

Prostitution Terminology²

Prostitution: What is it? It is the use of a woman's [or girl's or boy's] body for sex by a man; he pays money, he does what he wants. The minute you move away from what it really is, you move away from prostitution into the world of ideas ... Prostitution is not an idea. It is the mouth, the vagina, the rectum, penetrated usually by a penis, sometimes hands, sometimes objects, by one man and then another and then another and then another and then another. That's what it is.

A prostituted woman (cited in Dworkin, 1997)

Child/Juvenile Prostitution

The act of engaging in sexual intercourse or performing other sex acts with a child in exchange for money or other considerations (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, affection, etc.).

Child Sexual Abuse

Sexual activity involving persons younger than 18 years of age. Most often perpetrated by an adult, such activities include rape and molestation, pornography, and exposure of children to the sexual acts of others.

Child Sexual Assault

Any sexual act directed against a person younger than 18 years of age, forcibly and/or against that person's will; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity

Child Sexual Exploitation

A practice by which a person, usually an adult, achieves sexual gratification, financial gain or advancement through the abuse or exploitation of a child's sexuality by abrogating that child's human right to dignity, equality, autonomy, and physical and mental well-being, i.e., trafficking, prostitution, prostitution tourism, mail-order-bride trade, pornography, stripping, battering, incest, rape and sexual harassment.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

The sexual exploitation of children entirely, or at least primarily, for financial or other economic reasons. The economic exchanges may be either monetary or non-monetary (i.e., for food, shelter, drugs) but, in every case, involve maximum benefits to the exploiter and an abrogation of the basic rights, dignity, autonomy, physical and mental well-being of the child.

"John"

Slang term for a man who is a prostitute's customer.

Madam

A woman who runs or manages a brothel; she also may "recruit" persons into prostitution work.

² Adapted from Estes and Weiner (2001), Schaffner (1999), Whitbeck and Hoyt (1999), and Flowers (2001).

Pimp

An individual—usually a male—who promotes and/or profits from the sale and/or abuse of another person's body or sexuality for sexual purposes, or the production and/or sale of images made of that person, e.g., trafficker, pornographer, brothel madam, third party manager, talent director, mail-order bride agent, prostitution tour agent.

Runaway

A minor who leaves home or place of legal residence without the permission of parents or legal guardians for at least a 24-hour period of time.

Survival Sex

The exchange of sex for money or other considerations (e.g., food, shelter, drugs, etc.) by persons not perceiving themselves as engaging in prostitution but rather as doing "whatever is necessary" to ensure their survival. (NOTE: Researchers typically consider "survival sex" and "child prostitution" to be the same phenomenon and therefore use the terms interchangeably.)

Throwaway

A child who has been kicked out or locked out of home and told not to return. Also refers to a runaway child who is not actively sought by parent(s) after the child has run away.

Trick

Slang term for a client who hires a prostitute for an individual engagement.