

cognitive ability to fully understand and consent to such acts (APSAC, 2013). In addition, with sex trafficking victims, there is often an element of force or coercion when victims are recruited through kidnapping/physical coercion, false promises such as a paying job, or through the guise of legitimate organizations such as modeling or tourist agencies (e.g., Hodge & Lietz, 2007; Jones, Engstrom, Hilliard, & Diaz, 2007).

"Guesstimates" of the problem of sex trafficking and child prostitution, such as "millions of victims of trafficking," are commonly referenced in international publications attempting to draw attention to a largely undocumented crime (Goodey, 2008). One source, for example, claimed that 9 million girls and 1 million boys are prostituted globally each year (Willis & Levy, 2002). According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2012), an estimated 945,000 minors were victims of forced sexual exploitation worldwide. Within the United States, estimates of child prostitution have ranged from 1,400 to 326,000 children (Sedlak, Finkelhor, Hammer, & Schultz, 2002; Shared Hope International, 2009). The covert nature of sex trafficking and child prostitution, as well as the lack of a uniform reporting system, contributes to the difficulty in determining the extent of the problem. In the United States, new legislation is attempting to improve documentation of CSEC. The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015, for example, requires each state to report child victims of CSEC and will be added to NCANDS data over the next several years (U.S. DHHS, 2016). Although there is reason to question the validity of estimates, what is not debatable is the fact that the purchase of youth for sexual purposes does occur and is a serious violation of their human rights (Miller-Perrin & Wurtele, 2017a).

Miller-Perrin and Wurtele (2017a) described a number of characteristics of child prostitutes and sex trafficking victims that have been documented repeatedly in the literature. This literature suggests that children who are vulnerable in some way are the ones typically targeted and recruited. Children who have drug and alcohol problems, physical and/or intellectual difficulties, and troubled family lives (e.g., parental substance abuse) are much more likely to become involved in CSEC (Clawson, Dutch, Solomon, & Grace, 2009; Cobbina & Oselin, 2011; IOM & NRC, 2013). Being female and pubescent (ages 15–19 years) are also risk factors (Clawson et al., 2009; UNICEF, 2014). Another common vulnerability is the presence of violence in the home, including child physical and sexual abuse and neglect, which often result in youth running away to escape the abusive home (Wilson & Widom, 2010). Social and economic factors are also likely to contribute to sex trafficking, such as poverty and few employment or educational opportunities (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2009; U.S. Department of State, 2005).

In response to the problem of CSEC, guidelines and standards have been set in various U.S. and international laws, treaties, and protocols to protect victims, prosecute offenders, provide services to victims, and prevent future CSEC (e.g., United Nations, 2000; U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act [TVPA], 2000). For example, in an effort both to protect victims and prosecute offenders, 116 countries have enacted legislation prohibiting all forms of human trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2010). With regard to providing services for victims, the **Administration for Children and Families** has a website with resources to Rescue and Restore Victims of Human Trafficking (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/anti-trafficking>). Ideally, victim services should include temporary and safe shelter, physical and mental health services, public benefits, legal and immigration assistance, substance abuse treatment, support groups, employment and training services,

(Continued)