The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

A Hidden epidemic

Alisha K. Morton
A Capstone Project
Portland State University
June 1, 2013
# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .................................................................1  
  Purpose of this Project .......................................................1  
  Background Information .................................................... 1  
  Methods ...............................................................................2  
  Results ................................................................................3  

Introduction .............................................................................4  

Literature Review ....................................................................8  
  Background and definition of terms .......................................8  
  Key information sources for CSEC .........................................10  
  The victims of CSEC ...........................................................11  
  Traffickers ...........................................................................14  
  The supply and demand ......................................................15  
  Strategies to address CSEC ..................................................16  
  Research Question: CSEC in the Pacific Northwest ...............18  

Data Collection .......................................................................20  
  The Interview Questions ......................................................20  
  Interviewees .........................................................................21  

Data Analysis .........................................................................23  

Summary of information by each interviewee .......................23
Executive Summary

The commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is the most hidden form of child abuse in the United States today (Boxhill & Richardson, 2007). As public sector employees it is our responsibility to work in the best interest of the public and this includes protecting children in our city and our community from sex trafficking. In order to ensure that we are doing our part we need to have the knowledge and the skill set to identify and assess victims of sex trafficking and the ability meet the basic needs.

Purpose of this project

The purpose of this capstone project is to identify the key points of information public sector employees need to know to properly identify and work with victims and perpetrators. It is then the intent of this author that once these key points have been established the information will be compiled into a comprehensive handbook/reference guide for public sector employees to use and refer to.

Background Information

The commercial sexual exploitation is a crime that affects hundreds of thousands of children every year and until recently received very little attention from American citizens or the federal government. In 2000 the Trafficking Victims Protection Act defined sex trafficking as, “The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act where such an act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age (Shared Hope International, 2009). Other forms of CSEC include; child pornography, stripping, escort services, gang-based
prostitution, interfamilial pimping and forms of internet based exploitation (Multnomah County CSEC Training Manual).

The city of Portland has been identified by Shared Hope International as a destination spot for sex traffickers to move their victims through. It is especially conducive for sex trafficking based on its geographical location of being on the I-5 corridor, the high number of adult establishments, the fairly lenient laws on the buyers and the high number of homeless youth. With the sex trafficking so prevalent in Portland and its surrounding counties it is an issue that can no longer be ignored. In order to address the issue of CSEC appropriately it is essential to raise public awareness and for public sector employees that come in contact with victims and traffickers to be able to have enough knowledge of the issue to identify victims and traffickers and refer to the appropriate resources.

**Methods**

An extensive review of the existing literature was conducted. In addition, interviews with local professionals that work with victims and traffickers were conducted to obtain testimonials. Primary contributors of information on CSEC came from national organizations working towards public awareness such as Shared Hope International and the Polaris Project. Other sources were smaller advocacy groups such as Girls Educational and Motivating Services (GEMS) and the Human Exploitation and Trafficking (H.E.A.T.) as well as studies funded by the state and federal government.

The selection of professionals interviewed was based on their expertise in the field, their accessibility and the professional relationship I had already established as a colleague. A former Portland sex trafficking victim was also part of the interview pool. The intent of these interviews was to gain a Portland perspective on sex trafficking from those that work first hand with the
victims and perpetrators. Although questions asked of the interviewees were directed towards their particular expertise in the field, there were a number of responses that overlapped thus presenting themes in the data which included gang affiliation of traffickers, history of sexual abuse of victims, the need for more services and resources in our community for sex trafficking victims.

An analysis of the literature and the qualitative data collection resulted in the identification of key information needed for public sector employees. The key findings include the following:

1. Key characteristics of CSEC victims,
2. Key characteristics of traffickers,
3. Key characteristics of buyers/demand,
4. Factors that contribute to CSEC,
5. Key components needed to combat CSEC
6. Local resources to address CSEC

Based on the findings of this project, a Reference Guide for public employees was developed. The goal of the Reference Guide is to provide public sector employees with a better understanding and heightened awareness of CSEC and a basic understanding of the multitude of interrelated components involved. In addition to the ability to identify, assess, work and refer CSEC victims to the appropriate resources that support them in breaking away from the CSEC lifestyle as well as identifying perpetrators and notifying the appropriate professionals.
**Introduction**

The issue of the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is a subject matter that is hidden from our public consciousness. However, the reality is, it is a crime that is shocking and disheartening. The following is an excerpt from an interview with Joyce, a former Portland sex trafficking victim:

I was growing up in North Portland with my mom and my sister. My mom, she was a single parent so it was a little hard for her to try to raise us and go to work. Growing up I was really good in school, I was an A & B honor roll student until I was 11 years old and I was sexually molested by my mom’s boyfriend. After I got molested from him I started running away from home, I started going into stores stealing, I started doing anything that was opposite of what I was supposed to do. I was angry and I was hurt. How could you tamper with somebody, make them think their crazy and then all the love you thought you were supposed to have from your mom is going to him? In order to keep my younger sister from going through all that (molestation by mom’s boyfriend) I thought I would tell my mom. She said I was a lying bitch and that I wanted to sleep with her man. When you are 11 years old you don’t think about sleeping with somebody like that unless something happens to you to make you think that. From that point on he always used to say you never going to be no good, you’re never going to amount to anything and I always thought that. I started hanging out with the wrong people, fast guys and I got promiscuous. When I was 15 I met this guy, he was a fast guy. He had about six other girls at the time which I didn’t know; I just saw the exterior and was like “ahhhh”, I was just really looking for love to be honest with you because I couldn’t find it at home. He enticed me to go out there and work and I thought why not I have nothing else to live for?

Joyce ended up working for this pimp for over five years. He was extremely physically abusive and she was terrified of him. Eventually she left him for another pimp because his abuse was so excessive she couldn’t work because her face was constantly bruised. She was involved in sex trafficking for almost fifteen years and is a survivor.

Sex trafficking in the United States is a multi-million dollar business. It affects hundreds of thousands of children every year and exists in cities across the country but most Americans
are ignorant to its prevalence in their community. The average age of entry into sex trafficking is 12 to 14 years old and for many their story begins like Joyce’s. Victims of child sex trafficking come from every socio-economic level, race, and ethnic group, urban, suburban and rural areas. It is a crime that knows “no boundaries” (personal communication, Sergeant Jesse Luna). It is a crime in which the young victims experience violence, beatings, starvation, forced drug use and trauma on a daily basis. This is happening right under our nose and most of us as are unaware of the severity and prevalence of it in our community. So how do we bring awareness to the public and those working in the social service field? How do we educate those who will be working most closely with its young victims and the perpetrators or pimps? We have reached a point where it is time to understand CSEC more fully in order to rescue the victims and convict the buyers and perpetrators. More importantly it is imperative that we as public sector employees and citizens understand that CSEC does happen in our community and is not an issue that happens primarily in third world countries or just in metropolis cities such as New York and Los Angeles.

The existing literature on CSEC includes information from sources such as Shared Hope International and the Polaris Project as well as other smaller state organizations such as Human Exploitation and Trafficking (H.E.A.T.) and the Girls Education and Mentoring Services (GEMS). These sources presented information that was either very broad in terms of general facts and terms or the sources were focused on the specific issue each organization faces. In researching for this project, it became clear that there is a lack of literature focusing on the Pacific Northwest and Portland. Shared Hope International established to address CSEC and bring public awareness and support to the issue identified Portland as a destination spot for sex trafficking and it is a known fact that Portland has a thriving adult sex industry. With these two
factors alone it is surprising that there is not enough information to help public sector employees address sex trafficking.

