

stolen youth



**CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING:  
THE IMPACTS OF RACE, GENDER,  
AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITY**

A close-up, black and white photograph of a young girl's face, showing her eyes, nose, and freckles. The background is dark and out of focus.

# Stolen Youth

Mission: To end child sex trafficking in Washington state. We inspire action, fundraise, and build and invest in coalitions to dismantle the marketplace exploiting children for sex.



# Tonight's Moderators



Valiant Richey

King County Senior Deputy  
Prosecuting Attorney

StolenYouth Board Member



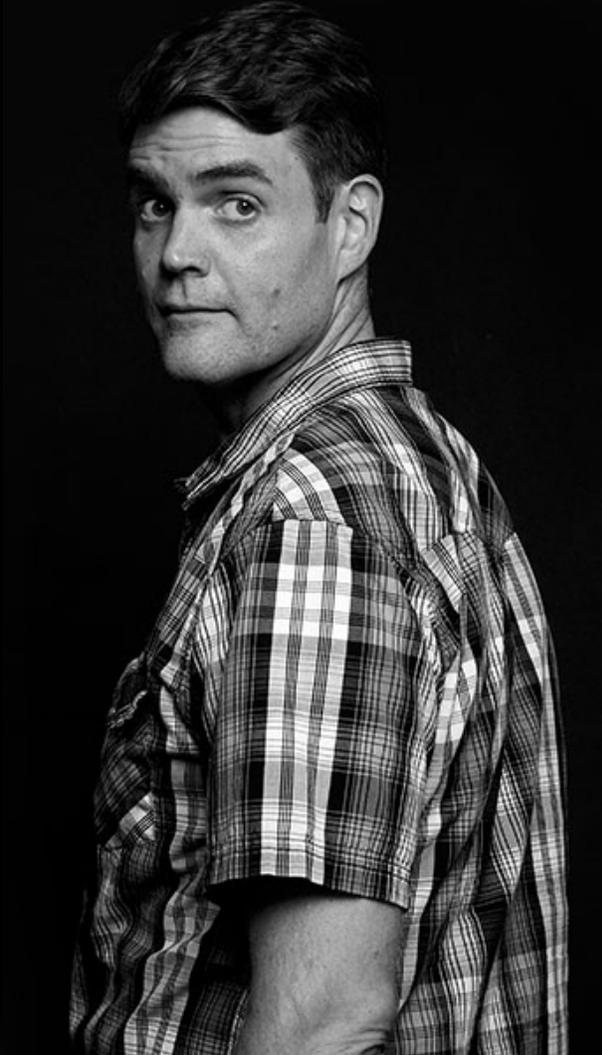
Susan Long-Walsh

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
Senior Recruiter

StolenYouth Board Member



# Panelist: Peter Qualliotine



Peter Qualliotine is co-founder of the Seattle-based Organization for Prostitution Survivors (OPS) and directs Men's Accountability programming.



# Panelist: Shaquita Bell, MD, FAAP



Dr. Bell is currently a pediatrician at the community health center Odessa Brown. She is the site coordinator for residents and helps to run the foster care program. Dr. Bell is faculty at Seattle Childrens and the University of Washington in the division of General Pediatrics.



# Panelist: Liletha, Survivor-Perspective Advocate

Liletha is currently working for YouthBuild at YouthCare in Seattle. Liletha is a member of the Sex Industry Survivor's network and provides a critically important voice regarding the impact of race on disproportionate rates of exploitation experienced by communities of color.



# Keynote: Yasmin Vafa, Executive Director, Rights4Girls



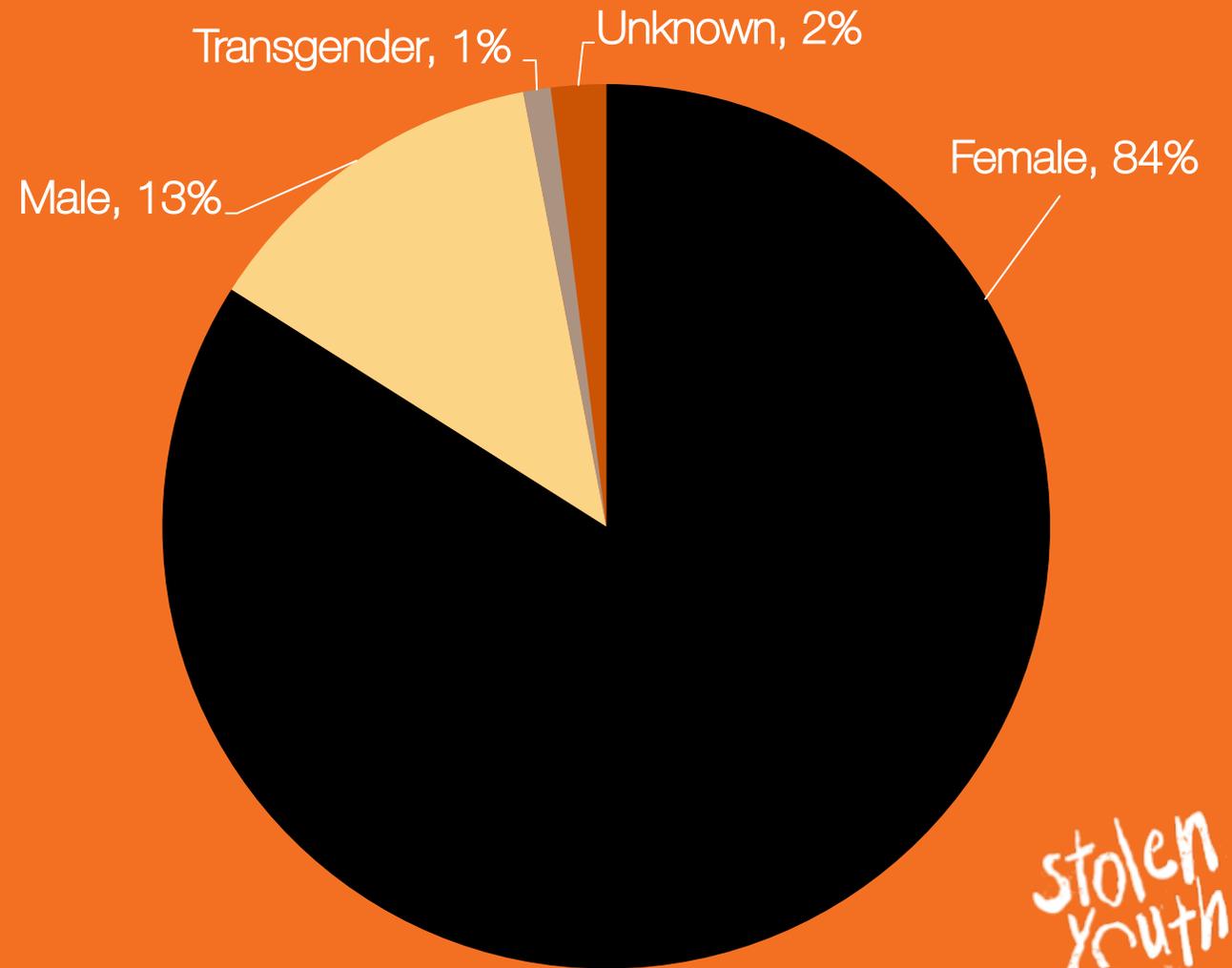
Yasmin Vafa is co-founder and Executive Director of Rights4Girls, a human rights organization working to end sex trafficking and gender-based violence against young women and girls in the U.S.



