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Youth Involvement in the Sex Trade

A National Study

By Rachel Swaner, Melissa Labriola, Michael Rempel, Allyson Walker, and Joseph Spadafore

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Executive Summary

Over the past decade, federal, state, and local policymakers across the United States have devoted increasing attention to the plight of youth who are involved in the sex trade. Despite growing national attention, the ability of policymakers to design effective programs and strategies has been hindered by a paucity of valid research on the size, needs, characteristics, and criminal justice experiences of these youth (e.g., see Institute of Medicine 2013).

Funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the U.S. Department of Justice, the current multi-method, multi-site study aims to increase scientific knowledge. Building on prior research using comparable methods in New York City and implemented by some of the same researchers (Curtis et al. 2008; Muslim, Labriola, and Rempel 2008; and see, also, Dank et al. 2015), this study includes interviews with youth and official records data collection in six sites: Atlantic City, NJ; the Bay Area, CA; Chicago, IL; Dallas, TX; Miami, FL; and Las Vegas, NV.

To date, the study has produced six reports providing comprehensive ethnographic findings concerning the lives of youth in the sex trade in each of the research sites (Jones and Gamson 2016; Marcus, Riggs, Rivera, and Curtis 2016; Martin et al. 2016; Maurrasse and Jones 2016; Schaffner et al. 2016; and Wagner, Whitmer, and Spivak 2016). The current report provides a quantitative, multi-site analysis of findings from nearly 1,000 youth interviews across all six sites; a population estimate; findings from official criminal justice data sources; and findings from interviews with service providers. All reports are available at <http://www.courtinnovation.org/youthstudy>.

Overview of the Study Methodology

This study was animated by the goal of gaining a representative portrait of the lives and needs of youth who are involved in exchanging sex for money, food, housing, drugs, or other goods. The study was overseen by the Center for Court Innovation in collaboration with the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Researchers from John Jay developed the youth interview instrument and led the fieldwork in the Atlantic City site, and researchers from the Center for Court Innovation contracted with experienced ethnographers to lead the fieldwork in the five other sites and conducted the multi-site analysis presented in this report.

The six research sites were selected to represent a geographically diverse set of locations that, at the outset of the project, were deemed likely to possess a relatively sizable population of youth in the sex trade. Final site selection was informed by official prostitution arrest statistics collected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation; call volume from a national human trafficking hotline maintained by the Polaris Project; and key informant interviews regarding perceived national “hub sites” for the sex trafficking of underage individuals. The feasibility of implementing the study methodology was also considered in final site selection. The four principal elements of the study methodology are summarized below.

Youth Interviews

To interview youth in the six sites, the research team employed respondent-driven sampling (RDS), ethnographic fieldwork, and street and internet outreach. RDS methods are designed for interviewing populations where there is involvement in stigmatized behavior; a dearth of widely accepted research information; and participants who are difficult to reach through traditional sampling methods (e.g., see Heckathorn 1997, 2002, 2007).

In this study, RDS started with “seed” interviews, most of whom were recruited through street ethnography at known “tracks” or “strolls.” The interviews were all anonymous. Participants were paid for their time (most received \$40); given three numbered coupons; asked to give the coupons to other eligible youth in their social network; and paid \$10 for each coupon that was redeemed for a subsequent interview. The combination of street ethnography and RDS methods allowed the research team to access a wider pool of youth than in prior studies that exclusively recruited youth through a single venue, such as service providers or criminal justice agencies.

In total, interviews were completed with 949 young people ages 13-24 across the six sites.¹ Ranging from 30 minutes to two hours, the interviews included both closed-ended and open-ended questions on a wide range of topics. The present report only concerns responses to the

¹ Restricting eligibility exclusively to underage individuals (ages 13-17) would have limited the effectiveness of the RDS methodology, since individuals just under or over the age of 18 are frequently networked to each other. Further, prior research in New York City and Atlantic City, the first site in the current study, led the research team to expect limited age-based differences in interview responses. Indeed, across all six sites, the final data in the present study pointed to few substantive differences in the experiences of the 13-17-year-old and 18-24-year-old subgroups.

closed-ended questions and to questions that could be recoded into quantitative data. The six site reports provide in-depth themes and findings from the open-ended questions.

Official Criminal Justice Records

For 2009, the number of prostitution arrests of youth under the age of 18 in all 50 states was obtained from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Given limitations in this data (see Chapter 2), comparable information was also sought from state-based data sources; and data was obtained from the designated Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) or some other state data source in 34 of the 50 states in the U.S. In those states for which the arrest totals obtained from FBI and state-based data sources diverged, the two results were averaged to create a final estimate for each state.

Additionally, the research team sought case-level data on demographics, criminal history, prosecution outcomes, and re-arrests for youth ages 24 and under who were arrested on prostitution charges in the six research sites. The research team also sought analogous data on individuals arrested on commercial sexual exploitation of children charges.

Population Estimate

A national population estimate was constructed based on the number of underage individuals arrested for prostitution in a given year (obtainable from official sources), combined with youth interview data on the percentage of youth who are *missed* in official records—given that only a fraction of youth in the sex trade are arrested each year. The methodology is designed to correct for the underestimate of the true population that would result from utilizing official arrest statistics alone. Nonetheless, as described in the body of this report, the research team encountered limitations in the quality and precision of each data source, rendering it unfeasible to produce a precise national estimate in the form of a single number. Instead, the research team created a conservative (i.e., intentionally wide) *range* for a national population estimate, varying assumptions to produce a lower and upper limit.

Service Providers and Law Enforcement

In four of the six research sites, interviews were conducted with staff from a total of 18 social service and law enforcement agencies that interact with youth in the sex trade. (In some of the 18 agencies, multiple staff were interviewed.) The interviews covered organizational background; interactions between agency staff and youth; client characteristics; service delivery; and challenges to working with the population.

Characteristics and Needs of the Population

This section reports major themes and findings from the 949 youth interviews in all six sites.

Demographic Characteristics

- **Gender:** The interview participants displayed significant gender diversity, with 60% cis female, 36% cis male, 4% trans female, and less than 1% trans male (6 youth total).²
- **Sexual Orientation:** The participants similarly identified with a range of sexual orientations (53% heterosexual, 36% bisexual, 9% gay, and 2% other sexual orientation).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** More than two-thirds of the interview participants (70%) were black/African-American. The other participants were white (12%), multi-racial (8%), Hispanic/Latino (7%), or identified with an additional race or ethnic category (3%).
- **Age:** A total of 199 underage youth were interviewed (ages 13-17), accounting for 21% of the total 13-24-year-old sample. However, pointing to a young age of initiation among most participants, 77% of all respondents indicated that their first experience trading sex took place while under the age of 18. (The average age was 15.8 years old.)
- **Place of Birth:** Only 3% of participants were born outside the United States. Most participants entered the sex market after running away or otherwise leaving home at a young age.
- **Living Situation:** Eleven percent of interview participants were either homeless/living on the streets (5%) or living in a shelter (6%), and an additional 12% reported living alone. The remaining 77% were living with family, friends, or in some other arrangement.
- **Parent Status:** Thirty percent of participants reported having children, with cis females significantly more likely to report having children (37%) than cis males (20%) or trans females (14%).

² When someone is cisgender, they identify their gender as the gender they were assigned at birth. When someone is transgender, they identify their gender as something other than what they were assigned at birth. For example, someone classified as trans female was assigned male at birth but identifies as female.

Market Involvement

- **Background to Market Entry:** Almost three-fourths of interview participants (73%) had left home under the age of 18, and 13% had left home under the age of 13. (The average age having left home was 15.0 years old.) Almost one-third of participants (32%) had their first sex experience under the age of 13. Further pointing to possible childhood trauma among many participants, 24% (including 30% of cis females) reported that their first sex experience was nonconsensual.
- **Work Hours:** Just over half of the interview participants (52%) reported working (in the sex market) 10 or fewer hours in the previous week, 15% reported working 11-20 hours, 21% reported 21-30 hours, and 21% reported 31 or more hours.
- **Weekly Income:** Thirty-two percent reported weekly earnings of \$300 or less—with 44% of cis males compared to 25% of cis females and 30% of trans females reporting earnings in this range. At the other end of the spectrum, 28% reported weekly earnings of \$301-\$600, 21% reported \$601-\$1,000, and 19% reported \$1,001 or more—with cis females the most likely gender subgroup to report earnings in the higher income categories.
- **Obtaining Customers:** Interview participants reported obtaining customers through a variety of means (often listing more than one), including: the street (63%), internet (42%), friends (39%), referral from someone else they knew (26%), and a pimp (9%). The most common internet sites used were Adam4Adam, Backpage, Craigslist, and Facebook.
- **Working Conditions:** More than half of the sample (53%) reported work conflicts, including arguments with other sex workers, customers, pimps, and drug dealers. Most conflicts were described as relating to competition and money. Thirty-five percent of all participants recounted that they had experienced conflicts leading to physical fights, with 54% of trans females indicating as much—citing their gender identity as a basis for discrimination and violence.

Pimps and Market Facilitators

- **Definition:** The six site reports make clear that interview participants were involved in complex social relationships with others in the underground economy. To classify these relationships for multi-site analysis, a “pimp” is defined as a person who exploits an individual in the sex market through coercion, control, or force. A “market facilitator” is defined as a person who helps obtain customers but without evidence of coercion, control, or force. For coding purposes, researchers reviewed answers to a battery of both closed- and open-ended questions asking participants how they obtain customers; whether they shared their money with anyone (and who); whether that person had rules; and the nature

of those rules. Coding for a pimp was liberal, meaning that researchers likely over-coded the presence of pimps, including cases where participants did not themselves use this term.

- **Prevalence of Pimps:** Fifteen percent of interview participants had a pimp. Cis females (21%) were significantly more likely than cis males (7%) or trans females (9%) to have a pimp who exerted coercion, control, or force. Pimps were both male and female.
- **Imposition and Nature of Rules:** Of those participants who had pimps, 42% reported that their pimp had rules. Examples involved returning a percent of earnings to the pimp each day; stopping work for the day after reaching a quota of customers (potentially with a threat of beatings for noncompliance); and being required to obtain money from customers upfront. Other rules involved drug use, time limits with customers, ability to have partners, and time of day to be back at home.
- **Prevalence of Market Facilitators:** Nineteen percent of participants were coded as having a market facilitator who was not a pimp. As discussed in the site reports (see, e.g., Marcus et al. 2016; Wagner et al. 2016) and earlier New York City studies (Curtis et al. 2008; Dank et al. 2015), typically a market facilitator and the youth do not share money, have no rules, and neither works for the other. The parties find the relationship to be mutually beneficial, leading often, for example, to mutual support, discussions of strategies to stay safe, and cross-referrals of potential customers.
- **Legal Definition of Trafficking:** Eighty percent of participants met the legal definition of sex trafficking at some point in their lives, either because they had a pimp or, in most cases, because they were under the age of 18 when they first traded sex. At the time of the interview, 32% met the legal definition of trafficking.

Interactions with Law Enforcement and Other Illegal Activities

- **History of Arrest:** Overall, 65% of participants reported a prior arrest, 16% reported a prior prostitution arrest, and 11% reported a prostitution arrest in the past year. Those with a pimp were significantly more likely to report a prostitution arrest than others (28% v. 13%).
- **Arrest Charges:** Interview participants who had been arrested reported a diverse array of charges. More than four-fifths (82%) were nonviolent. Charges other than prostitution included property crimes (41% of all charges, including many low-level theft charges); drug-related crimes (22%), and trespassing or loitering charges (8%).

- **Experience of Transgender Youth:** Trans females (37%) were significantly more likely than cis males (12%) or cis females (17%) to report a prior prostitution arrest and at least three times more likely to report a prostitution arrest in the past year (30% v. 9% v. 10%).
- **Drug Use:** Nearly three-fourths (73%) of participants reported currently using at least one illegal drug, including marijuana (66%), cocaine/crack (13%), heroin (7%), or some other drug (often methamphetamines or pills, 20%).

Interactions with Social Services and Major Service Needs

- **Physical Health:** Most participants reported positive indicators of physical health, including having seen a doctor within the past three months (64%) or within the past year (93%), and using protection against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (94% reported “all the time” or “often”).
- **Experiences with Services:** About half (51%) of participants reported having ever been to a service agency (48% of cis males, 51% of cis females, and 71% of trans females).
- **Major Service Needs:** The services sought most by participants involved basic survival needs: employment or education (49%); housing or help paying for utilities (47%), and food or money (36%). By comparison, counseling or advice was sought by 16% of interview participants and addiction or health services by 11%.
- **Exiting the Life:** Sixty-two percent of participants had tried to leave “the life” and 63% reported that they would know how to leave they life if they wanted to do so.

Differences by Site

Themes and patterns were broadly consistent across sites with several notable exceptions. Specifically, the average age of the Miami sample was younger than in the five other sites (17.6 years v. 19.9 years) and more likely to be born outside the U.S. (8% v. 1%). In the Bay Area, a significantly higher percentage of interview participants worked with a pimp than elsewhere (29% v. 12%). In Atlantic City and Las Vegas, relationships with market facilitators were particularly common (36% in Atlantic City and 24% in Las Vegas, contrasting with 15% in the other four sites). Finally, social services appeared to be more plentiful in the Bay Area than elsewhere. Seventy-five percent of Bay Area interview participants reported having ever visited a service agency, compared to 46% in the other five sites. Participants in the Bay Area were also significantly more likely to report that staff from a service agency had approached them with an offer of services (35% v. 19%).

The Criminal Justice Response

This section reports official arrest, prosecution, and recidivism outcomes—both for youth ages 13-24 who are engaged in the sex trade and individuals who exploit these youth for commercial gain.

- **Underage Prostitution Arrests Nationwide:** Combining FBI and state data sources yields an estimate of 1,130 individuals under the age of 18 who were arrested for prostitution in 2009. These arrests were spread unevenly, with 67% of all arrests taking place in five states: California, Nevada, New York, Texas, and Washington.
- **Arrest History and Recidivism:** In all four sites where case-level data was obtained on youth under the age of 25 who were arrested for prostitution (Chicago, Dallas, Las Vegas, and Miami), at least 56% had a prior arrest, and at least 36% were re-arrested over a two-year period. Notably, well over half of all prior and recidivist arrests were for offenses other than prostitution. In Chicago, for example, the sample averaged 1.33 re-arrests on any charge compared to 0.54 prostitution re-arrests over two years; and in Dallas, the sample averaged 1.02 re-arrests on any charge compared to 0.37 prostitution re-arrests.
- **Prostitution Case Outcomes:** In sites providing data on prosecution outcomes for youth under the age of 25 who were arrested for prostitution, the percent convicted was 28% in Miami, 56% in Dallas, 58% in Chicago, and 59% in Las Vegas. Of those convicted, the percent receiving jail time was 39% in Miami, 73% in Chicago, and 97% in Dallas.
- **Characteristics of Defendants Arrested on Exploitation Charges:** Across 11 states for which such data could be obtained, 607 defendants were arrested on commercial sexual exploitation of children-related charges in 2009, of which 65% were male and 35% were female. This gender distribution was generally mirrored in four of the five research sites for which relevant data was available (excluding Atlantic City); defendants ranged from 60% to 71% male in four sites, although they were 96% male in Las Vegas.
- **Case Outcomes and Recidivism in Exploitation Cases:** Conviction rates in commercial sexual exploitation of children cases varied (12% in Las Vegas, 31% in San Francisco, 43% in both Chicago and Dallas, and 55% in Miami). The two-year re-arrest rates on any charge also varied (9% in Las Vegas, 36% in Chicago, 39% in Dallas, and 50% in Miami).
- **Problematic Data Collection on Underage Arrests:** Focusing on aggregate data concerning the number of underage prostitution arrests in each state, this study uncovered substantial limitations in data quality. They included: incomplete reporting of arrest numbers from local law enforcement to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program of

the FBI (the low charge severity of prostitution offenses makes reporting optional); laws in some states that group together prostitution, exploitation, and solicitation charges under a single penal law code; the UCR practice of combining arrests in the aforementioned three categories within the same overarching “prostitution and commercialized vice” designation even where state penal laws could have enabled distinguishing prostitution, solicitation, and exploitation charges; and general limitations in the existence and reliability of data on juvenile (as opposed to adult criminal) arrests in some states. Moreover, in 15 of 34 states for which both UCR and state-based data sources provided numbers for underage prostitution arrests, including ten of 14 states where one data source yielded a number of arrests greater than five, the UCR and state-based numbers diverged.

Population Estimate

Combining information from state and federal data sources yielded a total of 1,130 underage prostitution arrests in 2009. Youth interview data yielded 10.75% of interview participants reporting an arrest for prostitution in the prior year. Extrapolating from these numbers yields a national population estimate of 10,506 youth under 18 years of age who are engaged in the sex trade nationwide. A second estimate was produced by first obtaining the percent of participants reporting a past year arrest *within each site* and then giving equal weight to each site’s result (rather than according more weight to sites where we interviewed more youth). This second approach yielded an estimate of 12.67% youth with a past year prostitution arrest, which extrapolates to a total of 8,914 youth in the sex trade nationwide. Given notable data limitations, we then varied our underlying assumptions to produce a population estimate *range* with a lower limit of 4,457 youth and an upper limit of 20,994 youth. A particular concern leading to this conservative range, as opposed to single estimate, is that youth in tightly controlled situations may not have been located for interviews by the research team and, more relevant to the population estimate algorithm, may also not tend to be located or arrested by law enforcement.³ To address this potential bias, the upper limit of the population estimate range reflects a conservative assumption that only 5.38% of the true underage population of interest is arrested for prostitution each year.

³ Interview data did not, per se, provide support for the premise that youth who are subject to control are inaccessible to law enforcement, as those involved with a pimp were more than twice as likely as others to report a prior arrest for prostitution (28% v. 13%). Nonetheless, it remains plausible that those whose daily movements are subject to a deeper level of control than the individuals represented in our sample are distinctly inaccessible to law enforcement.

The Perspective of Social Service Providers

This section reports on themes and findings from interviews conducted with staff at select social service and law enforcement agencies.

- **Varying Perceptions of the Population:** Staff varied in the extent to which they defined the population of interest as female and as working with a pimp. In general, staff from agencies that specialize in serving this population tended to perceive that the majority of these youth are female and work with a pimp, whereas staff from agencies that do not specialize primarily in this population tended to perceive the population as more diverse.
- **Contended Nature of Language:** Staff from some agencies referred to the population with the term “commercial sexual exploitation of children” or “CSEC.” Staff at these agencies also generally tended to use the term “victim” and expressed a view that most of the population is female. Staff from other agencies used the term “youth engaged in survival sex,” which one interviewee from a homeless shelter defined as “trading sex for money, drugs, or housing.” Staff from still other agencies used the language of the youth: “sex work,” “hookin’ and crookin’,” “hustling,” or “other job.” There was also tension around the term “trafficking,” which some interviewees objected to for variety of reasons (e.g., suggesting that it directs attention to international as opposed to domestic forms of trafficking; or dovetails with labeling the youth as “victims,” potentially depriving them of agency).
- **Constraints on Policy and Practice Related to Funding:** Some staff expressed that the need to secure funding often required agencies to create singular narratives that tended to limit both discourse and programming to a subset of all youth and, in particular, to focus on girls. Some staff perceived that policymakers would be less willing to move away from criminalizing youth unless they perceived that the population consists predominantly of girls who are subject to force.
- **Available Services:** Service agencies whose staff were interviewed reported offering a variety of services, although they tended to fall into the following categories: counseling, support groups, case management, job assistance, parenting classes, and legal and educational advocacy. Those interviewed expressed that youth have a particular unmet need for safe housing to reduce vulnerability to entry or to help youth exit “the life.”
- **Additional Service Agency Needs:** Social service staff expressed particular needs for more staff who could engage in visible outreach to the youth population (i.e., in lieu of merely waiting for participants to locate and arrive at the door of services themselves); more bilingual staff; more staff education around trauma in the juvenile justice system; and more engagement with the youth on what is best for them.

Conclusion

From speaking with almost 1,000 youth in six sites across the country, this study revealed that young people who are engaged in the sex trade are a diverse population that does not conform to any particular stereotype. The population varies in gender, sexual orientation, and living situation, among other attributes. Some members of the population work long hours and earn a sizable weekly income from their sex market participation, but a great many do not. The population is often involved in complex social relationships that, for a vast majority, does not involve direct coercion, control, or force—but often involves others who find themselves in broadly analogous positions in the underground economy.

Many in the population of interest use one or more illegal drugs and have an arrest history for an array of low-level illegal behaviors that are not limited to prostitution or related offenses. Of those youth who are underage—and, indeed, most of the youth we interviewed first entered the sex market when they were underage—most have not been arrested for prostitution per se, although many have an arrest history on other charges. Thus, whereas an estimated 1,130 underage youth were arrested for prostitution in 2009, even the lower limit in our range of national population estimates is more than four times higher, given that most youth do not experience a prostitution arrest in any given year.

Just as many of the involved youth are not arrested for prostitution, many also have not accessed services. (Almost half reported never accessing services). Unfortunately, the greatest service needs that the youth reported—which included the socioeconomic and survival necessities of safe housing, employment, education, food, and money—are not the most easily met needs, given the current funding and resource environment, which tends to place a greater emphasis on counseling, therapy, support groups, and legal advocacy.

We found that most youth who enter “the life” have limited options available to them. Most left home at a young age, many experienced severe forms of childhood trauma, and their skills and capacity to leave “the life” and enter the mainstream routines of stable housing, education, and legal work are limited. Even those youth who are not subjected to emotional, sexual, or physical violence by a pimp are still disadvantaged by social structures (including poverty and discrimination) that restrict available life choices and leave some youth particularly vulnerable to entry into the underground economy and “the life”—and may pose seemingly overwhelming barriers to exiting the life.

The prevailing narrative about young people engaged in the sex trade is that they are young girls controlled by pimps. While a notable percentage of the population fits this description, many do not. Our research suggests that many are male or transgender. The majority do not have pimps. The vast majority are from the United States rather than other countries. Helping these various subgroups escape “the life” will require more than a single, generic model; it will require policymakers to create multi-faceted initiatives that grapple with the realities on the ground—including how this young population conceives of itself.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Over the past decade, youth involvement in exchanging sex for money has become a growing concern among youth advocates, policymakers, and researchers across the United States. Federal, state, and local policymakers have responded with an array of initiatives, including expanded federal and state enforcement of those who exploit underage youth for commercial gain; training for law enforcement in identifying the involved youth; services for female youth in particular; specialized human or sex trafficking courts that seek to connect youth involved in the commercial sex industry with court-ordered services; and interagency task forces designed to coordinate action across advocates as well as the criminal, juvenile justice, child welfare, and social service systems (see Banks and Kyckelhahn 2011; Finklea, Fernandes-Alcantara, and Siskin 2011; Finn et al. 2009; Monto 2004; Muslim, Labriola, and Rempel 2008; Siskin and Wyler 2013; Small et al. 2008).

To date, there has been a paucity of rigorous research on the size, needs, and characteristics of the relevant population of youth who exchange sex for money. The absence of an evidence-based and representative understanding of the involved youth has hindered the ability of those who care about this population to design relevant programs and to make informed policy decisions. Accordingly, the Institute of Medicine's recent report, *Confronting Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Minors in the United States* (2013), called for rigorous research to advance understanding in order to create more informed prevention and intervention strategies and better law enforcement responses.

About This Study

The current study, funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the U.S. Department of Justice, aims to increase scientific knowledge concerning youth who engaged in the sex trade. Utilizing a mixed method approach of collecting official arrest and prosecution data, interviewing service providers, and conducting in-depth interviews with youth and slightly older young adults in six sites (Atlantic City, NJ; Dallas, TX; Las Vegas, NV; the Bay Area, CA; Miami, FL; and Chicago, IL), the goals of the study are:

- To provide a rich qualitative and quantitative portrait of the characteristics, experiences, and health and social service needs of these youth;
- To analyze arrest patterns and prosecution and recidivism outcomes for these youth when they encounter the juvenile or criminal justice systems;
- To document the types of services that are available to this population; and
- To estimate the size of the national population of youth who are engaged in the sex trade.

Six separate reports provide systematic qualitative accounts of the emergent themes and findings from the youth interviews that were conducted in each of the six respective research sites (Marcus, Riggs, Rivera, and Curtis 2016; Jones and Gamson 2016; Schaffner et al. 2016; Martin et al. 2016; Maurrasse and Jones 2016; Wagner, Whitmer, and Spivak 2016). This publication constitutes a multi-site synthesis and final technical report on the study. Authored by researchers at the Center for Court Innovation, this report describes the research methodology for each component of the study; reports findings from both a 50-state (national scope) and six-site analysis of official arrest data; analyzes prosecution and recidivism outcomes in select sites; synthesizes themes and findings from social service provider interviews; and provides comprehensive quantitative findings from the youth interviews. The qualitative, but not the quantitative, findings from the youth interviews are the primary focus of the six aforementioned site-specific reports. Therefore, the current report focuses in somewhat greater detail on presenting an original quantitative analysis. For this report and the six site reports, see <http://www.courtinnovation.org/youthstudy>.

Chapter 1 of this report reviews the relevant literature to date. Chapter 2 describes the multi-site research design and methodology. Chapter 3 presents findings from interviews with youth in our six sites. Chapter 4 presents findings from the official records analysis of arrest, prosecution, and recidivism data; it also includes a population estimate for the entire United States. Chapter 5 presents an analysis of social services, including services currently available as well as challenges and youth needs that are not currently being met. The report concludes in Chapter 6 with a summary of findings, lessons learned for policymakers and practitioners, and recommendations for future research, policy, and practice.

The Hidden Nature of the Population

Young people involved in the sex trade are often difficult to locate and reluctant to acknowledge their age (Spangenberg 2001). These youth may have contact with myriad agencies, including law enforcement, criminal courts, juvenile courts, child welfare agencies, educational institutions, shelters, and a wide range of service providers (Muslim et al. 2008). Except in jurisdictions with rigorous systems for interagency communication—which by many accounts are rare—different agencies may each encounter a subset of the population (Muslim et al. 2008; Finn et al. 2009). In turn, researchers who draw a sample or conduct a study based on youth who come into contact with only one system (law enforcement, juvenile detention, child welfare, or social services) may reveal only part of the population and only part of the story.

In the absence of a comprehensive research sample, several studies have sought information from service providers (Estes and Weiner 2001; Gragg et al. 2007; Williamson et al. 2010). Yet, many of the youth involved in the commercial sex market may be resistant to services; unaware or unable to find services that meet their needs; or unable to escape from their exploiter in order to reach services safely. Hence, those who end up at the door of service agencies may not be representative of the population overall. A representative sample may be even less likely to emerge from arrest or court statistics—population estimates that rely on criminal justice data may be biased by the particular arrest and prosecution policies in those jurisdictions where research is conducted (see Puzzanchera al. 2011).

At the time of the first International Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) in 1996, the research literature was described as plagued by problematic methodologies (Ennew et al. 1996). While the situation has improved, a consensus has yet to emerge on the magnitude of the problem or the characteristics or needs of the population, either domestically or internationally. Policymakers and service professionals need more detailed information about the attitudes, orientations, and behaviors of these youth in order to develop effective responses.

Population Estimates

The extant literature has produced a small number of national population estimates, all of which have serious methodological limitations, as well as several state and local estimates, of which several of the most scientifically rigorous are summarized below.