In order to fill this gap in the literature it was determined that a handbook/reference guide would provide the information needed for public sector employees in the Pacific Northwest, specifically Portland and south along the I-5 corridor such as Marion and Lane counties. The questions that remain are; what are the knowledge and skill sets necessary for public sector employees to recognize victims and perpetrators and refer to the appropriate available resources? Secondly, in all of the existing literature how it determined what is important?

The purpose of this capstone project is to compile from the literature the key information needed for the development of a comprehensive reference guide on CSEC for public sector employees. Interviews from local professionals working in the arena of CSEC provided valuable information specific to our community. This paper describes the process and the findings from the literature review. The result of the literature review informs the selection of the professionals to be interviewed and the interview questions. It also describes the data collection process using professional interviews. The finding of this project informed the development of a compact and comprehensive reference guide on CSEC intended for every public sector employee.

**Literature Review**

A comprehensive review of the literature on CSEC was conducted. Books, articles, websites and CSEC training materials that provided any information on the subject were examined. Key sub-categories identified in the literature include: victims, traffickers, buyers, the supply and demand as well as the steps needed to combat CSEC. Consequently, these sub-
categories were used as a framework to organize the information and direct the research. This section provides the key information obtained from the literature review. It discusses the background and definitions of CSEC terms, the victims and their experience in the sex trafficking world, the manipulation and dangerous behaviors of traffickers, the buyers and their demands and the strategies that organizations, social service agencies, law enforcement and victim’s advocate groups must take to combat child sex trafficking.

**Background and definition of terms**

The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) is defined by the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) as “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act where such an act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age” (Shared Hope International, 2009). TVPA describes a *commercial sex act* as the giving or receiving of anything of value (money, drugs, shelter, food, clothes, etc.) to any person in exchange for a sex act (Shared Hope International 2009). In the case of sex trafficking of a minor, no proof of force, fraud, or coercion is required, age is the sole determining factor. Sex trafficking also includes such acts as: street prostitution, pornography, stripping, and erotic/nude massage, escort services, phone sex lines, private parties, gang-based prostitution, interfamilial pimping and internet based exploitation and is driven by a supply and demand in the criminal market industry. Sex trafficking of adults, children, women and men falls under the umbrella of human trafficking. The Polaris Project, a national organization fighting to end human trafficking explains it as, “a form of modern-day slavery where people profit from the control and exploitation of others. As defined under U.S. federal law, victims of human trafficking include children involved in the sex trade, adults age 18 or over who are
coerced or deceived into commercial sex acts, and anyone forced into different forms of ‘labour or services,’ such as domestic workers held in a home, or farm-workers forced to labour against their will” (2013). This modern-day form of slavery is thriving in the United States and is affecting the lives of our children.

The issue of CSEC in the United States has only recently generated the attention of the federal government with the passing of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000. The TVPA was the first comprehensive federal law to address trafficking, with a significant focus on the international dimension of the problem (Polaris Project, 2013). In 2001 Linda Smith, a former US Congresswoman and founder of Shared Hope International—an organization providing services, shelter and prevention strategies for sex trafficking victims in countries across the globe also founded the War Against Sex Trafficking Alliance (WATA) which led to a series of summit meetings with nations across the globe including the United States addressing the issue of sex trafficking in their country. In 2006 Shared Hope International coordinated the U.S Mid-Term Review on the commercial sexual exploitation of children bringing together leaders from across the country to assess the United States fight against CSEC (Courage Worldwide, 2011). The result was the recognition of the need to broaden our lens in order to effectively combat sex trafficking. This meant not only addressing the needs of the victims but addressing the buyers as a significant force behind the demand. Although recent efforts have brought the issue of sex trafficking to the forefront, as reported by Estes and Weiner (2001), child exploitation still remains the most hidden form of child abuse in the United States today. It is the nation’s least recognized epidemic (Ending Sex Trafficking of Children in Atlanta 2007, p.140). It is estimated that at least 150,000 children in the United States are lured into prostitution each year (National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway and
Throwaway Children 2002). It is considered a low visibility or underground crime which also suggests that there are many CSEC cases that go unreported. The actual number of CSEC victims is assumed to be far greater than what is estimated. Unfortunately, according to the National Institute of Justice (2007), “no concerted effort has been made to gather reliable data regarding the extent of the commercial sexual exploitation of children” (p.2) therefore the exact number of CSEC victims is not known.

**Key information sources for CSEC**

Most of the information pertaining to CSEC in the United States comes from a few major sources such as: National Institute of Justice, The Polaris Project, Shared Hope International, and the Training Manual on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) for Multnomah County Department of Community Justice and the California Child Welfare Council. There are also a handful of websites devoted to the issue of CSEC that focus on the issue in a particular state. For instance, the Girls Education and Mentoring Services (GEMS) in New York City focused on the state of New York. Human Exploitation and Trafficking (H.E.A.T.) an organization fighting to combat CSEC and MISSEY another resource organization for support and comprehensive series for victims and public outreach are both based in California and focuses on the California issues. There is very little literature found focusing on the Pacific Northwest and Portland in particular with the exception of one reference from Shared Hope International. It identifies a well-known trafficking circuit as, “the Western Circuit, which includes, Seattle, Washington; Portland, Oregon; San Francisco, Los Angeles…” (2009 p. 26). The Multnomah County’s website also provides general information and a short list of resources.
Shared Hope International is frequently referred to by other literature. As noted earlier, Shared Hope International was established in 1998 by former US Congresswoman Linda Smith and has appeared to catapult the issue of CSEC into the forefront forcing our government and our social service agencies to begin seriously addressing the issue. Due to the history and the depth of knowledge Shared Hope has generated over the last fifteen years, it is the primary source of information.

*The victims of CSEC*

Many sources discuss issues related to the victims of CSEC. Shared Hope International and the California Child Welfare Council websites in particular explained in detail the vulnerability of children how they are manipulated into the life of prostitution, the violence and brutality they experience every day. All literature emphasizes that the biggest factor contributing to the vulnerability of a child becoming a victim to CSEC is simply their age. Shared Hope International (2009) states “research has shown that the average age of entry into prostitution is 12 to 14 year old in the United States” (2009 p.30). Not only is it against the law as a 12 or 14 year old does not have the developmental maturity to give consent but the experience of repeated sexual encounters with adult men has a long lasting psychological impact that require intensive mental health counselling.

The psychological disorders as a result of recurring trauma include: attachment disorder, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, self-harming disorders and conduct disorder (Shared Hope International 2010). Other factors that contribute to the vulnerability of a victim being lured into sex trafficking include: history of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, drug use by parents, running away and history of being in child protective services. It was also noted in
the literature that although these factors contribute to a child’s vulnerability there are many children that do not present these additional vulnerabilities yet are still lured into sex trafficking.

The North Carolina School Social Workers Association organizes risk factors into three categories; individual, environmental and social. The individual factors are risks that pertain specifically to the child’s individual experience, these include: a history of sexual and physical abuse, neglect, developmental/learning disabilities and mental health issues. The environmental risk factors are societal-based such as the prevalence of the adult sex industry, a transient male population such as sporting events, military bases and truck stops, community violence as well as the proximity to borders which increases the likelihood of trafficking between countries such as Tijuana and San Diego. Lastly, the social factors that contribute to a child’s vulnerability are imbedded in our culture. Racism for instance, impacts who and how children are used in CSEC, sexism and misogyny force women to deal with systems of sexism which include messages that they need to appear sexually attractive, downplay their strength and intelligence and to compete with each other but not with men. This gender inequality,”…sets the stage for exploitation and violence against women” (CSEC Training Manual, 2010). Based on these categories a typical victim is a 14 year old girl who has been sexually abused, has difficulty in school both academically and socially and eventually runs away. Due to her low self-esteem she is easily flattered by the attention of older men, easily manipulated and soon she is sucked into the life of sex trafficking.

