

Connections

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Washington Coalition of
Sexual Assault Programs

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The Commercial
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OF YOUTH



Letter from the Editor

Trisha Smith – Advocacy Specialist, WCSAP

The fact that children are being commercially sexually exploited within the United States continues to come as a surprise. Once conversations around the issue do occur, many hang on to the notion that this is a problem happening “somewhere else.” This can make it very difficult for communities to effectively identify and respond to the issue. While it is understandable that many would see the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) as unbelievable, it is becoming quite apparent that this devastating issue is very much alive and well in the United States, and it has been for some time. This is why it is so imperative that we keep having these conversations.

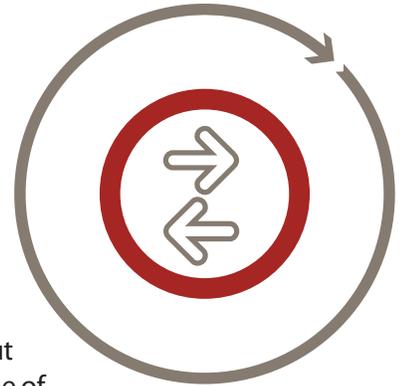
Over the past few years, the anti-sexual violence movement has pulled together to learn more about our role in responding to the needs of CSEC victims and survivors, as well as identifying ways to create social change that will help prevent this from happening. The recent momentum, rooted in a collaborative energy, feels very promising. As advocates strive to take a more proactive role in responding to CSEC, we must remember to take the time necessary to learn more about complexities of this issue and to gain a better understanding of the needs of this population. There is no doubt that sexual assault advocates are a very valuable resource to these youth; however we need to continue to be intentional with our approach and our response.

In the fall of 2010, WCSAP surveyed Washington State sexual assault programs in an effort to learn more about the experiences advocates are having working with youth who have been commercially sexually exploited. The survey also offered an opportunity to gain a better understanding of what CSEC looks like in Washington State. Two themes stood out from the survey results: advocates shared an interest in hearing about successful strategies others have had in working with this population, and wish to learn more about what CSEC looks like in rural communities.

There are a number of agencies across the U.S. that are dedicated to supporting victims, raising the voices of survivors, and demanding a world where children do not have to worry about sexual exploitation. This issue of *Connections* provides a platform to spread the word about the great work that is already happening around this issue and share out a number of resources that have been developed. We hope the agencies whose work is highlighted in this publication can continue to be a source of information, training, and resources for advocacy programs.

There are also a number of programs in Washington that have made concerted efforts to enhance their work with CSEC survivors and develop programs specific to their needs. Two of our local programs are highlighted in this issue, Skagit Against Slavery and the Yakima Sexual Assault Program. The experiences, insights, and recommendations shared by these advocates offer an incredibly valuable local perspective on the work, including strategies for developing successful collaborations in your community and a view in to what CSEC looks like in smaller towns.

It is our hope that this collection of resources will be helpful in your daily advocacy work, and that the information shared will be useful during the ongoing, “big picture” conversations happening around this issue.





WCSAP
Washington Coalition of
Sexual Assault Programs



The Commercial
Sexual Exploitation
of Youth

The mission of the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs is to unite agencies engaged in the elimination of sexual violence through education, advocacy, victim services and social change.

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It is possible to stop sexual exploitation by directly addressing the culture, institutions, and individuals that perpetrate, profit from, or tacitly support sexually exploitive acts against people.

Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation

The following two resources, **Know the Facts: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Addressing Demand**, were developed by the Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation.

As their website states, The Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (CAASE) “believes it is possible to stop sexual exploitation by directly addressing the culture, institutions, and individuals that perpetrate, profit from, or tacitly support sexually exploitive acts against people.

To accomplish our mission, CAASE: seeks legal repercussions on behalf of survivors against perpetrators of sexual harm; advocates for policies and legislation that hold sexual exploiters accountable; creates and implements prevention initiatives, including the provision of safe spaces for survivors to give testimony about their experiences; and develops resources that empower individuals and communities to stand with victims of sexual harm and take powerful actions against sexual exploiters” (from <http://caase.org/work.aspx>).

CAASE has developed a collection of resources that are available on their web site www.caase.org. These resources can help advocacy programs in their work with youth who have been commercially sexually exploited, as well as support and inform programs’ prevention and education efforts with their communities.



KNOW THE FACTS:

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

The commercial sexual exploitation of children is a large and growing concern around the world. Every year thousands of children are coerced, kidnapped or tricked by traffickers or pimps into the sex trade. Even though commercially sexually exploited children are routinely arrested as prostitutes and charged with prostitution in the United States, every act of “prostitution” where a child is involved is actually an act of child abuse, rape, and sexual exploitation.

- According to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, a federal law passed in 2000, any child under the age of 18 years old who is used for the purpose of exploitation through sexual servitude (prostitution), regardless of the absence of economic leverage, manipulation, fraud, coercion, threats, force or violence is considered a **commercially sexually exploited child and a victim of human trafficking**. A child victim of human trafficking does not have to prove that they were tricked or violently forced into sexual exploitation in order to be considered a victim of human trafficking under this federal law. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act applies to every child human trafficking victim in the United States, whether trafficked domestically or internationally.¹
- The U.S. Department of Justice states that the average age of entry into prostitution is 12-14 years old.²
- Underage girls are the bulk of victims in the commercial sex markets, which include pornography, stripping, escort services, and prostitution.³
- A University of Pennsylvania study from 2001 estimates that close to 300,000 children nationwide are at risk of falling victim to some sort of sexual exploitation. Outreach workers concur, saying that of the 1 million to 1.5 million runaway children in the country, about a third have some brush with prostitution.⁴
- Sixty percent of children exploited in prostitution are first recruited by peers.⁵
- The overwhelming majority of runaway, homeless, abused, and at-risk children are approached by pimps and drug dealers within 48 hours of landing on the streets.⁶
- Earlier childhood sexual abuse greatly increases vulnerability to commercial sexual exploitation during teen years. According to national statistics, children who are sexually abused earlier in childhood are four times more likely than their peers to be targeted and victimized by commercial sexual exploitation. Other risk factors for commercially sexually exploited children include homelessness, inadequate supervision or care by parents or family, and exposure to domestic violence in the home.⁷
- The rise of the internet and increased use of technology have led to more children being exploited in the commercial sex trade. Pimps use the internet, text messaging, and digital and web cameras to set up “dates” for their “girls.” The girl never has to leave the van she is sitting in or the hotel room where she has been placed to be exploited, making her harder to find and harder to save.⁸

¹ *Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000*, H.R. 3244, 106th Cong., 2nd Sess. (2000).

