

Sexually Exploited Youth

Risk Factors, and Preventative Efforts

(Part 1)

Objectives

- Understand MN Safe Harbors Law and No Wrong Door Model
- Define sex trafficking, sexual exploitation and risk factors
- Identify possible indicators of sexual exploitation and preventative efforts
- Examine strategies and best practices for supporting SEY
- Analyze available resources for immediate intervention

Sex Trafficking Defined

Federal Definition

Trafficking Victims Protection Act:

The act of sex trafficking is “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act.”

Includes:

- Force, fraud or coercion
- Being under 18

Minnesota Definition

Defined as “receiving, recruiting, enticing, harboring, providing, or obtaining **by any means** an individual to aid in the prostitution of the individual.”

- Being under 18
- No need to prove “force, fraud or coercion.”
- No one can consent to being trafficked

Safe Harbors Law

Excluded sexually exploited youth under 18 from the definition of a delinquent child (effective: August 2014)

Included definition of sexually exploited youth in Minnesota's child protection statutes/laws (effective: 2011)

Ordered development of a statewide model response

Safe Harbors Law

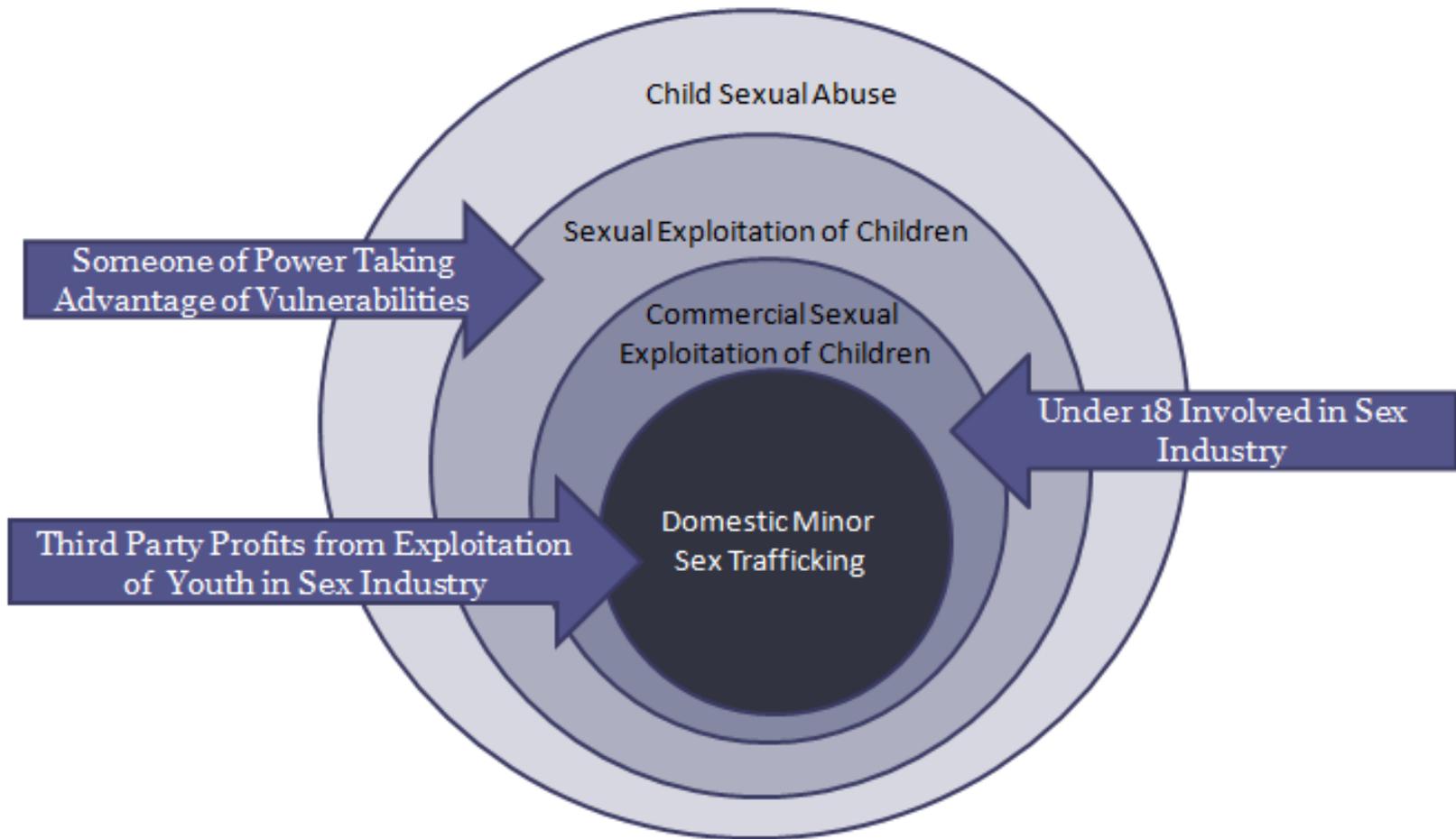
Safe Harbor

- Youth under the age of 18 who have engaged in prostitution activities are now considered victims rather than criminals
- Safe Harbor also designed to:
 - Train law enforcement and community how to identify and assist victims
 - Increase penalties for traffickers
 - Promote development of statewide system of care

MN Working Definition

- Eligibility for services includes trafficked and sexually exploited youth
- “Sexual exploitation includes all youth who have engaged, agreed to engage, or were forced into sexual conduct in return for...” something of value.
- Includes:
 - Survival sex
 - Exotic dancing
 - Pornography
 - Or traded sex for drugs

Intersections of Abuse



NO WRONG DOOR



Rectangular Snip
A Comprehensive Approach
to Safe Harbor for Minnesota's
Sexually Exploited Youth

January 2013



