

CHILDREN TRAFFICKED ON CRAIGSLIST

Erotic Services Section Sold Children as Young as 4-years Old

Craigslist, an Internet company well known for enabling users to conveniently advertise everything from jobs to housing, is a popular marketplace for the sale of human-beings. With its free postings and relative anonymity for its users, Craigslist's "Erotic Services" site has become a vehicle for the trafficking and exploitation of women and children. There have been numerous reportings of children falling prey to traffickers advertising on Craigslist and victims as young as four years old have been sold on the Erotic Services site.

Recent Craigslist headlines include a report on January 11, 2007 Cook County, Illinois. Three adults were arrested, two of which were posting advertisements on Craigslist for girls ranging in age from 14 to 16 years old to perform sex acts. ABC 7 Chicago reported that "some of these girls were forced to turn 10, 12 tricks a day resulting in tens of thousands of dollars for the pimps." In response to the mounting evidence that its site is being used for these insidious purposes, Craigslist has often refused to comment or claimed lack of resources to effectively monitor postings.

The Internet, with all of its conveniences, has become a major platform for facilitating human trafficking, prostitution and sexual exploitation of children. Currently, approximately 400,000 women and children are being prostituted in the U.S. annually. Surprisingly only 10-20% of prostitution is street-based. Behind closed doors, hidden by the anonymity of the Internet the exploitation of children is surging.

Love146 has launched the Craigslist "Call to Action" campaign. It urges Craigslist, a multi-million dollar company and face of other philanthropic causes, to take responsibility for the role its site is playing in facilitating child trafficking and exploitation. In light of the New Year, Love146 are asking Craigslist to make a New Year's resolution: to follow in the footsteps of MySpace and Google and implement better preventative policies and monitoring efforts to protect its site from being used as a resource for child traffickers.

Love146 works toward the abolition of child sex trafficking and exploitation through aftercare, prevention and advocacy. Love146 trains aftercare workers, multiplies safehomes, aids socioeconomic development programs in high-risk communities and provides a voice for these victims of modern-day slavery.

Source: Love146

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