Sex trafficked children and adults  
are consistently among the most  
vulnerable people in our society.

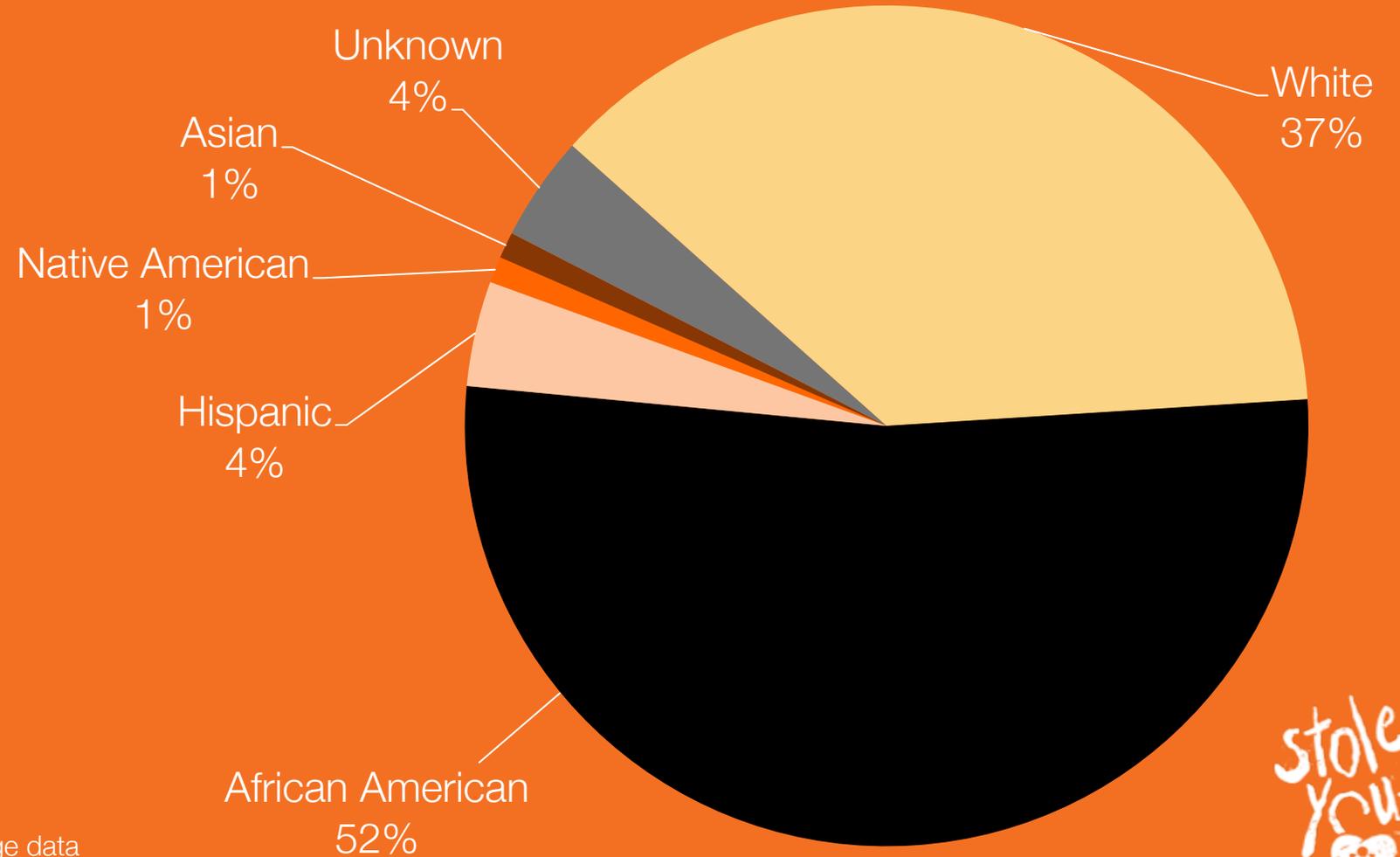


Most (not all) are female



# Victims of child trafficking by race

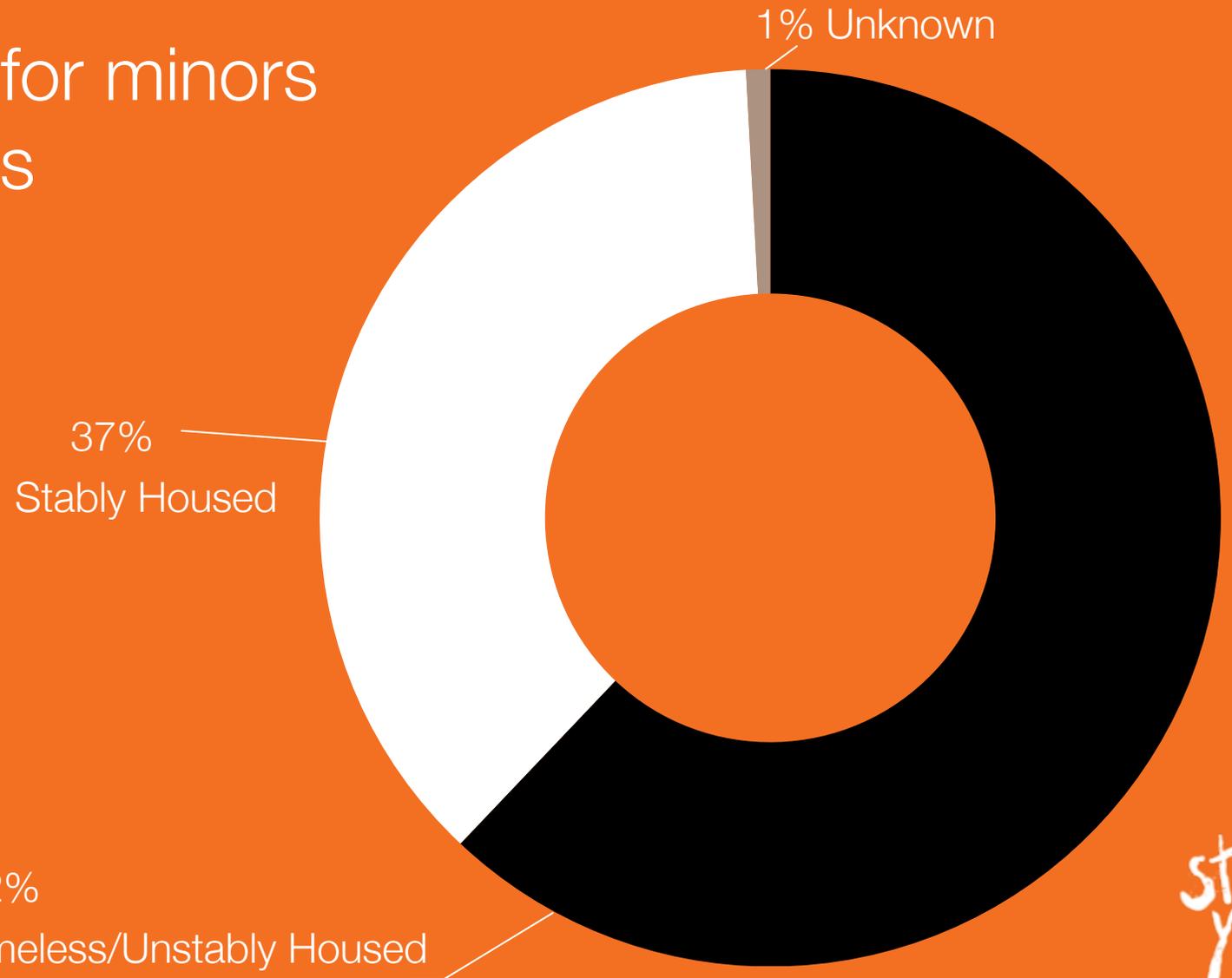
N=75



\*KCPAO data – 2011-2016; mirrors Bridge data



# Living conditions for minors in trafficking cases



Bridge Collaborative Clients



