
Engaging Catholic Communities in Ending Sexual Exploitation:

A Toolkit and Resource Guide

Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation

2010



Introduction

Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation

(CAASE) is committed to building a global community free from sexual exploitation. We know that all forms of sexual exploitation, including sexual assault and the commercial sex trade, are detrimental to a healthy society and undermine the dignity of all people.

CAASE believes in stopping sexual exploitation by directly addressing the culture, institutions, and individuals that perpetrate, profit from, or tacitly support, sexually exploitive acts against people. To accomplish our mission, CAASE: seeks legal repercussions on behalf of survivors against perpetrators of sexual harm; advocates for policies and legislation that hold sexual exploiters accountable; creates and implements prevention initiatives including providing safe spaces for survivors to give testimony about their experiences; and develops resources that empower individuals and communities to stand with victims of sexual harm and take actions against sexual exploiters.

Engaging Catholic Communities in Ending Sexual Exploitation is a resource created by the Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (CAASE) for groups within parishes (i.e. women's groups, study groups, social groups, etc.) and any other individuals of faith who are passionate about ending sexual exploitation. The toolkit provides background information on issues surrounding prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation both generally and affecting Chicago specifically, including pathways to entry, barriers to exiting, and the role that customers and pimps play in maintaining and profiting from the sex trade. This kit can be used to raise awareness *and* mobilize your community to join the fight to end sexual exploitation. As Catholics, it is imperative that we take action on this issue. As followers of a faith permeated with social justice and helping those who are suffering, there is no choice *but* to be a voice for justice.

This toolkit includes the following resources:

- Biblical passages and reflective questions that can help you explore the issues surrounding prostitution in a way that is relevant to your community
- Practical action steps to eliminate the exploitation of women and children
- A section describing specific groups that have taken positions against sexual exploitation
- Lists of a variety of organizations, both faith-based and secular, that are working to end sexual harm against women and children

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How Catholic Communities Can Help

Catholic tradition is rooted in the concepts of love and compassion, and these overarching values form the foundation for Catholics' leadership roles in social justice efforts throughout the world. With a long history of striving to make the world better for all, Catholic communities can play a key role in the fight to end human trafficking and sexual exploitation. This kit is a tool that can be a catalyst for activism within parishes. The toolkit can be used by groups within faith communities that are interested in working towards social change (women's groups, social justice groups, young adult groups, etc.), as well as by any individual who is passionate about ending sexual harm.

Prostitution and human trafficking are human rights violations of that occur in neighborhoods in the Chicago Archdiocese, throughout Illinois, and indeed worldwide. As long as people remain unaware of the root cause and extent of sexual exploitation, the trauma experienced by victims will continue to grow. Catholic communities can be a vehicle for both raising awareness and advocating on behalf of the victims of sexual exploitation.

This toolkit focuses specifically on the importance of ending *the demand* for paid sex. While this is just one piece of a complicated puzzle, it is the piece that is most commonly overlooked. Providing prostituted individuals with social services and other resources is vital for helping them exit prostitution, but as long as demand exists, vulnerable individuals will continue to be recruited and coerced into the sex trade. Purchasing sex is never justified, no matter a person's circumstances and serves to support an industry that profits from sexual exploitation and harm. That is why we are reaching out to you to help us *end the demand*.

We hope that you will use this toolkit to educate your fellow parish members about the harms of human trafficking and sexual exploitation and work with them to identify ways to take action toward change.

And what does the LORD require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

—Micah 6:8

The sexual exploitation of women and children is a particularly repugnant aspect of this trade, and must be recognized as an intrinsic violation of human dignity and rights. The disturbing tendency to treat prostitution as a business or industry not only contributes to the trade in human beings, but is itself evidence of a growing tendency to detach freedom from the moral law and to reduce the rich mystery of human sexuality to a mere commodity.

—Pope John Paul II

(Letter to Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, Secretary for Relations with States. "Twenty-First Century Slavery – The Human Rights Dimension to Trafficking in Human Beings." 15 May 2002.)

Information on Prostitution

The Role of Supply and Demand

The alarming increase in the trade in human beings is one of the pressing political, social and economic problems associated with the process of globalization; it presents a serious threat to the security of individual nations and a question of international justice which cannot be deferred.

—Pope John Paul II

(Letter to Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, Secretary for Relations with States. "Twenty-First Century Slavery - The Human Rights Dimension to Trafficking in Human Beings." 15 May 2002.)

Solving the issue of prostitution is complicated. Individuals involved in the sex trade need a variety of social services and other resources to exit the sex trade safely. Unfortunately, instead of viewing these individuals as victims in need of assistance, society tends to label them as criminals. This leads to a criminal justice response that disproportionately targets those selling sex and not the men who are purchasing or the pimps and traffickers who are profiting. In 2008 nearly two-thirds of prostitution-related arrests in Chicago were of the women who were prostituting, while one-third were of customers, and only about 1 percent were pimps.¹ Although ample research informs us that the customers (or

"johns"), pimps, and traffickers are fueling the sex trade and abusing the women and girls in prostitution, the criminal justice and legal systems continue to target and punish the victims. **This one-sided focus fails to address the root cause of prostitution: the demand to purchase sex.** As long as this demand exists, more vulnerable women and children will continue to be forced, coerced, and manipulated to meet the demand. The equation is simple: eliminate demand, eliminate commercial sexual exploitation.

In Illinois, incarceration rates for felony prostitution (again, just the selling side of the transaction) have increased by nearly 1000 percent since 1995, causing women in prostitution to face further barriers towards rehabilitation since an arrest record makes it more difficult to secure a job or home. The Johns, on the other hand, receive lesser punishments, such as car impoundment, fines, and municipal violations, resulting in very little deterrence. Clearly this \$9-million-a-year² a year strategy is not working.

Prostitution will not end unless we end the demand. By shifting the community focus from targeting women in the sex trade to eliminating the demand for paid sex, we believe that we will see a real reduction in prostitution, and the harms associated with it, in our communities and in our city.

