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Identifying and Mitigating Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking in an Urban Community

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Abstract

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Anne Ellen Gresham

MPA, California State University, Hayward, 2006

BS, University of Phoenix, 2003

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Human trafficking, domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST), and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) are complex and multifaceted occurrences in the United States. As the numbers of youth ensnared in sexually exploitive situations increase, organizations and communities are called upon to address the ramifications of this abuse; little research was located, however, that examined collaborative networks and partnerships that address victim identification and mitigation of DMST and CSEC. The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to determine whether strategic partnerships existed within the community under investigation. The theoretical framework was environmental theory, as first described by Florence Nightingale; the conceptual framework was centered on collaborative networks. Research questions focused on victim identification and organizational strategies for collaboration and mitigation of sex trafficking. The research population was composed of 8 individuals working in organizations in a metropolitan area on the West Coast that served victims of DMST and CSEC. Data obtained from interviews were coded, compared, and analyzed for major and emergent themes. Findings indicated that, in the effort to identify victims, these 8 individuals needed to consider all children involved in prostitution as victims and not criminals. Further, their efforts toward mitigation needed to center on widespread education across the broader social spectrum of the issues with DMST and CSEC. These workers identified strategies identified to address DMST and CSEC included the "5 Ps": prevention, protection, prosecution, partnership, and policy. These findings may inform organizations and policy makers about how to make informed decisions about the needs and challenges of addressing sexually exploited youth.

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Dedication

To my daughter, Anna Alvina, who has always believed in me and my convictions of pursuing social justice and social change.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Background

Human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation are not isolated incidences of abuse, but rather an underground criminal activity that is considered one of the leading criminal activities of the 21st century (Miko, 2006). According to the International Labour Organization (IOL, 2010, para. 1), approximately 200 million children worldwide are enslaved in child labor. Of the 200 million enslaved, an estimated 115 million are subjected to the worst form of child labor—sexual exploitation (IOL, para. 1). Although there is much debate in the literature about the exact numbers of children being trafficked for sexual purposes (Farrell & Fahy, 2009; Finklea, Fernandes-Alcantara, & Siskin, 2011; Kotrla, 2010; Logan, Walker, & Hunt, 2009; Weitzer, 2007; Williamson & Prior, 2009), the fact remains that sexual exploitation of minor children for financial gain is an egregious, preventable offense against youth (Rafferty, 2008). Human trafficking is considered to be a low-risk, high-profit business venture driven by sexual demand (Logan et al., 2009). Trafficking of women ranks third in criminal earnings, just behind drugs and weapons (Hughes, Chon, & Ellerman, 2007). In 2006, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released an Intelligence Report stating that human trafficking generated profits of approximately $9 billion per year (para. 1). Other estimates of the profits from trafficking and exploitation range from $14 million to $20 billion per year (Rand, 2009). Although the exact numbers of children being exploited are not confirmed, the amount of revenue generated by human trafficking and sexual exploitation reveals the potential this unscrupulous activity has to affect numerous lives.

Chapter 1 is organized into several main categories. First is a brief review of the literature that builds on the problem of *domestic minor sex trafficking* (DMST) and *commercial sexual exploitation of children* (CSEC). (For additional acronyms used throughout this research, see Appendix A.) Second, in the problem statement, I identify gaps in the literature and discuss why this research was necessary. Third, a detailed description of the purpose of the study is outlined. Fourth, the research questions are presented. Fifth, the conceptual framework of collaborative networks and the theoretical foundation of environmental theory are discussed. Sixth, the nature of the study is identified. Seventh, definitions of terms used throughout the work are detailed. Assumptions are presented in the eighth section. The ninth section contains information that is relevant to the scope of the work and delimitations. Limitations of the study are discussed in the 10th section. The significance of the study is outlined in the 11th section, and a summary is presented in the 12th section.

The occurrence of human trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children is not new; it has its roots far back in history (Bales, 2004). Bales (2004) explored contemporary slavery in terms of the relationship between the slaves and the slaveholders. The common elements between the enslaved and those in control remain the same today as they were in the 1800s. The relationship between the two is rooted in control of the person or persons by use of actual or potential acts of violence. Bales's (2004) theory of modern or contemporary slavery is based on the impact of globalization and economic changes around the globe. As economic hardships beset a country or region, there is an appreciable increase in the numbers of vulnerable people. The cycle of

enslavement has an opportunity to manifest and create disproportionate numbers of persons entrapped, with few chances for economic prosperity.

No area of the globe is immune from the reaches of human trafficking and sexual exploitation (U.S. Department of State, 2011, para. 2). The 2012 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report (U.S. Department of State, 2011) revealed that the United States is a source, transit, and destination country (U.S. Department of State, 2011, Country Narratives: United States of America). A *source country* is one in which victims of trafficking originate. A *transit country* is one where victims are exchanged and continue on to other locations or countries. A *destination country* is one to which victims are transported and continue in as trafficked individuals. As a source, transit, and destination country, the United States is in a strategic position to influence responses to human trafficking. However, the problem of human trafficking is exacerbated by the clandestine, insidious nature of the crime, and the hidden faces of the victims make combatting the crime even harder (Logan et al., 2009; Williamson & Prior, 2009). Due to the illicit nature of sex trafficking, the underground world of crime and abuse goes largely unnoticed in communities (Logan et al., 2009). As underground criminal activities infiltrate communities, the less impervious society becomes to the devastation left in the wake of various forms of human slavery.

Throughout the latter part of the 20th century and the first two decades of the 21st century, human trafficking in all its forms has been analyzed through various lenses in an attempt to address trafficking concerns. These lenses include a focus on national security (Farrell & Fahy, 2009), criminal justice (Smith & Vardaman, 2010-2011), human rights

(Chuang, 2006; Dillon, 2008; Gallagher, 2008; Khoo, 2010), feminism (Farley, 2006; Nichols, 2011), abolitionist legislation (Bales, 2004; Bravo, 2012; Yen, 2008), a victim-centered approach (Moossy, 2008), and, most recently, child rights (Todres, 2010). Some of the unintended consequences of the multiple lens constructs are the delivery of a bifurcated message about human trafficking and *commercial sexual exploitation* (CSE). The various lenses used to understand human trafficking are discussed further in Chapter 2.

DMST in the United States was first recognized as a serious problem between 2006 and 2007 (Clawson & Goldblatt, 2007). According to Albanese (2007), confirmed cases of *CSEC* are increasing on the domestic front in the United States Smith, Vardaman, and Snow (2009) released a study in which they found DMST to be the single most underreported, underidentified, and severe form of sexual exploitation. DMST and CSEC are often used interchangeably; however, there are important distinctions between the two terms. The primary distinguishing factor is that DMST includes all forms of CSEC and requires a third party. The third party profits from the sexual exploitation of the child. Conversely, CSEC involves sexual activities involving children in exchange for something of value. An example of CSEC is survival sex; for instance, if a homeless child exchanges sex for a place to stay or something to eat, an act of sexual exploitation has occurred, yet no third party benefited from the exploitation. CSEC has taken on various forms, including "prostitution, child pornography, trafficking, and sex tourism" (Estes & Weiner, 2001, p. 15). For the purposes of this research, DMST and CSEC will be used simultaneously to identify the developing problem of the various forms of child

abuse. There is a growing interest from service organizations, law enforcement, and policy makers in the proliferation of DMST and CSEC. Each sector seeks validated information regarding specifics related to its area of expertise.

Qualitative and quantitative studies on sex trafficking of minors are limited. Each available study builds upon the topic and reveals the complexities of human trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation (CSE), CSEC, and/or DMST. Estes and Weiner (2001) were the first to study the social problem of CSEC in North America; the study included areas in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Using both qualitative and quantitative research strategies, Estes and Weiner developed a multisampling, multimethod, and multilevel interview approach that included structured interviews with child victims, traffickers, and customers of child sex; structured interviews and surveys with law enforcement and human service providers were also conducted. Data were collected and interpreted at both individual and aggregate levels. Multiple factors contributing to and associated with CSEC were identified by Estes and Weiner and included the identification of risk factors for exploited children, people who exploit children for sexual purposes and/or financial gain, responses from law enforcement agencies, and participation efforts by both government and private human service organizations. Estes and Weiner also identified numerous areas for building partnerships and networks to enhance and strengthen the response to complex CSEC issues. Estes and Weiner's study contained several recommendations for moving forward. One recommendation that is germane to this research is that of reducing CSEC by promoting effective public/private partnerships.

An example of the need for effective partnerships offered by Estes and Weiner (2001) addressed advocacy, awareness, legislation, and public policy efforts. Whereas nongovernmental organizations focus on how CSEC is "produced," governmental organizations focus their attention on how CSEC is "detected" (Estes & Weiner, 2001, p. 166). The risk factors for children and recommendations for building a coordinated response to CSEC are discussed further in Chapter 2.

In a comparative study of the demand side of sex trafficking and sex tourism, the degree of exploitation for both adult and child victims was assessed in four countries: Jamaica, Japan, the Netherlands, and the United States (Shared Hope International, n.d.). The comparative study determined that there were similarities between countries and unique attributes of each geographical area. The marketplace in the United States, as identified in the study, consisted of escort services, massage parlors, and brothels, with Internet and print media sources for connecting to exploited women and children (Shared Hope International, n.d.).

Based on a comparative study by Shared Hope International (n.d.), two of the six recommendations for the United States that are relevant to this research and metropolitan area are as follows. First, align state laws currently on the books to, at minimum, meet federal antitrafficking statutes. Second, build the capacity of organizations to identify victims of minor sex trafficking. Identifying victims of minor sex trafficking is essential to reducing the incidence of minor abductions into a life of sex slavery and prostitution. In Chapter 2, I discuss in detail issues and challenges identified in the literature in relation to victim identification and current laws affecting mitigation efforts.

A more recent study conducted by Vardaman and Franker (2009) focused on DMST in Florida. The primary framework involved addressing areas of prevention, prosecution, and protection in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties, Florida. This research used qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection. Quantitative information in the form of comprehensive surveys was gathered over a 7-month period from organizations and agencies that interact with victims of DMST. Qualitative interviews were also conducted during this same period, and best practices were identified within the scope of the research. Researchers found that service providers may fail to recognize DMST victims, thus treating victims as delinquents. Further examination of the findings will be covered in Chapter 2. Knowledge gaps and challenges of working with sexually exploited minors were identified in this research as needing further study. In this research, I attempted to address issues identified by Vardaman and Franker.

In a similar study, Williamson et al. (2010) examined the scope of human trafficking in Ohio, in terms of both actual cases and at risk individuals. The study was designed to incorporate existing studies of human trafficking, government and nongovernment reports, newspaper articles, and interviews with professionals directly involved in the field of human trafficking. Although the study by Williamson et al. included all forms of human trafficking—labor and sex—there was considerable focus on DMST and at-risk youth. Using a modified statistical inference model initially created by Estes and Weiner (2001), Williamson et al. constructed estimates of domestic young people who are at risk of becoming ensnared in the world of trafficking. Assumptions were made, and therefore estimates of actual numbers of youth at risk may be faulty.

Findings from this research showed that first responder providers in criminal justice, social services, and healthcare had a 66.7% knowledge base of human trafficking. Recommendations from the study included education of front line personnel in many disciplines. Additionally, coordinating the efforts of all stakeholders within the realm of human trafficking was paramount. Further examination of the findings for coordinating stakeholder efforts will be reviewed in Chapter 2. Knowledge of the characteristics of DMST that victims demonstrate is crucial to curtailing the continued abuses that trafficked children face on a regular basis. I have attempted to narrow the current knowledge gap in terms of identifying victims of DMST and CSE.

All of the studies and reports reviewed by Williamson et al. (2010) determined the need for better coordination of services and collaboration among organizations. Reduction strategies that address collaboration among the judicial system, policy makers, law enforcement, healthcare professionals, child advocacy groups, and nongovernmental organizations are necessary to identify victims and mitigate CSEC in communities. Community awareness campaigns and educational opportunities directed at the general public, potential victims, and sexual offenders—including traffickers, pimps, or johns and other individuals who come into contact with trafficked persons—will be necessary to combat CSEC in the 21st century. Through this research, I attempted to ascertain what needs to happen to strengthen collaboration and partnerships in order to address DMST and CSEC in the community.

Since 2000, the United States has attempted to mitigate human trafficking in its various forms of manual labor and sexual exploitation. The Trafficking Victims

Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) was the first United Nations protocol to address the issue of human trafficking. The underlying intent of the protocol was to prevent human trafficking, prosecute perpetrators, and protect victims worldwide. Countries that ranked low in terms of efforts to reduce the incidence of human trafficking were penalized with sanctions. Although the TVPA was instituted in 2000, it has only been since 2010 that the United States has ranked itself as part of the global community addressing human trafficking (U. S. Department of State, 2010,). Further exploration of the TVPA and reauthorizations is presented in Chapter 2, along with California state laws that are an offshoot of the TVPA of 2000. The role that the U.S. government plays in discourse and mitigation efforts concerning human trafficking is examined.

There has been much dispute about the definition of trafficking and whether human smuggling is, in fact, a form of trafficking (Farrell & Fahy, 2009; Musto, 2009). The language used to address issues of human trafficking and prostitution contributes to confusion regarding treatment and services for child victims. *DMST* is not a term used by a wide range of the population. In fact, DMST victims are routinely misidentified as sexually abused children, juvenile prostitutes, or sexually exploited minors (Reid, 2008). This mislabeling or misidentification of DMST victims minimizes their experience and can lead to further victimization by the very agencies that are charged with victim protection. The language used to identify DMST and victim circumstances is reviewed further in Chapter 2 and is relevant to recognizing barriers to victim identification.

In 2007, the California Alliance to Combat Trafficking and Slavery Task Force (CA ACTS) released a federally mandated report on the scope of human trafficking in the

state. The Task Force met with individuals from various sectors involved in prevention, prosecution, and protection of people involved in the human trafficking trade. Representatives on the task force included state, federal, and local law enforcement agencies, as well as nongovernmental agencies that provided services to victims, advocacy groups, survivors, and prosecutors. CA ACTS reported that California was the top destination state in the country (Government Accountability Office, 2006, as cited in CA ACTS, 2007). Recommendations for enhancing complex responses from individual organizations, in addition to collaborative responses as a collective, were identified in the report. The findings and recommendations from the Task Force are discussed in Chapter 2.

This research was needed in order to understand more fully the barriers to victim identification and mitigation of abuses based on the experiences, knowledge, and perceptions of individuals who work on a daily basis to identify victims and to combat DMST and CSEC. Data gathered from various organizations and personnel were interpreted for emerging themes and patterns across many boundaries and disciplines. How organizations interact with other agencies while trying to reach a common goal or outcome was the focus of this research. No one organization can address the socially complex issue of DMST and CSEC. It is critical to understand how organizations function and communicate across boundaries. As human resources become scarce, funding streams become inadequate to support the efforts of a single organization, and duplicative efforts erode the fragile infrastructure and resources of communities, making the identification of new ways of addressing complex social issues paramount.

Problem Statement

The problem addressed in this research was a lack of strategies and best practices for solving the social problem of DMST and CSEC. Commercial sex trafficking is seen as a problem that only affects other countries when, in fact, the United States has people at risk for being trafficked and abused (U. S. Department of State, 2011, para. 1). Logan, Walker, and Hunt (2009) identified a consensus and recommendation among numerous researchers to enhance collaboration and coordination between services. There is a dearth of literature documenting a lack of effective and efficient collaborative efforts and identifying best practices. This knowledge gap impedes front line personnel from streamlining efforts and using personnel to the fullest extent possible based on a proven tactic or best practice for addressing DMST and CSEC issues. Identifying and incorporating best practices into a working model may aid in the reduction of redundant or duplicative efforts. Coordination of the numerous aspects of sex trafficking such as prevention, prosecution, protection, partnerships, and policy efforts in a major metropolitan city on the West Coast was investigated. To understand the complex social issue of DMST and CSEC, I sought to determine what collaborative strategies were working well, what strategies were not working well, and what strategies could work better or should be shared with the broader community. This research focused on what local government, law enforcement, healthcare providers, and nonprofit organizations were doing or could do in partnership to identify and mitigate DMST and CSEC in a large metropolitan community. Strategies that were fragmented, disjointed, duplicative in

nature, or that added little to no value in the fight against DMST and CSEC were identified and are shared as a part of a framework for best practice.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to examine the phenomenon of collaborative networks and partnerships among agencies dealing with the social issue of DMST and CSEC in a major metropolitan area on the West Coast. This research determined if there were areas for developing or enhancing collaboration and partnerships among local government, law enforcement, and nonprofit organizations that serve this underrepresented population. Applying the research paradigm of qualitative inquiry, this research used a single case study approach as the basis of the research design. The theoretical framework for this research was environmental theory. The conceptual framework was based on collaborative networks, partnerships, and best practice. This research was designed to determine what collaborative measures existed in the metropolitan area under investigation, or whether partnerships and collaborative measures needed to be developed in order to aid in the identification of child victims and mitigation efforts of DMST and CSEC within the community.

Research Questions

The questions that were addressed are complex and focus on the identification of best practices and barriers in identifying minor victims of DMST, while identifying best practices and barriers that enhance or prevent mitigation of CSEC within the community. Additionally, questions regarding what needs to happen between collaborative networks and partnerships that are addressing the social issue of DMST and CSEC in order to

increase efficient and effective best practices were investigated. This research attempted to answer four fundamental research questions, which are discussed in detail in Chapter 3 (see also Appendix B).

1. What are the best practices and barriers to identifying child victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation in this community?
2. What are the best practices for and barriers to mitigating human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children in this community?
3. How can government facilitate changes in policies and laws that reduce human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children?
4. What would need to happen between collaborative networks and partnerships in order to be more effective and efficient in the discourse to identify victims, mitigate barriers, and follow best practice?

Theoretical Framework

Environmental theory was the theoretical basis for this research. Florence Nightingale first described environmental theory in 1860 when she explained key aspects of nursing as restoring one's health status based on environmental factors such as clean water, clean air, and overall general cleanliness (Kleffel, 1991). Including environmental theory into the context of DMST and CSEC creates a platform to think about this complex social problem as a preventable occurrence, one in which social disparities are identified as contributing factors in the cycle of abuse, and how society, in general, responds to the challenges presented. Framing DMST and CSEC within environmental

theory allowed a greater understanding of how political will translates into policy efforts to address the complex social issue under investigation.

Poverty, although a factor in the numbers of children being trafficked, contributes significantly less to the possibility of being trafficked than does family dysfunction, family sexual assaults, family or personal drug dependence, or school or social failures—all of which are environmental factors (Estes & Weiner, 2001). Once a child is "in the life," the probability of being exposed to continued violence and abuse increases (Shively et al., 2010). An additional environmental factor that may lead to DMST for youth is homelessness; 87% of individuals who have been prostituted were, at one time, homeless (Farley et al., 2004). Posttraumatic stress disorders, sexually transmitted diseases, and suicidal ideations contribute to the barrage of preventable environmental factors (Farley, 2004; Farley, Baral, Kiremire, & Sezgin, 1998; Molnar, Shade, Kral, Booth, & Waters, 1998). Addressing the aforementioned environmental factors—coupled with primary, secondary, and tertiary education on DMST and CSEC influences for all sectors of society—is paramount to effective prevention efforts that minimize a child's exposure to preventable abuse and trauma. Understanding environmental factors that lead to an increased potential for children being at risk may provide a foundation for policy development in terms of prevention and protection aspects and strategies against the growing phenomenon of DMST and CSEC.

Conceptual Framework: Collaborative Networks

Maxwell (2005) has described a *conceptual framework* as "the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that support and informs your

research" (p. 33). The model or conceptual framework for this research is a collaborative network. *Networking* differs from *networks* in that networking occurs when people make connections and communicate in informal ways, whereas networks link organizations and are more formalized yet operate independently (Keast, Mandell, Brown, & Woolcock, 2004). Collaborative networks identify processes of developing partnerships that play a role within the networks. This partnership was explored as a method of best practice to expand knowledge in order to reach identified goals and specified outcomes. A detailed analysis of how networks and partnerships are vital for addressing the issue of DMST and CSEC is provided in Chapter 2.

Weber and Khademian (2008) have suggested that networks have taken a more active role between public and private organizations as part of the overall strategy to address "wicked" social problems (p. 334). *Wicked social problems* challenging contemporary governments are issues that are highly complex, intractable, unstructured, crosscutting, and relentless (Keast et al., 2004; Weber & Khademian, 2008). Human trafficking, DMST, and CSEC fall into the category of wicked social problems in that the supply side of human trafficking is highly complex and intractable, and the network of criminal activity associated with human trafficking is relentless and highly adaptive to changes or threats to the overall system.

In general, networks and partnerships are composed of multiple organizations with varying interests, values, and mission statements. As a collective unit, collaborative networks and partnerships align their organizational goals and visions with dissimilar organizations in order to obtain an agreed-upon outcome. As such, the multidisciplinary

approach to addressing wicked social problems becomes a community effort, resulting in a stronger and more effective tactic when tackling community problems. The criminal worlds of DMST and CSEC have used the network and partnership approach in a rather forceful manner.

Therefore, for public and nonprofit organizations to meet the growing needs for service with limited budgetary access, partnerships and collaborative networks offer an avenue for success (Norris-Tirrell & Clay, 2010). When common goals and outcomes are identified, the sharing of information and resources can be seamless, and desired goals can be realized (Norris-Tirrell & Clay, 2010). I focused on a multidisciplinary approach to collaboration and partnerships on the community side of DMST and CSEC.

Over the past two decades, attention to collaborative networks has grown—yet the lines between theory and practice are less well identified (Norris-Tirrell & Clay, 2010). Mandell and Keast (2007) described the importance of developing collaborative networks as a horizontal approach to addressing and solving wicked social problems. Mandell and Keast also identified three variations on the term *network*: cooperative, coordinative, and collaborative. To effectively assess the outcomes and performance measures of the network, Mandell and Keast classified each type of network with a variance in the communication structure. Whereas *cooperative networks* focus on the "exchange of information or expertise" and *coordinative networks* center on maintaining individual or organizational autonomy, *collaborative networks* link together and devise new ways to provide required services based on relationship building and innovation (Mandell & Keast, 2007). Only through innovation and building trust will organizations be successful

in accomplishing stated goals and objectives. The importance of advancing the ideal of partnerships cannot be understated.

Moreover, a 2007 report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) identified recommendations key to investigations and prosecutions of trafficking crimes. These included collaboration and strategic frameworks across multidisciplinary boundaries in order to combat trafficking and aid in the identification of victims. Using proactive approaches to identify victims, increase intelligence on trafficking activities, and expand outreach programs across disciplines was identified in the GAO report as critical to fighting trafficking crimes. To enhance and sustain efforts against trafficking, a strategic framework addressing interagency collaboration was acknowledged as a key development goal for federal agencies (GAO Report, 2007). Using collaborative networks and partnerships to combat the growing social problem of DMST and CSEC is germane to this research as the foundational conceptual framework and is discussed further in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

This research used a single case study strategy in a qualitative research design (Merriam, 2009). Face-to-face interviews with practitioners involved in DMST and CSEC were conducted to determine collaborative and noncollaborative experiences within their own organizations as well as with other organizations they had interfaced with in combating DMST and CSEC. Trochim and Donnelly (2007) offered that qualitative methodologies provide a rich, robust, and multilayered account of the experiences of research participants. An understanding of the experiences of practitioners

in the field can help provide a link to developing a better understanding and coordinated responses to DMST and CSEC. Trochim and Donnelly suggested that understanding the experience from an individual's perspective, in addition to other stories from individuals having similar experiences from different vantage points, contributes breadth to social research that supports policy development and decision making. From the experiences, knowledge, and perceptions of numerous individuals dealing with the social issues of DMST and CSEC, a contextual framework was constructed to address gaps identified in the current literature.

In conjunction with oral interviews, sources of evidence included organizational records and written documents addressing best practices. Together, these resources augmented and corroborated information obtained during the interview process (Yin, 2009). By combining the documented data into the case study, a chain of evidence was maintained, adding to the overall validity and reliability of the study (Yin, 2009).

Merriam (2009) stated that case study research could include multisite and comparative designs. This research focused on a single case study design. Case studies use a bounded system in which to focus. Stake (1995) described a *bounded system* as a single entity, unit, or phenomenon surrounded by boundaries. Distinguishing features of case study research are threefold, in that (a) there is a focus on a particular situation or phenomenon, (b) the final results of the research contain a rich and robust account of what has been investigated, and (c) the study expands the knowledge base for the reader (Merriam, 2009). For this research, DMST and CSEC were the main issue, thus furnishing the intrinsically bounded system.

Many of the same strategies used in the method of phenomenological analysis were incorporated into this research. Additional exploration of the single case study research method of discovery is discussed in detail in Chapter 3. As an adjunct to the technique of single case study research, I incorporated a software program specifically designed to enhance the experience through the discovery of meaning within the experience.

Data collected from personal interviews were recorded digitally and transcribed verbatim. Analysis of the interviews was conducted using NVivo software to decipher emerging themes and categories of similarity among participants. Additional descriptions of collection and analysis are provided in Chapter 3.

Definitions of Terms

Child and/or minor: Any person under 18 years of age.

Coercion: Threat of serious harm to, or physical restraint against, any person; 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, a person; or the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process (TVPA 2000, Sec. 103 (2) (a) (b) (c)).

Collaboration: Mutually beneficial and joint decision-making process of two or more organizations that is intended to produce more public value or best practice than could be produced when the organizations act alone (Government Accountability Office, 2005; Norris-Tirrell & Clay, 2011).

Commercial sex act: Any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to, or received by, any person (TVPA 2000; 22 USC 7102(3)).

Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC): Includes the production and sale of child pornography, juvenile prostitution, and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes (Mitchell, Jones, Finkelhor, & Wolak, 2011).

Destination country: A country to which victims of trafficking are transported and in which they continue as trafficked individuals (U.S. Department of State: Trafficking In Persons Report, 2012).

Domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST): Any act in which a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident (LPR) under the age of 18 is sexually exploited for financial gain (Clawson & Goldblatt, 2008).

Human smuggling: Related to trafficking but differs in that consent was originally given by the person being smuggled. Smuggling turns to trafficking when the use of force or coercion is introduced (National Institute of Justice, 2012).

International sex trafficking victim: Any person who is trafficked from one country to another for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

John, customer, or client: Any individual who purchases a male or female minor for sexual purposes.

Juvenile prostitution: Considered to be a form of child sex trafficking.

Modern day slavery: Refers to a situation in which individuals are enslaved through extreme force and violence for the purpose of debt bondage, sweatshop labor, and/or forced prostitution (Bales, 2004).

Partnership: A relationship between two or more parties with an implied or expressed commitment to work together to deliver a public good or service (Kamensky, Berlin, & Abramson, 2004).

Pimp: A person who solicits clients or johns for a prostitute.

Prostitution: Trading sex for money, items, or a place to stay (Williamson & Prior, 2009).

Severe forms of trafficking in persons: This term is used when force, fraud, or coercion is used to elicit a commercial sex act from an individual who is under the age of 18 (TVPA 2000, Sec. 103 (8)(A)).

Sex trafficking: Recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act (TVPA 2000, Sec. 103 (9)).

Source country: A country in which victims of trafficking originate (U.S. Department of State, 2012).

Survival sex: Selling of sex to meet subsistence needs such as food, shelter, drugs, or money (Greene, Ennett, & Ringwalt, 1999).

Traffickers: Pimps with the sole purpose of sexually controlling and exploiting others for money (Williamson & Prior, 2009).

Trafficking in persons: Synonymous with *human trafficking*. The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a child for the purposes of exploitation. (UN Protocol 2000, Article (3) c); also defined as the recruitment, abduction, transport, harboring, transfer, sale, or receipt of persons within national or across international borders (AB 22 California Trafficking Victims Protection Act 2005).

Transit country: A country where victims are exchanged and continue on to other locations or countries (U. S. Department of State, 2012).

Wicked social problems or wicked social issues: Complex social issues that are intractable, unstructured, crosscutting, and relentless (Mandel & Keast, 2007; Weber & Khademian, 2008).

Assumptions

Four assumptions were made with this research. First, it was assumed that all participants had experience—either directly or indirectly, depending on their work environment—with child victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Second, it was assumed that participants were currently working in the capacity of assisting young victims, whether in law enforcement, the judicial system, healthcare, local government, or a nongovernmental capacity. Third, it was assumed that all participants had a working knowledge of the barriers that prohibit identification of child victims and mitigation efforts of human trafficking and CSEC. Fourth, for the purposes of this research, it was assumed that all participants would acknowledge that there is value and potential for greater partnerships and collaborative networks for identifying child victims and for mitigating human trafficking and CSEC. The assumptions regarding the identified research participants included the following: (a) participants would answer the questions accurately and honestly, (b) recurrent themes would be evident across organizations, and (c) from this research, recommendations for strengthening partnerships and identification of best practices would emerge.

Scope of Study

The scope of this qualitative study involved interviewing individuals in 11 organizations in Oakland, California who worked directly with youth affected by human trafficking and CSE to determine the barriers that may exist in the identification of victims, as well as barriers to mitigating this crime against youth. In this research, I also attempted to determine best practice in how organizations collectively work within the framework of networks and partnerships to solve the complex issues of commercial sex trafficking of children. Nowell (2010) stated that working in isolation lends itself to ineffective and often counterproductive management of local community issues. The particular aspects of victim identification and mitigation associated with the complex problem of CSEC were chosen because they represent a set of interdependent, dynamic, and often politically charged realities for civil society.

Delimitations

The delimitations to this research included exploring the perceptions and working knowledge of the circumstances surrounding human trafficking and CSEC within the participants' own organizations and communities. The issues included the barriers to minor victim identification, mitigating all forms of CSEC, and the framework for working collaboratively across multiple organizations and organizational boundaries. The study was further delimited to a purposeful sampling of individuals currently working with organizations involved in the prevention, prosecution, or protection aspects of DMST and CSEC. Based on the findings of this research and the limited amount of

current research available, the potential for assisting other communities in the development of partnerships and best practices to address DMST and CSEC was viable.

