WHAT IS SEX WORK?

Provision of sexual services or performances by one person (Sex Worker) for which a second person (Client or Observer) provides money or other markers of economic value.

These markers of economic value may include:
- money
- food
- shelter
- drugs
- & more

Sex work can be LICIT or ILLICIT.

In situations of illicit sex work, risk is involved for all three parties.

Sex work involves a
- Worker
- Consumer
- Often times, Manager

WHAT IS SESTA/FOSTA?

WHAT IS IT?
- Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act / Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act
- Bipartisan bill passed by House & Senate March 2018, signed April 2018.

HOW DOES IT WORK?
- Makes third party sites responsible for posting ads for sex workers – legally liable for trafficking.
- Since its passage, Craigslist personals, Backpage, and other sites have been pulled down.

WHAT'S THE IMPACT?
- Makes it more difficult for sex workers to find & screen clients.
- Pushes people out into the street again – putting sex workers of color, of trans identity, and/or of undocumented status further at risk.
- Creates more competition & more risk for sex workers who are 100% street-based (& often survival-based).
- Puts people MORE at risk of being trafficked.
WHY DO PEOPLE ENGAGE IN SEX WORK?

**CHOICE**
- Julia chooses to work as a dominatrix because the work is profitable & she enjoys it.
- Julia chooses to do sex work.

**CIRCUMSTANCE**
- Mark is marginally housed, & engages in a relationship with Peter to have a place to sleep.
- His sex work is circumstantial.

**COERCION**
- Leah’s partner coerces her into trading sex with their supplier in exchange for drugs even though she doesn’t want to.
- This is a human rights violation & not the same as consensual sex work.

SEX WORK IS WORK

- Everyone who engages in sex work has personal, unique reasons for doing so.
- Sex work is one of the few trades in which someone without any formal education can provide for themselves at an equal level to someone with an advanced degree.
- However, sex workers who hold marginalized identities are uniquely vulnerable to racism, transphobia, xenophobia, classism, & other forms of structural violence.

RESOURCES
- DecrimNY: decrimny.org
- Sex Workers' Project: sexworkersproject.org
- VOCAL-NY: vocalny.org

HARM REDUCTION INTERVENTIONS

- DROP-IN CENTER
- COMMUNITY ORGANIZING & POLICY CHANGE
- INTRACOMMUNITY SKILL SHARING
- STREET OUTREACH
- DON’T ASSUME! DON’T TRY TO ‘SAVE’ ANYONE FROM SEX WORK
- SAFER DRUG USE & OVERDOSE PREVENTION MATERIALS
- MEDICAL & HEALTH SERVICES
- OFFER HAND SANITIZER, ANTISEPTIC WIPEs, MOUTHWASH, MAKEUP REMOVER TOWELETTES
- BAD DATE SHEET
- OFFER ANONYMOUS TESTING SERVICES
- OFFER SAFER SEX MATERIALS & EDUCATION

For more resources, visit harmreduction.org