

REPORT OF THE  
TASK FORCE ON

# Trafficking

of Women  
and Girls



AMERICAN  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

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**REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON  
TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND GIRLS**

Available online at <http://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/trafficking/report.aspx>

Grids of the empirical studies used in this report are available as supplemental material online at <http://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/trafficking/grids.pdf>

Suggested bibliographic reference:

Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls. (2014). *Report of the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/trafficking/report.aspx>

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We express great appreciation to the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest (BAPPI), the Committee on Women in Psychology (CWP), and the Women's Programs Office (WPO) for supporting us in the process of examining the trafficking of women and girls into and within the United States. Without their ongoing support, the task force could not have succeeded in accomplishing its goals.

Specifically, we wish to thank the following individuals:

**Gwendolyn Puryear Keita, PhD**

Executive Director, APA Public Interest Directorate

**Members of the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest (2011–2014)**

Toni C. Antonucci, PhD (2014 Chair); Asuncion Miteria Austria, PhD; Meg Bond, PhD; Y. Barry Chung, PhD; M. Dolores Cimini, PhD; Priscilla Dass-Brailsford, EdD; Linda M. Forrest, PhD; Claire Guthrie Gastañaga; Douglas C. Haldeman, PhD (2011 Chair); Gary W. Harper, PhD; J. Douglas McDonald, PhD; Jona S. Meier, JD; Linda R. Mona, PhD; Gayle L. Skawennio Morse, PhD; Allen M. Omoto, PhD (2013 Chair); William D. Parham, PhD; Luis A. Vargas, PhD; Elizabeth M. Vera, PhD; Karen F. Wyche, PhD (2012 Chair); and Antonette M. Zeiss, PhD

**Members of the Committee on Women in Psychology (2011–2014)**

Joan C. Chrisler, PhD (2013 Chair); Cynthia de las Fuentes, PhD (2012 Chair); Ramani S. Durvasula, PhD; Edna M. Esnil, PsyD; Kathy A. McCloskey, PhD, PsyD, ABPP; Maureen C. McHugh, PhD (2014 Chair); Sandra L. Shullman, PhD; Nancy M. Sidun, PsyD, ABPP, ATR (2011 Chair); Cheryl L.B. Travis, PhD; Earlise C. Ward, PhD; Julie L. Williams, PsyD; and Jennifer P. Wisdom, PhD

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Emily Moses

Scott Pine

Rebecca Reilly

Marcy Rudins

Paige Tieman

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Leslie Cameron  
Nida Corry, PhD  
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Diane Elmore, PhD  
Donella Graham  
Susan Houston  
Stephanie Reeves  
Ivana Willis

We are grateful to the following individuals, APA boards, and APA committees that provided thoughtful critiques, feedback, and suggestions. The time and effort they provided significantly strengthened the report:

### **External Cadre of Experts**

Jeanne L. Allert; Claudette Altuna, MSW, LICSW, ACSW, BCD, MHSA; Noel B. Busch-Armendariz, PhD, LMSW, MPA; Charita L. Castro, PhD, MSW; Stacey Cecchet, PhD; Megan Cler, PsyD; Angel Colon-Rivera, PhD; Karen Countryman-Roswurm, LMSW; Katherine C. Cunningham; Carolina de los Rios, PhD; Smita Ekka Dewan; Carol A. Dwyer, PhD; Tina Frundt; Bravada M. Garrett-Akinsanya, PhD; Rivka Greenberg, PhD; Iva GreyWolf, PhD; Helen H. Hsu, PsyD; Patti Johnson, PhD; Linda Petroff, PhD; Diana L. Prescott, PhD; Joan A. Reid, PhD, LMHC, CRC; Karen A. Roberto, PhD; Leyla Strotkamp; Lekeisha A. Sumner, PhD; Linda M. Williams, PhD; Bincy Wilson; and Jennifer L. Woolard, PhD

### **APA Boards and Committees**

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Committee of Psychology Teachers at Community Colleges (PT@CC)  
Committee on Socioeconomic Status (CSES)  
Teachers of Psychology in Secondary Schools (TOPPS)

For careful reading and copyediting we thank the following:

Gary Hume  
Gabriele McCormick  
Deborah Farrell

The report was designed by David Spears of APA's Editorial and Design Services.

We would be remiss not to acknowledge Rita Chi-Ying Chung, PhD, an original task force member, and others who contributed to the conceptualization of this report.

### **We also gratefully acknowledge those who supported this work through financial contributions:**

American Psychological Association Council of Representatives  
American Psychological Association Women's Caucus  
Larsson Charitable Foundation  
Nimick Forbesway Foundation  
Quality Carpentry and Painting, LLC

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Human trafficking, a grave contemporary human rights violation, is characterized by the economic exploitation of an individual through force, fraud, or coercion (Trafficking Victims Protection Act [TVPA], 2000; United Nations, 2000).<sup>1</sup> U.S. citizens are involved as both victims and perpetrators of trafficking within the United States and abroad; the majority of those identified as trafficked in the United States for labor or commercial sex are women and girls (Kyckelhahn, Beck, & Cohen, 2009; U.S. Department of State, 2005).

In 2011, the American Psychological Association (APA) established the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls at the recommendation of APA's Committee on Women in Psychology (CWP) and upon approval by the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest (BAPPI). The purpose of this report is to (a) raise awareness among psychologists about human trafficking; (b) make recommendations to enhance research, education and training, advocacy and public policy, public awareness, and practice as they pertain to the intersections of psychology and this social problem; and (c) urge psychologists to bring scientific rigor and research expertise to bear on policy, service provision, and an understanding of the dynamics of trafficking.

## Methodology

Human trafficking is characterized by exploitation of vulnerable populations and is a violation of the basic human right to autonomy and freedom affirmed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948). In this report, the task force uses the definition of human trafficking from Article 3, Use of Terms, of the *U.N. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* (United Nations, 2000):<sup>2</sup>

(a) "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;

(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this

article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;

(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;

(d) “Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

A social ecological model (McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988), used as the framework for this report, highlights the contributions of individual, interpersonal, institutional, community, and societal factors as they pertain to human trafficking. Successful prevention approaches need to take into account more than the vulnerabilities of individual women and girls. Prevention efforts must consider the institutional structures, social norms, and policy factors that can empower those individuals or constrain individual agency and options. In addition, a focus on reducing demand for commercial sex and for goods produced by exploitive labor is integral to preventing human trafficking.

The task force identified literature published since 1980 pertaining to the trafficking of women and girls into and within the United States. Because this is a relatively new research area, there are a limited number of empirical studies published. We cast a wide net to capture all relevant research, capitalize on the unique con-

There is no typical case of human trafficking, which often overlaps with other ... crimes, such as human smuggling, prostitution, intimate partner violence, and child abuse.

tributions of multiple methodological approaches, and determine which findings are supported by converging evidence from multiple approaches. Thus, the review includes studies that used qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methodologies; large or small sample sizes; and case studies, ethnography, and community-based participatory research, among other approaches. Each methodological approach offers a unique lens and contributes to a more complete picture of human trafficking.

## Methodological Challenges

Research related to human trafficking is challenging due to its complexity. There is no typical case of human trafficking, which often overlaps with other closely related crimes, such as human smuggling, prostitution, intimate partner violence, and child abuse. Trafficked women and girls are frequently victims of multiple crimes. A variety of clinical populations potentially include trafficking victims.

Human trafficking is also extremely difficult to measure. The clandestine nature of the crime, the lack of a comprehensive centralized database of human trafficking cases, the sheer diversity of trafficking situations and experiences, and the difficulty in accessing persons with knowledge of the phenomenon, including trafficked women and girls themselves, contribute to the gaps and weaknesses in the empirical research (Farrell et al., 2010, 2012; Hopper, 2004; Weiner & Hala, 2008).

There is currently no reliable estimate of the prevalence or incidence of trafficking of women and girls in the United States (Farrell et al., 2010; Hopper, 2004). Shifts in estimates published in the U.S. Department of State’s annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* are indicative of the difficulty in determining prevalence and incidence (Miko & Park, 2002; U.S. Department of State, 2003, 2005, 2006).

## Characteristics of Trafficking

### RISK FACTORS

Vulnerability to human trafficking results from a nesting of an individual’s characteristics and personal history within a complex and dynamic system of external factors. Conditions that permit or condone labor and sexual exploitation, tolerate or fail to regulate unscrupulous business practices, or maintain status inequalities and marginalization all contribute to trafficking (Brennan, 2008; Chacon, 2006; Heyzer, 2002; Van Liemt, 2004). Globalization, poverty, social and political instability, and war and military presence magnify the risk of trafficking (APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration, 2012; Aronowitz, 2009; Danailova-Trainor & Belser, 2006; Farr, 2005; Nikolić-Ristanović, 2002a; O’Neill Richard, 2000; Trujillo, 2004; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002). Factors that undermine the ability to protect oneself or disrupt the connections to social and familial support also increase susceptibility to psychological coercion (Albanese, 2007; Lloyd, 2011; Norton-Hawk, 2002; Pierce,



2009; Raphael & Ashley, 2008; Reid, 2010). In addition to gender, variables contributing to a person's vulnerability include individual attributes such as age; membership in a marginalized group; prior victimization and trauma; developmental, emotional, and cognitive factors; disabilities; immigrant or refugee status; and family disruption (Pierce, 2009; Ugarte, Zarate, & Farley, 2003; Van Dorn et al., 2005).

### TRAFFICKERS

Those who recruit, transport, and exploit women and girls span the continuum from a single individual to organized networks (Bruckert & Parent, 2002; UN Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2010). The most effective recruiters are those who already have, or who can establish, a trusting relationship with the potential victim or with victims' families (Human Rights Center, 2005). No consistent profile of a trafficker exists: He or she may be a family member, an acquaintance, an intimate partner, a known and trusted member of the victim's community, or a stranger (Kingsley & Mark, 2000; Pierce, 2009; Sidun & Rubin, 2013; UNODC, 2009).

### MEANS OF TRAFFICKING

Traffickers use coercion and psychological abuse, deception and fraud, threats, physical and sexual violence, abusive work and living conditions, and coerced substance use to lure, manipulate, and control their victims (Bauer, 2007; Hynes, 2002; Kennedy, Klein, Bristowe, Cooper, & Yuille, 2007; O'Neill Richard, 2000; Pierce & Koeplinger, 2011). Use of the Internet and communications technology has become an important tool in trafficking as well (Arizona State University, 2012; Blevins & Holt, 2009; Reid, 2010).

### CONSEQUENCES

Trafficked women and girls experience severe and potentially life-threatening physical and mental health consequences, which can be lifelong. They encounter high rates of physical and sexual violence, including homicide and torture, psychological abuse, horrific work and living conditions, and substance abuse (Aronowitz, 2009; Hynes, 2002; Oram, Stöckl, Busza, Howard, & Zimmerman, 2012; Pierce, 2009; Potterat et al., 2004; Raymond et al., 2002; Sarkar et al., 2008). Women trafficked into the United States may also encounter extreme deprivation while in transit (Raymond et al., 2002). Serious mental health problems result, including anxiety, depression, self-injurious behavior, suicidal ideation and suicide, drug and alcohol addiction, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), dissociative disorders, and complex

PTSD (Jung, Song, Chong, Seo, & Chae, 2008; McClanahan, McClelland, Abram, & Teplin, 1999; Sallman, 2010).<sup>3</sup>

Physical consequences can include neurological issues, gastrointestinal disturbances, respiratory distress, chronic pain, sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV), urogenital problems, dental problems, fractures, and traumatic brain injuries (Burnette et al., 2008; Farley et al., 2003; Farley, MacLeod, et al., 2011). The extremely limited research addressing the consequences of labor trafficking reveals that trafficked women and girls in forced labor are at high risk for physical injury, exposure to work hazards, and generally deplorable working conditions (Free the Slaves & the Human Rights Center, 2004; Human Rights Center, 2005; Human Rights Watch, 2001, 2012).

## Responding to Trafficked Women and Girls

Effective anti-trafficking programming in the United States is in its infancy. As a result of professional training and community awareness programs, early identification of human trafficking should increase the chances that women will receive services and be able to escape or exit the trafficking situation. Prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership (the "4 Ps") currently serve as the "fundamental international framework used by the United States and internationally to combat contemporary forms of slavery" (U.S. Department of State, 2011a).

### PREVENTION

- **Awareness and educational campaigns** are intended for both primary prevention (reducing vulnerability to trafficking) and secondary prevention (early victim identification and intervention).
- **Empowerment programs** build protective factors, such as education and career counseling, and address risk factors and barriers to exiting, such as homelessness, substance use, history of violent victimization, and unavailability of support.
- **Demand reduction programs** target sex buyers and attempt to change social norms about commercial sex.
- **Policy efforts** at the local, state, national, and international level also address prevention, although most U.S. policy focuses on prosecution of traffickers and services for victims,

which may reduce revictimization but do not address primary prevention needs.

Although many prevention approaches seem promising, their impact in terms of reducing victimization is largely unknown, and there is limited reporting on these programs in the peer-reviewed literature. Prevention initiatives may need to be strategically distinct for domestically and internationally trafficked persons.

## PROTECTION

Protection measures “ensure that human trafficking victims are provided access to health care, counseling, legal, and shelter services in ways that are not prejudicial against victims’ rights, dignity, or psychological well-being” (Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking, n.d.). Much of the responsibility for protecting and meeting the needs of survivors of trafficking is assumed by a host of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The primary challenges to meeting survivors’ needs are (a) lack of sufficient training to identify human trafficking when encountered, (b) inadequate resources (trained staff, funding, etc.) to meet client needs, (c) limited communication and planning between agencies, (d) a shortage of resources to evaluate the effectiveness of service provision, and (e) challenges in working with law enforcement agencies (Caliber, 2007; Jones & Yousefzadeh, 2006).

## PROSECUTION AND PARTNERSHIP

The complexity of human trafficking investigations makes collaboration and coordination among a variety of entities and jurisdictions necessary (Farrell, McDevitt, & Fahy, 2008; Venkatraman, 2003). The most common law enforcement strategy in response to trafficking has been to form and rely on joint task forces made up of state, local, and federal agencies, including law enforcement, social service providers, and mental health providers, among others (Clawson, Dutch, & Cummings, 2006).

## PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

Responses to human trafficking in the United States are not always guided by a comprehensive understanding of the problem. To date, there is a notable lack of outcome evaluation (Clawson, Dutch, Salomon, & Goldblatt Grace, 2009; Laczko & Danailova-Trainor, 2009; van der Laan, Smit, Busschers, & Aarten, 2011). The field is in need of systematic, high-quality research to determine program efficacy in preventing trafficking, protecting victims, and prosecuting those engaged in the crime of human trafficking.

# The Role of the Psychologist

Psychology can and must address human trafficking in all professional capacities: research, education and training, advocacy and public policy, public awareness, and practice. The issue must be addressed at multiple levels of the social ecological model, from individual protective and risk factors to societal and policy factors.

- Psychologists who conduct **research** have a critical role to play in conceptualizing, designing, conducting, analyzing, and publishing investigations related to human trafficking.
- Psychologists involved in **education and training** at the undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral levels can incorporate the topic of human trafficking into their courses, seminars, and case conferences.
- By engaging in **education and advocacy**, psychologists can share their knowledge of psychological science with policymakers to “contribute to the formulation of sound public policy to address health and social issues and improve human welfare” (APA, 2010b, p. 7). Policymakers at all levels—federal, state, and local—would benefit from information about populations at risk for trafficking, contributing factors, means of trafficking, identification of trafficked persons, and the consequences of exploitation for individuals and communities.
- Psychologists can contribute to **public awareness** of human trafficking by translating complex research findings into information accessible to the general public. Community and social psychologists’ expertise can also contribute to developing effective ways to educate specific audiences.

Psychologists practice in many arenas and with thorough training can contribute to human trafficking prevention, protection of trafficked persons and potential victims, and prosecution of traffickers. Clinical and counseling psychologists can provide psychotherapy, forensic evaluation, career counseling, and other services. School psychologists can train other school personnel on trafficking issues, develop prevention programming for youth, or identify at-risk students. Forensic psychologists can work within law enforcement agencies on investigative and prosecutorial responses to trafficking.

The central challenge of providing psychotherapy services to survivors of human trafficking is the dearth of clinical research identifying best practices for this population. The needs of

trafficking survivors are extensive and complex (Shigekane, 2007), and psychologists have an obligation to gain competency regarding this population's unique constellation of mental health problems before providing treatment to trafficked women and girls. Competency in multiculturalism and diversity is essential to effective practice; psychologists need to attend to the intersections of race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender, age, ability, class status, education, religion/spirituality, developmental stage, and culture (APA, 2008).

In many parts of the United States, survivors have limited access to service providers with specialized training in the unique psychological needs of trafficking victims (Adams, 2010; Chung, Bemak, Ortiz, & Sandoval-Perez, 2008; Yakushko, 2009). Because victims of trafficking are likely to have experienced multiple and persistent traumas, a trauma-informed approach to treatment is essential. A wealth of literature describes effective and empirically based interventions with survivors of trauma (Cook et al., 2005), and until interventions specific to the needs of trafficked women and girls are developed, it is reasonable to recommend the current guidelines applied to the treatment of survivors of other abuses. Psychologists should remain aware that trafficking survivors may present with many issues, requiring a holistic approach to services.

Psychologists working on complex trauma and complex PTSD issues can continue to inform and enhance an understanding of best practices and effective interventions (Cloitre et al., 2011; Courtois, 2008). Working in conjunction with women and girls who have been trafficked to develop appropriate and effective therapeutic techniques is essential. Practitioners working to establish therapeutic techniques for trafficked women and girls can develop diagnostic, evaluation, and treatment guidelines that describe professional competencies and prescribe ethical and responsible care of the individuals they serve.

Finally, psychologists can play key roles within criminal justice systems by assisting in interviews and evaluations of victims. Trafficking survivors who are well advanced in their recovery process can provide invaluable assistance to psychologists and forensic interviewers regarding trafficking dynamics and ways to avoid retraumatizing the client (Pierce, personal communication, April 29, 2013). Social psychologists can help jurors and judges understand the psychological mechanisms by which people can be coerced and manipulated and their freedom constrained; they can address the misperception that trafficking victims "could

have left" because they may not have been physically confined and that the victim is a "bad witness" because of her behavior and demeanor.

## Self-Care and Safety: Ethical Considerations

Psychologists and organizations that provide services to trafficked individuals must proactively prepare for the potential effects of working with traumatized clients. Awareness, education, ongoing self-care, and a supportive work culture are essential to the well-being of psychologists and to the responsible and effective treatment of trafficked persons.

### SELF-CARE

Psychologists working with trafficked individuals need to pay special attention to their own well-being (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2009; Kliner & Stroud, 2012). Providing trauma-focused treatment is emotionally complex and demanding (Figley, 2002; Meichenbaum, 2007). Distress can fuel burnout, secondary traumatic stress (STS), vicarious traumatization (VT), and compassion fatigue (CF), which can include exhaustion, emotional numbing, a sense of reduced personal effectiveness, PTSD-like symptoms, and a variety of somatic disturbances (IOM, 2009; Jenaro, Flores, & Arias, 2007; Kliner & Stroud, 2012; McCann & Pearlman, 1990; Meichenbaum, 2007; Perron & Hiltz, 2006; P. L. Smith & Moss, 2009; Yassen, 1995).

Psychologists have an ethical responsibility to (a) be cognizant of the possibility of burnout, STS, VT, and CF; (b) understand the impact these conditions have on the therapeutic relationship; and (c) engage in self-care measures to prevent and mitigate impairment in their work (APA, 2010a; E. K. Baker, 2003; Barnett & Cooper, 2009; Carroll, Gilroy, & Murra, 1999; Good, Khairallah, & Mintz, 2009; Meichenbaum, 2007; Norcross & Barnett, 2008; P. L. Smith & Moss, 2009).

Supervisors, managers, and organizations that educate or employ psychologists also have an ethical responsibility to promote "a culture of self-care" (Barnett & Cooper, 2009, p. 16). First and foremost, this includes honest acceptance that STS, VT, and CF can occur and that measures should be taken to reduce their likelihood and to address them when they arise.

## SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Psychologists who work with trafficked women and girls need to be mindful of safety for their clients, for themselves, and for their places of work, especially if the trafficker is under criminal investigation or prosecution (IOM, 2009). Maintaining absolute confidentiality about clients who have been trafficked is essential for safety (IOM, 2009). For the safety of providers, agency staff, and clients, clear guidelines should be developed for confidentiality protocols, employee responsibilities, building security, emergency communication and planning, and staff education and training.

Zimmerman and Watts (2003, p. 4) provided excellent guidelines for interviewing trafficked women and girls that capture the essential need for ethical, respectful, and safe interactions. The guidelines are intended for service providers and researchers working with this population as well as media professionals. A full explication of their recommendations is beyond the scope of this report, but the 10 guiding principles are:

1. Do no harm.
2. Know your subject and assess the risks.
3. Prepare referral information—Do not make promises you cannot fulfill.
4. Adequately select and prepare interpreters and coworkers.
5. Ensure anonymity and confidentiality.
6. Get informed consent.
7. Listen to and respect each woman's assessment of her situation and risks to her safety.
8. Do not retraumatize a woman.
9. Be prepared for emergency intervention.
10. Put information collected to good use.

## Recommendations

The Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls offers specific recommendations in the following topic areas: research, practice, education and training, public policy, and public awareness. In addition, the task force offers general recommendations

that transcend the topic areas and are essential to all aspects of work in psychology.

## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that psychologists:

- **Examine their assumptions and biases toward at-risk groups as they consider engaging in work on human trafficking issues.** Stereotypes related to immigrants and undocumented migrants, runaway or homeless youths, persons with addictions, or individuals in prostitution can impede identification of human trafficking survivors and their unique needs.
- **Be culturally sensitive in all endeavors related to human trafficking (research, education and training, advocacy and public policy, public awareness, and practice).**
- **Remain cognizant that internationally and domestically trafficked persons are a diverse and multicultural group.** Psychologists must be able to adapt their professional work accordingly.
- **Recognize that no “one-size-fits-all” approach exists to comprehensively address the victim/survivor experience.** No single law enforcement or victim services protocol will suffice in every case. Remaining flexible with regard to conceptualization is a critical skill given the many possible intersections of victim characteristics (minor or adult, domestic or foreign national, among others), as well as the multiple labor and commercial sex settings in which trafficking occurs.
- **Acknowledge that their work occurs within a social ecological system that includes larger community and cultural influences and that changes in one level of the system may have wider implications.** Psychologists should remain aware that psychological approaches do not exist in a vacuum. For example, policy change in the name of anti-trafficking efforts may create unintended consequences for other vulnerable communities (such as clients of child welfare systems or immigrants).
- **Support the creation of cultural shifts among law enforcement and service providers in anti-trafficking efforts to create a greater understanding of and respect for all trafficked populations.** For example, community and social psychologists can address law enforcement and service provider attitudes toward marginalized populations as groups “worthy” of support and access to

services by providing specialized training regarding the nature of trafficking and its victims.

- **Examine the impact of paternalistic attitudes and the “rescue” approach on survivors’ outcomes and well-being.**

This approach must be guarded against in U.S. policy, NGO programs, and individual treatment. Paternalistic attitudes toward survivor inclusion in policymaking, program planning, and program evaluation sideline expertise and silence essential voices.

- **Advocate for survivor-centered, survivor-informed, and survivor-led efforts guiding policymaking, protocol development, research design, methodology, and clinical approaches.**  
For example, community-based research should be conducted with the input of affected individuals, taking time to build and maintain trusting collaborative relationships.
- **Increase focus on prevention of human trafficking at all levels of the social ecological system.**
- **Support recommendations of the APA Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls (2010) regarding social norms, attitudes, and culture of tolerance for sexual exploitation.**

## RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

To address the limitations of the current research base as discussed at length in this report, particularly the absence of research on trafficking of women and girls for forced labor, of women and girls into and within the United States, and on the efficacy of programs and treatment modalities for survivors, it is recommended that:

- **The complexity of human trafficking issues be addressed with an interdisciplinary and multisector response.**  
Transnational and domestic trafficking of women and girls occurs within systems of global and domestic trade, voluntary and forced migration, economic disparities, and structural inequalities. In addition, legal and governmental factors such as the existence or lack of labor laws, criminal justice procedures, and child welfare systems impact trafficking situations. The complexity of the issue requires a multisector response, and interdisciplinary research is necessary for that response to be optimally effective.
- **Research methodologies be developed and conducted in collaboration and consultation with survivors and clinicians who have substantial experience providing services to this population.**

Trafficked persons who have experienced powerlessness may perceive research settings that are inherently hierarchical to be overpowering. Therefore, mixed methodologies (e.g., qualitative and quantitative, with an overarching participatory action research lens) may be better suited to concurrently obtain empirically supported results while paying attention to important ethical concerns.

- **Community-based participatory research be considered as one promising approach to addressing this topic.**

It is recommended that research be conducted in the following areas:

### Prevention/Demand

- **Prevention of human trafficking at all levels of the social ecological model.**  
This includes examining risk factors such as child sexual abuse, child neglect, parental abandonment, racial and ethnic discrimination, homelessness, and marginalization due to sexual identity, sexual orientation, disability, or immigrant status.
- **Role that objectification of women and girls plays in the proliferation of human trafficking and in fueling the demand for commercial sexual exploitation.**
- **Role of women’s empowerment, equity, and rights in the prevention of trafficking.**
- **Potential role of religion and religious practices in relation to trafficking recruitment and recovery.**
- **Effective cross-disciplinary collaboration and partnerships for prevention.**
- **Consumer and business models for reducing demand for products made with forced labor and factors impacting consumer attitudes and behavior.**
- **Effectiveness of primary prevention efforts targeting girls and women.**
- **Link between pornography and sex trafficking, including trafficking for the purpose of producing pornography, the use of pornography by traffickers, and the potential for pornography to fuel trafficking via increased demand.**  
Anecdotal evidence suggests traffickers may use pornography to “train” women and girls for commercial sex work and also as a coercion method (e.g., threatening to show family the pornographic material involving the victim if she does not comply).

- **Demographics, characteristics, and motivations of consumers of goods and services that involve trafficking, especially commercial sex.**
- **Demand and trafficking.**  
Psychologists can collaborate with groups that work on rehabilitating consumers of commercial sex to build methodologies that contribute to an understanding of demand in the United States.

#### **Identification**

- **How information processing, social perception, schemas, and labeling impact the ability of professionals to identify perpetrators and victims of human trafficking in the field and to respond appropriately.**
- **Better understanding of common contributing factors regarding areas that may involve trafficking but have not been examined as such (e.g., survival sex, stripping, pornography).**

#### **Biases**

- **How depictions of human trafficking impact justice for and empowerment of survivors.**  
Depictions may impact how victims perceive themselves (including whether they identify as victims of a crime) and how the justice system responds (e.g., jury perceptions and decisions, prosecutors' willingness to take cases, assumptions about "good witnesses" and "good victims," and judges' rulings). Failure to represent the diversity of trafficking situations or to recognize the resiliency and agency of trafficking survivors may impact how services are provided. This could include examination of depictions of trafficking in the media, government-produced public service announcements, outreach materials, and NGO logos and websites. It could also be fruitful to examine the language of policy and rhetoric in the anti-trafficking movement.

#### **Traffickers**

- **Trafficker coercion tactics, especially psychological tactics.**
- **Typology of traffickers, including characteristics and contributing factors (e.g., factors that determine whether people become traffickers).**
- **Comparison of sex traffickers to other types of sex offenders (e.g., rapists, child molesters) to determine whether current criminal justice responses, mental health treatment, and rehabilitation and reentry protocols applied to sex offenders are appropriate for sex traffickers.**

- **Degree to which formerly trafficked persons engage in the trafficking of others and the determinants of this behavior.**

#### **Trafficked Persons**

- **Interactions of situational and individual characteristics (e.g., developmental, cultural, demographic) as they apply to human trafficking vulnerability, resistance, resiliency, and recovery.**
- **Post-trafficking social support and relationships.**  
Because traffickers commonly prey on women and girls by establishing a trusting, albeit false, relationship with them, studies on the impact of trafficking on relationships will be especially helpful.
- **Long-term impact of the trafficking experience throughout the life course of survivors.**  
For example, the impact of prolonged exposure to violent pornography or of forced abortions on survivors' sexual and reproductive health warrants investigation.
- **Overlap of intimate partner violence and sex trafficking.**
- **Impact of gender nonconformity and gender fluidity on vulnerability to trafficking.**
- **Trafficking of men and boys for labor and for commercial sex.**
- **Religious and spiritual factors pertinent to trafficking (e.g., risk and recruitment), survivor resilience and recovery, and service delivery (e.g., how the faith orientation of groups providing services impacts the well-being of survivors).**

#### **Trauma**

- **Types of trauma exposure during and after trafficking, with specific focus on exposure to psychological and physical coercion, resulting sequelae, and areas of functioning that are impacted.**
- **Trauma's impact on decision making, willingness to cooperate with law enforcement, willingness to receive services, and vulnerability to revictimization.**
- **Traumatic bonding, or Stockholm syndrome, in cases of human trafficking.**
- **Factors that reduce the risk of trauma-related sequelae in affected populations (e.g., resilience of trafficked persons).**

#### **Labor**

- **Risk factors for trafficking into domestic service, agricultural production and meat processing, service industries**

(e.g., salons, restaurants, hotels), and other locations of labor trafficking.

- **Biopsychosocial effects of slavelike and exploitative work environments.**

A thorough examination of the experiences of persons trafficked for labor, including psychological impact and health consequences, is lacking in the current literature.

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- **Public attitudes about and media depictions of labor trafficking.** It would be informative to examine factors contributing to the relatively low profile of labor trafficking in research, academic writing, and public discourse.

