

## About Human Trafficking and Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking

In some respects, the numbers below are irrelevant—even one person forced into slavery is too many. And one must admit that due to the shadowy nature of trafficking, it is very difficult to collect reliable data; hence, there are startling differences and much debate about the statistics surrounding human trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. But here are the facts, as best we know them, based on what seem to be the most credible resources.

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- 1) **There are between 21 million and 30 million enslaved people in the world today.** (Source: [Free the Slaves](#); “Human Trafficking: A Global Multi-Billion Dollar Criminal Industry,” *International Journal of Public Law and Policy*, 2014, 4, 293–308.)
- 2) **Every year, 1.2 million children worldwide are trafficked.** (Source: Hagemann, Frank, et al., “Every Child Counts: New Global Estimates on Child Labour,” International Labour Organization, Geneva, 2002, page 6.)
- 3) **An average slave in the American South in 1850 cost the equivalent of \$40,000 in today’s money; today a slave costs an average of \$90.** This is less than a pair of Nikes, an iPod, and even some pairs of jeans at Abercrombie & Fitch. It is ten times less than the average cost of attending the high school prom. (Source: [Free the Slaves](#); amazon.com; US News & World Report)
- 4) In 1850 it was difficult to capture a slave and then transport them to the United States. Today, **millions of economically and socially vulnerable people around the world are potential slaves.** (Source: [Free the Slaves](#))
- 5) **As many as 300,000 children are at risk for domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) in the United States.** (Source: [Street Grace](#) and [ECPAT-USA](#), citing Estes, Richard J. and Neil Alan Weiner, “The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children In the U. S., Canada and Mexico,” University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 2001.)
- 6) **Each year, 14,500 to 17,500 foreign nationals are trafficked into the United States.** (Source: US Department of Justice report to Congress, *Assessment of US Government Activities to Combat Trafficking in Persons*, 2004, page 9.)
- 7) **Slavery is a \$150 billion global industry and, within that, DMST a \$32–\$39 billion industry.** For comparison, McDonald’s global revenue in 2012 was only about \$28 billion and Apple’s just over \$155 billion; Americans spend \$32 billion on snacks like potato chips and pretzels every year. (Sources: UNILO 2014; Street Grace; Free the Slaves; annual reports.)

- 8) **The average age at which children are forced into DMST in the United States is 12–14.** (Source: Street Grace.)
- 9) **In the United States, the perpetrators are not a few so-called “sexual predators” or tourists. Perpetrators are disproportionately middle class and aged 30–39.** (Source: Schapiro Demand Study, *Men Who Buy Sex with Adolescents: A Scientific Study*, 2009.)
- 10) **The top 14 cities for prostitution of children in the United States include Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New York, San Diego, San Francisco, St. Louis, Tampa, Washington.** (Source: [Street Grace](#)) But research conducted by [Free the Slaves](#) with the University of California–Berkeley found documented cases of slavery and human trafficking in **more than 90 cities across the United States.**
- 11) **Ninety-eight percent of commercial sexual exploitation victims worldwide are female.** (Source: *ILO Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings*, International Labor Organization, Geneva, 2008.)
- 12) **Ninety-five percent of all trafficking victims experience physical or sexual violence.** (Source: Zimmerman, Cathy, et al., *Stolen Smiles: A Summary Report on the Physical and Psychological Health Consequences of Women and Adolescents Trafficked in Europe*, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, 2006). **The lifespan of children once they enter sexual slavery is estimated between two and seven years.**