

Stop Trafficking !

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter



Awareness

Advocacy

Action

December 2017 Vol. 15 No. 12

This issue highlights the vulnerability of children, including in travel and tourism industries.



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Travel & Tourism & ... Trafficking

Amsterdam

Caribbean

Dominican Republic

Top Sex Tourism Sites:

Dominican Republic, Thailand, Cambodia, the Netherlands, Spain, Brazil, and the Philippines.
(https://www.huffingtonpost.com/oyster/the-most-popular-countrie_b_8067520.html)



Awareness

2 Exploitation of Children by Tourists

In July 2016 Ashley Feasley, Advocacy Director at the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC), wrote of the growing reality of the 'sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism' (SECTT). International tourism rose from 527 million in 1995 to 1,135 million globally in 2014. With the simultaneous growth of Internet use, opportunities for SECTT have exploded. Child sex offenders make use of facilities offered by tour companies, hotels, resorts, restaurants, roadside rest areas and airlines to exploit children.

Although Southeast Asia remains the primary site for SECTT, research indicates that this phenomenon is occurring in other parts of the world, including in Europe and the Americas, in part due to the low cost of travel and proximity. Canada and the United States have long been considered source countries for offenders, but they are also, increasingly, destinations. Neither country maintains reliable data on this issue. In North America SECTT is perpetrated as international SECTT (where North American child sex offenders travel to another country and there engage in illicit sexual activity with a child) and domestic SECTT.

'International Megan's Law to Prevent Child Exploitation and Other Sexual Crimes Through Advanced Notification of Traveling Sex Offenders' (known as Megan's Law HR 515, now Public Law No: 114-119 as of Feb. 8, 2016), requires that convicted sex offenders report foreign travel to the U.S. government and requires the U.S. government to notify destination countries of the individual's arrival. (<http://www.humantraffickingsearch.net/wp1/2016/7/29/the-growth-of-modern-child-sex-tourism>)

Busting Sex Tourists in the Dominican Republic

Matt, a former CIA agent and U.S. diplomat and now vice-president of foreign missions and intelligence at Operation Underground Railroad, a U.S.-based organization that rescues children trapped in sex trafficking rings worldwide, posed with an undercover team as tourists looking to buy sex with children in the Dominican Republic's northern beach town of Sosua.

The island's beaches attract around five million visitors a year, making the Dominican Republic the most visited destination in the Caribbean and the \$5 billion tourism sector its largest foreign exchange earner. But it is also a sex tourism hotspot, driven by demand from foreign tourists, Dominican expatriates visiting the island, and local people. Forty percent of the country's 10 million people live in poverty. Girls living in poverty with little hope and few options before them become the perfect kind of victim. Adult prostitution is legal in the Dominican Republic but, if forced, someone can easily become a victim of sex trafficking.

Matt, using a first name to preserve anonymity, explained, "At first the traffickers working on the beach offer you women but eventually, if you talk long enough with them, they will offer you young girls. We imply to the traffickers we only want the really young ones."

Matt and the undercover team told the traffickers they were organizing a private party for their boss, a wealthy

Dominican Republic *cont. pg. 3*

Busting Suspected Child Sex Predators in Los Angeles

Conducted by the Los Angeles Regional Internet Crimes against Children task force, Operation Broken Heart III targeted offenders wanted for the sexual exploitation of children, child prostitution, sex tourism and possessing and distributing child pornography. Operation Broken Heart, funded by the U.S. Justice Dept., gives law enforcement agencies and task forces an opportunity to combine resources and investigative tools to identify child sexual predators. During that raid law enforcement made arrests of 238 persons suspected of child sex trafficking. Among those arrested during sweeps in April and May 2016 were entertainers, community leaders, white-collar professionals and clergy members'

Children and teens are spending more time on the Internet and social media sites, where child predators often look for victims. Parents and kids need to have frank conversations about how to stay safe in cyberspace. "The incidence of child sexual exploitation has reached staggering proportions," said a special agent from the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security.

In May 2016 Michael Quinn, 33, traveled from Australia to Los Angeles to complete a deal to buy a 6-year-old boy for sex. Undercover agents met Quinn on a social media networking site, where he had communicated that he wanted to "meet up with a dad who shares his young

Los Angeles *cont. pg. 3*



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Dominican Republic

cont. from pg. 2

American businessman who was flying in for the event. The price for a girl for the six-hour sex party was \$500. “They talked to us as if they were selling a product. All the traffickers see is the money. We were told the girls would do anything we wanted, however we wanted.”

