

# The Intersection Between Prostitution and Sexual Violence





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If you are the victim of sexual violence, or for more information, please call 1-888-772-7227.



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# Introduction

Research has shown that, regardless of why a person is involved in prostitution, there are frequently substantial intersections between that person's involvement in prostitution and sexual violence throughout the life span:

- Child sexual abuse
- Sexual abuse by people who have sold them (pimps)
- Sexual abuse by people who have purchased them (johns)
- Sexual abuse by people in authority

This guide is meant as an introduction to the subject of prostitution and sexual violence for judges, defense attorneys, prosecutors, law enforcement personnel, and advocates. The goals are to clarify misconceptions about women and men involved in prostitution and shine a light on the sexual violence often experienced by this population in hopes that the criminal justice system can assist people who are involved in prostitution with services such as advocacy, counseling, and shelter when they are encountered as both offenders and victims.

Traditional outreach and awareness initiatives do not target this population. In order to better assist all victims of sexual violence, we hope this guide will help in proactively offering assistance to those who historically have not reached out for help on their own.



# Links Between Childhood Sexual Victimization and Prostitution

Research has consistently linked childhood sexual violence with a victim's entrance into prostitution. Women are more likely to work in prostitution if they were sexually victimized as children and were later victimized as adults. The majority of those involved in prostitution began as adolescents (Farley, 2003).

"I was just a kid, you know. Really, I didn't know nothing. So, like, here was this nice guy who was 25 or something then. And he was, like this older brother or something. At first it was, like, nothin' was going on. Then he started getting off on me bit by bit, you know. OK, so I was used to that, eh? Then he started bringin' his friends over, using them to try me out? So the next things I know, I'm workin' at his parties. I was too dumb to even know that he was makin' money off me."

(Nixon, Tutty, Downe, Gorkoff, Ursel, 2002, p. 1025-1026 – Woman involved in prostitution recounting her introduction to prostitution at the age of 11

In Pennsylvania, when a minor, under the age of 18, is involved in a situation that has the elements of prostitution, it is legally defined as a form of human trafficking; force, fraud, and coercion do not need to be proven. Many minors who are victims of human trafficking have run away from home or have been thrown out of their homes. Once on the streets, minors are exposed to dangerous environments in which they lack housing, food, and physical safety. Exploitative adults, and in some cases other minors, often use minors' desperate situations for their benefit and frequently target them for human trafficking.

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery where people profit from the exploitation of others. Human traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion against victims to manipulate them into engaging in commercial sex acts, or labor or services in exchange for something of monetary value (money, safety, transportation). When victims of human trafficking are minors, force, fraud or coercion is not necessary. Despite the word "trafficking" being used in the term, transportation from one place to another is not required to make it human trafficking.

The following are some statistics on child abuse, runaways, and sex trafficking:

- Of youth who are runaways, walkaways, or throwaways from home or foster care, 90% are fleeing physical or sexual abuse in the home (National Center of Missing & Exploited Children, 2013).
- 76% percent of missing minors are between the ages of 12 and 17 (Sedlak, 2002 p. 7).
- Youth who run away from home, walk away from home, or are thrown out of the home are at increased risk of being sex trafficked.
- If youth are on runaway, walkaway, or throwaway status four or more times in 12 months, there is an 80% probability they have already been victims of sex trafficking (Dalla, 2003).
- 350,000 youth are at risk for sex trafficking in the United States each year (National Center of Missing & Exploited Children, 2013).
- The average age of boys when they are first sex trafficked is 11. (National Center of Missing & Exploited Children, 2013).
- The average age of girls when they are first sex trafficked is 13. (National Center of Missing & Exploited Children, 2013).
- Sex trafficking can begin in the home with parents and guardians selling their children for money, drugs, or to pay off a debt such as rent.

Adolescents who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, or queer (LGBTQ) are at a high risk for sex trafficking. This risk is a result of the intolerance, prejudice, and marginalization that can be experienced by these youth in their homes, schools, and community. Many LGBTQ youth have been thrown out of their homes by intolerant family members and/or have run away as a result of abuses perpetrated against them in their homes and schools. Being homeless subjects them to physical danger and the exploitation of abusive adults and older adolescents. The following are some statistics on LGBTQ youths and sex trafficking:

- One out of every five homeless youths is LGBTQ (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2008)
- Once on the streets, LGBTQ youths have higher risks of becoming victims of sex trafficking as a result of being targeted because of their sexual orientation (Kipke et al., 1997).
- Homeless LGBTQ youths are three times more likely to have been exploited by others through survival sex (Ibid.).

