

The trafficking of children in Las Vegas

M. Alexis Kennedy
University of Nevada, USA

Children are being exploited domestically through human trafficking in the United States. One hot spot of activity is the site of this conference-Las Vegas, Nevada. This presentation will provide a detailed insight into commercially sexually exploited children identified in Las Vegas. The challenges faced by children surviving on the streets or who are being exploited through prostitution are gaining new recognition. The prevalence of this high-risk behavior is increasingly being identified by professionals working with homeless youth, addicted youth, foster children and children involved in the Juvenile Justice System. The first objective of this workshop is to define human trafficking and provide strategies for identifying youth exploited through prostitution. Detailed information gathered on this population will be presented including information on their very high rates of alcohol abuse, drug use, and high risk sexual behaviors (a sample of 161 girls from the juvenile delinquency system will be discussed). These youth also suffer from polytrauma or multiple types of injuries. This presentation will profile their history of family dysfunction, abuse, truancy, pregnancies, STIs and mental illness. The red flags for identifying youth involvement in prostitution will be covered as well as the treatment needs for these youth in the context of addressing multiple traumas.

Biography

M. Alexis Kennedy is an Associate Professor in Department of Criminal Justice, at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Kennedy has her Ph.D. in forensic psychology. As a former lawyer, she has successfully integrated these two professional foci into her research agenda examining sexual exploitation. She has published papers on child abuse, sexual assault, and exploitation through prostitution, internet crime and negative body image. She has received grants to study crime and led a number of task forces. A recognized expert on sexual exploitation, she has testified in court, spoken throughout North America and is quoted frequently in the media.

alexis.kennedy@unlv.edu