

Boys Are Trafficked Too

Seven Common Myths

Current Trends



Hierarchy of CSEC Survival

Red Flags & Interventions

Working Together

Russell G. Wilson
Human Trafficking Subject Matter Expert
Citations

Seven

Common Myths

Around Male Sexual Trauma & Exploitation

These myths are socially constructed and imposed on all of us from a very early age. Exposing these myths is the first step to breaking the cycle of stigmatization of male victims and survivors sexual assault.

Myth

1

Myth

2

Myth

3

Myth

4

Myth

5

Myth

6

Myth

7

Masculinity is not a
determinate to victimization

Boys and men can be sexually exploited
or victimized and it has nothing to do
with how masculine they are.

An erection is not consent

An erection during sexual assault is purely a biological response that does not indicate consent or sexual pleasure. Nonetheless, this physical reaction leaves many men confused as to why their bodies reacted this way and ultimately serves as an additional impediment to seeking counseling or legal aid.

Siegmund Fred Fuchs

Sexual abuse is less harmful to boys than it is to girls

Sexual abuse and assault harms boys and girls in similar, and different, but equally harmful ways.

One study found that the sexual abuse of boys was more likely to involve penetration of some kind, which is associated with greater psychological harm.

U.S. Center for Disease Control

Most men who sexually abuse boys are gay

Boys can be abused by both straight and gay men, as well as women. Sexual abuse is taking advantage of a child's vulnerability, regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Studies suggest that men who have sexually abused a boy most often identify as heterosexual and are often involved in adult heterosexual relationships at the time of the abusive interaction.

Boys abused by males must have attracted the abuse because they are gay or become gay as a result

A boy's sexual orientation is neither the cause or result of sexual abuse. Abuse arises from the abusive person's failure to have healthy adult sexual relationships, and his or her willingness to sexually abuse the victim.

It has nothing to do with the sexual preferences of the victim, therefore it cannot be a determinate of a person's natural sexual orientation.

If a boy is abused by a female, he is "lucky", if he doesn't feel that way, something is wrong with him

Premature, coerced, or forced sexual exploitation are never positive regardless of the gender of the abuser.

To be sexually objectified by a more powerful person regardless of gender can cause lasting harm.

If boys are sexually abused,
they will continue the cycle
of abuse with others

Most boys and men who are sexually abused or assaulted will not go on to sexually abuse or assault others. This myth is especially dangerous because it can create tremendous fear. They may not only fear becoming an abuser themselves but also that others will view them as potential abusers.

This stigma further suppresses a person from seeking help with their trauma.

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Statistics and Correlations

Statistics

1

Trends

2

Correlations

3

Male/
Female

4

Statistics

What the research tells us

- Males who have such experiences are less likely to disclose them than females.
- A study of male university students in the Boston area reported that 18% of men were sexually abused before the age of 16.
- 47% of transgender, gender-queer, non-conforming (TGQN) youth have been sexually assaulted, compared to 18% of non-TGQN females, and 4% of non-TGQN males
- 52.4% of male victims report being raped by an acquaintance and 15.1% by a stranger
- 35% of men report significant short- or long-term impacts such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- 27.8% of men were age 10 or younger at the time of their first completed rape victimization
- The average age at which girls first become victims of prostitution is 12-14 years old, and the average age at which boys first become victims of prostitution is 11-13 years old

Trends

Last year the National Crime Victimization Survey turned up a remarkable statistic. In asking 40,000 households about rape and sexual violence, the survey uncovered that 38% of incidents were against men.

A recent analysis of Bureau of Justice Statistics data found that 46% of male victims of sexual assault reported a female perpetrator.

Compared to those with no history of sexual abuse, young males who were sexually abused were five times more likely to cause teen pregnancy, three times more likely to have multiple sexual partners and two times more likely to have unprotected sex, according to the study published online and in the June print issue of the Journal of Adolescent Health.

Boys that have been sexually abused at home are often targeted by traffickers as they are deemed easier to manipulate. More money can be earned by younger boys exploited in sexual exploitation. Younger boys are expected to have greater earning potential, and as such are in greater demand.

