Diverse Approaches to Reducing Prostitution and Sex Trafficking

2015 International Symposium on the Prevention of Sex Trafficking
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Michael Shively
Overview

- Prostitution and sex trafficking = illicit markets

- Distinguishing prevention from reaction and symptom management
  - Primary, secondary, tertiary prevention

- Combating illicit markets: Addressing supply, demand, distribution

- Examples of prevention and other efforts within the United States

- Preventing prostitution and sex trafficking: Lessons learned, challenges, opportunities
Definitions & Parameters

- **Sex trafficking is commercial sex…**
  - compelled by force, fraud, or coercion
  - with a minor

- **Complex legal & political environment**
  - Different laws and program infrastructures at different levels of government
    - Federal, state, local
  - Presents challenges for practitioners
Prostitution and sex trafficking are profit-driven criminal enterprises.

Like any other market, commercial sex “industry” is composed of supply, demand, and distribution.

Prostitution and sex trafficking are both components of commercial sex industry.

– What distinguishes the two is consent.
Model of Prostitution & Sex Trafficking Markets

Adapted from Lederer, 2006
Flow Model of Prostitution & Sex Trafficking Markets
What Do We Mean by “Prevention?”

- Often ill-defined, vague, used to describe any type of effort to oppose or react to trafficking.
- Different sectors or professions define and approach prevention in different ways.
What Do We Mean by “Prevention?”

- **Criminal Justice**
  - **Deterrence**
    - Offender focused
    - Certainty, swiftness, severity of punishment
    - General versus specific
  - **Target hardening**
    - Victim and context focused
    - Risk avoidance strategies (identifying and resisting pimps; avoiding risky situations; improving self-esteem)
  - **Victim extraction**
    - Victim Focused
What Do We Mean by “Prevention?”

- **Social Services**
  - Victim focused
  - Empowerment, awareness among potential victims
  - Avoiding revictimization

- **Healthcare**
  - Victim focused
  - Trauma response, mitigating harm, avoiding revictimization

- **Advocates**
  - Broad or varied focus
  - Raising public awareness
  - Legislative reform, policy advocacy
  - Community collaboration, mobilization
A Framework Discussing Prevention of Prostitution and Trafficking

Borrow Core Concepts From Public Health

- **Primary Prevention:**
  - Prevent problem from occurring in the first place, by attacking (and shielding against) root causes.

- **Secondary Prevention:**
  - Find and treat problem early; keep from worsening, spreading

- **Tertiary Prevention:**
  - Develop treatments, manage symptoms of those afflicted.
Prevention of Sex Trafficking

- **Primary**
  - Reducing consumer-level demand for commercial sex

- **Secondary**
  - Responding to the presence of prostitution and sex trafficking
  - Investigation, raids, sting operations targeting pimps, traffickers, brothels
  - “target hardening” (people at high risk targets for exploitation)

- **Tertiary**
  - Victim rescue, provision of support services
Infrastructure for Prevention and Response Programs

- Federal Law
U.S. Federal Law - TVPA

- Established federal definition of human trafficking
- Provided funding for enforcement of anti-trafficking provisions and for new assistance programs.
- Provided severe punishment for persons convicted of operating trafficking enterprises within the U.S.
- Authorized funding for victim support programs (shelters and rehabilitation)
- Established relief from deportation and access to programs for certified victims who are not U.S. citizens.
- Established programs to prevent trafficking by:
  - enhancing economic opportunities available to potential victims.
  - increasing public awareness of the dangers of trafficking.
Established the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons within the State Department.

- Annual reports on global trafficking, rankings for over 150 nations.
- Prohibits non-humanitarian U.S. assistance to foreign governments that tolerate or condone severe forms of trafficking.
- Allows for economic sanctions for “Tier 3” nations (those with substantial trafficking problems and inadequate responses).

Authorized funding to help other countries improve anti-trafficking efforts.