Using hidden cameras, 15 men and one woman posing as partygoers, including an ex-U.S. Navy SEAL and three undercover armed Dominican police, mingled with the 29 women and girls the traffickers had brought. After money had changed hands and a signal was given, police stormed in and arrested seven alleged traffickers - five men and two women - along with Matt and the undercover team to preserve their fake identities. The suspects were placed in pre-trial detention for a year awaiting trial, and if convicted, they could face up to 15 years in prison for trafficking. Of the 29 victims rescued, 14 were aged between 14 and 17. The rescuers hope such sting operations will deter other sex traffickers and tourists. “We want to make Americans, Canadians and western European tourists think twice about what they’re doing and put doubt in their minds before they have sex with children,” said Matt.

An IJM investigation covering 412 establishments across 20 towns in the Dominican Republic found that one in every 10 women being prostituted in bars, nightclubs and brothels was under 18, while one in every four prostituted in outdoor places - streets, beaches and parks - was a teenager, most of them aged between 15 and 17.

Slowly things are changing in the

Dominican Republic. The attorney general created a special office on human trafficking in 2013, new laws have been passed imposing tougher punishments on traffickers, and a trafficking national hotline has been set up. At least 39 visitors to the Dominican Republic have been denied entry by immigration officials since late 2013 because they have child sex tourism and other sex crime convictions, according to the U.S. State Department’s 2014 Trafficking Persons (TIP) report.

The hotel industry has also taken action, signing a code of conduct to prevent adults and children being sexually exploited and training staff to spot potential sex crimes. At hotel receptions in beach resort areas it is common to see signs saying: “It is prohibited to take minors into hotel rooms” and “Trafficking and sexual exploitation are crimes punishable by law.”

Despite these efforts, the number of convictions in the Dominican Republic remains low, as it does worldwide. (<http://www.newsweek.com/busting-sex-tourists-dominican-republic-318735>)

Los Angeles *cont. from pg. 2*

one,” according to prosecutors. Quinn explained to the undercover agent he was hoping to meet ‘other pervs’ in the U.S. and ultimately agreed to pay a human trafficker \$250 to provide him with a young boy with whom he could engage in illicit sex, according to the U.S. attorney’s office in Los Angeles.

Quinn went to a hotel in Los Angeles, where he planned to meet and party with three other child predators and engage in sex with boys. Instead, undercover agents were waiting inside the hotel room. After Quinn handed money to an agent, posing as a sex trafficker, law enforcement authorities entered the room and arrested him.

Weeks later in Riverside, authorities arrested a 26-year-old Buddhist monk, at the Wat Lao Buddhist Monastery in Riverside. They had investigated him for a year after receiving information that he was possibly distributing child

pornography, according to the Riverside County district attorney’s office. When federal investigators searched the monastery, they found at least one digital device containing child pornography in his belongings, prosecutors said. Prosecutors alleged he also distributed child pornography to another person through a social media site.

(<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-operation-broken-heart-arrests-20160621-snap-story.html>)

Sex Tourism in the Philippines

Fr. Shay Cullen, head of the Preda Foundation in the Philippines, believes the world needs to declare war on child sex crime to save thousands of children, victimized by rape and commercial sexual exploitation. A hundred thousand minors are estimated to be trafficked every year into sex dens in the Philippines. There they are raped, abused and addicted to drugs, making them weak, docile and submissive. That is what sex abusers want and pay for—a weak vulnerable child over whom they have total power.

The main customers of the sex trade are tourists from abroad. They come to Southeast Asia and especially to the Philippines because they know that while some sex tourists are arrested and some are set up for exploitation by the corrupt police, they believe they can easily get away with sexual exploitation of a child by paying bribes.

There is also strong evidence that the incidence of cyber-sex crimes or online sexual exploitation of children, where very young Filipino children are coerced to perform sex acts for live internet broadcast to paying foreigners, is increasing. A recent study conducted by UNICEF entitled *Perils and Possibilities: Growing Up Online* reveals that globally there are around 75,000 child predators online at any time and many of them are trying to contact children in the Philippines. In 2015, the Philippines Office of Cybercrime received 12,374 cyber tips from the U.S.-based National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.