#### Program and Treatment Evaluation

- **Program/practice evaluation using randomized control designs and quasi-experimental designs when appropriate and ethical.**
- **Strengths, limitations, and successes of organizations with survivor leadership and survivors on staff or as peer mentors.** It is essential to determine factors contributing to successful models and to identify best practices, as the number of service agencies is growing rapidly.
- **Development and evaluation of successful exit programs and support programs.**
- **Development and evaluation of appropriate individual and group treatments to address the psychological impacts of trafficking.** Group therapy has been used effectively in some programs (Ward & Roe-Sepowitz, 2009), but anecdotal evidence suggests support groups may be less effective with some populations because of the circumstances of their trafficking (Shigekane, 2007). Further exploration is needed.
- **Protocols for meeting needs of trafficking victims (i.e., shelter, health care, trauma-focused counseling, substance use counseling, education, job training, etc.), including guidance on how to prioritize and provide treatment needs in the most efficient and cost-effective way.**
- **Impact of developmental variables on treatment choice and success.**

#### PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

As practitioners, psychologists perform critical services by providing direct treatment, developing treatment protocols, and consulting with organizations/businesses regarding trafficked

women and girls. The task force recommends that to address the unique needs of trafficked persons competently, psychologists:

- **Develop more effective screening tools for therapists, social service providers, law enforcement personnel, health care providers, and other professionals who may encounter victims.**
- **Consider comprehensive and coordinated community-level responses in supporting victims and survivors.** Psychologists are encouraged to develop and maintain partnership protocols with law enforcement personnel, social workers, and victim service networks (depending on the needs and request of survivors) to help streamline and support efficient community response.
- **Strive for partnership with and coordination of efforts between protection, prosecution, and prevention sectors.** For example, service providers and law enforcement personnel can coordinate their efforts to support survivors more efficiently.
- **Apply psychological theories of healthy personality and identity development, thriving, and psychological growth during the recovery process for survivors of trafficking.**
- **Educate themselves about developmental factors that impact trafficking risk, response to the trauma of trafficking, and efficacy of treatment with different age groups.**
- **Assist the companies with which organizational psychologists consult through technical assistance and training, implementation of prevention strategies, and development of business models for monitoring subcontractors, recruiters, supply chains, and other practices that may conceal trafficking.** Of special interest are companies that outsource services where trafficking is more prevalent (e.g., hired cleaning crews, subcontracted construction labor, suppliers of manufacturing components). In addition, in settings where traffickers or trafficked persons might be encountered (e.g., airports, hotels, border customs checks, emergency rooms), psychologists are encouraged to consult with personnel to increase identification and awareness of trafficked persons.
- **Identify avenues for practitioner self-care and support self-care for other professionals involved in anti-trafficking work (law enforcement, service providers, health care, educators, etc.).**

In addition, it is recommended that APA make the *Report of the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls* available to all practitioners to familiarize them with consequences of

being trafficked and treatment recommendations relevant to trafficked persons.

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS

To increase knowledge and awareness of trafficking, specifically its prevalence and devastating consequences, within the discipline of psychology and among psychologists, the task force recommends that:

- **Psychological theory and research be used to develop effective communication materials and training curricula to maximize learning among multiple sectors that interface with trafficked persons or are involved in prevention efforts.** This would include service providers, policymakers, law enforcement personnel, health care professionals, businesses, educators, and others.
- **Research on information processing, social perception, schemas, and labeling be used to address misperceptions and failures of identification of trafficked persons.** This research should also be incorporated into training curricula.
- **APA disseminate the *Report of the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls* to school psychologists, educators, and faculty at the elementary, middle-school, high-school, and undergraduate levels and to chairs of graduate departments of psychology.** School psychologists and educators need to be informed about (a) identification of students at risk for trafficking; (b) fortifying those at-risk youths with skills to withstand manipulation and advances; (c) empowering youths to recognize and value healthy, noncoercive relationships; (d) helping youths distinguish between legitimate job opportunities and fraudulent “too-good-to-be-true” offers; and (e) encouraging critical discussion of the glorification of pimp culture, sexualization of girls and women, and demand for commercial sex.
- **Chairs of graduate departments of psychology, chairs of departments in related disciplines (e.g., law, social work, public health, public policy, human development and family studies, criminal justice), as well as other relevant professionals or community partners, be encouraged to use information from the *Report of the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls* in curriculum development and to aid in the dissemination of the report.**

- **The importance of and ethical imperative for self-care be emphasized in course work and training.**
- **Psychologists who supervise practicum students, interns, or postdoctoral residents be well versed in and have extensive knowledge of human trafficking.**
- **A continuing education and online program be developed using information from the *Report of the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls*, in collaboration with APA's Office of Continuing Education in Psychology.**
- **All curricula and communication materials be developed by professionals with appropriate background in and knowledge of trafficking and be evaluated for effectiveness.**

### PUBLIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

To promote deeper understanding of all aspects of trafficking of women and girls, the task force recommends that psychologists:

- **Support funding of research related to human trafficking.**
- **Advocate for the development and implementation of evidence-based, developmentally appropriate, culturally appropriate, and trauma-informed services for survivors of human trafficking.** Promote the integration of behavioral health services in settings where trafficking survivors reside and receive services, including schools, victim services, communities, foster and residential care, juvenile justice, criminal justice, and health care.
- **Promote and inform the education and training of health, educational, law enforcement, legal, child welfare, and social service professionals on the causes, signs, and consequences of human trafficking, including mental health aspects, to ensure that individuals are appropriately identified as at risk for or as survivors of trafficking.** Identified individuals should be offered appropriate resources, services, and support to ensure safety and optimal medical and mental health outcomes.
- **Support evidence-based policies and programs to meet the needs of girls as the fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice system.** Address the substantial overlap between involvement in the justice system and in human trafficking. For example, support investments in competitive grant programs to help states and localities better address the needs of girls in the juvenile and



criminal justice systems and to provide specific, targeted support for state efforts to implement best practices for at-risk and system-involved girls.

- Advocate addressing human trafficking in legislation and federal and state initiatives relating to runaway and homeless youth, child welfare services, and foster care and adoption assistance programs.

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- Advocate inclusion of information about sex-trafficking practices and prevention, intimate partner violence prevention, sexualization, objectification, and healthy relationships in school health and related programs, including comprehensive sex education and other sexuality education programs.

- Support policy that recognizes trafficked persons coerced into illegal activities (e.g., prostitution) as victims rather than criminals.

- Promote the development and utilization of empirically supported curriculum models and media literacy programs, including interactive media to prevent trafficking and potentially counteract the effect of sexualization and objectification of girls.

Interventions should be evaluated for effectiveness and potential wide-scale adoption and should assess the impact of sexualization on girls and boys and consider important factors such as race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, disability status, and socioeconomic status, consistent with the recommendations of the *Report of the APA Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls* (APA, Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls, 2010).

- Advocate for effective behavioral health and educational supports for immigrant-origin children, adolescents, and adults who have suffered from or are vulnerable to human trafficking, as consistent with the recommendations of the APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration (2012).
- Continue to raise awareness of the behavioral health effects of detention and deportation processes on immigrant trafficking survivors and their families (adapted from the recommendations of the APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration, 2012).
- Promote immigration policies that support trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive behavioral health services and that recognize the importance of family reunification in immigration proceedings when

appropriate and in the best interest of the trafficking survivor, as consistent with the APA Resolution on Immigrant Children, Youth, and Families (1998) (adapted from the recommendations of the APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration, 2012).

- Advocate review of immigration policy, including examination of the temporary work visas and guest-worker programs, to eliminate abusive labor conditions.

- Promote protection of human rights for all workers in the United States through support for humane and just labor standards, enforcement of labor laws, and protection of workers' interests.

- Examine the impact of the current economic climate and policy on the well-being of the workforce.

- Advocate careful examination of the connection between free-trade policies and trafficking of persons into the United States and to produce goods for U.S. consumption.

- Promote policies that will provide access to lifelong health and mental health care to address the long-term and chronic health issues faced by survivors of trafficking.

#### PUBLIC AWARENESS RECOMMENDATIONS

To raise awareness of trafficking, the task force recommends that public awareness campaigns be used to:

- Address common misperceptions and myths about trafficking victims.
- Increase awareness that human trafficking occurs within the United States in all types of communities. As such, awareness campaigns must be adapted for use in diverse and multicultural communities.
- Increase awareness of both labor and sex trafficking.
- Educate the public about common signs of human trafficking to help identify potential victims in their communities. Psychologists can be especially helpful in educating about signs of psychological coercion—often subtle and difficult to identify—in trafficking (e.g., grooming, traumatic bonding).
- Emphasize prevention for parents and youth.
- Include multilevel training created by long-term survivors who are advanced in their own healing and have the

necessary experience, professional skills, and training to work with economically and culturally diverse stakeholders.

- **Respect the varied lived experiences of human trafficking survivors.**

Ensure that images are neither exploitive nor sensationalist in nature to prevent stereotypical images of human trafficking survivors. When public awareness programs include survivors as speakers, the organizers and other speakers should be mindful of avoiding unintentionally presenting survivors as “token” examples, or worse, “specimens” to be examined.

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It is also recommended that:

- **Public service announcements provide survivor hotline numbers in addition to the Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline number.**  
Institutions that may serve trafficked persons or may be locations of trafficking should post public service announcements with hotline numbers.
- **Public awareness curricula address intersections and overlaps with other forms of violence (e.g., child abuse, intimate partner violence), exploitation (e.g., labor exploitation and violations), and vulnerable communities (e.g., immigrants, refugee/asylees, homeless youth).**

# INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

## Purpose

The existence of human trafficking underscores society's ongoing struggle to secure equality and human rights for all its members. Human trafficking is defined as the economic exploitation of an individual at the hands of another through force, fraud, or coercion (Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 [TVPA]; United Nations, 2000).<sup>1</sup> U.S. citizens are both victims and perpetrators of this crime in the United States and abroad.

In 2011, the American Psychological Association (APA) established the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls at the recommendation of APA's Committee on Women in Psychology (CWP) and upon approval by the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest (BAPPI). The purpose of this report is to (a) raise awareness among psychologists about human trafficking; (b) make recommendations to enhance research, education and training, advocacy and public policy, public awareness, and practice as they pertain to the intersections of psychology and this social problem; and (c) urge psychologists to bring scientific rigor and research expertise to bear on informing policy, service provision, and an understanding of the dynamics of trafficking.

In this report, the task force examines and summarizes the literature on human trafficking as it relates to women and girls trafficked into and within the United States.<sup>2</sup> Although we

acknowledge that many forms of human trafficking are equally devastating, the focus of this report is in accordance with the mandate from CWP: women and girls trafficked into or within the United States for purposes of labor or commercial sex.<sup>3</sup>

Psychologists in all areas of the discipline can play a meaningful role in addressing human trafficking through research, education, advocacy, and provision of clinical services. Attention by APA and its members to human trafficking is in clear alignment with its mission "to advance the creation, communication, and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives." It is hoped the content of this report will move readers to action through advocacy and by addressing task force recommendations in their professional activities.

## Background and Definition

Human trafficking is characterized by exploitation of vulnerable populations and is a violation of the basic human right to autonomy and freedom (*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*; United Nations, 1948). This report uses the definition of human trafficking from Article 3, Use of Terms, of the *U.N. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* (United Nations, 2000):<sup>4</sup>

(a) “Trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;

(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;

(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;

(d) “Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

Human trafficking has been referred to as “modern slavery,” “modern-day slavery,” and “contemporary slavery” by U.S. government officials, including President Barack Obama (Sweet, 2012; White House, 2012), former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (U.S. Department of State, 2012a), Ambassador Luis CdeBaca (U.S. Department of State, 2012a), and others (e.g., Bales, 1999; Batstone, 2007). These terms are used to contrast the illegal and hidden nature of human trafficking in the 20th and 21st centuries with the legal institution of slavery that existed historically. O. Patterson (2011), on the other hand, argued that some forms of human trafficking are much closer to the historical model of slavery than Bales’s (1999) analysis suggests and thus should be categorized as slavery rather than “modern slavery.” Patterson (2011, p. 17) stated:

The context of slavery in our globalized world today may be different, but an abundant and growing body of evidence from observers and from enslaved women themselves clearly show [sic] that this mode of domination is personally experienced in almost exactly the same way by today’s slaves as the slaves of yesterday. Classic slavery persists, however, mainly among three groups of persons: those cases ...

[in] parts of the middle East and Africa where old systems continue into modern times; children held in the worst forms of forced labor; and in the trafficking and exploitation of women for domestic and commercial sexual purposes.

In the United States, the TVPA (and its reauthorizations and amendments) provide tools to combat human trafficking.<sup>5</sup> The act authorized the annual publication of the *Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report)* and established the President’s Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons to assist in the coordination of anti-trafficking efforts. The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003 (TVPRA) required the U.S. Department of State to collect data provided by foreign governments on trafficking investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences to determine compliance with the TVPA’s minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.

Several federal departments address trafficking both within and outside of the country. The U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement oversee victim services. The U.S. Department of Justice is responsible for investigating and prosecuting cases with the assistance of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). For example, the DOL may assist by calculating back pay as part of restitution for victims of trafficking. Additionally, the DOL Office of the Inspector General investigates visa fraud and abuse, as well as other criminal threats to the integrity of its Foreign Labor Certification (FLC) programs.<sup>6</sup> Evidence of human trafficking may be identified in the course of these investigations (U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

The TVPA distinguishes between trafficking in persons for labor and for commercial sex. This distinction can facilitate communication among agencies investigating and prosecuting cases under federal law. However, it runs the risk of oversimplifying the complexity of human trafficking, because trafficked women and girls may be subjected to both forced labor and sexual exploitation.

U.S. courts have ruled on cases in which women and girls have been trafficked into nail and hair salons (*U.S. v. Akouavi Kpade Afolabi*, 2009; *U.S. v. Lynda Dieu Phan, Justin Phan, Duc Cao Nguyen*, 2009), the agricultural industry (*U.S. v. Jose Tecum*, 2001), domestic servitude (*U.S. v. Calimlim*, 2006; *U.S. v. Theresa Mubang*, 2004), the service industry (*U.S. v. Abrorkhodja Askarkhodjaev*, 2011), the garment industry (*U.S. v. Kil Soo Lee*, 2001), fraudulent marriage (*U.S. v. Lynda Dieu Phan, Justin*

## Sex Trafficking

### “Fernanda”

Fernanda was an undocumented adult woman from South America who was smuggled through Mexico and into the United States. She had paid thousands of dollars in exchange for entry into the country and the promise of a job as a maid. Instead, she was forced into prostitution in the suburb of a major city in the southeastern United States. Some of her earnings were confiscated by the traffickers, and she was controlled by the threat of informing her family that she was a prostitute. The traffickers were from the same nation as Fernanda but had been living in the United States.

(From the Human Trafficking Law Project Database, 2013, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Law School. Copyright 2014 by the Regents of the University of Michigan. Adapted with permission.)

*Phan, Duc Cao Nguyen*, 2009), and peddling (*U.S. v. Adriana Paoletti-Lemus*, 1998). Women and girls also have been forced into prostitution (*U.S. v. Marcus Sewel*, 2007), stripping (*U.S. v. Corey Davis*, 2008), pornography in its many forms (*U.S. v. Irey*, 2007), and sex tourism (*U.S. v. Kent Frank*, 2007).<sup>7</sup>

The case examples provided throughout this report are intended to illustrate the variation in human trafficking of women and girls in the United States, as well as to highlight some determinants of and responses to trafficking. Examples include testimonials as well as fictional characters based on genuine trafficking experiences and cases. The examples are intended to realistically represent patterns of trafficking in the United States. Cases were developed to illustrate labor and sex trafficking, variations in age of victims and survivors, geographic and demographic variation, different means of trafficking, and variation in risk factors and outcomes.

## Methodology

### FRAMEWORK

A social ecological model is used as the framework for this report, highlighting the contributions of individual, interpersonal, institutional, community, and societal factors as they pertain to human trafficking. Social ecological models locate individuals with their unique identities, experiences, strengths, vulnerabilities, and characteristics at the center of a series of concentric circles representing multiple levels of social influence that independently and interactively impact their options, behaviors, and outcomes (McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988). Social ecological models are predicated on the assumption that behaviors and outcomes are multiply determined; intrapersonal characteristics are one part of the picture, but consideration must also be given to

the interpersonal relationships, social institutions and organizations, communities, and public policy environments in which an individual acts.<sup>8</sup> This model suggests that successful approaches to preventing human trafficking need to take into account more than the vulnerabilities of individual women and girls and consider the institutional structures,

social norms, and policy factors that can empower those individuals or constrain individual agency and options.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The task force identified literature pertaining to the trafficking of women and girls into and within the United States published between 1980 and December 31, 2012. Although the term *human trafficking* was not used in the peer-reviewed literature prior to the 1990s in the United States, some of the seminal research on the prostitution of minors—which is human trafficking according to the TVPA—was published in the 1980s.<sup>9</sup> We believe it is essential to include studies that examined the populations of interest, even if the work predated the current terminology.

The task force relied on nonempirical reference materials for the history, legal framework, and background information on this topic. These included academic sources; reports and briefs from governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental organizations; and case information from databases maintained by the University of Michigan Law School and the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime. However, information regarding prevalence of human trafficking from nonempirical sources was reported only as evidence of variation in official estimates, not as empirically confirmed data.

Because this is a relatively new research area, there are a limited number of published empirical studies, especially on trafficking into and within the United States and on labor trafficking. We cast a wide net to capture all relevant research, capitalize on the unique contributions of multiple methodological approaches, and determine which findings are supported by converging evidence from multiple approaches. Thus, the review included studies using qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methodologies; large or small sample sizes; and case studies, ethnography, and community-based participatory research,

among other approaches. Each methodological approach offers a unique lens and contributes to a more complete picture of human trafficking.

The task force sought high-quality empirical research and defined this as work in which (a) the methodology is appropriate for the research question, (b) the selected sample is appropriate for the questions asked and the sampling methods are clearly explained, (c) measures and methods are fully and clearly explained, (d) limitations are addressed, and (e) conclusions and inferences drawn are appropriately supported by the qualitative or quantitative data. In other words, whether qualitative or quantitative techniques are used, the methodology should be transparent, and the evidence should support the conclusions. Key characteristics of the empirical studies identified are presented in a set of grids available as supplementary material online.<sup>10</sup>

The accumulated evidence provides a valuable foundation for addressing the trafficking of women and girls, but additional work is needed. Policy and programmatic responses to human trafficking are based on the evidence available at the time they were enacted. Ultimately there is a need for stronger policy based on a longitudinal and population-based assessment of the scope, characteristics, risk and protective factors, and impact of human trafficking.

### LANGUAGE CONSIDERATIONS

One of the biggest challenges faced by the task force was determining how to use appropriate and accurate language to synthesize the experiences of trafficking victims described in the literature. The range of experiences that trafficked women face—from blatant and overt violence, to subtle yet very effective coercion tactics—makes this an enormously complex topic. For example, we deliberated over the detail with which the violence perpetrated against trafficked women and girls should be described. There was an obligation to represent honestly the experiences of victims and survivors while striving to avoid sensationalism and voyeurism on the one hand and sanitization on the other. Furthermore, emphasizing the very real physical and mental violence perpetrated in trafficking may inadvertently reinforce misperceptions. Trafficked women and girls who experience less overtly brutal circumstances may not be seen as legitimate victims of trafficking and may not receive the justice they deserve. It is hoped that the resulting report gives an accurate picture of the issue.

Additionally, task force members deliberated over the variety of existing terminology used to describe commercial sex activity. In the end, we settled on a particular set of terms that best reflect the population of concern: trafficked women and girls. The term *commercial sexual exploitation* (CSE) was used to encompass all forms of involvement in the commercial sex industry as a result of trafficking (force, fraud, coercion) or of exploitation of vulnerability (e.g., homelessness, poverty, disability, gender nonconformity). The term *commercial sexual exploitation of children* (CSEC) was used when the victim of such exploitation was a minor (17 years of age or younger under U.S. law). The terms *sex work* and *sex worker* were avoided, as they imply voluntary activity and the focus of this report is on trafficked individuals. The terms *prostitution* and *prostitute* were similarly avoided unless using CSE would inhibit clarity or alter the meaning of the literature reviewed.

### CONCEPTUAL CHALLENGES

Research and practice related to human trafficking are challenging due to the complexity of the issue. Throughout this document, the task force presents case examples of women and girls trafficked into or within the United States. Although there are commonalities—their gender and the presence of exploitation—the truth is that there is no typical case of human trafficking. The diversity of circumstances is vast. To establish laws, develop policy, conduct research, provide services, and communicate about this issue, experts must categorize and define types and subtypes of trafficking. Research in social and cognitive psychology demonstrates that labels, categories, and schemas can facilitate information processing (Fiske & Linville, 1980; Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Schank & Abelson, 1977), but these same cognitive shortcuts can hinder full understanding and careful processing of complex and nuanced realities (Chanowitz & Langer, 1981; Langer, 1990; Langer & Abelson, 1974). Humans make relatively swift, unconscious, and automatic categorizations of other people and their behaviors (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). However, the category label may impede attention to and processing of additional information, consideration of alternate possibilities, or deeper investigation. In instances of human trafficking, this may reduce the chances that a victim will be identified. It is important not only for psychologists in therapeutic, research, policy, or educational settings to guard against premature conclusions about people or their behavior but also to use the research to assist other professionals to avoid hasty—and potentially injurious—conclusions.

## Sex Trafficking

### “Lot Lizards”

A law enforcement officer attending training on human trafficking stated there were no incidents of this crime in the county. Because a major interstate bisected the county, the trainers asked about the possibility of juveniles being prostituted at truck stops and travel plazas. The officer responded that there were “lot lizards” at [name of travel plaza] but denied encountering human trafficking. “Lot lizard” is a pejorative, slang term referring to individuals—female or male—exchanging sex for money or something else of value at truck stops, fueling plazas, or rest areas.

(D. L. Hume, personal communication, September 28, 2012. Used with permission.)

Introduction  
and Overview

Another challenge arises from the overlap of human trafficking with other closely related crimes, such as human smuggling, prostitution, and intimate partner violence (IPV). Trafficked women and girls frequently are victims of multiple crimes. It is possible that there are trafficking victims within a variety of clinical populations.

A number of authors highlight similarities in the underlying risk factors, processes, and consequences of IPV and trafficking (Alejano-Steele, 2011; Hynes & Raymond, 2002; Moe, 2004; Owens Bullard, 2011; Reid, 2010; Zimmerman et al., 2003). Although they can be, they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For example, sex trafficking and IPV may occur in relationships in which a boyfriend or spouse is also the woman’s pimp; labor and sex trafficking as well as IPV may occur within “mail order bride” arrangements (Hynes, 2002). Batterers and traffickers perpetrate similar types of violence (Farley et al., 2003; Giobbe, 1993; Hopper & Hidalgo, 2006), and because of the complex coercion methods that traffickers use, it may not be clear to the trafficking survivor herself that she is a victim (Shigekane, 2007).

One area of human trafficking facilitated through intimate relationships includes situations involving mail-order brides. Although marriage brokerage is a lucrative and legal enterprise in many countries (with an estimated 10,000 Internet sites worldwide), the relational context of marriage may hide instances of human trafficking. An estimated 2,000–3,500 American men find their wives through mail-order bride agencies each year, particularly from Southeast Asia and the former Soviet Union (Hughes & Roche, 1999; Hynes, 2002). Although not every situation involves trafficking, marriage brokerage provides an opportunity to lure women from abroad for potential CSE or domestic servitude.

The U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (2011) acknowledged that smuggling and trafficking are frequently confused and that the terms sometimes are used interchangeably, even in the research literature. Unlike smuggling, which requires movement across an international border, human trafficking does not require any movement of the victims;

individuals can be trafficked in a single locality, including within their own home. As illustrated in Table 1 (see page 18), smuggling and trafficking are two distinct crimes, although they can co-occur (Webber & Shirk, 2005). Above all, trafficking involves exploitation of a human victim; exploitation or victimization is not a defining element of smuggling (K. Kim & Hreshchyshyn, 2004).

Probably the most contentious area of overlap and attempted distinction is between sex trafficking and prostitution. Complex discourse about prostitution, sex work, exploitation, and sex trafficking abound. O’Connell Davidson (2006) noted that in the absence of clearly articulated and agreed upon definitions of concepts such as exploitation, there is disagreement about when prostitution is sex trafficking. Some scholars have argued that prostitution is a legitimate and potentially empowering choice of work (e.g., Brennan, 2002; Butcher, 2003; Foerster, 2009; Weitzer, 2010) and have distinguished it from sex trafficking, which involves force or deceit.<sup>11</sup> They argue that criminalization of prostitution denies individuals the right to freely control their own bodies and sexuality and support themselves as they wish. Other scholars argue that prostitution itself is an act of violence and inherently harmful (Barry, 1979; Farley et al., 2003; MacKinnon, 2005; Raymond, 2004); they argue that consent and choice are meaningless when there are no real alternatives.

Agency to choose prostitution must be considered in the context of social oppressions based on gender, race, and class. According to Farley (2006), “prostitution is ‘chosen’ as a job by those who have the fewest real choices available to them” (p. 110). For the purposes of this report, the task force acknowledges this controversy because of its importance in the discourse on human trafficking. However, this debate does not refute the fact that trafficking occurs in prostitution and other sex work (D. Banks & Kyckelhahn, 2011; Barnitz, 2000; Lloyd, 2011; Pierce, 2009; Zimmerman et al.,

2008) and that many women and girls in the sex industry work under horrific conditions (Peng, 2005). The research provides compelling evidence that prostitution is not, in fact, victimless; the harmful consequences for body and psyche are well-documented and summarized in a later section of this report (L. M. Baker, Dalla, & Williamson, 2010; Burnette et al., 2008; Choi, Klein, Shin, & Lee, 2009; Dalla, Xia, & Kennedy, 2003; Farley & Barkan, 1998; Farley et al., 2003; Jung, Song, Chong, Seo, & Chae, 2008; McClanahan, McClelland, Abram, & Teplin, 1999; Mitchell, Finkelhor, & Wolak, 2010; Potterat et al., 2004; Sallman, 2010; K. Shannon et al., 2008; Stachowiak et al., 2005; Thukral, 2005).

**TABLE 1**  
**Human Trafficking vs. Migrant Smuggling**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>HUMAN TRAFFICKING</b>	<b>MIGRANT SMUGGLING</b>
	“Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons.” <sup>a</sup>	“The facilitation, transportation, attempted transportation, or illegal entry of a person across an international border.” <sup>b</sup>
<b>Transnational border crossing</b>	Not required	Required
<b>Movement of target person</b>	Not required	Required
<b>Consent</b>	If other elements of definition present, consent not relevant; not relevant for minors.	Required
<b>Outcome</b>	Economic exploitation of the individual that may include sexual exploitation and/or forced labor.	Illegal border crossing; illegal entry into a nation.
<b>Source of profit</b>	Trafficker profits through exploitation of victim in forced labor/commercial sex.	Smuggler profits in payment for assisting illegal entry.
<b>Victimization</b>	Required; crime is against a person, violation of human rights.	Not required. Arrangement may be mutually beneficial. <sup>c</sup> Crime is against the state rather than a person.
<b>Crime</b>	Crime is against a person.	Crime is against the state.

<sup>a</sup> U.N. Protocol (2000).

<sup>b</sup> U.S. Department of State, Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center (2006).

<sup>c</sup> Although smuggling does not require victimization, there are occasions when these two phenomena do overlap. Human trafficking is sometimes the end result of a smuggling agreement, either through exploitation directly by the smuggler or by smugglers working in concert with traffickers and pimps. According to U.S. federal law, however, the initial consent of a person to be smuggled into the country does not preclude charges of human trafficking if force, fraud, or coercion is then used to exploit the individual.



# MEASURING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking as a crime, including its embedded human rights violations, is extremely difficult to measure. Because of numerous challenges, there is incomplete and imperfect knowledge about the nature and scope of the problem, the characteristics of both victims and traffickers, and the effectiveness of policies and practices used to respond to trafficking.

## Methodological Challenges

The methodological challenges and the resultant research gaps are outlined in a number of reports and reviews (Brennan, 2005; Clawson, Dutch, Salomon, & Goldblatt Grace, 2009; Clawson, Layne, & Small, 2006; Goodey, 2008; Gozdziaik & Bump, 2008; Jahic & Finckenauer, 2005; Laczko & Gozdziaik, 2005; Oram, Stöckl, Busza, Howard, & Zimmerman, 2012; Tyldum, 2010; van der Laan, Smit, Busschers, & Aarten, 2011; Weiner & Hala, 2008; Zhang, 2009). The first and perhaps largest challenge is the hidden nature of the crime. This is due in part to the nature of criminal activity; trafficking is clandestine (Clawson, Layne, & Small, 2006; Jahic & Finckenauer, 2005), and not all incidents are discovered or reported. This makes acquisition of a representative sample impossible, as there is no defined population or sampling frame.

In addition, many of the contexts in which trafficking occurs are relatively unobserved, such as migrant labor, domestic servitude, or the commercial sex industry (Bauer, 2007; Farrell et al., 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Silverman, 2011). Farrell et al. (2012) reported that of 140 cases of labor and sex trafficking investigated in 12 U.S. counties, 43% occurred in a private residence, making detection difficult. Persons trafficked in the service sector (e.g., hotel cleaning staff, restaurant staff) may interact briefly with patrons of those businesses; however, genuine connections are rare. Infrequent and impersonal interactions, as well as potential language barriers, render trafficked persons in the service sector virtually invisible.

Lack of a comprehensive centralized database of human trafficking cases further complicates research efforts. The absence of such a database arises in part because of a lack of information sharing among multiple agencies (law enforcement, human services, education, the judiciary) at multiple levels (local, state, federal), sometimes due to statutory or policy restrictions (Farrell et al., 2010, 2012; Hopper, 2004; Reid, 2010).<sup>1</sup> Variation in charges filed and disposition of cases further complicate the availability of reliable data. Variations can result if trafficked persons deny their victimization and thus are not counted (L. A. Smith, Vardaman, & Snow, 2009) or if victims refuse to cooperate in the prosecution of traffickers because of fear or

## Labor Trafficking

### “Rayya”

Rayya was a 10-year-old girl from the Middle East forced into domestic servitude by a wealthy family in the western United States who was also from the Middle East. The family used accusations and threats of police action to coerce Rayya’s family to sell her. Using a fraudulently obtained visa, the wealthy family brought Rayya to their home and forced her to do housework, provide child care, and cook and to live in the garage. Rayya was unpaid, verbally and physically abused, and prevented from attending school or religious services.

(From the Human Trafficking Law Project database, 2013, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Law School. Copyright 2014 by the Regents of the University of Michigan. Adapted with permission.)

intimidation (Farrell et al., 2012; Gajic-Veljanoski & Stewart, 2007). The difficulties are compounded when trafficking is misidentified as delinquent or criminal behavior or as undocumented immigration (Barnitz, 2001; Laczko & Gozdzia, 2005; Lloyd, 2005; Mitchell et al., 2010; L. A. Smith et al., 2009; Srikantiah, 2007; Reid, 2010; Webber & Shirk, 2005; Williams, 2010).

Researchers are further challenged by the sheer diversity of trafficking situations and experiences (Brennan, 2005) and the conceptual challenges mentioned previously. There is no typical trafficking scenario, making it difficult to extract common elements and create useful generalizations. Variations in how terms are operationally defined further complicate a cohesive understanding of trafficking, traffickers, ancillary participants, and the victims involved.

