



The State of
Human Trafficking
in Texas



children
at Risk

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I. Human Trafficking in Texas: An Overview

A. Slavery Did Not End With the Thirteenth Amendment

Most people assume that slavery in the modern world ended with Lincoln and the 13th amendment. This could not be further from the truth. Nearly a century and a half after abolition slavery persists inside and outside of our country's borders in the form of human trafficking. Trafficking of persons is one of the largest criminal industries existing today, superseded only by drug and arms dealing. It is the fastest growing criminal industry in the world, and generates billions of dollars in profits for its perpetrators every year. Traffickers employ various tactics for luring and enslaving their victims. Traffickers also resort to kidnapping or purchasing a victim from the person's family or significant other. The perpetrators of these crimes instill fear in their victims in order to keep the victims from leaving or reporting the crimes they endure. Fear is instilled through actual harm, the threat of harm or the believed threat of harm to the victim or to another person connected to the victim.

Human trafficking has been documented in almost every country. The United States is not an exception. The criminal industry of human trafficking is driven by high demand, the enormous profit available due to that demand, and a negligible-to-low risk of prosecution. Trafficking in persons is an underground crime, for several reasons. Many, if not most, victims will not seek help. Many victims fear imprisonment or deportation by law enforcement. They may also fear retaliation by the trafficker if they report the crimes they suffer. Moreover, victims may experience difficulty communicating in the language of the country in which they are enslaved. Lack of awareness among the general public, law enforcement and other professionals who may unknowingly serve trafficked persons also contributes to the persistence of human trafficking. Prosecutions of human traffickers, especially in state court, remain low. This can be attributed to lack of education within law enforcement, problems with the wording of the statute and the lack of special prosecutors.

Human trafficking affects both foreigners and American citizens. It is defined as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, providing or obtaining of a person by means of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of a

commercial sex act or labor services.¹ Trafficked persons often suffer torture tactics including sexual abuse, imprisonment, and starvation. Trafficking often involves elements of other crimes, including forcible rape, kidnapping, false imprisonment, and violations of labor and immigration codes.² Human trafficking continues to be the second largest criminal industry in the world, after the weapon and drug trades.³ The global demand for sex and labor services provides a lucrative business for individuals as well as organized crime units. Women and children remain the most vulnerable victims.⁴

There are two types of human trafficking: domestic and international. Human trafficking once was thought to be a problem beyond America's borders. This is, however, far from reality. Victims of domestic human include both U.S. citizens and legal residents who are trafficked within the United States' borders without ever leaving the country. Victims of international trafficking include foreign nationals who are trafficked into the country from abroad. Despite the general belief that victims of trafficking are mainly foreign citizens, the internal or "domestic" component of human trafficking is much larger than the international one. According to the Polaris Project, more than 200,000 American children are at risk for being lured into sex trafficking each year.⁵

Sex trafficking is one of the most prominent forms of domestic human trafficking.⁶ Traffickers compel women and children to enter the commercial sex industry through the use of a variety of recruitment and control mechanisms. Victims are often recruited to work for strip clubs, escort services, brothels, and to prostitute on the streets. Vulnerable youth, particularly runaway and homeless children, who are often as young as twelve years old, are particularly at risk for being targeted by pimps.⁷ Labor trafficking is another form of domestic human trafficking and often takes

¹ United States. Dept. of Health and Human Services. Administration for Children & Families. Look Beneath the Surface: Human Trafficking is a Modern-Day Slavery. 25 June 2009. 23 July 2009 <<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/>>.

² Department of Health and Human Service, Look Beneath the Surface.

³ Department of Health and Human Service, Look Beneath the Surface.

⁴ Department of Health and Human Service, Look Beneath the Surface.

⁵ "What is Human Trafficking?" Polarisproject.org. No date. 25 July 2009 <<http://www.polarisproject.org/content/view/26/47/>>.

⁶ "Domestic Trafficking Within the U.S." Polarisproject.org. No date. 12 August 2009 <<http://www.polarisproject.org/content/view/60/81/>>.

⁷ Polaris Project, Domestic Trafficking Within the U.S.

place in locations such as restaurants, the agricultural industry, traveling carnivals, peddling or begging rings, and in traveling sales crews.

On the international side of the issue, as many as 17,500 foreign nationals are trafficked into the United States each year.⁸ The United States is a major destination for traffickers for both sexual and labor exploitation. Foreign trafficking victims come from all parts of the world, primarily from Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa.⁹ Sex trafficking cases of foreigners are known to occur in a wide variety of locations in the commercial sex industry, such as massage parlors, cantinas, hostess clubs, commercially-fronted brothels, residential brothels, escort services, and strip clubs.¹⁰ Labor trafficking of foreign nationals often occurs as domestic servitude in private homes, in small independently-owned family businesses such as restaurants or nail salons, in peddling or begging rings, and in larger-scale labor environments such as agricultural farms or sweatshop-like factories.¹¹ Often, businesses where labor trafficking takes place are otherwise legitimate, despite the fact that certain workers are forced to work for little or no pay.¹²

B. Human Trafficking Exists in Texas?

Texas is a hub for international human trafficking because of its many busy interstate highways, international airports, bus stations, the shipping commerce through the Gulf of Mexico, and its shared border with Mexico. This border is North America's number one supply site for young children used in sex and labor trafficking.¹³ Texas is also home to Houston, the fourth largest city in the U.S. which also boasts one of the largest international communities in the country. In addition, Texas houses the I-10 corridor, which the Department of Justice designated as the number one

⁸ Polaris Project, [What is Human Trafficking?](#)

⁹ "Transnational Trafficking into the U.S." [Polarisproject.org](#). No date. 25 July 2009 <<http://www.polarisproject.org/content/view/61/82/>>.

¹⁰ Polaris Project, [Transnational Trafficking into the U.S.](#)

¹¹ Polaris Project, [Transnational Trafficking into the U.S.](#)

¹² Polaris Project, [Transnational Trafficking into the U.S.](#)

¹³ The State of Texas. Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission. [Trafficking in Texas](#). 17 Aug. 2009. 18 Aug. 2009

<http://www.tabc.state.tx.us/enforcement/trafficking_in_texas.asp>.

route for human trafficking in the United States.¹⁴ Texas continues to serve as the biggest point of illegal entry into the United States largely because traffickers are able to get aliens across the border without documents.¹⁵

Texas is also a hotspot for domestic human trafficking because cities such as Dallas, Houston and Austin have many runaway and homeless youth. For example, Dallas alone has approximately 6,000 runaways annually.¹⁶ According to National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Throwaway Children, an estimated one out of every three children that run away is lured into sex trafficking within 48 hours of leaving home.¹⁷ Children who run away from home can often be found at bus stations, which have become a major recruiting ground for prostitution. The United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Operation Predator initiative estimates that 1 in 5 girls and 1 in 10 boys in the United States are sexually exploited before they reach adulthood.¹⁸ Many of those victims are victims of sexual exploitation, often commercial.

Houston, as well as other large Texas cities, possesses all of the factors that make a community susceptible to human trafficking. Not only is Houston the closest major city to the border with an I-10 corridor passing right through it, it is also home to a large number of sexually oriented businesses including strip clubs, massage parlors, and modeling studios, most of which can be found along inter and intra-state highways. In addition, Houston, Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio, are homes to universities and professional sporting events that attract many visitors. Each of these cities also hosts major conventions that create even greater demand for the commercial sex industry.

¹⁴ See The State of Texas. Office of Attorney General. Report to 81st Legislature. The Texas Response to Human Trafficking. No Date. 30 July 2009

<http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/pdfs/human_trafficking.pdf>

¹⁵ Office of Attorney General, The Texas Response to Human Trafficking.

¹⁶ Children's Medical Center Dallas and The Coalition for North Texas Children. Beyond ABC: Growing Up in Dallas County. Texas: Children's Medical Center Dallas and The Coalition for North Texas Children, 2007. 74.

¹⁷ "In the U.S.A" Makewaypartners.org. No date. 12 August 2009

<<http://www.makewaypartners.org/effects.html>>.

¹⁸ United States. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Operation Predator: Targeting child exploitation and sexual crimes. 19 Nov. 2008. 30 July 2009

<<http://www.ice.gov/pi/news/factsheets/operationpredator.htm>>.

In the last quarter of 2007, 30% of the calls received by the National Human Trafficking Hotline originated in Texas and 25% of all international victims certified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services were located in Texas. As of the date publication, the National Human Trafficking Hotline receives more calls from Texas than from any other state.

C. The Human Face of Trafficking

Victims of human trafficking include foreigners who are brought across international borders as well as U.S. citizens and legal residents who are trafficked within U.S. borders. On a global scale, approximately 600,000-800,000 people are trafficked each year and become victims of commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor.¹⁹ It is estimated that between 14,500 and 17,500 people are trafficked into the United States each year.²⁰ The U.S. government believes that 80% of transnational trafficked persons are women and approximately 50% of them are minors.²¹

As previously mentioned, some of the victims are American born. In fact, it is estimated that as many as 450,000 children run away from home each year and that one out of every three of those kids is lured into sex trafficking within the first 48 hours of leaving home.²² Even more disturbing is the fact that the average age of entry into sex trafficking is 12-13 years old.²³ Youth who are runaways, throwaways, or homeless are the most vulnerable to trafficking, especially those with histories of abuse or those within the foster care system and child protective services. Human trafficking is an issue for all socioeconomic levels and does not only affect low-income families and households.

International labor trafficking and international sex trafficking both occur in a variety of forms. Often, a person can become a labor trafficking victim

¹⁹ United States. Dept. of State. Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Trafficking in Persons Report. Introduction. 4 June 2008. 24 July 2009 <<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2008/105376.htm>>.

²⁰ United States. Dept. of Justice. Assessment of U.S. Government Activities to Combat Trafficking in Persons. September 2006. 24 July 2009

<http://www.usdoj.gov/ag/annualreports/tr2006/assessment_of_efforts_to_combat_tip.pdf>

²¹ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report.

²² Make Way Partners, In the U.S.A.

²³ Polaris Project, Domestic Trafficking Within the U.S.

when he or she becomes financially indebted to another person in exchange for the benefit of working abroad. This is called debt bondage.²⁴ Someone pays for the worker's initial expenses, such as travel, fees, and room and board, and then the worker must pay off the debt through labor. While incurring a debt to work abroad is not initially illegal nor is it a form of trafficking, this practice makes workers highly vulnerable to becoming trapped in a situation in which they cannot get out of debt and must continue to work to pay off the balance of what they owe.²⁵ Often, the debt grows with fraudulent fees and room and board charges. The victim finds him or herself unable to pay off the debt and is left susceptible to unscrupulous traffickers. A victim may be forced to work in an involuntary domestic servitude setting, but may also sometimes find himself or herself trapped and hidden in a job at a factory, ranch or business. In particular, female workers may also be subjected to sexual exploitation in the context of debt bondage.²⁶

The primary forms of sex trafficking include prostitution, pornography, stripping, and modeling.²⁷ Trafficked persons, who are recruited into the sex industry worldwide, are subject to serious health risks, such as exposure to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Many of the trafficked victims are transported from their home community, away from family, friends, and religious institutions that provide them with support and protection. They are left defenseless and vulnerable in an unfamiliar environment.

Although there are many factors that make someone a victim of human trafficking, identifying the traits can be difficult. Victims often do not self-identify for many reasons. Many do not realize that they are victims with rights or that the treatment they receive is against the law. In addition, most live in fear of their trafficker or the police, thinking that their situation is their own fault and that they will suffer the consequences. They may be physically or psychologically controlled by their pimps, and trained to tell lies and fabricate stories. For example, minors often attempt to disguise their

²⁴ United States. Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report. June 2009:16. 24 July 2009 <<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/123357.pdf>>.

²⁵ United States. Dept. of State. Major Forms of Trafficking in Persons. 4 June 2008. 24 July 2009

<<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2008/105377.htm>>.

²⁶ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 5.

²⁷ Polaris Project, Domestic Trafficking Within the U.S.

age. Several victims are frequently moved from place to place as pimps are constantly in search of lucrative places for sex work and are determined to evade law enforcement. The enormous demand for commercial sex throughout the world is the primary reason that sex trafficking is such a big business. Most international victims are trafficked from places such as the former U.S.S.R., Central and South America and Southeast Asia.²⁸

II. Anti-Trafficking Policy on a Global, National, and Statewide Scale

A. UN Protocol

In 2004, in an effort to combat criminal networks that defy borders, the United Nations ratified the “The Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto.”²⁹ The United Nations established the Convention to present a united front against the transnational criminal problems facing the world’s citizens, especially human trafficking.³⁰ The Convention promulgated a set of guidelines aimed at severely undermining human trafficking networks, protecting the victims of this heinous trade and punishing those who seek to exploit others. It was ratified as the “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children” (“The Protocol”).³¹ Because there is no international law enforcement body that can prosecute trafficking, the Protocol’s authors sought to erect a unified framework that all nations could try to build within their countries to better confront global trafficking and other forms of organized crime.³² There are currently 117 signatories to the Protocol, including the United States.³³

²⁸ United States. Dept. of Justice. Criminal Division. Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section. Trafficking and Sex Tourism. No date. 24 July 2009 <<http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/ceos/trafficking.html>>.

²⁹ United Nations. United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2004: iii. 27 July 2009 <<http://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNTOC/Publications/TOC%20Convention/TOCebook-e.pdf>>.

³⁰ United Nations Convention at iv.

³¹ United Nations Convention at iv.

³² United Nations Convention at iii-iv.

³³ United Nations. Office on Drugs and Crime. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations

Prevention

The Protocol urges signatories to enter into programs, studies, and human aid projects to understand better how trafficking networks develop and fester, and how to prevent these networks by reducing poverty worldwide.³⁴ Countries are encouraged to engage in bilateral and multilateral efforts in economic, cultural, social and educational development projects that are targeted at promoting the well-being of at-risk segments of the population—particularly women and children.³⁵ Additionally, because trafficking is an international trade with no respect for national borders, it is essential that nations cooperate in law enforcement endeavors and effective border control while treating the victims of trafficking with dignity and respect.³⁶

Protection

In keeping with the United Nation's mission of global respect for human rights, the Protocol proposes that signatories develop a legal framework aimed at not only ensuring the protection of trafficked persons but also providing them with housing, counseling, medical care, training and opportunities for work.³⁷ Furthermore, special education and health care programs for youths may need to be implemented since many exploited persons are minors.³⁸

The work to construct safety nets, promote awareness and provide viable protections to victims of trafficking has begun. The Protocol urges signatories to criminalize any attempt to traffic persons, including prosecuting accomplices and others who are involved in organizing or directing trafficking.³⁹ The United States, which signed the Protocol on December 13, 2000,⁴⁰ enacted the Trafficking Victims Protection Act in 2000 and the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) in 2008. Under the TVPA, the State Department issues an annual

Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 15 Nov. 2000, 28 July 2009
<<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/countrylist-traffickingprotocol.html>>.

³⁴ United Nations Convention at 46.

³⁵ United Nations Convention at 46.

³⁶ United Nations Convention at 46.

³⁷ United Nations Convention at 44.

³⁸ United Nations Convention at 44.

³⁹ United Nations Convention at 43.

⁴⁰ United Nations, Protocol.

Trafficking in Person's ("TIP") Report.⁴¹ The 2009 TIP Report highlights some of the innovative programs around the world being used to provide protection for victims of trafficking.⁴² For example, an Uzbek organization called Istiqbolli Avlod operates in the United Arab Emirates, a major destination for trafficked Uzbek women.⁴³ Between September 2008 and February 2009, Istiqbolli Avlod had successfully used cultural and language outreach to repatriate most of the 41 Uzbek women the organization found incarcerated in UAE jails.⁴⁴ Similarly, the Jordanian ministry of labor has created a fund to provide humanitarian assistance to trafficking victims and even to pay for the legal costs of civil and criminal suits against traffickers.⁴⁵

Criminalization

The TVPRA also asks foreign governments to supply information related to trafficking investigations, convictions, prosecutions and sentences to the United States government.⁴⁶ For instance, in 2008, country reports to the United States recorded a total of 5,212 prosecutions and 2,983 convictions worldwide.⁴⁷ The TIP Report includes a tier ranking system that is categorized into the three focus areas of trafficking prevention: Prosecution, Protection and Prevention.⁴⁸ Once a government's activity in combating human trafficking is assessed, countries are ranked as Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3.⁴⁹ Countries that are fully compliant with TVPA minimum standards receive Tier 1 status; nations ranked as Tier 3 do not meet the TVPA minimum standards and have taken no steps toward achieving those standards.⁵⁰ These countries may be subject to non-humanitarian sanctions and U.S. opposition to other benefits from organizations such as the World Bank.⁵¹ In between these tiers, there are Tier 2 and Tier 2 watch list nations. Tier 2 countries do not fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards,

⁴¹ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009.

⁴² Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009.

⁴³ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 42.

⁴⁴ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 42.

⁴⁵ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 42-43.

⁴⁶ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 47.

⁴⁷ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 47.

⁴⁸ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 25, 27.

⁴⁹ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 49.

⁵⁰ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 49.

⁵¹ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 13, 15.

but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance.⁵² Nations are placed on the Tier 2 watch list when the absolute number of trafficking victims is very significant or is significantly increasing or the country fails to provide evidence that it is increasing its efforts to combat human trafficking from the previous year.⁵³ Evidence of efforts to combat trafficking include increased investigations, prosecutions, and convictions of trafficking crimes and efforts to provide greater assistance to victims.⁵⁴ It also includes efforts to decrease complicity by government officials in human trafficking.⁵⁵

The following are summaries of three randomly selected countries listed in the 2009 TIP Reports. The summaries detail each country's efforts to prevent trafficking, including prosecution of traffickers and protection of trafficking victims.

Tier 1: Australia

Australia continues developing anti-trafficking law enforcement measures and, to that end, has established the Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation Task Team to increase the country's efforts to combat trafficking.⁵⁶ Australia provides for criminal penalties ranging from 12-25 years for trafficking violations and may assess fines against guilty parties of up to \$140,000.⁵⁷ As in the United States, victims who help the criminal prosecutions against the traffickers may get a visa along with their family members.⁵⁸ Those who do not receive a visa on account of trafficking generally receive a protection visa available to refugees.⁵⁹ In addition, Australia has undertaken a publicity campaign to spread awareness about Australia's anti-sex laws among tourists.⁶⁰ The Australian government also has begun funding domestic non-governmental organizations ("NGO's") specializing in protecting victims and educating the public about trafficking.⁶¹ In the course of its anti-trafficking efforts, Australia prosecuted

⁵² Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 49.

⁵³ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 12-13.

⁵⁴ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 13.

⁵⁵ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 13.

⁵⁶ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 68.

⁵⁷ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 67-68.

⁵⁸ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 68.

⁵⁹ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 68.

⁶⁰ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 68.

⁶¹ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 68.

a criminal ring that broadcast internet images of children being sexually and physically abused.⁶²

Tier 2: Armenia

Armenia is a source country for the sexual exploitation of women in the United Arab Emirates and Turkey.⁶³ Boys and girls within Armenia are often victims of sexual exploitation.⁶⁴ Additionally, laborers may be trafficked into Armenia from Russia and the Ukraine.⁶⁵ The 2009 TIP Report noted that while Armenia showed progress in prosecuting trafficking, convictions of traffickers in Armenia decreased.⁶⁶ Armenia prosecuted 8 traffickers (out of a total of 13 investigations) in 2009 under laws which provide for a 3-15 year prison sentence for trafficking.⁶⁷ NGOs, both Armenian and foreign, were active in Armenia and the Armenian government allocated \$55,000 to fund an Armenian trafficking victims shelter and also provided funds for medical care to the victims.⁶⁸ Additionally, the Armenian government advertised to raise awareness among adolescents about the dangers of trafficking.⁶⁹ Out of 34 identified trafficking victims in 2008, 20 were referred by law enforcement to receive assistance.⁷⁰ Although all 34 victims cooperated with trafficking investigations, the 2009 TIP Report stated that witness protection continued to be a concern among trafficked persons and may have hindered the prosecution of traffickers.⁷¹ The Armenian government's attempts at prevention were mixed: while the government set aside \$53,000 for trafficking prevention measures (up from \$33,000 the previous year), border officials did not scrutinize emigrants and immigrants for signs of trafficking.⁷²

Tier 3: Kuwait

⁶² Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 67-68.

⁶³ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 66.

⁶⁴ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 66.

⁶⁵ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 66.

⁶⁶ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 66.

⁶⁷ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 66.

⁶⁸ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 67.

⁶⁹ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 67.

⁷⁰ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 67.

⁷¹ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 67.

⁷² Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 67.

Annually Kuwait experiences a large influx of migrant workers, many of whom have come to find employment in the domestic and sanitation sectors.⁷³ These people are often abused by their “sponsors” and/or labor agents.⁷⁴ Sexual exploitation of women is common.⁷⁵ The 2009 TIP Report noted that Kuwait does not comply with the minimum standards of the TVPA and shows no sign of doing so.⁷⁶ In 2007, the Kuwaiti government failed to enact legislation that would target trafficking and provide shelter for trafficking victims.⁷⁷ Although there are plans to build a trafficking shelter for up to 700 people, currently there is only a temporary women’s shelter capable of housing 40 victims and there are no shelters for male victims.⁷⁸ Prosecuting traffickers in Kuwait is problematic because there are no laws that specifically prohibit trafficking.⁷⁹ Instead, offenders may be punished under laws punishing forced prostitution, transnational slavery and labor abuse.⁸⁰ Of particular concern was the Kuwaiti government’s unwillingness to prosecute its own citizens.⁸¹ Although in 2008 the Kuwaiti government did set up a Human Rights Commission to meet monthly and discuss the rights of domestic workers, the Commission has taken no action consistent with enforcing any such rights.⁸²

International human trafficking is an abhorrent trade that destroys lives, tears apart families and communities, and destroys the social fabric of countries throughout the world. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the United Nations and developed countries such as the United States continue to spearhead global efforts to prevent trafficking by prosecuting traffickers and assisting the victims. The UN Protocol and the U.S. TVPA and TVPRA are productive steps, however, there is always more that could be done. It is evident from the case studies and TIP Reports that many countries not only ignore trafficking activity in their countries but support and profit from it. The United States and other countries that strive to end trafficking must engage in firmer dialogue with violator countries and emphasize that those nations who seek to perpetuate and profit from

⁷³ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 179.

⁷⁴ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 179.

⁷⁵ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 179.

⁷⁶ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 179.

⁷⁷ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 180.

⁷⁸ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 180.

⁷⁹ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 180.

⁸⁰ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 180.

⁸¹ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 179-80.