Established an Interagency Task Force to facilitate and evaluate progress in trafficking prevention, victim assistance, and the prosecution of traffickers.
U.S. Federal Infrastructure: Examples

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  - Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)
  - Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
  - Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
  - Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)
U.S. Federal Infrastructure: Examples

- U.S. Department of Justice
  - Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI)
  - U.S. Attorneys (USAO)
  - National Institute of Justice (NIJ)
  - Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)
  - Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)
US: Secondary and Tertiary Programs

- **US Department of Health and Human Services:**
  - Provides trafficking victim certifications (ORR)
  - Developed trafficking victim identification instruments (ACF)
  - Evaluated trafficking victim service programs (ACF)
  - Rescue and Restore Campaign
    - “Look Beneath the Surface” Campaign
    - Human Trafficking Resource Center & Hotline
US: Secondary and Tertiary Programs

National Human Trafficking Resource Center & Hotline

GET HELP.
Report a Tip.
Request Services.

1-888-373-7888
US: Secondary and Tertiary Examples

- **FBI: Operation Innocence Lost**
  - Conducts periodic multi-city police operations designed to arrest pimps and traffickers, rescue child victims.
  - Recent operation resulted in approximately 170 pimps and traffickers, rescued 170 victims.
US: Secondary and Tertiary Programs

- **ICE/DHS: Blue Campaign materials to educate public, police, service providers**
  - Cards providing tips for recognizing trafficking victims.
  - Brochures outlining eligibility and application guidelines for victims seeking temporary immigration status and access to services.
  - Pamphlet about immigration options for victims, designed for police and other emergency responders and healthcare professionals.
  - Public service announcements designed to raise awareness, airing at ports of entry.
  - Public awareness campaign targeting potential trafficking victims: Hidden In Plain Sight.
US: Secondary and Tertiary Programs

- **ICE/DHS: Training for Law Enforcement and DHS Personnel**
  - Computer-based training system for federal, state and local law enforcement officers.
  - Training for all DHS personnel who encounter human trafficking within their scope of work.

- **ICE/DHS: Victim Assistance/Outreach Efforts**
  - Most HSI offices have full-time victim specialists, collateral duty victim assistance coordinators trained to handle human trafficking leads, address urgent victim needs, serve as contacts for local police.
  - U.S. Customs and Border Protection produced 'tear' cards, 'shoe' cards, and posters targeting potential victims of human trafficking; present at U.S. ports of entry.
Violent Crimes Against Children

Innocence Lost

HELP END CHILD PROSTITUTION
AMERICA'S CHILDREN ARE NOT FOR SALE.

1-800-CALL FBI
CALL FBI (225-5324)

Resources

Statistics (as of June 2013)
- Founded: June 2003
- Children Recovered: More Than 2,700
- Seizures: More Than $3.1 Million
- Convictions: More Than 1,300
- Task Forces & Working Groups: 66

NCMEC Resources
- Child Safety & Prevention
- Child Sex Trafficking Team

Report a Sighting
1-800-THE-LOST
or
CyberTipline
**US: Secondary and Tertiary Programs**

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**Trafficking vs. Smuggling**

**Human Trafficking** is defined as:
- sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or
- the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery.

**Human Smuggling** is defined as the importation of people into the United States involving deliberate evasion of immigration laws. This offense includes bringing illegal aliens into the United States as well as the unlawful transportation and harboring of aliens already in the United States.

These are not interchangeable terms:
- **Smuggling** is transportation-based
- **Trafficking** is exploitation-based

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**Report Suspicious Activity:**

**1-866-DHS-2-ICE** (1-866-347-2423)

www.dhs.gov/humantrafficking
US: Secondary and Tertiary Programs

**Trafficking Indicators**

- Is the victim in possession of identification and travel documents; if not, who has control of the documents?
- Was the victim coached on what to say to law enforcement and immigration officials?
- Was the victim recruited for one purpose and forced to engage in some other job?
- Is the victim’s salary being garnished to pay off a smuggling fee? (Paying off a smuggling fee alone is not considered trafficking.)
- Was the victim forced to perform sexual acts?
- Does the victim have freedom of movement?
- Has the victim or family been threatened with harm if the victim attempts to escape?
- Has the victim been threatened with deportation or law enforcement action?
- Has the victim been harmed or deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care or other life necessities?
- Can the victim freely contact friends or family?
- Is the victim a juvenile engaged in commercial sex?
- Is the victim allowed to socialize or attend religious services?


www.dhs.gov/humantrafficking
Current Emphasis of US Federal Policy

- **Secondary and Tertiary Prevention**
  - **Supply**: Victim Rescue & Support
  - **Distribution**: Trafficker/Pimp investigation, arrest, prosecution, punishment
Challenges & Limitations of Focus on Supply & Distribution

- Heavy reliance on victims to arrest and prosecute traffickers
  - Limited effectiveness, unfair burden on victims to solve problem
- With strong demand and huge $$ incentives, arrested traffickers soon replaced
  - “A game of whack-a-mole”
- Virtually endless supply of victims:
  - Survivor: “We will never rescue our way out of the problem, or build enough shelters.”
Exchange with Trafficking Survivor

CNN Reporter:

“Do you think these arrests will do anything to slow down the problem of sexual exploitation and human trafficking in this country?”