Limitations

There were six limitations identified in this research. First, this research was limited to one metropolitan area on the West Coast of the United States. Second, this research only included local organizations that interface with child victims of human trafficking for the purpose of CSE. Third, due to the sensitive nature of this research, child victims were not interviewed for their perspective on the network system. The fourth limitation to this research was that the accounts offered by the participants were not quantified and therefore is not generalizable to the larger issue of human trafficking and CSEC. Fifth, it was assumed that there was some form of partnership and collaborative network in place within and between the organizations under review. Sixth, my bias as a healthcare professional and child advocate might have affected the data analysis. Maxwell (2005) argued that "critical subjectivity" is a necessary companion to qualitative research (p. 38). Chapter 3 addresses my role and bias. Methods were identified and incorporated into the design to minimize the influence of researcher bias. Although there were several identified limitations to this research, it did address major gaps in the literature and its importance outweighed its limitations, as DMST and CSEC are growing at an alarming rate.

Significance of the Study

The implications for positive social change include the development of comprehensive strategies inclusive of prevention, prosecution, and protection for victims

of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. The expansion of knowledge in this area will be useful for law enforcement, criminal justice, policy makers, communities, and nonprofit organizations that assist potential victims as well as victims in recovery. The study broadened the understanding of the problems associated with combatting sex trafficking and advanced the knowledge of how a network of collaboration between and among organizations that deal directly with the various facets of this hidden crime aids in addressing DMST and CSEC.

The social and practical significance of this research is threefold, in that it may inform and guide responses of organizations that are fighting DMST and CSEC. Second, this research may assist organizations in gaining a better understanding of the implications and necessity of collaborative networks as a vital function in the arsenal against this most egregious assault on children. Third, this research may assist in identifying collaboration strategies for early identification of DMST and CSE victims.

Summary

Human trafficking for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation, whether on an international scale or a domestic scale, presents a question of moral, ethical, and political will as the problem of commercial sex trafficking continues to grow, expand, and endanger the lives of the children it touches. Although slavery was abolished 150 years ago, it exists today in what is referred to as *modern day slavery*. Economic and social factors that fueled the slave trade of the 1800s still exist in communities across the United States in the 21st century. Partnerships that cross over organizational boundaries

and share information regarding prevention, protection, and prosecution strategies will be better situated to manage the complexities associated with DMST and CSEC.

To understand the magnitude of the problem of DMST and CSEC, an investigation was undertaken regarding the experiences of individuals and organizations that interface with the population; the research method of a single case study best fit this intended goal of discovery. To determine effective outcome measures and best practices in the fight against human trafficking and CSEC, data tracking and information sharing remain vital. The ability of front-line service providers to identify victims is a key to protection. Identifying and advocating for at-risk youth plays a major role in prevention strategies. The types of data collected, and the manner in which they are disseminated across organizational boundaries, will determine how effective and at what levels the network of collaboration and partnerships operate.

The human rights of a child must be preserved to the point that children are protected from predators and abuses at the hands of their abductors and patrons. As citizens in a civil society, we have a duty and moral imperative to protect the children in communities and not to leave them alone, invisible, and vulnerable. Many of the problems and issues associated with DMST and CSEC are bound together; my goal as a researcher was to disentangle with rigor some of the complexities of working across boundaries to address the invidious crime of commercial sexual abuse against children. This research was needed in order to demonstrate the need for developing and strengthening collaborative networks and partnerships as an approach to identifying child victims and mitigating the effects of a complex adaptive system of criminal activities

within the realm of DMST and CSEC. Collaboration between service providers is paramount for an effective strategy against continued sexual abuses against children.

Chapter 2 includes a review of the literature from peer-reviewed journals and government reports within the last 5 years. Due to the limited number of research studies specifically on DMST and CSEC, related areas of adult human trafficking were included. Approaching the literature in this way extended the base for developing an integrated review of sex trafficking of children.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) present unique challenges to communities across the nation. More questions than answers dominate the literature in terms of how to identify victims and mitigate the wave of devastation in the lives of children that this criminal activity produces. The following single survivor story is disturbing but all too familiar throughout neighborhoods and communities across the nation. It is a story of a child trapped in child prostitution:

> Alissa, 16, met an older man at a convenience store in Dallas and after a few dates accepted his invitation to move in with him. But soon Alissa's new boyfriend convinced her to be an escort for him, accompanying men on dates and having sex with them for money. He took her to an area known for street prostitution and forced her to hand over all of her earnings. He made Alissa get a tattoo of his nicknames, branding her as his property, and he posted prostitution advertisements with her picture on an Internet site. He rented hotel rooms around Dallas and forced Alissa to have sex with men who responded to the ads. The man, who kept an assault rifle in the closet of his apartment, threatened Alissa and physically assaulted her on multiple occasions. The man later pled guilty to trafficking Alissa. (U. S. Department of State, 2011)

The problem addressed by this research was how organizations are collaborating to identify victims and mitigate DMST and CSEC within the community. Commercial sex

trafficking is seen as a problem that only affects other countries when, in fact, the United States has people at risk for being trafficked and abused (U. S. Department of State, 2011, Country Narratives: United States, para. 1). Human trafficking of children, in particular, carries many social, economic, political, and legal issues that require the involvement of many different organizations and agencies. Coordination of the numerous aspects of sex trafficking, including prevention, prosecution, protection, partnerships, and policy efforts, in a major metropolitan city on the West Coast was investigated. To understand the complex social issue of DMST and CSEC, consensus needs to be reached about what collaborative strategies are working well, what strategies are not working well, and what strategies currently in place could work better. Strategies that are fragmented, disjointed, duplicative in nature, or add little to no value in the fight against human trafficking and CSEC were investigated and are shared as part of developing a framework of best practice. This research was conducted in an attempt to identify what local government, law enforcement, healthcare providers, and nonprofit organizations were doing or could do in collaboration and partnership to identify and mitigate DMST and CSEC in a large metropolitan community.

Commercial sex trafficking of children is perceived by many in the United States as a problem that only affects other countries, when in fact many people in this country are at risk for being trafficked and abused (Estes & Weiner, 2001; U. S. Department of State, 2011). Human trafficking is a problem that affects not only individuals, but also groups of individuals and communities (Logan et al., 2009). Determining the exact numbers of children at risk for DMST is fraught with limitations, including duplication of

tracking or lack thereof and primary assumptions about at-risk characteristics (Williamson et al., 2010). The fact remains that children are being trafficked for sexual purposes across the United States.

Chapter 2 is organized into four main categories. First, a description of strategies for researching the available literature is presented. Second, the conceptual framework used to establish the issue of DMST and CSEC is detailed. Third, a historical account of human trafficking is presented so that the context and scope of DMST and CSEC can be appreciated. Fourth, the current literature that relates specifically to DMST and CSEC is presented. Aspects of DMST and CSEC in terms of prevention strategies, victim identification, stakeholder challenges, networks and partnerships, current laws, policy, language, and best practice models within the realm of human trafficking are also presented.

Relevance of Study to Previous Research

The current research further expands on the barriers and challenges organizations confront when attempting to identify victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. In addition, areas focused on mitigating or reducing the incidence of this crime in the community were explored. The framework for working collaboratively across organizational boundaries was investigated. Current research indicated a need for partnerships and collaborations, yet no studies have addressed such issues within a DMST and CSEC framework. This research is relevant for determining the perceived and actual level of collaboration and best practices across agencies.

Moreover, by using a case study approach to investigation, the richness and robustness of the experiences, knowledge, and perceptions of the individuals who were interviewed may assist in finding opportunities for further advancing collaborative efforts and developing stronger partnerships within the community. Previous research has recommended collaboration and partnerships as vital to addressing human trafficking in all its forms, including DMST and CSEC.

Research Strategies

This research incorporated several databases and selected key words to locate pertinent and current works related to child sex trafficking at the domestic level. Databases used included Academic Search Premier, EBSCO Host, Lexis Nexis, ProQuest, and Sage Publications. Research studies, reports to Congress, peer-reviewed journal articles, laws, news briefings, news reports, and survivor stories were used to compile this research. Subject-based key words included *commercial sex trafficking, human trafficking, domestic minor sex trafficking, sexual exploitation of children, child abuse, slavery, modern-day slavery, sex tourism, child pornography, child prostitution, forced labor of children,* and *abolition of slavery.*

Given that no research has focused specifically on networks within the scope of human trafficking or DMST, additional key words were used to locate literature relevant to networks that included *partnerships, collaboration,* and *collaborative networks.* The expanded search provided me a broader context of the complexities of human trafficking.

Environmental Theory

The environmental causes or push factors that have created an increase in human trafficking on a global scale include poverty, crisis, ignorance, and despair (Miko, 2006; Williamson & Prior, 2009). Estes and Weiner (2001) posited that factors other than poverty—including family dysfunction, family sexual assault, poor school performance, as well as family or personal substance abuse—create additional vulnerabilities that contribute to the potential for being commercially trafficked and sexually abused. Variables that lead specifically to DMST include family dysfunction such as domestic violence, substance abuse, instability, and mental illness (Hughes et al., 2007; Kotrla, 2010; Williamson & Prior, 2009). As part of the fight against DMST and CSEC, all of the above environmental factors must be considered when attempting to identify young victims of sexual abuses. Mitigating root causes must also be a part of reinforcing the arsenal for ending the devastating human sacrifice and cost to youth.

Broader contributing environmental factors of DMST and CSEC identified in the United States include child pornography and the anonymity of abusers via the Internet. Mitchell, Jones, Finkelhor, and Wolak (2011) reported on a longitudinal study of technology-facilitated cases of CSEC. In 2006, data were collected from telephone interviews with law enforcement agencies across the United States. Findings indicated that of the 1,051 reports of Internet-facilitated CSEC, 54% of the cases were within the United States.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this research was collaborative networks and partnerships. Numerous organizations come into contact with DMST victims, as the fight against human trafficking—and especially DMST—is not confined to one organization or one type of service. Given the need to stay abreast of rapidly changing and adaptable criminals and criminal organizations, the importance of partnerships between like-minded organizations fighting against human trafficking cannot be understated. When addressing wicked social issues, in order to change expectations and outcomes, networks need to work differently (Keast et al., 2004). Conceptually, if networks are going to resolve complex social issues, then one focus must be redesigning the future of how organizations interact, not only between and among themselves, but also with the larger community.

Network Types

The literature describes various types of networks: whole networks, public sector networks, knowledge networks, collaborative networks, cooperative networks, community collaboratives, and a host of other aptly named designations. Each descriptor, although slightly different, encompasses many of the same characteristics. The intent of this research was not to focus solely on distinguishing the systems in use—whether networks and/or partnerships—but rather, how people within the organizations of study interface across boundaries to further a goal of victim identification and mitigation of DMST and CSEC.

When dealing with wicked social issues, researchers have designated a preferred method of systematically addressing the complexities and problematic circumstances associated with this wicked issue—specifically, collaborative networks. Mandell and Keast (2007) described the characteristics of three different types of networks: cooperative, coordinative, and collaborative. *Collaborative networks* have a higher level of trust, better communication, higher levels of commitment, a shared power structure, and accountability to the whole network (Mandell & Keast, 2007). Trust, communication, commitment, shared power, and accountability are the primary characteristics differentiating each type of network. Mandell and Keast also argued that within a network addressing wicked problems, collaboration would garner the best outcome and the most innovative solutions. This innovation in addressing social issues will allow the problem itself to be better understood. Innovation, however, is not the only consideration for building strong collaboratives; understanding the function of boundaries is also a contributing factor in developing effective partnerships.

Boundaries to public sector knowledge networks contain a complex combination of factors, including policy, legal issues, competing priorities, value differences, and organizational and professional cultural differences. Interorganizational networks that have a higher degree of knowledge sharing across boundaries also bring additional risks, costs, and barriers to the functional sharing of information (Dawes, Cresswell, & Pardo, 2009). Dawes et al. (2009) argued that both political leaders and public managers are accountable for ensuring the success and health of the network in which they work by sharing knowledge across jurisdictions, sectors, and levels of government. The

development of trust as a foundational element of knowledge sharing and crossing boundaries or boundary spanning are essential to addressing wicked problems today and in the future. The element of trust allows for a quicker response to the uncertainty and complexity presented by wicked social problems.

Collaborative Network Characteristics

In addition to positing that building trust is required for high-functioning collaborative networks, Provan and Lemaire (2012) offered that whole networks require a shift in focus from the individual to the relationships that multiple individuals have in order to address a goal or common purpose. In this research, I was interested in the whole network. To understand the ties within the whole network—ties that are both present and absent—one must determine how organizations are structured as they address the issue and problem of DMST and CSEC, either separately or collectively.

As complex community issues continue to expand and financial resources dwindle, community collaboratives have been created to address the needs and shared visions of the community. Collaboration occurs between autonomous stakeholders during the interactive process of issue resolution (Provan & Lemaire, 2012). Trust is the cement of collaboration and is a prerequisite for creativity. Collaboratives, partnerships, and networks are the essential underpinning of methods needed to address DMST and CSEC within a community. No matter what the approach is called, key characteristics of collaboration are vision, common goals, trust, and willingness for innovation. The key concepts and characteristics of collaboration are what were investigated during the interview process with participants. In addition, policies and procedures that facilitate

boundary spanning and enable richer, more robust cooperation between agencies were explored.

A Collaboration Model

A 2007 GAO Report (GAO-07-915) found that a strategic framework for collaboration on human trafficking cases that included federal, state, and local agencies performed better when an agreed-upon common outcome was identified. The GAO Report also indicated a need to build on collaborative efforts in order to create an environment that is sustainable for collaboration efforts to combat trafficking. Although the GAO Report (2007) recognized the importance of collaboration, it indicated that collaborative efforts between agencies currently operate on a case-by-case basis and are reactive rather than proactive, indicating a nonsustainable relationship. Consistent communication and information sharing are key components of a collaborative effort to fight trafficking. Four fundamental elements that the GAO Report identified are (a) a common outcome; (b) mutually enforcing or joint strategies; (c) agreed-upon roles and responsibilities; and (d) compatible policies, procedures, and other means to operate across agency boundaries (GOA Report, 2007). The fundamental elements that the GAO Report described are building partnerships and, most importantly, building trust between organizations and across organizational boundaries.

Additionally, support and recognition of the importance of collaboration were posited in seminal work by Estes and Weiner (2001), who advocated that collaboration and partnerships are paramount to success in the battle against CSEC. Estes and Weiner specifically noted the need for a “seamless and forceful connection between the activities

of knowledge creation, knowledge transmission, and knowledge application" (p. 200). Human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, when explored in the aggregate, reveal many factors that intersect and make up the whole. Munro (2006) compared responses at the domestic level of five Western European countries and found discrepancies between local policy and local practice. Munro attributed the differences to a lack of coordinated collaboration efforts between and among agencies and agency priorities. Logan et al. (2009) reviewed nine human trafficking reports from 2003–2007, which included four state reports and five national reports. Each report addressed numerous aspects of human trafficking, but one thing they all had in common was the recommendation for better coordination/collaboration. The impact that relationships have across organizational boundaries is in need of further investigation (Newton, Mulcahy, & Martin, 2008). Law enforcement would benefit from an integrated response to CSEC with multiple alternatives for dealing specifically with juveniles and the extraordinarily diverse needs of this population (Mitchell, Finkelhor, & Wolak, 2010).

To support the concept of working across boundaries and the need for agencies to do this, in 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton included partnerships in the fight against human trafficking (U. S. Department of State, 2010). According to Secretary Clinton, partnerships across civil society, the corporate sector, and governments represent a step toward ensuring that every man, woman, and child has the ability to live up to his or her potential. In essence, a designation of partnerships, coupled with prevention, protection, and prosecution, provides a more holistic approach to combating human trafficking. Incidentally, unlike prevention, prosecution, and protection measures, there is

no specific measure or metric of how the country or countries in this case are meeting the challenges of partnerships.

Collaboration Summary

This research was organized around five key elements that align and form the whole of DMST and CSEC, including aspects of prevention, prosecution, protection, partnerships, and policy. Organizations that concentrated on one or more aspects of the issue of DMST and CSEC were included as part of the network. Partnerships between and among the numerous agencies that serve this population of abused children along the continuum are represented. Prevention strategies include topics of education for all sectors of society. The target population included individuals working within the field of DMST and CSSEC or the community at large. Prevention strategies can include primary prevention that focuses on education targeting of all populations of children and adults prior to abuse occurring; secondary prevention strategies that may include education of either service providers, adults within the community, or individuals at risk for becoming trafficked or commercially exploited; and tertiary prevention strategies, among them, education targeting of service providers, victims, and perpetrators of DMST and CSE once the crime has occurred. Prosecution includes the criminalization of DMST and CSEC, comprising demand side, traffickers, and facilitators of the criminal activity. Protection strategies in place that address housing and recovery programs for youth after the traumatic experience of being trafficked were also explored. Policies that address DMST and CSEC were reviewed for potential changes in order to strengthen antitrafficking efforts. Environmental theory constitutes the theoretical backdrop for

exploring how local networks and partnerships address human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children in a metropolitan area. The conceptual framework of collaborative networks and partnerships was chosen for this research based on the inclusionary aspect of working across boundaries and ideologies.

Increasingly, communities are faced with the social issue of human trafficking. Nowell (2010) offered that complex social issues are a product of "interdependent, dynamic, ambiguous, and politically charged causal factors" (p. 91). This research identified collaborative networks associated with human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children within the City of Oakland, California; how effective they were at addressing the public concern of sex trafficking; and what the networks' relationship was to the overall effort of reducing sex trafficking and sexual exploitation of children.

Overview of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking, DMST, and CSEC present an unequal power relationship that disrupts basic ethical principles, and the expressed moral values of a civil society. Human trafficking is growing at an alarming rate; it is the third largest illegal business activity surpassed only by weapons trading and drugs (Winterdyk & Reichel, 2010). The difference between smuggling and trafficking can be identified in several ways.

Smuggling is based on the transport of individuals and ends when the destination has been reached and a fee has been paid, whereas trafficking is the nonconsensual exploitation of victims and can go on indefinitely. People can be trafficked for a number of reasons including manual labor, domestic help, organ harvesting, and prostitution. Causes of human trafficking have many contributing factors including variables such as

(a) level of diversity within an area, (b) socioeconomic status of the victims, (c) educational levels, and (d) access to port communities where the transport of trafficked persons can go undetected. Trafficked children are more commonly found to have been in a dysfunctional family environment and have had previous family sexual assaults (Estes & Weiner, 2001). Although all forms of human trafficking are an egregious assault on human dignity, this research focused on human trafficking of children for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation.

Human trafficking, a form of involuntary slavery, exists in neighborhoods and communities across the nation. The Thirteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America expressly states in Section 1: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." Slavery was abolished in 1865 as part of the reconstruction efforts following the Civil War. According to Bales (2004), the slave trade is more vibrant and alive today than it was at its peak during the African slave migration. During the African slave trade, infants and children were also sold. The difference between these two periods in American history is that slavery in the 1700s and 1800s was legal and was a protected way of life. Today, human trafficking or modern day slavery is recognized worldwide as an illegal method of control for purposes of labor or sexual servitude. Trafficking has become a "catchphrase and dominant cognitive map" for understanding "migration, commercial sex, and modern day slavery" (Musto, 2009, p. 281). Whether abuses are called slavery

or trafficking is not the debate, although the language used to describe events of this nature is confusing to many people.

Language

DMST or CSEC is the language used by scholars and people working in the field of human trafficking. These terms are not, however, used by a wide range of the population. In fact, DMST victims are routinely misidentified as sexually abused children, juvenile prostitutes, or sexually exploited minors (Reid, 2008). This mislabeling or misidentification of DMST victims has the potential to victimize the child all over again by the very organizations charged with protecting them.

The term "child prostitute" harms the discourse of sex trafficking because it assumes that the child had a choice to prostitute. Minors (children under the age of 18) are not capable of determining consent where a sexual act is concerned. According to Mitchell et al. (2010), the appropriate term would be "juveniles involved in prostitution" (p. 32). This distinction would encompass various aspects of juvenile prostitution and help minimize assumptions about the form or conditions of the actual process of prostitution. Language plays a key role in the discourse of the issue, and is how the social experience is constructed.

One example of how language is relevant to the discourse on sexual assault and sexual abuse is the redefinition of rape. In a National Press Release (2012), the FBI released a statement from Attorney General Eric Holder announcing the change in the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) definition of rape. The new definition is more inclusive of the various types of vaginal, oral, and anal penetration previously discounted when

reporting rape crimes. Accordingly, the changes in definition will better reflect the experience of the victim and add credence to aspects of accountability for committing the crime. Previously, the working definition of rape from 1927 consisted of a very narrow interpretation of the act of rape; including only vaginal penetration by a male penis (UCR, 2004). Redefining the word rape, allows for a more comprehensive understanding of a complex social ill, sexual abuse of children.

Unfortunately, in the realm of DMST and CSEC, there is still a need to recognize the impact that language has on how the issue is addressed. Smith and Vardaman (2010–2011) have stated that young girls found at truck stops selling sex were referred to as "lot lizards," thereby eliminating the need to acknowledge the reality that these girls were underage (p. 268). Another example on the opposite side of the spectrum is the need to change the language currently used to identify the demand side of this issue and refrain from referring to an individual who purchases sex from young girls and boys as a client or a "john or a customer," and instead refer to him or her as a "child sexual predator" (Williamson & Prior, 2009, p. 59), thereby more aptly naming the abuser. Words tend to normalize sexual deviance, and therefore, normalize sexual demand.

Another area of concern for DMST and CSEC stems from child pornography. Flood (2009) reviewed correlational and experimental studies regarding the effects of exposure to pornographic material on young children. The findings revealed that, as a result of exposure to sexual material, there was desensitization to sexual practices and unhealthy beliefs about relationships. Girls and women are more easily objectified and stereotyped by people exposed to explicit sexual media (Flood, 2009). The studies also

suggested that children and young people exposed to pornography reinforce attitudes and behaviors of sexual violence.

According to Flood (2009), men who are exposed to sexually violent material have a greater acceptance of myths about rape, and a decreased emotional connection to the victims. Teaching children and youth about sexuality in an age-appropriate way is an effective means of fostering healthy emotional and sexual practices, as sexual ignorance perpetuates sexual abuse and poor sexual health. Changing how DMST and CSEC abuses are referred to and framed, both from the victim standpoint and the sexual predator standpoint, makes society as a whole less complacent about the destruction of lives they cause.

Another problem found in the discourse on human trafficking is the highly contested definition of human trafficking (Dillon, 2008; Farrell & Fahy, 2009; Gozdziak & Collett, 2005; Musto, 2009). Many terms used to describe human trafficking, human smuggling, modern day slavery, commercial sex trafficking, and prostitution confuse the discourse. Coupled with the pendulum of changes identified for framing actual incidences, this misuse of terms has led to a stalemate in terms of mitigating this wicked social problem. One word that exemplifies the impact that misusing language has had on the discourse of human trafficking is *prostitution.* Bravo (2012) argued that the words *prostitution, forced prostitution,* and *exploitation* undermine the importance and experience of trafficking victims. This observation lends credence to the ongoing struggle to define human trafficking and put into practice a working definition.

Laws

The government has created protocols and laws that address the issue of human trafficking. In an effort to develop an international response to human trafficking, the United Nations developed standards for the international community, known as the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Organized Crime (2000). This protocol is more commonly referred to as the Palermo Protocol. The protocol's definition of trafficking in persons is:

> The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, or 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 labor or services, slavery or practice similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. (UN Protocol, Sec. 1, Article 3 (a) 2000)

Concurrently, the United States Congress enacted the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA), in which "severe" forms of human trafficking are defined as:

1. sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or

2. the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. (TVPA, 2000)

The TVPA 2000, Public Law 106–386 was enacted to address three of the five parameters of human trafficking: prevention of trafficking, prosecution of traffickers, and protection of victims. In 2003, TVPA was reauthorized as The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003 (TVPRA 2003), Public Law 108–192. This restructuring of the law was intended to enhance the tools used against traffickers, including the ability of the victim to file a federal civil suit against his or her abusers. In 2005, the act was again reauthorized as TVPRA 2005, Public Law 109–164. TVPRA 2005 designated specific resources, such as grants, for state and local expansion of enforcement efforts and victim assistance programs. In the TVPARA 2005, funding is made available to address the demand side of sex trafficking. Sec 204(1)(B) investigates and prosecutes persons who engage in the purchase of commercial sex acts and (C) educates persons charged with, or convicted of, purchasing or attempting to purchase commercial sex acts.

To enhance efforts to address trafficking, End Demand for Sex Trafficking Act of 2005, H.R. 2012, 109th Cong. (2005) was crafted. The bill was sent to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, but the bill was defeated and never became law. The bill would have specifically targeted the demand side of commercial sex

trafficking and provide an additional level of protection to children ensnared in commercial sex trafficking.

In addition to the Federal TVPA laws that are relevant to child sex trafficking, two other pieces of legislation can be used to prosecute the criminal activities of DMST and CSEC. The Mann Act of 1910, initially enacted to address issues of White slavery, makes interstate and foreign commerce for the purposes of prostitution or any sexual act a felony offense. In addition, the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act (RICO Act), passed in 1970, includes trafficking in persons as behavior that violates specified laws; federal or state laws can fall under the RICO Act.

The TVPA 2000 was reauthorized in 2003, 2005, and again in 2008. It was not, however, until 2005 that forms of domestic human of human trafficking were included (Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act [TVPRA] 2005). The inclusion of women and children who were being "domestically trafficked" within the United States was partially a mandate of the reauthorization act; this supplement enabled further protections for domestic victims. The definition of domestic trafficking has yet to be clearly defined (Newton et al., 2008). The 113th Congress reauthorized the TVPRA for 2013 as an amendment to the Violence Against Women Act of 1994. Although this is good news with future policy implications, questions about priorities and political will in terms of addressing the overall issue of human trafficking within the United States at the federal level remain.

In 2005, California enacted its own version of a protection act, The California Trafficking Victims Protection Act (AB 22), defining human trafficking as:

> All acts involved in the recruitment, abduction, transport, harboring, transfer, sale, or receipt of persons, within national or across international borders, through force, coercion, fraud or deception, to place persons in situations of slavery or slave like conditions, forced labor or services, such as forced prostitution or sexual services, domestic servitude, bonded sweatshop labor, or other debt bondage. (AB 22, Lieber)

Nonetheless, The CA ACTS Task Force Report (2007) indicated a need to have a "common working definition" throughout the state that identified human trafficking based on the letter of the law (p. 4). Despite the fact that there are laws on the books that address human trafficking, a concrete definition eludes the very service providers tasked with prevention, protection, and prosecution efforts.

Although the definition of human trafficking is highly contested, in 2012, California voters passed Proposition 35 - Californians Against Sexual Exploitation Act (CASE Act, 2012). The new law increases penalties for human trafficking with sentences ranging from 15 years to life and fines up to $1,500,00. Fines that are collected from individuals prosecuted for trafficking crimes are used for survivor services. Another provision of the law is that persons convicted of human trafficking must register as sex offenders. The law also requires additional training for police officers. Nevertheless, unless state funding is made available, a focused concentration on the educational needs of providers will fall short of the anticipated provision of the law.

In 2008, California AB 499 enabled Alameda County to initiate a pilot program expressly stating that commercially sexually explicated minors (those under the age of

18) would be processed as victims and not criminals. The pilot project was extended in 2011, with a sunset clause of 2017. At issue is that the pilot program is a single county program for the State of California. Los Angeles attempted to initiate a similar program in Southern California, however to date it has not been implemented. The lack of consistent identification across the state to classify children as victims and not criminals compounds the problem of protection efforts.

Another law that can be used for litigation against all forms of sexual predators is The PROTECT Act (Prosecuting Remedies and Tools Against the Exploitation of Children Today Act of 2003). The PROTECT Act enhanced legislation both at home and aboard concerning issues of child pornography, child abuse, and exploitation. The PROTECT Act enhanced provisions of the Amber Alert Network, addressed sex tourists, and provided increased imprisonment penalties for repeat sexual offenders. The PROTECT Act stipulated a mandatory life sentence for persons with a prior sex conviction in which a minor was the victim (Title III, Sec. 106, (e)1).

The caveat for all of the laws, penal codes, and statutes both at the federal and state levels is that to prosecute traffickers and facilitators, victims must be willing to testify against their abusers. The criminal process of conviction is slow and arduous, which is perhaps why so few cases make it all the way through the courts. The continuous reminder of the abuse not only retraumatizes young victims but also puts the ability to move past the horror of the enslavement in perpetual suspension. As described by Werner and Kim (2008), considerations for any type of civil litigation against the abusers include determining the willingness of the victim to endure years of litigation,

facing the accused in court, all the while having the ability to maintain oneself not only emotionally, but also physically. The fact that so many of the trafficking laws are new and not yet tested in the courts, gives rise to the difficulty in preparing a case against the criminal. Understandably, the path of least resistance is often taken, and lesser charges are the mainstay of the convictions. This practice does not make such options right, and government needs to do more to ensure that sexual predators are subjected to the full extent of the law(s).

In 2006, President George W. Bush declared human trafficking a crime against human dignity (White House Press Release, 2006). In the 14 years after the initial signing of the TVPA 2000 and the 8 years following the declaration by the president, human trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children has continued to plague the United States. The United States has attempted to provide a backdrop of continued support for the eradication of human trafficking by acting as global sheriff (Chuang, 2006). Still, the failure to protect victims of human trafficking at an international level as well as a domestic level is evident by the increasing number of victims.

Economics of Trafficking

The economic side of human trafficking not only continues to expand and morph at the global level, but also is increasingly becoming a domestic problem (Kotrla & Wommack, 2011). The ability to sell and resell the human body makes sex trafficking a lucrative business prospect. The profit-to-cost ratio is very high. The world of economics helps describe the phenomenon of *supply and demand*. Where there is a demand for a product or commodity, a supply chain will soon develop to meet the needs of the

demand. This same supply-and-demand structure has made its way into the realm of sex trafficking (Yen, 2008). One of the ways to understand the cycle of abuse that commercial sexual exploitation of children reveals, is to recognize that this phenomenon is driven by the demand side of commercial sex trafficking. The economic model of supply and demand has four basic principles that include the effects of increases and decreases in either the supply side or the demand side with the resulting changes seen in price and quantity (Yen, 2008). As the demand for child sex increases, more and more children are ensnared in the commercial sex trafficking arena. The more children trapped in the life of sexual exploitation, the younger the children become. A vicious cycle of abuse continues. In this case, the acquisition of young children feeds the demand for sex. In the sex trade, children are seen as objects and the property of the exploiter. The person doing the exploiting could be a pimp, a trafficker, or a john, all of which are considered sexual predators. These perpetrators and sexual abusers must be held accountable and responsible for their role in the continued growth of DMST and CSEC.

Demand

Federal, state, and local laws that address the demand side of DMST and CSEC must include legislative educational mandates for sexual predators, in addition to stringent punishment for such activities. Kotrla (2010) and Shively et al. (2008) have advocated mandating educational training for first offenders. To present this phenomenon in terms of a social responsibility as well as a moral and ethical challenge, the education of young men and women early on is essential to teaching that sexual exploitation is not normal behavior.