An additional challenge is access to persons with experiential knowledge of the phenomenon. Victims who are still in trafficking situations will rarely be accessible to researchers, and attempting to access them can prove dangerous for the victims and the researchers (Zimmerman & Watts, 2003). Continued access may be complicated by movement for safety reasons or by removal from the country. Survivors may not be psychologically ready to be interviewed or may be protected from contact with researchers to protect confidentiality or to protect investigations (Laczko & Gozdzia, 2005). Key informants in law enforcement, prosecutors’ offices, and service agencies may be unable or unwilling to share information regarding work with trafficked women and girls.

As a result of these challenges, gaps and weaknesses exist in the empirical research on trafficking (Freedom Network, 2010), including an absence of research on labor trafficking relative to sex trafficking, too little research representing the viewpoint

of trafficking victims and survivors, and insufficient evaluation of anti-trafficking policies and programs. Gozdzia and Bump (2008) reviewed 1,467 articles and determined that only 39 were based on empirical research, although 96 nonempirical studies were published in peer-reviewed journals. The nonempirical articles largely

relied on overviews, commentaries, and anecdotal information. Likewise, in a meta-analysis of intervention programs, van der Laan et al. (2011) concluded that policies or interventions to prevent or suppress cross-border trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation have not been evaluated rigorously enough to determine their effect.

## Prevalence and Incidence

Because of the many methodological challenges, there is currently no reliable estimate of the prevalence and incidence of trafficking of women and girls in the United States. What is known is largely based on criminal justice statistics that underestimate the extent of the problem because of underreporting, misidentification, and decisions not to pursue investigation or prosecution (Clawson, Layne, & Small, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2010). Underreporting, misidentification, and decisions not to pursue cases may be differentially applied on the basis of victims’ characteristics, including race, sexual orientation, or immigration status. This in turn could impact the demographic makeup of the population of identified victims. Therefore, although criminal justice statistics provide a basic understanding of some characteristics of trafficking in the United States, they must be interpreted cautiously.

Kyckelhahn, Beck, and Cohen (2009) examined 1,229 investigations of suspected human trafficking in the United States reported by federally funded task forces between January 2007 and September 2008. Of these, 112 incidents were confirmed, 286 were determined not to be trafficking, and 831 were pending or undetermined at the time the report was submitted. For confirmed cases that provided gender information, roughly 99% of sex-trafficking

victims (out of  $n = 230$ ) and 61% of labor-trafficking victims (out of  $n = 36$ ) were women. For confirmed cases that provided citizenship information, 34% of sex-trafficking victims were U.S. citizens, nationals, or permanent residents. For confirmed cases that provided citizenship information ( $n = 216$ ), 34% of sex-trafficking victims were U.S. citizens, nationals, or permanent residents.

Mitchell et al. (2010) estimated approximately 1,450 detentions and arrests were related to prostitution of minors in the United States in 2005.<sup>2</sup> The authors emphasized that due to methodological issues, as well as the realities of the criminal justice system (e.g., underreporting, misidentification, and decisions not to pursue investigation or prosecution), this number underestimates the number of juveniles exploited in commercial sex. These researchers examined 138 of the cases in greater depth and determined that 57% involved a third-party exploiter (pimp, trafficker); 31% were “solo” cases in which there was no intermediary exploiter; and 12% were atypical cases in which the minor was paid for sexual activity by a family member, a caretaker, or an acquaintance but was not “prostituted” in the sense of multiple clients. The authors stressed that within each of these subcategories, there was a great deal of variation regarding the exploiters (organized networks vs. individual operations, including family members), the youth’s circumstances (homeless, runaway, living at home, or in foster care), and other factors. In cases examined by Mitchell et al., 59% of victims were White, 36% Black, and 6% “other” or “do not know.” Nine percent identified as Hispanic ethnicity.<sup>3</sup>

Mitchell et al. (2010) also noted that law enforcement responses differed depending on whether the youth was identified by police, in which case the youth was more likely to be treated as delinquent, or by a concerned party, in which case the youth was more likely to be treated as a victim. The authors of this exploratory study cautioned that a more nuanced understanding of these issues is necessary, as the stereotypical runaway trafficked by a pimp fails to capture the variability in this population.

The U.S. Department of State initially suggested that approximately 50,000 individuals were trafficked into the United States each year (Miko & Park, 2002). This number was decreased to 18,000–20,000 in the 2003 *Trafficking in Persons Report* (TIP Report; U.S. Department of State, 2003). The number was reduced once again to 14,500–17,500 individuals trafficked into the United States each year in the 2005 and 2006 TIP reports (U.S. Department of State, 2005, 2006). These shifts in

estimates are themselves indicative of the difficulty in getting a handle on prevalence and incidence (DeStefano, 2007). As Goodey (2008) wrote, the published estimates of human trafficking are often unverifiable, a problem common to serious and organized crime. There are no estimates related to the labor trafficking of adult or child citizens within the United States, and only rough extrapolations were made of the number of minors at risk for sexual exploitation. Therefore, caution must be exercised in citing published statistics. Jordan (2011) argued that the continued use of unreliable and unsubstantiated estimates of trafficking numbers leads to ineffective policy and public skepticism regarding the reality of human trafficking.

# RISK FACTORS FOR THE TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

Vulnerability to human trafficking results from a nesting of an individual's characteristics and personal history within a complex and dynamic system of external factors. It is a system that encompasses many layers: the immediate social situations and relationships in which an individual is embedded; the characteristics of school and work settings; the local community in which that individual lives; and national patterns of economics, policy decisions, and societal forces that impact the local community. All of these layers are further influenced by current processes of globalization and transnational policies.<sup>1</sup> These factors, from the individual to the global, play out within an immediate and historical milieu of oppressions on the basis of gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, social class, and other identities.

Vulnerability to trafficking must be understood at multiple levels. Consideration must be given to the particular combination of factors that determine whether one girl or one woman is at risk of exploitation and also to factors that lead to heightened risk for specific groups and populations. Understanding these contributing factors provides the best hope of identifying potential points of intervention to prevent the trafficking of women and girls and to redress the harm that it has caused its victims.

## Societal and Public Policy Risk Factors

Numerous local, national, and global processes contribute to the trafficking of women and girls in the United States. Although selected factors are addressed individually in the following sections, they are interconnected in a network of determinants that amplify the risk of human trafficking.

### **GENDER OPPRESSION, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, AND A CULTURE OF TOLERANCE FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Gender oppression takes many forms that independently and collectively contribute to individuals' vulnerability to trafficking and hinder societal recognition of exploitation. Gender inequities persist in control of assets and in earning power both in the United States and in other nations (United Nations Population Fund, n.d.; U.S. Department of Commerce & Office of Management and Budget, 2011). Work traditionally performed by women continues to be devalued and poorly paid. Worldwide, women are more likely to live in poverty than are men, and women in many nations face barriers to education, voting rights, and property rights.

In addition, "gender-based discrimination intersects with discriminations based on other forms of 'otherness,' such as race, ethnicity, religion, and economic status, thus forcing the majority of the

world's women into situations of double or triple marginalization" (Coomaraswamy, 2000, pp. 19–20). Gender-based discrimination also intersects with discrimination based on disability, sexual orientation, age, and gender identity. All of these intersections exacerbate individual vulnerabilities and societal denial of exploitation (Hynes & Raymond, 2002; Tang & Lee, 1999; Tharinger, Horton, & Millea, 1990; Ugarte, Zarate, & Farley, 2003).

In addition to being a violation of basic human rights, gender-based violence manifests and maintains the inequality of women and girls (United Nations, 1993). Victims of both labor trafficking and CSE experience elevated levels of physical and sexual violence (Freedom Network, 2010). Furthermore, past experience of violence and abuse increases the risk of being trafficked (Bagley & Young, 1987; Boxill & Richardson, 2005; McClanahan et al., 1999; Pierce, 2009; Reid, 2011; Simons & Whitbeck, 1991; Tyler, Whitbeck, Hoyt, & Yoder, 2000; Van Dorn et al., 2005).

Decades of psychological research demonstrate the sexualization and objectification of women and girls (APA, Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls, 2010; Fischer, Vidmar, & Ellis, 1993; Frederickson & Roberts, 1997; Hughes, 2000; Kaschak, 1992; Quina & Carlson, 1989). Human trafficking—in particular sex trafficking—occurs within the context of widespread objectification and commodification of the female body that creates women and girls as “product” in economies in which they have little power and sometimes few options for self-sufficiency. In both labor and sex trafficking, “there is a power imbalance where the trafficker possesses the economic power to treat another human as a commodity and to keep the profits. There is no element of consent, voluntariness, pleasure or personal desire of the victim in this transaction” (APA, Division 35, Special Committee on Violence Against Women, n.d., p. 14).

Research in four countries with major commercial sex markets (Jamaica, the Netherlands, the United States, and Japan) suggests that each of these countries maintains a culture of tolerance for sexual exploitation that supports sex-trafficking operations (Shared Hope International, 2007). In the United States, the glamorization of pimping and prostitution and the sexualization of adolescent girls in popular culture may further contribute to a climate of risk (APA, Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls, 2010; Kotrla, 2010).

## GLOBALIZATION

Numerous authors argue that processes related to globalization and international policies exert a major influence on human trafficking (APA, Presidential Task Force on Immigration, 2012; Bales, 1999, 2003; Chuang, 2006; Danailova-Trainor & Belser, 2006; Enriquez, 2006; Louie, 2001; Meyer, 2003; Othman, 2006; Santos, 2002; Seabrook, 2001). These characteristics and changing patterns impact human trafficking in complex ways. For example, Seabrook (2001) argued that because of high debt, many poverty-affected countries are subject to structural adjustment programs as a condition of assistance through the International Monetary Fund. These programs encourage less state spending on national welfare, health, nutrition, and education and greater acceptance of “open market” policies, resulting in three outcomes that increase risk of human trafficking:

- Vulnerable populations are most affected by cuts in social programs.
- More family members are forced into the labor market.
- Children become more economically marginalized.

These shifts in economic policy can contribute to human trafficking by forcing rural populations to seek work in urban areas or abroad, removing them from family and community protection (Hynes & Raymond, 2002; Seabrook, 2001). To finance relocation, individuals often take out loans that push them into debt and increase their vulnerability. Compounding individuals' vulnerability, countries must apply most of their monetary assets to debt payments rather than to anti-trafficking (Bales, 2003) or anti-poverty (Farmer, 1999) efforts.

The number of those who—driven by poverty and persecution, displaced by environmental catastrophes and political instability and conflict, or pulled by promises of employment, liberty, or a better life—voluntarily and involuntarily migrate is at one of the highest levels ever recorded (APA, Presidential Task Force on Immigration, 2012; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2009; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2010; United Nations Population Fund, 2009). In the United States, there are nearly 40 million foreign-born persons, which is the largest number recorded to date (Grieco et al., 2012).<sup>2</sup>

Although migration has always been part of the human experience, the face of migration has changed. Changes in the labor market as a result of globalization led to an increased number of women migrating to support their families (APA, Presidential Task Force

## Labor Trafficking “Jennifer”

Jennifer, a 30-year old Guatemalan woman, came to the [United States] ... with the dream of providing her two children with a good education and her ailing mother with proper medical attention. ... She learned about a job working as a waitress at a restaurant in Virginia. ... At first the restaurant owner and staff were welcoming. Because Jennifer had nowhere to live, the restaurant owner allowed her to sleep in a room at the back of the restaurant in exchange for a very low wage. However ... within two months the owner fired the cook and the other waitress. Jennifer was coerced into working 14-hour shifts every day, preparing the food, cleaning the restaurant and serving patrons. Jennifer felt she had no other choice because she did not have a support network to turn to and was not able to communicate well in English. She was in this situation for 8–9 months until one day during an undercover operation at the restaurant she was able to ask for help from the police officers. Jennifer explained her situation ... including the constant verbal and psychological abuse by the restaurant owner.

(From Testimony of Mary C. Ellison, J.D., Director of Policy, Polaris, Before the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, *International Human Trafficking and Forced Labor*, November 28, 2012, Washington, DC: Polaris. Copyright 2014 Polaris. Reprinted with permission. Names, locations, and other identifying information have been changed and/or omitted to preserve the confidentiality of the populations Polaris Project serves.)

on Immigration, 2012; Piper, 2003; Zimmerman, Kiss, & Hossain, 2011). According to the International Organization for Migration (2010), at least 49% of the worldwide migrant population today is female. Female migrants seek a variety of jobs; however, most employment opportunities available to them are relatively low-paying, low-skilled, and low-power jobs, frequently characterized by traditionally feminine roles of nurturing and serving (Santos, 2002). The sectors of the U.S. economy in which female migrants are employed are also those in which human trafficking has most frequently been identified: the service sector (e.g., hotels, restaurants, salons), domestic service (e.g., nannies, housekeepers), nursing homes and home health care, agriculture and agricultural processing, the garment industry, and sex work (Clawson et al., 2009; Polaris Project, 2011b, 2012; see also the Human Trafficking database at the University of Michigan School of Law [Human Trafficking Law Project, 2013]). Hynes (2002) noted that

transnational sex trafficking in women has a distinct pattern of women being trafficked from developing countries (Asia, Latin America, and Africa) and new market economies in crisis (Russia, Ukraine, and other former Soviet countries) to so-called developed countries, including Western Europe, Australia, Japan, the U.S. and Canada. (p. 48)

Several visa programs within the U.S. immigration system itself are under scrutiny by groups concerned about human trafficking.

These programs include visas for domestic servants (A-3, G-5, and B-1 visas) and visas for agricultural and nonagricultural temporary seasonal workers (H-2A and H-2B visas; frequently called “guest workers”).<sup>3</sup> Workers’ legal status in the United States depends on their remaining in the employment situation associated with their initial entry, even if the situation is abusive or exploitative (American Civil Liberties Union, 2007; American University Washington College of Law International Human Rights Law Clinic & Centro de

los Derechos del Migrante, 2010; Bauer, 2007; Bauer & Ramirez, 2010; Global Workers Justice Alliance, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Polaris Project, 2011b, 2012).

Intensified enforcement of immigration law has pushed undocumented immigrants further underground, making them even more vulnerable to exploitation (Brown, Hotchkiss, & Quispe-Agnoli, 2008). Some advocacy groups suggest that immigrant communities are relatively closed to outsiders because members fear their own or others’ deportation, inadvertently protecting gangs and small criminal networks that prey on vulnerable members of their own group (Shared Hope International, 2007). There is also some evidence that more stringent border controls simply moved the point of crossing for illegal entrants to more dangerous routes through desert areas and that this change further endangers migrant women when crossing illegally (Hendricks, 2007; Lozano & Lopez, 2010).

Women migrating from Mexico without legal authorization are more likely than men to use smugglers to cross into the United States, which increases their risk of being trafficked for forced labor or commercial sex (Donato & Patterson, 2006). Other research on human trafficking from Mexico found that pimps frequently work in concert with human smugglers to kidnap or trick women and girls as young as age 12 into crossing the U.S./Mexico border, where they are trafficked into commercial sex

in San Diego and surrounding military bases and rural areas (Hernandez, 2003; Ugarte et al., 2003).

#### **ECONOMIC INSTABILITY AND WIDESPREAD POVERTY**

Pervasive poverty in combination with limited access to employment or other resources to meet basic needs has been identified as a primary characteristic of source countries for human trafficking, immigration, and migrant labor (Aronowitz, 2009; Bales, 2003, 2004; Danailova-Trainor & Belser, 2006; DeStefano, 2007; Farr, 2005; Newman, 2006; O'Neill Richard, 2000; Trujillo, 2004).<sup>4</sup> The leading countries of origin for confirmed international trafficking victims in the United States are also major source countries for migrant workers and immigrants seeking entry to the United States to raise themselves and their families out of poverty (Farr, 2005; Free the Slaves & Human Rights Center, 2004; Gammage, 2002; U.S. Department of State, 2011b; Zhou, 2003). Research by the World Bank found that developing countries located closest to a major labor-receiving region such as the United States or Europe have the highest rates of migration (Page & Adams, 2003). Mexico is one of the primary countries of origin for men, women, and children trafficked into the United States (Free the Slaves & Human Rights Center, 2004; Shelley, 2010; Ugarte et al., 2003; U.S. Department of State, 2010).

#### **SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INSTABILITY**

An unstable political environment disrupts social functioning and, by extension, exposes vulnerable women and children to traffickers (Derks, 2000; Hughes, 2000, 2002; Joshi, 2002). Examples from Somalia (Karama Movement, 2010), Haiti (Delaney, 2006; U.S. Department of State, 2009), and post-Hurricane Katrina New Orleans (Fletcher, Pham, Stover, & Vinck, 2007; Kissinger et al., 2008) suggest that whether the instability is the result of natural disasters, economic crises, or political conflict, the resultant lack of civil protections amplifies the risk of trafficking for women and girls (CdeBaca, 2010).

#### **PERVASIVE CRIME AND CORRUPTION**

Environments characterized by widespread criminal activity and corruption contribute to the entire process of human trafficking, including identification and recruitment of potential victims, transport and exploitation of victims, and money laundering (Trujillo, 2004; UNODC, 2011). Corruption among authorities at all levels (local and national governments, law enforcement, military forces, international and nongovernmental organizations, and

private business entities) creates a supportive environment for human trafficking operations. Furthermore, when members of the population perceive corruption to be high, they are more likely to accept a trafficker's claim that using a smuggler is essential to obtain necessary travel documents (UNODC, 2011).

Both international and domestic gangs contribute to human trafficking. Gangs and smaller criminal enterprises operating within and outside of the United States have increased their level of cooperation with one another and with transnational criminal organizations to create global trafficking networks that link supply and demand in source, transit, and destination countries (UNODC, 2011). In particular, gangs and criminal networks of various nationalities have built upon their human smuggling operations to traffic illegal migrants into forced labor and CSE in the United States (Aronowitz, 2009; Free the Slaves & Human Rights Center, 2004; National Gang Intelligence Center, 2011; O'Neill Richard, 2000; Webber & Shirk, 2005).<sup>5</sup>

#### **WAR, CONFLICT, AND MILITARY PRESENCE**

International research on human trafficking shows that environments impacted by armed conflict or war, the aftermath of war, and military presence facilitate the sex trafficking of women (Hughes, Chon, & Ellerman, 2007; Nikolić-Ristanović, 2002b; United Nations Development Fund for Women/UNIFEM, 2002). In locations where large numbers of soldiers were stationed for long periods of time, such as Vietnam, businesses involving CSE and CSEC became core components of local "entertainment" and continued as sites of exploitation of women and girls long after the soldiers returned home (Barnitz, 2000).

Researchers also found that military men were recruited to act as escorts or false marriage partners to bring trafficked women into the United States without inspection (in legal terminology, "entry without inspection"; O'Neill Richard, 2000). In their study of prostituted women in the United States, Raymond and Hughes's (2001) sample included Asian-born respondents who had been prostituted in Asia. These women had been married to U.S. servicemen who then forced them into CSE after having brought them to the United States. Similarly, Shelley (2010) reported that women from Japan, Korea, and the Philippines who come to the United States as military brides are sometimes pressured into becoming part of the sex industry.

Other studies suggest militarism itself contains cultural ideals about gender that increase the vulnerability of women to

trafficking through socioeconomic marginalization (Nikolić-Ristanović, 2002a). When armed conflict, economic inequalities, and a growing demand for commercial sex intersect, sex trafficking increases (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002).

### **CONFLICTING POLICIES**

Contradictions between local and national laws or between policies from different government agencies regarding immigration, employment, prostitution, and other issues may reduce recognition of and responses to trafficking. Chacon (2006, p. 2) argued that

current labor and immigration law enforcement actually creates incentives for trafficking and other forms of migrant exploitation in the United States. ... Border interdiction strategies, harsh penalties for undocumented migrant workers, and insufficient labor protections for all workers, but particularly undocumented migrants, all interact to facilitate trafficking, notwithstanding the TVPA.

### **PERCEPTIONS AND MISPERCEPTIONS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

Although scant systematic research exists on societal perceptions of and knowledge about human trafficking (see Menaker & Miller, 2012, for an exception), there are suggestions in the literature that such perceptions have significant impact

Unless communities believe trafficking is a problem, law enforcement administrators have little incentive to allot resources to investigations.

on societal, community, and institutional policy and practice (Chuang, 1998; Desyllas, 2007; Farrell et al., 2012; Fitzpatrick, 2003; Srikantiah, 2007; Williams, 2011). It will be important to determine to what extent perceptions impact identification of trafficking situations and victims, willingness of communities to invest resources to address the problem, jury decisions and judicial sentencing of perpetrators of this crime, and success of survivors' efforts to reintegrate into communities.

Farrell et al. (2012) reported, for example, that unless communities believe trafficking is a problem, law enforcement administrators

have little incentive to allot resources to investigations. According to their respondents, this is particularly problematic for garnering the necessary political will to address labor trafficking.

Law enforcement respondents also believed that successful investigation and prosecution of cases were hindered by misunderstandings of the nature of trafficking and victimization (Farrell et al., 2012). Even when law enforcement understood and recognized trafficking, prosecutors were reluctant to go forward with cases either because of their own misperceptions or because they did not believe a jury would respond favorably to the victim. Farrell and colleagues referred to this as “downstream orientation,” meaning prosecutors weigh how judges and juries will evaluate evidence and how that will impact chances of a conviction. If prosecutors expect that the judge or jury will not understand the force of psychological coercion and the cognitive and behavioral consequences of trauma or will hold prejudicial evaluations of victims based on immigration status, race, appearance, and other factors, they are reluctant to take cases.

Farrell et al. (2012) noted that the very factors that make individual women and girls vulnerable to trafficking may work against them. Factors including past abuse, disabilities, language barriers, undocumented status, being a runaway, or having parents involved in substance abuse or criminal activity may result in a victim's being perceived as not credible or as not a true victim of a crime. Additionally, these factors may make it more difficult for the victim to stay engaged in the legal process. In response to a question about a case that was not prosecuted, one officer stated:

I suspect that a lot of it had to do with the girls being not very good witnesses. ... Last I heard, one of the girls ended up getting pregnant and the other girl was a runaway, and again, almost all of these girls are damaged goods. They come from, you know, really abusive backgrounds. They've been abused physically or sexually. (Farrell et al., 2012, p. 170)

Mistrust of the police, social services, and other adult authorities, combined with a level of savvy about society's attitudes toward them and a desire not to relinquish control of their lives, can create significant barriers between young survivors of CSEC and those trying to “help” them (Kreston, 2000; Williams, 2011).



Srikantiah (2007) argued that preconceptions about the degree of control necessary for a situation to count as trafficking have interfered with implementation of the TVPA, so that not all actual victims are viewed as deserving of services. Similarly, Chuang (1998) argued that representations and depictions of trafficking embedded in anti-trafficking policy and law can mask true diversity of experience. Depictions in awareness campaigns and training materials can be similarly misleading. Williams (2011) stated:

The victim image (of the child we must save) may garner support of charities and politicians but this victim label may be a great disservice to teens encountered in the field. Instead of a sorrowful “victim,” police and service providers confront a strong, willful survivor. The appearance and demeanor of these “survivors” may result in being viewed as “offenders” because they do not conform to the stereotype of “victim.” (p. 11)

## Community Risk Factors

Many societal risk factors related to trafficking are community risk factors as well, but the degree of impact varies depending on community circumstances (Lloyd, 2005; Shelley, 2010). For example, within the United States, 2011 poverty rates for the total population (adults and children) ranged by municipality from 4% to 49.9% (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, 2011). Rates for children in poverty in 2011 varied from 12% to 57% (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013). Unemployment rates as of December 2012 ranged from roughly 3% to over 26% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Similarly, variation in communities within source countries differentially impacts the risk for trafficking out of those communities to the United States.

Community and neighborhood norms impact risk as well. A study of CSEC in the United States, Canada, and Mexico found that youths’ exposure to adult prostitution zones and to social groups that condone or tolerate child–adult sexual relationships contributes to their early involvement in commercial sex (Estes & Weiner, 2001).

Additional community factors that potentially impact trafficking risk deserve further scrutiny. These include demographic factors, such as proportions of homeless persons, immigrants and refugees, and adolescents and young adults. Community awareness

of human trafficking, including local vigilance regarding unlawful business practices (e.g., child labor, minimum wage violations) must be considered as well.

## Institutional Risk Factors

Institutional risk factors for human trafficking include characteristics of the settings in which trafficked women and girls work and of agencies that respond to trafficking or serve survivors. Factors that reduce oversight of employment practices—either by the parent business or by government officials—can increase worker vulnerability to human trafficking. These practices include employing labor brokers or labor-leasing services or otherwise subcontracting labor recruitment and supervision (Brennan, 2008; Chacon, 2006; End Human Trafficking Now, 2010; Heyzer, 2002; Van Liemt, 2004; see, e.g., *United States v. Askarkhodjaev*). Employment practices in the informal or “underground” economy may be especially difficult to monitor (Van Liemt, 2004).<sup>6</sup> Workers can include women and girls employed in private homes as servants, nannies, housekeepers, and home health care providers.

Law enforcement, health care, and social services agencies’ ability to identify and respond effectively to trafficked persons depends on adequate training about human trafficking and an institutional commitment of resources to address the issue. Lack of training or of institutional commitment increases the risk that trafficked women and girls will not be correctly identified or appropriately served (Reid, 2010). Webber and Shirk (2005) reported that because human trafficking was first criminalized at the federal level, federal law enforcement received training first, and local and state officers are not necessarily trained uniformly or universally. For both law enforcement and service providers, working with human trafficking cases often requires more staff time than is required for other cases or clients (Clawson, Dutch, & Cummings, 2006; Clawson et al., 2009; Farrell et al., 2010, 2012; Greene, Ennett, & Ringwalt, 1999; Todres, 2010). Investigations are complex and relatively new for most law enforcement agencies (Farrell et al., 2012). Service provision may involve multiple agencies, with additional complications if children or non-U.S. citizens are involved (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, & Heffron, 2011; Clawson, Small, Go, & Myles, 2003), and development and maintenance of interagency collaboration are inherently time consuming.

Farrell and colleagues (2012) addressed factors in the criminal justice system that could facilitate identification of and response

## Sex Trafficking “Crystal”

Crystal was a 14-year-old American Indian girl in a large midwestern city [in the United States]. She had been placed in a foster home while her mother completed inpatient chemical dependency treatment. Crystal attended an alternative school and had been a relatively good student, but her schoolwork had suffered since she began a relationship with man in his early 20s. The boyfriend always picked her up and dropped her off at the school, and staff noted he was often verbally abusive. When asked about the relationship, Crystal insisted he loved her and refused to talk further. After the foster home notified the school that the girl was “on the run,” the school counselor called the advocate from an American Indian NGO who did “healthy sexuality” education and outreach at the school. After meeting with the school counselor and the advocate, Crystal agreed to begin attending the NGO’s biweekly education and support groups for young Native girls, where she received cultural teachings about healthy male–female relationships and the respect held for women and learned traditional sewing and crafts. The advocate also assisted her with finding housing and meeting basic needs. Six months later, after being beaten by her boyfriend, Crystal revealed to her case worker that he was selling her for sex and asked for help. She was able to safely escape, and police launched an investigation of the pimp/boyfriend. A year later, Crystal continues to stay connected with the program staff and other girls and is making good progress toward high school completion.

(A. Pierce, personal communication, November 2012. Used with permission.)

to human trafficking. The willingness of prosecutors (whether state or federal) to take human trafficking cases is essential if officers are to justify devoting time and resources to investigating cases. Farrell et al. (2012) found “law enforcement funnels resources toward investigating the types of cases prosecutors are more likely to accept for prosecution. . . . This serves to further perpetuate myths and misunderstanding over the extent to which human trafficking is a problem in many communities” (p. 156). Prosecutors’ willingness to take cases was, in turn, influenced by the newness of legislation and lack of case precedents, level of support from supervisors, as well as their own knowledge of human trafficking.

Reid (2010) reported that within one circuit court in a major metropolitan area of the southern United States, minors in CSEC are encouraged to enter guilty pleas in an effort to keep cases moving through the system. However, girls charged with misdemeanor prostitution are only eligible to be represented by a public defender if they plead not guilty. Without legal counsel, the girls are unaware that the guilty plea they are encouraged to enter can negatively impact their eligibility for services for victims of sex trafficking. This institutional procedure further marginalizes victims by giving them a criminal record and blocking access to needed services.

## Interpersonal and Relationship Risk Factors

Due to the relative scarcity of research on interpersonal and individual risk factors for labor trafficking, most of what is reported in this section and the next is drawn from work on sex-trafficking victimization. However, this is not meant to suggest that factors at these levels do not contribute to risk for labor exploitation.

For minors, the lack of a stable or protective family structure is associated with vulnerability to trafficking. Girls displaced from their homes and families

are at elevated risk for victimization by human traffickers (Lloyd, 2005, 2011; Norton-Hawk, 2002; Pierce, 2009; Priebe & Suhr, 2005; Raphael & Ashley, 2008). The death of a parent, overt abandonment, or emotional abandonment and neglect can cause disruption in the family structure. Emotional abandonment and neglect and maltreatment by caregivers have been shown to be powerful precursors of CSEC (Rabinovitch, 2003; Reid, 2010).

Abandonment and neglect due to substance abuse is a common theme in the families of adolescent victims of CSEC (Norton-Hawk, 2002; Raphael & Shapiro, 2002). In a sample of 222 adult female victims of CSEC, 83% reported growing up in homes in which one or both parents experienced substance abuse and addictions (Raphael & Shapiro, 2002). Young girls removed from their families of origin and placed in foster or group homes often experience intense feelings of emotional isolation and abandonment (Coy, 2008; Rabinovitch, 2003) as well as “confusion, fear, apprehension of the unknown, loss, sadness, anxiety, and stress” (Bruskas, 2008, p. 70). To alleviate these feelings, they may run away from foster care, group homes, or treatment facilities, and their resulting homelessness makes them particularly vulnerable to CSEC (Norton-Hawk, 2002; Raphael & Shapiro, 2002; Silbert & Pines, 1982a).

Running away or being forced to leave home is a primary factor in young adolescents' vulnerability to sex trafficking (Lloyd, 2005; Reid, 2010; Williams & Frederick, 2009). Traffickers often target female runaways for sexual exploitation (Albanese, 2007). Unfortunately, young girls who are early and repeat runaways have often been victimized by sexual predators prior to running away and then are victimized again when they run away (Whitbeck, 2000).