Ensure Minnesota has the knowledge, skills and resources to effectively identify and serve sexually exploited and at-risk youth.

Regional Navigator Role

Goal 1. To provide expertise, initial case management, and technical assistance to communities on sexually exploited youth and the Safe Harbor Law.

Goal 2. Improve the community's capacity to identify commercially sexually exploited youth in West Central Minnesota.

Goal 3. Increase availability and effectiveness of services and positive outcomes for sexually exploited youth.

Goal 4. Enhance coordination and collaboration between systems (criminal justice, health care, child protection) to ensure a coordinated community response to juvenile victims of sex trafficking.

Sex Trafficking Facts

- 90% of trafficking victims found in U.S. were born in the U.S.
- Average age of entry into prostitution is 12-14 years old
- 1.6-2.8 million American kids run away from home every year.
36-48 hours of being on the run, they will be approached by a pimp, trafficker or perpetrator looking to sexually exploit them.
- Life expectancy after entering prostitution is 7 years
- 90% have a pimp and few get to keep any of the money
- Pimp with a “stable” of 3 girls or women can easily make upwards of \$547,000 per year.
 - \$500 per girl (x 3) = \$1,500 a night
X 365 nights a year = \$547,000



Rural Minnesota

Regional search for commercial sex in West Central MN:

- 64 escort ads posted in St. Cloud on Backpage.com over a period of just seven days,
- 38 strip clubs within 150 mile radius of Benson, MN,
- At least 6 advertised escort companies servicing Willmar and the surrounding areas.

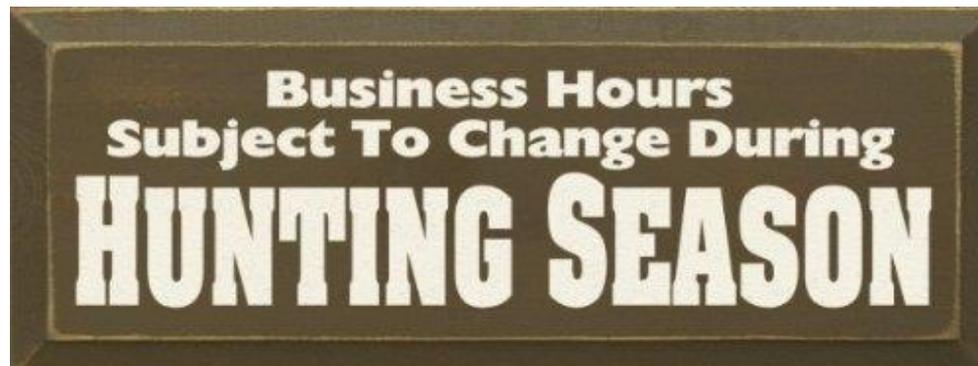
Homeland Security's Federal Law Enforcement Training Center:

Scott Santoro claims, ““Traffickers like to work underground,” “They don’t necessarily want to work in big cities. They are drawn to small towns ... because they feel like they won’t get caught. So areas that have a lot of agricultural farming, areas that have not a lot of law enforcement on patrol...those are areas that are also breeding grounds. Traffickers know that and they want to do some of their work there.”

