

# Supplemental Materials for Toolkit: **Engaging Writers in Ending Sexual Exploitation and Harm**



## **Supplements to Toolkit**

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## **General Guidelines for Writing a Media Response**

Did you read an article in the newspaper, on a blog or even watch a story on the news that didn't get things right about sexual exploitation? Let your voice be heard!

**Be brief:** Short, concise responses are more likely to be published in print than long, meandering ones. Letters to the editor should be no longer than 250–300 words; opinion or editorial pieces may be slightly longer, around 400 words. Longer responses are also more likely to be edited, giving you less control over which parts are kept and which are cut. Leaving a thoughtful comment on a blog is also valuable, as authors usually read them.

**Be timely:** Try to respond within one or two days of the original piece's publication.

**Be organized:** Start your response with a brief recitation of the portrayal you are opposing, including the article to which you are responding, the date it was published, and the author, if this information is available. Then provide a statement of your own position. Next present your evidence. Finally, close with a concise and strong restatement of your position.

**Be polite and professional:** Do not be shrill, rude, or abusive. Editors tend to discard responses containing personal attacks.

**Be authoritative:** Use facts, evidence and/or research findings from reliable sources. If you're writing online, use links. If possible, also bolster your response with facts and quotes from authoritative sources; readers respect the opinions of people with special knowledge or expertise.

**Be accurate:** Newspapers will usually edit to correct mistakes, but your piece is more likely to be published if it does not require editing. Proofread your response carefully for errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Ask a friend or colleague to read it and offer objective input.

## Sample Responses to Sexual Violence in the Media

### SAMPLE #1:

#### Opinion Piece on Press Coverage of Eliot Spitzer Scandal

*Submitted to the Chicago Reader in response to the media coverage of the revelation that Eliot Spitzer was purchasing prostituted women from escort services.*

There are major words and concepts missing from the discussion about Eliot Spitzer's recent crime. The most glaring one is *patriarchy*. If the sex trade were an equal opportunity employer, then it would make sense that there would be equal numbers of men and women selling sex. But the truth is very different. It is overwhelmingly women who end up selling their bodies, predominantly to men. As a society, we have constructed this dangerous idea of masculinity as being entitled to sex. And that is why so many are excusing Spitzer's behavior — it's really just “boys being boys.”

But is it just a "male thing" to purchase the bodies of others? If so, why do so many men not buy sex? And why do so many of those who do have incredibly conflicted feelings about it? As one 'john' I interviewed said, "I don't like to see women subjugate themselves to anything. But I use rationalization to justify my use of prostitutes."

Another concept missing from the debate is an expanded understanding of why Spitzer's actions were wrong. Yes, he crusaded against corruption and helped bring down organized crime, so his actions illuminate his hypocrisy. He has a wife and family and has brought major pain into their lives. But what about the injustice surrounding Spitzer's feelings that not only is it his right to purchase a human being's body but that he can use the bodies he has purchased to live out sex acts, which accounts have implied were sometimes physically harmful to the women?

We can get lost in debates about legalization or the difference between those who "choose" to be in the sex trade and those who end up selling sex out of survival needs. But this is dangerous for the following reasons:

1. It sets up a false dichotomy between "safe" prostitution, or prostitution that occurs behind closed doors, and "dangerous" prostitution, or prostitution that occurs on the street. Research nationwide has consistently found that there is no such thing as safe work in the sex trade. Physical and psychological harm occur at similar rates irrespective of where the sex act is being sold.
2. Prostitution is not simply an interaction between two people. It is a system or an institution that is based on making money. It is a system that recruits young girls and people with limited resources and often histories of sexual abuse. In the United States the average age of entry into the sex trade is 12–14. Can we really

say prostitution is a victimless crime when the majority of those in it start as children, experienced childhood sexual abuse, suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, and experience physical harm at the hands of customers? If prostitution is such a victimless crime then why are women in the sex trade 10 times more likely to be murdered?

There are two paths of activism that might emerge from the Spitzer case. The first is a push towards legalization, something that has not worked in other countries and has actually served to increase the number of women and children trafficked illegally into the sex trade. The second is moving towards the acknowledgement of how the sex trade harms those in it, those buying, and our society as a whole. By using this opportunity as a starting point to have these important conversations, we can transform a very unfortunate situation into an opportunity to work towards a culture that does not accept, and is free from, commercial sexual exploitation.

