

Background

For the past year the Human Relations Commission has been actively collaborating with community groups and agencies on the subject of human trafficking.

On their website they have posted this information:

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery where people profit from the control and exploitation of others.

As defined under U.S. federal law, victims of human trafficking include:

- *Children involved in the sex trade*
- *Adults age 18 or over who are coerced or deceived into commercial sex acts*
- *Anyone forced into different forms of "labor or services"*

According to the [California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General](#) human trafficking is the world's fastest growing criminal enterprise and is an estimated \$32 billion-a-year global industry.

After drug trafficking, human trafficking is the world's second most profitable criminal enterprise, a status it shares with illegal arms trafficking.

California – a populous border state with a significant immigrant population and the world's ninth largest economy – is one of the nation's top four destination states for trafficking human beings.

During the months of meetings called by the Commission Senate Bill 1193 was passed. This bill Senate Bill 1193, enacted April 1, 2013 added Section 52.6 to the Civil Code required specified businesses and other establishments to post a notice informing the public and victims of human trafficking of telephone hotline numbers to seek help or report unlawful activity (<http://www.sandiego.gov/human-relations/pdf/humantrafficking/sb1193.pdf>). Through the Commission's work a locally designed poster (see attached) has been distributed city-wide with the help of agencies and community advocacy organizations.

The Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention supported the HRC by attending meetings and distribution of the flyers. Gang involvement in human trafficking is of specific interest to the Gang Commission, specifically prostitution, which is a fast growing avenue for gangs to generate income.

The City of San Diego is home to the largest proportion of gang members and active gangs in the San Diego County Region. At least 48% of the violent crimes committed in the city are committed by gang members.¹ According to the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) there are more than 4,100 documented gang members (100 documented juvenile gang members) and over 91 gang sets in the City.

¹ <http://www.businessinsider.com/13-american-gangs-keeping-the-fbi-up-at-night-2012-8?op=1>

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Prosecutions of gangster pimps have skyrocketed over the last four years. San Diego County prosecutors [quadrupled the number of cases](#) they filed between 2009 and last year. On the federal side, prosecutions jumped from two to 22 in the same period. And the feds are using the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act to prosecute cases because the penalties are stiffer. Just this year there was a large arrest and indictment of African American gang members involved in sex trafficking residing partially in the target area:

Two dozen alleged North Park gang members and their associates were charged in an indictment unsealed as members of a racketeering conspiracy linked to the trafficking of women and girls as young as 15, a murder nearly 20 years ago and robbery and drug offenses. U.S. Attorney Laura Duffy said a combination of two gangs, dubbed "BMS" by law enforcement, earned money by trafficking 60 girls and women from ages 15 to 25 for prostitution in 46 cities in 23 states, including Alaska and Hawaii.

"Over the last several years, the defendants in this enterprise had really expanded enterprise activities, like a profit-driven, fast-expanding corporation," Duffy said. "The kind of sex trafficking described in the indictment is nothing less than modern-day slavery. Unfortunately, this is something we're beginning to see more and more with gangs, moving away from some of the traditional gang behavior into this type of business."²

Like many in the gang lifestyles, pimps have serious emotional issues. In a DePaul University Law Center research study it was stated:

The overwhelming majority of ex-pimps [in the study] suffered physical abuse and sexual assault while growing up and watched their mother being physically assaulted by their fathers, stepfathers or boyfriends. One pimp's mother was killed by his alcoholic father while the child was hiding behind the couch. After that time he was placed in foster care, where he was sexually abused at age seven by the foster father—abuse which continued until he ran away at age 15.³

This trauma needs to be addressed. There is no doubt about the criminality of pimping but there also needs to be rehabilitation of pimps. As stated by this research:

*Prostituted women **are unrecognized victims of intimate partner violence by pimps and customers** (Stark and Hodgson, 2003). Pimps and customers use methods of coercion and control like those of other batterers: minimization and denial of physical violence, economic exploitation, social isolation, verbal abuse, threats and intimidation, physical violence, sexual assault, and captivity (Giobbe, 1993, 1991; Giobbe et al., 1990).*

A process and procedure that educates and changes this behavior needs to be advocated for. Research points out:

Whenever, there is violence and abuse, the violent one must FIRST get treatment for his or her problem of not controlling the violence/abuse. The one who is physically violent or emotionally

² <http://www.fbi.gov/sandiego/press-releases/2014/north-park-gang-members-indicted-in-racketeering-conspiracy>

³ [Depaul University's College of Law: From Victims to Victimizers:](http://www.law.depaul.edu/centers_institutes/family_law/research_reports.asp)
http://www.law.depaul.edu/centers_institutes/family_law/research_reports.asp

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abusive needs to seek help for his or her individual problem of lack of control. Group treatment by trained violence professionals is known to be the most effective type of therapy.⁴

County-wide efforts to impact human trafficking

The San Diego County Regional Human Trafficking And commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Advisory Council held a county-wide human trafficking summit “Combating Human Trafficking in San Diego County – Best Practices for Today and Tomorrow”. This summit brought together an array of advocacy, agencies and law enforcement groups to work together on recommendations on how to impact human trafficking in the county.

In a report to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors in October 2014, the Council shared these recommendations for several areas: Law Enforcement, Prosecution, Victim Services, Child Welfare Services, Education, Community and Research and Data. (See attached).

Conclusion

Ultimately the only solution to human trafficking is eliminating the demand side of the human trafficking equation. Until then working collaboratively, the Human Relations Commission and the Gang Commission have an opportunity to impact the understanding of human trafficking. Collaboratively the two commissions could:

1. Educate City Staff the signs of youth and adults being victimized Park and Recreation and the Library and Patrol Officers
2. Advocate for special services for victims, victimizers (both johns and pimps)
3. Support and participate in county wide efforts to address the effort
4. Share information with agencies to expand the understanding of the issue

⁴ <http://www.realhope.com/AbusiveRelationships.php>