Minors who have run away or have been thrown out of their homes are at increased risk for having attachment issues and suffering from neglect and abuse throughout their life spans. Once targeted by someone exploitative, they are initially controlled through emotional manipulations and physical security. The exploiter will then pressure or physically force the minor into prostitution by withholding affection, threatening abandonment, threatening violence, or imposing physical and/or sexual violence.





# Sexual Violence Against Those Involved in Prostitution

## Agency

Those involved in prostitution are often targeted for sexual and physical abuse by the people who purchase them. Each time a person is met by a purchaser to trade a sex act for money, drugs, food, or some other commodity, he or she is in a potentially life-endangering situation. Therefore, sexual and physical abuse against people involved in prostitution is not uncommon.



A 2003 study by Dalla, Xia, and Kennedy on the extent and severity of violence experienced by those involved in commercial sexual exploitation found that a significant proportion of participants had been subjected to various forms of violence:

- Sexual assault (93%)
- Rape (75%)
- Forced or coerced sex with self-identified law enforcement (44%)
- Robbery (56%)
- Physical assault (82%)
- Threatened with weapons (83%)

In addition to violence, people who are involved in prostitution often face stigmatization and marginalization by members of society, including people who are in fields that are meant to help victims of sexual violence. To confuse a person's agreement to exchange a sex act for something of monetary value with a person giving up his or her body autonomy is a dangerous misconception. It is a violation of a person's civil rights to say he or she is "unable to be raped," and it is dangerous for our communities to allow sexually abusive individuals to go unchecked.



A young woman involved in prostitution was gang-raped at gunpoint in Philadelphia, Pa in 2007. When it went to trial, municipal court judge Theresa Carr Deni dismissed the rape charge claiming it was not a case of rape but "theft of services," because the young woman had initially agreed to have sex in exchange for money with the first two men. It is imperative that legal advocates, law enforcement, prosecutors, and the judiciary uphold the rights of all victims of sexual violence regardless of existing personal bias.

# Understanding the Emotional Impact on Those Involved in Prostitution

Those involved in prostitution employ multiple strategies and coping techniques for long-term survival in the violent and oppressive circumstances that epitomize prostitution. Two forms of coping are escapism and self-internalization.

Escapism can often lead to using alcohol and/or drugs to numb fear, trauma, and physical pain from sexual and physical assaults. Therefore, people involved in prostitution may become addicted to drugs and/or alcohol as a way of coping with or forgetting about past sexual violence and current physical pain.

Self-internalization refers to an individual taking on the responsibility of all circumstances, events, and experiences that occur in his or her life. When this technique is used to make sense of a lifetime of consistent sexual, physical, and emotional victimization, it leads to low self-esteem, overwhelming depression, and a lack of belief in the ability of others to be capable of providing help or services (Nixon, Tutty, Downe, Gorkoff, Ursel, 2002).



Those who are involved in prostitution often live in a perpetual state of fear of experiencing violence at the hands of people who sell them sexually and those who purchase them for sex acts. Understanding this fear and how it profoundly affects an individual's self-image, daily life, and decision making is imperative if intervention and service delivery are to be effective.

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In a 2002 study of women and girls who were involved in prostitution, Nixon, Tutty, Downe, Gorkoff, and Ursel found that they instinctively cultivated numerous rules to help decrease the likelihood of victimization by those who purchased them for sex acts:

- Remain sober while working to be better able to escape a situation if it becomes violent.
  - Trust your instincts.
  - Avoid vans.
  - Don't go with more than one person at a time.
  - Don't leave the area.
  - Don't go with people who are drunk or high.
  - Don't go with younger men, especially if they agree too quickly to a price.
  - Work in pairs and take down the license plates of the Johns who pick each other up.
  - Use what you have as weapons: stiletto heels, keys, mace.
-



## Service Needs

Intervention strategies and services are unique for people who are involved in prostitution. Depending on whether violence is perpetrated by strangers, partners, or pimps, it has different dynamics and consequences on an individual's psychosocial development. Services must address the multiple sources of violence that a person has experienced throughout his or her life span (Ibid.).

