



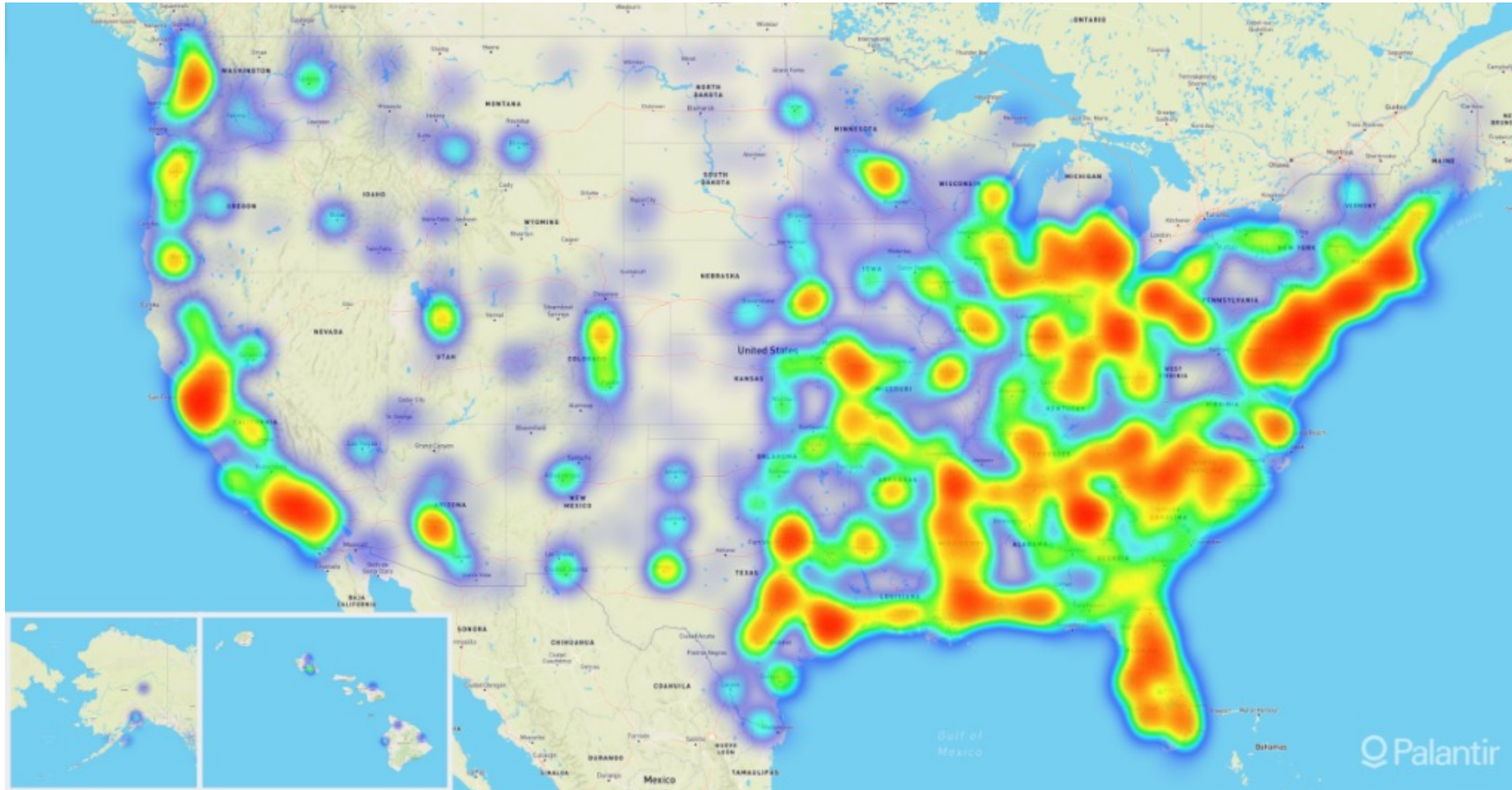
Human Trafficking and Exploitation by Illegal Street Gangs



Amy Hutsell, Director of Special Projects and Partnerships, Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

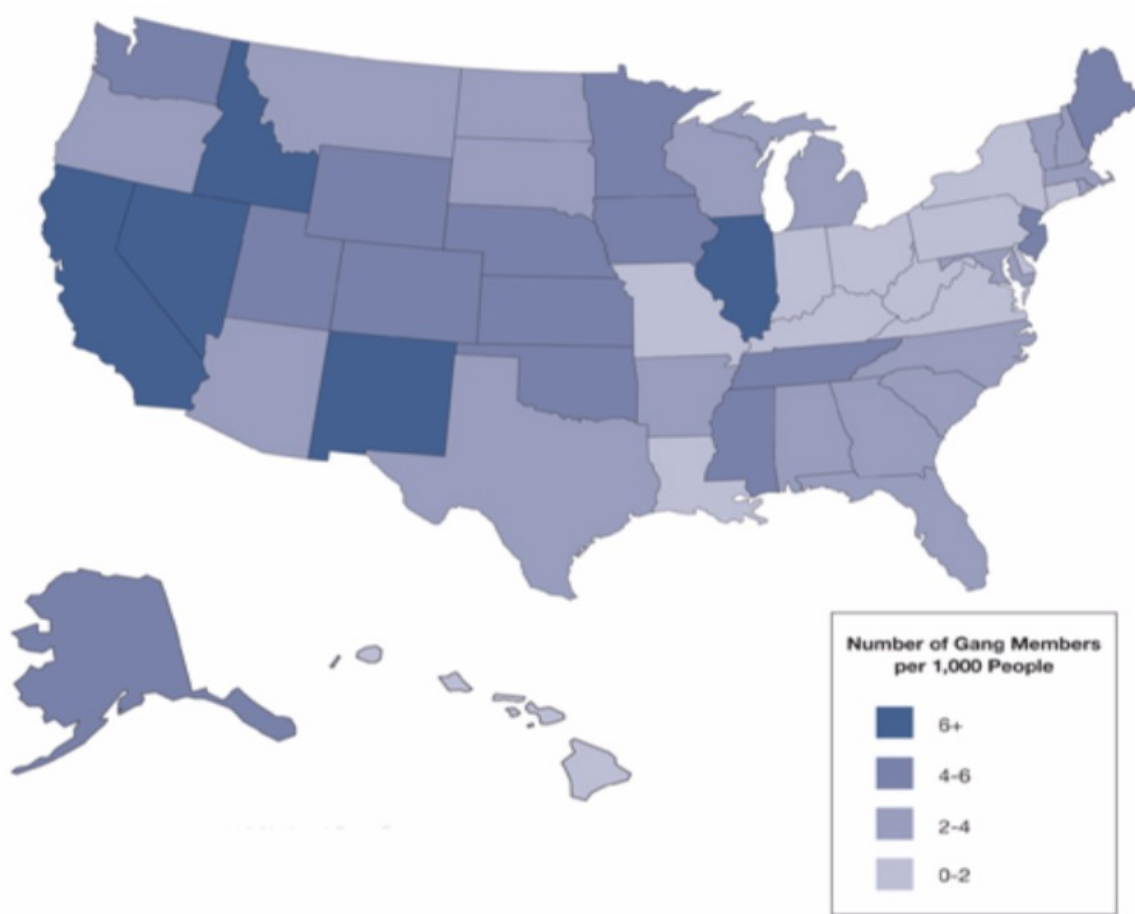
Victor Williams, President and Founder, Quest2Freedom

CJCC | A National Issue: Human Trafficking in the US



Location of likely Human Trafficking Cases in the U.S., U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline Statistics. Polaris, 2020

CJCC | How Prevalent is the Gang Issue in the USA?



There are over 33,000 gangs with approximately 1.4 million members operating in the 50 states including Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

American gangs are responsible for about 48% of violent crimes in most jurisdictions.

Gang membership has been on the rise due to aggressive recruiting, new gang formation, collaboration between gangs, and new opportunities for drug and human trafficking.

Nationwide Gang Presence per Capita - Source: NGIC and NDIC 2010 National Drug Survey Data and U.S. Census Population estimates 2010.



Understanding Sex Trafficking

CJCC | Human Trafficking – A Crime



- Sex trafficking is divided into two distinct subcategories:
 - Adult victim: requires **force, fraud, or coercion**.
 - Victim under 18: a crime **regardless** of whether there is any force, fraud or coercion.
- Labor trafficking:
 - Victim of any age: requires force, fraud, or coercion

A victim does not need to be physically transported from one location to another for the crime to fall within definition of trafficking.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (2013)



ACTION

Recruits

Harbors

Transports

Provides

Obtains

MEANS

Force

Physical assault, sexual assault, confinement

Fraud

False promises of employment conditions, withholding wages

Coercion

Threat of harm or deportation, debt

Psychological manipulation, confiscation of documents

PURPOSE

A COMMERCIAL
SEX ACT

LABOR OR
SERVICES

Sex Trafficking of minors (under 18 years of age)- neither force, nor fraud, nor coercion need to be present to qualify as trafficking.

- Only girls are victims
- Only poor people or immigrants are victims
- Human trafficking does not occur in the US
- All traffickers are male
- Youth choose to get involved in “the life”
- Individuals must be forced/coerced into commercial sex acts to be victims of HT - regardless of their age
- Human trafficking victims will be eager to be “rescued”
- Sex trafficking is a metro/urban problem, not a rural problem
- Traffickers are always strangers



CJCC | Who is the victim?



Spectrum of Sexual Exploitation

www.theexodusroad.com



Sex Trafficking

- Controlling/dominating relationships
- “Daddy,” “boyfriend,” “Aunt,” or “godmother”
- Document confiscation
- Lack of Payment/ no access to earnings
- Signs of Physical/ Sexual Abuse
- Monitored movement/communication
- Does not make eye contact/ speak
- Sudden changes in behavior
- Truancy
- Repeat runaway

CJCC | Where Sex Trafficking can Occur:



Oftentimes, traffickers pose behind fronts for legitimate business opportunities to lure victims, both American and foreign-born, into situations where they are trapped for someone else's financial gain.

Sex trafficking can occur in many different venues:

- Hotels
- Apartments
- Model Agencies
- Commercially fronted brothels
- Travel agencies
- "Au Pair" services
- Massage Parlors
- Nail Salons
- Strip Clubs
- International Matchmaking Services



CJCC | Who are the Traffickers?



