



Minnesota HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASKFORCE

Human Trafficking & Demand

ISSUE • RESPONSE • SOLUTION

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is a public health, public safety and human rights violation that occurs around the world and in communities throughout Minnesota. Human trafficking includes both labor and sex trafficking, and international and domestic victims. The Minnesota Human Trafficking Task Force (MNHTTF) is working to address and prevent human trafficking in Minnesota through a coordinated, multidisciplinary, statewide response.

THE ISSUE: ACKNOWLEDGING MEN'S ROLE IN SEX TRAFFICKING

Human sex trafficking is driven by the demand for commercial sex. This demand is comprised of both **a)** men who buy women and girls for sex, and **b)** a culture that tolerates or promotes sexual exploitation. The demand for commercial sex is strongly related to male privilege and sexual entitlement, and is part of a continuum of sexual exploitation and discrimination against women and girls. Strip clubs, violent pornography, exploitative massage parlors, and other venues and/or forms of sexual exploitation drive the demand for commercial sex and contribute the normalization of degradation and violence against women and girls.

As a society, we have allowed and perpetuated pervasive messaging and images that portray women and girls as sexual objects and dehumanized commodities purposed for male consumption. Our children are bombarded with this toxic message every day through media, music, movies, video games and pop culture that reinforce this message and normalize the hypersexualization of America's youth.

In order to effectively address sex trafficking in Minnesota, we must consider tougher penalties for the traffickers and the perpetrators, or buyers of commercial sex, who are driving the demand (see the MNHTTF Law Enforcement Fact Sheet for innovative strategies on reducing demand). We must also study the effect that commercial sex has on communities and the local economy to determine which businesses are profiting from it, including the marketing vehicles used by traffickers. Communities, by way of tolerating this activity, actually contribute to continued exploitation. When working on these issues, it is important to remember that these

social norms/perceptions and beliefs about women and sex are something we create, and are, therefore, something that we can change.

Men, Pornography, and the Correlation to Sexual Violence

Perpetrators

- A 1992 national survey of U.S. men found that 16% had sexually exploited someone through paying prostituted individuals for services.¹ (note: did not ask about other forms of sexual exploitation)
- One U.S. study found that 59% of men who had paid prostituted individuals for services described themselves as married and/or having a steady intimate partner.²
- Of prostitution-related arrests in District 14 of Chicago during 2002, 89% of the arrests were of the prostituted individuals, while only 10% were of the commercial sexual exploiters (i.e. the “John’s”) and less than 1% were of pimps.³
- A 2014 study of the trafficking of minor girls in Minneapolis found evidence that:^{3.1}
 - Facilitators and victims often reside in neighborhoods with high rates of poverty, whereas sex buyers are typically more dispersed across Minneapolis and the Twin Cities metropolitan area.
 - Locations where youth are recruited and captured into operations include schools, parks, shelters and youth programming, juvenile detention and treatment facilities, streets, bus stops, libraries, malls, and other places where youth congregate.
 - Sexual transactions primarily occur at sex buyers’ homes, hotels in the Minneapolis suburbs, and streets easily accessed by commuters.
 - Sex trafficking in Minneapolis is conducted by structured business operations, using a variety of business models (street, escort, brothel/brothel-like, and closed sex buyer networks).

Strip Clubs, Massage Parlors, and Adult Videostores\Bookstores

- Various studies provide evidence that strip clubs and bars in rural MN are places where rural Native American women and girls are recruited into stripping, prostitution, and other forms of trafficking.⁴
- Anecdotal evidence shows that child sexual exploitation occurs in strip clubs and other sexually-oriented businesses; not only do children work in the businesses, many are trafficked out of the businesses.⁵
- Customers’ online “reviews” of clubs provide evidence that illegal sexual contact, such as lap dances and bed dances, occurs in the clubs.¹⁵
- Internet discussion boards where sexual exploiters (i.e. “John’s”) exchange tips and information reveal examples of how trafficking occurs in strip clubs and massage parlors.⁶
- In these discussion boards, the sexual exploiters commonly talk about the race of the women/girls, using terms such as BSW, HSW, etc. [Black street walker, Hispanic Street walker]. The exploiters will write that they want a woman/girl of a specific ethnicity, such as Native American, Indian, Latina, etc.¹⁶

¹ Monto, M. (1999). Focusing on the Clients of Street Prostitutes: A Creative Approach to Reducing Violence Against Women- Summary Report.

² Sawyer, S., Metz, M., Hinds, J., & Brucker, A. Attitudes Towards Prostitution Among Males: A 'Consumers' Report. *Current Psychology: Developmental, Learning, Personality, Social*, Winter 2001-02, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp363-376.

³ Hughes, D. (2005). Fact sheet: Domestic sex trafficking and prostitution in the U.S.

^{3.1} Martin, L. & Pierce, A. (2014). Mapping the Market for Sex with Trafficked Minor Girls in Minneapolis: Structures, Functions, and Patterns.

⁴ Pierce, Sandi. (2009). Shattered Hearts: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of American Indian Women and Girls in Minnesota. *MN Indian Women's Resource Center*

⁵ Vieth, V., Anderson, C., & Smith, S. (2012). In the neighborhood: enforcing child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation statutes in strip clubs and adult bookstores. National Child Protection Training Center. CenterPiece, vol. 3, no. 5.

⁶ Janson, L., Mann, H., Marro, R., & Matvey, A. (2013). Our great hobby: an analysis of online networks for buyers of sex in Illinois. Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation.