## Child Welfare Involvement

Mean # of placements for exploited children: 27

Average # of times child went on the run: 9



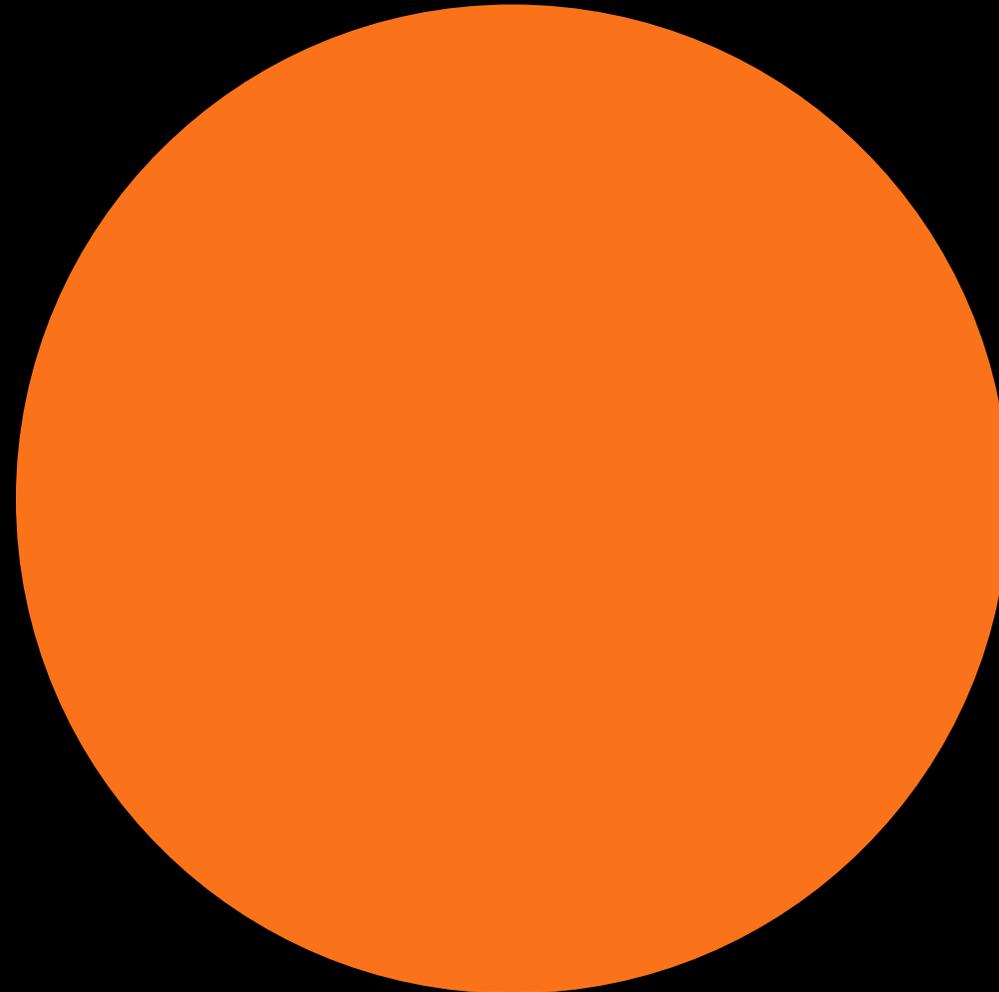
A close-up, black and white photograph of a young person's face, showing their eyes, nose, and mouth. The person has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the right of the camera. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows on the right side of their face.