Victims of CSEC live the life of a modern day slave through control, violence and manipulation of the pimp/trafficker and live in constant fear. According to the California Child Welfare (2013) “children are hit, kicked, punched, struck with objects, burned, [and] cut with knives, others have been murdered. Accordingly, the average life expectancy of an exploited
child is a shockingly short time: seven years. Homicide and HIV/AIDS account for a majority of the deaths” (p. 15).

Despite the violence and brutality victims suffer at the hands of their pimp it is still difficult for them to leave. In the Practitioner Guide and Intake Tool (2010) authored by Shared Hope International it explains the obstacles that prevent a victim from leaving her pimp. First there is the physical control a pimp has over a victim. It is important to remember that the victims are young girls who are typically much smaller physically then their adult male pimp. Often time’s victims are also too physically weak to leave due to malnutrition from their pimp withholding food. Second and most threatening is the beating they will endure if caught trying to escape. It is not uncommon for pimps to beat one girl for the actions of another, making the victim feel guilty for trying to leave (2010 Shared Hope International). The most significant factor for a victim not leaving is the pimp’s psychological control over her (Shared Hope International, The California Child Welfare Council and GEMS). The trauma bond that a victim has with her pimp is incredibly strong and probably the most difficult to deconstruct. Lastly, there is shame involved in what the victims have been doing. Quite often pimps take photographs of the victims engaging in a sexual act to use as blackmail. The fear of what her family and friends will think when they see the photographs keep the victim close to the pimp so he won’t divulge her terrible secret.

The literature reveals that the life of sex trafficking victims is a violent, traumatic and psychologically, emotionally and physically damaging experience that takes a tremendous amount of time to heal from. It is a life they do not choose to become involved in but one that they are forced to live and for many without the hope of escape.

*Traffickers*
Literature on traffickers is not as extensive as it is for the victims. Most of it focuses on the grooming and recruiting techniques a pimp uses to coerce a child into prostitution and the violence and brainwashing used to control the victims. One interesting point made by Shared Hope International and supported by Melissa Snow author of *The Sociopath Construct of the American Pimp* (2009) was that pimps/traffickers share many of the same psychological characteristics as psychopaths as defined by the Psychopathy Checklist Revised (PCL-R).

Shared Hope International cited a study of 22 male prisoners incarcerated for pimping. The study suggested that more than one third of the male prisoners met the PCL-R characteristics resulting in the diagnosis of a psychopath. This study raised a significant concern for the victims under pimp control, because of the high rate of psychopathic tendencies and the acceptance and glamorization of pimping in our society. In the Human Trafficking Training material for Multnomah County it listed other behaviors and physical characteristics of pimps such as tattoos, having multiple phones, multiple girlfriends, quite often other family members are involved in prostitution, no clear financial resource yet very well dressed and have material things and frequent adults establishments.

The literature on traffickers also emphasized the modes of manipulation and coercion used to lure children into the life of sex trafficking. Traffickers target areas where children congregate such as malls, schools, bus stops, movie theaters, youth shelters, etc. They will then develop relationships with the children and through manipulation of the child’s vulnerability will eventually turn and force them to work in the sex industry typically seven days a week. For other pimps, violence and force is used at the beginning and the victim is essentially held hostage.

*The supply and demand*
Shared Hope International, Polaris Project and the California Child Welfare Council discuss in great detail the demand for sex trafficking driven by the sex industry, a business based on supply and demand. In a report titled, *A National Overview of Prostitution and Sex Trafficking Demand Reduction Efforts (2012)* it stated that, “Both prostitution and sex trafficking (commercial sex provided by those compelled through force, fraud, or coercion) arise from a common source: men’s decisions to buy sex” (p. 6). This particular report focused on the reasons that men choose to buy sex, the authors have identified through a series of surveys five main reasons men buy sex: (1) seeking intimacy, (2) seeking sex without intimacy, (3) seeking variety, (4) thrill-seeking and (5) pathology (addiction or compulsion).

The Multnomah County CSEC Training Manual stresses that the buyers of sex are a very diverse population from every socio-economic level, race and profession. They also distinguished between a pedophile (an adult who has intense sexual urges for prepubescent children or children under 13) and a ephebophilia/hebephilia (an adult who has a strong attraction to post-pubescent child/teen) and the reality that most men that buy sex with underage girls are what is called situational abusers, adults who use children for sex not because they have a predisposition to do so but just because they want to or find themselves in a situation where it is possible. Such men engage in the criminal activity of sex with minors (under 18) without necessarily feeling any real sexual attraction towards them (Module I, Handout 1.4). It was also noted that the factors that influence the demand are: presence of adult sex industry, acceptance of violence towards individuals in the sex industry, dehumanization of prostituted women and CSEC victims, no perceived consequences and internet pornography (Module 1). In addition, a CNN travel website explains how the hotel industry contributes to the sex industry and one woman’s efforts to encourage hotels to sign the Tourism Child-Protection Code of Conduct.
This volunteer agreement signed by hotels state that they will do their part in ensuring that sex trafficking does not take place in their establishments and will contact the proper authorities if they suspect it is happening.

The level of demand specific in Portland however is unknown. The only reference found in relation to Portland is a three and a half minute story by ABC reporter Dan Rather, titled *Pornland* speaking specifically to the issue in Portland. Based on the literature demonstrating the severity of CSEC in the United States and that Portland is a destination spot for the West Coast Circuit, one can conclude that it is quite prevalent in our city.

**Strategies to address CSEC**

There are a number of different strategies presented in the literature addressing what can be done by government agencies, social services and health departments to prevent, assess and refer CSEC victims to the appropriate resources (Shared Hope International, The California Child Welfare Council, CSEC Training Manual, and Polaris Project). The California Child Welfare Council (2013) summarized four key areas of efforts necessary to address CSEC. They are: (1) placement, (2) identification, (3) training and (4) data. *Placement* refers to establishing safe and secure emergency and transitional placements for CSEC victims. *Identification* implies implementing cross-system screening tools to systematically identify CSEC and children at risk of exploitation in order to inform and improve service delivery and placement decisions. Proper identification of victims is crucial because without it victims do not receive the appropriate services to deal with the trauma they have endured. When misidentified they commonly are charged with a crime and adjudicated resulting in being placed in juvenile detention accruing a criminal record which can hinder receiving services. *Training* should be mandated for all professionals working with youth in child-serving systems, including, but not limited to, the
child welfare, juvenile justice, probation, mental health and education, to better identify CSEC and children at-risk, provide CSEC specialized services and supports, and use culturally competent and trauma-informed practices. It is critical that all public sector employees are trained to identify CSEC victims and have knowledge of the resources available in their community to assist victims in meeting their physical, emotional and mental health needs. If everyone is not trained then it can be assumed that many CSEC victims will fall through the cracks and not receive help. Last but not least, data needs to be collected by developing protocols and strategies to coordinate, collect and share data across systems to better understand the scope of the problem, the level of interaction with multiple systems and address CSEC specific needs. The complexity of CSEC and the geographical scope of the issue require agencies to work closely together to maintain and share updated information. Sex trafficking will not be curbed unless we work in a collaborative effort as it cannot be eliminated by one agency alone. This collaborative effort is extremely important in gathering information needed to prosecute pimps and johns, help identify victims and keep abreast of the latest research. As a result we as public sector employees are better informed therefore have the knowledge and skills to make a significant difference in combating this crime.

