

Human Trafficking and Sex Tourism with Children and Technology

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Defining the Problem

Human trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transporting, providing or obtaining, by any means, any person for forced labor, slavery, or servitude in any industry or site such as agriculture, construction, prostitution, manufacturing, domestic service, or marriage.

Human smuggling is the facilitation, transportation, attempted transportation or illegal entry of a person across an international border, in violation of one or more countries' laws, either clandestinely or through deception, such as the use of fraudulent documents. Human smuggling is generally with the consent of the person(s) being smuggled. Once in the country of their final destination, the person will generally be left to their own devices. The vast majority of people who are assisted in illegally entering the United States are smuggled, rather than trafficked.

The Internet is increasingly being used internationally as a trafficking tool by organized crime. For instance, criminals in one country recruit and find potential victims in other countries through online advertisements offering good jobs at high pay in exciting cities. The ruse of modeling or singing in a nightclub and a paid airline ticket is used to lure unsuspecting women into trafficking schemes. Once the victim arrives, the victim's passport is taken for "safekeeping" and the victim is forced into prostitution. Unfortunately in addition to language difficulties, the victims do not know how to escape the violence or even where to go for help.

To help combat this international problem, in February 2003, France passed an anti-trafficking and slavery law, including a provision against the trafficking of children. French police have estimated that 90 percent of the 15,000 prostitutes in France are trafficking victims and that 3,000 to 8,000 children have been forced into prostitution in that country alone.

Case Illustration

The Cook County Sheriff's Police conducted a sting operation at a massage parlor and arrested three 16-year-old girls for prostitution. The Department of Children and Family Services notified Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) concerning the illegal immigration status of the three minors. ICE agents interviewed the three juveniles and learned that they had voluntarily entered the United States illegally.

Were the girls smuggled or trafficked?

The girls were trafficked into the United States.

All three girls were juveniles and were performing commercial sex acts. Since the girls were under 18 years of age, they would be considered victims of severe forms of trafficking, regardless of whether or not they consented to participate or paid someone to be brought illegally into the U.S.

U.S. Basis for Prevention

On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln approved a Joint Resolution of Congress and forwarded the 13th Amendment to the states for ratification. On December 18, 1865 it was ratified. The 13th Amendment to the United States



Constitution provides that "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." Yet, human trafficking remains a problem in the United States even today.

In 2003, the Bush Administration authorized more than \$200 million to combat human trafficking through the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003 (TVPRA). TVPRA renews the U.S. government's commitment to identify and assist victims exploited through labor and sex trafficking in the United States.

The TVPRA provides resources and initiatives to assist the 18,000-20,000 victims of human trafficking who are trafficked into the United States every year. It augments the legal tools which can be used against traffickers for actual and punitive damages, and by including sex trafficking and forced labor as offenses under the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organization statute (RICO).

Section 7202 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 established the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center. The Secretary of State, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, and members of the National Intelligence Community oversee the Center. ICE holds the current directorship. To make a report of suspected human smuggling or trafficking one should telephone 888-428-7581.

INTERPOL aims to end the abuse and exploitation of human beings for financial gain. Women from developing countries and young children all over the world are especially vulnerable to trafficking, smuggling, or sexual exploitation. Trafficking in females for sexual exploitation is a multi-billion-dollar business which involves citizens of most countries and helps sustain organized crime. A violation of human rights, human trafficking destroys the lives of its victims.

International trafficking of child abuse images on the Internet ranges from posed photos to visual recordings of brutal sexual crimes. One of INTERPOL's main tools for helping police fight this type of trafficking crime is the INTERPOL Child Abuse Image Database (ICAID). Created in 2001, ICAID contains hundreds of thousands of images of child sexual abuse submitted by member countries, thereby facilitating the sharing of images and information to assist law enforcement agencies with the identification of new victims.

In order to assist the police in the United States, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) in Arlington, VA has created their own database of child abuse images that is called the Child Victim Identification Program (CVIP). The National Center's CyberTipline may be reached by calling 1-800-the-lost or www.cybertipline.com. Because of the international implications of trafficking in child abuse images, INTERPOL and NCMEC each have access to each other's database.

Sex Tourism with Children

Sex tourism involving children is defined as an adult traveling to a foreign country with the intent to engage in sexual activity with a child. The term "child" is defined as a person less than 18 years of age.

With the Internet and the click of a mouse, one can book a trip to a foreign county where a "pimp" will provide the tourist with a child for sex. Online blogs provide potential child sex tourists with pornographic accounts written by other child sex tourists. Some websites will detail sexual exploits with children and supply information on sex establishments and prices in various destinations, including information on how to specifically procure child prostitutes.

As a result, the United States now has laws that prohibit U.S citizens from having sex with minors in other countries and has greatly increased government efforts to combat this problem. Under the PROTECT ACT which was signed into law in 2003, United States citizens or residents who engage in sexual activity abroad with a child under 18 can face up to 30 years in a U.S. prison. In essence this means if one has sex with a child in another country, that person can now be prosecuted in the United States.

Other countries are also fighting this problem. The government of Brazil is fighting sex tourism with children by asking hotels to be active in discouraging child prostitution on their premises. Hotels participating in the government program receive an extra "star" in their quality rating. Brazil also distributes brochures to visiting tourists making them aware of the penalties associated with having sex with minors.

Conclusion

Human trafficking, sex tourism with children, and trafficking in child abuse images is an ever growing international evil that transcends national boundaries in a manner that renders this form of organized crime a global concern.

The globalization of technology has influenced criminal activity especially for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Video digitizers, digital cameras, Internet applications, file transfer protocols (FTP), and even cell phone cameras are among the tools utilized by traffickers to commit their crimes and promote their services. As the Internet expands into the far reaches of third world countries, it is clear that these crimes likely will continue to increase and expand.

Program Updates

The Sixth Annual VIRTUS® Coordinators Conference held in Chicago was, again, a success. We received valuable feedback and had interactive discussions with safe environment coordinators from around the country.

Jeff Chasen, President and Chief Operating Officer of in2vate™, presented the Substance Abuse Prevention program, as well as an additional education and training program. He demonstrated the functionality and resources available through new VIRTUS Programs and answered questions from participants about implementing the programs.

Mary Jane Doerr, from the USCCB's Office of Child and Youth Protections, discussed the audit process and answered questions from participants about the bishops' long-term vision for safe environment programs. Dioceses continue to evaluate their safe environment programs and looking for ways to improve their individual programs—both in terms of benefits to the faith community and efficiency for the diocese.

Robert Hugh Farley, Consultant in Crimes Against Children, presented information regarding human trafficking and sex tourism with children and technology. Human trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining, by any means, any person for forced labor, slavery, or servitude in any industry or site such as agriculture, construction, prostitution, manufacturing, domestic service, or marriage. (Please see the above article for additional information about this topic.)

Finally, we reviewed the SWOT (**S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats) analysis performed at last year's conference and provided an update to our commitment regarding the enhancements to the VIRTUS Programs. Three specific areas of development include a teen program, a revised Protecting God's Children® DVD, and a program for international priests. We are currently in development of the teen program and anticipate the module's completion by the end of 2009. We have completed the revised Protecting God's Children DVD and have included the following updates:

- An addition of a technology component that includes footage of Robert Farley as the expert on technology safety
- Addressing the importance of the safety of vulnerable adults related to sexual abuse
- Providing a stronger emphasis on "youth" throughout the program

Sister Patricia Hudson, from the Diocese of Brooklyn, overviewed the need and progress of a program for international priests. A program designed to provide insight to incoming international priests on boundaries and accepted behavior within the United States when given positions of trust with children.