reflects growing sophistication. Children, usually girls, who are transported across national boundaries or even across regions of





Some Sex Trafficking Routes Worldwide

The arrows indicate the direction children are being trafficked for use in the sex trade. Their origin and destination is identified nationally—the points are not city or region specific. The ◆ symbol indicates that sex trafficking is conducted internally between regions of that country. Information on sex trafficking routes has been provided by the sources, publications and organizations listed at the back of this booklet, and by the All Africa Council of Churches.

their home country often believe the recruiter's pitch that they will be provided legitimate work as domestic servants, dancers, nannies or factory workers. Once these children have left their homes, there is little they can do to escape the sex trade if that is the intention of the traffickers who hold their identification and passports.

In some countries, traffickers offer families large amounts of cash that are paid back through the child's labor. They promise opportunities for the child to earn that money and much more if the child will come with them. Most recruiters do not openly say that the work the child is going to do is prostitution. The traffickers then have the parents and the child sign a "contract" that stipulates that the child must continue working until she repays the amount advanced to the parents. This practice makes a child debt-bonded at the very least. A harsher opinion would call the practice slavery.

The nongovernmental organization Global Survival Network (GSN) found in their studies of the former Soviet Union—now known as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)—that the Russian Mafia recruits girls and women at matchmaking parties organized by marriage agencies. The mafia uses these companies' databases to get additional names of possible recruits.¹³ There is suspicion that several mail-order bride businesses in the CIS and other countries are no more than covers for sex trafficking organizations.

Traffickers are adept at providing false documents with false names and ages. Some traffickers have boasted that they don't have to work very hard at it where corrupt officials look the other way if they are sufficiently bribed.¹⁴ In many cases, they don't need false papers at all. Women and girls are trafficked into many developed countries with easily obtained tourist visas. When the visa expires, the traffickers may create new aliases and apply for the girls' visas for another country, or they may send the girls back to their home country and collect fresh recruits. Sometimes they simply dump the girls where they are and let local immigration authorities deal with them.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND WHOSE CHILDREN ARE VULNERABLE?

- *There is no reliable global estimate of the number of children involved in commercial sexual exploitation, but individual countries are beginning to conduct studies that point to alarming numbers.*
- *Children who are prostituted suffer from and spread HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases.*
- *Children abused by family members or acquaintances and children lacking familial care are particularly susceptible to entering the sex trade.*

Counting children involved in prostitution, pornography and sex trafficking

Researchers are debating whether or not a larger percentage of children in the total world population are being sexually exploited today than in the past. There is no reliable global estimate of the number of children involved in commercial sexual exploitation. Official estimates are notoriously low due to the underground nature of the sex trade and national embarrassment. However, many argue that estimates provided by child advocacy organizations are too high. Even the numbers that have been published by various research organizations are of limited reliability because of the vari-

ety of methodologies, term definitions and the generally small sample sizes. Very little information is available from many regions, including China, the CIS, South America, several African countries, and the Middle East.

If only one child is exploited in the sex trade it is one too many, but we know that far more children are involved.

Both boys and girls¹⁵ are victims of commercial sexual exploitation, but in most countries the prostitution of girls is far more common. In some countries, such as Sri Lanka, it has come to the attention of officials that boys are being sought as the particular targets of sex tourists. Male-to-male prostitution also is prominent in the United States and in Western European countries.

Children suffer several physical and psychological problems as a result of commercial sexual exploitation

Commercial sexual exploitation hurts children. Children engaging in sexual activities are vulnerable to the same sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) as adults, including herpes, gonorrhea and syphilis. Girls are at risk of pregnancy and additional abuse as a result of pregnancy. And children who are prostituted are vulnerable to HIV infection and AIDS.

Tragically, the worldwide fear of AIDS appears to be one of the factors explaining why adults are sexually exploiting children as well as one of the consequences. Adults in many parts of the world are seeking younger and younger commercial sex partners in the belief that this practice will protect them from exposure to AIDS.¹⁶ People reason that a young prostitute is less likely to be infected with disease than an older prostitute.

Sexually active children actually are at greater risk of being infected by STDs and the HIV virus than a mature adult. Children are more vulnerable because their body tissues are more easily damaged—the thin tissues around a boy's anus and rectum and a girl's vagina are easily ruptured.¹⁷ It should not be overlooked that many children in the sex trade also are drug users, another risk factor for HIV infection and hepatitis. The United Nations estimates that more

THE POWER-
LESSNESS OF
SEXUALLY
EXPLOITED
CHILDREN
TO STOP
ABUSE MAY
MAKE THEM
BELIEVE
THAT TELL-
ING ANYONE
ABOUT IT IS
POINTLESS.

than 50 percent of new HIV infections currently are occurring in people between the ages of 15 and 24. An additional 10 percent of new infections are occurring in children under age 15.¹⁸

The immediate danger posed by prostitution is the physical, mental and emotional violence of pimps and madams and customers. Outreach workers in the United States have reported prostituted children who have been raped, sodomized, beaten, emotionally abused, tortured and killed by the adults that control them or by the people who use them. Bringing prostituted children to a point where they have enough self esteem to be concerned about their personal safety is the first major milestone

in any reintegration program.

“You must understand that these children believe what people have told them,” said Susan Breault, assistant director of the Paul & Lisa Program, which provides public education and prevention programs and outreach to prostituted children in New York and other east coast cities of the United States. “Most of these girls do not believe they are worthy of rescue. One girl told us that no matter what happened to her she knew what her pimp and the customers expected her to do. She said she had no idea of what to expect from people who were not involved in prostitution.”¹⁹

According to research on child sexual exploitation, children who experience inappropriate sexual activity are psychologically impacted by a combination of the assault itself with the distorted information abusers use to justify their sexual behavior.²⁰ Although distorted information may be a more common feature of noncommercial sexual exploitation, children in the sex trade are impacted in a similar way. These children experience stigmatization, betrayal and powerlessness in combination with adults’ strategic measures to enforce silence about the abuse.

Experiencing stigmatization, betrayal and powerlessness leads to behaviors that hamper prostituted children’s escape and reinte-

gration. Stigmatization and betrayal cause children to fear trusting and talking to adults about their experiences. The powerlessness of sexually exploited children to stop abuse may make them believe that telling anyone about it is pointless. A prostituted child may internalize feelings of guilt and shame about her participation in prostitution. Or, as a defense against feeling powerless, a sexually exploited child may create a different reality for herself, preferably one where she had options about her experience. The child may express the opinion that prostitution was her choice.²¹

Interviews with prostituted children reveal many variations of the “choice” argument.²² Sexually exploited children have explained that they have participated in prostitution and/or pornography because they wanted to help support their families; because experience with sexual abuse at home was less preferable than being paid for sex; because they were homeless and the adult who sheltered them needed payment; because their pimp was really a boyfriend who loved them and just needed some extra money.

There has been very little research about the impact of prostitution on boys and few outreach programs for prostituted children work with boys. Part of the reason for this appears to be related to widespread discrimination against homosexuals and different social expectations about male sexual behavior. Part of the lack of research appears to be due to boys’ differing perception of their work in the sex trade. Breault commented on the situation in New York.