² U.S. Department of Justice, Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (November 2007). *Domestic sex trafficking of minors*. Retrieved July 22, 2009, from <http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/ceos/prostitution.html>.

³ Shared Hope International (July 2007). *DEMAND: A comparative examination of sex tourism and trafficking in Jamaica, Japan, The Netherlands, and the United States* [Electronic version]. Retrieved on July 22, 2009, at <http://www.sharedhope.org/files/DEMAND.pdf>

⁴ Fang, B. (2005, October 16). Young lives for sale: Why more kids are getting into the sex trade—and how the feds are fighting back [Electronic version]. *U.S. News & World Report*. Retrieved on July 15, 2009, at <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/051024/24sextraffickers.htm>

⁵ Schetky, D.H. (1988). Child pornography and prostitution. In D.H. Schetky and A.H. Green (Eds.), *Child sexual abuse: A handbook for health care and legal professionals*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

⁶ Project to End Human Trafficking, Prostitution Research and Education Center, Breaking Free, and The National Center on Missing and Exploited Children. *Buying sex stops here*.

⁷ Brantley, N. (June 2009). *Framing the issues of commercial sexual exploitation of children*. Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting & Serving Sexually Exploited Youth (MISSEY).

⁸ Brantley, N. (June 2009). Presentation on victims of commercial sexual exploitation on behalf of Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting & Serving Sexually Exploited Youth (MISSEY) (hereinafter MISSEY Presentation). www.caase.org

KNOW THE FACTS:

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

- A study in San Francisco of 149 youth identified as commercially sexually exploited children found that:
 - 61% of the youth had been raped one or more times
 - 55% were foster care youth from group homes
 - 82% had previously runaway from home multiple times
 - 60% had previously been arrested for solicitation⁹
- Mental and overall health problems for commercially sexually exploited children are two to five times higher than the general population of adolescents.¹⁰ The San Francisco study referenced above found that:
 - 25% of the 149 youth were clinically depressed
 - 3% were diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
 - 4% were diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder
 - 25% had a history of suicide attempts that required hospitalization
 - 52% had serious drug abuse problems
 - 16% had been pregnant or had children
 - 43% reported a history of physical or sexual assault
 - 53% reported feeling unsafe
 - 58% reported being arrested for solicitation
- Venereal disease and suicide attempts are the two greatest health risks for prostituted youth.¹¹
- The average life expectancy of a child after getting into prostitution is seven years, with homicide or HIV/AIDS as the main causes of death.¹²

⁹ Brantley, N. (June 2009). *Framing the issues of commercial sexual exploitation of children*. Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting & Serving Sexually Exploited Youth (MISSSEY).

¹⁰ MISSSEY Presentation. This data represents a group of commercially sexually exploited youth that were served through West Coast Children's Clinic's Screening, Stabilization and Transition program.

¹¹ Schetky, D.H. (1988). Child pornography and prostitution. In D.H. Schetky and A.H. Green (Eds.), *Child sexual abuse: A handbook for health care and legal professionals*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

¹² Fang, B. (2005, October 16). Young lives for sale: Why more kids are getting into the sex trade--and how the feds are fighting back [Electronic version]. *U.S. News & World Report*. Retrieved on July 15, 2009, at <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/051024/24sextraffickers.htm>

ADDRESSING THE DEMAND

THE ISSUE

The sex trade would not exist without demand. This demand is predominantly from men who buy sex, thereby funding the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and girls. Generating billions of dollars every year, the sex trade continues to expand at an alarming rate. It is impossible to create real change unless we address the root cause of the issue—detering the demand for sexually exploited individuals. As stated by a man who purchases sex in Chicago:

“If there were no customers, there would be no prostitution.”¹³

DEMAND CHANGE

Everyday Actions

1. Understand the role that the demand for commercial sex plays in prostitution. Be vigilant about refocusing conversations about prostitution away from blaming the woman to holding the people purchasing sex accountable for their actions. Challenge people in your friendship circle to stop patronizing sex trade venues. Highlight how practices that have become socially acceptable, such as hiring women to strip at bachelor parties or going to strip clubs, can be harmful and serve to normalize the exploitive aspects of the sex trade.
2. Write “Letters to the Editor” and “Op-Eds” to newspapers that participate in victim blaming and hold them accountable for how they cover the issue. Encourage them to highlight the role that demand plays in the harms experienced by individuals in the sex trade.

Raise Awareness

3. Work with a local graphic design program at a university or college to create posters aimed at deterring individuals from purchasing sex. Help raise funds to print and exhibit the posters in your neighborhood. Or download poster designs at www.caase.org.
4. Host a screening of Shared Hope International’s Film Demand (visit www.sharedhopeinternational.org for more information). Other films you can screen include: *Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes* by Byron Hurt, *Tough Guise* by Jackson Katz, and *Real Talk: Engaging Young Men As Allies To End Violence Against Women* by Beyondmedia and the Young Women’s Action Team.

¹³ Durchslag, R. & Goswami, S. (2007) *Deconstructing the Demand for Prostitution: Preliminary Insights From Interview With Chicago Men Who Purchase Sex*. The Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation.

Volunteer

5. Encourage all boys and men you know to respect women and girls and treat them with dignity. Participate in programs such as Mentors in Violence Prevention, which mentors young men and educates them to be part of the solution in regards to sexual harassment and abuse of girls and women. (www.jacksonkatz.com/mvp).

