

# Background: Sex Trafficking

## Introduction

This white paper was written on behalf of the Alaska Ad Hoc Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) Working Group on Sex Trafficking, and attempts to provide a basic background on sex trafficking including the history of U.S. policy on the issue of human trafficking with a particular focus on sex trafficking, prevalence and data collection, risk factors, services and needs of victims, and barriers to providing service. The goal of this paper is to serve as background for future discussions and the Working Group's recommendations to the State of Alaska.

## U.S. and international policy on human trafficking

U.S. policymakers have paid increasing attention to the issue of human trafficking in the past thirteen years. Prior to 2000, the United States ratified only two international conventions on human trafficking, the International Labor Organization (ILO) Conventions on the Abolition of Forced Labor (1991), and on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (1999). In 2000, the United States began to take significant action on the issue. The U.S. government signed the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (also known as the Palermo Protocol), The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Pornography, and the U.S. passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000. The Palermo Protocol was ratified in 2005 and TVPA was reauthorized in 2005 and 2008.

The TVPA was scheduled for reauthorization in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, but fell victim to the current Congressional backlog. When originally authorized in 2000, the TVPA focused almost singularly on human trafficking victims who were trafficked into the United States from other countries or into other countries. With each reauthorization of the TVPA, policymakers have increasingly acknowledged that human trafficking occurs not just across borders, but within countries, including the U.S., and that in addition to foreign nationals, U.S. citizen and U.S. legal residents are often victims of trafficking here in the U.S.

State level policymakers have also taken action on human trafficking. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, as of 2011, 40 states in the U.S. passed laws enacting some form of protection for victims of trafficking, 21 states enacted laws providing services to

victims, 19 passed legislation creating task forces on trafficking, three changed laws and regulations to require the posting of the national trafficking hotline number in key locations, two states passed laws qualifying threatening to report a victim of human trafficking to immigration as extortion; seven passed laws classifying the destruction, concealment, removal of people's passports, immigration papers or other government documents and the possession of false official documents of identification as a crime, and seven states designated a particular day, week or month for the purpose of public awareness<sup>1</sup>. Governor Parnell designated February 1, 2011 an anti-human trafficking awareness day, and Alaska added itself to this list of states that took legislative action on the issue by amending its criminal code and creating a sex trafficking task force in 2012 legislative session.

### Definitions

Few people know what constitutes human trafficking. The lack of familiarity with the definition of the crime of human trafficking complicates the ability of law enforcement, service providers, judges, prosecutors and court personnel to identify victims of trafficking, to intervene on their behalf, to protect victims' rights, or to ensure access to dedicated services. More often, the failure of appropriate identification of these victims leads to the treatment of victims of trafficking as criminals<sup>2</sup>.

### The United Nations definition

The United Nations defines human trafficking as:

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud or deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation includes, at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, servitude or the removal of *organs*.<sup>3</sup>

### U.S. definition

U.S. Federal Law, in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, provides the definition of "severe forms of trafficking in persons":

*a) sex trafficking in which commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or*

*b) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of 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.<sup>4</sup>*

It is important to note that the U.S. government views human trafficking as modern day slavery<sup>5</sup> and there are two types of human trafficking: labor trafficking and sex trafficking. Sex trafficking of adults and sex trafficking of minors are often addressed and studied separately. Furthermore, it is a common misconception that a person needs to be transported across international or state borders in order to be trafficked.<sup>6</sup>

Human trafficking is distinct from, and yet often intertwined with smuggling. Human smuggling is the clandestine transport of a person across an international border and is done with the consent of the individual smuggled, but the crime of human trafficking does not require crossing borders or even changing locations and does not involve consent of the trafficked individual, but rather fraud, force or coercion.<sup>7</sup> As noted in the U.S. State Department's 2012 *Trafficking in Persons Report* the crime of human trafficking is based on exploitation of vulnerable people who are required by force, fraud or coercion to engage in some activity against their will.

#### **State of Alaska definition**

Sex trafficking is one type of human trafficking. The State of Alaska, as of the 201 legislative session, amended its criminal code to define sex trafficking in the first degree as:

*“ person commits the crime of sex trafficking in the first degree if the person*

*(1) induces or causes a person to engage in prostitution through use of force.*

*(2) as other than a patron of a prostitute, induces or causes a person under 20 years of age to engage in prostitution; or*

*(3) induces or causes a person in that person's legal custody to engage in prostitution.”<sup>8</sup>*

#### **Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC)**

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) is the global business of sexual exploitation of children for commercial gain and consists of criminal practices that demean, degrade and threaten the physical and psychosocial integrity of children. There are three primary and interrelated forms: prostitution, pornography and trafficking for sexual purposes.

### **Domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST)**

Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) is the commercial sexual exploitation of American children within U.S. borders. It is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act where the person is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident under the age of 18. DMST includes but is not limited to the commercial sexual exploitation of children through prostitution, pornography, and/or stripping, and does not require force, fraud, or coercion.

### **Sex trafficking and prostitution**

One common debate revolves around the difference between sex trafficking and prostitution. One side of the debate argues that prostitution and sex trafficking are so intertwined that all prostitution is essentially domestic trafficking.<sup>9, 10</sup> The other argues that women choose sex work and they have the right to do so.

The U.N., which includes member countries that have legalized sex work, acknowledges two types of sex work: sex work that is freely chosen and sex work that is forced or coerced.<sup>11</sup> The U.S., with only one state, Nevada, legally permitting prostitution, avoids the debate by linking the crime of sex trafficking to the use of force, fraud, or coercion, except in the case of minors. However, the U.S. government acknowledges a strong link between sex trafficking and prostitution. In a 2002 National Security Directive, the Bush Administration took the position that: "...prostitution is inherently harmful and dehumanizing, and fuels trafficking in persons, a form of modern-day slavery."<sup>12</sup> Additionally in 2004, the U.S. Department of State issued a fact sheet that strongly advocated policies that would contribute to a reduction in demand for commercial sex rather than legalization of prostitution.<sup>13</sup> The fact sheet noted that the majority of women involved in prostitution want to escape prostitution, that prostitution is brutal and subjects those involved to extremely high rates of trauma, violence, traumatic stress and disease, and that prostitution provides a safe haven for crime.<sup>14</sup>

While the Alaska State Legislature took the bold step to update the criminal code to address sex trafficking, this working group finds the federal statute more comprehensive. For that reason and because many of the sex trafficking cases in Alaska have been federal cases, this paper will use the federal definition of sex trafficking.

### Prevalence

Accurately assessing the scope of the problem is a challenge. Traffickers keep their victims hidden. Victims, foreign national and domestic victims, are unlikely to self-identify as victims due to fear, shame, distrust and/or a lack of understanding that they are a victim of a crime.<sup>15</sup>

The International Labor Organization estimates global human trafficking at 20.9 million people at any given time: 55 % of those trafficked for labor are women, and 98% of sex trafficking victims are women.<sup>16</sup> The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, cited estimates of 600,000 to 800,000 trafficking victims globally on an annual basis. In 2003, the U.S. State Department reported 18,000 to 20,000 people were trafficked into the U.S. annually. In 2006, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) questioned the accuracy of these estimates citing information gaps and questionable methodology.<sup>17</sup> The State Department revised its estimates of trafficking into the U.S. to 14,500 to 17,500 annually in subsequent reports.<sup>18</sup> In a report prepared for the U.S. Department of Justice, a combined research team from the Northeastern University and the Urban Institute critiqued the State Department's estimates as limited for various reasons such as the fact that the estimates only included foreign nationals trafficked into the U.S., not U.S. citizens and residents who are also victims of trafficking, and the researcher failed to publish the methodology used.<sup>19</sup>

However, there is enough reliable data at the federal, state and local level to know that human trafficking is happening and it is fairly widespread. For example, according the U.S. Department of Justice, between 2008 and 2010, federally funded task forces on human trafficking investigated 2,515 cases.<sup>20</sup> Eighty two percent of the incidents reported involved sex trafficking, 11% involved labor trafficking and 7% were unknown. Eighty three percent of the victims in the sex trafficking incidents were U.S. citizens.

In 2001, researchers estimated that between 244,501 and 286,506 youth in the U.S. to be at risk for commercial sexual exploitation.<sup>21</sup> However, accurate prevalence data on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) occurring within the U.S. is also nonexistent. In addition

to the barriers to data collection mentioned above, Shared Hope International, a faith-based nongovernmental organization (NGO) dedicated to the eradication of sex trafficking, identified additional obstacles to collecting meaningful data including lack of uniform understanding of the crime, failure to track the crime, failure to identify CSEC victims as victims of sex trafficking, failure to prosecute the crime or inclinations toward plea agreements, and barriers to communication across agencies.<sup>22</sup> Finally, because sex trafficking is a hidden crime, prevalence data based on reported incidents will always underestimate the scope of the problem.

