

Introduction to Domestic Sex Trafficking

The 2000 Victims of Trafficking Protection Act first defined what sex trafficking was, and a 2003 revision clarified that the definition includes domestic minors. Defining the law this way relieved law enforcement of the burden of having to prove force, fraud, or coercion for anyone under the age of 18.

Sex Trafficking

- **Recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining a person through force, fraud, or coercion (psychological, physical, financial) for the purpose of benefitting financially from the commercial sex act of that person. Transporting, obtaining, or providing can happen within cities and states as well as across state or international lines.**

- ❖ Sex trafficking generates \$32-91 billion in profits worldwide
- ❖ U.S. is a top destination country for human trafficking activity
- ❖ Arizona has many factors that make it a profitable market for sex trafficking including 1) transportation corridors enabling easy, anonymous movement throughout the state and across state lines, 2) a large resort community, and mild climate that brings conferences and other tourist attractions year-round

What kinds of experiences do individuals face before becoming sexually exploited?

- Childhood abuse including sexual abuse (Simons and Whitbeck, 1991), physical abuse (Silbert & Pines, 1982), and emotional abuse (Roe-Sepowitz, 2012)
- Parental alcohol and drug use (Dalla, 2001)
- Domestic violence, neglect, or abandonment (Dalla, 2003)
- Running away from home, homelessness (Nadon, Koverola, & Schludermann, 1998) and economic need/poverty (Hardman, 1997)

How do individuals become victims of trafficking (Roe-Sepowitz, 2010)?

1. Running away and living on the streets
2. Girls/women may be recruited by “Romeo” pimps who convince them that they love and care about them
3. Girls/women may be kidnapped and forced by “gorilla” pimps
4. Involvement in gang-related prostitution
5. A parent or relative pimps their child
6. Freely enter and participate in prostitution for “fun” or “excitement”
7. Gay males accessing the gay community via the hustle market
8. International or domestic major crime operations “circuits”

Negative consequences of sexual exploitation

Physical health	Mental/emotional health	Relational health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injury resulting from violence perpetrated by pimps and customers • STI's, physical pain from frequent sexual activity, stress-related pain, poor diet/GI problems • Drug addiction and related health issues (e.g. asthma, Hepatitis C, skin infections) • Sources: (Dalla, 2003; Jeal & Salisbury, 2004; Raphael & Shapiro, 2004; Schaffer and DeBlasie, 1984) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTSD, dissociation • Poor coping skills including drug use and other forms of self harm • Suicidal ideations low self-esteem • Explosive disorders/violence • Sources: (Clarke, Clarke, Roe-Sepowitz, & Fey, 2012; Farley & Barkan, 1998; Roe-Sepowitz, Hickie, & Cimino, 2011; Young, Boyd, & Hubbell, 2000) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manipulation, fear/trust issues • Trauma bond (i.e. Stockholm Syndrome) • Codependency and poor boundaries, problematic attitudes towards intimacy • Participation and identification with an underground social network • Sources: (Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002; Williamson & Prior, 2008)

Treatment needs

- Have a mentor or person they can trust
- Develop positive social support
- Facilitate/support lifestyle change
- Deal with their traumatic experiences through counseling (individual/group), where they can 1) Learn how to feel safe, 2) Decrease fear and anxiety, 3) Address core beliefs about self and the world, and 4) Anticipate future triggers

Warning Signs of Domestic Sex Trafficking

- Homelessness
- Moving frequently
- Prior sexual abuse
- Travel with an older male, or with a number of other women/girls
- Presence of older boyfriend
- Multiple sexually transmitted diseases
- Tattoos or other branding marks
- Signs of violence
- Involvement in the system through other offenses (e.g. drug charges, theft, property crimes)

What to ASK if you suspect sex trafficking victimization

1. Can you tell me about where you are living right now? How long have you been there?
2. Who do you stay with? Did you have to do things to stay somewhere that you would rather not have?
3. Do you have a boyfriend? What do you do together?
4. Has anyone ever paid you to have sex or paid someone else (like a boss or pimp) for you to have sex with them?
5. Have you ever traded sex for anything like drugs, food, a place to stay, protection, or things like purses or clothes?