Prostitution in Chicago

Between 16,000 and 24,000 women and girls are impacted by the sex trade in Chicago every day.³

Attention needs to be paid to the deeper causes of the increased "demand" which fuels the market for human slavery and tolerates the human cost which results. A sound approach to the issues involved will lead also to an examination of the lifestyles and models of behavior, particularly with regard to the image of women, which generate what has become a veritable industry of sexual exploitation in the developed countries.

—Pope John Paul II

¹ Data compiled by the Mayor's Office on Domestic Violence for the *Innersystems Assessment* and obtained through the Chicago Police Department.

² City of Chicago's estimated cost of arresting, prosecuting and detaining people for prostitution offenses (Sentencing Project 2002), www.sentencingproject.org.

³ C. O'Leary and O. Howard, *The Prostitution of Women and Girls in Metropolitan Chicago: A Preliminary Prevalence Report* (Center for Impact Research, 2001).

Research conducted both in Chicago and nationwide reveals that a substantial percentage of women in prostitution are homeless, and/or survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, and often start selling sex at a very young age. Many also experience mental health and substance abuse issues that go untreated.

Additionally, these individuals often face extreme physical violence, sexual harm, and psychological trauma. Research on women working as prostitutes in Chicago shows that approximately 90 percent are physically, sexually, and emotionally abused at the hands of traffickers and customers. This abuse results in a myriad of health problems, including migraines, memory problems, sleeplessness, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and eating disorders. These problems add further complications to physical health problems associated with prostitution, such as suffering from sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS.

Prostitution Facts	
Prostitution is an act of violence which is intrinsically traumatizing.	
Average Age Entering Prostitution	13.5
reported a history of sexual abuse in childhood	85%
reported a history of incest	70%
Percentage That Said Porn Taught Them What Was Expected Of Them	52%
said porn was used to illustrate client demands	80%
said pimps regularly exposed them to porn	30%
Rough Percentage Of Prostitutes Who Were Victims Of Rape	75%
prostituted women who had pimps	90%
prostituted women raped by pimps	85%
Prostituted Women Were Raped 16 Times Yearly By Pimps	
Of 475 Women, Men And Transgender People In Prostitution From 5 Countries (South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, USA, Zambia):	
raped in prostitution	62%
physically assaulted	73%
currently or formerly homeless	72%
Wanted To Escape Prostitution Immediately	92%
Girls And Women In Prostitution Have A Mortality Rate 40 Times Higher Than The National Average	
women in escort prostitution that have attempted suicide	75%
completed suicides of prostituted women of all completed suicides reported by hospitals	15%
Ingredients: Excerpted from the Prostitution Fact Sheet, compiled by Melissa Farley, at the Prostitution Research & Education site, prostitutionresearch.com.	

The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

The overwhelming majority of individuals engaged in prostitution have a history of physical and/or sexual abuse, with estimates ranging from 65 to 90 percent.⁴ Incest has long been considered a form of “boot camp” for prostitution because it teaches its victims to expect and accept abuse, even from the people who claim to love and care for them most. It also teaches young people how to disassociate their bodies from their minds, and as many women in the sex trade have expressed, being able to disassociate is necessary to survive the trauma of prostitution.

Domestic sex traffickers, commonly referred to as pimps, target particularly vulnerable youth, such as runaway and homeless adolescents (one out of every three teens on the

street will be lured toward prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home⁵), and are constantly searching for younger victims. Pimps understand the circumstances and tactics necessary to

He promised me everything and better. Clothes, cars, house, himself. I was just looking for someone to love and love me.
—prostitution survivor

compel an individual into the sex trade and look for the most vulnerable women and girls to physically coerce or emotionally manipulate through false promises and verbal abuse.

⁶

⁴ M. Farley et al., “Prostitution and Trafficking in Nine Countries: An Update on Violence and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder” in M. Farley, ed., *Prostitution, Trafficking, and Traumatic Stress* (New York: Haworth, 2003), 33-74.

⁵ National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, www.missingkids.com.

⁶ J. Raphael and J. Ashley, *Domestic Sex Trafficking of Chicago Women and Girls* (Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, DePaul University College of Law, 2003).

Nationally, the average age of females entering the sex trade is 12-14.⁷ In Chicago, according to the Center for Impact Research, 35 percent of all women in the sex trade entered before the age of 15.⁸ The effects are devastating for these children. Youth in prostitution are seriously affected developmentally, suffering from lack of sleep, loss of appetite and concentration, addiction to drugs, and a feeling of intense isolation and disconnectedness. Additionally, they are often targeted by law enforcement and treated as criminals, even though federal law states that any child under the age of 18 who has been forced to perform a commercial sex act is a victim of a severe form of trafficking.⁹

The average age of entry into prostitution is 12-14 years old in the United States

Prostitution vs. Human Trafficking: Similarities and Difference

When we think of a woman in prostitution compared to a sex trafficking victim, different images often come to mind. We tend to blame women in prostitution for their involvement in the sex trade but view sex trafficking victims as innocent. Indeed, our response to sex

trafficking victims is almost uniformly sympathetic, while our response to women in prostitution are usually arrest and incarceration. So what is the real difference between sex trafficking and prostitution?

The universal declaration of human rights states in Article 1: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." Article 3 states: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

The William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 defines "severe forms of trafficking in persons" as the following:

1) sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion or in which the person induced to perform such an act is under 18, or

2) 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.¹⁰

Sex trafficking is just one of the many subcategories of human trafficking. Although prostitution does not always fall under the category of trafficking, pimps often use coercion and other dishonest recruitment tactics similar to those employed by traffickers.

⁷ U.S. Department of Justice. (2007). *Domestic Sex Trafficking of Minors*. Washington, DC.

⁸ Raphael, J. & Shapiro, D. (2002). *Sisters Speak Out: The Lives and Needs of Prostituted Women in Chicago*. Center for Impact Research.

⁹ *William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008*, Public Law 110-457, 110th Cong. (December 23, 2008), codified at US Code 18 section 1591.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Legally, an adult in prostitution who entered the sex trade entirely of her or his own volition, and where there is no third-party involvement, is not considered a victim of trafficking. Yet it is important to move *beyond* legal definitions to understand the human rights violations experienced by both trafficked and nontrafficked individuals in prostitution.