The male sex trade is the basement of this underground business. There are lots of boys out there [working in the sex trade], but we don’t know that much about them. They get together and create their own groups for protection. There’s not so much reliance on pimps. But there are boys being prostituted by their families, and there are boys being drawn into pedophile sex rings. They are abused and exploited.²³

MANY
PROSTITUTED
CHILDREN
HAVE
EXPERIENCED
SEXUAL ABUSE
IN THE
HOME
PRIOR TO
ENTERING
THE
SEX TRADE.

People working with prostituted children say that depression, disassociation of emotions from memory and posttraumatic stress disorder—maladies also common to victims of torture—may be exhibited by prostituted children as a result of repeated trauma.²⁴ More apparent, however, are the behaviors that help prostituted children cope with the pain of their reality. Drug addiction is common in many countries. So is sexually aggressive behavior.

“Some of these children are not sweet,” said Breault. “They’re rough around the edges, but that doesn’t mean that they don’t deserve our help. They’re children first.”²⁵

The supply side: factors that increase children’s risk of entering the sex trade

The commercial nature of this issue makes it one where tackling the issues of supply (children) and demand (adult sexual exploiters) may be useful for outlining the problem. On the supply side there are several factors that contribute to the likelihood of a child entering the sex trade.

Under all other explanations for the commercial sexual exploitation of children there is the influence of poverty. However, poverty by itself does not explain why children enter the sex trade. Some impoverished children use their bodies as tools for survival, but many do not. Children in developed countries, whose families are not impoverished, work in the sex trade. Also, many children from a variety of economic situations are tricked or forced into the sex trade against their wills.

Children who suffer abuse in the home

In North America, it is estimated that 80 percent of prostituted children have suffered physical or sexual abuse before entering the sex trade.²⁶ These children have come from a variety of socioeconomic conditions. Although research on child abuse is not well developed in many parts of the world, there is agreement among experts that children in the sex trade are very often victims of abuse long before they were introduced to prostitution and/or pornography.

Breault commented on the state of prostituted children in the United States—

Most prostituted children are abused or neglected children. They might even come from upper middle class families, but they do not have adults who care about them. They lack self esteem and pimps can spot that so easily. Children who are abused or neglected are set up for the manipulations of the pimp. They respond to inappropriate or unrealistic lures—lines like ‘Oh, you’re so pretty. I’m sure you could be a model if you came with me to the city.’²⁷

Children who lack family support and protection

Abandoned children, children who have lost their families, and children who have been encouraged to leave the protection of the family are at risk. Children who run away from home for any reason are at risk.

A study of 143 street children conducted in Guatemala²⁸ in 1992 showed that 70 percent of the children had one or two sexual partners per day, and approximately 25 percent (over 90 percent of the girls) reported having more than four partners per day. All of the children reported having contracted STDs. All of them used drugs. Research in several countries indicates a high positive correlation between living on the streets and commercial sexual exploitation.

Rädda Barnen (Save the Children, Sweden) learned that homeless girls in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, have to take their chances sleeping outside on the street and hope to avoid rape and other violence.²⁹ Many of these homeless children are raped, and often times the social stigma surrounding rape leads to employment as a prostitute. Still, a girl prostitute’s earnings are less than a dollar per customer, and one trick is not enough to rent floor space to sleep inside for even one night.

Children whose parents are incapable of intervening on their behalf, or who believe it is the child’s responsibility to care for themselves are at risk. Traditional beliefs where children are viewed as the property of adults and without individual human rights increase the vulnerability of children to commercial sexual exploitation. Girls are particularly vulnerable to a lack of sufficient familial care in many parts of the world. It is certain that the complex interplay of

male and female gender roles and discrimination against women have contributed to the fact that women and girls are the majority of those who are sexually exploited. Boys who have experienced sex with men also are very vulnerable to rejection by their families.

A young Cuban prostitute whose family “disowned” her because of promiscuous behavior might not resemble a young Thai prostitute who was sold to a pimp by her drug-addicted father. Most likely, the two girls’ stories would not elicit the same concern or reaction from others. And their stories would be different from the experiences of a boy from the Dominican Republic who sexually serviced tourists on the beach. However, the stories of these children would share in common the fact that their families were unwilling or unable to protect them.

Children who live near tourist destinations and military bases

Tourism generates billions of dollars of business throughout the world. Children in the vicinity of tourist destinations sometimes are overwhelmed by the prospect of making a lot of money quickly and that increases their risk of entering the sex trade. Research on the connection between tourism and the commercial sexual exploitation of children has been undertaken by the nongovernmental organization ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes). ECPAT’s research suggests that in some tourism development areas the public, tourists and law enforcement agencies perceive that different laws and social considerations apply.³⁰ This may be part of the reason why the sexual exploitation of children in these areas has not been swiftly penalized and curtailed.

ECPAT has focused on the commercial sexual exploitation of children through sex tourism in developing countries. It should come as no surprise that the infrastructure designed to support general tourism also supports sex tourism. Men from developed countries are the majority of sex tourists visiting developing countries and sexually exploiting children there. Following arrests reported in the media, ECPAT compiled information on sex tourists in Asia from 1989 to 1996 that showed the largest number of arrested for-

eign abusers came from the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia, France, Japan, Canada, and Switzerland.³¹ Information gathered throughout the 1990s indicates that men from other parts of Europe, the Middle East, China and the newly industrialized countries of Asia also participate in the commercial sexual exploitation of children from developing countries. Sex tourists share in common only their economic affluence in the place of their holiday destination. They may be of any occupation, race, religion, or culture.

In at least three countries where the exploitation of children through sex tourism is acknowledged as a serious social problem—Thailand, the Philippines and Taiwan—sex trade businesses were enhanced in response to military forces' desires for rest and recreation (R&R). Prostitution was well-established locally before the war in Vietnam, but the buying power of U.S. soldiers visiting these countries on R&R created a surge of money flowing into the hospitality businesses in the 1960s and early 1970s.³² Sex trade businesses were core components of local "entertainment," and they continued to be patronized by foreigners and local people after the war ended.

The presence of large numbers of military men, separated from their families and normal societal conditions, has been known to spur on prostitution in every part of the world for thousands of years. However, it is disturbing that soldiers' participation in the abuse of prostituted children has not been completely curtailed. This abuse continues to be reported in the media in places where large numbers of soldiers are stationed for long periods of time.³³

Children whose family is involved in the sex trade

"It was awful and very painful but I didn't show it," admitted Munni, of Bangladesh. She was 11 years old when she received her first customer—a man in his forties who is a friend of her mother. He paid about \$12 for taking Munni's virginity. Munni said she was proud to give the money to her mother, who is a retired prostitute herself.³⁴

In Bangladesh, like many other countries, a majority of prostitutes' daughters become prostitutes themselves. The general social disgust for the sex trade and the social value placed on controlling

INDIGENOUS
CHILDREN
APPEAR TO
HAVE A
HIGHER RISK
OF ENTERING
THE SEX
TRADE IN
SEVERAL
COUNTRIES.

women's sexuality leaves the children of prostitutes with few routes toward achieving social legitimacy and other economic options. The status of the mother is very often conferred on to her children, particularly girl children.