Advocate for Change

6. Encourage schools to provide a curriculum that helps young men understand the messages they receive about masculinity from mainstream culture. Connect these messages to the normalization of gender-based violence. For recommendations of available curriculums, visit the CAASE website.
7. Identify establishments that may be profiting from sexual exploitation. Learn about local ordinances to assess if the establishments are in violation of existing laws. Let law enforcement know if you think there are massage parlors, drug houses, other businesses and/or brothels that are prostituting trafficked women and girls.
8. Use the Community Response Toolkit created by the Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation to help your community take tangible actions to address the demand for the sex trade in their neighborhood (visit www.caase.org for more information).
9. Put pressure on law enforcement to arrest men who are purchasing sex in your neighborhood.

Keep Learning

10. Learn more about the issue:

Read:

- *The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and How All Men Can Help* by Jackson Katz
- *Pornography and International Sex Trafficking: Driving the Demand in International Sex Trafficking* by Captive Daughters Media
- *The Johns: Sex for Sale and the Men Who Buy It* by Victor Malarek

Visit:

- The Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation: www.caase.org
- Men Can Stop Rape: www.mencanstoprape.org
- A Call To Men: www.acalltomen.org

Voice of a Survivor



Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting, and Serving Sexually Exploited Youth (MISSEY) “advocates and facilitates the empowerment and inner transformation of sexually exploited youth by holistically addressing their specific needs. MISSEY collaborates to bring about systemic and community change to prevent the sexual exploitation of children and youth through raising awareness, education and policy development” (from their website, www.missey.org).

The following poem was written by a youth to whom MISSEY provided support and services.



Voice of a Survivor

By Anonymous SEM (Sexually Exploited Minor)

All my life I've been rejected
All my life I've been neglected
All my life I've been disrespected
All I ever wanted to be was protected
So I choose to feel with something that needs to be injected
People don't understand and most times I don't either
I just feel scared and alone and I do not want to feel either
I feel like I'm drowning in a swarm of confusion
Praying it's all just a dream, life just an illusion
It's self-persecution like a slow suicide
You can run, you can run but you cannot hide
Sometimes I feel like I can't take it anymore
Growing up as a kid I never dreamed I'd be a whore
I keep hearing this voice inside my head saying
'you'll never be nothing more and you're better off dead'
And it hurts so bad thinking that this is all that I am good at
Thinking about the shoulda, coulda, would have
Knowing that there's nothing I can do so what's the point in even trying
Knowing that each day I'm slowly dying what's the point in crying
I'm tired of people always lying to me
Why can't they see this is all I'll ever be?
Maybe I should just end it all
I know it's kind hard when you're in Juvenile Hall
But that doesn't mean that I can't bash my head up against the wall
I know there's a big world out there but damn do I feel small
Will anybody answer when I call out for help?
My voice has no sound no matter how loud I shout
I found my way in but I can't find my way out
I have my hopes but there consumed by doubts
I feel like a prisoner of words unsaid
Just lonely feeling locked away in my head
I should start to speak but I stop and stay silent
In the fear that you may get violent

Too many words yet not enough to express

All the stress that lies deep in my chest

I can't think, I can't rest I feel mentally compressed

I know life is a trade off but it is also a test

I know I should feel blessed that I have been given a chance but I know I'm going to fail so I am just going to fake it until I make it you can take my heart but you can't break it

You think that I trust you but don't mistake it for something that it is not for what may have been forgiven will never be forgot

Remember I say cold you say hot

I feel like a prisoner of words unsaid, just lonely feeling locked away in my head

I should speak but I stay silent on the fear that you might get violent

To my head is my hand with a gun and it's cold

And it's hard when there is nowhere to run and you've engaged yourself by holding your tongue

I feel like a prisoner of words unsaid...don't worry these are only lonely feelings locked away in my head.

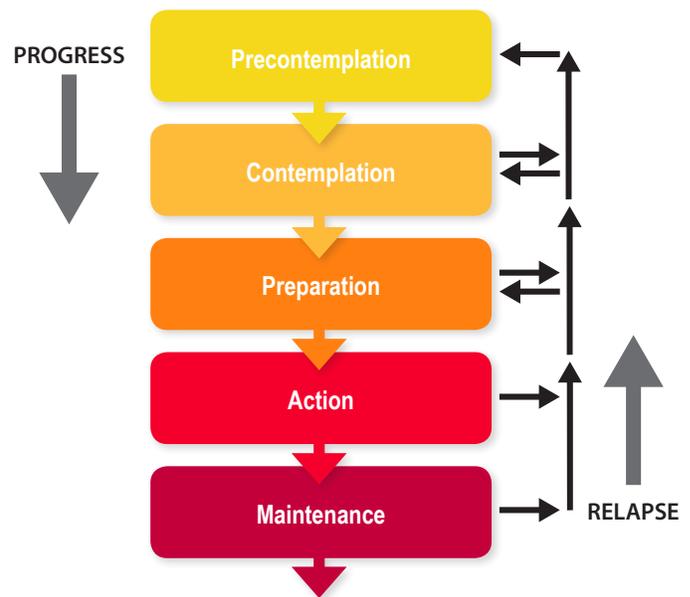


Stages of Change in CSEC Counseling

Building rapport with survivors of CSEC requires that advocates be conscious of where survivors are at and where they want to go.

Developed by Girls Educational and Mentoring Services

Girls Educational and Mentoring Services (GEMS) is an organization based in New York State whose mission “is to empower girls and young women, ages 12–24, who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation and domestic trafficking to exit the commercial sex industry and develop to their full potential. GEMS is committed to ending commercial sexual exploitation and domestic trafficking of children by changing individual lives, transforming public perception, and revolutionizing the systems and policies that impact sexually exploited youth” (from <http://www.gems-girls.org>).



© <http://batonrougescounseling.net/stages-change/>

GEMS created the following handout based on the Stages of Change Model. The Stages of Change Model (SCM) was originally developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s by James Prochaska and Carlo DiClemente. Although the model was created in the context of working with addicts, it has been utilized in a variety of fields to help service providers understand and respond to the process of behavior change. “The idea behind the SCM is that behavior change does not happen in one step. Rather, people tend to progress through different stages on their way to successful change. Also, each of us progresses through the stages at our own rate... Each person must decide for himself or herself when a stage is completed and when it is time to move on to the next stage. Moreover, this decision must come from inside you -- stable, long term change cannot be externally imposed” (Kern, 2008).

