

# Policy Memo

**To: Evergreen state college MPA**

**Regarding: Human Sex Trafficking and prostitution**

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The issue of human trafficking in the Pierce and King counties has caused major problems for the region. Human trafficking, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), is the third-largest criminal industry in the world, and it is defined by the use of force, fraud and/or coercion to gainfully profit from somebody else's labor or sex acts. This includes anybody under the age of 18 who has been forced to do manual labor or sex work." *Ayden Bolin, Human trafficking prevalent in Seattle-Tacoma area - The Trail* "If a 16-year-old trades sex for a place to sleep at night, then that's considered trafficking," Runbeck said *Human trafficking prevalent in Seattle-Tacoma area -* . "So even though the person who gave that 16-year-old a place to sleep that night maybe didn't gain money, or 'pimp' the kid, they took advantage of the kid by trading a place to stay."

Sex traffickers often control their victims physically, emotionally, and financially. While some traffickers have no relationship to their victims, many survivors of human trafficking reported being in a romantic relationship with the person who trafficked them and described "complicated power and control dynamics commonly associated with situations of intimate partner violence.

Inside Prison addresses prostitution to not be a problem in Tacoma, Pierce County. Yet women are arrested daily for prostitution. Prostitution is recognized as a victimless crime in law enforcement and court rooms.

The women who are victimized are overlooked and addressed as criminals instead of victims. Even though Pierce County officials are aware that prostitution is very prevalent in Pierce County there is not one safe house for women who are being victimized. A safe house in Pierce County would be a great asset for survivors of sex trafficking.

I am focused on this issue because of my own personal experiences with it. I was abandoned as a child by my mother. I have been a victim of Human Sex Trafficking for more than half of my life. My hope is to develop a nonprofit safe house for survivors so women and their children can be rescued from being victimized by sex predators.

**Citation:**

**Human trafficking prevalent in Seattle- Tacoma area – The Trail**