Children with uncertain legal status

Children who are members of groups with uncertain legal status are at risk of entering the sex trade. All trafficked children, whether they were trafficked for sexual purposes or not, fall into this category. These groups include refugees, immigrants and emigrants. Also, indigenous peoples with separate legal status within a larger population are often discriminated against, and their children may have a disproportionate risk of entering the sex trade.³⁵

Illegitimate children—by whatever definition of legitimate marriage locally exists—are at greater risk in some countries. In Kenya, for example, illegitimacy was almost completely unknown³⁶ under customary law where nearly all families were extended and children were the responsibility of the entire family and sometimes their whole community. Kenyan children were protected by the Affiliation Act in Kenyan law, which required biological fathers to maintain their offspring whether or not the parents were married.

The repeal of the Act in 1969 created a category of children not recognized under the law, and shifted the burden of caring for these children onto their mothers alone.³⁷ Impacted by the effects of rapid urbanization, poverty and the destruction of family support in child rearing, many single, working mothers have seen their children drift into street life. In Kenya, like many other parts of the world, life on the streets features drug dealing and prostitution as common forms of employment.

WHO ARE INVOLVED IN THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND WHY?

- *Adult males make up 90 percent of the customers for prostituted children.*
- *Adult men and women organize and promote commercial sexual exploitation businesses.*
- *Organized crime is involved in the sex trafficking of children in many parts of the world.*

The demand: who buys sexual services from children?

All over the world adult men, both heterosexual and homosexual, are the predominant customers of prostituted children. Outreach workers and activist organizations believe that men make up approximately 90 percent of prostituted children's customers.³⁸

People who seek out children to have sexual relations with are called *preferential abusers*. Among them are people suffering from a specifically defined psychiatric disorder known as pedophilia. Pedophilia is a term generally used to describe an adult's sexual preference for young, prepubescent children. Other preferential abusers specifically choose to abuse adolescent youth.

Adults who desire children as sexual partners are rarely identified because they make efforts to hide their fantasies and their behavior.³⁹ They may appear to be introverted people who do not form

relationships with other adults easily. They sometimes seek employment in organizations or businesses that put them in daily contact with children, and they may be perceived by the broader community as holding positions of trust with children. Many preferential abusers seek relations with children of a particular age range and sex.

There is no way of knowing how many people in the world are preferential abusers and pedophiles, but the International Police Organization (INTERPOL) does maintain a registry of 200 known pedophiles.⁴⁰ INTERPOL alerts law enforcement agencies about the movement of these people.

Another term for adults who have sex with children is *situational abusers*. Situational abusers are those adults who may not prefer children, and who do have sex with adults, but will exploit children when and where they are conveniently available. According to ECPAT, the majority of people who use prostituted children are situational abusers. Situational abusers are adults traveling on business or on vacation, aging people seeking to rejuvenate themselves, and men and women who have separated from or divorced their spouses. In fact, situational abusers come from all occupations, age groups and countries. Nevertheless, the “situations” that lead to their use of children are not as circumstantial as these abusers would like people to believe.

To begin with, practically every patron of prostitutes in every part of the world specifically looks for *young* and beautiful girls or boys. The emphasis on youth and its correlation with physical beauty is a worldwide phenomena. If taken to extremes, this correlation may lead people to believe there is an implicit sanction of the sexual exploitation of children. An example of this pervasive attitude was found a few years ago in a publicity campaign for Brazil's edition of *Playboy* magazine. The charms of a young playmate were described this way—“She may be 18 but she has the body of a 15-year-old.”⁴¹

It is well-documented that many men value the experience of taking a girl's virginity, whether through the social mechanism of marriage or not. Adults who procure children for prostitution know they will be able to charge a higher fee for virgins. In Thailand, the price of “unveiling” a Burmese virgin can be 100 times higher than the price for the same girl after she has had sexual experience.⁴²

Many adults buying the services of prostituted children—both domestic and foreign—convince themselves that these children are not really children because they have engaged in sex. Many times, the excuses given for sexually exploiting a child are based on the perception that the child is a prostitute, *not* the prostitute is a child. Once sexually used, the argument goes, the child is not innocent and therefore not a child. As children age, there are fewer barriers to stop anyone from sexually exploiting them. Their mature appearance is used as an excuse for abuse. Many countries do not have comprehensive legal protections for 16- and 17-year-old youth.

Some adults who have sex with children appear to want to convince themselves that their sexual activity is something the child initiated.⁴³ The statement of a Canadian expatriate in Costa Rica, quoted below, exemplifies this kind of argument for sexually exploiting children.

*They all get pregnant by the age of 13, for Christ's sake... this is such an open, natural culture. Girls are so willing and open, they want to please. They're sexual from the age of six.*⁴⁴

The quote above also exemplifies racist and bigoted attitudes held toward the culture of the child victim. Research on sex tourists has turned up ample examples of how men traveling from developed countries to less developed countries try to excuse their behavior by arguing that local people have less morals than they do. Instead of not exploiting children themselves, sex tourists are likely to explain how they exploited children in a superior fashion. Giving a child enough money to feed his family for a month or sending gifts to the child in the mail are justifications that sex tourists sometimes use to try to legitimize their behavior.

ADULTS, NOT
CHILDREN,
PROFIT FROM
SEX TRADE
BUSINESSES.
ADULTS RUN
BROTHELS.
ADULTS
PRODUCE POR-
NOGRAPHY.
ADULTS PAY
OTHER ADULTS
TO OWN
CHILDREN
LIKE SLAVES.

Adults organize and promote commercial sexual exploitation businesses for profit

Throughout the world adults are the primary beneficiaries of the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Adults, not children, run the bars where customers meet prostitutes. Adults run brothels. Adults make and distribute pornographic films and magazines. Adults create the false documentation that allows them to take children over national borders. Adults advertise sex tours. Adults pay other adults to buy children like slaves.

Pimps and Madams

Although there is evidence that suggests that many pimps and madams have a history of sexual abuse themselves,⁴⁵ they explain their involvement from strictly an economic rationale. The commercial sexual exploitation of children is highly profitable. Fourteen year olds in the United States have been reported to bring in \$500 a night for their pimp.⁴⁶ In Thailand, a prostituted girl under 18 can cost a customer \$100.⁴⁷

Pimps and madams often take 50 to 80 percent of the fee charged for the use of prostituted children. There are many different kinds of arrangements. They may take the money from the customer first and give the prostituted child a cut. They may bill the child for food, shelter and protection. Or they may collect a set fee once a week.

The means pimps and madams use to control children ranges from providing for the children's physical needs to psychological manipulation to outright violent coercion. Some children who have worked in the sex trade have reported that their pimp or madam was the only adult who provided anything for them, even if it was no more than a place to sleep. However, kindness is something prostituted children cannot count on. Children in the sex trade have been found chained to beds, locked in small rooms, forced to take drugs, and beaten to death.

Hospitality and Tourism Businesses

Children are being sexually exploited as a result of the marketing practices of hospitality and tourism businesses. ECPAT research-

ers have uncovered numerous, creative variations on the practice of making money off sexually exploited children. Bar owners who “allow” prostitutes to come in and solicit often take a bar fee from the prostitute or her customer that can be disguised as the cost of extraordinarily expensive drinks. Hotel employees look the other way when money is provided to slip in an unregistered guest. Guest house property managers happen to be able to procure “maid service” for an extra fee, and the maids are available to the customer, at any time, for the extent of their holiday.