Additionally, people's use of escapism and self-internalization as coping strategies can make it difficult to develop and maintain healthy support networks, such as positive friends, family members, and helping professionals. Therefore, outreach and intervention efforts need to include establishing realistic coping strategies that people can employ during stress-inducing circumstances— strategies that do not use escapism or internalization (Dalla, Xia, Kennedy, 2003) and will result in more positive outcomes.

People who are involved in prostitution may be interested in being linked with services for assistance in coping with prior victimizations, such as substance abuse treatment, suicide prevention, and counseling that addresses sexual violence experienced throughout the life span. Additionally, they may be interested in being linked with services for basic needs that would assist them in being able to have more options in their lives. Basic needs include safe housing, food and clothing, job skills training, and job placement assistance.

## Housing Services

People who are able to leave prostitution have extensive long-term and short-term rehabilitative needs. According to a 2006 study conducted by the Urban Institute, people are often notified of available social services after being detained or arrested for prostitution, drug possession and/or distribution, or another crime. A small number of survivors individually research and identify programs and services prior to fleeing from their traffickers or pimps. People reported similar immediate needs regardless of the types of prostitution experienced, age, or country of origin. The study also indicated that the primary short-term necessity is safe housing.

Some who successfully leave prostitution are in danger of being found by their pimps or traffickers or by members in the community that work with or pay pimps or traffickers for the sexual services of the victim (Urban Institute, 2006). The primary immediate goal of most housing programs is to protect survivors from any imminent danger or threat (Clawsone & Grace, 2007). Both immediately after leaving prostitution and in the long term, they will need a safe environment to heal physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Most housing programs provide a variety of services to those who are interested in leaving prostitution. People in housing programs often need immediate medical attention. The medical services most needed include gynecological exams, dental care, and physical exams, as well as post-traumatic stress and mental health counseling (Urban Institute, 2006).

In addition to health care, most programs include instruction on basic educational skills and job training, and some also offer the opportunity for family reunification. Depending on the focus of the organizational mission, programs place a strong emphasis on particular components of assistance; for example, many faith-based organizations provide resources and services based on their core spiritual values (Clawson & Grace, 2007).

The U.S. AID organization issued a 2007 study on the rehabilitation of victims of trafficking in group residential facilities. The information in that study pertains to all forms of human trafficking; however, the best practices put forward by the research certainly are germane to programs specific to assisting people who have been involved in prostitution and sexually victimized.



Best practices for housing and shelter care identified by the study include the following:

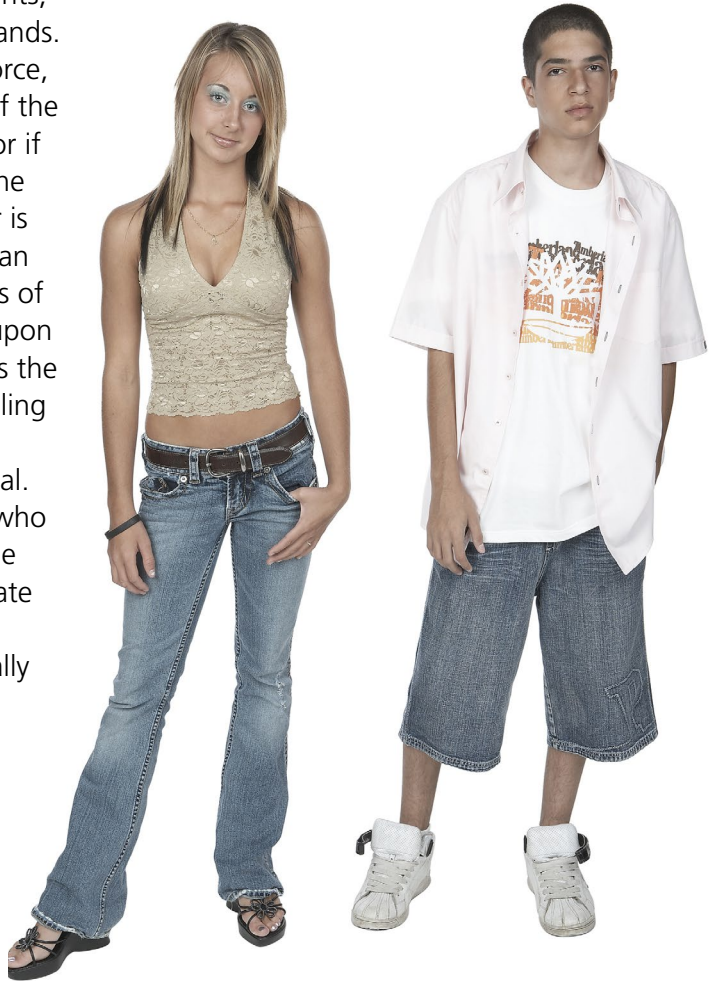
- Set up standard operating procedures, outlining criteria for those entering the facilities, procedures for day-to-day activity, as well as emergency situations, staff responsibilities, and case management.
- Ensure collaboration among stakeholders. The recovery process is multifaceted, and all stakeholders should be engaged and working together for a common goal.
- Engage in staff training. Recovery programs need to employ and develop relationships with professionals in relevant fields, as well as individuals who can provide vocational training in a wide range of skill sets for survivors.
- Give survivors individualized attention and treatment.
- Provide economic opportunity training for survivors based on realistic goals and opportunities.
- Follow up with survivors after completion of the program.

