



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## *Children are a heritage from the LORD... Psalm 127:3*

### **About Sex Trafficking**

**Human trafficking:** The use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act.

**Sex trafficking:** “For-profit” sex act that is induced by force, fraud or coercion. Child prostitution is equivalent to trafficking under the law according to Wisconsin Statute § 948.051: Trafficking of a Child

- There are an estimated 36 million people in modern-day slavery in the world today.
- Human trafficking (both sex and labor trafficking) is the fastest growing organized crime and is the second largest criminal enterprise in the world.
- Human trafficking generates \$32 billion per year in profits.
- 98% of sexually trafficked victims are women and girls.
- In the United States there are an estimated 100,000 – 300,000 children prostituted each year.
- 33% of children that run away are lured into prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home.
- Mortality rate for prostitutes can be 100 times greater than the general population.
- The average age for being sex-trafficked is 13
- Sex trafficking has been found in every county of our state
- 46% of prostitutes attempt suicide

### **Wisconsin Sex Trafficking of Minors**

It is difficult to determine how many youths are being sex trafficked in Wisconsin because even though it is pervasive, it is very covert. To date (2017) cases have been reported across the state in every county, and as awareness of sex trafficking increases professionals are recognizing more youth who are victims of trafficking. Jan Miyazaki, the director of Madison’s Project Respect, said that in her work with local women in the sex trade, she encounters between 50-75 cases a year involving force, fraud or coercion. A community educator who works with Milwaukee minors in the sex trade said she has come into contact with more than 100 young people in the past year that she believes fit the definition of human trafficking victims.

Milwaukee was referred to as “The Harvard of Pimp School,” in the November 2, 2015 article in The Guardian. However, many of the traffickers have moved into suburban and rural areas. The Internet as well as public places are used for recruiting. It is common for traffickers to spend significant time tracking potential girls and boys for prey and they often work in teams.

Find us at [loppw.org](http://loppw.org)

**Thank you!**

- Thank you to the legislature for including money in the last budget to address sex trafficking of youth.
- Thank you also for any support you have offered for the past good legislation that is now helping to raise awareness about human trafficking and place a greater emphasis on punishing traffickers more than the victims.

**Immediate Request:**

- Please co-sponsor LRB 0568 when it comes out. This will become the same bill to decriminalize youth under 18 who are caught in an act of prostitution, that came up last session.
- The last bill was passed out of committee in both the assembly and senate. Let's bring it to the floor this time.
- Former Attorney General Brad Schimel testified that he had a change of heart and moved from not supporting the bill at all to strongly supporting it.
- Judge Ramona Gonzalez of La Crosse at a legislative hearing in 2016 talked about the problem of sex trafficking of youth in our state. She said there is a lot of good will among judges when working with young people caught in prostitution, but that charges such as "lewd and lascivious behavior" sometimes goes into a youth's record in place of prostitution. She had a list of examples of charges that can be and have been made against youth victims.
- Minnesota, Illinois and several other states have passed similar legislation and it has been very successful. As we have more services for victims of sex trafficking in our own state, let's focus on offering our young people services and not re-victimizing them by treating them as criminals.

**KEY ASK (Be sure to get to this point during your meeting):**

Rep. Jill Billings and Senator Alberta Darling are key sponsors of LRB 0568. Can we count on you to be a co-sponsor?

**In Addition:**

- In the next state budget, please support additional funding for services to help more people to survive sex trafficking.
- Also please support any other legislation that helps youth who have been exploited and that brings awareness to the problem of sex trafficking, and that prevents it. For example, please support required instruction in the recognition and prevention of human trafficking for those being trained in commercial driving at technical colleges and licensed private driver schools as came up during the last legislative session as AB 540.