Sex buyers are consistently among the more privileged, white, educated, and employed members of our society.



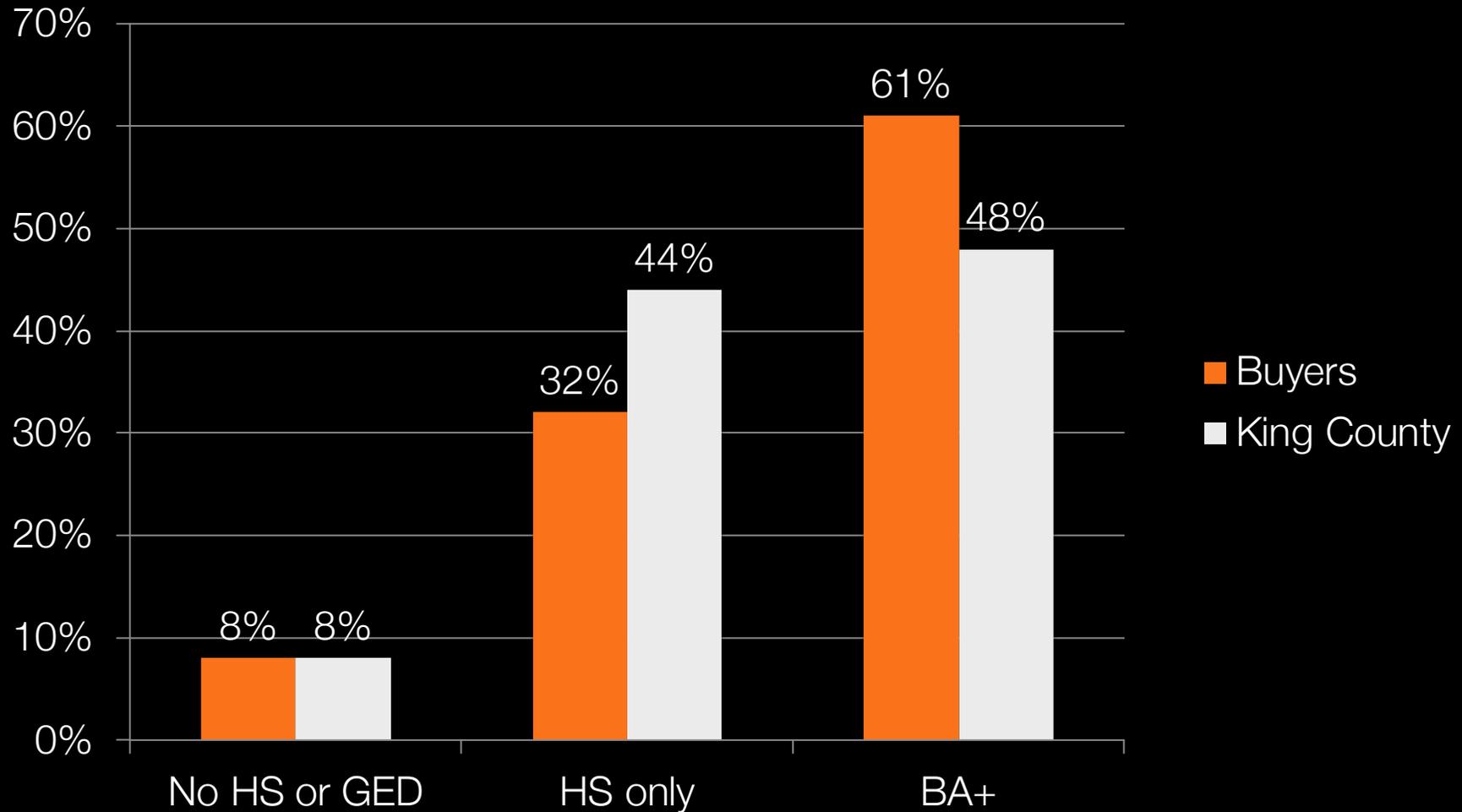
# Buyers are male

King County sex buyers  
by gender – 2013-2017



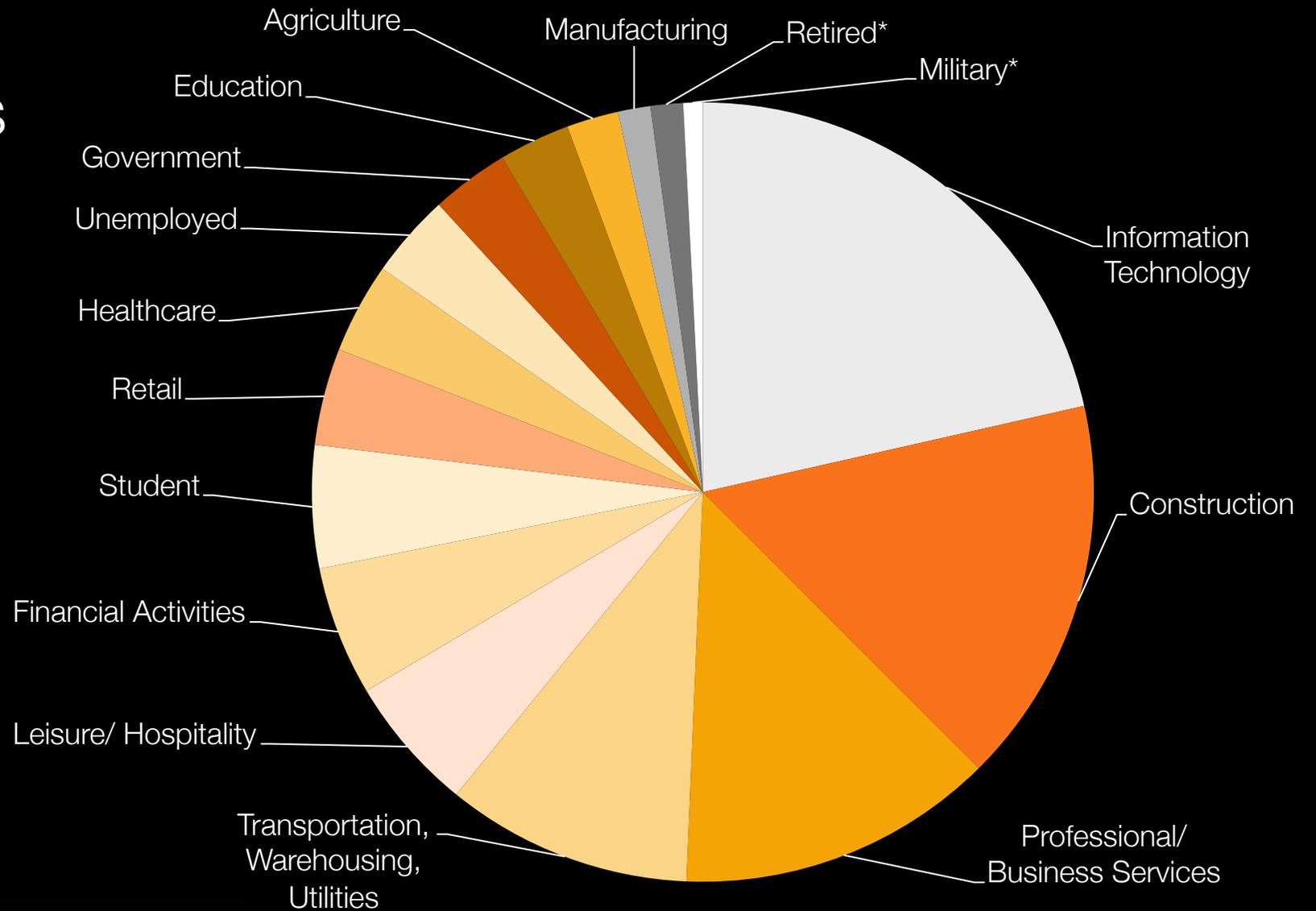
- Men
- Women

# Arrested buyers have above average education

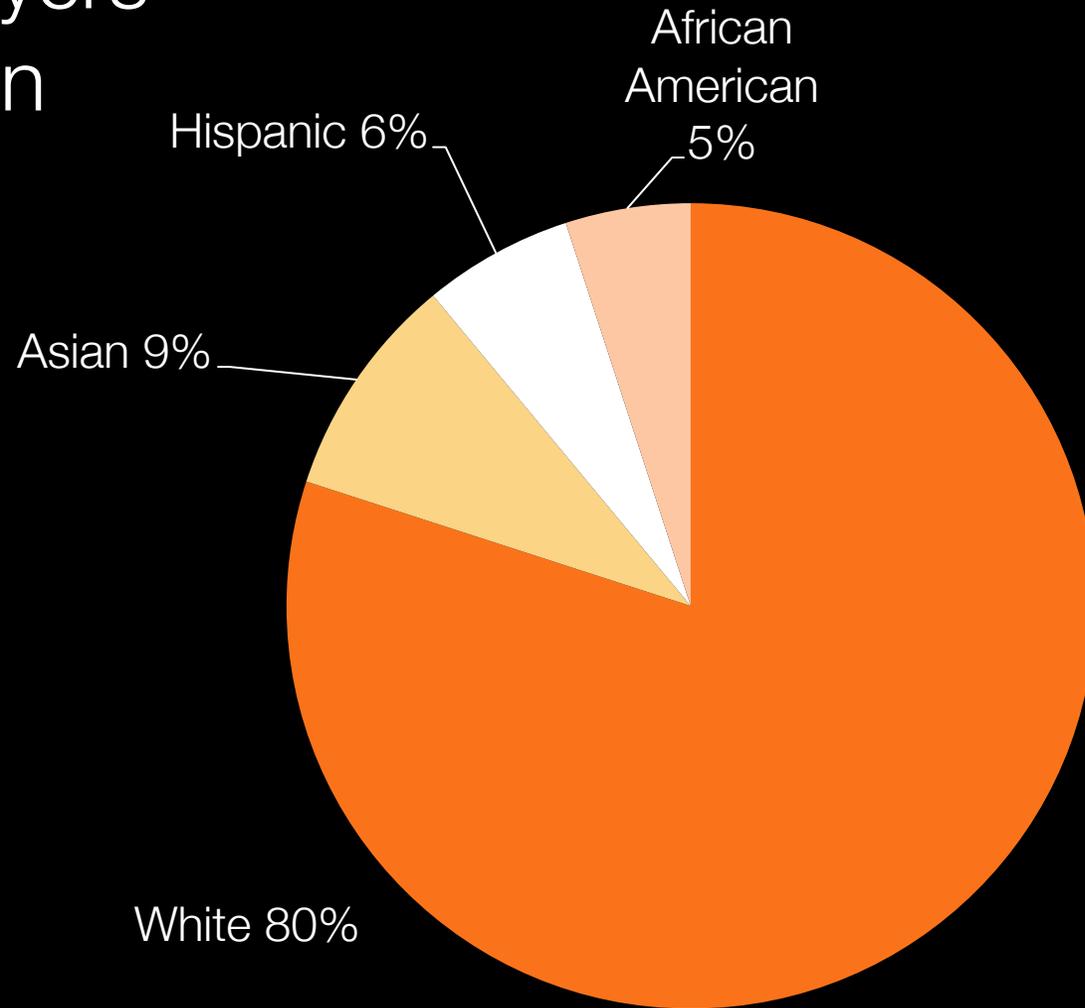


# Employment of arrested buyers

N=373



The vast majority of buyers of minors are white men



# Keynote: Yasmin Vafa, Executive Director, Rights4Girls



Yasmin Vafa is co-founder and Executive Director of Rights4Girls, a human rights organization working to end sex trafficking and gender-based violence against young women and girls in the U.S.





# From Recy Taylor to Latesha Clay:

UNDERSTANDING THE LEGACY OF RACIAL & GENDER VIOLENCE THAT FUELS  
THE EXPLOITATION AND CRIMINALIZATION OF GIRLS OF COLOR TODAY



rights4girls

# A Legacy of Sexual Exploitation

## The “Fancy Girl” Trade

- ▶ Black women have been commercially sexually exploited in the U.S. since the 1600s (NMAAHC 2017)
- ▶ During the domestic slave trade, a new category of enslaved women emerged known as “fancy girls” (NMAAHC 2017)
- ▶ Predominantly young, light-skinned, and purchased explicitly for sexual exploitation at rates 4x to 5x that of field laborers (NMAAHC 2017)

# Who is Recy Taylor?

- ▶ In 1944, Recy Taylor was gang-raped by six white men on her walk home from church. She reported the incident to the police.
- ▶ Police barely investigated the incident, so the NAACP brought in anti-rape activist **Rosa Parks** to conduct their own investigation.
- ▶ Two separate grand juries **failed to indict** her abusers.
