

Confronting Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Minors in the United States

Report Release
September 25, 2013

What are Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Minors?

A range of crimes of a sexual nature committed against children and adolescents, including:

- Trafficking a minor for the purpose of sexual exploitation
- Exploiting a minor through prostitution
- Exploiting a minor through survival sex

Overlooked, misunderstood, and unaddressed
forms of child abuse.

Overlooked

These crimes may be unreported or undiscovered.

Their victims may not be recognized.

Misunderstood

Although victims themselves, children and adolescents may be subject to arrest, detention, adjudication or conviction, commitment or incarceration, and having permanent records as offenders.

Unaddressed

There are too few services available to meet current needs.

Services that do exist are unevenly distributed geographically, lack adequate resources, and vary in their ability to provide specialized care to victims/survivors of these crimes.

Societal Risk Factors

- Lack of awareness of commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking
- Sexualization of children
- Lack of resources

Community Risk Factors

- Peer pressure
- Social norms
- Social isolation
- Gang involvement
- Underresourced schools, neighborhoods, and communities

Relationship Risk Factors

- Family conflict, disruption, or dysfunction

Individual Risk Factors

- History of child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment
- Homeless, runaway, or “thrown-away”
- LGBT
- History of being systems-involved (e.g., juvenile justice, criminal justice, foster care)
- Stigma & discrimination

Severity of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Minors

- Victims and survivors face immediate and long-term consequences
- Exploiters and traffickers contribute to and benefit financially from the exploitation and abuse of minors
- People who purchase or trade for sex with underage individuals fuel demand
- Those who look the other way enable and perpetuate these crimes

Statement of Task:

What We Were Asked to Examine

- Scope and severity
- Causes and consequences
- Experiences among populations served by child welfare and juvenile justice systems
- Evidence associated with prevention and intervention efforts
- Lessons learned through advocacy efforts
- Adequacy of current state and federal laws

Statement of Task:

What We Were Asked to Recommend

- Policies and practices for human services, health care agencies, juvenile justice agencies, law enforcement, and the judiciary
- New legislative approaches
- Research agenda

Committee on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Minors in the United States

- **Ellen Wright Clayton**, (*Co-Chair*), Vanderbilt University
- **Richard D. Krugman**, (*Co-Chair*), University of Colorado School of Medicine
- **Tonya Chaffee**, University of California San Francisco
- **Angela Diaz**, Mount Sinai School of Medicine
- **Abigail English**, Center for Adolescent Health and the Law
- **Barbara Guthrie**, Yale University School of Nursing
- **Sharon F. Lambert**, George Washington University
- **Mark Latonero**, University of Southern California
- **Natalie McClain**, Connell School of Nursing, Boston College
- **Callie Marie Rennison**, University of Colorado Denver
- **John A. Rich**, Drexel University School of Public Health
- **Jonathan Todres**, Georgia State University College of Law
- **Patti Toth**, Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission

Committee Process and Timeline

- September 2011 – Project Begins
 - 6 Committee Meetings
 - 2 Public Workshops
 - 4 Regional Site Visits
 - Boston, MA
 - San Francisco, CA
 - Chicago, IL
 - New York, NY
- September 2013 – Report Release

Organization of the Report

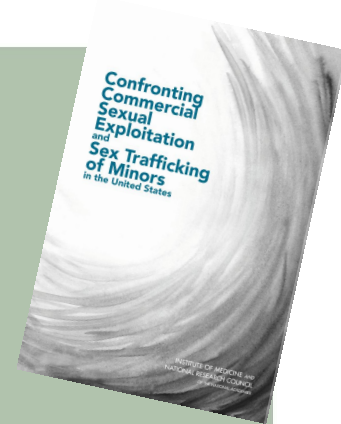
Part I – Understanding Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking of Minors in the United States