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Sexploitation: Florida-Georgia Football Weekend

The Florida-Georgia football rivalry is an October tradition that dates back to 1933. Going on around it for just as many years is a different kind of battle, one in which young women are losing in an unfair game.

After handling countless federal cases for 20 years, the Florida Attorney General's Human Trafficking Unit stated that during the game weekend is the prime time for sex trafficking. "We see a huge uptick in human trafficking during major sporting events. The victims are behind closed doors or are a paid date at a football game and you and I would never know." Girls are sold online, through escort services, or right next door. "We have a lot of human trafficking in Jacksonville

through our hotels, but it is in gated neighborhoods and happening all over this community."

That's why local trafficking organizations, like Save Our Adolescents

from Prostitution (S.O.A.P.), host events twice a year, ahead of The Players Championship (TPC) and the Florida-Georgia weekend, educating groups on sex trafficking and taking action at local hotels working with hotels to train employees on what to look for, like men guarding doors or someone reserving an entire block of rooms.

The woman, who started S.O.A.P. is a survivor. When she was only 15, she realized that the worst nights she had she was alone in the hotel, the only thing in the hotel room was a bar of soap. Hotels will always at least have a bar of soap. So, for that reason, S.O.A.P. teams bring bags of soap to hotels packaged with the national human trafficking hotline number to place in rooms in case girls can get a chance to save the soap and call the number for help.

Florida Highway Patrol says they are focused on catching DUIs and stopping violence during the weekend so too often the trafficking remains unmet.

(<http://www.firstcoastnews.com/news/investigations/selling-girls/sex-trafficking-prevalent-during-florida-georgia-weekend/486948405>)



Minors Exploited

The October 2017 sting, 'Operation Cross Country XI,' focused on underage victims of prostitution. Fifty-five FBI field offices and partners in Canada, the UK, Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines took part. Half the arrests occurred in Georgia.

(https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/fbi-rescues-children-human-trafficking_us_59e85f96e4b00905bdaec9d8)

Busts in Polk County Florida

In October 2017 a weeklong undercover sting, entitled 'Operation No Tricks, No Treats,' targeting human trafficking and online prostitution in Polk County, FL ended with 277 arrests (photo) that included doctors, pharmacists, a lawyer, two men who traveled to have sex with minors, two sex offenders, and current or former

law enforcement officers.

Undercover detectives posted fake ads or profiles online posing as prostitutes or as someone who solicits prostitutes. Other detectives responded to profiles and ads posted by prostitutes.

Investigators say 215 suspects drove to Polk County from locations throughout Florida. Some were in the state visiting from Alabama, California, Delaware, Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

(<http://wavy.com/2017/10/18/doctors-and-cops-among-277-arrested-in-human-trafficking-online-prostitution-sting-in-florida/>)



Advocacy

Leaders Unite to Stop Global Sexual Exploitation of Children Through Travel and Tourism

A combination of weak child protection systems, cheap international travel, and growing access to the internet has expanded demand and heightened the risk of children being sexually exploited in the travel and tourism industries. At the same time, grinding poverty and lack of education – combined with the continued neglect of child protection systems – have fueled the supply of children. In addition, a chronic lack of robust data is allowing offenders to commit their crimes in the shadows and with impunity, while the capacity to respond internationally and nationally is being outpaced. Those were conclusions reached at a tourism industry conference in Madrid.

Hosted by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the meeting of international experts and officials was supported by the government of The Netherlands, UNICEF, the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children, ECPAT International and the High Level Task Force for the Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism. The UNWTO asked its General Assembly to approve a new international convention on sustainable tourism with the inclusion of provisions for the protection of children. (Source: <http://www.eturboneews.com/159723/leaders-unite-stop-global-sexual-exploitation-children-travel-tourism>)

“Sexual exploitation in travel and tourism has a child’s face. No country is untouched by this phenomenon and no child is immune. In this International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, let us place children’s right to protection from violence and exploitation at the heart of our actions.”

Najat Maalla M’jid,
Chair of the Taskforce.

“It is everybody’s business to end the business of children being exploited and abused. All of us — from families and governments... to hotel workers, taxi drivers and airline staff...to tour operators and telecommunications companies... to police forces...to UN agencies and NGOs — we all have a responsibility to do all we can to end this monstrous violation of children’s rights...children’s safety...and children’s futures.”

Anthony Lake,
UNICEF Executive Director.