Pornographers

Pornography is estimated to be a multibillion dollar industry worldwide. In the United States and European countries, pornographic depictions of children increased in the 1970s, but leveled off or decreased by the early 1990s after those countries passed legislation against it.⁴⁸ However, child pornography continues to circulate, much of it now being produced using children from developing countries. Also, computer technologies appear to be aiding a resurgence in the number of child pornography businesses.

There are people who argue that the production, distribution and possession of child pornography should not be criminalized because it is an expression of free speech. Free speech is certainly a human right worthy of protection. However, even speech cannot supercede a child’s right to safety and protection from unlawful sexual activity and demeaning and degrading acts.

For pornography to be created, someone’s child was cajoled, bribed or forced to perform or simulate sexual acts for the gratification of others. No matter what choices a child makes later, he knows that the material record of his commercial sexual exploitation remains circulating, perhaps thousands of copies of that exploitation. Pedophiles use pornography to teach children how sexual acts are performed. Pedophiles also use pornography to convince children that sexual activity is acceptable, good for them, or fun.

Organized Crime

International sex trafficking is not conducted by one or two exploitative entrepreneurs. Trafficking is the domain of organized

crime groups that trick, bribe or actively involve corrupt law enforcement, and immigration, travel and transportation authorities. Information is being collected about organized groups that participate in sex trafficking in nearly every part of the world.

“The mafia is not stupid,” said Michael Platzer, head of operations for the United Nations’ Center for International Crime Prevention, based in Vienna.⁴⁹ In an article in the *New York Times* about trafficking women from the CIS, Platzer stated, “There is less law enforcement since the Soviet Union fell apart and more freedom of movement. The earnings are incredible. The overhead [for trafficking women and girls] is low—you don’t have to buy cars and guns. Drugs you sell once and they are gone. Women can earn money for a long time.”⁵⁰

Nongovernmental organizations and official law enforcement agencies focusing on the sex traffic from the CIS to other countries have not published information about the number of children involved. Teenage girls are counted as women in published reports because of the difficulties of establishing their true ages. Research groups have found that the CIS criminal organizations also are involved in other illicit activities, such as drug trafficking and auto smuggling.⁵¹

In Pakistan, Bangladeshi girls trafficked into the country for sexual purposes have been sold for over \$1,000.⁵² Girls brought to Japan are sold to pimps and madams for \$10,000 each.⁵³ Chinese girls, as young as age 12, have been smuggled into Thailand and sold for approximately \$400.⁵⁴ Girls trafficked into Israel are reported to be sold for at least \$10,000 each.⁵⁵

Families

The role of parents who knowingly sell their children into businesses of pornography and prostitution was reserved for last, not because it has less importance, but because there is very little detailed information available about it. There have been cases where parents and family members initiated their children into sexual activity and made the children, or pornography of them, available to friends.⁵⁶ In some cases, families have procured business in the same fashion as typical pimps and madams even though the children were never sexually abused by family members. In many

cases, families have taken money in an outright exchange, typifying the slave-like nature of commercial sexual exploitation.

How could this happen? According to the research being gathered, poverty plays its part. However, poverty is not the only factor, and, in some instances, it doesn't even appear to be a primary factor.⁵⁷ Lack of family stability, drug addiction, incidence of incest in the family, discrimination against girl children, and materialistic greed have all been discovered as reasons why families have condemned their children to lives of sexual abuse.

Systemic hindrances to the rescue and reintegration of prostituted children

After children have become involved in commercial sexual exploitation, law enforcement officers are usually the primary actors the public depends on to identify these children, remove them and participate in providing evidence for the prosecution of their exploiters. These officers hold a position of public trust. Unfortunately, officers are not always encouraged to be sensitive to the plight of prostituted children. Many children who are prostituted, especially those who have been trafficked from their home countries, are afraid to go to the police for help. In several countries, these children know they face months or years behind bars if the police catch them. There are cases of police corruption where children have reported being physically and sexually abused by officers themselves.⁵⁸

In some places, law enforcement officials excuse the commercial sexual exploitation of women and children as a necessity of local peacekeeping. When Thai police under orders from Bangkok cracked down on brothels in the port town of Ranong in 1993, they arrested 40 Burmese girls under age 18. The girls had been trafficked into Thailand to serve the Burmese fishermen who were under contract to Thai ship owners. The town's police chief stated—

...it is normal that there is a prostitution problem. In my opinion it is disgraceful to let Myanmar [Burmese] men frequent Thai prostitutes so I have been flexible in allowing Myanmar prostitutes to work here.... If we do not allow brothels in Ranong, the Myanmar fishermen will commit crimes and mischief here.⁵⁹

Even in developed countries there are few protections or rewards for children in the sex trade who do come forward. In the United States and Canada, several states and provinces adopted laws in the 1970s that prohibited police from pulling apparently homeless children off the street and putting them behind bars.⁶⁰ The rationale was that street children should not be treated as criminals. Unfortunately, the children often are not provided any public assistance or shelter either. Because there is little public funding to support the treatment and reintegration of prostituted children, even Canadian and U.S. children wait for someone to pick them up, vulnerable to every criminal interest that comes down the street.

To be fair, assisting prostituted children can be difficult and time-consuming. Law enforcement officials who must interview sexually exploited children become frustrated when children claim they can't remember what happened or where they were taken or who they were with. It may be difficult to tell whether these children are experiencing disassociation or are simply intimidated by their abusers and afraid to tell the truth. Due in part to the personal impact of their traumatic experiences, prostituted children may be treated as uncooperative witnesses in investigations.

The scarcity of comprehensive public assistance for commercially sexually exploited children has hindered rescue even in cases where public officials have attempted to address public outrage over the issue. Politicians often hold the opinion that prostituted children, not their abusers, are the criminals. As a result, so-called "rescue" efforts may amount to nothing more than revictimization of these children in an effort to make the problem disappear.

This lack of accountability on the part of public leaders and policy makers was exemplified in 1996 when over 400 child prostitutes were rounded up in police raids in Bombay, India. The girls were abruptly housed, under lock and key, in orphanages and juvenile institutions—leaving behind their money, belongings and even their children in some cases. Many of the girls, particularly those who had been trafficked from Nepal, remained under this detention for up to five months. At least six HIV-infected girls died of tuberculosis while in detention. There was no comprehensive plan for their treatment or reintegration.⁶¹

HOW CAN THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN BE STOPPED?

- *Grassroots action is needed in coordination with active law enforcement and the efforts of national and international organizations.*
- *Reliable data on the commercial sexual exploitation of children in all parts of the world would provide invaluable support to ending this abuse.*
- *A comprehensive international treaty on the issue is needed.*

The World Congress Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children set an agenda for action

Under the patronage of Queen Silvia of Sweden, the 1996 World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children marked greater global cooperation toward mobilizing governments, organizations and people to confront this issue. In her concluding remarks at the Congress, Queen Silvia stated, “We have to act now and we have to act forcefully. We owe this to the children that have been abused, tortured and even killed by sex offenders and to the children who are at risk of becoming victims.”

The meeting’s Declaration and Agenda for Action was adopted unanimously. It contains the following checklist of guidelines for concrete action.