⁸² Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 180.

trafficking victims will not be permitted to share in global trade and the other economic benefits they currently enjoy. The anti-trafficking legislation in the United States, for example, threatens such sanctions for countries that do not demonstrate sufficient efforts to prevent trafficking within their borders. Though sanctions are a step in the right direction, other problems still remain, particularly with respect to the victims. Even in the United States where T-visas (visas for victims of trafficking) are available to trafficking victims, only a small percentage of the actual quotas for such visas are granted every year. The United States must lead the global effort to end trafficking by demonstrating a greater commitment to protecting victims, not just prevention and prosecution. An emphasis on protection is especially important in light of the fact that so many trafficking victims are unable to return to their home countries because of the harsh stigma attached to being a trafficking victim. Although institutionalized slavery has been largely abolished, human trafficking is a more clandestine form of slavery that is a global problem and can only be stopped with a united, global response.

B. Federal Human Trafficking Legislation: TVPA

As discussed above, in 2000, the U.S. Congress passed the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA), in answer to the growing problems of domestic and international trafficking.⁸³ The TVPA focuses on three aspects used to combat human trafficking: prevention of the crime, prosecution of the trafficker, and protection for victims. Under this law, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services can “certify” international human trafficking victims as trafficked persons. Once certified, victims are eligible for physical and mental health services, housing, food stamps, educational and vocational programs, as well as legal services and translation services. Victims of the more severe forms of international trafficking may also be granted a T-visa, which allows them to remain in the United States for three years and offers them the protection of its laws. The requirements for T-Visas are discussed below in more detail. After three years, the victim may apply to adjust their status to become a lawful permanent resident. Domestic trafficking, on the other hand, lacks the same comprehensive system that the TVPA provides to victims of international trafficking.

⁸³ Trafficking Victims Protection Act. 22 U.S.C. § 7101 *et seq.* (2000).

1. International Victims

In order to be granted T-visa non-immigrant status, the applicant must prove that he or she: (1) has been a victim of a severe form of human trafficking; (2) is physically present in the United States or certain U.S. territories because of that trafficking; (3) is either under 15 years old or has complied with any reasonable request for assistance in the investigation or prosecution of the trafficker⁸⁴ and (4) would suffer extreme hardship⁸⁵ if removed from the country.⁸⁶ An immigrant is ineligible for a T-Visa if he or she participated in trafficking others.⁸⁷

Based on those requirements, a trafficking victim who is 15 or older must assist law enforcement in the investigation or prosecution of the trafficker and show extreme hardship if deported. Most victims meet this last criterion because they often need medical attention, and they could be stigmatized by society or harmed by the trafficker's associates.

⁸⁴ 8 C.F.R. § 214.11(a) (2008). The “reasonableness” of the law enforcement request depends on the totality of the circumstances taking into account general law enforcement and prosecutorial practices, the nature of the victimization, and the specific circumstances of the victim, including fear, severe traumatization (both mental and physical), and the age and maturity of young victims.

⁸⁵ 8 C.F.R. § 214.11(a) (2008). Extreme hardship involving unusual and severe harm may be determined based on, but not limited to, the following:

- (i) The age and circumstances surrounding the victim;
- (ii) Physical or mental impairments that require medical attention unavailable in the applicant's home country;
- (iii) the nature and extent of the physical and psychological consequences of severe forms of trafficking in persons;
- (iv) Lack of redress for crimes committed against the applicant in the victim's home country;
- (v) The expectation that the victim's status as a trafficked person would be a source of great stigma in the applicant's home country;
- (vi) The probability that the applicant could become victimized again in his or her home country and the likelihood the home country could protect against such victimization;
- (vii) The probability that the victim could be harmed by the trafficker or agents of the trafficker in his or her home country;
- (viii) The possibility that the applicant could be harmed by unrest or conflict in his or her home country. 8 C.F.R. § 214.11(a)(1)(i-viii) (2009).

⁸⁶ 8 C.F.R. § 214.11(b) (2008).

⁸⁷ 8 C.F.R. § 214.11(c).

In addition to the T-Visa, the United States also offers an alternative form of relief to trafficked persons known as Continued Presence.⁸⁸ Continued Presence is usually appropriate in two situations. The first situation arises when the trafficked person does not want to remain in the United States but needs to stay to participate in the trafficking investigation or bring civil suit against the trafficker, or is not capable of traveling due to physical or psychological damage and requires treatment.⁸⁹ Second, when prosecutors of a trafficking case have not yet closed their case against the trafficker, they may be hesitant to give out a T-Visa for fear it may look like there was a *quid pro quo* or improper exchange of the T-Visa for the testimony between the trafficking witness and the prosecutor's office.⁹⁰ In this instance, officials may grant Continued Presence.⁹¹ An individual granted Continued Presence may receive employment authorization and public benefits similar to those of refugees, but may not become a permanent resident green card holder (as a T-Visa recipient can).⁹² An alien granted Continued Presence is allowed to seek T-visa status eventually.⁹³ In fiscal year 2008, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Law Enforcement Parole Branch granted 225 Continued Presence requests and extended 101 other Continued Presence requests.⁹⁴

Despite the fact that the United States is authorized to grant 5,000 T-Visas annually, it only granted 247 T-Visas to trafficking victims and 171 T-visas to derivative family members in fiscal year 2008.⁹⁵ The Department of Justice has acknowledged a disparity between estimates of trafficking victims in the United States and those located and aided.⁹⁶ Helga Konrad, Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, noted that the United States T-Visa levels were remarkably low in 2003, with 328 granted, and

⁸⁸ Abriel, Evangeline, and Sally Kinoshita. The VAWA Manual: Immigration Relies for Abused Immigrants. San Francisco: Immigrant Legal Resource Center, 2006: 13-9.

⁸⁹ Evangeline, 13-9.

⁹⁰ Evangeline, 13-8.

⁹¹ Evangeline, 13-9.

⁹² Evangeline, 13-9.

⁹³ Evangeline, 13-9.

⁶³ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 57.

⁹⁵ Dept. of State. Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2009 57.

⁹⁶ Meyer, Paul. "Sex Slaves of Capitalists?" dallasnews.com. 7 May 2006. 24 July 2009 <http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/latestnews/stories/DN-sexslaves_07met.State.Bulldog.7eae7bb.html>.

these levels fell further in the year 2004 to 136.⁹⁷ Additionally, she criticized the U.S. government's requirement that trafficking victims assist law enforcement agencies in prosecuting traffickers as "benign coercion."⁹⁸ Thus, while the United States is taking decisive legislative and enforcement measures to prevent and curb trafficking, more efforts could be made to find, protect, and rehabilitate victims.

One reason why so few T-Visas have been issued is that trafficking victims are often hidden from public view and difficult to locate.⁹⁹ This is especially true in the context of labor trafficking which may involve one person performing domestic labor in a private home or a few hundred people working under what appears to be legitimate circumstances in a factory.¹⁰⁰ In addition, victims may not view themselves as such, instead believing that they are obligated to pay off their debt regardless of the circumstances or feeling guilty that they are in the United States illegally.¹⁰¹ Victims may also have become so psychologically abused that they are dependent on their traffickers, who often train the victims to give certain answers to police and tell them they will be deported to their home counties in shame if they report their situations to authorities.¹⁰² Another problem arises when law enforcement officers may not sometimes sympathize with the victims because they are uncooperative, or because officers have not been trained to spot trafficking victims.¹⁰³ There have even been some extreme cases when the government deported victims of trafficking after receiving assistance from them.¹⁰⁴

2. Domestic Victims

⁹⁷ Konrad, Helga. "Assessment of the United States Human Trafficking Situation and the Anti-Trafficking Activities." June 2005: 6. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. 27 July 2009 <http://www.osce.org/documents/cthb/2005/06/17862_en.pdf>.

⁹⁸ Konrad, 6.

⁹⁹ Dept. of State. Major Forms of Trafficking in Persons.

¹⁰⁰ Dept. of State. Major Forms of Trafficking in Persons.

¹⁰¹ Dalrymple, Marla, "The Nightmare of Human Trafficking," Macon County News. 19 June 2008. 29 July, 2009 <

http://www.maconnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2764&Itemid=34>. *See also* Meyer, Sex Slaves of Capitalists?

¹⁰² Salett, Elizabeth Pathy. "Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery," Nmci.org. No date. National MultiCultural Institutute. Practice Update: Human Rights & International Affairs. 18 Aug. 2009 <http://www.nmci.org/news/news_items/trafficking.html>

¹⁰³ Meyer, Sex Slaves of Capitalists?

¹⁰⁴ Meyer, Sex Slaves of Capitalists?

Currently, there is no assistance available for domestic victims under the TVPA. However, on December 23, 2008, the TVPA was reauthorized as the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA). Even though the reauthorization still does not provide assistance for domestic victims, it added a few provisions that make prosecution of trafficking offenders easier for domestic victims and others. The Act now includes a new trafficking-specific conspiracy statute which prohibits peonage, enticement into slavery, forced labor, trafficking, sex trafficking, and domestic servitude.¹⁰⁵ The Act also includes a new provision penalizing those who knowingly benefit from participating in a venture that engaged in trafficking.¹⁰⁶ Previously, only the sex trafficking statute contained such a provision. The Act also strengthens the crime of sex trafficking of a minor by eliminating the knowledge-of-age requirement in certain instances.¹⁰⁷ Previously, proof was required that the victim was a minor. However, the new legislation only requires that the defendant had a reasonable opportunity to observe the minor victim, actual knowledge of the victim's age is not required.¹⁰⁸ Previously, the government was required to prove that the defendant actually knew that force, fraud, or coercion would be used to cause a person to engage in a commercial sex act. New language in the statute only requires that the defendant acted in reckless disregard of the fact that such means would be used.¹⁰⁹

C. Texas Human Trafficking Legislation

In addition to worldwide and federal efforts, there is a need for comprehensive state legislation to combat human trafficking. State and local agencies are likely the first to encounter human trafficking crimes and they have immediate accessibility to the perpetrators and victims. For this reason, local agencies can sometimes meet the urgent needs of trafficking victims more efficiently than the federal government. States that have legislation criminalizing human trafficking, such as Texas, are able to assist prosecutorial efforts, identify greater numbers of victims, and marshal state resources to find and prosecute human traffickers. Moreover, having both federal and state legislation creates a “unified front” against the proliferation of human trafficking anywhere in the United States.

¹⁰⁵ 22 U.S.C. § 7102(8).

¹⁰⁶ Trafficking Victims Protection Re-Authorization Act of 2008, Pub. L. No. 110-57.

¹⁰⁷ Pub. L. No. 110-57.

¹⁰⁸ Pub. L. No. 110-57.

¹⁰⁹ Pub. L. No. 110-57.

In 2003, Texas was the first state to pass legislation criminalizing human trafficking.¹¹⁰ In Texas, a person commits an offense of human trafficking if the person “knowingly traffics another person with the intent or knowledge that the trafficked person will engage in forced labor or services.”¹¹¹ Under Texas law, a minor is defined as person under 18, and the term “traffic” is not dependent on the element of “transport.” In addition, trafficking of a minor is a first degree felony, but trafficking of an adult is a second degree felony.¹¹² Texas law imposes greater penalties on the offender when the victim is under 18 years old.

In 2009, Texas’s 81st Legislature passed some very important laws to expand the body of anti-trafficking legislation in the state. Among those changes is the establishment of a statewide task force in the Office of Attorney General.¹¹³ This will allow for increased awareness and communication among the multiple state agencies charged with dealing with the complex issues surrounding human trafficking. The task force will also become the single point of contact for Texas on the national level. In addition, the new legislation requires police officers to receive a four hour training course on human trafficking. It will specifically impact those officers who are first licensed or achieve a higher level of licensing on or after January 1, 2011.¹¹⁴ It also established an advanced 4-hour training course to be included in officers’ continuing education curriculum, on a voluntary basis.

Other legislation approved this session recognizes that prostitution is most often an involuntary activity. Defendants will be able to raise as a defense to a charge of prostitution that they committed the crime only because they were a victim of human trafficking.¹¹⁵ Another legislative change that passed will ease the burden of proof for prosecutors. Prosecutors will no longer be required to prove that the trafficker knew the victim was a minor.¹¹⁶ If the defendant is convicted of trafficking and the victim is a minor, the harsher penalty will automatically attach. The 81st Legislature

¹¹⁰ Tex. Pen. Code § 20A.02(a).

¹¹¹ Tex. Pen. Code § 20A.02(a).

¹¹² Tex. Pen. Code § 20A.02(b).

¹¹³ Tex. Gov’t Code § 402.35(b) (2009).

¹¹⁴ Tex. Gov’t Code § 402.35(b) (2009).

¹¹⁵ Tex. Pen. Code § 43.02(d) (2009).

¹¹⁶ Tex. Pen. Code § 43.05(a) (2009).

also created an avenue for human trafficking victims to sue their trafficker in civil court. Now, these victims can pursue monetary damages against their trafficker for the physical and emotional harm they suffered at the trafficker's hands.¹¹⁷

Texas's 81st Legislature passed a bill which gave Harris County the authority to regulate massage parlors located in the unincorporated area of the county. The purpose behind this bill was to provide an avenue to regulate the illegitimate businesses that were attempting to escape city ordinances by moving to unincorporated parts of the county.¹¹⁸ Once the commissioners' court passes such regulation, liability for operating an illegitimate massage parlor in Harris County will exist. A district or country attorney may then bring suit to shut down such a business and the owner may be fined up to \$1,000 per violation per day.

Another new "illegitimate massage parlor" piece of legislation requires sexually oriented businesses to maintain identification records on their employees or independent contractors for up to two years past the last date of employment. This law will allow for easier discovery and prosecution of business owners who exploit child sex workers.¹¹⁹ Finally, 81st Legislature passed a law that will allow municipalities to access the National Crime Identification Center when a sexually oriented business applies for a license.¹²⁰ Currently, license applications for sexually oriented businesses require a criminal background check. According to the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Federal Bureau of Investigation will not grant municipalities or counties the authorization to access nationwide criminal history record information without explicit state authorization. As a result, if an applicant is convicted of a crime in another state that would prohibit the applicant from obtaining a license for operating a sexually oriented business in Texas, the municipality would not have access to that information. This bill addresses that shortcoming by giving a municipality or county the right to access National Crime Information Center criminal history record information for the purposes of obtaining information regarding persons applying for a license to operate a sexually oriented business in the municipality or county.

¹¹⁷ Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code § 98.002(a) (2009).

¹¹⁸ Tex. Loc. Gov't Code § 234(D) (2009).

¹¹⁹ Tex. Labor Code § 51.016 (2009).

¹²⁰ Tex. Gov't Code § 411.122(a) (2009).

D. How does Texas Compare?

European nations have gone much further than the United States in passing laws related to human trafficking. Many countries in Europe have implemented what is known as the “Sex Purchase Law” which has been successful in reducing demand and supply for prostitution. Independent research shows that after passage of those laws, prostitution was reduced by 50 percent and solicitation decreased by 75 percent.¹²¹ Human trafficking for sexual services has also decreased significantly. Sweden pioneered efforts to fight human trafficking through legislation and passed the first example of such legislation in Europe, which follows the victim-centered approach.¹²² This law focuses on allowing more rigorous legislation; improving measures to raise public awareness, researching crimes and treatment methods, and the developing better victim identification procedures for more protection and improved social services. The Swedish Penal Code includes offenses such as the *Gross Violation of a Woman’s Integrity* and the *Gross Violation of Integrity*.¹²³ Those are enforceable against a defendant that commits certain repeated criminal acts that “severely damage the person’s self-confidence.”¹²⁴ Predicate acts that trigger this offense are “assault, unlawful threat or coercion, sexual or other molestation, and sexual exploitation.”¹²⁵ However, most notably, in 1999, the Swedish government passed the *Act Prohibiting the Purchase of Sexual Services*. That law criminalizes the demand for prostitution, but decriminalized prostitution itself. Under this approach, women and children are seen as “victims of male violence”¹²⁶ who should not be punished by the legal system and should have a right to assistance to escape prostitution.

Swedish law also emphasizes preventative measures, such as research and education. The 1999 Act created a Law Commission on Sexual Offenses, which evaluates the Swedish Penal Code to address any changes to the law that may be necessary. The National Board of Health and Welfare is

¹²¹ United States. Dept. of State. Bureau of Public Affairs. [The Link between Prostitution and Sex Trafficking](#). 24 Nov. 2004. 23 July 2009

<<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/38901.pdf>>.

¹²² “Fact Sheet on Violence Against Women: 1999 Swedish Law on Prostitution.”

[Prostitution Research and Education](#). No date. 31 July 2009

<<http://www.prostitutionresearch.com/laws/000024.html>>.

¹²³ [1999 Swedish Law on Prostitution](#).

¹²⁴ [1999 Swedish Law on Prostitution](#).

¹²⁵ [1999 Swedish Law on Prostitution](#).

¹²⁶ [1999 Swedish Law on Prostitution](#).

responsible for researching violence against women and their primary goal is to facilitate the assessment and expansion of social and health services. Economic resources have also been allocated by the Swedish government to help organizations dedicated to providing services amongst human trafficking victims and to raising awareness of this issue to the general public. Many services are available for victims of human trafficking. The Swedish model provides training and education to persons working closely with victims of trafficking. Also, the Swedish government has implemented the national crisis telephone line and increased funding to the National Center of Battered and Raped Women and various women's shelters in order to better serve victims.

Other European nations, such as Norway, Scotland, and Iceland, have followed a similar model to the Swedish model. Overall, laws in Europe dealing with prostitution are aimed at reducing the demand and thus reducing human trafficking for sexual purposes. Some countries decriminalize prostitution and institute stiffer penalties for those who purchase or attempt to purchase sexual services. These countries acknowledge that without the demand for prostitutes, the demand for trafficking of women and children is significantly reduced.

In the United States, all states, except Nevada, criminalize both prostitution and solicitation and provide the same punishment for both. Charges for these offenses range from a petty misdemeanor to a state jail felony for repeat offenders. However, some states have taken more forceful steps to prevent, prosecute, and research human trafficking by addressing the inherent flaws that contribute to the flourishing of this crime. Some of the flaws that such legislations aims to prevent are a lack of communication between governmental agencies regarding enforcement and prosecution of human trafficking, insufficient funding for research regarding important contributing factors that aggravate human trafficking, and improper training of individuals and agencies that are directly involved with victims of human trafficking.

Some of the more recent state efforts focus on legislation that is similar to the European models, particularly the Swedish model discussed below. This model has the following as its crucial points: training, research, and education. Some states, including Texas, have formed statewide task forces

to help identify and research human trafficking.¹²⁷ The task forces are usually charged with identifying and reporting incidents of human trafficking and also researching different possibilities for training and punishment.

As of April 2009, there are thirteen states that have a state wide task force and fourteen that established a human trafficking research commission. However, there are only three states that have taken actions closely resembling the Swedish model: California, Connecticut, and Iowa.¹²⁸ In each of these states five basic elements of the Swedish model are addressed: (a) *prosecution* through the codification of new crimes for sex and labor trafficking; (b) *task force* creation to take action on human trafficking, (c) *Research Commission* charged with researching human trafficking in each state, (d) *law enforcement training* mandated by each state which focuses on investigating human trafficking and identifying victims, and (e) *victim protection* focused on providing victims or potential victims of human trafficking aid through social services available in each state.¹²⁹

In 2005, California enacted The California Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Specifically, this law establishes the following provisions:

- (1) Establishes human trafficking for forced labor or services as a felony crime punishable by a sentence of 3, 4, or 5 years in state prison and a sentence of 4, 6, or 8 years for trafficking a minor;¹³⁰
- (2) Provides for mandatory restitution to the victim;¹³¹
- (3) Allows a trafficking victim to bring a civil cause of action against his or her trafficker;¹³²
- (4) Directs the Attorney General to give priority to human trafficking along with other crimes;¹³³
- (5) Establishes a state wide task force, The California Alliance to Combat Trafficking and Slavery (CA ACTS), to examine

¹²⁷ "U.S. Policy Alert on Human Trafficking." [Polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org). Feb. 2007. 18 Aug. 2009 <<http://www.polarisproject.org/images/docs/alerts/Policy%20Alert%20FINAL%202021%202007.pdf>>.

¹²⁸ [U.S. Policy Alert on Human Trafficking](#).

¹²⁹ [U.S. Policy Alert on Human Trafficking](#).

¹³⁰ Cal. Pen. Code § 2361 (2005).

¹³¹ Cal. Pen. Code § 1202.4 (2005).

¹³² Cal. Civ. Code § 52.5 (2005).

¹³³ Cal. Pen. Code § 14023 (2005).

California's response to human trafficking and present a report to the Governor, Attorney General, and Legislature.¹³⁴

III. The Fight Against Human Trafficking

A. The Current State of Services for Victims in Texas

1. Houston

Houston is a popular trafficking hub for both domestic and international victims.¹³⁵ With an estimated population of 2.2 million, Houston is the fourth largest city in the country and the largest city in Texas.¹³⁶ The metropolitan area further expands the population to almost 6 million people.¹³⁷ People hail from all over the world; over 90 languages are spoken in the city.¹³⁸ Houston is a popular trafficking hub in part because the city is so diverse, with large Hispanic, Asian and Middle Eastern populations, which allows traffickers and their victims to blend into local communities.¹³⁹ The city's major port and proximity to the border also influence its position as a major distribution point for traffickers.¹⁴⁰ Houston is a multicultural city in part because of its many academic institutions and strong industries, but also because of its location. Sitting on I-10 at the crossroads of many national highways in the southeast corner of Texas, Houston also has close proximity to a port and the Mexican border. The Port of Houston is the busiest port in the United States in terms of foreign tonnage, second-busiest in the United States in terms of overall tonnage, and tenth-busiest in the world,¹⁴¹ and Houston is just about 350 miles from the border. These factors provide many avenues of entry and enable easy transportation for both domestic and international trafficking victims.

¹³⁴ Cal. Pen. Code § 13990 (2005).

¹³⁵ "News & Updates: Houston, Texas Major Hub for Human Trafficking." Humantrafficking.org, 31 Oct. 2007. 6 Aug. 2009 <<http://www.humantrafficking.org/updates/807>>.

¹³⁶ United States. Census Bureau. Houston QuickFacts from the U.S. Census Bureau. 10 July 2009. 6 Aug. 2009 <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48/4835000.html>>.

¹³⁷ Houston QuickFacts from the US Census Bureau.

¹³⁸ City of Houston. Houston Facts and Figures. No date. 20 Aug. 2009 <<http://www.houstontx.gov/about/houston/houstonfacts.html>>

¹³⁹ News & Updates: Houston, Texas Major Hub for Human Trafficking.