**Research Question: CSEC in the Pacific Northwest**

The existing literature on CSEC covers specific aspects of the issue and generally has a broad geographical scope. There does not appear to be CSEC literature addressing the specific conditions and needs of the Pacific Northwest region—the target region of this study. Although there are organizations that provide trainings and information about CSEC, including one by Multnomah County, to my knowledge there is no comprehensive manual available for public sector employees that encompasses all aspects of CSEC specifically for the Pacific Northwest.
Aside from Multnomah County’s website with general information and a short list of local resources, no information was available on the issue of CSEC in Portland and Pacific Northwest based on the expertise of local professionals. This Capstone project attempts to fill this unmet need.

We know that CSEC exists in Portland and in fact is a destination spot for the West Coast Circuit. Information is not readily available however to public sector employees to help them identify CSEC victims and assess and refer them to the appropriate resources. Therefore the following overarching research question that guides this capstone project is:

**What are the knowledge and skill sets necessary for public sector employees to recognize victims and perpetrators and refer to the appropriate available resources?**

In order to address this overarching question and develop a reference book, the following six sub-questions are addressed:

1. What are the important key points regarding victims that people in the public sector should have knowledge of? What specific skills are needed to effectively work with CSEC victims?
2. What are important key points regarding perpetrators that people in the public sector should have knowledge of?
3. What factors contribute to the CSEC epidemic?
4. What drives the demand for buying sex from minors? What is the level of demand in Portland?
5. What can we do to combat CSEC?
6. What local resources are available for victims?
By addressing the above question, this Capstone project aims to produce a comprehensive reference book on CSEC for the public employees as a deliverable. The following section discusses how data was collected through interviews that informed the above questions that lead to a production of a compact and comprehensive resource/information handbook for the public employees that would provide them with a basic understanding of CSEC.

**Data Collection**

The information collected in the literature review pertained to general information about CSEC but was lacking information specific to Portland. To obtain information specific to Portland, interviews of five local professionals working towards combating CSEC and one CSEC victim were conducted. Each interview lasted thirty to sixty minutes. The data for five out of the six interviews was collected without audio recording, relying on the notes taken during the interview. For the sixth interview of a former CSEC victim from Portland, information was collected using a recorder. Professionals who worked in different arenas of CSEC were selected in order to get varied perspectives and knowledge from their professional expertise. In addition, one victim of CSEC who provided first-hand experience of being in the life in Portland. With each interviewee I asked specific questions pertaining to their field in addition one questions asked of all of them.

**The Interview Questions**

The interview questions asked were designed to be answered by the professional’s based on their expertise of CSEC in Portland and surrounding communities. The focus of the questions for the purpose of the development of the CSEC Handbook was categorized into four areas:
victims, traffickers, demand/buyers, what can be done to combat CSEC. Some questions overlapped providing more than one perspective for the question. One question that was asked of all interviewees was, “What can we do as public sector employees to help combat CSEC?” All interviewees had very strong opinions and suggestions on what we need to do as public sector employees, parents and as a community to curb this crime. For a list of the specific interview questions asked, refer to Appendix 1 under Interview Questions.

**Victims**-Questions regarding victims were addressed to Officer Gallagher, Patty Iwamoto and Joyce, the former Portland CSEC victim. I asked each of them their role in the arena of CSEC. I was specifically interested in what a typical victim in Portland may look like, her history, age, and her involvement in sex trafficking. Questions about victims also included what is needed to help victims, how to work with victims and what do we need to know as public sector employees about CSEC victims.

**Traffickers**-Questions regarding traffickers were referred to PO Ian Clanton, Sergeant Luna and District Attorney J.R Ujifusa. I was interested in the behaviors of traffickers from their perspective, how they end up in the criminal justice system and how pimps are caught and prosecuted. I also asked about specific locations in Portland that are known for trafficking and the current trends.

**Buyers and the demand**- Questions regarding the buyers and the demand were answered by Officer Gallagher, Ian and Sergeant Luna. I was curious in their perspective of the demand in Portland and the means to curb this demand.

**What can be done to combat CSEC**-This question was asked of all the interviewees. I was interested in what can be done as a society, a community and as a public sector employee.


**Interviewees**

The interviews were chosen based on three factors: (1) their area of expertise in the issue of commercial sexual exploitation of children, (2) the professional relationship I had already established with them and (3) the ease of access I had to them due to working for Multnomah County. Another factor that assisted in gaining access to the interviewees was the referral of one colleague to another which also helped broaden the interview pool. Recruitment and scheduling of the interviewees was simply by email or a phone call and for a few backed up by a referral from a colleague. Table 1 is the list of professionals interviewed and their affiliation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mike Gallagher</td>
<td>Portland Police Officer</td>
<td>Portland Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>East Precinct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prostitution Coordination Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patty Iwamoto</td>
<td>Juvenile Court Counselor</td>
<td>Multnomah County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Community Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Family Services Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian Clanton</td>
<td>Parole/Probation Officer</td>
<td>Multnomah County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Community Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parole and Probation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce Hamilton</td>
<td>Portland CSEC Survivor</td>
<td>Probationer with Multnomah County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse Luna</td>
<td>Sergeant</td>
<td>Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Human Trafficking Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.R. Ujifusa</td>
<td>District Attorney</td>
<td>Multnomah County DA’s Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic Violence Unit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interviewees were eager to help answer questions and provide information for this capstone project. They went above and beyond to make time in their schedule and support for this project. Their dedication to fight sex trafficking in our community is undeniable.
Data Analysis

The interview data were analyzed in two steps. First, key information that are relevant to the development of the CSEC Reference Guide were summarized from the interview notes and audio recording. Second, key themes were identified by analyzing the frequency of the topics raised by the interviewees.

Summary of information by each interviewee

The following is a summary of the professionals’ interviews. It includes a description of the interview process and the summary of the information they provided that were incorporated into the CSEC Reference Guide.

Officer Mike Gallagher - Portland Police East Precinct Prostitution Coordination Team (PCT)

Officer Gallagher works on the front line in Portland, identifying victims and buyers specifically on SE 82nd, an area of high prostitution activity. For this interview I participated in an evening ride-along with Officer Gallagher on the swing shift. I met him at the east precinct and before we began the patrol we spent approximately an hour and half with a question and answer session. One topic that we spent a quite a bit of time discussing was the use of the internet in sex trafficking. To give an example of how the victims advertise their services he demonstrated by going to a popular website, Backpage.com, explaining the language used in the posts that implied how much a service was per hour and the age of the victim. Other topics discussed were: the importance of building a rapport with the victims in order to build trust so she feels comfortable enough to seek help from them when she is ready to leave the life or is strong enough to testify against the pimp. Officer Gallagher explained that this is a painstakingly
slow process that involves patience, consistency and follow through. We also touched on the
demand of sex trafficking and the reasons for Portland’s high demand and high supply.

The remainder of the interviewing took place in the patrol car. As we drove along SE 82nd, we identified possible victims and discussed the approach officers use when they pull over a buyer with a victim. Officer Gallagher explained rarely do they arrest a victim for prostituting, explaining that they will only arrest if it is a safety issue for the victim or she has been causing other problems in the community. Typically they run her name in their system and provide her with a list of resources and contact information.