All of these obstacles to collecting accurate prevalence data on CSEC are also barriers to data collection for sex trafficking of foreign national and U.S. citizen/resident adults. In fact, in the 2007 Crazy Horse case, the first sex trafficking case in Alaska where six Russian women, including two minors, were forced to dance nude, the women were not initially identified as victims of sex trafficking. By the time that they were properly identified as victims some of the women had already been deported to Seattle and the traffickers had hired an attorney in Seattle to represent the women. If not for the involvement of the Alaska Immigration Justice Project, the women would have been treated as criminal aliens and either deported or handed back to their traffickers.<sup>23</sup>

In spite of these challenges, some useful data is available from state and local entities. For example, New York State estimated that 2,253 youth in New York City and 399 youth in upstate counties were victims of CSEC per year.<sup>24</sup> A research group in Minnesota estimated that in Minnesota 45 girls under the age of 18 were sexually exploited on a typical weekend night.<sup>25</sup>

### **Characteristics of sex trafficking**

In spite of gaps in prevalence data, which would help answer “who” “what” and “where” questions on trafficking, significant research has been and continues to be done at the international, national, state and local levels to provide valuable information regarding risk factors that make someone vulnerable to sex trafficking, service needs and obstacles to providing services to victims of sex trafficking. Important trends include gang involvement in the business and control of sex trafficking, traffickers confiscating a victim’s identifying documents, and the youth engaging in commercial sex at earlier ages than in the past. Data suggests that the average age of entry in commercial is 15 years old, but a significant portion of girls enter as young as 12 years old.<sup>26</sup>

### **Risk factors**

The primary risk factor that makes one susceptible to sex trafficking is vulnerability. Causes of vulnerability linked to susceptibility to sex trafficking of foreign nationals include: poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunity, and disruption and displacement caused by political and natural disasters.<sup>27</sup> Domestic victims of sex trafficking tend to have histories of childhood sexual abuse, family disruption including child welfare involvement, substance abuse by caretaker, abuse and/or neglect, domestic violence in the home, death of a caretaker, running away or throw out of their homes; homelessness, and school failure. Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered youth are specifically at risk.<sup>28</sup> Researchers find, recurrently, that the vast majority of victims of sex trafficking, and individuals involved in prostitution, adults and minors, were maltreated as children. If one were to name a single root cause for sex trafficking it would surely be childhood maltreatment. Here, it is worth stepping back and observing that childhood abuse and neglect are also potent risk factors, later in life, for attempted suicide, becoming addicted to alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs, engagement in relationships marred by domestic violence, and an astonishing range of mental and physical health problems.<sup>29</sup> Viewed in this way, sex trafficking is one manifestation of the social, mental, and physical health problems that ultimately flow from childhood maltreatment.

### **Sex trafficking and First Nations/American Indians/Alaska Natives**

Limited research has been done on sex trafficking and First Nations/American Indians. None has been done on Alaska Natives and sex trafficking. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, "American Indians are 2.5 times more likely to experience sexual assault crimes compared to all other races, and one in three American Indian women reports having been raped during her lifetime."<sup>30</sup> Amnesty International noted in a 2007 report that not only are American Indian women more likely to be victims of violence, but the level of violence they are subjected to is much worse than that of the general population.<sup>31</sup> The report further noted that Indigenous women who report their victimization are often met with dismissive, blaming attitudes from law enforcement and service providers. This reaction has led to profound distrust of agencies that should be resources and a disinclination to report violence perpetrated against them. It is in this context that sex trafficking also occurs.

Two studies by the San Francisco-based nonprofit research organization, Prostitution, Research and Education, explored sex trafficking among Indigenous women in Vancouver, Canada and in Minnesota.

The Vancouver study collected information via interviews from 10 female prostitutes in Vancouver, Canada. The researchers found that First Nations women were vastly overrepresented in prostitution in Vancouver, 52% of the women in the sample were First Nations; however, First Nations people make up only seven percent of the general Vancouver population.<sup>32</sup> According to other sources cited by the authors, First Nations youth make up 90% of the visible sex trade in some Canadian communities.<sup>33</sup>

