DOMESTIC CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING AND BLACK GIRLS

**What is Domestic Child Sex Trafficking?**
Domestic Child Sex Trafficking (DCST) occurs any time a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident under the age of 18 exchanges sex for anything of value (e.g., food, shelter, money, etc.).

**What Makes a Youth Vulnerable to Trafficking?**
The following factors make youth vulnerable to sex trafficking and exploitation.

- A history of sexual and/or physical abuse
- Community or family instability and dislocation
- Child welfare involvement, especially out-of-home foster care placement
- Being a runaway or homeless youth
- Disconnection from the education system and being off-track for achievement
- Poverty

**Black Girls are Disproportionately At-risk**
Black girls are more likely to experience the risk factors listed above. In addition, studies report that Black girls become trafficked at younger ages than their racial counterparts. They are more likely to experience poverty, and consequently more likely to be disconnected from schools and other community supports. Also, younger Black Girls have an increased risk of experiencing abuse due to the fact that children are most likely to experience physical and sexual abuse at young ages and Black girls witness and experience multiple forms of violence at higher rates than their white peers.

**A Significant Number of DCST Survivors are Black Girls**
According to the FBI, Black children comprise 53% of all juvenile prostitution arrests—more than any other racial group. In a two-year review of all suspected human trafficking incidents across the country, 40% of sex trafficking victims were Black. In Los Angeles County, 92% of girls in the juvenile justice system identified as trafficking victims were Black, 62% of those children were from the child welfare system, and 84% were from poor communities in the southeastern part of LA County. In Alameda County, 66% of child sex trafficking survivors identified as Black girls.

Even in communities where a small percentage of the population is Black, Black girls are disproportionately trafficked. For example, in King County, Washington, 84% of child sex trafficking victims are female and 52% are Black, though Black children and adults together only comprise 7% of the general population. In Multnomah County, Oregon, approximately 95% of child sex trafficking victims are female and 27% of child sex trafficking victims are Black, though Black people comprise less than 6% of the population. In Louisiana, Black girls account for nearly 49% of child sex trafficking victims, though Black girls comprise approximately 19% of Louisiana’s youth population.

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1. As defined in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, DCST is the “recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act” where the victim is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident under the age of 18. 22 U.S.C. §§ 7102(9)-(10). A commercial sex act is defined as “any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person.” § 7102(4).


Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States 2017*, Tables 43B.