Diverse

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Socio- Economic Background

Individuals/ networks

- Small business owner
- Family member
- Labor broker
- Intimate partner
- **Gangs**
- Pimp
- Diplomat

Manipulators

- Force
- Threats/Lies
- Document Confiscation
- Psychological Coercion
- Drug inducement

Exploiters

- Compel adults into forced labor and commercial sex.
- Participate in children being sold for sexual exploitation

CJCC | Traffickers/Exploiters: Who are they?



- “Boyfriend”
- Older friend
- Peer
- Hotel clerk
- Spouse
- Mother
- Grandmother



CJCC | Traffickers: Why?



- Undetected
 - i.e. vehicle stops
- Access to Supply
 - Vulnerable individuals
- High Demand
 - Buyers
- Renewable Resource
 - Drugs vs. weapons vs. humans
- LUCRATIVE
 - The International Labor Organization estimated that human trafficking globally generates **\$150 billion** in illegal profits a year—**\$99 billion** from sex trafficking

“The Economic Drivers and Consequences of Sex Trafficking in the United States”. Institute for Women’s Policy Research, September 2017.

Danke et al, 2014. “Estimating the Size and Structure of the Underground Commercial Sex Economy in Eight Major US Cities”. The Urban Institute.



Cold Call Technique:

- When the trafficker scouts places where he may encounter vulnerable youth: malls, runaway/homeless youth shelters, bus stops, juvenile court, hotels, streets
- Traffickers sometimes use other victims to make the initial approach to youth to disarm them

Boyfriend Technique (Romancing):

A technique that controls others primarily through psychological manipulation. This technique relies on showering victims with affection and gifts.

- “No one loves you like I do”
- “You’re beautiful—you could be a model
- “I’ll be the daddy you never had”
- “I’ll give you the things you need (food, clothing, a place to stay, etc.)”





Gorilla Technique (uncommon) :

- False Imprisonment and/or Kidnapping
- Domestic Violence
- Sexual Assault

*CAVEAT: Exploiters transition from one technique to another

CJCC | Technology and Recruitment:



Traffickers and/or gangs and/or buyers commonly use social media platforms to meet, recruit, exploit individuals like:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Snapchat

Popular advertising websites:

- Skip the games
- PlentyofFish
- Megapersonals
- Adultsearch





Within the various recruitment strategies used by traffickers, many utilize another victim to make the initial approach to youth to disarm them

- Victims that are made to recruit other victims are typically called “**bottoms.**”
- Bottoms are appointed by the trafficker to supervise the others and help in recruiting, instructing, and monitoring victims, collecting money, booking hotel rooms, posting ads, and/or inflicting punishments on other victims.

Most bottoms were previously and/or currently exploited victims!

**I'm just trying
to survive.**

CJCC | Buyers: Who?



- They might be our friends, co-workers, public officials, community, and/or religious leaders.
- The median age of buyers nationally is **49 years old**.
 - **56%** of buyers are currently married.
 - **25%** of buyers have children of their own in their home, and, of these,
 - **50%** of buyers have children in their home the same age as their CSEC victims.

Supply and Demand: NO DEMAND (BUYERS), NO NEED FOR A SUPPLY (VICTIMS)

Understanding Victimization

Sex Trafficking

- *Physical or sexual abuse*
- *Prior child abuse*
- *Homelessness/ Poverty*
- *Lack of education*
- *Socially marginalized group status (LGBTQ+)*
- *History of being systems-involved (juvenile justice, foster care)*





Victims can be any age, gender, race, or immigration status...they can live in cities, suburbs, or rural areas...but the one thing they share is their vulnerability.

- History of Sexual Abuse
 - 70-90% of sexually exploited children have a history of child sexual abuse.
- Runaway/Throwaway/Homeless Youth
 - 60% of victims reported to be runaway, thrown away, or homeless youth
 - 48% of victims who engaged in commercial sex activity reported that a lack of a safe place to sleep was a main reason for their initial decision to engage in survival sex

LaBoy, Ana & Wright, Eric (October, 22 2019). *Atlanta Youth Count: The Prevalence of Sex and Labor Trafficking Among Homeless Youth in Metro Atlanta*. Georgia State University.
U.S. House of Representatives. (2011). *Testimony of Ernie Allen, President and CEO of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, on domestic minor sex trafficking*.



- **LGBTQI Youth:**
 - **44%** of LGBTQ youth experienced trafficking in comparison to **34%** of their straight peers.
 - **26%** of LGBTQ youth experienced commercial sexual exploitation while homeless in comparison to **12%** of their straight peers
 - Transgender youth have been found **eight times** more likely than non-transgender youth to trade sex for a safe place to stay
- **History Of Involvement in the Child Welfare System (Specifically Foster Care)**
 - **63%** of youth reported involvement in multiple systems during their childhood

LaBoy, Ana & Wright, Eric (October, 22 2019). *Atlanta Youth Count: The Prevalence of Sex and Labor Trafficking Among Homeless Youth in Metro Atlanta*. Georgia State University.
U.S. House of Representatives. (2011). *Testimony of Ernie Allen, President and CEO of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, on domestic minor sex trafficking*.