**SAMPLE #2**

**Letter to Venue Regarding Its “Pimp and Ho” Halloween Party**

*A letter sent directly to the Crobar Nightclub in response to the “Pimp and Ho” Halloween Party*

Dear Sir or Madam:

I was incredibly disappointed and offended to learn that Crobar Nightclub is hosting a “Pimp and Ho” Halloween party. “Pimp and Ho” parties are not only incredibly racist (since the majority of individuals who attend are white and dress up as African-American stereotypes of pimps and prostitutes), but these parties also celebrate a culture of violence against women.

“Pimp And Ho” parties are just an additional way that the harms of prostitution are normalized in mainstream culture. Celebrating men who abuse and rape vulnerable women is completely unacceptable.

Pimping is a form of slavery. Pimps use violence and intimidation to control women and girls and to coerce them into prostitution. The statistics are frightening. Eighty-six percent of pimps’ victims are physically abused, with 50% being assaulted frequently or daily. Eighty percent are sexually assaulted, 71% are controlled by drugs, 69% are confined, 61% have weapons used against them and 34% have death threats against them or their families.

Pimps are perpetrators of unimaginable amounts of violence towards women in prostitution. And yet your club is continuing the glorification of this culture by hosting a party dedicated to batterers.

I hope, with this information, your club decides to change the theme of its Halloween party. By hosting this party, you are contributing to trivializing the harm experienced by 25,000 women and girls on any given day in Chicago.

Sincerely,  
Rachel Durchslag  
Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation

## Relevant Blogs

Here is a list of blogs that cover issues related to sexual exploitation. You can also get in touch with the organization that hosts the blog and inquire about guest posting on the blog about these issues.

Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation: <http://caase1821.blogspot.com/>

Feministing: [www.feministing.com](http://www.feministing.com)

Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation: <http://www.abolishhumantrafficking.com/>

Ms. Magazine: <http://msmagazine.com/blog>

Neighborhood Writing Alliance: [www.iot.org/blog](http://www.iot.org/blog)

Polaris Project: <http://www.polarisproject.org/blog>

SAFER (Students Active For Ending Rape): <http://www.safercampus.org/blog>

Traffick Free: <http://www.traffickfree.org/blog>

## **Outreach and Direct Services for Survivors in Chicago**

### **Anne's House – Salvation Army's Partnership to Rescue Our Minors from Sexual Exploitation**

Illinois' first long term trauma based residential program for young women and girls who have been impacted by sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. This trauma-informed program offers comprehensive services including, but not limited to, individual and group therapy, life skills training, support with academic and vocational goals, social and recreational activities and spiritual guidance.

For additional information:

<http://www.sapromise.org/anne.htm>

(312) 291-7916

### **Center on Halsted**

Center on Halsted's Legal Clinic provides free and confidential information and referrals from local volunteer attorneys and legal organizations. The Center has an Education and Victim Advocacy team who works to reduce bias and violence in the lives of LGBT, queer, questioning and HIV-affected people. The Center also has an anti-violence project that offers a 24-hour crisis hotline, counseling, incident reporting assistance, court accompaniment, and victim advocacy to LGBTQ survivors of abuse and violence.

For additional information:

<http://www.centeronhalsted.org/EVA.html>

(773) 472-6469

### **Dreamcatcher Foundation**

An agency run by survivors of the sex trade, the Dreamcatcher Foundation provides health services, counseling, referrals to transitional housing and addiction treatment facilities, employment placement and educational support for young women between the ages of 12-25 who have survived the sex trade.

For additional information:

<http://dianetye.com/dreamcatcherfoundation/index1.html>

(773) 936-9898

### **Footprints**

Offers hope and rehabilitative services to girls and women exposed to trauma in the sex trade. It also facilitates substance abuse and HIV prevention for women arrested for prostitution in Cook County.

For additional information:

[www.cchc-online.org](http://www.cchc-online.org)

(773) 533-5600

### **National Runaway Switchboard**

The mission at the National Runaway Switchboard is to help keep America's runaway and at-risk youth safe and off the streets. Their 24-hour crisis line has experienced front-line team members ready to help. Their services are anonymous, confidential and free.

For additional information:

<http://www.1800runaway.org/>  
1-800-RUNAWAY

### **National Immigrant Justice Center**

The National Immigrant Justice Center ensures human rights protections and access to justice for immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers through direct legal services, policy reform, impact litigation, and public education.