- ▶ What did the assailant's say they did in order to feign innocence for the sexual violence they committed?

# What Does Recy Taylor's Case Have to Do With Today's Conversation?

- ▶ Prostitution as a means to legitimize sexual violence against Black women
- ▶ What has changed since 1944? What hasn't?
- ▶ **If what the assailant's said was true, would it have erased the violence or trauma she experienced?**
- ▶ Is there a difference between raping someone & paying to rape someone?

# How are Prostitution and Sex Trafficking Related?

- ▶ Prostitution and sex trafficking are inextricably linked– one cannot exist without the other
- ▶ Individuals are trafficked into the system of prostitution
- ▶ Many first enter the sex trade as children and thus, child sex trafficking victims under the law, but what happens when they turn 18?
- ▶ Policies that seek to address one issue inevitably affect the other

# What Drives People into the Sex Trade?

- ▶ Structural oppression
  - ▶ Racism, Sexism, Misogyny, Misogynoir, Homophobia, Transphobia
- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ Homelessness
- ▶ Violence and abuse
- ▶ System-involvement: Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice, Criminal Justice
- ▶ Marginalization
- ▶ Lack of access to mental health and trauma services

# Who is Most Impacted by Involvement in the Commercial Sex Trade?

Histories of Abuse and Neglect in Sex Trafficking Victims

- ▶ Foster care to trafficking pipeline