CJCC | Barriers to Victim Self-Identification



- Threat to loved ones or co-workers
- Lack of transportation or controlled movement
- Fear of retaliation
- Loyalty/relationship to trafficker
- False promises
- Distrust of authority
- Hopelessness
- Debt bondage
- Isolation
- Confinement
- Language barriers
- Fear of arrest



CJCC | Trafficking Cases Present Unique Challenges



It is important to recognize that victims may:

- Fear and distrust of law enforcement
- Not tell a complete story or use rehearsed responses
- Be afraid to come forward to disclose victimization
- Identify with or be dependent on the trafficker or express romantic feelings for them and therefore be reluctant to testify against trafficker
- Fear judgement from those in authority
- Not identify themselves as a victim – **“trauma bonding”**

REMEMBER

CJCC | Trafficking Cases Present Unique Challenges



Trauma Bonding occurs when a person develops positive feelings toward their trafficker.

This typically occurs when:

- the trafficked person has been isolated and controlled by a trafficker or other abuser
- feels threatened or unable to escape
- has experienced sporadic acts of kindness from the trafficker

CJCC | Pathways of Entry into “The Life”



- Parents selling their children
- Runaway
- Peer recruitment
- Violence and force
- False advertising for modeling, acting, or dancing
- Social Media Connections
- Targeted manipulation and coercion



Polyvictimization is defined as having experienced multiple types of victimizations, such as sexual abuse, physical abuse, bullying, and exposure to family violence during a specific time frame, many times in different settings (ex: home, work, school, community) and often at the hands of different perpetrators.

Finkelhor, Turner, Hamby, & Ormrod, 2011





Domestic Violence

Neglect

Community Violence

Bullying

Sexual Violence

Harassment

Describes the **collective** experiences of multiple types of victimizations, usually in multiple settings, and at the hands of multiple perpetrators.

Child Abuse

Drug Trafficking

Arson

Gangs

Robbery

Identity Theft

Elder Abuse

Fraud

Discrimination & Bias



- As many as half of all children in the mental health, child welfare, and juvenile justice systems are poly-victims.
- Almost **1 in 10** American children saw one family member assault another family member, and more than **25%** had been exposed to family violence during their lifetime.
- Exposure to one type of violence increased the likelihood that a child would be exposed to other types of violence and exposed multiple times.

Turner HA, Finkelhor D, Ormrod R. Poly-victimization in a national sample of children and youth. *Am J Prev Med.* 2010;38(3):323–30. Epub 2010/02/23. doi: 10.1016/j.amepre.2009.11.012

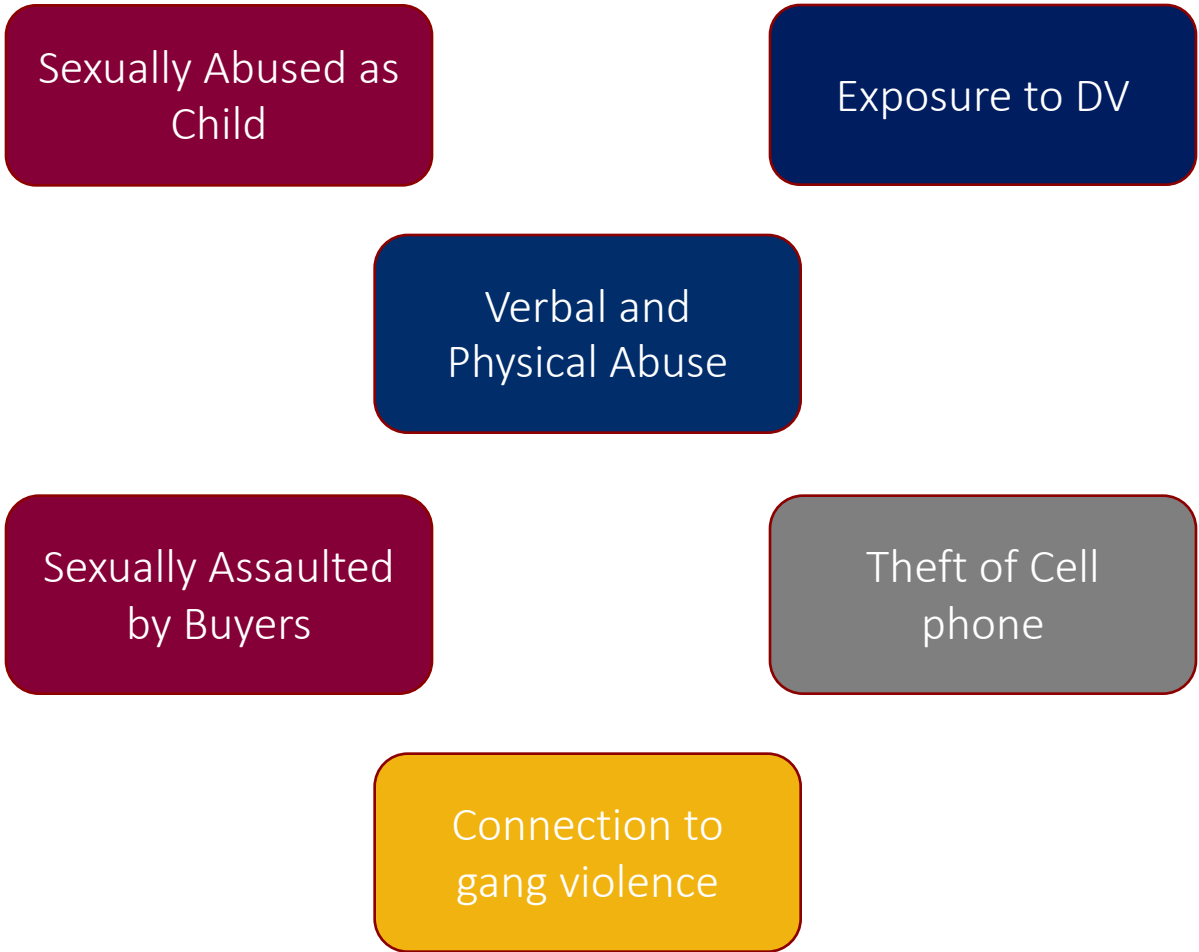


According to a national sample that examined polyvictimization of children and youth:

- As many as **1** in **5** American children are polyvictims.
- Nearly **66%** of the sample was exposed to were exposed to violence, crime or abuse in their homes, schools and communities.
- **30%** of the sample experienced five or more types of victimization.
- A staggering **10%** of the sample experienced 11 or more different forms of victimization.

Turner HA, Finkelhor D, Ormrod R. Poly-victimization in a national sample of children and youth. 2010 Am J Prev Med. 2010;38(3):323–30.

CJCC | Polyvictimization: Case Study



Alicia, 17, presents as DMST victim identified by emergency medical personnel at a local hospital

CJCC | Polyvictimization: Case Study



Sexual abuse as a child

Verbal and Physical Abuse

Neglect

Community Violence

Connection to gang via friends and family

Parental Criminality

Poverty

Access to firearms and weapons



Gang members, 16-17, presents as "at risk for gang involvement/ recruitment" by school resource officer and counselor.

CJCC | Youth and Gang Membership



- Youth may be “pulled” and/or “pushed” into gang membership.
- The features that attract youth, such as:
 - the perception of increased reputation and social status,
 - the desire to be with friends and/or family who are already gang-involved,
 - the promise of money, drugs, protection, and/or excitement,
 - cultural pride and identification with one’s neighborhood.
- Youth less frequently report being coerced or actively recruited to join the gang.
- Finally, it is also important to point out that the process of joining a gang is a gradual one. Youth may begin at a “gang-marginal status” by hanging around other gang members or having older family members in the gang, leading some to join later.

National Gang Center, 2024.