Communities need to do more to publicize the existence of DSTM and CSEC, and strategies must be developed within the community to address reduction and, ultimately, mitigation of DMST and CSEC (Albanese, 2007). Todres (2010) argued that prevention is the key and ultimate goal in the strategies for developing a comprehensive response to child trafficking. Todres also made the point that most efforts are designed to address the issue of child sex trafficking once the abuse has occurred. Addressing the root causes such as lack of educational opportunities and lack of job training or job placement would reduce the incidence of young children being ensnared in the sex trafficking trade in the first place (Todres, 2010). Preventing DMST and CSEC is a basic leadership issue. The fact that vulnerable children are targeted by sexual predators is indicative of a failed response to root causes.

When children are involved in CSE, the prospects for a productive life are minimized. Risks of sexually transmitted diseases, psychological trauma, substance abuse, and addictions, coupled with a lack of skills and education, increase the potential for early death either due to the continual abuse of the trafficker or by their own hand (Yen, 2008). Additionally, the mental health needs of child victims of sex trafficking are complex. Children can come to the mental healthcare provider with substance-related disorders, impulse control issues, conduct disorder, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, and antisocial personality traits (Williamson, Dutch, & Clawson, 2010). Prostitution—especially the prostitution of children—is not a victimless crime.

Kotrla (2010) looked at the growing incidence of DMST and indicated that children involved in DMST enter the commercial sex industry between the ages of "11

and 14 years of age and some as young as 5" (p. 182). According to Smith and Vardaman (2010–2011), "The demand for children and adolescents is staggering" (p. 283). An estimated 100,000 minors have been commercially trafficked into the sex trade in the United States alone (Polaris Project, 2012). Risk factors for youth that are associated with DMST and CSEC may vary but contain the same basic themes or characteristics. Runaway children are at a higher risk of being subjected to "the life" of prostitution and exploitation at the hands of pimps than are other youth. The United States Department of Justice (2007) discovered that traffickers and pimps target and find young girls in areas where youth tend to congregate such as arcades or malls. Children who appear to be runaways or lack money are easy prey for traffickers and pimps.

Not unlike the international sex trafficking phenomenon, DMST is driven by greed, money, and sexual desire (Hughes, 2004). Commercial sex markets in Japan, the Netherlands, Jamaica, and the United States have high levels of a "culture of tolerance," which equates to the use of various forms of entertainment such as songs, television, video games, and so forth (Kotrla, 2010, p. 183). That younger and younger children are being pursued, objectified, and then tossed aside is a testament to the desensitization of the both the supply and demand side of human trafficking.

Culture of Tolerance

Smith and Vardaman (2010–2011) offered that cultural tolerance originates in influences of a society such as political and economic standing. Cultural differences can differ based on location, for example a country or even a city (Smith & Vardaman, 2010–2011); however, cultural tolerance is based on social acceptance and is backed by

political lenience. One example of the culture of tolerance in the United States can be found at truck stops. Major thoroughfares and interstate highways are the breading ground for CSE of minors as truckers pay for easy sex with underage girls (Smith & Vardaman, 2010–2011). van Manen (1990) stated that the United States has "tacitly accepted the existence of throw away kids," and through cynicism and narcissism, society has disengaged and lost sight of the vital role that children provide in communities (p. 141). These are disturbing accusations for humanity in general—and for children specifically. Addressing the wicked social problem of DMST becomes harder when also having to address the undercurrent of social norms.

Organized crime perpetuates the problem of sex trafficking of children by meeting the needs of the demand side of this heinous crime. People and criminal organizations involved in human trafficking are malleable, creative, and highly adaptive to the changing environment. Corruption, an absolute disintegration of moral values and human integrity, enables criminals to entrap and exploit children for financial gain. Due to the lucrative nature of DMST, street gangs have become a major player and facilitator of DMST and CSEC. Rival gangs are coordinating efforts and working in collaboration as profits increase and profit margins soar (Smith et al., 2009). Criminals have the ability to swiftly adapt to changes in their immediate environment. When one area where criminal activity is occurring becomes the target for law enforcement, criminals move the operation to a new location. Government has not been able to adapt as quickly to the changing environment of DMST and CSEC.

Williamson and Prior (2009) suggested a key deficiency in the discourse and laws concerning sexual exploitation of children: the lack of any repercussions for purchasing children for sexual acts. Conversely, Todres (2010) suggested that research is lacking on the topic of child trafficking and CSEC, thereby making it difficult at best for legislators to design laws that are supported by evidence and have a track record for being effective. Whether laws are inefficient or the numbers of trafficked children are not readily available should not be a determining factor of whether the issue is addressed.

Trafficking Lenses

Government responds to social issues as driven by public outcry. The dynamic process of social issue framing constitutes four distinct timeframes: citizens identify an issue, governments respond to the citizen groups, citizens decry the ineffectiveness of government officials, and a new oversight agency is created (as cited in Farrell & Fahy, 2009). This trajectory is perhaps why there has been a transition through so many different lenses to understand the magnitude of the issue of human trafficking. The lenses used to make sense of DMST and CSEC are limiting when used with only one of the lenses. Farrell and Fahy (2009) mapped the public and policy framing of human trafficking for almost two decades. The two decades reviewed—beginning in 1990 and ending in 2006—revealed three separate public and policy frames to define and address human trafficking in the United States: the human rights violations frame, 1990–1999; the criminality frame, 2000–2002; and the national security frame, 2003–2006 (Farrell & Fahy, 2009). Although using a single lens to view the issue of human trafficking has

occurred over time, this author would argue that a multitude of lenses are necessary for addressing the wicked social problem of DMST and CSEC.

Specifically, if only one type of framework or theoretical perspective is used, other areas will be left off the agenda, and the cycle of abuse will go unchecked. For example, Farrell and Fahey (2009) offered that a national security lens should be used to address human trafficking. As such, the focus will be on international trafficking, and domestic trafficking will be left to struggle and defend for funds and support based on its own strategies. Since September 11, 2000, the focus of National Security forces has been the porosity of borders. As an unintended consequence of changes to national security policy and immigration policy post 9/11, there has been an increase of domestic human trafficking (Shared Hope International, n.d.). The amount of domestic trafficking has become more widespread and is now identified as an issue within local borders.

Another example of a bifurcated message about human trafficking was offered by Moossy (2008), who argued for a victim-centered approach to combating human trafficking. Again, if a single lens such as a victim-centered approach is the only frame for addressing human trafficking then the entire issue of prosecution is left unaddressed. Similarly, Smith and Vardaman (2010–2011) suggested using criminal justice as the framework for combatting human trafficking. Although criminal justice is a key component that addresses prosecution and some aspects of protection, it does not address prevention approaches. A holistic approach that encompasses aspects of each of the 4Ps (prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnerships) will be necessary for addressing

the complex, convoluted, and confusing world of human trafficking—and more specifically, DMST and CSEC.

Aside from contributing to the ongoing debate about the definition of domestic trafficking reauthorization issues of the TVPRA and the lenses used to frame the issue of human trafficking, this research had as a primary objective describing the perception of DMST and CSEC in a metropolitan community by examining the experiences, knowledge, and perceptions of individuals directly involved in the fight against DMST and CSEC. A focus on the challenges to victim identification and mitigation of DMST and CSEC in the community was undertaken with a goal of identifying the role of government and collaborative networks that affect the outcome of human trafficking trends and sexual exploitation of children in Oakland, California.

When viewed as a wicked social problem, DMST and CSEC become exacerbated by the fact that little substantive research has been done on the topic. Estes and Weiner (2001), considered first-generation researchers into the prevalence and incidence of CSEC, were able to lay the groundwork for identifying the "unchartered territory" of CSEC and to develop a framework for future studies (p. 160). Although Estes and Weiner were able to postulate the prevalence of the problem of CSEC, solutions for mitigating CSEC were not forthcoming. Nevertheless, the initial research findings shed light on and increased awareness that a human tragedy was occurring in towns and communities across the nation.

Barriers to Victim Identification

DMST is alive and well in the United States; due, in part, to a culture of tolerance, but also to an inability to recognize the population at risk for exploitation (Kotrla, 2010). Children ensnared in the sex trade do not self-identify as victims. Rand (2009) offered that one of the problems with the detection of commercial sex trafficking is the identification of the victims; instead of being identified as a victim, young girls are inaccurately identified as criminals. Misidentification of commercial sex trafficking victims leads to further trauma and victimization by the very professionals charged with protecting these citizens—namely law enforcement and the juvenile justice system (Tordes, 2010; Williamson & Prior, 2009). Victims of human trafficking are often hidden, and the clandestine nature of trafficking in humans adds to the complexity of victim identification (Logan et al., 2009). Barriers to victim identification, when coupled with extensive control techniques used by traffickers, make the methods and approaches to finding victims an even larger challenge.

There are several methods of control by which traffickers ensure their victim is not able to separate themselves from the traffickers. Raphael, Reichert, and Powers (2010) described the relationship of a trafficked person and a pimp as similar to that of a battered woman's relationship with her abuser. Raphael et al. explained that coercive control was also used to control the victim—coercive control being a crime of liberty, as opposed to a crime of violence. Examples of coercive control may include personal identification being taken away, so that it becomes increasingly difficult to mobilize and gain access to assistance. Traffickers will withhold wages so that the trafficked victim is

not able to pay off any debt (whether perceived or actual) that the victim has incurred. Another method traffickers will employ to control their victims is to threaten harm to victims' family members. Traffickers may also threaten that the victim will be arrested if he or she does not comply with the demands of the trafficker.

Additional signs that may indicate a victim has been trafficked are substandard living and working conditions (Newton et al., 2008). A person may have been trafficked if he or she lacks food, water, and sleep. Victims are often threatened and may have bruising or other signs of abuse (Newton et al., 2008). If victims are not allowed to socialize or communicate with family or friends, this can also be an indicator that the victim is being controlled. Additionally, if the victim appears to have been coached on how to answer a question or if they defer the question to another person, either the trafficker or pimp, the likelihood that they have been trafficked increases.

Estes and Weiner (2001) identified three main categories that contribute to CSE: external factors, such as a socioeconomic status; the presence of various groups or factions such as preexisting adult prostitution zones; the presence of groups advocating adult-child sexual relationships, such as unattached transient males, military, seasonal workers, truckers, motor cycle gangs, or conventioneers. Microsituational factors include family dysfunction, parental drug dependency, a history of physical of sexual abuse, school or social performance failures, and gang membership. Additional factors include poor self-esteem, chronic depression, and an external locus control. Hence, if a child, male or female, is a runaway youth who has been previously sexually abused, lacks

fundamental essentials such as shelter, and is considered a poor performer, he or she is at greater risk of being trafficked for sexual purposes.

The research conducted by Estes and Weiner (2001) was groundbreaking in that it demonstrated a much larger problem than initially thought. The primary goal as stated by Estes and Weiner was to determine ways in which interventions could occur, and how prevention strategies could be put into place at every point in the exploitation chain. Estes and Weiner conducted research over a two-year period to determine the nature and extent of child sexual exploitation in North America: Canada, the United States, and Mexico. There were eight goals identified for the research, including determining the nature, extent, and causes of CSEC; identification of at-risk youth; identification of perpetrators of sex crimes; identification of the extent of organized crime and CSEC; modes of operation to recruit and exploit youth; laws relating to CSEC; prevention and protection strategies; and finally, the collaborative efforts of governmental and nongovernmental organizations to prevent and protect children from sexual exploitation (Estes & Weiner, 2001). Estes and Weiner used both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection. Face-to-face interviews, surveys, official record reviews, and observations were included in the arsenal of investigative techniques. Participants in the study included sexually exploited youth, law enforcement, public and private human service organizations, traffickers and clients, youth advocacy networks, and faculty members of youth-focused educational organizations.

Seventeen U.S. cities were selected as part of Estes and Weiner's (2001) research, based on the premise that these 17 cities represented 40% of the U.S. urban population

and reflected the racial and ethnic diversity of known CSEC connections. Oakland, California, was one of the cities involved in the research project.

CSEC surveys developed by Estes and Weiner (2001) were mailed to local, state, and federal agencies throughout North America. In total, there were 1,130 surveys mailed and 288 surveys returned, for a 25.5% return rate. Interviews and meetings with identified participants totaled 920, of which 59 interviews were in the San Francisco Bay Area. The results of the study revealed that prevention is the first step in protecting children from sexual exploitation. Collaboration between agencies was also a key area requiring further investigation.

Based on the work done by Estes and Weiner (2001), I queried what has transpired over the 14-year period since the initial investigation of CSEC. As such, the following literature review was conducted.

Current Research

The literature review on DMST and CSEC is organized around four subsections. The first subsection discusses strengths and weaknesses of the relevant research. The second subsection includes current research into victim identification. The third subsection consists of prevention strategies addressed in the literature. In subsection four, the focus was on collaborative efforts and partnerships among organizations. The research literature was compared, contrasted, and synthesized across the four subsections. As stated previously, relatively few current studies address DMST and CSEC. Gaps in the literature that justified the current research are reviewed and discussed.

The strengths of the studies by Penry (2011), Smith et al. (2009), and Vardaman and Franker (2009) are that they used the same qualitative method of interviewing to obtain relevant data on the current status of DMST in selected U.S. counties and across the country. The broad sampling of first responders and front line service providers enabled a robust and inclusive view of DMST and CSEC in the targeted communities. Sampling size was sufficient to obtain saturation. The three studies represent a national view of the issues throughout the country in terms of challenges to victim identification, barriers to mitigating DMST in communities, and the need for enhanced collaboration across agency boundaries. The findings of studies by Penry, Smith et al., and Vardaman and Franker, correspond to prior peer-reviewed literature on DMST and CSEC, and as such reflect the current understanding in terms of prevalence and problems associated with child sex trafficking.

Conversely, the weakness of the three studies is that they were all produced for the same organization, Shared Hope International. Although there does not appear to be any detectable bias to the information or data, that each study was produced for, one organization does raise a certain level of concern. Shared Hope International has partnered with the federal government to produce the initial research that focuses on DMST within local communities. More importantly, one weakness with the three studies is that there is no root cause correlation analysis between DMST and CSEC to runaways or youth who are sexually abused within the home. Such analysis could suggest that the starting point of prevention comes earlier in the cycle of abuse. This point needs

consideration and further investigation however, root cause analysis is beyond the scope of this research.

Finally, in terms of controversial factors of DMST and CSEC, there are no identified variances between researchers in terms of the variables that comprise the world of trafficking. In fact, the only controversies noted were what lens or lenses through which the issue of human trafficking should be viewed. With that said, the area of investigation now becomes what are the best practices and how can best practices be implemented into the arsenal of strategies necessary to fight DMST and CSEC in local communities?

Victim Identification

Identification of victims of DMST and CSE is not without its challenges. Of the three studies that addressed the proposed question of barriers regarding victim identification of domestic minors, Penry (2011) found that each category of the service provider, law enforcement, juvenile justice, and NGOs had unique challenges when confronting a victim of DMST. Findings by Penry are consistent with the earlier works of Smith et al. (2009) and Vardaman (2009). The complexity of the issues of DMST is exemplified in the difficulties experienced by front line personnel when attempting to identify young victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Between May and August 2011, Penry (2011) interviewed 39 employees representing 22 different agencies in the Houston, Texas, area who either had contact with a victim or victims of DMST or had the potential to identify a victim. Each service area within the chain revealed a disturbing similarity: a lack of awareness by providers

that a child was a victim of sex trafficking and abuse. Similarly, Vardaman and Franker (2009) interviewed 35 employees from 30 different organizations in Broward and Dade Counties, Florida, who participated in efforts to address victims of DMST. A key finding in both studies was that DMST and CSEC children were frequently arrested for prostitution and processed within the criminal justice system as criminals.

In a broader view of DMST established in a national study of DMST, Smith et al. (2009) interviewed 297 individuals in seven different service areas across nine cities and one U.S. territory during 2006. Smith et al. found that children were being misidentified as juvenile prostitutes. Smith et al. also identified an underlying issue that perhaps offers insight into the manifest difficulties of victim identification—trauma bonding. The identification of trauma bonding by Smith et al. as a means of abuser control lends credence to the victim's inability or unwillingness to self-identify. Mental health issues such as depression, anxiety disorders, and personality disorders all enable the abuser to further control a victim and create this trauma bond. On the part of the victim, trauma bonds create reliance on the abuser for the victim's every need. An earlier study by Estes and Weiner (2001) identified the same mental health issues of depression, anxiety disorders, and personality disorders; however, the term trauma bonding was not identified as such. The nondisclosure of abuse from victims compounds the challenges of service providers in appropriately identifying and serving sexually abused children.

Vardaman and Franker (2009) have also discussed the complexities of the trauma bond relationship. Vardaman and Franker found that law enforcement in the Miami area were unable to disentangle differences between minor prostitution and trafficking if

victims were uncooperative. Subsequently, victims are treated and processed as criminals. Victim identification of minor children caught in the sex trafficking trade, coupled with the inability or unwillingness of DMST victims to self-identify as victims, adds to the difficulty in response and rescue efforts by law enforcement. The findings of Vardaman and Franker correspond to the findings of Smith et al. (2009) and Penry (2011) in which multiple variables of nondisclosure by victims, victims' trauma bond to the abuser, and service providers' lack of awareness of DMST and CSEC compound the problem of victim identification.

The following areas identified by Penry (2011) are problematic when reviewing DMST and CSEC from a law enforcement perspective. When DMST and CSE children are arrested for a crime, the arresting officers' inability to accurately gauge a child's age presented a barrier. The inability or inexperience of law enforcement in interrogating suspects to reveal evidence of exploitation is an additional barrier needing attention (Penry, 2011; Vardaman & Franker, 2009). Frequently, youth claim that the perpetrator is their boyfriend, leading to further difficulties in the proper identification of victims (Penry, 2011). The ability to appropriately interview suspects to uncover potential abuses would possibly find a less resistive victim, and self-disclosure could be the outcome.

From the perspective of the judicial system, the barriers to victim identification included myriad complicated variables involving the use of federal, state, and local laws (Penry, 2011; Smith et al., 2009; Vardaman & Franker, 2009). One recurring theme was the practice of reducing or pleading out charges of prostitution; hence, trafficking charges were never considered, enabling the perpetrator to go unpunished and return to a life of

being an abuser (Penry, 2011; Smith et al., 2009). Laws intended to protect young victims of abuse must align with each other and be consistent across the various entities. The fact that lesser charges are regularly administered to victims, who are considered criminals, exacerbates the issue of abuse and does little to address the demand side of the equation (Vardaman & Franker, 2009). Along the chain of victim identification, service providers have opportunities to reverse the potential of continued abuse.

Nevertheless, Penry (2011) determined that juvenile detention center staff was mandated to report if a child even spoke of having sex with an older person. This practice of reporting overheard conversations further alienates the child and pushes this hidden crime even further into the abyss of abuse. There was a similar finding within the nongovernmental organization (NGO) sector when dealing with youth; reporting the abuse of children alienates the child further and can drive the victim deeper into darkness in order to avoid confrontations with authorities. Beginning with initial contact with a potential victim, appropriate interview questions are key to identifying DMST and CSEC. Of course, training first responders and service providers is essential to meeting the needs of the victims.

The need for training in all sectors of the provider chain was evident throughout the three studies. Currently, there is no training of prosecutors in Harris or Galveston Counties (Penry, 2011). Public defenders and defense attorneys within the Houston area were unaware of any training available for DMST cases. One of Penry's (2011) findings was that opportunities for DMST education are not only limited by funding streams but also rely on, and are limited by, the personal motivation of the service provider.

Screening procedures that enable front line personnel to investigate and identify victims of sex trafficking is paramount. Vardaman and Franker (2009) found that most prostituted children start as runaways; as such, in the identification process they are labeled as runaways or homeless youth—as opposed to the correct identification of trafficked victim. Furthermore, although the counties of Broward and Dade do not maintain specific data on runaway and homeless youth, Broward County Family Court has recognized this vulnerable population as potential DMST victims. Training has been provided; however, law enforcement was unaware of the connection between runaway or homelessness and DMST (Vardaman & Franker, 2009). Connecting runaway or homeless youth to the potential of being trafficked is an area that all initial intake and screening procedures could incorporate into the screening process.

Another area of misidentification revealed in the study by Vardaman and Franker (2009) was that many youth found in prostitution are deemed by law enforcement to be delinquents as opposed to victims. As delinquents, they enter the legal system as criminals, and subsequent victim services are not forthcoming. Instead, the child is further traumatized within the system. Smith et al. (2009) considered these types of cases "the perfect victim problem" (p. 51). In part, this mislabeling is due to the signs exhibited by youth as those of delinquency—such as aggression and unruly behaviors that confuse the identification process further. As example, one survivor identified in the Smith et al. study found it difficult to cooperate with law enforcement because of gender differences. Having recently been sexually abused by men and then being arrested and confronted by numerous male officers was intimidating and frightening. If a child is not considered a

delinquent, then the alternative is to charge him or her with prostitution, thus creating an even harder experience for the victim. These are the kinds of challenges that law enforcement personnel confront when dealing with sexually abused children.

In Florida, prostituted youth are charged with prostitution; under state law, prostitution is a criminal offence—unless the accused youth is considered a witness and is willing to testify against his or her trafficker (Vardaman & Franker, 2009). The scenario is a Catch-22, whereby a sexually abused youth is treated like a criminal and charged with prostitution. Victims unwilling to cooperate with law enforcement charges of prostitution remain on the record, creating further barriers to victim identification (Vardaman & Franker, 2009). Unwillingness to cooperate leads to withholding of vital services that this population of victims so desperately needs.

NGOs are in a unique position to identify DMST victims. As child victims transition through the NGO branch of the system—either through homeless shelters, drug treatment centers, or street outreach efforts—contact with victims involved in prostitution increases. An informal 2007 survey of agencies and providers in the Miami area revealed that over 500 DMST victims had been identified (Vardaman & Franker, 2009). Vardaman and Franker (2009) found that although the contact with victims was increasing, the ability to provide services once the child had been identified as trafficked was lacking due to inadequate facilities to address the needs of this population. The lack of funding available to DMST victims is due, in part, to the allocation of funds through the TVPA appropriations for international victims, as opposed to domestic victims (Vardaman & Franker, 2009). Domestic victims deserve the same level of treatment and

care as international victims. Such glaring differences in services due to lack of funds leave domestic victims in a state of limbo when entering the system as trafficked victims.

Thus, what each of the three studies reveals is the need to be proactive and not reactive when addressing issues of DMST and CSEC—proactive in the sense that youth with the potential to become victims are identified early in the cycle of abuse before extensive abuse occurs. Misidentification of DMST and CSEC can lead to a chain of negative outcomes. Education directed at service providers, community partners, and youth on the classic warning signs of trafficking is paramount for reducing or mitigating the incidence of this heinous crime. Creating a template for intake assessments across multiple disciplines with questions directed at obtaining the most reliable evaluation of potential sexual abuse will aid in the proper identification of sexually abused victims. Providing focused questions for first responders to aid in detecting abuse at the onset would greatly enhance the ability to correctly identify youth. Treating juveniles found in prostitution as victims and not a prostitute, a delinquent, or a criminal is crucial to preventing further trauma to the individual.

Clearly, victim identification is difficult due to the many variables when attempting to provide service, especially when dealing with a victim who is uncooperative or even combative. But is victim identification primarily an educational problem or is there an underlying current of passivity on the part of first responders that is ingrained in the fabric of society? Victim identification challenges could be lessened if more attention were focused on root cause and prevention efforts.

Prevention

Awareness of DMST and CSEC is a starting point for both communities and potential victims. Prevention of DMST and CSEC is a primary recommendation throughout the literature (Clawson & Dutch, 2008; Estes & Weiner, 2001; Moossy, 2008; Smith et al., 2009; Vardaman & Franker, 2009). Penry (2011) argued that prevention is one of the hardest aspects of human trafficking to quantify because of a lack of ability to objectively state that one thing prevented another from occurring. Although quantifying prevention measures is fraught with uncertainty, some effort to address prevention measures directed at DMST and CSEC is better than no effort. Prevention has two basic components that need to be addressed concurrently: supply and demand. Addressing one without the other will not reap the desired outcomes of reduction and mitigation.

It is strongly argued in the literature that primary, secondary, or tertiary education across all sectors of the population as it relates to DMST and CSEC is a key component in prevention efforts (Penry, 2011; Smith et al., 2009; Vardaman & Franker, 2009). Age-appropriate education should be included in prevention programs targeting school children. Additionally, parents, teachers, and community groups need primary education that is focused on prevention and intervention strategies prior to the abuse. Concurrently, awareness training of causes and push factors of DMST and CSEC needs to be made available to all sectors of the community. Secondary education regarding early interventions should be available for social service workers and other front line service providers that may come into contact with a child during early phases of abuse. Tertiary education relevant to victim identification, investigation of criminal activities, and

victim-interviewing techniques is essential for law enforcement personnel and the justice system. Mandatory training for sexual perpetrators and facilitators of abuses against children is a fundamental first line of defense. Although there is training available at each level of need—primary, secondary, and tertiary—widespread availability of educational materials or educators is lacking (Smith et al., 2009).

Penry (2011) found that law enforcement officers that did not have any training specific to human trafficking held the attitude that young trafficking victims were "there because they wanted to be" (p. 17). As disturbing as this attitude is coming from law enforcement personnel it is not an isolated finding. Smith et al. (2009) found that law enforcement viewed DMST victims as juvenile delinquents. In fact, Vardaman and Franker (2009) stated that law enforcement in Broward and Dade Counties, Florida, considered DMST victims perpetrators of prostitution. The only way for these attitudes and beliefs to be changed is through appropriate training that addresses the plight of young victims. In addition, a review of new laws and understanding of the current state and federal laws surrounding DMST and CSEC is paramount in training law enforcement personnel (Penry, 2011; Vardaman & Franker, 2009).

The TVPA specifically states that minors cannot commit prostitution but rather are victims of DMST. Minors, however, are being arrested on charges of prostitution across the nation. Statewide, Florida arrested 364 children on prostitution charges over five years (Smith et al., 2009). The six other locations researched by Smith et al. (2009) had a total of 2,170 children arrested for prostitution between 1996 and 2008, bringing the total to 2,534 DMST victims treated as criminals. Conversely, the arrest rates of

victims versus buyers are minuscule. Here again, the unfamiliarity of the laws prevents the correct responses toward a victim of DMST—although Smith et al. did allude to the possibility that arrests were made due to lack of alternative placement facilities for DMST victims. The numbers of victims lacking a placement category cannot be confirmed. Protection issues in terms of placement facilities and aftercare programs are not within the scope of this research, and therefore, will not be presented.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Partnerships and collaboration between DMST service providers need further investigation. No research has been conducted that specifically addresses partnerships and collaborative efforts in the DMST and CSEC arena. Penry (2011) indicated that sharing information across agency boundaries regarding the status of victims within the system is an essential first step in understanding the scope of the issue. To address the highly adaptive nature of criminal activity, front line organizations combatting DMST require information. Collaboration and partnerships contain myriad components that make up the whole. The larger scope can be appreciated when dealing with the social issue of human trafficking in general, and DMST and CSEC specifically. As discussed earlier, children have special needs due to their developmental stages (Smith et al., 2009); hence, collaboration is key to addressing the special needs of the child victim of sex trafficking.

Partnerships are also necessary to defining the roles of various agencies and organizations that will help prevent duplication of efforts, thereby enabling organizations to appropriately utilize resources and perhaps expand services. Increasing educational

opportunities across agency boundaries will provide an environment that is robust with ideas and innovation, as the diversity of talents within the collaborative network is considered a major strength. Building trust within and between organizations is the key factor and vital foundation of all relationships. To effectively provide services to victims of trafficking, trust is paramount for not only working with the victims, but also working with other service providers. Lastly, collaborative efforts and partnerships can increase the chances of successfully prosecuting traffickers.

A model of collaborative approaches to wicked social problems is seen within the realm and domain of domestic violence. For the past 30 years, communities have identified domestic violence as a complex social issue. As such, they have invested in coordinated community approaches to develop strategies to end violence against women. Although the struggle to end domestic violence continues, much progress has been made in terms of public discourse, laws, and institutional practices (Hart, 1995). Coordinated Community Response (CCR) Coalitions addressing domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and teen dating violence have developed over the past 18 years. CCR coalitions not only plan and coordinate services for individuals but also are responsible for addressing the larger, more complex components and systemic attributes that make up domestic violence (Cox, Finkelstein, Perez, & Rosenbach, 2013). Through the CCR, the capacity of organizations to effect change increases both internally and externally in the larger community as well.

One area of domestic violence CCR as described by Cox, Finkelstein, Perez, and Rosenbach (2013) that is foundational to the issue of DMST and CSEC is the ability of

CCRs to build prevention capacity. Cox et al. have defined prevention capacity as the structures, processes, resources, and willingness of an organization to implement various aspects of the prevention strategy. Capacity building occurs at the local, state, and federal levels both internally and externally. Domestic violence advocates have been successful in creating a framework for continued work by building a collaborative structure. A similar structure is needed in the area of DMST and CSEC.

Summary

Chapter 2 reviewed the current literature on the obstacles to DMST victim identification, barriers to mitigating DMST, and discrepancies in the discourse of DMST. This research expands on prior research to further address issues of victim identification and mitigation strategies of DMST and CSEC. Because there is a lack of research to answer research questions about what role collaborative networks and partnerships play in addressing discourse and outcomes of DMST, this research expands the current knowledge.

The three studies that have addressed DMST and CSEC—Penry (2011), Smith et al. (2009), and Vardaman and Franker (2009)—are relevant to the research questions posed by this research in confirming the need to address the obstacles to victim identification, barriers to mitigation of the crime, and the role collaboration and partnerships have in addressing the wicked social problem of modern-day slavery. DMST and CSEC cannot be mitigated by a single sector or reduction strategy. A multipronged approach will be necessary for eradicating sexual exploitation of children. Prevention, prosecution, protection, and partnerships are but a small step toward change. Sweeping

social change in how society views the normalization of pornography, sexual promiscuity, sexual violence against women, and gendered relationships will be necessary for dramatic change. Societal attitudes that allow sexual slavery to go unchecked must be addressed. The potential for positive social change based on the reported findings of this research may help form stronger bonds with individuals and organizations dealing with DMST and CSEC.

