

What pushes and pulls youth into the sex trade?

➤ Money

- * often without documentation or identification
- * without job experience or education requirements
- * often without a permit for being under 18
- * without waiting for a check
- * in an amount that you could never earn at a legal job

➤ Survival

- * a place to sleep, food to eat, clothes, medical care, hormones for transgender youth, hygiene products/ability to shower
- * safety/protection from the streets, part of being in a gang or in an area controlled by a gang
- * looking out for yourself or children, siblings, friends

➤ Pimped out by family member or guardian

- * can start out very young and last well into the teens
- * as individuals and as part of a network of abusers
- * in exchange for drugs or money

➤ Recruited by a pimp outside your family

- * deception/lying
- * romantic/relationship
- * helping you out, helping them out
- * physical force

➤ Encouraged or drawn in by a friend or family member involved

- * sister brings home lots of cash from exotic dancing
- * friend recommends it to help, not hurt

➤ Searching for affection, attention, love, acceptance, community, family

- * emotional needs really met
- * emotional needs seeming to be met

➤ Community and family messages to youth that it's a good idea to make money off your body

- * reward beauty, sexuality, commodification of people

➤ Once involved, difficult to leave

- * lack of options
- * isolation from people not somehow involved in the sex trade
- * drug use, connection to community, "the life"
- * stigma, criminal record, lack of understanding