Adolescents often run away from home because of parental neglect, physical or sexual abuse, family substance abuse, and/or family violence (Janus, Archambault, Brown, & Welsh, 1995; Janus, McCormack, Burgess, & Hartman, 1987; Molnar, Shade, Kral, Booth, & Watters, 1998; Smoller, 2001; Whitbeck & Hoyt, 1999; Whitbeck, Hoyt, & Ackley, 1997; Whitbeck & Simons, 1993; Widom & Ames, 1994; Williamson & Prior, 2009). Without resources or income, homeless and runaway youths are more likely than other youths to engage in sex in exchange for money or necessities, increasing their vulnerability to traffickers who offer the immediate subsistence they need (Clawson et al., 2009; Greene et al., 1999). Such "survival sex" may not always be self-initiated; it is often a requirement of the person providing those resources (Andolina Scott, 2008; Brannigan & Van Brunschot, 1997; Estes & Weiner, 2001; Tyler & Johnson, 2006).

Adolescents sexually abused by a parent or trusted adult are at heightened risk for unhealthy interpersonal relationships and revictimization (Gobin & Freyd, 2009). Betrayal trauma theory provides a framework to understand how being sexually abused as a child increases the chance of later victimization (Freyd, 2003). Betrayal trauma theory suggests that when children are abused by someone they trust, depend on, and care for, the betrayal is particularly traumatic. Counterintuitively, traumatic betrayals are remembered less than traumas that did not involve betrayal (Freyd, DePrince, & Zurbriggen, 2001). This lack of remembering—the relative inaccessibility of memories of the betrayal—is in some ways adaptive and protective, as children feel they need the abuser for their emotional and physical survival (Freyd, 1994, 2003; Freyd, DePrince, & Greaves, 2007). Betrayal trauma alters a person's ability to accurately trust, resulting in overly trusting behavior or failure to recognize further betrayal behavior. According to Gobin and Freyd (2009), "because of their inability to label someone as untrustworthy and a damaged 'cheater detector,' sexual abuse victims are often more susceptible to exploitation later in romantic partnership" (p. 243).

Family disruption increases women's and girls' psychological vulnerability to being trafficked and may reduce their chances of exiting or escaping. The need to belong—to be connected to family or community—is posited as a fundamental human need that motivates behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Maslow, 1954; Stevens & Fiske, 1995). Rachel Lloyd, a trafficking survivor and the founder and executive director of a nonprofit organization that serves survivors of exploitation and sex trafficking, describes how the disrupted family unit increases psychological vulnerability to being trafficked (Lloyd, 2011). For domestically trafficked girls, the longing for a family can be so strong and intense that it does not take much to create an illusion of family. Traffickers (i.e., pimps) exploit this, using this craving for family to their advantage. Some create a pseudo-family structure of girls who are the "wives-in-law," headed up by a man who is called "Daddy" (Lloyd, 2011). Others use seduction and feigned romantic attachments to lure girls in need of attention and affection. The offered affection may be alternated with cruelty and violence, setting up dynamics that can contribute to traumatic bonding or Stockholm syndrome (Cantor & Price, 2007; Dutton & Painter, 1993; Graham, 1994; L. A. Smith et al., 2009).<sup>7</sup>

Domestic sex trafficking often involves "grooming" (Kennedy, Klein, Bristowe, Cooper, & Yuille, 2007; Polaris Project, n.d.; Reid, 2010; L. A. Smith et al., 2009; U.S. Department of State, 2008; Williams, 2010), a recruitment process in which the trafficker/pimp identifies the psychological and physical needs (i.e., vulnerabilities) of targeted victims and then pretends to fulfill them. The trafficker may develop the initial relationship under the pretext of being the caring, loving boyfriend, bestowing false love and attention on his target. This can entail gifts, compliments, housing, and clothing, as well as sexual, physical, and false emotional intimacy. The trafficker systematically begins to desensitize the victim to sexual activity. Once the trafficker gains the targeted victim's trust and affection, the formal exploitation begins, with the trafficker asking the victim to have sex with "friends" or complete strangers. If the victim refuses, the trafficker uses violence, abuse, or coercion to obtain compliance.

Reid (2010) described the grooming process as "a mixture of reward ... and punishment, freedom and bondage, acceptance and degradation, all used to produce loyalty and trauma bonding to the trafficker" (p. 158). Traffickers are skillful at gaining and maintaining dominance and control through manipulation, isolation, violence (physical, sexual, or emotional), economic dependence, coercion, and threats (Reid, 2010; Smith et al., 2009).

## Sex Trafficking “Tiffany”

Having run away from her group home, Tiffany, a 12-year-old African American girl, went to New York City. At the NYC terminal, a neatly dressed, polite young man approached her and asked if she was all right; Tiffany, grateful for the attention, smiled. The young man asked if she would like to get something to eat. Tiffany accepted and over the meal she began to tell him about running away, her troubled family life (father in jail, mother’s drug addiction, multiple foster/group homes), and her dilemma of not having anywhere to go. He invited her to live with him and to be his girlfriend, promising he would take care of her and they could be like “family.” Tiffany readily accepted, thinking she had found what she always been hoping for, “a home.” The first few weeks were wonderful; her “boyfriend” took her shopping and bought her clothes, even a pair of high heels and a sexy dress. Tiffany felt like a grown-up wife, cooking and cleaning and having sex nightly. Her boyfriend asked her to dance for him with just her underwear and high heels. Initially she felt awkward, but in time with his encouragement and praise she felt proud to do it for him. After a few weeks, her boyfriend told her that they were going out to a club. He instructed her to dress sexy and gave her two drinks before they left. Tiffany woke the next morning with a hazy memory of the night before, barely recalling dancing and stripping. While miserable and feeling like she never wanted to do anything like this again, her boyfriend was excitedly counting money and verbally praising Tiffany for her actions. Unable to let him down, Tiffany began her life of sexual exploitation.

(From *Girls Like Us*, by R. Lloyd, 2011, New York, NY: HarperCollins. Copyright 2011 by Rachel Lloyd. Adapted with permission.)

In-depth interviews with former pimps and madams in Chicago (Raphael & Myers-Powell, 2010) revealed they targeted women and girls they perceived to be vulnerable, needy, or low in self-esteem. One stated, “I looked for girls who needed [things], who would do whatever to come out of the messed up homes and escape from their [messed] up parents, and I pulled those girls” (p. 5). Another responded, “What would you look for? Broken bones, unhappy with parents, abused by some sucker.” One pimp claimed he was helping rather than harming the individuals he recruited: “I helped girls who no one else would. I always picked up throwaways and runaways and dressed them up and taught them how to survive” (p. 5).

Although studies consistently find running away as a risk factor for CSEC, Boxill and Richardson (2007) cautioned that the reverse also needs to be considered: Running away and other behavioral risks may also be effects of sexual victimization rather than contributors to it. Boxill and Richardson (2007) examined county juvenile court records for a sample of girls recently involved in CSEC, reviewing the period of time prior to their CSEC for high-risk behaviors, and reported that most of the girls were “typical girls,” exhibiting no previous academic, family, or peer-group maladaptive behaviors. Instead, most had been targeted by a

trafficker while the girls were emotionally vulnerable and then lured from malls, bus stops, arcades, and similar locations and trafficked into CSEC. Boxill and Richardson concluded that the majority of girls exhibited the “risk” characteristics commonly seen in adjudicated girls after being sexually exploited, not before. Their conclusion must be viewed cautiously as it is a single study and the methodology is not reported; however, it would be important to explore this situation in further research.

Research also identifies prior involvement in the child protection system and placement in institutional settings as

background characteristics of youths in CSEC (Farley, Matthews, et al., 2011; Gorkoff & Runner, 2003; Hay, 2008; Pierce, 2009). Victim advocates and survivors of CSEC describe group homes, foster homes, and shelters as target sites for recruitment by traffickers, who take advantage of the concentrations of vulnerable youth in these settings (Smith et al., 2009).

## Individual Risk Factors

In this section we review what is known about correlates of trafficking risk at the individual level. As mentioned previously, most of what is reported here is drawn from work on sex-trafficking victimization because empirical reports of individual risk factors for labor trafficking are scarce.

### GENDER AND AGE

Globally, women and children make up the largest subset of victims trafficked into the sex trade (Curtol, Decarli, Di Nicola, & Savona, 2004; U.S. Department of State, 2004). The International Labour Organization (2012, p. 1) stated that “women, low-skilled migrant workers, children, indigenous peoples and other groups

## Sex Trafficking “Sandy”

[Sandy] is a 35-year-old transgender woman from Mexico who arrived in the United States in her twenties. In her hometown, she had been ridiculed for her gender identity, and she was beaten and severely bullied most of her life. Like many of her peers, Sandy dreamed of a life where she would be safe and accepted, and she looked for that life in New York City. Once she was in New York, Sandy suffered an abusive arrest for prostitution and sought help [at the Urban Justice Center]. As she talked about her immigration experience, it became clear she was a survivor of human trafficking. In Mexico, she had been unsure about how she could move to the United States with little money and no family support. Ultimately, she was approached by an older man, seduced, and brought to New York City, supposedly to be his girlfriend. But once they were in New York, he quickly used violence and threats to force her into prostitution, and he took the money she earned. She escaped after a year of this sustained abuse.

(From “Human Trafficking of Immigrant Transgender Women: Hidden in the Shadows [Web log post], by C. DeBoise, January 11, 2012. Copyright 2014 Race-Talk. Reprinted with permission.)

suffering discrimination on different grounds are disproportionately affected” by forced labor and slaverylike practices. The extent of this disproportion is not precisely known, as estimates are plagued by the measurement challenges discussed previously.

Various studies of U.S. girls trafficked into commercial sex found the average age of entry to be 13–16 years old (Boyer, 2008; Pierce, 2009; Priebe & Suhr, 2005; Raphael & Ashley, 2008), although Priebe and Suhr reported girls as young as 10. The Minnesota Indian Women’s Resource Center found that of 37 clients reporting CSE at intake, 20% were exploited at age 12 or younger (Pierce, 2009). Silbert and Pines (1981, p. 408) did not report an average age of entry, but at the time of their interviews of a sample of 100 women and girls, “the youngest was 10; ... about 60% were 16 and under; many were 10, 11, 12 and 13 years old.” Lloyd (2005) reported that the average age of girls referred to Girls Educational and Mentoring Services for CSEC was 17–19 in 1999 but had decreased to 14–16 years of age.

Finkelhor and Ormrod (2004) examined data on 200 female minors categorized as “juvenile offenders” in prostitution incidents in the National Incident Based Reporting System from 1997 to 2000. Four percent of the girls were under age 12 ( $n = 8$ ), 6.5% were 12 or 13, 33% were 14 or 15, and 56.5% were 16 or 17 years of age. However, reports of initiation of commercial sexual activity at age 4 (Farley, Matthews, et al., 2011) and age 5 (Norton-Hawk, 2002) are also found in the literature. Research based on national U.S. human trafficking investigations between January 2007 and September 2008 found that 30.4% of 112 cases in which

trafficking was confirmed involved minors (Kyckelhahn et al., 2009).

A second study examined characteristics of 527 victims in 389 U.S. trafficking cases opened between January 2008 and June 2010 (D. Banks & Kyckelhahn, 2011). All cases in this sample had been confirmed as human trafficking, and the U.S. Department of Justice characterized them as “high data quality” due to consistent and complete data entry. The vast majority

of victims in this sample had been trafficked for commercial sex (90%), and the majority of both sex- and labor-trafficking victims were female (94% of sex-trafficking victims; 68% of labor-trafficking victims).<sup>8</sup> Of those trafficked for commercial sex, 49% were age 17 or younger, 85% were under 25, and 95% were under 35. Victims trafficked for labor were somewhat older, but nevertheless 71% were under 35. However, because these data were from confirmed cases that had been investigated by federal task forces during a specified time period, they may not be representative of all trafficking victims.

### MARGINALIZATION

A number of demographic characteristics are associated with risk for sex trafficking. Transgender youth may be more likely than other children to be CSEC victims (Estes & Weiner, 2001; Stransky & Finkelhor, 2008; Ugarte et al., 2003; Williamson, Dutch, & Clawson, 2009). Adults who are transgender or gender nonconforming may also be at heightened risk for sex trafficking (DeBoise, 2012; Grant et al., 2011). Although investigators did not ask questions about trafficking specifically, results of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey found 11% of transgender and gender nonconforming respondents “reported having done sex work for income,” compared to an estimated 1% of women in the United States (Grant et al., 2011, p. 3). Notably, respondents were most likely to report engaging in sex for income if they had experienced harassment and assault at school, faced bias and harassment at work, had lost a job or experienced homelessness due to bias, had less than a high school education, or were Black or Latino/a.

The differential rates suggest discrimination and marginalization as risk factors for CSE.

Advocates at the Sex Worker Project of the Urban Justice Center have reported similar risk factors for transgender Latinas being trafficked into CSE (DeBoise, 2012). DeBoise reported that although “a startling number of them met the legal definition for trafficking” and had been arrested for prostitution on numerous occasions, “law enforcement had never asked any of these women if they were being coerced into sex work. Even the minors, who automatically meet the federal definition for human trafficking, had not been screened or identified as trafficked” (p. 1).

Research in Chicago, Atlanta, Toledo, Seattle, and New York City found disproportionate representation of African American girls among youths exploited in commercial sex (Boxill & Richardson, 2005; Boyer, 2008; Curtis, Terry, Dank, Dombrowski, & Khan, 2008; Gragg, Petta, Bernstein, Eisen, & Quinn, 2007; O’Leary & Howard, 2001; Williamson & Prior, 2009). Additionally, several U.S. studies (Farley et al., 2003; Farley, Matthews, et al., 2011) and government reports (U.S. Department of State, 2011b) noted that Native populations are especially vulnerable to trafficking. While one study found that prostituted girls in upstate New York juvenile systems were most often White (Andolina Scott, 2008), FBI agents in Alaska and Minnesota reported traffickers’ targeting of American Indian/Alaska Native girls because they were “versatile” and could be marketed in the sex trade as “exotic” Hawaiian, Asian, or Native girls (Pierce & Koeplinger, 2011).

#### **PRIOR VICTIMIZATION AND TRAUMA EXPERIENCE**

A number of studies found that childhood sexual assault is a common past experience among women and children in CSE (Bagley & Young, 1987; Boxill & Richardson, 2005; Kramer & Berg, 2003; Lloyd, 2005; McClanahan et al., 1999; Reid, 2010; Senn & Carey, 2010; Silbert & Pines, 1981, 1982a, 1982b; Simons & Whitbeck, 1991; Tyler, Whitbeck, Hoyt, & Yoder, 2000; Van Dorn et al., 2005). Reid (2010, p. 149) argued that a child’s “normative self-protection reactions” may be disrupted by both psychological and neurobiological consequences of abuse (see also Reid & Jones, 2011). Other research suggests childhood sexual abuse, a child’s self-image, and her attitude toward sexual activity contribute to vulnerability to CSEC (Schissel & Fedec, 1999).

A particularly heinous category of childhood sexual victimization involves having been sold for CSEC by family members, including mothers, fathers, siblings, aunts and uncles, and foster parents.

Studies in Chicago, New York, Las Vegas, and throughout Minnesota found that a number of prostituted children are first sold into the sex trade by family members (Gragg et al., 2007; Kennedy et al., 2007; Kennedy & Pucci, 2007; O’Leary & Howard, 2001; Pierce, 2009; Priebe & Suhr, 2005; Raphael & Ashley, 2008).<sup>9</sup> Parents and other family members may indoctrinate their youths into exploitation directly; on the other hand, this way of life may seem normal to the youths who grew up in the home of a trafficker or a trafficked mother (e.g., Kingsley & Mark, 2000; Pierce, 2009).

Additionally, the ongoing impact of historical trauma (Brave Heart, 2003; Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998) or generational trauma (Pierce, 2009), defined as the psychological legacy of government-sanctioned colonization, genocide, displacement, forced removal of children to residential schools and adoptive families, and political and legal disenfranchisement, has been implicated in the vulnerability of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Canadian Aboriginal women and children to sex traffickers (Farley, Matthews, et al., 2011; Kingsley & Mark, 2000; Pierce, 2009).<sup>10</sup> The psychological impact of historical slavery, colonialism, and oppression of other ethnic and racial groups as a potential contributor to vulnerability to trafficking warrants further scrutiny.<sup>11</sup>

#### **DEVELOPMENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND COGNITIVE FACTORS**

Developmental research shows that adolescents may be malleable and susceptible to outside influences and environmental settings (Reid, 2011; Reid & Jones, 2011; Steinberg & Cauffman, 1996). Adolescents also tend to make impulsive decisions and seek out intense, risky experiences, especially with peers (Gardner & Steinberg, 2005; Steinberg & Scott, 2003). Two particular emotional states may contribute to adolescent girls’ vulnerability to sex traffickers: (a) self-isolation as a response to not feeling safe and (b) being emotionally distressed (Boxill & Richardson, 2007). Even fleeting stress stemming from a single heated argument with a parent or friend can be a vulnerable moment (Ryan & Lindgren, 1999). On the other hand, such emotional states may be the long-term outcomes of abuse or neglect (Schoenberg, Riggins, & Salmond, 2003). Regardless of the etiology, adolescents in either of these emotional states are particularly vulnerable to traffickers’ ruses.

In an innovative study, Reid (2011) explored the role of sexual denigration of self or others as a potential contributor to risk for CSE, in addition to previously studied risk factors (e.g., childhood maltreatment, substance use, running away). Examples of sexual denigration included beliefs such as “no man would care for [me] without a sexual relationship” and “only bad, worthless

## Labor Trafficking “Jocelyn”

Jocelyn, an adult woman from Southeast Asia with four children, was seeking work in the United States to better support her family. She came to the United States on an H-2B visa, having been promised a 40-hour work week at minimum wage in hotel housekeeping. She and her workmates instead were forced to work more than 100 hours each week in a hotel and café in a western town of fewer than 500 people. Their documents and earnings were confiscated, and threats of violence and legal action were used to control them. Jocelyn's traffickers were the married couple who owned the franchise to the chain motel in which Jocelyn was enslaved.

(From the Human Trafficking Law Project database, 2013, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Law School. Copyright 2014 by the Regents of the University of Michigan. Adapted with permission.)

guys would be interested in [me]” (Reid, 2011, p. 149). Reid found that childhood maltreatment predicted running away, substance use, and sexual denigration but that sexual denigration was the strongest predictor of childhood sexual exploitation.

Research also identified fetal alcohol exposure as a factor that increases a child's vulnerability to commercial sex exploitation (Boland & Durwyn, 1999; Hunt, 2006; Olson, Burgess, & Streissguth, 1992; Streissguth, 2005). Because of high rates of fetal alcohol syndrome in American Indian, Alaska Native, and Canadian Aboriginal communities, children in these populations may be at increased risk for CSEC (Hunt, 2006; Kingsley & Mark, 2000; Pierce, 2009; Vancouver/Richmond Health Board, 1999).

Although the vulnerability to trafficking of individuals with physical or cognitive disabilities or developmental delays has not been formally studied, they may be at elevated risk for sexual abuse and exploitation (Tang & Lee, 1999; Tharinger et al., 1990), suggesting they are at elevated risk for trafficking. Several cases of trafficking involve victimization of persons with disabilities or developmental delays for both labor and sex trafficking (McGraw, 2009; U.S. Attorney's Office, 2009, 2012, 2013; *U.S. v. Adriana Paoletti-Lemus*, 1998).

### IMMIGRANT OR REFUGEE STATUS

Immigrants, refugees, asylees, and internally displaced persons (people displaced within their own nation by economic status, political upheaval, natural disasters, or armed conflict) are susceptible to human trafficking because of social isolation, language barriers, and lack of a reliable source of protection (Free the Slaves & Human Rights Center, 2004; Gajic-Veljanoski & Stewart, 2007; Hodge, 2008; Human Rights Watch, 2001, 2012; Kara, 2010; Sturdevant & Stoltzfus, 1992; U.S. Department of State, 2011b; U.S. Department

of State, Human Smuggling & Trafficking Center, 2006; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002). Displacement from home and community results in the weakening or loss of protective social support, thereby increasing an individual's vulnerability to trafficking (Heyzer, 2002).

In research based on surveys of service providers and trafficking-related newspa-

per articles in the United States, researchers at the University of California, Berkeley, found that foreign-born persons represented 80% of victims in 131 identified cases (Free the Slaves & Human Rights Center, 2004). Analysis of data from 389 confirmed human trafficking cases from 2008 to 2010 (D. Banks & Kyselhahn, 2011) showed that one third of all victims were foreign born, and 53 of the 63 confirmed victims of labor trafficking were foreign born (one was a U.S. citizen or national; the citizenship of nine victims was unknown). Of labor-trafficking victims, 67% were undocumented, but 28% had legal authorization to work in the United States (D. Banks & Kyselhahn, 2011). In one recent case, the U.S. Department of Justice indicted Global Horizons, Inc., a labor recruiting company, for trafficking more than 400 migrant Thai workers for forced labor in 13 states. The company deported recruits who did not cooperate with its demands (Polaris Project, 2012; U.S. Department of Justice, 2010b).

## Conclusion

A host of factors at multiple levels contribute to risk for human trafficking. Conditions that permit or condone exploitive labor and sexual exploitation, tolerate or fail to regulate unscrupulous business practices, and maintain status inequalities and marginalization all contribute to the phenomenon. Factors that undermine an individual's capabilities for self-protection or that disrupt her connection to social and familial protection increase her vulnerability. Therapeutic response to survivors of trafficking requires sensitivity to the unique constellation of factors that contributed to that survivor's victimization. Primary prevention of future victimization requires addressing the persistent social, economic, and political factors that place populations at risk.

# DESCRIBING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

## Traffickers, Facilitators, and Perpetrators

“Human trafficker” is a label encompassing many functions, from recruitment, to transportation, to training, to exploitation of trafficking victims. A wide variety of persons can and do carry out these functions. How these functions are managed varies, ranging from a single individual performing them all to an organized network of associates.

Initially, human trafficking was assumed to be largely controlled by organized crime (see, e.g., Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, & Steinzor, 1999; Farr 2005; Morawska, 2007; O’Neill Richard, 2000; S. Shannon 1999; Shelley, 2007, 2010; Sulaimanova, 2006). Additional research and practice have revealed that this conclusion was overly simplistic (Bruckert & Parent, 2002; UNODC, 2010). For example, a study of federally prosecuted CSEC cases found that 90% of those sampled had a single defendant (Small, Adams, Owen, & Roland, 2008).

The most effective recruiters seem to be those who have or can establish trust relationships with potential victims. The Human Rights Center (2005) pointed out that perpetrators frequently are familiar to their victims—they may be relatives, neighbors, or people from the same town. Free the Slaves and the Human Rights Center (2004) further reported that perpetrators are often of the

same nationality or ethnicity as their victims and “often ... are recently naturalized United States citizens with close ties to their country of origin” (p. 14). However, “[w]hen the perpetrator was a U.S. citizen not of recent origin, the cases tended to concentrate in certain areas of exploitation, especially the sexual exploitation of children and the trafficking of very young children for adoption” (2004, p. 14).

Whether perpetrators are acting alone or as part of a larger enterprise, the crime requires some organizational skill. For transnational trafficking, travel documents must be obtained or forged, public authorities or law enforcement may need to be bribed, and illegal border crossings must be managed. For both domestic and transnational trafficking, roles include harboring and controlling victims, exploiting them in the specific setting, and laundering any monies obtained from illegal enterprises. These actions, however, do not necessarily require traditional networks of organized crime. As Bruckert and Parent (2002) concluded from their literature review, “the association between trafficking and organized crime is neither self-evident nor always very substantial” (p. 19).

The individuals carrying out human trafficking functions are highly diverse (UNODC, 2011). They may be victims’ family members, acquaintances, or intimate partners. They may be known and trusted members of the victim’s community or strangers.



## Sex Trafficking

### “Danielle”

Danielle was a White teenager born in a college town in the northwestern United States. She experienced extensive emotional and sexual abuse as a child. Before she was 15, she left home and was living on the streets in a nearby city, couch surfing, and living in squats. As a minor, she had exchanged sex for money, food, and drugs. When she was 16, her drug supplier began prostituting her, using physical force and drugs to maintain control of her. She had been arrested several times for prostitution, both as a teen and as an adult, but no one had ever investigated further to determine why she was on the streets.

(From the Human Trafficking Law Project Database, 2013, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Law School. Copyright 2014 by the Regents of the University of Michigan. Adapted with permission.)

They include a wide variety of authority figures—school teachers, government officials, military personnel, religious leaders. Additionally, they include persons involved in a variety of other criminal activities such as gang activity and drug dealing (National Gang Intelligence Center, 2011). Mitchell et al. (2010) found that many pimps exploiting youths were known to law enforcement authorities and had connections to local gangs or other organized criminal groups, businesses, or websites through which they offered the prostituted girls.

According to a 2009 report from the UNODC, it is not uncommon for traffickers to be women. In the 46 countries for which sufficient data were available to analyze convictions by gender, convicted traffickers were women in over 50% of cases in 14 countries, between 10% and 50% in 28 countries, and less than 10% in four countries (UNODC, 2009). This finding is confirmed by other researchers (Coonan, 2004; Kyckelhahn et al., 2009; Shelley, 2010) and through adjudicated cases (e.g., *U.S. v. Akouavi Kpade Afolabi*, 2009; *U.S. v. Adriana Paoletti-Lemus*, 1998; *U.S. v. Calimlim*, 2006). Of the 112 confirmed cases of human trafficking from U.S. federally funded task forces, women were suspected perpetrators in 23% of sex-trafficking and 46% of labor-trafficking cases (Kyckelhahn et al., 2009).

Shelley (2010) indicated that women in trafficking operations, unlike those in many other criminal activities, often hold positions of authority. Female traffickers exploit women and girls in domestic servitude, service industries, and commercial sexual activity (Coonan, 2004; Shelley, 2010). Acting independently or in concert with others (sometimes a spouse or partner), women recruit, train, and control victims, maintain brothels, and reap considerable profit (Shelley, 2010). Conviction rates of women are higher for trafficking than for other crimes in a number of nations studied, and more women than men were convicted of trafficking in 14

nations included in the report (UNODC, 2009). Some of these women were former trafficking victims (Shelley, 2010; Sidun & Rubin, 2013; UNODC, 2009). According to Sidun and Rubin, “It is extremely troubling that some former victims become traffickers, and research to understand the psychological, financial, and coercive reasons why women would recruit other women into slavery demands attention (p. 165).”

## Means of Trafficking

Force, fraud, and coercion are the means of trafficking explicitly identified within the TVPA, but each of these may take a variety of forms.<sup>1</sup> Traffickers may use indebtedness, fraudulent job advertisements, changes in promised employment after arrival in the United States on a guest visa, fraudulent marriage offers and recruitment via marriage brokers (commonly referred to as “mail order brides”), legal insecurity, drug addiction, and a variety of psychological means to manipulate and coerce potential victims (Bauer, 2007; Hynes, 2002; Pierce, 2009; Pierce & Koeplinger, 2011; Raphael, 2004; Raymond & Hughes, 2001; U.S. Department of State, 2011b). According to these authors, traffickers may target women and girls with particular vulnerabilities such as homelessness, addiction, disabilities, mental illness, or gender nonconformity.

### COERCION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

Coercion is the thread that links the overlapping experiences of trafficked persons with victims of sexual abuse, domestic violence, migrant women, women exploited for labor, and survivors of torture (Hopper & Hidalgo, 2006). Although physical coercion is readily understood and widely studied, psychological coercion, a form of mental violence (Hopper & Hidalgo, 2006; J. Kim, 2010), is insufficiently discussed in the trafficking literature.

Coercion that does not result in physical consequences often poses legal challenges in proving cases of trafficking, rape, domestic violence, and torture and in considering refugee/asylum cases (Farrell et al., 2012; Hopper & Hidalgo, 2006; J. Kim, 2010).

## Sex Trafficking Coercion

“The coercion I faced [in strip club prostitution] did not involve physical force. Instead, the coercion was emotional and psychological in nature. This included socialization as a sex object, fear of never being accepted in the straight world after being a ‘whore,’ induction into the sex world ‘family’ (one that accepts those not accepted elsewhere and a closed system that is difficult to leave), and knowledge that I could not make ends meet and that I would never make the same amount of money (even with a PhD).”

(From Taylor Lee, “In and Out: A Survivor’s Memoir of Stripping,” in Rebecca Whisnant & Christine Stark (Eds.), *Not for Sale: Feminists Resisting Prostitution and Pornography* (pp. 56-63), 2004, Melbourne, Australia: Spinifex Press. Permission to reproduce kindly granted by the publisher.)

Report of the Task  
Force on Trafficking  
of Women and Girls

Farrell and colleagues (2012) conducted extensive interviews with law enforcement and prosecutors in counties across the United States regarding their efforts to investigate and prosecute human trafficking at the state and local level. They found that a lack of understanding of the dynamics of psychological coercion was a significant obstacle in convincing judges and juries of the seriousness of human trafficking. When there was no element of physical force, prosecutors had to overcome misperceptions that the victim was complicit in her own victimization, acting freely, or at least able to leave if she really wanted to. This was the case for victims of labor trafficking and for both minor and adult victims of sex trafficking. One prosecutor stated, “The perception from jurors is, ‘Well this is slavery, they got a ball, iron ball attached to their leg, and they’re wearing rags and sleeping in shipping containers’” (Farrell et al., 2012, p. 185).

The 2008 reauthorization of the TVPA provided additional clarification of the term *coercion*. In his explanatory remarks on the reauthorization, Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA) (2008) stated that the intent was to make clear that means of trafficking included psychological, financial, and reputational harm and threats of harm, as well as physical force or threats of violence. Berman (2008) elaborated:

It is contemplated that these refinements will streamline the jury’s consideration in cases involving coercion and will more fully capture the imbalance of power between trafficker and victim. A scheme, plan, or pattern intended to inculcate a belief of serious harm may refer to nonviolent and psychological coercion, including but not limited to isolation, denial of sleep and punishments, or preying on mental illness, infirmity, drug use or addictions (whether pre-existing or developed by the trafficker). (p. H10904)

Raphael and Ashley (2008) interviewed 100 women between the ages of 16 and 25 who had first become involved in commercial sex between the ages of 12 and 23. The women spoke of coercion in the recruiting process, including verbal abuse (40%), reminders of indebtedness for clothing and other items (32%), withholding of drugs

(12%), threats to end a romantic relationship (23%), threats of harm (29%), and threats of being kicked out of the home (20%). On the basis of interviews with 13 survivors of CSEC, Williamson and Prior (2009) described manipulation or “finesse pimping,” including making girls feel that they need to repay the kindness shown to them by engaging in commercial sex and bringing the money “home.”

