COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION & SEX TRAFFICKING OF THE YOUNG & VULNERABLE: HEALTH, LAW, & HUMAN RIGHTS

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Overview

- Introductions
- Framing of the issue
- Health & human rights perspective
- Treaties and laws
- Achieving change
Framing

- Sexual exploitation & sex trafficking
- Global problem
- Major illegal commercial enterprise(s)
- Profound harm to adolescents & young adults
- Difficulty determining scope of problem
- Limited services for survivors
- Significant challenges for health care professionals
- Complex international treaties & laws
How Many?

- No accurate/verifiable evidence-based estimates
- Frequently cited statistics
  - 1 million children
  - 300,000 children
  - 100,000 children
EVERYWHERE >>>

1.3 million children in sex trade centers in Philippines, India & Thailand

Very young boys from Poland are prostitutes in Berlin

Homeless youth in Brazil sell themselves to survive

Girls in Malawi take money for sex from Sugar Daddies

20,000 girls trafficked from Nepal each year
300,000 children in the U.S. are sexually exploited or at risk each year.

300,000 each year

- homeless youth
- teens in foster care
- young cute naive girls
- LGBT youth
- girls & boys who need work
- former foster youth
- the average age of entry into prostitution in the U.S. is 12 to 14
Who Are the Perpetrators?

- Supply
  - International organized crime
  - Local criminal networks
  - Brothel owners
  - Pimps
  - Gangs
  - Websites and online services
Who Else Are the Perpetrators?

- Demand
  - Chronic sex offenders
  - Sex tourists
  - Occasional “entertainment” seekers
  - “Respectable” citizens
  - Police officers
  - Government officials
  - Religious leaders
  - “Silent” bystanders

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How Much?

- Global Estimates
  - Human trafficking
    - ILO: $32 billion in annual profits
  - Commercial exploitation of sex slaves
    - Kara: > $35 billion in annual profits
    - “...trafficked sex slaves are by far the most lucrative slaves in the world …”

- Individual countries
  - No reliable estimates
How Bad?

“The brutalities associated with sex slavery are perverse, violent, and utterly destructive. Whips, cigarette burns, broken bones, starvation—every slave has suffered these tortures, but sex slaves suffer each of these as well as innumerable counts of rape — ten, fifteen, twenty or more times per day. In brothels across the globe, I met women and children who suffered unspeakable acts of barbarity ... Nothing I write can possibly convey the sensation of peering into the moribund eyes of a broken child who has been forced to have sex with hundreds of men before the age of sixteen.”

--- Siddarth Kara, Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery, 2009
International Treaties & Laws

- Human rights treaties
- International conventions on sex trafficking and exploitation
- Laws in nations around the globe
Human Rights

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948
- U.N. Convention Against Transnational Crime, 2000
  - Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, 2003
- Human rights provisions in laws of individual nations
Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- What Human Rights Are Violated?
  - Life, liberty, security of person
  - Freedom from slavery or servitude
  - Freedom from torture, cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment
  - Health and well-being
  - Medical care
  - Freedom of movement
  - Freedom of expression
Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989

- Article 6 – right to life
- Article 19 – right to freedom from violence
  - Comment 13
- Article 24 – right to health

- [www.unicef.org/crc/](http://www.unicef.org/crc/)
- [www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/comments.htm](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/comments.htm)
Article 6

State parties (i.e. countries) shall recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.

State parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.
States Parties shall protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.

Such protective measures should include the establishment of social programs to provide necessary support.
State parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. State parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

State parties shall pursue full implementation of this right …

Limit = available resources …
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of
the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution,
and Child Pornography

- Adopted 2000, effective 2002
- “State parties” (i.e. countries) required to:
  - Prohibit child prostitution
    - “Child prostitution means the use of a child in sexual activities for
      remuneration or any other form of consideration.”
  - Criminalize sexual exploitation of children
  - Protect rights of child victims in judicial proceedings
Palermo Protocol, 2003

- U.N. Convention Against Transnational Crime, 2000
  - “Palermo Protocol” to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children
  - Trafficking is “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power, or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.”

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Laws

- Individual nations
  - Sweden

- United States
  - Federal laws
  - State laws
  - Emphasis on prosecution
  - Very few laws address prevention
  - Limited focus on services for victims and survivors
What is Sex Trafficking?

- U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act, 2000
  - Sex trafficking is: “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age.”
  - Force, fraud, or coercion not required to establish that a minor under age 18 is a victim of trafficking
  - Transportation not required for minors or adults
What is Commercial Sexual Exploitation?

- Transaction involving either money or other exchange of value
- Sexual interaction - voluntary or involuntary
- Arranged directly between a “client” and a young person, or
- Arranged by “intermediary” – pimp or trafficker
Multiple Meanings of CSEC

- Street prostitution
- Pornography
- Stripping
- Erotic/nude massage
- Escort Services
- Phone sex lines
- Private parties
- Gang-based prostitution
- Intra-familial pimping
- Forms of Internet-based exploitation
- SURVIVAL SEX???????
Laws re Sex Trafficking & Exploitation

- Human trafficking
- Prostitution
- Juvenile delinquency
- Status offenses, runaway & homeless youth
- Criminalization of sex with a minor
- Child abuse reporting
- Health care
- Child welfare & foster care
- Education, housing, & employment
- “Safe Harbor” laws
Prostitution & Juvenile Delinquency

- Adolescents & young adults
- Prosecution for prostitution & related offenses
- Criminal justice & juvenile justice systems
- Criminal records
- Registration as sex offenders
- Lack of services for recovery & reentry
Sex With Minor as a Crime

- “Statutory Rape”
- “Age of consent”
- All states criminalize some forms of sex with a minor
- Commercial element often not required
- Age variations
- Variations in penalties
Child Abuse Reporting

- Laws require reporting of known or suspected child abuse
- Health care professionals are mandated reporters
- Sexual exploitation included in reportable abuse
- Extra-familial abuse not reportable in some states
- Mixed responses to reports
- Deterrent effect on disclosure & identification
Child Welfare & Foster Care

- Child welfare system ill-prepared
- Most victims & survivors picked up by law enforcement or routed through juvenile justice
- Increasing efforts to address victims & survivors in child welfare
  - Massachusetts
  - Illinois
- Child welfare does not address young adult victims & survivors
“Safe Harbor” Laws

- Many victims treated as criminals
- States enacting laws to direct victims out of juvenile/criminal justice system
- Often directed to child welfare system
- 9 states, beginning in 2008
- Limits in some states
  - < age 16
  - First offense
Increased Visibility in U.S.

- Journalists & Media
- Institute of Medicine
- President Obama
- Federal Agencies
Institute of Medicine 2011-2013

- Institute of Medicine/National Research Council of National Academies of Sciences
- Committee on Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Minors in the United States
- Evidence based study
- Report September 2013 - Recommendations
  - Research
  - Services
  - Policy

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Child Prostitutes, Berlin
Nevada Brothels
What is needed?

- Increased awareness
- Paradigm shift
- Collaboration of many sectors
- Involvement of health care professionals
- Focused advocacy & action
what would it take ...?

- public awareness
- political will
- common humanity
- inaction
- understanding
- Action
- change