Human slavery has existed for centuries. Abolitionists and human rights advocates have seen little progress toward eradicating the human suffering and misery associated with modern-day slavery. Human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation presents many challenges and a different set of problems for civil society. Framing the issue solely in terms of modern-day slavery and as a human rights violation is one of the complexities associated with mitigating the problem. The most recent attention given to illegal immigration and national security efforts has diluted the resources needed to address the problem of sex trafficking and has been a contributing factor in fewer prosecutions for human trafficking.

Legislation intended to protect the victims of abuse has done little in terms of appreciable decreases in the numbers of women and children enslaved within the commercial sex trade. Human trafficking cases must be tried in the courts so that precedence can be set and victims can achieve restitution and recovery for the heinous crimes they endured. Laws must focus on human trafficking and not dilute the injustice with other morally objectionable criminal activities such as prostitution.

Human trafficking and sexual exploitation are not isolated incidents of abuse but rather an underground criminal activity third only to the weapons and drug trade. Human trafficking occurs in all areas of the globe (Aronowitz, 2001; U. S. Department of State, 2011). Sex trafficking is increasing on the domestic front as economic hardship becomes more severe, and sexual demand for young women and children escalates. Reduction strategies that address collaboration between law enforcement, community awareness campaigns, and educational opportunities for potential victims and offenders will be necessary to combating sex trafficking in the 21st century.

Human trafficking, DMST, and CSEC are fundamentally a collective action problem. There is no magic bullet for the wicked social problem of exploitation but rather a dire need to address and approach the issue from a collective partnership vantage point. Human trafficking cannot be mitigated on a global or local scale simply by implementing a single portion of identified best practices. A change necessary to the overall outlook of human trafficking requires working together collectively. To ensure the process of working toward mitigation of human trafficking can be realized, engaging in discourse across boundaries is essential. A change in the thought process related to human trafficking is paramount to becoming informed citizens, not just consumers. The conceptual shift that children are victims and not prostitutes is essential to how society moves forward with strategies for mitigation. At the state and local levels, complacency has no role in protecting a vital resource: young children. A choice needs to be made to protect these victims. Not addressing DMST and CSEC is an American leadership failure.

Organizations involved in combatting DMST and CSES must network and partner with other organizations seeking similar goals or outcomes. This research identified what organizations are currently doing to promote the community connections. Using the knowledge that participants bring to the table helps identify areas of common interest and strengths, allowing for the connection of dissimilar organizations to reach a common goal of reducing or mitigating DMST and CSEC in the community. Innovation and trust will be the guiding elements for revamping how organizations maneuver through the dark and dangerous underground world of human trafficking. A model and framework for coordinating community responses has been implemented nationwide to address the complex social issue of domestic violence.

This research is relevant in that DMST and CSEC continues to plague communities. The method incorporated into this research runs parallel to what other researchers have used to collect data: face-to-face interviews with first responders and service providers. This research addressed the gap in the literature in terms of determining how organizations collaborate across organizational boundaries to combat this most egregious crime against youth.

Chapter 3 presents an overview of the research design used for this research. Included in Chapter 3 are the rationale and justification for selecting the qualitative inquiry of case study as the research method. Additional information will include my role as a researcher, sampling strategies and data collection procedures, interviewing techniques, ethical considerations, and identified aspects of positive social change.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to describe the experiences, knowledge, and perceptions of individuals associated with combatting DMST and CSEC. The focus was on the challenges and barriers to victim identification and mitigation of this crime in a metropolitan area. In addition, this research investigated whether there are areas for developing or enhancing collaboration and partnerships between and among agencies that serve this underrepresented population. This research determined the progress made within a metropolitan community on the West Coast in developing partnerships across agency boundaries since the enactment of the TVPA 2000 and the inclusion of partnerships in 2010 (U. S. Department of State, 2010) as part of the arsenal to combat human trafficking in all its forms.

Chapter 3 is divided into seven sections. The first section contains an explanation of the design of the study and questions relevant to the research. The second section contains a discussion of the research method and rationale for choosing the method. In the third section, I clarify my role as . In the fourth section, I describe the methodology, the sampling strategy, and the population of the study. The research grounds for choosing specific individuals within an organization are included in this section. Then, the fifth section details data collection methods. The sixth section contains a discussion of data analysis techniques. Finally, the seventh section contains an examination of ethical considerations for the study.

Design and Rationale of the Study

The goal was to make thematic connections among the participants and to gain an understanding of their experiences, knowledge, and perceptions of the world of DMST and CSEC in relation to how each organization connected to the larger network to partner with different organizations. To understand the experience of individuals involved in organizations working with children who have been commercially trafficked for sex, I sought to understand their subjective understanding of the situation. The best way to gain understanding of the magnitude and diversity of an individual's experience is by using interviewing as the chief investigative method (as cited in Seidman, 2006). The following research questions were developed in order to understand the experiences, knowledge, and perceptions of individuals working across organizational boundaries within the community to address the "wicked" social problem of DMST and CSEC. For interview questions and potential follow-up probes, see Appendix A.

Research Questions

Understanding Barriers to Victim Identification

1. What are the best practices for and barriers to identifying child victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation in this community?

Understanding Barriers to Mitigation of DMST and CSEC

2. What are the best practices for and barriers to mitigating human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children in this community?

Understanding Government's Role

3. How can government facilitate changes in policies and laws to reduce human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children?

Collaborative Networks and Partnerships

4. What would need to happen between collaborative networks and partnerships in order to be more effective and efficient in the discourse to identify victims, mitigate barriers, and follow best practices?

Case Study

This research was a single case study using a face-to-face interviewing approach to data acquisition. Open-ended questions were asked during the interview. Follow-up or exploratory questions lent themselves to further investigation. Creswell (2007) offered insightful tips on how qualitative research designs allied with appropriate methodologies can garner the desired outcome in terms of reliable, credible, and valid research results. The research questions manifested from the deep desire to understand a problem based on the human experience with a focus on a "qualitative understanding of behavior rather than [a] quantitative" one (Moustakas, 1994, p. 105). To further the line of reasoning that case studies hold fundamental insights into an individual's experiences, Merriam (2009) identified a case study as the research method that allows for intensive study of an individual or specific context.

According to Merriam (2009), case study research has distinguishing characteristics that set it apart from other methods of study. Specifically, case studies are particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic (Merriam, 2009). A particularistic attribute

refers to a setting or phenomenon with a generalized focus on questions, situations, or puzzling situations. The descriptive aspect of a case study relies on a robust and rich accounting of the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 2009). Finally, the heuristic elements of understanding of the phenomenon under study can bring new insights that confirm or contradict what is known about a topic (Merriam, 2009). This investigation relied on these special features or characteristics of case study research. Subsequently, this method enabled me to gain an understanding of ways that results could potentially shed light on the phenomenon under study that would otherwise not be appreciated.

Although the method of case study is viewed as a subjective investigation of experience and interpretation, it allows for nuanced understanding that quantitative methods disavow. Seidman (2006) characterized the use of interviewing in qualitative research as "ways of knowing" and gaining a deeper understanding of the subject under study (p. ix). Case study is a representation of reality that has been socially constructed, and the participants explain reality as they know it. Case study investigation can reveal significant changes to the organizational climate that have occurred over time.

Yin (2009) described using case study research when an investigator is interested in assessing contemporary events in-depth and in real time. Case study is an inductive qualitative method of understanding—going from the specific to the general. Based on the framework suggested of case study inquiry (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995; Trochim & Donnelly, 2007; Yin, 2009), I argued that DMST and CSEC appropriately fit the criteria for case study for the following reasons. One, the subject matter is relatively new in modern terms. Two, DMST and CSEC are undoubtedly complex and sensitive in nature.

Three, there is a need to understand more fully the challenges and experiences of individuals working in the field. Four, the use of a structured format may not gain the insights necessary to moving forward in the fight against DMST and CSEC. Five, the use of an inductive model of inquiry helped identify the diversity of the situation based on the agency individuals. Finally, to understand and construct meaningful relationships between and among participants, interpretive case study offered the most robust exploration of their experiences, knowledge, and perceptions.

Contained in the central concept of case study is the idea of a contemporary phenomenon studied in a real-life context (Yin, 2009). I incorporated not only contemporary issues, but also the idea of freedom into the overall framework of this case study. Freedom implies that I have minimal control over what the participant says by developing open-ended questions, allowing the participant the freedom to express his or her thoughts, views, and experiences, unhampered by me. Freedom also implies that Iwill not attempt to predict or prejudge what will be disclosed from the participant. Therefore, I created an environment that was conducive to open and honest dialogue. Merriam (2009) offered that interpretive research is "socially constructed" (p. 8). As a socially constructed phenomenon, interpretive case study allows for the use of multiple socially constructed realities and is not limited to one perspective (Merriam, 2009). I argued that in the case of DMST and collaborative networks, the use of a single case study was the most appropriate method to determine barriers to victim identification and barriers to mitigation that participants experience in their daily lives. Furthermore, the magnitude of

the impact that networks and partnerships have on the phenomenon under study was discovered by the use of a single case study methodology.

Justification of Qualitative Method

Through language, there is meaning made of the topic under investigation. Language, a socially constructed phenomenon and communication tool, can have a wide variety of meanings and significance to different people. Interviewing allows for a more in-depth understanding of the experiences of the individual while affirming the value of the individual (Seidman, 2006). Investigating how research participants describe their experiences, knowledge, and perceptions while having the ability to compare similar and dissimilar experiences can help inform the larger community that is aggressively addressing issues of DMST and CSEC.

A quantitative research survey questionnaire was considered for this research; however, due to the topic under investigation, it was determined that no validated surveys had been constructed that focus on collaboration between organizations that address commercial sex trafficking of children. Given the lack of a validated survey—coupled with the fact that interviewing garners a more robust and deeper understanding of the subject under investigation—such a methodology was deemed inappropriate for determining answers to research questions based on the experiences, knowledge, and perceptions of individuals addressing the wicked social problem of DMST and CSEC.

A mixed method of investigation using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies was also considered. The determining factor against the mixed-method approach was the scope of the questions. According to Trochim and Donnelly (2007), in

a mixed-method model of investigation, the objective is to have both the qualitative data and the quantitative data answer the proposed question. Although mixed methods have been used in prior studies of human trafficking, their focus was not on the collaboration of networks and partnerships (Estes & Weiner, 2001; Shared Hope International, n.d.; Williamson et al., 2009).

A qualitative method was selected as the research method based on the questions posed. Further, respondents' answers to integrated questions were juxtaposed within their role in the phenomenon and how their contributions to defeat commercial sex trafficking intersected across and spanned institutional boundaries. Barriers to identification of victims, mitigation of sexual exploitation of children, and coordination between multidimensional agencies were required in order to understand the magnitude of commercial sex trafficking in a metropolitan area. Collaborative network functionality has been studied and was a source of information for this research. Research questions were developed for this research that were directed at understanding how organizations function within organizational boundaries as well as how they operate in a collaborative network or partnership.

Justification of Case Study Design

There were several qualitative research designs considered for this research; however, based on the questions I developed, the methodology of a single case study investigation best suited the framework for answering the designed questions. Creswell (2007) offered four other qualitative research designs: narrative research, grounded theory, ethnography, and phenomenology. Whereas each research method offered a

distinct advantage, the scope of this investigation met the criteria for a single case study investigation. A brief description of the alternate methods is presented below.

Narrative research focuses on the experience of a single individual, with a resulting story or "narrative" of the individual's life (Creswell, 2007). Perhaps if I had been conducting an investigation of a survivor's account of DMST and CSEC, this research method would have been an appropriate selection, one that would have supplemented current knowledge; however, the scope of this investigation was multidimensional. Therefore, narrative research was not the method that would have garnered the multidimensional aspects of the research questions.

Alternately, grounded theory was considered for this investigation. The defining difference between grounded theory and other qualitative research designs is that when one is concluding the latter, an emerging theory is formulated (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Incorporating a grounded theory approach to knowing requires that after data are collected, collated, coded, and synthesized, a theory is developed. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), the newly developed theory must have applicability to prediction and explanation of behaviors and situations. It was not the intent of this research to develop a theory per se, but rather to work within the existing structure to determine areas for improving outcomes and accomplishing common goals and a vision of a collaborative network or partnership.

Ethnography was considered as a research methodology; however, the magnitude of diversity stemming from various individuals and organizations that interface with the issue of DMST and CSEC was the deterring factor when constructing the design and

scope of this research. Ethnography requires the researcher to become a participant in interactions with people and situations. Ethnography focuses on the culture of the phenomenon, including all aspects of the environment and interactions of the participants. Ethnography concentrates on describing and interpreting patterns within cultures (Creswell, 2007). The intent of this research was not to actively participate in the environment but rather, as Babbie (2007) stated, to understand the dilemmas and barriers of human interaction with others. Such is the situation with case study investigations.

Finally, the research strategy of investigation using a phenomenological approach was considered; but again, the scope of a phenomenological study is limited to the lived experiences of an individual. Although rich information could be obtained using this method (Merriam, 2009), I determined that the broader picture using the method of a single case study of investigation as the framework for answering the research questions would be the most appropriate of all of the methods discussed above. Albeit, many of the strategies used in phenomenological analysis run parallel to the data analysis techniques incorporated into this research.

Qualitative Research and Positive Social Change

The implications for positive social change include the development of comprehensive strategies inclusive of prevention, prosecution, and protection for victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Expansion of knowledge in this area will be useful for law enforcement, criminal justice, policy makers, communities, and nonprofit organizations that assist potential victims in prevention strategies and actual victims in rescue and recovery efforts. It was anticipated that this research would broaden

understandings of the phenomenon of sex trafficking in this community and develop a strategic framework of networks for collaboration between and among organizations that deal directly with the various facets of this hidden crime. Presentation of identified best practices is included as part of the case study findings based on shared information from study participants.

Role of the Researcher

Human trafficking has been an interest of mine for over 12 years. In undergraduate studies, I had a case management project whose aim was to identify and report on an issue that involved various aspects of a current social issue. After researching several topics, I located information about international human trafficking and the numerous countries addressing a plethora of issues in relation to this crime. It was at this time that images of young children being trafficked for sexual servitude struck a chord of disquieting magnitude, causing a pledge to myself to somehow, someday, make a difference in the life of a vulnerable child. This research was undertaken in an attempt to fulfill that pledge.

In order to fully engage with the research, a researcher must be able to disengage or bracket his or her understanding of an issue in order to understand the issue free of bias, prejudgment, and preconceived notions of the reality within the issue or thing (Moustakas, 1994). Through this type of separation, the experiences of the individual being interviewed for his or her perceptions, understandings, and new knowledge can be received without the filters of one's own experiences, thoughts, and knowledge of a subject. Bracketing allowed me to experience the phenomenon in new and fresh ways

unhampered by the past (Moustakas, 1994). The role that I played was strictly that of an observer, as I do not work in the field of DMST and CSEC but rather have an interest in addressing this wicked social ill.

As the researcher, I had no professional connections to any of the research participants. This fact may be viewed as a disadvantage, but was considered an advantage from the viewpoint that I had the ability to bracket preconceived ideas about what participants divulged making it an easier task to obtain unfiltered responses than if casual, formal, or professional relationships had existed.

Minimizing Researcher Bias

Qualitative studies often deal with intense emotions and experiences. These emotions or experiences can be brought to the research by the researcher or transferred to the researcher through the research participants, thus creating bias. To minimize bias, the researcher must set aside prior beliefs about the topic under study, thereby reducing the amount of interference from the researcher's own experiences (Merriam, 2009). Such setting aside of prior beliefs is what Moustakas (1994) has artfully described as an "epoch," a Greek word meaning to abstain from or stay away (p. 85). Yin (2009) proposed that in order to avoid bias, the researcher should not attempt to substantiate a predetermined idea or opinion about the topic, but rather accept the contrary. Only by providing for the contrary view will the study reduce the likelihood of bias.

Reducing researcher bias is to keep an open mind and avoid preconceptions. Focus attention on the participant and what the participant has said and avoid thinking of how you, as researcher, think about the statements. To this end, Seidman (2006)

suggested using the term "explore" as opposed to the verb "probe" (p. 83). Explore denotes an equal standing, and probe indicates a power position that can lead to researcher bias (Seidman, 2006). Another technique, as described in the literature, to aid in the reduction of researcher bias is incorporating a technique called "reflexivity." Reflexivity differs from reflection in that when someone is being reflexive, he or she is, in fact, a part of the social construct as opposed to being reflective and looking inward (Maxwell, 2005). Maxwell (2005) has equated researcher bias as bringing your own background and identity to the design. Therefore, setting aside or bracketing predetermined notions about what something is or is not is key to gaining new and fresh knowledge about the subject of study.

Methodology

Sampling Strategy

A purposeful sampling of individuals associated with commercial sex trafficking of children was included in this case study design. The participants in this research design were from 10 different organizations that participated in some form of prevention, prosecution, protection, and policy efforts against commercial sex trafficking of children. The organizations and selection process of individuals included in this research are described below. According to Seidman (2006), purposeful sampling using a technique of "maximum variation" will lead to a more robust understanding of the topic being reviewed (p. 52). Maximum variation is a technique for identifying populations. Maximum variation of organizations involved in prevention, prosecution, protection, and policy arenas questions was developed, and criteria for participant inclusion in the study

were determined. One individual from local organizations was selected to participate in the interview process to discuss barriers to victim identification and mitigation of DMST and CSEC. His or her perceptions of partnerships and collaborative network between and among the agencies that focus on commercial sex trafficking of children were included in the interview questions.

Each participant was asked open-ended questions that facilitated better understanding of the barriers to identifying child victims of commercial sex trafficking and the barriers to mitigating commercial sex trafficking of children. In the aggregate, the responses—garnered from a variety of participants in varied organizations—led to the discovery of identifiable changes that may enhance collaboration and increase partnership relationships in a multiorganizational network that addresses DMST and CSEC. A framework for building upon best practices was created based on information revealed by the research participants.

As stated previously, DMST and CSEC are not issues that affect only a few organizations, but rather cross through the community and intersect with establishments and companies that deal directly with this issue. A total of 10 organizations identified in the local community were invited to participate in this research. The goal was to secure an interview with at least one person from each organization. The targeted number of research participants ranged between 10 to 12. Participants were selected from identified organizations involved with some stage along the trafficking chain. Organizations representing some aspect of the fight against DMST and CSEC in the community, and research participants representing the various organizations, are described below.

Participant Selection

Participants were invited to take part in this research based on their experience working with victims of DMST and minors who have suffered from CSE. Participants met the following criteria: (a) had the experience of working with this population of victims within the last five years, (b) worked for an organization focused on providing services to this population, and (c) had knowledge of what the issues are to victim identification and the barriers to mitigating DMST and CSEC.

The following organizations were purposefully selected based on their ability to represent and interface with the population of DMST and CSEC victims. Prior research (Estes & Weiner, 2001; Penry, 2011; Smith et al., 2009; Vardaman & Franker, 2009) used a similar participant structure to answer specific research questions. For this research, participants from each of the organizations were selected on the basis of operational knowledge within the organization. Executive directors, directors, and program directors were included as well as a police sergeant and a state legislator. One representative from each organization was invited to participate. It is important to capture the experiences, knowledge, and perceptions of the selected individuals, as they are the point people for creating or maintaining partnerships and collaboration between organizational boundaries.

Law Enforcement

The first Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) selected to participate was the Oakland Police Department. A member of the Division of Child Exploitation Unit was selected to participate based on the front line nature of his or her work. As front line and often first

responders to calls of child abuse or unlawful activity, law enforcement members hold perspectives that are critical to understanding not only the scope of the problem but also the health of collaboration and partnerships with other organizations confronting DMST and CSEC in the community.

Nonprofit Organizations

Four nonprofit organizations, including advocacy and treatment organizations, were included, as they are a vital component to this research. The nonprofit organizations that participated in this research included MISSSEY, which stands for motivating, inspiring, supporting, and serving sexually exploited youth. MISSSEY is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that sexually abused children are recognized as victims and not criminals. MISSSEY provided direct services to CSEC, and training and workshops for professionals and community groups. The executive director of MISSSEY participated in the research.

Courage House, a long-term residential facility for victims of DMST and CSE was selected based on its involvement with the population under investigation. The program director of this organization was the targeted participant within the organization. The rationale for selecting a residential facility was to determine the connections and interactions with other organizations within the larger community that are also addressing victims' needs. Perceptions of barriers to victim identification and barriers to the mitigation of DMST and CSEC were invaluable in identifying best practices. In addition, understanding collaboration strategies across organizational boundaries was paramount to appreciating challenges.

Bay Area Women Against Rape (BAWAR) was a nonprofit organization that provided a multitude of services to victims of rape and DMST. The executive director of the local BAWAR organization was the person invited to participate in this research. As advocates for addressing problems associated with sexual assault, BAWAR was an active community participant in addressing victims' needs and community education regarding sexual assault. BAWAR provided support to victims during medical and jurisdictional interventions.

Covenant House, a homeless youth shelter located in the community, added to the perspective of the nonprofit sector addressing DMST and CSEC, as many victims of DMST and CSE are homeless youth. The inclusion of this organization was relevant in that it represented a key aspect of root cause that would otherwise not be addressed. As in the aforementioned nonprofit organizations, the executive director was invited to participate in this research.

Community Organization

Oakland Community Organization, a grass roots organization that organized Safe Streets Safe Kid awareness events at the local level, was invited to participate. This organization represented the diversity of the community combatting DMST and CSEC. The spokesperson for this organization, although invited to participate in this research declined to be interviewed. I viewed grass roots efforts to protect the children within the community as a starting point for further development of protection and prevention strategies across the community as a whole. The nonparticipation of this group of the community will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

State Legislature

The seventh organization selected was the California State Legislature. A State Assembly member from Oakland who was responsible for drafting and sponsoring antitrafficking legislation was identified as a necessary participant. California AB 22 was signed into law in 2005 and has been the defining legislation for human trafficking in the state since its enactment. Although the perspectives of this individual would have greatly enhanced the understanding of mitigation barriers to DMST and CSEC, the interview was declined.

Federal Law Enforcement

One representative from the FBI's local task force on human trafficking was included in the participant pool and represented the federal government's interests and involvement in DMST and CSEC. The participant had worked in the field for several years and collaborated with local service providers within the targeted community.

Juvenile Justice

The ninth organization was HEAT Watch, an organization supported by the district attorney's office that addresses human exploitation and trafficking. Perspectives of collaboration and partnerships from this division of law enforcement in terms of protection and prosecution cannot be understated.

The 10th organization to be included in this research, the Juvenile Justice Center, declined an interview.

Child Protection

The medical director for Child Protective Services (CPS) at a local community children's hospital rounded out the panel of participants for this research. This individual was a leading expert in child abuse and neglect. The perspectives that this individual had on the problems associated with barriers to victim identification and mitigation of DMST and CSEC within a community led to a profound understanding of the challenges in supporting this group of underrepresented individuals.

Participant Contact

The diversity of the research participants and the varied roles they encompassed supported obtaining a maximum variation on perspectives. Creswell (2007) offered that maximum variation—which a researcher determines at the beginning of a study—would reap an increase in the different perspectives of a given topic. Because this research was designed around a single case study, the diversity of participants representing numerous organizations helped elicit maximum saturation and provide for variation (Creswell, 2007). Notwithstanding, Smith et al. (2009) determined that the sample size and saturation point for case studies is less important than the identification and enrollment of key participants. The maximum variation technique as described by Seidman (2006) includes both sites and people in the design structure. This model was achieved within this research design. In as much as Creswell, Smith et al., and Seidman agreed upon the need for variation or difference in order to adequately address the key concept of maximum variation as a sampling strategy, it is important to point out the viability of this research relied on quality data. Consequently, due to the nature and variation of

individuals and organizations chosen for this research, that is, ample or maximum variation, which represents quality of data, was achieved.

Initial contact with each of the prospective agencies was through what is referred to as a cold call technique. A cold call transcript was developed for this method of participant enrollment (Appendix C). Names of specific individuals within the organizations that deal directly with victims of trafficking were gathered from news reports, both media and print, and the various organizational websites. The initial cold call was directly to the individual whose name was gathered from publically available secondary sources.

The location of the interview was negotiated at the time of interview agreement. Prospective participants were offered a neutral place in which the interview could be conducted, such as the interviewee's place of business, a library, or a coffee shop. An email was sent to the interviewee as a form of follow-up confirmation of the interview date, time, and location. Once an interview date, time, and location had been secured, an informed consent form was emailed to the participant for review and signature. Participants were requested to review, electronically sign, and return the informed consent form via email to me prior to the interview, or participants elected to bring the signed informed consent form with them at the time of the interview. I had blank copies of the informed consent form available to participants in the event that a participant failed to return or bring a signed consent form to the interview location. The content of the informed consent form was reviewed with participants prior to initiating the interview.

Given the gap in the literature on the functional capacity of networks and partnerships with organizations dealing with DMST and CSEC, this research addressed that gap beginning at the local level.

Data Collection/Instrumentation

Face-to-face interviews were conducted; open-ended questions were asked of the participants. A digital audio recording device was used to record the participants' responses. A back-up recording device and additional batteries were available to me during the interviews. The interviews lasted approximately one hour. Creswell (2007) has recommended the use of an interview protocol (Appendix D).

Interview questions I developed were written so that the experiences and working knowledge of DMST and CSEC of the research participant could be fully appreciated and aggregated across multiple disciplines. The research questions were supplemented with corresponding open-ended interview questions and possible probe or exploratory follow-up questions that helped glean a more robust understanding of the participant's initial explanation or answer to the original question. Participants were asked to share any best practices that their organization incorporated.

Within two weeks following the interview, the digitally recorded responses to the interview questions were transcribed verbatim into a word document by a professional transcriptionist who was required to sign a confidentiality agreement (Appendix F). Once the transcription was completed, the document was returned to me via thumb drive for inclusion in the study.

NVivo software, student version 10, was used to interpret and deconstruct transcribed interviews and field notes. Subtle aspects of the data were revealed when themes emerged through the use of NVivo software. NVivo software has the capability to code, query, import, and provide a visual representation of the data collected. This combination of functions enabled me to explore and reflect on the meaning of the data and provide insight and evidence on the topic of DMST and CSEC within the community of study.

Immediately following the interview, I made field notes that accompany the digital recording. Impressions, thoughts, and observations regarding the participants' responses and nonverbal presentations were included for the record. Written notes were not kept during the interview process, as this may have been distracting for the participant. Field notes were written and then transcribed into NVivo within four hours of the interview. Selected journal entries of my reactions to the process are included in Appendix H of the completed research document. Once the interview had been transcribed, the participant was offered an emailed copy of the transcription to verify content and accuracy.

Interview Techniques

Smith et al. (2009) have presented several principles of successful interviewing, including a dialogue with the participants—specifically, demonstrating to the participants how the researcher is interested in hearing about the experiences that they bring to the table. Reassuring the participant that there are "no right or wrong answers" to the interview questions is paramount for gaining a crucial level of trust between researcher

and participant and allowing open and honest dialogue about the latter's experiences (Smith et al., 2009, p. 63). The researcher must convey to the research participant that there is no set agenda but rather a desire to understand his or her experiences, perspectives, and recommendations for change. Smith et al. also suggested that it is imperative for the researcher to create an environment in which research participants feel relaxed and are given the ability to tell their stories in depth with reflective accuracy and without fear of reprisal or interruption.

One technique incorporated during the interview process that reduced distractions was the memorization of the research questions. Creswell (2007) explained the importance of maintaining eye contact during the interview. This technique demonstrates to the participant that the researcher is listening intently to his or her stories, thereby decreasing the potential for distractions.

The importance of being fully present during the interview cannot be understated. van Manen (1990) suggested that the approach to understanding is made possible by the researcher's ability to be sensitive to what was heard and what was not heard, and paying attention to the tonality of the participant. Language limits us in expression; yet by combining the nuanced aspects of interaction, a fuller reality emerges.

Data Analysis

Saldaña (2009) offered, "Coding is not a precise science," but rather "primarily an interpretive act" (p. 4)—one in which codes and labels placed on data are nothing more than links to the meaning of the data. Furthermore, Saldaña has explained coding as a heuristic form of explanation. Seidman (2006) referred to reduction and coding as a

process in which a researcher uses his or her judgment about what is integrated into the research analysis that allows for decisions and conclusions regarding what is meaningful or important. The process of analysis includes a series of steps that lead to the final discovery of the meaning of the research (Moustakas, 1994). Following the framework of data analysis offered by Moustakas (1994), I applied the methods of reduction and coding to the transcripts obtained from participants.

Horizonalization is a technique used for discovery of meaning and experience on a continual basis. Moustakas (1994) has explained that horizonal investigation allows the researcher to continually discover new information and understanding from the same experience—no boundaries, and no limits. To reach this never-ending end point, the researcher must be willing and able to experience the situation from the vantage point of self-awareness and self-reflexivity. Horizonalization of data occurs when the researcher treats each piece of data as having equal weight and importance (Merriam, 2009). During phase one of the analysis, I had a professional transcriptionist transcribe verbatim the interview recording, noting any extended pauses or unusual nonverbal mannerisms. To garner a deeper understanding of the text, the written record was read and reread by myself in its entirety to understand the essence and feeling portrayed by the participants (Smith et al., 2009). Additionally, I listened to the audio recordings while reading the transcription. During the second phase of analysis, a preliminary grouping of text was performed. According to Moustakas this work is referred to as horizonal experience. By extracting the horizonal experience, clusters and themes will emerge that enabled me to identify and illuminate repetitive and irrelevant data.

Once phase two was completed, emerging patterns and themes in the answers to the interview questions became evident and, therefore, a textual description of the experience was created (van Manen, 1998). During this phase of analysis, I substantially reduced the volume of data into patterns and themes that, although reduced, created a complex canopy of relationships between categories, participants, and the topic under investigation (Smith et al., 2009). Chronological ordering of the themes is presented as the themes emerged from the transcripts. The final phase of analysis was the integration of both the structural (how) and textural (what) descriptions obtained from the transcripts. A composite description includes the essence of the participant's experience in how and what the participant experienced (Creswell, 2007). By utilizing NVivo 10 qualitative software, I was able to easily establish major themes and identify discrepant cases. These intense and detailed data analysis techniques created a clearer picture of the lived experience.