While patrolling SE 82nd, we identified a number of victims and pulled over two that had been solicited. The first young woman claimed that she was trying to make some money quickly to pay her bill for her storage locker. She confessed that this was her third “john” for the day and pleaded to let her go home. The second young woman was 18 years old and according to her just arrived in Portland from San Diego that morning. She claimed she was with her “cousin” but did not know where she was staying or how long she would be in Portland. She was reluctant to give us her “cousin’s” name or his cell phone number. After we let her go we found that she had a post on a website called Redpage.com, which is a popular sex trafficking site in California. I personally had the chance to talk with her while we waited for Officer Gallagher to run her name. Her story represents the stories of so many young victims. She explained that her father passed away of AIDS and her mother had rarely been present in her life. She went on to say she had been raped two years ago by her foster mother’s boyfriend and has essentially been on her own ever since.

_Patty Iwamoto-Multnomah County Juvenile Court Counselor_
Patty is a long time county employee who currently has a caseload comprised of close to 50% CSEC victims, she is also very involved the oversight of the CSEC task force, victim services and working closely with law enforcement and the FBI. I met Patty at her office with a list of interview questions, the interview lasting approximately an hour and a half. The experience Patty has with CSEC victims is through the juvenile justice system. In her role she supervises their probation but also acts as an advocate and service provider. Patty is an expert in the “Do’s and Don’ts” of working with victims and assessing their needs. She stated that she has taken many young girls to get pregnancy tests and HIV tests and explained the work involved in meeting their basic needs. She provided me with additional literature on CSEC which proved extremely helpful for this capstone project. The interview questions I asked her focused on the victims; how to identify, steps to take if you do identify, how to work with victims and the challenges in working with the victims.

**Ian Clanton-Multnomah County Adult Probation Officer**

I interviewed Ian at his office on SE 122nd Ave. in Portland. Ian supervises adult offenders on probation in the criminal justice system. The offenders on his case load are pimps/traffickers but like most, are on probation for a variety of crimes; robbery, drug offenses, gun charges, etc. Ian spends the majority of his work time not only supervising the pimps ensuring they are following their probation conditions but also assisting Sergeant Luna and DA Ujifusa in collecting evidence and information in order to prosecute these pimps.

The interview questions focused on the traffickers, specifically in Portland, identifying traffickers, behaviors and the challenges in supervising traffickers. Ian described pimps as highly deceptive, manipulative, and confrontational, have many people lying for them and rarely stay at
one place for any length of time. He also described the prevalence of sex trafficking in Portland and the recruitment process used.

Sergeant Jesse Luna - Human Trafficking - Multnomah County’s Sheriff’s Office

I met Sergeant Luna in his office at the Multnomah County Justice Center. Our meeting lasted a little over an hour. Sergeant Luna presented an abundance of information that two hours of interview time would have been more appropriate for this interview. Sergeant Luna told the story of how the Human Trafficking division came about. Several years ago an officer pulled over a high-end priced car for a traffic violation near the Portland Airport. What he saw in this person’s car were three young girls scantily dressed without an explanation of what they were doing or where they were going. Investigating further into this person’s criminal history he had sex trafficking connections in other states. This eventually led the department to examine the prevalence of sex trafficking in our city, one thing led to another and the Human Trafficking department was established.

Sergeant Luna demonstrated the databases used in identifying and keeping track of pimps and traffickers that are brought into custody. These databases assist in gathering evidence for prosecuting and keeping abreast of the complicated network of pimps, victims and other associates. The database was first established in July of 2010 and since then 258 pimps have been identified in the Portland area with at least 150 more not yet in the system. Sergeant Luna described the methods used in identifying pimps when in custody. This involves recording their phone calls and tracking their visiting log and the amount of money put on their books.

Several important points Sergeant Luna emphasized was that the victims of CSEC are getting younger, there are no borders to sex trafficking as it can happen to anyone. Lloyd Center
is a “hot bed” for trafficking, Clackamas Town Center is a close second and Washington Square mall also has its fair share.

**Deputy District Attorney J.R. Ujifusa**-Domestic Violence Unit, Multnomah County DA’s Office

I met J.R. at his office at the Multnomah County Court House. This interview was the shortest of all the interviews, lasting only thirty minutes. Mr. Ujifusa clarified that in Oregon an offer and agreement of sex with a minor without the sexual act is considered a misdemeanor and if a sexual act occurred it is considered a felony. He also clarified the difference between compelling vs. promoting prostitution. When asked about the biggest challenge in prosecuting traffickers he responded that it is the emotional link a victim has with her pimp which makes it extremely complicated and difficult for the victim to testify. The most important source of evidence Mr. Ujifusa relies on to prosecute pimps aside from the victims are phone records, cell phone downloads, bank records and lap top records. Lastly, an interesting statement that Mr. Ujifusa made in response to what we can do to combat CSEC is to educate our children about healthy relationships and signs of unhealthy relationships.

**Joyce Hamilton-Former Portland CSEC victim**

Joyce and I met on a Saturday morning after weeks of finding a time and place to meet for the interview. The challenge in scheduling an interview time with her was that she is currently on probation in Multnomah County and as an employee of Multnomah County there were professional boundaries that had to be upheld. For instance I was unable to give her my personal cell phone number therefore trying to get in touch her without her being able to call me back proved challenging. Secondly, the issue of where to meet also presented some obstacles. Joyce’s work schedule is Monday through Friday so she was unable to meet during a weekday. We had to meet in a public place that was private enough so she could tell her story. I looked
into reserving a private room at her local library or others in her neighborhood but they did not have such rooms. We met on a Saturday morning and found a fast food restaurant that appeared to be nearly empty. For this interview, unlike others, I used a recording device as my goal was to allow Joyce to freely tell her story without interruption on my part.

Joyce is a 44 year old woman who was in the life of sex trafficking for fifteen years. She began her story with the childhood trauma she endured as a young girl. At age 11 her life changed when her mother’s boyfriend began molesting her on a regular basis whenever her mother was not in the house. In order to protect her younger sister from the same abuse she eventually told her mother what was happening. Her mother put the blame on her, making claims of “stealing” her boyfriend or enticing him to molest her. At that point Joyce began running away from home and became sexually promiscuous. She explains that the sex for her was her way of feeling like someone cared for her because she was not getting it at home. At age fifteen she met a man through a friend, they became intimate and soon he suggested to her that she could make money by selling herself. Joyce explained that at that point she was engaging in sex all the time; felt she had nothing else to live for so why not making money off sex? Through her years as a sex trafficking victim, she was raped, repeatedly beaten by her pimp and became addicted to crack cocaine.

Joyce eventually left Portland and for over a period of a decade slowly turned her life around. She eventually got a job at McDonald’s after earning her GED; she had a child and eventually met her future husband. I asked Joyce what it was that finally gave her the determination to live her life differently. She explained that while in Atlanta Georgia she picked up a charge and was put in jail. It was then that the state had threatened to take her child away. Her husband took the children to South Carolina where she eventually reunited with them when
she was released from custody. It was here that both she and her husband decided together to stop using drugs and turn their life around. They joined a church and have been abstained from drugs for fifteen years.