Coercive methods of control perpetrated by traffickers are often tantamount to torture. Trafficked women have been locked in rooms; forced to witness violence perpetrated on others (Kurtz, Surratt, Inciardi, & Kiley, 2004; Zimmerman et al., 2003); controlled and deprived of freedom of movement (Di Tommaso, Shima, Strom, & Bettio, 2009; J. Kim, 2010; K. Kim, 2011); separated from children (Choi et al., 2009; Zimmerman et al., 2003); and emotionally abused, shamed, and neglected (Choi et al., 2009). Other methods of coercion include threatening harm or death to the victim or to family members (Acharya, 2008; Choi et al., 2009; Hopper & Hidalgo, 2006; Hossain et al., 2010), or telling victims they had been purchased (Zimmerman et al., 2003). In addition, control of physical appearance, body weight, clothing, and activities such as eating, sleeping, and toileting are used (Choi et al., 2009). In the case of internationally trafficked people, isolation from their culture and language is another means of control (Free the Slaves & Human Rights Center, 2004; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Logan, Walker, & Hunt, 2009).

### PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Violence is used as a mechanism of trafficking as well as a means of controlling and maintaining the exploitative relationship. Evidence from studies with women exploited in commercial sex in the United States indicates high rates of physical and

## Sex Trafficking

### “I didn’t know who I was anymore”

[A] teenager, who had been trafficked by members of her own extended family was subjected to beatings with a shoe, starvation, forced labor for as many as 19 hours a day and a sense of menace so extreme that whenever she and her trafficked younger brother were sent out to Safeway to buy water, they never attempted escape. Rather, since they knew that their trips outside were being timed by the trafficker, they put all their energy into carrying the heavy water and other bundles as quickly as they could back to their house of confinement. In addition, although she spoke English and knew how to contact police, the teenager was afraid to call law enforcement because the trafficker had changed the victim’s name and her age on her passport and “told so many lies that I didn’t know who I was anymore.”

(From the Family Violence Prevention Fund (FVPF) publication *Turning Pain Into Power: Trafficking Survivors’ Perspectives on Early Intervention Strategies*, 2005, p. 17, San Francisco, CA: Author. Copyright 2013 by FVPF. Reprinted with permission.)

sexual violence perpetrated by pimps and clients, including rape, physical assault, gunshots, knife wounds, and threats with a weapon (Dalla, 2000; El-Bassel, Witte, Wada, Gilbert, & Wallace, 2001; Farley & Barkan, 1998; Farley et al., 2003; Farley, Matthews, et al., 2011; Hynes, 2002; Kennedy et al., 2007; Raphael & Shapiro, 2004).

Studies ranged from one third to 90% of participants reporting experiences of violence: 32.4% (El-Bassel et al., 2001), 72% (Dalla, 2000), 82% (Farley & Barkan, 1998), 84% (Farley, Matthews, et al., 2011), 84% and up (Hynes, 2002), and from 56% to 91% in a study of nine nations (Farley et al., 2003).<sup>2</sup> One third to two thirds of participants reported having been raped, and in one study over half of rape victims reported more than five rapes (Farley et al., 2003).<sup>3</sup> International studies revealed extreme forms of physical and sexual violence against trafficked women and girls in the Middle East, South Asia, Africa, Mexico, Canada, and Europe (Acharya, 2008; Acharya & Clark, 2010; Aronowitz, 2009; Bokhari, 2008; Cwikel, Chudakov, Paikin, Agmon, & Belmaker, 2004; Di Tommaso et al., 2009; Farley, Matthews, et al., 2011; Hossain, Zimmerman, Abas, Light, & Watts, 2010; Kennedy et al., 2007; Sarkar et al., 2008).

Experiences of torture are also common in trafficking cases (Hynes, 2002; Zimmerman et al., 2003), and there are similarities in the experiences of torture survivors and trafficking victims (Farley, Baral, Kiremire, & Sezgin, 1998; Farley & Barkan, 1998). Two studies illustrated the torturous experience of the trafficked persons they studied: Acharya (2008) reported that sex-trafficking victims in Mexico City experienced intentional burns and

placement of chili powder in their eyes and vaginas; Bauer and Ramirez (2010) reported that victims of labor exploitation in the United States were blindfolded with duct tape and struck with meat hooks in a meat processing plant.

Physical harms perpetrated on trafficked women can be extreme and life threatening. In a cohort of nearly 2,000 sexually exploited women followed for 3 decades, homicide was

the leading cause of premature death (Potterat et al., 2004). The standard workplace homicide rate for these women was 7 times higher than for male taxicab drivers and 51 times higher than for female liquor store workers, two occupations with the highest homicide rates in the United States during the time of the study. The authors stated that to their knowledge, “no population of women studied previously has had a crude mortality rate, standardized mortality ratio, or percentage of deaths due to murder even approximating those observed in our cohort” (Potterat et al., 2004, p. 783).

Several researchers report that for most victims of CSEC, the initial exploitation is more likely to occur via pretenses of love, affection, or access to perceived needs such as shelter, food, or drugs rather than immediate violence; physical violence escalated later (Kennedy et al., 2007; Raphael & Ashley, 2008; Reid, 2010; Williams & Frederick, 2009). However, each reported a minority of respondents for whom the entry into CSEC was brutal.

#### ABUSIVE WORK AND LIVING CONDITIONS

Women trafficked for labor are at high risk for physical injury and illness (Freedom Network, 2010). Abuse includes deprivation of basic needs, as well as nonphysical and psychologically coercive tactics; such tactics are injurious but difficult to prove (Free the Slaves & Human Rights Center, 2004; Human Rights Center, 2005; Human Rights Watch, 2001; J. Kim, 2010; K. Kim, 2011). Migrant workers as a group are vulnerable to labor trafficking; both U.S. and international studies on the health conditions of migrant workers revealed deplorable work conditions (APA, Presidential Task Force on Immigration, 2012; American University Washington

## Sex Trafficking “Brittany”

A man approached Brittany at a mall in her hometown, asked if she was looking for a job, and gave her a business card for a local restaurant he owned. When Brittany called the number on the card, the man confirmed that he was looking for waitresses to start working immediately. Brittany needed the job and asked for the restaurant’s address, but the man told her he would pick her up at the mall where they first met. Instead of going to the restaurant, the man drove her to a nearby hotel and told her that she was going to be a prostitute instead of a waitress. At gunpoint, Brittany was forced to drink bottles of vodka and take blue pills that made her dizzy and disoriented. Brittany tried to look for help but was locked in the hotel room without access to a phone. After three days of being beaten, drugged, and forced to have sex with at least 60 men, Brittany managed to escape and asked the first car she saw to call the police. Polaris provided case management services to Brittany, and with time and a strong support system she was able to enroll in school.

(From *Brittany: Escort Service Sex Trafficking*, Washington, DC: Polaris Project. Copyright 2014 by Polaris. Reprinted with permission. Names, locations, and other identifying information have been changed and/or omitted to preserve the confidentiality of the populations Polaris Project serves.)

College of Law International Human Rights Law Clinic & Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, 2010; Bauer, 2007; Chuang, 2010; Hsu, 2007; Human Rights Watch, 2012; Preibisch & Hennebry, 2011; Verité, 2010). Inadequate food and shelter, denial of breaks, including bathroom breaks, and exposure to toxic levels of pesticides threaten health (Arcury & Quandt, 2007; Bauer & Ramírez, 2010; Curl et al., 2002; Hansen & Donohoe, 2003). Both sex-trafficking victims (Acharya, 2008; Cwikel, Ilan, & Chudakov, 2003; Di Tommaso et al., 2009; Kennedy et al., 2007) and domestic workers (Domestic Workers United & Data Center, 2006; Human Rights Watch, 2001) are subject to excessive workloads, long hours, and unsafe working conditions. For example, Human Rights Watch (2001) conducted interviews regarding employment conditions of 43 domestic workers and found that “both the average and the median workday was fourteen hours, with most workers working at least six-day weeks and ten working seven. Only three workers reported working ten hours or less per day” (p. 17).

### MOVEMENT

Although movement of victims is not required for the crime of human trafficking, it is nevertheless a technique used by traffickers to maintain control (Hynes, 2002; Hynes & Raymond, 2002; Johnson, 2012; Rieger, 2007). Separation from familiar locales and frequent movement reduce the chances that victims will be able to escape the situation or connect with potential sources of assistance. Raphael and Ashley (2008) reported that

among the girls in their CSEC sample, 58% had been moved away from their homes and 26% had been moved to other states by their traffickers. Self-initiated movement is also a common pattern; women and girls may leave untenable home situations, flee their traffickers, or move in search of better options for rebuilding their lives. Regardless of the reason for relocation, frequent movement—especially between service areas or legal jurisdictions—creates difficulties

for accessing needed services (Williams & Frederick, 2009).

### DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Several international studies from India, Mexico, and Thailand found that traffickers forced drug use as a form of coercion (Acharya, 2008; Falb et al., 2011; Goldenberg et al., 2012; Gupta, Raj, Decker, Reed, & Silverman, 2009). Some reports suggest that U.S. traffickers also control their victims with substance use and addiction (Logan, Walker, & Hunt, 2009; Raphael & Ashley, 2008). Additionally, preexisting drug use can be a risk factor for youth involvement in exchanging sex for money (Edwards, Iritani, & Hallfors, 2006) and for trafficking.

### THE INTERNET

Sex businesses exploit the Internet and communication technology to offer commercial sex services around the world (Arizona State University, 2012; Blevins & Holt, 2009; Reid, 2010). Internet websites now provide contact information, specifics on sexual acts, pornography of the woman to be prostituted, coded prices,<sup>4</sup> and reviews by sex buyers (Blevins & Holt, 2009; Castle & Lee, 2008; Holt & Blevins, 2007). Classified advertisement websites, such as Craigslist and Backpage.com, have been used to advertise commercial sex services, including sex with minors (Cunningham & Kendall, 2011; Roe-Sepowitz, 2012; see the Human Trafficking Law Project, 2013, for specific cases using the Internet). Durschlag and Goswami (2008) reported 34% of their sample of men who purchased sex in Chicago ( $n = 113$ ) used the Internet to contact women, with Craigslist being the

## Sex Trafficking

### “Shayna”

At 17 years old, Shayna was trafficked by a man and a woman who operated an online escort and prostitution business. The traffickers made Shayna and the other girls post photos and solicitations for customers on Internet sites like redlightspecial.com or Backpage.com’s adult section. Customers arranged “dates” via the website, and the traffickers used an online service to reserve motel rooms for the “dates.” The trafficking ring was investigated, and the operators were eventually sentenced for trafficking children, coercion and enticement, transportation for illegal sexual activity, and conspiracy.

(From the Human Trafficking Law Project Database, 2013, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Law School. Copyright 2014 by the Regents of the University of Michigan. Adapted with permission.)

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most frequently used site. Curtis et al. (2008) interviewed youths engaged in commercial sex (survival sex as well as pimp-controlled activity) and found that of 249 youth interviewed, 23% used the Internet to find customers.

Although research has begun to address the role of the Internet in sexual predation targeting children and youth (e.g., Dombrowski, LeMasney, Ahia, & Dickson, 2004; Wolak, Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Ybarra, 2008), a limited number of empirical studies were identified that focused specifically on trafficking and commercial exploitation via the Internet. In July 2012, Microsoft awarded six research grants in North America to examine the role of technology in CSEC. Although the grants are limited to the study of sexually exploited children, they are a positive step in addressing the use of modern technology in trafficking in general (Microsoft News Center, 2012).

As well as facilitating trafficking, the Internet can be used as a law enforcement tool to identify victims, gather strong evidence against perpetrators, and address demand for CSEC. One such effort involved using Craigslist to post advertisements clearly indicating prostitution of a minor as the basis for a reverse sting operation, which yielded convictions of seven men intending to purchase sex with a child (U.S. Attorney’s Office, 2009).

# CONSEQUENCES AND IMPACT OF TRAFFICKING

There is a pressing need to recognize human trafficking as a health issue (Beyrer, 2004; Gushulak & MacPherson, 2000; Hynes, 2002; Zimmerman et al., 2003) and to apply a public health approach to address its consequences (Todres, 2011). Zimmerman et al. (2003) and Hynes and Raymond (2002) argued that the health risks and consequences trafficking poses for women and girls are comparable to those resulting from forced migration, sexual abuse, intimate partner violence, torture, or exploitive labor. There are serious psychological and physical health consequences for women and girls involved in trafficking.

## Literature Review

There is a scarcity of empirically based research on the physical and psychological consequences of human trafficking for women and girls in the United States. As a result, the task force drew from existing literature pertaining to trafficking outside of the United States and populations that typically contain trafficked women and girls.<sup>1</sup> Under U.S. federal law, the prostitution of minors is human trafficking (e.g., commercial sex with a person under the age of 18). As such, research on the consequences of prostitution with samples of minors was considered, even if the authors did not explicitly address trafficking.<sup>2</sup> Also considered was literature pertaining to trafficking in which the

United States was not a destination, source, or transit country. Although geographical, social, and political contexts may differ, information about the consequences of trafficking drawn from this literature can advance understanding of trafficking in the United States.<sup>3</sup> In addition, research on populations that typically contain trafficked persons was taken into account under the assumption that women and girls trafficked into forced labor, domestic servitude, or other work would not experience better health and mental health outcomes than the occupational group as a whole, and women and girls trafficked for prostitution are unlikely to experience better outcomes than women and girls in prostitution where trafficking status is not known.

## Mental Health Consequences

### RELATIONSHIP COMPLEXITIES

Psychological coercion and abuse dramatically disrupt relationship dynamics for trafficked women and girls. According to Herman (1992):

Traumatic events have primary effects not only on the psychological structures of the self but also on the systems of attachment and meaning that link individuals and community. ... Traumatic events destroy the victim's fundamental

assumptions about the safety of the world, the positive value of the self, and the meaningful order of creation. (p. 51)

Many victims are subjected to “traumatic subordinate relationships” in which they engage in behaviors to appease the perpetrator’s potential for violence (Cantor & Price, 2007). As a result, they may present with ambivalent attachment responses to their traffickers. Cantor and Price (2007) also noted that complex PTSD is common in populations that have been subjected to “traumatic subordinate relationships” characterized by life-threatening entrapment. The perpetrator commonly engages in small and sporadic acts of kindness, isolates the victim from perspectives other than those of the perpetrator, and creates a situation from which the victim feels she cannot escape.

These factors are also common determinants of Stockholm syndrome. Although not formally recognized as a mental health diagnosis (Namnyak et al., 2008), Stockholm syndrome is classically associated with hostage situations.<sup>4</sup> Graham and colleagues (1995) found the disorder was a common form of coping for female undergraduate students in abusive relationships. Namnyak and colleagues’ (2008) meta-analytic review of Stockholm syndrome studies found that in most cases, psychological violence—as opposed to physical violence—and kindness by the perpetrator increased the victim’s attachment following escape.

Another study with women who had left abusive relationships (Dutton & Painter, 1993) found that alternating good and bad treatment appeared to strengthen the feelings of attachment to the abusive partner over time. Other studies found that victims might engage in behaviors of appeasement; victims of intimate partner violence, for instance, may behave in a childlike manner toward the batterer (Cantor & Price, 2007), thus making it seem as though the victim is willingly with the perpetrator. Similarly, trafficking victims might describe loving feelings and engage in compassionate and kind behaviors toward the trafficker (Stark & Hodgson, 2003). Such behaviors, however, should not be mistaken for a willingness to remain in the trafficking situation but rather viewed as a complex trauma response akin to the ambivalence to leave that is common among victims of intimate partner violence. Additionally, reintegration into the community may be more difficult because the survivor could be perceived as complicit in her own captivity. Such perceptions have the potential to retraumatize survivors.

Cumulative victimization experiences impact people’s beliefs about themselves and others. For example, in a study that assessed defense mechanisms used by homeless youths,

researchers found that victimization is related to increased use of all defenses to cope with trauma (Mounier & Andujo, 2003). One particular defense mechanism, splitting, involves the victim’s adapting her responses to please the perpetrator, focusing on that person’s positive behaviors and ignoring his or her negative behaviors. Splitting reduces the capacity of the victim to distinguish between safe and dangerous people and is damaging to relationships. The use of splitting was associated with cumulative experiences of child maltreatment, multiple experiences of victimization, and sexual abuse (Mounier & Andujo, 2003)—common traumas among women and girls prior to trafficking. Splitting could contribute to the vulnerability of homeless and runaway youth to trafficking and re trafficking.

Research demonstrating that social pain and physical pain activate similar neural pathways (Eisenberger, 2012; Eisenberger & Lieberman, 2004) can begin to shed light on the physiological effects psychological coercion has on trafficked women and girls.<sup>5</sup> In addition to the isolating and controlling impact of coercion during the trafficking situation, survivors who escape may face discrimination and social exclusion that lead to further isolation. For instance, in a study of undergraduates’ perceptions of commercially and sexually exploited minors, Menaker and Miller (2012) found that the more information participants had about a girl’s history of victimization and coercion, the less blame they placed on the girl.

On the basis of the findings of neurobiological research (e.g., Eisenberger, 2012; Eisenberger & Lieberman, 2004), A. Banks (2011) emphasized that recovering the ability to relate and connect is central to treating trauma-affected women. A. Banks (2006) noted that in addition to recovering from the health, spiritual, and cognitive impairments resulting from chronic abuse, the largest obstacle to healing for women is recovering from a destroyed sense of relationships. This is consistent with Herman’s (1992, 1997) stages of recovery model, work by Dalla and colleagues (L. M. Baker et al., 2010; Dalla, 2006) on the exit process, and work by Freyd and colleagues (Freyd, 1994, 2003; Freyd et al., 2007) on betrayal trauma.

## DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

Studies with both U.S. (Alegría et al., 1994; Dalla et al., 2003; Edwards et al., 2006; Perdue et al., 2012; Twill, Green, & Traylor, 2010) and non-U.S. samples of CSE and trafficked women found elevated rates of depression (Choi et al., 2009; Hossain et al., 2010; Jung et al., 2008; Roxburgh, Degenhardt, & Copeland, 2006;

Tsutsumi, Izutsu, Poudyal, Kato, & Marui, 2008; Zimmerman et al., 2003, 2006). Nearly all women (95%) endorsed “depression/feeling very sad” within the first couple of weeks of exiting a trafficking situation (Zimmerman et al., 2006, p.18). These women also reported loneliness (88%), and over three fourths (78%) experienced feelings of worthlessness (Zimmerman et al., 2006).

In addition, anxiety and hostility were psychological symptoms detected among trafficked women (Alexander, Kellogg, & Thompson, 2005; Williamson, Dutch, & Clawson, 2010; Zimmerman et al., 2003, 2006). Zimmerman et al. (2006) found that “among the anxiety-related symptoms reported, ‘nervousness,’ ‘fearful,’ and feeling ‘tense or keyed up’ were the most prevalent (between 84% and 91% at the first interview)” (p. 18). At interviews 3 months later, these survivors were still endorsing feelings of nervousness (51%) and fearfulness (43%) (Zimmerman et al., 2006). Immediately upon exiting trafficking, 83% of the survivors reported feelings easily irritated or annoyed, and temper outbursts continued to be an issue with 67% of the survivors 3 months later (Zimmerman et al., 2006).

#### **POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)**

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was identified as a psychiatric diagnosis in the third edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III)*; American Psychiatric Association, 1980) and has been modified through subsequent *DSM* revisions, including the most recent edition, the *DSM-5* (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, 5th ed.). PTSD can result from trauma exposure and may include a combination of debilitating symptoms, including avoidance of trauma-triggering stimuli, reexperiencing symptoms (e.g., flashbacks), hypervigilance (e.g., startle response), and hyperarousal states (e.g., sleep disorders). The *DSM-5* includes “negative alterations in cognitions and mood” as diagnostic criteria (p. 271). This can include loss of memory, self-blame for the trauma, mistrust of others, and other “persistent and exaggerated negative beliefs or expectations about oneself, others, or the world” (p. 271). Such distorted beliefs can be particularly challenging in the therapy setting; they may interfere with the survivor’s ability to reestablish trusting relationships and may increase risk for self-injurious behavior.

In a study with trafficked and prostituted women from nine nations, Farley and colleagues (2003) found that 68% of the women in the full sample and 69% of the women in the U.S. sample met criteria for PTSD. Over 50% of a group of trafficked Native American women in the United States met criteria for PTSD

(Farley, Matthews, et al., 2011). Studies with non-U.S. samples of trafficked women also found elevated rates of PTSD (Choi et al., 2009; Hossain et al., 2010; Jung et al., 2008; Roxburgh et al., 2006; Tsutsumi et al., 2008; Zimmerman et al., 2003, 2006).

#### **COMPLEX PTSD**

Although elevated levels of PTSD are found in samples of trafficked women and girls, additional symptomology suggests that the PTSD diagnosis cannot comprehensively capture the psychological harms of trafficking. Instead, a complex trauma approach can provide a comprehensive understanding of the multiple symptoms and the psychological consequences of trafficking.

PTSD may present following a single or discrete traumatic event. In contrast, complex PTSD results from multiple or persistent trauma. Many trafficked persons have suffered multiple forms of trauma, including events that predate the experience of trafficking, such as physical abuse (Dalla et al., 2003; Goldenberg et al., 2012; Perdue et al., 2012; Zimmerman et al., 2008) and sexual abuse (Burnette et al., 2008; Farley et al., 1998; James & Meyerding, 1977; Kramer & Berg, 2003; Loza et al., 2010; McClanahan et al., 1999; Senn & Carey, 2010; Silbert & Pines, 1981, 1982a, 1982b; Simons & Whitbeck, 1991; Tyler, Whitbeck, Hoyt, & Cauce, 2004; Widom, 1995). Traffickers may gain their victims’ trust or even be family and community members well known to the victim. The combination of abuse and close relationship with the trafficker makes this population highly vulnerable to complex trauma, or trauma that is purposefully inflicted through the actions of another person through sexual abuse, relationship violence, exploitation, or similar violations (Courtois, 2008; Herman, 1992, 1997).

Persons exposed to such extreme, chronic, and relational forms of trauma may exhibit symptoms that go beyond typical PTSD. The set of symptoms has been identified as complex PTSD (Herman, 1992), also known as “disorders of extreme stress not otherwise specified” (Luxenberg, Spinazzola, & van der Kolk, 2001). Complex trauma contributes to a combination of alterations in the individual’s affect regulation, consciousness, self-perception, perception of the perpetrator, relationships with others, and in systems of meaning (Herman, 1997; Luxenberg et al., 2001). In an attempt to regulate affect, victims who present with complex PTSD may turn to substance abuse, cutting, disordered eating, suicidal gestures, or other forms of self-injurious behaviors. Comorbid diagnoses, such as PTSD, depression, and anxiety are



understood as part of the overall complex PTSD presentation (Courtois, 2004).

Determinants influencing the degree of psychopathology in complex PTSD include the type of trauma, with relational traumas increasing vulnerability; multiple or chronic experiences of trauma; the victim's relationship to the perpetrator; the community's reaction to the traumatic event (e.g., supportive, judgmental); and the particular defense (e.g., fight, flight, or freeze/submit) activated during the traumatic event (McEwen, 2002; Scaer, 2001). Age is a factor, with younger victims at greater risk for complex PTSD (Cole & Putnam, 1992; Herman, 1992, 1997; Scaer, 2001; van der Kolk, 1988).

One Korean study demonstrated that when compared with non-trafficked women ( $n = 31$ ), trafficked women ( $n = 46$ ) had higher rates of both PTSD and complex PTSD resulting from a combination of the coercive experiences during trafficking and from histories of physical and sexual abuse and other traumas prior to trafficking (Choi et al., 2009). Complex PTSD symptoms included somatization, dissociative experiences, identity problems, relational problems, and affect regulation problems.

## Studies with trafficked women found that dissociation's etiology may be twofold: linked to high rates of childhood physical and sexual abuse followed by violent victimization during trafficking.

Related to this, a study of trafficked girls in India with a history of sexual abuse ( $n = 120$ ) showed that the girls had high levels of aggression (Deb, Mukherjee, & Mathews, 2011), a form of affect dysregulation that can be related to the complex PTSD diagnosis.

### DISSOCIATION

Pathological dissociation can result from early childhood trauma and may be compounded by exposure to multiple traumas throughout the lifespan (Putnam, 1995). Thus, trafficked individuals may present with this symptom. Dissociation is a psychophysiological process that triggers a unique form of consciousness, which is present in all individuals to a greater or lesser degree (Putnam, 1993). In normal states of consciousness, the individual integrates

memory, information, and affect. In a dissociated state, the normal integration process fails. Research over the last 2 decades demonstrates a relationship between traumatic stress and pathological forms of dissociation (Putnam, 1995). Pathological dissociation experiences result in serious impairment of memory and identity. These disruptions may lead to a range of dissociative disorders (Putnam, 1993). Dissociation can also impact cognitive functioning necessary for learning and decision making (Kimble, Fleming, Bandy, & Zambetti, 2010).

Defense mechanisms associated with dissociative disorders were prevalent in homeless runaway youths who had experienced multiple forms of victimization and abuse (Mounier & Andujo, 2003). In a study of sexually abused girls, dissociation was related to sexual abuse by multiple perpetrators coupled with physical abuse (Putnam, Helters, Horowitz, & Trickett, 1995). According to Choi et al. (2009), studies with trafficked women found that dissociation's etiology may be twofold: linked to high rates of childhood physical and sexual abuse followed by violent victimization during trafficking.

Dissociation is common among those in escort, street, massage, strip club, and brothel prostitution and frequently is accompanied by PTSD, depression, eating disorders, and substance abuse (Farley, Matthews, et al., 2011; Ross, Anderson, Heber, & Norton, 1990; Ross, Farley, & Schwartz, 2003; Vanwesenbeeck, 1994). In a sample of non-U.S. women ( $n = 207$ ) who had survived trafficking, more than 33% reported difficulty recalling complete or even minor details of the most horrific events to which they were subjected, and memory deficits were a problem for 63% (Zimmerman et al., 2006). Anecdotally, many trafficked women report using dissociativelike defenses to tolerate their traumatic experiences, but limited research exists to clarify how the process unfolds or how it impacts functioning after the experience of trafficking.<sup>6</sup>

### SELF-INJURIOUS AND SUICIDAL BEHAVIORS

Schissel and Fedec (1999) found higher rates of self-injurious behaviors in the form of cutting among trafficked Canadian Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youths than among those from both groups who had not been trafficked. Trafficking was also associated with increased suicidal tendencies and more suicide attempts. In samples of marginalized and homeless youths in British Columbia (Saewyc, MacKay, Anderson, & Drozda, 2008), the risks for self-harm and for considering, planning, or attempting suicide were two to three times higher among sexually

exploited youths than among nonexploited youths. Thirty-eight percent of a sample of European women reported having suicidal thoughts within the first weeks after exiting their trafficking situations, and many stated that during the time they were trafficked, they seriously considered suicide (Zimmerman et al., 2006). Burnette et al. (2008) found that women participating in a substance abuse program who had been exploited in commercial sex experienced a higher rate of lifetime suicide attempts than did substance-abusing women without a history of exploitation.

## Physical Health Consequences

Trafficked and sexually exploited women report a variety of health concerns, including neurological issues (Chudakov, Ilan, Belmaker, & Cwikel, 2002; Farley et al., 1998, 2003; Farley & Barkan, 1998; Farley, Lynne, & Cotton, 2005; Zimmerman et al., 2006, 2008); gastrointestinal disturbances (Farley et al., 2003; Zimmerman et al., 2006, 2008); respiratory distress (Farley et al., 2003, 2005; Zimmerman et al., 2008); cardiovascular disorders (Chudakov et al., 2002; Farley et al., 2003, 2005; Zimmerman et al., 2006, 2008); chronic pain, urogenital problems, and injuries, including fractures, broken and missing teeth, and traumatic brain injury (Chudakov et al., 2002; Farley et al., 2003, 2005; Potterat et al., 2004; Raymond et al., 2002; Zimmerman et al., 2003, 2006, 2008).

Trafficked women also reported a range of reproductive and sexual health issues, such as pain during menstruation and intercourse, heavy bleeding, abnormal vaginal discharge, and unwanted pregnancies and abortions (Acharya, 2008; Choi et al., 2009; Cwikel et al., 2003; Decker, McCauley, Phuengsamran, Janyam, & Silverman, 2011; Farley et al., 2003, 2005; Zimmerman et al., 2003, 2006).

Studies of women exploited in commercial sex in the United States found rates of HIV infection ranging from 14% to 28% (Alegría et al., 1994; Burnette et al., 2008; El-Bassel et al., 2001). In a U.S. sample of clients seeking substance abuse treatment, Burnette and colleagues (2008) found rates of HIV/AIDS four times higher, rates of hepatitis four times higher, and rates of other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) almost six times higher among women who had engaged in commercial sex ( $n = 816$ ) than among women who had not ( $n = 790$ ).

Long work hours and dangerous working conditions combined with limited rest, limited nutrition, and lack of access to medical care (Choi et al., 2009; Di Tommaso et al., 2009; Holmes, 2007) contribute to fatigue, incapacitating physical pain, disfiguring and disabling injuries, and increased risk of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis (Bauer, 2007; Bauer & Ramírez, 2010; Dharmadhikari, Gupta, Decker, Raj, & Silverman, 2009; Huffman, Veen, Hennink, & McFarland, 2012).

Substance abuse and addictions also negatively affect health status (Burnette et al., 2008; Jung et al., 2008; Schissel & Fedec, 1999). Burnette et al. (2008) interviewed more than 1,500 women receiving substance abuse services. Over half ( $n = 816$ ) reported having exchanged sex for money or drugs at some time in their lives; these women were significantly younger, had a lower educational level, and were more likely to be homeless than women who had not engaged in commercial sex. They also were significantly more likely to have a history of inpatient treatment and of crack cocaine, polysubstance, and intravenous drug use.

In a study of African American women ( $n = 203$ ) who reported smoking crack cocaine, women who engaged in commercial sex reported a higher severity of drug use and were more likely to use drugs to decrease guilt and increase their sense of control, confidence, and closeness to others, compared with women who had not engaged in commercial sex (Young, Boyd, & Hubbell, 2000). The study suggests that although attempts to fund their drug use may have contributed to commercial sex activities, the women's drug use likely increased as a way to deal with negative aspects of the work, a finding also noted in qualitative studies (Dalla, 2002; Murphy, 2010).

## Additional Consequences

In addition to experiencing the physical and psychological consequences of trafficking, trafficked women and girls often face financial, community, and family stressors directly related to their trafficking experience (DeRiviere, 2006). Feelings of shame about the experience of trafficking may impede them from seeking support from their families and communities (Hart, 2012; Miller, Decker, Silverman, & Raj, 2007; Poudel & Carryer, 2000; Shigekane, 2007; Vijayarasa & Stein, 2010).