The sexual and physical violence and psychological harm inherent in prostitution erode an individual's human dignity and even basic health because prostitution inhibits the individual's ability to live a life free from violence and harm. For example, a study by the Center for Impact Research confirmed that prostituted women in Chicago face a wide array of violence, including physical and sexual assault, as well as high rates of psychological trauma, homelessness, drug addiction, and chronic health problems.¹¹

When we compare the life circumstances that precede entry into prostitution and sex trafficking and assess the overall devastation of sex trade involvement, the line between prostitution and trafficking becomes blurred. Regardless of whether or not an individual is involved in prostitution as a result of human trafficking or because of limited life opportunities, the reality is that the sex trade is incredibly harmful, dangerous and demeaning. It is important to move past legal definitions to understand that sexual exploitation harms everyone involved.

We're talking about money here. Millions of dollars and these people don't think about these women as human beings. They think of them as dollars and cents. Chicago, Houston, St. Paul, Minnesota—these crimes are happening in every community in America big and small.

—Marcie Forman, Director of Investigations for Immigration Customs Enforcement

¹¹ Raphael and Shapiro, *Sisters Speak Out*.

Relating Biblical Passages to the Issue of Sexual Exploitation

Trafficking in persons—in which men, women, and children from all the globe are transported to other countries for the purposes of forced prostitution or labor—inherently rejects the dignity of the human person and exploits conditions of global poverty.

(US-Mexico Bishops Pastoral Letter, November 2002.)

Below is a short compilation of biblical passages¹² that can be used for study groups. The passages focus on the inherent dignity and worth of all people, the state of oppression and slavery that exists even today, and our role and responsibility as defenders of human rights to work for justice and freedom. Biblical passages that explicitly prohibit prostitution have been intentionally omitted to help shift the focus away from the condemnation of individuals in the sex trade toward a more proactive approach: ending sexual exploitation by targeting the root cause—the demand.

Accompanying each biblical passage is a short paragraph noting its implications for congregations today. Our desire is that these references and questions will help individuals and groups determine how they can best respond to the multi-faceted aspects of prostitution and human trafficking.

The trade in human persons constitutes a shocking offense against human dignity and a grave violation of fundamental human rights.

—Pope John Paul II

(Letter to Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, Secretary for Relations with

¹² Scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New American Bible with Revised New Testament* © 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C. and are used by permission of the copyright owner. All Rights Reserved. No part of the *New American Bible* may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

Slavery

Ecclesiastes 4:1

¹ Again I considered all the oppressions that take place under the sun: the tears of the victims with none to comfort them! From the hand of their oppressors comes violence, and there is none to comfort them!

Reflections: We live in a world prone to cruelty, a world of oppressors and the oppressed. Solomon, the author of Ecclesiastes, is known for two things: his wisdom and his search for meaning apart from God. Solomon discovered that all is “vanity/meaningless” apart from God, “a chase after the wind.” When we are left to our own devices, we focus solely on our own betterment and desires: “Then I saw that all toil and skillful work is the rivalry of one man for another” (Ecc 4:4). When a person's focus becomes solely personal gain, violence and oppression are often not far behind. All we have to do is look around us to see the oppression that is occurring in our own city today. As spiritual beings, we realize that our focus cannot solely be our own health, wealth, and protection as this adds only limited meaning to our lives. When we pursue peace and justice for all, we reap the benefits of recognizing the meaning and significance of another's life in addition to our own.

- ◇ How often does our quest for significance consider or include the well-being of others? Whom and in what ways? What effects, positive or negative, can this have?
- ◇ What would be the benefits/drawbacks of focusing on the health, safety, and freedom of those for whom society generally ignores and oppresses?

Prayer Pointer—Pray that God opens our eyes to see the oppression that takes place around us.

Mercy and Justice

Isaiah 58:5-9

⁵ Is this the manner of fasting I wish,
of keeping a day of penance:
That a man bow his head like a reed,
and lie in sackcloth and ashes?
Do you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?
⁶ This, rather, is the fasting that I wish:
releasing those bound unjustly,
untying the thongs of the yoke;
Setting free the oppressed,
breaking every yoke;
⁷ Sharing your bread with the hungry,
sheltering the oppressed and the
homeless;
Clothing the naked when you see them,
and not turning your back on your
own.

⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the
dawn,
and your wound shall quickly be
healed;
Your vindication shall go before you,
and the glory of the LORD shall be
your rear guard.
⁹ Then you shall call, and the LORD will
answer,
you shall cry for help, and he will say:
Here I am!
If you remove from your midst
oppression,
false accusation and malicious
speech;

Reflections: In this passage, God addresses certain rituals and explains that God does not want empty, meaningless actions. Depending on one's faith, fasting has different meanings and purposes. It can be done for atonement, as an expression of collaborative mourning and gratitude, as a declaration of the sincerity of one's faith, as an act of petition, and out of a desire to become closer to God. Repentance and generosity to those less fortunate are common themes that coincide with the practice of fasting. Many faiths require that the true significance of this act of fasting should extend beyond the Sabbath and prescribed days and outside the doors of our houses of worship. As this passage says, true fasting is "releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; Setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke (vs. 6)." To accomplish this, the passage says to be "sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own (vs. 7)." In other words, faith requires action.

Who is providing for those who are trafficked or bound in the chains of prostitution? Each of us has the ability to ameliorate the situations of those in need. God allows us the opportunity to be God's vessel through which mercy and justice are extended to the most vulnerable in society. It is an opportunity to be a part of something that is bigger than ourselves, close to God's heart, and a response to Isaiah's call for mercy and justice.

- ◇ Many women, men, and children in our city are hungry or homeless or lack other basic necessities. Because of these circumstances, they may engage in the sex trade to meet their basic survival needs. How can we avoid turning our backs on these individuals?

Prayer pointer—Pray for the opportunity to reach out to someone in need.