The message Joyce felt strongly that she wanted to convey was the need for resources and programs for CSEC victims. She explained that when they are released from jail after getting arrested for prostitution all they have are the clothes on their back, they don’t have a job, they don’t have anyone to talk to, a majority don’t have their GED, they need a place to stay and help them with building up their self-esteem and finding different ways to live. For most of them, selling their bodies is all they know. Lastly, they don’t have to look for love from someone that doesn’t care about them.

**Key Topics**

In addition to summarizing key information from each interviewee, the content of the qualitative interview data was analyzed and the main themes were identified. First, the data was categorized based on the coverage of the four sub-categories. The sub-categories are: Traffickers, Victims, If Identified, and Strategies to Combat CSEC. Within each sub-category key topic areas were identified. The key topic areas identified are: Physical characteristics, Behaviors/Characteristics, Agencies and Actions. In table 2 below each “X” represents an interviewee who touched on the key topics for the given sub-category. When more than two interviewees mentioned the topic under the given sub-category, it was considered as an important “theme” that warrants attention. In the table, topics that were mentioned by two interviewees are color coded in yellow; topics mentioned by three interviewees are color coded in green; topics mentioned by four interviewees are color coded in orange.
Table 2 key topics by sub-categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TRAFFICKERS</th>
<th>VICTIMS</th>
<th>IF IDENTIFIED</th>
<th>STRATEGIES TO COMBAT CSEC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical signs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tattoos</td>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice clothes/accessories</td>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behaviors/characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent strip clubs</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang affiliation</td>
<td></td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly deceptive</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confrontational</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatening</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STD/HIV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All they know is sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetitive Trauma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one in life to talk to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low self-esteem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual History</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward of the court</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependency history-DHS</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim of sexual abuse</td>
<td></td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV background</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low socio-economic</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of education</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents have criminal background</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland Police</td>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation Officer</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Trafficking Hotline</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Assault Resource Center</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Victim-centered approach

Interviewees stressed the need for work in CSEC to be victim-centered. As public sector employees it is extremely important we change our view of adolescents involved in sex trafficking not as delinquents or assume girls willingly become involved in this lifestyle but realize they are victims. Interviewees spoke of how most victims of sex trafficking have been victims of sexual abuse. When childhood sexual abuse goes untreated without professional help it often leads to victims engaging in promiscuous behavior due to equating sex with love and attention they are not getting at home.

Gangs as significant source of problem

Currently in Portland, most pimps/traffickers are actively involved in gangs. Although gangs continue to sell guns and drugs to make money, they
have fairly recently found that sex trafficking is highly profitable. The difference between selling guns/drugs and sex trafficking is that guns and drugs can only be sold once where as a young victims can be sold over and over again in one day.

**Need for collaboration**- In order to effectively combat CSEC in our community it is essential that agencies and organizations collaborate. This includes information sharing such as creating a nationwide, state wide and/or county wide database that can be accessed by public sector employees to keep up to date on the most current information on CSEC, lists of identified traffickers and victims and an alert system. Agencies work in a specific area of CSEC, i.e. victims, traffickers, etc. therefore coming together in a collective group to tackle the issue is essential.

**Need for more programs/resources**- Portland has a few agencies that work with victims of CSEC but unfortunately they are limited in the help they can provide. One interviewee expressed his frustration that for juveniles the only two options that provide services are Harry’s Mother and New Avenues For Youth but because it is not a secured facility most youth simply walk out the door and are back with their pimps within 30 minutes. Interviewees expressed the need for more programs that work specifically with CSEC victims and offer support that addresses their mental, emotional and physical needs in a safe and secure environment where they do not fear their pimp.

**Discussion**

The review of the literature on CSEC revealed that there are a small handful of organizations established to provide information, resources and public awareness in order combat this crime. It may be fair to say that Shared Hope International and the Polaris Project
for instance are the leading organizations in the United States on CSEC. These organizations although provide a comprehensive volume of information and knowledge on CSEC but do so on a very broad scale. On the other hand, public sector employees in Portland and the surrounding counties are in need of CSEC information that is relevant to our community in terms of identifying victims and traffickers/pimps and local resources. This is especially true due to the level of CSEC activity in Portland. As stated previously, Shared Hope International has identified Portland as a destination spot along the West Coast Circuit (2009 p. 26) and interview data gathered confirmed their claim.

The interviewees identified that other factors that contribute to Portland’s high level of sex trafficking is the large population of homeless youth, the fairly lenient laws against buyers (although this is slowly changing) and the fact that Portland has the highest number of adult establishments per capita than any other city in the United States. Another possible indicator of the high level of sex trafficking in Portland is the number of pimps/traffickers. Since July of 2010 Sergeant Jesse Luna has identified 258 pimps in Portland alone, this does not include areas such as Beaverton, Gresham, Troutdale and other outlying suburbs. He also claims that there are easily another 150 unidentified. For as much as CSEC has saturated Portland and the I-5 corridor down to Eugene, there is very little training offered or literature to refer to that is easily accessible to public sector employees.

Both the literature review and the findings from the interviews encompass the important key points of CSEC that are necessary for public sector employees to identify victims and traffickers, assess the victims’ needs and refer them to the appropriate resources. At times the literature was extremely detailed in its explanation and went far deeper than what is necessary
for the average public sector employee to know to properly identify CSEC. Therefore it was my intent to focus on the main subject matter and compile only the pertinent information.

The topic related to victims was most comprehensively covered in the literature. The first and foremost message in the literature as well as in the interviews was that we should not be treating CSEC victims as delinquents but to understand that children and adolescents involved in CSEC are *victims*. Most often they were victims of sexual abuse before they became involved in CSEC and are victims of trauma, physical abuse and sexual abuse while in the life of sex trafficking. When CSEC victims are criminalized they are placed in facilities such as juvenile detentions or foster homes that do not have the ability to address their trauma or meet their needs, as a result they return to their pimp and to the life of sex trafficking.

Just as important as properly identifying CSEC victims is to understand how they become involved in sex trafficking. Literature provided numerous factors that make a child vulnerable to CSEC; but the prevailing factor is their age. The average age of entry into CSEC is 12 to 14 and as Sergeant Luna mentioned it is becoming increasingly younger. A child in the preteen and teen years has not fully developed the frontal lobe of their brain that is involved in reasoning and judgment, which makes detection of the manipulation of a pimp extremely difficult.

Another prominent factor according to the literature and confirmed by Patty Iwamoto of Multnomah County Juvenile Justice and former Portland victim Joyce, that contributes to a child’s vulnerability is a history of sexual abuse. Patty Iwamoto reported that almost all of the CSEC victims on her caseload as a Juvenile Justice Counselor have been sexually abused. Other factors include homelessness, identification as gay/lesbian/bisexual or transgender. It must be made clear that although these are factors that contribute to the vulnerability of a child being
lured into sex trafficking, any child despite their ethnic background, religion or socio-economic background is at risk, as Sergeant Luna describes it CSEC has “no boundaries.”

The third piece of information to understand about victims is the way in which they are manipulated by traffickers and eventually coerced into trafficking. Initially the relationship between a victim and a trafficker is much like a boyfriend/girlfriend, he dotes on her, buying her nice clothes, manicures/pedicures, dinner’s etc. During this courting phase she develops a sense of loyalty to him as she sees his behaviors as “love.” He not only becomes intimate with her but during this time but begins to understand her strengths, weaknesses and her available support system. Eventually, he convinces her to earn money by prostituting and because she “loves” him and is loyal to him she obliges and this is where it begins. To keep her under his control the pimp uses beatings, starvation, forced drug use and blackmail to keep her working and preventing her from escaping. Violence is a daily occurrence for CSEC victims not only from their pimps but from the victimization they endure everyday selling their bodies to strangers.