National Population Estimates

Perhaps the most widely cited population estimate comes from the research of Estes and Weiner (2001). They estimated that between 244,000 and 325,000 children are at risk of commercial sexual exploitation in the United States, in addition to the additional estimated 105,000 children who are victims of other types of child sexual abuse annually. To produce their population estimate, Estes and Weiner (2001) conducted interviews and focus groups with “runaway and throwaway” youth living on the streets, as well as interviews and focus groups with a number of state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies, social service providers and others. Surveys were sent to hundreds of local, state, and federal agencies.

Despite this mixed-method approach, the limitations of Estes and Weiner’s (2001) estimates are well documented (see, e.g., Stransky and Finkelhor 2008) and are clearly acknowledged by the authors. For instance, the estimates are based on youth whom are “at risk” for commercial sexual exploitation; the estimates are not based on actual youth engaged in the commercial sex market. In tallying “at risk” youth, individuals may belong to multiple risk categories (homeless, gay, victim of child sexual abuse, etc.). These young people would be counted multiple times in the estimates. The authors did not take into account individuals who may belong in multiple risk categories (Stransky and Finkelhor 2008). Although the authors describe how the methodology corrects for some portion of the duplicate counts, the true extent of duplicate counting cannot be known. The authors themselves acknowledge that “a different type of study from ours—one that used a different methodology and a higher investment of resources—is needed to carry out a national prevalence and incidence survey that could produce an actual headcount of the number of identifiable commercially sexually exploited children in the United States” (Estes and Weiner 2001: 143).

Another study attempting to produce a national prevalence estimate analyzed the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, a nationally representative sample of 13,294 adolescents enrolled in grades 7-12 in the United States (Edwards, Iritani, and Hallfors 2006). This study found that 3.5% of youth reported that they had ever exchanged sex for

drugs or money. The median number of times that youth who have exchanged sex reported doing so was one. Critiques regarding the wording of questions in the study, in particular the possible misunderstanding of what it means to exchange sex for goods, have been raised (Stranskey and Finkelhor 2008).

Some estimates draw upon law enforcement data sources. In particular, Finkelhor and Ormrod (2004) analyzed police reports of juvenile prostitution cases from 1997 through 2000. They found that 200 prostitution incidents reported in the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) from 1997-2000 involved juvenile offenders. Mitchell, Finkelhor and Wolak (2010) built upon this earlier work and surveyed a national sample of law enforcement agencies about the characteristics of crimes involving juvenile prostitution and the numbers of arrests and detentions for these crimes during a one-year period. They produced a national estimate of 1,450 arrests or detentions in cases involving juvenile prostitution during a one-year period (Mitchell, Finkelhor and Wolak 2010). Of course, not all youth who exchange sex for money or other goods are arrested. And when arrests do take place, many law enforcement agencies charge the youth with offenses other than prostitution, such as drug possession or a curfew violation (Smith, Vardaman, and Snow 2009). Just as the Estes and Weiner estimate of at-risk youth is almost surely far higher than the actual number of youth in the population, the Mitchell et al. estimate likely omits a large swath of the population who are not arrested for prostitution in a given year.

Finally, Smith, Vardaman, and Snow (2009), working with local human trafficking task forces, provided an estimate of underage sex trafficking in ten Department of Justice-funded sites. While this study did not produce a national estimate, the study reported findings for ten key hub cities. The estimates used a different measurement period in each site and relied largely on official government records. From 1994-2007, Smith et al. (2009) estimated that there were 5,122 individuals suspected to have been sex trafficking victims in Las Vegas, but no more than 227 for each of the nine other sites, which Kansas City, Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Salt Lake City, Buffalo, Baton Rouge, Tampa, and one site in the northern Mariana Islands.

Local Population Estimates

A series of case studies have examined the problem in central hubs across the county. Most of the findings from these studies are based on official arrest records or convenience samples

of interview subjects; they do not indicate the extent of “hidden” youth who exchange sex for money.

New York City: Possibly the most studied “hub” is New York City. Beginning with the mayoral administration of Rudolph Giuliani (1994-2001), all “adult establishments,” including stores specializing in sexually explicit magazines, books and videos, as well as strip clubs and peep shows, had to be located at least 500 feet apart from each other and at least 500 feet away from churches, schools, and residential districts. These establishments were also restricted from operating in certain commercial and manufacturing districts. The regulations severely limited the number of adult establishments located around Times Square and significantly reduced street prostitution in the Midtown area (Sviridoff et al. 2000), displacing much of the sex business away from Manhattan and into the outer boroughs (Spangenberg 2001).

In January 2002, the next mayor, Michael Bloomberg, announced “Operation Clean Sweep,” with the purpose of abolishing “quality of life” problems by targeting repeat offenders with high numbers of arrests, including those involved with prostitution. But as law enforcement devoted more attention to pursuing the street-level sex market and their participants, the sex business adapted and diversified, becoming reliant on technological innovations such as the internet and cell phones to conduct business. While New York City can rightfully claim to have made progress in addressing the most blatant sex markets (e.g., in and around Times Square), there is scant evidence that the overall sex market across the city has been reduced in size. Indeed, professionals and child advocates have become concerned that the population of exploited youth in New York City has grown in recent years (Covenant House 2013).

Spangenberg (2001) estimated that in 2001, there were up to 5,000 youth who were sexually exploited in New York City. Another more recent study, based on a comprehensive survey of social service and public sector agencies, estimated that the population of sexually exploited children in New York City was approximately 2,200 (Gragg et al. 2007). Since many exploited youth are unlikely to have had direct contact with the agencies surveyed, the authors believed that their methodology probably yielded a significant undercount of the actual population.

Indeed, in 2008, researchers from John Jay College of Criminal Justice (as part of a larger study conducted in partnership with researchers on the current project) conducted a population estimate using respondent-driven sampling (RDS). RDS uses a network-based

strategy for accessing and interviewing statistically representative samples of hard-to-reach populations, such as young people involved in the commercial sex market, by recruiting eligible “seed” interviewees who then refer others they know to be interviewed for the study to build a sample pool. The 2008 study (Curtis et al. 2008) estimated that there were 3,946 children ages 18 and younger in New York City who were exchanging sex for money or other goods. An original reanalysis of the same dataset by the current research team, which engaged in a small number of methodological corrections, changes the estimate to 2,726.

Atlanta: A team of researchers sought to estimate the prevalence and scope of child sexual exploitation in Atlanta. Multiple estimation methods produced a surprisingly low set of figures (Finn et al. 2009). Over a four-year period from September 2003 to September 2007, the study identified only 24 prostitution-related arrests of youth under 18. The study also found that only one in 12 homeless youth participating in research interviews had engaged in sex for money; only 15 youth whose cases were documented in a citywide interagency tracking system had experienced forms of child sexual exploitation; and only 2.3% of 697 surveyed social workers, psychologists, and other Atlanta area counselors reported having served youth with a history of involvement in the commercial sex industry. This estimate seems low for Atlanta and was not based on a representative sample drawn from all institutions that might conceivably have contact with the relevant population.

Another study conducted in Atlanta, Georgia surveyed street activity, internet service postings, escort services, and large hotels for juvenile prostitution during a one-month period (The Schapiro Group 2010). Surveying street activity involved video recording of individuals suspected to be engaged in prostitution. Researchers also counted adolescent females in advertisements on Atlanta Craigslist and placed their own ads looking for youth prostitutes to count response rates. To study escort services, researchers called escort service phone numbers throughout Georgia. To study hotel activity, researchers were placed in lobbies of major hotels in the Atlanta area. The researchers counted that on any given night, there were 41 girls under age 18 involved in street activity, 26 girls involved in Craigslist sex postings, 20 girls involved in escort services, and 7 girls selling sex in major hotels, for a total of 94 girls under 18 per night. The utility of these numbers in informing a general population estimate for Atlanta is unclear, absent further information about the behavior of this population.

Ohio: The Ohio Trafficking in Persons Study Commission Research and Analysis Subcommittee examined data from the Innocence Lost Initiative and from Immigrations

Customs Enforcement, reviewed governmental and nongovernmental reports and studies, and spoke with social service workers. Similar to Estes and Weiner (2001), the authors developed low, medium and high risk categories to determine the number of American-born youth at risk for trafficking in Ohio, as well as the number of foreign-born youth that have been trafficked (Williamson, Karandikar-Chheda and Barrows 2010). They arrived at an estimate of 2,879 American-born youth in Ohio at risk of sex trafficking, over 1,000 of which are estimated to be currently trafficked in the state. Since the methodology closely mirrors that of Estes and Weiner (2001), similar caveats apply, especially concerning the distinction between at-risk youth and participants in the sex trade. In addition, youth can easily be placed in one or more of the three tier categories and, thus, counted multiple times.

Also in Ohio, information from the Ohio Network of Children's Advocacy Centers shows that 51 minors from across the state were potential human trafficking victims over a nine-month period, including five youth under the age of six. The network has a state contract to screen children referred by law enforcement, children's services agencies and others, to determine whether they may have been trafficked. Statistics from July 2013 to March 2014 showed all but five of the 51 minors reported were 13 to 18 years old. Only one case involved a male. They came from both urban and rural areas of the state. Information on at least three of the five youngest victims indicated they were trafficked sexually by one or both of their parents in exchange for drugs, rent, goods or money (Ohio Network of Children's Advocacy Centers 2014).

Population Characteristics and Needs

Numerous studies have been conducted on the causes and correlates of youth involvement in the commercial sex market in general and prostitution in particular. These studies have identified a host of underlying factors, including childhood abuse (e.g., Busby et al. 2000; Edwards et al. 2006; Estes and Weiner 2001; Greene et al. 1999, Schissel and Fedec 1999; Williamson 2009); runaway status (Edwards et al. 2006; Greene et al. 1999; Kennedy and Pucci 2009; Seng 1989; Simons and Whitebeck 1991); and exposure to criminal behavior, drug use, and domestic violence (Burgos et al. 1999; Kennedy and Pucci 2009; Schissel and Fedec 1999; Silbert and Pines 1982).

Child prostitution may further exacerbate the risks of drug use (Edwards et al. 2006; Inciardi et al. 1991); unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (Busby et al. 2000; Decker et al. 2012; Ireland and Widom 1994; Kidd and Krall 2002, Schissel and Fedec

1999); physical and sexual abuse (Schissel and Fedec 1999, Simons and Whitbeck 1991; YWEP 2009); and criminal behavior (Loeber and Farrington 1998; Widom and Kuhns 1996). Finally, psychological problems such as depression, self-abusive behavior, and schizophrenia may either cause or result from youth involvement in the commercial sex market (e.g., Brannigan and Brunschot 1997; Kennedy and Pucci 2009; Schissel and Fedec 1999; Seng 1989). Professionals continue to struggle with the challenges posed by these youth, including flight risks and lack of willingness to cooperate in investigations; in many places, there is a lack of appropriate housing to keep these youth safe and provide them with much needed services (Kennedy et al. 2007).

There is broad agreement concerning many of the causes and correlates of youth involvement in the sex market. Yet, many questions related to the characteristics, needs, and experiences of the population during the period when they are actively involved in the sex market remain unanswered. Moreover, since much of the research focuses on young people that are referred to social services or housed in juvenile detention centers or other criminal justice settings, there is a need to provide a more representative examination of this population.

The more that data analysis is not limited to a particular slice of the population (e.g., those who are arrested or those who appear at the door of available service agencies), the more that boys appear to comprise a significant percentage of the overall population. Indeed, in analyzing the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, a nationally representative sample of 13,294 adolescents enrolled in grades 7-12 in the U.S., researchers found that 68% of those who involved in the sex trade were male (Edwards et al. 2006).

In recent years, more research is focusing on LGBTQ youth. Ashley (2008) found that transgender youth reported that prostitution was a kind of “game” or “competition.” They also reported that being in “the life” made them feel included and part of a family. Some reported that they faced employment hurdles due to their gender, so selling sex was a way to survive. Participatory action research conducted by the Young Women’s Empowerment Project also found that girls were denied help from institutional systems, such as the Department of Children and Family Services and the police, because of their sexual identification (YWEP 2009). According to a recent study of LGBTQ youth engaged in the commercial sex market in New York City, 47% identified as male, 36% as female, 11% as trans female, 3% as trans male, and 3% as other (Dank et al. 2015).

Another issue yet to be resolved is the extent to which the youth who are involved operate independently or work for a true “exploiter.” In a New York City-based study that involved respondent-driven sampling interviews, 10% of those who exchange sex for money worked for a market facilitator or “pimp” (Curtis et al. 2008). A cross-sectional survey of female patients in five family-planning clinics (affiliated with Planned Parenthood) in Northern California found that of the 9% of young women (aged 16-29 years old) who sought services at these family planning clinics, 16% reported pimp involvement (Decker et al. 2012). However, an acknowledged limitation in the methodology in both of these studies was the potential for under-representing youth who were trafficked into the country or held in tightly controlled indoor environments.

The Law Enforcement Response

There is little research to indicate how frequently youth are arrested and prosecuted for child prostitution. In general, evidence indicates that prostitution providers are arrested far more frequently than their customers and procurers (Thukral and Ditmore 2003). Several cities have attempted to address this disparity (Monto 2004), but some believe that only federal standards can ensure consistency (Estes and Weiner 2001). However, a recent study concludes that because prostitution-related offenses are regulated at a state level, the federal law is rarely applicable (Lutnick 2016). In many cases, police charge the young person with another crime, like loitering or disturbing the peace, in places where prostitution for minors has been decriminalized (Lutnick 2016). Law enforcement officials often state that arresting these minors is for their own good, to get them away from their pimp and off the dangerous streets, but this recent research suggests that involvement with the criminal justice system only leads to additional barriers, such as employment, education, housing and benefits and not to safety or the ability to escape an exploiter (Lutnick 2016; YWEP 2009).

To facilitate a consistent response, specific laws such as the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) and the Prosecutorial Remedies and Other Tools to end the Exploitation of Children Today Act of 2003 (PROTECT) were created to define and address youth engaged in the sex trade. TVPA, in particular, states that any person below 18 years old “induced to perform” a commercial sex act is considered a victim of a “severe form of trafficking” and the crossing of state lines is not required for it to be designated a federal crime. The TVPA and its reauthorizations in 2003, 2005 and 2008, as well as the PROTECT Act of 2003 and the 2008 Adam Walsh Act, have funded task forces to better identify victims, increase penalties for perpetrators, and enhance victim services.

In addition to the federal statutes, all states have laws addressing various aspects of commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of minors, although most states do not mention those terms in particular. A much smaller subset of state laws, usually those enacted more recently, contain specific provisions that address sexual exploitation or sex trafficking of minors or the particular situation and needs of those minors who have been victimized.

A recent study found that since the passage of the new federal statutes, many jurisdictions, especially in California, Florida, and Texas, saw a significant increase in the number of investigations, case filings, and convictions where a prison sentence is imposed for exploitation (Small et al. 2008). The study found that it was not just the passage of this legislation that led to these increases, but the creation of task forces and convening of national summits that brought an increased awareness and focus on prosecuting the perpetrators using a collaborative, victim-centered approach.

Another step towards a national response was taken in 2003 with the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Innocence Lost initiative. This initiative re-conceptualizes prostituted children as victims and focuses on providing them with services, while increasing legal responses to the adults who exploit them. This re-conceptualization is reflected in a range of local initiatives, such as passage of the Safe Harbor for Exploited Children Act in New York in 2008, and the recent rise of specialized prostitution, human trafficking, and sex trafficking courts that seek to help youth who are arrested through court-ordered services. Nonetheless, it is unclear whether available services are truly suitable or effective or whether the use of "back-end" policies *after* a youth is arrested will truly reduce or inadvertently dovetail with the criminalization of the involved youth.

With regard to enhancing efforts to prosecute the exploiters, some evidence suggests that new policy initiatives have produced positive results. On a national scale, the average federal prison sentences imposed on exploiters recently increased from 53 months in 1999 (prior to when the TVPA went into effect) to 80 months in 2004 (Small et al. 2008). Over that same time, the percentage of offenders receiving probation (i.e., non-custodial) sentences dramatically decreased. A quasi-experimental analysis of a specialized prosecution initiative of the District Attorney's Office in Queens, New York confirmed that it resulted in a significant increase in jail or prison sentences imposed on those convicted of exploitation offenses (Muslim et al. 2008).

Available Services for Youth

A wide array of barriers hinder efforts to provide effective assistance to youth engaged in the sex trade, beginning with the hidden nature of a significant portion of the population and continuing with resource and funding limitations to the provision of crisis housing and other services (Gragg et al. 2007; Muslim et al. 2008; Lutnick 2016)). The complexities of their lives may bring these youth into contact with multiple institutions: criminal justice, child welfare, health care, and education. Furthermore, providers who work with youth have expressed concern about training deficits for clinical staff, police officers, and judges (Gragg et al. 2007). Existing services range from enforced detention programs (Busby et al. 2000) to shelters and safe housing (e.g., Children of the Night; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) to voluntary counseling, health, educational, and job training services.

More than two-thirds (68%) of youth who were interviewed in one of the New York City studies reported having visited at least one service agency; many reported visiting multiple agencies (Curtis et al. 2008). Yet, little research has been conducted into the efficacy of services for this population (Wahab 2005). One evaluation of the Salt Lake City's First Offender Prostitution Program made a number of recommendations, including that programs balance the priorities of criminal justice and service agencies; use empirically-driven, structured intervention strategies; limit the scope of issues to be addressed; train counselors to deal with sex work issues; and establish clear goals, objectives, and roles for staff (Wahab 2005). Impact studies could not be located, however, that employed rigorous quasi-experimental methods and included re-offense or similar outcomes.

On Language: A Challenge for Researchers, Policymakers, and Practitioners

Throughout our research, we came across numerous words and phrases to describe the population of interest for our study, including: commercially sexually exploited children, youth engaged in survival sex, child sex workers, child or juvenile prostitutes, teenage hookers, or trafficking victims. Many of these terms entail non-empirically-based assumptions or do not accurately capture everyone in the population.

In the current study, we conducted interviews with 949 young people ages 13-24 who exchange sex for money, housing, food, or drugs. In the remainder of this report, we generally refer to this population simply as “youth engaged in the sex trade,” although we recognize that this language too is imperfect. As our research indicated, some youth often exchange sex outside of a commercial sex market and are instead exchanging sex for things other than money, including housing, food, drugs, or some other good. More broadly, our intention is to be inclusive of anyone who was eligible for our study, where eligibility encompassed youth ages 13-24 who exchange sex for either money or some other good.

Chapter 2

Research Design and Methodology

This study was animated by the goal of providing a better understanding of the lives, experiences, and needs of the wide range of young people (ages 13-24) engaged in the sex trade in the United States. In addition, the project assesses the criminal justice response to this population, analyzing arrest numbers in all 50 states and prosecution and recidivism outcomes for both the youth and exploiters in select sites. Finally, the project seeks to provide information regarding the total size of the population of interest. The study was designed and overseen by the Center for Court Innovation in collaboration with the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Researchers from John Jay developed the youth interview instrument and led the fieldwork in the Atlantic City site. Researchers from the Center for Court Innovation contracted with experienced ethnographers to lead the fieldwork in the five other sites and conducted the multi-site analysis.

The study involved four concurrent research strategies: (1) respondent-driven sampling (RDS) methods to locate and interview youth engaged in the sex trade in six sites across the country; (2) collection and analysis of prostitution-related arrest nationwide; (3) collection and analysis of prosecution, sentencing, and recidivism data in research sites where relevant data could be obtained; and (4) interviews with select representatives from service providers and law enforcement agencies in four of six sites. This chapter outlines the design and methodology of these four strategies. Relevant limitations to the methodology are described within the sections that follow.

Youth Interviews

The lead research agency, the Center for Court Innovation had previously teamed up with researchers from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice to conduct a similar study on youth in New York City (Curtis et al. 2008; Muslim et al. 2008). The current study sought to replicate much of the New York City study. After first outlining the site selection process, we provide an overview of the cross-site research methodology that built on the past experience of the research team.

Site Selection

The youth interview component of this study occurred in six sites around the United States: Atlantic City, NJ; Bay Area (San Francisco and Oakland), CA; Miami, FL; Dallas, TX; Chicago, IL; and Las Vegas, NV. Each site was initially tasked with seeking to complete 200-300 interviews with young people engaged in the sex trade. At each site, a local professor or consultant was hired as a site coordinator to oversee a team of research assistants (often local graduate students) to conduct the interviews.

The Atlantic City site was chosen as a pilot for the following reasons: 1) as the second largest gaming market in the United States, it stands second only to Las Vegas in its reputation as a hub for prostitution and related illegal leisure activities; 2) with the only no-charge beach in New Jersey and a boardwalk that runs nearly the length of the island, the city is, during the summer months, a magnet for runaway youth; and 3) a robust sex market (not specifically youth though) was detected in early reconnaissance trips. The site was also attractive as a pilot site due to its proximity to New York City, where the research team was located.

To determine the other five sites, a multi-step process was implemented. First, general research was conducted on the prevalence of youth engaged in the sex trade using information provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Office of the Inspector General. This first step allowed for the development of a short list of possible sites based on official prostitution arrest numbers of people under the age of 18 (FBI Uniform Crime Report) and the 13 high-intensity child prostitution areas identified by the FBI's work with the Innocence Lost project (Office of the Inspector General).

Second, the research team spoke with key stakeholders at two leading organizations. The Polaris Project coordinates the national human trafficking hotline, provides client services through specialized local offices, and runs campaigns to fight human trafficking. During our discussion with Polaris, the research team confirmed the short list of sites with the numbers Polaris was receiving from its hotline.

Discussions were also held with Shared Hope International. At the time of site selection, Shared Hope International was finalizing field assessments designed to measure and evaluate the access to and delivery of services for youth who were involved in the commercial sex market. The field assessments involved interviewing justice officials, non-

governmental/service provider organizations, and child protection organizations regarding how the involved youth are identified and routed through the criminal justice or social service systems. Shared Hope International conducted field assessments in select sites, and three (South Florida, Las Vegas, and Dallas) were also on our short list.

The final sites were confirmed after receiving recommendations for local site coordinators who could serve as effective partners. Leading each site was a large responsibility and it was critical to work with individuals that came highly recommended, knew the community and key players, had strong qualitative research experience, and had the ability to manage research assistants.

Rationale for Respondent-Driven Sampling

Respondent-driven sampling (RDS) was first introduced by Heckathorn (1997) as a method for sampling hard-to-reach populations whose underlying behavior or participation in research might be stigmatized (Heckathorn 1997, 2002, 2007). RDS works as follows: Initial “seeds,” intentionally recruited by the researchers, represent Wave 0. These seeds must meet sample eligibility criteria but do not have to be “representative.” Each seed then recruits a limited number of other eligible participants (e.g., three to five), who comprise Wave 1; they in turn recruit similar numbers of additional participants (Wave 2); and so forth.

Research has shown that sample and social network characteristics reach equilibrium—i.e., become representative of the population of interest—after several waves. The precise number of waves can range from three to six, depending on the number of subjects recruited by each initial subject and other factors; although some research suggests that six waves is the maximum necessary (Heckathorn 1997, 2002; Salganik and Heckathorn 2004; Wang et al. 2005). RDS relies on the fact that respondents have more study-eligible members in their social networks than the number of persons they are allowed to recruit. Thus each recruitment wave introduces an element of randomness, which, as the process continues, is magnified by subsequent, quasi-random choices (since individuals must recruit individuals who have not already been interviewed). The process ensures that after many waves, any bias that results from initial seed selection is minimized (Heckathorn 1997, 2002; Salganik and Heckathorn 2004). To be clear, the essential finding of the RDS literature is that although RDS begins with a convenience sample composed of several “seed” interviews, when implemented properly, RDS ends with a snowball sample that, after making statistical adjustments for network size (and hence increased or decreased likelihood of being recruited

for the study), can make a strong claim to represent the population of interest.

Youth engaged in the sex trade fit the profile of groups for which RDS was originally designed—lack of prior, widely-accepted information about the population; involvement in stigmatized behavior; often difficult to reach through traditional sampling methods; and a small subset of the total youth population (e.g., meaning that random sampling methods would require extraordinarily large sample sizes, mostly of ineligible individuals, to reach the target group). Previous research suggests that the population of interest is indeed heavily “networked,” and in fact, prior efforts to use RDS with this population have been at least partially if not highly successful (e.g., Curtis et al. 2008; Dank et al. 2015).

Logistics and Limitations

Full descriptions of each site’s RDS implementation and recruitment strategies, as well as challenges in applying the methodology, are discussed in the six individual site reports (see Jones and Gamson 2016; Marcus, Riggs, Rivera, and Curtis 2016; Martin et al. 2016; Maurrasse and Jones 2016; Schaffner et al. 2016; Wagner, Whitmer, and Spivak 2016). In this section, we present a basic overview of major cross-site decisions and challenges.

In each of the sites in the present study, initial research “seeds” were recruited through multiple methods, including local service providers, street outreach on known “tracks” or “strolls,” flyers, internet posts, and ethnographic methods. At the start of this study, site coordinators were advised by the Center for Court Innovation research team to recruit participants through local social service providers (e.g., youth organizations that have programs specifically for sexually exploited youth, homeless/street youth shelters, LGBT centers, etc.). This proved to be a challenge, as some providers were leery of having their participants help recruit others who were “still in the life.” Additionally, those engaged in services were often no longer networked to others in the sex trade. For these reasons, site coordinators eventually moved to outreach and ethnography to recruit participants. In the last two sites to initiate fieldwork, Chicago and Las Vegas, the site coordinators began with outreach and ethnography immediately from the outset.

Once initial seeds were recruited and interviewed, they were paid for their time. In the early stages of the study, participants were given \$20 for an interview. However, with Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, this was soon increased to \$40 in an effort to build the interview pool. After each interview, participants were given three numbered coupons and

told to give the coupons to young people in their network who were also eligible for the study. In the early phases of study implementation, eligibility meant young people ages 13-19 who engaged in the sex trade. However, this age range proved limiting: often people older than 19 were networked to those who were younger, and by not interviewing someone who was 20 years old, we missed the opportunity to become connected to truly eligible youth. Additionally, the numbers of people in the 13-19-year-old age range proved to be low in our pilot site, Atlantic City. Therefore, we increased the maximum age eligibility to 24. As indicated in the results presented in Chapter Three, the empirical data pointed to few substantive differences in the needs and characteristics of our population based on age, retrospectively justifying the decision to expand eligibility through age 24.

The coupon design varied by site, but all included a number to contact the local research team to set up an interview. When coupons were redeemed by eligible research subjects, their recruiter could be compensated \$10 for each one (they would call the contact number to find out if their coupons had been redeemed). The eligible subjects referred by the seeds were in turn given three coupons to recruit eligible participants in their network. If enough coupons were not returned to generate recruitment trees, more seeds were recruited.

Although this RDS referral system had proved successful in past studies, including the research team's prior study of the same population in New York City, the system was unsuccessful in several sites in this study. For instance, in the Bay Area site, 66% of the interviewees were seeds. In the Dallas site—where the lack of population density, the lack of available public transportation options, and the high usage of cars meant that youth were not geographically networked in a way that RDS requires—nearly all of the interviews were seeds.