- Give high priority to action against the commercial sexual exploitation of children and provide funds for this purpose;
- Criminalize the commercial sexual exploitation of children as well as other forms of sexual exploitation. Hold all abusers accountable, whether local or foreign, and ensure that the child victims are not penalized;
- Enforce laws, policies and programs to protect children from commercial sexual exploitation and strengthen communication and cooperation between law enforcement authorities;
- Develop education, social mobilization, and development activities to help parents and guardians to protect children from this kind of abuse;
- Encourage popular participation, including that of children and youth, in preventing and eliminating the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Leaders of the World Congress are committed to coordinate with and inform the UN groups that are concerned with the commercial sexual exploitation of children—particularly the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.⁶² Also, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has made a particular commitment to aiding children suffering from commercial sexual exploitation. The ILO explicitly lists prostitution, pornography and trafficking as among the worst forms of child labor that should be abolished by countries. Through the ILO’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) organizations in several countries have partnered with the ILO to implement programs addressing this issue. The ILO is calling for drafting a new convention on child labor that would include protections for children in the sex trade businesses.

In addition to the efforts of international organizations, there remains a critical need to mobilize people in local, regional and national efforts to stop the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Organizations from every part of the world that participated in the

1996 Congress are establishing networks to share information with others and to report on activities to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children in their area. For information on how you can be included in these efforts, contact the ECPAT organization in your region of the world or the headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand.

What is being done to help sexually exploited children?

Public awareness of the issue is growing. As a result of committed grassroots efforts, there has been significant media coverage in Australia, the Philippines, Thailand and several other countries. With careful attention to protecting the privacy of exploited children, meetings such as the International Summit of Sexually Exploited Youth, held in Canada in 1998, have brought the voices of sexually exploited children from the Americas⁶³ to the attention of national and international leaders. Also, health organizations are being invited to participate in efforts to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children as connections are being established between the spread of AIDS/HIV infection and the sexual abuse of children.

As a result of the hard work of ECPAT and other organizations, several countries known to have a high number of offending sex tourists have enacted legislation that provides **stiff penalties** for those citizens engaging foreign children in sexual activities. The United States has made it a felony for U.S. citizens or legal residents to travel to a foreign country for the purpose of engaging in any sexual act with a child. Penalties for conviction include fines and/or imprisonment for up to 10 years.⁶⁴ Australia has made it illegal to have sexual intercourse with a child under age 16 for citizens and residents traveling or living outside Australia. The maximum penalty if convicted is 17 years imprisonment.⁶⁵

Very few convictions have been obtained as a result of these laws so far. Difficulties in prosecution exist because of extradition issues, meeting the standards of evidence, and the necessity of protecting exploited children from further victimization. The **treatment of adult abusers** also must be addressed. Punishment alone does not change behavior, but a change in behavior is needed to protect children.

Prostituted Children Can Lead Successful Adult Lives

Cherry Kingsley entered prostitution in Canada at age 14. Today, she is the project coordinator of Out from the Shadows—International Summit of Sexually Exploited Youth.⁶⁶ Following is a brief interview between Kingsley and Youth Advocate Program International.

YAP-I: Why are children who suffer commercial sexual exploitation largely invisible to the people who could assist and protect them?

Kingsley: “It is because of the issue of sexual abuse. People are uncomfortable about it and not sure when to intervene. Also, there is no clear line about what constitutes abuse, and children who speak out often are not believed.... Neglect is even harder to define and it is often confused with poverty.”

YAP-I: What helps children leave prostitution behind?

Kingsley: “There is never a single solution. You cannot rely on law and order, a shelter program or a training program alone. Rehabilitation requires a multitude of services, but healing a child of sexual abuse is the most important service to offer.

“Young people need to be empowered—knowing your rights is not enough. Youth must know how to exercise their rights.”

YAP-I: How did you get out of prostitution?

Kingsley: “I saw my friends dying of AIDS, drug abuse and violence. I had encountered many violent clients and had a serious addiction problem, too. When I was 18 I began to participate in a self-help group with youth in the Canadian child welfare system. By talking about issues, I began to shed some of the shame and stigma that I felt. I started working on a street youth newsletter and tried to create a safe house. I felt responsible for telling the stories of my friends who had died.

“It is not possible to move directly from the street to the ‘straight’ world. When I had a child, my image of my body changed and I began to see the sacredness of life and of ones body. But motherhood, by itself, was not the key to getting out. I needed to work through steps of self-help, peer support and trying to create change. I needed to be connected to something outside of prostitution and to see good in the world first. I was 22 when I got out.”

Greater **law enforcement efforts** have been undertaken in several countries, but much remains to be done. Nonbinding, cooperative measures between immigration officials and law enforcement organizations have been arranged to share information about the movements of pedophiles, pornographers, and known trafficking organizations. INTERPOL has created a standing party on offenses against minors that is assisting law enforcement organizations in many parts of the world. Unfortunately, INTERPOL appears unwilling to share data and information with non-law enforcement organizations working on the issue. With the assistance of public agencies and nongovernmental organizations, some law enforcement agencies are receiving information about commercial sexual exploitation to sensitize them to the plight of these children and to make them better prepared to investigate and bring profiteers to justice.

In many places where the commercial sexual exploitation of children has been recognized as a serious problem, there have been revisions of the relevant **national laws**. The Philippines and Sri Lanka are two countries where the penalties for the commercial sexual exploitation of children have increased significantly. Several other countries are in the process of decriminalizing the status of prostituted children. These countries are writing specific legislation that recognizes children's rights to be protected from commercial sexual exploitation.

Combating pornography is a particular interest in developed countries, such as the United States and European countries, because of the exposure of millions of children to commercial sexual exploitation through computer technologies. It appears that more public funds are being committed to fighting child pornography in several countries. A recent operation conducted by the New York State Attorney General's office identified over 1,500 suspected traffickers in child pornography.⁶⁷ Redd Barna (Save the Children, Norway) has created a hotline service⁶⁸ with the Norwegian Children's Ombudsman to report child pornography on the internet. Information is forwarded to the Criminal Bureau of Investigation in Norway and other police authorities.

On the ground in practically every country, a number of UN organizations and local and international nongovernmental organizations are implementing **prevention, rescue and reintegra-**

tion programs. Efforts consist of providing community education and development initiatives, basic education for girls and boys who have been prostituted, vocational training, health services and counseling.

CONCLUSION

Children have human rights, and they are in a vulnerable stage of development that deserves the protection and concern of adults. Despite their involvement in prostitution, pornography or sex trafficking, children should not be treated as criminals because of what they have done nor because of what is done to them.

It is very tempting to dismiss this ugly problem by simply saying—yes, there ought to be laws against it in every country. Where it is difficult to find consensus for creating local and national legal protections, a new international treaty could set the standard that criminalizes the sex trade in children. Unfortunately, the problem has not been and cannot be solved by law enforcement alone. Ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children requires widespread grassroots action that addresses meeting children’s needs and curtailing and correcting the abusive behavior of adults.

The complexity of commercial sexual exploitation demands dialogue and action on the issues of sexuality, discrimination against women and girls, the role of the family, poverty and child labor, public health, law enforcement and human rights. When community leaders from all of these sectors are working together, children will have real choices about their lives, and adult abusers who sexually exploit children can be brought under the scrutiny and sanction they deserve.