Additional service needs for people who have been involved in prostitution may include agencies or counselors that address the unique issues encountered during prostitution. These services should address traumatic bonding and the psychosocial trauma of being marginalized by society, as well as identity issues that can manifest from having one's body sold as a commodity. A list of resources for survivors of sexual violence who are involved in prostitution is featured in the back of this booklet.



# Pimps, Partners, Traffickers, and Bottom Girls

Most prostitution involves a person in control arranging the selling of someone else's body for sexual use. The individuals who sell are often referred to as pimps. They may be significant others, such as parents, boyfriends, or husbands. If the act involves force, fraud, or coercion of the person being sold, or if he or she is under the age of 18, the seller is a considered a human trafficker. Regardless of the title bestowed upon the person who sells the body of another, selling someone else to be used sexually is illegal. Additionally, those who purchase sex and the pimps who coordinate the sale are often sexually and physically abusive. This is also illegal.



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“I used to have an old man. He needed smokes or something and he’d send me out. Sometimes I’d go out and I didn’t want to be out there.”

(Dalla, Xia, Kennedy, 2003, p. 1027

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Those who are involved in prostitution are often adamant in distinguishing between men who are pimps and men who are partners. Both those who sell their partners sexually and pimps who sell people sexually are prone to physical, sexual, and emotional violence. Both may father children to a woman or girl under their control. Both are often the ones who introduced the woman or minor to prostitution. The main differences between the two are that pimps typically require that a certain amount of money, or quota, is made every night; women and minors give all their money to their pimp, who in turn purchases their clothes and provides their food and shelter; and pimps typically exploit more than one woman or minor at a time in what they refer to as a “stable.” Women who have partners involved in their prostitution report that their partners allow them to have some freedom in personally determining the amount of money they make each night and a say in how it is spent. To an outsider, the distinctions may appear quite subtle. However, individuals involved in such situations may place a significant amount of importance on how they view their exploiters and how they define these relationships (Dalla, Xia, Kennedy, 2003).

It is important to note that women and girls who are exploited by a pimp will frequently refer to him as their old man, boyfriend or “daddy.” One of the most common strategies a pimp employs, both in recruitment into commercial sexual exploitation and in maintenance of control, is to initially take on a role as boyfriend or father figure. Once he has emotional control over his target, he then denies the manufactured attention or love to ensure that the woman or girl remains obedient in hopes of regaining the full affection of the perceived boyfriend or father figure. This strategy is very effective, since those who are involved in prostitution are significantly more likely to have come from abusive homes or situations.