## Sex Trafficking PTSD

### Consequences and Impact of Trafficking

“Escaping a captor isn’t even a halfway point to recovery. For 3 years I was tortured, raped, endured sensory deprivation, placed in restraints, ... malnourished, and had absolutely no control over any part of my life. Life for me as a captive was always cause and effect—usually with violent consequences. Even involving things I had no control over; for example, bruising from a vicious beating was cause for punishment. ... This has profoundly impacted my life even though I escaped nearly 30 years ago.

Since my captivity ended, I’ve had eight surgeries ... caused by what I suffered in captivity. For many years I considered myself very fortunate. Most of my injuries appeared to just be scars until the years of abuse caught up with me in the form of delayed-onset injuries. Many injuries can’t be repaired. My raspy voice is the direct result of trauma and has no resolution. While I have managed to live a semi-normal life physically, I have ... lost years of income ... unable to work as a result of the injuries.

From an emotional perspective ... an escaped captive will have PTSD. ... It will likely take years of counseling to learn to deal with the most common symptoms of PTSD including nightmares, flashbacks, hyper vigilance [sic] and/or an emotional flat affect. There will also be a process of learning to trust again and developing healthy relationships. ... Part of recovering from captivity is regaining one’s sense of self worth and coping with being treated as damaged goods by people ... once they become aware of the victim’s history. A long term captive’s emotional and psychological responses are also altered in ways that are less obvious. When freedom has been taken away and replaced with living in abstract fear of death, with violence that is often incomprehensible and in response to uncontrollable events, that devastates one’s psychology and how they view and react to the world after escape. Freedom is something that I literally have had to relearn, and am still learning. Something as basic and normal as asking a friend to stop at a restaurant because I’m hungry or need to use the restroom are examples of what I have had to relearn. I still take instruction far too literally, fearing an aggressive or violent response. ... This is PTSD. This takes many years of intense therapy to overcome and it is a lifelong process.”

(Reprinted from “One Former Slave on Helping Cleveland Kidnap Victims,” by J. Breneman, May 27, 2013 [Web blog post]. Reprinted with permission.)

Although lack of education can increase a person’s vulnerability to trafficking, trafficking itself can contribute to lack of education. Minors trafficked for labor or commercial sex may be prevented from attending school or may drop out of school (Massachusetts Department of Education, 1989; Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2009; Pierce, personal communication, March 30, 2013; *U.S. v. Abdel Nasser Youssef Ibrahim*, 2006; *U.S. v. Abdenasser Ennassime*, 2006). Others may continue to attend school but not receive the full benefit of their education due to physical exhaustion and psychological trauma (Flores & Wells, 2010). Limited educational attainment may then increase subsequent vulnerability because of restricted employment options. Victims who were treated as offenders rather than

crime victims may have juvenile or criminal records; such records can interfere with opportunities for employment, housing, and access to services (Reid, 2010).

# RESPONDING TO TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

Prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership—the “4 Ps”—serve as the “fundamental international framework used by the United States and internationally to combat contemporary forms of slavery” (U.S. Department of State, 2011a).<sup>1</sup> These categories facilitate communication across professional and geographical domains and help identify work that needs to be done. The task force recognizes, however, that the distinctions among them are somewhat artificial. In practice, professionals may actually concurrently be contributing to protection, prevention, and prosecution. Psychologists entering the field of anti-trafficking work should be prepared to partner with professionals from a variety of disciplines. They must also recognize that this work will—and should—be complex.

Although there is much to be learned about which interventions are most effective, a variety of programs have been implemented to address prevention, protection, and prosecution. This section will provide a brief overview of programs and policy responses currently in use in the United States.

## Prevention

Prevention must be the centerpiece of any effort to combat human trafficking. Prevention is preferable to providing remediation services for victims of the abuse, deprivation, and violence of this crime because it is more protective of health and is a matter of justice and basic human rights.

Compared to efforts to identify and serve victims and survivors, to investigate and prosecute traffickers, or to build partnerships, prevention has received less attention from researchers, funding sources, media, and governmental and nongovernmental entities involved in anti-trafficking work (Barrett & Shaw, 2011; Chuang, 2006; Dettmeijer, 2009; Shinkle, 2007; Todres, 2010). Overall, the approach to prevention of human trafficking in the United States has not been comprehensive or systematic. Many approaches seem promising, but their impact in terms of preventing victimization is largely unknown, and there is limited reporting on these programs in the peer-reviewed literature. Programs described in the following sections illustrate different approaches to prevention, but inclusion is not meant to imply these programs were evaluated and found to be effective. All types of prevention programs need to be evaluated for developmental appropriateness and for competence in reaching diverse cultural and language groups. Campaign effectiveness should be improved by including survivors of labor and sex trafficking in planning and development.

## Sex Trafficking “Teodora”

Teodora entered the United States on a J-1 visa, recruited by what she believed to be a legitimate modeling business. Instead, she and other women from Eastern Europe were forced to work 70–80 hours a week as strippers and exotic dancers in a midwestern city. Her passport was confiscated by the traffickers, her wages were withheld to repay the exorbitant debt the recruiters claimed she owed them, and she was controlled by threats of violence and deportation. The traffickers included men and women, foreign nationals, and naturalized U.S. citizens.

(From the Human Trafficking Law Project Database, 2013, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Law School. Copyright 2014 by the Regents of the University of Michigan. Adapted with permission.)

### AWARENESS AND EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

The goals of awareness and educational campaigns are both primary and secondary prevention. Primary prevention is accomplished by alerting potential trafficking victims about fraudulent employment offers, visa schemes, or pimp recruitment. Secondary prevention is aided by early victim identification and connection to services to reduce chances of revictimization. Some campaigns are large international and national programs funded by intergovernmental organizations (e.g., Blue Heart Campaign Against Human Trafficking; UNODC, 2012), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs; e.g., Free the Slaves, Truckers Against Trafficking), or the federal government (e.g., U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s [2012] Blue Campaign), while some campaigns are small-scale efforts conducted by local NGOs, faith-based organizations, or service agencies.

The U.S. State Department (2009) developed a “Know Your Rights” pamphlet as part of a promising campaign to inform foreign nationals coming to the United States on nonimmigrant visas about their workplace rights. According to early information from the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC, 2010, 2011), the pamphlet brought about “increased call volume [to the national hotline] from a number of different foreign-born visa holders experiencing diverse types of exploitation.”

### EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS

Empowerment programs for women and girls at risk of trafficking in commercial sex (primary prevention) or exiting commercial sex (secondary prevention) commonly address key factors that increase risk of trafficking or act as barriers to exiting, such as homelessness, substance use, history of violent victimization, and lack of means of support. Most often established by NGOs that provide direct services for survivors, empowerment approaches

vary depending on the organization’s philosophy and target population. Services typically include information about sexual health, commercial sex myths, targeting and recruitment tactics, as well as safety planning, identifying resources, and building self-esteem. Several programs employ survivors of CSE to facilitate empowerment groups

or to act as role models, encouraging education, leadership, and advocacy (Hotaling, Burris, Johnson, Bird, & Melbye, 2003; Lloyd, 2008; Justice Resource Institute, 2012; Pierce, 2012).<sup>2</sup>

In addition to their educational components, programs at the Minnesota Indian Women’s Resource Center (MIWRC; Pierce, 2012) include holistic health care (e.g., acupuncture, acupressure, and massage as a source of safe, healing touch) and cultural teachings. A 6-month outcome assessment for one MIWRC program with a sample of adolescent girls ( $n = 17$ ) showed that, relative to baseline, fewer girls reported homelessness and relationship abuse, and more girls reported improved family relationships and increased school attendance. There was, however, no change in the number of girls exposed to threats of violence. Girls did not report any change in amount of police contact, although the nature of their contact changed from involvement in unlawful behavior to reporting victimization (Pierce, 2012).

A comprehensive, strengths-based program for runaway girls who had been sexually exploited or sexually abused showed favorable results in restoring supportive relationships, reducing traumatic distress, reducing risk behaviors, and increasing self-care (Saewyc & Edinburg, 2010). Some of the services provided in this program included home visits to strengthen relationships, mental health screenings, goal setting, health education, and empowerment groups.

Recognizing and building on the existing strengths of survivors, as well as developing new ones, is a common theme in the CSE literature (Harvey & Tummala-Narra, 2007; Lloyd, 2008, 2011; Saewyc & Edinburg, 2010; Williams, 2010, 2011; Williams & Frederick, 2009). Trafficked women and girls have had to endure extreme circumstances; the coping skills, strength, and determination that kept them alive should not be overlooked. Along with

having significant needs, survivors will also have significant resources that they can develop. Williams (2011) argued compellingly for not underestimating survivors:

We found that, when asked, many homeless, runaway and thrown away youth were able to articulate significant aspirations and dreams. For example, while many of the youth had experienced considerable difficulties with school, it was clear that for many teens these difficulties did not dampen their enthusiasm about or aspirations to complete their high school educations or attain higher degrees. Many homeless youth spontaneously mentioned school as one of the top three things that were important to them. This is significant considering the multiple challenges of survival the runaway and homeless youth faced on a day to day basis. (p. 4)

Existing programs that show promise appear to be comprehensive (i.e., they include educational, relational, therapeutic, and other components), strengths-based, culturally competent, and survivor-informed. Initial successes are encouraging, but evaluation of long-term effectiveness of existing programs regarding prevention of victimization or revictimization is not yet available and will be important to an understanding of factors that best promote the well-being of women and girls.<sup>3</sup>

### **EDUCATION, JOB TRAINING, AND CAREER COUNSELING**

Beyond curricula to raise awareness of trafficking, primary prevention of human trafficking demands high-quality educational opportunities from early childhood to ensure all children have the foundation for meaningful career options and self-sufficiency. Adolescents need educational and career counseling as well as real job opportunities to enhance their resistance to trafficking schemes and reduce the chances they will exploit others. Educational programs, career counseling, and job training are also essential secondary prevention strategies for girls and women who have been trafficked and are seeking to rebuild their lives. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Labor make education and job training programs available to survivors of human trafficking (Siskin & Sun Wyler, 2010). Public schools and universities can provide additional programs to enhance opportunities for survivors.<sup>4</sup>

### **DEMAND REDUCTION**

The philosophy behind demand reduction efforts is that the demand for commercial sex or for cheap labor, services, and consumer goods drives trafficking. Demand reduction for commercial sex takes a

variety of forms at both the individual and the community level. On an individual level, some approaches include seizure of vehicles used in soliciting prostitution, shaming through letters sent to the homes of arrested sex buyers or by publicizing the solicitors' identities on websites or billboards, reverse stings in which a law enforcement officer poses as a prostitute and the sex buyer is arrested,<sup>5</sup> and "john schools" or educational programs (with attendance required as a condition of sentencing for solicitation) designed to discourage purchasing commercial sex (Abt Associates, n.d.; Shively, Kliorys, Wheeler, & Hunt, 2012; Willoughby & Lee, 2008; Yen, 2008).

Although demand for a "product" is essential to support the enterprise of human trafficking, surprisingly little attention has been paid to purchasers of commercial sex, even those who contribute to the sexual exploitation of children. Schauer and Wheaton (2006) stated that

the masculine actors, the purchasers of sexual services ... and pimps, receive either no or "slap-on-the-wrist"-type sanctions. Twenty-five states have no statutes that sanction the behavior of those buying sexual services, whereas 9 have none sanctioning the pimp; however, 47 states make prostitution (i.e., women selling sexual favors) a crime. (p. 150)

Yen (2008) argued that "the sexual desires and preferences of the male customers who purchase commercial sexual acts ... influence and direct all aspects of sex trafficking, from the type of girls that are recruited to the location of the brothels" (p. 665). Research examining the motivations, beliefs, and behaviors of purchasers of commercial sex may contribute to efforts to reduce demand and prevent trafficking (see Durschlag & Goswami, 2008; Farley, MacLeod, et al., 2011; Schapiro Group, 2010).

Community-based approaches include media campaigns to change social norms, such as the "Dear John" campaign in Atlanta, GA (Kotrla, 2010; National Criminal Justice Reference Service, 2009; Willoughby & Lee, 2008), which uses billboards and public service announcements in the form of letters to sex buyers stating that sexual exploitation of Atlanta's youth is not tolerated. Programs such as the Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (CAASE) curriculum for young men of high-school age focus on reducing demand for commercial sex by exploring and challenging social norms (CAASE, n.d.; Dunn Burque, 2009).

The "Swedish model" is a promising approach to reducing demand that needs further investigation.<sup>6</sup> On the basis of the

assumption that prostitution and sex trafficking constitute violence against women, this approach decriminalizes the sale of sex while instituting strong penalties for the purchase of commercial sex (Committee of Inquiry to Evaluate the Ban Against the Purchase of Sexual Services, 2010; Ekberg, 2004). In other words, Swedish law criminalizes the clients of commercial sex but not the sexually exploited persons. The Swedish approach has been hailed by many observers as being successful in substantially reducing prostitution at the street level in Sweden and in reducing trafficking of persons into Sweden for the purpose of prostitution (Claude, 2010; Ekberg, 2004; Shively et al., 2012; Willoughby & Lee, 2008). Eriksson and Gavanas (2008) acknowledged immediate reductions of street-level prostitution following the passage of the law; however, they concluded that prostitution has been increasing over subsequent years and in 2007 was about two thirds as prevalent as it had been prior to the law.

## Swedish law criminalizes the clients of commercial sex but not the sexually exploited persons.

Eriksson and Gavanas also suggested that there were widely differing views among their respondents about the success of the law in reducing demand. Shively et al. (2012) reviewed a wide range of demand-reduction approaches toward sex trafficking and concluded:

Evidence that anti-demand tactics (or comprehensive approaches that include addressing demand) can effectively suppress commercial sex markets is slowly accumulating and is robust in relation to evidence of the effectiveness of other approaches. However, formal evaluations are still confined to evaluations of a few anti-demand approaches implemented in a few locations. (p. v)

Although addressed in the literature less often, the relationship between human trafficking and the demand for nonsexual services and products (labor trafficking) must be considered and addressed as well. Major retailers—and ultimately, individual consumers—benefit from lower priced services or consumer goods that may be produced using forced or coerced labor, including forced child labor (Bales & Soodalter, 2009; Bauer, 2007; Bauer & Ramírez, 2010; Coalition of Immokalee Workers, 2012).<sup>7</sup> Prevention campaigns often focus on changing individual consumer behavior by raising

awareness of the human costs and violations of human rights embedded in the production process and in supply chains. For example, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) led a successful campaign to increase prices paid by major retailers for tomatoes grown in Florida. This effort was one aspect of CIW's anti-slavery campaign, complementing its work to investigate and expose labor trafficking in Florida agriculture. A series of controlled field studies suggests that campaigns to raise awareness of trafficking and exploitation may positively influence consumer behavior (Hainmueller, Hiscox, & Sequeira, 2011; Hiscox, Broukhim, Litwin, & Woloski, 2011; Hiscox & Smyth, 2011).

### POLICY APPROACHES

Prevention can be addressed through policy efforts at the local, state, national, and international level; such efforts have the potential to impact trafficking comprehensively and consistently. However, current U.S. policy focuses on prosecution of traffickers and services for survivors, which may reduce revictimization but do not address primary prevention needs.

One policy approach is to expose trafficking in supply chains through efforts such as the enacted California Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2010 and the proposed federal Business Transparency on Trafficking and Slavery Act (2011). In addition, the TVPRA of 2005 mandates that the U.S. Department of Labor “carry out . . . activities to monitor and combat forced labor and child labor in foreign countries.” Such activities include creating a publicly available list of goods “that the Bureau of International Labor Affairs has reason to believe are produced by forced labor or child labor in violation of international standards”; by developing a standard set of practices that will reduce the likelihood that listed goods will continue to be produced with such labor; and by consulting with other U.S. government agencies “to reduce forced and child labor internationally and ensure that products made by forced labor and child labor in violation of international standards are not imported into the United States” (TVPRA, 2005).

Finally, a number of authors point to components of the U.S. temporary-visa system that allow serious abuses including human trafficking (Bales & Soodalter, 2009; Bauer, 2007; Bauer & Ramírez, 2010; Coalition of Immokalee Workers, 2012). Of most concern are visas that directly tie domestic servants and “guest workers” in agriculture, fisheries, and other industries to their employers, with little oversight or protection from the federal government. Some efforts have been made to address these problems, but business groups blocked an attempt to

reduce abuses in the H-2 visa program in federal court (*Bayou Lawn & Landscape Services et al. v. Hilda Solis et al.*, 2012). Until substantial changes are made in a number of the visa programs, especially those that give employers unfettered discretion over the legal status, safety, and well-being of foreign workers, persons coming to the United States to work will be at elevated risk for human trafficking.

## Protection

According to the Colorado Project to Comprehensively Combat Human Trafficking website (Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking, n.d.):

Protection measures ensure that human trafficking victims are provided access to health care, counseling, legal and shelter services in ways that are not prejudicial against victims' rights, dignity, or psychological well-being. Protection also means creating an environment (social, political and legal) that fosters the protection of victims of trafficking.

Numerous studies identify a similar range of needs (Aron, Zweig, & Newmark, 2006; Clawson et al., 2009; Jones & Yousefzadeh, 2006; Macy & Johns, 2011) and highlight the importance of meeting changing needs over time.

The post-trafficking needs of trafficking survivors vary depending on their specific circumstances (e.g., whether they are adults or minors; whether it is safe for them to return home; whether they speak English; whether they are U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, lawful temporary migrants, or undocumented immigrants). Each individual's circumstances—prior to, during, and following the trafficking—are different, and the survivor should be consulted to determine what she perceives to be her most pressing needs. There may be needs for housing, employment, psychological services, foster placement, medical care, legal assistance, interpreters, family reunification, or case management (Clawson & Dutch, 2008). Funds may be needed for removal of tattoos or brands that the trafficker used to mark the individual as property. Additional needs arise if the trafficking survivor has children (Busch-Armendariz et al., 2011).

Because undocumented immigrants would not normally be eligible to remain in the United States, to find employment, or to access many services needed by survivors, the TVPA and TVPRA provide some immigration relief through continued presence

and the T-visa program (Busch-Armendariz, 2012; Busch-Armendariz et al., 2011).<sup>8</sup> However, these avenues have not always been used. According to Farrell et al. (2012), "Findings from our research suggest that this is more complicated in practice and does not always happen" (p. 167); one respondent reported instances of potential trafficking victims being "deported administratively" because "we don't have the resources to deal with every illegal alien case" (Farrell et al., 2012, p. 167).

Given that protection is specifically enumerated in the federal TVPA and in state anti-trafficking laws, psychologists need a general understanding of how human trafficking laws can potentially impact their ability to provide services to clients, to refer clients to certain types of programs, and to pursue (or not) legal remedies. Much of the responsibility for meeting needs and protecting survivors of trafficking is shouldered by a host of NGOs. Some NGOs focus on specific populations (e.g., domestic minors), whereas others address human trafficking more globally. In addition, many agencies (e.g., domestic violence agencies, child advocacy centers, homeless shelters, refugee resettlement agencies, pregnancy centers) serving other populations may serve human trafficking survivors as well.

Challenges to meeting survivors' needs include (a) lack of sufficient training to identify human trafficking when encountered, (b) inadequate resources (e.g., trained staff, funding) to meet client needs or constraints on available resources, (c) little communication and planning between agencies, and (d) a shortage of resources to evaluate the effectiveness of service provision. There are also challenges in working with law enforcement agencies (Caliber, 2007; Jones & Yousefzadeh, 2006; Kara, 2007). Farrell et al. (2012) found that law enforcement officers may be reluctant to expend significant resources in investigating potential trafficking cases if stable community resources are not available for the survivor. Without adequate and appropriate services, survivors may be vulnerable to re-trafficking or may view returning to the trafficking situation as their only option. Brunovskis and Surtees (2007) reported that for a variety of reasons, including previous negative experiences with assistance, survivors may not always avail themselves of services offered. Additional challenges identified in the Caliber (2007) study were some survivors' unwillingness to work with law enforcement and concerns about confidentiality. The lack of research that informs effective training and clinical interventions contributes to these challenges. Psychological expertise in developing training for professionals providing services is greatly needed.



## Prosecution and Partnership

In the United States, investigation of human trafficking violations is undertaken by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at the federal level and by numerous police agencies at the state and local levels. The FBI's Civil Rights Unit handles human trafficking investigations involving forced labor and adult sexual exploitation, while its Crimes Against Children Unit manages cases involving the sex trafficking of children (FBI, 2012). ICE's human trafficking efforts include enforcing border security, training for law enforcement, and interagency partnerships and collaboration (ICE, 2012).

Perhaps the single most common law enforcement strategy in response to trafficking is to form and rely on joint task forces. In 2006, the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice

### Traffickers often create, encourage, and exploit this distrust of law enforcement to keep victims from seeking assistance.

Assistance began funding task forces dedicated to the investigation of human trafficking. These task forces, while federally funded, are administered by state and local policing agencies and typically form partnerships with state, local, and federal agencies, including law enforcement, social service providers, mental health providers, and others (Farrell et al., 2012).

In a recent study of law enforcement officers investigating human trafficking violations ( $n = 121$ ), 45% reported that victim distrust was the biggest challenge to identification of and response to victims (Clawson, Dutch, & Cummings, 2006). The officers believed that victims' distrust was due primarily to fear of deportation, fear of retaliation from the traffickers (toward the victim or the victim's family), and a general "lack of trust in the U.S. criminal justice system" (p. 38). Similarly, Farrell, McDevitt, and Fahy (2008) reported that lack of victim cooperation was the most commonly cited challenge to investigating human trafficking cases, with fear of retaliation and lack of trust in the criminal justice system as the top two reasons believed to cause noncooperation. Interestingly, Farrell et al. (2008) also noted that 81% of respondents reported a victim's fear and lack of cooperation as a key indicator of potential human trafficking.

In an unpublished study of 91 successful prosecutions of human trafficking involving juveniles, three or more interviews were needed to establish the necessary rapport for a victim to disclose her abuse (T. D. Patterson, 2012). Traffickers often create, encourage, and exploit this distrust of law enforcement to keep victims from seeking assistance.

Systemwide factors can also impede the investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases—in particular, ignorance of human trafficking, lack of collaboration across sectors, and misidentification of victims as criminals. Lack of knowledge and the need for training about human trafficking on the part of law enforcement, especially at the state and local levels, were identified in several studies and self-identified within the law enforcement community (Clawson, Dutch, & Cummings, 2006; Kara, 2007; Moosy, 2008; Reid, 2010; Zhang, 2011).

The complexity of human trafficking investigations, which may include a variety of criminal activities such as drug trafficking, organized crime, and sexual assault, makes collaboration and coordination among a variety of entities and jurisdictions necessary (Farrell et al., 2008, 2012; Venkatraman, 2003). Parties must be aware of each other's respective roles and work closely together. Unfortunately, the literature suggests this may not always happen. For instance, Clawson, Dutch, and Cummings (2006) found that most local law enforcement respondents were unaware of the role of their federal law enforcement counterparts in human trafficking investigations, and many were not accustomed to dealing with victims, even when assigned to a specialized unit. Psychological research on work-team and multidisciplinary team performance (e.g., Salas, Cooke, & Rosen, 2008) could potentially contribute to more effective collaboration among joint task force members. Reid (2010) also suggested that the differences in terminology can hinder cross-jurisdictional partnership. For example, agents investigating pornography involving minors may not collaborate with agents who investigate other forms of CSEC.

Law enforcement agencies' failure to recognize and distinguish trafficking victims from criminals derives in part from the tendency to rely on traditional law enforcement tactics and strategies. Conflicts between state laws and the TVPA also contribute to this failure. For example, in a majority of the 50 states, a minor's selling of him- or herself for sex is a criminal offense. This contrasts with the TVPA, which considers all minors engaged in commercial sex acts as trafficking victims. Further,

state statutes regarding prostitution do not distinguish between adult prostitution and child sexual exploitation and thus criminalize both (Adelson, 2008).

In fact, a 2010 report from the Department of Justice to the U.S. Congress concluded that “[c]hild victims of prostitution—the victims of CSE—are more likely to be arrested than are the child sex traffickers or client sex offenders” (U.S. DOJ, 2010a, p. 34). Data from 76 law enforcement agencies in 13 states showed that arrests were made in 74% of 229 cases in which juveniles were implicated in prostitution incidents between 1997 and 2000 (Finklea, Fernandes-Alcantara, & Siskin, 2011). Logan, Walker, and Hunt (2009) concluded that this misclassification was not limited to juvenile cases:

U.S. law enforcement personnel ... are typically trained to focus on perpetrators of crimes. When the trafficked person is involved in illegal activities such as prostitution or is an undocumented immigrant, ... it may be difficult to define them as victims rather than just as criminals. Thus, law enforcement officials often do not look past the criminal activity to see whether it is part of a larger problem such as human trafficking, leaving some victims of human trafficking identified only as criminals. (p. 6)

Social service agencies also report that lack of information and training on human trafficking and lack of information about available referral agencies are barriers to successful service provision (Clawson & Dutch, 2008). Additional complexities arise from differences in organizational cultures between law enforcement and service agencies (Fukushima & Liou, 2012), lack of familiarity with operating procedures of collaborating agencies, and unrealistic expectations that may result from these factors (Clawson et al., 2003; Fukushima & Liou, 2012; Srikantiah, 2007). Differences in how “victim-centered” approaches are defined and whether prosecution or protection should take precedence further complicate partnerships.

## Program Evaluation: The Challenge

Responses to human trafficking have developed as needs have been identified, but they seldom have been guided by a comprehensive understanding of the problem. To date there is a notable

lack of outcome evaluation (Clawson et al., 2009; Laczko & Danailova-Trainor, 2009; van der Laan et al., 2011). Clawson et al. (2009) stated that

while respondents reported collecting and reporting these data as a requirement of their funding, very few indicated they are using the data to assess their own performance. Respondents indicated that a lack of resources, limited capacity, and a lack of technical expertise were key reasons for not using the data and for the absence of engaging in formal (or informal) evaluations of their efforts. (p. 41)

Thus, the field is in need of systematic and rigorous research to determine what does and does not work in preventing trafficking, in protecting victims, and in prosecuting those engaged in the crime of human trafficking.

## Conclusion

A variety of responses to human trafficking have been suggested and attempted in the field, but by and large, demonstrably effective anti-trafficking programming has barely begun. As a result of professional training and community awareness programs, early identification of human trafficking should increase the chances that women and girls will receive services (if such services are available) and will be able to escape or exit the trafficking situation. However, this is insufficient from the standpoint of human rights and justice. Far more attention needs to be directed to primary prevention and to what Strasser (1978) called “primordial prevention” or efforts to correct underlying conditions that enable risk factors to develop in the first place. As others have argued (Farmer, 1999; Rieger, 2007), the root causes of trafficking must be addressed, focusing on the structural violence that makes women and girls vulnerable to this crime.<sup>9</sup> According to Rieger (2007, p. 235), “sex trafficking could not thrive if women were not systematically oppressed and marginalized.” Ultimately, success will mean providing all that is necessary for women and girls to live healthy, safe, and free lives.

# THE ROLE OF THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Psychology can and must address human trafficking in all professional capacities: research, education and training, advocacy and public policy, public awareness, and practice. The issue must be addressed at multiple levels of the social ecological model, from individual protective and risk factors to societal and policy factors. Whether as independent practice clinicians or as organizational psychologists, researchers, educators, or members of integrative health care teams, psychologists are needed to fill the critical roles that continue to develop within this field.

Furthermore, psychologists engaging in professional capacities to address human trafficking must possess competence in multiculturalism and diversity that prepares them to attend to the intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ability, class status, education, religion/spirituality, developmental stage, and culture (APA, 2008, 2012).

Professional psychology must address the societal factors that contribute to the trafficking of girls and women, including the status of girls and women in the United States and other nations, gender-based violence and abuse, racism and ethnocentrism, and the sexualization and objectification of women and girls (APA, Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls, 2010). Psychological expertise is essential to establish more humane and equitable labor practices, a more just and sustainable immigration system, and an

educational system that provides a foundation for children from all communities to have real opportunities for meaningful work at a living wage and sufficient leisure for healthy lives.

As a discipline that explores the depth and breadth of human behavior, psychology is well positioned to study the multiple intrapsychic, developmental, interpersonal, relational, social, cultural, religious, educational, institutional, societal, and economic issues that intersect to contribute to the phenomenon of trafficking. All psychologists have a role to play in eradicating trafficking and are urged to bring scientific expertise to bear on policy, service provision, and an understanding of the dynamics of trafficking. This section explores the variety of roles psychologists can play in addressing human trafficking.

## Research

Psychologists who conduct research, such as those in academic, governmental, nongovernmental, military, and industrial sectors, have a critical role to play in conceptualizing, designing, conducting, analyzing, and publishing investigations related to human trafficking. Research can guide clinical practice, help in the evaluation of prevention efforts, inform curricular development, and educate policymakers, law enforcement personnel, community organizers, and the public.

Psychologists can undertake research projects that will lead to a more nuanced and specific understanding of the individual factors that may put women and girls at risk of being trafficked. In addition, attention to factors such as resilience (Cecchet, 2012; Harvey & Tummala-Narra, 2007; Schloenhardt & Loong, 2011), spirituality and religious faith (Bryant-Davis, 2005), resistance to identifying as a victim (Gozdziak, Bump, Duncan, MacDonnell, & Loiselle, 2006), activism (Bryant-Davis, 2005), and posttraumatic growth (Bensimon, 2012)—as opposed to exclusive focus on the negative consequences of victimization—may also be important in the process of healing and recovery for survivors of human trafficking (Gozdziak et al., 2006).

Participatory and social action research methodologies that include persons who were formerly trafficked or grassroots organizations as research partners may help address some of the challenges of conducting clinical research with this population. In particular, identifying potential participants and building trust with women and girls who are victims of trafficking can be difficult. Community-based participatory research is a promising approach to addressing this topic (Israel, Schultz, Parker, & Becker, 1998; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008; Smikowski et al., 2009).<sup>1</sup>

As the number of direct-service programs for women and girls who are victims of trafficking continues to grow, psychologists can contribute by conducting evaluation and assessment research. Research on programs that provide street outreach, exiting support, survivor mentorship, family and community reintegration, legal advocacy, career counseling, and mental and physical health care will contribute to evidence-supported practice.

Psychologists are well suited to lead interdisciplinary teams as they develop research agendas (Sternberg, 2007). Partnerships with scholars trained in other disciplines, such as criminal justice, sociology, international studies, business, women's studies, public health, law, social work, public affairs, human development and family studies, nursing, medicine, religion, and ethics can further inform psychologists' understanding of the complexities of human trafficking and also ensure that other disciplines develop a more comprehensive understanding of the ways in which human behavior impacts, and is impacted by, social, political, and economic issues.