ENDNOTES

1. Ron O'Grady, *The Child and the Tourist* (Bangkok: End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes [hereinafter ECPAT]; Auckland, New Zealand: Pace Publishing, 1992), 53-54.

2. Mark Clayton, "Prostitution 'Circuit' Takes Girls Across North America," *The Christian Science Monitor* (included in a series reprint titled "The Child Sex Trade: Battling a Scourge"), September 1996, 5.

3. Tim McGirk, "Nepal's Lost Daughters, 'India's Soiled Goods'," *Time* 149, no. 4 (27 January 1997), [article on-line]; available from http://www.pathfinder.com/@rm5v@QUAGR14yQka/time/magazine/1997/int/970127/asia.nepals_lost.html; Internet; accessed 10 June 1998.

4. United Nations (1989), *Convention on the Rights of the Child: adopted by the U.N. General Assembly resolution 44/25 on 20 November 1989*. Article 34 of the CRC states: "States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent: (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; (b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;...." Article 35 states: "States Parties shall take all appropriate national bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form."

5. Margaret A. Healy, "Prosecuting Child Sex Tourists at Home: Do Laws in Sweden, Australia, and the United States Safeguard the Rights of Children as Mandated by International Law?" *Fordham International Law Journal* 18, no 5 (May 1995): 1879. Refers to the Draft Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Concerning the Elimination of Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children [hereinafter Draft Optional Protocol]. The Draft Optional Protocol Article 1 (1) states: "State Parties recognise that crimes of sexual exploitation of or trafficking in children represent crimes against humanity." Other crimes against humanity include war crimes such as willful killing, torture, genocide, and unlawful mass deportations. The Draft Optional Protocol is still a draft, has not been adopted by the United Nations and has no binding effect as of this booklet's publishing date.

6. Vitit Muntarbhorn, "The Report of the Rapporteur-General" on the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, 27-31 August 1996 (Stockholm, Sweden, photocopy), 4-5.

7. World Health Organization [hereinafter WHO], "Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: The Health and Psychosocial Dimensions," (written for the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, June 1996), 10.

8. WHO, "Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: The Health and Psychosocial Dimensions," 10.

9. Women's Environment & Development Organization, "Root Causes: A Gender Approach to Child Sexual Exploitation," (written about the World Congress against

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, 1996), 25. See also, WHO, "Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: The Health and Psychosocial Dimensions," 10.

10. "Demonstrators at Los Angeles International Airport Target Sex Tourism to the Philippines," 18 April 1998, [on-line press release]; on the Captive Daughters website; available from <http://www.captive.org/ActionB2.htm>; Internet; accessed 6 June 1998.

11. Ladda Saikaew, "A Non-governmental Organization Perspective," in *Forced Labor: The Prostitution of Children*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, 1996), 65.

12. This booklet's author received this electronic message (email) on June 2, 1998. The message was not solicited and is included here only as an example of the deluge of pornography advertisements. Internet service providers suggest that their customers request the advertisers to remove their email addresses from the mailing lists of unwanted solicitations. Any solicitations advertising the commercial sexual exploitation of children should be reported to your internet service provider and other relevant child pornography monitoring organizations.

13. U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, "International Trafficking in Women from Central Europe and the NIS," (working paper) 16 December 1997, 4.

14. U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, "International Trafficking in Women from Central Europe and the NIS," 5-6.

15. This booklet uses male and female pronouns interchangeably to remind readers that children of both sexes may become victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

16. The assertion that adults are seeking younger sex partners because of the fear of AIDS is commonly held among health workers and counselors working with prostituted children in many parts of the world. See also the report submitted by WHO, "Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: The Health and Psychosocial Dimensions," 21-22.

17. O'Grady, *The Child and the Tourist*, 112.

18. Miriam Lyons, "The Impact of HIV and AIDS on Children, Families and Communities: Risks and Realities of Childhood during the HIV Epidemic," UN Development Programme, HIV and Development Programme, Issues Paper 30, May 1998 (New York, photocopy), 1.

19. Susan Breault, assistant director of the Paul & Lisa Program, telephone interview by Laura A. Barnitz, Washington, DC, 29 July 1998.

20. Liz Kelly, Rachel Wingfield, Sheila Burton, Linda Regan, *Splintered Lives: Sexual exploitation of children in the context of children's rights and child protection* (Ilford, Essex, UK: Barnardo's, 1995), 52-53.

21. Kelly, Wingfield, Burton, Regan, *Splintered Lives: Sexual exploitation of children in the context of children's rights and child protection*, 55.

22. National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, *Female Juvenile Prostitution: Problem and Response*, (Arlington, Virginia: National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 1992), 3, 8, 10. See also "Girls Entering Sex Trade May Say It's a 'Choice'...but are they victims of master manipulators?" *The Christian Science Monitor* (series reprint "The Child Sex Trade: Battling a Scourge"), September 1996, 18.
23. Breault interview, 29 July 1998.
24. Breault interview, 29 July 1998, and Norma Hotaling, executive director of SAGE, telephone interview by Laura A. Barnitz, Washington, DC, 23 July 1998.
25. Breault interview, 29 July 1998.
26. Mark Clayton, "Sex Trade Lures Kids from Burbs," *The Christian Science Monitor* (series reprint "The Child Sex Trade: Battling a Scourge"), September 1996, 10.
27. Breault interview, 29 July 1998.
28. Bruce Harris, "All They Have Left to Sell is Themselves," 20 August 1996, [article on-line]; on the OneWorld News Service website, from Casa Alianza/Covenant House Latin America; available from http://www.oneworld.org/news/partner_news/aug96_children.html; Internet; accessed 5 June 1998.
29. Lisbet Helleberg, "As Long as I'm not Raped," trans. Rädde Barnen, *Barnen och Vi*, no 4 (1996): 28-29.
30. O'Grady, *The Child and the Tourist*, 87-109. See also, Ron O'Grady, *The Rape of the Innocent*, (Bangkok: ECPAT, 1994), 53-58, and the ECPAT research paper series by Dr. Julia O'Connell Davidson and Jacqueline Sanchez Taylor, 1. *Child Sexual Exploitation in Costa Rica*; 2. *Child Prostitution and Sex Tourism in Cuba*; 3. *Child Prostitution and Sex Tourism in the Dominican Republic*; 4. *Child Sexual Exploitation in Goa*; 5. *Child Sexual Exploitation in Venezuela*; 6. *Child Prostitution and Sex Tourism in South Africa*; and 7. *Sex Tourism in Pattaya, Thailand*, (Bangkok: ECPAT, 1996).
31. "The Paedo File," *ECPAT Newsletter*, no. 17 (August 1996): 4-5. ECPAT compiled data on 240 foreigners who sexually abused children in Asian countries. The results showed that nearly 25 percent of the reported abusers came from the United States. The United States was followed by Germany (16 percent); the United Kingdom (13 percent); Australia (12 percent); and France and Japan (7 percent each). The data was collected from newspapers, police or court records, and nongovernmental organizations. Fifty percent of the reports were of abusers' arrests in or deportations from the Philippines, nearly 25 percent were reported in Thailand, and just over 10 percent were reported in Sri Lanka. The rest were divided between Cambodia, India and Okinawa.
32. O'Grady, *The Child and the Tourist*, 92, 94-101.
33. Ernst Schade, "Experiences with Regard to the United Nations Peace-keeping Forces in Mozambique," report of Redd Barna (Save the Children, Norway), (photocopy), 20 November 1995. This report documents the sexual exploitation of children by the UN Peace-keeping Forces in Mozambique between April 1993 and February 1995.
34. Renée Andersson, "Daughters are Worth a Fortune—in the Brothels of

Bangladesh," trans. Rädga Barnen, *Barnen och Vi*, no 4 (1996): 26-27.

