



The Convention on the Rights of the Child says...

CRC Article 11 – Freedom from Illegal Transfer
CRC Article 27 – Adequate Standard of Living
CRC Article 32 – Economic Exploitation & Labor

CRC Article 34 – Protection from Sexual Exploitation
CRC Article 36 – Freedom from Slavery
CRC Article 37 – Freedom from Torture

Key Questions

- What are some of the factors that put children at risk to be trafficked or exploitation?
- What is preventing local and federal authorities from ending the problem of child exploitation?
- What needs to be done at the legislative and local level to end this problem and provide for the victims?

Fact and Figures

- The International Labor Organization (ILO) defines “the worst forms of child labor” as:
 1. All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children.
 2. The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution.
 3. The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs.
 4. Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.
- The number of children in the US believed to be “at risk” of sexual exploitation is between 200,000 and 300,000 (University of Pennsylvania 2001).
- Nationally, 450,000 children run away from home each year and one out of every three teens on the street will be lured toward prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home (National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and Thrownaway Children).
- The majority of prostituted girls are hidden behind closed doors in escort services, massage parlors, dance clubs and other “legal” establishments where sex is bought and sold (ECPAT, 2005).
- The central issue facing the justice system is whether it views and treats prostituted girls as victims or offenders. Welfare and reform organizations tend to approach them as victims, while the police are more likely to view them as criminal offenders. In fact, the legal system can treat them as both offenders and victims (ECPAT, 2005).

Laws & Conventions

- **The US Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000:** all persons under the age of 18 involved in a commercial sex act are automatically defined as victims.
- **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography:** promotes legal reform to criminalize these violations and to safeguard the rights of child victims, and calls on the strengthened capacity of professionals working with and for children to prevent and address all forms of sexual exploitation.

Further Resources

[Borderline Slavery: Child Trafficking in Togo](#) (HRW 2003) – Though this report is about child trafficking in Western Africa, many of its recommendations apply to the United States as well.

[ECPAT-USA, Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children](#): United States of America (2006).

[ECPAT-USA](#), “Alternative Report to the Initial Report of the United States of America to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Concerning the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography” (2007)

[Signing onto international protocols, Member States join fight to protect child rights](#) (UNICEF 2010).

[“Who is There to Help Us?”](#) (ECPAT, 2005).