Respondents in a 2002 study by Nixon of barriers to exiting prostitution cited fear of pimps as a major barrier:

**“He threatened us that if we ever left, he’d show us big rifles. He had other men with him so if you tried to escape, his other buddies would go looking for us.”**

**“I’ve always thought if I could [leave] safely, I would.”**

**“I was out there at a certain time, back in (from the street), didn’t talk to anybody. I was being pimped. I was told to go out and get so much money and make sure I stayed where I was supposed to. They were always watching me, and I don’t know what would have happened if I had talked to someone. They were always just across the street from me.”**

## Bottom Girls

In a culture of violence, oppression, and sexual exploitation, it is necessary for pimps who have more than one person under their control to maintain this authority in order to keep making as much money as possible. Efforts to accomplish this can take many forms. As previously mentioned, pimps initially recruit women or girls by posing as boyfriends or father figures. Once a pimp has someone under his control, he will begin physical and sexual victimization to keep her traumatized, off balance, and ultimately to break her. Once the pimp has made several individuals dependent on him, the need for assistance in controlling the women or girls arises.

To assist pimps in their endeavors, one of the girls in the stable commonly acts as the pimp's right hand. However, the pimp refers to this woman or girl not as a top hand, but as a bottom girl or bottom bitch. The bottom girl is responsible for assisting in recruiting other woman and girls by enticing them with the supposed benefits of working for this particular pimp, often telling them that "the life" is glamorous. They also are responsible for making sure the new women and minors know the rules (Shared Hope International, 2009):

- Always get the money first, before you perform sexual services on a john.
- Never look another pimp in the eye. If a woman or girl looks another pimp in the eye, that pimp can then own her, and it is considered disrespectful to the original pimp.
- Never hold out money from the pimp.

Keeping the girls in line is another responsibility of the bottom girl. Techniques to ensure this often include physical and mental abuse. If the other girls are not kept in line, then the bottom girl is punished by the pimp. Therefore, it is in her best interest to keep



them straight. The role of bottom girl is fluid. Pimps dangle the prized role in front of all the women and minors they control. This leads to frequent infighting among the women and minors who are being prostituted. This infighting is ideal for the pimp, as it aids in keeping the anger of the women and girls focused toward each other and away from him.

With an increase in technology such as [www.backpage.com](http://www.backpage.com), [www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com), cell phones, and social networking sites, much of the sex trafficking is conducted off the street via appointments to area hotels, truck stops, homes, and abandoned buildings.

## The Demand for Prostitutes

If the demand to purchase people for sex did not exist, then opportunists such as pimps, traffickers, and exploitative adults would have no one to sell to. However, there is a demand, and a very profitable one. The selling of people sexually grossed an estimated \$32 billion in 2012 (United Nation Office of Drugs and Crime, 2012).

The majority of those who purchase someone for sex acts have a regular consensual sexual partner (Durchslag & Goswami, 2008). The person purchased for sex is often viewed by the purchaser as less than human. This dehumanization of those involved in prostitution is a key factor in the high levels of sexual and physical violence perpetrated against them, as evidenced by these quotes from a 2008 study by Durchslag and Goswami:

**"She feels a lot of force between her legs, because I'm not going to be lenient. I'm going to give her everything I got. You can pound them, she don't mind."**

**"She has no rights because you are paying her for a sex act—she gives up the right to say no."**

**"I want to pay someone to do something a normal person wouldn't do. To piss on someone or pay someone to do something degrading who is not my girlfriend."**

In a confidential survey conducted by the Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (2008, 66% of those interviewed who had purchased someone for sex said they believe women became involved in prostitution out of economic necessity. In addition, the study noted the following:

- 54% of those interviewed had exchanged drugs for sex.
- 19% had exchanged shelter for sex; other items of value exchanged included food, transportation, and clothing.
- 57% believed the majority of women in prostitution experienced some type of childhood sexual abuse.
- 32% believed the majority of women in prostitution entered before the age of 18.
- 20% stated they had bought sex from women who had been trafficked from other countries.