- *Nature and extent*
- *Risk factors and consequences*
- *Laws*

Part II – Current and Emerging Strategies

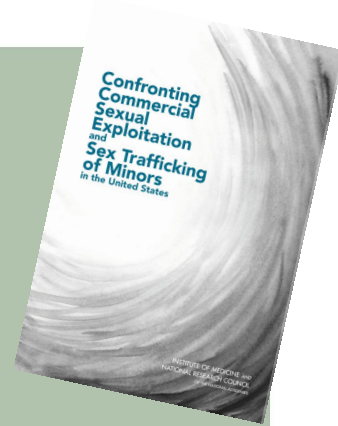
- *Legal system*
- *Health and health care*
- *Victim and support services*
- *Education sector*
- *Commercial sector*

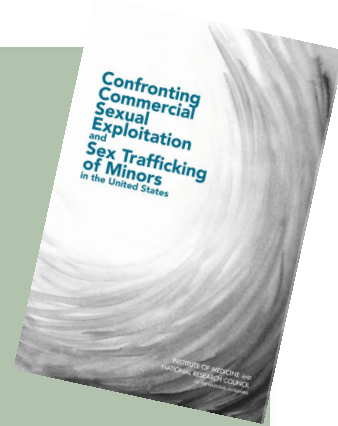
Part III – Overall conclusions and recommendations



Guiding Principles

- Commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of minors should be understood as **acts of abuse and violence**.
- Minors **should not be considered criminals**.
- Identification and any intervention should **do no further harm**.





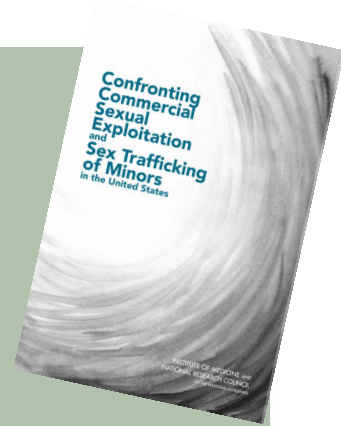
Overall Conclusions

- Commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of minors in the United States are serious problems with **immediate and long-term adverse consequences**.
- Efforts to **prevent** these problems are essential but largely absent.
- Efforts to **identify and respond** to these crimes are emerging, but largely undersupported, insufficient, uncoordinated, and unevaluated.

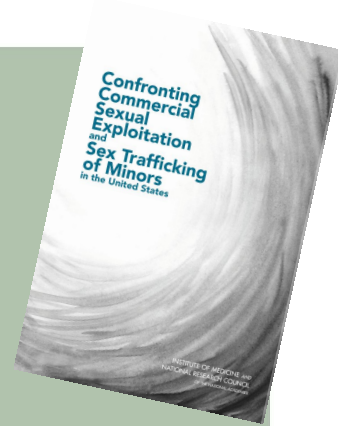
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Overall Conclusions (cont.)

- Efforts to prevent, identify, and respond require **collaborative approaches** that build upon the core capabilities of people and entities from a range of sectors.
- Efforts need to **confront demand** and the individuals who commit and benefit from these crimes.



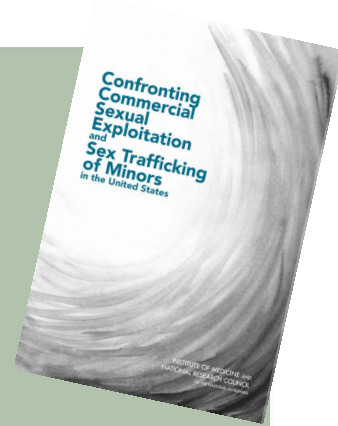
Recommendations



The committee makes recommendations in 5 key areas:

1. Increase awareness and understanding
2. Strengthen the law's response
3. Strengthen research on prevention and intervention
4. Support collaboration
5. Support information sharing

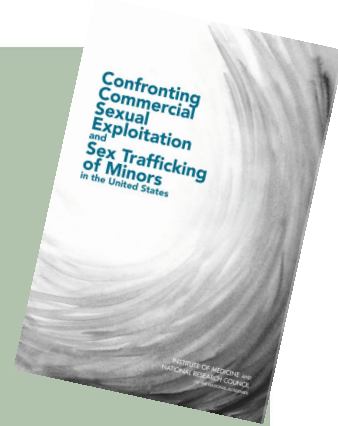
Increase Awareness and Understanding



Develop, implement, and evaluate:

- Training for professionals and other individuals who routinely interact with children and adolescents,
- Public awareness campaigns, and
- Specific strategies for children and adolescents.