The Minnesota study employed similar methodology, and interviewed 10 Native American women in prostitution. Findings included the following: 79% of the women had been sexually abused as children by an average of four perpetrators, 4 % had been in foster care averaging five or more placements, almost half of those who had been in foster care were abused in some form in foster care, 69% had family members who attended boarding schools, 92% had been raped as adults, 98% either were or had been homeless, 72% suffered a traumatic brain injury, 92% wanted to escape prostitution, and 42% of the cases met the legal definition of trafficking.<sup>34</sup> The levels of sexual abuse prior to prostitution and violence in prostitution found in the study were not unique to Minnesota. Researchers employed a similar methodology in nine different countries and found four types of violence common in all study participants lives: childhood sexual abuse, childhood physical abuse, rape in prostitution, and physical assault in prostitution.<sup>35</sup>

The Anchorage Police Department and the FBI, in briefings in 2010, estimated that Alaska Native victims made up 30% of the sex trafficking cases they were investigating. In fact, of the 102 prostitution arrest made by the Anchorage Police Department in the last five years, 33% of the women were Alaska Native<sup>36</sup>. Alaska Natives make up only 7.9 % of the Anchorage population<sup>37</sup>.

Research clearly identifies prior trauma as a risk factor for prostitution and trafficking. Alaska has extremely high levels of forcible rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, child sexual abuse and trauma in general in the state population.

Unfortunately, no research has been done yet to begin to assess the scale of the problem of sex trafficking in Alaska in general or among Alaska Natives specifically. In order to better



estimate the size of the population at risk for trafficking, the State should include variables relating to adverse childhood experiences (ACE) in surveillance efforts, and should begin to include variables relating to trafficking in appropriate existing data collection efforts on high-risk behavior.

### **Service needs of trafficking victims**

The needs of international and domestic victims of sex trafficking differ slightly. Victims of sex trafficking who are foreign nationals are likely undocumented immigrants. They need immediate access to language interpretation and legal counsel experienced in trafficking cases. If the law enforcement representatives and prosecutors involved aren't familiar with trafficking laws these victims may be treated as illegal immigrants and deported before a trafficking case can be opened. Foreign national victims have access to funds from the U.S. Department of Justice to pay for needed services. There is a federal process of certification involving working with law enforcement to access the funding. Emergency needs for both domestic and international victims include safety, housing, food and clothing, and obtaining identifying documents, which are often confiscated by the trafficker. Longer term needs of both domestic and international victims include legal assistance, substance abuse treatment, advocacy, housing, medical, dental and mental health care, transportation, education, job training and placement, and family reunification.<sup>38</sup> Additional services may be court accompaniment, crisis intervention, emotional support and counseling, safety planning and protection, transportation and help accessing government services.<sup>39</sup> One key service identified as important to victims' healing is access to intensive case management.<sup>40</sup> Ironically, case management services may be easier to access for foreign national victims than domestic victims of human trafficking.<sup>41</sup>

Providing training to law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, court personnel and key service providers is an extremely important first step.

### **Barriers to service**

There are numerous barriers to providing services to victims of sex trafficking. First, due to limited awareness of trafficking and the hidden nature of the crime, victims are hard to find. When found, victims don't necessarily identify themselves as victims and may be distrustful of the legal and social services systems, and of anyone trying to help. They may be very bonded to

their trafficker, and simply want to return to him. Victims may also experience extreme fear or shame; there may also be language barriers.<sup>42</sup>

These victims are also difficult for many services providers to work with. Trafficking victims face extreme safety issues, may be isolated, have immediate and profound mental health needs related to trauma and traumatic stress, they may be unfamiliar with the legal system, or have no or limited access to services because of immigration status. Given the diverse needs of these victims, collaboration across organizations and agencies is essential. In fact, these victims may fall through the cracks without seamless access to services and intensive casework or advocacy. Finally, because their cases may take years, funding such intensive support services over long periods of time can be challenging.<sup>43</sup>

Ideally, a specific funding stream should be created to pay for the intensive and long-term services needed by this population. Ensuring that sex trafficking of adults and minor victims is a crime eligible for funding from the Violent Crimes Compensation Board is an important first step to provide these victims access to services. Often requirements to cooperate with law enforcement or prosecution, or to report within a particular time frame after the crime can be barriers to eligibility. Sex trafficking and CSEC should be explicitly stated among the list of crimes eligible for compensation, and victims should be afforded the same assurances given to sexual assault and domestic violence victims that the Board “cannot deny a claim based on provocation, use of alcohol or drugs, or prior social history of the victim”.<sup>44</sup>

### Trends and State actions

- *Focus on Runaways--High Risk Victim Model*

Facing a growing problem of CSEC, the Dallas Police Department implemented a high-risk victims model developed by Sgt. Byron Fassett to intervene with high-risk runaways. Specifically, the model focuses on repeat runaways (four times in one year) with prior history of sexual abuse and truancy. Fassett trained patrol officers to identify runaways and connect with them. He developed interview and investigative models that worked well with the youth. And then he pulled together meetings of a diverse mix of law enforcement, governmental agencies and service providers to problem-solve around the cases. In addition, the Dallas County Department of Juvenile Justice created a public-private partnership with the Dallas Junior League to build the Letot Center, which is a safe, but not locked, 40-bed residential facility for

youth. Sgt. Fassett further noted that CSEC is increasingly moving online, and as a result, the focus of his work has changed significantly from targeting youth working on the street to monitoring electronic soliciting.<sup>45</sup>

- *coordinated response to CSEC in Schools*

The Grossmont Union School District in San Diego County, CA, a school district in the eastern portion of San Diego County with 20,000 high school students in 10 schools, had seen a handful of CSEC cases and considered the cases an anomaly. Recently, the six San Diego school districts had signed information-sharing agreements with probation, child protective services, and the police department. The agreements were developed under the guidance of a law professor at Pepperdine University. The agreements proved useful when the police called the director of Guidance at the Grossmont Union School District regarding a student who had been picked up a second time for prostitution. School authorities pulled together a multi-disciplinary team to talk with the student and learned that pimps were targeting their schools, and students were pimping other students. They worked with the police to research past prostitution cases involving students and found that of 30 cases reviewed, 21 involved special education students, and 2 of the individuals had five or more child welfare involvements before the age of five. In response, they trained all personnel on CSEC and developed clear protocols for response when CSEC was identified on campus.<sup>46</sup> One issue that Jenee Litrell, the Director of Guidance and Wellness for the Grossmont Union School District, shared as particularly frustrating is that trafficked youth fall in between the jurisdictions of Juvenile Justice authorities and child protective services. This lack of clarity regarding jurisdiction is because the harm is being inflicted by a third party outside the, but until the youth are picked up for some crime there is no angle for the juvenile justice authorities to step in.

- *Safe Harbor bills*

Because prostitution is outlawed in most states, accurately identifying sex trafficking cases has required a cultural shift from only considering prostitutes as criminals and arresting, fining and sending them to jail, to identifying prostitutes as victims, and in many cases, trafficked. This shift is even more important for minors. Youth picked up for prostitution are often treated as criminals and charged as such. Eight states (MN, NY, NJ, IL, OH, MA and WA) have all passed safe harbor laws that exclude sexually exploited youth from the definition of delinquent. Some

states have created diversion programs for youth and adults arrested for prostitution, and others have increased penalties for “johns”. Three states (CT, FL and TN) have passed more limited versions of safe harbor, and the Texas Supreme Court ruled that trafficked youth are victims, not criminals.<sup>47</sup>

- *International: International Organization for Migration*

One reason that the U.S. Department of State, the U.N. and other international agencies are so interested in the patterns of human trafficking is that traffickers often share routes with other perpetrators of crimes. For example, in Moldova weapons are often trafficked along with people. While Alaskan authorities may not find a clandestine weapons trade mixed with sex trafficking, it is possible that diseases (chlamydia, gonorrhea and trichomoniasis) and, or drugs may be moving along with the victims. It is important to note that Alaska was first in the country in 2011 for chlamydia and second for gonorrhea.<sup>48</sup>

- *Taskforces and collaboration*

Where there is a lack of collaboration and coordination and a culture of silo-style communications, traffickers find opportunity. Examples of interagency communication and new forms of collaboration, such as the information sharing framework developed in San Diego and the internal collaboration developed by the Dallas police force, demonstrate the effectiveness of collaboration on this issue. In Dallas, internal collaboration made the difference between finding 1 case year or 13 cases year.<sup>49</sup> Cross agency collaboration is also essential in order to meet the diverse needs of these victims. No one agency can provide the range of services needed by these victims that range from housing to dental care to immigration legal services. Agencies working with victims should coordinate services to reduce duplication and collaborate on protocols for efficient and effective emergency response and victim support. To develop macro level policies that support local efforts, 22 states created statewide trafficking task forces that were directed to various degrees to develop plans of action for state agencies. Many included funding and requirements for annual or biennial reporting.