***“Foster care was the perfect training ground for a life of trafficking...because it was in foster care throughout my 14+ different placements where I first internalized the duality of being cared for and being raped...it was in foster care where I realized I was tied to a paycheck.”***

– “T” Ortiz Walker Pettigrew, Survivor advocate

# Gender + Racial Disparities in the Sex Trade: Youth

## Girls and LGBTQ/GNC Youth of Color

- ▶ **66%** of identified child sex trafficking victims in Alameda County, CA were **Black** when Black people are only **12%** of the population (2013)
- ▶ In Anchorage, **Alaskan Native** people are less than **8%** of the population but their young women and girls represent **33%** of sex trade survivors (2011)
- ▶ In Portland, **Black** people are less than **6%** of the population but **27%** of child trafficking victims (2015)

# Gender + Racial Disparities in the Sex Trade: Adults

## Women and LGBTQ/GNC People of Color

- ▶ In Chicago, **66%** of sex trafficking victims were **Black women** (2017)
- ▶ In Nebraska, **50%** of individuals sold online for sex were **Black women** though Black people are **only 5%** of the population (2017)
- ▶ **40%** of sex trafficking victims in South Dakota were **Native American women**, though Native Americans are **only 8%** of population (2016)
- ▶ Nationally, **40%** of sex trafficking victims are **Black women** (2014)

# What are the Impacts of Involvement in the Sex Trade?

- ▶ Violence
  - ▶ **92%** of women reported being subjected to physical violence including being shot, strangled, burned, beaten, stabbed, or punched (2014)
- ▶ Criminalization
- ▶ Marginalization
- ▶ Stigmatization
- ▶ Negative mental and physical health outcomes
  - ▶ STIs, unwanted pregnancies, forced abortions, PTSD, infertility, depression

