

The background of the cover is a photograph with a dark, teal-green tint. It shows the silhouettes of an adult and a child standing in front of a light-colored wall. The adult is on the left, and the child is on the right, with the adult's hand resting on the child's shoulder. The scene is dimly lit, with some shadows on the wall and a utility box visible.

**SEX TRAFFICKING
PUBLIC CONVERSATION
RESOURCE GUIDE**

The resources in this guide were developed by ECPAT-USA for elected officials to take the lead in their districts in helping community members confront and understand the existence of sex trafficking in their midst. It is expected that the guide will be useful after a case of sex trafficking has been identified in your district. Americans are frequently surprised and alarmed to hear that these trafficking cases might occur right in their own backyards and are not aware of all the forms that human trafficking can take, specifically sex trafficking. It is not a crime that only happens to people in other countries, it happens frequently here in the U.S.

The resource guide will help you to plan a community meeting with suggestions for who to invite, an agenda, talking points, a sample press release, and background information about the topic.

ECPAT-USA is prepared to help with technical assistance and identifying experts who might be able to participate in a discussion or training in your community. Please contact us if you would like this additional information.

ECPAT-USA

718-935-9192

info@ecpatusa.org

www.ecpatusa.org

Twitter: @ecpatusa

Facebook: [ecpatusa](https://www.facebook.com/ecpatusa)



Table of Contents

Draft Agenda for Public Conversation	4
Public Conversation Invitees	4
Public Conversation Talking Points	5
Sex Trafficking Frequently Asked Questions	6
Statistics on Sex Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation	8
For Immediate Release	10
Resources for Additional Information	11

PRESENTING SPONSOR



GOLD SPONSORS



PATRON SPONSORS



Draft Agenda for Public Conversation

1. Introduction and overview by Member of Congress
2. Member of Congress introduces law enforcement official to discuss human trafficking incidents in the community
3. Law enforcement official overview
4. Member of Congress introduces members of panel discussion: (consider school district representative, human trafficking advocate organization, child services representative, trafficking survivor)
5. Member of Congress moderates questions from community to the panel
6. Description of any pending legislation or other policies that the Member supports.
7. Concluding remarks by Member of Congress
8. Press availability by Member, speakers and panelists

Public Conversation Invitees

1. Mayor's office
2. City council members
3. School district officials
4. Local police
5. State police
6. District or State's Attorney's office
7. US Attorney's office, ICE or FBI if relevant
8. Local victim services organization
9. Local and state family services agencies
10. Local Chamber of Commerce
11. State hotel and lodging association
12. Survivor organizations

Public Conversation Talking Points

- **Our Vulnerable Children and Youth Are Most At Risk, But Any Kid, Any School**
– Data suggest that the majority of trafficked youth in the US are in the child welfare system. In 2013, 60% of the child sex trafficking victims recovered as part of an FBI nationwide raid from over 70 cities were children from foster care or group homes. However, that means 40% of children not involved with child welfare systems are exploited and increasingly it is happening to children online without any reference to wealth, quality of schools or family upbringing.
- **We Have to Do More to Address Demand, Before We are Forced to Rescue Children**
– Vulnerable children are kidnapped or easily lured by exploiters, and buyers can purchase them with ease, anonymity, and impunity. These sales can be executed quickly, conveniently, and privately over the Internet. We support efforts to enable law enforcement, courts, and anti-trafficking task forces around the country to effectively target the demand for children exploited for commercial sex.
- **We Have to Treat These Young People as Victims, Not Criminals** – Current federal law defines a commercial sex act in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age to be sex trafficking. However, too often, children are convicted of prostitution and placed at the mercy of the criminal justice system. Children who fall victim to sex trafficking are victims of a crime and should not be treated as criminals.
- **We Need Better Data for Our Community and the Country As a Whole** – We must collect data on sex trafficking to truly gauge the magnitude in order to adequately address the problem. Collecting data about underground activity is difficult but it can be done. Statistics on sex trafficking are limited due to the crime's hidden nature, limited awareness by law enforcement and social service providers, and lack of research.
- **We Must Provide Survivor Centered and Trauma Informed Services for Trafficking Victims** – Trafficking survivors are the experts on their own experience and are crucial to informing service delivery, public policy, law enforcement, and advocacy efforts. Decisions made without the cooperation and consent of survivors are less likely to succeed and might even leave them more isolated, distrustful, and vulnerable to abuse.

Sex Trafficking Frequently Asked Questions

What is sex trafficking?

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 defines sex trafficking as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the 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. Transportation need not be a factor.

Who is at risk?