While the total number of interviews varied by site, only two sites totaled over 200. Table 2.1 presents the total number of eligible participants interviewed by site. There may be a few reasons for the lower than expected Ns. First, in some sites (e.g., Atlantic City), it seems likely that the total number of youth who engaged in the sex trade was simply lower than expected. Second, there may be seasonality in some sites (e.g., Atlantic City or Miami), where warmer weather may create an influx of runaway youth. If the research team was actively recruiting during colder months, the population of young people may have indeed been lower, making recruitment difficult. Third, there are members of the population who may either not be visible (e.g., under strict control by a pimp), or may not speak English or Spanish (e.g., there was a sizeable Russian-speaking population in Atlantic City), which were

the only two languages in which interviews could be conducted. Researchers in Atlantic City were in the field for significantly fewer months than the other sites, and part of that time was when the age eligibility was limited to 13- to 19-year-olds, limiting sample size in our pilot site. Finally, a delay in the project for over a year broke recruitment trees that did exist in Chicago and Las Vegas, and when the project started up again, research deadlines meant that three sites ultimately had to conclude fieldwork (Chicago, Las Vegas, and Dallas) before reaching the initially desired N.

As shown in Table 2.1, despite lower than expected volume at the site level, close to 1,000 interviews were conducted in total, and for most analytic purposes, site data could be pooled. Pooling the site data yielded estimates with relatively small confidence intervals, although required drawing attention to a relatively small number of substantive issues where responses in some sites did systematically differ from others (see Chapter 3; and see Appendix E). Except where delineated in Chapter 3, we largely uncovered comparable patterns across sites, providing a strong justification to take advantage of our large sample size when pooling.

Table 2.1 Eligible Participants Interviewed by Site

Site	N
Atlantic City, NJ	98
Bay Area, CA	136
Miami, FL	264
Dallas, TX	78
Chicago, IL	202
Las Vegas, NV	171
TOTAL	949

Informed Consent and Confidentiality

Upon meeting a potential interview participant, research interviewers briefly screened the youth to ensure study eligibility. Then, interviewers went over the informed consent form. An example of this form is attached as Appendix A. The interviewer was tasked with conducting a quick assessment of participants’ psychological state of mind, physical condition, the degree to which they appeared to fully understand the purpose of the study, the extent to which they assented to participate, and the relative degree of freedom that they

appeared to exercise in making decisions. (To facilitate the assessment process, all research assistants first participated in training concerning both the research methodology and underlying psychological problems and dynamics that the interviewers might encounter in the population.) If the participant was of sound mind, safe, and fully understood the study, they would sign a fake name of their choosing to the consent form.

Participants were often concerned that their information would be shared with police officers or other law enforcement officials. Interviewers assured them about the confidentiality and anonymity of their participation⁴. No identifying information was collected, and interviews were conducted in safe spaces, often chosen by the participant to ensure privacy, safety, and comfort.

At each site, a social worker was on call in case a participant became upset, although in the nearly 1,000 interviews that were conducted, no one had to call the social worker. A local resource sheet was provided to participants if they wanted it at the end of each interview.

This study was approved by the Center for Court Innovation's Institutional Review Board. Additionally, the Institutional Review Boards at the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas approved the studies in Dallas and Las Vegas, respectively.

Interview Instrument

The interview consisted of the following domains: 1) demographic characteristics (14 questions, including race/ethnicity, age, living situation); 2) market involvement (28 questions, including age and means of initiation, location of work, and type of involvement); 3) network size and characteristics (15 questions, including information about pimps and

⁴ This study and its resulting knowledge could not be gained without our having the capacity to assure our human subjects that they could speak freely—without fear that we might abrogate their confidentiality, report them to child protective agencies, order them to services, or involve the police without a compelling justification. Moreover, in this particular study, the names of those we interviewed were not requested and, therefore, were not known even to the researchers, which provides our interviewees with an added confidentiality protection. Additionally, federal regulation 28 CFR Part 22 makes clear that researchers must maintain the confidentiality of their data *without any exceptions—including child abuse*. Therefore, maintaining the anonymity of the interviewees was essential for this study.

customers); 4) health and social service history and needs (14 questions); 5) experience with law enforcement and courts (12 questions, including number of arrests, charges, and arrest/court outcomes); and 5) future expectations (10 questions). The questions were a mix of closed-ended and open-ended. This report includes only the closed-ended questions and questions that could be coded into quantitative data. For more narrative qualitative data, as well as themes and findings emerging from the full transcripts and exchanges during the research interviews, see the individual site reports that accompany this report (Jones and Gamson 2016; Marcus et al. 2016; Martin et al. 2016; Maurrasse and Jones 2016; Schaffner et al. 2016; Wagner et al. 2016). Interviews lasted between 30 minutes and two hours and were most often conducted one-on-one. Occasionally, an additional interviewer was present. Interviews mostly took place in local parks, fast-food restaurants, universities, cars, and community spaces. If the participant consented, the interview was recorded for later transcription. The interview instrument is attached as Appendix B.

Analysis

All quantitative data were entered into databases. Sites were given the option of entering their youth interview data into Access, Excel, or Dedoose. After all data were entered, research staff at the Center for Court Innovation merged the databases into SPSS, then cleaned and coded the data. Chapter 3 of this report presents the descriptive (i.e., quantitative) findings for the 949 youth ages 13-24 in the total sample. Bivariate t-test and, where appropriate, chi square analyses were conducted to determine significant mean differences based on various demographic variables (e.g., gender, age, or whether someone was a parent) and certain experiences (e.g., whether someone's experience in the commercial sex market involved force, fraud, coercion, or control). ANOVA was used to test for significant differences across interview sites.

To achieve a truly representative sample with RDS, when analyzing quantitative data, the researcher omits seed interviews (Wave 0). However, because the majority of interviews in our study were from seeds, we did not eliminate seed interviews. Additionally, weighting is often used during analysis to compensate for the fact that some people have larger networks than others and hence have more opportunities to be recruited for the study. However, weighting was unfeasible in this study due to the lack of precise question wording that accounted for networks from a relevant age range (13-24 for the complete study sample). This weakens our internal validity, or ability to yield precise estimates for our sites.

Official Arrest and Conviction Data

Official arrest, prosecution and recidivism data were collected to achieve multiple goals. To achieve the goal of generating a valid prevalence estimate of the size of the relevant population of youth, RDS methods require youth interview data to be analyzed in light of data collected from an institutional dataset. For this purpose, information about the *aggregate* number of youth prostitution arrests in each state and nationwide in 2009 was obtained from a combination of national (Federal Bureau of Investigation) and state data sources. Having obtained this information, it becomes possible to estimate the number of youth who trade sex in each state and nationwide, whether or not the youth have an arrest history per se.

Case-level official records were also sought in the six states where the interview sites were located. These case-level records allowed an analysis of prosecution and recidivism outcomes for both the youth and individuals charged with exploitation offenses in the selected research sites.

Relevant Offenses

Research was conducted to determine the specific penal law charges in each state that might be applied to young people under the age of 18 (as well as 18 and over) as well as to exploiters and solicitors. Shortly into the data collection process, however, the research team realized that not all states had codes that were easily delineated into the three relevant charge categories of (1) prostitution, (2) solicitation, and (3) exploitation (where the latter is often termed “promoting prostitution”). Furthermore, although many state legal codes had these charge delineations, many state agencies were unable to provide data by state legal code, and instead provided us with data by the federal code. That is, rather than separating out different prostitution-related charges, these states combined all prostitution-related charges into the category of Prostitution and Commercialized Vice. In total, 16 states provided data for this more general category, potentially encompassing those arrested for prostitution, solicitation, or exploitation. Further, in four additional states, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Tennessee, the state’s prostitution penal codes combine buying and selling, making the distinction impossible between prostitution and solicitation arrests.

To summarize, the penal laws in many states fundamentally precluded generating an accurate and separate estimate of the prevalence of prostitution, exploitation, and solicitation arrests.

Some of these data limitations are mitigated for the purpose of estimated *underage prostitution arrests*. In short, it seems reasonable to expect that underage youth charged with any prostitution offense were generally arrested, specifically, due to trading sex, not due to soliciting sex or seeking to promote prostitution or exploit other underage youth. Nonetheless, despite this a priori expectation, it remains the case that in some states, some number of underage individuals whose offenses involved solicitation or exploitation may have been included incorrectly in the prostitution numbers due to the fashion in which data had to be obtained.

Aggregate Data Collection from the Uniform Crime Reporting Program of the Federal Bureau of Investigation

For each state, we received the number of prostitution arrests of youth under the age of 18 from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Of particular note, prostitution charges in some states are defined only as ordinance violations, not even rising to the misdemeanor level, a factor that may decrease the likelihood of rigorous and complete reporting to the UCR program. In addition, the UCR data includes the category, Prostitution and Commercialized Vice, which encompasses prostitution, solicitation, and exploitation arrests (see discussion just above). Nonetheless, the availability of the UCR data in all 50 states meant that at least an estimate could be provided for each state regardless of the availability of data from a state-based data source.

Aggregate Data Collection from State-Based Data Sources

In addition to the UCR numbers, we believed that it was essential to collect data from state-level Statistical Analysis Centers (SAC). Given that law enforcement agencies may not engage in complete reporting of prostitution arrests to the UCR program of the FBI, our expectation was that in at least some states, the Statistical Analysis Center-based information would be more complete and accurate. To obtain estimates from state sources, we first contacted each state's Statistical Analysis Center. In those cases where the SAC did not have the appropriate data, other agencies such as the state's Department of Public Safety or State Police were contacted. In one state (Hawaii), it was necessary to contact separate agencies for adult criminal and juvenile arrest data.

In general, once we identified the appropriate agency and contact person, we sent a request for data. The request specified which penal codes, years of arrests, and other demographic

data (including age, gender, and race and/or ethnicity of the offender) were needed for our analysis.

We requested aggregate data on the number of arrests of underage individuals (under the age of 18) in 2009 from 44 states as well as the District of Columbia. For the six remaining states, where our youth interview sites were located, we requested case-level, rather than aggregate, data. After extensive follow-up contacts (follow-up e-mails, calls, etc. directed to multiple potentially relevant agency personnel in each state), we received data from 34 states in total. Specifically, aggregate or case-level data was obtained from 19 SACs,⁵ nine Department of Public Safety or State Police offices,⁶ four Attorney General's Offices,⁷ two Governor's Offices,⁸ and one Crime Reporting Unit (from Massachusetts). (As noted above, two separate data sources were needed for Hawaii.) States that did not provide data included Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Vermont, and Wisconsin. Washington, D.C. also did not provide data. Notably, although Nevada could not provide data for the underage population of primary interest, as discussed below, Nevada provided case-level data for 19-24-year olds who were arrested on prostitution charges within the Las Vegas research site. In general, lapses in our capacity to collect necessary data from state-level data sources in 16 states were caused by, in some states, our inability to locate and contact correct and responsive agencies, and in others, an inability of the appropriate agencies to provide the data.

Of the 34 states that did provide data on youth under the age of 18 who were arrested for prostitution, some were also able to provide a breakdown by charge, age of the youth, defendant demographics (e.g., sex, race/ethnicity, and place of birth), dispositions (e.g., dismissed vs. convicted) and sentences (e.g., prison, jail, probation, time served, conditional discharge, fine, or other).

⁵ The states providing SAC data included Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New York, New Jersey, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

⁶ The states whose public safety or police offices provided data included Alaska, Connecticut, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Washington.

⁷ States include North Dakota, Rhode Island, and Wyoming.

⁸ States include Maryland and North Carolina.

Case-Level Prosecution and Recidivism Data

In addition to obtaining data spanning all 50 states in the U.S., we were also interested in assessing the criminal justice response to young people who trade sex, specifically, analyzing prosecution and recidivism outcomes for the youth and their exploiters. To achieve this goal, we requested case-level data from the six states where the youth interviews took place.

First, we contacted each of the six state's Statistical Analysis Centers. We requested 2008 and 2009 case level data for all people arrested in the state with prostitution related penal codes (including child prostitution, exploitation, or solicitation of a minor—but with each of these charge sub-types distinguished). Specifically, we asked for the following variables: arrest and conviction charges, case processing time, dispositions, sentence types, sentence length, and background characteristics (age, gender, race, ethnicity, place of birth, criminal history, county and jurisdiction). To satisfy the requirements for the population estimate (i.e., one full year of official records data), we used the 2009 data. However, we asked the state to identify the 2008 sample for the recidivism analyses (the 2008 sample allowed additional recidivism tracking time). Thus, the descriptive information presented in Chapter 4 and utilized for the population estimate is based on 2009 arrests, and the recidivism information is based on 2008 arrests.

Each data obtained from each state had important limitations. Specifically:

- **California:** We were only able to obtain aggregate data for San Francisco County but could not obtain usable case-level data, nor aggregate data for the state or Alameda County, the latter of which includes Oakland. (Thus, UCR data was utilized for estimating the annual number of underage prostitution arrests in California.)
- **Nevada:** We could not obtain case-level data on juvenile cases or sentence information.
- **New Jersey:** We could not able to obtain recidivism data, and other case-level data appeared to be problematic, leading Atlantic City, NJ results to be omitted from most portions of Chapter 4.
- **Florida:** We could not obtain detailed jail sentence information.

Analysis

Using the case-level data obtained from the six states, we conducted descriptive analyses, including demographic information; distribution of specific arrest charges; percent of cases ending in conviction vs. dismissal; sentence types (local jail, state or federal prison, probation, etc.); and average length of custodial sentences. In addition, separately for individuals facing exploitation charges, more limited descriptive analyses were conducted.

Re-arrest rates were computed overall and for youth arrested on prostitution charges within each interview site. We also distinguished re-arrests on any charge from prostitution-specific re-arrests. Furthermore, we conducted multivariate analyses to determine the individual-level predictors of continued prostitution involvement. (These latter analyses did not reveal substantively notable findings or patterns that were not evident from simple descriptive or cross-tabulation analyses and, therefore, were not ultimately included in this report.)

Population Estimate

As described above, we possessed youth interview data containing information about whether and how often youth are arrested for prostitution, and we possessed official arrest data concerning actual prostitution arrests in the six research sites as well as all 50 states nationwide. This information made it possible to compute a population estimate by combining knowledge of the number of individuals factually arrested for prostitution with knowledge—gained through the youth interviews—of the percent of individuals in the population of interest who experience a prostitution arrest in any given year. In effect, the percent of youth within the interview sample who reported a prostitution arrest over a one-year period provides an indication of the extent to which the number of official arrests in a given year in fact covers the total population. To provide a hypothetical example, if 10% of youth participating in interviews reported an arrest for prostitution over the prior one-year period, and official arrest records reveal that there were factually 100 youth prostitution arrests over a comparable one-year period, we would project that 100 would be equal to 10% of the actual population in the jurisdiction in question; hence, our population estimate would be that 1,000 youth are involved in the sex trade in the jurisdiction. In general, such a method is referred to as a “capture-recapture” methodology. Originally developed in biology (Kendall 1999), this method has been applied widely in social sciences (Bouchard and Tremblay 2005; Bouchard 2007), including in prior studies of prostitution (Curtis et al 2008; Roberts and Brewer 2006).

Of course, as was the case in this study (see above), data can be flawed. In the above hypothetical example, 10% of those youth who were interviewed reported an arrest; but what if we were disproportionately likely to find and interview youth who had been arrested as opposed to youth who had not been arrested? In other words, what if, in reality, the real percent arrested in the past year was 5%, not 10%? Plugging in 5% would yield a population estimate for the jurisdiction of 2,000, rather than 1,000. Conversely, if the real percent arrested in the past year was 20%, the population estimate would be reduced to 500. As further discussed below, allowing that the numbers plugged into our formulas are all subject to various forms of sampling error, we opted to include a *range* for all reported results. We also opted to make the reported range conservative (i.e., wide), such that it would be extremely unlikely that the real number could be lower than the lower limit of the range or higher than the upper limit of the range (although the possibility of even larger deviations than what is reflected in our range cannot be ruled out entirely). As will become clear in Chapter 4, the upper limit of the range was likely well over the actual number, but given multiple data uncertainties, an unusually prudent and conservative sensitivity analysis nonetheless seemed preferable to producing a range that could possibly be too narrow.

Applying the General Methodology

To construct a plausible population estimate (P), there are three requirements: 1) a sample (s) of the population of interest; 2) a known statistic derived from that sample (σ), and 3) an equivalent statistic for the population of interest (Σ), where $P = \Sigma / (\sigma / s)$. Applied to the current study, the sample (s) could be drawn from youth interviews in the six sites; the known statistic (σ) could consist of the number of youth in the sample who reported an arrest for prostitution in the past year; and the equivalent statistic for the population of interest (Σ) could consist of the actual number of prostitution arrests over a one-year period of time, as determined through official records data collection for all 50 states. More specifically, two of the relevant terms in the above mathematic formula can be combined, such that what is essentially sought from the youth interview data is the percentage of youth in the underage population of interest that experiences a past year prostitution arrest (σ/s).

In establishing the required statistics from the youth interviews, because the total number of youth ages 13-17 from our youth interview sample who reported a past year prostitution arrest was very low (17), and was even lower within each of the six sites, we deemed it more reliable to base our calculations on the 18-24-year-old subgroup. This subgroup yielded

larger sample sizes and hence smaller confidence intervals both overall and within each site. Therefore, as shown in Table 2.2, the sample population (s) was the 642 youth ages 18-24 who were interviewed and who provided a valid, non-missing response to the interview question about whether they were arrested for prostitution in the past year. The known statistic for this sample (σ) was the number, of those 642 youth, who reported affirmatively that they were in fact arrested for prostitution in the past year, where such number was equal to 69. Therefore, the percentage of the sample with a past year prostitution arrest was $69/642 = 10.75\%$.

Since this percentage afforded equal weight to each youth with valid interview data, those sites where we interviewed more youth disproportionately influenced this percentage. This disproportion could well be appropriate if more individuals in the population of interest were located in the sites where we conducted more interviews; yet, it is also possible that other factors related to the implementation of the RDS methodology in different sites led to variations in site-specific sample sizes. In that case, affording equal weight to each individual would be problematic. Thus, as an alternative approach, we also calculated the percentage of those arrested for prostitution in the past year separately within each interview and then computed an average of the six resulting percentages site (see the percentages provided in Table 2.2, second column from the right). This second method gave equal weight to each of the six sites, rather than to each individual in our pooled sample. The alternate σ/s was 12.67%.

The data in Table 2.2 further illustrates how the estimation process works by providing the number of individuals arrested for prostitution in each site and across all six sites combined (total arrests = 1,899 for the six sites combined) and then providing population estimates (P) for the 18-24-year-old population. However, the 18-24-year-old population estimates in Table 2.2 (rightmost column) are mainly presented for illustrative purposes. The ultimate purpose of this estimation process was to generate a reasonable prevalence estimate for the *underage* population that trades sex. In this regard, the key result at this point was simply to estimate the percentage of the population of interest with a past year prostitution arrest ($\sigma/s = 10.75\%$ or 12.67%). Notably, whereas discussions in this chapter (see, also, below) make clear that the underlying data utilized to compute this percentage has multiple limitations, our methodology of concluding the population estimate process with a *range* rather than a single “answer” was deemed sufficient to encompass plausible error.

In completing this estimation process, it was necessary to establish a known statistic for the national underage population of interest (Σ), which was equivalent to a statistic available in our sample (σ). Specifically, we obtained the number of prostitution arrests of underage youth in all 50 states in 2009.⁹ State data came from state data sources and the UCR program of the FBI, as discussed above. In states where only FBI data was available, we used the FBI number. If both state-based and FBI data were available, we used the average of the two numbers. As shown in Chapter 4, for each state, a population estimate was then created. A national estimate was created by summing all 50 states' estimates.

Table 2.2. Population Estimates for Youth Ages 18-24 in Youth Interview Sites

Site	s (sample size)	σ (# in sample reporting past year prostitution arrest)	Σ (official number of people arrested for prostitution)	σ/s	P (population size estimate)
Atlantic City 18-24-year-olds	53	9	0	16.98%	0.00
Miami 18-24-year-olds	125	19	182	15.20%	1,197.37
Bay Area 18-24-year-olds	116	11	455	9.48%	4,798.18
Dallas 18-24-year-olds	43	9	506	20.93%	2,417.56
Chicago 18-24-year-olds	163	15	304	9.20%	3,303.47
Las Vegas 18-24-year-olds*	142	6	452	4.23%	10,697.33
Total	642	69	1,899	10.75%	

* Official arrest data were only available for 19-24-year-olds in Las Vegas. The number of 18-year-olds in Las Vegas was therefore imputed based on ratios of 18- to 19-24-year-olds in Dallas, Miami, and Chicago. This extrapolation influences the 452 figure for the number of 18-24-year-olds arrested for prostitution in the past year in Las Vegas and the 10,697.33 figure for all those ages 18-24 who trade sex in Las Vegas but has no influence over any underage population estimates (18 and under).

Data Limitations

There were numerous limitations to our ability to generate a reliable estimate, which is why we present a range at the end of Chapter 4 rather than a single figure.

⁹ No data were available for Washington, D.C.; therefore, the estimates represent all 50 states but not the District of Columbia.

Limitations Related to Youth Interview Data: First, the relevant year covered in the youth interview data was not identical to the year covered in the official data. Specifically, the exact question we asked of the youth was: “Within the past year, how many times were you arrested for prostitution-related charges in this city area?” From this question, the percent arrested would simply be the percent reporting at least one past year prostitution arrest. The youth interviews yielding this statistic were conducted between 2010 and 2014 (although fieldwork only extended beyond 2011 in Dallas, Chicago, and Las Vegas and only extended beyond early 2012 in Chicago and Las Vegas). This means that “past year” arrest data could range from 2009 through 2014 depending on the site—potentially six years. For example, if a youth was interviewed in 2010, past year arrests could take place in parts of 2009 or 2010. If a youth was interviewed in 2014, past year arrests could take place in parts of 2013 or 2014. The official records data we obtained for the population estimate, however, was based on 2009 data—spanning the *initial portion* of the potentially relevant period of time. Yet, for the population estimate to be precise and fully capable of avoiding any historic biases that could result from changes in law enforcement practices over time, the timeframes referenced must match. Moreover, for interviews conducted in 2011 and beyond (i.e., not including any part of 2009 within the “past year” period of interest), independent evidence suggests that this might lead to an overestimate of the population of interest. Solely relying on UCR data, the numbers point to significantly fewer prostitution arrests of underage youth over time, declining from 1,130 arrests in 2009 to 850 in 2010, 798 in 2011, and 657 in 2012. The UCR website includes an explicit caution against conducting trend analysis, given the UCR reporting problems described above. Nonetheless, the UCR trend data is at least suggestive of a potentially declining underage population that is subject to arrest over the period of time when fieldwork took place. For purposes of the population estimate math, this trend data, in effect, suggests that the numbers utilized for underage prostitution arrests, because they are based on the period when fieldwork *first began*, may be biased somewhat high, potentially leading the resulting population estimates to be biased high.

An additional concern related to the use of interview data is that capture-recapture methods depend on a representative sample of a given population. However, as discussed above, all seed interviews remained in our final sample, and we did not weight the data, posing a threat to any claims to represent a precisely representative sample of youth who trade sex within our six sites. Finally, the population estimation methodology involves extrapolating the percentage of youth in the population of interest who had a past year arrest from the six sites to the entire United States. Obviously, arrest rates in other jurisdictions as well as the true average for the country as a whole may differ.

Limitations Related to Official Data: The official prostitution arrest data was limited in several ways. First, all official data collected through both the UCR program and state-based data sources was case-level data, whereas the numbers from the interview sample used to create the percentage of youth who experience a past year prostitution arrest (σ/s) are from individual-level data. For example, state level data could report 15 arrests, but this number could represent between one and 15 youth (i.e., the same youth could have more than one arrest). This data limitation means that it is possible that we overestimated the size of the population of underage youth who were arrested for trading sex.

Second, as discussed above, UCR data combined prostitution, solicitation and exploitation charges, as did data from some states. Even though solicitors and exploiters are generally unlikely to be underage, meaning that the data is still likely to fall in close proximity to the prostitution total, underage solicitors and exploiters cannot be assumed to be non-existent. Moreover, available case-level data in three sites that carefully distinguished the age of each defendant facing exploitation or promoting prostitution charges revealed that the percentage of such defendants under the age of 18 was zero in Chicago, 4% in Miami, and 3% in Texas. This empirical data suggests that there are indeed likely to be few underage exploiters mixed with underage individuals trading sex in data sources that ostensibly combine the categories. Nonetheless, to the extent that we are counting some individuals arrested on exploitation or solicitation charges towards the underage prostitution total, this data limitation too leads to the potential for overestimating the actual underage population in the sex trade.

Third, also as discussed above, arrest numbers obtained from the UCR program may be lower than reality due to inadequate reporting from local law enforcement agencies to the UCR program. It is similarly possible that some state-based data sources did not capture all juvenile arrests. This fourth bias raises the potential for underestimating the population by omitting arrests that our data sources did not report. Moreover, while official data evidently carries multiple biases, these biases may cancel each other out to at least some degree, since they respectively point to possibilities both of over- and under-counting in any given state. Nonetheless, it cannot be assumed that any canceling out of biases in different directions ultimately leads to a precisely accurate final estimate.

Fourth, we were unable to obtain official arrest data for Oakland. Therefore, the estimate in Table 2.2 for the Bay Area site only includes San Francisco data, although interviews were conducted both in San Francisco and Oakland. This fourth limitation does not influence the

national population estimate, for which official records data was required at the state level, not the site level, and California data was successfully obtained via the UCR program.

Fifth, in our Las Vegas site, official arrest data were only available for 19-24-year-olds. Therefore, we had to impute the number of 18-year-olds based on ratios of 18- to 19-24-year-olds in Dallas, Miami, and Chicago. Similar to the Bay Area data limitation, this one also did not influence our national population estimate, which relied on Nevada statewide data.

Sensitivity Analysis: Given the number and potential significance of these limitations, to increase the reliability of the reported results, all population estimate findings are provided in terms of a range with both a low-end and high-end estimate. The use of a conservative range takes into account plausible errors in each direction introduced by data limitations.

Furthermore, the lower and upper limits of the final population estimate range exceeded what would have been reached through a more standard sensitivity analysis approach, which might have relied on standard errors or a 95% confidence interval for the key statistic required from the interview sample: namely, the percent of the population with a past year prostitution arrest. For example, a 95% confidence interval around the estimated 10.75% statistic with a past year prostitution arrest would have yielded a range of 8.1% to 13.3%. Nonetheless, the final range of population estimates was instead based on a more conservative assumption at one end of the spectrum that only 5.38% of the true population of interest in fact had a past year prostitution arrest and an assumption at the other end that 25.34% had such an arrest. The 25.34% figure resulted from doubling the average of the higher of the two primary percentages arrested ($2 * 12.67\% = 25.34\%$). The 5.38% figure, whose use yields the upper limit of our population estimate range, reflected half of the lower of the two primary percentages arrested ($0.5 * 10.75\% = 5.38\%$). The upper limit reflects our concern that a sub-population might exist in tightly controlled indoor locations that was neither reached for interviews in our study nor is commonly arrested by law enforcement.

Service Provider and Law Enforcement Interviews

The final component of this study involved interviewing service providers, as well as law enforcement officials, to learn more about the programs and services currently available for this population, what service providers see as the greatest needs for the youth, and how criminal justice players talk about and respond to this population.

In each of the sites where youth interviews were conducted, relevant service providers and law enforcement officials were identified (through referrals and Internet searches). Center for Court Innovation staff reached out to potential interviewees to provide information about the study and to see if an interview could be scheduled. If someone consented to an interview, a date, time, and location was set for an in-person interview. The relatively open-ended protocol included questions about organizational background; service delivery; and challenges. Additional questions were asked related to known locations (e.g., tracks or strolls) where youth could be found. These latter questions helped inform outreach for youth interview recruitment. Protocols for these interviews can be found in Appendix C. These interviews were conducted in 2010 and 2011. Researchers interviewed staff at a total of 18 social service and law enforcement agencies.¹⁰

Qualitative content analysis of the interview data was conducted to determine emerging themes around language and approach to working with youth, service provision, and characteristics and service needs of clients/participants.

¹⁰ At some agencies, multiple staff members were interviewed.

Chapter 3

Findings from the Youth Interviews

The research team conducted interviews with 949 youth ages 13-24 in order to gain a better understanding of the characteristics, experiences, and service needs of young people engaged in the sex trade in the United States. Interviews took place in six sites: Atlantic City, NJ; the Bay Area (San Francisco and Oakland), CA; Chicago, IL; Dallas, TX; Miami, FL; and Las Vegas, NV.

The interview instrument was semi-structured, combining a range of open-ended and closed-ended items. The separate reports for each site provide rich details on emergent qualitative themes and findings. This chapter presents the major quantitative findings gained from pooling data across all six sites.

Organization of Findings

The data collection and research methodologies are described in-depth in Chapter Two. In brief, the interviews covered the following major domains, addressed respectively in the sections that follow (see Appendix B for the full instrument):

- Demographic characteristics;
- Commercial sex market involvement;
- Making and spending money;
- Recruitment and interactions with customers;
- Involvement with “pimps” and “market facilitators” (these terms are defined below);
- Health and service needs;
- Interactions with the police; and
- Expectations for the future.

Besides reporting overall descriptive findings, distinct themes and patterns were analyzed for the following major subgroups:

- **Gender:** All tables provide a breakdown for cis males, cis females, and trans females. Totals also include the small number (6) of trans males in the sample.¹¹
- **Age:** The narrative draws attention to a relatively small number of significant and notable differences between those ages 13-17 (legal minors) and 18-24, while Appendix D provides a bulleted summary of select significant differences by age category.
- **Involvement with a Pimp:** Results pointed to a substantial array of differences in the market involvement, experiences, and needs of interview participants who were and were not subject to coercion and control by a pimp (see definition below).
- **Other Characteristics:** While these factors did not systematically or repeatedly differentiate the sample, differences were also analyzed based on sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, and whether the interview participant had children. The narrative draws attention to differences that were both significant and noteworthy; Appendix D provides a more thorough bulleted summary of subgroup differences on these factors.

Finally, for readability and because significant and meaningful differences by site were not present across the interview instrument, pooled six-site results are generally reported. A separate final section at the end of this chapter describes several notable areas where results in one or several sites did, in fact, systematically differ from the rest. Also, Appendix E shows in table form a complete breakdown of interview responses by site.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Table 3.1 presents the demographic background of the interview participants. As the results indicate, they were diverse in numerous ways. Sixty percent were cis female, 36% were cis male, 4% were trans female, and 6 youth were trans male (less than 1%). The sampling frame was intentionally limited to youth ages 13 through 24 (see Chapter 2), and given this restriction, the average age was 19.3 years, with 21% (199 youth) under the age of 18.

¹¹ When someone is cisgender, they identify their gender as what they were assigned at birth. For example, someone who is cis female was assigned female at birth and identifies as female. When someone is transgender, they identify their gender as something other than what they were assigned at birth. For example, someone who is trans female was assigned male at birth but whose gender identity is female.

Table 3.1. Demographic Characteristics

Gender	Cis male	Cis female	Trans females	Total
<u>Age</u>				
Mean age	19.7***	19.0	21.1	19.3
13	0%	1%	0%	0%
14	0%	1%	0%	1%
15	1%	3%	0%	2%
16	5%	7%	0%	6%
17	10%	13%	0%	12%
18	15%	20%	5%	18%
19	22%	19%	8%	19%
20	13%	11%	29%	13%
21	13%	9%	18%	11%
22	8%	4%	18%	6%
23	8%	6%	13%	7%
24	5%	5%	8%	6%
<u>Age Categories</u>				
13-17 years	16%	25%	17%	21%
18-24 years	84%	75%	83%	79%
<u>Gender</u>	36%	60%	4%	100%
<u>Sexual Orientation</u>				
Heterosexual	57%***	52%	32%	53%
Bisexual	27%	42%	21%	36%
Gay	13%	5%	45%	9%
Other	3%	1%	3%	2%
<u>Ethnicity</u>				
Black/African American	69%	70%	76%	70%
White	14%	12%	3%	12%
Multi-racial	7%	9%	11%	8%
Hispanic/Latino	8%	7%	3%	7%
Other	2%	3%	8%	3%
<u>Living Situation</u>				
Family	48%**	48%	30%	47%
Friends	22%**	30%	35%	27%
Alone	14%	10%	19%	12%
Shelter	8%	5%	11%	6%
Homeless	7%	4%	3%	5%
Other	1%	4%	3%	3%

Gender	Cis male	Cis female	Trans females	Total
<u>Education Level</u>				
Less than 6th Grade	0%	0.2%	0%	0.1%
6th-8th Grade	3%	6%	3%	5%
9th-11th Grade	48%	49%	38%	48%
12th Grade and above	49%	45%	60%	47%
<u>US Born</u>	97%	96%	100%	97%
<u>Have children</u>	20%***	37%	14%	30%
<u>How old when first left home?</u>				
Mean for those who had left home	15.2	14.7	16.4	15.0
0	0%	0.2%	0%	0.1%
2	0%	0.4%	0%	0.2%
3	0.3%	0.2%	0%	0.2%
4	0.3%	0.2%	0%	0.2%
6	0.3%	0.2%	0%	0.1%
7	1%	0.2%	0%	0.3%
8	0%	1%	0%	1%
9	1%	2%	0%	1%
10	1%	2%	0%	1%
11	3%	3%	0%	3%
12	4%	6%	0%	5%
13	10%	8%	6%	8%
14	10%	14%	3%	12%
15	11%	14%	11%	13%
16	15%	14%	17%	14%
17	11%	12%	39%	13%
18	10%	7%	6%	8%
19	4%	2%	11%	3%
20	1%	1%	0%	1%
21	1%	1%	0%	1%
24	0%	0.2%	0%	0.1%
Still lives at home	17%	14%	6%	15%
<u>Age Left Home Categories</u>				
0-12	10%*	15%	3%	13%
13-17	57%	61%	75%	60%
18-24	16%	10%	17%	12%
Still lives at home	17%	14%	6%	15%

Gender	Cis male	Cis female	Trans females	Total
<u>Age of first sex experience</u>				
Mean	12.9	13.4	13.3	13.2
2	0%	0.4%	0%	0.2%
3	0%	0.2%	3%	0.2%
4	0%	0.2%	0%	0.1%
5	1%	0.2%	0%	0.4%
6	2%	3%	5%	3%
7	1%	1%	0%	1%
8	2%	2%	0%	2%
9	4%	2%	0%	3%
10	5%	2%	5%	3%
11	9%	4%	8%	6%
12	15%	13%	5%	14%
13	21%	20%	27%	20%
14	16%	20%	11%	18%
15	10%	16%	8%	13%
16	8%	8%	5%	8%
17	2%	5%	19%	4%
18	2%	3%	0%	3%
19	1%	1%	3%	1%
20	0.3%	0%	0%	0.1%
21	0%	0.2%	0%	0.1%
<u>Age Categories</u>				
0-12	39%**	28%	27%	32%
13-17	57%	68%	70%	64%
18-24	4%	4%	3%	4%
<u>First sex experience was nonconsensual</u>	16%***	30%	23%	24%

± Number non-missing data varied between 640 and 949.

+p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001.

As shown in Table 3.1, a little over half (53%) of all interview participants identified their sexual orientation as heterosexual, with cis males significantly more likely than other genders to identify as straight, cis females significantly more likely than others to identify as bisexual, and trans females significantly more likely than others to identify as gay.

Nearly half (47%) of the sample reported living with family, and another 27% reported living with friends. Of the remaining interview participants, 12% reported living alone, 6% reported living in a shelter, 5% reported being homeless, and 3% reported other circumstances (living with customer, pimp, house to house, etc.).

Over half of the sample (53%) reported less than a twelfth-grade education. Only 15% still lived at home with their family; of those who did not, the average age of having left home was 15.

Thirty percent of the sample had children, with cis females significantly more likely to report having children (37%) than cis males (20%) or trans females (14%). Not surprisingly, older youth were far more likely than younger ones to report having children (34% of those ages 18 years or older compared to 18% of those ages 13 to 17).

Nearly a third of the youth reported having their first sexual experience before the age of 13, with cis males significantly more likely than others to report as much (39% of cis males v. 28% and 27% of cis females and trans females, respectively).

Nearly one-quarter (24%) of the sample were coded as describing their first sexual experience as non-consensual,¹² although they did not often use that term themselves; cis females reported the highest percentage with a non-consensual first sexual experience (30%), with significantly lower though hardly negligible percentages reported for cis males (16%) and trans females (23%).

Finally, as shown in Table 3.1, almost all youth (97%) were born in the United States (those who were not came at a young age), and the large majority (70%) were black/African-

¹² “Non-consensual,” as used in this report, is not referring to the legal definition of the age of consent at or above which a person is considered to have the legal capacity to consent to sexual activity, but whether the young person interviewed described their experience as something they did not want to engage in or something they were forced or coerced into doing.

American. This percentage reflects disproportionate involvement as compared to the total black population in those cities where interviews were conducted, as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. By Site Comparison of Percent Black/African American in Interview Cities v. Percent Black/African American in Youth Interviews

Site	% Black/African-American in City*	% Black/African American in Sample
Atlantic City, NJ	38%	23%
San Francisco, CA	6%	47%
Oakland, CA	28%	92%
Miami, FL	19%	86%
Dallas, TX	33%	80%
Chicago, IL	11%	57%
Las Vegas, NV		

* Source: U.S. Census, 2010.

Commercial Sex Market Involvement

The interview instrument included a number of questions exploring the history of each young person’s involvement in the commercial sex market and their current work environment and experiences.

Age of Market Entry

As shown in Table 3.3, the first question in this section asked the young people at what age they first had sex in exchange for money or some other good. On average, the age was 16, although responses ranged widely from ages 6 to 24. Over 75% reported their age of market entry as younger than 18.

Work Environment

Also shown in Table 3.3 (previous page), several questions went on to probe the nature of participants’ work environment. About half reported that there were conflicts in the neighborhoods where they worked. These conflicts often included arguments with others in the sex trade, customers, pimps, and drug dealers, and most were related to competition and money. Participants also frequently cited run-ins with police as a source of conflict.

Table 3.3. Market Involvement

Gender	Cis male	Cis female	Trans female	Total
<u>What age first sold sex?</u>				
Mean	16.04*	15.56	16.18	15.8
6	0.3%	0.4%	0%	0.3%
7	0%	0%	3%	0.1%
8	0.3%	0.4%	0%	0.3%
9	0.3%	0.4%	0%	0.3%
10	2%	1%	0%	1%
11	1%	1%	3%	1%
12	3%	4%	0%	4%
13	8%	11%	6%	9%
14	12%	16%	6%	14%
15	14%	17%	12%	16%
16	16%	17%	21%	17%
17	15%	15%	18%	15%
18	11%	10%	18%	11%
19	8%	3%	9%	5%
20	5%	3%	3%	4%
21	2%	1%	3%	2%
22	1%	1%	0%	1%
23	1%	0.4%	0%	1%
24	0%	0.4%	0%	0.2%
<u>Age Categories</u>				
0-12	7%*	7%	6%	7%
13-17	66%	74%	62%	70%
18-24	28%	19%	32%	23%
<u>Time in "the life"</u>				
Less than 1 year	13%	10%	3%	11%
1 year	16%	19%	11%	17%
3 years	37%	34%	32%	35%
4 years	14%	13%	14%	13%
5-9 years	19%	23%	35%	22%
10 or more years	2%	2%	5%	2%
<u>Say there are conflicts in the neighborhood where they work</u>	46%	47%	61%	53%
<u>Say any conflicts have led to physical fights</u>	36%***	33%	54%	35%

± Number of non-missing cases varied between 734 and 920.

+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001.

Participants were asked if any of the conflicts led to physical fights. Just over a third of interviewees responded affirmatively. Trans females (54%) were significantly more likely to report experiencing physical fights in the neighborhoods where they work compared to cis females (36%) and cis males (33%). For trans females, examples of why these fights occurred included: “They were hating on a trans-person for looking like a regular female,” and “Trans ain’t supposed to be out there in front of the hotel, it’s regular females out there.” For other respondents, responses included stories about customers not wanting to pay, customers trying to force them to do things they did not want to do, and other people selling sex who thought the respondents were stealing their customers.

Making and Spending Money

Table 3.4 presents findings related to earning and spending habits. Respondents were asked about how much money they make from the sex trade. Seventy-five percent charged between \$0¹³ and \$200 the last time they saw a customer, with a median amount of \$100. On average, cis females reported charging significantly higher prices than cis males (\$202 vs. \$151). When asked how much money they make in a week, responses ranged from \$20 to \$20,000. Answers were recoded into seven categories, with the distribution shown in Table 3.4. Cis females earned significantly more than cis males. Regarding working hours, over half the sample reported that they worked 10 hours or fewer last week, and about a fifth worked more than 30 hours. There were no significant differences in hours worked per week by gender, but cis females tended to earn the most from their work (e.g., 48% of cis females reported earning \$600 or more per week compared to 28% of cis males and 33% of trans females).

Parents and non-parents had key differences on questions related to money and work. On average, parents charged more the last time they saw a customer than non-parents (\$255 vs. \$162). Parents also made more money per week than non-parents (the average fell in the \$601-\$1000 category vs. \$300-600, respectively).

When asked an open-ended question about the first thing they do with money, responses showed substantial variation. Participants often gave more than one response. The top two responses related to purchasing clothes or shoes (39% of interviewees) and food (32%). Just over a quarter (26%) said they spend their money on rent or other bills, and the same percent

¹³ Some respondents exchanged sex for something other than money (e.g., drugs, housing).

reported buying drugs or alcohol. The drug that participants most commonly reported purchasing was marijuana, followed by cocaine products, heroin and other drugs.

Several significant differences were found based on gender regarding how study participants spend their earnings. Cis males were significantly more likely to purchase drugs (25%) than the two other gender categories (16%). Trans females (22%) were significantly more likely than the rest of the sample (7% or fewer) to purchase cigarettes, and cis females were much more likely than cis males and trans females to report purchasing items for children—reflecting their higher probability of having children in the first place, as shown above.

Overall, 42% of study participants reported having another source of income, with older participants (ages 18-24) significantly more likely than younger ones to report another source of income (45% v. 25%). In addition, 22% of the older participants reported owing money—oftentimes to family and friends—compared with 10% of their younger counterparts.

Obtaining Customers

Study participants were asked about where and how they find customers. As shown in Table 3.5, most participants found customers on the street, followed closely by the internet and through friends. Nearly half (42%) reported using the internet to obtain customers. Trans females were particularly likely to get customers from the internet (76% for trans females compared to 45% and 37% for cis males and cis females, respectively). The most common internet sites used were Adam4Adam, Backpage, Craigslist, and Facebook.

Participants were asked how many customers they typically saw per night/day. Responses ranged from 0 to 20 and were generally clustered between one and five (mean = 4.6; median = 4.0).¹⁴ There were notable differences by gender, age, and sexual orientation. Trans females reported a mean of 6.2 customers per day/night, cis females a mean of 5.0, and cis males a mean of 3.8. Younger participants averaged seeing more customers than older participants (average of 5.4 customers for those ages 13-17 years v. 4.4 for ages 18-24).

¹⁴ One outlier of 250 and 11 other outliers were censored at 20.

Table 3.4. Making and Spending Money

Gender	Cis male	Cis female	Trans female	Total
<u>How many hours did you work last week?</u>				
0 hours	12%	14%	10%	13%
1-10 hours	44%	37%	32%	39%
11-20 hours	17%	13%	19%	15%
21-30 hours	11%	13%	19%	12%
31-40 hours	7%	8%	7%	8%
More than 40 hours	9%	15%	13%	13%
<u>Amount charged to last customer</u>				
< \$100	49%	39%	60%	43%
\$101-200	33%	32%	27%	32%
\$201-\$300	7%	13%	7%	11%
> \$300	11%	16%	7%	13%
Mean	\$151*	\$202	\$111	\$190
Median	\$100	\$115	\$60	\$100
<u>How much do you make in a week?</u>				
\$0 / No longer working	2%***	1%	-	1%
< \$100	7%	3%	-	5%
\$100 - \$300	35%	21%	30%	26%
\$301 - \$600	28%	27%	37%	28%
\$601 - \$1000	16%	24%	17%	21%
\$1001 - \$1500	4%	9%	13%	7%
> \$1500	8%	15%	3%	12%
<u>First thing you buy when paid?±±</u>				
Clothes or shoes	42%	37%	47%	39%
Food	37% ⁺	29%	41%	32%
Rent or other bills	27%	25%	25%	26%
Drugs/Alcohol	25%***	16%	14%	19%
Cigarettes	7%**	6%	22%	7%
Items for children	4%**	16%	0%	11%
Other	26%**	39%	47%	35%
<u>Reports having other sources of income</u>	42%	40%	55%	42%
<u>Reports owing anyone money</u>	18%	20%	26%	20%

± Number non-missing data varied between 663 and 833.

+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001.

Table 3.5. Customers

Gender	Cis male	Cis female	Trans female	Total
<u>Where do you get customers?^{±±}</u>				
Street	64%	66%	71%	63%
Internet	45%***	37%	76%	42%
Friends	39%	36%	23%	39%
Referral	28%	22%	20%	26%
Other (Parties, Casinos, Strip Clubs, etc.)	16% ⁺	20%	8%	18%
Pimp	4%***	13%	0%	9%
Regulars	2%	2%	3%	3%
<u>Average number of customers seen each day/night</u>				
0	2%	1%	0%	1%
1	20%	14%	6%	16%
2	20%	12%	12%	15%
3	19%	18%	12%	18%
4	13%	13%	18%	13%
5	10%	13%	12%	12%
6	5%	9%	9%	7%
7	2%	5%	6%	4%
8	3%	3%	3%	2%
9	1%	2%	0%	2%
10	1%	4%	9%	3%
>10	4%	8%	12%	7%
Mean	3.7***	5.0	6.2	4.6
Median	3	4	5	4
<u>How often customers from pimp?</u>				
Never	78%*	74%	93%	76%
Rarely	11%	11%	5%	11%
Often	7%	7%	2%	7%
All the time	4%**	8%	0%	6%
<u>Of those who have pimp: report internet was used to get customers</u>				
	57%	39%	0%	41%
<u>Of self-generated customers: report internet was used to get customers</u>				
	39%***	53%	68%	46%

[±] The number of non-missing cases varied between 271 and 900.

^{±±} Multiple responses were allowed for each question.

⁺p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001.

Regarding how often customers obtained customers from a pimp, 76% responded never, 11% rarely, 7% often, and 6% all the time. Significant differences were found by gender, age, and sexual orientation. Trans females were the least likely group to report working with a pimp (98% answered never or rarely compared to 85% of cis females and 89% of cis males). In addition, younger participants were modestly but significantly more likely to obtain customers through a pimp. Specifically, 17% of those ages 13-17 compared to 12% of those ages 18-24 reported “often” or “all the time” obtaining customers through a pimp.

The ways that people reported finding customers were not mutually exclusive: even if they sometimes obtained customers through a pimp, it did not mean they did not other times obtain customers on their own at parties, from the internet, etc.

Pimps and Market Facilitators

For the purposes of this report, a “pimp” is a person who exploits an individual in the sex market through coercion, control, or force, whereas a “market facilitator” is a person who helps obtain customers but with whom the relationship does not have a coercive, controlling, or forceful nature.

A battery of questions were asked to allow researchers to code and clarify the role, if any, specifically of pimps (as distinct from market facilitators) in participants’ lives. Participants were asked whether anyone helped them obtain customers (the word “pimp” was not explicitly used here), and if so, what their relationship was like with that person—whether they shared money, whether there were rules and, if so, what the rules were, or whether there was any abuse. Based on responses to multiple questions (including open-ended responses regarding the nature of any “rules,” whose coding was reviewed by multiple researchers), researchers liberally coded a dichotomous yes/no variable for pimp status. Liberal coding means coding “yes” wherever participant responses left any doubt; hence, reported results may somewhat overstate the prevalence of pimps in the sample. Researchers then created a dichotomous variable for market facilitator status as well.

Prevalence of Pimps in the Lives of Sampled Youth

Overall, 15% of participants were classified by researchers as working with a pimp—a slightly higher percentage than those who explicitly identified as obtaining customers from a pimp (13% answered that they obtain customers from a “pimp” often or all the time). More

than four in ten (42%) of the 15% of study participants who had pimps in turn responded that the pimp had rules.¹⁵ Examples of these rules included:

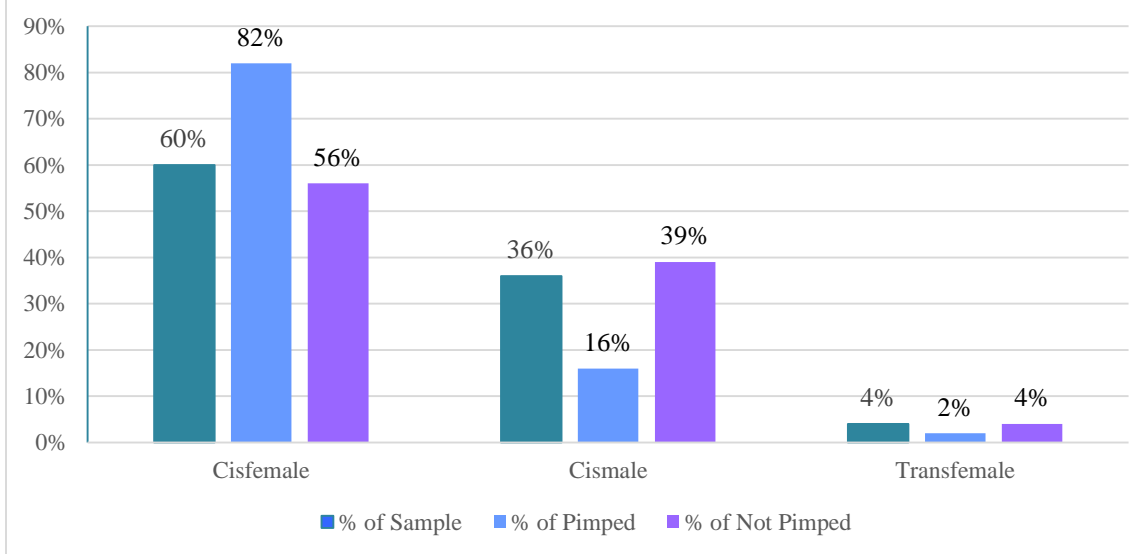
- Percentage of earnings between 15% and 100% returned to pimp each day;
- Quota to stop working for the day, beatings for non-compliance;
- Require money from customers upfront;
- Rules around drug use;
- Time limits with customers;
- Not allowed to have partners; and
- Not allowed to leave home after certain hours.

Relationship of Pimp Status and Gender

Significant differences were found in pimp involvement based on gender. Cis females (21%) were significantly more likely than cis males (7%) and trans females (9%) to work with a pimp. Figure 3.1 displays the gender breakdown for the entire sample, those controlled by a pimp, and those not controlled. Whereas cis females represented 60% of the total interview sample and 56% of those without pimp involvement, cis females represented 82% of those *with* pimp involvement (cis males represented 16% and trans females 2%). Also notable, of those with pimps, cis females (48%) and trans females (44%) were significantly more likely to report that their pimp had rules than cis males (29%).

¹⁵ A respondent was coded as having a pimp if they answered that they share money with a pimp, they have a “pimp” who helps them get customers, or they identified the person who helps them get customers as having rules that could be determined as coercive or controlling.

Figure 3.1 Gender Breakdown of Full Sample Compared to those with a Pimp



Relationship of Pimp Status to Other Interview Responses

Results indicate that those involved with a pimp were more likely than others to have a first sex experience at an extremely young age (40% v. 30% at age 12 or younger) and to have a nonconsensual first experience (35% v. 22%). In addition, those with a pimp reported earning more than others. Specifically, those involved with a pimp made significantly more money per week (55% with v. 38% without a pimp made more than \$600, although the average number of daily customers was not significantly different). Those with a pimp were also more likely to report conflicts in their neighborhoods (65% v. 51%).

Prevalence and Nature of Market Facilitators

The results indicate that 19% of respondents had a market facilitator who was not a pimp. The distinction between market facilitators and pimps is an important one. Both facilitate the young people’s participation in commercial sex markets, mostly by linking them to customers. However, the pimp exerts coercion, control, or force. Moreover, as shown in our open-ended ethnographic data, pimps may impose strict rules on the youth, which can include setting prices for them, requiring a percentage of their money, forcing them to do things they do not want to do, and exerting broad control over their movements and whereabouts. On the other hand, a market facilitator does not exert control (e.g., see Curtis et al. 2008; Marcus et al. 2016; Wagner et al. 2016). Often the market facilitator and young person do not necessarily share money,¹⁶ do not have no rules for interacting with each other, and neither has to work with the other; but, both parties find the relationship to be mutually beneficial. For example, local drug dealers may send clients to young people they know who are exchanging sex for money. In return, if the young people have customers who are looking for drugs, they will refer to the local drug dealers. It is one of the many ways that different individuals in the underground economy work together. Often, as indicated in our richer set of ethnographic data, market facilitators consist of other young people (of all genders) who are also exchanging sex and refer customers who, for any number of reasons, may be deemed more appropriate for a different youth. The relationships are complicated and do not necessarily fit within any definition or stereotype. Recognition of the role that is often played by collaborative—i.e., non-coercive—market facilitators enables a more nuanced and accurate understanding of the complex relationships maintained by youth who trade sex.¹⁷

Legal Definition of Trafficking

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) defines trafficking as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age. Any child (under the age of 18)

¹⁶ In some cases they may provide each other with referral fees.

¹⁷ For example, some couples choose to work together, with one being the market facilitator and the other exchanging sex. While the temptation may be to say that the (often) male partner is therefore “pimping” his (often) girlfriend, the qualitative data show that one cannot force this narrative into a “pimp” status. Young people do many things in order to survive.

engaged in commercial sex is legally considered a victim of trafficking. Accordingly, although 15% of youth in our sample were specifically involved with pimp, 32% met the legal definition of trafficking either due to having a pimp or due to a current age under 18. Further, 80% of youth in our sample met the legal definition of trafficking at some point in their lives, either because they had a pimp or because they were under the age of 18 when they first traded sex (77% were underage at the time of their initial market involvement).

Interactions with the Police

As shown in Table 3.6, while 65% of the sample had ever been arrested, only 16% had ever been arrested for prostitution. Of those with an arrest, 82% of the charges involved nonviolent offenses such as petty larceny, shoplifting, drugs, and trespassing/loitering. Only 11% had been arrested for prostitution in the past year. Interestingly, while no significant difference was found in past history of any arrest, respondents with pimp involvement were significantly more likely to report having ever been arrested for prostitution than respondents not involved with a pimp (28% v. 13%).

Table 3.6. Interactions with the Police

Gender	Cis male	Cis female	Trans female	Total
EXPERIENCE WITH POLICE				
<u>Ever arrested</u>	74% ***	60%	72%	65%
<u>Ever arrested for prostitution</u>	12% **	17%	37%	16%
<u>Arrested for prostitution in the last year</u>	9% **	10%	30%	11%
<u>Ever arrested outside city of interview</u>	20% **	14%	19%	16%

[±] Number of non-missing cases varied between 718 and 825.

