And Boys Too

A discussion paper by ECPAT-USA

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Federal Definition: Human Trafficking

**Human Trafficking:** 18 U.S.C. § 1591 makes it illegal to recruit, harbor, transport, provision, obtain, *patronize*, or *solicit* a person or to benefit from such activities knowing that the person will be caused to engage in commercial sex acts *where the person is under 18 or where force, fraud or coercion exists*. This statute does not require that either the defendant or the victim actually travel.

**Commercial sex act** means any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person. This includes:

- Prostitution
- Pornography Internet based
- Exotic dancing/stripping “Survival sex”
- Erotic/nude massage Phone sex lines
- Sex tourism Gang based prostitution

- Trafficking Victims Protection Act
Methodology

• Literature review
• Interviews with trafficking service providers
• Interviews with other experts in the field
Literature Review Takeaways

• Boys have largely been left out of both the academic and service provider CSEC discussion.

• What research does exist in the U.S. is mainly focused on RHY.

• When included, researchers have mainly viewed boys as active participants - not victims/survivors- of CSEC. Moreover, research has been almost completely void of intervention or prevention strategies.

• The international community, specifically the UK and Canada, seem to be ahead of the U.S. in regards to action for CSE boys with far more published reports, studies and available services.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Research Findings for Males</th>
<th>Research Findings for Females</th>
<th>Research Findings for Transgender Youth</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ferguson et al.</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>601 homeless young adults</td>
<td>18-24 years of age</td>
<td>Los Angeles, Austin, Denver</td>
<td>5.5% reported trading sexual favors in exchange for money, drugs, shelter, food or other things of value</td>
<td>6.5% reported trading sexual favors in exchange for money, drugs, shelter, food or other things of value</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Roe-Sepowitz, et al.</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>246 homeless young adults</td>
<td>18-25 years of age</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>21.8% reported a sex trafficking experience</td>
<td>24.8% reported a sex trafficking experience</td>
<td>19% reported a sex trafficking experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gwadz et al.</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>80 homeless youth</td>
<td>15-23 years of age</td>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>35.9% reported that they had traded sex for money, food, drugs, other</td>
<td>31.7% reported that they had traded sex for money, food, drugs, other</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>O'Grady and Gaetz</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>360 homeless youth</td>
<td>Youth up to age 24</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
<td>25% reported having sex with someone for money sometimes or daily 10% reported escort service work 13% reported exotic dancing</td>
<td>27% reported having sex with someone for money sometimes or daily 12% reported escort service work 22% reported exotic dancing</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Halcon and Lifson</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>203 homeless youth</td>
<td>15-22 years of age</td>
<td>Minneapolis, MN</td>
<td>19.6% reported that they had received money, food, drugs, clothing or shelter for sex at some point</td>
<td>23.8% reported that they had received money, food, drugs, clothing or shelter for sex at some point</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Author</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>Ages</td>
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<td>Whitbeck et al.</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>974 homeless and/or runaway youth</td>
<td>12-21 years of age</td>
<td>Seattle, Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas</td>
<td>3.4% reported that they had “prostituted for money”</td>
<td>2.5% reported that they had “prostituted for money”</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3.8% reported that they had ever traded sex for money or drugs</td>
<td>4.7% reported that they had ever traded sex for money or drugs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4.8% reported that they had traded sex for food or shelter</td>
<td>4.2% reported that they had traded sex for food or shelter</td>
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<td>Greene, Ennett &amp;</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>631 youth in shelter 528 youth staying on the street</td>
<td>12-21 years of age</td>
<td>Nationally Representative</td>
<td>11.1% of males in shelter sample reported engaging in survival sex</td>
<td>8.3% of females in shelter sample reported engaging in survival sex</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Ringwalt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28.2% of males in street sample reported engaging in survival sex</td>
<td>26.3% of females in street sample reported engaging in survival sex</td>
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<td>Anderson, Freese &amp; Pennbridge</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>610 street youth</td>
<td>13-21 years of age</td>
<td>Hollywood, CA</td>
<td>51.5% reported engaging in survival sex</td>
<td>32.3% reported engaging in survival sex</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Pennbridge, Freese &amp; MacKenzie</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>446 male street youth</td>
<td>14-23 years of age</td>
<td>Hollywood, CA</td>
<td>27.1% involved in prostitution in the last 3 months</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yates, et al.</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>620 runaway and/or homeless youth</td>
<td>10-24 years of age</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>32% reportedly involved in prostitution</td>
<td>68% reportedly involved in prostitution</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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CSEC Breakdown by Gender, cont.

Gender Breakdown Among Minors Reporting CSEC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>% Males</th>
<th>% Females</th>
<th>% Transgender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swaner, et al.</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>949 youth who self-reported that they have had sex for money</td>
<td>13 to 24 years of age</td>
<td>Six sites: Atlantic City, the Bay Area, Chicago, Dallas, Miami, Las Vegas</td>
<td>36% of the sample were male</td>
<td>60% of the sample were female</td>
<td>5% of the sample were transgender (4% trans female, 1% trans male)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curtis, et al.</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>249 youth who self-reported participating in CSEC markets</td>
<td>Under the age of 18</td>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>45% of the sample were male</td>
<td>48% of the sample were female</td>
<td>8% of the sample were transgender</td>
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</table>

Nationally Representative Literature Regarding the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
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<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Overall Findings</th>
<th>Research Findings for Males</th>
<th>Research Findings for Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edwards, Iritani &amp; Hallfors</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>13,294 American Youth</td>
<td>7th through 12th grade</td>
<td>Nationally Representative</td>
<td>3.5% of all youth reported that they had exchanged sex for drugs or money.</td>
<td>67.9% of youth who reported they had exchanged sex were male.</td>
<td>32.1% of youth who reported they had exchanged sex were female.</td>
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Antecedents to CSE for Boys

• Like girls, exceptionally high rates of past physical and sexual abuse have been found among male CSEC victims.

