



# Sexual Abuse to Prison Pipeline

Actions for NOW



**Justice Centers**



**School**

**Child  
Prostitution**



- Gender-specific physical and mental healthcare

## **Justice Centers**



- Train teachers and staff
- Provide appropriate referrals

- End arrest of youth prostitution
- Criminalize men who seek prostitutes

**School**

**Child  
Prostitution**

# Point 1: Schools

Goal: Teacher and staff training

# The Problem

- Crimes girls are commonly arrested for are symptoms of trauma
  - Running away, substance abuse, truancy
- Without sufficient counseling, an abuse victim may only receive the school's attention after "acting out"
- Punitive school policies are linked to involvement with the justice system
  - Girls penalized for defending themselves
  - Especially girls of color



# Possible Areas of Focus

- Mandate training for teachers and staff on how to recognize signs of sexual abuse and respond to young girls appropriately
- Increase funding for counseling staff, and establish protocols to make sure that students are referred to counselors when needed
- Review and revise school policies to ensure that punishments for victimized girls are modified appropriately
  - Abandon zero-tolerance disciplinary policies



# Point 2: Child Prostitution

Goal: End arrest of children and/or decrease demand

# The Problem

- Victims of child sex trafficking / minors are being arrested, detained, and prosecuted for prostitution, prostitution-related offenses, and other acts related to their sexual exploitation
  - Many jurisdictions still view victims of child sex trafficking as perpetrators. These girls are arrested on charges of prostitution even though they are too young to legally consent to sex
- Laws that criminalize the act of sex with minors are too rarely enforced in the context of child sex trafficking. In many cases, child-sex buyers escape with little or no accountability, despite the traumatic effect of their acts on the victims





# Possible Areas of Focus

- State laws and delinquency codes should define children under the age of 18 who engage in commercial sex acts as victims of trafficking and prohibit their arrest, detention, and prosecution
  - Consistent with state laws that declare minors to be legally incapable of consenting to sex
- Educate the public on the role of buyers in perpetuating systematic violence against underage girls and other vulnerable youth
- Increase training of law enforcement and prosecutors on investigations and prosecutions of child-sex buyers and redirect resources to scale up operations against buyers rather than criminalizing victims
- Instruct federal and state anti-trafficking task forces throughout the country to target buyers of child sex in their operations
- Encourage the use of federal anti-trafficking statutes and state laws that criminalize sex with minors to prosecute buyers of underage girls



# Point 3: Justice System

Goal: Gender-specific physical and mental health care

# The Problem

- Limited access to services to address trauma
  - Mental health counselors rarely licensed professionals
  - Many girls not evaluated for mental health symptoms at all
- Limited access to gynecological and pediatric care
  - Includes pregnancy testing and prenatal care/education
- Routine processes can re-traumatize victims
  - Use of restraints, strip searches, isolation
- Possibility of continued abuse while on the inside

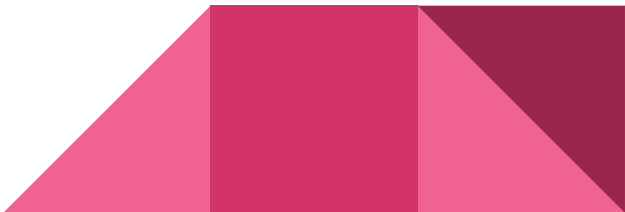


# Strong link between abuse and mental health problems for females:

- Traumatic conditions in detention centers lead to...
  - Higher rates of depression for girls
  - Higher rates of self harm
  - Exacerbation of existing trauma
- Mental health treatment leads to...
  - Reduced recidivism
  - Lower pregnancy rates



# Possible Areas of Focus

- Reauthorize and strengthen the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A)
    - Increase funding to cover gender-specific, trauma-focused care
    - Require states to screen for trauma and sexual exploitation at entry
    - Increase metrics and data collection
  - Require juvenile detention facilities to comply with standards for healthcare set forth by National Commission on Correctional Healthcare, and meet guidelines established by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
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# Additional Items for Discussion

- Use of Title IX to improve resources in schools (\*See additional info sheet\*)
  - Use of Medicaid funds to enhance mental health systems
  - Nationwide webinar on the Sex Abuse to Prison Pipeline
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# Additional Information

[The Sexual Abuse to Prison Pipeline: The Girl's Story](#) by the Human Rights Project for Girls, Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality, and the Ms. Foundation

[Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Over policed, and Unprotected](#) by the African American Policy Forum and the Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies

[Kept Out](#) by Georgetown Law Human Rights Institute

[SOS Project: Girls, Status Offences, and the Need For a Less Punitive and More Empowering Approach](#) by Coalition for Juvenile Justice

[Understanding and Responding to Girls' Delinquency](#) by U.S. Department of Justice

[Effects of Sexual Abuse](#), the [Aftermath of Sexual Abuse](#), and [Recovering from Sexual Abuse](#) by the Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN)

[State Policies, Federal Laws, Court Decisions, and Issues Backgrounds on Sexual Abuse](#) by RAINN

# Media Responses to The Sexual Abuse to Prison Pipeline

[How Girls of Color Are Unjustly Arrested and Incarcerated](#) from The Root

[Girls Are The Fastest Growing Group In The Juvenile Justice System](#) from Mother Jones

[The Sickening Realities of the Sexual Abuse to Prison Pipeline](#) from NY Magazine

[The Sexual Abuse to Prison Pipeline](#) from MSNBC

[The Girls Matter Too](#) from The Huffington Post

[My Brother's Keeper](#) by The White House; programming that excludes young girls of color

[My Brother's Keeper, but Maybe Not My Sister's](#) by The Atlantic

[Why Are There So Many LGBT Youth In prison?](#) by attn