For many that do not understand the impact CSEC has on a victim, they often question why the child does not leave, especially if they have a loving family at home or another support system. The literature focused on the reason why it is extremely difficult for CSEC victims to leave their pimps. For many it takes years and even those that are no longer working for the pimp they still feel the pull to go back to him. The most difficult reason a victim does not leave her pimp and for some the most difficult to understand is what is called trauma bond. This is a psychological coping mechanism in which the victim feels an emotional bond towards the abuser whenever they show any act of kindness. This creates an image of the abuser as a protector therefore defending the abuser and not identifying themselves as the victim (West Coast
Children’s Clinic, 2012). Other reasons include physical control, psychological control, fear and blackmail.

In working with a CSEC victim it is extremely important to meet them where they are in terms of their emotional, mental and physical needs. In other words do not overwhelm them with information or push them to divulge information about their pimp or their lifestyle. The best approach is to build a rapport (Officer Mike Gallagher) with them so they can begin to feel comfortable with you and hopefully begin building some trust with you. The first and simplest way of doing this is meeting their basic needs. Many of them are hungry, exhausted and in need of medical attention therefore it is important to meet these needs first before anything else is addressed. Secondly, do not be judgmental, meaning do not react in a way that shows disgust, disappointment or disapproval. The Girls Education and Mentoring Services (GEMS) provide a list of what to do and not do when working with CSEC victims. It is important to be familiar with these guidelines in order to work successfully with these children that have been repeatedly traumatized.

The literature on traffickers focused on the manipulative behaviors of pimps and the violence and brutality that are commonly used. What we also know about pimps are the behaviors, characteristics and physical markings (tattoos) that identify as a pimp/trafficker. In the media today the word “pimp” is synonymous with good or better such as the popular TV show “Pimp My Ride” and unfortunately desensitizes the general public to the violent and horrific nature of sex trafficking. The most useful information on trafficker/pimps for the purpose of this capstone project came from PO Ian Clanton and Sergeant Luna as well as the information provided from the Human Trafficking training facilitated by Sergeant Luna and District Attorney J.R. Ujifusa. One of the most obvious means of identifying a trafficker is by
the tattoos displayed on their arms, neck, chest, hands, back and stomach. Sergeant Luna and PO Clanton provided extremely useful information of indicators of a pimp behavior both in public and while in custody, some of these include: a very neat appearance (nice clothes/accessories/car), leadership among peers, displays confidence, good conversationalist. While in custody; always on phone, always has lots of commissary, lots of female visitors, lots of mail from women and popular among the inmates. PO Clanton describes the challenges in working with pimps is that they are highly manipulative, deceitful, confrontational and do not live at a permanent residence therefore making it difficult to keep track of them. It is important to understand the behaviors of pimps and the danger they pose to our children and our community. The trauma they have inflicted on our children is one that should be punished to the fullest extent therefore identifying a pimp and reporting them to the proper authority will help in gathering the evidence needed to prosecute.

The literature and the interviews suggest that CSEC is an issue that is not going away any time soon. It is a crime that affects hundreds of thousands of children every year in the United States and as explained earlier is very prevalent in Portland. For instance on Backpage.com a common website used by victims to advertise their services, there are 150-180 posts per day just for Portland (Officer Mike Gallagher), again this excludes Beaverton or Gresham and all other suburbs. Victims are seen walking along S.E. 82nd, N.E. Sandy, and N.E 102nd near the airport and at the convention center when there are events, especially those that are likely to have a high population of men. The prevalence of CSEC in Portland, its surrounding communities and along the I-5 corridor cannot be ignored. It is a real issue that needs to be addressed as it has consequences that not only affect the victims but us as a society.
Similar themes emerged in the literature on CSEC and the interviews of local professionals in what we can do as public sector employees, parents and citizens to help combat CSEC. The first is proper placement. This was addressed not only in the literature but also by Officer Gallagher, Joyce and Patty Iwamoto. Although the resources we provide in Portland are helpful we are still lacking, like most cities, a placement specifically for CSEC victims that is safe and secure, provides the services CSEC victims require. Second, public awareness and training for public sector employees. In order to address CSEC we need to be aware of its existence to properly identify CSEC victims and traffickers by their behaviors, characteristics, actions and physical markings. What was not found in the literature but was discussed by more than one of the interviewees was prevention. This would include going into the schools to alert children to the issue, talking with our own children at home or any other organization that works with children. Other factors that are more of a cultural issue that contribute to sex trafficking are sexism and misogyny, sexualization of girls and young women, acceptance of violence against women and minority groups and the increased access to technology (North Carolina School of Social Work Association) which has drastically changed the sex trafficking business. PO Ian Clanton also suggested that the public stop supporting businesses that profit from sexualizing young women such as strip clubs and other adult establishments.

Lastly, for this capstone project is was important to relate the issue of CSEC to Portland, therefore it is essential to provide a list of resources that public sector employees can refer to. These resources include national hotlines such as The National Human Trafficking Resource Center, operated by Polaris Project and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) National Hotline. These hotlines can provide the caller with resources in their community; they accept tips about possible trafficking and provide general CSEC information.
On a local level there is the Sexual Assault Resource Center (SARC) which provides immediate intervention and advocacy. In addition, for immediate triage and shelter for children there is Harry’s Mother and for adult women they are referred to LifeWorks NW which provides immediate mental health assessments, counseling and case management. Cares NW, Legacy Emanuel Emergency Dept. and DePaul Treatment Center, Youth and Family also work in some capacity with CSEC victims. The important message being that if you suspect you have identified a victim or a trafficker to call one of the listed resources or if you do not have the numbers on hand call the police.

The purpose of this capstone project is to serve and provide possible solutions for an unmet need related to CSEC in our community. It would also prove beneficial to not only have a CSEC handbook readily available but also to provide comprehensive trainings throughout the state on CSEC for public sector employees. This issue not only affects the larger cities in Oregon but is very much thriving in our smaller communities as well.

Challenges and limitations

This project was limited in the scope of professionals interviewed. All interviewees are employees of the Multnomah County justice system. Even though I am confident that the interviewees provided a thorough and fair depiction of CSEC in our community, the fact that most have the perspective from the criminal justice system may limit the breadth of knowledge. One challenge of the interviews was the length of time allotted for the interviews. For most, it would have been beneficial to have more than an hour but as the interviewer it was important to respect the time of the professionals. The other challenge was scheduling a time that was available for me and for them. In addition, there was the challenge of dealing with my role as a
student versus my role as an employee of Multnomah County parole and probation when interviewing the victim. She is currently on probation therefore I had to be selective in where and when we met for the interview. She was also asked to sign a waiver stating she is a willing participant in the interview. Lastly, after completing a comprehensive literature review the number of questions I had for the interviewees was reduced considerably. As a result, new questions were formulated and some completely eliminated.

