



PARTNERS IN CRIME PREVENTION

MARCH/APRIL 2017

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SEX TRAFFICKING—PROSTITUTION IS CHANGING

The oldest profession in many ways is the same as it always has been and in other ways has made some changes.

You have the three people that make prostitution. This has not changed. The female who provides the “service;” the pimp, who controls the female (often more than one), the “customers” (the johns).

Attitudes by many is that this is a “victimless crime.” The pimp and the prostitute willingly provide the “service” to the john. It might be a disgusting enterprise, but there are no victims.

Traditionally, a customer might find someone to provide the service along the streets or a hotel in a certain part of town. Or he might respond to an ad in certain newspapers.

This is where there have been some changes. While a person can find a prostitute the old fashioned way, much of the communications has migrated to the internet and social media. Its much easier and in some ways more secure to hook up on social web sites and negotiate terms via social or instant messaging apps. The market place is as much online as it is in a physical place.

There have been changes in how the Sheriff’s Office approaches prostitution. It considers the female as a victim, especially when it comes to a female under the age of 18. Individuals under 18 are minors, and cannot agree to exchange sex for money. This is Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor, for which the customer can be charged. Pimps can be charged with trafficking as long as there is an element of “force, fraud, or coercion.”

And, it looks at prostitution as a form of slavery or human trafficking. That is the exploitation of a human by force. The victim can be controlled through the use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, or deception. The victim can be forced into prostitution or into other labor that can include domestic service, farm labor, etc.

While prostitutes can be adults or children, much of the emphasis by the Sheriff’s Office’s limited resources is on child sex trafficking.

Arresting prostitutes and pimps alone will not solve or even reduce the problem. Part of the effort includes offering services to the victim to help her disconnect from the sex trade. This effort can include government and volunteer agencies that have limited resources.



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SEX TRAFFICKING- A CASE STUDY

The Seattle PI recently published a story about a 51-year-old Lynnwood man who is facing charges of recruiting young women into prostitution.

The man has been indicted on charges that he produced child pornography and participated in sex trafficking.

He and a woman recruited girls and young women for prostitution under the guise that they were under contract to produce a documentary on prostitution.

In the process of researching and producing this "documentary" the two along with at least one young woman conducted a nationwide tour to Oregon, Florida, Nevada, Texas and Illinois. Along the way, they recruited more women and girls.

This article from the Seattle PI gives good insight into a prostitution operation:

<http://www.seattlepi.com/local/crime/article/A-hacker-a-sex-trafficker-and-a-fake-filmmaker-11007574.php?cmpid=twittersocialflow#photo-12560982>

SEX TRAFFICKING- RECRUITING INVENTORY

So how does a child get into the prostitution business? Certainly, most girls do not dream of becoming prostitutes.

Pimps need girls to do the sex work. And pimps are all about the money. They need girls who are easy to control. They look for girls who are vulnerable in some way such as a run away or someone having low self-esteem.

Once a pimp has picked a target, he will use several methods to convince her to work for him. He might get into a romantic relationship with the girl, then convince her that she could or needs to earn money through the sex trade. He might seduce the girl then pressure her into the sex trade. He might recruit a girl with money and promises of riches, fame and wealth.

If the target resists, the pimp may get abusive to force the girl to comply.

Pimps who recruit minors do so because minors are easier to manipulate. The pimps might believe that younger women work harder to make money and are more "marketable."

Pimps recruit just about anywhere. Mostly they recruit in their own social circles or home neighborhoods. But they will also go to clubs and bars, other neighborhoods, the internet, schools, malls, and even transit stations.

Sometimes they will use some of their girls to recruit other girls into the "trade." The females have a softer approach and often can develop trust easier than males.

Pimps often consider the girls/women who work for them as inventory. Most pimps place close controls on the women. For example, they will collect all of the money the girl collects to create dependency. They will reward the girl with material goods or deny them to motivate the girl or to make her dependent on the pimp.

To maintain control they may impose a whole set of rules from daily quotas, bans on alcohol and drug use, to who their clientele should be.

They also maintain control with psychological measures that instill fear and dependency. Threats of violence or humiliation are often key techniques.

Isolation is also an important element to maintaining control. One method of isolation is to move the girls from one city to another. In a perverted sense, this gives clientele in different "markets" fresh "inventory" but it also isolates the girls who are in unfamiliar places making it more difficult to run away from the pimp.

SEX TRAFFICKING– FIGHTING THE PIMPS

The Sheriff’s Office has seven detectives who investigate sexual assaults, child pornography, child abuse and neglect. It has one detective who investigates human trafficking. The detectives use evidence that may include statements from victims and witnesses, physical evidence, photographs, computer/digital data, DNA, clothing, and fingerprints.

