



The No Such Thing Campaign

There is **No Such Thing** as a “child prostitute.” There are only victims and survivors of child sex trafficking and commercial rape.

All across the United States, American children are bought and sold for sex. Many of these children experience torture and abuse at the hands of traffickers and buyers. Despite the fact that these children are too young to consent to any sexual activity, and the fact that federal law defines them as victims of human trafficking, they are not contemplated as victims. Instead, too often these children, many of them girls between the ages of 12 and 16, are criminalized for prostitution offenses when they are, in fact, victims of crime.

Since the launch of the **No Such Thing** Campaign and the spread of its message, the number of children arrested on prostitution charges has **dropped by 65 percent**.¹ However, our work is far from over as hundreds of children continue to be arrested on prostitution charges and even more are funneled into the legal system for other offenses directly related to their exploitation.²

How We Are Named is How We are Treated

The **No Such Thing** Campaign seeks to eradicate the very notion of “child prostitute” in language and in law. The term “child prostitute” trivializes the egregious abuse experienced by the most vulnerable members of our communities—our marginalized girls. We owe it to trafficked and exploited children to make clear that the victimization and abuse they suffer is no different or more tolerable than other forms of child sexual abuse. And we owe it to these children to hold accountable those who have purchased and raped them.

We Need Your Voice as We Come Together to Take a Stand

The Campaign has four primary goals:

- To end the use of the term “child prostitute” and variations of the phrase in the public square and in the media’s coverage of child sex trafficking issues;
- To encourage stakeholders to pass policies ending the criminalization of child sex trafficking survivors;
- To urge for the treatment of trafficked and exploited youth as victims of crime entitled to all of the services and protections available to other victims of child abuse, both in and out of the courtroom; and
- To promote deterrence and accountability for child sex buyers through prevention strategies, awareness raising, and application of laws that criminalize sex with minors.

¹ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *OJJDP Statistical Briefing Book*. (October 2018)

² E.g., from 2014-2018 in LA County, California, over 500 detained youth disclosed sexual exploitation while at the same time arrests of youth on prostitution charges decreased from 37 to zero. [New Model for Serving Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth in Detention Facilities Unveiled](#). (March 2018)