The qualitative responses of those interviewed in the survey that admitted to purchasing people for sex demonstrate that those driving the demand are well aware of the harm being done and that those they purchase are exploited:

**"I've had some Asian women through a service that were forced here."**

**"She didn't ask for much—she just asked for something to eat. McDonald's. It was a cheap experience."**

**"My best experience was I met her, she just got off the Greyhound (bus) ... she wanted some money and she didn't have a place to stay. It was her first night in Chicago. I gave her some money and gave her a room and stayed in that room with her, and we had sex ... she didn't know much about the city and she was at my whim."**

# Criminal Justice Responses to Purchasers of Prostitution

Educational programs and initiatives have been instituted to deter the sexual purchasing of others and to punish consumers. People who purchase others sexually are often referred to as “johns”. Therefore, the term “john schools,” describes programs designed to deter men from continually purchasing commercial sex. John schools provide information about the legal and health consequences of purchasing sex, the social dynamics that play out in prostitution, and sexual addiction (Gillings & Willough, 2010).

Proponents of john schools believe that these programs are the best way to lessen the demand for prostitution. On the other hand, there is research that suggests that john schools are not adequate deterrents on their own merits. A primary component of john schools involves requiring participants to pay a fee for the course; however, often this does not serve as a deterrent for the large population of customers that have substantial financial means. Many cite the cost-effectiveness of john schools using this fee-for-service model, but there is not substantial data indicating the true effectiveness of these types of programs. Although john schools might have their place in the spectrum of deterrence, there are other, more effective mechanisms for deterring the purchasing of commercial sex acts. The following are some examples of how different locations are addressing the issue.







## Portland, Oregon

The criminal justice system in Portland, Oregon offers a Prostitution Offender Program that aims to deter the purchasing of sex. The program emphasizes the connection that purchasing sex has to the legal system and focuses on the self-interests of the men who purchase others for sex acts. It is a philosophy of the program that the purchasing of people sexually will diminish if it is not in the self-interest of the consumer. The program challenges men to change their purchasing behavior by explaining the possible damage caused to their health by sexually transmitted diseases, the risk of their being killed by the pimps, and the legal consequences for rape (Carson, Carson, Hughes, 2004).

## Los Angeles and El Cajon, California

In addition to alternative programs in an educational setting, many cities have taken more radical approaches to cracking down on demand. Los Angeles instituted a program in 2003 that allows city police to confiscate the car of any person arrested for soliciting a prostitute. Additionally, the police department informs the media when a car is confiscated. In 2004, El Cajon, California, enacted a similar program. The law permits law enforcement to confiscate and assume ownership of cars that belong to men who were arrested for soliciting prostitutes (Carson, Carson, Hughes, 2004).





## **West Palm Beach, Florida**

West Palm Beach, Florida, implemented a program that also targets the purchasers' vehicle but also adds additional caveats. Referred to as the Prostitute Impact Prevention Education (PIPE) program, when men are arrested for solicitation, the traffic division of the West Palm Beach Police Department confiscates, searches, and impounds the vehicle. A \$500 administrative fee is charged, and the man is arrested but can be released on bond. Additionally, the perpetrator has the option of a PIPE plea agreement. If the plea agreement is accepted, the perpetrator is sentenced to 60 days in jail but can avoid jail time through completing PIPE classes, testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) at the Health Department, and paying the fines equated with each of these (Carson, Carson, Hughes, 2004).

## **Omaha, Nebraska**

In addition to confiscating cars, some cities have implemented billboard programs. Omaha, Nebraska, put up five billboards with six to 12 names of individuals that were caught for solicitation. Unlike other programs initiated by law enforcement, community organizers implemented this campaign.

## Illinois (Statewide Initiatives)

The state of Illinois has implemented programs as well as legislation to mitigate the demand for prostitution. In 2006, the Illinois legislature passed the Predator Accountability Act. The act provides legal recourse for victims of sex trafficking to sue their captors in civil court. More specifically within Illinois, the Cooks County Sheriff's Department enacted the Public Morals Nuisance Violations, or "Johns" Ordinance. This ordinance increases the fines for individuals purchasing sex as a means of reducing the demand. The money collected from the fines are funneled into the Women's Justice Fund for rehabilitation services for women and girls (Monets, Stroger, Vidis, 2007).