Asia Graves (Child Trafficking Survivor):

“Actually, no. It’s maybe making a dent, but you have to go after the johns.”

Overview of U.S. National Assessment of Tactics Targeting Demand

- Funded by National Institute of Justice
- Designed to provide descriptive overview and specific information about implementation, useful to practitioners
- 12 major tactics used to combat demand
- At least one type implemented in over 1,100 US communities
- Study products:
  - www.demandforum.net website
  - National Assessment project report
# U.S. Sites Employing Anti-Demand Tactics

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Demand Reduction Tactic</th>
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<td>1,128</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverse Stings (web-based)</td>
<td>524</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shaming (Arrestee identities publicized)</td>
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</table>
Dear John

You have been abusing our kids, prostituting them and throwing them onto the street when you’re done. As Mayor of Atlanta, I have promised to listen to people. Kids are no exception. When you buy sex from our kids, you hurt them, you hurt our families and you hurt our city. It’s over, John. No more —

NOT IN MY CITY.

— Mayor Shirley Franklin

Dear John

My daughter is everything to me. I want her to have opportunities, like an education, a good family — a good life. You take advantage of kids who feel lost and alone and use them for sex.

No more —

NOT IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD.

Dear John

The girls on my team stay in school and learn important life lessons: Sportsmanship. Leadership. Teamwork. They become strong women. Meanwhile, you use kids for your own sexual sport. You take away their hope and their lives. The game’s over. No more —

NOT ON MY TEAM.
Reverse Stings

- **Street-level operations: common, established strategy**
  - Women decoys elicit offers to buy sex

- **Web-based**
  - False online ad, with police decoy in hotel

- **Variations/Innovations**
  - Police replace brothel staff, continue illusion of normal operations to catch buyers
  - Police respond to actual online ad, replace prostituted person with decoy, continue making appointments
  - Police departments exchange staff – method used by small departments w/limited number of women officers to serve as decoys
Shaming

• **Publicizing identities**
  - News outlets – web, print, TV
  - Police websites
  - Billboards
  - Community efforts – online (e.g., “JohnTV”)

• **“Dear John” Letters**
  - To arrestee home address
  - To home of registered owner of autos used to loiter or solicit sex

• **Pros & Cons**
  - Possibly effective
  - Due process concerns
  - Negative impact on families of johns
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 6, 2009

Hermitage Precinct and Specialized Investigations Division detectives charged 17 men with patronizing prostitution today and yesterday after the defendants allegedly agreed to pay a female undercover officer for sex.

The undercover officer was propositioned as she walked on Murfreesboro Pike between Plus Park Boulevard and Wilhagan Road.

Those charged are identified as:

- Alberto Barron, 29, of Nashville
- Ricky Ward, 50, of Lebanon
- Kaleb Waller, 20, of Nashville
- L. Christopher Sander, 20, of Smyrna
- Abdifatah B. Jama, 22, of Nashville
John Schools – Basic Structure

- Police conduct “reverse stings,” courts process arrestees.
- **Diversion**: Case is dismissed if eligible men volunteer, pay a fee, complete program
- **Sentence**: Men are required to attend as condition of sentence.
- Single class, versus multiple sessions.
- **Typical Curriculum**:
  - Health consequences
  - Impact on communities
  - Impact on “providers”
  - Victimization risks and impact on johns
  - Legal consequences

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- Other topics: Pimping & sex trafficking; sexual addiction; healthy relationships; anger management; impact on families.
Evidence of Effectiveness: Combating Demand

