

# DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING RAPID ASSESSMENT FACT SHEET

## WASHINGTON

### BACKGROUND

Shared Hope International conducted an assessment in Washington to examine the practices and procedures used in identifying and delivering services to victims of domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) – U.S. children who are exploited through commercial sex. The Washington Assessment can serve as a springboard for the existing working groups, activists, and community members to prioritize the identification and protection of children in sexual slavery in Washington.

### KEY FINDINGS

Dedicated professionals are engaging in progressive efforts to respond to the many prostituted children who pass through the system on a yearly basis. Based on information from 105 interviews with professionals who interact with or advocate for victims of domestic minor sex trafficking, the following factors prove evident in Washington:

- In 2009 and 2010, 153 youth were arrested and referred to detention on charges of prostitution in King, Clark, Snohomish, Benton/Franklin, Pierce, Spokane, and Thurston Counties. The youngest was 12 years old.
- Conservative projections reveal that over 70,000 men bought children for sex acts in Washington in 2010. Based on data from the Washington State Office of the Courts, 55 youth were arrested for prostitution in seven counties in 2010. Prostituted youth are often required to fill a quote of five to 15 men per night. Based on these statistics, if the youth were exploited five nights a week, 71,500 buyers purchased sex acts from a child in Washington in 2010. (55 youth x 5 men/night x 5 nights/week = 71,500 buyers).
- Seattle has developed a highly effective model of community collaboration for DMST victims that should be viewed as a model for replication. Based on research commissioned and funded by the City of Seattle and informed by the expertise of local field professionals, the model provides a comprehensive response to victims of DMST. Key stakeholders in this successful response model includes, law enforcement, county and federal prosecutors, juvenile detention, service providers, shelter providers, survivor leaders, and researchers/academics.
- YouthCare, located in King County, is the only DMST shelter in the state of Washington and is one of only several service providers across the nation that serves this population of victims.
- Utilizing Shared Hope International's INTERVENE intake process at Clark County Juvenile Detention Center resulted in the identification of six DMST victims. These youth were offered an opportunity to provide information to law enforcement, which resulted in the investigation and prosecution of two traffickers. Spruce Street Secure Crisis Residential Center adapted a form of SHI's INTERVENE tool, resulting in the identification of 55 DMST victims in 2010.

### ABOUT SHARED HOPE INTERNATIONAL

Shared Hope International rescues and restores women and children in crisis. Over the past decade, Shared Hope has worked around the world in partnership with local groups to prevent trafficking and to rescue and restore victims of sexual slavery.



# DMST IN WASHINGTON

*The average age a child was charged with prostitution* **15**

## Traffickers

**Who:** Though traffickers can be anyone; a common trend was familial and gang-related trafficking.

**Where:** Many victims of DMST in Washington reported being advertised and sold in strip clubs.

**When:** Many minors said they were used during school hours to serve the “lunchtime” crowd.

## Arresting Minors

|                 | White | Black | Asian | Other | Total | <i>Number of juveniles referred to the Washington State Office of the Courts for prostitution in 2009 and 2010</i> |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| Benton/Franklin | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     |  |
| Clark           | 8     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 9     |  |
| King            | 32    | 43    | 2     | 14    | 91    |  |
| Pierce          | 15    | 21    | 1     | 3     | 40    |  |
| Snohomish       | 6     | 1     | 1     | 1     | 9     |  |
| Spokane         | 1     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 2     |  |
| Thurston        | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     |  |

## A Decade of Progress



“It was almost like they were just waiting for someone to ask them the right question – to open the door and take away the burden of them having to bring it up.”

– Social Service Provider