¹⁴⁰ News & Updates: Houston, Texas Major Hub for Human Trafficking.

¹⁴¹ The City of Houston. Port of Houston Authority. General Information: Overview. 10 March 2009. 6 Aug. 2009 <<http://www.portofhouston.com/geninfo/overview1.html>>

Because the city is so diverse, traffickers and victims easily blend into the community. Fortunately, this problem has been identified and subsequently two coalitions (Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition and the Coalition Against Human Trafficking) and a task force (Human Trafficking Rescue Alliance) that include collaboration between law enforcement agencies and many nongovernmental agencies have formed. Additionally, there are many faith-based organizations and ethnically specific community centers that also address the needs of victims, both directly and indirectly.

The Human Trafficking Rescue Alliance (HTRA) was formed in August 2004 after the first national human trafficking conference was assembled at the direction of the U.S. Attorney General after the commitment of the President of the United States to address this scourge.¹⁴² It is one of five Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) funded task forces throughout Texas and forty-two across the country.¹⁴³ The collaboration of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies works with social service organizations to identify and assist the victims of human trafficking and to prosecute the perpetrators of these horrific crimes. Under the leadership of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas, the HTRA brings together a range of law enforcement and victim service partners that traditionally would not have the opportunity to work together. Those partners include Harris County Sheriff's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC), and YMCA International Services, among others, in carrying out the HTRA's mission to rescue and restore the victims of human trafficking. Additionally, the HTRA has delivered numerous law enforcement trainings around Texas and across the nation and has participated in other community outreach and educational programs concerning the issue of human trafficking.¹⁴⁴ While the BJA funding can only be used for operations to combat international trafficking in Houston, the HTRA does include the FBI's Innocence Lost Task Force.¹⁴⁵ The Innocence Lost Task Force centers its investigations on domestic minor sex trafficking. HTRA wants to ensure that the needs of both the international and domestic populations of victims are being addressed.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Houston Human Trafficking Rescue Alliance. Telephone interview. 6 Aug. 2009.

¹⁴³ Houston Human Trafficking Rescue Alliance. Telephone interview. 6 Aug. 2009.

¹⁴⁴ Houston Human Trafficking Rescue Alliance. Telephone interview. 6 Aug. 2009.

¹⁴⁵ Houston Human Trafficking Rescue Alliance. Telephone interview. 6 Aug. 2009.

¹⁴⁶ Houston Human Trafficking Rescue Alliance. Telephone interview. 6 Aug. 2009.

Although both legal and social services for international victims are available, a significant issue is in the length of their availability. After a certain amount of time, victims are no longer able to access the social services and frequently find their way back into their previous situations or in situations where they are vulnerable to abuse.¹⁴⁷ This is also a problem that affects the domestic victims. Currently, a Houston non-profit organization called Hope of Hope is envisioning a long-term shelter as a first step of ending that cycle both for domestic and international victims of human trafficking.¹⁴⁸

For domestic victims who are detained by law enforcement agents for other crimes, such as drug possession, theft or disorderly conduct, identification as a human trafficking victim is the first hurdle that needs to be overcome. The initial providers who come into contact with these victims, such as interviewers from Child Protective Services, law enforcement, the Juvenile Probation Department, or any counseling service, need to be adequately trained to identify victims correctly so as to direct them to the proper services. Moreover, services that are available may be inaccessible due to eligibility requirements such as family involvement or cost.

i. International Victims

While the majority of the cases discovered involving international victims in Houston do involve sexual exploitation or sex trafficking of women and young girls, a greater number of labor trafficking cases involving men have recently been recognized. “There has been an increase locally in the number of male human-trafficking victims, primarily from Central and South America. The majority of the cases involve forced labor at construction sites or in agriculture.”¹⁴⁹ However, even though there is a greater awareness of the existence of both labor trafficking and the male victims, there has not been an increase in the specific services available to those targeted victims.

¹⁴⁷ Chandler, Anne. Telephone interview. 13 July 2009.

¹⁴⁸ “Human Trafficking is Modern-Day Slavery.” Home page. No date. 19 Aug. 2009. <<http://www.homeofhopetexas.com/>>

¹⁴⁹ Carroll, Susan. “More men victims of human trafficking.” Houston Chronicle. 6 July 2009. 6 Aug. 2009 <<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/front/6514945.html>> (quoting special agent Maritza Conde-Vazquez).

Houston has a wealth of legal services available to international victims who are identified and rescued. The services most frequently provided are T-Visas, or in some cases U-Visas, which allow victims of human trafficking to lawfully remain in the United States. Continued presence, pre-certification and certification steps are also taken to ensure victims the same benefits that refugees are afforded. Other common legal services are family based petitions, which assist U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents to reunify with family members and adjust the family members' status to that of permanent residents, and special immigrant juvenile status for minors seeking permanent resident status.

The St. Frances Cabrini Center for Immigrant Legal Assistance (Cabrini Center) provides legal services to immigrants and refugees, including unaccompanied international minors, who might otherwise not be able to obtain legal representation. The Cabrini Center is a program of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston that is accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) in the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR). The Center provides reduced and no-fee legal services to immigrants, including free services to victims of human trafficking.¹⁵⁰ The Center also assists with clients who are applying for various types of immigration relief, including, for example, family-based visa petitions, asylum, and relief under the Violence Against Women Act, and represents unaccompanied minors and other individuals who are in removal proceedings.

The Center provides its legal services through seven attorneys, as well as representatives accredited by the BIA, legal caseworkers and administrative staff.¹⁵¹ Volunteer services are also utilized; pro bono attorneys have the option of taking on an individual case or going into the office to volunteer with both litigation and administrative cases. Volunteers are also involved in translating documents or with administrative office tasks. The Cabrini Center's activities include outreach, legal assessment and counseling, legal representation, and advocacy. Most of the clients, who are not referred to the Cabrini Center by other non-governmental organizations, find their way by attending an outreach meeting, a "charla," regarding immigration law.¹⁵² These information sessions are completely free. At the close of each session,

¹⁵⁰ Zipple-Shedd, Kristen. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

¹⁵¹ Zipple-Shedd, Kristen. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

¹⁵² Zipple-Shedd, Kristen. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

potential clients have the opportunity to speak with an attorney or accredited representative regarding his or her case. If it is a type of case that Cabrini Center may be able to handle, then the individual can make an appointment to come back for a full intake. The outreach meetings are offered twice a month in Spanish, and once a month in English.

At the present time, Cabrini Center staff is working on a handful of identified victims of human trafficking, including adult victims and minors who in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement.¹⁵³ Cabrini Center provides legal assessment and representation with human trafficking victims as they work with law enforcement officials, apply for T-visas, and work to gain status in the United States for themselves and qualifying family members.¹⁵⁴ Staff also makes targeted referrals to trafficking victims so that they receive the social services necessary to get back on their feet. The length of this process varies from client to client, depending on how long it takes a victim to get certified, collect supporting documentation, whether the consular processing for family member is necessary, and on the unique circumstances of each client's case.¹⁵⁵

YMCA International Services provides assistance similar to the Cabrini Center, but instead of focusing on minors, the YMCA focuses on international adults.¹⁵⁶ YMCA International Services is sponsored by United States Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime ("OVC") grant to provide direct services to victims of trafficking, to train law enforcement, and to provide community education and outreach.¹⁵⁷ They are able to assist pre-certified victims through the OVC grant and certified victims of trafficking through Refugee Cash Assistance and Match Grant Programs with comprehensive case management services, including immigration counsel. All of the services provided focus on refugees, asylees, and victims of human trafficking. Since 2003, the YMCA has served close to 150 human trafficking victims; they are currently working with nine trafficking cases.¹⁵⁸ Their legal department consists of one staff attorney and several pro-bono attorneys.

¹⁵³ Zipple-Shedd, Kristen. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

¹⁵⁴ Zipple-Shedd, Kristen. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

¹⁵⁵ Zipple-Shedd, Kristen. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

¹⁵⁶ Rossiter, Constance. Telephone interview. 10 July 2009.

¹⁵⁷ Rossiter, Constance. Telephone interview. 10 July 2009.

¹⁵⁸ Rossiter, Constance. Telephone interview. 10 July 2009.

The Trafficked Persons Assistance Program at the YMCA is similar to Catholic Charities in providing a “one stop shop” divided into two components, legal and social. On the legal side, services consist of immigration assistance, including T- and U-Visa applications, employment authorizations and adjustment of status. The Houston Pro Bono Project, the VAWA Pro Bono program and the Crime Victims Civil Legal Services department at the YMCA all assist indigent clients in obtaining pro bono legal representation as they apply for T and U-Visas, adjustment of status and relative petitions.

Through the Trafficking Persons Assistance Program, the YMCA assists pre-certified human trafficking victims for an average of 4-5 months.¹⁵⁹ After a victim has been certified, the YMCA’s Refugee Program offers cash assistance, match grant benefits, employment services, educational services, cultural orientation and case management services in addition to legal services. Victims of human trafficking are eligible for case management services for a period of five (5) years through the Refugee Case Management Program.

University of Houston Immigration Law Clinic specializes in handling applications for asylum on behalf of victims of torture and persecution, in representing immigrants who have been the victims of domestic violence, human trafficking and crime. The Clinic on occasion represents children and those fleeing civil war, genocide or political repression. The Immigration Clinic sees a significant number of trafficking cases for both children and adults.¹⁶⁰ The Clinic has handled multiple labor cases. The Clinic has also handled situations where girls have been exploited by one or two males, as well as case of purchase of young girls.¹⁶¹ Since 2003 they have served over 30 trafficking victims, and at the moment, they are working with 10 to 15 trafficking cases.¹⁶²

The Clinic will generally only take a human trafficking case if they will be able to ultimately change the victim’s status (i.e., get them some type of citizenship or visa).¹⁶³ For every human trafficking case involving a minor, the Clinic has elected to apply for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS).

¹⁵⁹ Rossiter, Constance. Telephone interview. 10 July 2009.

¹⁶⁰ Chandler, Anne. Telephone interview. 13 July 2009.

¹⁶¹ Chandler, Anne. E-mail to the authors. 18 Aug. 2009.

¹⁶² Chandler, Anne. Telephone interview. 13 July 2009.

¹⁶³ Chandler, Anne. Telephone interview. 13 July 2009.

SIJS is a way for a dependent in the juvenile court to become a permanent resident of the United States. A minor who successfully applies for this status may remain in the United States, work legally, qualify for in-state tuition at college, and after five years apply for U.S. citizenship.

The Clinic is comprised of three attorneys, as well as law students. While the clinic specifically addresses immigration issues, they work with other clinics at UH that are utilized for other legal issues involved in trafficking cases. The comprehensive clinical program at UH includes civil attorneys and students familiar with family court, protective orders, among other services so that the legal team is actually broader than the three attorneys specifically working with the immigration issues.¹⁶⁴

Because Houston has such a diverse population, the barrier created by the linguistic and cultural needs of victims is somewhat addressed by ethnically specific community centers. For example, Boat People SOS Immigration Service Center, a non-profit service provider, addresses the needs of low-income families and victims from Vietnam who have immigration or family reunification issues. Its legal services include advocacy, representation, and case management and services. The legal services are accessible in conjunction with other social services available at the center as well.

Because of the many non-profit and faith-based organizations dispersed throughout the city, Houston is able to offer an abundance of social services directly and indirectly to international victims. Across the board, providers offer counseling services, case management financial assistance and food pantry services. If they are not able to provide a shelter through their facilities, there are other emergency shelters around the city for temporary housing. However, the other emergency shelters have a variety of eligibility requirements: age, length of time, substance use, gender, ability to house families, etc.

In addition to legal services available through the Cabrini Center, Catholic Charities is able to provide counseling, case management, financial assistance and food pantry services to their clients. Catholic Charities is also one of only two programs in Texas that offer the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program, providing care to unaccompanied minor victims of trafficking who have received a letter of eligibility from the U.S. Office of

¹⁶⁴ Chandler, Anne. Telephone interview. 13 July 2009.

Refugee Resettlement. Essentially, this program establishes legal responsibility under state law to ensure that the trafficking victim can access the full range of assistance available to foster children.¹⁶⁵ The juvenile victims who are eligible for the program have their medical, dental, psychological, and legal needs addressed within 90 days of placement.¹⁶⁶ Also, victims participate in English as a Second Language (ESL) and life skills classes, tutorials, and other social activities. Upon leaving the program, victims are then placed in age-appropriate living situations.¹⁶⁷

Since February 2003, the program has placed minors by referral only from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). USCCB identified a need for an Unaccompanied Refugee Minor program in Texas and identified Houston as an excellent community for resettling unaccompanied refugee minors.¹⁶⁸ Because of Houston's extensive network of ethnic, non-profit, and community organizations, in addition to the government, social, and educational services available, the city is able to accommodate the international minor victims. The program consists of two agency homes and individual foster homes that provide 24-hour, long-term foster care services to minors of all ages who have been designated as a refugee, asylee, or a victim of human trafficking.¹⁶⁹ The program also applies to minors who are in federal custody awaiting designation of status (i.e., asylum or Special Immigrant Juvenile Status) who require long-term foster care due to the amount of time the legal process takes (3-36 months).

The two homes have the capacity to house six boys and six girls. While the victims are in the transitional housing, their medical, mental, educational, and legal needs are assessed as staff develops the victim's initial service plan.¹⁷⁰ After these assessments are completed, a decision about a long-term placement is made; the juvenile will either move into an individual foster

¹⁶⁵ Office of Attorney General, The Texas Response to Human Trafficking.

¹⁶⁶ Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. "Unaccompanied Refugee Minors." Immigration and Refugee Services, Unaccompanied Juvenile Foster Care (UJFC). No date. 6 Aug. 2009 <<http://www.catholiccharities.org/en/cms/74/>>

¹⁶⁷ Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Unaccompanied Refugee Minors.

¹⁶⁸ Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Unaccompanied Refugee Minors.

¹⁶⁹ Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Unaccompanied Refugee Minors.

¹⁷⁰ Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Unaccompanied Refugee Minors.

family or remain at the agency home. All services provided by the program are accessible to children who move to foster families as well. Additional services provided by the program include: indirect financial support for housing, food, clothing, and other necessities, intensive case management by a social worker, independent living skills training, job skills training and career/college counseling, on-going family tracing, where possible cultural activities/recreation, special education services, when needed.

YMCA International Services, the lead provider for victims of human trafficking in the Greater Houston Area and its surrounding counties, offers comprehensive services beyond legal assistance for adult international victims. Some of the YMCA's legal services were mentioned above. However, they also provide for basic needs, such as food, clothing, immediate shelter, and safety planning.¹⁷¹ The program also assists victims with obtaining permanent housing. Medical screenings and mental health needs are also addressed. Victims are enrolled in an employment program where they are offered job training, cultural orientation services and are provided educational opportunities, such as GED studies.¹⁷² Social security card applications and referrals to other service agencies are additional services provided. Furthermore there is a large language capacity within the organization with staff speaking 23 different languages; consequently they have interpretation and translation services available to meet the various needs of the international victims.¹⁷³

Other community centers around Houston reach out to specific ethnic populations. The Chinese Community Center and Boat People SOS are examples of such programs that do direct outreach in the community. Boat People SOS provides a multitude of programs and services to their clients, including Immigration Service Center, Health Awareness Program for Immigrants, Victims of Exploitation and Trafficking Assistance, and Disaster Relief and Recovery Center.¹⁷⁴ The Victims of Exploitation and Trafficking Assistance (VETA) Program at Boat People SOS provides direct services in addition to legal representation specifically to immigrant victims of human trafficking. The VETA team also conducts outreach to the community, service providers, and law enforcement to increase awareness

¹⁷¹ Rossiter, Constance. Telephone interview. 10 July 2009.

¹⁷² Rossiter, Constance. Telephone interview. 10 July 2009.

¹⁷³ Rossiter, Constance. Telephone interview. 10 July 2009.

¹⁷⁴ "Programs and Services." Home page. No date. Boat People SOS. 6 Aug. 2009

<<http://bpsos.wordpress.com/welcome-to-bpsos-houston/#Programs%20and%20Services>>

of human trafficking and victim identification. Other programs through Boat People SOS might serve victims of human trafficking indirectly as well. For example, their Community Against Domestic Violence (CADV) Program provides direct services to immigrant victims of domestic violence, and conducts outreach and offers education to the community and local service providers. The centers also offer citizenship and ESL programs that enable adults to prepare for their U.S. Citizenship and Naturalization Examination, develop civic skills, or improve their English language proficiency.

ii. Domestic Victims

At the moment, any law enforcement agents who come across domestic trafficking victims are required to take them into custody.¹⁷⁵ Domestic victims of sex trafficking often only gain access to services by being labeled as delinquents and charged with the class B misdemeanor of prostitution. However, it is not uncommon to see possible victims detained for other offenses such as drug possession, theft, or disorderly conduct.

Law enforcement officers take the minors they pick up to one of two 24-hour intake units of the Juvenile Probation Department which are located at the Chimney Rock Center and the Juvenile Detention Center. The Intake Screening staff is responsible for assessing immediate circumstances and deciding if a youth is to be detained or released. It is these intake workers who are charged with the responsibility of being able to identify trafficking victims as such.

At the Juvenile Detention Center, the intake unit will assess a juvenile's specialized needs, but all detained juveniles receive medical testing and psychological testing pre-adjudication. If detained, juveniles undergo physical and psychological assessments, short-term therapy, and crisis intervention. Additionally, the Harris County Juvenile Justice Charter School provides an educational program that focuses on areas in which these students are generally deficient such as remedial reading, language, and math skills.

¹⁷⁵ "Sex Trafficking Problem in Houston." [Myfoxfhouston.com](http://www.myfoxfhouston.com/dpp/news/local/090505_human_trafficking). 5 May 2009. 6 Aug. 2009. <http://www.myfoxfhouston.com/dpp/news/local/090505_human_trafficking>

Although at the detention center there is mental and physical health care available, unless charged with a crime, the victims are not kept long at the detention center. Juveniles will stay at the detention center and be given a court advocate only if charged with a criminal offense, such as prostitution, if he or she presents a threat to self or to the community, or is likely to run away and not return for a court appearance.¹⁷⁶ Alternatively, while parents are allowed to take their child home if the juvenile is not charged with anything, releasing the child means that there will be no additional services or support. It is unfortunate that trafficking victims must be charged with the class B misdemeanor to receive the full services available through the detention facility.

The Juvenile Probation Department, Harris County Children's Protective Services (CPS), and the Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority (MHMRA) are partners in the TRIAD Prevention Program. The Chimney Rock Center (CRC) housed at the TRIAD facility is the other 24-hour intake center for youth, ages 10 to 16, who are picked up for status offenses such as runaway, truancy and curfew or Class C Misdemeanors (theft, assault, disorderly conduct, or public intoxication) and those who are in need of supervision.¹⁷⁷ Many juvenile trafficking victims are picked up for one of these offenses, but unless the intake worker is trained to recognize signs of trafficking, victims are overlooked.¹⁷⁸

At CRC, services include screening and assessment, crisis intervention, counseling, an emergency shelter, referrals, and follow-up.¹⁷⁹ The center serves about 150 kids a month, not including the calls received by their hotlines. However, only 1 to 2 juveniles per quarter are identified specifically as trafficking victims.¹⁸⁰ Identifying these girls who are mainly engaged in some sort of prostitution as victims is mainly based on the skill of the interviewer. About 80% of the youth that come through the center are brought by law enforcement because the agents were unable to find a parent or the parent was unavailable. The youths are allowed to stay up to 24 hours and are provided with a shower, hygiene items, clothes, cots, and three

¹⁷⁶ The Harris County. Juvenile Probation Department. "Juvenile Detention Centers." No date. 6 Aug. 2009. <http://www.hcjpd.org/Juv_Detention_Centers.asp>

¹⁷⁷ Broussard, Matt. Telephone interview. 13 July 2009.

¹⁷⁸ Broussard, Matt. Telephone interview. 13 July 2009.

¹⁷⁹ Broussard, Matt. Telephone interview. 13 July 2009.

¹⁸⁰ Broussard, Matt. Telephone interview. 13 July 2009.

meals a day. If a relative is not able to come within that time period, TRIAD intake will make an in-house referral to CPS.

In addition to intake services, the TRIAD Prevention Program operates the Choices Program of Harris County. This is a multi-agency program devoted to serving those youth that have just entered the juvenile justice system for the first time, or are at risk of becoming involved.¹⁸¹ The TRIAD Prevention Program coordinates STAR services (services for at-risk youth), which is funded through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Additionally, the program houses case managers who serve as liaisons in the Justice of the Peace (JP) courts. JP court liaisons work with the youth and their families who have to appear before the JP court. The liaisons have a variety of responsibilities, including crisis intervention and sentence recommendations during dockets.¹⁸² The JP court liaisons also involve the community in order to better serve clients. For example, they work in collaboration with local school districts, community and faith-based organizations, and other branches of the judicial system.¹⁸³

TRIAD additionally offers JP Court Case Management to at-risk youth and their families who are referred by the JP courts. This program assists those cases that are identified as needing intensive follow-up and monitoring regarding recommended programs or court-ordered conditions.¹⁸⁴ The case managers do visits to both the home and school, develop case plans and make referrals to ensure that their clients' needs are met.¹⁸⁵

2. Dallas/Forth Worth

The cities of Dallas and Fort Worth, commonly referred as the 'Metroplex', are the economic and cultural hubs of the North Texas region. Dallas is the ninth largest city in the United States of America and the third largest city within the state of Texas with an estimated population nearing 1.3

¹⁸¹ Broussard, Matt. Telephone interview. 13 July 2009.

¹⁸² The Harris County. Child Protective Services. Court Services. No date. 6 Aug. 2009

<http://www.hc-ps.org/triad_prevention.htm>

¹⁸³ Harris County CPS, Court Services.

¹⁸⁴ Harris County CPS, Court Services.

