



## **Helpful tips the Reproductive Justice Movement can use to support Girls, Women and Transgender people of color involved in the Sex Trade & Sex Work**

1. We are not ONLY “victims” or ONLY “empowered”- the reality of the sex trade is complicated and our lives don’t fit into a box. Don’t ignore our reality by assuming we are one or the other (we might be both or neither ☺- let us define how we view our lives.
2. Don’t ask us to tell you how or why we were involved- our stories belong to us and we will share when we are ready.
3. Trust, listen and don’t judge young people- even young people under 18. Many of us have been surviving on our own for years and know what we need. Ask us what we think and be ok with hearing something different that you might expect.
4. Instead of supporting government organizations, or organizations that focus on “saving” or “rescuing” us- support an organization that is led by and for girls and young women of color with life experience in the sex trade or sex work. For a list of resources see [Different Avenues](#).
5. Avoid using the word “prostitution” this is a legal word that is very stigmatizing and only describes a specific legal act. Our lives and experiences cannot be reduced to a criminalizing label. Instead ask what words someone prefers to use, or use terms like the sex trade which is inclusive of many kinds of experiences.
6. Be wary of the terms “trafficking” language in legislation, funding and popular media. The definition of trafficking has recently changed to mean any trade of sex in exchange for money or resources. This has led to lots of confusion, media madness and increased criminalization for young people and adults involved in the sex trade.
7. Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer girls and women are involved in the sex trade too. We need access and information to condoms, pregnancy prevention, abortion and health care that are free of judgment and stigma.
8. Avoid engaging in or creating opportunities for debate about “choice” vs. “force or coercion”- when these debates happen many of us are silenced. This is an important conversation that deserves a full discussion where everyone can be heard. It’s best to have small groups using popular education questions like “Why does the sex trade exist?” or “How are people involved in the sex trade?”
9. Make sure that the voices of those of us with current and former life experiences are centered in conversations that are about these issues. Especially if decisions are being made or policies are being decided. We are our best leaders!
10. Economic Justice is essential- fight for quality education, jobs, housing, and employment protection for youth, transgender people and women as a part of reproductive justice!
11. Transgender people deserve access to hormones and quality health care- this must be part of our vision for reproductive justice.