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Prostitution of Children

Many assume that human trafficking is something that happens in another country not in America. However, that is not the case because it is increasingly an American problem as of lately. Human trafficking brings in a lot of money, and it is an underground crime that is extremely difficult to detect which tempts the criminals to begin their own human trafficking ring. Prostitution happens in every human trafficking ring and every country around the world. Prostitution brings in a consistent flow of money, however the prostitution of children brings in much larger sum of money compared to adult prostitutes. The fact that the prostitution of children is more profitable, it becomes a serious problem in today's society.

Exact statistics are difficult to obtain, but it is estimated that around ten million children are involved in prostitution worldwide. Between 100 to 300 thousand children are bought and sold for sex. Many children are kidnapped and then tortured, starved, beaten for an amount of time till they break and succumb to prostitution. The Internet has become widely used for juvenile prostitution and it makes it more difficult for the authorities to detect because the Internet is a massive place where many things go undetected. The pimps and individuals who are involved in the sex slavery ring advertising on social networking sites to attract

more children. The vulnerability of the children makes them a much easier target than recruiting or forcing adults into prostitution. Children can be brainwashed, confused or just easier to intimidate into prostitution.

The problem with the children who are lured into prostitution is their lack of awareness and resources. They do not think about things like human trafficking because it is not exposed often in the media, it is not talked about globally. It is just a hideous and morally degrading crime that kind of stays underground. In the summer of 2013, the authorities did a 76 cities sweep targeting prostitution rings and the number of children recovered were shocking. 159 were arrested in the sweep and 105 children involved in prostitution were recovered. The age range of the 105 children recovered was between thirteen to seventeen years old. One of the children was allegedly offered up by her own father who was involved in the prostitution ring, and the father would also videotape her sexual encounters. Many of the children were from foster or group homes so it was easier to get away with kidnapping them than the children who come from a family household. The children were being sold through the Internet, truck stops, casinos, and street corners. Throughout the 76 cities, 12 were recovered from San Francisco, 10 from Detroit. Unfortunately, even though 105 children were recovered, it is not even close to the number of children that are still out there having sex for money.

Another issue that revolves around the prostitution of children is that many believe that there is no such thing as a child prostitute. What they mean by that is they are coerced, beaten, tortured and forced into prostitution instead of choosing

the life of prostitution. The fact that they were not left with an option means that they are victims of the crime. There are cases where children who had sex for money were arrested for juvenile prostitution and sent to the detention center. It is extremely frustrating for the judges because of how challenging the decision about what to do with the children. Many judges detain the children because they feel that jail is the safest option. For example, if the child avoided juvenile detention and was sent back to the foster home that they ran away from, the risk of that happening again is likely. The life at the foster or group homes are often perilous, the option of safe therapeutic centers are rare and this country has more animal shelters than shelters for exploited children.

The prostitution of children is a widespread problem and is now increasingly a problem in America. The children who are involved in prostitution are impacted in such a negative way physically and mentally, and they often turn to drugs and alcohol to escape. Children who experience prostitution often times experience other bad things in life and have a difficult time getting it back on track. Sex trafficking of humans is a serial and systemized rape. The children are hiding in plain sight and they are invisible to society. To fight against prostitution of children, the country needs to aggressively spread awareness, different resources to help combat this problem. More therapeutic centers, and safe shelters for exploited children are a necessity.

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