¹⁸⁵ Harris County CPS, Court Services.

million.¹⁸⁶ Radiating out of Downtown Dallas's freeway loop are the spokes of the area's highway system—Interstates 30, 35E, and 45, U.S. Highway 75, U.S. Highway 175, State Spur 366, the Dallas North Toll-way, State Highway 114, U.S. Highway 80, and U.S. Highway 67. Other major highways around the city include State Highway 183 and State Spur 408.¹⁸⁷ Fort Worth is the seventeenth largest city in the United States of America and the fifth largest city within the state of Texas with a population of 720,250.¹⁸⁸ Fort Worth is served by four Interstates (30, 20, 35W, 820) and two US highways (287, 377).¹⁸⁹

In 2006, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales announced that Dallas, Texas, was one of ten locations selected to receive a grant from the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs. The purpose of the grant was to construct a local human trafficking task force that would comprise of entities from both law enforcement and social services to combat human trafficking in Dallas, Texas. The North Texas Anti-Trafficking Task Force (NTATTF) aims to identify and rescue victims of human trafficking while arresting and prosecuting the perpetrators. To this end, the Dallas Police Department, the Fort Worth Police Department and Mosaic Family Services are tasked with actively recruiting other agencies and organizations—both government and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)—in order to form a comprehensive network of responders to situations of human trafficking.¹⁹⁰

The majority of initial contact with human trafficking victims is accomplished by police anti-trafficking task forces. In Fort Worth, the NTATT of the Fort Worth Police Department is the primary stabilizer of victims. Once a victim has been identified, all international victims are sent to Mosaic Family Services and domestic victims are sent to the juvenile detention center for holding. Mosaic Family Services provides

¹⁸⁶ North Central Texas Council of Governments Research and Information Services. "2009 Current Population Estimates." Apr. 2009. Web. 31 July 2009

<<http://www.nctcog.org/ris/demographics/population/2009PopEstimates.pdf>>.

¹⁸⁷ "Transportation in Dallas." 08 July 2009. Wikipedia. 31 July 2009

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transportation_in_Dallas#Highways>.

¹⁸⁸ North Central Texas Council, 2009 Current Population Estimates.

¹⁸⁹ "List of Dallas Fort Worth Area Freeways." 05 July 2009. Wikipedia. 31 July 2009

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Dallas-Fort_Worth_area_freeways>.

¹⁹⁰ "Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: Dallas Texas." Sept. 2008:1. Shared Hope.org. PIP Printing. 16 July 2009

<http://www.sharedhope.org/dmst/documents/FINALAssessment_Dallas.pdf>.

comprehensive services to international human trafficking victims, which are described below. Although the Trafficking Victims Protection Act acknowledges that commercially exploited minors are victims, domestic minor victims often only gain access to services by being labeled as delinquents and charged with the class B misdemeanor of prostitution.¹⁹¹ In juvenile detention, an intake unit first assesses a juvenile's specialized needs, but all juveniles will receive medical testing and psychological testing pre-adjudication. Detained juveniles receive education on HIV and STDs, but the testing is voluntary; therefore, detained victims could be suffering from STDs that are unidentified and untreated.¹⁹² Those not charged are released to their parents' care and receive minimal support. If a criminal charge is assessed against the child, they will remain in the detention center until the court hearing and will be given a court advocate. Only if there are allegations of parental abuse or neglect will CPS become involved. If CPS does take control of the victim, they will be placed in a foster home or placement center where the victim will receive therapy as well as a court advocate. Currently, the Fort Worth PD has served 28 identified victims of human trafficking since the inception of the NTATT in the summer of 2005.¹⁹³ Out of 28 victims, FWPD can only certify six victims due to the fact that they are international victims. United States citizens cannot be certified as trafficking victims. They can only be labeled as a victim. When a victim is certified that allows certain federal funds to be released to assist the victim according to TVPA. Since such funds are not available to U.S. citizens, domestic victims do not need to be certified.¹⁹⁴

In Dallas, the Child Exploitation/High Risk Victims & Trafficking Unit (CE/HRVTU) of the Dallas Police Department is the primary initial stabilizer of victims. The CE/HRVTU has waged a very successful war against misconceptions through exceptional training and advocacy. Originally, the Dallas PD misidentified most human trafficking victims as criminal delinquents and willing prostitutes. Through the efforts of CE/HRVTU the Dallas PD now recognizes human trafficking minor victims as "High Risk Victims" and prevents their labeling as delinquents or prostitutes. The focus of the CE/HRVTU is to first identify and locate any potential victims. Once that has been achieved their focus is to stabilize the victim by removing them from the dangers of the street. After that, they

¹⁹¹ Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, 1.

¹⁹² Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, 45.

¹⁹³ Meza, Daniel. Telephone interview. 6 July 2009.

¹⁹⁴ Meza, Daniel. E-mail to the authors. 18 Aug. 2009.

direct their attention to the possible exploitation and/or abuse that the child may have suffered in the past. In an effort to comprehensively respond to the situation of exploitation/abuse it is the intention of the CE/HRVTU to identify the root causes that created an environment for the child to enter a life of prostitution. Another main goal of CE/HRVTU is to proactively curb repeat runaway incidents before the child is recruited into the commercial sex industry.¹⁹⁵ To accomplish this goal, the CE/HRVTU has a practice of flagging, as “High Risk Victims,” all minors who have run away from home four or more times in one year, and any minors that are repeat victims of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation.¹⁹⁶

When Dallas Police Department (“DPD”) rescues an international victim, they often bring the victim to the Mosaic Family Services. However, domestic victims only gain access to services by being charged with delinquency or prostitution. Dallas they are not sent to the juvenile detention center. Instead, all charged high risk victims are sent directly to Letot for secure placement. The Letot Center is a staff-secure facility where runaway girls are housed and receive therapy. For more information on the Letot Center see discussion below. In 2007, the DPD served 136 high risk victims. Of those victims, 61% were actively prostituting and 63 felony cases were made against their pimps. In 2008, the DPD served 207 high risk victims. Of those victims, 51% were actively prostituting and 94 felony cases were made against their pimps.¹⁹⁷

i. International Victims

As mentioned earlier, in the Dallas/ Fort Worth area if a victim is identified as an immigrant, they are sent to Mosaic Family Services. Mosaic is funded through the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, and Office for Victims of Crime (“OVC”). Mosaic is the founding member of the North Texas Anti-Trafficking Team and it coordinates services for all human trafficking victims, both domestic and international. However, funds provided by OVC are restricted to foreign national victims.

Mosaic provides comprehensive case management, including food, shelter, legal services, counseling, and assistance with access to other available

¹⁹⁵ Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, 11.

¹⁹⁶ Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, 3.

¹⁹⁷ Fassett, Byron Sgt. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

services, helping victims navigate the system and access benefits. Mosaic caseworkers have received training on sex trafficking, labor trafficking, and commercial sexual exploitation from the Freedom Network Training Institute, from national conference held by the Department of Justice, and through CE/HRVTU at the Anti-Trafficking Task Force meetings. If Mosaic cannot provide the necessary services or shelter, they find residential assistance and services for the victim.¹⁹⁸

Mosaic Family Services has at time referred international victims to Human Rights Initiative and to Catholic Charities for legal assistance. Catholic Charities provides legal immigration assistance for certified victims by processing T-Visa, U-Visa and work permit requests. Catholic Charities also has comprehensive case management services available for certified adults and any unaccompanied minor regardless of certification. This case management includes cash assistance and benefit management of TANF, Medicaid, etc.

Although adequate services exist for international victims in the Dallas community, most domestic victims do not receive the services and care necessary to get off the street and out of prostitution unless they are charged. There are some miscellaneous services provided by diverse local not for profit organizations that human trafficking victims could potentially utilize, but unfortunately, most of these organizations do not focus on human trafficking victims and they do not recognize these victims as human trafficking victims when they provide services to them. The problem stems from a lack of self-identification among the domestic victims as human trafficking victims. The victims might identify themselves as prostitutes or substance abuse victims, but ‘rarely to never’ do they self- identify as human trafficking victims. For that reason, it is hard to gather information on how many victims receive their services.

Another valuable organization in the community is Human Rights Initiative of North Texas (“HRI”). HRI provides free legal representation and social services to victims of human rights abuses and it also serves as a community resource on international human rights issues. In addition to international human trafficking victims, HRI’s clients include victims of human rights abuses seeking asylum in the United States; immigrant victims of spousal or child abuse at the hands of a U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident; immigrant

¹⁹⁸ Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, 47.

victims of violent crimes who assist law enforcement in the prosecution of those crimes; immigrant children who often flee from violence and travel to the U.S. alone; or immigrant children that have been abused, abandoned or neglected by their parents in the U.S. HRI has an award-winning Volunteer Attorney Program in which it recruits, trains and supervises volunteer attorneys to execute the majority of its legal caseload. On average, a pro bono attorney will spend up to 100 hours assisting a client. With three attorneys and one legal assistant on staff, HRI is able to manage an annual caseload of more than 300 active cases with the help of volunteer attorneys. Annually, over 190 volunteer attorneys provide legal services to HRI clients.

ii. Domestic Victims

If a victim is identified as a domestic victim and charged with a criminal offense, in Fort Worth, they are held in the local juvenile detention center and in Dallas they are sent to the Letot Center. Most commonly, DPD officers charge domestic victims with delinquency and place the minor in a staff-secure facility and limit their flight risk. Although DPD views minors engaged in prostitution as victims, officers have no alternative to filing a charge against them in order to detain them in a protective location. Due to an informal agreement with the juvenile judge in charge of detention hearings, law enforcement is able to take a minor suspected of being exploited through prostitution, who charged with prostitution or a lesser offense, directly to the Letot Center. The Letot Center is a staff-secure¹⁹⁹ facility that is a program of the Dallas County Juvenile Department. While it is a governmental agency, it also has a private non-profit status. The Letot Capital Foundation generated the funds to build the existing facility and currently partners with Dallas County to maintain the facility. A court order is not required for admission because the Letot Center is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services as an Emergency Shelter.²⁰⁰ The mission of the Letot Center is to prevent the abuse and exploitation of adolescents by collaborating with law enforcement and providing a wide range of professional services. It strives to divert adolescents from the juvenile justice system and, when appropriate, reunite runaway adolescents with their families and their schools. Caseworkers at

¹⁹⁹ “Staff-secure” indicates that the facility is not locked from the inside and the children can leave, but that the doors are secured by staff who supervise to ensure that they do not.

²⁰⁰ Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, 13.

the Letot Center are all certified juvenile probation officers who then determine the best course of action for a charged minor. Letot Center staff works in conjunction with the High Risk Victims Unit of the Dallas Police Department and the Juvenile Courts to determine whether to defer prosecution of a charge or implement an alternative probation plan (including a placement plan). If a parent or guardian is identified, a minor may be allowed to receive family services from home.²⁰¹

Free legal services are available to domestic victims through the Dallas County Public Defender's Office (PDO) Juvenile Division. The PDO is separate from the courts, prosecutors, and probation services. In the 304th and 305th District juvenile courts, there are four public defenders, any one of whom may represent minors in cases that involve prostitution or other types of sexual exploitation. Because most victims are taken directly to the Letot Center, they are not coming into contact with public defenders immediately. A minor will only receive legal services from a public defender or a private attorney after a case has been filed and the minor is served papers to attend an Announcement Hearing with a Juvenile Judge. If a minor involved in prostitution is referred for a disposition hearing, a public defender has access to any reports that a prosecutor has accessed, including those created by law enforcement, the Juvenile Probation Officers and CPS. Public defenders do not have mandated training in sex trafficking. Should information regarding any sexual exploitation arise from interviews between a public defender and a referred minor, the protocol is to contact CPS, when appropriate, and the High Risk Victims Unit, so the minor can be interviewed regarding victimization. Although an adult is most commonly involved in a juvenile's prostitution, most charged victims are not forthcoming with information on their trafficker. Since public defenders do not raise domestic minor sex trafficking as a key defense, questioning along these lines to identify a trafficker is not necessarily pursued.²⁰² Training public defenders on how to identify a human trafficking victim is a necessary step to protect victims and criminalize their traffickers.

Promise House, a shelter facility located in Dallas, embraces homeless, runaway and at-risk teens, giving them needed support, encouragement and hope to live a better life.²⁰³ Nine programs cover the vital needs of teens,

²⁰¹ Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, 13.

²⁰² Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, 16.

²⁰³ Collier, Joshua. E-mail to the authors. 21 Aug. 2009.

including emergency shelter, transitional living, pregnant and parenting teen services, individual, group and family counseling, substance abuse prevention and education, street outreach and educational intervention.²⁰⁴

Many issues lead a teen and their family to seek the services of Promise House, including family crisis, school conflict and truancy, and abuse and neglect. Promise House is dedicated to providing the strength, stability and hope that teens need today to fulfill their promise for a healthy, productive and self-sufficient tomorrow. Since 1984, Promise House has had an open door 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to youth and families in crisis serving nearly 60,000 teens and families in North Texas. For more information about Promise House, visit www.promisehouse.org.²⁰⁵

The Family Place, located in Dallas, is another shelter that sometimes houses human trafficking victims. Its mission is to eliminate family violence through proactive prevention, and intervention, extensive community education, advocacy, and assistance for victims and their families. It serves approximately 350 women and 400 children in the emergency shelter each year and about 1500 women and 500 children in nonresidential counseling per year.²⁰⁶

New Life Opportunities is a project coalition between the staff of a local not-for-profit organization, Homeward Bound, and local law enforcement agencies. New Life focuses on removing commercial sex workers from the street. The project is conducted in two phases. The first phase is led by law enforcement and includes bringing social and medical services as well as the judiciary into the targeted area. Social, medical, and judicial services are rendered as an alternative to incarceration. This effort occurs the first Wednesday of each month and includes volunteers from the following organizations: Dallas Police Department, Dallas County Sheriff's Department, Dallas County Health Department, City of Dallas Attorney's Office, Community Court, Dallas County Judiciary and Probation, and forty-five social service providers. There is a comprehensive screening, assessment, and evaluation done by licensed counselors and medical health professionals on-site. There is also a collective recommendation made to the judiciary for suggested services that the individual might benefit from and

²⁰⁴ Collier, Joshua. E-mail to the authors. 21 Aug. 2009.

²⁰⁵ Collier, Joshua. E-mail to the authors. 21 Aug. 2009.

²⁰⁶ Hageman, Tina. E-mail interview. 10 July 2009.

be willing to enter. If all parties are in agreement, then the individual can be transported to care that evening. The next phase for those not incarcerated is the treatment portion in which the individual is admitted into substance abuse and/or mental health treatment services. The treatment programs typically are residential in nature and last approximately 45 days. During that time, substance abuse, mental health, physical health, and trauma issues are identified and addressed by professional licensed staff. Following the 45-day program, there is a 60-day funded stay at a transitional home for women that allows for re-integration into the community. New Life has mentors and peer advocates that continue to work with the individuals during this transition and they request participation in outpatient services that parallel with their other commitments such as job searches, job skills training, and recovery meetings.²⁰⁷

New Friends New Life is a faith-based organization that addresses all areas of a woman's life.²⁰⁸ Basic living expenses are provided while women become stable, gain job skills and secure conventional employment. In cooperation with other agencies and individuals, women receive legal, medical and dental services, budgeting training and other life skills. Women are required to obtain additional education and job training. A weekly support meeting for women and their children is a key component of the program. On average, there are twenty-five women at any given time receiving comprehensive services. Any sex industry worker is eligible for services, including victims of human trafficking.²⁰⁹

Victim's Outreach, Inc. is another Dallas non-profit organization with the potential to serve human trafficking victims. Its mission is to serve survivors of violent crimes, including, for example, victims of rape and car-jacking. The services they provide include crisis intervention, counseling, legal advocacy, assistance with CVC claims and advocacy and referral to other providers as needed. They serve 800 victims a year and the length of service varies from one crisis call or therapy session to many interventions over multiple months.²¹⁰

While law enforcement is receiving education and resources, service providers and the community at large do not understand how to identify or

²⁰⁷ Breazelee, Renee. E-mail interview. 8 July 2009.

²⁰⁸ Shackelford, Lyla. Telephone interview. 16 July 2009.

²⁰⁹ Shackelford, Lyla. E-mail to the authors. 18 Aug. 2009.

²¹⁰ Alexander, Claudia. Telephone interview. 23 July 2009.

respond to the commercial sexual exploitation of domestic minors.²¹¹ This problem is compounded by a lack of self-identification by the victims as human trafficking victims.

All rescued international victims have fairly comprehensive services available though Mosaic Family Services, Human Rights Initiative, and Catholic Charities. Unfortunately, there are no specific services available and targeted towards domestic minor victims of human trafficking who are not arrested and charged with prostitution. The only possibility of services exists through outside not-for-profit organizations. These organizations have expressed the need for more bilingual therapists, child therapists, additional transitional housing, and funding. Many domestic victims do not have responsible parents or guardians and are flight risks. For that reason, they require treatment in a secure facility at the beginning of their restoration.²¹² The greatest need in the Dallas community is a long-term residential facility for domestic victims.

3. Waco

Waco is a city located in McLennan County, Texas with a population of 121,496.²¹³ I-35 is the major north-south highway for Waco, which directly connects the city to Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, and San Antonio. Waco's highways make the city centrally located and easier to pass through to get to the larger hubs like Dallas and Houston. Major highway accessibility may be a contributing factor to the area's inability to combat human trafficking. In Waco, service providers are just beginning their anti-human trafficking efforts through outreach in the community. There are 35 to 40 non-governmental organizations and law enforcement members on the Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition which meets quarterly.²¹⁴ The members have encountered domestic servitude, sex trafficking, and labor trafficking cases since the time the Coalition first met in July 2007.²¹⁵ One of the members, the Ruth Project, conducts outreach to local churches, educating congregations on human trafficking and how to recognize victims. Labor

²¹¹ Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, 23.

²¹² Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, 43.

²¹³ United States. Census Bureau. Waco (city), Texas. 2006 Estimate. 18 Aug. 2009. 20 Aug. 2009 <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48/4876000.html>>.

²¹⁴ Kotrla, Kim Ph.D., LCSW. Phone Interview. 15 July 2009.

²¹⁵ Kotrla, Kim, Ph.D. LCSW. Phone Interview. 15 July 2009.

trafficking and domestic servitude are especially significant issues in this area. Because of limited resources and services available, all human trafficking victims are referred to Mosaic Family Services in Dallas for more comprehensive services.

The Waco Police Department has established one of the first John Schools in the state to combat the demand for prostitution in the Waco area.²¹⁶ Officer Anita Johnson established the school to deter first-time offenders from receiving further services from prostitutes.²¹⁷ When “johns” are arrested in a prostitution sting operation, they are brought down to the police station and processed. If the offender has been arrested for any crime involving violence, drugs, weapons, or any sex crime, he does not qualify to attend. If the offender qualifies and agrees to participate in the program, then the officer writes the offender summons to report to the school in 10 days for a mandatory all day program.²¹⁸ If a “john” does not attend the program, then the summons is dismissed and a warrant is issued for their arrest²¹⁹. The “johns” have to pay \$350 dollars to participate in this program.²²⁰ The John School consists of an all-day program with various speakers, including staff members from the Family Violence Center and the Freeman Center for Substance Abuse, a psychologist to discuss sex addictions, a staff member from the Health Department to teach about various STDs and methods of recognizing them and to provide free HIV tests, an ex-spouse of a John to discuss how prostitution affects marriages, neighborhood members to speak about how prostitution affects neighborhoods, and former prostitutes to talk about their lives as prostitutes and prostitution’s negative effects on their lives.²²¹ Since the creation of the John School in Waco there have been only three repeat offenders.²²² The John School meets after there is a prostitution sting in the Waco area. Even if a “john” is not selected for the John School, the police will place the offender’s photo on their website to notify the public and to provide a deterrent mechanism.²²³

²¹⁶ Johnson, Anita. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²¹⁷ Johnson, Anita. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²¹⁸ Johnson, Anita. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²¹⁹ Johnson, Anita. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²²⁰ Johnson, Anita. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²²¹ Johnson, Anita. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²²² Johnson, Anita. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²²³ Johnson, Anita. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

Waco Police Department also has a Crimes Against Children Unit that handles children who are victims of sexual assault, abuse or neglect, or runaways. The unit investigates any crimes against children, but does not specifically handle human trafficking of children in the Waco area.²²⁴

i. International Victims

The Ruth Project (TRP) has been in existence for almost three years and it originated from the internship work of Baylor Social Work graduate students who were concerned with immigration issues. They teamed up with the Waco Regional Baptist Network to develop the project in its current state. The Ruth Project's main focus is to provide legal and social assistance in a compassionate and professional manner to all the Waco's immigrant community, including international victims of human trafficking, as well as to reach out to churches and other players in the community. Services provided include consultations, document preparation, legal case management, public education forums, and other social services.²²⁵ The organization's main role in human trafficking is educating the public through religious collaborations and community events.²²⁶ The Ruth Project educates churches on T- and U-Visa, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which also gives victims certain benefits, the definition of human trafficking, and methods of identifying a victim.²²⁷ The Ruth Project has also identified two individual cases of labor trafficking in the Waco area since the time of its inception.

ii. Domestic Victims

The Family Abuse Center (FAC) exists to eliminate domestic violence in Central Texas by sheltering victims of domestic violence and by preventing abuse through intervention and education.²²⁸ The FAC shelter is a sixty-bed facility, offering three meals and healthy snacks each day, rooms for families as well as rooms for single women, individual counseling, group

²²⁴ Hambrick, John Sgt. Telephone interview. 31 July 2009.

²²⁵ "Ruth Project." [Waco Regional Baptist Network.org](http://www.wacoregionalbaptistnetwork.org). No date. 13 July 2009 <<http://www.wacoregionalbaptistnetwork.org/ministries/RUTHproject.php>>.

²²⁶ Ruth Project. Telephone interview. 9 July 2009.

²²⁷ Ruth Project. Telephone interview. 9 July 2009.

²²⁸ "About Us." [Family Abuse Center.org](http://www.familyabusecenter.org). No date. 30 July 2009

<<http://www.familyabusecenter.org/AboutUs.aspx> retrieved 2009-7-30>.

therapy, life skills, financial planning classes, and legal advocacy.²²⁹ The emergency shelter is available to clients for up to 60 days.²³⁰

The Family Abuse Center offers individual and group counseling for victims and their children. Counseling can include crisis intervention, safety planning, as well as therapeutic help in rebuilding one's life.²³¹ Counseling is available to shelter residents and non-residents. Family Abuse Center provides a support group for victims of domestic violence who do not reside at the shelter.²³² Typically, the program lasts from 8-10 weeks with group discussions on domestic violence education, co-dependency, boundaries, self-esteem, grief, anger management, shame and guilt, and self-care.²³³ Group therapy sessions are facilitated by a licensed professional.²³⁴ Although the Family Abuse Center is not specifically targeted to help human trafficking victims, they are open and willing to serve both domestic and international human trafficking victims.²³⁵

The Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children originated in 1976 and was formerly known as the Waco Rape Crisis Center.²³⁶ The Center now houses three diverse programs, including: the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC), Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), and the Victims Center.²³⁷ The Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children assists survivors of violence and abuse. Safe, professional, and confidential, services are available for victims and their friends and families.²³⁸ The Center responds immediately to survivors of violence through hotline advocacy and therapeutic services. While 70 percent of those served by the program are affected by sexual assault, the agency works with all victims of all crimes including international and domestic human trafficking victims.²³⁹ The agency provides group counseling, as well as family, and individual

²²⁹ Family Abuse Center, [About Us](#).