Rural Minnesota

Seasonal Hunting and Fishing

- Isolated rural settings are ideal locations
- Small towns cater to hunters during hunting season
- Bars featuring topless dancers provide entertainment
- Women and children are trafficked into the hunting lodges and camp sites to service men
- Native American women and children



Children at Risk for Recruitment

- Are under the age of 18 years old
- Walk to school or the store alone
- Own or have access to a computer
- Are attracted to consumer goods
- Desire to develop romantic relationships
- Sometimes feel insecure
- Feel misunderstood
- Fight with their parents
- Sometimes feel their parents don't care
- Want more independence
- Test boundaries and take risks

Question:

According to this, who is at risk for recruitment into CSEC?

Answer:

ALL CHILDREN



Risk Factors

- Past sexual abuse or other maltreatment
- Chronic runaway/Homelessness
- Substance addictions
- Poverty
- Involvement with justice system
- Low self-esteem/self worth
- Sexual orientation
- Lack of familial or social support
- Age/Race



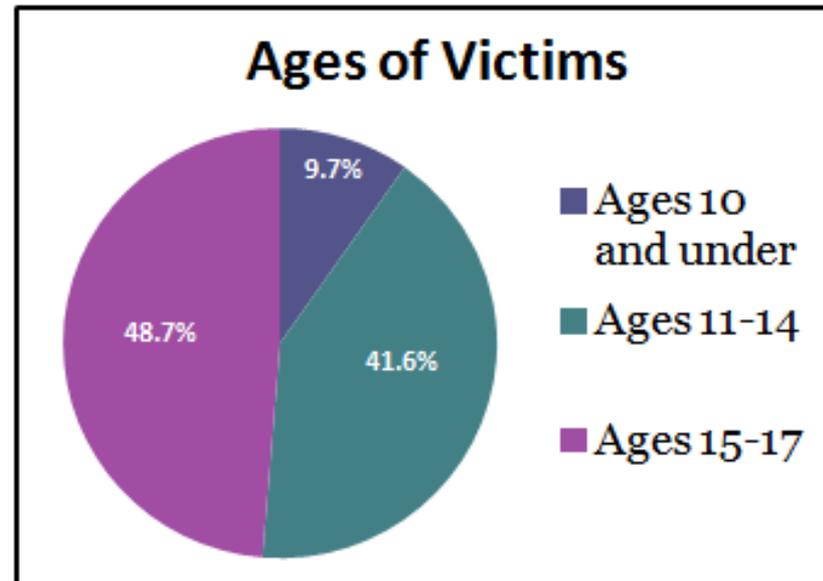
The Demanding Justice Project Benchmark Assessment

Shared Hope International

Study looking at 407 cases of buyers in the U.S. who purchased or attempted to purchase minors from 2008 – present

Victims' Statistics:

- 78% female, 21% male
- .1% female and male, .03% transgender
- Ages ranged from 2 to 17 years old
 - Ages 2-10 = 9.7%
 - Ages 11-14 = 41.6%
 - Ages 15-17 = 48.7%



Past Trauma

- Common Characteristics:
 - History of neglect and abuse
 - Chronic trauma as children
 - Physical and emotional abuse
 - Multiple perpetrators
- 70 to 90 percent of children in “the life” were previously sexually abused
- Sets them up to expect abuse
- Perfect candidates for trafficking

<http://www.goccp.maryland.gov/>

Homelessness

- Lack of employment
- Lack of positive adult guidance
- Top reason for survival sex: Shelter
- Fluidity between survival sex and eventually being trafficked

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



<http://www.mikekanephotos.com>

General Indicators

- Lying about their age (lying in general)
- Personal information might change or might be contradictory
- Has no personal identification
- Not in control of their own money
- Chronic runaway
- Has new or expensive things with no means to buy them
- Frequent relocation (avoid detection)
- Use of lingo or slang from “the life”
- Difficulty making eye contact



Social Indicators

- Older boyfriend or travel with older male
- Presents with non-guardian or unrelated adults
- Evidence of controlling or dominating relationships
- Fearful attachment to cell phone
- Truancy
- Friends or acquaintances who are in “the life”
- Something just doesn’t feel right!!