- 40% to 80% reductions in prostitution/sex trafficking markets achieved through demand-focused or comprehensive approaches:
  - Wilkes-Barre, PA: 75% reduction in number of women known to engage in street prostitution; city removed from domestic trafficking circuit.
  - Jersey City, NJ: 75% reduction in observed and reported prostitution from comprehensive approach including demand tactics.
  - Sweden: Reported 70% reduction in street prostitution.
  - Buffalo, Fresno, Memphis: Reduction in police calls for service

Approaches featuring John Schools

- Ipswich, Bolton, and Northampton, England: 40% to 80% reductions in calls for police service, number of persons involved in prostitution.
- San Francisco: FOPP john school produced at least 40% reduction in recidivism.
Model of FOPP Impact on Rearrests

Change in Re-arrest Rate attributable to FOPP:
A - B = -0.054

Change in Re-arrest Rate, San Francisco = -0.067

Change in Re-arrest Rate, CA excluding San Francisco = -0.014
Benefits of Anti-Demand Tactics

- Necessary for truly comprehensive attack on the problem
- Demand is primary driver; combating demand = primary prevention
- No solid evidence prevention occurs when demand is ignored
- Relatively strong evidence demand tactics produce results
Challenges in Sex Trafficking Prevention Efforts

- Primary prevention threatens commercial sex markets
  - The “industry” is pushing back

- Policy conflict: public health “harm reduction” model versus domestic criminal justice “abolition model
  - US agencies with international scope (USAID, CDC), international bodies (UN, WHO), large foundations (Gates, Soros) promoting decriminalization of all sex work as means of HIV prevention
  - US domestic law and policy is abolitionist
Opportunities: Seized & Missed

- Buyers provide revenue stream for all sex trafficking
  - Could starve the system
- Buyers are source of intel about trafficking networks
- Using buyers to prosecute traffickers
  - "Flipping" - confidential informants, pimp stings
  - Phone evidence
  - Eases burden on victims for prosecution evidence
Demandforum.net

Over 1,000 cities and counties in the U.S. have combated demand for commercial sex.

About This Site
Demandforum.net is a comprehensive online resource for people interested in ending sex trafficking and prostitution. Learn more about the 1,000-plus cities and counties in the U.S. that have launched initiatives aimed at deterring men who buy sex. The site includes details on tactics and how to start, improve, and sustain an initiative.

Tactics
There are at least 12 major types of tactics used to deter men from buying sex—auto seizure, cameras, community service, job school, letter, license suspension, neighborhood action, public education, reverse stings, shaming, SOAP orders, and Web stings. Learn more now.

Locations
To learn where various tactics are being used, use our interactive map to locate city and county anti-demand initiatives across the U.S.
### St. Petersburg, FL

**St. Petersburg was an “early adopter” of anti-demand tactics**

St. Petersburg was one of the first cities in the U.S. to shift their main prostitution law enforcement focus from the “supply” to the “demand” side of commercial sex markets. In the mid-1970s, the city moved away from the traditional approach of being punitive toward providers and lenient toward buyers. St. Petersburg conducted its first reverse sting in 1974, and in 1975 and 1976 spent the majority of its police resources devoted to prostitution toward arresting male customers in an effort to undermine the market by reducing demand. The city also shifted toward a primarily therapeutic/social service approach for those engaged in selling sex. Between 1974 and 1976, 56% of the prostitution arrests in the city were of male buyers apprehended during reverse stings (118 arrested Johns, 92 arrested women involved in prostitution).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactics Used</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reverse stings</td>
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<td>Neighborhood action</td>
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<td>SOAP orders</td>
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<td>John school</td>
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John School

John schools are education programs for men arrested for buying sex. The schools can be structured as a sentencing option and combined with other criminal sanctions, or as a diversion program, resulting in dismissed charges. John schools can be one-day classes or designed as multiple-session counseling programs. The programs are financed by the fees or fines that the arrested Johns must pay (typically, about $400) for soliciting sex. The fees or fines usually cover all program costs, and often produce excess revenue used to fund survivor recovery programs.

A typical curriculum includes these topics:

- Health consequences
- Impact on communities
- Impact on survivors (testimony from women who have been trafficked or prostituted)
- Victimization risks and impact on Johns
- Legal consequences

Other topics presented in John schools include:

- Male development, decision making, and responsibility
- Developing and maintaining healthy relationships
- Anger management

A comprehensive approach including reverse stings reduced prostitution by 75% in Jersey City, New Jersey.
Contact Information & Acknowledgements

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