

# Girls Educational & Mentoring Services Screening Party Fact Sheet

## Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)

The commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) comprises of sexual abuse by adults and payment in cash or kind to the child or a third person or persons and is a fundamental violation of children's rights.

Commercial sexual exploitation is a contemporary form of slavery of children and consists of practices that are demeaning, degrading and many times life-threatening to children. The child is treated as a commercial and sexual object.

CSEC is expressed through multiple forms of prostitution and pornography as well as the sale and trafficking of children for sexual purposes.

### CSEC Quick Facts

- 2,200 children are estimated to be victimized by commercial sexual exploitation each year in New York City alone (OCFS Prevalence Study 2007).
- 325,000 are estimated to be at risk for commercial sexual exploitation annually in the United States (Estes and Wiener 2001).
- A 2001 University of Pennsylvania study states "Child commercial sexual exploitation is the most hidden form of child abuse in the United States and North America today" (Estes and Wiener 2001).
- The majority of victimized youth have run away from home, or were running away from a foster care home, juvenile detention center or group home (Estes and Wiener 2001).
- 70-90% of commercially sexually exploited children have a history of child sexual abuse (Murphy 1993).
- 1.6 million children run away from home each year in the United States (NISMART).

## Girls Educational and Mentoring Services (GEMS)

GEMS, was founded in 1999 by Rachel Lloyd, a young woman who had been sexually exploited as a teenager. Ms. Lloyd came to the U.S in 1997 as a missionary to work with adult women exiting prostitution. While working with adult women in correctional facilities and on the streets, Ms. Lloyd observed the overwhelming need for services for young women at risk for sexual exploitation who were being ignored by traditional social service agencies. It became clear that specialized services were essential for this disenfranchised population.

From a one-woman kitchen table project, GEMS has grown to a nationally recognized and acclaimed organization and now is one of the largest providers of services to commercially sexually exploited and domestically trafficked youth in the US. GEMS' vision is to end the commercial exploitation and trafficking of children. GEMS advocates at the local, state and national level to promote policies that support young women who have been commercially sexually exploited and domestically trafficked.

## Gem (jem): 1) a precious stone 2) an object of great beauty

### Make a Difference

1. **Recognize** examples of pimp culture glorified in the media, music or movies, and acknowledge that this kind of societal acceptance adds to the problem by not buying those products, albums or movie tickets.
2. **Change** your language around the issue and encourage those around you to do the same. Instead of saying "teen or child prostitute", recognize them as legitimate victims by using the term, "commercially sexually exploited children and youth" (CSEC).
3. **Share** "The Making of a Girl", a short video on YouTube of a hypothetical pre-teen girl as she faces a life of sexual exploitation, with your family and friends.
4. **Volunteer** to host an event for GEMS or a screening for Very Young Girls. To learn more about how you can host an event or screening go online to:  
<http://councilofdaughters.ning.com/events>
5. **Donate** \$10 to GEMS so we can continue to advocate for New York's young women and girls both in the legislature and in their everyday lives.