Traffickers search for the most vulnerable possible victims. Anyone can become a victim, but certain populations are particularly vulnerable: undocumented migrants, runaway and homeless youth, survivors of sexual abuse, children involved in child welfare or criminal justice systems and marginalized groups and individuals. Victims have often run away or been “thrown away” from abusive or troubled homes, including foster care placements. Both boys and girls can be victims of sex trafficking. While there is not enough data to determine the average age of entry, a 2015 study by the National Human Trafficking Resource Center found that 44% of survivors surveyed estimated that they were children aged 17 or younger when they first engaged in commercial sex.



Is sex trafficking a problem here in the United States?

Yes. The FBI reports that from 2008 – 2010, 83% of sex trafficking victims found within the US were US citizens. Further, homeless children and teens living on the streets are often involved in commercial sex activity.

How do traffickers recruit and control victims?

Traffickers lure children into the sex trade through a grooming process that involves compliments, gifts and promises of love to create a “trauma bond” or Stockholm syndrome. Simply put, the trafficker ensures, via multiple psychological methods, that the victim believes their life is in danger and begins to “bond” with the trafficker. Once they are recruited, traffickers use violence, threats, lies, false promises, debt bondage, drugs, or other forms of control and manipulation to keep victims in the sex industry. Further, traffickers often take their victims’ identity documents, including birth certificates, passports, and drivers’ licenses. Criminal networks transport victims and often provide them counterfeit identification to use in the event of arrest. If a victim is able to escape, they are often unable to access shelters and services or support themselves. As a result, survivors frequently return to their traffickers. Sometimes parents, family members or caregivers are implicated in the trafficking of children.

Who is penalized?

Punishment for traffickers and buyers is minimal. Buyers are rarely charged or convicted for solicitation or pandering, let alone statutory rape or child endangerment. Often, it is the sexually exploited child who ends up in jail for prostitution, despite not having reached the age of consent. Thus, they can have an unwarranted criminal record that follows them throughout their lives while they attempt to rebuild it.

What services do survivors need?

Traffickers keep victims isolated from support and opportunity. For many survivors, it can be difficult to enter the workforce after their escape. Survivors need to build skills that will allow them to be self-supporting and independent. In the short term, survivor centered, trauma-informed, gender-informed, culturally competent services are needed, including emergency housing, legal assistance, specialized health care, and counseling. If a victim has a record of criminal arrests those records must be “vacated” or erased so they do not further inhibit chances of employment, student loans, housing, voter registration and much more. In the long term, immigration relief, job training, and long term housing are crucial to helping survivors achieve lives free from exploitation. However, without addressing the systemic issues that allow trafficking to exist, including lack of education and opportunities, we will never fully eradicate the problem.

Statistics

on Sex Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation

International

Due to its clandestine nature and the lack of uniform and disaggregated data, making accurate calculations on the scale of commercial sexual exploitation of children, child trafficking and adult trafficking can be difficult and misleading, but there are some general statistics:

- **On any given day in 2016, an estimated 40.3 million people were victims of modern slavery, 4.8 million of them in “forced sexual exploitation.” Over one million of those in “forced sexual exploitation” are children.**

Source: “Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage.” International Labor Organization, Walk Free Foundation, International Organization for Migration, 2017

United States

Commercial sexual exploitation is a term that covers all people younger than 18 years old whose sexual abuse is subject to a commercial transaction. Two categories of children who are commercially sexually exploited are described here. The term child includes both pre-pubescent and pubescent children.

1. Commercial sexual exploitation of children includes pre-pubescent children who are raped and whose abuse is then captured in a photograph or video and sold. This is called “child sexual abuse imagery or material.” Children as young as infants are subject to this abuse.

- **In 2016 the National Center on Missing and Exploited Children received 8.2 million reports, most of which related to apparent child sexual abuse images. But it also included cases of online enticement, child sex trafficking; and child sexual molestation.**

Source: www.missingkids.org/KeyFacts

2. Children who have reached puberty, starting as young as 12 or 13 years old, are incorporated into the adult sex industry. There is no universal number about how many of these children there are in the United States. Here are some local statistics:

A report by the Louisiana Dept. of Children and Family Services in February 2018 found 352 child sex trafficking victims, based on data reported by a limited number of agencies. There were 237 adult victims and 52 whose age was not reported.

Source: *Human Trafficking, Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes, and Commercial Sexual Exploitation, Annual Report February 2018* <http://www.dcf.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/searchable/Child%20Welfare/PlansReports/Human%20Trafficking%20Report%202018.pdf>

• 1 in 6 of the 18,500 runaways reporting missing in 2016 were likely sex trafficking victims. That is up from 1 in 7 in 2013. Of these likely sex trafficking victims 86% were in the care of social services or foster care when they ran.

Source: *National Center on Missing and Exploited Children*, <http://www.missingkids.com/1in6>

• 340 individuals ages 25 and under were confirmed or believed to be victims of sex trafficking in Milwaukee between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2016.

