

Project HELP: Human Exploitation



- The US public goes through about 50 billion plastic water bottles a year; most of those plastic containers are not recycled.
- Current statistics show that more than one-third of the visitors to all adult (porn) Web sites are women and that more than 9 million women visit adult Web sites each month.
- The trafficking of women, children, and men into the United States for use in the sex industry, sweatshop labor, domestic servitude, and

migrant agricultural labor has been estimated to involve 14,500 to 17,500 persons annually.

Uncomfortable facts are hard to absorb. So, what does one do about situations like these? How do Christians respond so that life can be better? How can we stop the cycle or decrease the demand? God has always given His people improbable jobs. This challenge is no different.

Six Issues:

- Exploitation of natural resources for personal gain
- Bullying, cyberbullying, queen bee bullying
- Human trafficking—labor
- Human trafficking—sex
- Media's exploitation of children and families
- Pornography and sexting

Human exploitation is the unethical, selfish use of human beings for the satisfaction of personal desires and/or profitable advantage.



ISSUE: Exploitation of Natural Resources for Personal Gain

“The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein” (Psalm 24:1 KJV). “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:29 NIV).

God’s first commandment to His new creation (man and woman) was to take care of the earth and to care for and respect each other. He made us interdependent—human to human and human to natural resources.

Exploitation of natural resources is the misuse and abuse of the abundant creation which God has entrusted to us. It is also the disrespect of neighbors—those present, those to come, or citizens in another country. As we disregard the earth, we may be creating an unequal burden on those who are most vulnerable.

Who are the victims? We are all affected by this issue and are exploiters in some way. Unfortunately, individuals or groups who are often most affected are those who are already poor and lack resources to respond.



ISSUE: Bullying, Cyberbullying, Queen Bee Bullying

“Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies” (Psalm 34:13 NIV).

Bullying is the act of treating others in an abusive manner through force or coercion or with threatening language or behavior. Bullying another person dishonors and disrespects them.

Cyberbullying. This kind of bullying victimizes an individual through the Internet, interactive technologies, or a mobile phone causing willful and repeated harm.

Queen bees are simply mean-spirited girls who bully other girls. Their tactics may be physical, verbal, or emotional, and their intent is to hurt others.

Who are the victims? Many are children in grade school, middle school, preschool, and churches. Others can be found in the workplace and among families.



ISSUE: Media’s Exploitation of Children and Families

“Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil” (1 Thess. 5:21–22 NIV).

Visual, verbal, or tactile messages are communicated through a variety of media. The most common formats include TV, videos, video games, computers, music, movies, animation, magazines, CDs, DVDs, radio, phone, etc. In this age of positive and negative image bombardment all of us must make a decision about what is good and what is not.

Media tools can be used for good. However, they are often used to send negative information or images that affect children and families. That same media also opens the door for children, teens, young adults, and adults to be enlisted for inappropriate roles that are billed as entertainment.

Who are the victims? You are. Your family is. Your neighbors are. Your church is. Our nation is. A positive Christian influence in the world is victimized by this issue.

WMU and Human Exploitation:

Project HELPSSM is a ministry initiative of Woman’s Missionary Union®. It was created because WMU leaders recognized the need to speak to critical issues where Christians could give a positive response. WMU has addressed hunger, AIDS, child advocacy, cultural diversity, violence, literacy, restorative justice, and poverty. Poverty is a good lead into the next challenge.

This next challenge—human exploitation—is broad enough to encompass a variety of subissues. One issue may feed off of another thus creating a web that is hard to break.



“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’”

(Matt. 22:37–39 NIV).



Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is the commerce and trade of people, legally or illegally, for modern-day slavery, forced labor, and servitude.

ISSUE: Labor Trafficking

“Doomed is the one who builds his house by injustice and enlarges it by dishonesty; who make his people work for nothing and does not pay their wages” (Jer. 22:13 GNT).

In order to entrap women, men, and children into labor or services, traffickers will use force, fraud, or coercion. They recruit, harbor, transport, or purchase their victims.

Where are victims found? Look around in these places: agriculture, landscaping, factories, hotels, janitorial services, construction, day labor, restaurants, nail salons, domestic servitude, illegal drugs trade, fishing industries, tourism, and traveling carnivals.

ISSUE: Sex Trafficking

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy” (Prov. 31:8–9 NIV).

Sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, provision, or obtaining of a person in order that a commercial sex act can be induced, often by force, fraud, or coercion. (Source: U.S. Department of State)

Who are the victims? A victim can be a runaway or throwaway child, a coerced or kidnapped teen, an international or a US citizen trafficked within our borders. Victims are caught up in prostitution, pornography, exotic dancing, strip clubs, live sex shows, modeling studios, massage parlors, escort services, and brothels.