Call to Action

Isaiah 61:1-3

¹ The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly,
to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
and release to the prisoners,

² To announce a year of favor from the LORD
and a day of vindication by our God,
to comfort all who mourn;

³ To place on those who mourn in Zion
a diadem instead of ashes,
To give them oil of gladness in place of mourning,
a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit.
They will be called oaks of justice,
planted by the LORD to show his glory.

Reflections: Perhaps you already know that human trafficking is often called “modern day slavery” and that victims of trafficking are all too often forced into prostitution. The same methods that are used in trafficking are used to enslave women and children in prostitution, the majority of whom have not “chosen” to be there. The oppressor uses coercion, deception, fraud, the abuse of power, abduction, threats, violence, and economic leverage such as debt bondage to manipulate individuals into a life from which they often cannot escape. Victims of trafficking are denied their God-given dignity.

Similar to the passage in Isaiah, Deuteronomy 15:15 says, “For remember that you too were slaves in the land of Egypt, and the LORD, your God, ransomed you. That is why I am giving you this command today.” God asks each of us to remember where we came from, whether it was literal slavery in Egypt or other enslavement that we feel in our personal lives. God has been gracious and generous with each of us and asks the same from us toward others. God gives us the opportunity to share in bestowing beauty, gladness, and a spirit of praise, release, freedom, and healing.

- ◇ Deuteronomy implies that we have all been in slavery, though not always literally. How has God used others to proclaim freedom and healing, to provide beauty and gladness in your life?
- ◇ How can we be these vessels of healing and freedom for those in our community who are feeling trapped and broken?

Prayer Pointer—Ask God to reveal to you anything in your heart that might be preventing you from reaching out to others. Listen carefully and take action.

Gifting and Competence

2 Corinthians 3: 5-6

⁵Not that of ourselves we are qualified to take credit for anything as coming from us; rather, our qualification comes from God, ⁶who has indeed qualified us as ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit; for the letter brings death, but the Spirit gives life.

Reflections: Rather than become prideful about our achievements and competence, we can give credit where credit is due. We are heirs to a new covenant not because of our own competence but because God gives us everything we need for a Spirit-filled life. When we achieve success in life, whether at work, school, or elsewhere, we can be thankful for what God has given us.

- ◇ Does competence come from our own knowledge or from God? Why is it important to acknowledge the interrelationship?
- ◇ Why are we competent? Are we using our intellect, skills, and compassion for others or to serve ourselves?
- ◇ How are the successes in our lives achieved?

Prayer Pointer—Thank God for what you have been given and find ways to share this gifting with others.

Loving Like God

Matthew 22:36-40

³⁶"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" ³⁷He said to him, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the greatest and the first commandment. ³⁹The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."

Reflections: When Jesus was asked what is the most important thing we can do, He answered that it is to love God—not distantly, but with all of our heart, with all of our soul, and with all of our mind. When we love God like this, we grow in love for that which God loves. Thinking about ourselves, for some of us, is easy. It's natural and healthy, but it should not be our only focus. As followers of God, we are called to love God and to show that love through loving others—*all others*—as we love ourselves. The natural outgrowth of loving God is loving others.

- ◇ Jesus does not leave room for quibbling over His response to the Pharisee's question. The greatest command we can follow is to love God, first and foremost. The second is to love our neighbors as ourselves—not instead of ourselves or more than ourselves, but as ourselves. How do you define who your neighbors are? How do you love them as you love yourself?

Prayer Pointer—Pray for God to increase love in your life and deepen your understanding of love.

Serving Others

Matthew 25:35-40

³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.' ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?' ⁴⁰And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Reflections: When we feed the hungry and invite in strangers, take care of the sick and visit prisoners, fight for the rights of those that are exploited, and serve the least in our communities, we are serving God. It is often easy to look to the most influential or powerful in society and desire to align ourselves with them, but Jesus chooses to identify Himself with the poor, the oppressed, the exploited, and the most vulnerable of society. Jesus challenges us to do the same.

- ◇ What does Jesus mean by saying that what we did for the least of these, we did for Him? Who are the “least of these” in this passage? Who are the “least of these” in today’s society?
- ◇ Jesus mentions six practical things that people did to help the poor, homeless, and oppressed. Are the practical needs among the poor and oppressed today significantly different than they were during Jesus’s life? In what ways?
- ◇ Does Jesus qualify which hungry, poor, sick, or imprisoned individuals to help? Do we? Should we?

Prayer Pointer—Create a list of the hungry, poor, sick, and imprisoned, and the individuals and organizations that reach out to them, and include them in your daily prayers. Consider placing your name on the list of helpers.

Commitment to Social Justice

Luke 10: 29-37

²⁹But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. ³¹A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. ³²Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. ³³But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. ³⁴He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. ³⁵The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' ³⁶Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" ³⁷He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Reflections: In this passage, two of our previous questions are addressed: what does it mean to love our neighbors as we love ourselves and just exactly who is our neighbor? In loving our neighbors, we rightly love God. In defining who our neighbor is, Jesus tells us it is anyone—family, friends, strangers, all in need. The street child, homeless man, and prostituted woman are our neighbors. We love them by showing mercy, empathizing with and caring for them, and providing a place and means for recovery. In this passage, we see that no one is exempt from the responsibility to help his or her neighbor. Like the Samaritan, we must realize that we cannot ignore our responsibility to help and hope that the clergy, government, or the “experts” will do it all. In God's worldview our mercy, love, and generosity must extend beyond ourselves and our circle of favored people.

- ◇ How many people passed by the abused individual before someone stopped to help? Why?
- ◇ How many people in need of help have we passed by? Would we even recognize them if we saw them?
- ◇ Like the robbed and abused man in Luke, how might an individual in prostitution need help?

Prayer Pointer—Pray to become more like the Samaritan in the story.

Catholic Statements Against Sexual Exploitation

United States Governance Circle of the Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

"We, in our effort to reverence all creation, and to embrace all people, especially the marginalized, stand in solidarity with those caught in the snare of human trafficking. We commit ourselves to uphold the dignity and human rights of those exploited by supporting: Advocacy; Empowerment; and Sponsorship."¹³

Statement of Catholic Bishops and Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) of Illinois: Eradicating Human Trafficking

The mission of the gospel is to set captives free and to show mercy to our neighbor who is in need. Human trafficking around the world betrays every dimension of personhood and is a modern day form of slavery.

Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World

"Whatever is opposed to life itself, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, whatever insults human dignity, such as...slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where men are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed. They poison human society, but they do more harm to those who practice them than those who suffer from the injury. Moreover, they are supreme dishonor to the Creator."¹⁴

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

"Violence against women stems from perceptions, some long ingrained, which basically devalue and objectify females and deny their human rights."¹⁵

Pope Benedict XVI

"Trafficking in human beings—especially women—flourishes where opportunities to improve their standard of living or even to survive are limited. It becomes easy for the trafficker to offer his own "services" to the victims, who often do not even vaguely suspect what awaits them. In some cases there are women and girls who are destined to be exploited almost like slaves in their work, and not infrequently in the sex industry."¹⁶

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Migration

"Combined with these economic root causes is a demand in developed nations for the services of the sex trade and forced labor. Human trafficking will never be truly defeated without eliminating the consumerism which feeds it and prosecuting those actors in receiving countries, including our own, that benefit because of the exploitation of vulnerable human beings."¹⁷

¹³ Fondini, mfc, Suzanne. (2009, June). Corporate Stance. Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter, p. 7.

¹⁴ "Gaudium Et Spes" (27). Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. 7 December 1965.

¹⁵ "Background on Violence Against Women." Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development: Office of International Justice and Peace. February 2009.

¹⁶ "Migrations: a sign of the times." Message of Pope Benedict XVI for the 92nd World Day of Migrants and Refugees. 18 October 2005.

¹⁷ "On Human Trafficking." Bishop Gerald R. Barnes, USCCB Committee on Migration. 12 September 2007.

Take Action

Christ has no body on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion for the world is to look out; Yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good, And yours are the hands with which He is to bless us now.

—**Saint Theresa of Avila**

Love shows itself better through deeds than by words.

—**Saint Ignatius of Loyola**

This section provides tangible actions individuals and groups can take to counter the egregious harm of prostitution and human trafficking. We hope these suggestions will help individuals feel empowered to take action and improve the world for all of us.

- **Learn more about the issue** – There are many films and books about human trafficking and prostitution. Expand your personal knowledge about these issues by checking out any of our recommended resources or facilitate a book club or film screening for a group of friends or your faith community. Develop action steps based on what you learned from these resources. Reach out to other churches in your denomination or community and engage them in your activities.
- **Adopt congregational fasting/prayer** – Choose a time of year and a length of time appropriate for your faith community to fast and pray for the sexually exploited individuals in your community. Incorporate into this time opportunities to teach your congregation or group about the issues facing women in prostitution and appropriate responses to the problem.
- **Add a personal dimension** – Sometimes we find ourselves so removed from an issue that we cannot imagine that it is happening in our communities. As a faith leader, you can help raise awareness about sexual exploitation by hosting an “educational hour” and inviting a prostitution survivor or expert on the issue to share their experiences and expertise with your group. This is a great opportunity to create dialogue on these important issues. If you are interested in having someone speak to your community, please contact Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation at info@caase.org.
- **Ask your priest to address the issue in a sermon** – Raise awareness about sexual exploitation in your congregation by addressing the issue in a religious sermon.
- **Build a relationship with your local elected officials** – Help your representatives understand how important it is not to revictimize women in their community. Advocate for targeting those causing the harm—pimps, traffickers, and customers—instead of revictimizing prostituted individuals. Most political leaders allot one day per week to meet with their constituents. Call ahead to confirm times and schedule a meeting to introduce yourself and your congregation and offer your recommendations. Chicago residents can find their alderman at <http://www.chicityclerk.com/citycouncil/alderman/find.html>.
- **Contact your legislators** – Your voice counts! Keep abreast of relevant legislation and support initiatives that provide resources to women and hold perpetrators accountable. A easy way for you and your faith community to voice your opinions and make an impact on this issue is to write, call, or meet your local legislator. Each Illinois legislator has a Springfield office and a community office. And each US legislator has a DC office and a local office. You can find your local and national representatives at <http://capwiz.com/cfw/state/main/?state=IL&view=myofficials#0>.
- **Talk with faith community members who are government and law enforcement officials** – Set up a meeting to discuss the reality of human trafficking and the efforts of anti-trafficking organizations working on the issue. Connect them with ways to get involved in the work of these organizations.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

—Martin Luther King Jr.

- **Monitor the Media** – If you see something in the media that promotes or glorifies the exploitation of women, write letters to the editor and/or producer. All forms of media have avenues for this. If you see advertising or billboards that are offensive or degrading, contact the company or publisher and inform them of your opinion. To access CAASE's guide on how to respond to harmful depictions of the sex trade in the media, please visit: <http://www.caase.org>.
- **Serve fair trade coffee or have traffik-free chocolate parties** – Buy fair trade and traffik-free chocolate and coffee and use them as an entry point for conversations with faith community members and friends about human trafficking, both abroad and in Illinois. Use fair trade coffee at religious functions and encourage surrounding communities (especially schools and colleges) to do the same.
- **Make available counseling** – Depending on the size and makeup of your faith community, there may be licensed counselors or therapists as part of your community. If you have the resources, your parish might consider the benefits of adding a counselor to your staff who can provide trauma treatment and counseling services to victims. And if you are a small parish with minimal resources, just being able to refer someone to a counseling service can be incredibly helpful to those in need and promotes the establishment of a safe, supportive network for victims. Train your leaders and staff that when speaking with victims, they should *listen* to the story, *believe* it, and *refer* the person to proper counseling.
- **Volunteer** – Partner with organizations that are working on this issue. Many organizations/coalitions are looking for individuals to help support their goals through volunteer time, collaborative community efforts, and donations. Work with the members of your parish to identify their skill sets and how they can contribute to the missions of potential partnering organizations. Areas of need are medical care, translation, job placement, housing, legal services, and mentoring. Your faith community can also help by organizing a clothing, blanket, and/or food drive. Chicago-based organizations working to end sexual exploitation can be found in the Resources section of this kit. If you need assistance finding an organization that matches your gifting, please contact CAASE.
- **Connect the issue to liturgical seasons & holidays** – Harness the goodwill of the holidays and holy days when people come together to celebrate what matters to them most to educate individuals about sexual exploitation and trafficking. Two occasions that can be connected to the issue are Lent and Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Think creatively to make this issue relevant to other holidays.