Physical Indicators

- Tattoos or Branding
- Signs of physical trauma
 - Injuries in various stages of healing
bruises, cigarette burns, scars,
pulled hair
 - History of strangulation
 - Firearm or knife wounds
 - Scarring from other unattended
injuries
 - Malnutrition
 - Drug and chemical dependency
 - Intoxicated, combative or
uncooperative



Specific Medical Issues



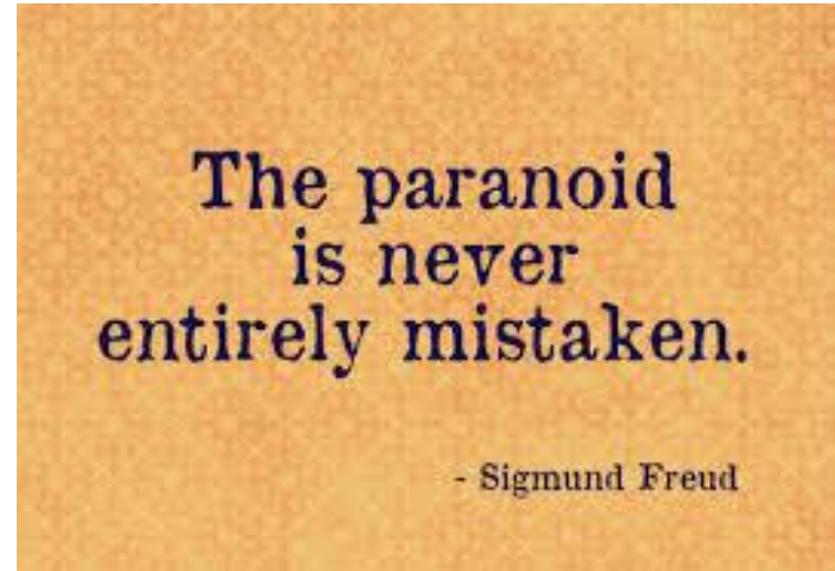
- Frequent sexually transmitted infections
- History of multiple pregnancies and or abortic
- Vaginal packing
 - Cosmetic sponges or foreign bodies in vagina can hide menstruation and allow the selling of sex to continue
 - Other genital trauma
 - Oral cavity injuries
 - Items lodged or caused damage in any body cavity



REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Behavioral/Mental/Emotional

- Exhibit hyper-vigilance or paranoid behavior
- Evidence of controlling or dominating relationships
- Fear, anxiety, depression, submission, nervousness, or anger
- Fearful attachment to cell phone or odd cell phone behaviors

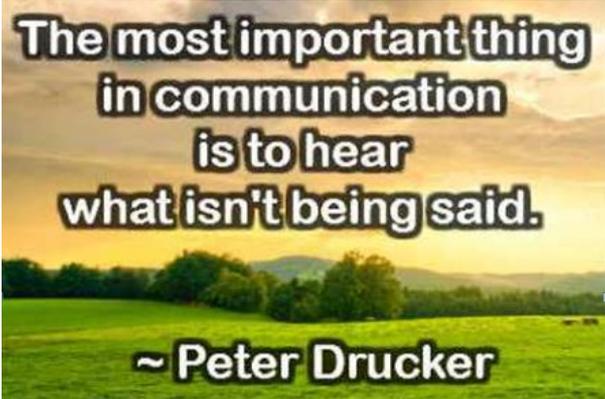


Other Criminal Activity

- History does not match what you observe
- May look like domestic violence
 - Multiple calls to the same location
 - Victim unwilling to report to police
- Theft, shoplifting
- Truancy
- Check fraud
- Violence, fighting, etc



Challenges

- May not recognize they are being trafficked
 - Do not identify as a victim
 - Afraid of being reported, returned to another unknown, or unsafe place
 - Unaware of alternatives
 - Fearful of harm
 - Loyalty to trafficker or gang
 - Running away/Relapse
 - Difficulty adhering to rules and structure
 - **Stigma and Shame**
- 
- Victims actions and locations may be monitored very closely
 - Phone/GPS/listening devices
 - Direct observations
 - Lack of trust
 - Sexual confusion (appropriate boundaries)
 - Glamorizing the exploitation (helps to mask the shame)

Prevention

- Primary Prevention – creating a societal paradigm shift
- Awareness and education of issue
 - To general public and systems professionals
- Identification of at-risk youth –
 - Many already in the system
- Supportive services for at-risk youth
- Collaboration and coordination between systems professionals

Engagement Strategies and Best Practices for Supporting Youth who have been in “The Life”

*“It’s not a choice, no one just wakes up
and wants to do this. You can’t just walk away...”*

- CSEC Survivor

Overview of Link Programs

Juvenile Justice Division (Juvenile Supervision Center, Evening Reporting Centers, The Parent Support Program and School Matters)

Housing & Homeless Youth Services Division (Lindquist Apartments, Lincoln Place, Housing First, the Young Families Program, Rapid Rehousing, C.O.R.E. Drop-In Center and the Street Outreach Program)

Safe Harbor Division (Passageways, West Metro Regional Navigator and Safe Harbor Supportive Services)

The Link's Leadership is provided by a 14 Member Board of Directors and three Youth Advisory Committees as well as an internal Executive and Program Leadership Team.

Language Reality Check

- Do not use “prostitute or teen prostitute”
- Government, Law Enforcement, Prosecutors and Funders use terms such as CSEC and Sex Trafficking
- Youth use Terms such as “The Life”, “Partying”, “Turn Up”, “Working”
- Trafficker, Exploiter typically referred too as Pimp, Boyfriend/Girlfriend or Friend

Engagement and Stages of Change

I needed someone to talk to me, like, everyone makes mistakes; to tell me, you know, it's going to be ok and I'm better than that."

- CSEC Survivor

Rules of the Game

Now try to imagine trying to cope with all of this at once...

- Constantly having to lie about your age
- All of your identification is taken away
- Having to change your name
- Constantly moving wherever someone else wants to
- Being kidnapped
- Being raped, repeatedly
- Being beaten for not making enough money
- Having to give all the money you make away
- Having threats made against your family
- Having to completely change your appearance
- Getting a tattoo on your neck of the name of the person who constantly abuses you
- Being constantly threatened with violence
- Living with a group of people you call “family” who you could never depend on for support
- Feeling trapped in an abusive and violent situation

Stages of Change

- Pre-Contemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance
- Relapse

Working with CSEC Victims

- **DON'T** expect a **child to recognize their situation as exploitative**, or to present themselves as a victim in need of immediate intervention or rescuing.
- **DO** meet a sexually exploited child where they are and on their terms, and **try to meet the needs they present.**

Working with CSEC Victims

- **DON'T** use strategies that **switch intermittently** between treating the child as an offender and as a victim.
- **DO** recognize the various **symptoms of trauma** exhibited and **coping mechanisms** used by a CSEC victim that may not be those one typically associates with victims.

Working with CSEC Victims

- **DON'T** react verbally or physically in a way that communicates **disgust** or **disdain**.
- **DO** be **nonjudgmental** when listening to a sexually exploited child.

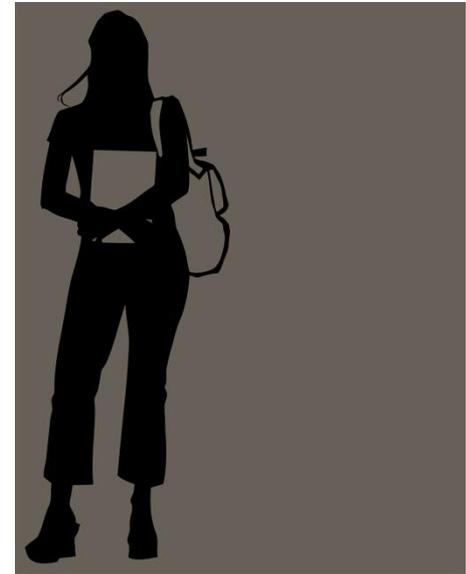
Working with CSEC Victims

- **DON'T dispute facts** or comment on a child's motivation. This is likely to stop the flow of information.
- **DO** keep the child **talking** and make him or her feel comfortable.

