

SEX TRAFFICKING IN CHICAGO

Created by:

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ESSAY

The topic I chose to explore was sex trafficking in Chicago. I initially chose this topic because it quickly grabbed my attention, making me want to find out more about it. Sex trafficking is defined as the practice of illegally transporting someone from one place to another with the purpose of using them for sexual exploitation.

It is important to be educated about this topic because it greatly affects people who are underage. Each year in Chicago, 16,000 women fall prey to trafficking, with most of these women being underage, and Black. These women are taken advantage of and manipulated and many survivors end up with criminal records due to the different types of coercion they experience by their captors.

What is worse is that there are very few programs in Chicago that aid in rehabilitating women that have dealt with this trauma. One program that provides housing for these women is hosted by The Salvation Army, called Ann's House, which is a program that gives sex trafficking victims a safe place to stay. In Ann's House they are taught to cook, wash clothes, and do the things that will help them take care of themselves. Programs like these try to give women affected by this issue a second chance at life.

So, what is the legal side of all of this? Right now, the way to prevent soliciting is a fine of \$1,000, which, in some cases, has proven to be effective, reducing repeat offenses. Still though, these women face the same struggles on a daily basis. This is where I believe the Equal Rights Amendment would be very important.

The ERA Coalition is an organization that believes in equal opportunities, and equality, for everyone. The ERA Coalition emphasizes the fact that women are not specifically included in the Constitution and they are doing what they can to pass the Equal Right Amendment.

ESSAY

If equal rights were guaranteed for women, women would be better protected from acts like sex trafficking because the culture of oppression would shift. I believe that if women, like me, were specifically included in the Constitution we would be provided more protections, and rights, across the board. Also, since sex trafficking mostly affects women, the ratification of the ERA will give women further legal acknowledgement.

After conducting interviews with people my age, as well as older, I learned that others have very similar thoughts about this issue. I posed the following inquiries: "What does sex trafficking mean to you?" and "Have you ever witnessed sex trafficking?" One person's response to the first question stood out the most. They said, "Sex trafficking is basically when people use women to get money by forcing them to use their bodies illegally." While the people I interviewed did not have any first-hand experiences, everyone was eager to learn more, and I did my best to share what I have learned while researching this project.

In conclusion, I think that this project was a great opportunity for me, and the people I know, to grow and learn more about Chicago's sex trafficking crisis, as well as ERA. I think both are very important to be knowledgeable about. I will continue to stay updated on both topics because I am interested in seeing how both progress legally, socially, and culturally. Maybe there will be more housing in Chicago for people who have suffered from sex trafficking, or maybe the ERA will be ratified. I am looking forward to seeing what happens because I think a part of achieving equality is ending all forms of sex trafficking, and thus furthering the rights of women.

MORE RESOURCES

<https://www.equalrightsamendment.org/>

<https://www.globalgirlmediachi.org/>

<https://fundforwomensequality.org/>

This project was made in collaboration with Global Girl Media-Chicago, The Fund for Women's Equality, and the ERA Coalition.

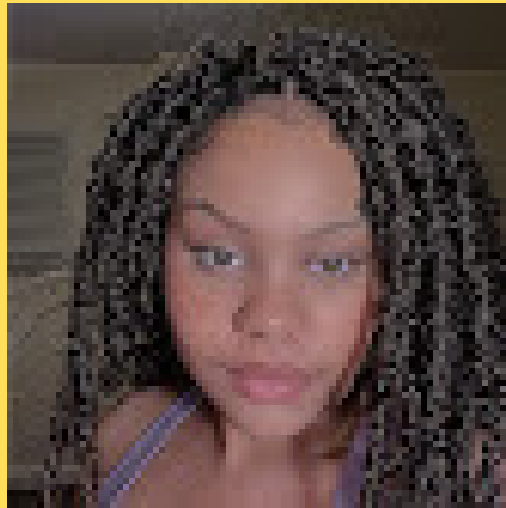
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



I am Mya and I am from Chicago, Illinois. I am 17-years-old and I enjoy reading and singing during my free time. I attend Gwendolyn Brooks College Prep on the South Side of Chicago. I'm the proud daughter of a CPS Principal and I am planning on becoming one, myself, one day.