Validity and Reliability of Data Collection

One method of assuring validity of research is to triangulate the data. Creswell (2007) offered that triangulation provides multiple perspectives from different sources that together present a validated theme or premise. Because this research involved multiple organizations, the concept of triangulation of data from various sources was met. One triangulation strategy for ensuring validity included member checking as a measure. Member checking provides participants the opportunity to verify content and accuracy, which in turns lends itself to trustworthiness about the actual data collected (Creswell, 2007). Member checking was included in this research by having participants review an

emailed or mailed copy of the interview transcript, make comments about the accuracy of the actual content, and return comments or corrections to me. Additionally, Creswell offered that validation in qualitative studies considers the accuracy of the findings. Hence, having participants review the verbatim transcript secured confirmation of accuracy. Each participant was offered member checking with an option to review an electronic or paper copy of the written transcript of the interview. Participants had the ability to decline member checking. Each participant who agreed to participate in member checking was informed that he or she would have two weeks to review the transcript for accuracy. If, at the end of two weeks, there was no response from the participant, the transcript stood as written and became part of the data set.

Reliability was maintained throughout the research by keeping detailed field notes of my observations and thoughts post interview with participants. Audio recordings and verbatim transcription were also utilized as a measure of reliability. Creswell (2007) stated that robust descriptions allow the reader to determine the transferability of data to other settings. This technique of transferability was useful when analyzing the data for commonalities across organizational boundaries.

Equally important for valid and reliable research is the concept of maximum variation. Maximum variation involves purposeful variation or diversity of the sample (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). As an example, this research was designed to allow for variation and diversity of the sample by incorporating multiple types of organizations that respond to the issue of DMST and CSEC. Consequently, this richness of diversity and variation fostered reliability.

Ethical Procedures

The foremost attribute of solid ethical behaviors during research is to do no harm. Smith et al. (2009) presented ethics as a "dynamic" process that must be adhered to throughout the process of data collection and data analysis (p. 53). Sensitive topics, such as DMST and CSEC, must address a vibrant awareness of the research participants under study. To ensure optimal ethical procedures, I complied with the following process for participant safety.

First, prior to any research inquiry of a potential participant, Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved all research questions and methods of data. The Walden University IRB approval number (09-26-13-0125678) was obtained prior to data collection.

Second, participants meeting research criteria were informed of consent requirements prior to participation in the study. Informed consent was discussed and obtained prior to the start of the interview process (Appendix F). An electronic copy of the consent was emailed to participants prior to the interview. Participants either returned the signed consent electronically, or I collected the consent at the time of the interview. I maintained a signed Informed Consent document. Participants were also informed of the nature of the questions prior to the interview.

Third, all participants were informed of the requirements of confidentiality, and how I planned to maintain this aspect of research. The researcher offered anonymity to the research participant; however, no guarantee of confidentiality was offered (Smith et al., 2009). Although I was unable to guarantee confidentiality, systems were in place that

minimized the risk of a confidentiality breach. Participants were notified that their privacy would be ensured by maintaining the following ethical research standards: (a) data were transcribed into and stored on a password protected computer, (b) only dissertation committee members and myself were allowed access to the data, (c) no personal identifying marks were used that may have revealed a participant's identity, and (d) no participant identifiers were maintained other than the organization. Written transcripts of interviews were maintained on a thumb drive and kept in a fireproof home safe. Audio recordings will be maintained in the same manner for up to five years, after which time the data will be erased from the storage devices, and all records will be destroyed. During the transcription process, the computer will be password coded. The researcher is the only individual who will have access to the data sets.

Fourth, the potential community benefits to participating in the research were disclosed. Participants were informed of the potential to make positive social change in the realm of DMST and CSEC in their community. Personal benefits in terms of financial gain were not offered.

Fifth, participants were advised that participation in this research was strictly voluntary and that at any time during the process they had the ability to withdraw from the study without consequence. This event never occurred.

Sixth, participants were informed that if they had any questions regarding the interview scope or the scope of the research project, these questions would be addressed with the participant before the actual interview convened.

Finally, contact information was available for participants that included my information as well as contact information for Walden University for any questions that may have arisen regarding the research or participants' rights.

Summary

The goal of this qualitative research was to discover and understand the experiences, knowledge, and perceptions of individuals working across multiple organizations within the same target population and toward the same objective. The qualitative methodology of case study inquiry best suited this research project due to the broad and robust nature of the research structure (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). When a topic has not been the subject of much research, a case study is the method that will assist in closing the gaps (Stake, 1995). DMST and CSEC are fraught with many different aspects that cross many different organizational boundaries. The literature revealed a gap in the knowledge of how organizations work collaboratively to address DMST and CSEC. Only through the collaborative process can understandings of the scope and magnitude of difficulties and barriers organizations have in addressing these issues be realized.

This research was designed to incorporate different organizations at the federal, state, and local level that are on the front lines of managing this social problem. Questions were developed to address barriers and effectiveness of the selected organizations at identifying victims and strategies for DMST and CSEC reduction—with the ultimate goal of mitigation. A determination of how well organizations are able to

cooperate and collaborate across organizations was a key component and the conceptual framework of this research.

Participants from diverse professional backgrounds were selected for his or her role as advocates for child safety and welfare. An interview protocol was developed for face-to-face interviews, which was the method of data collection. Responses to research questions were transcribed, coded, labeled, and analyzed individually and collectively. NVivo software was an adjunct to the data analysis.

Validity was maintained through the triangulation technique of member checking (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009; Seidman, 2006; Yin, 2009). Meticulous recordings of researcher field notes and observations ensured reliability. In addition, triangulation procedures of member checking and multiple interviews assisted in assuring validity of the research.

Procedures that meet criteria of ethical research were in place to ensure the highest standards of principled research. Approval from the Institutional Review Board of Walden University was obtained before research proceeded. Informed consent was obtained from participants prior to the interview; confidentiality requirements were discussed with participants. No coercion to participate or false pretense of monetary rewards was extended. Participants were made aware of their ability to withdraw at any time.

As stated previously, the implications for positive social changes included the development of comprehensive strategies inclusive of prevention, prosecution, and protection for victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. The expansion of

knowledge about DMST and CSEC is invaluable. The expansion of knowledge will be useful for law enforcement, criminal justice, policy makers, communities, and nonprofit organizations that assist potential victims, as well as victims in recovery. This study broadens the understanding of the problems associated with combatting sex trafficking and development of a network for collaboration between and among organizations that deal directly with the various aspects of this hidden crime. By identifying techniques used by various organizations to identify victims, and working across agency boundaries, best practices emerged from the aggregate.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to examine the phenomenon of collaborative networks and partnerships between agencies dealing with the social issue of DMST and CSEC in a major metropolitan area on the West Coast. This research determined whether there were areas for developing or enhancing collaboration and partnership between local government, law enforcement, and nonprofit organizations that serve the underrepresented victims of DMST and CSEC. The research questions were designed to garner information regarding the following: (a) best practices for and barriers to identification of child victims, (b) best practices for and barriers to mitigating DMST and CSEC in the community, (c) how government interventions might play a role in mitigation of DMST and CSEC, and (d) the role that collaborative networks and partnerships have in dealing with the wicked social issue of DMST and CSEC.

Chapter 4 contains the following content: descriptions of the setting in which participants were sourced; participant demographics; data collection methods and details for collecting data; data analyses that led to initial findings, including broad themes, emergent themes, and coding of information; the treatment of discrepant data; evidence of trustworthiness through the examination of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability; detailed results of the study; and finally, a summary of the study's findings.

Setting

Study participants were individuals working in public, private, and advocacy organizations that responded to and served domestic minors of sex trafficking. The criteria for selecting each of the organizations and individuals assisting young victims were required to incorporate boundary spanning as part of the assault on DMST and CSEC within the broader community. Participants were required to have over 5 years of experience in the field. Not all previously identified community partners participated in the research; this factor is discussed in the demographics section. Each research participant who did agree to be interviewed had a distinct point of view that depended on which organization he or she worked for in the community. These varying viewpoints revealed the larger picture of DMST and CSEC.

Demographics

A purposeful sampling of individuals working to combat DMST and CSEC was invited to participate in this research. A cold call telephone request was made to potential participants. A cold call telephone script (Appendix C) was used when discussing the research project and requesting participation. Each participant was selected based on organizational affiliation, years in the field, and a working knowledge of DMST and CSEC. A total of 12 people were invited to participate. One person declined an interview, stating that he did not feel that he was an appropriate subject. One individual agreed to participate but failed to show up at the agreed-upon interview date, time, and place. A request to reschedule the interview was made, with no response from the potential participant. Two potential participants who were contacted did not respond to repeated

requests over a 2-month period. Eight potential participants agreed to be interviewed. Table 1 indicates participants by gender and organization. To maintain confidentiality, each participant was identified using a numbering system (RP1, RP2, etc.).

Table 1

Individual Participant Demographics

	Sex	Years in field	Organization	Organization type
RP 1	Male	17	Child advocacy	Human service
RP 2	Female	20	Nonprofit	Development
RP 3	Female	14	Nonprofit	Housing
RP 4	Male	25	Criminal justice	Court
RP 5	Male	09	Nonprofit	Housing
RP 6	Female	10	Law enforcement	Local LEA
RP 7	Female	19	Law enforcement	Federal LEA
RP 8	Female	30	Nonprofit	Crisis center

The final group of eight individuals represented a broad cross-section of organizations addressing DMST and CSEC within the community under investigation.

Data Collection

Using the framework of case study design (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2009) face-to-face interviews were conducted over a 7-month period—between February 2014 and August 2014. The eight participants represented eight different organizations. Participants were asked the same set of interview questions (Appendix B). The interview questions differed from the research questions in being open ended, thus allowing the participant to share as much information as he or she wished. An interview protocol (Appendix D) was the format maintained during the interview process (Creswell, 2007).

Seven interviews were conducted at the participant's place of business, either in a conference room or his or her personal office. One interview was conducted at a coffee shop of the participant's choosing. Interviews ranged from 35 minutes to 65 minutes in

length, with an average interview recording time of 45 minutes. Each interview was audio recorded using a digital Sony recorder and later transcribed verbatim into a Word document by a transcriptionist. Detailed field notes were hand-written post interview, transcribed into a Word document, and subsequently uploaded along with audio files and participant transcripts into an NVivo database program for further analysis.

During the initial meeting and prior to commencing the interview, I discussed the overall objective of the research project with each of the research participants. An approved Walden IRB informed consent was reviewed with the participant, and a copy of the consent was given to each participant. Each participant was afforded the opportunity to ask questions before signing the consent form. Once the interview portion of the meeting had concluded, participants were asked if they had any further questions regarding the research; questions were answered to the participant's satisfaction. Post interview, a hand-written note was mailed to each participant to thank him or her personally for his or her time and expertise.

Within an hour of the conclusion of the interview, I hand wrote detailed field notes regarding the interview, including impressions, thoughts, and participants' verbal and nonverbal responses to the interview questions (Appendix G).

Data Analysis

Initially, each interview was analyzed and treated as a comprehensive single case study. Once this within-case analysis was completed, a cross-case analysis followed, allowing for a multiple-case study approach (Merriam, 2009). Audio recordings were reviewed and concurrently read with the transcript several times in order to gain clarity

and emphasis as gained by the individual participant's statements. This review was an iterative process that occurred numerous times during data analysis. Based on the research questions posed to participants, major themes were identified, labeled, and summarized individually—on a case-by-case basis—and then collectively, within the context of the question. Table 2 shows the 4Ps and indicates the principles, elements, and attributes of each component. Emergent themes were captured in a more in-depth review and as analysis of the individual data sets progressed.

Table 2

Themes: Principles and Attributes

Principles	Element	Attributes
Prevention	Root cause and demand	Develop prevention strategies for social development and sexual demand reduction through prevention strategies that focus on both educational opportunities and awareness programs at all levels of society.
Protection	Victim-centered approach	Protect victims from being revictimized by providing a safe environment, for both healing and reintegrating into society.
Prosecution	Legislation	Develop policies that effectively address both the supply and demand aspects of domestic minor sex trafficking.
Partnership	Community based	Develop relationships based on cooperation and collaboration between government sectors, organizations, businesses, and civil society.

A major thematic framework was created using broad coding representations for the 4Ps (Trafficking In Persons Report, 2010, 2011, & 2012). The major themes of prevention,

protection, prosecution, and partnership were used to create the research questions and were identified as major themes in participant answers.

Table 3 represents the inductive process and theme development based on the research questions. Horizontalization of data was classified across participants' responses to the research questions. As part of the horizonalization process, data were examined and treated as having equal weight. From this process of analysis, themes and clusters of themes were identified. Participant narratives were extracted and compared within themes, across themes, and in conjunction with the topic. Further reduction of data was accomplished with meticulous grouping of meaning revealed by the narratives and identified within the emergent patterns and themes. From this reduction process, the knowledge, experiences, and perceptions of the participants were appreciated. Many similarities across the participants' experiences were noted. Only one notable discrepancy was identified during the analysis. Similarities and discrepancies will be discussed further.

Table 3

Major Themes and Emergent Themes

Research question	Major themes	Emergent themes
What are the best practices for and barriers to identifying child victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation in this community?	Prevention Protection	Barriers Best practices Education Environment
What are the best practices for and barriers to mitigating human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children in this community?	Policy Prevention	Barriers Best practices Demand Education Environment Protection Victim needs
How can government facilitate changes in policies and laws to reduce human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children?	Policy Prosecution Protection	Policy and demand Policy and protection Education Leadership
What would need to happen between collaborative networks and partnerships in order to be more effective and efficient in the discourse to identify victims, mitigate barriers, and follow best practice?	Partnership	Boundaries Collaboration Coordination Culture Involvement Opportunities

Evidence of Trustworthiness

To ensure validity and reliability, and to preserve the integrity of the research as outlined in Chapter 3, specific research techniques were incorporated into the participant selection and data collection processes. A purposeful sampling of individuals from various organizations was used to increase trustworthiness and decrease systemic bias (Seidman, 2006). Using the technique of triangulation as described by Creswell (2007) facilitated the development of the various attributes of prevention, protection,

prosecution, and partnership. Incorporating the technique of triangulation from various sources led to an important aspect of dependability throughout the study.

Research techniques used to ensure validity and reliability in the study included member checking, detailed descriptions of themes, and bracketing of researcher bias. Credibility was established during the member-checking phase as each participant was mailed a copy of his or her verbatim transcript either by email or via the U.S. Postal Service. One participant declined to receive a copy of the interview transcript, stating, "That's fine, I don't need it." None of the participants returned the transcript with corrections.

The method of ensuring trustworthiness and transferability is demonstrated in the detailed description of theme development coupled with corresponding participant quotations that reflect the major and emergent themes as noted above. To enhance transparency, an interview transcript is included in Appendix I. This transcript will enable the reader to establish accuracy of interpretations, any undue influence by myself, and transferability and confirmability (Creswell, 2007).

Results

The results of the research are presented not only in relation to the question asked, but also by the corresponding answers by the participants. Various major and emergent themes are presented, as are examples of participant responses to open-ended research questions. Responses to questions regarding DMST and CSEC were submitted as evidence of the experiences that individuals encountered in their work environment.

There were a total of 16 different cases of DMST and CSEC discussed during the interviews with the eight research participants. Each case represented a slight variation on the specifics, lending credence to the complexity of the problem identified by Penry (2011), Smith et al. (2009), and Vardaman (2009). The horrific experiences of the young boys and girls cannot be understated. The young children, whose childhoods were disrupted and exploited, experienced repeated rapes, betrayal of innocence, extreme violence—in one case, resulting in a coma—and, in several cases, death. If a child is a runaway, is homeless, or lives in a toxic home environment, his or her chance of becoming a victim of predatory sexual exploitation increases. Many of the cases discussed had an underlying theme of family dysfunction, confirming what Estes and Weiner (2001) discovered in their cutting-edge research on sexually trafficked children.

Similarities were noted throughout the individual victim stories discussed by participants. Specifically, force, fear, and intimidation were used to control, exploit, and sexually abuse innocent children. Children as young as 6 years old were being sold for deviant sexual purposes and financial gain. Other young children were sex trafficked around the country, making detection of their plight even harder. The insidious nature of this most tragic abuse is illustrated in the following excerpt from RP3:

> Her mom sold her at 6 years old to her uncle. He had an international business, and 2 weeks out of almost every month, month and a half, she was going traveling under the guise of we want to show her the world, it's a family business, and we want to give her a broader education than just the classroom. And she was being trafficked from 6 years old to 23 is when she finally got out. That's her *entire life*.

RP4 revealed the following, which offers another example of the treacherous nature of CSEC:

> A homicide case involving a young woman from the southern part of our county who was 19 years old. She had been trafficked by the defendant. He had placed tattoos on her and had exploited her for a pretty good period of time. He was also known to have been the person that initially sort of broke in teenage girls into the life of sex trafficking. And in this particular case, this girl expressed a desire to leave him and, as a consequence, he murdered her.

Not all cases ended in such heartbreak and misfortune. Although each of the cases is unique and the cases had varying outcomes, the fact remains: Young children have been subjected to the darkest and most heinous side of the human experience.

Victim Identification

Research Question 1 was directed at determining best practices for and barriers to child victim identification. Children ensnared in the world of sex trafficking are difficult to identify for a variety of reasons. Barriers to identification include an unwillingness on the part of the victim to self-identify as a victim (Kotrla 2010), trauma bonding between victim and abuser (Raphael et al., 2010), and fear of retaliation by the abuser or the legal system (Logan et al., 2009). Again, participants were asked to discuss a case of DMST in which they were involved. The major themes for this question developed into prevention and protection. The emergent themes of best practice and barriers were extracted from the individual cases. In addition, education and environmental factors were components

identified during data analysis for Research Question 1. Participants had the following responses to some of the challenges of victim identification.

> RP1: A lot of these kids are hidden in plain sight.
>
> RP4: A large percentage of these girls don't even understand and appreciate their own exploitation.
>
> RP6: There's no cookie cutter, right? People want to know, what's a victim look like? It's like, it's a human. So it's complicated. You know what I mean? It's not like a statistic on paper where, it's black and white is so easy.

These statements confirm what Kotrla (2010) cited as an issue with victim identification, specifically, the inability to recognize the population at risk. In earlier works, Logan et al. (2009) explained that DMST and CSEC victims are hidden in plain sight.

Barriers to Victim Identification

When dealing with cases of DMST and CSEC, the barriers to victim identification are a result of the inability to recognize the symptoms of victimization (Newton et al., 2008) and deal with the issue head on. Young children are reticent to engage with the authorities when they are confronted with questions regarding sexual activities and relationships. RP1 very astutely stated:

> [These children] are quite resistant to necessarily being identified as trafficked victims. And a lot of people, for their own stuff, for lack of comfort level, lack of familiarity, would much rather embrace a don’t ask/don’t tell kind of mentality

which is obviously not helpful because people die. These kids exist and again they don't look any different than any other kid.

RP6 concurred with this statement by stating: "She's not going to self-identify as a victim." RP5 had another perspective relevant to barriers of victim identification. "Sometimes it's hard to tell who's domestic and who's foreign-born because of the diversity of our community. So, there's kind of a blur between domestic and international identifying a survivor just by looking at them. You can't, really." RP4 not only surmised that girls do not understand their own exploitation but also made another germane point. "They are suffering from Stockholm Syndrome and they view the person that's taking advantage of them as the person that's actually in their best interest."

Raphael et al. (2010) examined similar behaviors and noted that trafficked victims and battered women have similar relationships to their abusers. This victim-to-abuser emotional bonding makes victim identification even more fraught with uncertain positive outcomes. Based on this investigation, barriers to victim identification confirm the findings of Raphael et al. in that victims do not self-identify, but also do not necessarily identify as a victim due to the trauma bonding effect.

Best Practices to Victim Identification

The single most effective best practice for victim identification acknowledged during this case study was the basic premise that if a person is involved in prostitution and he or she is under 18 years of age, then he or she is automatically considered a victim, not a criminal. One participant characterized this unwavering viewpoint as a "no brainer," with 100% agreement from the other participants. The following excerpts from

the interviews are compelling evidence that this one agreed-upon viewpoint has created a standard approach to dealing with young victims of DMST and CSEC.

> RP7: And my opinion, and really everybody in law enforcement who I work with, if they are under 18, they are automatically a victim. Whether they say they are or not. Most of the time they don't say they are. It's really anyone under 18 who we pick up whose, you know, who is working as a prostitute on the track or online somewhere.
>
> RP1: If somebody is or appears to be under 18 they will ask them their age and if they're under 18, we recognize, that these are minors these are not adults.
>
> RP6: Wherever the information is coming from, if she's a minor, that's not even a question. She's a victim because the law for so many years now is recognizing that a minor cannot consent to sex, especially with an adult, right?

RP6 went on to explain the position and working theory that has developed over time within their department:

> After many, many years of doing this wrong, is that if there's a minor that we come in contact with that is in any way showing signs and symptoms or is clearly involved in prostitution activity, that's a victim. There's really no question about that. That's a victim.

Another technique identified during the interviews as a best practice was to have advocates available for the girls during sting operations, intake assessments into juvenile hall, and any court proceedings. There were rape crisis counselors and former child victims providing support and advocacy for these young victims. RP1 described best the

use of former DMST/CSEC victims as advocates: "So they know exactly what the girls are going through. I think it's incredibly powerful thing to offer these girls, which is a sense that your life doesn't have to suck like it does today."

RP8 explained the life-on-the-streets tactic of intervention with the following insightful strategic practice:

> If there's a minor that's pulled in, then we go into the police car with the kid in the backseat of the police car and do stabilization. And what that looks like is just talking to them and seeing how they're doing and acknowledging that they're really afraid right now and that we don't work for the cops; we don't work for the hospital; we work strictly for them and try to do some grounding with them to get them a little more back into their skin and realizing that they've got support. We take clothes, so they have brand new sweats that they can put on because half the time they're freezing to death. We give them food, so we're kind of doing all of that right in the moment as somebody who is coming right to them and helping them feel a little more heard, a little more seen.

This victim-focused intervention in the very moment of need lends credence to the underlying premise that these young victims are just that: victims. In a moment of crisis, there is support and recognition that these children are not invisible, but have value and potential for a better life.

Education of Victims

Education throughout society plays a major role in all aspects of identifying victims and mitigating DMST and CSEC. Education at different levels will be covered

during the presentation of the results. Education of victims, however, is particularly important if the cycle of abuse is to end. Victims need to understand the physiological aspects of trauma bonding and numerous techniques used by abusers to entrap the victim into the abuse. Victims also need to be educated on the risk factors for becoming a victim and understand the behaviors that may place them in a higher risk bracket. When participants were asked specifically about victims of sex trafficking, it was clear that the education of victims in terms of the cause-and-effect relationship of DMST and CSEC was key to helping victims move past the psychological bonds and entrenchment of being controlled by an abuser. RP2 and RP8 disclosed the following:

> RP2: It's also about educating them on trafficking. On what this looks like on the fact of it's happening all over the country, all over the world; who the victims are; why they're targeted, what tactics are used to target them. Really demystifying what's happened and depersonalizing it.
>
> RP8: So part of the way that we help work with the kids and help them is to empower them to understand what they're doing and understand why they're doing it; understand what their options are; understand their role within the legal system and what that looks like; what rights they have there, and we do that through individual counseling, peer crisis counseling, and by "peer," not by other children, but we are peer counselors, through classes.

Environmental Issues

Environmental factors that contribute to a child's predisposition and potential for being sexually trafficked are key to understanding the insidiousness and complexity of

the problem of DMST and CSEC. The combination of poverty, family dysfunction, prior sexual assault, substance abuse, along with child pornography and anonymity of the Internet, compound the problem, by the very nature of the social structure and inadequacy of addressing root causes (Estes & Weiner, 2001; Hughes et al., 2007; Kotrla, 2010; Mitchell et al., 2011). RP2 spoke very passionately about this very issue; here are a few of the responses that were offered during the interview:

> Many of these children are in the foster care and juvenile probation system. So for one girl, she might be at risk because she's not having her basic needs met. Another girl might be at risk because she had experienced chronic sexual abuse and she hasn't received any treatment or services. One girl might be at risk because, her parents started selling her when she was seven years old and this is her way of life that she knows. One girl might be at risk because she got addicted to drugs by someone she thought was her boyfriend, which was really a pimp who was getting her addicted so that he could exploit her. Definitely, really looking at their residential situation. It's just some times the most difficult it's like where they're going every night to lay their head; is it safe? Is it meeting their needs? Are they feeling loved and accepted in that environment and often times, at least 50% of the time, the answer to that question is no. So it makes it very difficult to do the rest of the work when they don't have a basic home environment or group home or foster care environment where, where they feel safe and loved.

To address the issues of victim identification, there must also be cognition of the root causes of vulnerability that at-risk children experience. The environmental issues play a

major role in societies ability to contain the explosion of abuse that has tormented domestic youth. Although root cause factors are a part of the equation, they are not necessarily the only problem with mitigating DMST and CSEC in communities.

Mitigating CSEC

Mitigating DMST and CSEC in communities across the country is a matter of strong leadership and political will. Addressing the issues of supply and demand requires recognition of a social problem. When faced with the wicked problem of DMST and CSEC, prevention strategies must be identified and incorporated into the framework as well as policies that address the demand side of the equation. Research Question 2 was directed at determining best practices and barriers to mitigating DMST and CSEC in the community. Policy and prevention were identified as the major themes for this question. Research participants addressed prevention methods and policy enactments that contributed to the larger picture of mitigation strategies for DMST and CSEC within the community under investigation. Emergent themes included best practices and barriers to mitigation of DMST and CSEC. Equally important, aspects of demand, education, environment, protection, and victim needs emerged from the iterative data analysis. Each aspect of mitigation builds on underlying concepts of policy and prevention. The current state of affairs was best described by RP4 with these statements:

> We have now recognized that this is occurring within our communities, in a way, it has always occurred in our communities. The difference is that lights have gone off amongst people and what was not seen before is now apparent and as a consequence, the center can't hold. What the status quo is isn't acceptable

> anymore and so now we're dealing with how do we respond to an agreed-upon problem. And the reality is that we're in a place now where perhaps we were many years ago with respect to other issues, whether it was rape or domestic violence, many decades ago where we are now responding with policy, community awareness, and resources to combat this issue. We're not there yet. The policies that are, public policies and laws haven't evolved to the point of where we are intellectually, in terms of our ability to combat this, not just criminally but in other ways. And we haven't yet dedicated the resources that are necessary to truly make a dent in this and we're a long ways in terms of community outreach and relations. There are a bunch of people, more than ever before that are paying attention to this. But we still have a long ways to go.

Indeed, human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation has gained some notoriety as of late; however, as RP4 stated, there is a long way to go in terms of mitigation. As identified previously, addressing root cause is but one area that must be addressed in order to effectively mitigate DMST and CSEC. Additional considerations are identifying and correcting barriers associated with mitigating DMST and CSEC including demand, education, environmental factors, protection, and, finally, victim needs.

Barriers to Mitigation

During the interview process, several areas were identified as barriers to mitigation. Nowell (2010) described how complex social issues could be interdependent, dynamic, and politically charged. RP8 alluded to how, functionally, public and private

organizations are under different constraints when there is a change in practice that will address a specific issue:

> We don't work the same way structurally. So it's just—it's a unique challenge, and I think that's another thing that's unique about this county, and I see this all the time when I go to statewide things; where, we still have the crisis centers that are fighting with their law enforcement agencies are never asked to come into an interview, and all the things that are law. I think it has always been a challenge. I think it will always continue to be a challenge because we really do all have our own focus. We can all have a common goal in our vision, but how we get there everybody does differently. And I think it's always challenging when you mix system and nonprofit because they have to wait 12 years to get something done. I can sit down and say, okay, that sounds really good. Just go do it.

Equally important in the identification of barriers to mitigation is the use of language and how society tends to objectify women in general. Flood (2009) has argued that the desensitization to deviant sexual practices makes the objectification of women and girls easier to justify. RP6 was adamant when he or she spoke of the barriers to mitigation and objectification:

> Prevention starts with, you know, how as Americans do we over sexualize females. That, to me, is a question that's important. Like, how do we sell burgers using a female body? Like, what does that have to do with the burger? I don't understand what the catsup dripping on the sexy girl's boobs has to do with the burger, right? But, I mean, that's just where we are. Like, that's where we are with

> it. It's really strange. And, then, at the same time, we have this weird love/hate relationship—maybe that's not the best way to describe it, but we're just in this weird space with female sexuality because we're using it to sell the burger, but, then, we don't want to have real conversations in schools about sex.

Indeed, having healthy conversations about relationships and sexual practices between men and women is fundamental if progress is to be made with mitigation of DMST and CSEC. This effort would be a huge undertaking but, I would argue, a worthy fight. Another area identified as a barrier and that somewhat piggybacks on what RP6 so vehemently opposed, is the notion that, in general, parents of young children feel uncomfortable talking with their children about the dangers of sexual promiscuity, sexual deviance, and the potential for abuse by a known or unknown person or persons. RP4 gave an example of how difficult it is for parents to acknowledge the ever-present dangers within society.

> People [aren't] ready to have that conversation with their child yet. And, you know, I appreciate that. Every parent has their own decision as to when to have certain conversations with their child and to some extent, we force the issue in a way that maybe some hadn't anticipated or necessarily wanted. But at the same time, given that the average age of entry into this is 12-14 years old, it's not a bad conversation to start.

Albeit changing social attitudes and beliefs about gender, gender roles, sex, and relationships will require a major sea of change within society, there is hope in terms of mitigating DMST and CSEC at some levels of organizations involved in the fight. Some

of the ideas and procedures put into motion in terms of best practices may come as a surprise.

Best Practices for Mitigating CSEC

The best practices identified for victim identification included automatically identifying children under 18 years of age as victims not criminals. Advocates not involved in law enforcement are made available during rescue and recovery efforts. In addition, the approach to victim services is victim-focused. Best practices identified for mitigating DMST and CSEC, include sharing information about CSEC cases with colleagues, advocating at the state level for better protections, promoting increased penalties for abusers, and providing education across all sectors of society. One comment made by RP8 exemplifies collaboration and practice development of the community under investigation:

> See, I think we're unique in that I think it works backwards here. I think we put it into practice, and then it becomes policy because of [an individual within an organization]. I'm serious. I'm dead serious. We're an amazing county and there are more firsts.

Finally, another best practice that emerged during the interviews from several research participants was a recent billboard campaign. This campaign was initiated in the community and targeted everyone in the community. Slogans on the billboards included such messages as, “Buying a teen for sex is CHILD ABUSE. Turning a blind eye is NEGLECT.” Community awareness of the issue is now beginning to take place, and conversations are happening at dinner tables across the area. A spike in the numbers of

referrals of CSEC was reported. Although several best practices have been identified and were being worked on within the community, the more difficult component to mitigating DMST and CSEC remains demand.