Working with CSEC Victims: Key Points

- **Be aware of your actions** when working with children
- Set a **nonjudgmental** and empathetic tone
- **Treat the child as a victim** of trauma and abuse

What Youth who have been in the Life Say Works...



Advice from the Experts:

- Allow us to tell you about our situations when we are ready and don't judge us (we can tell when you are-we are the best people readers).
- Do not treat us or talk to us like children.
- Do not lock us up.
- Provide other ways for us to develop career/leadership skills and ways to earn money.
- Help us with finding emergency shelter and housing.

Helpful Things for Exploited Youth

- Food
- Clothing
- Access to Low Barrier Health Care Services
- Survivor Mentors
- Specialized & Appropriate Therapy Options
- Safe and Specialized Shelter & Housing Options
- Providers that allow youth to come in/out of services

What to do if you think a youth may be sexually exploited?

- Call your local Regional Navigator

The Link-West Metro Regional Navigator, Kristy Collier

Cell Phone: 612-232-5428

Email: kcollier@thelinkmn.org

Back-Up: Quisha Stewart, Passageways Number: 952-288-2688 and Beth Holger-Ambrose 612-636-4260

- Call the Day One Hotline: 1-866-223-1111
- If youth fully discloses the exploitation to you follow your county's mandated reporting rules and also contact the regional navigator and/or Day 1 Hotline

NWD Response after Call is Made

- Regional Navigator will meet with youth and/or others involved in the situation and screen for sexual exploitation, conduct mandated reports as needed, safety and needs assessment
- Connect youth with needed resources services, shelter and housing as needed

At the end of the day...

- Don't Freak Out-Stay Calm
- Connect with Appropriate Resources in Your Area
- Be Respectful and Kind
- Be Non-Judgmental

The Link's Piece in Safe Harbor/NWD

- Host for the **West Metro Regional Navigator** (collaboration with Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis and the Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center)
- **Trainings and Advocacy**
- **Supportive Services:** Mental Health Counseling, Family Reunification, On-Site School/Education Programming, Life Skills, Case Management, Survivor Mentor Program, Survivor Advisory Committee, After Care and Positive Youth Development Activities
- **Passageways Emergency Shelter and Housing Program** (open to referrals from anywhere in the state or youth who are from MN. but from out of state), Contact Kristy Collier WMRN for intake and bed availability

* 6 Shelter Beds (13-17) 5 One Bedroom Apartments (16-23)

* All Genders are Served

* Parenting Youth with 1 Child

Thank you & Resources

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Survivor Advisory Committee Members and Link Staff Members: Lateesha, Kiara, Lexie, Jada, Symmie, Fawn, Deyanna and Samantha

No Wrong Door Legislative Report: [https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/forms-documents/Documents/!2012%20Safe%20Harbor%20Report%20\(FINAL\).pdf](https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/forms-documents/Documents/!2012%20Safe%20Harbor%20Report%20(FINAL).pdf)

Minnesota Women's Foundation Website: <http://www.mngirlsnotforsale.org>

MN. Indian Women's Resource Center, Cost Benefit Study Link:
http://www.miwrc.org/system/uploaded_files/0000/0147/Benefit-Cost-Study_Full_Report_9-4-2012.pdf

Minnesota Human Trafficking Taskforce Website: <http://mnhttf.org/>

Holger-Ambrose, B.; Langmade, C.; Edinburgh, L. *Identifying Effective Outreach Strategies for Sexually Exploited Youth*, Journal of Adolescent Health, Volume 48: Number 2S: February 2011.

Holger-Ambrose, B.; Langmade, C.; Edinburgh, L. & Saewyc, E. (2013): *The Illusions and Juxtapositions of Commercial Sexual Exploitation among Youth: Identifying Effective Street Outreach Strategies*, Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 22:3, 326-340.