

## Sex Trafficking & Gangs in San Diego Correlative Research Findings

“In 2011, San Diego County created the multi-agency San Diego County Regional Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Advisory Council with the objective to reduce human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children in San Diego County and the Mexico border region through prevention, prosecution, protection and partnerships. As co-chairs of the Research and Data Sub-Committee of this advisory council, Drs. Carpenter and Gates were asked to pursue a research agenda that would help develop robust measures of the scope of human trafficking in San Diego County. Of particular interest to the County Advisory Council was empirical evidence of the suspected relationship between gangs and human trafficking. (Gates & Carpenter, 2015)”

**This research discovered the following pertaining to San Diego:**

- The estimated size of the illicit sex economy in San Diego County in 2013 is ***\$810 million dollars***.
- San Diego is ranked by the FBI as one of the ***nation's 13 highest areas*** of commercial sexual exploitation of children
- There are ***110 gangs in San Diego County*** from a wide variety of neighborhoods and racial/ethnic backgrounds that have members that are engaged in profiting from sex trafficking in San Diego
- The three most commonly used types of coercion were **Economic Coercion (74%)**, **Psychological Coercion (57%)**, defined as social and emotional isolation, induced emotional exhaustion, and degradation, including humiliation, denial of the victim's power, and name-calling and **Chemical Coercion (42%)**, i.e. bringing about altered states of consciousness either by providing drugs, or forcing drugs.
- Commercial sexual activity has moved **off the streets and into hotels, casinos and residential brothels**. We mined law enforcement data for location of prostitution, pimping and pandering arrests to identify locations

where commercial sexual activity is most common. In 2013 for example, the majority of arrests took place in just 13 locations, 10 of which were hotels.

- Sex-trafficking victims in the social service system were **primarily born in the United States** (79.3%). The next most significant country of birth is Mexico (11.4%) with less than 10% of victims born in one of the following countries: Cameroon, China, Colombia, Germany, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Korea, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Russia, and Taiwan.
- The average age of entry is into sex trafficking in San Diego County is estimated to be 16 years of age.
- No community in San Diego is untouched by CSE, however, the majority of trafficked individuals live in 10 zip codes. Each of these zip codes identifies a particular neighborhood or area of the city that is home to ***one or more street gangs***. To give just three examples, 92113 (Logan Heights) has seven street gangs; 92114 (Southeast San Diego) has six gangs; and 92102 (Golden Hill; Market Street) is home to four gangs with multiple cliques.
- There is a ***strong correlation between victimization, homelessness and foster care***. Victims who have gone through foster care are 2.63 times more likely to be homeless than those who have not gone through foster care.
- ***Twenty high schools*** participated in this study and confirmed that recruitment was happening with their students; 90% (18 schools) reported documented cases of sex trafficking victimization.

The facts represented on this sheet can be found by reading the Executive Summary found at [www.AbolishHumanTrafficking.com](http://www.AbolishHumanTrafficking.com)

## References

Gates, J., & Carpenter, A. (2015). *The Nature and Extent of Gang Involvement in Sex Trafficking - Executive Summary*. San Diego, CA: United States Department of Justice.