# Conclusion

Sexual victimization of those involved in prostitution throughout their life span has tremendous impacts on individuals and the society at large. Although clinicians are beginning to recognize the overwhelming physical violence in prostitution, its internal ravages are still not well understood. Far more clinical attention has been paid to sexually transmitted diseases among those prostituted than to their depression, suicidality, mood disorders, anxiety disorders (including post-traumatic stress disorder), dissociative disorders, substance abuse, and traumatic brain injury. Regardless of its legal status or its physical location, prostitution is extremely dangerous for women. Homicide is a frequent cause of death. The conditions that would make genuine consent possible, including physical safety, equal power with purchasers and pimps, and real alternatives, are absent from prostitution. The worst thing about prostitution is not the social stigma; it is the violence often involved, including rape, strangulation, beatings, toxic verbal abuse (Davidson, 1998).

# Resources for Those Involved in Prostitution

## Coalition Against Trafficking in Women

<http://www.catwinternational.org>

The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women is a feminist human rights non-governmental organization that works internationally to oppose all forms of sexual exploitation. Its mission is to promote a world in which women's rights are human rights; where prostitution and sex trafficking do not exist; where women are free and equal in dignity and rights; where no woman is sexually exploited; that recognizes and values the great genius of women in the development of civilization and cultures; and where women have sexual integrity and autonomy.

## Women's Justice Center

Santa Rosa, California

<http://www.justicewomen.com/>

[rdjustice@monitor.net](mailto:rdjustice@monitor.net)

707-575-3150

The Women's Justice Center provides bilingual (Spanish) resources for rape, domestic violence, and prostitution victims. Its mission is to provide advocacy, free of charge, for victims of rape, domestic violence, and child abuse, particularly in the Latina and other underserved communities of Sonoma County; and to provide advocacy training and community education.



## **Polaris Project**

<http://www.polarisproject.org>

[info@polarisproject.org](mailto:info@polarisproject.org)

202-745-1001

202-745-1119

Polaris Project is a multicultural grassroots organization combating human trafficking and modern-day slavery. Based in the United States and Japan, its passionate staff combines street-level experience and technical expertise, working every day from morning to past midnight to provide victim services, conduct advocacy, and build the antitrafficking movement.

## **Prostitution Awareness and Action Foundation of Edmonton (PAAFE)**

P.O. Box 11471

Edmonton, AB T5J 3K6

Canada

780-479-4205

PAAFE works with existing agencies to provide support to those in need of outreach services, transitional housing, and connection to community resources. Community awareness is promoted through initiatives, education, and fund disbursement. Its mission is to find long-term solutions to the complex issues central to prostitution.



## Prostitution Research and Education (PRE)

San Francisco, California

<http://www.prostitutionresearch.com>

415-922-4555

PRE develops research and educational programs to document the experiences of people in prostitution. The purpose of Prostitution Research and Education is to organize against the institution of prostitution and advocate for alternatives, including emotional and physical health care for women in prostitution. A purpose of PRE is to reflect the voices of one of the world's most disenfranchised groups: prostituted women and children. The project's goal is to empower this constituency by documenting their perspectives through research, public education, and arts projects. PRE develops innovative approaches to educating the public about the issue of prostitution, including how prostitution is an issue of women's rights, how prostitution is about racism, and the ways in which prostitution is also about poverty and basic human rights. International and U.S. components of the research and facts about prostitution can be found at the PRE website.

## Girls Educational & Mentoring Services (GEMS)

<http://www.gems-girls.org/about>

GEMS is the only organization in New York specifically designed to serve girls and young women who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation and domestic trafficking. Founded in 1999 by Rachel Lloyd, a young woman who had been sexually exploited as a teenager, GEMS has helped hundreds of young women and girls, ages 12 to 21, who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation and domestic trafficking, to exit the commercial sex industry and develop to their full potential. GEMS provides young women with empathetic, consistent support and viable opportunities for positive change.

## Covenant House Pennsylvania

Crisis Center

31 East Armat Street

Philadelphia, PA 19144

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

215.951.5411

215.951.5412 (Fax)

Covenant House Pennsylvania serves homeless, runaway, and at-risk youth with absolute respect and unconditional love.

Providing a continuum of services for youth in need, Covenant House is the largest private child welfare agency in the Delaware Valley.



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PCAR

PENNSYLVANIA COALITION AGAINST RAPE

If you are the victim of sexual violence, or for more information,  
please call 1-888-772-7227.

To contact your local rape crisis center, please call:



125 North Enola Drive | Enola, PA 17025  
800-692-7445 | 717-728-9740

[pcar.org](http://pcar.org)

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