²³⁰ Miller, Seth. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²³¹ Family Abuse Center, [About Us](#).

²³² Miller, Seth. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²³³ Family Abuse Center, [About Us](#).

²³⁴ Family Abuse Center, [About Us](#).

²³⁵ Miller, Seth. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²³⁶ "Three programs, one agency, one mission..." [Advocacycntr.org](#). No date. Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children. 30 July 2009

<<http://www.advocacycntr.org/VictimsCenter.asp>>.

²³⁷ Davis, David. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²³⁸ Advocacy Center, [Three programs, one agency, one mission...](#)

²³⁹ Davis, David. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

counseling to clients. It provides 8 to 12 sessions to victims over a span of time depending on client's needs.²⁴⁰ The program receives referrals from Child Protective Services (CPS), hotlines, hospitals, and law enforcement concerning victims in need of services.²⁴¹

4. San Antonio

San Antonio occupies 368.6 square miles in Bexar County with a population of 1,296,682.²⁴² San Antonio is the second largest city in Texas and the seventh largest city in the United States.²⁴³ San Antonio is in South Central Texas, approximately 140 miles northwest of the Gulf of Mexico and 150 miles northeast of the city of Laredo on the Mexican border.

There is a large number of domestic trafficking victims in San Antonio; however funding options are extremely limited for most service providers who serve them. The South Texas Human Trafficking Coalition services the San Antonio area.²⁴⁴ This area also sees more with sex trafficking than labor trafficking.²⁴⁵ The coalition and many of its members do outreach at community fairs and health fairs, and also reach out to underserved neighborhoods to educate people on human trafficking.²⁴⁶ Service providers have seen an increased interest during their trainings and outreach activities. NGOs in the area hope that more cases will be recognized, reported, and prosecuted because of their efforts.

Bexar County Sheriff's Office has a Human Trafficking Unit that was established approximately three years ago to combat human trafficking.²⁴⁷ The Unit receives its leads on human trafficking and trafficking victims from local non-profit organizations, probation officers, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Services, the National Human Trafficking Hotline, and concerned citizens. The Unit provides a lot of training to patrol

²⁴⁰ Davis, David. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²⁴¹ Davis, David. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²⁴² United States. Census Bureau. San Antonio (city), Texas. 2006 Estimate. 18 Aug. 2009. 20 Aug. 2009 <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48/4865000.html>>.

²⁴³ Ayala, Elaine. "S. A. Again Census Standout". San Antonio Express News. 1 July 2009: B1. 20 Aug. 2009.

<http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local_news/SA_again_census_standout.html>.

²⁴⁴ Moreno, Melissa. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

²⁴⁵ Moreno, Melissa. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

²⁴⁶ Moreno, Melissa. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

²⁴⁷ Garza, Jerry Det. Telephone interview. 31 July 2009.

officers, probation officers, and other law enforcement personnel to educate them on methods of recognizing a human trafficking victim. The Unit also conducts outreach to the San Antonio community to encourage community members to report suspicious activity of possible human trafficking. This is also a way for the department to educate the public on the issue. Detective Garza, who is with the Unit, believes that getting the word out is essential in combating human trafficking. The average age for international human trafficking victims in San Antonio is twelve years old and the average age for domestic human trafficking is thirteen.²⁴⁸ He agrees with local NGOs that domestic trafficking is a serious issue in San Antonio. Gangs in San Antonio are actively involved in human trafficking by forcing girls into prostitution.²⁴⁹ There is also a large concern for runaways who are forced into domestic human trafficking. Unfortunately, there are limited resources for domestic human trafficking victims in San Antonio. Overall, Bexar County is playing a significant role in combating human trafficking and educating the public on its existence in their community.

i. International Victims

Catholic Charities serves 32 counties in the state of Texas.²⁵⁰ Their anti-trafficking program was started in 2006 to help trafficking victims in the San Antonio area.²⁵¹ This program helps victims directly by providing immigration legal services, food, housing, medical services, mental health services, client advocacy, and interpretation services.²⁵² The program also provides technical support to law enforcement and other agencies in the community.²⁵³ The members of the program are also spreading more information out about human trafficking in the communities through outreach and awareness activities.²⁵⁴ However, the largest gap in services available for victims of human trafficking is long-term services.²⁵⁵

Embassy of Hope Center (EOHC) is a faith-based, non-profit center that aims to bridge community resources in order to realize emotional and

²⁴⁸ Garza, Jerry Det. Telephone interview. 31 July 2009.

²⁴⁹ Garza, Jerry Det. Telephone interview. 31 July 2009.

²⁵⁰ Moreno, Melissa. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

²⁵¹ Moreno, Melissa. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

²⁵² Moreno, Melissa. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

²⁵³ Moreno, Melissa. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

²⁵⁴ Moreno, Melissa. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

²⁵⁵ Moreno, Melissa. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

spiritual growth for survivors of violence, trauma, abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation, or slavery.²⁵⁶ The Center encourages healing through a holistic, survivor-centered approach and provides migrants with assistance at no charge.²⁵⁷ EOHC provides housing referrals, healthcare, and advocacy services for physically, sexually, and emotionally abused victims. The Center also provides mentoring and practical needs assessment.²⁵⁸ EOHC is a non-traditional, non-medical treatment center, and its employees are not licensed counselors.²⁵⁹ EOHC is a member of Every Child Has Options (ECHO), an anti-human trafficking taskforce. EOHC is actively fighting against human trafficking in Texas by serving victims and by reaching out to schools, professionals, and other members of the community.²⁶⁰ They serve both domestic and international victims of human trafficking.²⁶¹

ii. Domestic Victims

The Rape Crisis Center (RCC) for children and adults was founded in 1975 to provide comprehensive services to sexual assault victims and their families.²⁶² The Center also conducts sexual assault education programs throughout Bexar County and surrounding areas.²⁶³ Established as a non-profit 501(c)(3) agency, the Rape Crisis Center receives funding federal, state, and local funding, as well as funding from private individuals, foundations and the business community.²⁶⁴

Counseling services are designed to assist clients to start living more comfortably in the immediate crisis.²⁶⁵ The RCC offers a variety of counseling services, including individual, group, child play therapy, and specialized groups, such as Adults Molested as Children and PTSD Symptom Management support groups and others.²⁶⁶ The RCC offers these services free to their clients and provides transportation to and from

²⁵⁶ “One Changed Life Impacts Generations.” [Embassy of Hope Center.org](http://www.embassyofhopecenter.org/). No date. 30 July 2009 <<http://www.embassyofhopecenter.org/>>.

²⁵⁷ Crooks, Elizabeth. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²⁵⁸ Crooks, Elizabeth. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²⁵⁹ Embassy of Hope Center, [One Changed Life...](#)

²⁶⁰ Crooks, Elizabeth. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²⁶¹ Crooks, Elizabeth. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²⁶² [Rapecrisis.com](http://rapecrisis.com). 2007. Rape Crisis Center. 20 Aug. 2009 <<http://rapecrisis.com/>>.

²⁶³ [Rapecrisis.com](http://rapecrisis.com).

²⁶⁴ [Rapecrisis.com](http://rapecrisis.com).

²⁶⁵ [Rapecrisis.com](http://rapecrisis.com).

²⁶⁶ [Rapecrisis.com](http://rapecrisis.com).

counseling sessions as needed.²⁶⁷ The risk reduction education component of the project provides age appropriate curriculum for youth in grades K through 12.²⁶⁸ These sessions ensure students are educated on issues of risk reduction and general steps they may take to make themselves and their learning environment safer. The students are also given tools on how to utilize available community resources.²⁶⁹ At the middle school, high school, and university levels, training sessions focus on a variety of topics, including bullying, battering, rape awareness, violence, sexual harassment, healthy relationships, date rape and violence, and issues of consent.²⁷⁰

The Battered Women and Children's Shelter is a program sponsored by the Family Violence Prevention Services, Inc. and dedicated to breaking the cycle of family violence and strengthening families by providing the necessary tools for self-sufficiency through emergency shelter, transitional housing, education, effective parenting and early intervention with children and youth.²⁷¹ The Battered Women and Children's Shelter provides an array of long-term, comprehensive residential and non-residential programs including 24-hour crisis hotline/crisis intervention, comprehensive case management, individual and group counseling, educational workshops, parenting workshops, primary medical care, legal advocacy and referrals, comprehensive programs for children, support groups (English & Spanish), emergency food and clothing, and transitional housing.²⁷²

5. Austin

Austin is the capital of Texas and located in Travis County. It is the fourth largest city in Texas and the 15th largest in the United States. Austin has a population of 725,306 people. Central Austin is bracketed by Interstate 35 to the east and the Mopac Expressway to the west; U.S. Highway 183 runs from northwest to southwest, and State Highway 71 crosses southern part of the city from east to west, completing a rough "box" around the central and north central city; U.S. Highway 290 enters Austin from the east and merges into I-35.

²⁶⁷ Rapecrisis.com.

²⁶⁸ Rapecrisis.com.

²⁶⁹ Rapecrisis.com.

²⁷⁰ Rapecrisis.com.

²⁷¹ [Family Violence Prevention Center](http://www.fvps.org/). 2008. Battered Women and Children Shelter. 30

July 30 <<http://www.fvps.org/>>.

²⁷² [Family Violence Prevention Center](http://www.fvps.org/).

In Austin, human trafficking is an important issue for service providers and law enforcement. Austin is both a destination and transient city for traffickers. Direct service providers have come across both sex and labor trafficking in Austin. Austin has a well-established anti-human trafficking coalition. Their human trafficking coalition uses the one-person contact model. When someone calls the 1-888-3737-888 National Human Trafficking Hotline to report suspicious activity, the designated contact person is called and notifies the other coalition members for further investigation, 24 hours a day. The coalition consists of NGOs and law enforcement and has encountered both suspected and confirmed cases of human trafficking.

i. International Victims

Refugee Services of Texas is a professional agency dedicated to providing quality resettlement to refugees and other displaced persons from around the world. The agency works in partnership with faith-based communities, businesses, and volunteers.²⁷³ It also provides clients with resources, referrals, education, and guidance to ensure their successful and self-sufficient lives in Texas.²⁷⁴ Refugee Services encounters both sex trafficking and domestic servitude victims. Refugee Services does not provide shelter to their clients, but community partners assist the agency with their clients' shelter needs. Refugee Services works solely with international human trafficking victims.²⁷⁵ The personnel receive referrals from community members and provide intake with victims and connects victims with the agency's legal partners. Refugee Services is also a member of Central Texas Coalition Against Human Trafficking.²⁷⁶ They serve as a 24-hour contact for law enforcement and the National Human Trafficking Hotline. Therefore, when a human trafficking case is brought to Refugee Services by law enforcement, the personnel assess a victim's needs and disseminate information to other coalition members for their input, resources, and availability of services for the case. Even though Refugee Services works hard to combat human trafficking and provides a significant number of

²⁷³ Refugee Services of Texas, Inc. 2009. 7 Aug. 2009.

<<http://refugeeservicestexas.tripod.com/>>.

²⁷⁴ Refugee Services of Texas, Inc.

²⁷⁵ Anonymous Source. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

²⁷⁶ Anonymous Source. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

services, there is still a need for long-term case management in the Austin area.²⁷⁷

ii. Domestic Victims

Central Texas Youth Services (CTYS) provides counseling, emergency shelter, transitional living, information and referral services and 24-hour hotline at no cost to eligible youth and their families throughout Central Texas.²⁷⁸ CTYS has four programs to serve the vast needs of their clients: (1) Option House, (2) Project Future, (3) Community Youth Development, and (4) Street Outreach for Survival. Option House is a 15-bed emergency shelter for children and youth ages 3-17 years.²⁷⁹ CTYS has been operating Option House since 1977. CTYS also provides the following services at no cost to eligible children, youth, or their families: 24-hour emergency shelter care, food, counseling, medical and dental screening, assessment, information and referral, and independent living skills training.²⁸⁰ The children and youth they serve may be homeless, runaways, push-outs, or removed from their home due to abuse and/or neglect.²⁸¹ They also offer a cooling-off period up to three days for families who are in crisis or conflict.²⁸² CTYS serves domestic human trafficking victims who are 25 and younger.²⁸³ Overall, CTYS tries to provide comprehensive services to troubled children, youth, and families, counseling, case management, and shelter to include victims of human trafficking.²⁸⁴

6. El Paso

El Paso is a city in El Paso County, Texas.²⁸⁵ According to the United States Census Bureau's 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year population estimates, the city had a population of 592,627.²⁸⁶ It is the sixth

²⁷⁷ Anonymous Source. Telephone interview. 15 July 2009.

²⁷⁸ Central Texas Youth Services Online. 2009. 31 July 2009

<http://www.centraltexasyouthservices.org/emergency_shelter.htm>.

²⁷⁹ Wicke, Steve. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²⁸⁰ Central Texas Youth Services Online.

²⁸¹ Wicke, Steve. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²⁸² Wicke, Steve. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²⁸³ Wicke, Steve. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²⁸⁴ Wicke, Steve. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

²⁸⁵ United States. Census Bureau. El Paso County, Texas. 2008 Estimate. 20 Aug. 2009

<<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48/48141.html>>.

²⁸⁶ Census Bureau, El Paso County, Texas.

largest city in Texas and the 22nd largest city in the United States. Its metropolitan area covers all of El Paso County. The metropolitan area has a population of 742,062.²⁸⁷ El Paso stands on the Rio Grande River across the border from Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua.

El Paso is a corridor for human trafficking because of its close proximity to the border. More cases of labor trafficking than sex trafficking are reported in this area. However, the area experiences lack of services for human trafficking victims. Just recently, the Salvation Army, a major provider in the area, has lost its funding from the Department of Justice to help human trafficking victims, but continues to service victims through volunteer services and prearranged agreement with service providers. However, the Salvation Army's budget restraints have hindered training of law enforcement and the community about the issue of human trafficking.

The El Paso Human Trafficking Task Force²⁸⁸ is a coalition and cooperation between federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, as well as NGOs and social services agencies.²⁸⁹ These organizations work together to investigate cases of human trafficking more effectively and to provide social services to victims in the El Paso area.

The El Paso Police Department has been tasked with coordinating a Human Trafficking Task Force. The U.S. Department of Justice has funded task forces in an effort to address the problem of human trafficking throughout the nation.²⁹⁰ This task force consists of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as local and federal prosecutors and non-governmental organizations. They work together in a cohesive effort to

²⁸⁷ Census Bureau, El Paso County, Texas.

²⁸⁸ The members of the task force include Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the FBI; the U.S. Attorney's Office; the U.S. Department of Labor; the U.S. Department of State; the U.S. Border Patrol; U.S. Customs and Border Protection; the U.S. Probation Office; the U.S. Consulate, Juarez, Mexico; the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; the Social Security Administration; the Union Pacific Railroad Police; the El Paso Police Department; the El Paso County Sheriff's Office; the Dona Ana County Sheriff's Office; the El Paso District Attorney's Office; Texas Alcohol and Beverage Control; the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services; the Texas Office of the Attorney General; the Casa Alexia Mission on the Border; Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services; the Salvation Army; the Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center; and the University of Texas El Paso Social Work.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁹ El Paso. Federal Bureau of Investigations. Partnerships. No date. 30 July 2009
<<http://elpaso.fbi.gov/partners.htm>>.

²⁹⁰ The State of Texas. City of El Paso. Human Trafficking Task Force. 2009. 7 Aug. 2009
<http://www.ci.el-paso.tx.us/police/human_trafficking.asp>.

identify and rescue victims of this crime and ensure that traffickers are punished.²⁹¹ In particular, when law enforcement receives a tip they investigate and they investigate and look for victims, the multi-agency task force works together to investigate the crime and to get the victims certified by FBI or ICE.²⁹² The task force uses a victim-centered approach in working with human trafficking victims.

i. International Victims

Las Americas was officially founded on May 1, 1987. A true El Paso-grown organization, Las Americas has developed a rich history and excellent reputation for assisting immigrants and refugees.²⁹³ Las Americas includes the Battered Immigrant Women Project, an organization that provides outreach services to immigrants who are victims of domestic violence and other crimes, as well as the community organizing group and health promoter program, Mujeres Unidas por La Justicia, Educacion y Respeto (MUJER), geared at educating and empowering immigrant women in El Paso in the areas of domestic violence, communicable diseases, and environmental health.²⁹⁴

At first, Las Americas focused on direct legal services and had a group of volunteers to assist in the preparing of asylum applications. Soon thereafter, Las Americas also began to advocate on issues involving refugees, detainees and immigrants. The project expanded to advocate issues of border enforcement, Border Patrol abuse and legislation affecting immigrants and their families. Las Americas partners at the local, state, and national levels with other groups working on these same issues. Las Americas continues to be one of the only non-profit legal service providers that assists persons seeking asylum and children detained by the government, while simultaneously addressing the ongoing needs of the immigrant community in El Paso, West Texas, and Southern New Mexico. Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center has served thousands of immigrants, refugees, and unaccompanied immigrant children over the years.²⁹⁵ Their programming includes high quality pro bono legal representation,

²⁹¹ City of El Paso. [Human Trafficking Task Force.](#)

²⁹² Watts, Eric Det. Telephone interview. 6 Aug. 2009.

²⁹³ [Las-Americas.org.](#) 2009. Las Americas: Immigrant Advocacy Center. 29 July 2009

<<http://www.las-americas.org/>>.

²⁹⁴ [Las-Americas.org.](#)

²⁹⁵ [Las-Americas.org.](#)

collaboration with government and private agencies that work with immigrants, nurturing self-reliance and self-esteem amongst clients, and coordinating aggressive public education throughout the El Paso area.²⁹⁶ Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center and MUJER are collaborating on a strategy to work with victims of trafficking. They currently conduct outreach programs in both Hudspeth County, Texas to the east and in Dona Ana County, New Mexico to the west. Both counties lie on the U.S.-Mexico border and both have large, sparsely populated desert areas that serve as migrant corridors. Help Prevent Slavery is limited to the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).²⁹⁷ The program is restricted to this area because the liaisons with law enforcement do not cover areas outside the El Paso MSA. Education and outreach is done using a two-tier system. The program's target population not only includes immigrants, but also those not living in the immigrant community.²⁹⁸ This includes healthcare workers, business owners and workers in stores in the area, truck stop employees, and cable installers. The outreach educators are conducting educational programs to alert those who live outside the community, but are in position to potentially recognize a situation of involuntary servitude, sex slavery or any other form of human trafficking.²⁹⁹

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Their message is based on the Bible. Their mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs without discrimination.³⁰⁰ The Salvation Army helps international human trafficking victims in the El Paso community. They have pre-arranged agreements with other community organizations to provide services to their clients for free. Services include mental health services, legal services, shelter, and medical services. The Salvation Army has taken an active role in community outreach and in training local law enforcement on human trafficking. The Salvation Army provides clothing and transportation to human trafficking victims. However, as mentioned above, the agency has recently lost its major funding source to fight human trafficking.

²⁹⁶ Las-Americas.org.

²⁹⁷ Las-Americas.org.

²⁹⁸ Las-Americas.org.

²⁹⁹ Las-americas.org.

³⁰⁰ [Salvation Army: Southwest Division](http://www1.usw.salvationarmy.org/usw/www_usw_southwest.nsf). 2009. 7 Aug. 2009.

<http://www1.usw.salvationarmy.org/usw/www_usw_southwest.nsf>.

Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services, Inc. (DMRS) is a full-service immigration legal aid clinic serving low-income immigrants and refugees residing in the southwestern United States.³⁰¹ DMRS began providing legal services in 1987 to Central and South American refugees fleeing their war-torn countries and to undocumented immigrants needing legal assistance.³⁰² Since then, the organization has grown in experience and stature, celebrating 21 years of active service to many new immigrants within the community. Over the years, DMRS has expanded its services to provide legal assistance to individuals and families facing removal from the United States, individuals seeking to attain citizenship, individuals looking for assistance with the family-based immigration process. DMRS also has a special focus on unification and reunification of families and on victims of domestic violence and human trafficking.³⁰³ The Board of Immigration Appeals has accredited DMRS, thereby giving several of their non-attorney staff the authority to represent clients in administrative and immigration court proceedings.³⁰⁴

The Institute of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity was founded by St. John Eudes, in 1641 in Caen, France. On July 8, 1855, Sister Jerome Tourneux of Rennes, France, established the first Foundation in North America in Buffalo, New York, and thus began the spread of the Mission of Our Lady of Charity in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.³⁰⁵ They are located in Hamburg & Newburgh, New York, Erie and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Wheeling, West Virginia, El Paso, Texas, Carrollton, Ohio, Green Bay, Wisconsin, San Diego, California, and in Mexico and Canada.³⁰⁶

The primary mission of Sisters of Our Lady Charity is to work with “women in need.”³⁰⁷ Today their ministries include counseling, serving in English- and Spanish-speaking parishes, counseling troubled teenage girls, daycare for children and adults, teaching in schools and in religious education

³⁰¹ [Dmrs-ep.org](http://www.dmrs-ep.org). 2006. Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Service. 21 Aug. 2009
<<http://www.dmrs-ep.org/>>.

³⁰² [Dmrs-ep.org](http://www.dmrs-ep.org).

³⁰³ [Dmrs-ep.org](http://www.dmrs-ep.org).

³⁰⁴ [Dmrs-ep.org](http://www.dmrs-ep.org).

³⁰⁵ [Sister of Our Lady of Charity Online](http://www.nauolc.org/about.html). 2009. 25 July 2009

<<http://www.nauolc.org/about.html>>.

³⁰⁶ [Sister of Our Lady of Charity Online](http://www.nauolc.org/about.html).