# Gender + Racial Disparities: Who Are the Buyers

- ▶ Recent Minnesota study found that the majority of sex buyers in their state are “**predominately white, married men, from middle and upper socio-economic backgrounds.**” (2017)
- ▶ In a study of men who use the internet to buy sex, researchers found **85%** were **white men** (2012)
- ▶ **65%** of buyers in Atlanta live in the suburban metro area (2017)

# Buyers: Understanding the Scale of the Problem

- ▶ Arizona State University found there were **6,800 buyers** soliciting sex on just one site **in 24 hours** (2014)
- ▶ **12,400 men each month** in Georgia pay for sex with a young female; **7,200** end up exploiting adolescents, and over **27,000 men** buy sex with young females multiple times a year (2010)
- ▶ Important to understand the number of men willing to break the law in order to buy sex. **Imagine how many more will enter the market if we repeal laws against purchasing sex?**
  - ▶ Who will be most harmed? Who benefits?

# Buyers In Their Own Words

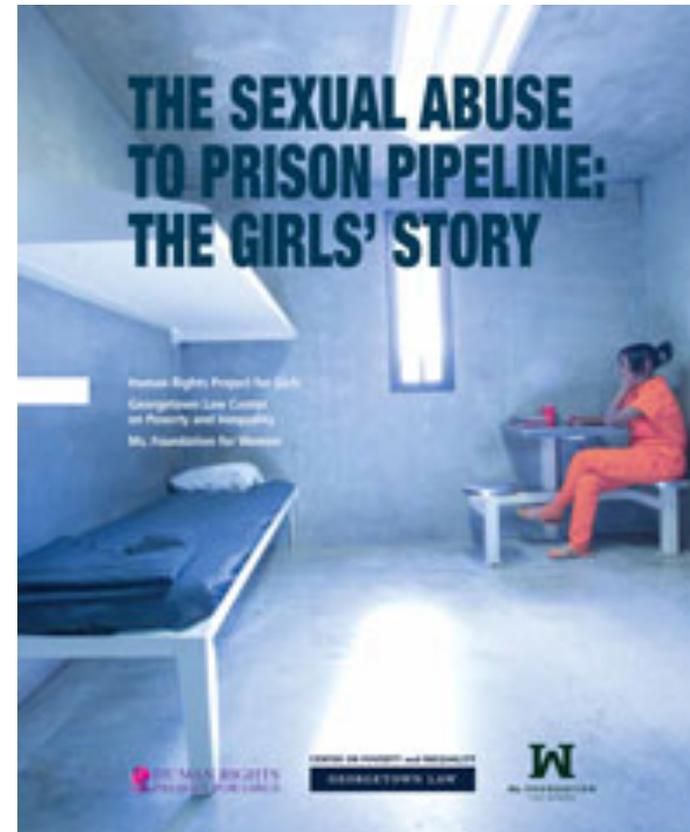
- ▶ “I made a list in my mind. I told myself that I’ll be with different races e.g. Japanese, Indian, Chinese...Once I have been with them I tick them off the list. It’s like a shopping list.” (2017)
- ▶ “If she isn’t crying but says ‘no’, I keep on. I only stop if she is really crying.” (2017)
- ▶ “In the beginning they have emotions. But it becomes a routine. They die off after a while.” (2017)
- ▶ “I buy sex because I love sex, but I hate women.” (2017)

# Who is Most Often Criminalized?

- ▶ In Pennsylvania, **78%** of arrests are for selling sex, while only **22%** of arrests are for buying sex (2017)
- ▶ **Women** account for **64%** of **adult prostitution arrests** (2015)
- ▶ **Black** adults account for **40%** of all **arrests for prostitution** despite being **only 7%** of the population (2015)
- ▶ **Girls** account for **78%** of all **juvenile prostitution arrests** (2014)
- ▶ **Black children** are **57%** of all **juvenile prostitution arrests** (2016)

# The Abuse to Prison Pipeline

- ▶ The **Sexual Abuse to Prison Pipeline** is a term to describe the pathways of gendered violence that lead women and girls– especially girls of color– into the justice system as a direct result of their victimization.



# Who is Latesha Clay?

- ▶ **At 15**, Latesha left an unsafe home environment with her child and moved in with an older male and female.
- ▶ They convinced her to post an ad on **Backpage** advertising sex with a teenager, to which two men responded.
- ▶ They met at a **hotel** intending to have **sex with 15-year-old** Latesha, but instead Latesha's exploiters robbed the men at gunpoint while she stayed in the hotel room.
- ▶ Latesha was **charged as an adult** for armed robbery and sentenced to **nine years in adult prison**. Her case was successfully appealed but only after she spent nearly a year in an adult women's prison.
- ▶ The male buyers who responded to the ad were **never charged**.

# Language, Systems, and Power

- ▶ Think about Recy Taylor and Latesha Clay. What **policies and systems** have allowed for the continued sexual exploitation and subjugation of Black and Brown women and girls?
- ▶ What **role** does the **language** that we use play in **perpetuating** these systems of oppression?
- ▶ Where does the language that we use **come from and what are its effects**?
- ▶ What **role** does the language that we use have in **pushing us towards or away from accountability** for those who enact sexual violence against us?

# What Terms Do We or Others Use to Talk About the Commercial Sex Trade?

- ▶ Prostitution
  - ▶ “Sex Work”
  - ▶ Trafficking
  - ▶ “Survival Sex”
  - ▶ Victim
  - ▶ Survivor
  - ▶ Modern-day Slavery
- 
- ▶ Do they connote criminality? Agency? Do they sanitize? Stigmatize? Empower?