Lent: Lent is often associated with giving up something that is pleasurable in our lives. But Lent can also be a time when we give up practices that are unhealthy either to ourselves or society. By focusing on giving up practices that are harmful to the global community, we can connect to the issues of slavery and exploitation in the following ways:

- Raise awareness about how what we purchase, eat, wear, and participate in can contribute to global slavery. Challenge members of your congregation to give up slave-made food, clothes, and other products. Go to www.slavefree.com or www.equalexchange.com to learn more about slave-free products. Free trade items can be purchased for gifts throughout the year.

- Encourage people during Lent (and thereafter) to stop patronizing institutions, stores, and companies whose advertising is degrading and whose commodification of women's bodies helps normalize the existence of the sex trade. Examples are gyms with "pole dancing" classes, TV stations with shows that glamorize prostitution or pornography, and magazines and stores with ads that degrade the dignity of women.
- Develop a mechanism, such as an open blog on a website, where parish members can share what steps they have taken during Lent to make a difference on the issue of sexual exploitation.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day: While teaching faith communities about Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and its connection to bringing awareness to institutionalized racism, systemic injustice, and the continuing need for opportunities and equal rights, draw parallels to those who are sexually exploited as a result of these very systems that enable the existence of the sex trade. You can do this in the following ways:

- Invite a survivor of prostitution to speak to your parish on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
 - Hold discussion groups about the role that modern-day racism and inequality play in perpetuating the sexual exploitation of vulnerable individuals.
 - Host a book club on Martin Luther King Jr. Day that connects racism and inequality to the issue of sexual exploitation (see the **Resources** section at the end of this kit for recommendations).
 - Volunteer as a faith community at a social service agency that helps victims of sexual exploitation.
- **Participate in the National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness** – Every year on January 11th, organizations around the country hold events to raise awareness about human trafficking and take action against human trafficking. Choose an action from this section, create your own, or join an event planned by another organization to commemorate this day.
 - **Pray** – Pray for justice and healing in your worship services, small group meetings, or personal practice. Here is one example adapted from a prayer offered by the Sisters of the Holy Family:

God of all peoples, awaken our hearts and deepen our commitment to work for a world where every person is free and able to live their lives fully and joyfully. We ask for conversion of heart for traffickers and for strong laws that protect victims and resources so that they may lead fulfilling lives. Help us to grow in our awareness that we are all connected. Give us wisdom, inspiration, and courage to stand in solidarity, so that together we will find ways to the freedom that is your gift to all your people. Amen

- **Join the Illinois Rescue and Restore Coalition** – The Coalition offers several ways to get involved in Illinois' efforts to combat human trafficking: stay informed on current human trafficking news and local anti-trafficking efforts and events in Illinois, be a part of developing a local protocol for helping trafficking victims, assist efforts to raise awareness and improve the anti-trafficking strategy in Illinois, work with Coalition members to establish an emergency housing network. For further information please visit <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=31332>.

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- **Subscribe to the Stop Trafficking Newsletter** – The current issue can be found at <http://www.stopenslavement.org/>.

Resources

Ten Must-Read Books

A Crime So Monstrous: Face-to-Face with Modern-Day Slavery

Author: E. Benjamin Skinner. Free Press, 2008.

Journalist E. Benjamin Skinner gives several accounts of current slaves and traffickers, but emphasizes slavery victims in Haiti, Sudan, Romania and India. Their stories and conditions are recorded and analyzed.

A Piece of Cake

Author: Cupcake Brown. Crown Publishers, 2006.

Cupcake's story encompasses foster care, child abuse, rape, drug dealing and addiction, alcoholism, gang activity, prostitution, and homelessness. In this original narrative, she describes overcoming these obstacles with the help of friends and strangers.

Bodies and Souls

Author: Isabel Vincent. HarperCollins Publishers, 2005.

The story of Jewish women victimized into the sex trade from the late 1860s to the beginning of the Second World War is told through academic studies and biographical accounts. In South America, South Africa, India, and New York, these women, shunned by the Jewish community, formed their own Jewish order spreading love and acceptance.

The Johns: Sex for Sale and the Men Who Buy It.

Author: Victor Malarek. Arcade Press, 2009

The journalist and author of *The Natashas* (see below) writes another exposé on the sex industry, its customers, and the women who are trafficked from around the world into sexual slavery to meet the demand for paid sex.

Listening to Olivia

Author: Jody Raphael. Northeastern University Press, 2004.

Jody Raphael gives voice to a woman formerly in prostitution and stripping in Chicago, Olivia, who suffered from drug addiction, abuse, and poverty. Olivia overcame her obstacles and now works to help women exit the sex trade and leave behind a life of shame and harm.

The Macho Paradox

Author: Jackson Katz. Sourcebooks, Inc., 2006.

In this book, Katz speaks to all men, who, he argues, have a role to play in preventing male violence against women. His basic assertion is that rape, battering, and sexual abuse and harassment are so widespread that they must be viewed not as issues relevant only to troubled individuals but rather as a social problem rooted in our culture.

The Natashas

Author: Victor Malarek. Arcade Publishing, 2004.

The trend of Eastern European girls being forced into the sex trade is examined—how they get there, what happens, how they survive—as well as its impact on globalization.

Not for Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade and How We Can Fight It

Author: David Batstone. HarperCollins Publishers, 2007.

Journalist, professor, and editor David Batstone profiles the new generation of abolitionists who are leading the struggle to end modern-day slavery.

Prostitution, Trafficking, and Traumatic Stress

Editor: Melissa Farley. The Haworth Maltreatment & Trauma Press, 2000.

An analysis of all aspects of the sex industry, from impoverished Mexican prostituted women to those trafficked around the world, and highlights the various forms of harm they face.