Understanding Illegal Street Gangs

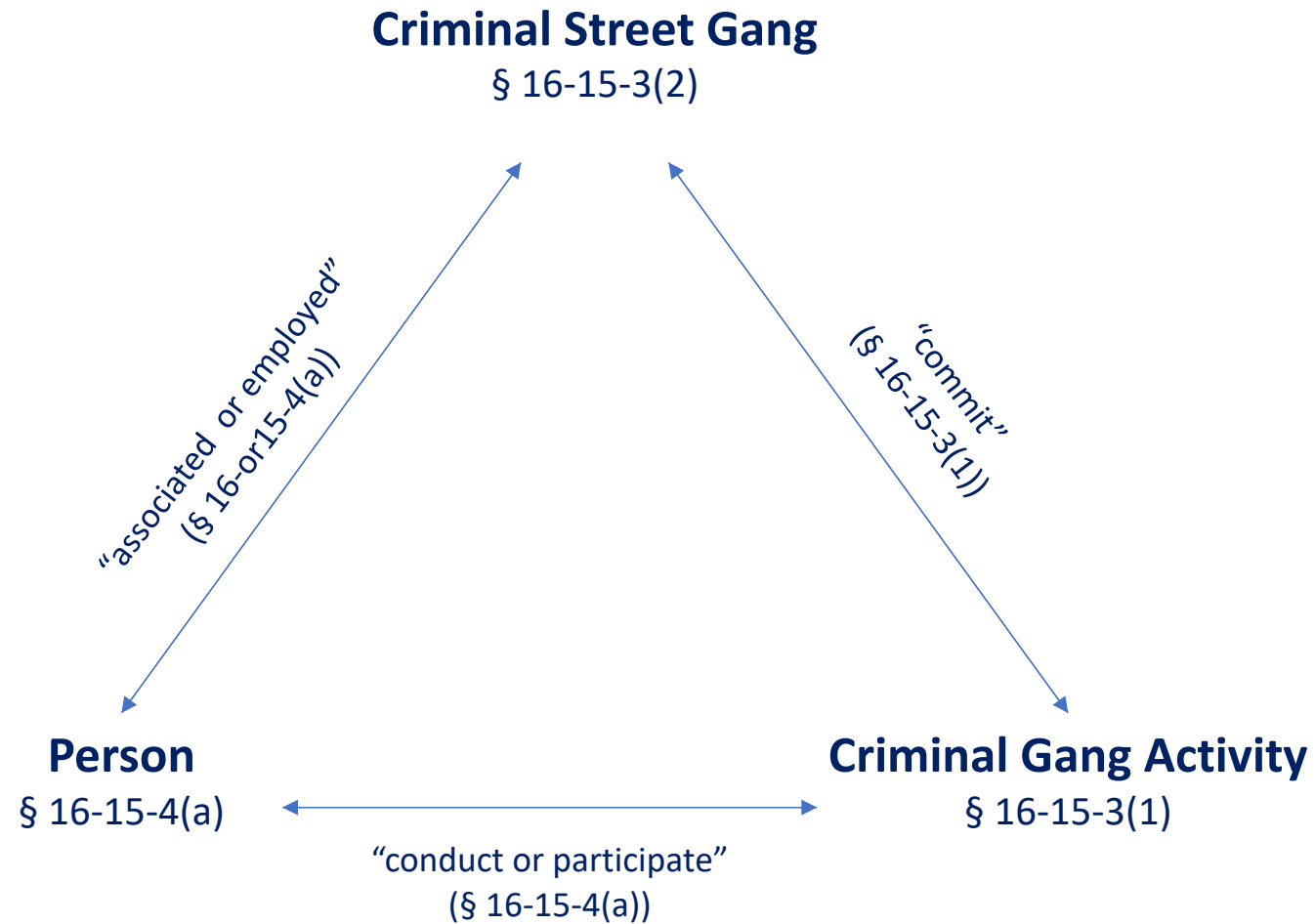


What does it mean to be in a gang?

Being in a gang is not illegal!

Being in a criminal street gang is.

AG | Violation of Street Gang Terrorism and Prevention Act



AG | Criminal Street Gang Terrorism and Prevention Act



O.C.G.A. § 16-15-3(2):

“Criminal gang activity on or after April 18, 2019, shall also mean the commission, attempted commission, conspiracy to commit, or the solicitation, coercion, or intimidation of another person to commit on and after April 18, 2019, any offense defined in Code Section 16-5-46 as **trafficking persons for labor or sexual servitude**, 16-6-10 as keeping a place of prostitution, 16-6-11 as pimping, or 16-6-12 as pandering.”



Understanding the Intersection between Human Trafficking and Illegal Street Gang Activity



The findings of the study revealed:

- The underground sex economy in San Diego County totals to **\$810 million**
- **110** gangs in San Diego County were discovered to be engaged in sex trafficking
- **80% of facilitators of sex trafficking had a gang affiliation**
- **90%** of schools in San Diego County confirmed CSEC cases involved with gang activity
- The average age of entry into CSEC was **15 years old**
- Demographics of gang membership: **34% White, 32% African American, 24% Hispanics**

The scale and scope of sex trafficking are larger and wider in San Diego County than expected; no community in San Diego remains untouched by it.

Carpenter, A. C. and Gates, J. (2016). *The Nature and Extent of Gang Involvement in Sex Trafficking in San Diego County*. San Diego, CA: University of San Diego and Point Loma Nazarene University

CJCC | 2011 National Gang Assessment



Human Trafficking is another source of revenue for gangs. Victims – typically women and children – are often forced, coerced, or led with fraudulent pretenses into prostitution and forced labor. The Bloods, MS- 13, Sureños, and Somali gangs have been reportedly involved in human trafficking, according to multiple law enforcement and NGIC reporting.

- Some gangs in the New England area are combining human trafficking and drug trafficking operations, where females are used to courier drugs and forced in to prostitution.
- In November 2010, Federal law enforcement officials indicted 29 members of a Somalin gang in Minneapolis for operating an interstate sex trafficking ring that sold and transported underage African American and Somalian females from Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Columbus, Ohio, and Nashville Tennessee, for prostitution, according to FBI and ICE Reporting.

CJCC | 2011 National Gang Assessment



- Gang involvement in alien smuggling, human trafficking, and prostitution is increasing primarily due to their higher profitability and lower risks of detection and punishment than that of drug and weapons trafficking.
- Over the past year, federal, state, and local law enforcement officials in at least 35 states and US territories have reported that gangs in their jurisdictions are involved in alien smuggling, human trafficking, or prostitution.

CJCC | Texas Gang Threat Assessment



- Revealed that gangs across Texas are engaged in the **sex trafficking of both adults and juveniles**
- Gangs are attracted to sex trafficking by the “**perceived low risk and high profitability**”
- Gang involvement may be organized networks, or members may operate independently
- Gangs involved in sex trafficking range from national, to regional, to small neighborhood gangs

Texas Department of Public Safety (2018) Texas Gang Threat Assessment Available online
Office of the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Center, Human trafficking Resources. 2020

LOW RISK

CJCC | The Situation in Georgia



- On average, **60%** of all violent crimes in Georgia are linked to gang activity
- A survey conducted by the Georgia Gang Investigators Association found that gang activity in Georgia is on the rise, with **71,200** validated gang affiliates and over **1,600** suspected gang networks
- **157 counties** reported a rise in gang activity and **155 school districts** reported suspected gang activity
- Criminals are now turning social media into a recruitment platform to specifically target younger audiences

"The GGIA June 2018 Street Gang Survey Results". Georgia Gang Investigators Association (2018).