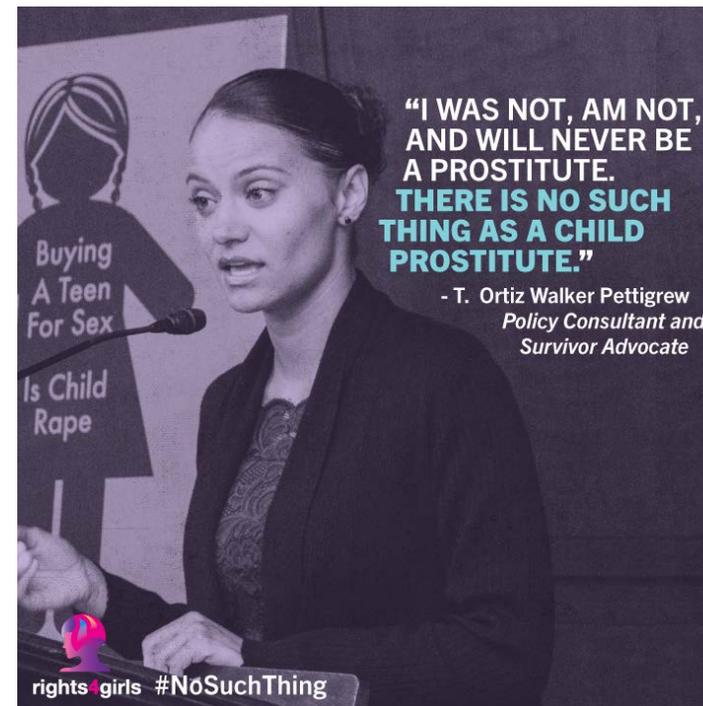
# The Importance of Language

How we are named is how we are treated



# No Such Thing Campaign

- ▶ Campaign to **eliminate “child prostitute” in language and in law**
- ▶ Encourage states and jurisdictions to pass policies that **end the criminalization of sex trade survivors**– especially minors
- ▶ Uplift and **center the experiences, voices, and recommendations of survivors**
- ▶ **Promote prevention** and deterrence of sex buyers



# Survivor-Centered Solutions

- ▶ Sex trade is a violent system of oppression predicated on **racial, gender, and income inequality**
- ▶ Promote policies that **shrink the sex trade**– not expand it
- ▶ **Decriminalize those who sell sex**– protect the most marginalized by maintaining prohibitions against pimping and purchasing
- ▶ Promote **victim-centered accountability** for exploiters

# Movement Towards Accountability

## What does accountability look like?

- ▶ Centering the most marginalized
- ▶ Survivor-centered justice
- ▶ Racial and gender justice
- ▶ Acknowledgment of harm
- ▶ Deterrence and prevention
- ▶ Reparation of harm

# Promising Approaches & Moving Forward

- ▶ Examples:
  - ▶ King County/Seattle
  - ▶ LA County/California
- ▶ Change is possible when we bring our attention to these problems
- ▶ Our challenge now is to expand successes like these all across the country

# Contact Information



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stolen youth



Panel Discussion



Panel Discussion

**CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING:  
THE IMPACTS OF RACE, GENDER,  
AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITY**

stolen youth



Audience Q & A



Audience Q & A

**CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING:  
THE IMPACTS OF RACE, GENDER,  
AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITY**



# Not On Our Watch Luncheon, 2018

**April 19, 2018 | 12:00pm | Seattle Sheraton Hotel**

## **SAVE THE DATE!** **STOLEN YOUTH ANNUAL LUNCHEON**

Thursday, April 19, 2018 | 12:00pm | Grand Ballroom | Sheraton Hotel | Seattle

In the brief hour we'll be sharing with you and your fellow attendees, we at Stolen Youth—in concert with our partners—will shed light on the current state of child trafficking in our community. Expect to be moved and motivated by compelling facts, stats, and stories designed to drive awareness, compassion and ultimately, inspire your participation in the eradication of this inconceivable crime.

The good news: our annual Stolen Youth luncheon has fast become one of Seattle's most successful fundraisers, having generated over \$4 million to date in the fight against the trafficking and sexual exploitation of our children and youth. And so much of our success starts here—with you.

Did you know you can host your own table? Or, become an Event Sponsor? Either way, you'll be helping to propel real and lasting change in Washington, a state where the spirit of giving thrives—and our children matter most.

Ready to learn more? Contact us at [Hope@StolenYouth.org](mailto:Hope@StolenYouth.org)



**FACEBOOK:** [StolenYouth.Seattle](https://www.facebook.com/StolenYouth.Seattle) | **TWITTER:** [@StolenYouthWA](https://twitter.com/StolenYouthWA) | **INSTAGRAM:** [StolenYouthWA](https://www.instagram.com/StolenYouthWA)

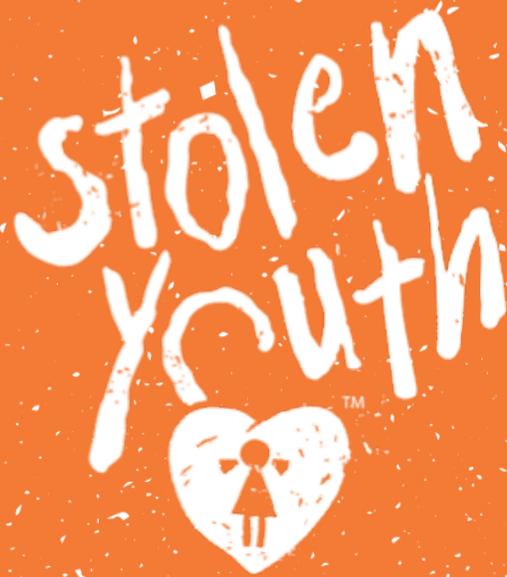
Stolen Youth is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.





NO CHILD SHOULD BE  
**BOUGHT  
OR SOLD**  
FOR SEX





Thank you

[stolenyouth.org](http://stolenyouth.org)