“Anonymity protects traveling sex offenders, and INTERPOL is working with countries to deprive known sex offenders’ of their anonymity, through mechanisms such as an international warning system sharing information across borders about convicted sex offenders, as well as an international vetting system for job applicants applying to working with children.”

Peter van Dalen, Interpol’s Organized and Emerging Crime Directorate.

“Child protection has to be placed at the core of tourism development strategies.”

Maud de Boer Buquicchio,
Special Rapporteur on the sale of children and sexual exploitation of children.

Catalina Alemany-Sorrell, head of Corporate Social Responsibility for RIU hotels spoke of the commitment of the family-owned international hotel chain, *“Large companies in the tourism and travel industry have a greater responsibility to the communities where we operate, precisely because of our capacity for influence and transformation. For this reason, we need our commitments to send signals to society that this problem will not be tolerated and that above all, we will fight for a world where children are free from abuse.”*

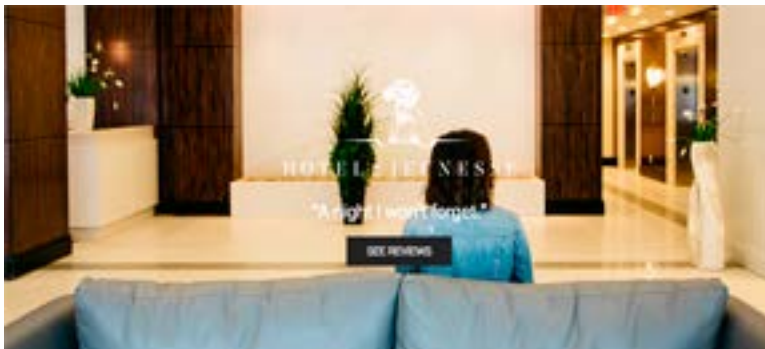
RUI Hotels is a member of “The Code,” a travel industry initiative to stop sexual exploitation of children. Some of the largest players in travel are CODE members.





Advocacy

Hotel de Jeunesse, Canada



People searching for hotel accommodation in Toronto last summer might have come across a banner ad for *Hotel de Jeunesse*

(<https://www.hoteldejeunesse.com/>). At first glance, if you click through, it looks like a perfectly ordinary hotel website. But look a little closer and you might get a shock -- for instance, the dining menu includes OxyContin and marijuana, and Room Service can include an order for a threesome or bondage.

The site is actually a PSA by *Crime Stoppers Toronto* to warn people of the dangers of human trafficking. Created by agency *Tribal Worldwide*, and promoted on Instagram and Facebook as well as via banner ads, the website for the fake hotel discreetly places the scenes and signs of human trafficking within the patterns of hotel room fabrics, including the wallpaper, bedding and drapes.

According to *Crime Stoppers*, human trafficking, which is not typically perceived to be a problem in Canada, is one of growing concern across the country. More than 90% of the victims of sex trafficking within Canada come from Canada itself.

"We wanted to reach people right before they entered into a known human trafficking hotspot so they could help us fight this problem. By creating a presence on travel-related platforms and in those micro-moments, we are able to unpack what signs to look for," said Marketa Krivy, executive creative director, *Tribal Worldwide Toronto*, in a statement. *"The signs of human trafficking hide in plain sight and can be easily dismissed if you don't know what to look for. But once you do, it becomes much harder to ignore."*

The campaign also includes out-of-home placements across the greater Toronto area including transit shelter ads, elevator advertising, digital screens, and advertising at gas stations and convenience stores.

(<http://creativity-online.com/work/toronto-crime-stoppers-hotel-de-jeunesse/52375>)

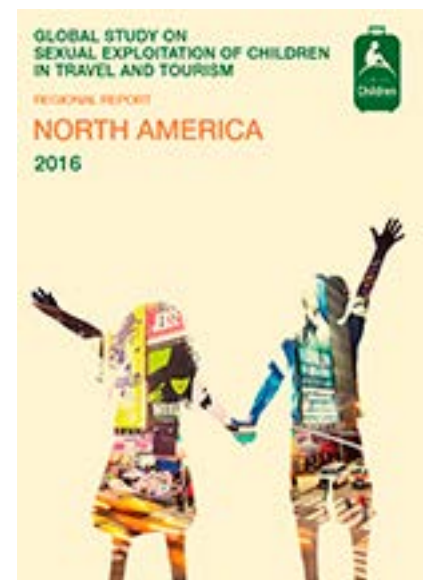
Six of the largest 10 hotel chains in the world partner with ECPAT-USA:

- Accor Hotels
- Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group
- Choice Hotels
- Hilton Worldwide
- Marriott International
- Wyndham Hotel Group

Efforts to Prevent Human Trafficking in the Hotel Industry

In 2016 ECPAT-USA prepared the *Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism: Regional Report North America*. This report provided an updated picture of the environment in which the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism (SECTT) persists in the U.S. and proposed a set of recommendations to improve government, nongovernment and private sector responses to prevent and combat this crime. As such, it promotes the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals related to children's right to live free from sexual exploitation.

(<https://www.ecpatusa.org/ecpat-reports/>)



#Doesyourhotelknow

An ECPAT-USA public awareness campaign alerts hotels and travelers alike to educate themselves about the signs of sex trafficking and take action, using videos such as this 1.5 minute one.

(<https://www.ecpatusa.org/responsible-traveler>)

See other ECPAT videos at:

<https://www.ecpatusa.org/media>



Advocacy

Travel Social Good (TSG)

TSG is a global community of change-makers, passionate about transforming the travel industry into a force for good. The alliance wants to solve issues of poverty and inequality through business and leisure travel, using the UN Global Millennium Development Goals for inspiration to explore ways in which tourism can positively impact our world. They aim to do so through three main initiatives:

The first approach is the annual Travel Summit, which addresses the current state of the travel industry and collectively seek concrete solutions.

The travel industry represents 10% of global Gross Domestic Product and employs 1 in 11 persons around the world. Yet, on average, only \$5 out of every \$100 spent by travelers remains in the countries visited.

The *2017 Travel+SocialGood Global Summit* drew together 150 innovators in the travel industry to collectively tackle a single issue facing the travel industry. up with Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), Sustainable Travel International (STI), Center for Responsible Travel (CREST) and Tourism Cares to present the 2017 TSG Summit. Our goal is to develop concrete and actionable solutions to push the industry forward.

A tangible result from a previous Summit was the *Ritz-Carlton's Impact Experiences*, a program which has been launched in locations worldwide.

Examples of Impact Experiences organized by Ritz-Carlton hotels in local communities include a heritage farming project on an organic farm in Arizona; supporting critical coastal trail and rain forest restoration in Kapalua, Hawaii; protecting the natural wetland environment in Donau-Auen National Park near Vienna, Austria; planting the endangered native species of trees in Dubai; collaborating with The Battery Conservancy in New York to help beautify the 25-acre public park; and building bird nests for migrating rare bird species at the remarkable wetland

that is the Futian Mangrove Natural Reserve Area in Shenzhen, China.

Impact Experiences also offer on-property activities that may be incorporated to a conference agenda during lunch breaks, receptions and coffee breaks. These include:

- Partnering with the hotel's culinary team to prepare the ingredients for a regionally adapted dish for donation to a local hunger relief organization.
- Assembling school supplies and art materials in backpacks for donation to students whose academic success is threatened by poverty.
- Collaborating in teams to assemble emergency preparedness kits to be shipped to a disaster relief facility or community organization.

To see the recorded livestream of the TSG Summit, including The Ritz-Carlton's Impact Experiences announcement, visit: <http://www.travelsocialgood.org/2016-summit-info/may-13-livestream/>

The second approach are the TSG Hubs, which are local chapters of our organization. Through education, advocacy and community-building around sustainable tourism, Hubs build networks of travel professionals passionate about making a positive impact on our world.

Impact Travel Hubs (local chapters) make up our global network of travel professionals. Hubs build communities and host events focused on education and advocacy around sustainable tourism. Through the Hubs, our vision is to transform cities into capitals of sustainable travel.

The third approach is the Media Network, an alliance of content creators passionate about sustainable tourism, the Impact Travel Media Network works to collectively amplify the reach of stories on travel and social good. Our vision is to unite storytellers who are shedding light on both the positive and negative impacts of tourism.

The *TSG Media Network* is made up of freelance journalists, bloggers and social media influencers – one of the only of its kind that creates a platform for all types of influencers to collaborate. The Global team works with brands to identify core audience demographics and then craft campaigns, matching our members with sponsored opportunities or press trips that are relevant to their engaged audiences. TSG also produces in-house content. In turn, Media Network members work together to cross-promote content and amplify online reach.