CJCC | Gang Affiliation and Trafficking

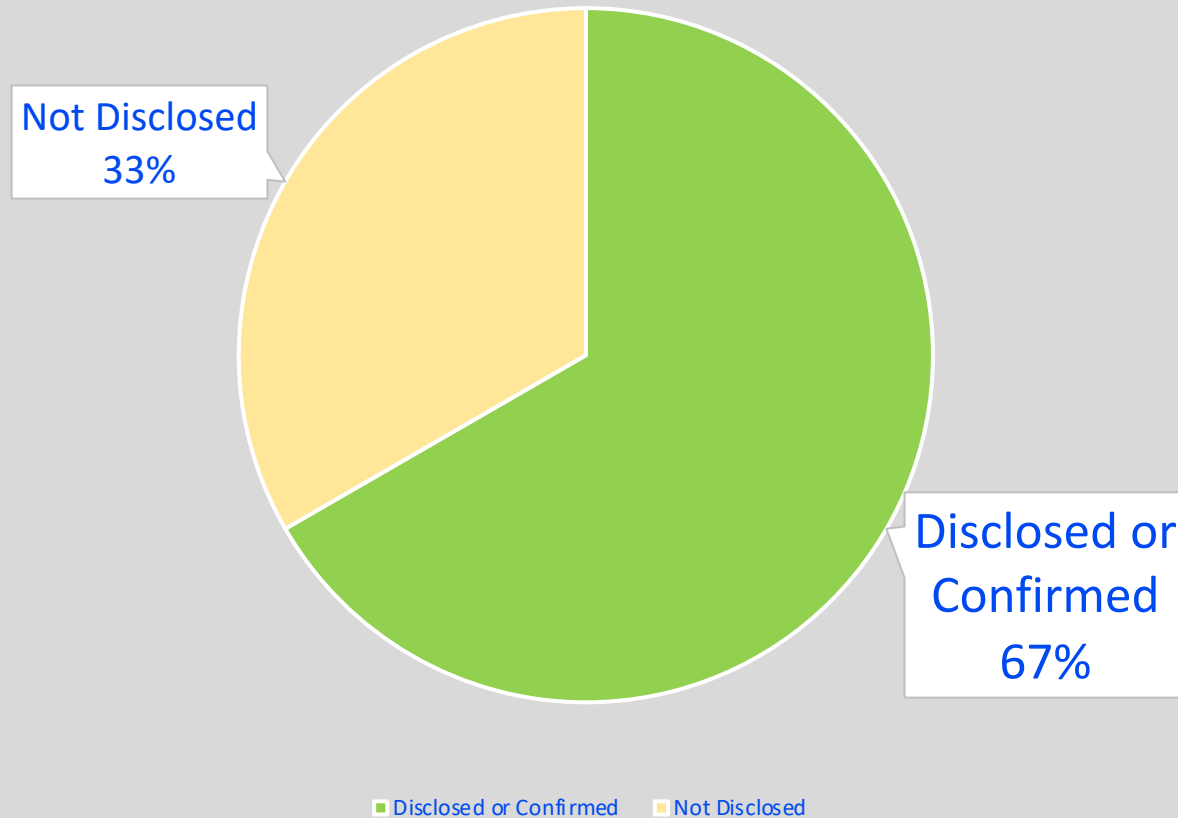


- Certain tattoos/markers may identify if a victim is being trafficked by a gang





Gang Affiliation





What Can You Do?



Human Exploitation and Trafficking (HEAT) Unit is housed within the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

- The HEAT Unit focuses on the enforcement efforts of commercial sex trafficking and labor trafficking as well as the rescue of trafficking victims.
- The HEAT Unit provides the GBI with the resources needed to crack down on this criminal enterprise and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable.
- This state agency refers cases to counties, the state and feds for prosecution



Train on Human Trafficking *and* Gangs

In partnership with GGIA, CJCC and AG's Office developed and assisted in presenting a Human Trafficking/ Gang Investigator Certification Training for Georgia's Gang Investigators Association conference.

This training addresses the nexus between trafficking and illicit gang activity and equips gang investigators with the appropriate identification of human trafficking victims and proactive gang investigations.





Specialty Courts

Model: RISING Court in Cobb County, Georgia

- Modeled after accountability court
- Probation option after adjudication
- For youth with high risk of gang affiliation
- Mentorship, life skills courses, etc.
- Successful completion results in record sealing



Georgia Attorney Generals Office: Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit

Launched September 3, 2019

- Specialization in Human Trafficking
- Prosecutors/investigators/analysts/advocates
- Approximately 40 pending indictments
- 29 convictions last year (3 prosecutors)
 - All prison sentences
 - No dismissals
 - 100% conviction rate
 - Victim cooperation not required!

CJCC | Establish Statewide Resources



- Statewide 24/7 hotline
- Statewide coordinated response to missing children
- Statewide intelligence sharing
- Statewide advocates
- Handbook for investigating and prosecuting human trafficking

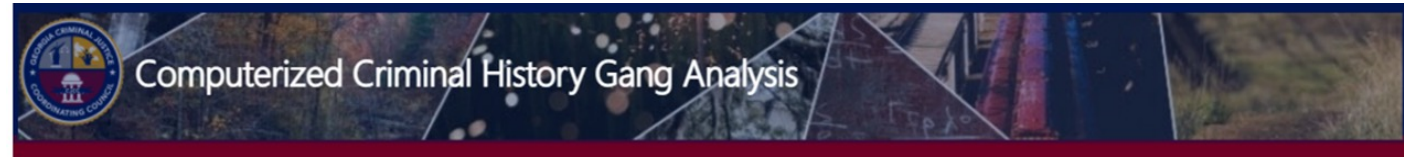


New Website: www.endhtga.org

CJCC | Human Trafficking Data Clearinghouse

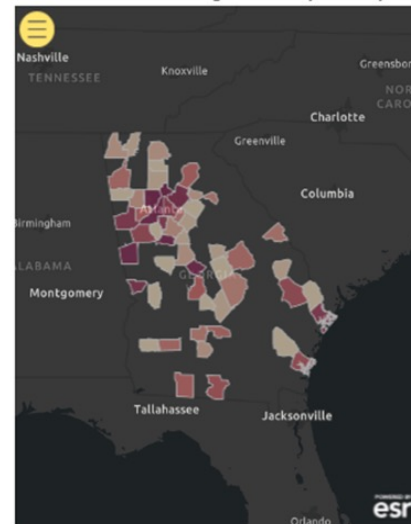


The Human Trafficking Data Clearinghouse provides our partners with pertinent data regarding human trafficking and other related information in the state of Georgia for planning and targeting purposes.



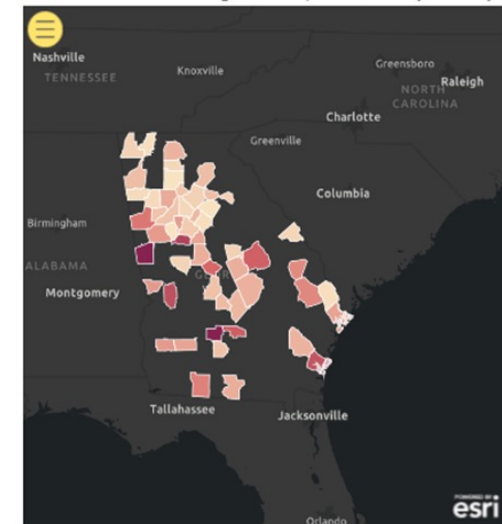
Year of Arrest
Sele... 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019

Number of Street Gang Arrests By County



Year of Arrest
2015 2016 2017 2018 2019

Number of Street Gang Arrests per 10,000 by County



CJCC | Societal Issue



Pimps and Hoes party playlist?

Big Daddy Kane - "Cause I Can Do It Right"

*"That's why I say it ain't easy
But I've been able to maintain my status
With ladies macking without if's, and's, or maybe's
And other players just can't understand it
And couldn't keep they girls even if they were branded
I always end up with them on my shelf
SMACK I gotta jump back and kiss myself"*



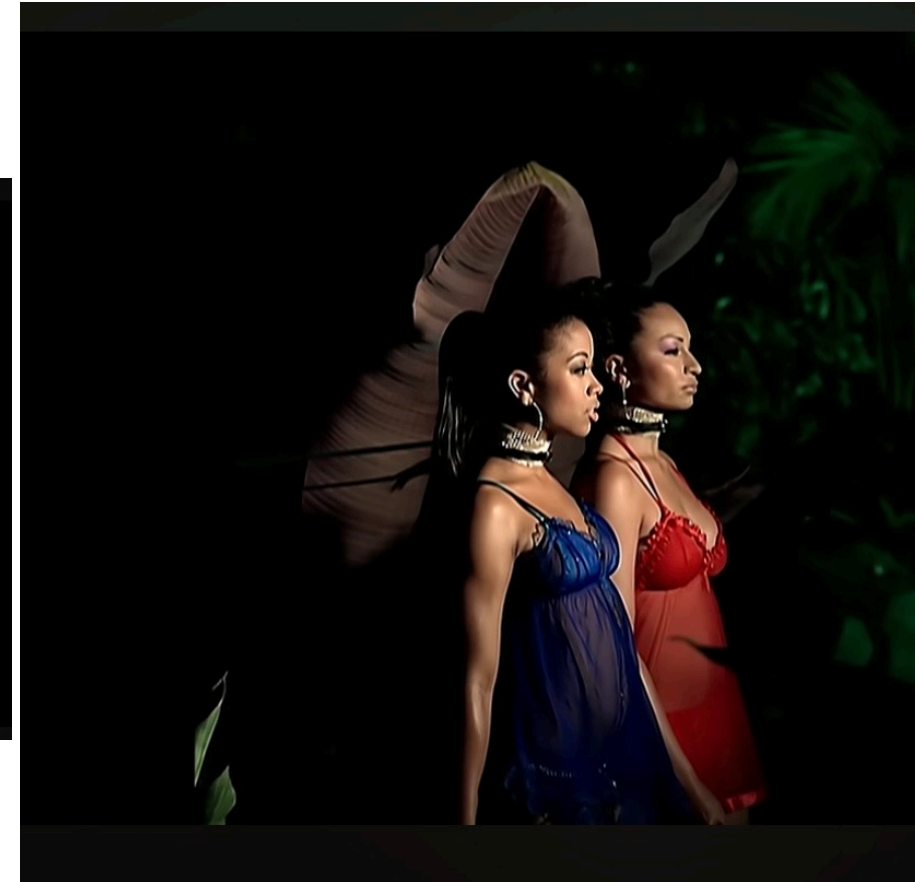
DMX - "X Is Coming"

*"Tryin' to send the b-ch back to her maker
And if you got a daughter older then 15, I'mma rape her
Take her on the living room floor, right there in front of you
Then ask you seriously, whatchu wanna do?"*

Future - "Collection"

*"Won't get a lie from me, ain't no confessions
Before I tell a lie, won't tell you nothin'
Any time I got you, girl you my possession
Even if I hit you once, you part of my collection"*









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