Human Trafficking in the Midwest
Human Trafficking in the Midwest

A Case Study of St. Louis and the Bi-State Area

Erin C. Heil
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Andrea J. Nichols
Washington University in St. Louis

Carolina Academic Press
Durham, North Carolina
Contents

Acknowledgments ix

Chapter 1 · Introduction 3
  Definitions 5
  Prevalence 10
  Identified Research Gaps 13
  Use of Terms 15
  Methods 18
    Study Setting 18
    Sampling 21
    Data Collection 22
    Data Analysis 23
  Chapter Overviews 24

Chapter 2 · Labor Trafficking 29
  Labor Trafficking in the Rural Communities of the Bi-State Region 30
  Labor Trafficking in St. Louis and the Metro-East 40
    Case Studies 42
  Identifying and Prosecuting Labor Trafficking Cases 44
  Outreach Efforts 47
  Chapter Summary 49

Chapter 3 · Sex Trafficking 51
  Who Are the Survivors? 52
  Types of Sex Trafficking 58
    Pimp-Controlled Prostitution and the “Boyfriend” Pimp 58
    Survival Sex 62
    Shades of Gray 66
    Buyers as Sex Traffickers 70
Contents

Fraud 71
Parents As Traffickers 72
Child Pornography as Sex Trafficking 72
Weak Social Institutions and Risk Factors of Sex Trafficking Vulnerability 75
Home Life 76
Weak Education Systems: Truancy and Drop Outs 80
Poverty 83
Mental Health & Substance Abuse 85
Techniques of Traffickers 87
Recruitment 88
LGBTQ Identities 90
Disability 93
Barriers to Leaving 94
Trafficking Operations 97
The Internet 97
Interstate Circuits 101
Chapter Summary 103

Chapter 4 · Policing Human Trafficking 105
Training 106
Local Level Law Enforcement Perceptions of Human Trafficking Trainings 108
Officers’ Perceptions of Trafficking in St. Louis and the Bi-State Area 111
Investigating Sex Trafficking Cases 112
Online Challenges for Law Enforcement 116
Investigating Labor Trafficking Cases 121
From State Level to Federal Level 125
Challenges for Prosecution 126
Chapter Summary 130

Chapter 5 · Community Responses to Trafficking: Education, Training, Outreach and Collaboration 133
Efforts toward Identification 134
Community Awareness 134
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training for Professionals and Front-Line Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining Gaps in Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Summary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter 6 · Social Service Provision for Sex Trafficking Survivors**

The Need for Sex-Trafficking-Specific Services | 157 |
Unique Trauma | 158 |
Ineffectiveness of Non-Sex-Trafficking-Specific Services | 159 |
Why Do Girls Run from Services? | 163 |
“People Like Us . . .” | 166 |
Survivor-Informed Programming | 171 |
Survivor-Defined Practices | 177 |
Gaps in Services | 181 |
Lack of Shelter Space | 181 |
Lack of Services for Adult Women | 182 |
Lack of Shelter for Men and Boys | 185 |
Lack of Shelter for LGBTQ Individuals | 186 |
Lack of LGBTQ-Specific Services | 188 |
Chapter Summary | 196 |

**Chapter 7 · Implications**

Implications for Social Service Providers | 197 |
Sex Trafficking | 198 |
Labor Trafficking | 201 |
Implications for Law Enforcement | 203 |
Sex Trafficking | 203 |
Labor Trafficking | 206 |
Education and Training | 209 |
Implications for Policy | 212 |
Conclusion | 215 |

References | 217 |
Index | 227 |
Acknowledgments

First and foremost, we would like to thank all of the individuals that assisted in this project, including the local- and federal-level legal officials, social service providers, and survivors. This book would have not been possible without your stories and experiences with human trafficking.

We would like to thank our editor, Beth Hall. She fully supported this project from the initial proposal, and guided us throughout the process.

We would like to thank our friends and family who remained patient with our absence through travel and constant writings. They listened to us as we tackled new ideas, and fully supported this endeavor when it was nothing more than a discussion between the two of us.