³⁰⁷ [Sister of Our Lady of Charity Online](http://www.nauolc.org/about.html).

programs, and providing rehabilitation and nursing care for the ill, elderly, and people with AIDS.³⁰⁸

ii. Domestic Victims

STARS, formerly Rape Crisis Center of El Paso, is El Paso's only rape crisis center whose mission is to promote a world without sexual violence through education about sexual violence issues and to provide services to victims/survivors and all those affected.³⁰⁹ STARS is a member of El Paso's anti-human trafficking taskforce.³¹⁰ STARS provides peer counseling, individual counseling, referrals, and court preparation and accompaniment for victims.³¹¹ STARS does community outreach to law enforcement, schools, and other professionals. STARS also has a dedicated crisis hotline for victims. In 2008, out of 1000 calls to the hotline, 303 of those calls were reported to the police.³¹² All the services that are provided are free. STARS helps both domestic and international victims who have been sexually assaulted.³¹³

7. The Border

Brownsville is Texas's southernmost, international seaport and the largest city in the lower Rio Grande Valley.³¹⁴ Brownsville's location is about 25 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico at an elevation of approximately 33 feet above sea level.³¹⁵ Brownsville is located in Cameron County, Texas. Brownsville is the 15th largest city in the state of Texas and the 130th largest in the United States. The population is currently estimated at 172,825.³¹⁶ Brownsville is also the southernmost city in Texas. It is adjacent to Mexico and it is sister city to the City of Matamoros located in the Mexican state of Tamaulipas.³¹⁷ The per capita income for the city is

³⁰⁸ Sister of Our Lady of Charity Online.

³⁰⁹ Giovas, Kathy. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

³¹⁰ Giovas, Kathy. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

³¹¹ Giovas, Kathy. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

³¹² Giovas, Kathy. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

³¹³ Giovas, Kathy. Telephone interview. 30 July 2009.

³¹⁴ Brownsville, Texas. The Chamber. Live and Work. No date. 28 July 2009 <<http://www.brownsvillechamber.com/live/index.asp>>.

³¹⁵ Brownsville Chamber of Commerce.

³¹⁶ United States. Census Bureau. Brownsville (city), Texas. 2006 Estimate. 18 Aug. 2009. 21 Aug. 2009 <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48/4810768.html>>.

³¹⁷ Brownsville Chamber of Commerce.

\$11,161. About 36.6 percent of families and 40.2 percent of the population are below the poverty line, giving it one of the highest poverty rates of any city in the United States.³¹⁸ Brownsville is serviced by U.S. Route 77 to Kingsville and Corpus Christi, U.S. Route 83 to McAllen, and U.S. Route 281 to Edinburg.

While there are a lot of human trafficking victims in Brownsville, the majority of these victims are simply passing through as they are being disbursed to other areas of the state and country. The victims that are identified usually come out of “mom and pop” shops. These “mom and pop” shop operations often take advantage of situations where an individual finds himself in a position to exploit one to three victims while avoiding law enforcement and the community. Consequently, victims coming out of these situations are difficult to assist, as their stories and evidence are hard to prove. Further, the Rio Grande Valley experiences a tremendous lack of available social services. Any victims identified by law enforcement or ICE are sent to San Antonio or other facilities around the state to receive services. Additionally, there does not seem to be much focus on domestic victims.

The Brownsville Police Department currently views human trafficking as a federal issue and refers any cases of international human trafficking to Immigration and Customs Enforcement Service and/or Border Patrol. They are largely unaware of domestic human trafficking issue in the Brownsville area and view prostitutes as criminals. However, there is hope that more training will bring needed attention to domestic as well as international human trafficking in the Brownsville area.

i. International Victims

Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid (TRLA) is playing a significant role in Human Trafficking on the Texas border. It is a non-profit organization that provides free civil and criminal legal services to indigent residents of Southwest Texas. It provides legal services in 68 counties in Texas and provides public defenders to eight counties in Texas.³¹⁹ TRLA has branch offices in Weslaco, Austin, El Paso, Corpus Christi, San Antonio, Del Rio, Eagle Pass,

³¹⁸ Census Bureau. Brownsville, Texas.

³¹⁹ Texas RioGrande Legal Aid Online. 2009. 7 Aug. 2009 <<http://trla.wordpress.com/>>.

Harlingen, Edinburg, Laredo, Sinton, and Victoria.³²⁰ TRLA is funded by the Federal Legal Services Corporation, Texas Access to Justice Foundation, the Department of Justice, and individual donations. TRLA is the third largest federally funded legal services provider in the nation with approximately 125 attorneys.³²¹

TRLA received their first international human trafficking case in 2004.³²² TRLA helps victims of human trafficking to receive T- or U-visas.³²³ However, T-visas usually take three months to a year and half to be processed for victims of human trafficking. TRLA works with international human trafficking victims but are able to work with domestic human trafficking victims with wage claims as well.³²⁴ TRLA handles more labor trafficking cases than sex trafficking cases in the border area.³²⁵ However, sex trafficking is occurring but it is difficult to get into the cantinas to investigate individual cases.³²⁶ TRLA finds less organized human trafficking on the border as the border is usually just a transient point for the highly sophisticated networks of traffickers.³²⁷ It is also very difficult to find witnesses or even the victims themselves because they are too scared to testify against the traffickers.³²⁸ Therefore, it is very hard to prosecute and to obtain corroborating evidence against the traffickers in this area.³²⁹ Nevertheless, TRLA is still combating human trafficking through community outreach to non-profits, churches, and various service providers and direct outreach to vulnerable populations such as farm workers, colonias residents, and victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

La Posada Providencia, founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Divine Providence, is a ministry for people in crisis from around the world, who are seeking legal refuge in this country.³³⁰ The Shelter staff provides a safe and

³²⁰ [Texas RioGrande Legal Aid Online.](#)

³²¹ [Texas RioGrande Legal Aid Online.](#)

³²² Schommer, Erica. Telephone interview. 9 July 2009.

³²³ Schommer, Erica. Telephone interview. 9 July 2009.

³²⁴ Schommer, Erica. Telephone interview. 9 July 2009.

³²⁵ Schommer, Erica. Telephone interview. 9 July 2009.

³²⁶ Schommer, Erica. Telephone interview. 9 July 2009.

³²⁷ Schommer, Erica. Telephone interview. 9 July 2009.

³²⁸ Schommer, Erica. Telephone interview. 9 July 2009.

³²⁹ Schommer, Erica. Telephone interview. 9 July 2009.

³³⁰ Telkamp, Zita (Sister Zita). Telephone interview. 24 July 2009.

welcoming home as well as mentors to promote self-sufficiency and cultural integration.³³¹

Since 1989, La Posada has provided shelter to over 5,000 refugees from 72 countries, including countries with oppressive regimes and those that have experienced natural disasters. Refugees housed in La Posada are in the legal process of seeking asylum or other legal relief in the United States.³³² By sharing knowledge, experience, and community resources, La Posada helps the population served to strive for self-sufficiency and to integrate more easily into U.S. culture. La Posada's program is able to shelter up to 17 people, and clients are able to stay in the facility for up to a year. La Posada provides them with mentor and case management services.

La Posada's specialized program service offerings have garnered local recognition. As a result, the shelter has a list of accomplishments representing long-standing community collaborations that benefit clients. La Posada works with more than 16 immigration and social service agencies, including Proyecto Libertad and ProBAR legal services agencies for asylum seekers detained by U.S. Immigration authorities.³³³ Collaborations offer valuable in-kind support, including medical, dental, and pharmaceutical services, language support, and job opportunities for clients with work permits.³³⁴ Neighboring churches also provide assistance. La Posada is not specifically designed to help human trafficking victims, but the shelter is an option for victims who qualify for the services and are referred by ICE.³³⁵

ii. Domestic Victims

The Family Crisis Center is a corporation established to provide temporary shelter and sustenance for women and their children who are victims of domestic violence, to provide educational and counseling services for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence and victims' families, to undertake all lawful activities for the protection and assistance of such victims, and to educate the community on these issues.³³⁶

³³¹ Telkamp, Zita (Sister Zita). Telephone interview. 24 July 2009.

³³² Telkamp, Zita (Sister Zita). Telephone interview. 24 July 2009.

³³³ Telkamp, Zita (Sister Zita). Telephone interview. 24 July 2009.

³³⁴ Telkamp, Zita (Sister Zita). Telephone interview. 24 July 2009.

³³⁵ Telkamp, Zita (Sister Zita). Telephone interview. 24 July 2009.

³³⁶ "Family Crisis Center Helps Women, Children in Times of Domestic Crisis." Family Crisis Center Online. 2009. 30 July 2009 <<http://www.familycrisisctr.org/>>.

At the Family Crisis Center of the Rio Grande Valley, they offer a shelter, a sanctuary for victims of domestic abuse, and a place where women and children can turn to get the help and protection they need.³³⁷ The Family Crisis Center provides free and confidential services to victims of sexual assault in the northern Cameron and Willacy counties.³³⁸ These services include the following: 24-hour hotline; hospital accompaniment; accompaniment to police interviews and court proceedings; follow-up counseling for victims and their families; support groups for victims of rape, incest, marital rape, as well as abused children and teens; and educational programs for schools, community and professional groups.³³⁹ Family Crisis Center provides services to both domestic and international human trafficking victims.³⁴⁰ They are able to help up to 24 people at one time in their facility.³⁴¹ They have done 220 community outreach presentations and 27 professional presentations in 2008 alone.³⁴²

B. Successful Examples in Other States

According to the United States Department of Justice, 14,500 to 17,500 foreign nationals are trafficked into the United States each year,³⁴³ but the number of U.S. citizens trafficked within the borders of the United States is even higher. Each year, there are an estimated 200,000 American children at risk for trafficking into the sex industry alone.³⁴⁴

These victims of trafficking have unique needs not seen in other vulnerable populations.³⁴⁵ Those who have been victims of sex or labor trafficking face

³³⁷“Programs & Services.” Family Crisis Center Online. 2009. 30 July 2009 <<http://www.familycrisisctr.org/services/>>.

³³⁸ Heredia, Brenda. Telephone interview. July 30, 2009.

³³⁹ Family Crisis Center, Programs & Services.

³⁴⁰ Heredia, Brenda. Telephone interview. July 30, 2009.

³⁴¹ Heredia, Brenda. Telephone interview. July 30, 2009.

³⁴² Heredia, Brenda. Telephone interview. July 30, 2009.

³⁴³ United States. Dept. of Justice. Report to Congress from Attorney General John Ashcroft on U.S. Government Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons in Fiscal Year 2003. 1 May 2004. 19 July 2009 <<http://www.usdoj.gov/ag/050104agreporttocongresstvprav10.pdf>>.

³⁴⁴ United States. Dept. of Justice. National Crime Victims’ Rights Week. 29 May 2008. 19 July 2009 <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/ncvrw/2005/pg51.html>>.

³⁴⁵ Clawson, Heather J., and Nicole Butch. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Addressing the Needs of Victims of Human Trafficking: Challenges, Barriers, and Promising Practices. Rep.

medical and psychological issues not necessarily present in victims of domestic abuse or homelessness. Shelters accessible by the general public that serve the broader homeless population, as well as those targeted toward victims of domestic abuse, can fail to serve all of the needs of a human trafficking victim.³⁴⁶ Therefore, trafficking-specific shelters and resource centers have been established across the United States in order to address these needs. Most of the facilities provide similar services to trafficking victims, such as counseling, medical services, and educational opportunities. Though these similarities exist, each shelter offers services or develops funding plans tailored to its unique position in their respective communities.

Any group interested in opening a shelter could learn a great deal from each existing facility, but should tailor the actual model to meet its community's needs and resources.

1. San Francisco, California

In 2008, the FBI conducted "Operation Cross Country II," a three day national enforcement action in twenty-nine cities across the United States. This operation resulted in the arrest of seventy-three pimps, 518 adult prostitutes, and freed dozens of juveniles in forced prostitution.³⁴⁷ "More than one-fifth of the total arrests the sting produced and nearly one-quarter of the child prostitutes rescued were in the Bay Area."³⁴⁸ Additionally, "federal agents confiscated 2 million dollars in cash from ten Asian massage parlors during a San Francisco raid in summer 2005," illustrating that San Francisco is also a center for international sex trafficking.³⁴⁹

The San Francisco area clearly shows a need for facilities for victims of trafficking. Fortunately, the area provides many safe outlets for people in need.³⁵⁰ Although there are a great number of shelters for victims of domestic abuse and homelessness that are willing to serve victims of human

³⁴⁶ Lloyd, Rachel. Telephone interview. 21 July 2009.

³⁴⁷ Bohn, Kevin. "Operation frees dozens of child prostitutes." CNN.com. 27 Oct. 2008. 30 July 2009 <<http://www.cnn.com/2008/CRIME/10/27/child.prostitutes.freed/index.html>>.

³⁴⁸ "136 Arrests In Bay Area Child Prostitution Sting." CBS Broadcasting Online. CBS 5 Crime Watch. 28 Oct. 2008. 30 July 2009 <<http://cbs5.com/investigates/child.prostitution.sting.2.850012.html>>.

³⁴⁹ May, Meredith. "San Francisco Is A Major Center For International Crime Networks That Smuggle And Enslave." San Francisco Chronicle 6 Oct. 2006: A-1.

³⁵⁰ "San Francisco Free Shelter Chart." Chart. Free Print Shop.org. July-Sept. 2009. 30 July 2009. <http://www.freeprintshop.org/download/shelter_english.pdf>.

trafficking, there is only one organization in the city which is specifically targeted at this population.

SAGE

Standing Against Global Exploitation (SAGE) is a San Francisco non-profit committed to bringing “an end to the commercial sexual exploitation of children and adults.”³⁵¹ SAGE offers many services to survivors, including in-custody crisis counseling, assessment, and traditional services for young women detained at San Francisco’s Juvenile Justice Center, mental health services, EMDR therapy, transgender and men’s programs, and a John’s school.³⁵²

SAGE’s staff is a blend of survivors of violence, exploitation, homelessness, and/or addiction and clinicians experienced with exploited girls and women. This makes clients feel more comfortable and accepted in their interactions at the facility. SAGE provides the same service to all clients in non-residential services. Another form of therapy that SAGE employs is the participation of the clients in creative arts projects. In particular, SAGE provides expertise in creative writing and art therapy and provides the clients a forum to share their work safely. This provides a healthy outlet for victims to express their emotions and allows survivors to explore their pain in a productive way.

Any facility utilizing survivors in peer counseling services must be cautious of vicarious trauma in the staff member. SAGE invests in monitoring and training of their staff, and finds that the rewards of the program outweigh these additional costs.

Many of the educational resources, too, are provided by former clients of SAGE. Vocational classes such as those in the basic office skills of filing and typing are often provided by former clients who have successfully completed the SAGE program. Basic computer classes are also taught to provide clients with more marketable job skills.

³⁵¹ The SAGE Project.org. Standing Against Global Exploitation. 2009. 29 July 2009. <http://www.sagesf.org/html/about_main.htm>.

³⁵² The SAGE Project.org.

SAGE provides counseling and other services to transgenders at its treatment facility, as well as other treatment programs and San Francisco County Jail. These services include education on safety and medical concerns unique to transgender individuals, referrals to doctors able to work with hormone therapy, assistance with name changes, and guidance on cosmetic changes such as electrolysis. SAGE also provides sensitivity training regarding issues faced by transgender individuals to its entire staff so that any interaction with transgender clients will be handled appropriately.

Like transgender individuals, male survivors of the commercial sex industry are often ignored by service providers. In order to address this gap in services, SAGE has a men's program. There, male victims are given access to the same services of psychotherapy, medical attention, one-on-one peer counseling, and vocational skills as other SAGE clients.

Like most facilities for victims of human trafficking, SAGE is funded through a variety of sources, which include the San Francisco Department of Public Health, the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of DHHS, the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth, and Families, and foundations, and corporate and individual donations.³⁵³

Other Organizations

Though SAGE is the only organization in San Francisco intended solely to address human trafficking-related issues, many other organizations will provide assistance to trafficking victims. Asian Women's Shelter (AWS), Huckleberry Youth Programs (HYP), and Community United Against Violence (CUAV), for instance, are three of the organizations which are willing to provide services and assistance to victims of human trafficking.³⁵⁴

Asian Women's Shelter provides services to women, girls, and transgender individuals (transitioning from male to female only) who have been the victims of domestic violence or trafficking. It houses up to eighteen people

³⁵³ "What You Can Do: Donate" 2009. [The SAGE Project.org](http://www.sagesf.org/html/what_donate.htm). 21 July 2009 <http://www.sagesf.org/html/what_donate.htm>.

³⁵⁴ Barbier, Martine. Telephone interview. 16 July 2009.

at a time. Clients are not limited to Asian women, but the staff's language skills and cultural background are uniquely suited to serve women from Asia. Mental health and legal services are not provided on-site, but they are available through AWS's partner organizations.³⁵⁵

Huckleberry Youth Programs (HYP) provides services to youth, ages eleven to seventeen, who are not on probation.³⁵⁶ In 2008 alone, Huckleberry facility served 8,600 youth.³⁵⁷ Through HYP, a child can receive three meals a day, medical assistance, individual and family therapy, and peer-based prevention education,³⁵⁸ as well as take advantage of the HIV Prevention Program that the house provides.³⁵⁹ Though Huckleberry House serves all runaway and homeless youth and is not targeted specifically to human trafficking victims, it accepts clients who have been victims of the commercial sex industry and labor trafficking.³⁶⁰

In 2008, San Francisco's Transgender Law Center conducted a study of 646 Californian transgender people and found that twenty percent of those questioned had, at one point, been homeless. A third of these claimed that they had been denied access to a shelter.³⁶¹ Though these numbers do not illustrate how many transgender people are victims of human trafficking, they do show that the transgender population is a vulnerable one that can fall victim to human traffickers. Therefore, Community United Against Violence (CUAV) works with "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning" groups to combat violence against these populations in order to meet the goals of transforming violence and oppression. They utilize peer-based counseling, direct assistance, education and outreach, and

³⁵⁵ Asian Women's Shelter Online. 2009. 30 July 2009 <<http://www.sfaws.org/>>.

³⁵⁶ Free Print Shop, San Francisco Free Shelter Chart.

³⁵⁷ Huckleberry Youth Programs. 2008 Annual Report. <<http://www.huckleberryyouth.org/documents/2008AnnualReport.pdf>>.

³⁵⁸ "Huckleberry Youth Programs and Services." Huckleberry Youth.org. 2009.

Huckleberry Youth Programs: Huckleberry House. 30 July 2009.

<<http://www.huckleberryyouth.org/huckleberryhouse.html>>.

³⁵⁹ Huckleberry Youth Programs. 2008 Annual Report.

³⁶⁰ Barbier, Martine. Telephone interview. 16 July 2009.

³⁶¹ Walker, Dionne. "Shelters Slowly Adapt to Help Transgender Homeless." San Francisco Chronicle 3 Apr. 2009. 1 Aug. 2009 <<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/n/a/2009/04/03/national/a040931D47.DTL&feed=rss.gay>>.

community organizing as well as a 24-hour hotline and a comfortable, safe facility in which people can share their stories and experiences.³⁶²

In the San Francisco area, there is an “ongoing challenge to find space for men.”³⁶³ Though there are shelters which house them, they are rare, and do not have many beds. Additionally, long-term care is rare, as SAGE’s secure house houses at most twelve girls at a time. It is undeniable, though, that the San Francisco area is better situated to address the needs of human trafficking victims than most other metropolitan areas in the United States.

There are many shelters available for disadvantaged groups across California. Any organization interested in opening a facility here would have many shelter facilities that it could partner with. Though it is ideal to house people in facilities tailored solely to the needs of human trafficking victims, in the instances where that option is not available, there should be a safe place willing to provide housing and basic counseling services. Any facility should look into the resources which already exist in their areas, and consider providing training to the staff and volunteers concerning proper methods of talking with human trafficking victims.

Finally, SAGE has provided assistance to organizations wishing to replicate their services across the United States. They have provided training on “peer counselor skills; trauma and stabilization; and trauma and addiction,” and intend to continue these efforts in new cities.³⁶⁴ Any group interested in learning more about the methods employed by SAGE should visit their website at www.sagesf.org/.

2. Atlanta, Georgia

Atlanta is the thirty-third largest city in the United States, and the 28-county Atlanta Metropolitan Area is the 8th largest such region in the country with more than 5,376,285 residents. Atlanta’s population is 537,958.³⁶⁵

³⁶² [CUAV.org](http://www.cuav.org/). 2009. Community United Against Violence. 30 July 2009 <<http://www.cuav.org/>>.

³⁶³ Barbier, Martine. Telephone interview. 16 July 2009.

³⁶⁴ “About SAGE.” [The SAGE Project.org](http://www.sagesf.org/html/about_services_replication.htm). Standing Against Global Exploitation. 2009. 31 July 2009 <http://www.sagesf.org/html/about_services_replication.htm>.

³⁶⁵ United States. Census Bureau. [Austin QuickFacts from the U.S. Census Bureau](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/13/1304000.html). 18 Aug. 2009. 2 Sept. 2009 <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/13/1304000.html>>.

“According to the FBI, around 300 girls are trafficked every month in [Atlanta], and their average age is 14. A mind-boggling 37 million survivors of human trafficking are estimated to live in the city today.”³⁶⁶ In order to combat this, Mayor Shirley Franklin, in collaboration with the Juvenile Justice Fund and other organizations, has begun the “Dear John” program, a public education campaign concerning the sexual exploitation of children.³⁶⁷ This program has been recognized as one which has expanded public awareness,³⁶⁸ but there is still an overwhelming need for organizations willing to provide direct services to human trafficking victims. Additionally, the Juvenile Justice Fund has founded “A Future, Not a Past”, a statewide initiative to end child prostitution through research, prevention, intervention and education.³⁶⁹ Also founded by the Juvenile Justice Fund, the Center to End Adolescent Sexual Exploitation (CEASE) utilizes prevention, public awareness, court advocacy, and direct assistance to victims of commercial sexual exploitation in the form of placement at Angela’s House.³⁷⁰

Angela’s House, which is owned by the Juvenile Justice Fund, is a safe house and residential group home for child/adolescent victims of commercial sexual exploitation.³⁷¹ This facility, combined with various

³⁶⁶ Braselton, Emily. "Traffic in Atlanta is Worse Than You Think: How Human Trafficking is Giving the City an Unwanted Distinction." Brenau Community Intranet. Brenau University. 29 Mar. 2009. 24 Aug. 2009.
<<http://intranet.brenau.edu/dnn/StudentServices/TheAlchemist/TheFullStory/tabid/403/mid/2471/newsid2471/1983/TRAFFIC-IN-ATLANTA-IS-WORSE-THAN-YOU-THINK-HOW-HUMAN-TRAFFICKING-IS-GIVING-THE-CITY-AN-UNWANTED-DISTINCTION/Default.aspx>>.

³⁶⁷ “Launch of the “Dear John” Campaign to End the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. City of Atlanta Online. 6 Nov. 2006. 30 July 2009
<http://www.atlantaga.gov/mayor/dearjohn_111006.aspx>.