Finally, psychologists can contribute to the fields of crime prevention, investigation, and prosecution through research regarding the circumstances, characteristics, and behavioral patterns of perpetrators. Research on individual traffickers, networks of traffickers, and the demand (e.g., sex buyers) aspects of trafficking

will all contribute to an understanding of human trafficking and its prevention.

## Education and Training

Psychologists whose careers focus on education and training at the undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral level can incorporate the topic of human trafficking into psychology-specific<sup>2</sup> and interdisciplinary courses, seminars, and case conferences.<sup>3</sup>

Specialized practicum, internship, and postdoctoral training sites that work with traumatized populations, such as the Cambridge Health Alliance's Victims of Violence Program, should be considered.<sup>4</sup> Supervision must be provided by psychologists who are experienced and knowledgeable regarding human trafficking dynamics, complex trauma, and the potential for secondary traumatization. Practical experience with organizations led by survivors of trafficking would be extremely beneficial for psychologists training to work with this population.

Practicing psychologists in most states are required to earn continuing education credits on a regular basis as a component of license renewal.<sup>5</sup> Psychologists can develop and provide continuing professional education content addressing human trafficking to assist colleagues and others to expand their skills and content expertise.

Psychologists can participate in developing culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate curricula for all levels of education, as well as for professionals who interact with populations vulnerable to trafficking (e.g., airline and hotel personnel, emergency room staff, child protection workers, law enforcement). Training is critical to improve professionals' ability to identify and respond appropriately to trafficked individuals. The Family Violence Prevention Fund (2005) reported that 28% of survivors in their sample interfaced with health care providers during their captivity, yet none were questioned about their situation.

## Advocacy and Public Policy

Policy may be the most meaningful area to which psychologists can contribute. Policy has substantial potential to impact both those identified as trafficked and those at risk for trafficking. By engaging in education and advocacy at the federal level,

psychologists can share their knowledge of psychological science with policymakers to “contribute to the formulation of sound public policy to address health and social issues and improve human welfare” (APA, 2010b, p. 7). At state and local levels, psychologists can educate their elected and appointed officials in the state legislature, state agencies, city council, and school board.<sup>6</sup> All levels—federal, state, and local—would benefit from concise information about at-risk populations, contributing factors, means of trafficking, and the consequences of exploitation for individuals and for communities.

Psychologists also may ground their work with nongovernmental or nonprofit (501c3) organizations to address gaps that have not or cannot be met by government agencies. In some cases, agencies that address youth homelessness, immigrant rights, refugee/asylee resettlement, intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and child abuse may also serve trafficked persons. Within the nonprofit community, psychologists who work as social policy researchers also influence public policy and resource allocation decision making at all levels of government.

Chung (2005) argued that professional psychologists working with women and girls affected by inequalities and violence must reexamine their roles and be mindful of social justice and human rights issues. Psychologists must work from a more holistic and less isolated perspective and strive to understand the impact of international connectedness to inform their advocacy work.

## Public Awareness

Public awareness and understanding of the crime of human trafficking and the dynamics of coercion and trauma are essential for the success of any anti-trafficking efforts. Psychologists interested in informing the public about human trafficking can

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translate complex research findings into information accessible to the general public. Their translational skills can specifically support nongovernmental organizations that focus on public awareness and prevention efforts. Expertise offered by community and social psychologists can also help in developing effective ways to educate specific audiences.

## Practice

Psychologists practice in many arenas. Practice areas pertaining to trafficking may include evidence-based assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of individuals; program development and evaluation; program and organizational administration; criminal investigation; consultation; career and educational counseling; and community organizing. Before engaging in any work related to trafficked women and girls, psychologists have an obligation to educate themselves about the complexity of this issue.

### DIRECT SERVICE WITH TRAFFICKED WOMEN AND GIRLS

The central challenge of providing psychotherapy services to survivors of human trafficking today is the dearth of clinical research identifying best practices for this population. Given that caveat, the following sections refer to interventions and approaches, which with few exceptions were not developed to work with trafficked persons but rather with other trauma-affected populations.

**Trauma-informed care.** Using a trauma-informed care approach to engage women and girls with histories of traumatic experiences recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role these experiences play in their current concerns and earlier in their lives (see National Center for Trauma-Informed Care web page: <http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic>).<sup>7</sup> This is a paradigm shift from one that asks “What’s wrong with you?” to “What has happened to you?” This approach changes the way in which services and supports are organized and delivered and creates opportunities for healing and recovery. The intention of trauma-informed practice is to foster support, healing, and resiliency and to refrain from doing further harm, which results in retraumatization (Harris & Fallot, 2001). Trauma-informed care must attend to contextual and cultural factors and to the individual and collective resilience of trauma survivors (Harvey & Tummala-Narra, 2007). Harvey and Tummala-Narra (2007) emphasized that providers should view recovery as “a result of clinical intervention, yes, but also recovery as a result of the many internal and external resources that

trauma survivors are able to craft and call upon in widely diverse environments” (p. 2).

In many parts of the United States, survivors have limited access to service providers with specialized training in the psychological needs of trafficking victims (Adams, 2010; Chung, Bemak, Ortiz, & Sandoval-Perez, 2008; Yakushko, 2009). In addition, trauma-informed psychological services specifically for this population are still in development and difficult to access (Clawson, Salomon, & Goldblatt Grace, 2008; Yakushko, 2009).<sup>8</sup> However, there is a wealth of literature describing effective and empirically based interventions with survivors of trauma (Cook et al., 2005), and as long as the gap in development of

## Before providing treatment to trafficked women and girls, psychologists have an obligation to gain competency regarding this population’s unique constellation of mental health problems.

interventions specific to trafficked women and girls exists, it is reasonable to recommend current guidelines applied to the survivors of other abuses.

Developmental and cultural considerations remain paramount in creating trauma-informed therapies with trafficked women and girls. Additionally, Harvey and Tummala-Narra (2007) recommended a stronger focus on the role of resiliency and other individual and contextual factors that mediate recovery from trauma.

Psychologists working on complex trauma and complex PTSD issues can continue to inform and enhance an understanding of best practices and effective interventions (Cloitre et al., 2011; Courtois, 2008). Working in conjunction with trafficked women and girls to develop appropriate and effective therapeutic techniques is essential. Practicing psychologists can also develop diagnostic, evaluation, and treatment guidelines, which describe professional competencies and prescribe ethical and responsible care of the individuals they serve. A good example is APA’s Division 56 (Trauma Psychology), which, in collaboration with the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies,

initiated the Task Force on Treatment of Complex Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (Cloitre et al., 2011). The goal of that task force was to provide guidance for practicing clinicians and other health professionals on the treatment of complex posttraumatic conditions resulting from repetitive and chronic interpersonal trauma over the lifespan, which is related to the pervasive poly-victimization of trafficked women and girls. As evidence-based treatments specifically geared toward trafficked women and girls are evaluated, there will be opportunities to revisit treatment guidelines to continue to improve the provision of services.

**Treatment considerations.** Before providing treatment to trafficked women and girls, psychologists have an obligation to gain competency regarding this population’s unique constellation of mental health problems. The overarching stance that treating psychologists need to adopt is one that integrates a human rights perspective (Bemak, Chung, & Pedersen, 2003), addresses the particular needs of women and girls, and is sensitive to the unique needs of the various ethnic and racial groups affected by this crime (Clawson, Dutch, & Williamson, 2008).

A. Banks (2006, 2011) proposed using psychotherapies that foster the development of mutual and growth-promoting relationships. Psychotherapies that emphasize the role of the therapeutic relationship can change brain structures and functions responsible for mental illness (Fuchs, 2004), including dysfunctional neurocircuits contributing to major depression and PTSD (Peres & Nasello, 2008). Because traffickers use and abuse the human need to connect with others, and because depression and PTSD are both consequences of trafficking, such formulations hold promise for therapy with trafficking survivors.

Herman’s (1992) stages of recovery model to address PTSD and complex PTSD has potential for working with trafficking survivors. Herman’s recovery model includes three stages: establishing safety, remembrance and mourning, and reconnection with ordinary life. The first stage is essential; according to Herman, recovery cannot progress if safety is not established and maintained. Remembrance and mourning involve narrative work, with the survivor relating the trauma experience in depth until the memory is transformed and integrated into her life story. In the final stage of recovery, the survivor faces the challenge of “creating a future” by developing new relationships, new learning, new belief systems, and “reclaiming her world” (1992, p. 196).

Other models address the needs of women in CSE who are at different stages of the exiting process (L. M. Baker et al., 2010; Dalla, 2006). L. M. Baker and colleagues proposed an integrated-stage model of exiting prostitution on the basis of their own work with women in street-level prostitution and on four earlier models: Prochaska, DiClemente, and Norcross's transtheoretical (1992) model; Fuchs Ebaugh's (1988) role exit model; Månsson and Hedin's (1999) exit model; and Sanders's (2007) typology of transitions. Individual differences must be recognized in any model focused on exiting CSE; like the experience of trafficking itself, the reasons and readiness for escaping CSE and the subsequent needs for services and support will vary from one individual to another (Dalla, 2006; Williamson & Folaron, 2003). Understanding the varying degrees of cognitive and emotional readiness to leave and the many barriers to exiting across the stages can help therapists working with women and girls as they seek to remove themselves from exploitation.

The harm reduction approach, originally applied in treatment and prevention of addictions, has also been used with CSEC survivors and in HIV/AIDS and violence prevention projects with CSE adults (Harm Reduction Coalition, n.d.; Iman, Fullwood, Paz, Daphne, & Hassan, 2009; Marlatt, Larimer, & Witkiewitz, 2012; Pierce, 2012; Rekart, 2005).<sup>9</sup> This nonjudgmental approach facilitates outreach and helps maintain connections to populations that might be suspicious of service providers' intentions, such as homeless and runaway youths or adults involved in illegal activity. This method addresses the complexities of decision making and the ways in which unequal power exploits relationships. Additionally, for individuals not yet able or ready to exit commercial sex (e.g., at earlier stages in the model proposed by L. M. Baker et al., 2010), the harm reduction approach offers protective health services for reducing risk of contracting infectious diseases, including HIV, and maintains an open connection with service providers who can serve as resources when individuals are ready to leave the trafficking situation.

An important critique of the harm reduction model applied to CSE is the extensive harms that *are not* addressed. There is no question that HIV, STIs, and addictions require nonjudgmental treatment and prevention. However, many HIV/AIDS prevention programs for sex workers do not screen for trafficking or indicate that engagement in commercial sex is anything other than a free choice. Harm reduction programs focused on CSEC victims (Harm Reduction Coalition, n.d.) instead work on reducing the risk

factors that can contribute to entering prostitution<sup>10</sup> as opposed to exclusive attention to preventing HIV infection.<sup>11</sup>

Addressing disordered family dynamics is an important aspect in prevention of trafficking; it is an essential component in the healing process to prevent revictimization. Working with youths on peer relationships and issues of interpersonal violence can also serve protective purposes.

In addition to treating survivors, psychologists can play a role in meeting the needs of affected families and communities, especially during the course of family reunifications and community reintegrations. Whether the woman or girl was victimized in labor- or sex-trafficking situations, she likely was separated from family and friends. There may also be barriers to reestablishment of those relationships, particularly if the survivor was trafficked into the United States and needs to cooperate with the investigative and prosecutorial process to receive government assistance. Barriers to reestablishing relationships may also exist if the family and community shame, blame, or shun the trafficked person or if the family was the origin of the trafficking.

Psychologists with expertise in complex systems can also consult with service providers about the importance of social support in the process of exiting CSE and the relational factors that can be barriers to exiting (L. M. Baker et al., 2010). These can include limited formal and informal support, strained family relations, social isolation, and problems created by existing relationships with pimps and drug dealers (L. M. Baker et al., 2010).

The needs of trafficking survivors are extensive and complex, requiring a holistic approach to services (Chung, 2009; Shigekane, 2007; Yakushko, 2009). Trafficked women and girls are exposed to high levels of physical deprivation, injury, and violence that may result in physical and cognitive disabilities needing specialized rehabilitation services. Psychologists can serve on interdisciplinary rehabilitation teams (Yakushko, 2008, 2009). Concurrent treatment for physical and mental health symptoms is optimal. The role of culture in symptom experience and service seeking may further complicate service provision. Developmental factors must also be considered. Psychologists must be competent in identifying somatoform disorders; because of the interaction of trauma, gender, and culture, some women and girls may present with multiple medical problems rather than articulate them as mental health concerns (Chung, 2009; Williamson et al., 2010).

Issues of trust and betrayal are pervasive with trafficked women and girls; therefore, it is critical that psychologists fully understand their professional responsibilities and limitations in regard to confidentiality and mandatory reporting of child maltreatment. Clawson, Salomon, and Goldblatt Grace (2008) recommended that professionals refrain from promises of confidentiality that they may not be able to keep, particularly with youths.

Other challenges to providing psychological services include language and cultural barriers (Orhant, 2002; Zimmerman et al., 2003); shame and stigma about mental health services (Chung et al., 2008; Miller et al., 2007; Shigekane, 2007); avoidance issues and security concerns (Shigekane, 2007); the criminalization of CSE women and girls (Judge & Murphy, 2011; Kurtz, Surratt, Inciardi, & Kiley, 2004); and barriers to accessing other services, such as shelter and transportation (Alexander et al., 2005; Boyer, 2008; Miller et al., 2007; Zimmerman et al., 2003). Each of these challenges is exacerbated by limited clinical research to guide program developers and clinicians in offering effective services.

**Victim identification.** Keeping in mind that human trafficking and other victimizations are not necessarily mutually exclusive, clinicians must have the knowledge base to differentiate human trafficking from other situations that share many of the same dynamics (e.g., intimate partner violence). Violence in a relationship may mask evidence of force, fraud, or coercion—key indicators of human trafficking. Similar issues of miscategorization may arise with childhood sexual abuse or with delinquent behaviors. Unless screening questions are asked, sex and labor trafficking can remain invisible.<sup>12</sup>

Barrows and Finger (2008) highlighted that health care professionals have two key roles to play. First, they are likely to be on the front line for potentially identifying victims if they have adequate training about indicators of trafficking.<sup>13</sup> Factors such as tattoos that indicate “property” (e.g., bar codes, the pimp’s name), lack of identification documents, or reluctance to speak in the presence of the person accompanying them may indicate trafficking but could also indicate any number of other situations, including entirely innocuous ones. However, if there is a suspicion that the person may be controlled, it is essential to provide an opportunity to consult with that individual privately, using protocols similar to those used in possible intimate partner violence situations.

Second, health care professionals can provide essential services in addressing health care needs that are emergent or that may be chronic and have been neglected (Barrows & Finger, 2008). The International Organization for Migration (2009) provides an excellent resource for health care providers that covers such topics as what to do if a provider suspects trafficking; providing culturally appropriate, trauma-informed care and working effectively with interpreters; and identifying and treating potential acute and chronic mental and physical health needs.

Burnette et al. (2008) found that women with a lifetime history of prostitution reported using emergency department services (44.6%) more than any other form of health care service. Psychologists can assist with training emergency department personnel to increase early identification of trafficked women and girls and referrals for services.

**Other areas of practice.** School psychologists and other psychologists who work with children and youths can educate themselves about human trafficking risk factors and vulnerabilities—such as early exposure to violence, abuse, or neglect—to develop tools to identify high-risk situations and individual vulnerabilities to human trafficking and to provide early intervention. School psychologists can also provide training to teachers, administrators, and other school personnel to help them identify at-risk children and their families.

Within criminal justice systems, psychologists can play key roles by assisting in victim interviews and evaluations. Forensic interviewers are uniquely trained to bridge the sensitive needs of trauma victims with the needs of law enforcement officials and members of the court who seek to prosecute traffickers. Herman (2003, 2005) addressed the advantages and challenges of mental health provider involvement in criminal cases. Issues of confidentiality, consent, and establishing who the client is (law enforcement, attorneys, or the survivor) become critical issues for professional discernment.

Training in psychology and forensic interviewing must be supplemented with information regarding the dynamics of victimization in human trafficking. For example, without an understanding of the multiple traumas experienced by trafficked women and girls and the lengthy process of recovery, an interviewer may mistakenly characterize a crime victim as “uncooperative in her own treatment” rather than as having been conditioned by her captors to fear the authorities. Trafficking survivors well advanced in their recovery process can provide invaluable assistance to



psychologists and forensic interviewers in their efforts to understand these dynamics and protect against retraumatizing the client (Pierce, personal communication, April 29, 2013).

Psychologists may also serve as expert witnesses in court proceedings. Social psychologists can provide valuable testimony to help jurors and judges understand the psychological mechanisms by which people can be coerced and manipulated and their freedom constrained. This can be done by addressing the misperception that trafficking victims “could have left” because they may not have been physically constrained or that the victim is a “bad witness” based on her behavior and demeanor. Clinical, forensic, developmental, and child psychologists can speak to

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the impact of complex trauma on child and adult behavior in a way that would help the court understand the impact of the crime. For example, forensic psychologists may use psychological evaluation methodologies and tests to illuminate the psychological conditions created as a result of trafficking and its impact on functioning and recovery. In addition, psychologists can evaluate persons receiving benefits under the TVPA, provide treatment recommendations to multidisciplinary teams, or explain documents for an attorney to use in support of a T-visa application.<sup>14</sup>

Psychologists working as administrators may oversee health care delivery systems, supervise clinical training of future psychologists, or directly influence service delivery and care received by clients and patients. These psychologists are particularly well suited to address the complex needs of survivors, which require an array of coordinated multimodal responses from diverse sectors, ranging from mental health, medical, and social services providers to law enforcement, attorneys, and other representatives of the law (Miller et al., 2007).

## Self-Care and Safety: Ethical Considerations

Milton Erickson used to say to his patients, “My voice will go with you.” His voice did. What he did not say was that our clients’ voices can also go with us. Their stories become part of us—part of our daily lives and our nightly dreams. Not all are negative—indeed, a good many are inspiring. The point is that they change us. (Mahoney, 2003, as cited in Meichenbaum, 2007, p. 3)

Psychologists working with trafficked individuals, in whatever capacity—direct service, consulting, policy work, research—need to pay special attention to their own well-being (IOM, 2009; Kliner & Stroud, 2012). Research indicates that providing trauma-focused treatment is emotionally complex and demanding, with roughly 50% of professionals reporting distress and approximately 30% reporting extreme distress (Figley, 2002; Meichenbaum, 2007). Distress can fuel burnout, secondary traumatic stress (STS), vicarious traumatization (VT), and compassion fatigue (CF). Because of the level of trauma experienced by trafficked persons, psychologists working with this population need to be particularly mindful of their personal mental health.

Burnout, STS, VT, and CF are interrelated yet different. Burnout can occur regardless of the type of work or population served. However, STS, VT, and CF result from work with traumatized individuals. While some authors differentiate the three conditions, the terms are frequently used interchangeably (Meichenbaum, 2007; Smith & Moss, 2009):

- Burnout can result from prolonged exposure to a work environment that is not supportive yet has high demands. This causes exhaustion, depersonalization, and a sense of reduced personal effectiveness and accomplishment (IOM, 2009; Jenaro, Flores, & Arias, 2007; Kliner & Stroud, 2012; Meichenbaum, 2007; Perron & Hiltz, 2006; Smith & Moss, 2009).
- Secondary traumatic stress is similar to PTSD but results from knowledge of trauma experienced by another person (Figley, 2002; IOM, 2009; Kliner & Stroud, 2012; Perron & Hiltz, 2006; Smith & Moss, 2009; Yassen, 1995); the trauma could result from a single traumatic event or from multiple or persistent traumas. Symptoms of STS may include heightened arousal, intrusive images and thoughts, avoidance, numbing, somatic complaints, and nightmares and sleep disruption (IOM, 2009; Kliner & Stroud, 2012; Smith & Moss, 2009).

- Vicarious traumatization, like STS, results from interaction with traumatized persons (McCann & Pearlman, 1990) and permanently alters the lens through which an individual perceives the world and self (Meichenbaum, 2007). In particular, VT impacts an individual's sense of safety and ability to trust others.
- Compassion fatigue has been described as “a form of caregiver burnout among psychotherapists” (Figley, 2002). Compassion fatigue is one potential manifestation of STS and may be experienced as preoccupation with the traumatized client and reduced empathy, numbing, distancing, or avoidance. Adams, Boscarino, and Figley (2006) developed a scale to measure CF, which includes elements of burnout (“I have a sense of worthlessness, disillusionment, or resentment associated with my work,” “I have felt trapped in my work”) and STS (“I experience troubling dreams similar to those of a client of mine,” “I am losing sleep over a client's traumatic experiences”).

Psychologists with a personal history of trauma are more vulnerable to burnout, STS, VT, and CF (Meichenbaum, 2007). Additional factors that can increase the possibility of these conditions are insufficient training, education, or experience; demanding workloads; and psychosocial stressors (Barnett, 2008; Kliner & Stroud, 2012; Meichenbaum, 2007). Protective factors include supportive work environments, adequate training and supervision, job autonomy, and self-care (Barnett, 2008; Barnett & Cooper, 2009; Kliner & Stroud, 2012; Meichenbaum, 2007; Smith & Moss, 2009).

Although U.S. studies on the consequences of working with trafficked persons are not available, international literature indicates negative impacts on providers' physical health, psychological health, work, and personal lives (IOM, 2009; Jung et al., 2008; Kliner & Stroud, 2012). Jung et al. (2008) found that anti-trafficking activists in Korea presented with high rates of somatization, fatigue, depression, and frustration. Health and social care staff working with survivors of sex trafficking in the United Kingdom reported a number of problems, including sleep disturbance, somatic pain, and physical and emotional exhaustion (Kliner & Stroud, 2012). Kliner and Stroud (2012) reported that “many of the participants described their work as heavily impacting their personal life” (p. 12).

Psychologists who provide direct services to clients have an ethical responsibility to (a) be cognizant of the possibility of burnout, STS, VT, and CF; (b) understand the impact these conditions have on

the therapeutic relationship; and (c) engage in self-care measures to prevent and mitigate impairment in their work (see, e.g., APA Ethics Code, 2002, 2010a; E. K. Baker, 2003; Barnett & Cooper, 2009; Carroll, Gilroy, & Murra, 1999; Good, Khairallah, & Mintz, 2009; Meichenbaum, 2007; Norcross & Barnett, 2008; P. L. Smith & Moss, 2009).<sup>15</sup> Without awareness of these hazards and without adequate individual and organizational measures to maintain psychological and emotional health, psychologists run the risk of compromising their effectiveness and retraumatizing their clients. Barnett and Cooper (2009) argued that self-care is an “ethical imperative” and should “be seen as a core competency for psychologists” (p. 17).

Self-care is a dual responsibility. It should be practiced by individual psychologists but also must be supported through organizational and supervisory actions. Individual activities include maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life; getting adequate sleep, nutrition, leisure, and exercise; employing strategies to heal, relax, and self-soothe;<sup>16</sup> alerting supervisors or colleagues if additional support or a change in caseload is needed; seeking social support; and participating in personal psychotherapy (Barnett & Cooper, 2009; Good et al., 2009; Meichenbaum, 2007; Smith & Moss, 2009). It is also recommended that psychologists seek additional training, supervision, and educational opportunities to ensure their competence in areas that are new or challenging (Smith & Moss, 2009).

Supervisors, managers, and organizations that educate or employ psychologists also have an ethical responsibility to promote “a culture of self-care” (Barnett & Cooper, 2009, p. 16). First and foremost, this includes honest acceptance that STS, VT, and CF can occur and that measures should be taken to reduce their likelihood and to address them when they arise. Recommendations include training about STS, VT, CF, and burnout for graduate students in psychology and as continuing education for practitioners (Barnett & Cooper, 2009; Good et al., 2009; Smith & Moss, 2009). Organizations need to provide culturally sensitive, high-quality supervision, mentorship, and careful management of caseloads (Kliner & Stroud, 2012; Meichenbaum, 2007). If a provider has a disproportionate number of severely traumatized clients, burnout is likely and there is increased risk for STS, VT, and CF.

Most important, integrating self-care norms into psychology education and practice will provide both preventative and restorative

benefits for practitioners who deal with trauma on a frequent basis (Barnett & Cooper, 2009; Good et al., 2009). Leadership in training programs and practice settings must promote a culture in which a balance between work and personal life is encouraged. Self-care activities must be reinforced rather than penalized or disparaged, and honest communication about personal distress and the need for collegial support must be encouraged (Barnett & Cooper, 2009; Good et al., 2009; Meichenbaum, 2007; Smith & Moss, 2009).

Good et al. (2009, p. 21) argued that psychologists “tend to view wellness and impairment in dangerous dualities,” casting care providers as healthy and knowing and clients as impaired and needing care. Good et al. warned that such dualistic thinking can keep practitioners from recognizing or admitting when they are depleted or need support and care. Just as such thinking can be harmful to the provider, it can also keep psychologists from recognizing the strengths, resilience, and resources of the clients they serve.

Given the trauma associated with human trafficking, individual psychologists and organizations that provide services must proactively prepare for the impact of this trauma. Awareness, education, ongoing self-care, and a supportive work culture are essential to the well-being of psychologists and to the responsible and effective treatment of trafficked persons.

### **SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

Psychologists who work with trafficked women and girls need to be mindful of safety for their clients, for themselves, and for their places of work. Concerns for the safety of the client are heightened if the trafficker is under criminal investigation or prosecution (IOM, 2009). Maintaining absolute confidentiality about clients who have been trafficked is essential to client safety (IOM, 2009). The IOM also recommends that providers listen carefully to trafficked clients, without pressing them to divulge details: “Careful listening is an essential security tool in cases of trafficking. . . . Trafficked persons are often in the best position to know of and interpret any dangers they may face” (2009, p. 90). Zimmerman and Watts (2003, p. 4) provided excellent guidelines for interviewing trafficked women and girls that capture the essential need for ethical, respectful, and safe interactions. The guidelines are intended for service providers and researchers working with this population as well as media professionals. A full explication of their recommendations is beyond the scope of this report, but the 10 guiding principles are:

1. Do no harm.
2. Know your subject and assess the risks.
3. Prepare referral information—Do not make promises you cannot fulfill.
4. Adequately select and prepare interpreters, and coworkers.
5. Ensure anonymity and confidentiality.
6. Get informed consent.
7. Listen to and respect each woman’s assessment of her situation and risks to her safety.
8. Do not retraumatize a woman.
9. Be prepared for emergency intervention.
10. Put information collected to good use.

For the safety of providers, agency staff, and clients, clear guidelines should be developed for confidentiality protocols, employee responsibilities, building security, emergency communication and planning, and staff education and training.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls offers specific recommendations in the following topic areas: research, practice, education and training, public policy, and public awareness. In addition, the task force offers general recommendations that transcend the topic areas and are essential to all aspects of work in psychology.

## General Recommendations

It is recommended that psychologists:

- **Examine their assumptions and biases toward at-risk groups as they consider engaging in work on human trafficking issues.** Stereotypes related to immigrants and undocumented migrants, runaway or homeless youths, persons with addictions, or individuals in prostitution can impede identification of human trafficking survivors and their unique needs.
- **Be culturally sensitive in all endeavors related to human trafficking (research, education and training, advocacy and public policy, public awareness, and practice).**
- **Remain cognizant that internationally and domestically trafficked persons are a diverse and multicultural group.** Psychologists must be able to adapt their professional work accordingly.
- **Recognize that no “one-size-fits-all” approach exists to comprehensively address the victim/survivor experience.** No single law enforcement or victim services protocol will suffice in every case. Remaining flexible with regard to conceptualization is a critical skill given the many possible intersections of victim characteristics (minor or adult, domestic or foreign national, among others), as well as the multiple labor and commercial sex settings in which trafficking occurs.
- **Acknowledge that their work occurs within a social ecological system that includes larger community and cultural influences and that changes in one level of the system may have wider implications.** Psychologists should remain aware that psychological approaches do not exist in a vacuum. For example, policy change in the name of anti-trafficking efforts may create unintended consequences for other vulnerable communities (such as clients of child welfare systems or immigrants).
- **Support the creation of cultural shifts among law enforcement and service providers in anti-trafficking efforts to create a greater understanding of and respect for all trafficked populations.** For example, community and social psychologists can address law enforcement and service provider attitudes toward marginalized populations as groups “worthy” of support and access to

services by providing specialized training regarding the nature of trafficking and its victims.

- **Examine the impact of paternalistic attitudes and the “rescue” approach on survivors’ outcomes and well-being.**

This approach must be guarded against in U.S. policy, NGO programs, and individual treatment. Paternalistic attitudes toward survivor inclusion in policymaking, program planning, and program evaluation sideline expertise and silence essential voices.

- **Advocate for survivor-centered, survivor-informed, and survivor-led efforts guiding policymaking, protocol development, research design, methodology, and clinical approaches.** For example, community-based research should be conducted with the input of affected individuals, taking time to build and maintain trusting collaborative relationships.
- **Increase focus on prevention of human trafficking at all levels of the social ecological system.**
- **Support recommendations of the APA Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls (2010) regarding social norms, attitudes, and culture of tolerance for sexual exploitation.**

## Research Recommendations

To address the limitations of the current research base as discussed at length in this report, particularly the absence of research on trafficking of women and girls for forced labor, of women and girls into and within the United States, and on the efficacy of programs and treatment modalities for survivors, it is recommended that:

- **The complexity of human trafficking issues be addressed with an interdisciplinary and multisector response.** Transnational and domestic trafficking of women and girls occurs within systems of global and domestic trade, voluntary and forced migration, economic disparities, and structural inequalities. In addition, legal and governmental factors such as the existence or lack of labor laws, criminal justice procedures, and child welfare systems impact trafficking situations. The complexity of the issue requires a multisector response, and interdisciplinary research is necessary for that response to be optimally effective.

- **Research methodologies be developed and conducted in collaboration and consultation with survivors and clinicians who have substantial experience providing services to this population.**

Trafficked persons who have experienced powerlessness may perceive research settings that are inherently hierarchical to be overpowering. Therefore, mixed methodologies (e.g., qualitative and quantitative with an overarching participatory action research lens) may be better suited to concurrently obtain empirically supported results while paying attention to important ethical concerns.