**Description of CSEC Handbook**

Identifying the key themes through research of the literature and data collected from the interviews provided the framework for the development of the handbook. It begins with the goal and objective of the handbook along with an introduction defining CSEC and how the information was gathered for the purpose of this project. The majority of the handbook focuses on these themes; victims, traffickers, buyers/demand, factors that contribute to CSEC, what can be done to combat CSEC and local available resources. Addressing victims is a primary concern in the fight against CSEC therefore a majority of the handbook covers the needs of victims, their behaviors, characteristics, their trauma and how to effectively communicate and work with them. It continues with a description of traffickers and their recruiting methods and control methods. Sergeant Luna provided a detailed depiction of the behaviors and characteristics that one would see of a pimp in public as well the behaviors seen in custody. Sex trafficking is a business of supply and demand, the handbook describes this demand and emphasizes that buyers of sex with underage girls look like what our society would call “normal” therefore making it difficult to identify them because they blend in as average everyday citizens. Factors that contribute to CSEC include societal and cultural reasons, i.e. sexualization of young girls and women and
environmental reasons such as the prevalence of the sex industry in our community. The reference guide provides suggestions based on research as to what is needed to combat sex trafficking, listing these as: placement, identification, training and data. Lastly, in order to ensure that the reference guide provided a local focus a list of available resources is provided covering three main counties along the I-5 corridor; Multnomah, Marion and Lane.

Research for the project also identified other relevant information surrounding CSEC that although were not within the main themes, I felt were important to add into the handbook. They include the internet and popular websites advertising sex for sale, the hotel industry’s role in CSEC, the current laws in Oregon for prosecuting johns and pimps. Multnomah County’s District Attorney, J.R. Ujifusa provided very relevant information in the prosecution of pimps in Portland. His information was the sole source for this section of the handbook. Also a list of the common slang words used by victims and pimps in relation to sex trafficking along with another list of tattoos and pictures of these tattoos commonly found on victims and pimps.

Throughout the reference guide are direct quotes from former victims and pimps that provide a real depiction of their thought processes and the daily life of violence and fear. The message the reference guide conveys is that the children and adolescents that are trafficked are victims in the sex trafficking world; they are trapped because of a complex myriad individual, societal and environmental factors. To free them from this life is just as complex and requires the contribution of many.
Conclusion

This capstone project set out to determine what information is available about the commercial sexual exploitation of children and what information is available that pertains to the issue in the Pacific Northwest, specifically Portland. The literature review provided a comprehensive volume of information regarding CSEC and data collected from the interviews provided additional information with a Portland perspective. As a result of the literature review and data collection it was determined that public sector employees do not have a compact yet comprehensive reference guide of CSEC indicators, general information for a better understanding and a list of local resources to refer identified victims.

To combat sex trafficking not only in the United States but in our own state, there has to be awareness that it exists and that it is an epidemic. One place to start is with public sector employees. As public sector employees working in community safety, health, parole and probation, detention and juvenile caseworkers we are more likely than most to come across a victim or trafficker. Research for this project has shown the severity of child sex trafficking in Portland which spills into other counties along the I-5 corridor, but there is a lack of literature available for public employees to refer to that is easily accessible. This Capstone project is the solution to this unmet need. It has identified the knowledge and skill set necessary for public sector employees to recognize victims and perpetrators and the information needed to refer to the appropriate available resources. The information has been compiled into a compact and comprehensive handbook that is accessible and user friendly. The development of the CSEC reference guide fills the gap in the existing literature on the issue in the Pacific Northwest. Quite often people do not take action to find a solution to a problem until it affects them personally. This reference guide will not only draw awareness to the issue of child sex trafficking but will
provide the needed information and answers. Sex trafficking is a complicated issue that is not going to go away without a collaborative effort, therefore the more people that have knowledge of the issue the better. The CSEC reference guide is a deliverable that has the potential to be in the hands of every public sector employee. The bottom line is that without the information, hundreds of children in Oregon will continue to become victims.

**Relevance to Leadership**

The Executive Master of Public Administration program at Portland State University has had a tremendous influence in how I view my work in the public sector. It has especially made an impact in my personal journey of ethical leadership. It is because of the EMPA program that I recognize my leadership strengths and understand the importance of leveraging those strengths to make a difference in whatever I choose to do in my professional career. This capstone project has challenged me to put my strengths into practice and apply the principles learned of public sector leadership. Four leadership principles embraced by the EMPA program that resonated with me and were applied to this capstone project are; relationship building, inclusion, collaboration and lead from where you sit.

The leadership principle of relationship building is an important component in the fight to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The most significant concern in the fight is the victims. In order help these wounded young lives requires building a relationship of trust and safety. This takes consistency, patience, empathy and follow through. With these relationships we can not only lead these victims out of “the life” but encourage them to mentor other young victims and survivors of CSEC. In addition, during the process of this project I have built
relationships with key stakeholders in our community that work towards combating CSEC. I hope to one day strengthen these relationships by working in a collaborative effort to help victims.

It is the legacy of Senator Hatfield which has struck me as the pinnacle of leadership. His value of inclusion has inspired me to bring awareness to the young victims of sex trafficking who have been ignored for so long by the public as well as our government. Historically CSEC victims have been viewed as “loose” and ostracized for seemingly choosing to be in the life of sex trafficking. It is time for us as a society to embrace these young victims and see them for what they are; victims.

Collaboration is an essential leadership principle that has been stressed in the EMPA program. The need for collaboration and the results of collaborative efforts were very apparent during my research on this topic. The fight to end CSEC cannot be done without the collaborative efforts of law enforcement, social services and advocacy groups.

Ultimately, the goal of this project is to bring awareness to an extremely important issue that has grave consequences for the children in our community. It is because of this capstone project that I have developed a CSEC reference guide for public sector employees to refer to if they suspect they are working with a victim or trafficker. I am not in a position of power or authority in my organization but as I have learned in the EMPA program that I do have the ability to lead from where I sit and this is how I choose to lead.
Appendix 1

Interview Questions

Questions for Patty Iwamoto, Juvenile Court Counselor with Multnomah County Department of Community Justice

1. What is your role in working with CSEC?
2. What is a typical CSEC victim in Multnomah County?
3. What is the current trend in trafficking?
4. What is the best approach when working with victims?
5. What are the biggest challenges in working with victims?
6. What can we do as public sector employees to combat CSEC?
7. What are the steps you suggest one takes if they suspect they have identified a victim?
8. In your opinion, what is it going to take to combat CSEC?

Questions for Officer Mike Gallagher-Portland Police East Precinct –Prostitution Team

1. What do you find to be the most popular means of trafficking?
2. Where are the “hot spots” in Portland for trafficking?
3. What is the current trend in trafficking?
4. What are your biggest challenges in working with victims?
5. What is the best approach when working with victims?
6. What can we do as public sector employees to help combat CSEC?
7. In your opinion, what is it going to take to combat CSEC?

Questions for Sergeant Jesse Luna, Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office

1. What is your role in combating CSEC?
2. How do they coerce their victims?
3. What are the signs of a trafficker?
4. Is there a “typical” trafficker?
5. The traffickers that are in custody, what are they typically in for?
6. What information is gathered to prosecute traffickers?
7. What are behaviors and attitudes of traffickers?
8. How is information gathered as evidence to prosecute a pimp?
9. What can we do as public sector employees to help combat CSEC?
10. Is there anything unique to Portland with CSEC?
Questions for Multnomah County District Attorney J.R. Ujifsa

1. What are the challenges in prosecuting traffickers?
2. What is your most important source of evidence?
3. How long does a typical case take to prosecute?
4. What is a typical sentence for a guilty verdict?
5. How often do victims testify against their traffickers?
6. What in your opinion would be the most helpful thing for those working in the public sector to do to help you prosecute traffickers and combat CSEC?

Interview of former Portland victim, Joyce

This was an open forum for Joyce to freely tell her story and for me as the interviewer to ask questions along the way. The conversation was recorded.
References