³⁶⁸ “Dear John” Wins World Leadership Award.” City of Atlanta Online. 2009. 30 July 2009. <http://www.atlantaga.gov/media/nr_dearjohn_121207.aspx>.

³⁶⁹ Woodruff, Victoria. "Statewide Campaign to Stop Prostitution of Children Commends Conviction of Man Who Pimped 16-Year-Old Cousin." A Future. Not A Past.org. 19 June 2009. 1 Aug. 2009.

<<http://www.afuturenotapast.org/ContentPages/ShowArticle.aspx?ID=134>>.

³⁷⁰ Juvenile Justice Fund.org. 2009. 1 Aug. 2009

<<http://www.juvenilejusticefund.org/programs/cease/index.aspx>>.

³⁷¹ Robinson, Melba. E-mail to the authors. 20 Aug. 2009.

shelters for the homeless and victims of domestic abuse, forms a network of organizations that provide services to victims of human trafficking.³⁷²

Angela's House

Angela's House is a group home in an undisclosed location outside of Atlanta which houses six girls at a time. Each of the three bedrooms in the house has beds for two girls as well as an attached bathroom. Within the home, there is also a computer room, recreational room, meeting room, and two additional bathrooms. Normally, girls complete their treatment between four to six months, but if a girl needs more time to complete her treatment, she can stay longer.³⁷³

Seventy-five percent of the girls in Angela's House come to the group home from the juvenile court or the Department of Juvenile Justice. The other twenty-five percent are placed in Angela's House through recommendations from the Division of Family and Children Services (DFACS), concerned citizens, parents, or other agencies. In a case where a girl has been housed in a youth detention center, someone from the sheriff's department transports the girl to the home without disclosing the location. Otherwise, the girl's social worker from the Department of Juvenile Justice or DFACS brings her.

Girls are referred to Angela's House by different entities, including Juvenile Court (JC), the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the Department of Family and Children (DFACS), other social agencies, as well as concerned citizens and parents. Girls are transported to the home by law enforcement to secure the location of the home.

When a case is brought to the attention of the Program Manager, Mrs. Melba Robinson, of CEASE (Center to End Adolescent Sexual Exploitation), the victim is categorized as either high risk or high priority. A high risk girl is one who has exhibited behavior which places a girl at risk of being exploited. These girls are currently placed at home and are receiving services through the court. CEASE provides a trained volunteer to assist

³⁷² Atlanta Day Shelter for Women and Children Online, 2009. 30 July 2009. <<http://www.atlantadayshelter.org/>>; Atlanta Homeless Shelters Helping Children Online, 2009. 30 July 2009. <<http://www.atlantachildrensshelter.com/about.html>>; Atlanta Union Mission Home Page, 2009. 30 July 2009. <<http://www.atlantaunionmission.org/>>.

³⁷³ Robinson, Melba. E-mail to the authors. 20 Aug. 2009.

these girls with disengaging in risky behaviors. A high priority girl is a girl who has been classified as a victim of exploitation as evident by being picked up by a police or loitering for solicitation. These girls are assessed by the CEASE Program Manager and considered for placement at Angela's House.

A resident's progress is monitored by the treatment team of Angela's House. The treatment team consists of the CEASE Program (Mrs. Robinson), residential director, therapist, director, house manager, senior counselor, and a child psychiatrist. Team meets twice a month. After a girl is discharged from Angela's House, she becomes involved in less intensive aftercare program. After three months in the aftercare program, the staff at Angela's House will do a follow-up to ensure that the child and family are continuing to make progress.

Education and counseling services are provided to all girls in Angela's House. Generally, the girls are eager to take advantage of these services. In the rare instances in which a girl has resisted, though, the resistance does not usually last beyond the first month, when she realizes that the services are there to assist her and help her stop being a victim of exploitation.

The staff of Angela's House consists of Ms. Melba Robinson, the program manager who oversees the day-to-day operations of the home, a senior counselor, counselors who remain at the home in pairs, a therapist, a teacher, and a psychiatrist. All of the staff is gender-appropriate, as men are not allowed to occupy positions which work directly with exploited girls.

Angela's House also uses volunteer assistance for many of its services. One of the volunteers, for instance, is a chef who teaches the residents to eat well and cook for themselves. Additionally, volunteers sit on committees to plan fundraising events and holiday parties, courtroom advocacy and case management. All volunteers must obtain an intensive background check and attend training with Mrs. Robinson. If the volunteer has no direct contact with human trafficking victims, she is only required to attend three hours of training. If there is direct contact, though, eight hours of training are required. Mrs. Robinson provides ongoing training and quarterly meetings with the volunteers that have direct contact with the girls.

Security at Angela's House is primarily achieved by a gate. The house sits about 500 yards away from the road on a wooded lot with a locked gate

which requires a code. In those instances when a girl elopes from Angela's House, the police are immediately notified, and the girl is usually found. As the location is rural, there is no public transportation, and there are few vehicles on the road in front of the home which could be flagged down. When the girl is found, the treatment team has a meeting to discuss her needs and her willingness to be in treatment. If the team finds that a girl is still committed to treatment, she will be accepted back into the group home. If the staff does not feel that she is committed or that she presents risk to the other residents, the staff will either develop a new plan for the girl involving services which do not include staying in a facility or will recommend that she is placed in a facility with a higher level of security. If the girl is on probation, any decision reached by the Angela's House staff must be presented to the court as a recommendation.³⁷⁴

Other Organizations

Angela's House provides a home for young girls who have been the victims of commercial sexual exploitation, but it only has the capacity to provide beds for six of these girls at a time. Therefore, other facilities are required in order to address the magnitude of the human trafficking problem in Atlanta. The staff at Angela's House recommends CHRIS Kids, Wellspring and Living Water for Girls (opening in September of 2009).³⁷⁵ Additionally, H.O.P.E. Through Divine Intervention is opening a facility for transgender individuals in September, 2009.

When the CEASE Program Manager is made aware of a male who is a victim of sexual exploitation, a referral will be made to Creativity, Honor, Respect, Integrity and Safety (CHRIS) Kids. CHRIS Kids is willing to provide assistance to male, female, and transgender youth. CHRIS Kids provides therapy, counseling, and a home to "abused and neglected children with severe emotional and behavioral problems, ages six to eighteen." Additionally, they have an Independent Living Program in which people between seventeen and twenty-one years old are assisted in the transition from "foster care, treatment facilities, detention or homelessness into self-sufficient adulthood." CHRIS Kids does not provide the same level of specialized services for trafficking victims as Angela's House, but does have

³⁷⁴ Robinson, Melba. Telephone interview. 31 July 2009.

³⁷⁵ Robinson, Melba. Telephone interview. 31 July 2009.

more beds to house victims, as there is room for forty-eight children in the group homes alone.³⁷⁶

Wellspring Living allows Angela's House to use fourteen of its beds when there is not enough room at the group home.³⁷⁷ Additionally, though, Wellspring provides services to people with no assistance from Angela's House. It is an organization dedicated to providing assistance to victims of childhood trauma. This is achieved through a women's program and a girl's program. The women's program "offers a safe place where motivated women can receive hope and healing from childhood sexual abuse and other destructive behaviors."³⁷⁸ Women who enter Wellspring take part in a structured daily program in which they participate in fitness activities and counseling.³⁷⁹ Wellspring for girls, on the other hand, provides housing, educational services, therapy, and life skills training to girls who have been part of the child sex trade.³⁸⁰

Living Water for Girls is a program of Circle of Friends, Inc., a not-for-profit organization.³⁸¹ Living Water for Girls' doors will open in September of 2009 with ten beds for girls victimized by commercial sexual exploitation. The agency will provide therapeutic long-term residential care, medical care, educational and vocational services, life skills training and spiritual wellness for victimized girls 12 to 17 years of age.

Helping Other People Excel (H.O.P.E.) Through Divine Intervention will provide services to homeless transgender individuals. The agency intends to open a transitional living facility to assist up to fifteen people at a time in the shift from living on the streets to permanent housing. This program will last one year, and will include educational and counseling services as well as housing. In order to inform law enforcement and service providers of the services which H.O.P.E. will provide, H.O.P.E. staff has participated in panel discussions regarding homelessness and been active with the Task Force for the Homeless. Though the services of H.O.P.E. will not be

³⁷⁶ [CHRIS Kids.org](http://www.chriskids.org/). 2009. 1 Aug. 2009 <<http://www.chriskids.org/>>.

³⁷⁷ Robinson, Melba. Telephone interview. 31 July 2009.

³⁷⁸ [Wellspring Living.org](http://www.wellspringliving.org/forhers.php). 2009. 01 Aug. 2009 <<http://www.wellspringliving.org/forhers.php>>.

³⁷⁹ [Wellspring Living.org](http://www.wellspringliving.org).

³⁸⁰ [Wellspring Living.org](http://www.wellspringliving.org).

³⁸¹ [Living Water for Girls.org](http://livingwaterforgirls.org/welcome.html). 2009. 01 Aug. 2009 <<http://livingwaterforgirls.org/welcome.html>>.

exclusively provided to survivors of human trafficking, the staff recognizes that sexual exploitation is not uncommon among the homeless and is prepared to provide services to trafficking survivors.³⁸²

Though she recognizes that Atlanta is more advanced than most other United States cities, Mrs. Melba Robinson of CEASE program admits that there are gaps in the services provided in her city.³⁸³ For instance, she would like to see more facilities for male victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Atlanta does have more resources for males than many other cities, but Mrs. Robinson points out that there are none specifically designated for males which offer the same variety of services provided by Angela's House. In some ways, this is a more difficult undertaking than developing a facility for female victims, as, in Mrs. Robinson's experience, male victims are less prevalent, and are less likely to self-identify as victims of sexual exploitation. Additionally, Mrs. Robinson hopes to see more arrests of pimps in the efforts to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children in Atlanta.

Mrs. Melba Robinson stresses the importance of the location of any group home or shelter. Angela's House is located in a rural area outside of Atlanta, and is not on any mass transit line. Additionally, it is not on a busy street where a car could be flagged down easily. Besides having safety benefits for the residents, this also makes their ability to elope more difficult. Girls who have been victims of the commercial sex exploitation are a flight risk. When a safe, secluded, and warm environment for the girls is provided, they can focus on receiving treatment much better. Mrs. Robinson also recommends that any facility located inside a city should take further precautions to assure that the residents are safe from predators and being victimized further.

Finally, Mrs. Robinson has volunteered to share her expertise with any group interested in mimicking the services provided by CEASE/Angela's House. She can be reached at Melba.Robinson@fultoncountyga.gov or at 404-224-4999.

³⁸² Iman, Reva. Telephone interview. 16 July 2009.

³⁸³ Robinson, Melba. Telephone interview. 31 July 2009.

3. New York, New York

New York City is the largest city in America, with a population of 8.3 million. New York City has a diverse population and a high percentage of international residents. John F. Kennedy International Airport is located in New York City, the top international gateway to the United States.³⁸⁴ Recognizing the human trafficking problem in their state, the New York legislature has taken steps to combat the problem through legislative initiatives in recent years.³⁸⁵ In addition to this progress in the legislature, New York City also has many well-established organizations and shelters that provide services and counseling to trafficking victims from all over New York state.

GEMS

Girls Educational and Mentoring Services (GEMS) is a shelter in New York City that provides direct services and shelter to female trafficking victims. Rachel Lloyd, a survivor of commercial sexual exploitation herself, founded the organization 30 years ago. Because GEMS has functioned successfully since it created its shelter in 1999, the service providers have gained a great deal of expertise in the area of providing services to girls who have been in prostitution. Therefore, they are also able to profit from trainings, which they provide to other organizations interested in GEMS' model.³⁸⁶ GEMS limits itself to serving young women between the ages of 12 and 21.³⁸⁷

GEMS has learned to make security a priority. Security and anonymity are of utmost importance in a shelter that houses victims of trafficking.³⁸⁸ Much

³⁸⁴ United States. Dept. of Transportation. Research and Innovative Technology Adm. Bureau of Transportation Statistics. U.S.-International Travel and Transportation Trends: 2006 Update. 2006. 7 Aug. 2009
<http://www.bts.gov/publications/us_international_travel_and_transportation_trends/2006/pdf/entire.pdf>.

³⁸⁵ Hakim, Danny, and Nicholas Confessore. "Albany Agrees on Law Against Sexual and Labor Trafficking." The New York Times 17 May 2007. N.Y./Region sec. 31 July 2009
<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/17/nyregion/17albany.html?_r=2&ref=nyregion&oref=slogin>.

³⁸⁶ Lloyd, Rachel. Telephone interview. 21 July 2009.

³⁸⁷ Lloyd, Rachel. Telephone interview. 21 July 2009.

³⁸⁸ Clawson, Heather J., and Lisa G. Grace. "Finding a Path to Recovery: Residential Facilities for Minor Victims of Domestic Sex Trafficking." Sept. 2007. Part of United

like a battered women's shelter, a trafficking victims' shelter must be able to protect its victims from the abuser. A prostitute or a trafficking victim in a shelter is considered lost revenue to a pimp. Thus, security and anonymity are necessary to protect a victim from any attempts to reclaim her. Although the organization avoids more intrusive security measures, Lloyd stated that security concerns were one of the areas that her organization takes most seriously. Keeping the location undisclosed was of utmost importance to the organization, and the shelter occupants were made very aware of it and the consequences. If any girl discloses the location to anyone, she has to leave the shelter as the disclosure puts the other girls' safety in jeopardy.³⁸⁹ When making employment decisions, GEMS keeps in mind the needs of the victims. Although some organizations advocate for interaction with male employees to "demonstrate the possibility of a relationship with a male that is non-exploitative," GEMS infrequently hires males.³⁹⁰ The reason for this policy is that it is necessary to gain the trust with the victims in order to adequately treat them, and because these girls have been victimized largely by males, this trust is likely much harder to gain for male workers. Although the organization has one male staff member, he works in an administrative position and has no interaction with the victims.³⁹¹ GEMS is equally cautious with its use of volunteer staff. GEMS allows for some role for volunteers, but in order to protect the victims in their shelter, volunteer positions are frequently limited to those that do not have direct contact with the victims. Furthermore, Rachel Lloyd, states that her entire staff has a "trauma-informed" perspective.³⁹² A relationship with law enforcement is vital to the success of any shelter.³⁹³ Because victims are frequently unwilling to self-identify as victims of trafficking, they often arrive in shelters by way of referrals from law enforcement.³⁹⁴ GEMS stated that 55 percent of girls in their shelter came by a court mandate, and 45% of them were referred by an agency, parent, or self-referral.³⁹⁵ GEMS also receives girls as part of an alternative to detention program.

States Dept. of Health and Human Services Research. 19 July 2009
<<http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/07/HumanTrafficking/ResFac/ib.htm>>.

³⁸⁹ Lloyd, Rachel. Telephone interview. 21 July 2009.

³⁹⁰ Clawson, Finding a Path to Recovery.

³⁹¹ Lloyd, Rachel. Telephone interview. 21 July 2009.

³⁹² Lloyd, Rachel. Telephone interview. 21 July 2009.

³⁹³ Clawson, Finding a Path to Recovery.

³⁹⁴ Lloyd, Rachel. Telephone interview. 21 July 2009.

³⁹⁵ Lloyd, Rachel. Telephone interview. 21 July 2009.

GEMS provides outreach to group homes, schools, and other programs to inform current victims of sex trafficking about the services offered at their shelter.³⁹⁶ The girls at the shelter can even decide if they wish to participate in outreach programs and can speak about their experience or against sexual exploitation in general. The organization also attempts to inform the public of its services through its video, *Very Young Girls*.

GEMS provides training in counseling skills to employees as well as any volunteers that have direct interaction with victims to allow them to be better resources for the girls. Though GEMS does not compel any resident to attend formal counseling, the girls gain some of the benefits of therapy through meetings and discussions with other girls. Each resident is encouraged to talk about her story openly and to express her emotions. Additionally, if any girl needs more serious counseling, GEMS has partnered with Mt. Sinai Adolescent Health Center, which provides psychiatric services.

Though some classes at GEMS are offered on-site, many of the classes are not. GEMS has partnered with educational facilities throughout New York in which the residents and other beneficiaries of GEMS's services can obtain credit toward their GEDs. In addition to GED courses, GEMS offers boxing, yoga, art therapy, creative writing, and other classes. They capitalize on the skills of their volunteers and staff members in order to offer a variety of classes and activities that their residents can enjoy.

GEMS is also fortunate enough to have a professional author volunteer with them.³⁹⁷ She teaches creative writing classes to the residents at their on-site school. This gives the residents a healthy outlet to express their frustration and pain, and has also produced meaningful poetry. GEMS has published books of this poetry which it sells to supply income for the shelter. GEMS also sells t-shirts, bracelets, and buttons for a small profit, all of which are for sale on their website.³⁹⁸ These revenue sources have not served to make GEMS financially independent, but they do help offset a reliance on grants.

³⁹⁶ Lloyd, Rachel. Telephone interview. 21 July 2009.

³⁹⁷ Lloyd, Rachel. Telephone interview. 21 July 2009.

³⁹⁸ "GEMS Shop." [Gems-girls.org](http://www.gems-girls.org). 2008. Girls Educational and Mentoring Services. 21 July 2009 <<http://www.gems-girls.org/gemsshop.html>>.

Covenant House

Covenant House, an organization founded to provide services to homeless and runaway youth, has 20 facilities throughout the country, as well as facilities internationally.³⁹⁹ Its New York location deals with both international and domestic trafficking victims, both male and female. The organization provides “counseling, referrals, educational and vocational programs, medical services, legal services, youth leadership opportunities and outreach services” to homeless youth, including trafficking victims.⁴⁰⁰

The organization helps children and young adults who are forced into a life on the street. The organization helps over 70,000 children every year through its residential and non-residential programs, including a program for victims of human trafficking.⁴⁰¹ Youth are allowed shelter at the Covenant House facility so long as they fit within the organization’s age range and are not a potential risk to anyone else.⁴⁰²

The entire New York facility (which includes areas outside of human trafficking) is run on a \$19 million budget.⁴⁰³ Covenant House, like many of the other organizations, relies on private donations and grants, but would like to decrease its reliance on these sources, as they have to alter their programming and level of service in times of economic hardship when people donate less and the government provides less funding. Sadly, these times of economic hardship also correspond to an increase in needs and in the numbers of runaway youth. Furthermore, Nathan Byrd, Director of Strategic Projects for the New York office of Covenant House, stated that the difficulty in getting victims certified as trafficking victims can also be a hurdle to receiving funding.⁴⁰⁴ As it currently stands, Covenant House receives 37% of its funds from private donors, corporations, or the government. Covenant House has been successful in soliciting funds through its direct mail program, which it has had for 30 years. Because Covenant House feels that its programs need to be as flexible as possible to

³⁹⁹ Covenant House Online. 2007. 31 July 2009 < <http://www.covenanthouseny.org/>>.

⁴⁰⁰ "Services & Programs." Covenant House New York Online. 2007. 2 Aug. 2009 <http://www.covenanthouseny.org/services_programs.asp>.

⁴⁰¹ Covenant House Online.

⁴⁰² Byrd, Nathan. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

⁴⁰³ Byrd, Nathan. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

⁴⁰⁴ Byrd, Nathan. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

adapt to the needs of its victims, it strives for as much private funding as it can get to avoid the restrictions that often come with public grants.⁴⁰⁵

Most organizations with which we spoke emphasized a need for a professional staff, as opposed to one chiefly composed of volunteers, something that may differ from a traditional homeless shelter. Covenant House's New York location is staffed almost exclusively by professionals.⁴⁰⁶ Although the organization does allow for a limited role for volunteers, these volunteers must undergo training, and the organization takes great care in the selection of their volunteers. Covenant House is very cautious when selecting volunteers and employees to work in its facilities and interact with the victims. One reason for its stringent requirements for interaction with the victims is a security concern. Mr. Byrd stressed that it is important to know the individuals who are working with the victims. Furthermore, it is important that those who interact with the victims have appropriate training to deal with persons suffering from the trauma caused by their exploitation.

In addition to their high level of scrutiny for employees, Covenant House takes many other precautions to assure the safety of their residents. The facility is staffed 24 hours a day and has security on site. Byrd stated that the organization is very careful about who they let into the facility. Furthermore, to protect the confidentiality of the victims in the shelter, Covenant House is very guarded with information concerning the persons in their shelter, which often is not released without a court order.⁴⁰⁷

That said, these security measures are to keep people out, not in. Covenant House is not a lock-down facility. Instead, the organization has an open-door policy which allows the victims to leave if they choose to do so, although extra precautions are taken for victims under the age of 18.⁴⁰⁸ The organization does not serve merely as a shelter, but rather the occupants are expected to make progress towards becoming rehabilitated from street life to become self-sufficient.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁵ Byrd, Nathan. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

⁴⁰⁶ Byrd, Nathan. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

⁴⁰⁷ Byrd, Nathan. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

⁴⁰⁸ Byrd, Nathan. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

⁴⁰⁹ Covenant House Online, [Services and Programs](#).

Covenant House is very involved and networked with local law enforcement, which provides a significant number of referrals for the shelter. Mr. Byrd stated that their partnership has grown stronger since law enforcement has begun to take a more victim-centered approach regarding child prostitution. However, this is not the only way that they receive trafficking victims. The organization receives referrals in a number of ways, including self-referrals, parental referrals, or referrals from hospitals. As many as 30% come from foster care to Covenant House. Furthermore, the organization engages in outreach to youth on the streets. Through this outreach, Covenant House hopes to find youth that would not otherwise be aware of their services or perhaps would not otherwise seek out the services.⁴¹⁰ The outreach program operates six nights a week in areas where homeless youth frequent in New York City.

Covenant House realizes that long-term care is crucial to adequately treat victims of human trafficking, and, for that reason, the trafficking victims' care does not necessarily end when the victims leave the shelter. The level of aftercare varies from site to site and is dependent on the level of funding the organization currently receives.⁴¹¹ It is important to Covenant House staff that after a victim spends a significant time in the facility, she can adapt to life outside of the shelter.

4. Los Angeles, California

As the second largest city in the United States and the largest in California, with a diverse population of 3.8 million, Los Angeles is a magnet for human trafficking activity. Interstate 10, a major trafficking route, ends in Los Angeles. Los Angeles has taken steps in the right direction towards combating the human trafficking problem in the city. The Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST LA), is one of the largest organizations in the United States dedicated towards eradicating modern day slavery. CAST LA was founded in 1998 as the first organization in the United States with a mission of ending human trafficking.⁴¹² Although CAST has more of an international focus, there are other organizations in Los Angeles that provide services to domestic victims of commercial sex trafficking, such as Children of the Night.