35. The commercial sexual exploitation of girls from indigenous cultures in Taiwan, Thailand, Burma and Nepal has been reported in numerous media accounts (For examples see the *ECPAT Bulletin*, a regular series of reprinted newspaper, magazine and web site articles on the commercial sexual exploitation of children).

36. Dorothy Munyakho, "Kenya: Child Newcomers in the Urban Jungle," report of the Urban Child Programme, UNICEF International Child Development Centre (Florence, Italy, September 1992), 12-13.

37. Dorothy Munyakho, "Kenya: Child Newcomers....," 13.

38. The 90 percent estimate is considered reasonable by ECPAT.

39. For more information on preferential abusers and pedophiles, see Barbara K. Schwartz and Henry R. Cellini, *The Sex Offender: Corrections, Treatment and Legal Practice* (Kingston, New Jersey: Civic Research Institute, 1995). See also Adele Mayer, *Sex Offenders: Approaches to Understanding and Management* (Holmes Beach, Florida: Learning Publications, Inc., 1988).

40. José Lambiet, "One Woman is Assigned to Protect Children," *Sun-Sentinel South Florida* (part of a series called "Children as Prey"), 17 May 1998; [article online]; available from <http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/prey/interpol.htm>; Internet; found in *ECPAT Bulletin* 5, no. 4 (May 1998): 37.

41. Jack Epstein, "Helping a Society to No Longer Accept Sex with Kids," *The Christian Science Monitor* (a series reprint titled "The Child Sex Trade: Battling a Scourge") September 1996, 19.

42. *Sacrifice: The Story of Child Prostitutes from Burma*, produced and directed by Ellen Bruno, distributed by Film Library, Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ USA, 1998, videocassette.

43. See the ECPAT research paper series by Dr. Julia O'Connell Davidson and Jacqueline Sanchez Taylor.

44. See ECPAT research paper 1. *Child Sexual Exploitation in Costa Rica*, 21.

45. National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, *Female Juvenile Prostitution: Problem and Response*, (Arlington, Virginia: National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 1992), 17-29.

46. Mark Clayton, "Sex Trade Lures Kids from Burbs," 10.

47. Wassayos Ngarmkham, "Newspaper ads not explicit enough: police," *Bangkok Post*, 16 March 1998; found in *ECPAT Bulletin* 5, no. 3 (March/April 1998): 7. Four thousand baht (Thai currency) equals approximately \$100 in July 1998.

48. Carl Göran Svedin and Kristina Back, *Children Who Don't Speak Out: About Children being used in Child Pornography*, (Stockholm: Rädga Barnen, 1996), 11-12.

49. Michael Specter, "Traffickers' New Cargo: Naïve Slavic Women," *New York Times*, 11 January 1998, 6.

50. *Ibid.*, 6.

51. United States Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, "International Trafficking in Women from Central Europe and the NIS," 5.

52. Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid, "Wife, Domestic Servant, Slave!!!" *Child Workers in Asia* 14, nos. 2 & 3 (April-September 1997): 17.

53. From "A short introduction to ECPAT and the issue of child sexual exploitation," a publication of ECPAT, June 1995 (photocopy), 3.

54. O'Grady, *The Child and the Tourist*, 52-53.

55. "Trafficking in Women in Israel," *ECPAT Newsletter*, no. 23 (April 1998): 6.

56. National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, *Child Sex Rings: A Behavioral Analysis for Criminal Justice Professionals Handling Cases of Child Sexual Exploitation*, (Arlington, Virginia: National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (in cooperation with the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation), 1992), 9-16.

57. There are reports of families from many different parts of the world introducing their children to commercial sexual exploitation. The dearth of research on the motivation of family members to "market" children in this fashion is a barrier that limits understanding, but societal taboos about incest and the status of victims of incest appear to be a motivating factor in some societies. See the ECPAT research paper 3. *Child Prostitution and Sex Tourism in the Dominican Republic*, 3-4. Also, there have been reports of children participating in prostitution in secret in order to acquire material goods that are symbols of status. See "Japan's Teenage Prostitutes," *ECPAT Newsletter*, no. 23 (April 1998): 6.

58. Gilberto Dimenstein, "The Role of the Media," in *Forced Labor: The Prostitution of Children*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, 1996) 72.

59. O'Grady, *The Rape of the Innocent*, 14-15 (from "Ranong Brothel Raids Net 148 Burmese Girls," *The Nation*, July 16, 1993).

60. Mark Clayton, "In United States, Canada, New Laws Fail to Curb Demand for Child Sex," *The Christian Science Monitor* (a series reprint titled "The Child Sex Trade: Battling a Scourge") September 1996, 13.

61. Meena Menon, "Victims of the Dark," *The Hindu Online*, September 29, 1996, [article on-line]; available from <http://blue-fox.com/nepal/victims-dark.html>; accessed 10 June 1998.

62. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography report to the UN High Commission on Human Rights (UNHCHR). The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child is a group of child rights experts who are elected by the countries that have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The group's purpose is to identify problems and monitor progress regarding the rights of children in each ratifying country. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography is an expert (the current rapporteur is Ms. Ofelia Calcetas-Santos) appointed by the UNHCHR to address its Programme of Action on this topic. The office was established in 1990.

63. "Out from the Shadows—International Summit of Sexually Exploited Youth" was held March 12, 1998, in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. Fifty-five youth delegates from across the Americas attended. The youth issued their own "Declaration and Agenda for Action of Sexually Exploited Children and Youth." The summary declaration and agenda are available from Youth Advocate Program International.

64. Margaret A. Healy, "Prosecuting Child Sex Tourists at Home: Do Laws in Sweden, Australia, and the United States Safeguard the Rights of Children as Mandated by International Law?" in *Fordham International Law Journal* 18, no. 5 (May 1995): 1905-1906.

65. Healy, 1897-1898.

66. Cherry Kingsley, program coordinator, Out from the Shadows—International Summit of Sexually Exploited Youth, telephone interview by Nancy Nye, Washington, DC, 14 August 1998.

67. "Protecting Children in the Computer Age," *ECPAT Newsletter*, no. 23 (April 1998): 5.

68. *Ibid.*, 5.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

Information/Book/Video List

The Rape of the Innocent

Ron O'Grady, *End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT) (in 1997 renamed End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes)*, 328 Phaya Thai Road, Bangkok 10400, Thailand, (in association with Pace Publishing, Auckland, New Zealand) © 1994, Tel: (66) 2 215 3388.

