

# Fact Sheet

about teen girls and young women in the sex trade  
by girls of the Young Women's Empowerment Project

1. You are not alone – girls everywhere do what they need to do to survive.
2. Girls get involved in the sex trade for a lot of reasons. It can be as simple as needing a place to stay or more complicated like being forced by someone you know.
3. We all deserve respect.
4. Lots of studies talk about how many girls are involved but it's hard to say because so few girls are asked about it. We know it's a lot of girls.
5. What's the sex trade? – that includes all the ways that girls get money from sex or sexual stuff like exotic dancing, phone sex, sex for survival needs like a place to sleep , escorting, being in adult videos or internet sites, and a lot more.
6. You have the right to say no.
7. You have the right to healthy, accurate information about sex, drugs, and your body.
8. We need more jobs for girls and young women that pay better so we can support ourselves, more safe and affordable housing so we have places to live, and more nonjudgmental support and options.
9. Ask us about harm reduction ideas so you can be safer while involved in trading sex for money.
10. Don't let what you do define who you are – you are creative, intelligent, beautiful and worth something

This fact sheet was developed by girls in Girls in Charge – a leadership development group of the Young Women's Empowerment Project (YWEP). YWEP is all about harm reduction, peer education and social justice for girls and young women impacted by the sex trade and street economies. Girls are leaders in our project and are paid for their work. Call us for more info – 773-728-0127.

**If you are currently involved in trading sex for money or survival needs –**

**Here are some helpful harm reduction ideas from girls who've been in the sex trade.**

Safety 1<sup>st</sup>, get the money 2<sup>nd</sup>, then have sex

1. Wear shoes you can run in
2. Work with a buddy
3. Tell someone where you are going, have a safety signal with friends so if you don't come back - they know what to do
4. Have someone write down information like license plate numbers or addresses, or pretend someone is doing that in front of the guy.
5. Drink lots of water - pee a lot – before and after sex, it helps prevent infections
6. Trust your instincts
7. Use condoms as much as you can
8. Take care of yourself first
9. Find someone you can trust to talk with
10. Go to a clinic if you are in pain or if you think something is wrong.