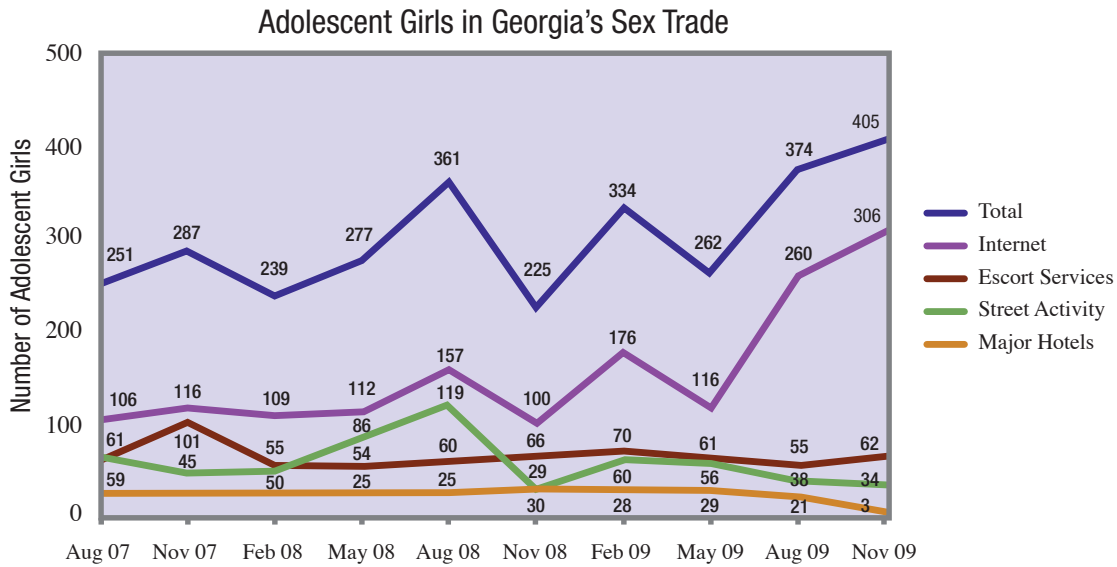




Georgia's Sex Trade Problem

Recently, the FBI named Atlanta as one of the 14 cities in the nation with the highest incidence of children used in prostitution. Each month, more than 400 girls are commercially sexually exploited in Georgia – girls who are 12 and 14 years old on average. A target for exploitation, one out of every three teens will be lured into sexual exploitation within 48 hours of leaving home.



RESEARCH

- 90% of exploited children are under the control of a pimp
- Often, the trafficker or pimp will break the girl's will in order to prepare her for prostitution and separation from her previous life which is accomplished through the use of several methods including physical and sexual violence, manipulation, isolation and coercion and threats, economic dependence, substance use and emotional abuse.
- Children who have been sexually abused are 28 times more likely to be arrested for prostitution at some point in their lives. It has also been found that the majority of girls and adult women who engage in prostitution have a history of sexual abuse in their childhood.
- Studies have found that there is a correlation between sexual and physical violence and negative health behaviors such as substance abuse, risky sexual practices, depression and suicide attempts.

A Statewide System to Protect Georgia's Children

Recognizing this as a serious problem in Georgia, the Governor's Office for Children and Families (GOCF) created *the nation's first statewide response* to help identify a greater number of child sex trafficking victims and address their needs.

Who is a child sex trafficking victim?

A child who has received food, drugs, money or shelter in exchange for sex



Governor's Office for

Children and Families

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Georgia Care Connection Office

The Georgia Care Connection Office (GCCO) takes a child-centered approach and connects teens to essential, long-term services. The office serves an essential role as it offers a single point of contact for anyone who seeks help for a sex-trafficked child. GCCO also provides information and technical assistance in its efforts to support victims, family members, community members, law enforcement, medical personnel, and service providers. For assistance, call 404-602-0068.

Working in partnership with state and national organizations, GCCO proactively tracks both actual and potential sexually exploited children and helps “connect the dots” of the child’s actions to identify opportunities for intervention.

Local Community Support

Roughly half of the girls identified as victims of commercial sexual exploitation are not committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice or in DFCS custody, thus do not have a stable funding source to cover the cost of a safe, restorative setting where they can recover from their ordeal. Blended funding is available to help pay for needed therapies, but children in parental custody lack a stable funding source for residential care (room/board and watchful oversight) which is calculated at \$5,600 a month per child.

In order to cover the cost of a safe, structured setting, a scholarship fund has been established with Community Foundation for Northeast Georgia to cover the gap for rescued girls who need residential care in a licensed safe house but have no other source of funding. Donations from community partners to this scholarship fund, in addition to funding GOCF has already budgeted, will address the funding gap and allow for all needs of commercially sexually exploited children to be met.

To make a donation, call 770-813-3380 or give online at www.cfneg.org

Collaborative Efforts are Working

As the facilitator of the statewide response, GOCF is excited about the initial results of this initiative: since the inception of the program in July 2009 through December 31, 2009, **more than 50 girls and their families statewide have received comprehensive services**. Response efforts will continue and Georgia will lead the way in identifying and supporting child sex trafficking victims.

To seek help for a child that may be a victim of commercial sexual exploitation, call: 404-602-0068

GOCF received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding pursuant to HB 900 and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding through Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) to support a statewide response.