GEMS connected this theory to advocacy-based counseling methods used with child victims of commercial sexual exploitation (CSEC) and included the valuable addition of direct quotes from victims with whom they have worked, making this handout a useful advocacy tool. Building rapport with survivors of CSEC requires that advocates be conscious of where survivors are at and where they want to go. This tool can help advocates to identify what stage a survivor might be in, while also providing a valuable reminder that being nonjudgmental and patient is extremely important when working with this population.

Stage of Change: Pre-Contemplation

- Denies being sexually exploited
- Discloses involvement in the life, but does not present it as a problem
- Is defensive
- Does not want your help, wants you to “stay out of their business”

What This Looks Like with CSEC Victims

- Not ready to talk about abuse
- Will defend or protect abuser
- Does not want help or intervention

Counselor’s Goals

- Validate experience/lack of readiness
- Encourage re-evaluation of current behavior
- Encourage self-exploration, not action
- Explain and personalize risk
- Get legal identification documents
- Set up appointments for healthcare and mental health

- *“I love my daddy. He takes care of me.”*
- *“I’m happy making money.”*
- *“I’m good with the way things are.”*
- *“I make money doing what other people give away for free.”*

- *“I can understand why you feel that way.”*
- *“Is there anything about your relationship with him that you don’t like?”*
- *“How do you feel when . . . ?”*
- *“I’m proud of you. You’re taking big steps right now. Be proud of yourself!”*

Stage of Change: Contemplation

- Acknowledges that being in the life is painful and probably not what they want for themselves
- Not yet ready to leave but processing the abuse and the effects of the abuse
- Ambivalent about actually leaving
- Open to self-reflection, weighing consequences, and talking about feelings

What This Looks Like with CSEC Victims

- Often an external event, or “reality,” has confronted the pre-contemplative stage.
- Incidents can include violence, rape, assault, getting pregnant, diagnosis with an STD, new girls in the house, getting arrested, not getting bailed out
- Fear of the consequences of leaving: violence, retribution, threats to self and family, being homeless, having no money
- Thinking of leaving but feeling isolated from the “square” world

Counselor’s Goals

- Listen!!!!
- Encourage client to list out the pros and cons
- Reflect change talk
- Affirm processing of problems
- Validate ability for client to make changes
- Identify and assist in problem solving/obstacles
- Help identify sources of support

- *“I didn’t think it was going to turn out this way.”*
- *“I feel like I don’t deserve this.”*
- *“I don’t want this for my daughter.”*
- *“I’m afraid that if I try to leave he’ll just track me down and find me. There’s no point.”*
- *“This is what I’m good at. I’m not good at anything else.”*

- *“When are the times you feel really good? When are the times you feel really bad?” (make lists)*
- *“What do you feel is holding you back the most?”*
- *“I think you should be proud of yourself for . . .”*
- *“I’m proud of you. You’re taking big steps right now. Be proud of yourself!”*

Stage of Change: Preparation

- Has made a commitment to leave
- Has thought a lot about leaving, now begins to “test the waters”
- Exhibits signs of independence by taking small steps to be able to leave
- Researches and is open to resources available

What This Looks Like with CSEC Victims

- Regularly attends events/groups/counseling at agency
- Stashes money
- Brings clothes or belongings to the agency
- Doesn't answer cell phone every time exploiter calls
- Starts GED classes
- Thinking about a part-time job
- Exploring housing/shelter options

Counselor's Goals

- Create a safety plan
- Case management: find housing, education, employment, regular therapy
- Encourage small initial steps
- Validate fear of change
- Introduce client to new experiences where he/she can gain new skills and increase self-esteem
- Affirm underlying skills for independence

- *“I would really like to finish school.”*
- *“I still love home and want to be with him, just not with all the other stuff.”*
- *“I want to leave, I just want to save some money first.”*

- *“You should be really proud of yourself for doing _____, you are doing something healthy for yourself.”*
- *“It's normal to be nervous about the changes you're making.”*
- *“What kinds of things are you interested in? What are your dreams for the future?”*
- *“I'm proud of you. You're taking big steps right now. Be proud of yourself!”*

Stage of Change: Action

- Leaving the life

What This Looks Like with CSEC Victims

- There are often stages of exiting (may feel the need to rely on a few regular “johns” until financial situation is stable)
- Goes through intake at a youth shelter
- Placement at a residential treatment center
- Staying with relatives
- Starts part-time job
- Cuts off contact with pimps/johns
- Moves from area of exploitation

Counselor's Goals

- Support & validate the effort it takes to leave
- Address safety concerns
- Focus on restructuring environment and social support
- Discuss self-care
- Create system with youth for short-term rewards he/she can give to him/herself
- Process feelings of anxiety and loss
- Reiterate long term benefits of change

- *“It's so hard and it's taking so long to get everything together.”*
- *“I'm so glad I left. I hate him...but I miss him.”*
- *“I can see myself going to college and getting a good job.”*
- *“It's so weird being in the 'square' world. I feel different from everyone else.”*

- *“It's going to take a while to get things in your life in order. Try to be patient and not do everything at once.”*
- *“It's completely normal to love and hate your ex at the same time. Let's talk about your feelings before you act on them.”*
- *“I'm proud of you. You're taking big steps right now. Be proud of yourself!”*

Stage of Change: Maintenance

- Remains out of CSEC
- Develops new skills for a new life
- Successfully avoids temptations and responding to triggers

What This Looks Like with CSEC Victims

- May maintain job/school
- Living in stable environment
- Develops new relationships (intimate and social), often struggles with this
- Develops network of support
- Begins to address trauma of experiences

Counselor's Goals

- Plan for follow-up support
- Reinforce internal rewards and self care
- Discuss coping with relapse
- Discuss triggers and temptations, creating coping strategies
- Continue to help look for opportunities to develop new skills and invest in supportive communities
- Recognize progress and validate strengths
- Be patient and realistic

- *"I can't believe I wasted so many years. It's like I never had a childhood."*
- *"I could never go back to the track/club."*
- *"I feel bad for other girls/boys who are still in it."*
- *"Sometimes I'm bored and kinda miss the drama."*
- *"It's hard starting relationships because they only want one thing."*

- *"Can you tell me the times you most feel like going back? What do you miss the most?"*
- *"How can you find 'excitement' and 'attention' in other ways?"*
- *"What kinds of people are you attracted to? Why do you think that is?"*
- *"I'm proud of you. You're taking big steps right now. Be proud of yourself!"*

The Stages of Change model is viewed as a cycle, one that may be repeated, albeit not always in a linear fashion. After the "relapse" stage, the hope is that the victim you are working with will restart the cycle at the "contemplation" or "preparation" phase, and eventually will have the support and skills they need in order to stay in the "maintenance" phase. According to Kern (2008), "eventually, if you 'maintain maintenance' long enough, you will reach... the stage of 'transcendence,' a transcendence to a new life."