• Also like girls, the vast majority of CSE boys report that they have extremely limited family support.

• Again like girls, homelessness and/or lack of basic necessities render boys vulnerable to CSE.
Entry Into CSE for Boys

• As is the case with many girls, studies have found that boys often participate in transactional sex in order to meet basic needs and obtain goods. Reported goods and services obtained include: shelter, money, food, drugs, transportation and clothing.

• Research indicates that boys are often recruited by friends/peers involved in “the life”. This is not to say that boys are never pimped/controlled/coerced.
Pimp Control? Force, Fraud of Coercion?

• Anecdotally, we consistently heard reports of some boys being forced and/or coerced into CSE by:
  o Organized sex trafficking gangs
  o Members of their family
  o “Street families”
  o Pimps

• As is the case often with girls still in “the life,” it is possible that boys may think of, and refer to, pimps/exploiters as romantic partners.
Buyers/“Johns” and the “Market” for Buying/Selling Boys

- Studies suggest that male buyers are usually white, middle or upper class, white collar, and often married.

- The vast majority of buyers seem to be men although there are consistent reports of some female buyers as well.

- As is the case with the trafficking of girls, areas with large numbers of men in transit (truck rest stops, conventions, etc.) are “hot spots” for demand for boys.

- Buyers find boys in virtually all the places they find girls: the street, the internet, call services, clubs and bars, etc. although these markets are often male specific.
Sexual Orientation

• Compared to the U.S. population as a whole, disproportionately high numbers of CSE boys identify as sexual minorities.

• In most studies however, the majority of CSE boys identified as heterosexual.
Mental and Physical Health Outcomes

• Similarly to girls, boy’s participation in transactional sex dramatically increases the likelihood of physical and sexual assault at the hands of a stranger.

• CSE boys experience disproportionately poor health outcomes including: increased rates of drug use, STIs (including HIV), increased rates of depression, and increased rates of suicidal ideations and attempts.
Criminal Justice Response

• In past decades boys have represented a small percent of minors who enter the criminal justice system on prostitution charges.

• We consistently heard reports that respondent’s local law enforcement rarely refer boys for services and are only looking for “the stereotypical girl” victim.

• We consistently heard reports that respondent’s local law enforcement did not believe that boys were pimped and therefore believed they were not in need of services.
Trafficking Service Provider Responses Regarding Serving CSEB

Broken down by general human trafficking service providers and CSEC specific service providers
Is your program willing and able to serve CSE boys/young men? (all human trafficking service providers)

- Yes, 41%
- No, 59%
Is your program willing and able to serve CSE boys/young men? (CSEC specific service providers)

- yes, 16%
- no, 84%
Has your program served boys/young men at some point? (all human trafficking service providers)

- **Yes, 27%**
- **No, 73%**
Has your program served boys/young men at some point? (CSEC specific service providers)

- yes, 16%
- no, 84%
Has your program/org. considered serving CSE boys/young men? (trafficking service providers who reported they do not currently serve boys)

- Yes: 50%
- No: 36%
- N/A: 14%
Why does your program not serve boys and young men?

• Program rarely receive referrals for boys and young men or calls from boys and young men and therefore does not see a significant need.

• Program is already full or over capacity with girls and thus there is no room for boys and young men in the program.

• Program needs more training regarding CSE boys and young men and/or they feel ill prepared to serve this population.

• Boys and young men are not pimped/controlled and/or enter prostitution through different pathways than girls.

• Program has a gender specific curriculum.
Why Aren’t Boys Being Identified?

Possible contributing factors include:

• Boys don’t come forward and in fact will often deny the CSE
  o Cultural context: women are victims, men are strong
  o Fear of being outed as gay or perceived as gay
  o May think service providers do not serve males even when they do
  o Not believed when they do come forward

• Routine CSEC screenings are often completed with girls only by juvenile justice, service providers, schools, etc.

• Very few are looking for boys or are not looking in the right places. For example:
  o CSEC/trafficking street outreach teams very rarely reported visiting areas known for male prostitution/“male tracks”
  o Law enforcement may be looking in female specific “markets” - backpage.com versus rentboy.com, hourboy.com, rentmen.com, etc.
Why Aren’t Boys Being Identified? Cont. Hustler, not CSEC?

- Researchers and service providers report that boys often experience an extreme sense of shame regarding their exploitation. It is widely speculated that this sense of shame leads boys to redefine themselves as “hustlers.”

- A similar attitude can be seen with girls “in the life” who tout the money they make and the lavish lifestyle they lead while embracing terms like “ho” or “bottom bitch.”

Estes and Weiner (2001) sum this up best when they state:

“Boys experience a profound sense of shame about what they do. As a result, few would discuss with us the specifics of their sexual encounters indicating, instead, that they were able to keep some measure of control over these experiences (and their psyches) by refusing to participate in certain types of sexual acts, e.g., mostly anal intercourse. At a certain point, many boys redefine themselves as “hustlers” and “escorts,” rather than “prostitutes” in order to deal both with their own sense of shame and with the omnipresent stigma they experience in their travels” (Adams as quoted in Estes & Weiner, 2001).
Call to Action:

- Acknowledge the existence of CSEB, and their need for services
- Establish screening and intake systems for CSEB
- Encourage agencies to include boys and ensure that gender-inclusive language is used in programming and appropriations for services for sexually exploited or trafficked youth
- Establish male-focused anti-trafficking agencies and/or male specific outreach teams
- Include boys in law enforcement recovery efforts
- Further research on the pros and cons of gender-specific or co-ed service agencies
- Encourage collaboration among organizations that address CSEB and for wider recognition among the public