- **Community-based participatory research be considered as one promising approach to addressing this topic.**

It is recommended that research be conducted in the following areas:

### PREVENTION/DEMAND

- **Prevention of human trafficking at all levels of the social ecological model.** This includes examining risk factors such as child sexual abuse, child neglect, parental abandonment, racial and ethnic discrimination, homelessness, and marginalization due to sexual identity, sexual orientation, disability, or immigrant status.
- **Role that objectification of women and girls plays in the proliferation of human trafficking and in fueling the demand for commercial sexual exploitation.**
- **Role of women’s empowerment, equity, and rights in the prevention of trafficking.**
- **Potential role of religion and religious practices in relation to trafficking recruitment and recovery.**
- **Effective cross-disciplinary collaboration and partnerships for prevention.**
- **Consumer and business models for reducing demand for products made with forced labor and factors impacting consumer attitudes and behavior.**
- **Effectiveness of primary prevention efforts targeting girls and women.**
- **Link between pornography and sex trafficking, including trafficking for the purpose of producing pornography, the use of pornography by traffickers, and the potential for pornography to fuel trafficking via increased demand.**

Anecdotal evidence suggests traffickers may use pornography to “train” women and girls for commercial sex work and also as a coercion method (e.g., threatening to show family the pornographic material involving the victim if she does not comply).

- **Demographics, characteristics, and motivations of consumers of goods and services that involve trafficking, especially commercial sex.**
- **Demand and trafficking.** Psychologists can collaborate with groups that work on rehabilitating consumers of commercial sex to build methodologies that contribute to an understanding of demand in the United States.

### **IDENTIFICATION**

- **How information processing, social perception, schemas, and labeling impact the ability of professionals to identify perpetrators and victims of human trafficking in the field and to respond appropriately.**
- **Better understanding of common contributing factors regarding areas that may involve trafficking but have not been examined as such (e.g., survival sex, stripping, pornography).**

### **BIASES**

- **How depictions of human trafficking impact justice for and empowerment of survivors.** Depictions may impact how victims perceive themselves (including whether they identify as victims of a crime) and how the justice system responds (e.g., jury perceptions and decisions, prosecutors’ willingness to take cases, assumptions about “good witnesses” and “good victims,” and judges’ rulings). Failure to represent the diversity of trafficking situations or to recognize the resiliency and agency of trafficking survivors may impact how services are provided. This could include examination of depictions of trafficking in the media, government-produced public service announcements, outreach materials, and NGO logos and websites. It could also be fruitful to examine the language of policy and rhetoric in the anti-trafficking movement.

### **TRAFFICKERS**

- **Trafficker coercion tactics, especially psychological tactics.**
- **Typology of traffickers, including characteristics and contributing factors (e.g., factors that determine whether people become traffickers).**

- **Comparison of sex traffickers to other types of sex offenders (e.g., rapists, child molesters) to determine whether current criminal justice responses, mental health treatment, and rehabilitation and reentry protocols applied to sex offenders are appropriate for sex traffickers.**
- **Degree to which formerly trafficked persons engage in the trafficking of others and the determinants of this behavior.**

### **TRAFFICKED PERSONS**

- **Interactions of situational and individual characteristics (e.g., developmental, cultural, demographic) as they apply to human trafficking vulnerability, resistance, resiliency, and recovery.**
  - **Post-trafficking social support and relationships.** Because traffickers commonly prey on women and girls by establishing a trusting, albeit false, relationship with them, studies on the impact of trafficking on relationships will be especially helpful.
  - **Long-term impact of the trafficking experience throughout the life course of survivors.** For example, the impact of prolonged exposure to violent pornography or of forced abortions on survivors’ sexual and reproductive health warrants investigation.
  - **Overlap of intimate partner violence and sex trafficking.**
  - **Impact of gender nonconformity and gender fluidity on vulnerability to trafficking.**
  - **Trafficking of men and boys for labor and for commercial sex.**
  - **Religious and spiritual factors pertinent to trafficking (e.g., risk and recruitment), survivor resilience and recovery, and service delivery (e.g., how the faith orientation of groups providing services impacts the well-being of survivors).**
- ### **TRAUMA**
- **Types of trauma exposure during and after trafficking, with specific focus on exposure to psychological and physical coercion, resulting sequelae, and areas of functioning that are impacted.**
  - **Trauma’s impact on decision making, willingness to cooperate with law enforcement, willingness to receive services, and vulnerability to revictimization.**
  - **Traumatic bonding, or Stockholm syndrome, in cases of human trafficking.**

- Factors that reduce the risk of trauma-related sequelae in affected populations (e.g. resilience of trafficked persons).

### LABOR

- Risk factors for trafficking into domestic service, agricultural production and meat processing, service industries (e.g., salons, restaurants, hotels), and other locations of labor trafficking.

#### Recommendations

- **Biopsychosocial effects of slavelike and exploitative work environments.**

A thorough examination of the experiences of persons trafficked for labor, including psychological impact and health consequences, is lacking in the current literature.

- **Public attitudes about and media depictions of labor trafficking.** It would be informative to examine factors contributing to the relatively low profile of labor trafficking in research, academic writing, and public discourse.

### PROGRAM AND TREATMENT EVALUATION

- **Program/practice evaluation using randomized control designs and quasi-experimental designs when appropriate and ethical.**
- **Strengths, limitations, and successes of organizations with survivor leadership and survivors on staff or as peer mentors.** It is essential to determine factors contributing to successful models and to identify best practices, as the number of service agencies is growing rapidly.
- **Development and evaluation of successful exit programs and support programs.**
- **Development and evaluation of appropriate individual and group treatments to address the psychological impacts of trafficking.** Group therapy has been used effectively in some programs (Ward & Roe-Sepowitz, 2009), but anecdotal evidence suggests support groups may be less effective with some populations because of the circumstances of their trafficking (Shigekane, 2007). Further exploration is needed.
- **Protocols for meeting needs of trafficking victims (i.e., shelter, health care, trauma-focused counseling, substance use counseling, education, job training, etc.), including guidance on how to prioritize and provide treatment needs in the most efficient and cost-effective way.**

- **Impact of developmental variables on treatment choice and success.**

## Practice Recommendations

As practitioners, psychologists perform critical services by providing direct treatment, developing treatment protocols, and consulting with organizations/businesses regarding trafficked women and girls. The task force recommends that to address the unique needs of trafficked persons competently, psychologists:

- **Develop more effective screening tools for therapists, social service providers, law enforcement personnel, health care providers, and other professionals who may encounter victims.**
- **Consider comprehensive and coordinated community-level responses in supporting victims and survivors.** Psychologists are encouraged to develop and maintain partnership protocols with law enforcement personnel, social workers, and victim service networks (depending on the needs and request of survivors) to help streamline and support efficient community response.
- **Strive for partnership with and coordination of efforts between protection, prosecution, and prevention sectors.** For example, service providers and law enforcement personnel can coordinate their efforts to support survivors more efficiently.
- **Apply psychological theories of healthy personality and identity development, thriving, and psychological growth during the recovery process for survivors of trafficking.**
- **Educate themselves about developmental factors that impact trafficking risk, response to the trauma of trafficking, and efficacy of treatment with different age groups.**
- **Assist the companies with which organizational psychologists consult through technical assistance and training, implementation of prevention strategies, and development of business models for monitoring subcontractors, recruiters, supply chains, and other practices that may conceal trafficking.** Of special interest are companies that outsource services where trafficking is more prevalent (e.g., hired cleaning crews, subcontracted construction labor, suppliers of manufacturing components). In addition, in settings where traffickers or trafficked persons might be encountered (e.g., airports, hotels,

border customs checks, emergency rooms), psychologists are encouraged to consult with personnel to increase identification and awareness of trafficked persons.

- **Identify avenues for practitioner self-care and support self-care for other professionals involved in anti-trafficking work (law enforcement, service providers, health care, educators, etc.).**

In addition, it is recommended that APA make the *Report of the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls* available to all practitioners to familiarize them with consequences of being trafficked and treatment recommendations relevant to trafficked persons.

## Education and Training Recommendations

To increase knowledge and awareness of trafficking, specifically its prevalence and devastating consequences, within the discipline of psychology and among psychologists, the task force recommends that:

- **Psychological theory and research be used to develop effective communication materials and training curricula to maximize learning among multiple sectors that interface with trafficked persons or are involved in prevention efforts.**  
This would include service providers, policymakers, law enforcement personnel, health care professionals, businesses, educators, and others.
- **Research on information processing, social perception, schemas, and labeling be used to address misperceptions and failures of identification of trafficked persons.**  
This research should also be incorporated into training curricula.
- **APA disseminate the *Report of the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls* to school psychologists, educators, and faculty at the elementary, middle-school, high-school, and undergraduate levels and to chairs of graduate departments of psychology.**  
School psychologists and educators need to be informed about (a) identification of students at risk for trafficking; (b) fortifying those at-risk youths with skills to withstand manipulation and advances; (c) empowering youths to recognize and value healthy, noncoercive relationships; (d) helping youths distinguish between legitimate job opportunities and fraudulent

“too-good-to-be-true” offers; and (e) encouraging critical discussion of the glorification of pimp culture, sexualization of girls and women, and demand for commercial sex.

- **Chairs of graduate departments of psychology, chairs of departments in related disciplines (e.g., law, social work, public health, public policy, human development and family studies, criminal justice), as well as other relevant professionals or community partners, be encouraged to use information from the *Report of the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls* in curriculum development and to aid in the dissemination of the report.**
- **The importance of and ethical imperative for self-care be emphasized in course work and training.**
- **Psychologists who supervise practicum students, interns, or postdoctoral residents be well versed in and have extensive knowledge of human trafficking.**
- **A continuing education and online program be developed using information from the *Report of the Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls*, in collaboration with APA's Office of Continuing Education in Psychology.**
- **All curricula and communication materials be developed by professionals with appropriate background in and knowledge of trafficking and be evaluated for effectiveness.**

## Public Policy Recommendations

To promote deeper understanding of all aspects of trafficking of women and girls, the task force recommends that psychologists:

- **Support funding of research related to human trafficking.**
- **Advocate for the development and implementation of evidence-based, developmentally appropriate, culturally appropriate, and trauma-informed services for survivors of human trafficking.**  
Promote the integration of behavioral health services in settings where trafficking survivors reside and receive services, including schools, victim services, communities, foster and residential care, juvenile justice, criminal justice, and health care.
- **Promote and inform the education and training of health, educational, law enforcement, legal, child welfare, and social service professionals on the causes, signs, and consequences**



of human trafficking, including mental health aspects, to ensure that individuals are appropriately identified as at risk for or as survivors of trafficking.

Identified individuals should be offered appropriate resources, services, and support to ensure safety and optimal medical and mental health outcomes.

- **Support evidence-based policies and programs to meet the needs of girls as the fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice system.**  
Address the substantial overlap between involvement in the justice system and in human trafficking. For example, support investments in competitive grant programs to help states and localities better address the needs of girls in the juvenile and criminal justice systems and to provide specific, targeted support for state efforts to implement best practices for at-risk and system-involved girls.
- **Advocate addressing human trafficking in legislation and federal and state initiatives relating to runaway and homeless youth, child welfare services, and foster care and adoption assistance programs.**
- **Advocate inclusion of information about sex-trafficking practices and prevention, intimate partner violence prevention, sexualization, objectification, and healthy relationships in school health and related programs, including comprehensive sex education and other sexuality education programs.**
- **Support policy that recognizes trafficked persons coerced into illegal activities (e.g., prostitution) as victims rather than criminals.**
- **Promote the development and utilization of empirically supported curriculum models and media literacy programs, including interactive media to prevent trafficking and potentially counteract the effect of sexualization and objectification of girls.**

Interventions should be evaluated for effectiveness and potential wide-scale adoption and should assess the impact of sexualization on girls and boys and consider important factors such as race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, disability status, and socioeconomic status, consistent with the recommendations of the *Report of the APA Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls* (APA, Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls, 2010).

- **Advocate for effective behavioral health and educational supports for immigrant-origin children, adolescents, and**

adults who have suffered from or are vulnerable to human trafficking, as consistent with the recommendations of the APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration (2012).

- **Continue to raise awareness of the behavioral health effects of detention and deportation processes on immigrant trafficking survivors and their families (adapted from the recommendations of the APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration, 2012).**
- **Promote immigration policies that support trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive behavioral health services and that recognize the importance of family reunification in immigration proceedings when appropriate and in the best interest of the trafficking survivor, as consistent with the APA Resolution on Immigrant Children, Youth, and Families (1998) (adapted from the recommendations of the APA Task Force on Immigration, 2012).**
- **Advocate review of immigration policy, including examination of the temporary work visas and guest-worker programs, to eliminate abusive labor conditions.**
- **Promote protection of human rights for all workers in the United States through support for humane and just labor standards, enforcement of labor laws, and protection of workers' interests.**
- **Examine the impact of the current economic climate and policy on the well-being of the workforce.**
- **Advocate careful examination of the connection between free-trade policies and trafficking of persons into the United States and to produce goods for U.S. consumption.**
- **Promote policies that will provide access to lifelong health and mental health care to address the long-term and chronic health issues faced by survivors of trafficking.**

## Public Awareness Recommendations

To raise awareness of trafficking, the task force recommends that public awareness campaigns be used to:

- **Address common misperceptions and myths about trafficking victims.**

- **Increase awareness that human trafficking occurs within the United States in all types of communities.**

As such, awareness campaigns must be adapted for use in diverse and multicultural communities.

- **Increase awareness of both labor and sex trafficking.**
- **Educate the public about common signs of human trafficking to help identify potential victims in their communities.**

Psychologists can be especially helpful in educating about signs of psychological coercion—often subtle and difficult to identify—in trafficking (e.g., grooming, traumatic bonding).

- **Emphasize prevention for parents and youth.**
- **Include multilevel training created by long-term survivors who are advanced in their own healing and have the necessary experience, professional skills, and training to work with economically and culturally diverse stakeholders.**
- **Respect the varied lived experiences of human trafficking survivors.**

Ensure that images are neither exploitive nor sensationalist in nature to prevent stereotypical images of human trafficking survivors. When public awareness programs include survivors as speakers, the organizers and other speakers should be mindful of avoiding unintentionally presenting survivors as “token” examples, or worse, “specimens” to be examined.

It is also recommended that:

- **Public service announcements provide survivor hotline numbers in addition to the Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline number.**  
Institutions that may serve trafficked persons or may be locations of trafficking should post public service announcements with hotline numbers.
- **Public awareness curricula address intersections and overlaps with other forms of violence (e.g., child abuse, intimate partner violence), exploitation (e.g., labor exploitation and violations), and vulnerable communities (e.g., immigrants, refugee/asylees, homeless youth).**

# NOTES

## Executive Summary

1. Within the TVPA, *coercion* is defined as “(a) threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; (b) any scheme, plan or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; or (c) the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process” and is distinguished from *force*, which involves actual physical violence or harm, restraint or confinement (TVPA, 2000).
2. The *U.N. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* is often referred to as “the Palermo Protocol” and was one of three protocols that supplement the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, Palermo, Italy, 2000.
3. Herman (1997) coined the term “complex PTSD” to describe a constellation of symptoms that can include impaired cognitive functioning, emotional dysregulation, and distorted perceptions of self, others, and perpetrators. Complex PTSD is a potential response when individuals experience complex trauma on multiple occasions or on a chronic basis. “Complex trauma” refers to severe harm that is interpersonal in nature. That is, such trauma is purposefully inflicted through the actions of another person, through sexual abuse, relationship violence, exploitation, or similar violations (Courtois, 2008; Herman, 1997).

## Introduction and Overview

1. Within the TVPA, *coercion* is defined as “(a) threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; (b) any scheme, plan or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; or (c) the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process” and is distinguished from *force*, which involves actual physical violence or harm, restraint or confinement (TVPA, 2000).
2. The task force originally defined its scope as women and girls trafficked into, within, and from the United States. No empirical research was identified that dealt with trafficking of women and girls out of the United States to other locations. However, anecdotal information and police reports of American Indian women and girls trafficked out of the United States through Duluth Harbor (Koeplinger, personal communication, March 22, 2008) suggest this warrants further investigation.
3. Trafficking that does not have a U.S. nexus and trafficking of men and boys are outside of the task force charge.

4. The *U.N. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* is often referred to as “the Palermo Protocol” and was one of three protocols that supplement the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, Palermo, Italy, 2000.
5. As of February 2013, all 50 states and the District of Columbia also had legislation criminalizing human trafficking (Polaris Project, 2013).
6. The FLC includes visas for foreign nationals to work in the United States on a permanent (PERM) or temporary basis in agricultural (H-2A), technical/professional (H-1B), and nonagricultural labor such as forestry (H-2B).
7. For additional case examples, see the human trafficking database at the University of Michigan School of Law (<http://www.law.umich.edu/clinical/HuTrafficCases/Pages/search-database.aspx>) and the UNODC case law database (<https://www.unodc.org/cld/index.jspx>).
8. Different conceptualizations of the levels are suggested by different authors. In this report we use a slightly modified version of the model proposed by McLeroy et al. (1988).
9. The term *human trafficking* was used by the United Nations (1949) at least since the mid-twentieth century, but no academic work using this terminology was located from before the 1990s.
10. For supplemental material, see <http://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/trafficking/grids.pdf>.
11. These two positions on prostitution roughly correspond to regulationist and abolitionist positions (Council of Europe, 2007; Kullman, 2012). MacKinnon (2011) distinguished them as the “sex work model” and the “sexual exploitation approach.” Although two diametrically opposed positions are presented here, this is not meant to imply that all scholars adhere to one position or the other.

## Measuring Human Trafficking

1. Reid (2010) pointed out that child protective services do not always code sex trafficking of a minor in a way that would identify it as human trafficking; it may be counted as child sexual abuse.
2. Prostitution of minors falls within both the U.N. and U.S. definitions of trafficking. However, the issue of commercial sex involving minors when no intermediary trafficker is involved

in or profiting from the transaction (frequently called *survival sex*) is a grey area. Some sources define survival sex as human trafficking; others do not.

- Mitchell et al. (2010) separated racial data from data on Hispanic ethnicity, so categories of White, Black, and “other” also contain individuals of Hispanic ethnicity. Kycckelhahn et al. (2009) excluded persons of Hispanic ethnicity from their data on White and Black victims and perpetrators.

### Risk Factors for the Trafficking of Women and Girls

- For the purposes of this report, we use *globalization* to encompass the increased interconnectedness among various entities worldwide (corporate, governmental, nongovernmental) and policies that include free-trade agreements, increasing deregulation of corporate practices, and reduction of social programs such as education and health care in many nations. Globalization is characterized by (a) changing patterns of production of goods, including outsourcing of jobs, free-trade zones with sweatshop industries, decreased power of organized labor, and relative reductions in wages and benefits; (b) a relatively open flow of capital and products between nations; (c) increasing demand for consumer goods not only in affluent nations but also in newly opened markets in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and South America; and (d) enhanced communication and technological connectedness between peoples across the globe.
- Foreign-born persons include “anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. This includes naturalized citizens, lawful permanent residents (LPRs), temporary migrants (such as foreign students), humanitarian migrants (such as refugees), and undocumented migrants” (Grieco et al., 2012, p. 3). Of these, 17.5 million were naturalized U.S. citizens and 22.5 million were noncitizens (LPRs, temporary migrants, humanitarian migrants, and undocumented migrants).
- According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (2013), “In 2011, the last year for which data are available, the United States issued about 55,000 H-2A visas and about 51,000 H-2B visas.”
- In cases of international trafficking, *source countries* and *countries of origin* refer to the nations from which the trafficking originated; *destination countries* refers to the nations in which the forced labor or CSE takes place; and *transit countries* refers to nations through which trafficked persons may be transported to reach the destination country. Some nations, including the United States, are source, transit, and destination countries (U.S. Department of State, 2010).
- Two recent cases illustrate the use of migrant smuggling operations to recruit victims in Mexico and Central America and then traffic them into the sex trade and forced labor in the United States. In May 2011, U.S. authorities arrested 19 members of the Hernandez-Castillo brothers’ network, which smuggled women from Mexico and Central America and then trafficked them into prostitution at brothels in Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Chicago, and Grand Rapids, MI (Kusmer, 2011). The same year, a federal jury convicted three New York men of collaborating to recruit and smuggle women from Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, and El Salvador into the United States, where they were forced to labor as waitresses and to engage in prostitution (“Three Convicted of Sex Trafficking,” 2011). Asian gangs have also been implicated in the trafficking of a considerable number of South Korean women through Canada and into the United States (U.S. Department of State, 2011b).
- Van Liemt defines the underground economy as comprising “those paid work activities leading to the production of legal goods and services that are excluded from the protection of laws and administrative rules covering commercial licensing, labour contracts, income taxation, and social security systems” (2004, p. 11).
- Traumatic bonding is defined by Dutton and Painter (1993) as “powerful emotional attachments ... [that] develop from two specific features of abusive relationships: power imbalances and intermittent good–bad treatment” (p. 105).
- D. Banks and Kycckelhahn (2011) reported only whether cases were identified as sex trafficking or labor trafficking; it is not possible to determine from this report whether any of the cases combined elements of both.
- Raphael and Ashley (2008) reported that family members were the exploiters for 10% of their sample ( $n = 100$ ). Gragg et al. (2007) reported 6–7% in their New York City sample ( $n = 2,121$ ), and 10–16% in their upstate New York sample ( $n = 399$ ) were exploited by family members. Kennedy and Pucci (2007) related that a service provider estimated that up to 30% of the commercially exploited youths they served had been exploited by a family member. Pierce (2009), O’Leary and Howard (2001), and Priebe and Suhr (2005) reported that some of their sample was exploited by family members, but frequencies or percentages were not given.

- The term *Aboriginal* is used for two reasons. First, Canada’s Inuit and Métis peoples are distinct from First Nations peoples. Second, government publications providing data on Native peoples in Canada most often use the Aboriginal unless reporting on First Nations people alone.
- See, for example, work by DeGruy-Leary (2005) and others on posttraumatic slave syndrome.

### Describing Human Trafficking

- If the individual engaged in commercial sex is younger than 18, it is considered human trafficking even in the absence of force, fraud, or coercion.
- The nine nations were Thailand (56%,  $n = 166$ ), Mexico (59%,  $n = 123$ ), Germany (61%,  $n = 54$ ), South Africa (66%,  $n = 68$ ), Colombia (70%,  $n = 96$ ), Turkey (80%,  $n = 50$ ), the United States (82%,  $n = 130$ ), Zambia (82%,  $n = 117$ ), and Canada (91%,  $n = 100$ ).
- Farley et al. (2003) used three items to assess rape: “Have you been raped?” “Who raped you?” “How many times have you been raped since you were in prostitution?”
- For example, \$ indicates \$100; \$\$ indicates \$200; “Jacks” or “Jacksons” indicate \$20.

### Consequences and Impact of Trafficking

- For a list of the empirical studies used in this report, see <http://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/trafficking/grids.pdf>.
- Important empirical research on this topic was conducted in the 1980s and early 1990s, predating the current terminology of sex trafficking or CSEC.
- A similar practice exists in refugee studies, where the findings from one cultural refugee group are often generalized to inform interventions for other groups (Kaczorowski et al., 2011).
- Research findings indicate Stockholm syndrome is also common among sexually exploited and battered women, incest victims, concentration camp prisoners (Graham, 1994), and victims of child sexual abuse (Julich, 2005).
- Social pain refers to the pain people experience as a result of social injury (e.g., ostracism, bullying, marginalization) (Eisenberger & Lieberman, 2004).
- “Prostitution is like rape. It’s like when I was 15 years old and I was raped. I used to experience leaving my body. I mean that’s what I did when that man raped me. I went to the ceiling and I numbed myself because I didn’t want to feel what I was feeling. I was very frightened. And while I was a prostitute, I used to do that all the time. I would numb my feelings. I wouldn’t even feel like I was in my body. I would actually leave my body and go somewhere else with my thoughts and with my feelings until he got off and it was over with. I don’t know how else to explain it except that it felt like rape. It was rape to me” (Giobbe, 1991, p. 144).

### Responding to Trafficking of Women and Girls

- Both the United Nations and the U.S. government began with a “3 P” framework (prevention, protection, and prosecution) but added a fourth P: partnership (United Nations, 2008; U.S. Department of State, 2011a).
- Among programs employing survivor mentoring or survivor leadership to address CSE and CSEC are Breaking Free (St. Paul, MN), Courtney’s House (Washington DC), Girls Education and Mentoring Services (GEMS) (New York, NY), Mary Magdalene Project (Los Angeles, CA), MISSEY (Oakland, CA), My Life, My Choice Project (MLMC) (Boston, MA), PEERS (British Columbia, Canada), SAGE Project (San Francisco, CA), and Veronica’s Voice (Kansas City, MO). Empirical reports of program evaluation information were not available in the peer-reviewed literature.
- The California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (n.d.) posts information regarding existing programs for girls victimized by CSEC. However, there is not enough information to provide ratings of evidence support (<http://www.cebc4cw.org/topic/commercial-sexual-exploitation-of-children-and-adolescents-services-for-victims/>).
- Metropolitan State University of Denver offers one such program.
- This technique is called a “reverse sting” or “john sting” to differentiate it from stings in which the individual involved in commercial sex is targeted for arrest.
- So named because it was instituted nationwide in Sweden in 1999.

7. Child labor may be involved in products imported to the United States or may take place on U.S. soil. Examples of child labor within the United States include *Juana Sierra Trejo v. Broadway Plaza Hotel*, 2005; *United States v. Abdenasser Ennassime*, 2006; *United States v. Abdel Nasser Youssef Ibrahim*, 2006; *USA v. Mariluz Zavala and Jose Ibanez*, 2004; and *United States v. Akouavi Kpade Afolabi*, 2009.
8. “Continued Presence (CP) is a temporary immigration status provided to individuals identified by law enforcement as victims of human trafficking. This status allows victims of human trafficking to remain in the U.S. temporarily during the ongoing investigation into the human trafficking-related crimes committed against them. CP is initially granted for one year and may be renewed in one-year increments” (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2010, p. 2).
9. Structural violence—as opposed to interpersonal violence—refers to the harm inflicted by social systems and structures, including oppression, discrimination, and poverty.

Notes

### The Role of the Psychologist

1. Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is “a partnership approach to research that equitably involves, for example, community members, organizational representatives, and researchers in all aspects of the research process” (Israel et al., 2003). For examples of CBPR used with human trafficking issues, see *Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking* (2012) and Pierce (2009, 2012).
2. For example, *Psychology of Violence and Aggression*, *Psychology of Women*, *Psychology and the Law*, and *Industrial/Organizational Psychology*.
3. For example, at Metropolitan State University of Denver: Women’s Studies 4160—Human Trafficking, a cross-listed course with African/African American Studies, Criminal Justice and Criminology, Human Services, Psychology, Social Work, and Honors.
4. The Victims of Violence Program (VOV), located in Cambridge, MA, is an adult, outpatient trauma clinic. The VOV clinic was established in 1984 and became a clinical training program of Harvard Medical School in 1985. Currently, VOV is a training program for graduate and postgraduate clinical trainees. Additionally, the clinic provides clinical resources for victims, is a setting for community and clinical research, provides consultation and training resources nationally and internationally, and contributes to global anti-violence efforts.
5. For example, see <http://www.apa.org/ed/sponsor/resources/requirements.aspx>.
6. For example, psychologists could advocate with school boards for programming for youth regarding healthy relationships and prevention of interpersonal violence and training for school personnel. Others might engage with state legislators and state agencies’ administrators to examine the role child-protection system policies could play in early identification of and intervention with youths at risk for trafficking. Other psychologists might inform legislators about the human costs of temporary visa programs that can expose domestic servants and migrant laborers to significant abuse at the hands of employers.
7. For example, the comprehensive delivery of services for human trafficking survivors would include mental health, substance use, housing, vocational or employment support, domestic violence and victim assistance, and peer support. A comprehensive approach would include specialized neuropsychological assessment, including assessment for head trauma and traumatic brain injury. A refugee/asylee report should also be elicited.
8. Programs such as Project REACH in Massachusetts that operates out of the Trauma Center at the Justice Resource Institute have been responding to some of these needs by providing nationwide multidisciplinary consultation on trauma and human trafficking. In Project REACH program evaluation reports, providers describe these consultation services as extremely helpful in understanding traumatic stress in victims, in developing trauma-informed services, and in helping clients understand their own reactions and begin to develop coping skills (Coquillon, 2011).
9. Proponents of harm reduction argue that certain behaviors (e.g., illicit drug use, adolescent sexual behavior, prostitution) will always occur and the responsible approach is to “work to minimize [their] harmful effects rather than simply ignore or condemn them” (Harm Reduction Coalition, n.d.). Rather than prevent the activity itself, the goal is to reduce harmful impacts by providing services without judgment of the underlying activity (drug use, commercial sex) to create an atmosphere in which services can be sought without fear of pressuring, shaming, or coercing clients who are not ready or able to change their behavior.
10. They give youths the opportunity to identify what they consider to be their most urgent needs and then help them meet those needs. The core component is providing a space

where youths can be safe, interact with peers in group activities, and learn about the realities of the sex trade, “pimp’s rules,” what a healthy relationship actually looks like, and their human rights. Program goals are to (a) reduce the likelihood that youths will be exploited because of peer/community risks and (b) give youths who are already CSEC victims, but who do not identify as such, support and time to consider that the situation they are in is exploitative and harmful and that help is available for them if and when they are ready.

11. The Minneapolis Indian Women’s Resource Center offers one such program that is described more fully in the section on empowerment programs (see p. 47). Proponents of these programs consider their harm reduction approach to be more “upstream” (primary and secondary prevention) than traditional harm reduction models.
12. The Polaris Project (2011a) provides examples of screening questions such as “Did anyone ever force you to engage in sexual acts with friends or business associates for favors/money?”
13. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Rescue & Restore Campaign provides free training materials for health care, social service, and law enforcement personnel online or by mail. Go to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/resource/rescue-restore-campaign-tool-kits>.
14. The T-visa provides immigration relief to victims of human trafficking who have been certified by federal authorities and have met specific criteria outlined in the TVPA. The visa provides access to benefits that would otherwise be unavailable due to undocumented status.
15. Pertinent sections in the APA Ethics Code (2002, 2010a) include:

**Principle A: Beneficence and Nonmaleficence:** Psychologists strive to benefit those with whom they work and take care to do no harm. . . . Psychologists strive to be aware of the possible effect of their own physical and mental health on their ability to help those with whom they work.

**2.03 Maintaining Competence:** Psychologists undertake ongoing efforts to develop and maintain their competence.

**2.06 Personal Problems and Conflicts:** (a) Psychologists refrain from initiating an activity when they know or should know that there is a substantial likelihood that their personal problems will prevent them from performing their work-related activities in a competent manner. (b) When psychologists become aware of personal problems that may interfere with their performing work-related duties adequately, they take appropriate measures, such as obtaining professional consultation or assistance and determine whether they should limit, suspend or terminate their work-related duties.

16. Such strategies will vary depending on individual needs and preferences but may include expressive activities (art, music, writing, dance), athletics (team sports, running, martial arts, cycling, swimming), meditation, massage, spending time in nature (hiking, fishing, camping), or spending quality time with intimate friends or family.

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