Stage of Change: Relapse

- Returns back to the life

What This Looks Like with CSEC Victims

- Runs away from program
- Re-establishes contact with exploiter (exploiter gets out of jail, runs into exploiter or someone from the life on the street, seeks exploiter out to reconnect)
- Returns to strip club or escort agency
- Begins to see "johns" regularly

Counselor's Goals

- Address feelings of failure
- Reassure that most people experience relapse
- Revisit subsequent stages of change (hopefully preparation or action, but sometimes contemplation)
- Evaluate the triggers that resulted in relapse
- Reassess motivation to leave again and barriers
- Plan stronger coping strategies

- *"He really loves me."*
- *"I'm always going to be like this. This is who I am."*
- *"I'm so ashamed. I don't want to come back."*
- *"You don't understand. I missed him and besides, it's different now."*
- *"It was too hard. I just couldn't do it."*

- *"It's ok. It's normal to struggle with making really big changes. You're still welcome here."*
- *"What did you feel like you needed that you weren't getting?"*
- *"Perhaps we can talk about why it was so hard."*
- *"Are things better this time? Why do you think that? What changed?"*
- *"I still support you and believe in you."*

References:

Kern, M. (2008). Stages of change model. Retrieved from: <http://www.addictioninfo.org/articles/11/1/Stages-of-Change-Model/Page1.html>

Voice from the Field

Kim Foley – Executive Director, Yakima Sexual Assault Program

Kim Foley started this work as a volunteer at the Yakima Sexual Assault Program in 1995. Kim was hired in 1997 as Yakima County's first Stop Gap Advocate, making the Yakima Community Sexual Assault Program a three-person team. Today, the Yakima program has grown to seven people, serving victims of all crime except those that are strictly domestic violence. As Kim states, "the program is currently fortunate enough to have funding for advocacy with children and to address the issue of human trafficking. The program is in the process of recruiting for an additional position to serve youth who have been or are at risk of being sexually exploited."

We are just recognizing sexual exploitation of youth as domestic trafficking. It has been here all along but not recognized, or we labeled it differently.

WCSAP: Much of the information available on the commercial sexual exploitation of youth speaks more to urban communities. Can you share a little bit about what you are seeing in your area?

KF: We are just recognizing sexual exploitation of youth as domestic trafficking. It has been here all along but not recognized, or we labeled it differently. We see youth exploited by gangs, by those who offer homeless youth a place to stay, food, or transportation, and we see generational exploitation, where a family will turn the kids out for drugs or a source of income.

Gang Culture

In the Lower Valley we hear that the gangs are particularly violent to the girls they rape and sell, leaving them naked and beaten in the orchards, a ditch, or abandoned houses. It took us a while to recognize that the gangs in our community were systematically raping unsuspecting kids. What we initially thought of as yet another isolated case of a girl getting gang raped at a party, we now see as organized events of the gang culture. The practice of the gang is to bring new people around, rape them, and then threaten with more violence to ensure no one speaks out or does anything to stop it.

For many girls, this ends up being their initiation into the gang. In the past people thought getting "jumped into" a gang (for girls this often means being gang raped) was a conscious decision that the person made, something they signed up for. However, we are seeing that this is not the case. These girls are attending these parties because they want to belong, but are unaware of what is going to happen. The gang members in our community know it to be their expected privilege to gang rape at parties. Even if a boy brings a girl he likes from school to the party and they rape her, he is not allowed to stop it. And if an older guy wants her, the younger guy has to accept that.

After being raped, these girls are so afraid of what will happen next that they do not report. Many of them feel that they have paid their dues and will continue to hang with the gang, thinking it won't happen again. This is often the start of a cycle of violence and exploitation. In order to be a good member, girls will bring their friends to the parties, knowing what will happen. Pretty soon these same girls are selling themselves to bring money back to the gang that they have now become a part of.

Kids in gangs want to belong and want to be as tough, if not tougher, than anyone else. Developmentally, this is true no matter what group they claim, be it sports, music, art, or a gang. They are developmentally on track when they excel at the challenges before them. Kids will do a lot to achieve that sense of pride, even pride in selling their body, if that is where they think they belong. All of these dynamics help the gangs have access to unsuspecting youth. At first victims think it only happened to them. Then the shame opens the door to silence, and the wanting to belong becomes stronger. Pretty soon they are being exploited by their rapists and recruiting others. They may not spend a lot of time on the streets before they get out of the gang but it doesn't matter, because there are plenty more waiting at the next party.

Homeless Youth

We know that kids who do not have safe housing are at risk for being sexually exploited in every part of the county. In Yakima, there is one drop-in facility for homeless youth, and it is only open for three hours a day, Monday through Friday. We do not have a youth shelter and tend to quickly notice street kids. In fact, they cannot be on the street very long without police picking them up as runaways or someone giving them a ride or a roof in exchange for sex. The lack of resources available to homeless youth is of huge concern.

When these kids are on the run and have nowhere to go, they often end up staying with unsafe people in order to survive. They soon learn that in order to eat, have clothing, and pay rent, they have to go make some money. They can go to the truck stop, the main drag, or even hang out at the bikini barista coffee shops knowing that there are customers there who are into sex for money and don't care about age. As they say, "they get their coffee, and I get in the car."