Demand

Demand for sex with minors is beyond the scope of this research, but is a huge component that needs attention. During the interview process with participants, demand was acknowledged as a barrier to mitigation of DMST and CSEC. The following are comments made by various research participants regarding the demand side of the human trafficking problem:

> RP2: So we need laws that put people that buy children in jail. Not increase their fines from $5,000 to $25,000, which was great, and we appreciate, you know, legislation for putting that legislation into place because it does make a difference but what we really need is them going to jail because research shows that fines and even shame does not stop the behavior.
>
> RP3: There's nothing being done to the Johns. So if they don't change that, you're gonna continue to have this cycle over and over. This is an age-old problem. It's not a new problem.
>
> RP4: And there's been a number of bills that have been introduced to try to address demand. We haven't, there's not a consensus on what that bill should look like yet.

Moreover, not addressing the demand side of DMST and CSEC will perpetuate the problem. The aftermath of abuse will become a greater piece of the post-trauma

recovery process with resources and funding being directed to the issue after the fact. Not addressing demand will further dilute the potential for addressing the issue before the physical, emotional, and mental damage is done to youth.

Primary Education

Primary, secondary, and tertiary education is the largest identified strategy for addressing all aspects of DMST and CSEC. Primary education specifically addresses prevention strategies before the abuse occurs. Secondary education is relevant for first responders in victim identification and identification of risk factors and being at risk. Tertiary education focuses on service providers such as law enforcement, crisis centers, housing advocates, and medical personnel. Perpetrators of abuse are included in the tertiary education segment. The importance of education at every level of society cannot be understated. All research participants interviewed agreed 100% that education was a key factor in mitigating DMST and CSEC in communities across the nation. The magnitude of the issue of education was captured in responses from RP4 and RP7:

> RP4: I don't want folks to perceive this as simply an urban, Oakland issue. It's much broader than that, you know, and if you have a hotel, if you have a freeway, there's a high likelihood that you have the potential if not the current problem of human trafficking in your community.
>
> RP7: Education is key. Parents need to be educated. First off, you need parents who give a shit (laughs) to put it bluntly. And unfortunately, that is not the case with a lot of our victims, as I'm sure you know. But then also, educators need to be aware of what to look for, the early warning signs, child welfare workers, even

> just the beat officers. Pretty much everybody needs to know what to look for so that we can catch this early on. That's really the only key to prevention that I can see.

Additional information regarding the need for education is reflected in this statement from RP6. "I don't think it's just that people are, you know, apathetic. I just think people are not informed." Not educating all the people in the communities will perpetuate the vicious cycle, as described by RP7:

> You know, unfortunately, these pimps will always be looking for people to exploit. The best prevention is to put up a strong defense and that's really where the education comes in. I can't think right now of another way to prevent it. They're going to be out there doing whatever they can to exploit no matter what.

Finding victims of DMST and CSEC is difficult by itself due to the covert nature of the people controlling and abusing young children. Couple that with the issue of trauma bonding and the inability to expediently identify victims unless they are involved in the act of prostitution or solicitation and the challenges become magnified. It is imperative that education at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels be implemented post haste so that better outcomes can be realized in the immediate future as well as for the long term. RP1 stated the obvious but perhaps also identified what may be an oversight by many in terms of addressing the issue of DMST and CSEC with appropriate resources and funding now:

> The CSEC girls that we see tend to be the youngest, the most vulnerable, the most likely to be affected in an adverse way for the rest of their life because their starting when their 10 or they're 11 or 12.

The evidence for providing education on DMST and CSEC throughout society is clear. The next question may be what does the education look like for all people in the community? Focus on educational training of environmental factors identified throughout the literature, must be in the forefront of the conversation. In addition, information obtained during the research interviews identified the varying levels of risk for youth. This information can be beneficial for developing educational programs.

Environmental Factors

The potential for a young girl getting ensnared in the world of DMST and CSEC is intensified when the youth has a background for being at risk. At-risk individuals may exhibit the following characteristics, including being a runaway, lacking money and resources, being in foster care, or having substance abuse problems or mental health issues. Although there has been a history of tacitly accepting these children as throwaway kids (van Manen, 1990), a socially constructed alternative way of viewing the environmental factors that contribute to abuse is necessary for understanding. RP2 offered a variety of situations in which youth may find themselves that led to the abuse. Risk factors included not having basic needs met, experiencing chronic sexual abuse, not receiving any treatment or services for the sexual exploitation, or drug addiction.

RP6 furthered the conversation about the disparity between social classes, and how this disparity intersects with the ultimate betrayal of sexual abuse of children:

> Addressing some of the very serious socioeconomic issues that are touching everywhere but mainly centered in urban environments where there's a lot of people of color because the large majority of girls that I'm seeing are girls of color, and they're coming from severely impacted situations. Being a 13-year-old girl in this country is already an at-risk situation because you're 13. When you're 13 you think you know stuff, and you think you can take care of yourself. But think about being a 13-year-old with a mom who is on drugs and a dad who is in prison and living below the poverty line in an urban environment with pimps on your way to school, and you were already sexually molested when you were five, so your body is already a sex object by the neighbor and layer upon layer of risk. So, if we don't start addressing the have-nots in society, then we're going to keep producing victims.

Although this scenario is a tragic accounting of the life a 13 year old, it does not have to be the end of the story—or worse, the end of life. Awareness of the contributing and often confounding factors associated with victimization and sexual abuse can increase the potential for better outcomes.

Protecting Victims

The hardest part of protecting young victims of CSE is the inability to remove the victim from harm and eliminate the potential for the abuser to intervene. During the interview process, protecting victims from their abusers was identified as a major concern by 100% of the participants. RP7 described the situation this way: "One thing that hurts us is the fact that we can't bring these victims to a lockdown facility unless they've been

charged with a crime. And it sounds terrible, but they need that for their safety." RP4 revealed the complexities associated with attempting to protect victims:

> The question is, how do you provide an intervention that looks out for the best interest of the child that still operates in the context of a Constitution that requires probable cause for someone to be detained and when you're dealing with children who vary in levels of sophistication and age, that if you're dealing with a child that is seventeen and very sophisticated, it's much more different than it is a run-away child that's twelve.

RP2 explained that in the interest of the child, better protections needed to be in place after the victim testifies against his or her abuser. RP5 agreed that better protections for victims participating in the prosecution of the abuser needed to be in place. The possibility of retraumatization during the prosecutorial process of the victim was also noted as problematic by several of the research participants. RP8 was instrumental in clarifying the issues surrounding victim protection:

> So I think [everything] comes back to safety. So I think that's where we really need to focus more attention is on concrete safety, and what can we do around that. Making sure that if they're being escorted in and out of court that they're being escorted in and out with an armed officer. Making sure that they're in a safe place where the pimp can't find them. Maybe that means placing them out of county. Well, let's place them in a good place out of county until their pimp is behind bars. There are so many layers. But safety is the biggest issue that we need to work harder on.

The needs of youth victimized by sexual exploitation are varied and run the entire gambit of physical, mental, and social reconstruction. The specialized needs of this population must be presented as a holistic approach to moving past the trauma and victimization that these youth have experienced. RP1 identified basic medical interventions such as pregnancy testing, and HIV or STD testing as a need and starting point. But, more importantly, how will society, deal with the 5, 6, 7 years until the child reaches adulthood? How can the help that is provided, be successful? How can the abused child's home life be addressed? How can the mental health needs of abused children be addressed? RP3 stated that long-term placements must be available as the majority of these kids don't have a place to go: "The reason they're on the streets is 'cause they've run away from something. . . . They don't have somewhere to go."

Another confounding issue is the ability to provide a safety net for traumatized, sexually abused youth. RP4 summed it up with the following analogy:

> One of the greatest problems in terms of treatment is aftercare. There's just very little in terms of services and then you say, "Now you're on your own" and it's not a soft landing. It's a very rough one. So you take a child and you place them out of state and they get wonderful treatment at a place like Megis Mountain and then you say you're coming back to Oakland and you don't have an adequate place for them to land. If you put a person right back in the environment that they came from, then the reality is that you're going to have slippage. That's natural. So that's one and then the second is, there's just very little in the way of housing for youth that are at risk. We have under twelve beds in the entire county for these type of

> kids and we know that a very large percentage come from a homeless type background so, in that context, we can see that that's an entry point that's not being addressed at the outset and that at the end, we don't have good aftercare.

Mitigating DMST and CSEC will not only take time but also resources and funding. Other considerations include functionally crossing organizational boundaries to address the needs of victims and of a particular organization. The risk factors associated with DMST and CSEC must also be addressed. As socially constructed as language is, society must take a hard look at how women and girls are objectified, and have those difficult conversations about sexual abuse and healthy relationships.

Government Interventions

Research Question 3 asked, how can government facilitate changes in policies and laws that reduce human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children? Research participants were asked an open-ended question: How effective are the laws against DMST? The major themes that were addressed by this question included policy, protection, and prosecution. Emergent themes included policy and demand, policy and protection, provider education, and—finally—leadership.

Policy and Demand

There was a great deal of transparency among the research participants and how they each viewed the issue of policy and government interventions within their respective organizations and their workflows. Although current policies bolster organizations' ability to address DMST and CSEC, there remain several areas for improvement. RP2 offered the following example, "Traffickers aren't getting convicted and Johns are getting

nothing, so if you don't, if you don't tackle the demand side of it you're gonna keep going around in circles." RP1 suggested that there were many factors in play in terms of the demand side, and offered this information: "Our county in particular . . . is at the forefront of advocating much stiffer penalties for trafficking." RP8 had a slightly different opinion on the topic in terms of legislation:

> You've got the human trafficking statute now that was actually modeled off of the federal model, or the federal statute, so that it makes it great for, you know, potential prosecution on either the state side or the federal side, because it will have the exact same elements. And, the penalties are fairly high. So, it's good. Because of bills that are being written and voted in, it is the hot topic which, you know, it's always been here, but now it's, hey, let's give money to this. It's the topic of choice at the moment for a whole lot of people.

RP4 reiterated the need to address the demand side of CSEC with these statements:

> Where we're behind and what needs to change in our state is we haven't adapted our laws to reflect the purchasers paying the right price for their activities. And until we do, in my view, you know, demand will create its own supply. And so we have to address the demand question. And there's, we've been involved in drafting legislation in Sacramento, but we're not there yet, you know. It's just our state needs to come to grips with that component piece. So I think that's probably one of the largest issues in terms of law enforcement is that there is a gap there that has to be addressed.

Addressing the issue of demand will be necessary to mitigating DMST and CSEC. As RP4 stated, society needs to come to terms with the meaning and the consequences of not addressing sexual demand of women and children.

Policy and Protection

Another area identified by 100% of the participants as needing to be restructured is the manner in which youth are caught in the middle of a policy conflict—in particular the idea that although minors are considered victims, the harsh reality is that in order to protect them not only from themselves but also from their abusers, they need to be charged with a crime and subsequently incarcerated. This particular area of controversy sends a mixed message to the child. The fact that he or she was charged with a crime, usually prostitution, will remain on their juvenile record thus creating additional hurdles for the youth. On this subject, RP1 made the following statement:

> I think the law is really ambivalent about how it responds to these juveniles who are being forced to do this because it's still illegal. They still get arrested and they still get put in Juvenile Hall. There's a lot of discussion about how helpful that is, to put a kid who is a victim in a further trauma situation.

RP2 had similar comments about how victims are being treated inappropriately. "We need laws that stop these children from getting arrested because they're under 18, they can't even consent to sex and they're booked being trafficked victims under the Trafficking Victim Protection Act."

RP7 furthered the conversation about necessary changes, with these remarks:

> I know a lot of counties are putting together programs for this population. The problem is Prop 35, we were told we cannot treat these girls as subjects they are victims. And so (laughs), we can only even get them to these programs if they're being charged with 647(b) or some other kind of crime. So, we've got this (laughs) disconnect and we don't want to have to charge them with anything, you know but if that's what we have to do to get them into a program and to get them to a safe place then we're going to do it.

RP3 shared their viewpoint on the situation with the following passage.

> The girls need to have rights, the right laws need to be put in place to help them, where right now, like the Safe Harbor Law is not going to help them. It feels great but it's going to allow them to stay on the streets. Because there's no children's receiving home or group home or foster family that has a legal ability to hold them down when they have want to go back to that trafficker.

Not one of the participants interviewed fully supported the notion that incarceration was the best method of securing a child's safety. Identifying alternative methods of providing protection without criminal charges will be necessary as a next step in the fight against DMST and CSEC.

Tertiary Education

Equally important in the fight against DMST and CSEC is tertiary education for service providers across the continuum. Law enforcement, legal counsel, and investigators of DMST and CSEC crimes require special training in the identification of victims, preservation of evidence, and prosecution of criminals and perpetrators. In the

city under investigation, the education for service providers was not called into question; however, areas outside of the city had opportunities for improvement as evidenced by the following statements made by RP6:

> The laws we have now can always be improved, and I think the DA is probably a better person to address any nuances in the laws that they have a hard time dealing with, but in my experience, my cases have been charged, and the people have been doing time in prison for them. I've talked to other cops in other counties who don't have that experience, and I think it's a combination of everything. Either the cops don't exactly know how to address this and investigate this crime from the beginning . . . maybe some evidence fell off in the beginning, then they take the case to the DA and the DA has no experience, and they don't know what to really do either to get these cases charged. If all the pieces aren't lined up, then it's not going to work.

The education of service providers extends to not only law enforcement and the beat cop but also probation officers and other professionals within the juvenile justice system. RP6 was instrumental in identifying a scenario that plays out within the juvenile system:

> If a judge convicts you for 647(b) you're going to get a probation officer assigned to you for your criminal behavior. So. . . they don't have any training, right? What is their training? If you're a probation officer and you have all these kids on your caseload and you don't have specific—just cases for girls who are trafficked, and you don't have any special training, what are you doing? How are you helping them? How are you serving? They check in with you. You're the probation

> officer, but in your mind, the kid is an offender like all the other kids. And, yes, the whole point of juvenile probation is different than adult probation. It's not just for monitoring. It really is supposed to be for rehabilitation.

Without proper training and leadership, DMST and CSEC cases will fail to garner the desired result of a successful prosecution and jail time for the perpetrators of these crimes. In addition, the victims of DMST and CSEC can potentially continue to be treated as criminals and not as victims, which would be a great disservice to this youth. Education for service providers must be specific and appropriate to the job of the individuals within the various organizations and facilities that assist in recovery efforts for youth.

Leadership

Leadership is a vital component when dealing with wicked social problems. Throughout the interviews, participants were more than willing to explain how the leadership within the community had shaped the course of effective strategies in developing a system response to DMST and CSEC. RP8 described how strong leadership affected this community:

> I think we're unique in that I think it works backwards here. We put it into practice, and then it becomes policy because of [name of specific person]. We're an amazing county and there are more firsts—we’re the first rape crisis center in the world. We had the first victim witness program anywhere. We have a lot of firsts, and I think we were really one of the first counties, at least in California, that really started jumping on this issue. I mean we've been doing it forever.

> We've always worked for CSEC. It was just another sexual assault survivor that we had to find different resources. It's not new to us. It's just renamed. We kind of figured things out at the county level. Seriously, if [name of person] goes and says we need this bill (RP8 claps hands together in the air). We need this to support this, it happens. So I don't see it going the other way.

Conversely, when leadership fails to produce the outcomes that are of value to people, the people will take matters into their own hands. RP4 made the following statements that reflect such sentiment:

> That it was in that context and the inability to respond to the problem of human trafficking, in terms of increased punishments for people who were doing the exploiting. The legislature's failure to act necessitated the passage of Prop 35. And some people feel that Prop 35 is over the top, too heavy a hammer, but that's the initiative process. If the legislature fails to act, an initiative will come into place to fill the vacuum. The legislature is mindful of what happened in Prop 35, knowing that it passed by 80% of the vote, which is an exceptionally high. It's the, the largest percentage of any initiative in the history of the initiative history process.

Again, California voters—in order to address criminal behavior and apply stricter fines or penalties to persons involved in human trafficking—passed Proposition 35. The legislation also requires that any monies received from criminals in the way of fines be used to assist victims. In addition, educational opportunities for law enforcement would be required under Proposition 35. Had the elected representatives managed to formulate

and agree upon steps to curb the incidence of human trafficking in communities across California, voters would never have needed to draft and approve Proposition 35.

Leadership is necessary to move along a continuum of stated goals and outcomes. Leadership is key to developing partnerships within organizations and across organizational boundaries. Without strong leadership, the ability to coordinate efforts and realize gains will be diminished.

Effective Partnerships

Research Question 4 targeted the major theme of partnerships with this question: What would need to happen between collaborative networks and partnerships in order to be more effective and efficient in the discourse to identify victims, mitigation barriers, and follow best practices? Each participant was asked to describe his or her experience with collaboration within his or her organization and across organizational boundaries. Although many of the participants touched on the topic before the question was posed, there were additional insights into how each organization addressed the topic of partnerships and collaboration. The emergent themes from this question included boundaries, collaboration, coordination, culture, involvement, and opportunities.

Boundaries

Effective partnerships are based on similar values and shared goals. One organization had the same goal of protecting victims but was not as big of a partner within the community due to a difference of opinion. RP5 had the following comments about how boundaries come into play when dealing with wicked social problems such as CSEC, demonstrating how value differences can adversely affect partnerships:

> We are not connected right now, because I think there were some unfortunate bickering, to be honest, about whose supposed to be doing what, and [name of organization] was involved and so on, and there was some confusion around definition and also how you work with survivors. There were some providers in that network and [name of organization], but there was also that CSEC network. There was disagreement on if an individual is involved in commercial sex or exploitation, and if that person continues to be involved whether or not they can receive services. So, essentially a zero tolerance policy. So, there were some organizations that said, "If a girl was working she comes with us she has to stop working. If she starts working again we won't provide services. We only provide services to someone who's willing to quit.

How to move past the boundaries of values can be difficult, but perhaps can be resolved. Education and information regarding outcomes of locked versus unlocked housing facilities can demonstrate and bolster the argument that a girl's safety comes first.

Collaboration

The framework and rhetoric is available for how collaboration is defined and how it functions. The issue that is current and relevant for organizations dealing with DMST and CSEC is that there is not a cookbook formula that fits the diversity of the community under investigation. This point is summarized by RP8:

> For most of the things that have gotten developed, we've sat around a table, and we've fought with each other, literally, for years. Like, before we got our sexual assault response team set up, we literally met monthly for ten years and pretty

> much hated each other's guts, but nobody left the table. That was the difference. Nobody left the table. Nobody said forget this. Screw it. Because we all knew the long-term goal was the right one and a good one.

Collaboration across organizational boundaries can be difficult, and when numerous organizations are involved, communication can become even more laborious. RP7 shared some insights into how large groups diminish effectiveness:

> You know, I think at least everyone meeting each other and knowing who each other is, is a very big thing. There's, like you said, there's a lot of duplication. There's a lot of confusion who we should call. Having something kind of set in stone saying, "All right, if you've got this situation, this is the person to go to." Again, having one point of contact makes it so much easier, but if it can't be one, just a couple or something not having a whole flow chart with 15 different people on it. That's not effective for anybody. So, if we could have that and then, you know, sit down and talk to those people and say, you know, "What can we do to make this work? What kind of information do you need from us?" And vice versa. Have that personal contact. Then, I think things could be a lot better for everyone.

Another method of effective collaboration is the act of communication. Specifically, when situations become distorted because of variances in organizations, the ability to clarify a position is extremely beneficial. This point is expanded by comments offered by RP8:

> Actually, when there's an issue, not just sitting with the issue and getting mad about it, but can you explain to me when you said this what you meant by that, or

> what was your goal; so that we have an understanding. Because three quarters of the time, something that we're misinterpreting, or interpreting correctly was not meant. It goes back to we need to assume good will. I think we just need to assume good will, and if we're concerned about something, we need to talk about it. And I think that that's relatively successful pretty much everywhere.

Coordination

Coordination is another key component of effective partnerships. Without the coordination of people across organizations, the effectiveness of the partnership will be diluted. Communication plays such an important role in all aspects of partnerships, but is not always easy—and the ability to agree upon future actions within large groups of people can sometimes be overwhelming. RP7 related the following scenario when called upon to address child prostitution:

> Okay, back in I think it was 2004 is when I got a call from headquarters and was told that, based on study that they did back at headquarters, San Francisco area has one of the highest incidences of child prostitution, and therefore I need to do something about it. And so, they wanted taskforces formed and things like that. Here in the Bay Area, we've got such a huge area that the taskforce model doesn't really work for a large area. If you're in someplace that has just one major town, then you can get some bodies from that police department and a couple of the outlying areas and you're good. Here it's too big; it's too massive. So, instead I formed just a working group. And we meet every other month and have been doing this ever since 2004 and it's just investigators who work child

> prostitution/human trafficking type of cases. We do a big roundtable, talk about Intel, talk about a subject we're looking for, or trying to identify a victim. It's been going for 10 years now. It's just law enforcement, and I think that is key in this particular situation, because then everybody feels free to discuss things like the victims or subjects they're looking for or whatever. And because these guys are so mobile, as are the girls, you have to reach out to all the other agencies in the area. In this working group, we get people from, Santa Cruz all the way up to Santa Rosa. It's amazing, it's awesome, and everybody talks about that it's one of the most productive meetings that they go to. Because we've got those partnerships and that liaison and everybody knows if all of a sudden they find that their girl is advertising on a website in Redwood City, they've got the list of everyone who attends these working groups and they can call them and get it taken care of right then. So, from the law enforcement standpoint, that is a great partnership

Although the coordination example described by RP7 is but one type of organization, the ability to span across a broader community is indicative of effective partnerships. To a larger degree, the scenario described above sheds some light on the magnitude of the problem organizations face when address issues of DMST and CSEC.

Culture

To respond to the needs of DMST and CSEC victims, organizations that have historically not worked in partnership must come together in ways previously unimagined. Through this boundary spanning, common goals are obtained. Throughout

the interviews, participants shared the different organizations they were in contact with on a regular basis. The sheer number of organizations that need to interface with one another is staggering. Organizations that were discussed during the interviews included law enforcement, faith-based organizations, schools, juvenile justice system, NGOs, CPS, businesses, community groups, hospitals, mental health, social services, and the court system.

Opportunities

Throughout the interviews, participants agreed that DMST and CSEC were the most galvanizing and unifying social problem of modern times. RP6 summed up the situation very succinctly:

> No matter if you're a cop or a civilian or a republican or a democrat living in Walnut Creek or East Oakland, that, like, we're not going to have children and women trafficked in this country and in this city and in this county.

RP2 outlined the following comprehensive approach to efforts that could be implemented but would take coordination and cooperation from a plethora of institutions:

> The billboard campaign was great, but this needs to be followed by a series of town halls that happen all over the county, in every city. When we really begin to talk about this action at a community level, we'll put stuff on Public Access Television and talk about it in multiple forums in order to really educate the community and elevate the conversation. To have a place of general education to really look at innovations, innovative solutions and really look at what kind of system reform needs to be done in order to respond to the population. So the

> reality is, the billboard campaign and other efforts like that are great efforts but they're not great if it takes a little attention off the subject for a brief period of time. It doesn't address the more long-term effort. So you do the billboard campaign, a series of town halls, you launch preventive curriculum in your local junior high schools and high schools, educational letters are sent home to parents. It has to accompany other steps; send flyers out to small business owners or businesses in general. We need a comprehensible plan so people don't just go shop, but they absolutely understand the true scope of the problem that we're dealing with locally and nationally.

RP8 revealed the reality of the current situation with the following statement, which is a stunning reminder to us all that doing nothing to improve relationships and system responses to DMST and CSEC is truly not an option:

> I think that we can do better as a system. I think system response to CSEC is a lot better than it was five years ago, and I think that we have a long way to go. I think we, as individuals within the system that the system response can do better, ourselves included, and I think we, as a team, can do better and mainly in safety response, especially if we've got a kid who is testifying against their pimp. We had a kid killed.

The opportunities to collaborate, coordinate, educate, partner, and affect real change in the area of DMST and CSEC are available. Ideas are waiting for implementation. These changes will only come to fruition through strong leadership and effective partnerships built between people.

Discrepant Cases

The nature of a case study and the use of open-ended research questions meant that some discrepant data emerged from the participant interviews. The emergent theme of victim needs drew discrepant data. Seven of the eight participants argued for a locked facility for the child's safety. All participants were against arresting the individual victims; only one participant felt that the use of locked facilities was inappropriate. It could be argued that locked facilities are a necessary part of keeping a child safe from harm. The following is an excerpt from RP5's interview demonstrating the point that protection and safety outweighs the position of choice:

> So, some of the staff were like, "No, we're not going to stand for this, we're going to go find her." So, we got in the van, and 3 or 4 staff went that knew the neighborhood. We are like, "We are going to go find her." And I was saying to them, I encouraged them to go and look for her. I was like, "What are you going to do if you find her?" They're like, "Oh, we haven't thought to that part, but we're going to find her, then we're going to talk to her and see if she's okay, if she needs us. And she can always come back; we offer(ed) to bring her back too. We didn't find her though.

Although little is known about what happened to this young woman who chose to leave the shelter, RP5 was fairly certain that she remained in "the life," being abused and exploited.

Summary

This research explored barriers and best practices for identifying victims and mitigating DMST and CSEC in an urban community. Questions were geared toward ascertaining potential government interventions and effectiveness of partnerships across organizational boundaries. Once data analysis was completed, several themes emerged to describe the experiences, understanding, and reality of the worked experience. There is no comprehensive way to demonstrate the complexities of the lived experience of each individual. The representational understanding of individual experiences is chronicled in the major themes of prevention, protection, prosecution, partnership, and policy, as previously presented. The majority of participants had worked together for many years and had built a high level of trust between their respective programs. The attribute of trust had created an environment that allowed organizations to effectively cross organizational boundaries and share common goals. To continue effectively managing the issue of DMST and CSEC, approaching each aspect of the 5Ps with unrelenting vigor is necessary. Addressing one piece without the other will only create a patchwork of resolution, and the abuse will continue to flourish, with devastating results. Chapter 5 will explore the findings and provide interpretations based on participant interviews and the current literature review.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to examine the phenomenon of collaborative networks and partnerships among agencies dealing with the social issue of DMST and CSEC in Oakland, California and to identify best practices used within organizations. Penry (2011) described the need for partnerships in order to understand the magnitude of this issue, as few studies have focused on the partnership aspect of dealing with this population of individuals. If organizations are to respond to criminals and criminal organizations that are highly adaptive in nature, the need for information sharing is heightened. To respond to the needs of young victims, it is necessary to collaborate across agencies and focus on the special needs of this population of victims.

The terms *DMST* and *CSEC* can be used interchangeably when describing sexually exploited youth. DMST refers to domestic children, and CSEC can refer to all children who are being sexually exploited. During this study, I discovered that the majority of people working in the field within the local community of Oakland used the term CSEC more often than DMST to describe domestic victims of sexual abuse.

This research enlisted the qualitative method of a case study as its research design. The study was grounded in environmental theory. Interviews were face to face and included open-ended questions that elicited information neither provoked nor directed in any particular manner. Multiple interviews were conducted that met strict guidelines and criteria for a case study design as described by Merriam (2009), Stake

(1995), and Yin (2009). The richness of the stories shared by the research participants yielded the following findings.

In summary, the key findings of this research include identified best practices and identified areas for improvement. The first key finding is the best practice for victim identification. If a person is under the age of 18 and involved in prostitution, he or she is automatically considered a victim, not a criminal. This single change in practice has seen major benefits in terms of how victims are processed within the system. The second key finding identified from this research is the need for public education at all levels of society on what DMST and CSEC are, who is involved, how they become involved, how to prevent it, and finally, what action to take if sexual exploitation is suspected. This one key factor—the need for education—was evident throughout the interviews. Lack of knowledge and understanding of root causes or push factors for at-risk youth and the special needs of this population perpetuates the problem. The third key finding is the lack of resources for the aftercare of victims of DMST and CSEC. Aftercare is an issue that clearly needs more attention and focus. The next key finding was that there was a high level of partnership currently in place within the community—that while participants agreed that it took time to develop trust and relationships, the working partnerships were worth the struggle. Finally, the fifth key finding is the need to develop additional policies and laws that address not only sexual demand, but also child safety, an issue repeatedly stated by participants throughout the research interviews.

Overall, I was pleasantly surprised at the level of cooperation and genuine interest and passion that people demonstrated for their work in combatting DMST and CSEC in

this community. The day-to-day operations can wear on a person, but the enthusiasm and dedication that the interview participants expressed gave me a sense that mitigating DMST and CSEC was manageable.

Interpretation of Findings

In this section, the interpretation of findings is organized to reflect the major themes of prevention, protection, prosecution, partnership, and policy that emerged from the research questions. These emergent themes are cross-referenced with the literature review from Chapter 2 and the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 1.

Theme 1: Prevention

To prevent DMST and CSEC from occurring in communities across the nation, the focus needs to be on both sides of the DMST and CSEC issue simultaneously—specifically, addressing supply and demand. Prevention of DMST and CSEC is a huge undertaking and lends to the basic underlying theory that encompasses the framework of this research, environmental theory. Although addressing specific issues of root causes is beyond the scope of this research, without a focus on education around the issue, fewer gains will be realized early in the abuse cycle of DMST and CSEC.

Education at every level of the abuse cycle—from preabuse and the confounding factors for being at risk, to the end of the abuse chain—is paramount not only for society in general to understand and detect sexual abuse, but also for communities working in partnership to mitigate sexual abuse and victims to recover from sexual abuse. Primary, secondary, and tertiary education is necessary to reduce or end the atrocities that have been perpetrated against youth because of sexual misconduct and the ever-present motive

of financial gain (Penry, 2011; Smith et al., 2009; Vardaman & Franker, 2009). Through the vital undertaking of education, the reduction in sexual demand for children can be realized. Increasing punishments and fines for abusers is not the final solution to prevention. Kotrla (2010) and Shively et al. (2008) advocated legislative and educational mandates for abusers, arguing that it is essential to impart that sexual exploitation is not a normal behavior or a normal experience. Flood (2009) argued that educating young men about the hazards of violent sexual material was one method to reduce the acceptance of myths about rape and sexual abuse. Addressing the objectification of women and girls also plays a major role in reducing the incidence of sexual abuse. Educating young girls and boys about sexual abuse, relationship boundaries, sex trafficking, and risk factors of sexual abuse is paramount for a directed strategy in the fight against DMST and CSEC.

Although awareness of the issue of DMST and CSEC, coupled with educational opportunities at all levels of society, is arguably the one prevention method most difficult to quantify, it is also the single most effective intervention strategy. Without the educational component for the public in general and addressing the supply-and-demand side of sex trafficking simultaneously, the desired outcomes of prevention and mitigation will remain elusive.