ISSUE: Pornography and Sexting

“Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?” (1 Cor. 6:18–19 NIV).

Pornography is like fog. It settles in and blocks our view. Pornography is sexually explicit material designed specifically to cause arousal and today it permeates our surroundings.

Pornography (hard-core porn, soft porn, child pornography) can be found here: books, magazines, Internet, photos, film, video, video games, TV, sound recordings, drawings, advertisements, animation, mobile phones, sex-oriented businesses, and more. Exposure at any level can lead to the next level and the next. Soon addiction sets in and the consumption won't stop.

What is sexting and why the connection to pornography? Sexting is the use of a cell phone for sending sexual words and pictures, especially among teens. It has some characteristics of pornography.

Who are the victims? Anyone of any age in your community, your schools, your neighborhood, colleges and universities, and even your church—all are exposed to pornography at some level.

Set1Free Campaign from WorldCrafts

The Set1Free campaign empowers WorldCraftsSM buyers and aids artisans by highlighting those groups working to free women involved in human trafficking and sexual exploitation. The income from their crafts provides the women with a living wage and a way to find release from oppressive situations.

Beginning of Life Foundation

Sex trafficking is common in the former Soviet Union nations. The Beginning of Life Foundation in Moldova focuses on prevention of falling into the sex trade as well as helping victims begin again. The foundation provides spiritual, psychological, and social support to the women who are part of this ministry.

Steps to Addressing the Issues

Pray, educate, motivate, and activate.

Step 1: Pray for awareness, understanding, and guidance.

Step 2: Educate yourself and your church. Present the issues in a variety of ways.

Step 3: Focus on one issue at a time.

Step 4: Ask for a response, then take action.

Step 5: Connect with local groups already involved in an issue.

Step 6: Be an advocate for victims and victims' families.

Pray About Your Involvement

Recognize the need for a strong spiritual foundation before you begin for you will confront a spiritual battle.

- Ask God for guidance. Depend on Him when you encounter roadblocks, deflections, discouragement, negative attitudes, and waning strength.
- Pray that God will keep you focused.
- Keep a positive and Christlike response toward those who expect something different from passionate Christians.
- Pray that your congregation will be open and receptive to responding.
- Pray for victims, victims' families, those in authority, and the perpetrators.

Do You Know Anyone Affected by an Issue?

More than likely you do know someone affected by an issue. Unfortunately, someone in your church may be a victim or even a perpetrator. By paying attention to your surroundings and by keeping up with the news in your community you may realize that, yes, you do know of someone.

Awareness and Action

- Study Scripture related to each issue.
- Gather information about the issues from news, newspapers, magazines, Internet, etc.
- Find out what laws exist in your state for an issue. These provide the

necessary law enforcement support. If there is no law or it seems weak, take steps for change.

- Plan a prayerwalk in targeted areas of your community or city.
- Hold a Set1Free WorldCrafts party.
- Find appropriate ways to communicate the National Human Trafficking Hotline number (1-888-3737-888).
- Know where your children go and what they are doing on the computer.
- Open your church building for discussion groups on any of the issues. Invite an expert on the issue to speak.
- Express your concerns (in a caring, Christlike way) to companies and businesses who provide inappropriate programming, publish negative materials, or present negative images.
- Work with church youth and children's leaders to provide education about respecting others and ways to keep children and students spiritually, morally, and physically safe.

Resources for Project HELP: Human Exploitation

Release and Restore: Addressing Human Exploitation Through the Church

This CD is the primary resource for conducting Project HELPSM: Human Exploitation. Content helps individuals, groups, and churches address the issue. Included are issue descriptions, Bible studies, prayer and worship plans, mission action plans, graphics, training resources, and more. 8446250-1286-0 • W113104 Available January 2011

Trafficked! An Experience in Choices and Consequences

An interactive simulation experience. Students explore human trafficking through the eyes of young women in Moldova. This CD includes instructions, layout, graphic elements, debriefing tips, and resource bibliography. 8446250-1249-5 • W116103 Available May 2011

Not in My Town: Exposing and Ending Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery

Dillon Burroughs and Charles Powell Exploring leads in cities nationwide, investigators Charles Powell and Dillon Burroughs unearthed a dark subculture of human trafficking and slavery in their own neighborhoods. Their unforgettable look into the secret world of America's modern slave trade led to a global undercover rescue operation. 978-1-59669-301-2 • N114136 Available Spring 2011

Additional information is available in WMU magazines, plan books, Associational LeaderTool, the WMU Year Book, and on WMU's Web site www.wmu.com/ProjectHELP.

To order any product call, WMU Customer Service at 1-800-968-7301, or online at www.wmystore.com.

WMU's Vision Statement: Woman's Missionary Union challenges Christian believers to understand and be radically involved in the mission of God.