For additional information:

<http://www.immigrantjustice.org>

### **Night Ministry**

The Night Ministry connects with Chicago's vulnerable youth and adults through street outreach, youth shelter and supportive services, and their mobile health outreach bus. They provide basic resources, free healthcare, housing and supportive services for youth and referrals to other agencies for specific resources.

For additional information:

<http://www.thenightministry.org/>  
(773) 784-9000

### **Pillars**

Pillars provides comprehensive mental health services. The organization provides a 24-hour hotline and crisis intervention for victims of domestic violence and sexual violence. Pillars runs the Constance Morris House, a DV shelter, legal advocacy, and counseling for women and children experiencing domestic violence and sexual violence including child sexual assault, incest, rape, and sex trafficking.

For additional information:

<http://www.pillarscommunity.org/services/DomesticandSexualViolenceServices.asp>

**24 hour Domestic Violence Hotline:** (708) 485-5254

**24 hour Sexual Violence Hotline:** (708) 482-9600

### **Prologues**

An outreach team that travels throughout the city to provide HIV prevention and support services for people involved in the commercial sex trade.

For additional information:

Lucretia Clay-Ward, (773) 317-8711

**STOP-IT**

Salvation Army's STOP-IT program aids in the elimination of human trafficking, by the rescue of victims and protection of survivors, as well as the prosecution of traffickers and exploiters. They are committed to educating the community to recognize and identify possible victims of trafficking. Contact the STOP IT 24 hour Hotline 1-877-606-3158 to report a suspected case of human trafficking including commercial sexual exploitation of children, sex trafficking, and labor trafficking.

For additional information:  
(773) 275-6233 X3029

**Young Women's Empowerment Project:**

The Young Women's Empowerment Project is a community-based, youth-led project that was founded in 2001 by a radical feminist and harm-reduction-based collective of women and girls involved in the sex trade, street economy, and their allies. They were created by women and girls who believe that any girl can be empowered and that all girls are priceless, creative, and smart and can be leaders in their communities. YWEP offers girls involved in the sex trade and street economy ages 12-23 non-judgmental support, harm reduction information and resources.

For additional information:  
<http://www.youarepriceless.org/>

## **Advocacy Organizations in Chicago**

### **Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation**

CAASE envisions a community free from all forms of sexual exploitation, including sexual assault and the commercial sex trade. CAASE addresses the culture, institutions, and individuals that perpetrate, profit from, or support sexual exploitation. Our work includes prevention, policy reform, community engagement, and legal services. As the lead agency for the End Demand Illinois campaign, CAASE seeks to refocus law enforcement's attention on pimps, johns and traffickers while proposing a network of support and services for survivors of the sex trade.

For additional information visit:

[www.caase.org](http://www.caase.org) and [www.enddemandillinois.org](http://www.enddemandillinois.org)  
(773) 244-2230

### **Salvation Army's Partnership to Rescue Our Minors from Sexual Exploitation (PROMISE)**

PROMISE is a Chicago faith-based organization working against the sexual exploitation of minors. Its mission is to address, in a holistic manner, the commercial sexual exploitation of youth under 18 in the Chicago area by focusing on prevention, intervention, outreach and service provision.

For additional information:

[www.sapromise.org](http://www.sapromise.org)  
(312) 286-2011

### **Prostitution Alternatives Round Table**

Prostitution Alternatives Round Table (PART) is a network of governmental and private non-profit organizations and survivors of prostitution dedicated to addressing the many issues surrounding prostitution and homelessness in Chicago. PART is a project of the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless and is led by an active Steering Committee and Committee of Survivors of Prostitution.

For additional information:

[www.chicagohomeless.org](http://www.chicagohomeless.org)  
(312) 435-4548

### **Soroptimist**

Soroptimist is an international volunteer organization comprised of professional women working to improve the lives of women throughout the world through raising public awareness, fundraising, programming, and membership.

For additional information:

<http://www.soroptimist.org/>

### **Traffick Free**

Traffick Free is an organization dedicated to raising awareness about human trafficking by conducting presentations for churches, schools, and groups. They also serve as a liaison with the community, linking community members with trafficking service providers for training, educational, and volunteer opportunities.