Correlations & Risk Factors

Risk factors exist regardless of gender, race, age, or economic status.

A history of physical and sexual abuse is a common risk factor among victims.

One study estimates 30% of shelter youth and 70% of street youth are victims of commercial sexual exploitation. They may engage or be coerced into prostitution for “survival sex” to meet daily needs for food, shelter, or drugs.

Any child may be vulnerable to being victimized by a trafficker who promises to meet his emotional and physical needs. This is why boys who have been previously sexually abused, are at an increased risk of being trafficked. Often traffickers will create a seemingly loving and caring relationship with their victim in order to establish trust and allegiance.

Traffickers are predators who seek out vulnerable victims, particularly children in foster-care, runaways or children experiencing trouble at home. They know these children have emotional and physical needs that are not being met and use this to their advantage. Traffickers find victims at a variety of venues such as in social media websites, shopping malls, and schools; on local streets; or at bus stations. While traffickers often target children outside of their family, a family member may also exploit a child.

Male/Female

In 2016, a Department of Justice-commissioned study, Youth Involvement in the Sex Trade, found that boys make up about 36% of children caught up in the U.S. sex industry (about 60% are female and less than 5% are transgender males and females).

13% of men on the streets selling sex for survival exclusively sell sex to women in one Urban Institute Study from NYC.

In 2008, researchers from the John Jay School of Criminal Justice reported that boys account for about 45% of child trafficking victims in New York City.

In 2013, an ECPAT-USA report concluded that the “scope of (the commercial sexual exploitation of boys) is vastly underreported.” The researchers also cited the need to better identify male victims, to raise awareness about the harm caused by commercial exploitation and to provide more services designed specifically for boys.

Why do boys continue to be overlooked in efforts to combat trafficking?

“We live in a culture where men are perpetrators and women are victims, and there are no gray areas,” Steve Procopio of Male Survivor said. “There’s a lot of sexism involved with this issue.”

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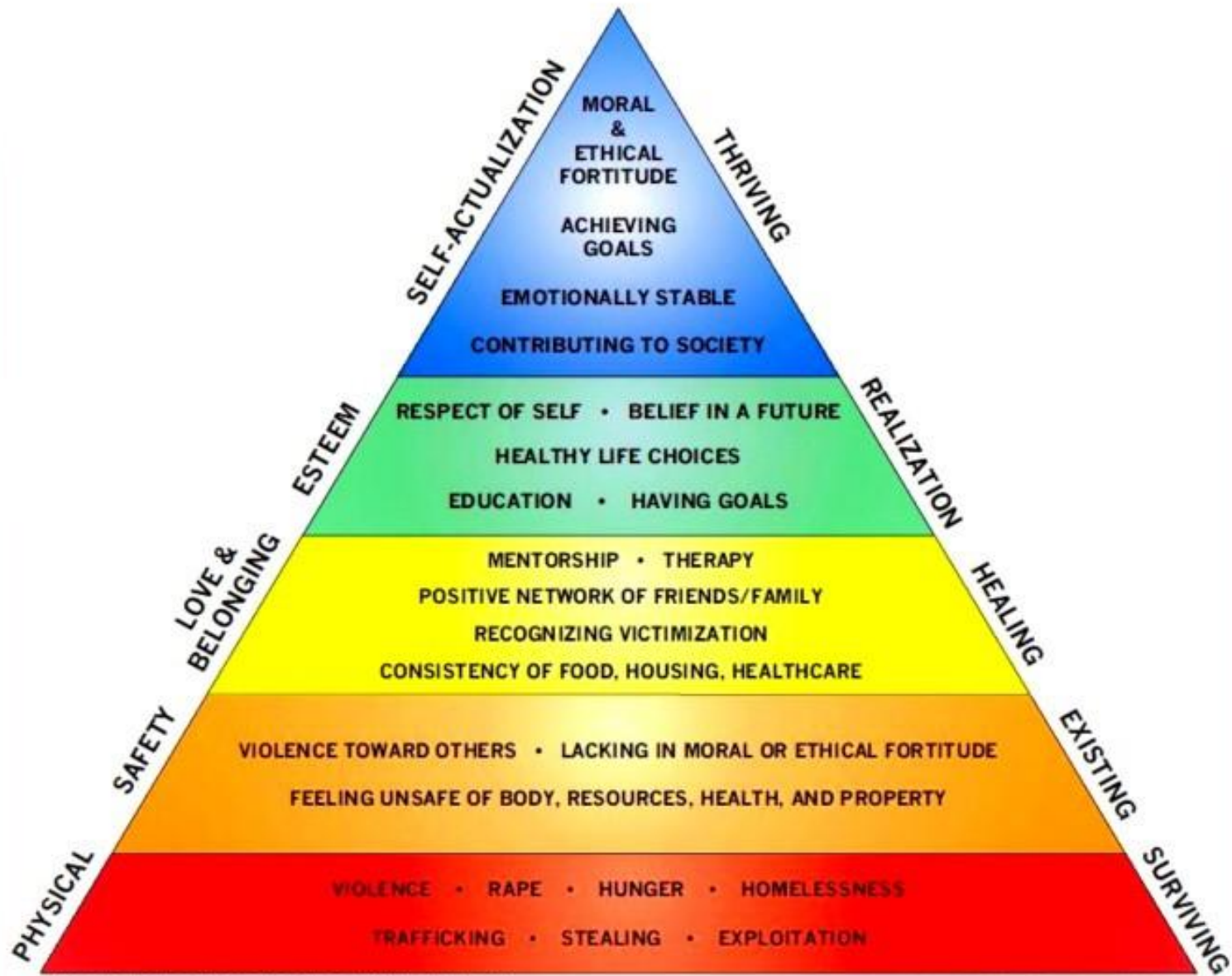
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MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS: 'A THEORY OF HUMAN MOTIVATION', 1943.