Finally, to address prevention measures for DMST and CSEC, it is important to identify root causes and how these factors play into the scheme of prevention. Williamson and Prior (2009) discussed the push factors that helped create the increases now seen in human trafficking on a global scale. Family dysfunction, poverty, and family sexual abuse all create the vulnerable child (Estes & Weiner, 2001). Substance abuse and

mental illness also contribute to vulnerabilities (Hughes et al., 2007; Kotrla, 2010). When considering how best to address mitigation strategies, root causes must be included in the discussions. The specifics of cases of DMST and CSEC were discussed during the interviews and confirm that environmental factors play a major role in youth becoming ensnared in DMST and CSEC.

Theme 2: Protection

How do some American children in the 21st century experience life from an abused and deprived vantage point? Data analysis revealed that in the community under investigation, the identification of young victims is relatively straightforward in terms of how first responders, providers, and service organizations approach these individuals. The identification of underage youth as victims is in direct conflict with what was found in the literature, in which youth found in prostitution or solicitation activities were treated like criminals (Penry, 2011; Vardaman & Franker, 2009).

In each case represented by the study, young girls and boys under 18 years of age were automatically considered victims and not criminals when found in exploitive situations—either prostitution or some other form of physical abuse. Still, as Smith et al. (2009) discussed, the lack of alternative processes forced the victims to be arrested for prostitution. This same process of arresting victims for prostitution was found in this research and was identified by participants as an area of major concern.

The best practice of treating youth under 18 as victims and not criminals lends credence to what Reid (2008) found in terms of the language used to describe youth ensnared in DMST and CSEC. Treating abused youth like criminals only increases the

amount of abuse these young victims must endure. Mitchell et al. (2010) advocated using the term "juvenile involved in prostitution" as a way to better understand the circumstances and conditions to which a child has been subjected. Either way, treating victims as victims is a small step in the recovery of the sexually abused child.

Based on the current legal structure and the inability to isolate victims for extended periods of time for their own protection, the only alternative for child advocates was to incarcerate the child for prostitution. Protection issues post abuse are beyond the scope of this research; however, research participants continually discussed a need for long-term housing resolutions. Smith et al. (2009) confirmed the lack of housing facilities available, which contributed to the incarceration of juveniles. During the course of the interviews, it was determined that a total of 60 beds were available to CSEC victims within the entire state. Given the magnitude of the incidence of DMST and CSEC, supportive housing should be a priority for legislators and communities.

Theme 3: Prosecution

In terms of prosecution and government interventions in California, there are several laws available for prosecuting criminals for human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children. Most recently, Proposition 35 was passed by the voters and provided for stiffer penalties and longer sentencing for criminals. Unless society can come to grips with the issue of demand, the ability to appreciate significant reductions in the numbers of children being trafficked cannot be realized. In 2005, there was a bill in Congress, End Demand for Sex Trafficking Act of 2005, which specifically addressed the demand side; the bill was never passed.

The prosecution of criminals involved in DMST and CSEC should not be so difficult to secure. Victim protections need to be considered throughout the prosecutorial process. Elected officials are charged with ensuring that the demands of the constituency are addressed. I would argue that addressing the demand side of DMST and CSEC should be top on the list of legislative priorities—right next to addressing root causes more effectively.

Theme 4: Partnership

The GAO Report (2007) clearly identified the strategic framework for collaboration, which included joint strategies, seeking a common outcome, agreeing upon roles and responsibilities, and finding ways to operate across agency boundaries. The organizations interviewed in this research have been able to identify a common desired outcome. Sharing information across organizational boundaries regarding DMST and CSEC victims is the first step to understanding the issue (Penry, 2011). Although sharing sensitive information has been a challenge with the participants included in this research, it was recognized that at certain points in the process, communicating across agency boundaries was necessary.

Mandel and Keast (2007) stressed the importance of developing a collaborative network in order to address wicked social problems. The community under investigation spent many years developing the network, identifying partners, and building trust among the stakeholders. The level of partnership within a community is based on the basic premise of trust, as described by Norris-Tirrell and Clay (2010). There was a high level of trust within the community under investigation, and the partners were willing to

innovate, take risks, and be open to changes within the environment. These are all signs of a highly adaptive work group.

Theme 5: Policy

Policy and policy development, as known in the United States, are in direct response to the constituency demanding change. In 2010, California voters passed Proposition 35—Californians Against Sexual Exploitation Act or the CASE Act (2010), which led to mandatory training of police officers on sexual exploitation. The proposition also had provisions for stiffer penalties for traffickers, and offenders are now mandated to register as sex offenders. Passage of Proposition 35 is one example of how informed citizens can make a transformative difference in the implementation of policy.

Another landmark legislative bill signed into law in 2014 by the California governor is Senate Bill 1165—Sexual Abuse and Trafficking Prevention Education. This bill will expedite the adoption of sexual abuse and sex trafficking prevention education in schools across California and standardize the curriculum. Sexual abuse and trafficking education will include children in middle schools and high schools. Provisions in this bill are explicit in terms of what should be taught to students, including different forms of sexual abuse, healthy relationships and boundaries, sex trafficking and risk factors, legal aspects of sexual abuse and sex trafficking, and—finally—how culture and media desensitize societies perceptions of sex abuse. This most recent piece of legislation will make many of the recommendations from research participants come to fruition.

Finally, the need for policies that address the rights of the victims to be safe when they confront their abusers in a court of law was repeated throughout the interviews.

According to research participants, testifying in court was a terrifying experience for the youth and resulted in the death of several young women. Policies need to be developed and passed into law that create the necessary measures of safety for victims so that the result is not the death of the victim.

Relationship of Theoretical Framework to Research

This research was based in the theoretical framework of environmental theory. The basic premise of environmental theory is that one's health status is directly related to environmental factors such as clear air or clean water (Kleffel, 1991). An environmental factor, such as social inequality, contributes to being at risk for sexual exploitation. Nevertheless, as Estes and Weiner (2001) discovered, poverty is not the only contributing factor. Family dysfunction, family sexual assault, school or social failure, and family or personal drug use increase the risk of being sexually exploited for financial gain.

The purpose of this study was to examine not only collaborative networks and partnerships among agencies working to end DMST and CSEC, but also to identify barriers to victim identification. Based on the results of the research, environmental factors increase the risk of being sexually exploited. In addition, environmental factors of domestic violence, homelessness, and mental illness were identified during the research as contributing heavily to the sexual abuse of minors. Although mitigating root causes is beyond the scope of this research, awareness of environmental factors contributing to being at risk increases the potential for early interventions. Thus, the result of this research confirms that an environmental theory is the basis of identifying at-risk factors for DMST and CSEC.

Relationship of Conceptual Framework to Research

The conceptual framework incorporated into this research design was collaborative networks and partnerships. As communities are faced with increasing numbers of DMST and CSEC cases, the need to collaborate and partner with other organizations dealing with this population of people becomes more urgent. Keast et al. (2004) explained that organizations addressing wicked social issues must work collectively within the community in order to effectively address the issue. As criminal organizations adapt to changes in the environment, so too must organizations (Mandell & Keast, 2007). Collaboration leads to innovation and information sharing; both are vital to addressing DMST and CSEC in the community. This research was designed to determine the level of partnership between the communities under investigation.

Essential elements and attributes of collaboration include trust, vision, common goals, and a willingness to innovate. Participants discussed each attribute of collaboration at length. These characteristics centered on several aspects including trust, communication commitment, and accountability, confirming what Mandell and Keast (2007) identified as a collaborative network. Participants within the various organizations included in the research discussed the ability to cross organizational boundaries and work with others for the common goal identified by the 5Ps: prevention, protection, prosecution, partnership, and policy aspects of DMST and CSEC within the community. Although participants identified areas for expansion or improvement, it was evident that strong partnerships were in place. Whereas all participants agreed that additional partners should be included in the conversations, the driving force behind the collaborative

network came from the direction of one individual, confirming what Weber and Khademian (2008) identified in the literature as a key aspect of strong collaborative networks and partnerships.

Limitations of the Study

This research was limited in that it was conducted using only one community directly involved in combatting DMST and CSEC. Local organizations were identified and contacted for inclusion; however, not all identified persons were able or willing—for myriad reasons—to participate in the research. Sexually exploited children were not included as part of this research. Future research should include this population. Additionally, educators, school administrators, parents of victims, and religious organizations were not included in this research. Future research would benefit from including this category of stakeholder in the research design, as they may be able to help to identify at-risk youth early on. As stakeholders, DMST and CSEC survivors must be recruited for any research attempting to understand the complexities of this phenomenon as they have valuable insights. Specifically, adult survivors were neither identified nor recruited for this research. It bears mentioning that one research participant was, in fact, a survivor of CSEC and brought that invaluable perspective to the conversation.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research was a qualitative case study designed to address a gap in the literature regarding best practices for identifying victims of DMST and CSEC and for mitigating DMST and CSEC in an urban community. The focus was also on partnerships and government interventions. The results of this research have begun to fill the

knowledge gap. This research was limited to one community and is not representational of a standard of practice. Future research could be replicated in other communities and include schools, survivors, and parents as stakeholders and valuable partners. Another area to be considered for future research could focus on longitudinal studies that clearly identify the long-term effects on victims of DMST and CSEC. It is the long-term effects that often perpetuate the cycle of abuse. Finally, the concept of partnerships across a multitude of organizations could be studied further as part of understanding how organizations striving for the same goal and desired outcome work across organizational divides.

Implications for Social Change

The findings of this research have several implications for positive social change. The best practices addressing DMST and CSEC include: (a) streamlining the method for victim identification; (b) treating young victims as "victims" and not "criminals"; and (c) identifying primary, secondary and tertiary education as a key strategic defense. The implications for increased awareness and understanding of the issues of DMST and CSEC can help communities address the needs of individual towns and cities across the nation. Finally, this research expanded on the premise that networks and partnerships are a vital piece of the strategy to mitigate DMST and CSEC. This research showcases the extraordinary way that organizations within the community have built trust and a working model for getting the job done across organizational boundaries. This research will add to the depth and breadth of the knowledgebase on DMST and CSEC. Although not conclusive, this research could translate into policy changes, and subsequently, funding

for organizations dealing with the issues of DMST and CSEC, as research drives policy and policy drives funding.

Practice Recommendations

Four principles identified previously—prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership, or the 4Ps—continue to serve as the foundation for addressing the complexities associated with sex trafficking of minors. Based on the findings of this research, and the enormity of the issue of DMST and CSEC found in this community, I strongly recommend the following actions. Local organizations should not only continue to move along the continuum of mitigation within the community under investigation, but also translate best practices and proven partnership frameworks to communities across America that are also addressing DMST and CSEC. Organizations need to continue to practice and promote the belief in this community and in other municipalities that all children ensnared in prostitution or sex trafficking who are under 18 years of age be treated as victims not criminals. This single best practice identified during this research—a change in perception of the victim—was probably the most significant advance in the fight against DMST and CSEC in the community under investigation. Translated across the broader spectrum of communities, this single change could have massive repercussions in terms of victimized youth. In addition to changes in identifying victims, the following are recommendations that emerged from the data.

- Education at all levels of society, including government, businesses, organizations, schools, and the general public on the specifics of root causes, at-risk youth, and prevention strategies.

- Develop aftercare programs that address the immediate needs and safety of survivors, including all aspects healthy living.
- Fund research and direct provider programs that have measurable outcomes in the prevention of DMST and CSEC in communities.
- Develop multi-sector partnerships within the community between governments, organizations, businesses, and society to help fight DMST and CSEC.
- Develop policies preventing victims from being processed as criminals.

Based on the responses from research participants, the addition of a fifth "P" is warranted—that is, policy. Many new policies will be needed in order to sustain best practices of victims being identified and treated as victims. Concurrently, addressing the demand side of sex trafficking, with stricter penalties and longer jail times for abusers, is necessary to reducing the incidence of sexual abuse. Providing safe and secure recovery centers for youth in crisis is also among the necessary policy changes. The passage of SB 1165 provides education for school-aged children and will be addressed in the near future. Nevertheless, more work remains to prevent and mitigate DMST and CSEC in communities.

Conclusion

DMST and CSEC continue to present as a wicked social problem—one that is invasive, relentless, and continually morphing to meet the demand side of sexual misconduct. Despite the enormity of the problem, one community has been able to move toward a model of understanding, partnership, and innovation. The dedication and

persistence of the people who participated in this research make a difference on a daily basis to alter the trajectory of a life of abuse and misfortune for children and, ultimately, the community.

Addressing youth ensnared in sexually exploitative situations as a victim and not as a criminal is essential for victim recovery. This factor has created a much stronger working position for child advocates in as much as the treatment of a victim differs from the processing of a criminal. This one change in practice in this community is more closely identified with a holistic approach to addressing the needs of the victims and the start of the recovery process. Increasing the educational opportunities across all spectrums of society will enlighten and enable citizens to respond to DMST and CSEC issues from an informed viewpoint.

Issues of domestic violence have recently been in the news as the relationship troubles of sports idols have been called into question. Society is at a similar standpoint for DMST and CSEC in terms of needing to initiate a difficult dialogue about sex and gender inequalities. The passing of 70 or 80 years should not go by before society takes action; it took that long to change the definition of rape. A faster response is required for the issue of DMST and CSEC, which has gone largely unnoticed in communities across the nation. Although international sex trafficking remains a global problem, domestic sex trafficking is growing at an alarming rate. This most egregious form of slavery is affecting U.S. children for myriad reasons. The issue of sexual exploitation of children is largely an outgrowth of leadership failures, a pervasive culture of tolerance, gender inequalities, and lack of awareness that there is, in fact, a social problem that is growing

exponentially. DMST and CSEC are both preventable, but it will take the will of many to address the issues of supply and demand.

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Appendix A: Acronyms

CCR: Coordinated Community Response

CPS: Child Protective Services

CSE: Commercial Sexual Exploitation

CSEC: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

BAWAR: Bay Area Women Against Rape

DMST: Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking

DOJ: Department of Justice

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation

GAO: Government Accountability Office

IOL: International Organization Labour

IRB: Institutional Review Board

LEA: Law Enforcement Agency

PROTECT ACT: Prosecuting Remedies and Tools Against the Exploitation of Children Today Act of 2003

RICO: Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act

TIP Report: Trafficking in Persons Report

TVPA: Trafficking Victims Protection Act 2000

TVRA: Trafficking Victims Reauthorization Act 2003, 2005, 2008, 2013

UCR: Uniform Crime Reporting

Appendix B: Interview Questions

4Ps	Research Question	Corresponding Interview Questions	Follow Up Questions
Prevention & Protection	What are the best practices and barriers to identifying child victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation in this community?	Tell me about a case of domestic minor sex trafficking in which you were directly involved.	1. How were you able to identify that the individual was a victim of sex trafficking? 2. Can you give me an example of any protocols you have to use when a victim is suspected or confirmed to be trafficked? 3. Can you describe the steps involved in the protocol?
Prevention	What are the best practices for and barriers to mitigating human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children in this community?	Tell me about the types of prevention strategies that are incorporated in your organization? How effective are the educational programs at both the organizational level and a community level in addressing human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children?	1. Could you elaborate on prevention strategies? 2. Tell me about any proactive operations. 3. Can you explain any prevention strategies that you feel should be considered or implemented?
Protection & Prosecution	How can government facilitate changes in policies and laws that reduce human trafficking and	How effective are the laws against domestic minor sex trafficking?	1. Can you explain any changes that you feel are necessary in terms of prosecution or protection?

	commercial sexual exploitation of children?		2. Can you describe how public policy has translated into practice?
Partnership	What would need to happen between collaborative networks and partnerships in order to be more effective and efficient in the discourse to identify victims, mitigate barriers, and follow best practices?	Tell me about your overall experience with collaborative efforts within your organization. Tell me about collaborative efforts or partnerships your organization has with local agencies and /or nonprofit organizations to identify and care for child victims?	1. Describe for me what your collaborative network looks like. 2. Tell me more about the types of information that is shared between organizations with which you interface. 3. Tell me how your organization might better partner with other organizations. 4. What, if any, kinds of resistance do you get when you interface with other organizations?

Appendix C: Cold Call Telephone Script

Hello.

My name is Annie Gresham; I am a doctoral student with Walden University a Laureate International University.

I am conducting research on domestic minor sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children here in Oakland.

I got your name from (news reports, website) based on the work you do for _____ organization.

I am calling to inquire if you would be available and willing to discuss your experience working in the field with victims and organizations that interface with DMST and CSEC.

Participation in this research is strictly voluntary but does require a face-to-face, recorded interview. The interview would take about one hour of your time. We can meet at some place that is convenient for you.

I will ask open-ended questions about your experiences and perceptions of the barriers to victim identification and mitigation of DMST and CSEC. In addition, I am interested in your thoughts on how partnerships with other organizations are helpful in combatting sex trafficking of minors.

If willing to participate:

Can we set up a date, time, and place where we can meet? If you would like, I can email you a copy of the Informed Consent for this research prior to our meeting. We will, of course, discuss the Informed Consent prior to the interview occurring.

Thank you for your time. I will see you at (date, time and location specified).

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

Date: Time:

Interviewee: Code Name: RP _____

Position of Interviewee:

Opening Remarks:

Thank you for agreeing to participate

Description of Research Project:

The purpose of this research

Research Questions:

Informed Consent: Completion, review, and collection

Concluding Remarks:

Thank you again for agreeing to this interview

Assure participant of confidentiality procedures

Reminder of follow up transcripts

Appendix E: Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement

As a professional transcriptionist assisting Anne E. Gresham in the research project *A Case Study Approach to Identifying and Mitigating Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking in an Urban Community,* I understand that I will have access to confidential information from study participants. I acknowledge that the information must remain confidential, and that improper disclosure of confidential information can be damaging to the participant. By signing below I agree to the following confidentiality guidelines.

1. I understand that all documentation and audio recordings are strictly confidential and I will not disclose or discuss any confidential information with others, including friends or family.
2. I will not in any way divulge, copy, release, sell, loan, alter, or destroy any confidential information.
3. I will not discuss confidential information where others can overhear the conversation. I understand that it is not acceptable to discuss confidential information even if the participants name is not used
4. I will not make any unauthorized transmissions, inquiries, or modifications to confidential information.
5. I understand that any violations of this agreement will have legal implications.
6. I agree to immediately notify my employer should I become aware of any actual breach of confidentiality or situation, which could potentially result in a breach of confidentiality.

_____

_____

Signature Date

Print Name:

_____

Appendix F: Informed Consent

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in research of the experience of working with victims of domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) and minors that have suffered from commercial sexual abuse (CSE). You were chosen for the study because you meet the following criteria: (a) have the experience of working with this population of victims within the last 5 years, (b) work for an organization that is focused on providing services to this population, (c) have knowledge of what the issues are to victim identification and barriers to mitigation of DMST and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this research before deciding whether to take part.

This research is being conducted by a researcher named Anne E. Gresham, who is a doctoral student at Walden University in Public Policy and Public Administration. Anne E. Gresham is a child advocate working in the field of medicine.

Background Information:

The purpose of this research is to discover and begin to understand: (a) the experiences of individuals working to combat human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children within an urban community, (b) the experiences of individuals as they work across organizational boundaries to protect and serve this population of victims, (c) the insights that individuals have when working in the day to day operations of combatting human trafficking.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this research, you will be asked to:

- Participate in an approximately 60 minute face to face interview about your experiences working with victims of DMST and CSEC, identifying barriers to victim identification and mitigation of DMST and CSEC, identifying the role that government plays in the mitigation process and how community partnerships/collaboratives expand the efforts between organizations.
- Agree to have the interview audio recorded
- Verify the transcription of your interview to ensure accuracy of the transcription via email or regular mail

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this research is voluntary. This means that the researcher will respect your decision of whether or not you want to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind during the study. If you feel stressed during the study, you may stop at any time. You may skip any questions that you feel are too personal.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Minimal risks are involved; participants may experience minimal stress in describing particular scenarios in which they may have felt uncomfortable or unsupported. In addition, given the personal preference of each participant, it is possible that interviews will be conducted in public places such as a coffee shop and therefore, public observation of the interview in progress is possible.

The benefits include that information obtained during this research could lead to an increased understanding of barriers to victim identification, barriers to mitigation of DMST and CSEC as well as providing insights into the role that government has and aide in identifying best practices and collaborative efforts. This increased understanding could lead to a more complete, holistic, and standardized approach to addressing the issues of child victims.

Compensation:

There is no compensation for participating in this research however, if your organization is interested in an Executive Summary or a presentation of the findings at the conclusion of the research process, one will be provided.

Confidentiality:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your information for any purposes outside of this research project. In addition, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in any reports of the study.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Alternatively, if you have questions later, you may contact via phone or email If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call. Walden University's approval number for this research is Walden University IRB #09-26-13- 0125678 and it expires on September 25, 2014.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Participant

Date of Consent

Participant's Written or Electronic* Signature

Researcher's Written or Electronic* Signature

Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Legally, an "electronic signature" can be the person's typed name, their email address, or any other identifying marker. An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically.

Appendix G: Researcher Field Notes

Journal Entry
February 21, 2014
RP1

I was really nervous and anxious before the interview. Very concerned if it would go well, would I stumble, would my recording devices give me problems, but it went very smoothly and it all worked out. RP1 was a very nice person, extremely knowledgeable about the issue of DMST and CSEC. The thing that really struck me was no only the amount of collaboration between individuals within the department but also across agency lines. This was a welcoming revelation. Although I had no anticipation one way or the other about what I might find, the fact that there was collaboration occurring within the community gave me a sense of wonder and hope. One area that was discussed that I need to pay attention to in future interviews is the issue of long term care for victims.

Journal Entry
July 30, 2014
RP4

As I wait outside the office building for the appropriate time to appear for my interview I am reviewing the questions with anticipation of what I might find during the session. One thought preinterview is that anybody doing research interviews should definitely work in the field he or she is researching. I find the fact that I was not in the field, was frustrating, however, on the same hand it could be that this fact helped eliminate any bias I might have for the person or the organization. Post interview...what was I so nervous about? This was a wonderful interview; I felt that I was in sync with the flow of the initial open-ended questions and the follow up questions. This interview made me feel not only that I

was on the right track in terms of the issues with DMST and CSEC, but also that the research work I am doing is of value. What an amazing person I just interviewed. I wonder what drives them.

Journal Entry
August 19, 2014
RP6

Post-Interview - WOW – what passion!!! Amazing, truly amazing!!! RP6 was extremely welcoming and gracious. At one point during the interview RP6 appeared to get irritated with me when we were discussing logistical differences between organizations. Perhaps it was due to my misunderstanding of how these two organizations functioned. Although RP6 never addressed demand per se they did speak passionately about women and girls not being treated as sex objects. RP6 clearly wanted more people and organizations to step up to the plate in terms of combatting CSEC. RP6 was also very clear about the greater good when discussing juvenile hall vs. releasing girls back to the streets. RP6 offered some great insights into the life and work of a child advocate.

Appendix H: Sample Interview Transcript

RS: This 8/19/2014. Research Participant No. 6. So I'm going to ask you some open-ended questions. Feel free to respond however you like. Please don't use any kind of identifying information for anything that is sensitive. **So tell me about a case of domestic minor trafficking, sex trafficking, in which you were directly involved.**

RP6 Okay. Just pick one?

RS: Just pick one. Any one.

RP6 Okay. All right. I mean, I've been involved in, you know, lots and lots of cases, but I'll pick the last case that I did before leaving the unit as an investor, so my first time around because I've been in the unit twice: once as an investor and then I went back once I got promoted as a supervisor. So I'll talk about a case from 2008 when I was an investor.

So, basically, this case involved 15-year-old girls being kidnapped off the streets of Oakland, off International Boulevard, and the way that this case came to my attention was a phone call by a patrol officer, an astute patrol officer who was in the field working, and I was sitting at my desk in the vice unit working. This patrol officer got flagged down by a 14-year-old girl who, you know, was, like, disheveled and was saying, like, you know, I just got -- I just escaped a kidnaper, basically, and, you know, the patrol officer spoke with her a little bit more and came to find out, well, this kidnapping was really tied to sex trafficking and that the suspect had kidnapped her off International Boulevard the night before with the intent of trafficking her. And so, you know, he got a very loose description of the suspect and the suspect vehicle and the circumstances surrounding the case.

So to make a, you know, pretty long story short, she was the first girl that we knew had been kidnapped, and so, of course, we're on the alert for is this going to be a serial situation. Well, it turned into, basically, being that. What ended up happening is about a week after that first girl flagged down the patrol officer, the vice unit -- we were doing what we do in running a proactive undercover operation, so we were out in the field. We had undercover cops out there, and we started -- within about a two-hour time frame, we found three other 15-year-old girls who all had the same story. Basically, variations of the story, some of them, you know, more timid in their admission statements than others, but, basically, we were getting a picture of, okay, this is a guy who is doing this continuously, and this -- these cases that we're getting this night are related to the first girl from a week ago, and it's the same suspect.

And the suspect was a 30-year-old guy on parole, lifetime history of, you know, various crimes, mostly, you know, drug-related type stuff. He was taking these girls, kidnapping them off International Boulevard by force, taking them to his sister's house in Stockton where he was raping them and, you know, preparing them to come back to Oakland to work for him, and then he was bringing them back to Oakland and forcing them to prostitute themselves, collecting all the money, and then with a couple of the girls, he even made them sell drugs for him. I mean, you know, he had guns. He was bringing pit bulls out to the track to chase girls down. He was driving girls all around Oakland to show them how influential he was. So, like, hey, even if I'm not on the track watching you, there's eyes everywhere because these are all the people that I know, gang members and all that. So, I mean, you know, he was -- when we categorize pimps' strategies and tactics as, you know -- you've -- I'm sure you've heard either the gorilla or the Romeo pimp. He was definitely on the gorilla end of the spectrum because it was force; it was fear; it was brainwashing; it was all of those things.

And so that case, after, you know, long couple of weeks of investigating and figuring out who he actually was -- was -- who is he, that case ended up with that guy, whose name is Vincent Turner -- I can say that publicly. He has been convicted, and he got life in prison from the Alameda County District Attorney's Office. So on the one hand, that's success because he's in prison forever, and he can't get to anyone else's vulnerable kids, but as is the case with so many cases, out of the girls, I want to say, you know, one of them is definitely not involved in trafficking anymore, and the others still are. And so that's not really success, right? I mean, it's kind of like, you have to be realistic sometimes when you're dealing with this type of crime is like what's going to happen with the girls after they've been through so much trauma. It's like, what's going to happen?

Because when I first started this, you know, 10 years ago, I just was very naive. First of all, I didn't even know trafficking in this type of capacity in this country with domestic victims even really existed. I was like so many Americans in thinking, like, okay, prostitution is kind of like a victimless crime and why are we wasting energy when police resources could be somewhere else. But I'm kind of going down -- you know, off a different track, but I know your first question was in regards to a case, and that is the last case that I worked as an investor before I left the unit for a break, and then, again, I came back to the unit in 2011 as a supervisor. So that was a 2008 case.

RS: All right.

RP6 Yeah. Yes, one of many, many cases.

RS: So one of the things that I'm trying to figure out, based on whatever organization people are working with, is how they're able to identify victims because victims

have a tendency not to self-report. **So can you talk about that, and how you were able to identify victims, in your many years of doing this?**

RP6 So are we just talking about -- I guess I'm not clear. Are we just talking about minors? Are we talking about all domestic sex trafficking? Who are we talking about?

RS: I'm focusing in on minors. Yeah.

RP6 Okay. Okay. So if we're talking mainly about minors, our approach at the police department, after many, many years of doing this wrong, is that if there's a minor that we come in contact with that is in any way showing signs and symptoms or is clearly involved in prostitution activity, that's a victim. I mean, we don't -- there's really no question about that. That's a victim. So it can happen -- I mean, patrol officers driving down the street and seeing, you know, blatantly girls standing on International Boulevard and she's a minor, she's a victim. Vice officers running undercover operations to target hotel -- the girls working on the Internet -- minors, that's a victim. Parents calling and saying my daughter is a chronic runaway and I just found what I think is her photograph because there's a matching tattoo or piercing or whatever but I can't see her face but I'm pretty sure it's her based on her body, she's a victim.

I mean, so, you know, there's so many different ways the information comes in and the contact with police happens -- I mean, even advocacy groups. You know, we have this girl, and we were, you know, helping her here, and we were providing services to her here, but now she went AWOL, and she is not here anymore, and we haven't seen her for weeks, and we're hearing from the other girls that she's at 37th and International right now with her pimp getting beaten up. Okay?

I mean, so it can come in -- you know, wherever the information is coming from, if she's a minor, that's not even a question. She's a victim because the law for so many years now is recognizing that a minor cannot consent to sex especially with an adult, right? And so you've probably, you know, heard this before around Oakland, and so we can't start getting confused when money changes hands. Like, because money is changing hands now, she can consent? That's kind of weird. Like, that -- that doesn't make sense. So I guess the answer to the question in regards to minors is we just start from the space that a minor is a victim.

RS: Okay. Yeah.

RP6 You know, I mean, that's just -- and we also try to take it a step further in trying to not only intervene in the girls that -- lives that we know for sure are being pimped

out or trafficked, but how do we take a step back and try to prevent it? How do we as law enforcement -- I mean, that -- you know, we have to do intervention and crime suppression, but we also have, like, a role in prevention, and so what we've done is we've built a high-risk victim program. So, basically, if we have a girl who is a chronic runaway, on her third runaway, we flag her as high risk for trafficking even if she shows no signs/symptoms, have not reported any trafficking. Maybe she really is just running away to her best friend's house, and they're safe, and everything is fine.

But we know that this city and its place and its marker as being a hub for the trafficking of minors that the risk to her because of her behavior of running away is huge, and so we'd rather flag her and pair her with resources as if she's a victim. Because it's like, great, if you're not a victim, we're going to get you this information so that you understand, like, how high risk is it. And the other thing is what are you running away from at home and how can we intervene in that process in either figuring -- I mean, that's not our job as a police department to figure out what resources her family needs, but we can pair her with the people that need to be looking at that. Like, what's the deal at home, you know? Is it just, you know, you're not getting along with your mom, or is it really something deeper because you're being molested, or your mom is on drugs, or you don't have a home, or whatever. What is going on? And so I think we have a piece of that pie as well, and so we've tried to insert ourselves into the prevention piece of identification.

RS: Okay. Good. Very good.

RP6 Yeah. Does that make sense?