Generational

Sometimes relatives will sell and exploit their kids. There is often a grooming process that happens over time. Perhaps, at an early age, kids are allowed to "spend time" with friends who take them to the park or to the store and teach them that in order to get the attention they like, or the makeup they want, they just have to stay quiet about the sex. This soon translates into being quiet about sex with others.

We have also seen situations where some adults in "the life" will turn out their daughters, sons, nieces, or nephews. In our experience, drugs are a huge part of this; the more people they have out earning money, the more drugs they can do and the less time they have to be on the streets themselves. We know a 14-year-old who was taught how to "date" by her auntie in order to help with the aunt's heroin bill. This was all happening while the girl's mother was in rehab.

There are also cases involving a much older male who turns out a young girl and gets her pregnant. Once she has his child, she will likely feel like they are bound together for life. If she runs, she will lose her child. If she stays, she is beaten and sold. The lack of options can create despair. Similar to domestic violence situations, many ask the question, "Why doesn't she leave?" But when we step back and look at the "choices" available we can better understand why a young girl would be trapped in this situation.

There was one case that a social worker spoke of that involved two teenagers picked up for shoplifting and then taken to juvenile detention. They spoke Russian, as did the "uncle" who came for them. Knowing that youth who are commercially sexually exploited are often not even given basic necessities, it makes one wonder what else might be going on here. Could these girls have been victims of sex trafficking? Sure. But we did not consider it and they were not asked before being released.

As these stories highlight, there are numerous intersecting issues each youth victim of commercial sexual exploitation is facing and will need support around. Advocates may need to take a different approach to addressing survivors' safety, health, and basic needs.

WCSAP: What are some of the steps you have taken to develop a program that can hopefully better respond to the needs of these youth?

KF: As Shared Hope International says, "Identify, Serve, Heal."

WCSAP: What are the some of the ways your program hopes to engage with youth who are at risk or who are currently being commercially sexually exploited?

KF: Capitalize on points of contact: schools, juvenile court system, detention, probation, mental health, homeless youth sites, and rehab programs. Let youth know they have support in the community and a place to go. Through these conversations, we can assess the needs, such as addiction treatment and safe housing. We are now at a drop-in site for homeless youth several days each week. We are working with law enforcement and juvenile detention to identify and respond in a way that alerts us to the case and allows for a quick response.

Identify Serve Heal

Identify

We are currently working very hard to help providers recognize trafficking. We have formed a task force to serve identified victims, and we are working to improve the availability of their healing options. We are also providing a lot of community education: holding meetings, workshops, and discussions with leaders in this arena and participating on a CSEC-focused task force.

This includes offering our staff education on everything about trafficking that we can. We continue to learn about the streets, the language, the culture of "the life," as well as assess what works and what does not.

Heal

We have secured a new source of funding for Multi Systemic Treatment, which provides in-home services to support life changes and offers respite care that youth in crisis may need. We are hoping that with the proper intervention and services, kids can get the support they need to recover.

Serve

Our sexual assault program provides advocacy services, and we work with the youth to help them feel empowered. In addition, we are looking at changes to the various systems that are responding to this population and thinking of ways that they might be better served.

Capitalize on points of contact: schools, juvenile court system, detention, probation, mental health, homeless youth sites, and rehab programs. Let youth know they have support in the community and a place to go.



One of our next projects will be to identify what written materials are available, or what we need to develop, to post in spots where youth will see them.

There is a group of adult sex trade workers in our community that started meeting. We have been invited and so going to that might be helpful, an opportunity to connect with a group in our community also interested in addressing this issue. A mentoring program, for instance, might offer a kid a safe individual who cares about them and their well-being, which is a simple, vital and rare commodity in these kids' lives. Be patient and present.

WCSAP: As you prepare to start working more with and supporting youth who have been commercially sexually exploited, what are a few key lessons you have learned along the way?

KF: This topic is finally getting the recognition necessary to make a difference. Train yourself and staff to the culture and needs of this population. Know your resources and lack of resources. Speak to the groups and service clubs asking for information, and start a task force of interested partners and resource providers to prepare for the inevitable case.

WCSAP: Any last thoughts or feedback for others who are hoping to get more involved with this work?

KF: Learn from those before us. Seattle, Portland, and Spokane have experience, as do GEMS (Girls Educational & Mentoring Services) and Shared Hope International. They are willing to educate us and be a resource. We learned to ask for information and support.

The hope is to create anti-trafficking networks as established and efficient as the trafficking networks that ship girls, boys, and women around this country and world.

Program Spotlight:

Skagit Against Slavery

Bethany Dearborn – Shelter Advocate, Skagit Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services

Bethany Dearborn has long been interested in the issue of human trafficking, and particularly sex trafficking. She was first exposed to this reality at an International Justice Mission conference about 10 years ago. Since then, she has persistently sought to better understand this pervasive global phenomenon, through pursuing various conferences, trainings, groups and organizations that are seeking to educate and organize the community. Where coalitions haven't existed, she has started her own - first an International Justice Mission (IJM) Chapter at her college, then most recently, Skagit Against Slavery. In 2010, as a part of her Master's in Social Work, Bethany created an independent study on the global roots of sex trafficking.

Like many others, she first saw human trafficking as an issue that plagued those in Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and Central America, among other areas of the world. In recent years, through the UNBOUND conference and the work of Shared Hope International on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, her eyes have been opened to the reality of the 200,000 domestic minors that are trafficked within the United States, as well as the 17,500 foreign nationals are trafficked into the U.S. every year (estimated by the U.S. Department of State, 2007). Although she recently traveled to Thailand and Cambodia in order to visit about 10 organizations that are working with those in the sex industry, her focus has mainly shifted to her neighborhood and what she can do in her community.