For more information, go to: <http://www.travelsocialgood.org/get-involved/>

Martin Buber Award

On November 17, 2017 in Kerkrade, the Netherlands **Fr. Shay Cullen**, an Irish Columban missionary, received the 2017 Martin Buber Plaque Award in recognition of his internationally acclaimed work on human rights undertaken through the *Preda Foundation* which he established in the Philippines in 1974. Learn more of Preda at: <http://www.preda.org>



Action

**Toll-Free 24/7 Hotline
National Human Trafficking
Resource Center
1.888.3737.888**

No Vacancy: How You Can Fight Child Sex Trafficking on Your Next Trip

In recent years buying fair trade coffee and clothing has become mainstream but something ECPAT-USA does not hear often is that people travel responsibly. The concept of responsible travel is similar to that of purchasing fair trade goods— you choose to spend your money ethically and with respect for human rights. Choosing a hotel is an opportunity to use your purchasing power for good— to help stop child sex trafficking.

While child sex trafficking may seem like a crime that happens in far away places, it happens more than you think throughout the United States. With the use of online classified ads, child sex trafficking is not only on the streets, but also behind the closed doors of local hotel rooms. Pimps rent rooms in hotels, then go online to create an ad in adult sexual services pages, and finally sell victims right out of the hotel or have victims meet purchasers at nearby hotels. While the hospitality industry is not responsible for trafficking, it does have an important role to play in helping to stop it.

Hotel rooms are a preferred venue for the sale of children because traffickers believe they are anonymous at hotels, giving them a sense that there is little risk in their behavior. For this reason, hotel associates are more likely to witness trafficking than the average person. In response, ECPAT asks hotels to train their associates on the indicators of trafficking and how to respond to it. Many hotels are doing just that. In October 2017 ECPAT-USA released a report, *No Vacancy for Child Sex Traffickers*, which shows the extent and impact of its training efforts. The Report shows that half of all hotels in the U.S. have had training for their

associates. It also lists which hotels in the U.S. have signed ECPAT's Tourism Child-Protection Code of Conduct, a set of guidelines travel companies, including hotels, agree to take to combat child sex trafficking; one of those steps is providing training.

One hotel brand leading the way on training is Marriott. Marriott requires associates at all the properties in their portfolio to take human rights training that covers trafficking, which is a step beyond some hotels that just recommend training. Accor Hotels, another ECPAT-USA partner, has taken an innovative approach on this issue by tying bonuses for their managers to training. Accor managers must have held anti-trafficking training at their properties to get their bonuses. Numerous other hotels are implementing their own initiatives. On your next trip, stay at one of these hotels. By choosing to stay at a hotel that has employees trained to address the commercial sexual exploitation of children, you can feel good knowing that you are supporting businesses taking a stand, and real steps, against child sex trafficking. Or, if your favorite hotel has not signed The Code, use the ECPAT letter to ask them to sign. Every child has a right to grow up free from sexual exploitation and trafficking, and you can help by spending your travel dollars at a hotel working on this issue.

To learn more about traveling responsibly, read the full *'No Vacancy' Report* (<https://www.ecpatusa.org/blog/2017/10/2/no-vacancy-how-you-can-fight-child-sex-trafficking-on-your-next-trip>) and visit ECPAT's responsible traveler page. (<https://www.ecpatusa.org/responsible-traveler>)

Informative Web Sites:

(Each contains information related to human trafficking)

The Tourism Sector & the UN Sustainable Development Goals:

Responsible Tourism 2016 - A Global Commitment

http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/turismo_responsable_omt_acc.pdf

'Offenders on the Move' 2016

<http://globalstudysect.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Executive-Summary-for-Global-Study-English.pdf>

Ecpat: 'Responsible Traveler'

<https://www.ecpatusa.org/responsible-traveler>



#Doesyourhotelknow

The 90 second NY Emmy nominated public awareness campaign by ECPAT-USA alerts hotels and travelers alike to educate themselves about the signs of sex trafficking, with a call to action. (<https://www.ecpatusa.org/media>)

Stop Trafficking! is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among religious congregations, their friends and collaborating organizations, working to eliminate all forms of trafficking of human beings.

Use the following web address to access back issues of *Stop Trafficking!* <http://www.stopenslavement.org/archives.htm>

To contribute information, or make requests to be on the mailing list, please contact: jeansds2010@yahoo.com

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