Sold

Author: Patricia McCormick. Hyperion, 2006

SOLD is the fictional story of 13-year-old Lakshmi from Nepal who is sold into prostitution as a means to secure money for her family, and held against her will in a brothel in India. This book is suitable for young adults.

Slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children and disgraceful working conditions, where people are treated as mere instruments of gain...poison human society...and debase their perpetrators.

—*Gaudium et Spes*, the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, one of the four Apostolic Constitutions resulting from the Second Vatican Council in 1965

Ten Must-See Films

Bangkok Girl

Nineteen-year-old Pla tells of her experience trying to avoid prostitution while working in a bar in Thailand since the age of 13. The film shows how, with time, she will inevitably be forced into the trade. (42 min)

Call and Response

CALL+RESPONSE is a first-of-its-kind feature documentary film that reveals the world's 27 million dirtiest secrets: there are more slaves today than ever before in human history. CALL+RESPONSE goes deep undercover where slavery is thriving from the child brothels of Cambodia to the slave brick kilns of rural India to reveal that in 2007, Slave Traders made more money than Google, Nike and Starbucks combined. (89 min)

Demand

This documentary exposes the men who buy commercial sex, the vulnerable women and children sold as commodities, and the facilitators of the trade within the marketplace of exploitation. (45 min)

Holly

An American stolen-artifacts dealer comes across a 12-year-old Vietnamese girl sold by her family into prostitution. The film focuses on his attempt to bring the girl to safety and raise awareness about child trafficking. (114 min)

Lilya 4 Ever

At 16 in the former Soviet Union, Lilya is left by her mother and tricked into prostitution. The film tells the story of the horror Lilya's life soon becomes. (109 min)

Not for Sale

This documentary investigates the 27 million individuals ensnared in the modern-day slave trade. Undercover footage covers trafficking operations and what today's abolitionists are doing to fight the rampant terrors of human trafficking in the US and abroad. (85 min)

Svetlana's Journey

Based on a true story, this drama describes the experience of a young Bulgarian girl sold by her adopted parents to a pimp for only 10,000 euros. (40 min)

Trade

A girl from Mexico City is abducted into modern day slavery, and her brother goes on a quest to rescue her. (119 min)

Turning a Corner

This documentary tells the stories of those affected by the sex trade in Chicago and examines efforts to implement policy reforms necessary to end the harm experienced by those in prostitution. (60 min)

Very Young Girls

This film follows 13- and 14-year-old girls in New York and addresses the mistreatment and abuse that they endure as prostituted young women. Rachel Lloyd, a survivor herself, runs

GEMs, a recovery center dedicated to supporting young girls as they exit the sex trade. (84 min)

Faith-Based Programs/Curricula

Freedom Begins Here

This faith-based program for sexual addiction provides resources and a safe place where people can find help with their struggle, equips church leaders with powerful tools to address the addiction, educates professional counselors with in-depth clinical training, and builds a movement of people who are willing to take a stand against sexual harm. For additional information, go to <http://www.freedombeginshere.org/>.

Porn and Pancakes

Pornography is a \$57-billion-a-year worldwide business. Everywhere we go, we are confronted with sexual images and dialogue. While having breakfast, men and boys in junior high and older meet with church counselors to discuss the harms of pornography and sexual addictions. Porn and Pancakes encourages and teaches men of all ages to overcome sexual addictions and pursue healing. For more information go to <http://xxxchurch.com/pornandpancakes/>

Set the Captives Free

This eight-week Bible study guide can be used for group study to enhance participants' Biblical understanding of human trafficking. The guide helps the reader turn knowledge into action in the fight against slavery. It is used along with the book "Not for Sale" (listed in the Book section) and addresses issues such as doubt and feelings of helplessness, justice, fasting, personal responsibility, the causes of modern slavery, personal goals and convictions, how to confront suffering, and much more. For more information, go to http://www.notforsalecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/nfs_bible_study.pdf.

Not for Sale Campaign also has resources available for participation in their Freedom Sunday annual awareness-raising event. Go to <http://freedomSunday.org> for information.

Simply Youth Ministry

There are students in your youth ministry who are desperately hurting from the pain of a broken home or struggling with depression, abusive relationships, or other life challenges. Life Hurts God Heals is a comprehensive eight-step recovery program providing life-long tools to students suffering pain and addiction. For more information, go to: <http://www.lifehurtsgodheals.com>.

Stop the Traffik Faith Resources

These resources include a Bible study comparing human trafficking to slavery, guides for praying for the people and issues involved, and a video and song that can be used for church groups or individuals looking to inspire participation in a campaign of awareness or education. Stop the Traffik also has a packet of information for event organizers with many ideas for projects that groups can do to take action. For more information, go to: <http://www.stopthetraffik.org/resources/faith.aspx>.

Wise as Serpents

Whether they are approached by a pimp at a vulnerable time or discover pornography on the Internet, youth face situations they may not be equipped to handle. Wise as Serpents is a six-lesson curriculum for junior high youth. It provides a forum for discussing the ways young people might be affected by the sex industry and how their faith guides them to respond. For more information, go to: http://www.adultssavingkids.org/wise_as_serpents.html.

International Faith-Based Organizations

International Justice Mission

International Justice Mission is a human rights agency that secures justice for victims of slavery, sexual exploitation, and other forms of violent oppression. IJM lawyers, investigators, and aftercare professionals work with local officials to ensure immediate victim rescue and aftercare, prosecute perpetrators, and promote functioning public justice systems.

For additional information:

<http://www.ijm.org/>

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army believes that all abuse and exploitation of human beings is an offense against humankind and against God. Due to the inherently abusive and exploitative nature of human trafficking, they consider all forms of trafficking in persons abhorrent.

For additional information:

<http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/trafficking>

Stop the Traffik

Stop the Traffik is a global coalition of organizations working together to fight human trafficking, with a special focus on advocacy and education. There are currently more than 300 member organizations, including businesses, faith groups, community groups, and charities.