The Sheriff’s Office is also a member of the FBI’s North Central Sound Child Exploitation Task Force (CETF). This task force investigates cases of commercial child sexual exploitation. Members of the task force coordinate their efforts by sharing information, working together in their operations and combining physical resources. The North Central Sound CETF consists of the FBI, Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office, Everett Police Department and Mt. Vernon Police Department, King County Sheriff’s Office, and police departments from Seattle, Kent, SeaTac, Port of Seattle, and Bellevue, SeaTac and Tukwila.

There is one other CETF in the Puget Sound region; the South Sound CETF. The task force includes the FBI, Washington State Patrol, Pierce County Sheriff’s Department, Tacoma Police Department, Lakewood Police Department, and the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Investigations (ICE-HSI) directorate.

The Washington State Patrol sponsors a similar multi-agency task force called the Missing and Exploited Children Task Force (MECTF) which investigates:

- Communication with a minor for immoral purposes
- Sexual exploitation of a minor
- Possession of depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct

- Dealing in depictions of minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

The Sheriff’s Office’s involvement with the multi-agency task forces leverages its scarce resources to more effectively investigate and help prosecute sex trafficking crimes in the county.

The detective also works hand in hand with:

- **Dawson Place Child Advocacy Center**– which provides interview services of children 3 to 17 years of age. (<http://dawsonplace.org/>)
- **Providence Intervention Center for Assault and Abuse**– which conducts child physical and sexual abuse forensic examinations as well as 24-hour crisis hot line, information and referral, and advocacy. (<http://washington.providence.org/hospitals/regional-medical-center/services/assault-abuse/services/>)
- **Compass Health Child Advocacy Program**– providing individual, family, and group treatment and counselling for children and non-offending parents. (<http://www.compasshealth.org/services/childrens-advocacy-program-cap/>)
- **DSHS Children’s Administration**– Investigates allegation of child physical or sexual abuse or neglect and provides support services. (<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/CHILDREN>)

FIGHTING THE PIMPS– OPERATION CROSS COUNTRY

Each fall, the FBI and its local law enforcement partners conducts sex trafficking enforcement emphasis operations throughout the country under the name of Operation Cross Country.

The objective of Operation Cross Country is to publicize the sex trafficking problem and to recover underage victims of prostitution.

In addition to its partners in the United States, the FBI has expanded the operation with international law enforcements partners including Canada, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Sex trafficking of minors is not only a U.S. problem but an international one.

For a summary of the 2016 operation as well as videos that describe the problem and other resources go to this link:

<https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/operation-cross-country-x>

SEX TRAFFICKING- WHAT YOU CAN DO

Protecting children from sex trafficking should be a concern for most parents. Pimps and other sex traffickers target children from any economic, cultural, or ethnic background.

The things that you can do to protect your children from sex trafficking are much the same as protecting them from illicit drugs, sexual predators, or bullying. You can:

- Know what your children are looking at online.
- Talk to them about what dating should look like.
- Know their friends.
- Look for warning signs
 - Signs of physical abuse
 - Withdrawn, depressed, or distracted
 - Displays expensive clothes, accessories or shoes
 - Acquires an older boyfriend or new friends with a different lifestyle
 - Talks about wild parties
 - Shows signs of gang affiliations

If you see these warning signs talk to your child. If you need help with the situation call the Providence Intervention Center for Assault and Abuse 24-Hour Crisis Line at:

(425) 252-4800

If you suspect sex trafficking in your neighborhood call the Snohomish County Human Trafficking 24-Hour Hotline at:

(425) 258-9037

Resources: Other resources that can help victims of sex trafficking include:

- **Peoria Home**– Providing long-term secure housing and support for women victimized by sex trafficking and chemical dependency.
<http://www.peoriahome.org/>
- **REST** (Real Escape from the Sex Trade)- Providing services to people who have been commercially exploited in the sex trade.
<https://iwantrest.com/>
- **Seattle Against Slavery**– Aims to mobilize the community against labor and sex trafficking.
<http://www.seattleagainstsavery.org/>
- **National Center for Missing & Exploited Children**-
<http://www.missingkids.com/home>

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MAKING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS SAFER

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SHERIFF'S OFFICE CRIME PREVENTION WEB PAGE:

<http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/289/Crime-Prevention>

NEWSLETTER INFO

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If you have questions regarding this newsletter or any articles that appear in it, please contact the editor at neighborhoodwatch@snoco.org

TIP LINES



Snohomish County Sheriff's Office: 425-388-3845

<http://snohomishcountywa.gov/303/Anonymous-Tips>

Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound: 1-800-222-8477