Wilson, Russell G. April 8, 2017. © Pending 1-4932151911

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Red Flags & Interventions

How to spot male victims and
Vulnerable Boys and how to
successfully help them

Red
Flags

Invisible
Red Flags

Interventions

Red Flags

Common Work and Living Conditions:

- * Is not free to leave or come and go as he/she wishes
- * Is in the commercial sex industry and has a pimp / manager
- * Is unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- * Works excessively long and/or unusual hours
- * Is not allowed breaks or suffers under unusual restrictions at work
- * Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off
- * Was recruited through false promises concerning the nature and conditions of his/her work
- * High security measures exist in the work and/or living locations (e.g. opaque windows, boarded up windows, bars on windows, barbed wire, security cameras, etc.)

Poor Mental Health or Abnormal Behavior:

- * Is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid
- * Exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behavior after bringing up law enforcement
- * Avoids eye contact

Red Flags

Poor Physical Health:

- * Lacks medical care and/or is denied medical services by employer
- * Appears malnourished or shows signs of repeated exposure to harmful chemicals
- * Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture

Lack of Control:

- * Has few or no personal possessions
- * Is not in control of his/her own money, no financial records, or bank account
- * Is not in control of his/her own identification documents (ID or passport)
- * Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating)

Other:

- * Claims of just visiting and inability to clarify where he/she is staying/address
- * Lack of knowledge of whereabouts and/or of what city he/she is in
- * Loss of sense of time
- * Has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story

Invisible Red Flags

While responses to trauma are universal, the way trauma can manifest in cis, transgender, and gay males can appear differently.

- Transgender and gay males will wear their monotonized sexual activity as a "badge of honor", while cis males will make efforts to reinforce their heterosexuality and masculinity through denial. However in intimate social settings they may acknowledge that they are "gay for pay".
- When approaching a trauma point with males, the reaction can be defensive, which can display as being aggressive.
- Presentation of abandonment issues: it is harder for males to process emotion, the first response leans towards anger.

Interventions

Creating a plan for the youth on a case by case basis that includes:

- Autonomous choice of independence.
 - Backtracking goals: don't invalidate dreams, create steps, and a game plan.
- Trust building and meeting necessities.
 - "What is something you're good at?"
 - Support and encouragement
 - Daily touch in - writing down pros and cons daily check in; be able to show accomplishments when times are harder.
- Encouraging consistent progress.

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Thank You!

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