As an employee of Skagit Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services (SDVSAS), Bethany is eager to see the movement against sex trafficking be encompassed into the work of those in the campaign against domestic violence and sexual assault. She believes that sex trafficking is a complex intersection of the dynamics and trauma associated with both domestic violence and sexual assault. Polaris Project (2010) defines it clearly: "Sex trafficking occurs when people are forced or coerced into the commercial sex trade against their will." Victims of sex trafficking are under the extreme power and control of their abuser: intimidation, coercion, threats, emotional abuse, control of money, minimizing denying, isolation—these and other characteristics described in the "Power & Control Wheel" (Domestic Violence Intervention Project, n.d.) are frequently utilized. In addition, the victim is forced to have sex with people against her will, sometimes numerous times a night. She may be given a quota of money she has to fulfill each night, otherwise she will be beaten. Often this manipulation flourishes under the belief that her abuser or "pimp" is in fact her boyfriend, loves her, and promises ongoing dedication to her. Sex trafficking exemplifies the disturbing interplay of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Bethany has sought to integrate this understanding into her work at SDVSAS and hopes it will have a rippling effect in Washington State. Her combination of passion, experience, and expertise was key in the development of Skagit Against Slavery.

Skagit Against Slavery is currently a coalition of volunteer activists and representatives from local organizations who are collaborating to end human trafficking in our lifetime, through community awareness, mobilization, and capacity building.



Stop Trafficking 2010 Rally

Where it All Began

Seattle Against Slavery (SAS), a grassroots coalition whose mission is to “foster collaboration in the fight against human trafficking through education, advocacy, and mobilization,” is both the inspiration and a source of guidance for Skagit Against Slavery (SkAS). As their website shares:

On June 4, 2009 in the wake of the first annual **UNBOUND Conference**, a meeting of 42 anti-trafficking activists was hosted by **The Freedom Initiative’s** Kelly Hogan and the **International Justice Mission (IJM)** volunteer Alex Sum. With the understanding that people fighting slavery and human trafficking must have more extensive and intricate networks than human traffickers, the vision for Seattle Against Slavery was born. Under the leadership of Alex Sum during its first year, SAS grew from a group of passionate individuals to a full fledged volunteer run organization, partnering with other local and national abolitionist organizations to become a bridge between the public and professional sectors in the fight against human trafficking.

www.seattleagainstsavery.org

As one of the 42 anti-trafficking activists in attendance, Bethany had the opportunity to become involved in the creation of SAS, albeit from a distance. Inspired by this model, Bethany was encouraged by SAS’s founder Alex Sum to start a coalition in her community. The hope is to create anti-trafficking networks as established and efficient as the trafficking networks that ship girls, boys, and women around this country and world. So, after organizing a two-hour STOP Trafficking Event panel event in February of 2010, alongside Soroptomist International, Bethany invited the 135 attendees to be apart of Skagit Against Slavery. She sent personal invitations to leaders of a number of key organizations, from youth-gearred social services to faith communities, asking if they would like to become partners in the coalition. The mission and vision of the coalition echo that of Seattle Against Slavery—which continues to serve Skagit Against Slavery as a guide and model.

Where We Are Now

Skagit Against Slavery is currently a coalition of volunteer activists and representatives from local organizations who are collaborating to end human trafficking in our lifetime, through community awareness, mobilization, and capacity building. The primary goals are to:

1. **Educate the Community** by providing community trainings, resources and support, and grassroots mobilization.
2. **Establish an Abolitionist Network** to increase effective collaboration of service providers, law enforcement, and community members to better identify and address the needs of potential victims of human trafficking.
3. **Stop the Demand** by increasing pressure on everyone, from community members to governmental leaders, to implement strategies that stop the demand.

Our Work

SkAS has engaged our community by hosting monthly meetings with topics such as *"Comparing Domestic Violence and Sex Trafficking"* and *"The Risk of Sexual Exploitation Among Runaway Youth."* The community meetings have involved videos, outside speakers, time for discussion, and planning time for events and strategies to increase community involvement and education. SkAS also hosts more extensive training on a yearly basis. This year's training event was organized and hosted as two community events by Shared Hope International on the topic of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST).

The first program, called INTERVENE, was an eight-hour training for 135 professionals working with youth, focused on identification and response to DMST. Community representatives were personally invited from surrounding law enforcement agencies, juvenile detention, youth social services, prosecuting attorney, probation officers, medical facilities, educators, and faith community leaders. In addition to SDVSAS, these events were sponsored by Soroptomist International of Burlington, Sedro-Woolley Police STOP Grant, Rotary International Sedro- Woolley, Sedro-Woolley Community Partners, and North Cascades Health Council. Understanding that the response to DMST requires a collaborative approach, Shared Hope International's key presenters included legal experts, as well as representatives from law enforcement and

Many people had assumed that trafficking is more prevalent in larger cities and were unaware that it could be a local issue. However, through this training, people's eyes were opened to what it can look like in more small town and rural environments such as Skagit Valley.

juvenile justice. The second event was a condensed version of INTERVENE, attended by 165 parents and community members. In total, 300 people in Skagit Valley were trained on DMST!

Many people had assumed that trafficking is more prevalent in larger cities and were unaware that it could be a local issue. However, through this training, people's eyes were opened to what it can look like in more small town and rural environments such as Skagit Valley. Sex trafficking may not be pimp-controlled women standing on Mount Vernon street corners waiting for customers. Instead, it is 56-year-old men meeting 13-year-olds on the internet, mothers forcing their children to have sex with drug dealers in exchange for drugs, and youth having to engage in "survival sex" because they believe it to be their only option. Hosting both events created a common language among many service providers and law enforcement, increased community awareness and ability to recognize the local reality of DMST. It has even resulted in a couple of potential cases, as well as new efforts by law enforcement to crack down on perpetrators.

What is Next

In response to the growing coalition, SkAS has now developed various teams:

- **Public School Education:** a team organizing and creating educational materials for sixth graders, hoping to incorporate curriculum in all surrounding school districts.
- **Youth Social Services:** a team providing further training, support, and guidance to social service providers working with youth as they seek to better identify, refer, and effectively support victims of sex trafficking.
- **Faith Based:** a team increasing community education and collaboration among faith communities through public movie screenings, informational meetings, and even an upcoming golf tournament led by Free At Last Ministries to raise money for International Justice Mission, as well as community attention to the issue.

SkAS will continue to develop these teams, as well as hopefully reach out and establish networking teams for medical professionals. SkAS also informs its members of wider Washington-area events as well as opportunities for advocacy in legislative policy.