For additional information:

[www.traffickfree.org](http://www.traffickfree.org)

## Suggested Reading

### ***A Crime So Monstrous: Face-to-Face with Modern-Day Slavery***

Author: E. Benjamin Skinner. Free Press, 2008.

Journalist E. Benjamin Skinner gives several accounts of current slaves and traffickers, but focuses on slavery victims in Haiti, Sudan, Romania, and India. Their stories and conditions are recorded and analyzed.

### ***A Piece of Cake***

Author: Cupcake Brown. Crown Publishers, 2006.

Cupcake's story encompasses foster care, child abuse, rape, drug dealing and addiction, alcoholism, gang activity, prostitution, and homelessness. In this original narrative, she describes overcoming these obstacles with the help of friends and strangers.

### ***The Passionate Torah: Sex and Judaism***

Author: Danya Ruttenberg. New York University Press, 2009.

A compilation of writings by Jewish rabbis, scholars, and others providing discussion on a wide variety of aspects of sexuality in Jewish tradition and today's culture. Chapter 2 addressed prostitution.

### ***Bodies and Souls***

Author: Isabel Vincent. HarperCollins Publishers, 2005.

The story of Jewish women victimized into the sex trade from the late 1860s to the beginning of the Second World War is told through academic studies and biographical accounts. In South America, South Africa, India, and New York, these women, shunned by the Jewish community, formed their own Jewish order spreading love and acceptance.

### ***The Johns: Sex for Sale and the Men Who Buy It***

Author: Victor Malarek. Arcade Press, 2009.

The journalist and author of *The Natashas* (see below) writes another exposé on the sex industry, its customers, and the women who are trafficked from around the world into sexual slavery to meet the demand for paid sex.

### ***Listening to Olivia***

Author: Jody Raphael. Northeastern University Press, 2004.

Jody Raphael tells the story of Olivia, a survivor of prostitution and stripping in Chicago. Olivia suffered from drug addiction, abuse, and poverty, and overcame her obstacles, and she now works to help women exit the sex trade and leave behind a life of shame and harm.

### ***The Macho Paradox***

Author: Jackson Katz. Sourcebooks, Inc., 2006.

In this book, Katz argues that all men have a role to play in preventing male violence against women. His basic assertion is that rape, battering, sexual abuse, and harassment are so widespread that they must be viewed not as issues relevant only to troubled individuals but rather as a social problem rooted in our culture.

### ***The Natashas***

Author: Victor Malarek. Arcade Publishing, 2004.

The trend of Eastern European girls being forced into the sex trade is examined—how they get there, what happens, how they survive—as well as its impact on globalization.

***Not for Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade and How We Can Fight It***

Author: David Batstone. HarperCollins Publishers, 2007.

Journalist, professor, and editor David Batstone profiles the new generation of abolitionists who are leading the struggle to end modern-day slavery.

***Prostitution, Trafficking, and Traumatic Stress***

Editor: Melissa Farley. The Haworth Maltreatment & Trauma Press, 2000.

An analysis of all aspects of the sex industry, from impoverished Mexican prostituted women to those trafficked around the world, and highlights the various forms of harm they face.

**For a list of more books, please visit The Voices and Faces Project website at**

**[http://www.voicesandfaces.org/rape\\_reading.asp](http://www.voicesandfaces.org/rape_reading.asp).**

## **Suggested Films**

### ***Bangkok Girl***

Nineteen-year-old Pla tells of her experience trying to avoid prostitution while working in a bar in Thailand since the age of 13. The film shows how, with time, she will inevitably be forced into the trade. (42 min)

### ***CALL+RESPONSE***

CALL+RESPONSE is a first-of-its-kind feature documentary film that reveals the world's 27 million dirtiest secrets: there are more slaves today than ever before in human history. CALL+RESPONSE goes deep undercover where slavery is thriving, from the child brothels of Cambodia to the slave brick kilns of rural India, to reveal that in 2007, slave traders made more money than Google, Nike, and Starbucks combined. (89 min)

### ***Demand***

This documentary exposes the men who buy commercial sex, the women and children sold as commodities, and the facilitators of the trade within the marketplace of exploitation. (45 min)

### ***Holly***

An American stolen-artifacts dealer comes across a 12-year-old Vietnamese girl sold by her family into prostitution. The film focuses on his attempt to bring the girl to safety and raise awareness about child trafficking. (114 min)