Strengthen the Law's Response



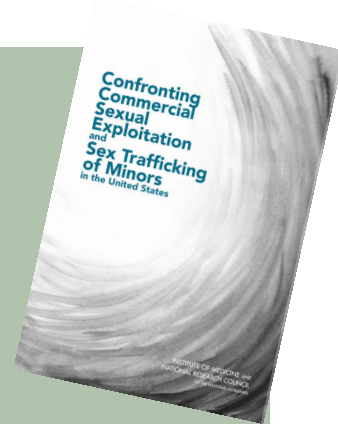
Develop laws and policies that **redirect** young victims and survivors of commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking from arrest and prosecution to systems, agencies, and services that are equipped to meet their needs.

Such laws should apply to all children and adolescents under age 18.

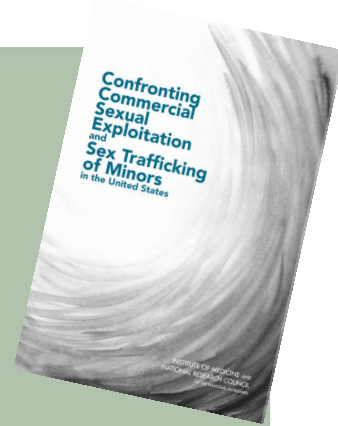
Strengthen the Law's Response

Review, strengthen, and implement laws that hold exploiters, traffickers, and solicitors **accountable** for their role in commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of minors.

These laws should include a particular emphasis on deterring demand.



Strengthen Research on Prevention and Intervention

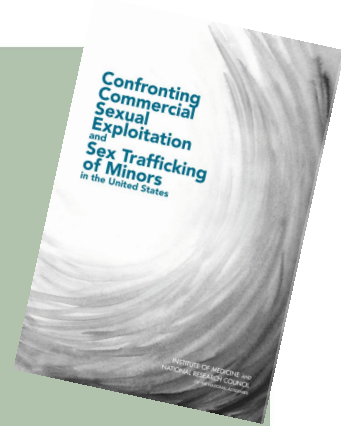


Implement a national research agenda focused on:

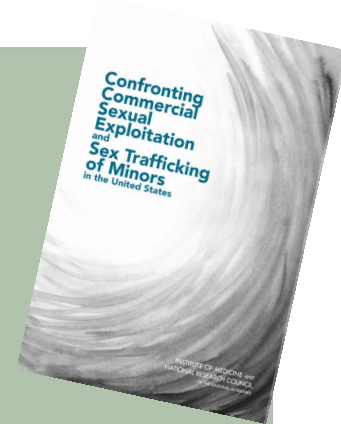
- Advancing knowledge and understanding,
- Developing effective interventions, and
- Evaluating the effectiveness of prevention and intervention laws, policies, and programs.

Support Collaboration

The Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention should develop **guidelines** on and provide **technical assistance** to support multisector collaboration and information sharing.



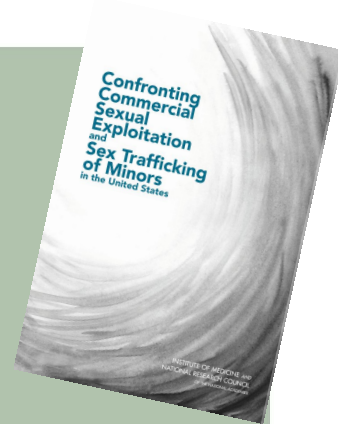
Support Information Sharing



The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention should create and maintain a digital information-sharing platform to deliver **reliable, real-time information** on how to prevent, identify, and respond to commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of minors in the United States.

Strategies for Implementation

The report provides guidance on key implementation strategies for the committee's recommendations by an array of individuals and entities.



www.iom.edu/sextraffickingminorsvideo

Final Thoughts

No one sector, discipline, or area of practice can fully understand or respond effectively to the complex problems surrounding commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of minors.

It will require:

- Victim and support service providers
- Health and mental health care providers
- Legislators
- Law enforcement personnel
- Prosecutors
- Public defenders
- Educators
- Commercial sector

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