- A “review” of an experience typically includes descriptions of what the woman/girl looked like (age, race, body), the sex act(s) performed, and how good the experience was. Some exploiters compare women/girls to choices of meat- prime, large slab of beef, overdone burger, etc.¹⁶

Pornography

- Anecdotal evidence from legal cases shows how exploiters traffic people to use them in pornography.⁷
- A 1990 Minneapolis-based study of prostituted women found that 53% had an experience where the sexual exploiters (i.e. “John’s”) made pornography of them.⁸
- Eighty percent had experiences where a sexual exploiter asked them to imitate sexual acts from a particular pornographic video.¹⁸
- A California-based study of the mental health of female adult film “performers” found that 33% met the criteria for current depression, 37% were victims of child sexual abuse, 27% had been raped as adults, 50% reported living in poverty and 34% had experienced domestic violence in the past year. Those percentages for a comparison group of women who were NOT adult film performers were 13%, 13%, 9%, 36%, 6%, respectively.⁹
- A study combining 46 published research studies on the effects of pornography (and encompassing a sample size of 12,323 persons) found that exposure to pornographic material puts one at increased risk for committing sexual offenses and accepting beliefs about rape and sexual violence that trivialize rape or blame the victim.¹⁰
- Pornography can desensitize the viewer to rape as a criminal offense and can encourage a desire for increasingly deviant and violent porn.¹¹
- An additional study showed that men who have engaged in date rape reported that they “very frequently” read magazines such as Playboy, Penthouse, Hustler, etc.¹²

⁷ Peters, R.W., Lederer, L.J., & Kelly, S. (2012). The slave and the porn star: sexual trafficking and pornography. *Journal of Human Rights and Civil Society*, 5, 1-21.

⁸ Parriott R, (1994). Health experiences of Twin Cities women used in prostitution. Unpublished survey initiated by WHISPER, Minneapolis MN, cited in Farley, M., 2007, Renting an organ for ten minutes: what tricks tell us about prostitution, pornography, and trafficking, in *Pornography: Driving the Demand for International Sex Trafficking*. LA: Captive Daughter’s Media.

⁹ Gruzden, C.R., Mekker, D., Torres, J.M., Du, Q., Morrison, R.S., Andersen, R.M., & Gelberg, L. (2011). Comparison of the mental health of female adult film performers and other young women in California. *Psychiatric Services*, 62(6).

¹⁰ Elizabeth Oddone-Paolucci, Mark Genuis and Claudio Violato, *The Changing Family and Child Development*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), pp. 48-59.

¹¹ Boeringer (1994)

¹² Warshaw (1988)

RESPONSE: MEN'S ROLE IN REDUCING DEMAND

Addressing the Demand

Some men are consciously aware of the social norms of sexual objectification and exploitation of women and girls and choose not to participate in behaviors that support these norms. However, they often remain silent as friends and co-workers make derogatory comments or participate in exploitative behaviors. Other men are either unaware or have given little thought to the harm of sexual exploitation and continue to support harmful exploitative behaviors (i.e. jokes, comments, harassment, strip clubs, porn, prostitution, trafficking, etc.).

Community Organizations and Initiatives

Community organizations across Minnesota recognize the need to address social and environmental factors that promote and foster attitudes contributing to sex trafficking and other forms of sexual violence against women. These organizations not only acknowledge men's role in sex trafficking, but also provide opportunities for men to combat the exploitation of women and girls.

Minnesota Men's Action Network: MNMAN is a statewide organizer of men working towards ending sexual violence against women, including ending sex trafficking.

<http://www.menaspeacemakers.org/programs/mnman/men-can-do>

Gender Violence Institute: GVI offers training and consultation throughout Minnesota on the causes of and solutions for addressing sexual exploitation demand.


<http://www.genderviolenceinstitute.org/>

Men As Peacemakers: Fostering and developing peacemakers through modeling, mentoring, storytelling, and dialogue. <http://www.menaspeacemakers.org/>.

Demand Change Conference: Hosted by Breaking Free, this bi-annual event focuses on addressing human trafficking in Minnesota. Significant focus is placed on prevention, through engaging men, through looking at the causes and contributors to human trafficking, and through understanding and combating the societal norms and privilege that create, promote, and protect men's violence. <http://www.breakingfree.net>

Beyond Tough Guise: Beyond Tough Guise is a program serving boys in Winona County, Minnesota. BTG works to mentor boys into a positive vision of masculinity that embraces respect towards women and girls. <http://www.beyondtoughguise.org/>

Prevention Committee of the MN Human Trafficking Task Force: The Prevention Committee is working to develop a comprehensive trafficking prevention agenda for Minnesota. For more information, email: amy.kenzie@state.mn.us



Breaking Free's John School: In partnership with the Ramsey County Courts and St. Paul Police Department, the Offenders Prostitution Program (John School) addresses the underlying attitudes and assumptions that enable and encourage offenders to participate in prostitution. This restorative justice program is designed to hold offenders accountable, while raising awareness about sex trafficking and providing resources to the women and children victimized by prostitution.

THE SOLUTION: A COORDINATED RESPONSE

Men can do something to end the demand for trafficking victims; and around the state of Minnesota, some men are doing great work to address human trafficking. Because men make up the overwhelming majority of the demand for sex trafficking victims, men are in a great position to work to address the causes of trafficking demand, in order to prevent trafficking from happening in the first place.

While there might be less opportunity for men to provide services to victims/survivors, there is endless opportunity for men to organize around *reducing demand* for sex trafficking victims, as well as provide resources to organizations that serve survivors.

Men are also more often than not the owners and the protectors of the businesses that profit from sexual exploitation. As men in positions of power, we have great access to use our privilege to stop these businesses and to move our society towards a deeper understanding of non-exploitative and non-harmful sexuality.

Law Enforcement also plays a crucial role in coordinating "John Stings" and using other innovative techniques to arrest and charge perpetrators.