Source: *Estimating the Magnitude of Sex Trafficking Risk and Victimization of Juveniles and Young Adults*, *City of Milwaukee* https://www.mcw.edu/FileLibrary/Groups/Epidemiology/SexTraffickingReport_FINAL_03.01.2018.pdf

• In 2016, 2,480 children and youth were identified self-reported or determined to be sexually exploited in New York City.

Source: *2016 Annual Report, New York City Administration for Children's Services and Department of Youth and Community Development*

• In a study published in 2016, it was estimated that there were approximately 79,000 minor and youth victims of sex trafficking in Texas.

Source: *Human Trafficking by the Numbers: The Initial Benchmark of Prevalence and Economic Impact for Texas Final Report, December 2016* <http://sites.utexas.edu/idvsa/files/2017/02/Human-Trafficking-by-the-Numbers-2016.pdf>

• A series of recent studies done by Covenant House, Fordham University, and Loyola University of New Orleans where 911 homeless youth were interviewed in 13 cities showed 19.4% were victims of human trafficking.

Source: <https://covenanthousestudy.org/landing/trafficking>

• During the last six months of 2014, the San Francisco Mayor's Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking identified 104 victims of child sex trafficking in San Francisco.

Source: *"Mayor's Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking Human Trafficking Report in San Francisco"*, August 2015 https://sfgov.org/dosw/sites/default/files/HT%20Report_FINAL.pdf

• 45% of child commercial sexual exploitation victims in New York City were exploited in hotels.

Source: *Ric Curtis, et al., "The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in New York City"*, *The Center for Court Innovation, New York City, 2008*

For Immediate Release

DATE

LOCATION

Contact:

Press Secretary

Press Secretary Email

Press Secretary Contact Number

Recent law enforcement action in our community has highlighted that human trafficking can happen anywhere, anytime. While we salute the men and women working to combat this scourge inside our criminal justice system, that approach alone will not solve the problem. What is required is a community-wide effort that involves all the stakeholders and makes use of all the tools our community can muster to bring this crime to an end.

To that effect, my office is convening a community dialog at xxx, on xxx, xx, 2019 at xxx am/pm. We have invited community leaders, victims service providers, and the public to attend and participate with their questions.

The event will be an opportunity to begin a coordinated response to the human trafficking incident that has occurred in our community and to develop plans to prevent similar crimes from happening again.

“We have known for a long time that human traffickers target vulnerable young people in every community from every walk of life. So while it may be shocking to uncover incidents of trafficking right here in our own backyard, we cannot afford to ignore them. We must work to bring our community together so that we can have a comprehensive response that deters this crime, and helps keep our children safe.” Cong. xxx

Cong. XXX has been a tireless advocate regarding human trafficking. S/he supported HR/S The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, as well as numerous other anti-trafficking measures that have been passed by Congress.

###

Resources for Additional Information

<https://www.ecpatusa.org>

ECPAT-USA is the leading advocacy organization dedicated to the elimination of child sexual exploitation.

<https://www.justice.gov/humantrafficking>

<https://www.ojjdp.gov/programs/human-trafficking-services.html#Resources>

The Department of Justice is an international leader in the prosecution of human trafficking and child sexual exploitation. Within the Department there is a dedicated Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit within the Human Rights Division, and there is a Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section devoted to combatting these crimes when children are involved. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) also has multiple resources.

<https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt>

The US Department of State's Trafficking in Persons Report is an annual report required by Federal Law that provides an overview of every country on the planet and their efforts to combat trafficking, including our own. Nations that fail to combat human trafficking can have US foreign aid contributions reduced.

<https://www.mccaininstitute.org/human-trafficking-mission>

The McCain Institute is doing ground-breaking and collaborative research on human trafficking for policy makers.

<https://www.Humantraffickinghotline.org>

1 (888) 373-788 is the number and website to call to report incidents of human trafficking anywhere in the United States.

<https://sharedhope.org/what-we-do/bring-justice/reportcards/2017-reportcards>

Shared Hope has focused its efforts on state policy advocacy and does an annual report card of the states on their human trafficking efforts, which also includes an analysis and recommendation section for every state.

<https://ovc.ncjrs.gov/humantrafficking/traffickingmatrix.html>

The Department of Justice's Office of the Victims of Crime (OVC) maintains a database broken down by state of victims' services providers and a short description of the services available by that provider.

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/resources>

The Department of Health and Human Services has multiple on-line resources about sex and labor trafficking and adult and child trafficking.

Protecting every child's
human right to grow up free
from the threat of sexual
exploitation and trafficking.



30 Third Avenue, Suite 800A
Brooklyn, NY 11217
718-935-9192
www.ecpatusa.org
info@ecpatusa.org
Twitter: @ecpatusa
Facebook: @ecpatusa