Also from ECPAT:

The Child and the Tourist, Ron O'Grady, © 1992, and

1. *Child Sexual Exploitation in Costa Rica*; 2. *Child Prostitution and Sex Tourism in Cuba*; 3. *Child Prostitution and Sex Tourism in the Dominican Republic*; 4. *Child Sexual Exploitation in Goa*; 5. *Child Sexual Exploitation in Venezuela*; 6. *Child Prostitution and Sex Tourism in South Africa*; and 7. *Sex Tourism in Pattaya, Thailand (Research Paper Series)* Dr. Julia O'Connell Davidson and Jacqueline Sanchez Taylor, of the Department of Sociology, University of Leicester, United Kingdom, © 1996.

Forced Labor: The Prostitution of Children

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, (published papers from a symposium co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of State, held September 29, 1995.) International Child Labor Study Office, Room S-1308, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20210, USA, © 1996, Tel: (1) 202 208 4843.

Kids for Hire

Save the Children, UK, 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD UK, © 1996, Tel: (44) 171 703 5400.

*Splintered Lives: Sexual exploitation of children
in the context of children's rights and child protection*

Liz Kelly, Rachel Wingfield, Sheila Burton, Linda Regan, of the Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit, University of North London, Barnardo's, Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex IG6 1QG, United Kingdom. © 1995.

Children Who Don't Speak Out

Carl Göran Svedin and Kristina Back, Rädde Barnen (Save the Children, Sweden), S-107 88 Stockholm, Sweden, © 1996, Tel: (46) 8 698 9000.

Rape for Profit: Trafficking of Nepali Girls and Women to India's Brothels

Human Rights Watch/Asia, 485 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10017 USA, © 1995, Tel: (1) 212 972 8400.

Children and Hazardous Work in the Philippines
Victoria Rialp, International Labour Organization, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland, © 1993, Tel: (41) 22 799 8537.

“International Trafficking in Women to the United States: A Contemporary Manifestation of Slavery and Organized Crime”
Amy O’Neil Richard, DCI Exceptional Intelligence Analyst Program, An Intelligence Monograph, Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, DC, USA, © November 1999, report available from <http://www.cia.gov/csi/monograph/women/trafficking.pdf>

“The Sexual Exploitation of Children:
A Working Guide to the Empirical Literature”
prepared by Richard J. Estes, University of Pennsylvania, School of Social Work, Center for Youth Policy Studies, Philadelphia, PA, USA, July 2000 (work in progress), bibliography available from http://caster.ssw.upenn.edu/~restes/CSEC_Bib_July_2000.pdf

Sacrifice: The Story of Child Prostitutes from Burma (video)
Ellen Bruno, distributed by Film Library, 22-D Hollywood Ave., Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ 07423 USA, © 1998, Tel: (1) 800 343 5540.

The Selling of Innocents (video)
A Halpern/Jacobovici Production, Malofilm Video, No. 96401, distributed by Behavior Communications, 2221 Younge St., Suite 400, Toronto, Ontario M4S 2B4 Canada, © 1996, Tel: (1) 416 480 0453.

RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS

ECPAT International (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes)

328 Phaya Thai Road
10400 Bangkok, Thailand
Tel: (66) 2 215 3388
Fax: (66) 2 215 8272
Email: ecpatbkk@ksc15.th.com
Web site: www.ecpat.net

The leading organization working on this issue. General and country specific information. Quarterly newsletter on commercial sexual exploitation of children is available. Offices worldwide.

ECPAT- USA

475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115 USA
Tel: (1) 212 870 2427
Fax: (1) 212 870 2055
Email: ecpatusa@hotmail.com
Web site: www.ecpatusa.org

U.S. office of ECPAT International.
Newsletter available.

UN High Commission on Human Rights (UNHCHR)

Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography
Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights
Palais des Nations
8-14 avenue de la Paix
CH 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel: (41) 22 917 9000
Fax: (41) 22 917 9016
Email: webadmin.hchr@unog.ch
Web site: www.unhchr.ch

Reports of the Special Rapporteur and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child are available from UNHCHR.

Focal Point on Sexual Exploitation of Children

NGO Group for the CRC
P.O. Box 88
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland
Tel: (41) 22 740 4711
Fax: (41) 22 740 1145
Email: info@focalpointngo.org
Web site: www.focalpointngo.org

A clearinghouse of information on this issue, collecting reports and information on the activities of organizations around the world.

Save the Children, UK

17 Grove Lane
London SE5 8RD, United Kingdom
Tel: (44) 020 7703 5400
Fax: (44) 020 7703 2278
Web site: www.savethechildren.org.uk

General information and publication. Searchable database on its web site.

Casa Alianza

Covenant House Latin America
SJO 1039, P.O. Box 025216
Miami, FL 33102 USA
Tel: (50) 6 253 5439
Email: info@casa-alianza.org
Web site: www.casa-alianza.org/

Country specific information for Latin America.

Paul & Lisa Program
P.O. Box 348
Westbrook, CT 06498 USA
Tel: (1) 860 767 7660
Fax: (1) 860 767 3122
Email: paulandlisaprogram@snet.net
Web Site: www.paulandlisa.org

Works to increase U.S. public awareness. Reintegration assistance for prostituted children. Magazine available.

The Protection Project
Johns Hopkins University-SAIS
1619 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20036 USA
Tel: (1) 202 663 5896
Fax: (1) 202 663 5898

The project's goal is to develop a comprehensive database on national and international legislation about commercial sexual exploitation.

Standing Against Global Exploitation (SAGE)
1275 Mission St.
San Francisco, CA 94103 USA
Tel: (1) 415 905 5050
Fax: (1) 415 905 5054

Reintegration services for women and girls involved in prostitution. Education programs. Peer counselors. Rehabilitation program for male clients of prostitutes.

Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive (H.I.P.S.)
PO Box 21394
Washington, DC 20009 USA
Tel: (1) 202 232 8150

Support for youth and adults ready to leave prostitution. Counseling and referrals.

Girls Educational and Mentoring Services (GEMS)
PO Box 520046
Bronx, NY 10452 USA
Tel: (1) 212 926 8089
Email: gemsgirls@aol.com

Support for girls and women involved in prostitution. Counseling and referrals.

Sisters Offering Support (SOS)
PO Box 75642
Honolulu, HI 96836 USA
Tel: (1) 808 941 5554
Email: info@soshawaii.org
Web: www.soshawaii.org

Advocacy and support for girls and women involved in prostitution. Counseling and referrals. Peer education.

Children of the Night
14530 Sylvan Street
Van Nuys, CA 91411 USA
Tel: (1) 818 908 4474
Email: cotnll@aol.com
Web: www.childrenofthenight.org

Street outreach and support for youth involved in prostitution and pornography. Counseling and referrals. Shelter home.

**U.S. National
Runaway Switchboard
1-800-621-4000**

**Confidential hotline for runaway youth,
teens in crisis and concerned friends and family
members. All services free and available
24 hours a day.**



"WE HAVE TO ACT NOW AND WE HAVE TO ACT FORCEFULLY. WE OWE THIS TO THE CHILDREN THAT HAVE BEEN ABUSED, TORTURED AND EVEN KILLED BY SEX OFFENDERS AND TO THE CHILDREN WHO ARE AT RISK OF BECOMING VICTIMS. THIS MODERN FORM OF SLAVERY HAS TO BE STOPPED!"

—QUEEN SILVIA OF SWEDEN

Youth Advocate Program International
4545 42nd St., NW, Suite 209, Washington, DC 20016 USA

\$6.00US