⁺ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001.

There were also significant differences by gender. Cis males were more likely to report ever having been arrested than cis females (74% v. 60%). By contrast, trans females (37%) were far more likely than cis males (12%) and cis females (17%) to report ever having been arrested for prostitution specifically; and trans females (30%) were more than three times

more likely than either cis females or cis males to report having been arrested for prostitution in the last year.

Regarding age, participants ages 18 and older were significantly more likely than younger ones to report having ever been arrested (69% v. 51%); and to report having been arrested outside of the city where the interview was held (20% v. 4%). However, there were no significant differences in arrest for prostitution (ever or past-year) between age categories, suggesting that the differences in “ever” arrested responses may simply reflect the longer lifetimes and hence longer period exposed to potential arrest of those who were older at the time of the interview.

Health and Social Service Needs

Table 3.7 presents information from study participants regarding their health problems, social service needs, interactions with social services, and drug use.

Physical Health

A majority of study participants (64%) had seen a doctor within the last three months, and 93% reported seeing one within the last year. Most also reported having no health problems, although some (27%) reported non sex-related physical problems such as allergies, asthma, bipolar disorder, and vision problems. No significant differences by gender were found.

Most participants (84%) stated that they used protection against sexually transmitted infections (STI) and pregnancy “all the time,” with 94% stating that they used protection “all the time” or “often.” Only 3% reported using protection “rarely” or “never.”

Nearly a third (31%) of participants reported ever having an STI—most commonly chlamydia, with significant differences by gender. Cis males were least likely (22%) to report having an STI, whereas trans females were most likely (41%).

Social Service Participation and Needs

About half (51%) of participants reported ever having been to a social service agency for help. Social service involvement significantly varied by gender, with trans females (71%) most likely to have been to a social service agency followed by cis females (51%) and cis males (48%). In addition, parents were significantly more likely than non-parents to have

sought help from a social services agency (66% v. 44%); and parents were also significantly more likely to seek food stamps from social services agencies (19% vs. 8%).

Of those who went to a service agency at some point, while the largest percentage of participants reported seeking help with rent or housing, a fairly even distribution of responses across other options shows that interview participants sought a wide range of services.

Of final note, independent of formal service participation, a majority of participants (72%) reported having someone to talk to about their life situation if they needed help.

Drug and Alcohol Use

Nearly all participants (84%) reported using drugs or alcohol. The highest reported use was for marijuana (66%) and alcohol (58%), with 13% reporting cocaine or crack, 7% heroin, and 20% some other drug (often “meth” or pills). Excluding alcohol, 73% reported using at least one type of illegal drug.

Reported drug use significantly differed by gender, with cis males (90%) and trans females (89%) more likely than cis females (79%) to report using drugs or alcohol in general, and with cis females also the least likely gender subgroup to report using each specific drug whose results are in Table 3.7. Despite these gender differences, as the data in Table 3.7 make clear, rates of drug use were still generally high across the board, although our questions did not allow drawing conclusions about the severity of drug dependence.

Demographic Differences by Age and Race/Ethnicity

The questions concerning health and social service usage revealed consistent differences across both age and race/ethnicity categories. As compared to younger study participants, older ones (ages 18-24) were significantly more likely to report problems of various kinds but were also significantly more likely to report having a person they could talk to and having visited a social service agency. Specifically, older participants were more likely to report seeing a doctor in the past three months (66% v. 58%); experiencing non-sex related physical health problems (29% v. 19%); having had a STI (34% v. 22%); having someone to talk to (74% v. 64%); and having visited a social services agency (55% v. 36%).

Table 3.7. Health and Needs

Gender	Cis male	Cis female	Trans female	Total
<u>When did you last see a doctor?</u>				
< 3 Months Ago	64%	64%	83%	65%
3-6 Months Ago	18%	19%	3%	18%
7-12 Months Ago	9%	11%	3%	10%
Over a year ago	9%	6%	10%	7%
<u>What kind of health problems, if any, do you have?</u>				
None	65%	65%	66%	65%
Non sex-related physical	31%	24%	28%	27%
Sex-related	2%	6%	3%	4%
Mental Health-Related	2%	3%	-	2%
Multiple	0%	3%	3%	2%
<u>How often do you use protection against pregnancy and STIs?</u>				
All the time	82%	82%	91%	82%
Often	12%	12%	6%	12%
Sometimes	3%	3%	-	3%
Rarely/Never/NA	4%	3%	3%	3%
<u>Ever had an STI</u>	22%***	36%	41%	31%
<u>Have someone to talk to about life situation or when help is needed</u>	74% [±]	70%	84%	72%
<u>Ever gone to a social services agency for help</u>	48%*	51%	71%	51%
<u>Service provided by social services agency^{±±}</u>				
Housing or Rent	26%*	17%	17%	20%
Counseling/Mental Health	12%	14%	7%	13%
Food Stamps	9%	13%	10%	12%
STI Treatment/Prevention/Pregnancy Testing	13% [±]	9%	21%	11%
Food	11%	9%	10%	10%
<u>Use any drugs or alcohol</u>	90%**	79%	89%	84%
<u>Use any of the following drugs^{±±}</u>				
Marijuana	72%*	65%	75%	66%
Alcohol	65%**	52%	64%	58%
Cocaine/Crack	15%	12%	14%	13%
Heroin	6%	7%	4%	7%
Other	22%	19%	11%	20%

[±] Number non-missing data varied between 560 and 878.

^{±±} Multiple responses were allowed for each question.

+p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001.

Regarding race/ethnicity, white (66%) and multi-racial (61%) participants were more likely than Latino (56%) and black/African-American (46%) participants to report having visited a social service agency. White participants (20%) were also more likely than black/African American (7%) and Hispanic (2%) participants to seek food from a shelter ($p < .01$). White participants, however, were significantly *less* likely to report having health problems than black/African American and Hispanic participants (51% v. 68% v. 64%, respectively).

Further, black/African Americans were significantly more likely than white participants to report using alcohol (62% vs. 35%), whereas white participants were significantly more likely than all other racial/ethnic groups to report using crack/cocaine, heroin, and other drugs.

Expectations for the Future

Participants were asked about their opinions of their work, habits, and future plans. Nearly three-fourths of participants said there was something they liked about “the life,” whereas more than four-fifths said there was something they disliked. Sixty-two percent had tried to leave “the life,” and 63% reported that, if they wanted to leave the life tomorrow, they would know how—meaning, conversely, that more than one-third of the sample (37%) reported *not* knowing how to exit.¹⁸

As presented above, 51% of participants reported ever going to a social service agency for help. Shown below in Table 3.8, almost one-fifth (19%) reported having been approached by a social services agency. Respondents were asked if there were an agency designed just to meet their needs, what services would they want. Responses were coded into categories, with the top three all related to basic socioeconomic and survival needs: employment/education

¹⁸ White study participants were far more likely to report knowing how to leave the life than black/African American participants (83% vs. 57%). Heterosexual participants were more likely to report having tried to leave “the life” than bisexual participants (63% vs. 58%, $p < .05$). Gay participants (79%) were significantly more likely to report knowing how to leave “the life” than heterosexuals (62%), bisexuals (61%) and other sexual orientations (33%). Gay participants (64%) were also significantly more likely than heterosexuals (42%) to have suggested that a social service agency help with housing/utilities.

(49%), housing/utilities (47%), and food/money (36%). By comparison, only 12% of respondents identified counseling or advice as what a service agency would ideally offer.

Underlining the role of unmet socioeconomic needs in youth involvement in “the life,” those who sought an agency that could meet basic employment/education or housing/utilities needs were also significantly more likely than others to report that they “disliked” something about the life; that they had gone to a social service agency in the past; and that they had previously attempted to leave the life. Despite their prior history of seeking help and actually attempting to leave the life, at the time of the interview our data also showed that those reporting basic survival needs (employment, education, housing, or utilities) were *not* more likely than others to answer affirmatively that they would know how to leave the life tomorrow.

Table 3.8. Expectations

Number of Cases [±]	Cis male	Cis female	Trans female	Total
<u>Is there anything you like about this work?</u>				
Yes	74%	72%	40%	72%
Not sure	2%	1%	-	1%
<u>Is there anything you dislike about this work?</u>				
Yes	77% **	87%	93%	83%
Not sure	2%	1%	-	1%
<u>Ever tried to leave the life</u>				
	57% *	65%	78%	62%
<u>If wanted to leave the life tomorrow, would know how</u>				
	66% +	60%	78%	63%
<u>Ever approached by social service agency to offer services</u>				
	66%	60%	78%	19%
<u>If there were an agency that existed just to meet your needs what would they offer?</u>				
Employment/Education	56% **	44%	63%	49%
Housing/Utilities	45% +	47%	75%	47%
Food/Money	34%	37%	31%	36%
Counseling/Advice	12% *	19%	6%	16%
Addiction Services/Healthcare/Sex Ed	9%	12%	13%	11%
Other (Transportation, Drugs, Clothing, Etc.)	5%	5%	3%	5%

[±]Number of non-missing cases varied between 718 and 825.

⁺ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001.

Differences by Research Site

Whereas the six research sites generally evinced a substantial degree of similarity in the essential findings and patterns (see Appendix E), there were a number of differences meriting explicit discussion. Most of the site-specific differences involved one or, at most, two sites deviating significantly from the pattern found across the others on a particular item or set of related items.

- **Participant Demographics:** Miami’s sample was significantly younger—on average, 17.6 years of age compared to 19.9 years for the other five sites combined. Miami also had a significantly higher percentage of non-U.S. born interviewees (8%, compared to 1% for the other sites combined).
- **Street-Based Customer Recruitment:** A significantly higher percentage of respondents from Miami and the Bay Area reported obtaining customers on the street (both 79%), compared to 52% for the four other sites combined.
- **Pimp Involvement:** The Bay Area saw a far higher percentage of young people who work with a pimp than elsewhere (29% in Bay Area v. 12% in the other five sites combined). This finding is consistent with previously published claims, largely based on reported law enforcement experiences, that the prevalence of pimp-controlled prostitution is higher in the Bay Area specifically and California generally than elsewhere in the country (e.g., see MISSEY 2008; Sully 2013).
- **Role of Market Facilitators:** Atlantic City and Las Vegas stood out as having the highest percentages of young people working with a market facilitator (36% and 24%, respectively, compared to 15% for the other four sites combined).
- **Social Service Participation:** Three-quarters of the respondents from the Bay Area reported having ever visited a social service agency for help—the highest percentage of all sites. (The five other sites averaged 46% having visited a social service agency; and Miami had the lowest percentage at 33%.) The Bay Area site also had the highest percentage of young people reporting that they had been approached by a social service agency to offer services (35% v. 19% for the other five sites combined). Chicago had the highest percentage of youth reporting that social service agencies should offer more help with employment and education (64%), with this emerging as the greatest expressed need in Las Vegas (56%) and Dallas (55%) as well.
- **Drug Use:** Atlantic City respondents were significantly more likely to report using cocaine/crack (43%) and heroin (35%) than other sites (9% and 4%, respectively for combined five other sites).

- **Arrest History:** Atlantic City and Dallas had the highest percentage of respondents who had ever been arrested, both at 88%, with other sites' percentages ranging from 55% to 70%. Atlantic City saw the highest percentage of respondents ever having been arrested for prostitution—31% compared to 14% for the other sites combined. Atlantic City and Dallas also had the highest percentage of respondents reporting that they were arrested in the last year for prostitution—23% and 19%, respectively, compared to 9% for the other four sites combined.

Chapter 4

Findings from Official Data and National Population Estimate

This chapter presents relevant arrest totals for all 50 states. Second, we present prosecution and recidivism outcomes for select cities from the six in which the youth interviews were conducted. Third, we present population estimates for the interview sites and the United States.

Youth Prostitution Arrests Nationwide

Prostitution Arrests in All 50 States

The data in Table 4.1 provides the number of prostitution arrests in all 50 states. We obtained state-based arrest data in 34 states for youth under the age of 18 and in 26 states for youth ages 18 to 24 (see Table 4.1, first column). In the remaining states, we used data collected by the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (see Table 4.1, second column). Where data was obtained from both the UCR and state-based data sources, the two figures were averaged (see Table 4.1, third column). For the slightly older 18-24-year-old age group, the FBI does not make arrest statistics available, meaning that information could only be obtained from state data sources (see Table 4.1, fourth column). Major findings include:

- **Annual Arrest Volume:** Overall, there were an estimated 1,130 arrests of underage youth (under the age of 18) for prostitution in 2009. This figure would be exactly the same whether relying exclusively on FBI data for all 50 states or averaging FBI and state-based data sources where numbers from both sources were available.
- **Concentration of Youth Arrests:** Arrests were spread unevenly, with an estimated two-thirds (67%) taking place in just five states: California, Nevada, New York, Texas, and Washington. California alone accounted for 429 arrests (38% of the national total). On the other end of the spectrum, 23 states reported fewer five or fewer arrests.
- **Higher Numbers of Arrests of 18-24-Year-Olds:** The numbers of arrests are much greater for the 18-24-year-old age group. In the 26 states for which data was available for this age group, there were a total of 4,399 prostitution arrests in 2009. The arrests were

also spread more widely, with only four states that reported five or fewer arrests in one year (Delaware, Idaho, South Dakota, and West Virginia).

The UCR program yielded a nationwide number of 71,355 prostitution and commercialized vice arrests of *individuals of all ages* in 2009. Since 2009, such arrests may have declined, as the UCR program reported 47,598 such arrests in 2014. (The UCR program, however, explicitly cautions against using its data for trend analysis.)

Limitations in Data Collection Procedures and Quality

As described in Chapter 2 and further illustrated in Table 4.1, this project revealed flaws in the data collection and reporting of underage prostitution arrests nationwide. Although UCR data could be obtained for all 50 states, only 34 of 50 states provided data on underage prostitution arrests from valid state-based data sources. Those states that did provide data sometimes provided imprecise numbers (e.g., combining prostitution, exploitation, and solicitation charges under a single category, which might lead prostitution arrests to be overestimated, or potentially lacking complete data on arrests handled in juvenile court, which might lead prostitution arrests to be underestimated). Further, regardless of the underlying state penal laws, UCR data universally combines numbers into a “prostitution and commercialized vice” category, which potentially combines prostitution, exploitation, and solicitation arrests, rather than isolating prostitution. In addition, given the relatively low charge severity of prostitution offenses, law enforcement agencies are not necessarily required to report, nor do they necessarily report, all prostitution arrests to the UCR program, leading to other potential inaccuracies.

The cumulative effect of these data limitations are illustrated in observed discrepancies between the state-based and UCR numbers in 15 of 34 states where both data sources provided numbers, as shown in the first two columns of Table 4.1. Discrepancies also existed in ten of the 14 states where at least one of the data sources reported an arrest total greater than five arrests. Accordingly, the data collection process itself underlined important limitations in reporting and understanding the scope of the criminal justice response to young people in the sex trade in the United States.

Table 4.1. Prostitution Arrests by Age

State*	Under 18			Ages 18-24
	State	FBI	Average of State and FBI	State Data Sources
Alabama ¹	0	0	0	134
Alaska ¹	2	2	2	58
Arizona ¹		28	28	
Arkansas ¹	0	0	0	21
California		429	429	
Colorado		13	13	
Connecticut ¹	0	0	0	11
Delaware ²	0	0	0	5
Florida	11	51	31	408
Georgia		48	48	
Hawaii ²	5	4	4.5	124
Idaho ¹	0	0	0	2
Illinois	27	41	34	559
Indiana		11	11	
Iowa ¹		2	2	
Kansas		0	0	
Kentucky ¹	1	1	1	82
Louisiana ¹		10	10	
Maine ¹	1	0	0.5	7
Maryland ¹	23	23	23	241
Massachusetts ¹	5	5	5	133
Michigan	7	7	7	133
Minnesota	30	30	30	244
Mississippi		8	8	
Missouri ¹	0	3	2.5	
Montana	0	0	0	
Nebraska ¹	2	2	2	
Nevada		76	76	
New Hampshire		0	0	
New Jersey	10	16	13	
New Mexico	2	2	2	15
New York	90	15	52.5	1,167
North Carolina	4	11	7.5	70
North Dakota ¹	0	0	0	
Ohio		10	10	
Oklahoma		8	8	
Oregon	3	26	14.5	102
Pennsylvania ¹	9	9	9	258
Rhode Island ²	0	1	0.5	
South Carolina		2	2	
South Dakota	0	1	0.5	1
Tennessee ²	17	19	18	467

Table 4.1. Prostitution Arrests by Age

State*	Under 18			Ages 18-24
	State	FBI	Average of State and FBI	State Data Sources
Texas	96	124	110	1,436
Utah ¹	0	24	12	
Vermont		1	1	
Virginia	1	1	1	29
Washington	128	57	92.5	406
West Virginia	0	0	0	0
Wisconsin		9	9	
Wyoming ¹	0	0	0	
Total	474	1,130	1,130	4,399

Note: Data collected as part of the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are for Prostitution and Commercialized Vice, a category that includes the “unlawful promotion of or participation in sexual activities for profit, including attempts,” a definition potentially encompassing prostitution, solicitation, and exploitation offenses. Whereas it is likely that few underage individuals were arrested on solicitation or exploitation charges, it cannot be ruled out that in some states, the UCR data slightly overestimates arrests specifically for prostitution.

* Data for Washington, DC was not collected.

¹ State-based data utilized the UCR charge categories, meaning that the numbers reflect prostitution and commercialized vice.

² State-based data combined prostitution and solicitation for prostitution charges (but does not include exploitation-related charges).

Sex and Race Distribution of Nationwide Prostitution Arrests

For those states that provided data, the data in Table 4.2 indicates that approximately four in five arrests for prostitution were of female defendants (81% for under 18 arrestees and 78% for 18-24-year-olds). The data also indicates that over half of the arrestees under the age of 18 are black (55%), and 43% of 18-24-year-olds are black. Most of the remaining defendants were white. Notably, data was not available for transgender defendants.

Table 4.2. Percent of Arrests by Gender and Race (2009)

Demographics	Under 18	18-24
Gender*		
Female	81%	78%
Male	19%	22%
Race		
Black	55%	43%
White	35%	52%
Other	8%	5%

* Transgender not reported.

Arrests on Exploitation or Promoting Prostitution Charges

From 11 states, we were also able to collect aggregate data on the number of arrests of exploiters (assisting or promoting prostitution) in 2009. Table 4.3 presents the total number of arrests made on such charges in those states, as well as a breakdown by gender (with data transgender defendants not available). In all states but one, more men were arrested for exploitation crimes, except in North Carolina. Overall, 35% of those facing exploitation charges were women, and 65% were men.

Table 4.3. Exploitation Arrests (2009)

State	Total Arrests	Male	Female
Hawaii	25	20	5
Michigan ¹	53	40	13
New Mexico	20	17	3
North Carolina ¹	149	55	94
Oregon	98	80	18
Rhode Island	20	-	-
South Carolina ²	23	22	1
Tennessee	11	10	1
Virginia ¹	96	59	37
Washington	77	59	18
West Virginia ¹	35	20	15
Total	607	382	205

¹ NIBRS code: Assisting or Promoting Prostitution

² Combined codes Pimping and Hire/Enter House of Prostitution

Prostitution Case Processing in the Youth Interview Sites

Arrest Numbers in the Interview Sites

As shown in Table 4.4, in 2009, the five interview sites for which such data could be obtained combined for 1,907 prostitution arrests of individuals under the age of 25. Across

these sites, 455 individuals under the age of 25 were arrested in San Francisco;¹⁹ 321 in Chicago; 540 in Dallas; 408 in Las Vegas; and 183 in Miami.

Data on underage prostitution arrests (under the age of 18) could only be obtained for three sites and indicates that there were 17 such arrests in Chicago (representing 5.3% of all under 25 prostitution arrests in Chicago), 34 arrests in Dallas (representing 6.3% of under 25 prostitution arrests), and one in Miami.

The bottom section of Table 4.4 shows the percentage of arrests in each state that came from our interview sites. Across four sites for which data was available, from 35% to 55% of under 25 prostitution arrests came from our interview sites, which in most cases were the largest cities in the state.

Background Characteristics

Table 4.5 presents the background characteristics of youth arrested for prostitution (under age 25) in 2009 in five of the interview sites (unavailable for Atlantic City). The mean age rounded to 20 or 21 years old in all sites and, when narrowing to the underage population (13-17-year-olds), the mean age was 16 or 17 years old. The majority of those arrested were female in Chicago, Dallas and Las Vegas. In San Francisco and Miami, the under 25 population arrested for prostitution was more than four in ten male (41% in San Francisco and 46% in Miami). San Francisco and Miami also deviated from the other three sites in racial composition. Specifically, the percentage of black arrestees was lower in San Francisco and Miami than in the other sites. Contrasting with the other sites, 42% of arrestees in Miami were Hispanic, and 18% in San Francisco were Asian.

The criminal history information that we were able to obtain for four sites indicates that the population of interest has sizable involvement with the criminal justice system, with an average of 7.1 prior arrests in Las Vegas, 6.4 in Chicago, 4.0 in Miami and 2.7 in Dallas. The prior criminal history data refers to any charge, not exclusively prostitution.

¹⁹ Neither aggregate nor case-level data for the combined Bay Area, including Oakland, could be obtained from state or county data sources.

Table 4.4. Number of Youth/Young Adults Arrested on Prostitution Charges in 2009 by Age

Interview Site	San Francisco ¹		Chicago		Dallas		Las Vegas ²		Miami ³	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
AGE AT TIME OF ARREST										
13 years			1	0%	0	0%			0	0%
14 years			2	1%	0	0%			0	0%
15 years			3	1%	5	1%			0	0%
16 years			0	0%	6	1%			0	0%
17 years			11	3%	23	4%			1	1%
18 years			31	10%	53	10%			13	7%
19 years			50	16%	71	13%	18	4%	22	12%
20 years			45	14%	82	15%	55	13%	22	12%
21 years			52	16%	74	14%	75	18%	40	22%
22 years			47	15%	81	15%	85	21%	24	13%
23 years			47	15%	64	12%	82	20%	28	15%
24 years			32	10%	81	15%	93	23%	33	18%
Ages 13-17 Years			17	5%	34	6%	0	0%	1	1%
Ages 13-18 Years			48	15%	87	16%	0	0%	14	8%
Total (Younger than Age 25)	455	100%	321	100%	540	100%	408	100%	183	100%
Statewide Totals	California		Illinois		Texas		Nevada		Florida	
PERCENT OF STATE ARRESTS FROM INTERVIEW SITE										
Ages 12-17 Years			63%		35%				9%	
Ages 12-18 Years			56%		38%				41%	
Total (Younger than Age 25)			55%		35%		54%		44%	

¹ Aggregate data from San Francisco obtained for 18-24-year-olds. Statewide data from California not available.

² We were not able to obtain juvenile data (18 or younger) from Nevada.

³ Numbers come from all of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Table 4.5. Background Characteristics for Youth/Young Adults Arrested for Prostitution in 2009 (Younger than Age 25)

Interview Site	San Francisco	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas ¹	Miami
Number of Individuals	455	321	540	408	183
DEMOGRAPHICS					
Mean Age	20.1	20.7	20.9	21.9	21.4
Mean Age (13-17 years)		16.0	16.5		17.0
Mean Age (13-18 years)		17.3	17.4		17.9
Sex					
Female	59%	92%	87%	97%	54%
Male	41%	8%	13%	3%	46%
Race/ethnicity					
Black	32%	53%	57%	45%	22%
White	48%	45%	42%	50%	36%
Hispanic	--	2%	--	--	42%
Asian or other race/ethnicity	18%	0%	1%	6%	1%
Born in the United States of America	--	97%	91%	93%	84%
CRIMINAL HISTORY					
Average Number of Prior Arrests		6.4	2.7	7.1	4.0
Any Prior Arrest		70%	72%	74%	56%

Note: Due to rounding, percentages do not always add up to 100%.

¹ Mean age figures are for 18-24 In Las Vegas.

Case Outcomes

Table 4.6 provides information on the case outcomes in prostitution cases in 2009 for youth under age 25 in five sites (excluding Atlantic City, and with limited information in San Francisco and Las Vegas). As shown in Table 4.6, the percentage of cases ending in a conviction ranged from 28% in Miami to just under 60% in the three other sites represented (Chicago, Dallas, and Las Vegas). In three of the sites, Chicago, Dallas and Miami, data enabled isolating the underage age group (13-17-year-olds). Results indicated that the younger age group was convicted less often than 18-24-year-olds (7% vs. 21%, results not shown). In Las Vegas, the conviction rate was similar regardless of age category.

Table 4.6. Case Outcomes for Youth Prostitution Arrests in 2009 (Younger than Age 25)

Interview Site	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami
Number of Cases	176	755	770	353
Number of Cases Ending in Conviction	101	573	454	205
Number of Cases Ending in Jail or Prison	73	556		80
DISPOSITION TYPE				
Pled Guilty/Convicted	58%	56%	59%	28%
Dismissed	7%	27%	41%	2%
Deferred Prosecution Agreement	35%	18%	--	8%
Declined to Prosecute	--	--	--	60%
Pre-Trial Diversion	--	--	--	2%
SENTENCE TYPE (If Convicted)				
Jail	73%	97%		39%
Time Served	6%	---		--
Conditional Discharge	8%	---		--
Fine	2%	97%		--
Other	10%	6%		27% ¹
DAYS OF INCARCERATION				
Average Days Sentenced to Jail				
All Cases	28.7	42.2		18.1
Cases Ending in Conviction	75.8	61.4		64.9
Cases Ending in Jail	88.3	63.3		97.5

Note: Due to rounding, percentages do not always add up to 100%.

In Chicago, data was obtained on 404 cases pending a disposition, leading to an N of 176. In addition, of the 808 arrests in Dallas, 53 were pending as of when data was received, leading to an N of 755.

-- indicates field was not provided.

¹ In Miami, 27% of defendants received community supervision, generally probation.

Of those convicted, in three sites where sentencing data was available, a high percentage received a jail sentence. Specifically, 97% of cases received both a jail sentence and fine in Dallas, 73% received jail in Chicago, and 39% received jail in Miami. Of those cases that were sentenced to jail, defendants received on average a two-month jail sentence in Dallas and approximately a three-month jail sentence in Chicago and Miami. When isolating the younger age group (13-17-year-olds), we found that only in Chicago was this younger age group given a shorter jail sentence than 18-24-year-olds.

Re-Arrest Rates

Table 4.7 presents re-arrest rates for the four sites that could provide reliable recidivism data (for the under 25 population). Two years after the initial prostitution arrest, 36% of youth in Las Vegas, 42% in Miami, 46% in Dallas, and 64% in Chicago were re-arrested on any charge. Notably, in the two sites for which prostitution re-arrests could be distinguished, such arrests accounted for well under half of all re-arrests on any charge. In Chicago, the sample averaged 1.33 re-arrests on any charge compared to 0.54 prostitution re-arrests over two years; and in Dallas, the sample averaged 1.02 re-arrests on any charge compared to 0.37 prostitution re-arrests. These findings further confirm the pattern detected in the youth interviews (see Chapter 3), with most arrests of the prostitution-involved population not specifically involving prostitution charges per se.