For additional information:

<http://www.stopthetraffik.org>

The Well

Each year thousands of women and girls from impoverished towns and villages in Thailand flock to cities like Bangkok and Pattaya to work in bars, go-go bars, brothels, and massage parlors. Some are sold outright by their families as slaves. **The Well** is a Christian ministry in Thailand (operating under *Servantworks* and other partner organizations) that provides counseling, training, job development, and other services to women and their families.

For additional information:

<http://servantworks.org/well>

World Vision

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to tackling the causes of poverty and injustice worldwide to help children, families, and communities reach their full potential. It has dedicated projects and websites for child sex trafficking.

For additional information:

<http://www.worldvision.org/content.nsf/learn/globalissues-childprotection-sexexploit>

Action on behalf of justice . . . appear[s] to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, . . . of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.

— World Synod of Bishops, "Justice in the World" (1971)

Chicago-Based Organizations: Direct Service/Outreach

Dream Catcher Foundation

A survivor-driven agency, the Dream Catcher Foundation provides health services, counseling, referrals to transitional housing and addiction treatment facilities, employment placement and educational support for young women ages 12 to 25 who have survived the sex trade.

For additional information:

<http://dianetye.com/dreamcatcherfoundation/index1.html>

773-936-9898

Footprints

This organization offers hope and rehabilitative services to girls and women exposed to trauma in the sex trade including facilitating substance-abuse and HIV-prevention programs for women arrested for prostitution in Cook County.

For additional information:

www.cchc-online.org

773-533-5600

Illinois Department of Human Services-Illinois Rescue and Restore Campaign

The State of Illinois has partnered with the Federal government to combat labor and sex trafficking in Illinois. Under former Governor Rod Blagojevich, Illinois joined the US Department of Health and Human Services and other law enforcement, social service, healthcare, and advocacy organizations across the state to fight what the Governor termed a modern-day form of slavery.

For additional information:

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=313322>

To report suspected cases of trafficking, find victim resources (including crisis intervention and urgent and non-urgent referrals) and to request comprehensive anti-trafficking resources or technical assistance, call the **24-hour hotline at 1-888-3737-888**.

National Immigrant Justice Center

The National Immigrant Justice Center ensures human rights protections and access to justice for immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers through direct legal services, policy reform, impact litigation, and public education.

For additional information:

<http://www.immigrantjustice.org>

National Runaway Switchboard

The mission of the National Runaway Switchboard is to help keep America's runaway and at-risk youth safe and off the streets. Their 24-hour crisis line has experienced front-line team members ready to help. Their services are anonymous, confidential and free.

For additional information:

<http://www.1800runaway.org/>

1-800-RUNAWAY

Night Ministry

The Night Ministry connects with Chicago's vulnerable youth and adults through street outreach, youth shelter and supportive services, and a mobile health outreach bus.

They provide basic resources, free healthcare, and housing and supportive services for youth as well as referrals to other agencies for additional needs.

For additional information:

<http://www.thenightministry.org/>

773-784-9000

STOP IT

STOP IT fights human trafficking by rescuing victims, protecting survivors, and prosecuting traffickers and exploiters. They are committed to teaching the community to recognize and identify possible victims of trafficking. Call the **STOP IT 24-hour hotline at 1-877-606-3158** to report a suspected case of human trafficking, including commercial sexual exploitation of children, sex trafficking and labor trafficking.

For additional information:

773-275-6233 X3029

Women of Power Alumni Association

WOPAA is a group of female ex-offenders who have attained successful transition from the Cook County Sheriff's Department of Women's Justice Services. WOPAA members are working towards self sufficiency through collaborative efforts with support from DWJS staff. WOPAA offers support groups for maintaining recovery and moving forward after incarceration. Other programs include education workshops, health fairs, financial literacy programs, and cultural awareness events.

For additional information:

<http://womenofpoweraa.org>

773-869-7877

Young Women's Empowerment Project:

The Young Women's Empowerment Project is a community-based youth-led project that was founded in 2001 by a radical feminist and harm-reduction-based collective of women and girls involved in the sex trade and street economy and their allies. It was created by women and girls who believe that all girls are priceless, creative, and smart and can be empowered and leaders in their communities. YWEP offers girls involved in the sex trade and street economy ages 12 to 23 non-judgmental support, harm-reduction information and resources.

For additional information:

www.youarepriceless.org

Chicago-Based Organizations: Advocacy

Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation

CAASE is committed to building a global community free from sexual exploitation. We know that all forms of sexual exploitation, including sexual assault and the commercial sex trade, are detrimental to a healthy society and undermine the dignity of all people. CAASE believes in stopping sexual exploitation by directly addressing the culture, institutions, and individuals that perpetrate, profit from, or tacitly support sexually exploitive acts against people. To accomplish our mission, CAASE seeks legal repercussions on behalf of survivors against perpetrators of sexual harm; advocates for policies and legislation that hold sexual exploiters accountable, creates and implements prevention initiatives, and develops resources that empower individuals and communities to take actions against sexual exploiters.

For additional information:

www.caase.org

773-244-2230

Partnership to Rescue Our Minors from Sexual Exploitation

PROMISE is a Chicago faith-based organization working against the sexual exploitation of minors. Its mission is to address, in a holistic manner, the commercial sexual exploitation of youth under 18 in the Chicago area by focusing on prevention, intervention, outreach and service provision.

For additional information:

www.sapromise.org

312.286.2011

Prostitution Alternatives Round Table

Prostitution Alternatives Round Table (PART) is a network of governmental and private non-profit organizations and survivors of prostitution dedicated to addressing the many issues surrounding prostitution and homelessness in Chicago. PART is a project of the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless and is led by an active Steering Committee and Committee of Survivors of Prostitution.

For additional information:

www.chicagohomeless.org

312-435-4548

Soroptimist

Soroptimist is an international volunteer organization comprised of professional women working to improve the lives of women throughout the world through raising public awareness, fundraising, programming, and membership.

For additional information:

<http://www.soroptimist.org/>

Traffick Free

Traffick Free is an organization dedicated to raising awareness about human trafficking by conducting presentations for churches, schools, and groups. They also serve as a liaison with the community, linking community members with trafficking service providers for training, educational, and volunteer opportunities.

For additional information:

www.traffickfree.org