⁴¹⁰ Covenant House Online, Services and Programs.

⁴¹¹ Byrd, Nathan. Telephone interview. 14 July 2009.

⁴¹² "More than 10 years of Abolishing Slavery & Trafficking." Castla.org. 2009. CAST LA: Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking. 7 Aug. 2009 <<http://www.castla.org/history>>.

Children of the Night

Children of the Night is one of the most successful programs dealing with child victims of commercial sexual exploitation in the country. Children of the Night is located in Van Nuys, a suburb of Los Angeles. The program has been helping victims of child prostitution for nearly thirty years.⁴¹³ The organization focuses solely on minors who are victims of sex trafficking and reaches out to victims through several avenues. The facility can accommodate 24 victims, however, Children of the Night also provides services to victims who do not reside at the shelter. Furthermore, through their hotline, they are able to help between 10, 000 and 13,000 people a year.

In their residential shelter, children can arrive as young as eleven and are allowed to stay until they are 18 years old. In case of necessity, some children are allowed to stay up to 18 and a half years of age. The duration of stay for these trafficking victims varies widely, from as little as a few months to up to four years.

Children of the Night provides comprehensive care for its residents. Education is provided to the children through an on-site private school. The school consists of a principal, who has been with the program for 16 years, and her teaching assistant, both of whom are salaried employees. Children of the Night's founder, Lois Lee, Ph.D., felt that it would not be possible to have an education program like theirs without having professional, paid employees.⁴¹⁴ Furthermore, like GEMS in New York City, Children of the Night uses poetry as a creative outlet for the victims in their shelter.

The majority of its funding comes from individual donations.⁴¹⁵ They utilize direct mail campaigns which result in 41% of their revenue coming from individuals. Additionally, 39% of the funding is from foundations, with corporate donations and bequests also composing a great deal. Children of the Night does not receive any money from the government. An annual

⁴¹³ Lee, Lois. "Children of the Night Trainings Coming Soon." Children of the Night.org. 19 July 2009. Dr. Lois Lee's Blog: Founder of Children of the Night. 2 Aug. 2009 <<http://www.childrenofthenight.org/blog/?p=9>>.

⁴¹⁴ Lee, Lois. E-mail interview. 21 July 2009.

⁴¹⁵ Children of the Night Annual Report: 2007 Accomplishments. Los Angeles, 2007. 25 Aug. 2009 <http://www.childrenofthenight.org/2007_Annual_Report.pdf>.

contribution of \$5000 comes from a local politician's discretionary fund.⁴¹⁶ However, this is a very insignificant amount in relation to the \$1.6 million budget.

The program secures their facility through several different measures. All doors in the shelter are locked from the inside (in order to keep out any intruders as opposed to keeping the children in), and all bedrooms have screens over their windows that set off an alarm throughout the building if they are removed.⁴¹⁷ The building is staffed 24 hours a day, with security cameras monitoring the building's common areas. This video footage is then stored permanently. Furthermore, Dr. Lee, has camera feeds at her house, which enables her to carefully monitor all activity.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of Children of the Night is that it is one of the few programs nationwide that caters to victims of sexual exploitation, regardless of sex. In fact, 40 percent of the Children at Night's clients are boys under the age of 18. The lack of care for transgender and male victims of sexual exploitation is frequently identified by experts in the field as being one of the biggest gaps in direct services. However, Children of the Night is doing its part to help close this gap in its city.⁴¹⁸ As long as the youth is a victim of sexual exploitation, the organization provides them with shelter and assistance. This is a significant improvement compared to the last two decades of the 20th century, when many of the boys were lost to AIDS in the 1980's and to gang violence in 1990's.

As one might imagine, having a mixed gender population for occupants at the Children of the Night facility creates problems that are not as likely to be present in an all-female facility. Dr. Lee stated that having a mixed population can create behavioral issues, but these issues have been manageable for the shelter. Through increased oversight, Children of the Night has had success in providing care to victims regardless of sex.⁴¹⁹

Children of the Night has had great success with the children that have stayed in their facilities. Although not every treatment is a success, the Children of the Night 2008 annual report reported that many of the children who stayed in their facilities have been successfully rehabilitated. According

⁴¹⁶ Lee, Lois. E-mail to the authors. 19 Aug. 2009.

⁴¹⁷ Lee, Lois. E-mail interview. 21 July 2009.

⁴¹⁸ Clawson, Finding a Path to Recovery.

⁴¹⁹ Lee, Lois. E-mail interview. 21 July 2009.

to the organization’s annual report, 60 percent of children served were successfully placed: 10 percent of children went to Independent Living Programs, 3 percent went on to a career in the armed forces, and another 47 percent are now to living with friends, family, or relatives.⁴²⁰

5. Other Cities

Atlanta, New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco are referenced as the cities with the best facilities for human trafficking victims, but they are by no means the only cities that provide services to these victims. Many cities throughout the United States provide unique services from which organizations in Texas could gain insight. Portland, Oregon, Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. are three cities which have employed noteworthy methods which should be reviewed by any group considering providing services to trafficking victims.

Portland, Oregon

Transitions Global has operated a shelter for “underage Cambodian and Vietnamese survivors of sex trafficking, exploitation, and abuse” in Cambodia since 2006. This shelter provides many of the services for human trafficking victims, including medical and dental care, case work, trauma therapy including art and yoga therapy, life skills and job skills training.⁴²¹ Transitions Global employs an innovative approach to survivor services which focuses on empowering survivors through leadership training, survivor involvement, intensive case management, and staff support. Currently, Transitions Global plans to extend its services to Mumbai, India, and is developing a first of its kind facility in Portland, Oregon which will house up to twenty minor girls in a secure placement shelter program.⁴²²

Baltimore, Maryland

You Are Never Alone (Y.A.N.A.) is an organization in Baltimore which strives “to reach out in love to women and girls involved in prostitution and human trafficking survivors, offering alternatives to those seeking change and compassionate support for women exploited by any aspect of the

⁴²⁰ Children of the Night Annual Report.

⁴²¹ Transitions Global.org. 2009. 31 July 2009

<<http://www.transitionsglobal.org/cambodia.php>>.

⁴²² Pond, James. E-mail to the authors. 20 Aug. 2009.

life.”⁴²³ Y.A.N.A. is able to provide trauma counseling and “referrals to substance abuse treatment facilities, literacy programs, job training and employment programs; potential employers; health care providers and many other community-based supports.”⁴²⁴ They have also been active in a campaign to spread the use of condoms among prostitutes in order to decrease rates of sexually transmitted disease.⁴²⁵

Washington, D.C.

Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive (HIPS) is a Washington, D.C. organization with the mission to “assist female, male, and transgender individuals engaging in sex work in Washington, DC in leading healthy lives.”⁴²⁶ In order to achieve this, HIPS performs street outreach on the weekends from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. in which HIPS representatives distribute safe sex materials, clothing, and provide counseling and support. Additionally, they assist victims with obtaining IDs and finding emergency shelters, and offer a twenty-four hour hotline number in which counseling and referrals are provided for sex workers.⁴²⁷

IV. Case Studies

A. Domestic

When the term “human trafficking” is mentioned several images come to mind. The first thoughts are often of forced sweatshop workers, agricultural labor, domestic servitude and sex trafficking. Usually, these impressions involve people brought into our country for exploitation. However, equally important is the issue of domestic human trafficking, which is not as widely covered by the media, but is as prevalent or even more prevalent in the United States.

⁴²³ Yanaglobal.com. 10 Apr. 2007. Y.A.N.A. Place – You Are Never Alone. 31 July 2009 <<http://www.yanaplace.c.om/index.html>>.

⁴²⁴ Yanaglobal.com.

⁴²⁵ Otto, Mary. "In Baltimore, New Ambitions on the Street." The Body.com. Adapted from Washington Post. 3 June 2003. The Body: The Most Complete HIV/AIDS Resource. 31 July 2009 <<http://www.thebody.com/content/whatis/art28411.html>>.

⁴²⁶ HIPS.org. 2009. Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive. 31 July 2009 <<http://www.hips.org/about.html>>.

⁴²⁷ "HIPS: Services." HIPS.org. 2009. Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive. 31 July 2009 <<http://www.hips.org/Services.html>>.

The vast majority of these victims of domestic human trafficking consist of runaway and throwaway youth. Some of these children run from abusive homes, others run away because they feel that they have no place to go. When these runaway and throwaway youth are on the street, they suddenly find themselves in a very vulnerable position and become an easy target for a pimp. Often, a pimp starts off showing the simplest gestures of kindness, often something as small as a meal at a fast food restaurant or a compliment. With these small first steps, a pimp begins to manipulate the child. When a child leaves home, he or she often feels abandoned and alone. These are the emotions and vulnerabilities that a pimp will prey upon to gain a child's trust and adoration. To this child, the simple, seemingly caring gestures appear to fill a missing void.

The first overtures are just the beginning; the next step is creating an environment where a child becomes completely dependent upon a pimp. This is frequently done by keeping complete control over any money or possessions of a victim, as well as limiting any contact with others. In addition, pimps frequently move their prostitutes or "stable" from city to city to avoid law enforcement crackdowns, which further adds to the isolation of the victim. By isolating these children and making them dependent, pimps make their victims feel as though there is no other life available to them, no place for them to go, no one who cares for them other than the pimp. Essentially, life on the streets is not a choice for these children; it is the result of a constant cycle of mental and emotional manipulation and abuse. As a result of alienation from the rest of society, a victim becomes trapped in this cycle of exploitation. In additions, our society tends to criminalize the prostitute, rather than to criminalize the pimp or john that purchases the child for sex. This further isolates the child and does not let him or her break free.

As a result of being under the control and influence of their pimps, these victims frequently do not self-identify as victims of human trafficking when in police custody. They have been brainwashed to the point where they truly believe that the pimp cares about them and they do not see themselves as victims. The pimp is a master manipulator who preys upon the child's insecurities and uses these skills to convince the child that they are working as prostitutes willingly and doing it out of love for their "boyfriends." As a result of this brainwashing, when these children are picked up by police and questioned, they do not self identify as victims and are unwilling to act in any way against the pimp. This is due either to a fear of retribution or the

fear of losing the one person in their lives that they perceive as caring for them.

This makes it very difficult to provide any services that would enable and help the victim to leave that life. Frequently, it takes an extended period of time away from the pimp before the child is able to view the situation realistically. In addition, with no way to isolate these girls from their pimps other than to criminalize them, law enforcement and other service providers have a difficult time convincing the girls that they are, in fact, victims.

Below is a composite case study based on several law enforcement sources highlighting the common experiences that victims of domestic human trafficking endure.

Katie was fifteen years old the first time she ran away from home. Katie grew up in a small town in Tennessee, living with her mother and stepfather and a younger brother and sister. She attended high school, was on the cheerleading squad and led an otherwise normal life to everyone that knew her.

Katie had spent two years before running away being sexually assaulted by her stepfather. Her mother did not know about the abuse, nor did anyone else. Katie was terrified of telling her mother about it, fearing that she would not believe her, or worse hate her. Furthermore, her stepfather, Harold, threatened to throw her out of the house and to blame Katie if she ever told anyone about what he did to her. Katie felt as though she could not tell anyone, and if she did, no one would believe her or would hate her for what she had done.

One day her school counselor called her into her office and asked Katie if anything was wrong, noting that her grades had been dropping. Katie started crying and continued to say that she could not tell anyone, and that everything was fine at home. After that meeting, she could neither go home nor could she go back to school because of what her school counselor might find out. Katie never made it home that day after school. She wandered around the town for a while. She could not go to any of her friends or anyone else she knew, because she was afraid that they would ask her why she was running away. She had no money, no food, and no place to go. It started raining and eventually she found herself at the bus station.

Katie had been away from home for less than 24 hours at this point. While

she was at the bus station sheltering from the rain, a man drove up in what Katie thought was the nicest car she had ever seen. He was well-dressed and came over with an umbrella to where she was sitting. “What’s wrong, why are you crying?” he asked her as he sat down next to her.

Katie could not tell him what was wrong. The man put his arm around her and told her that he would take her to get some food. They went to a fast food restaurant where he told her to order anything that she wanted. While Katie was eating, he asked her again what was wrong. This was the first time that Katie could remember that someone had been so nice to her. Besides, she did not know anyone in her life who she could tell the truth, who would listen to her, and even buy her food.

After listening to her for awhile he simply said, “You don’t have anything to worry about. I am going to take care of you and take you away from here.” He continued to tell her how special she was, how pretty she was, and how she would not have to worry about anything anymore. It was the best thing Katie had heard in two years. She got into the car with the man, whose name was Herman, and they drove off. They drove through the night, all the while Herman was being as nice as he could be to Katie. Katie felt like she was being rescued from all of the nightmares that she had been living with over the past two years. Finally, the next morning Katie woke up and looked out the window and saw that they were entering Texas. She smiled at Herman, this was the farthest she had ever been from her small town, and all of her problems seemed so far away at this point.

They stopped at a motel just off the interstate. Herman said he had to go take care of some business and he left her there alone with a woman who he introduced as his girlfriend. Katie was so relieved to have a place to stay and she felt safe for the first time, even though she had no idea where she was. Katie stayed at the motel for a week, and Herman would bring his other girlfriends by the room to introduce them. All the while whenever he saw Katie, Herman would tell her how pretty she was, and how much he loved her.

The next week Herman took Katie shopping for new clothes, since she only had the one outfit. He picked out several outfits for her, all of them very revealing, including some shoes with 6 inch heels. Katie told Herman that she did not like those clothes and that she did not want to wear them. Herman replied that she would wear the clothes whether she liked it or not

because he was taking care of her now. This was the first time that Herman had ever yelled at her, and Katie did not know what to think.

That night, Herman told Katie that she would need to help earn money for them so that they could stay at the motel. He told Katie to put on the clothes he bought her, which she did not want to do. When she expressed how she felt, Herman began screaming at her, and told her that she did not have anyone except him, and that that she needed to help earn money. He pushed her against the wall and for the first time, Katie was scared of him.

Later that night, Katie was still in tears, and Herman told her that he was sorry about what had happened earlier, that it would never happen again, and that he loved her. He told her that they needed money and that it would really help if she could only sleep with one of his friends. That night Katie became a child prostitute. She was fifteen years old.

Five months later Katie was still working on the streets. The first month she was gone, her stepfather claimed that she was just being a brat and was probably staying at a friend's house. A missing persons report was finally filed by her mother, but by that time the police and her family had no idea where Katie was. Katie worked six nights a week and she had to bring in at least one thousand dollars a night. On nights when she did not bring in enough money or when she did not want to work, Herman would throw her against the wall, pull her hair, and hit her.

During those months, Katie never had more than a dollar on her. Herman would take all of the money that she earned. She never had enough money to buy food or even take the bus. She was completely dependent upon Herman and his other girlfriends for everything. She was never allowed to meet anyone else.

Every time the police seemed to be picking up more than the usual number of girls for prostitution, Herman would move all of his girls to another city. Katie never knew anyone in the cities where she went, and sometimes she could not even remember where she was. Katie did not know any other life at this point.

Katie never considered running away from Herman. She could not go back to her parents' house where her stepfather was. She could not go back to her hometown because of what people would think if they found out she had

been a prostitute. She could not go to the police because they would arrest her and put her in jail. Herman was the only person who seemed to care about her.

Katie would be arrested for prostitution now and then, the police officers would pick her up and take her in, and then Herman would bail her out. She had a fake driver's license, and she had a complete script memorized about who she was, and where she came from, which she recited to law enforcement officers. She would be fingerprinted, but without any other identification or records tying her to her former life, she was never flagged as being missing or underage.

Whenever police officers asked whether Herman was her pimp, Katie would say he was her boyfriend. One time when she was arrested, she spoke to a different person other than the police officer. That person was a survivor of the sex industry. She showed Katie pictures of a time when she was arrested, which included the bruises on her body from when her pimp had beaten her. He never hit her on the face, so that she would always be appealing to the johns.

Katie stayed in jail for two days because Herman was out of town and could not bail her out. After talking to Katie, the woman convinced Katie to enter into a shelter in New York. While there, she met other girls who had been victims of prostitution. She attended support groups, went to therapy, continued her education, and began to see that there was possibly a way out of her former life.

One day she got a telephone call from Herman. He told her that he loved her and that they should be together. Katie started crying. Herman told her that the people at the shelter did not care about her, and that they would only put her back in jail. The shelter had an open-door policy; anyone could leave as there was no legal right to detain the girls. That night Katie left the shelter. Her location is not known at this time.

Katie and others like her share a similar story of manipulation and abuse at the hands of their traffickers. Pimps operate throughout the United States, moving from city to city to evade law enforcement. The girls are forced into a life of isolation and forced prostitution. Domestic human trafficking is more prevalent in the United States than international human trafficking and it exists in all cities and locations. These victims are not willing prostitutes.

They are forced to give all of their money to their pimps and live a life of abuse and poverty. Because of the continuous cycle of isolation and manipulation, it is difficult for them to break free.

B. International

Mina's story began in Korea where she worked at a clothing store. Mina was interested in improving her education and finding a more lucrative job. One day, a man called "Broker" came into the store and asked Mina's co-workers if they were interested in going to America. He told them that as bartenders they could make up to \$8,000 per month and attend college. Mina and three friends decided to do it. The women paid a man named Kwan, who was in the United States, a \$12,000 fee. Because the women did not have that much money, they borrowed the money from "Broker" who told them it would cover travel expenses and other fees. From Korea, the women would travel to Canada and then on to the United States.

The women left Korea and landed in Vancouver. The four women were met by a man in Canada. When she first saw him, Mina knew "something was wrong... [she] had a very bad feeling."⁴²⁸ The group was ferried from motel to motel for a few days in Canada and then finally smuggled over the Canadian/U.S. border. Mina never saw any border patrol agents during this time. Once over the border, the group, which now included other smuggled Koreans, stayed at the house of a woman named Chung for a week. There they watched television, rested, and were given vague descriptions of what work they would be performing for Kwan. When a week had passed, the group was driven to Kwan's house in Dallas and the work began.

Kwan operated a venue called The Zen Club. He made Mina and the other Korean women sell liquor to the customers. Mina was forced to sell multiple bottles to the customers and to drink with them. When Mina realized what was happening, "[she] wanted to die." Because the workers were forced to drink, it was apparent to Mina that everyone who worked there had become an alcoholic. If she did not drink or secretly discarded the alcohol, the manager would curse at her after the customers had gone. There were no wages for this work. Although Mina received tips, that small sum of money went toward basic essentials such as food and clothing. Moreover, Mina was

⁴²⁸ The quotations in this case study are from the affidavit Mina filed with the United States government when she applied for a T-Visa.

not even allowed to buy her own personal items; instead, she had to give the money to the bar's owner and someone else bought the items for her.

The living situation was like a prison. The workers lived on the second floor of Kwan's house while he and his family were on the first floor. Cameras watched every part of the house and alarms went off when doors were opened. "I was held in the house like a slave" and "we were treated like animals." People guarded the workers and transported them to and from work. The workers could not venture outside without permission and their identification documents were confiscated. Kwan told the women they had to work off their debts, but they were charged for room and board and assessed penalties for, among other things, leaning on a patron's shoulder, falling asleep, and fighting with other employees. In this way, it is doubtful that the debt would have ever been repaid and the women would have remained stuck in a form of modern-day slavery in the middle of the United States.

One day, Mina woke up to a raid by U.S. Immigration officials on the Kwan residence. Kwan was arrested and the workers were questioned. On June 12, 2006, Kwan pled guilty to several charges, including forced labor. Because Mina cooperated with the investigation, on November 13, 2006, she was granted a T-Visa.

If Mina were forced to return to Korea, she would face bleak prospects. In Korea, people know about the Kwan trafficking ring and its breakup by U.S. officials. If Mina's family and friends knew that she was trafficked, she would be ostracized and her chances at marriage would disappear. Moreover, Mina believes the Korean government would also blame her for being trafficked and she would never be able to recover her back wages from the Kwan trafficking ring. In short, whether it were marriage, work, school or family, Mina would have nothing if she returned to Korea. In the United States, she could create a new life for herself.

Mina and the women with whom she was trafficked are just a small part of a massive Korean trafficking web that is present in major cities throughout the United States.⁴²⁹ A large part of this network deals in sex trafficking. Like

⁴²⁹ Meyer, Paul. "Sex Slaves of Capitalists?" dallasnews.com. 7 May 2006. 24 July 2009 <http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/latestnews/stories/DN-sexslaves_07met.State.Bulldog.7eae7bb.html>

Mina, these women incur large debts to come to the United States in hopes of finding employment or education but instead are forced to work as “sexual sharecroppers, working off the balance [of their debt] at hundreds of Korean brothels across the country.”⁴³⁰ In one sting at a Dallas brothel, federal agents and Dallas police found 42 women who worked as sex slaves. The women were forced to work even when “sick, sore and bleeding.”⁴³¹ Room, board, clothes and even condoms were charged to their overall debt, perpetuating the cycle of slavery and mental and physical torture.⁴³²

With the help of Human Rights Initiative of North Texas, Inc., Mina and other labor trafficking victims are able to obtain T-Visas and green cards.⁴³³ Within 5 years of receiving their green cards, these trafficking victims can become U.S. citizens.

V. Conclusion

Human slavery exists. It is thriving in a country in which it was supposedly abolished over 150 years ago, and in a country that prides itself on its human rights record. It is not only flourishing in our country, but also in our state. Unless and until this truth is realized, the crime of human trafficking will persist and its perpetrators will continue to escape justice.

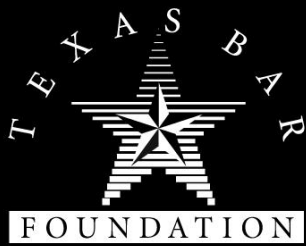
All Texans have a moral responsibility to join in this fight to stop human trafficking. Because of Texas’ location on the border and the interstate highways crossing our state, we must address the fact that we are a hub of the global sex trade. We have taken the first steps, however more action is needed to put a stop to this heinous crime. There clearly remain significant challenges ahead of us to end the demand and protect vulnerable American children.

⁴³⁰ Meyer, [Sex Slaves of Capitalists?](#)

⁴³¹ Meyer, [Sex Slaves of Capitalists?](#)

⁴³² Meyer, [Sex Slaves of Capitalists?](#)

⁴³³ In order to apply for a T-Visa an immigrant must file Form I-914 and can apply for derivative protection of family members using Form I-914, Supplement A. An applicant must file a Form I-765 to receive employment authorization for family members.



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