Table 4.7. Recidivism Among Youth/Young Adults Arrested on Prostitution Charges in 2008

Interview Site	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami
Number of Individuals in Recidivism Sample	332	357	61	152
One Year After Initial Arrest				
Any Re-Arrest	54%	29%	13%	18%
Number of Re-Arrests	0.67	0.51	0.15	0.56
Any Prostitution Re-Arrest	21%	11%	--	--
Number of Prostitution Re-Arrests	0.21	0.16	--	--
Two Years After Initial Arrest				
Any Re-Arrest	64%	46%	36%	42%
Number of Re-Arrests	1.33	1.02	0.41	1.57
Any Prostitution Re-Arrest	33%	22%	--	--
Number of Prostitution Re-Arrests	0.54	0.37	--	--

Case Processing of Exploitation Cases

Background Characteristics and Case Outcomes

Table 4.8 presents information regarding individuals arrested on sexual exploitation of children charges in five of the interview sites (excluding Atlantic City). The results generally do not point to a consistent cross-site profile of these individuals. They were on average approximately 30 years old (ranging from 25.0 years in San Francisco to 32.8 years in Miami). The percentage who were male ranged from 60% to 71% in four of the five sites and was 96% in Las Vegas. In regards to race, those arrested on exploitation charges were 80% black in San Francisco, whereas the other sites showed a more mixed breakdown of white and black individuals—along with 30% Hispanic in Miami. Those arrested also had significant prior experience with the criminal justice system, with the number of prior arrests on any charge varying from 4.1 in Las Vegas to 4.8 in Dallas to 6.8 in Miami.

In regards to the initial exploitation offense, the conviction rate across the five sites ranged from a low of 12% in Las Vegas to a high of 55% in Miami. Prison and jail were used as a common sentence type in cases of a conviction. Jail was imposed in 67% of cases in Chicago; either prison or jail were imposed in 95% of cases in Dallas (where sentences almost always included a fine as well); and prison or jail were imposed in 69% of cases in Miami. Dallas sentenced those convicted of sexual exploitation offenses, on average, to five years in prison, whereas jail or prison lengths were significant lower in the other sites, as shown in Table 4.8.

Recidivism

Re-arrest data could be obtained from four of the six sites for individuals initially arrested on an exploitation charge. After a two-year tracking period, the re-arrest rate on any charge was 9% in Las Vegas, 36% in Chicago, 39% in Dallas, and 50% in Miami. (Available data did not enable isolating re-arrests on exploitation charges specifically.)

Table 4.8. Background Characteristics and Case Outcomes for Individuals Arrested for Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in 2009

Interview Site	San Francisco	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami
Number of Cases	87	54	61	132	56
DEMOGRAPHICS					
Mean Age	25.0	30.8	30.5	31.2	32.8
Sex					
Female	40%	38%	30%	4%	31%
Male	60%	62%	71%	96%	69%
Race/ethnicity					
Black	80%	45%	56%	67%	29%
White	17%	48%	43%	30%	41%
Hispanic	--	---	---	--	30%
Asian or other race/ethnicity	2%	7%	2%	3%	0%
Born in the United States of America	--	78%	90%	72%	71%
CRIMINAL HISTORY					
Average Number of Prior Arrests			4.8	4.1	6.8
Any Prior Arrest			87%	62%	57%
DISPOSITION TYPE					
Pled Guilty/Convicted	31%	43%	43%	12%	55%
Dismissed	69%	0%	20%	87%	17%
Adjournment in Contemplation of Dismissal	--	57%	37%	--	17%
Declined to Prosecute	--	---	---	0%	11%
SENTENCE TYPE (If Convicted)					
Prison		0%	50%		6%
Jail		67%	45%		63%
Straight Probation		---	5%		5%
Conditional Discharge		33%	---		---
Fine		---	95%		---
INCARCERATION AND SUPERVISION					
Average Days Sentenced to Jail or Prison					
All Cases		43.0	685.7		46.4
Cases Ending in Conviction		50.6	1,991.8		84.2
Cases Ending in Jail or Prison Sentence		60.0	1,991.8		122.5

Note: Due to rounding, percentages do not always add up to 100%. Criminal history data was not obtained from San Francisco or Chicago. Sentencing information was not obtained from San Francisco and Las Vegas. Note that 22 individuals did not have a final disposition in Chicago, they were coded as bond forfeiture and not included in this analysis. -- indicates a field that was not provided.

Table 4.9. Recidivism Among Individuals Arrested on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Charges in 2008

Interview Site	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami
Number of Cases in Recidivism Sample	25	31	34	18
One Year After Initial Arrest				
Any Re-Arrest	32%	19%	6%	33%
Number of Re-Arrests	0.52	0.45	0.06	1.06
Two Years After Initial Arrest				
Any Re-Arrest	36%	39%	9%	50%
Number of Re-Arrests	0.92	1.00	0.09	2.01

Population Estimates

We calculated a range of estimates for the number of underage youth in the United States engaged in the sex trade (see Chapter 2 for the methodology underlying these estimates). Table 4.10 presents the findings. Based on available official data sources, there were 1,130 arrests of individuals under the age of 18 on prostitution charges in 2009. Given this number, and based on estimated percentages of the full population of interest that experiences a prostitution arrest in a given year (determined through the youth interview data), the most likely range of underage youth in the sex trade in the U.S. falls between 8,915 and 10,507.

Recognizing the data limitations described in Chapter 2, we also created a wider range of estimates, respectively based on a bare minimum plausible percent of the population with a past year prostitution arrest (5.38%, or half of 10.75%) and a maximum plausible percent with a past year prostitution arrest (25.34%, or double 12.67%). When applying these assumptions, the results indicate that the true population falls between a minimum of 4,457 (if we assume a 25.34% annual arrest rate) and 20,994 (if we assume that 5.38% of the actual population is arrested in any given year).

Table 4.10 Population Estimates Based on Official Prostitution Arrest Data for Underage Youth (Under 18 Years of Age)

State	State Data: Prostitution Arrests of Under 18 Youth in 2009	FBI Data: Prostitution Arrests of Under 18 Youth in 2009	Average = Σ (Official Number of Prostitution Arrests of Under 18 Youth in 2009)	Population Estimate Using 10.75%	Population Estimate Using 12.67%	Population Estimate Using 5.38%	Population Estimate Using 25.34%
Alabama	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Alaska	2	2	2	18.60	15.79	37.17	7.89
Arizona		28	28	260.47	220.99	520.45	110.50
Arkansas	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
California		429	429	3,990.70	3,385.95	7,973.98	1,692.98
Colorado		13	13	120.93	102.60	241.64	51.30
Connecticut	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Delaware	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Florida	11	51	31	288.37	244.67	576.21	122.34
Georgia		48	48	446.51	378.85	892.19	189.42
Hawaii	5	4	4.5	41.86	35.52	83.64	17.76
Idaho	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Illinois	27	41	34	316.28	268.35	631.97	134.18
Indiana		11	11	102.33	86.82	204.46	43.41
Iowa		2	2	18.60	15.79	37.17	7.89
Kansas		0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Kentucky	1	1	1	9.30	7.89	18.59	3.95
Louisiana		10	10	93.02	78.93	185.87	39.46
Maine	1	0	0.5	4.65	3.95	9.29	1.97
Maryland	23	23	23	213.95	181.53	427.51	90.77
Massachusetts	5	5	5	46.51	39.46	92.94	19.73
Michigan	7	7	7	65.12	55.25	130.11	27.62
Minnesota	30	30	30	279.07	236.78	557.62	118.39
Mississippi		8	8	74.42	63.14	148.70	31.57
Missouri	0	3	1.5	13.95	11.84	27.88	5.92
Montana	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nebraska	2	2	2	18.60	15.79	37.17	7.89
Nevada		76	76	706.98	599.84	1,412.64	299.92
New Hampshire		0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

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Table 4.10 Population Estimates Based on Official Prostitution Arrest Data for Underage Youth (Under 18 Years of Age)

State	State Data: Prostitution Arrests of Under 18 Youth in 2009	FBI Data: Prostitution Arrests of Under 18 Youth in 2009	Average = Σ (Official Number of Prostitution Arrests of Under 18 Youth in 2009)	Population Estimate Using 10.75%	Population Estimate Using 12.67%	Population Estimate Using 5.38%	Population Estimate Using 25.34%
New Jersey	10	16	13	120.93	102.60	241.64	51.30
New Mexico	2	2	2	18.60	15.79	37.17	7.89
New York	90	15	52.5	488.37	414.36	975.84	207.18
North Carolina	4	11	7.5	69.77	59.19	139.41	29.60
North Dakota	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ohio		10	10	93.02	78.93	185.87	39.46
Oklahoma		8	8	74.42	63.14	148.70	31.57
Oregon	3	26	14.5	134.88	114.44	269.52	57.22
Pennsylvania	9	9	9	83.72	71.03	167.29	35.52
Rhode Island	0	1	0.5	4.65	3.95	9.29	1.97
South Carolina		2	2	18.60	15.79	37.17	7.89
South Dakota	0	1	0.5	4.65	3.95	9.29	1.97
Tennessee	17	19	18	167.44	142.07	334.57	71.03
Texas	96	124	110	1,023.26	868.19	2,044.61	434.10
Utah	0	24	12	111.63	94.71	223.05	47.36
Vermont		1	1	9.30	7.89	18.59	3.95
Virginia	1	1	1	9.30	7.89	18.59	3.95
Washington	128	57	92.5	860.47	730.07	1,719.33	365.04
West Virginia	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Wisconsin		9	9	83.72	71.03	167.29	35.52
Wyoming	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL 50 STATES	474	1,130	1,130	10,507	8,915	20,994	4,457

* No data was available for Washington, D.C. Numbers for the third column were computed as the average of the first two columns—an average of the state-based data source and FBI data source—wherever both data sources were populated. The 50-state total of 1,130 appears in both the second and third columns (for FBI data and for the average obtained from both data sources, but those numbers are identical by coincidence; the results are based on different state-by-state computations. The final totals for all 50 states are rounded (no decimals).

Chapter 5

Perspectives of Social Service Providers and Law Enforcement

In four of the sites where youth interviews took place (Atlantic City, Bay Area, Miami, Chicago), the research team identified and interviewed staff at 18 social service and law enforcement agencies.²⁰ In some cases, these providers worked with the young people specifically because of their involvement in the commercial sex industry, but in many cases their interactions were based on some other aspect of the youth's identity or experience.

The interviews were semi-structured, and their purpose was threefold: 1) to learn the exact locations of tracts, hotels, beaches, etc. to inform outreach for the youth interviews; 2) to understand the types of available service organizations, the services offered, and the challenges to service provision; and 3) to learn, from the view of social service providers and police officers, about some of the common characteristics, experiences, and needs of the youth.

Types of Social Service Organizations and Services Offered

There are different types of social service organizations that work with youth involved in the commercial sex market, and the 18 in this study represent that range. In most cases, the programming of these agencies was not geared exclusively to youth in the sex trade, although there were a few whose name and mission had “sexual exploitation” or “sexually exploited youth” in it. Organizations with specific programming for sexually exploited youth reported that referrals most often come from police officers and other law enforcement officials, juvenile courts, and district attorney's offices.

Many of the organizations we interviewed were working with youth because of some other aspect of their identity or experience: foster care involvement, homelessness, LGBT

²⁰ At some agencies, multiple staff members were interviewed.

community member, or juvenile justice system involvement. We interviewed staff from youth homeless shelters, LGBT centers, youth empowerment organizations, agencies that work with victims of physical and sexual abuse, substance abuse treatment groups, and policy advocacy organizations.

Many of the organizations offered a variety of services, although they tended to fall into the following categories: counseling, support groups, case management, job assistance, parenting classes, and legal and educational advocacy. The youth shelters usually did not have these services, but instead offered food, a place to stay, clothing, bus passes, and hygiene kits, and often held life skills groups, LGBT support groups, and yoga classes. At one of the shelters, a staff member stated that 30% percent of the youth who stayed there were transgender, and that the shelter was the only safe place for them. Staff from the LGBT center we interviewed said they took a harm reduction approach, focusing their activities on safer sex, HIV prevention, and encouraging the youth to make sure they tell someone where they are at all times; staff at this agency did not try to get the youth out of the sex trade.

Some organizations provided additional services. One interviewee stated that they provide young people with smart phones “because otherwise kids will trade sex for those things,” and another stated that they provide “care free activities” such as art and jewelry making—“things that aren’t so intense or heavy.” One organization that works with girls coming out of the juvenile justice system stated that they do not have programming specifically for women in the sex trade, as “they all heal the same way, and isolating the issue doesn’t help—these women do not want to be defined by their offense.”

Youth Involved in the Commercial Sex Market

Social service providers differed in the characteristics they identified of the youth in the sex trade, and this often varied by type of organization. For instance, staff from organizations whose mission it was to work with sexually-exploited females perceived that most of the youth in the sex trade were females exploited by a pimp. Staff from organizations whose mission was anything other than sexual exploitation were more likely to perceive that the population was equally divided among males and females; staff from two organizations also highlighted the prevalence of exchanging sex for money among transwomen. One advocate stated that the sex trade is something that both males and females are involved in, although females tend to be targeted or identified by law enforcement.

The youth these organizations encountered were mostly English speaking, and many were from the foster care system. Staff from a few organizations said that over half were involved in foster care, and staff from another organization stated that 70% of them had previous contact with the local Department of Children and Families. In Miami, in part because year-round warm weather makes it a destination for homeless youth, interviewees talked about the prevalence of runaways in the sex trade. Similarly, in Atlantic City, the interviewees stated that the sex market was seasonal, and that during the warmer months there were a lot of runaways from other states who “turn to survival sex on the streets.”

The social services staff who were interviewed agreed on some characteristics: involvement in the sex trade was equally prevalent across race, many of the involved youth faced family issues such as abuse and neglect (and corresponding self-esteem problems), and most faced economic hardship. Some also identified that many youth come from single parent homes with lots of children, and others identified past sexual abuse or parental criminal justice histories as common among this population. Issues of poverty were overwhelmingly identified by staff from every organization. Youth had basic needs such as housing and food. Many were eligible for supplemental security income (SSI) but were not receiving it.

LGBT Youth

Those who worked with the LGBT population stated that a significant percentage of gay youth are kicked out of their homes because of their sexual orientation; many of these young people wind up on the street. One interviewee stated that gay male youth often exchange sex with older men for places to stay. For trans females in particular, one interviewee stated:

The transgender population is definitely involved in the sex work industry. For trans female youth, there is a lot of social pressure to do this work, and it is almost a rite of passage for them to “really be trans.” There are not many places for them to go and find community, so they go to the sex clubs, and there’s an expectation that they’ll also go to the Tenderloin and sell their bodies. It’s really hard for trans kids to get jobs because there’s so much prejudice against them, so finding someone to employ you is really challenging. When you’re young, the jobs available to you are things like CVS or McDonald’s. Those places have an endless pool of unskilled labor; they won’t hire the trans kid. In doing sex work, they can make a lot of money quickly and save enough to get their surgery.

Market Entry

There was no consensus among social service organizations about how youth entered the market. Some stated that girls were often recruited by other girls, moms, and, for runaways, by people at bus stops. Some stated that girls are recruited by their boyfriend/pimp. Others stated that it is a mix: some are recruited by friends, some are forced, and some are entering the life on their own. One stated that there was family pressure to do it—their fathers are pimps and their mothers are prostitutes. Finally, others stated that it is very easy to get involved, and many just find their own way into the market and do not work with anybody. As one interviewee stated, “To try to find a way in which you can’t fall into [commercial sex work] is way harder than finding ways in which you can.” Another made a similar point by stating, “Hustling is a ‘safer’ way to make money [than other underground economic activities] because the charges are usually loitering and it’s not a felony.” Staff from multiple organizations emphasized that many youth do not believe they are doing anything wrong because “it’s so normal” in their worlds, and in some cases, girls were pressuring their male friends to help them facilitate their interactions with customers.

Language and Framing

Some interesting tensions arose in the interviews around vocabulary. Some organizations used the term “commercial sexual exploitation of children,” or “CSEC.” For those who used CSEC, they most often used the word “girls” when referring to the population, reflecting their belief that all or most of the CSEC population was female. These organizations were also more likely to use the word “victim” when discussing youth in the sex trade.

Other staff took issue with the “CSEC” and “girls” language, with one interviewee stating, “Exploitation language triggers people.” Another saying, “Young people don’t necessarily see themselves as exploited,” and that people should not be defined by their offense.

Several interviewees highlighted that the narrative that most of the youth in the sex trade were girls was problematic: “There are lots of boys doing it too.” As one interviewee stated:

What about boys? When we talk about this in public, we talk about girls, and the men who buy sex from them. The movement hasn’t been engaged in services for LGBTQ individuals.

When referring to females, others stated that they purposely say “young women” instead of “girls.” Instead of “CSEC,” many organizations used “youth engaged in survival sex.” One interviewee from a homeless shelter defined survival sex as “trading sex for money, drugs, or housing.” Another from a different shelter—one designed specifically to work with sexually exploited females—called survival sex a “bullshit term.” At one LGBT center, staff said they use the language of the youth: “sex work,” “hookin’ and crookin’,” “hustling,” or “other job.”

There was also tension around the terms “victims” and “trafficking.” One interviewee stated that, “We need to push back on the language. People say foreigners are trafficked and domestics are engaged in prostitution. Call it all human trafficking, they are all victims.” Another stated that it was “crazy” to label all youth engaged in the commercial sex market as being trafficked. Staff at one agency felt that labeling the youth as victims takes away their agency, and that the goal of working with the youth should not be to “rescue” them, but to support them in making their own decisions.

Another tension around framing arose on the topic of pimps. Staff at one organization stated that all girls have some sort of pimp, but boys do not have pimps. Another organization’s staff said that it is hard to believe that most are not pimped and controlled in some way. Other organizations said that there was a mix—some had pimps, others had friends who helped them get customers but were not pimps, and that some were what they called “renegades,” engaging in the commercial sex market completely on their own. One interviewee stated that many do it on their own: “Girls have been pimping themselves because it gives them power.” Another stated that the idea of a “pimp” is complicated, and reducing the conversation to pimp as perpetrator and youth as victim is unhelpful, especially when the “pimp” is also a youth growing up facing issues of poverty:

While the girls didn’t necessarily choose this life, the pimps didn’t necessarily choose it either, and many of them are young men from the same family situations, and they were groomed just like the girls were, just for a different role. But nobody is talking about them as needing help, they are just thought of as criminals.

Finally, social service providers had different perspectives about police. According to one interviewee, “The police see [youth] as offenders, the court sees them as victims.” Many felt that law enforcement officials have changed their attitudes over the years. As one stated, “Some police still say things like ‘a hoe is a hoe,’ but even the roughest are starting to

change their attitudes and have the youth’s best interests in mind because they are kids.” One advocate said that, “Law enforcement mistakenly thinks all girls have pimps,” and one police officer said that the goal is “to rescue victims, prosecute pimps.” One officer referred to transgender youth as “crossdressers,” indicating that is still a need for training and education regarding appropriate language and understanding.

Challenges

When asked about the challenges of working with youth in the sex trade, responses fell into four main categories: the field, the police, logistics, and the youth.

The Field

There is growing media and policy attention on the issue of youth involved in the commercial sex market. A “field” has emerged—one where government and private funders sought to fund programs, criminal justice agencies sought to create new practices and policies, and researchers sought to generate knowledge. However, indicated through the service provider and law enforcement interviews, conflicts exist over language and framing of the problem. These conflicts are heightened by the realities of limited funding, leading agencies to try to differentiate their programming or approach to the issue. One interviewee stated that “everyone is facing funding issues,” while another across the country explained:

For service providers, there is territorialism around money. Every provider thinks they have the answer for these young people, so they are essentially competing with each other for funding, claiming they have the best program.

Another provider stated:

Providers are confusing their own survival with what’s best for the kids. It creates an identity that you have to follow. Their hearts are good, but they are too worried about funding and job security than really serving their population with an open mind.

The need to secure funding often requires agencies to create singular narratives that can exclude many youth in the sex trade, often limiting programming and discourse, for example, to a focus on girls.

Some interviewees mentioned that articulating the problem is part of the problem. The framing of the field as “anti-trafficking” comes up against “anti-prostitution” statutes, which leads to confusion on the part of the police and court system. Additionally, according to one police officer interviewed, when the word “trafficking” is used, money and resources often go to foreign human trafficking, not domestic. This sentiment was echoed by a service provider in another city: “Historically, trafficking programs worked with international folks only.” Nearly all of the interviewees stated that there are not enough resources to address domestic trafficking.

One interviewee who works with girls in the juvenile justice system stated that some young people see the framing of “commercial sexual exploitation of children” (“CSEC”) or “trafficked” as problematic.

Girls in juvenile hall see programs for CSEC youth and they get angry, because what about them? There are no services for them, but they face the same issues and challenges as CSEC girls. Just chose a different way to hustle. Some chose to sell drugs because they were uncomfortable selling their body, but they’re labeled criminals while others are labeled victims.

Finally, one police officer interviewed discussed the need for certain narratives—i.e., young girls being forced, coerced, and controlled—to frame the dominant discourse in order to convince politicians to pass laws like the New York Safe Harbor Act. He stated that it would be impossible to convince white, male state senators to pass a law that does not criminalize youth in the sex trade if you tell them that boys are involved or that many of the female youth are choosing to do this. This is problematic, however, because discourse shapes funding and programming, and it is precisely the narratives that, in the accounts we heard, maximize funding opportunities that ignores the majority of the population of youth who exchange sex, as shown in Chapter 3.

The Police

Across the different sites in this study, the police were identified by service providers as a challenge. The service providers do not believe that arresting the young people is helpful. Even when the policy in certain cities is not to arrest, it is still happening. One interviewee stated, “The official stance of criminal justice agencies is that [the youth are] victims, but

they still arrest. Police are arresting because they feel it's the safest thing to do." Another interviewee explained:

Police are stuck on the idea that the only way to keep the kids safe is to arrest them and put them in juvenile hall. So even though they say they see them as victims, they're still arresting them. And they arrest them more if they get attitude ... What's most lacking is a coordinated response and an awareness of roles. Providers focus on the youth and protecting them, and the [police department] is mostly charging the girls with loitering, solicitation, disturbing the peace, or having no identification ... The [police department] needs written protocols to respond to, and they don't have that, so there's no system in place for when they pick up a youth to do anything but arrest them.

In another city that does have a law to protect this population from arrest, a service provider stated, "Cops are still arresting kids though. Not usually for prostitution but for drugs." Another service provider stated that the district attorney, prosecutors, and police say one thing, but it does not trickle down to the beat officers, and that there is no "system in place to immediately provide intervention when they are arrested ... they're just going through the revolving door of the criminal justice system."

Finally, one interviewee stated that, "too many of these girls are being locked up for the purposes of prosecution of the pimps and because there is nowhere else to put them." In another site, a service provider stated something similar: "There is a safe house, but it's used only for girls who are ready to testify against their pimp. But what about the rest of the people who aren't pimped or looking to testify?"

Across the wide range of types of social service providers and approaches to working with youth who exchange sex, a clear consensus emerged from those we interviewed that the police arresting these young people was a serious problem.

Logistics

Some interviewees identified resources as a challenge to serving this population. Specifically, agencies lacked sufficient staffing to meet the needs of the population. Service providers indicated that more staff is needed for outreach, as well as for direct service. One interviewee stated that, "We get a lot of referrals but don't have the staff to address them

all.” Another said, “It’s hard working with CSEC youth, and we are lacking in people to do it. It’s intense, one-on-one, and it takes a long time.” Finally, transportation was an issue—“the kids know how to get around but don’t have the money to do it.”

The Youth

Across the sites, service providers identified the youth themselves as a challenge, for multiple reasons. One interviewee stated that, “The nature of being a teen makes it difficult to serve them. It’s hard to maintain contact, there are scheduling conflicts, kids lose their phone or run out of minutes.” Another provider stated that the youth will open up about most things in their life, but do not want to discuss their involvement in the commercial sex industry for fear of being judged or because they do not want people in their community to find out. Some providers felt that it was hard to offer an appealing alternative to “the life,” when they could not provide the youth with money or jobs that paid as much as they could make by exchanging sex. One interviewee stated that she often hears the girls she works with say things like, “I can’t get a regular job because I’ll have to wait two weeks to get paid, when I can get \$40 right now.”

What the Youth Need

Housing

When asked about what the youth need in order to exit “the life,” nearly everyone interviewed identified the top need as safe housing—a lack of which makes the youth vulnerable to entry or continued presence in the sex market. Additionally, the housing “must feel like a home.” Many of the youth are escaping abusive families or foster homes or live in overcrowded apartments. One staff member summarized housing issues LGBT youth face:

Many LGBT youth don’t have places to live because they aren’t accepted at home because of their sexual orientation. At the shelters, LGBT kids don’t always feel comfortable there because the social workers are very focused on family reunification, and these young people do not want to go back home or into foster care.

Some stated that safer foster homes, independent living programs, stable family environments, and group homes that are trauma-informed were all needed.

Other Youth Needs

Other needs that were commonly identified by social service staff included:

- Counseling;
- Other mental health and healing services;
- Job readiness/training;
- Actual jobs;
- Education support;
- Targeted case management;
- Legal advocacy;
- Cell phones;
- Bus passes;
- Substance abuse services; and
- Self-sufficiency skills to avoid co-dependency (relationships, drugs).

There was not necessarily agreement on the list above, although all were stated by multiple interviewees. For example, while nearly all stated that the youth needed counseling, two interviewees did not think that counseling was a primary need. As one stated:

They don't necessarily need counseling. Counseling pathologizes the young people, and they wouldn't need as much of it if they had housing, stability, and self-sufficiency skills.

As shown in Chapter 3, only 12% of youth respondents stated that if there were a social service agency designed to meet their needs, counseling was a service they would want. Instead, housing and education/employment were the top two services identified by the youth.

Social Service Agency Needs

Finally, some staff identified things social service agencies need to better serve this population. These needs included more bilingual staff, more staff education around trauma in the juvenile justice system, and more engagement with youth on what is best for them.

Additionally, it may be that some programming does not resonate with the youth. As one interviewee stated, “It’s adultism. We think we know better because we’re adults but we probably don’t know their life as well as they do so we don’t know what’s best.” Another summed up this sentiment by saying:

The girls have to be a part of the plan, we can’t force our plan for them on them ... There absolutely needs to be a client-centered response. Just because they’re kids, don’t act like you know what’s best for them; rather, support them in healthy decision-making.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

The goal of this study was to increase scientific knowledge concerning the characteristics, needs, size, and criminal justice experiences of the population of youth engaged in the sex trade in the United States. Specifically, we sought to:

- Provide a rich qualitative and quantitative portrait of the characteristics, experiences, and health and social service needs of youth who exchange sex for money or other goods;
- Analyze arrest patterns and prosecution and recidivism outcomes for these youth when they encounter the juvenile or criminal justice systems;
- Document the types of services that are available to this population; and
- Estimate the size of the national population of underage youth involved in the sex trade.

Based on interviews with 949 youth ages 13-24, interviews with staff from 18 social service and law enforcement agencies, and analysis of official records data, this study revealed findings with implications for policy, practice, and future research.

Major Study Findings

Characteristics of Youth Involved in Trading Sex

Gender: Our study confirms prior research (Curtis et al. 2008; Dank et al. 2015) that a substantial portion of the population involved in exchanging sex for money is not cis female. As shown in Chapter 3, 36% of the youth we interviewed were cis male, and another 4% were trans female. Many social services are targeting their resources to cis females and framing their conceptualizations of the population in terms of “girls” and “young women,” potentially making it more difficult for the approximately four in ten youth who do not fall into the cis female category to receive assistance. In light of this study and other recent research, there is a need for funders and policymakers to support services for the full population of youth engaged in the sex trade, for instance through more deliberately funding agencies whose services are not limited to one gender or, given that many cis female-

oriented programs already exist, through funding programs that are designed specifically to meet the needs of cis males or trans females.

