

RESTORING THE SOUL: BUILDING AND SUPPORTING BLACK RESILIENCY AFTER TRAUMA

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Kristylove Foundation Inc.
A Listening Ear to a Silent HEART



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- Co-Chair, Southern Indiana Human Trafficking Coalition
- B.A. from Hanover College in International Studies/Gender Studies
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PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES

- Discuss the impact human trafficking has from the perspective of a black survivor
- Discuss the impact trafficking has on the black community as a whole
- Explore a clinical approach to addressing black trauma and resiliency
- What role do men of color play in supporting survivors?
- Community power and responsibility to black trauma victims and survivors
- Next steps and moving forward

MY SECRET GARDEN

- "When a woman's soul is being reduced to the lowest level of humanity where your life has been restricted from you. You are being controlled and forced by a power greater than yourself."
-Angela Renfro

KRISTY LOVE FOUNDATION

PROVIDING A LISTENING EAR TO A SILENT HEART

- Concept: Survivor led, survivor founded
- Louisville, KY and Southern Indiana
- Services provided
- Feed the Community
- Kristy Love Clothes Closet
- [Kristy Love Foundation Interview](#)



PARTNERSHIPS



FORCES THAT INFLUENCE SEX TRAFFICKING

• Human trafficking is maintained within a context of intersecting forms of oppression. Cultural oppression, including racism and ethnic discrimination, creates additional risk for human trafficking and generates unique challenges for prevention and intervention.

BEGINNING

- This intersectional oppression is fueled by the persistence of myths about minority teen sexuality, which in turn encourages risky sexual behavior. Moreover, today's anti-trafficking movement has failed to understand and address the racial contours of domestic sex trafficking in the United States and even perpetuates the racial myths that undermine the proper identification of minority youth as sex trafficking victims.
- Kids of color are stereotyped as sexually aggressive, deviant, and predisposed toward risky sexual behavior such as prostitution. Society stereotypes some/white minors—Black kids in particular—as dysfunctional misfits whose inherently sexually promiscuous nature undermines the moral standards of the mainstream society.
- According to research, teens of color allegedly are more sexually promiscuous than their white counterparts. One study, for example, found that 45.7% of all teenage girls between 15 and 19 years old had experienced sexual intercourse, while the rate was 61.2% for teenage black girls. Black teens are also alleged to have had more sexual partners.

BEGINNING CONT'D.

- The same pop culture that immortalizes pimps as folkloric heroes also superficially glamorizes (but actually denigrates) girls who sell their bodies for pimps. The Kerbel stereotype of the slavery era is resurrected in the lyrics and persona of black female rap artists and other cultural images.
- Many of the top selling rap songs portray young women—especially black young women—as glamorous prostitutes who seem empowered by their sexuality, but in actuality lack autonomy over their bodies and sexual images. Further, while girls of all ethnicities are influenced by the media's encouragement of teen sexual activity, minority teens in particular perceive that the media disproportionately portrays them in a sexually stereotyped manner—that is, as lewd and sexually aggressive.
- Through listening to these negative strands of rap music, female minors are often seduced, manipulated, or exploited into joining a lifestyle of pimping and prostitution. Girls are particularly vulnerable to having their sexuality shaped by music videos of gangsta rap, a sub-genre that tends to idolize pimp culture. Some grow up to believe that a heightened sexual persona is a central part of their sexual identity as young black girls. These images in turn can have a negative impact on minority youth and sexual behavior.

• In the black community, human trafficking barely registers on the issues radar screen. Instead, matters like reducing violence in black communities, education, mass incarceration, and employment (which are also serious concerns), get most of the attention.

KEY FACTS

- 62% of human trafficking victims are African American
- 52% of all juvenile prostitution arrests are African American
- 40% of victims of human trafficking are African American, but significantly larger in major metropolitan areas
- "Black youths are three times more likely to be victims of reported child abuse or neglect, three times more likely to be victims of robbery and five times more likely to be victims of homicide."

WHY?

- Demand for African American's for sexual exploitation is higher than that of other races and the penalties associated with trafficking African Americans are less severe
- Because African American men abduct and traffic the highest percentage of America's human trafficking victims, the traffickers have more connections to African American victims and operate more comfortably in low-income AA communities where many victims live

WHY CONT'D.

- From a study done with the Urban Institute, traffickers believed that trafficking white women would make them more money, but trafficking black women would land them less jail time if caught.
- The traffickers are more likely selling the services of their victims to affluent and highly regarded caucasian men — which as a result advantaged caucasian offenders are more relatable and more credible to jurors than a young, poor, less educated victim.
- *Instead of protection, counseling, and training; they are given jail time and the penalties of having a juvenile record*

EXAMPLE

- Cyntoia Brown
 - AA girl who was convicted of murder for killing her captor in 2004. At 16 years she was prostituted by a pimp and later sold to a 43 year old Caucasian male. In fear of her life, she shot and killer her solicitor.
 - Documentary made called Me Facing Life: Cyntoia's Story

YOUR ROLE

- Mental health professionals have opportunities to intervene and provide care for trafficked people.



SUPPORT

- Provide information (support, referrals etc.)
- Be respectful of privacy and confidentiality
- Let survivors make their own decisions
- Remind the survivor you care
- TRUST the survivor
- Recognize the difference between what you want and what the survivor wants
- Know your limitations
- *Offer a choice regarding the gender of their mental health professional and interpreter when needed*



SUPPORT CONT'D.

- Evidence-based interventions
 - TF-CBT
 - EMDR (eye movement desensitization and re-processing)
 - (NET) narrative exposure therapy
 - — works really well with AA survivors as African Americans are known as "story tellers" ... so when they are ready to start, allow them to tell their story



THE ROLE OF BLACK MEN

- Kenneth takes over, here put: What role do men of color play in supporting survivors

IMPORTANCE OF THE BLACK MALE VOICE

- How important is it for men who are involved in the movement to be TIC

LEAD THE CONVERSATION

- How to effectively encourage men to step up and lead in the community around conversations on black resiliency.
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BUILDING SUPPORTIVE ORGANIZATIONS

- Train staff on cultural competency
- Conduct a cultural self-assessment
- Create an inclusive policy and procedure
- Top-down approach
- Hire people that look like us
- Consult and partner with black organizations





WHY COLLABORATE ?

- Education is key
- More resources for clients
- Being held accountable is crucial
- It's simple: You are supporting black led organizations
- What are other reasons we should collaborate?



NEXT STEPS

- Begin your research
- Contact those organizations that are survivor led, black led, or provide culturally competent service
- Review your organization with an open mind
- Have conversations that are difficult
- Listen and learn from black survivors



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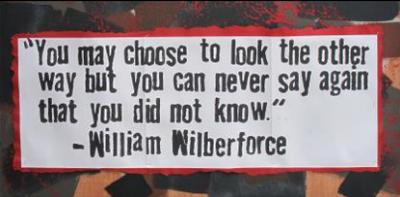
FINAL THOUGHTS: SURVIVOR PERSPECTIVE



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Kristy Love Foundation: <http://thekristylovefoundation.org>
- Indiana Trafficking Victims Assistance Program: <http://www.indysb.org/itvap>
- Indiana Coalition to End Sexual Assault: <https://indianacesa.org>

QUESTIONS?



**"You may choose to look the other way but you can never say again that you did not know."
- William Wilberforce**