- *Demand*

Given the costs and efforts associated with providing services to victims, many locations have begun to focus efforts on reducing demand. Reverse stings, john schools, shaming, vehicle impoundment, increasing fines, and in some cases increasing the severity of the charge for

repeat arrests are all strategies that have been employed. Combinations of many of these have shown impact on demand as measured by a decrease in street prostitution.<sup>50</sup>

- *Public education campaigns*

Most people are unaware sex trafficking occurs in their communities or that they or their friends and loved ones may be at risk. Many residents don't know what to do if they suspect someone is being trafficked. Public education campaigns can raise awareness of the issue, threat, and impact, and can inform people what action they should take. There are myriad campaigns. Some focus on domestic trafficking and others on international trafficking. Some campaigns focus on trafficking of adults and others on children. The mayors of New York City and Atlanta both have established ongoing sex trafficking campaigns. The New York campaign, featuring actress Emma Thompson, focuses on dispelling misconceptions that there is anything sexy about prostitution or buying sex.<sup>51</sup> The Atlanta campaign is focused on reducing demand.<sup>52</sup> The Florida campaign is produced by the Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking and created an exceptionally powerful public service announcement against commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).<sup>53</sup> States have also legislated public education campaigns. Washington State required the posting of information on human trafficking and resources for victims in bathroom stalls in highway rest stops and required that the information to be included in existing posters produced by the Washington State Department of Labor. Texas required that information for victims and the hotline number be posted in both Spanish and English where ever alcohol was sold.<sup>54</sup>

- *Court diversion programs*

Some states have employed court diversion programs to intervene with women arrested for prostitution with the goal of leveraging the point of court involvement to provide the women with a potentially life changing option: substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment and intensive supportive services. Hawaii Girls' Court is an example of a court diversion program designed to serve CSEC victims and girls engaging in high-risk behaviors.<sup>55</sup> Judge in Franklin County, OH has developed a court diversion program, CATCH Court, for adult women engaged in prostitution and trafficking.<sup>56</sup> California has four girls courts, one of which is focused on prostitution, and Las Vegas public defenders started a vice court, which a social worker on staff.<sup>57</sup>

- *Safe shelter*

Programs across the country have been challenged by the shortage of safe shelter for adult and minor sex trafficking victims.<sup>58</sup> In Anchorage, where housing, and especially affordable house and shelter (particularly transitional), are in short supply, finding safe housing for trafficking victims is a real and consistent problem. Adults and youth are often referred to existing emergency and transitional shelters, and many victims end up couch surfing. The Mary Magdalene Home is the only NGO in the Alaska currently working specifically with women coming out of prison on prostitution arrests, and they have a limited capacity. Nationally, there are four federally funded shelters for CSEC victims, Girls Educational and Mentoring Services Transition to Independent Living (GEMS/TIL) in New York, which serves girls ages 16-21 with operating costs of \$55,000/year/resident; Standing Against Global Exploitation (SAGE) Safe House, in San Francisco which serves girls ages 12-17 and costs \$64,000/year/resident; Children of the Night in Van Nuys, CA serves boys and girls ages 11-17 and has annual budget of \$2 million; and Angela's House in Atlanta. Angela's House serves girls ages 12-17 and their budgetary information was not available. In addition, there is an additional shelter in Dallas, TX, the Letot Center, which is a public private partnership serving high risk runaways<sup>59</sup> and one shelter in St. Paul, Minnesota that services prostitution-involved women and girls.<sup>60</sup>

## Summary

Sex trafficking is a process that begins with experiences in an individual's life that create profound vulnerabilities for that person. Those vulnerabilities are then identified and strategically exploited by traffickers and consumers, or "johns". The experience impacts the survivors for rest of their lives. Sex trafficking is a complex problem that requires a multi-disciplinary response. It is our hope that this information and examples of different actions taken by states and communities around the country will serve as guidance and inspiration to Alaska State, municipal and community leaders who are committed to ending sex trafficking in Alaska.

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<sup>1</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures. (2011). *Trafficking laws in the states*. <http://www.ncsl.org/issues-research/justice/human-trafficking-laws-in-the-states-updated-nov.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2012). *Trafficking in persons report*.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations. (2004). *United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto, Annex 11: Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, Article 3a*. As cited by Wyler, L.S. & Siskin, A. (2010). *Trafficking in persons: U.S. policy and issues for Congress*. Congressional Research Service.

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- <sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2012). *Trafficking in persons report*
- <sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2012). *Trafficking in persons report*.
- <sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of State. (2006). *Fact Sheet: Distinctions Between Human Smuggling and Human Trafficking*.
- <sup>8</sup> Sec. 8. AS 11.66.110(a)
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