In addition to being involved in Skagit Against Slavery and Seattle Against Slavery, Bethany is also mentoring the founders of Bridges Coalition, a new similar group in Whatcom County. She shared that her hope is for these movements to inspire coalitions throughout the state that bring to an end the commercial sexual exploitation of men, women, and children. The more united and pervasive the networks against trafficking, the greater impact there will be on the networks of traffickers.

Why This Work is So Important

Shared Hope International (2010) states:

- At least 100,000 children are used in prostitution every year in the United States.
- The average age of entry into prostitution is 13 years old.
- Prostituted girls are often controlled by a pimp who recruits them into sex trafficking by posing as a boyfriend, caretaker, and protector.
- The three primary manifestations of child sex trafficking in America are: pimp-controlled prostitution, familial prostitution, and/or survival sex.

Recommended Websites for Additional Resources

- **Skagit Against Slavery**
<http://www.skagitagainstsavery.org>
- **Polaris Project**
<http://www.polarisproject.org/>
- **Seattle Against Slavery**
<http://www.seattleagainstsavery.org/>
- **Shared Hope International**
<http://www.sharedhope.org/>
- **Skagit Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Services**
<http://www.skagitdvsas.org/>
- **Washington Anti-Trafficking Network**
<http://www.warn-trafficking.org/>
- **Washington Anti-Trafficking Engagement**
<http://www.waengage.com/>
- **Slavery Map**
<http://www.slaverymap.org/>
- **UN.GIFT Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking**
<http://www.ungift.org/>
- **US Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report**
<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/>
- **Call + Response**
<http://www.callandresponse.com/>

References:

Domestic Violence Intervention Project (n.d.).

Power and control wheel.

Retrieved from: <http://www.theduluthmodel.org/documents/PhyVio.pdf>

Polaris Project (2010). *Sex trafficking in the U.S.*

Retrieved from: <http://www.polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/sex-trafficking-in-the-us>

Polaris Project (n.d.). *Human trafficking statistics.*

Retrieved from: <http://www.dreamcenter.org/new/images/outreach/RescueProject/stats.pdf>

Shared Hope International (2010).

The national report on domestic minor sex trafficking America's prostituted youth.

Retrieved from: <http://www.sharedhope.org/Portals/0/Documents/NationalReportFACTSHEET11.18.2010.pdf>

U.S. Department of State (2007).

Trafficking in persons report.

Retrieved from: <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/>

Legislative Updates



Washington State has recently passed a number of laws that are applicable to work with youth who have been commercially sexually exploited, all of which go in to effect over the summer of 2011. Here is a brief summary.

SB 5546

Concerning the Crime of Human Trafficking

This bill provides amendments to our state's statutes to further define trafficking and include commercial sexual exploitation as an offense. Offenses of human trafficking in the first or second degree and the offense of promoting commercial sexual abuse of a minor are added to the statutory provision RCW 9.95.062, which lists certain crimes for which a stay of judgment on appeal is not allowed. Human trafficking in the first or second degree and promoting commercial sexual abuse of a minor are added to the statutory provision RCW 10.64.025, which lists the offenses for which a defendant is required to be automatically remanded into custody upon conviction while awaiting sentencing. SB 5546 was signed by the Governor April 18th, 2011; it will become effective July 22, 2011.

The final bill report is available at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2011-12/Pdf/Bill%20Reports/Senate%20Final/5546-S%20SBR%20FBR%2011.pdf>.

SB 5482

Authorizing Existing Funding to House Victims of Human Trafficking and Their Families

This bill states that funds which are being currently collected by the Affordable Housing for Surcharge and Home Security funds can be used to house victims of human trafficking and their families. SB 5482 was signed by the Governor April 18, 2011; it will be effective July 22, 2011.

The final bill report is available at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2011-12/Pdf/Bill%20Reports/Senate%20Final/5482%20SBR%20FBR%2011.pdf>.

HB 1874

Addressing Police Investigations of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Human Trafficking

This bill clarifies when law enforcement can record communications with one-party consent, in relation to investigating the crimes of Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor, Promoting Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor, and Promoting Travel for Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor. The bill also addresses law enforcement's employment of minors to aid in these investigations. HB 1874 was signed by the Governor May 3, 2011; it will be effective August 1, 2011.

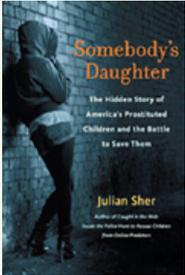
The final bill report is available at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2011-12/Pdf/Bill%20Reports/House%20Final/1874-S%20HBR%20FBR%2011%20E1.pdf>.



Andrea Piper-Wentland, Executive Director of WCSAP, joins Governor Christine Gregoire for the signing of SB 5482.

Resources

Did you know . . . that WCSAP members have access to check out our library items? It's true. We mail them to you, you mail them back. Here are a few we currently have available.



Somebody's Daughter

Type: Book

Takes you behind the scenes to expose one of America's most under-reported crimes: the trafficking of American girls on American streets.

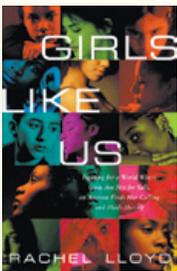
43 Days



43 Days

Type: DVD

Relays the hazards of the street and the desperate choices that a child may feel forced to make when hungry and homeless.



Girls Like Us

Type: Book

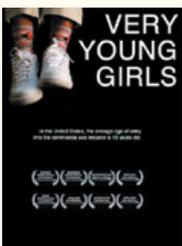
A moving story by a survivor of the commercial sex industry who has devoted her career to activism and helping others escape "the life."



Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking

Type: DVD

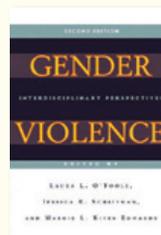
A training tool for agencies and organizations who may come in contact with this unique population of victims.



Very Young Girls

Type: DVD

An exposé of the commercial sexual exploitation of girls in NY City as they are sold on the streets by pimps and treated as adult criminals by police.



Gender Violence

Type: Book

The editors bring together emerging scholarship from feminist, post-modern, and queer theory with classic articles and central authors in the fields of gender, sexuality and violence.



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