

CHILD

Sex

TRAFFICKING



AN EIGHT-YEAR EXPLORATORY STUDY IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Child sex trafficking has been found in every state in the United States and is a serious public and mental health concern. Victims of child sex trafficking report significant health, mental health, and social problems and their support and treatment needs are complex. Communities have struggled to find the right combination of support and therapeutic services for these child survivors and having a clear idea of their experiences can assist in increasing targeted techniques by law enforcement and implementing better-informed trauma treatment programming.

This report is based on law enforcement reports from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Vice Enforcement and Sex Trafficking Unit. This data was collected and analyzed by the Arizona State University Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research team in a unique academic/ law enforcement partnership.

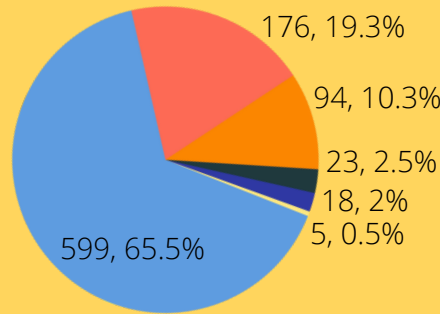
Police reports, victim/trafficker interviews, evidence reports, and case resolution reports were collected for 833 child sex trafficking cases from 2011 to 2019. These child sex trafficking cases did not include cases where a child and an adult victim were trafficked by the same trafficker (n = 53). **Within the 833 child sex trafficking cases, 922 child victims were identified.**

922
CHILD
VICTIMS

902 female
 17 male
 3 transgender

AGE
Age ranged from **11** **17** years old (average = 16)

28% were prior victims of sex trafficking.



ETHNICITY

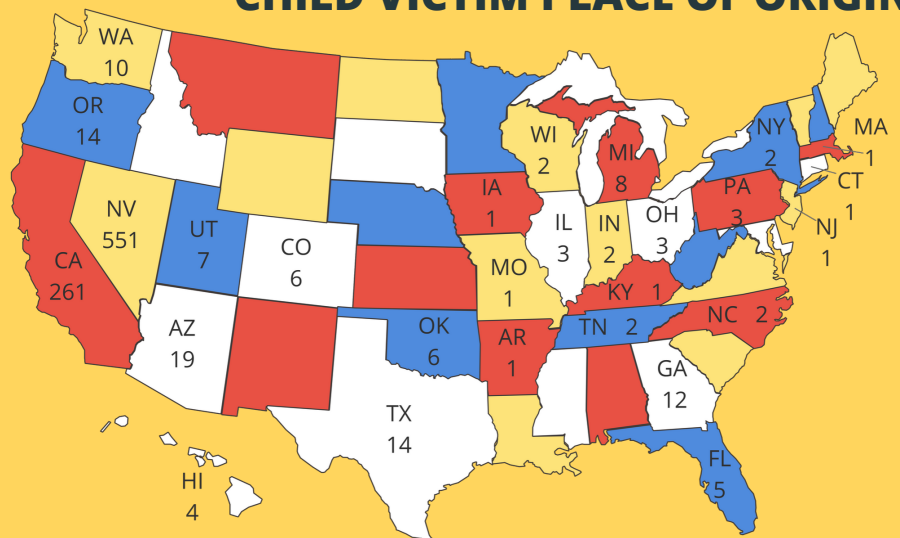
- African American
- Caucasian
- Hispanic
- Bi/Multiracial
- Asian/Pacific Isl.
- Native American/Alaskan Native

12%
(n = 113) of child victims were a ward of the state

63.5%
(n=586) of child victims had a history of running away

Only **40%**
(n = 373) of child victims were reported missing

CHILD VICTIM PLACE OF ORIGIN



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RECRUITMENT TACTICS

The child sex trafficking victims were recruited by the sex trafficker through various means. Information on recruitment tactics was provided for 221 cases (26.5%). Tactics included:



Social Media
(n = 65, 7.8%)



Use of a Friend
(n = 56, 6.7%)



Romantic Relationship
(n = 50, 6%)



Promises of Wealth
(n = 15, 1.8%)



Met in a Public Place
(n = 14, 1.7%)



Promise of Escape
(n = 7, 0.8%)



Use of a Family Member
(n = 6, 0.7%)



Through School
(n = 5, 0.6%)



Promises of Fame
(n = 5, 0.6%)



From Jail
(n = 5, 0.6%)

833
CHILD
VICTIM
CASES

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILD VICTIM

Sex traffickers perpetrated acts of violence on the child sex trafficking victims in order to force the child into a sex trafficking situation. Sex traffickers also use violence as a means of control to keep the child victim from running away or seeking help. The use of violence was indicated in 215 (25.8%) child victim cases, and included the use of:

Violence, by type (N = 215)

	#	%
Kidnapping	115	53.5%
Psychological violence	110	51.2%
Physical violence	84	39.1%
Sexual violence	45	20.9%

7%
of child victims experienced strangulation (n = 16, 7.4%)

MOVEMENT (N = 107)

Sex traffickers moved child sex trafficking victims across state lines in 107 (49.8%) cases. A known control tactic of sex traffickers is to remove victims from their normal surroundings in order to deter them from running away or seeking help. Sex traffickers moved child sex trafficking victims from their home state to Las Vegas for the purposes of sex trafficking in a popular destination city known for its entertainment and party atmosphere. Child victims were transported by private vehicle and by modes of public transportation, including:



Car
(n = 98, 91.6%)



Bus
(n = 11, 10.3%)



Airplane
(n = 2, 1.9%)



Train
(n = 1, 0.9%)

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833
CHILD VICTIM
CASES

CASES BY YEAR

Year	# of Cases	%
2011	79	9.5%
2012	69	8.3%
2013	109	13.1%
2014	101	12.1%
2015	98	11.8%
2016	107	12.8%
2017	94	11.3%
2018	86	10.3%
2019	90	10.8%

14%
(n = 117) cases involved
more than one sex
trafficker

10.6%
(n = 88) cases involved
more than one child
victim

CASES were identified by law enforcement in a number of ways:



Vice Sting
(n = 377, 45.3%)



Security Officer
alerted police
(n = 243, 29.2%)



Asked for help
(n = 50, 6%)



Family member
called for help
(n = 50, 6%)



Patrol car stop
(n = 45, 5.4%)



Domestic
violence call
(n = 45, 5.4%)



Healthcare
provider identified
(n = 16, 1.9%)



Sexual
assault call
(n = 14, 1.7%)

The child victims were cooperative with law enforcement during the investigation and prosecution of their sex trafficking case in 28.1% (n = 234) of cases. Cooperation included giving information, participating in interviews, and staying in contact with law enforcement as the case moved through the criminal justice system.

CASE RESOLUTION 2011 TO 2019

Resolution type	#	%
Case not filed	574	68.9%
Plea agreement	96	11.5%
Case dismissed	72	8.6%
Case still open	27	3.2%
Conviction (trial)	56	6.7%
Case refused by prosecutors.	8	1%

VICTIM COOPERATIVE

Year	# of Cases	%
2011	24	30.4%
2012	22	32.4%
2013	35	28.3%
2014	17	17%
2015	31	31.6%
2016	18	17.1%
2017	31	33.5%
2018	25	29.1%
2019	31	34.8%

39.7%
(n = 329) of cases a sex
trafficker was
identified

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