

The Issue

Demand drives the sex trade. People who buy sex, most often men referred to as “johns,” create the demand for exploited women and girls. Pimps, johns, and traffickers are benefiting from the sexual exploitation of others. It is impossible to create real change unless we address the root cause of the issue—deterring 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 and toward 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 and submit opinion pieces 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. Visit www.caase.org/toolkits for the Responding to the Media toolkit.

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/toolkits.
4. Host a screening of Shared Hope International’s film *Demand* (visit <http://www.sharedhope.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 ending sexual harassment and abuse of girls and women; learn more at www.jacksonkatz.com/mvp.

Advocate for Change

6. Empower young men to take action by bringing CAASE’s curriculum to a local high school. The curriculum helps students learn to be critical of media messages about “what it

means to be a man” and to examine glamorized portrayals of pimps and men who buy sex. To learn more contact info@caase.org.

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, businesses, or brothels that are prostituting trafficked women and girls.
8. Use CAASE’s Communities Engaged in Ending Sexual Exploitation Toolkit to help your community take tangible actions to address the demand for the sex trade in their neighborhood (visit www.caase.org/toolkits 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 by viewing the resources under the Addressing the Demand section in the index.

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