Trans Youth: Transgender youth face particular challenges. As shown in Chapter 3, they were significantly less likely than cis female or cis male youth to live with family; more likely than other genders to report vulnerability to harassment and violence; and far more likely to report ever having been arrested for prostitution. Research shows that when they are in custody, transgender individuals face disproportionate risks. In a study by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (Beck 2014), 40% of transgender prison inmates and 27% of transgender jail inmates reported unwanted sexual activity with other inmates or sexual activity with other prison staff members (which, by law, is considered nonconsensual)—ten times higher than for the general prison and jail populations. Few social service providers who specifically seek to help youth in the sex trade are addressing the unique needs of trans youth. The discrimination trans youth often face—from their families, law enforcement, service providers, and potential employers—makes them particularly vulnerable to entry into the commercial sex market.

Underage v. Older Youth: Although 21% of the youth we interviewed were between the ages of 13 and 17, there were few significant differences found between these youth and the 18- to 24-year-olds who composed the remainder of the interview sample. Additionally, the average age when interview participants first traded sex was 15.8 years old. These findings retroactively justified our decision to include 18-24-year-olds in the study. Our findings suggest that young people have broadly common characteristics before and after the “underage” cut-off, with the exception of having children (see “Children” below). These findings suggest a need for programs and policies that extend to young adults ages 18 to 24, most of whom have been “in the life” for a period of time extending back to when they were, originally, underage.

Race/Ethnicity: Study findings suggest that the youth population engaged in the sex trade is disproportionately black/African-American as compared to the larger population in each of the six research sites. More than two-thirds of interview participants (70%) were black/African-American. These findings mirror research on other topics regarding the greater collective disadvantages and disproportionate justice system involvement of minority youth, African Americans in particular, as compared to non-minority individuals.

Childhood Trauma: Consistent with previous literature, many youth in our interview sample appeared to have experienced childhood trauma. Social service providers identified past sexual abuse as common in the population, and indeed, nearly a quarter of the youth we interviewed described their first sexual experience as nonconsensual. Social service providers also reported that foster care involvement was common, and that many youth were runaways. On average, the youth in our sample reported first leaving home when 15.0 years old, and they also identified housing as their most pressing need. These findings underline the need for targeted prevention programs (perhaps anchored at a foster care agency, for example) that are for young people who have experienced early childhood trauma, to cut off the pathways from abuse to involvement in the commercial sex market.

Pimp Involvement: Similar to estimates in earlier studies (Dank et al. 2015, Curtis et al. 2008, Decker et al. 2012), our study found that 15% of youth in the sex trade were working with a pimp—a person who controls their involvement in the market by the use of force, fraud, or coercion. Pimp involvement was greatest among cis females, yet was still little more than one-fifth of any gender (21% for cis females as compared to 9% for trans females and 7% for cis males). As has often been the case, focusing public debate and programming on pimped cis girls may exclude nearly 80% of the cis female population and an even higher percentage of all youth—many of whom still have substantial and consequential needs that pose a real barrier to exiting the life.

Children: Nearly a third of the youth interviewed in our study had children, including 37% of cis females. Those who were parents reported working significantly more hours in the last week than those who were not parents, and they also made significantly more money per week than non-parents. In one of relatively few differences between the under 18 and the 18-24-year-old subgroups, those ages 18-24 were significantly more likely than underage youth to have children.

Physical Health: Overall, the youth in our sample reported some healthy behaviors: 93% had visited a doctor in the past year, with 83% having had visited a doctor in the last six months; only 4% reported having sex-related health problems; 82% reported using protection against pregnancy and STIs “all the time,” and an additional 12% said “often”; and 72% reported having someone to talk to if they needed help.

Arrests: Although the number of youth under the age of 18 arrested for prostitution nationwide is low according to official records and our youth interviews (e.g., totaling an

estimated 1,130 arrests in 2009), the service providers we interviewed stated that these young people are still getting arrested—perhaps for other things such as drugs or having no identification. Indeed, though only 16% of the youth we interviewed had ever been arrested for prostitution, 65% had ever been arrested for any offense. Of those with an arrest, 82% of the charges involved nonviolent offenses such as petty larceny, shoplifting, drugs, and trespassing/loitering.

Drugs: The use of drugs among our sample of youth was high. Seventy-three percent of the youth we interviewed reported using at least one type of illegal drug (with marijuana overwhelmingly the most common, though by no means the only drug found in the sample). Further, when drugs are involved, there is greater law enforcement involvement: Nearly three-quarters (73%) of those reporting that they use marijuana, cocaine, heroin, or some other illegal drug reported having ever been arrested, compared to 47% of all others.

Needs of Youth

Housing: Overwhelmingly, both the youth and the service providers we interviewed identified housing as the most important type of assistance. Retention in treatment and other services may be difficult unless stable housing is also provided. Housing must be safe—a broad term that encapsulates many things, including: trans and gender non-conforming youth should feel they will not be harassed; space should not be given only to those who are willing to testify against an exploiter; and the focus of corresponding services should not necessarily be on family reunification, given that many of these youth are leaving their family homes because of abuse or discrimination.

Other Needs: Youth identified their top three desired forms of assistance as related to basic socioeconomic and survival needs: employment/education, housing/utilities, and food/money. Only 12% answered that counseling is what they most wanted—highlighting a disconnect between what youth say they need and what social service agencies often focus on. These findings speak to the value of youth input into the programming designed to assist them. Given the likelihood of childhood trauma among many youth, the value of evidence-based therapeutic interventions should not be discounted; however, the data suggests that basic survival needs may be an initial precondition and first step in an effective system of interventions.

Population Estimate

A precise population estimate is impossible because of the flaws in officially collected data and the challenges to achieving an RDS probability sample, as well as major limitations in the precision of the youth interview data in estimating the percentage of the underage population of interest that is arrested v. not arrested in a given year. Despite the limitations outlined in Chapter 2, we believe that the range of youth ages 13-17 in the sex trade in the United States is likely between 8,914 and 10,507. Nonetheless, recognizing the sizable limitations in the estimation methodology in the present study, we also report a wider range of 4,457 to 20,995. Although the extent of this range is perhaps unsatisfying, it represents a prudent final set of findings, given substantial unknowns that persist about the population.

Official Records Data

The Poor State of Official Records: This study revealed fundamental flaws in the data collection and reporting of arrests for prostitution at the state and federal levels. In only 34 of 50 states did the designated Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) for each state or some other state-based data source provide the number of underage prostitution arrests. Further, those states that did provide data sometimes provided imprecise data for an array of reasons (e.g., combining prostitution, exploitation, and solicitation charges under a single penal law category). Although FBI data obtained as part of the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program was available for every state, given the low charge severity of prostitution offenses, law enforcement agencies are not necessarily required to report, nor do they necessarily report, all prostitution arrests to the FBI. Furthermore, UCR data reporting categories combines state-level charges into an overarching “Prostitution and Commercialized Vice” category that includes prostitution, solicitation, and exploitation—even for states that have the ability to distinguish these offenses in their penal codes. Some of the aforementioned problems are underlined by the discrepancies between state-based numbers and the FBI numbers in states where both data sources provided numbers (see Table 4.1 in Chapter 4). These data discrepancies and limitations reflect an important problem. If this is a topic of concern for policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels, better data collection procedures and more accurate youth identification, data collection, and labeling should be put in place.

Strengths and Limitations of the Youth Interview Methodology

Strengths: Although there were significant limitations (discussed in depth in Chapter 2), this study’s use of ethnographic methods and respondent-driven sampling (RDS) gave us access to a largely hidden population. Of the youth we interviewed, 42% used the internet to obtain customers, and only 51% reported ever having been to a social service agency for help. Research that only recruits from social service providers or from traditional outreach may miss large portions of the population who may be disconnected or who may not be visible on the street. A combined strategy of using trained ethnographers and respondent-driven sampling can help access this population.

Limitations: Our methodology did not work as intended in multiple sites. In some areas with more sprawl (e.g., Dallas), populations may not be closely networked, and RDS relies on those networks to access its sample. In addition, to the extent that there is a coerced and controlled indoor population of youth in the sex trade—i.e., a more tightly controlled population than those we accessed who reported pimp involvement—we were not able to access such a population through our study. Therefore, we cannot make claims about the characteristics and needs of those who have that experience.

Poverty and the Underground Economy

Although policymakers, service providers, and funders at times use a “commercial sexual exploitation of children” framework to describe youth in the sex trade, this term does not encompass all of the youth who participated in our research. The needs expressed by the youth themselves often related to issues of poverty and economic hardship—the need for employment, education, housing, food, and money. The youth talked about the first things they buy when they get paid, and these things often related to fulfilling basic needs—food, clothing, and shelter—linked to economic survival.

Framing the Issue: Given the above, social service agencies, funders, and policymakers may benefit from reconsidering the language and framing with regard to youth in the sex trade, given the problematic and isolating nature of parts of the current discourse. The labeling of youth as “exploited,” “trafficked,” or “victimized” has both positive and negative consequences. It clearly has helped drive public and political attention to young people in the sex trade. On the other hand, it does not always reflect the experiences of all youth, or how the young people involved think of themselves. Related, the public discussion of trafficking

may serve, unintentionally, to focus greater attention on those who have crossed national borders as opposed to youth born in the U.S. Our study suggests that many youth are involved in the sex trade as a matter of survival in the face of trauma, family dysfunction, poverty, and discrimination. Many of the youth we talked to do indeed have chosen “this life” from among the limited options available to them. For a large majority of the youth, the limitations are both personal and structural, including poverty and discrimination based on race, gender, or sexual orientation. These structures limit access to the legitimate economy, thereby limiting the choices that young people who face them can make. Moreover, the intersection of many of these structures—e.g., being transgender, black, and poor—makes some people particularly vulnerable. Many end up in the underground economy, of which trading sex is a part.

Complex Relationships in the Underground Economy: The complexity of the social relationships among the population of youth in the sex trade is important to understand. Like any economy or market, there are those who facilitate market transactions. In our study, we uncovered the complexity of the relationships between youth and market facilitators, the majority of whom are not pimps in the traditional sense of the word—people who exploit through the use of force, fraud, or coercion. Rather, many players in the underground economy often work together in mutually beneficial relationships to help each other survive. For example, those who deal drugs refer their customers to the youth, and the youth refer their customers to the drug dealers. Young people pay others to help protect them while they work. In Las Vegas and Atlantic City—two places that are known for illegal economic activities—the rate of having a market facilitator was higher than in any of the other youth interview sites.

Future Research

There is much room for future research.

Pathways into “The Life”: A high percentage of the youth in our sample experienced early childhood trauma, which may play a role in their entry into “the life.” Future research may want to further investigate how trauma such as foster care involvement, sexual abuse, and discrimination based on sexual orientation may lead youth into the sex trade.

Pathways out of “The Life”: More research is needed on youth who have gotten out, to gain a better understanding of the external circumstances and support that helped facilitate their exit, as well as internal characteristics that empowered the youth to leave.

Program Evaluation: Few rigorous evaluations exist of programs designed specifically to work with youth in the sex market. There is a particular need for evaluation research focused on interventions intended to link youth with supportive housing. Such evaluations might test whether, over the long-term, housing interventions increase the chances that youth exit the life at a younger age, increase their likelihood of future legal employment, and increase their future earnings.

Language: Given that the interviews we conducted were limited to English and Spanish, future research should expand their capacity to interview in other languages, perhaps bringing access to additional parts of the population that may not have been born in the United States.

Older Ages: In general, with the notable exception that older youth are more likely to be parents, this study did not detect sizable differences in the needs, characteristics, and experiences of underage individuals (ages 13-17) and slightly older young persons (ages 18-24). Yet, this study was ultimately limited to *youth*, broadly defined in light of developmental research suggesting that a young person’s brain continues to develop to approximately age 25. It is unknown to what extent the experience of the youth population comprising the focus of the present study mirrors or diverges from individuals who remain involved in the commercial sex market as older adults.

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Appendix A. Youth Interviews Consent Form

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Study, Chicago Site

Assent Narrative and Consent Form

A. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

You are invited to help us do a study of teenagers who engage in sex for money in Chicagoland area. The information I will give you can help you make a good choice about joining or not joining the study. We hope that the information we collect will help solve some of the problems that you and others in your situation face, and ensure that these problems become smaller and not bigger.

You are invited to be part of this study because you said you have had sex for money and you said you are older than 13. This study - sponsored by the federal government through a grant to a nonprofit organization called the Center for Court Innovation in New York City. The Center for Court Innovation hired researchers and college professors from the Chicago area to lead the project here.

B. PROCEDURES

If you agree to take part, you will participate in an interview that takes roughly 45 minutes. It will ask you questions about prostituted teenagers in the Chicagoland area. We would like to audio record some of your answers so that we can remember your exact words later. **Your name will not be used at any time during this study and you do not need to tell us your name or show us any identification at any time. This study is completely confidential.** You may refuse to answer any questions at any time for any reason or not be recorded. If you refuse to answer a question or do not want to participate any further, you will not be penalized in any way. Do you agree to be recorded? Please circle either yes or no.

YES – I AGREE TO BE RECORDED _____

NO – I DO NOT WANT TO BE RECORDED _____

Since we are interested in interviewing people like yourself who know about teens who have sex for money, after your interview, we will explain how you can help us recruit other people to participate in the study. If you should choose to help us recruit other people we will keep a temporary record of your physical appearance – height, weight, etc., in order to insure that you, and not somebody scamming you, are the one who receives payment. You have the option to be interviewed in a public place that is comfortable to you, such as a coffee shop, park, McDonalds, bus station, etc. If you prefer a more private office space, we will search for appropriate space to accommodate this request. If you decide to participate in the interview, and later on decide that you want to end your participation at any point, you will not be penalized in any way. If you don't want to talk to us, you can stop at any time.

C. RISKS

Because of the topic of this study, there are more than minimal risks to participating. The interview may cause you some stress or bring up upsetting things you experienced in the past. Remember, you are free to not answer any questions or stop the interview at any time, but our staff is prepared to help you in any way they can. All the answers you give will be kept private and confidential. They will not be given to the police or anyone else.

D. BENEFITS

The primary benefit is that this study seeks information in order to help professionals learn more about how to better deal with the challenges that you and others like you face. It is hoped that through greater knowledge about such lives, better services can be provided. In addition, many people feel good about getting the chance to tell their story. There are no direct benefits to you to participate in this interview.

E. COMPENSATION

To account for your time in answering questions, we will pay you \$40 at the end of the interview, regardless of your age, ethnicity or ability to speak English fluently.

If you agree to participate in helping the project recruit three additional people to interview, you will be paid \$10 for each eligible person that you recruit who completes the interview.

F. PERSONS TO CONTACT

If you have any questions about your participation in this study, you may call the Chicagoland area study leader, Dr. Laurie Schaffner at (773) 750-9091.

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant or if you feel that you have been harmed, contact the Center for Court Innovation’s Institutional Review Board chair in New York City at 646-386-4183.

G. PRIVACY STATEMENT

Your participation in this study is entirely confidential. Only a pseudonym (a fake name you pick) will be attached to your responses. No one except the research staff will have access to anything you tell us. The report on our findings will not be written in a way that would let someone who reads it figure out who you are. Please choose a pseudonym now and write it on the line below.

While your responses are confidential, there is a very slight chance that an unauthorized person may get access to them. To prevent this from happening, you will not be asked to give your name or the names of persons you know to any member of the study team. Any answers that you give us on surveys or in interviews will be kept in a locked file cabinet at the study office, to which only specific study staff will have access.

H. VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL STATEMENT

This study is VOLUNTARY. You are not giving up any legal claims or rights because of your participation in this study. If you do join, you are free to quit at any time.

I. AGREEMENT

Do you understand the information that we have given you and are you willing to be in this study? If so, please write your pseudonym on the line below.

Appendix B. Youth Interview Instrument

Interview Protocol

Thanks for volunteering to talk to me. The questions I'll ask you are about who you are and where you live; what you do and whom you know; your financial and health concerns; your experience with the police; and lastly I'll ask you about your expectations.

Coupon Number:	Interviewer Name:
Interview Date:	Location:

Respondent Information

1.How old are you:	2.Date of birth(mm/dd/yyyy):
3.Country of birth:	
4.State of birth:	5.City of birth:
6.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F)	7.What is your sexual orientation: Bisexual, Heterosexual, Homosexual, Other
8.What is your race or ethnicity? Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	
Note: DO NOT ask but observe for the next 5 questions	9.Color of hair: Black, Blond(e), Brown, Grey, Red, Shaved, Other:
10.Color of skin: White, Light Brown, Medium Brown, Dark Brown, Darker, Other:	11.Color of eyes: Black, Blue,Brown, Green,Hazel, Light brown, Other:

<p>12.Height: Below 5'4", 5'5"-5'7", 5'8"-5'10", 5'11"-6'1", 6'2"-6'4", Over 6'5", N/A</p>	<p>13.Estimated weight: 100 – 125, 126 – 145, 146 – 165, 166 - 185, 186 – 205, 206 – 225, 226 – 235, Above 236, N/A, Other:</p>
<p>14.Where are you from originally (neighborhood/block affiliation):</p>	<p>15.What is the highest grade you completed in school: 5 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, Some College, N/A, Other:</p>
<p>16.What's the name of your last school:</p>	<p>17.When did you last go there: N/A, This week, 1 week ago, 2 wks ago, 3 wks ago, 1 month ago, 2 months ago, 3 months ago, 4 months ago, 5 months ago, 6 months ago, 1 year ago, 2 years ago, 3 years ago, Other:</p>
<p>18.What grade were/ are you in: N/A, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, Some College, Other:</p>	<p>19.How long have you been in the life (or, how long have you exchanged sex for things like money, food, shelter, etc.):</p>
<p>20.What neighborhood/area do you currently live in:</p>	<p>21.Who do you live with: Boyfriend, Co-worker, Family, Foster care family, Friends, Girlfriend, Pimp, Self, Shelter, Spouse, Streets, Transitional housing, Other:</p>
<p>22.How long have you lived there:</p>	<p>23.Who pays the rent:</p>
<p>24.How many places have you lived in the last year: 1-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-11, > 12, Other:</p>	<p>25.Do you have any children: Yes, No</p>
<p>26.If yes, how many children do you have: 1, 2, 3, 4, >4</p>	<p>27.If yes, what ages are of your children: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, Other:</p>
<p>28.Who takes care of your children:</p>	<p>29.How old were you when you first left your family home, if you left: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, N/A, Still live there</p>
<p>30.What year was that:</p>	<p>31.What adults lived there:</p>
<p>32.What is the highest level of schooling any of your parents completed:</p>	<p>33.When was your first experience with sex :</p>

Some HS , HS Graduate, Some College, BA/BS, Some Graduate, Graduate, I don't know, N/A, Other:	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, Other:
34. Who was it with:	35. Can you tell me about it:

Making and Spending Money

The questions I'm going to ask you next will focus on making and spending money

36. How old were you when you first had had sex in exchange for something: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, Other:	37. Tell me about it (what happened):
38. Do you work on or off the streets these days:	39. Who negotiates prices with the customers:
40. What prices are charged:	41. How much, on average, do you charge each time that you see a customer (probe for different prices/different activities):
42. What did you charge the last time that you saw a customer:	43. How much do you make in a week:
44. Do you share your money with anyone after you get it:	45. If yes, with who and how much do you share:

46.What's the first thing that you buy/pay when you get money(clothes, food, rent, etc):	47.What other sources of income do you have:
48.How much are your main expenses per week:	
49.Do you owe anyone money: Yes, No	50.If yes, who do you owe:
51.If yes, how much do you owe:	52.If yes, for what do you owe:
53.How are you supposed to pay the money back:	

Market Involvement

Now I am going to ask you some questions about where and when you work

54.Where do you usually work (tracks, areas):
55.Do you ever work, or have you ever worked in other areas (different neighborhoods, cities, states, etc.): Yes, No
56.If yes, where:
57.What determines where you work and whether you change locations (police, competition, pimp, events, etc.):

Why do you change it around?

58. Where else have you worked besides the track:

59. What days/nights did you work last week:

60. How many total hours did you work last week:

1-10, 11-20, 21-30, 31-40, >40

61. Are there ever conflicts in the neighborhood(s) where you work (boyfriends, residents, store owners, dealers/gangsters, cops, customers, etc)? Tell me about some of them:

62. What have the conflicts been over (work, competition, money, etc):

63. Have any of these conflicts led to physical fights/altercations:

64. What do you do to avoid fights or violence:

65. Are there places, like neighborhoods, certain corners or areas, that you avoid? if so why:

66. How do you avoid these places:

67. What happens when you can't avoid these places:

Customers

Next, I'm going to ask you about the people you come in contact with

68. Where do you get customers or dates:

Friends, Internet, Pimp, Referral, Street, Other:

69. Which internet sites, if any, do you/your pimp use to get customers:

Adam4Adam, Blackplanet, Craig's list, Facebook, MySpace, Vampirefreaks, N/A, Other:

70. How many customers did you see the last time that you worked:

71. How many customers do you see, on average, each day/night:

72. Where do you go with customers:

Bars, Brothel/Parlor, Car, Client's residence, Hotels, Own room, Parks/Alleys, Other:

73. What are your customers professions:

Business Owner/Manager, Bartender/Restaurant, Counselor, Construction Worker, Doctor, Finance, Lawyer,

Maintenance Worker, Mechanic, Nonprofit/Social Service, Police Officer/Corrections Officer, Politician, Postal

Worker/Messenger, Sales, Singer/Dancer/Actor, Teacher/Professor, Other (please specify):

74. Which neighborhoods are your customers usually from:

75. Customers ages:

10-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 56-65, 66-75, >76, N/A

76. Customers marital status:

Divorced, I don't know, Married, Separated, Single, Widow, Widower, Other:

77. Customers' ethnicities:

Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A

78. Is there anything else that you think we might find useful or interesting about your customers:

79. How often do you get customers from a pimp/sponsor/market facilitator:

All the time, Never, Often, Rarely, N/A

80. Of these (pimp-generated) customers, how often are things set up through an Internet site like craigslist:

All the time, Never, Often, Rarely, N/A

81.Of these (pimp-generated) customers, how often are things set up through someone approaching someone else on streets:

All the time, Never, Often, Rarely, N/A

82.How often do you get customers on your own:

All the time, Never, Often, Rarely, N/A

83.Of these (self-generated) customers, how often are things set up through craigslist or another Internet site:

All the time, Never, Often, Rarely, N/A

84.Of these (self-generated) customers, how often are things set up through someone approaching someone else on streets:

All the time, Never, Often, Rarely, N/A

85.Of these (self-generated) customers, how often are things set up through a friend/referral (e.g. calling you on the telephone):

All the time, Never, Often, Rarely, N/A

86.What other ways do you get customers:

87.Over the past year, about how many customers would you say you worked with:

88.Of all these customers, how many would you say are steadies/regulars:

89.How often do you see the steadies:

90.How much do the steadies pay you:

91.Do your steadies pay you with anything besides money:

Pimps

Now I will ask you some questions about coworkers or people who help you find customers

92. Do you have someone who helps you to get customers: Yes, No	93. If yes, who is (s)he:
94. How did you get to know this person:	
95. How do you feel about this person:	
96. How is this person important to you:	
97. How do you get along with this person:	
98. Does this person have rules:	Yes, No
99. If yes, what are the rules:	
100. (If applicable) How many others work for her/him(your pimp):	
101. (If applicable) How does everyone get along(probe for respect, relationships, structure, etc):	

102.(If applicable) Have you worked with anyone else besides the current person (pimp): Yes, No	
103.Do you know any (other) pimps:	Yes, No
104.What are their street names:	

Network

Now I am going to ask you some questions that will better enable us to make population estimates and understand how different types of people in the life share networks, sort of like mapping people's friendships on Facebook. We will be doing this by collecting the last three digits of cellphone numbers to see who knows who. Since we do not take real names and we only ask for the last three digits, there is no way to identify anybody and we cannot obtain their phone number. This is purely to help the mathematicians on the project to count population.

105.About how many teens do you know under the age of 18 that have sex for money in this city:	
106.How many are girls:	107.How many are boys:
108.How many are transgenders:	109.How many are White:
110.How many are Black:	111.How many are Asian:
112.How many are Hispanic:	113.How many are multi racial:

114.How many are Native American:	115.Please pull out your cell phone: Yes, No
116.What are the last three digits of your cell phone number:	
117.Please take a look at your cell phone and tell me how many phone numbers you have for people under 18 who exchange sex for money:	
118.How many phone numbers do you have for people under age 18 who DO NOT exchange sex for money/commercial purposes:	
119.We would like to get the last 3 digits of the cell phone numbers for people under 18 who exchange sex for money:	

#1	
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:	
2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	
3.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4.Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A
5.Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6.Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7.Others:	

#2
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:

2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	
3.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4.Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A
5.Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6.Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7.Others:	

#3	
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:	
2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	
3.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4.Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A
5.Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6.Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7.Others:	

#4
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:

2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	
3.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4.Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A
5.Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6.Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7.Others:	
#5	
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:	
2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	
3.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4.Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A
5.Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6.Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7.Others:	

#6	
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:	
2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	
3.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4.Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A

5.Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6.Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7.Others:	

#7	
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:	
2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	
3.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4.Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A
5.Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6.Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7.Others:	

#8	
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:	
2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	

3.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4.Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A
5.Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6.Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7.Others:	

#9	
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:	
2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	
3.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4.Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A
5.Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6.Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7.Others:	

#10	
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:	
2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	

3.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A		4.Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A	
5.Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:		6.Does this person work for your pimp? No Yes,	
7.Others:			

#11			
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:			
2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above			
3.Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A		4.Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A	
5.Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:		6.Does this person work for your pimp? No Yes,	
7.Others:			

#12			
1.What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:			
2.This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above			

3. Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4. Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A
5. Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6. Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7. Others:	

#13	
1. What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:	
2. This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	
3. Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4. Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, N/A
5. Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6. Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7. Others:	

#14	
1. What is the last 3 digits of this person's cell phone number:	
2. This person is: Associate, Coworker, Family, Friend, None of above	

3. Gender: Female, Male, Trans(F to M), Trans(M to F), N/A	4. Age: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, N/A
5. Race-Ethnicity: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-Racial, Native American/Alaskan Native, White, N/A, Other:	6. Does this person work for your pimp? Yes, No
7. Others:	

Health and Needs

Now I am going to ask some questions about your healthcare situation

120. When was the last time you saw a doctor , a nurse or some other health care professional: This week, 1 week ago , 2 wks ago, 3 wks ago, 1 month ago, 2 months ago, 3 months ago, 4 months ago, 5 months ago, 6 months ago, 1 year ago, 2 years ago, 3 years ago, N/A, Other:
121. What kind of health-related problems, if any, do you have:
122. How often do you use protection against pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs): All the time, Never, Often, Rarely, N/A
123. What kind of protection do you use: Birth control, Check-ups with a doctor, Condoms, Wash/douche, N/A, Other:
124. Have you ever had a sexually transmitted disease(STD): Yes, No
125. What STDs, and how have you taken care of them:

126. Do you have someone to talk to if you about your life situation or if you need help:

No,

Not sure, Yes

127. Who do you feel most comfortable talking with about personal things:

Boyfriends, Cops, Counselor, Dealers/Gangsters, Families, Friends, Girlfriends, Johns, Pimps, Police, Police,

Probation/parole officer, Residents, School, Service provider agent, Sex workers, Social service agency, Store owners, Teacher,

N/A, Other:

128. What social service agencies, if any, are you aware of in your city area:

129. Have you ever gone to a social service agency for help with something:

No,

Yes

130. If no, why not:

131. If yes, which agencies:

132. If yes, what service(s) did you go for:

133. If yes, how often did you/do you go:

134. If yes, were they able to help you:

135. Why or why not:

136. Do you use any of the following drugs :

Alcohol, Cocaine/crack, Heroin, Marijuana, Methamphetamines, N/A, Other:

137. If yes, how old were you when you started using drugs or alcohol (probe for age of serious drug use as well as first drug/alcohol usage):

138. How much do you spend on cigarettes, alcohol and drugs per day:

Experience With the Police

Next, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your experience with the police

139. How many run-ins with the police have you had:

140. What were these run-ins over:

141. How many were about sex-related activity:

142. Where have these run-ins taken place:

143. How many occurred over the last year:

144. Do you give your real identifying information to the police:
No

Yes,

145. What happened last time when you interacted with the police (probe: has an officer ever not arrested you in exchange for sex?):

146. Do you try to keep away from the police? If so, how?

147. How many times have you been arrested:

148. What were you arrested for:

149. When was the last time that you were arrested in this city area:

150. What were you arrested for:

151. Within the past year, how many times were arrested for prostitution related charges in this city area?

152. Have you ever been arrested outside of this city area:	Yes,	No
153. If yes, where:		

Expectations

Now I am going to ask you some questions about your expectations for the future.

154. Is there anything you like about this work:	No,	Not sure,	Yes			
155. If yes, what do you like:						
156. Is there anything you dislike about this work:	No,	Not sure,	Yes			
157. If yes, what do you dislike:						
158. Have you ever thought about leaving the life/this work:	Yes	No,	Not sure,			
159. Have you talked to other people about leaving the life/this work:	Yes	No,	Not sure,			
160. If so, who:						
161. Have you ever tried to leave the life/this work:	Yes	No,	Not sure,			
162. If yes, how many times:	1,	2,	3,	4,	5,	>5

163.If you wanted to leave this life tomorrow, would you know how: Not sure, Yes	No,
164.How would you do this:	
165.Do you wish there were people who could help you make these changes:	
166.Do you ever think of going back to school:	Yes, No
167.Why or why not go back to school:	
168.Would you like to find a better living arrangement:	Yes, No
169.If yes, what kind of arrangement:	
170.Has any social service agency ever approached you to offer services: No	Yes,
171.Who:	

172.Comments: Note to interviewer: probe for whether contacts were CSEC specific or for other issues.

173.Who would you go to when in trouble or doubt:

Boyfriends, Cops, Counselor, Dealers/Gangsters, Families, Friends, Girlfriends, Johns, Pimps, Police, Police,

Probation/parole officer, Residents, School, Service provider agent, Sex workers, Social service agency, Store owners, Teacher,

N/A, Other:

174.If there were an agency that existed just to meet your needs what would they offer?

175.Where do you see yourself in ten years?

176. Is there anything else you would like to share with me:

Appendix C. Social Service Providers Interview Guide²¹

Introduction

Thank you for making the time to meet with me today. My name is _____. I'm a researcher from the Center for Court Innovation (CCI) in New York City. Today's interview is part of a national project, funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), to learn more about the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the United States. I'll begin the interview by asking you some general questions about the organization you work for, and then I'll go into specifics about your organization's experiences in trying to serve children who are sexually exploited for commercial purposes. This interview is completely confidential and voluntary. Your name will not appear in any published report or document. The opinions and experiences you share will help researchers, practitioners and policymakers understand the issues facing service providers as they try to address the needs of children who are sexually exploited for commercial purposes. The interview will last about one hour.

Organizational Background (5 minutes)

First, I'd like to ask you some general questions about your organization.

- 1) What is the overall mission of your organization?
 - a. When was it founded?
 - b. How many people work for the organization?
- 2) What is your role within the organization?

²¹ At the stage of the study when we were conducting interviews with social service providers, we used the term “commercial sexual exploitation of children” language, because this was the original language of the OJJDP solicitation that we were funded under. Therefore, we adopted “CSEC” terminology in our protocols. We later revised the language we used (i.e., throughout this report) based on empirical findings.

[NOTE: The next questions are meant to gently get a sense of how well CSEC fits within the overall organization. Is CSEC a main issue, an add-on or a far stretch? Do they work with at-risk youth, on issues of prostitution, etc.?)

- 3) In general, what kind of services does your organization provide?
 - a. About how many clients does your organization serve each year?

CSEC Issue & Organizational Capacity (10 minutes)

Now, I'd like to talk more specifically about the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).

- 4) How prevalent of an issue is the commercial sexual exploitation of children in your city?
[Note: specify the site]
 - a. Has it become more or less of an issue in recent years?
 - i. What has prompted these changes?

- 5) Where does the commercial sexual exploitation of children take place?
 - a. Public space (particular street corners, parks, alleys, etc)?
 - b. Massage parlors?
 - c. Motels?
 - d. Internet Sites?
 - e. Other?

[NOTE: Hand out a map and ask them to mark hotspots. Use map as a discussion piece. Ask if CSEC occurs in similar places as prostitution.]

- 6) Is there a special unit or department within your organization that works with children who are sexually exploited for commercial purposes?
 - a. If yes, about how many staff members are involved and what are their roles?
 - b. Do the staff members described above have any special training for working with children who are sexually exploited?
 - c. How long has your organization been working on CSEC issues?
 - d. Does your organization have specific funding to work on CSEC issues? If yes, what kinds of grants? (government, private, etc.)

- 7) How would you describe your CSEC clients in terms of characteristics?
 - a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Race/Ethnicity
 - d. Recent Immigrants
 - e. Geographic areas of origin

- f. Types of CSEC [prostitution, internet pornography, other forms?]
- 8) Do CSEC clients differ demographically from your other clients? How so?

Outreach & Partnership Strategies (15 minutes)

Now, I'd like to ask some more specific questions about how your organization identifies children who are sexually exploited for commercial purposes.

- 9) How does your organization first come in contact with children who are sexually exploited for commercial purposes?

[NOTE: Try to get a sense of the process and level of networking involved.]

- a. Do you have outreach workers who “pound the pavement” so to speak? If yes, please describe how this works.
 - i. Do they work certain hours and locations?
 - ii. Do they work in teams?
 - iii. Are they on foot or in vans?
 - iv. How do they attempt to reach out to the children?
 - v. Do they speak at community forums, schools, police stations, etc?
 - vi. Do they post flyers?
 - vii. Other?
 - b. Do police officers, probation officers, prosecutors, judges, FBI agents or other CJ officials refer children to your organization?
 - i. If yes, which CJ officials refer children?
 - ii. Is there a specialized unit?
 - iii. How does this process work?
 - iv. How would you describe these relationships?
 - c. Do other social service agencies refer children to your organization?
 - i. If yes, which agencies refer children?
 - ii. How does this work?
 - iii. How would you describe these relationships?
 - d. Do school officials refer children?
 - i. If yes, which school officials refer children?
 - ii. How does this work?
 - iii. How would you describe these relationships?
 - e. Of all the sexually exploited children your organization serves, about how are most referred to your organization?
- 10) How do you view the local CJ agencies' approach to CSEC?
- a. Do the police/feds/courts see prostitutes as offenders or victims?
 - b. How would you classify the relationship between the local CJ agencies and the children who are sexually exploited for commercial purposes?
- 11) Is your organization part of a special task force on the CSEC issue?

- a. If yes, when was this task force formed?
- b. How often does the task force meet?
- c. Who leads/convenes the meetings?
- d. Who attends these meetings?
- e. What are the goals of this task force?
- f. What has the task force accomplished so far?

CSEC Service Delivery (15 minutes)

Now, I'd like to ask more about the kinds of services your organization provides to children who are sexually exploited for commercial purposes.

12) Once a staff member makes an initial contact with a child who is thought to be sexually exploited, what happens next?

- a. Is there an intake assessment process/psycho-social evaluation?

[NOTE: If yes, get copy of the assessment.]

13) What kind of services does your organization provide for these children?

[NOTE: Take note of whether there are formal/structured programs, workshops and/or classes, and the duration/number of sessions.]

	Specify Service Description
Outreach	
Counseling (self esteem, sexual assault, etc.)	
Substance Abuse Counseling	
Housing	
Food	

Medical Care (general)	
Employment Assistance	
Family Reunification	
School/Education Assistance	
Policy/Advocacy	
Legal Assistance	
Other	

14) Does your organization refer children to other agencies for services? Please describe these referral agencies and the services they provide.

Referral Organization/Agency	Service Type

15) Does your organization have any contact with pimps or johns?
a. If yes, what does that contact look like?
b. How does that contact form?
c. How do pimps or johns feel about your organization?

Issues, Challenges & Promising Practices (15 minutes)

- 16) What do you think these children need to get out of the life?
- a. Do you have any examples of children who have been successful?
If yes, how did they get out?
 - b. Are there any needs that are currently unmet/not being addressed?
- 17) What are some of the main issues that make it difficult to serve children who are sexually exploited for commercial purposes?
[NOTE: Ask for specific examples]
- 18) What are some promising practices/strategies that seem to work well in serving these children?
[NOTE: Ask for specific examples]
- 19) Does your organization have any data or case management records on the number of children served?
- a. Any data on what happens to these children?
 - b. What indicators do you track? (demographics, program participation, outcomes?)
 - c. Would you be willing to share any of this data with us?
[NOTE: If yes, be sure to follow up on how to obtain data.]

Closing

Thank you for your time! As we wrap up the interview, there are just two things I'd like to ask. One is that I would like to know if you can recommend other people in your city that I should talk with regarding the CSEC issue.

	Names	Contact Information
Police Officers		
FBI Agents		
Judges		
Prosecutors		
Service Providers		
Others		

Thanks again!

Appendix D. Youth Interviews: Bulleted List of Select Significant Differences by Subgroup

Age

- **Recruitment of Customers:** Younger participants ages 13-17 (78%) were significantly more likely than ages 18-24 (61%) to get customers from the street ($p < .05$). Younger participants ages 13-17 (49%) were also significantly more likely than ages 18-24 (36%) to get customers from friends ($p < .01$).
- **Health Problems:** Older participants ages 18-24 (79%) were significantly more likely than ages 13-17 (46%) to have health problems ($p < .01$).
- **Social Service Agency:** Controlling for time in life, older participants ages 18-24 (55%) were significantly more likely than ages 13-17 (36%) to have gone to a social services agency for help ($p < .001$).
- **Arrest History:** Older participants ages 18-24 (69%) were significantly more likely than ages 13-17 (51%) to have been arrested ($p < .001$). Older participants ages 18-24 (19%) were significantly more likely than ages 13-17 (4%) to have been arrested outside city ($p < .001$).
- **Dislike about the Work:** Older participants ages 18-24 (88%) were significantly more likely than ages 13-17 (76%) to say there was something they dislike about the work ($p < .001$).
- **Leaving the Life:** Older participants ages 18-24 (66%) were significantly more likely than ages 13-17 (49%) to say they had tried to leave the life ($p < .001$). Older participants ages 18-24 (67%) were significantly more likely than ages 13-17 (50%) to say they would know how to leave the life ($p < .001$).
- **Housing Needs:** Older participants ages 18-24 (50%) were significantly more likely than ages 13-17 (36%) to say social services agencies should offer help with housing or utilities ($p < .01$).

Race/Ethnicity

- **Parent Status:** White participants (34%) were significantly more likely to be parents than black/African American participants (28%) and multi-racial participants (23%) ($p < .01$).
- **Age Left Home:** White participants (15.8) reported leaving home significantly later than Hispanic participants (14.3) and black/African American participants (14.8) ($p < .01$).
- **Age First Traded Sex:** White participants (17.2) reported first trading sex at a significantly older age than Multi-racial (15.4), Black/African American (15.5), and Hispanic/Latino (15.8) participants ($p < .001$).
- **Other Source of Income:** White participants (55%) are more significantly likely than Black/African American participants (37%) to have another source of income ($p < .01$).
- **Social Service Agency:** White participants (66%) were significantly more likely than Black/African American participants (46%) to visit a social services agency ($p < .01$).
- **Drug Use:** White participants (38%) were significantly more likely than all other ethnicities (7%) to use heroin ($p < .001$). White participants (49%) were significantly more likely than all other ethnicities (16%) to use drugs other than alcohol, marijuana, cocaine/crack, or heroin ($p < .001$).
- **Arrest History:** White participants (80%) were significantly more likely to have been arrested than black/African American participants (61%) ($p < .05$).
- **Leaving the Life:** White participants (83%) were significantly more likely to know how to leave the life than Black/African American participants (57%) ($p < .01$).

Sexual Orientation

- **Education Level:** Participants who identified as gay (62%) and those identifying their sexual orientation as “other” (63%) were significantly more likely to report having a 12th grade education or greater than other sexual orientations (45%) ($p < .10$).
- **Age Left Home:** Gay participants (24%) and those identifying their sexual orientation as “other” (25%) were significantly more likely than bisexuals (10%) and heterosexuals (12%) to have left home between the ages of 18-24 ($p < .05$).
- **Living at Home:** Gay participants (8.8%) were significantly less likely than heterosexuals (16.8%) to still live at home ($p < .05$).

- **Use of Internet to Get Customers:** Gay participants (63%) were significantly more likely than heterosexuals (36%) to use the internet to get customers ($p < .001$).
- **Social Service Agency:** Gay participants (64%) were significantly more likely than heterosexuals (48%) to have visited a social services agency ($p < .05$).
- **Housing Needs:** Gay participants (64%) were significantly more likely than heterosexuals (42%) to say that the ideal social services agency would offer help with housing/utilities.
- **Drug Use:** Gay participants (92%) were significantly more likely than heterosexuals (80%) to have used drugs and/or alcohol ($p < .05$).
- **Arrest History:** Gay participants (75%) were significantly more likely to have been arrested than heterosexuals (60%) ($p < .05$).
- **Leaving the Life:** Gay participants (79%) were more likely than all other sexual orientations (52%) to know how to leave the life ($p < .05$).

Parent Status

- **Hours Worked and Earnings:** Parents (2.2) worked significantly more hours in the last week than non-parents (1.9) ($p < .05$). Parents make significantly more per week than non-parents ($p < .01$).
- **Working with a Pimp:** Controlling for age and gender, parents (22%) were significantly more likely than non-parents (13%) to have a pimp ($p < .01$).
- **Food Stamps:** Controlling for age, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity, parents (19%) were significantly more likely than non-parents (8%) to seek food stamps from a social services agency.
- **Leaving the Life:** Controlling for age, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity, parents (74%) were significantly more likely than non-parents (57%) to say that they had tried to leave the life ($p < .001$).
- **Housing Needs:** Controlling for age, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity, parents (55%) were significantly more likely than non-parents (43%) to say that the ideal social services agency would offer help with housing/utilities ($p < .01$).

Appendix E. Youth Interviews: All Responses by Site

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
Number of Cases	947	98	202	78	171	264	136
<u>Age</u>							
Mean age	19	20	20	19	19	18	19
13	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
14	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%
15	2%	0%	1%	1%	2%	4%	2%
16	6%	1%	1%	4%	6%	14%	4%
17	12%	11%	5%	3%	6%	25%	7%
18	18%	16%	14%	26%	14%	22%	15%
19	20%	18%	18%	9%	15%	29%	16%
20	12%	13%	16%	15%	12%	1%	27%
21	11%	7%	16%	30%	17%	2%	10%
22	6%	12%	9%	8%	6%	0%	6%
23	7%	7%	15%	4%	10%	1%	3%
24	6%	13%	5%	1%	9%	0%	10%
<u>Age Categories</u>							
13-17 years	21%	12%	7%	8%	16%	46%	14%
18-24 years	79%	88%	93%	92%	84%	55%	86%
<u>US Born**</u>							
	97%	96%	98%	99%	100%	92%	99%

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
<u>Gender</u>							
Cis Male	36%	31%	47%	28%	36%	37%	24%
Cis Female	60%	69%	41%	63%	61%	62%	74%
Trans Female	4%	0%	11%	8%	2%	1%	2%
Trans Male	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
<u>Sexual Orientation</u>							
Heterosexual	53%	46%	46%	49%	69%	53%	48%
Bisexual	36%	52%	33%	21%	27%	42%	36%
Homosexual	9%	2%	17%	27%	4%	4%	11%
Other	2%	0%	4%	3%	1%	0%	5%
<u>Ethnicity</u>							
Black/African American	70%	23%	80%	86%	57%	92%	47%
White	12%	54%	3%	3%	22%	0%	15%
Hispanic/Latino	7%	12%	7%	1%	11%	3%	11%
Other	3%	5%	3%	0%	4%	0%	6%
Multi-racial	8%	6%	7%	10%	6%	4%	21%
<u>Education Level</u>							
Less than 6th Grade	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
6th-8th Grade	5%	4%	2%	1%	3%	9%	5%
9th-11th Grade	48%	56%	37%	38%	44%	58%	48%
12th Grade and above	47%	40%	61%	61%	52%	33%	47%
<u>Have Children</u>							
	30%	46%	32%	39%	34%	19%	28%

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
<u>How old when first left home?</u>							
Mean for those who had left home	15	15.8	15.5	14.5	15.3	14.1	14.4
Still lives at home	15%	9%	10%	2%	4%	34%	10%
<u>Age at first sex experience</u>							
Mean	13	13	13	12	13	12	12
0-12	32%	35%	25%	37%	22%	35%	38%
13-17	64%	53%	64%	60%	73%	64%	59%
18-24	4%	7%	7%	3%	5%	1%	3%
<u>First sex experience was nonconsensual</u>	24%	33%	14%	37%	18%	25%	-

± Number non-missing data varied between 640 and 947.

+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001.

Table 2: Market Involvement

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
Number of Cases	920	98	202	78	171	264	136
<u>What age first sold sex?</u>							
Mean	16	16	16	15	16	14	15
<u>Age Categories</u>							
0-12	7%	4%	5%	7%	4%	13%	6%
13-17	70%	60%	66%	73%	68%	82%	68%
18-24	23%	36%	29%	20%	29%	5%	26%
<u>Time in "the life"</u>							
Less than 1 year	11%	11%	9%	13%	15%	6%	16%
1 year	17%	23%	18%	10%	24%	16%	11%
3 years	35%	28%	32%	36%	34%	40%	35%
4 years	13%	10%	14%	19%	7%	15%	15%
5-9 years	22%	25%	24%	22%	18%	23%	19%
10 or more years	2%	4%	3%	0%	2%	0%	5%
<u>Say there conflicts in the neighborhood where they work?</u>	53%	46%	50%	60%	44%	60%	60%
<u>Say any conflicts have led to physical fights</u>	35%	53%	33%	56%	27%	39%	-

± Number of non-missing cases varied between 734 and 920

+p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001.

Table 3: Making and Spending Money

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
Number of Cases	833	98	202	78	171	264	136
<u>How many hours did you work last week?</u>							
0 hours	13%	6%	9%	5%	16%	5%	40%
1-10 hours	39%	29%	46%	28%	45%	41%	35%
11-20 hours	15%	11%	16%	22%	16%	16%	8%
21-30 hours	12%	17%	16%	15%	5%	16%	6%
31-40 hours	8%	11%	7%	10%	7%	9%	5%
More than 40 hours	13%	26%	5%	19%	12%	14%	7%
<u>Amount charged to last customer</u>							
< \$100	43%	30%	47%	32%	42%	48%	47%
\$101-200	32%	36%	27%	45%	25%	35%	35%
\$201-\$300	11%	15%	13%	6%	14%	11%	7%
> \$300	13%	19%	14%	17%	20%	7%	11%
Mean	\$190	\$254	\$244	\$181	\$213	\$142	\$143
Median	\$100	\$150	\$100	\$120	\$120	\$100	\$100
<u>How much do you make in a week?</u>							
\$0 / No longer working	1%	6%		0%	1%	1%	3%
< \$100	5%	1%	6%	2%	7%	3%	5%
\$100 - \$300	26%	10%	35%	20%	27%	32%	18%
\$301 - \$600	28%	25%	27%	31%	22%	33%	28%
\$601 - \$1000	21%	17%	19%	23%	16%	22%	30%
\$1001 - \$1500	7%	15%	6%	12%	11%	3%	3%
> \$1500	12%	25%	8%	12%	16%	6%	14%

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
<u>First thing you buy when paid?±±</u>							
Clothes or shoes	39%	18%	47%	45%	38%	53%	18%
Food	32%	31%	39%	35%	36%	31%	20%
Rent or other bills	26%	29%	36%	18%	34%	25%	7%
Drugs/Alcohol	19%	41%	15%	8%	25%	12%	19%
Cigarettes	7%	18%	12%	1%	8%	1%	7%
Items for children	11%	13%	10%	19%	10%	13%	4%
Other	35%	13%	46%	39%	34%	41%	24%
<u>Report having other sources of income</u>	42%	50%	49%	36%	44%	19%	52%
<u>Report owing anyone money</u>	20%	28%	20%	29%	23%	10%	-

± Number non-missing data varied between 663 and 833.

±±Multiple responses allowed for each question.

Table 4: Customers

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
Number of Cases	900	98	202	78	171	264	136
<u>Where do you get customers?^{±±}</u>							
Street	63%	62%	57%	34%	49%	79%	79%
Internet	42%	13%	41%	51%	36%	48%	52%
Friends	39%	28%	33%	35%	35%	59%	0%
Referral	26%	22%	20%	31%	18%	42%	0%
Pimp	9%	8%	4%	13%	4%	10%	19%
Regulars	3%	8%	5%	3%	0%	0%	-
Other (Parties, Casinos, Strip Clubs, etc.)	18%	29%	18%	1%	19%	18%	-
<u>Average number of customers seen each day/night</u>							
0	1%	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%	1%
1-2	31%	22%	43%	32%	33%	21%	34%
3-5	43%	36%	37%	40%	46%	48%	41%
6-10	19%	26%	12%	22%	14%	25%	20%
>10	7%	16%	7%	6%	5%	6%	4%
Mean	5	6	4	5	4	5	4
Median	4	5	3	3	3	4	3
<u>How often customers from pimp?</u>							
Never	76%	77%	75%	82%	78%	75%	74%
Rarely	11%	10%	16%	5%	7%	9%	16%
Often	7%	2%	6%	7%	7%	11%	6%
All the time	6%	11%	4%	7%	8%	5%	4%
<u>Of those who have pimp: report internet was used to get customers</u>	41%	50%	37%	36%	45%	41%	40%
<u>Of self-generated customers: Report internet was used</u>	46%	35%	49%	42%	36%	50%	49%

[±] Number of non-missing cases varied between 271 and 900.

^{±±} Multiple responses allowed for each question.

Table 5: Pimps

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
Number of Cases	949	98	202	78	171	264	136
<u>Report working with a pimp</u>	15%	11%	9%	17%	13%	14%	29%
Of those with a pimp, reporting the pimp has rules	42%	28%	43%	16%	43%	54%	72%
<u>Report working with a market facilitator who is not a pimp</u>	19%	36%	19%	10%	24%	11%	21%

± Number of non-missing cases varied between 325 and 949

+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001.

Table 6: Experience with the Police

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
Number of Cases	825	98	202	78	171	264	136
<u>Ever arrested</u>	65%	88%	70%	87%	55%	59%	62%
<u>Ever arrested for prostitution</u>	16%	31%	10%	23%	10%	17%	17%
<u>Arrested for prostitution in the last year</u>	11%	23%	9%	19%	4%	12%	11%
<u>Ever arrested outside city of interview</u>	16%	66%	16%	21%	21%	4%	0%

‡Number of non-missing cases varied between 718 and 825

+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 7: Health and Needs

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
Number of Cases	878	98	202	78	171	264	136
<u>When did you last see a doctor?</u>							
< 3 Months Ago	65%	69%	72%	83%	60%	54%	69%
3-6 Months Ago	18%	5%	14%	15%	17%	27%	20%
7-12 Months Ago	10%	17%	7%	3%	15%	11%	6%
Over a year ago	7%	10%	7%	0%	8%	8%	5%
<u>What kind of health problems, if any, do you have?</u>							
None	65%	54%	59%	25%	69%	78%	-
Sex-related	27%	5%	3%	8%	3%	6%	-
Non-sex-related physical	4%	33%	34%	7%	21%	16%	-
Mental Health-Related	2%	6%	2%	0%	4%	0%	-
Multiple	2%	2%	2%	0%	3%	1%	-
<u>How often do you use protection against pregnancy and STIs?</u>							
All the time	82%	87%	86%	91%	89%	77%	73%
Often	12%	7%	8%	5%	7%	18%	19%
Sometimes	3%	1%	6%	3%	3%	5%	5%
Rarely/Never/NA	3%	5%	0%	1%	2%	0%	4%
<u>Ever had an STI</u>	31%	22%	37%	40%	25%	24%	46%
<u>Have someone to talk to about life situation or when help is needed</u>	72%	72%	74%	82%	75%	62%	77%
<u>Ever gone to a social services agency for help</u>	51%	64%	50%	47%	53%	33%	75%

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
<u>Service provided by social services agency^{±±}</u>							
<i>Of those who had been to a service agency:</i>							
Housing or Rent	20%	26%	18%	16%	11%	14%	41%
Counseling/Mental Health	13%	9%	14%	3%	2%	23%	26%
Food Stamps	12%	17%	6%	6%	20%	12%	7%
STI Treatment/Prevention/Pregnancy Testing	11%	7%	8%	21%	4%	19%	17%
Food	10%	20%	10%	6%	4%	4%	19%
<u>Use any drugs or alcohol</u>	84%	77%	85%	93%	86%	82%	-
<u>Use any of the following drugs^{±±}</u>							
Marijuana	66%	49%	66%	74%	71%	68%	-
Alcohol	58%	22%	61%	64%	63%	63%	-
Cocaine/Crack	13%	43%	4%	6%	14%	11%	-
Heroin	7%	35%	0%	0%	9%	1%	-
Other	20%	25%	12%	4%	34%	19%	-

[±] Number non-missing data varied between 560 and 878.

^{±±} Multiple responses allowed for each question.

⁺p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 8: Expectations

Site	TOTAL	Atlantic City	Chicago	Dallas	Las Vegas	Miami	Bay Area
Number of Cases [‡]	825	98	202	78	171	264	136
EXPECTATIONS							
<u>Is there anything you like about this work?</u>							
Yes	72%	57%	61%	65%	77%	85%	70%
No	27%	43%	37%	33%	22%	15%	29%
Not sure	1%	0%	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%
<u>Is there anything you dislike about this work?</u>							
Yes	83%	92%	86%	88%	89%	71%	91%
No	15%	7%	12%	9%	12%	28%	8%
Not sure	1%	1%	2%	3%	0%	1%	1%
<u>Ever tried to leave the life?</u>							
	62%	70%	81%	68%	59%	42%	74%
<u>If wanted to leave the life tomorrow, would know how</u>							
	63%	67%	72%	63%	81%	46%	65%
<u>Ever approached by social service agency to offer services</u>							
	19%	13%	24%	20%	10%	13%	35%
<u>If there were an agency that existed just to meet your needs what would they offer?</u>							
Employment/Education	49%	35%	64%	55%	56%	38%	-
Housing/Utilities	47%	52%	54%	44%	51%	39%	-
Food/Money	36%	34%	26%	34%	42%	38%	-
Counseling/Advice	16%	20%	20%	10%	16%	15%	-
Addiction Services/Healthcare/Sex Ed	11%	21%	7%	8%	18%	5%	-

[‡]Number of non-missing cases varied between 718 and 825

+p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, ***p<.001.