RS: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely it does. I mean, it's not just a one-stop shop, you know. It's, you know, going back around.

RP6 Right. Yes. And so -- you know, and we try -- we've been trying for the past ten years to build relationships with all agencies that touch victims. Because, you know, like, we realized finally, like, we believe we're superheros. You know, cops, we think we're superheros. But, like, this issue is so much bigger than us, and the girls -- I say "girls" loosely. Most of the victims I've come in contact with have been girls, but the victims' issues are so deep and so complex, and it just -- it's like, takes a village. There's just no way. I mean, we can do our part of the piece really well, and we can identify and locate and rescue and whatever, but, like, we can find pimps and go after them, but everything else that she needs I am absolutely not equipped to do. I don't know how to do it, and so it's been a humbling experience in that regard to be, like, we need to make partnerships with folks that maybe traditionally we haven't really been great friends with. We need to work that out because we all have a common goal. Yeah.

RS: Yeah. Absolutely. And that's sort of what my focus is, is because everybody has a little piece of the pie, but everybody is strapped for resources and funding, that how do you not duplicate service and provide the optimal services that each individual needs?

RP6 Right. And it has to be individualized because you can't -- like, there's no cookie cutter, right? People want to know, like, well, what's a victim look like? It's like, it's a human. So it's complicated. You know what I mean? It's not like a statistic on paper; where, it's black and white is so easy. It's like, it's a complicated 14-year-old girl, and so the response has to be very individualized.

RS: Agreed. Yeah.

RP6 Yeah. I mean, you know better than I do. You work at Children's.

RS: Okay. So you touched on a little bit about your prevention strategies. **Do you have any sense of anything else that you think you could implement or that would actually help with prevention that isn't currently being done or...?**

RP6 I mean, I think there's so much that could be done that's not being done, but a lot of it is not directly tied to the police department. I mean, I think we're doing a lot with the small amount of resources that we have, and we're doing more than most agencies all over the country. I think a lot of the slack needs to be picked up by everybody else. I mean, there's a lot of people that are doing a lot of great work outside the police department, but there's a lot of people who aren't doing anything, and most of it is because they just don't even know it exists. I mean, I'm a believer in that if you tell people and people are really informed and they really understand and they really sink in, then they're going to be moved to action, and that's been my experience especially in Oakland.

Like, I'm an Oakland native. I understand the history of activism in this city. It's an amazing thing. And every time I've ever met with a community group or spoke on a panel, everybody comes up afterwards and is just like, oh, my God. I didn't even know this was going on. And then the next thing I know, they're putting up billboards, and, you know, they're like the San Antonio Park community who are coming out and working in conjunction with the police department in shutting down hotels like we did at 17th and International, you know, two summers ago. And so I don't think it's just that people are, you know, apathetic. I just think people are not informed.

And so -- but, I mean, there's so many things. There's -- I mean, prevention starts with, you know, how as Americans do we over sexualize females. I mean, how -- that, to me, is a question that's, you know, important is, like, how do we -- we sell

burgers using a female body. Like, what does that have to do with the burger? I don't understand what the catsup dripping on the sexy girl's boobs has to do with the burger, right? But, I mean, that's just where we are. Like, that's where we are with it. It's really strange. And, then, at the same time, we have this weird love/hate relationship -- maybe that's not the best way to describe it, but we're just in this weird space with female sexuality because, like, we're using it to sell the burger, but, then, we don't want to have real conversations in schools about sex. It's weird to me.

I just think we're in a weird place with it, and so I think, you know, it's comfortable if, you know, the female body is, like, objectified, and that's okay. Everybody is fine with that. But, like, if we want to talk about real stuff like birth control and choice and all, then it becomes real weird, and people don't -- aren't comfortable with that. So I think, first of all, as a society we've got to get into a healthy space with, like, the female body and sexuality and all of that; where, we're not. And that's, like, the most important thing in my mind.

The second thing, obviously, is addressing some of the very serious socioeconomic issues that are touching everywhere but mainly centered in urban environments where there's a lot of people of color because the large majority of girls that I'm seeing of girls of color, and they're coming from severely impacted situations. And so, I mean, we all know already that being a 13-year-old girl in this country is -- being a 13-year-old, period, right, is already an at-risk situation because you're 13. And we all know what we were like when we were 13, and, like, you think you know stuff, and you think you can take care of yourself, and you think all these things, right? But now, like, think about being a 13-year-old with a mom who is on drugs and a dad who is in prison and living below the poverty line in an urban environment with there's pimps on your way to school, and you were already sexually molested when you were five, so your body is already a sex object by the neighbor and -- I mean, like layer upon layer of risk.

So, like, if we don't start addressing the have-nots in society, then we're going to keep producing victims. I mean, and so I know I'm kind of answering your question very philosophically and not with, like, hard core this is what the Oakland Police Department should do as far as strategy-wise, but I just think, like -- I mean, those are really the issues, and if we're not, like, addressing those issues -- and, like, I'm going to be employed forever. I mean, I'll be able to be working in a human trafficking unit, rescuing 14 year olds for the next 20 years until it's time for me to retire. I mean, there's no strategy that the police department can put into place that is going to eradicate and handle this issue by itself. There's absolutely not. We can bring the most brilliant policing minds in the world coupled with the most brilliant social justice minds, and we're not going to come up with a strategy that the police department can roll out that is going to address this.

RS: Yeah. No, it begins in the home, you know, and it begins with changing attitudes toward the female and objectifying them.

RP6 Yeah. Right. I mean, and when we say "female," right, but, I mean, that -- like, nothing in society is compartmentalized and everything trickles, so, I mean, it's -- you know, like, we know that boys are molested and we know that, you know, boys are sold too, so it -- you know, it's just, females, we get the most of it. But I think it's just everything effects everyone else, and if we have this unhealthy attitude about sexuality and objectification and power and all of control and all of those things, then this is what we get. You know what I mean? It's kind of like what we get.

RS: Yep. **So in your professional opinion, how effective do you think the laws are against sex trafficking of minors in particular?**

RP6 So I know, like, my personal experience. I'm here in Alameda County, and I know that things aren't like this all over. But in my experience, when I get a good sex trafficking case, it's a good result legally, and I -- but I think that that's because of experience and because of partnerships and relationships, right? And so, like, we know what we're doing, basically. I mean, every -- we all know what we're doing. You know, the advocates know what they're doing; the cops know what they're doing; the district attorneys know what they're doing, and so when I get a case, I'm talking to the DA's H.E.A.T. team regularly. When I was in the vice unit, it's like, okay, I think I got this case tight on this pimp. What do you think? Is there something else you think I need for charging? Yes, you need to do "X," "Y," "Z." Okay. We're going to do it, and then we're going to bring the case back, and you're going to charge it. And, then, we haven't lost a jury trial. Like, most of these folks plea-out because they're afraid of Alameda County's team when it comes to human trafficking.

But when it does go, the thing that we have here that's interesting to me and was hugely eye-opening -- because before I started working on human trafficking full-time, I was in a narcotics unit. I was in a street team that focused mainly on drug dealing, and we would work and work and work on these cases, on these drug cases, and, you know, these drug dealers would, like, get off with, like, probation and nothing and double parole. I mean, just, you know, our tolerance in the Bay Area for anything involving drugs is very high, right? Juries -- it's high. We have a high tolerance, right? The one thing here is that everybody agrees. No matter if you're a cop or a civilian or a republican or a democrat living in Walnut Creek or East Oakland, that, like, we're not going to have children and women trafficked in this country and in this city and in this county.

And so I always make a joke and I say, like -- you know, I talk about my mom, right, because my mom is very, very, very, very, very liberal, weed smoking, you know, hippie lady. And I say -- you know, I could have taken one of my drug cases to my mom, and if she was on the jury, she would have been, like, whatever, right? But if I take one of these cases in front of my mom, she is going to be, like, put him under the jail. Put him under the -- you know what I'm saying? Like, I was burning my -- this is my mom. I was burning my bra in the '60s. You know, put him under the jail. Like, women's rights, right?

So this is the one topic that, like, I feel like we're all on the same page about. You know what I mean? It's pretty galvanizing when you have all of the information. When you don't have all the information, it's different, right? It's like, whatever you want to think in your mind about stereotypes, about sex workers and hookers and all those words you want to use to label people, well, when you have all the information, it becomes a different topic, and I see people on different, you know, sides kind of, like, start gravitating towards the middle together. And so that's part of it, too, is because community members have to understand and buy into because they make up the jury.

And so to your question about the laws, I think that the laws that we have now -- I mean, laws can always be improved, and I think the DA is probably a better person to address any nuances in the laws that they have a hard time dealing with, but in my experience, my cases have been charged, and the people have been doing time in prison for them. I mean, but I've talked to other cops in other counties who don't have that experience, and I think it's a combination of everything. Either the cops don't exactly know how to address this and investigate this crime from the beginning and, you know, maybe some evidence fell off in the beginning, then they take the case to the DA and the DA has no experience, and they don't know what to really do either to get these cases charged. You know, if all the pieces aren't lined up, then it's not going to work. But in my experience, the laws have worked out for me. Yeah.

RS: Okay. Well, that's sort of that best-practice part that I'm mining for, if you would, because across the board -- and I've been -- it's not like it is here in Oakland, and I have been pleasantly surprised at how informed, dedicated, you know, energized by this whole topic across the board.

RP6 In Oakland.

RS: In Oakland.

RP6 Yeah. I mean, we've had some time with it, right? Because, you know, this goes back to 1999 when the Oakland PD Vice Unit was just running regular, standard, average police stings that every agency across the country does and just scooping

up hundreds of girls a month and taken to jail for misdemeanor prostitution, basically, quality of life issues because of complaints from business owners about condoms and hanging out and drug paraphernalia and blah, blah, blah. And they were just cycling girls in and out of jail, and there was, like, you know, no resources offered to them, and there was no intelligence gathering. Nobody was sitting down and interviewing these ladies. None of that was happening, right? It was just --

So right around 1999, the end of 1999 is when -- I wasn't even here yet because I didn't come to the police department until 2001. But it was when those vice investigators started really paying attention to even just passing comments that some of these girls were saying in getting into the paddy wagon. You know, like, there's little girls out here. You know, they would be saying it sarcastically. Like, leave me alone. Let me make my money. There's little girls out here you need to be looking for. You know what I mean? And so, what? What did you just say? And so that started turning into interviews and real conversations and this whole discovery of this underworld of minor sex trafficking.

Now, don't get me wrong. There's always been an occasional 15 or 16 year old scooped up in this sweep, so it's not like we were completely naive to the fact that kids could get wrapped up in this. I just don't think we really understood the game as it really is, right? And so we didn't understand that there's pimps who specifically target minors, and there's pimps who specifically think it's easier to groom minors and that there's johns who really want minors. And, like, I don't think we had all that -- those ducks lined up.

And so '99 through, like, 2001 was the building process of, okay, let's ask the Feds to help us. What are the Feds saying? What are they seeing? And then all the partnerships forming to the point where in 2000 is when the vice unit wasn't only the vice unit. It was the vice and child exploitation unit with the emphasize on child exploitation. So we've had a long time, right? It's 2014, so we've been kind of working on this for 13 years. So there's been a lot of bumps in the road and a lot of hard, hard lessons, but I think, you know, when you're looking at other places, they're just -- they just -- they just haven't had it yet. They just haven't had the realization or the experience level yet or the training, and, I mean, it's -- yeah.

RS: Right. And, unfortunately, you know, in my exhaustive literature review, that's pretty much what it shows that people are pretty unaware. Law enforcement, unfortunately, looks at them as criminals and not victims, you know, that they were wanting it or, you know, just this whole mentality of...

RP6 She's fast. It's a choice. She likes it. She's a hoe. She -- yeah, all those things. I've heard all of those things. Now, the good news for you is -- so, you

know, California POST is Peace Officers Standards and Training. You know, you may have heard of it, or there's probably something similar for doctors or whatever. But they basically govern police training, and they specify standards for cops. And so I was in San Diego at the beginning of the year with some other folks that people -- maybe you probably interviewed Casey Bates from the DA's office, Nola Brantley from MISSSEY, right? So we were all together. Yeah, we're like a little crew, right? We travel around together. So we were in San Diego, and we created this video. And so, because of Prop 35, right, this two hours of mandatory law enforcement training so now I've trained the whole entire Oakland Police Department already.

But to your point is most police departments in California, and definitely across the nation, don't have a "me." They don't have a human trafficking expert inside to tell them anything, so they get the Prop 35 mandate, and they're like, okay, so who is giving me the two-hour training? I have no idea what you're talking about. And so we created this video in San Diego with POST that's going around to every police department in the country to fulfill the training requirement. I mean, it's only two hours, but I think we did a really good job on, you know, just at least the basics: the basics of victim recognition, next steps, partnering with advocacy groups, addressing the victim's needs, and then evidence collection, statement taking. I mean, it's very basic. It's not going to make anyone, you know, an expert in court, but it will definitely open their eyes to a different approach to an old problem. It's an old problem. It's not -- like, this is not a new problem. It's just a different way of looking at it. It's the real way to look at it, right? It's like the informed way of looking at it. Yeah.

So, I mean, progress is slow, but the only way you can stay positive when you're working in such an intense environment with so many victims and so much vicarious trauma is to just -- like that. Like, I got this letter on August 4th, and it's still on my desk, right, so that I can just, kind of, like, glance down at it every day. Like, okay, dude, I've been working on this issue for a long time, since 2003, and, like, I need to look at that because it's, like, ten years of -- you know, of...

RS: Putting the puzzle pieces together. And it is a puzzle. Yeah. I agree. I agree. Wow. Huh. I'd love to see that.

RP6 Yeah, I can get you a copy.

RS: Really?

RP6 Uh-huh. Yeah, for sure.

RS: Okay. Because that's one of the things that I've seen that's lacking is, you know, sort of as a toolbox or a standard way to get the information out. You know, I was at Grand Rounds at the hospital a couple months ago, and somebody from -- NB was supposed to be there, but she didn't make it but -- so somebody was filling in, and they were -- and one of the community physicians was -- well, how do you even begin to talk to your patient, your child patient? You know, what are -- you can't just say, you know, are you having sex. **So how do you approach it so that, you know, the child will trust you enough to, you know, even begin to open up and reveal what's really going on?**

RP6 Right. Uh-huh. It's hard, especially if you -- when you have a short time frame. You know what I'm saying? Like, if you're only spending 20, 30 minutes with this patient or this person, it's, like, really difficult to build rapport and trust. I mean, I haven't really figured out a way to do that in 30 minutes. I mean, it's -- it happens every once in a while, I mean, and for me it's just like from the moment that I contact -- I come in contact with the victim from the moment, it's just treat her like a 14-year-old girl. I mean, treat her like a 14-year-old girl like you would treat a 14-year-old girl at your child's school because that's what she is. You know what I'm saying?

And, like, once I start treating her that way, nine out of ten times, at some point during the evening, she's going to start acting in that way because in her heart she's still a 14-year-old girl. Like, that's all a shell. That's all survival mechanisms. All that talk and head-bobbing and smacking and all that stuff she does to me, I get that, like, I'm going to get that, right? All her pain is coming at me. I'm the bad guy. That's fine. I can handle it. Like, that's what I signed up for, but I'm going to keep on treating her like any other 14-year-old girl that I would talk with: respectful, caring, you know, and eventually it starts to break down. Sometimes it breaks down in 30 minutes; sometimes it breaks down in two hours; sometimes it doesn't break down for two weeks, and I have to, you know, go back and see her at her placement or in juvenile hall or wherever she is but -- and sometimes I don't break it down, but, I mean, mostly I do.

I don't know if you're going to ask me a question about our current processes and procedures with, you know, still taking them to juvenile hall, but I know that that's a big hot-button topic that we still don't agree upon. Different advocacy groups -- if you talk to, you know, Pat Mims who just left BAWAR, he's going to have an opinion. If you talk to Nola, she's going to have an opinion. If you talk to me, I have a totally different opinion, so I don't know if that's, you know, what you -- you're going to delve into that particular process, but that's controversial.

RS: Well, it is very controversial. But it was sort of put to me this way -- how are we doing on time?

RP6 We're good. We're good. We're okay. I can talk until 4: 30.

RS: Okay. Well, I'm not going to keep you that long but -- so, yes, it is very controversial, and I had sort of an enlightening moment at one of my interviews, and that was, basically, that, yes, juvenile hall is not the perfect place to go, but when you think of the alternative, what would you rather do? I mean, in either instance, you're going to retraumatize. And so is it going to do -- be the harm reduction model or just, you know, throw caution to the wind? And it's like, well, because we don't have the facilities -- we don't. I mean, we have a long-term care facility up in Rocklin.

RP6 Yes. And one in L.A.

RS: And, you know, that's, like, a total of 60 beds or something.

RP6 Well, and the beds issue is not even the only issue, right? The real -- it's part of it, but the real issue, in my opinion, is the fact that those facilities are only going to take the girls that are ready to be there and that are voluntarily going there because they're not going to take a girl who is going to go up there and recruit the other 20 girls who are way farther along in their process to get back into the lifestyle.

And so I'm glad to hear that other people have brought this up in your interview. Because when I first started this, this was the most contentious disagreement between us and our advocacy group partners because they felt that we should never incarcerate juvenile victims. They're like, you guys are saying one thing and doing a completely different thing. But, in my opinion, what ended up happening is life. And the reality of these streets is we have literally lost girls that we've been working on cases together. Killed, murdered girls. So when you have dead bodies lying on the ground, the conversation changes because I'm not going to let her go back to her pimp. So we can't have it both ways, right? Like, we can't say -- like, they were telling us, like, well, you can't have it both ways. You can't say she's a victim and then take her to jail. And mine was, well, you can't have it both ways. You can't say that she's a juvenile and so she's a victim, and she doesn't have a right to choose but then tell me that I have to allow her to choose to go back to her pimp because that's not what I'm going to do, right? And so I'm glad that it's mellowing out a little bit, but I think it's because of our experiences and...

RS: Well, like you said, that's the reality. That is the sad reality of the situation at this point.

RP6 Yeah, it is. She's not going to self-identify as a victim, like you said, and she's not going to self-identify as a victim when I take her to an assessment center that she

can walk out of and call her pimp, and worst case scenario, which has happened to us, she takes another girl who has never been trafficked but is perfectly ripe to be trafficked because she's in the assessment center because of her family issues, and now it's a two-for-one, and they're both gone with the pimp, right?

I mean, so until we evolve as a society -- and we have a facility that I like to call a lock out facility because it's really to lock the pimps out so she can heal. It's not to lock her in. But until we have that and it works somewhere outside the penal code -- like, I'm not trying to criminalize her, but at this point, the only thing I have to use is 647(b) of the penal code. That is it: 653.22 of the penal code, loitering for the purpose of prostitution or prostitution. That's all I have to hold her. If we want to work outside -- if we want to work in the welfare and institutions code and we want to make it something in the realm of she's a danger to herself and I can hold her on a welfare and institutions code violation and it's never anywhere on her criminal history, perfect. But I don't have that. I have a penal code that says prostitution is illegal and loitering for prostitution is illegal. Sorry. I mean --

RS: So she gets --

RP6 That's what happens.

RS: She gets labeled with prostitution label?

RP6 I mean, I don't know what else to do to save her life. To me, it's no different than -- I mean, under these circumstances. I mean, there's a lot we can do to change that. But until the law changes and until the way that we're addressing it changes, the circumstances I have right now I feel I have no other choice. And I'll be the bad guy, right? Like, if I wanted to be friends, I would have been a firefighter. Like, I'm fine. Like, saving people's lives and being the bad guy is what I signed up for.

It's no different to me than cops who go into a house of an abused six year old whose mom is literally putting out cigarettes on their body, and the child is screaming because they want to stay with the mom, and I'm ripping the child away from the mom. What's the difference? I'm ripping a 14 year old away from a 35-year-old pimp who is going to continue to abuse her. What is the difference? There's no difference to me. I mean, you know, so I'm going to rip her away from her pimp.

RS: I agree. All right then.

RP6 I'm sorry. (laughing)

RS: No sorry. No sorry. That's -- yeah, that's the sadness of the -- of where we are now. But we have come a long way. We have come a long way in recognizing that there is an issue and that there is a problem, and we can't fix it by ourselves.

RP6 Right. Exactly.

RS: Yeah. So, okay.

RP6 So I probably covered all those questions.

RS: Yeah. Let's see. Oh, here's one for you. **Can you describe for me how any kind of policy has translated into practice for OPD?**

RP6 Like, I'll say Prop 35. That translated for OPD as (pause)...

RS: A mandate?

RP6 Yeah. Because several of us who have been working on this issue for years have been saying we need training. Like, we need time in the academy. We need time in advanced officer school with these cops. Like, these are the -- we're the vice unit, and we're the specialized unit, but we're, like, a very small group, and we're only out there when we're doing a specialized operation a couple hours a week or a day or whatever. The other 24 hours is covered by regular patrol officers who have no idea what they're doing with this. So a police officer should not be released onto the streets of Oakland when we've been identified as a hub by the FBI for sex trafficking to not know what they're dealing with or how to even address it on a preliminary investigative level.

And deaf ears. Deaf ears. Deaf ears. It rotated through chief after chief after chief after us doing presentations and proposals. And, like, we don't have room to fit you guys in because we have all these other training mandates and everything, and so we just never got allowed to train anybody. So when Prop 35 came out and said, oh, yeah, you're going to train people, then we got our two hours of fame, right? Then it was like, whoa. Everybody is running around like, oh, we need the vice people. We need a training plan.

RS: Quick. Now?

RP6 Exactly. So, for me, that's an amazing thing. I mean, now you have Oakland police officers who are, like, hey, you know, Sergeant Joshi, hey, Holly, like, I went to a call that at first I thought was domestic violence because it came out as a domestic violence call. It came out as, you know, two people, boyfriend and girlfriend, arguing in a restaurant, and when I got there, I asked more questions, and I got from the girl what the argument was about. It was because she didn't

make her quota, so I knew it was human trafficking and not domestic violence. That's, like, a victory, right? Like, that's amazing. Like, you now actually did a preliminary investigation, and you figured out what was going on with this girl as opposed to every single argument between a guy and a girl is a domestic violence. It's DV. It's DV. You know what I mean?

And so that, to me, is the most impactful policy change that I have seen here in the past few years. And also just the practice of the vice -- child exploitation practice of consistently bringing advocacy groups in the field with us. I mean, we don't do undercover operations without advocates. Like, we just don't do it. Like, we know we're not -- we can't. So if we know we're going to be coming in contact with victims, BAWAR is there. We are -- we have a safe location for them to wait. Right after the girl meets the cop, she's meeting a BAWAR advocate in the field. Like, most cops that you talk to -- most organizations -- like, I've been all over the country teaching. Most organizations, either they're going to do a referral 24 hours to 48 hours later or they're doing no referral. But to have an advocate right there in the field, I mean, that's pretty amazing. I mean, that's -- you know, so I think those are probably the two biggest policy, you know, decisions that we've made that have been impactful.

RS: That's good. That's good. Yeah.

RP6 Yeah. I mean, I'm kind of telling it -- you know, the girl -- like, I get that, you know, we're the police, and you are in custody, and you are going to go to juvenile hall, but we don't think you're a criminal. And I know that's really weird, and it's not black or white. It's very gray, and we have to explain to you why, and now we're going to meet an advocate because we care about you, and the ultimate goal is for you to be safe. I mean, it's a mixed message, but it's better than a message that you're bad and you're wrong and we think you're a hoe. I mean, you know what I'm saying? It's what we can do at this point. So -- yes.

RS: So do you think that you could -- I have two more sort of questions necessarily about partnerships. Because I think one of the big things that's missing in the research is identifying how partnerships work, and, I mean, you've pretty much covered all of the folks that are included in yours: the H.E.A.T., MISSSEY, BAWAR. I mean, they are all definitely component pieces of this whole sort of wicked situation, but is there -- in your opinion, **do you think that there's some other way that you could partner with these different organizations or other organizations that you haven't considered?**

RP6 Well, I think, you know, with all of the minds that have been at the table for so long, you know, in Alameda County in Oakland for ten years plus, MISSSEY and BAWAR and OPD and the DA's office and, like I said, experiencing some of the heartbreaking things we've all experienced, I can't say that I think that there's

people we haven't thought of. I can say that I think there's people that are more resistant that don't understand that they have a role and maybe don't play their part.

RS: Such as...?

RP6 CPS. Juvenile Probation. Those are the top ones that come to my mind. I really -- you know, I'm just being blatantly honest. It's like, CPS, it's like, you got to step up your game. Like, I don't -- you know, it's like they don't seem to see a human trafficking victim as anywhere in their realm of responsibility because they're just focused on family violence, right? Like, if the family member is abusing that person, then that's kind of like our realm, but, like, how do we deal with the child that's being abused by a pimp? Like, that's been my experience with CPS is like what do I -- you know, where do I fit in or whatever. That's one issue I have. And, then, Probation, I think they're getting better. They've been coming to -- when I was leaving the unit this last time, they were coming to meetings and at least at the table and --

RS: Probation or juvenile hall?

RP6 Yeah. Juvenile Probation. Juvenile -- well, that is probation. Yeah, juvenile hall is probation. Juvenile probation officers work in juvenile hall. It's all one system. You know what I'm saying? It's the same system. You know what I'm saying? The juvenile probation officers work inside juvenile hall. Yeah. Like, if I'm going to talk to a girl that's in juvenile hall, I'm going -- I'll calling her probation officer inside the facility to say can I come talk to her today. Yeah. So, I mean...

RS: **So you don't think that they have any kind of ownership for...?**

RP6 I think it's getting better, but I think that in the past my experience has been that they're so focused on whatever -- like, she's 647(b.) So, like, what's the punishment or rehabilitation for 647(b) prostitute look like as opposed to she's a victim and -- but that goes back to, like, it's -- everybody kind of owns a piece of that because it's kind of like, well, maybe she shouldn't be on probation in the first place, right? I mean, that -- it brings up, like, kind of, like, questions. It goes in the big circle. If we're not using the system right, then how do they really fit in? Because they're doing their jobs as they're trained. Does that make sense? Like, okay, so she's an offender and she's on juvenile probation.

RS: Right. So, yeah, I get it.

RP6 You know what I'm saying?

RS: I get it. Okay.

RP6 You see, kind of, like, the connection? It's kind of like....

RS: Yeah. All right. Well, you're a victim, but you're going to juv-y.

RP6 And you're going -- and if a judge convicts you for 647(b,) you're going to get a probation officer assigned to you for your criminal behavior.

RS: Yeah. Right. Even though you're not a criminal.

RP6 Yes. So, I mean, it's not -- I mean, what -- they don't have any training, right? What is their training? Like, if you're -- and if you're a probation officer and you have, like, all these kids on your caseload and you -- and you're not -- you don't have specific -- just cases for girls who are trafficked, and you don't have any special training, how are you -- I mean, what are you doing? Like, how are you helping them? Yeah. How are you helping them? How are you serving? They check in with you. You're the probation officer, but, you know, in your mind, the kid is an offender like all the other kids. And, yes, the whole point of juvenile probation is different than adult probation. It's not just for monitoring. It really is supposed to be for rehabilitation. But I don't believe that that really...

RS: Yeah. Oh, I believe it. I get it. I get it.

RP6 Does that make sense?

RS: Yeah, it is. It does make sense. And therein lies a huge gap.

RP6 Yeah. I mean, I think one -- you know, check in because I've been out of the loop for a year now. But what I do --

RS: Oh whoop, whoop.

RP6 A year. It feels like forever, you know, but I think that there's some plan at Alameda County Juvenile Justice facility to either add another section or another wing onto the facility so that there's a particular housing area for these girls. Have you heard of this?

RS: No, I have not.

RP6 Okay. You should definitely interview somebody from juvenile hall because the last I -- like, one of the last meetings I went to was them saying that they were looking at -- either they were getting grant money; they were going to add a

portion of the facility that was going to be, like, more -- less lockdown-like, more apartment-like and an environment more where the girls can be learning life skills and getting therapy and all of this so that they weren't totally mixed in with general population and all of that. So I don't know what the progress is. I definitely don't think it's up and running, or I would have heard about it, but I know that those conversations were being had.

RS: Well, I do have a call-in, but I have not had any response. So...

RP6 Oh, really?

RS: Uh-huh.

RP6 Yeah. That's not good. Okay. Well, now you see.

RS: Yeah. Yes, they were definitely on my list, and they're a big player.

RP6 Right. I mean, you know, it has to be every single person. It has to be -- like, we have to all be on the same page. Like, we don't have to 100-percent agree philosophically, but we've got to agree to, like, the plan. Like, what's the plan?

RS: The goal. What's the goal? I mean, and everybody has the same kind of goal, I think. I mean, at least that's what I've heard so far. So...

RP6 Yeah. Right. Yeah. I mean, so -- yeah, I think -- I mean, those are the two partnerships I can think of that probably need to be strengthened. I mean, I think everybody -- aside from, you know, partnerships, traditional partnerships, it's like, everybody in society who comes in contact with kids has a responsibility. Teachers need to be trained; principals need to be trained; doctors need to be trained. Everybody that comes in with kids -- contact with kids has a responsibility, and they should be informal partners with each other. I mean, that's just kind of how I feel. Like, I'm all about agencies like Planned Parenthood and all of those things, you know, offering girls abortions without consent. All of that is -- we have to have that, but if you see a girl coming in and she's had, you know, ten abortions, and the guy that keeps bringing her is 30 years old and she's 14, it's kind of like...where does the -- you know, where does the societal desire and necessity to provide her with access to birth control and a safe environment and the responsibility of adults in this society to keep children safe from exploitation, where do those lines start and end? Those are types of questions we have to ask. I mean, you know -- I mean, we've had a hard time with, like, certain facilities when it's, like, a criminal case. Like, I have a warrant. I have a court order from a judge, and I need to get -- this is going to sound really gross. But I need to get the fetus that you took out of her body because that's a piece of evidence because she's 13 years old and her pimp is 40. And, oh, I can't get

it. Oh, whoa, whoa, I can't get a call back. Oh, wait. It's gone. It's destroyed, whatever. Like, come on. Seriously?

So, I mean, I think that some of those things need to be tightened up too, and that's probably an education piece also, right? It's like, I get what your service is. I agree with your service. You have to provide that. I agree with the laws that, you know, girls should be able to -- you know, to have abortions without parental consent. I totally agree with it. But, again, nothing is black and white. There's this gray area where stuff starts to cross, and we kind of need to have at least the ability as adults and professionals who are serving folks to be able to work things out and come up with some standards.

RS: Agreed.

(end of audio)