### ***Lilya 4 Ever***

At 16 in the former Soviet Union, Lilya is left by her mother and tricked into prostitution. The film tells the story of the horror Lilya's life soon becomes. (109 min)

### ***Not for Sale***

This documentary investigates the 27 million individuals ensnared in the modern-day slave trade. Undercover footage covers trafficking operations and what today's abolitionists are doing to fight the rampant terrors of human trafficking in the US and abroad. (85 min)

### ***Svetlana's Journey***

Based on a true story, this drama describes the experience of a young Bulgarian girl sold by her adopted parents to a pimp for only 10,000 euros. (40 min)

### ***Trade***

A girl from Mexico City is abducted into modern day slavery, and her brother goes on a quest to rescue her. (119 min)

### ***Turning a Corner***

This documentary tells the stories of those affected by the sex trade in Chicago and examines efforts to implement policy reforms necessary to end the harm experienced by those in prostitution. (60 min)

### ***Very Young Girls***

This film follows 13- and 14-year-old girls in New York and addresses the mistreatment and abuse that they endure as prostituted young women. Rachel Lloyd, a survivor herself, runs GEMS, a recovery center dedicated to supporting young girls as they exit the sex trade. (84 min)

## Take Action

This section provides tangible actions individuals and groups can take to counter the harm of prostitution and human trafficking. We hope these suggestions will help individuals feel empowered to take action and improve the world for all of us. Any of these activities can be incorporated into the suggestions we provide for monthly activities.

- **Learn more about the issue** – There are many films and books about human trafficking and prostitution. Expand your personal knowledge about these issues by checking out any of our recommended resources, as well as a more comprehensive lists available at: [www.caase.org](http://www.caase.org), or facilitate a book club or film screening for a group of friends or your community. Develop action steps based on what you learned from these resources. Reach out to local groups and engage them in your activities.
- **Add a personal dimension** – Sometimes we feel so removed from an issue that we cannot imagine that it is happening in our communities. As a community or campus group, you can help raise awareness about sexual exploitation by hosting an “educational hour” where a prostitution survivor or expert on sexual exploitation is invited to share his or her experiences with your group. This is a great opportunity to create dialogue on these important issues. If you are interested in having someone speak to your community, please contact Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation at [info@caase.org](mailto:info@caase.org).
- **If you are a student, ask professors to address the issue in class or host a panel** – Raise awareness about sexual exploitation on your campus by addressing the issue in an academic context.
- **Build a relationship with your local elected officials** – Help your representatives understand how important it is not to revictimize women in their community. Reach out your as aldermen, city council members and mayor to advocate for policies that target those causing the harm—pimps, traffickers, and customers—instead of revictimizing prostituted individuals. Most political leaders allot one day per week to meet with their constituents. Call ahead to confirm times and schedule a meeting to introduce yourself and your group and offer your recommendations.
- **Contact your legislators** – Your voice counts! Keep abreast of relevant legislation and support initiatives that provide resources to women and hold perpetrators accountable. An easy way to voice your opinions and make an impact on this issue is to write, call, or meet your local legislator. Each U.S. legislator has a D.C. office and a local office. You can find your local and national representatives at <http://capwiz.com/cfw/state/main/?state=IL&view=myofficials#0>.
- **Talk with community members who are government and law enforcement officials** – Set up a meeting to discuss the reality of human trafficking and the efforts of anti-trafficking organizations working on the issue. Connect them with ways to get involved in the work of these organizations.

- **Serve fair trade coffee or have traffick-free chocolate parties** – Buy fair trade and traffick-free chocolate and coffee and use them as an entry point for conversations with community members and friends about human trafficking, both domestic and abroad. Use fair trade coffee at functions and encourage other groups to do the same.
- **Volunteer** – Partner with organizations that are working to end sexual exploitation. Many organizations/coalitions are looking for individuals to help support their goals through volunteer time, collaborative community efforts, and donations. Work with the members of your campus community to identify their skill sets and how they can contribute to the missions of potential partnering organizations. Areas of need are medical care, translation, job placement, housing, legal services, and mentoring. Your campus community can also help by organizing a clothing, blanket, and/or food drive. Chicago-based organizations working to end sexual exploitation can be found in the Resources section of this kit. If you need assistance finding an organization that matches your volunteer strategy, please contact CAASE.