

ADDRESSING THE DEMAND

THE ISSUE

The sex trade would not exist without demand. This demand is predominantly from men who buy sex, thereby funding the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and girls. Generating billions of dollars every year, the sex trade continues to expand at an alarming rate. It is impossible to create real change unless we address the root cause of the issue—detering the demand for sexually exploited individuals. As stated by a man who purchases sex in Chicago:

“If there were no customers, there would be no prostitution.”²

DEMAND CHANGE

Everyday Actions

1. Understand the role that the demand for commercial sex plays in prostitution. Be vigilant about refocusing conversations about prostitution away from blaming the woman to holding the people purchasing sex accountable for their actions. Challenge people in your friendship circle to stop patronizing sex trade venues. Highlight how practices that have become socially acceptable, such as hiring women to strip at bachelor parties or going to strip clubs, can be harmful and serve to normalize the exploitive aspects of the sex trade.

2. Write “Letters to the Editor” and “Op-Eds” to newspapers that participate in victim blaming and hold them accountable for how they cover the issue. Encourage them to highlight the role that demand plays in the harms experienced by individuals in the sex trade.

Raise Awareness

3. Work with a local graphic design program at a university or college to create posters aimed at deterring individuals from purchasing sex. Help raise funds to print and exhibit the posters in your neighborhood. Or download poster designs at www.caase.org.

4. Host a screening of Shared Hope International’s Film Demand (visit www.sharedhopeinternational.org for more information). Other films you can screen include: Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes by Byron Hurt, Tough Guise by Jackson Katz, and Real Talk: Engaging Young Men As Allies To End Violence Against Women by Beyondmedia and the Young Women’s Action Team.

Volunteer

5. Encourage all boys and men you know to respect women and girls and treat them with dignity. Participate in programs such as Mentors in Violence Prevention, which mentors young men and educates them to be part of the solution in regards to sexual harassment and abuse of girls and women. (www.jacksonkatz.com/mvp).

Advocate for Change

6. Encourage schools to provide a curriculum that helps young men understand the messages they receive about masculinity from mainstream culture. Connect these messages to the normalization of gender-based violence. For recommendations of available curriculums, visit the CAASE website.

7. Identify establishments that may be profiting from sexual exploitation. Learn about local ordinances to assess if the establishments are in violation of existing laws. Let law enforcement know if you think there are massage parlors, drug houses, other businesses and/or brothels that are prostituting trafficked women and girls.

8. Use the Community Response Toolkit created by the Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation to help your community take tangible actions to address the demand for the sex trade in their neighborhood (visit www.caase.org for more information).

9. Put pressure on law enforcement to arrest men who are purchasing sex in your neighborhood.

Keep Learning

10. Learn more about the issue:

Read:

- The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and How All Men Can Help by Jackson Katz
- Pornography and International Sex Trafficking: Driving the Demand in International Sex Trafficking by Captive Daughters Media
- The Johns: Sex for Sale and the Men Who Buy It by Victor Malarek

Visit:

- The Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation: www.caase.org
- Men Can Stop Rape: www.mencanstoprape.org
- A Call To Men: www.acalltomen.org

2. Durchslag, R. & Goswami, S. (2007) Deconstructing the Demand for Prostitution: Preliminary Insights From Interview With Chicago Men Who Purchase Sex. The Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation.