

Children and the Sex Trade

This document is an extract from a research paper entitled "The Situation of the Children of Chiang Rai" published in 2000 by Sompop Jantraka, Director of the Development and Education Program for Daughters and Communities. Translated and edited by Tim Wraight.

The problem in Thailand today:

- In addition to the local demand for prostitutes, foreign men come to Thailand to purchase these services.
- Children as young as 10 are being forced into prostitution.
- Hotel owners and pimps work together to support prostitution in hotels.
- Children are sold by their parents.
- There is an abundant supply of prostitutes catering for the tourism market. This supply comes from both within Thailand and from neighboring countries. Approximately 30% of these prostitutes are less than 18 years old.

Thus:

- Children are being sexually abused.
- Children are being forced into prostitution.
- Children are denied an education.
- There is a large flourishing network of child prostitution supporters.
- Tourists use child prostitutes without fear of legal reprisal.

Numbers of Women and Children Working in Mae Sai Brothels (by ethnic background)

Age group	Number of girls working in the sex trade	Divided by ethnic background									
		Shan	Burmese	Moosor	Akha	Chinese	Laotian	Kachin	Thai	Palong	Thai Leu
14	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	12	6	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	0
16	25	18	2	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	0
17	36	24	6	3	0	0	1	0	2	0	0
18	35	25	5	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
19	43	26	9	1	3	0	0	0	4	0	0
20	33	18	7	3	3	0	0	0	2	0	0
21	10	7	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
22	11	9	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	15	5	0	1	3	3	0	0	3	0	0
24	6	1	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	10	7	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
26	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
27	5	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
28	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
29	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
31	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	258	164	40	13	15	3	2	1	18	1	1
% of total	100	63.57	15.50	5.04	5.81	1.16	0.78	0.39	6.98	0.39	0.39