

Local Strategy Development for Primary Prevention

Global Alliance Child Trafficking Prevention Task Force

Jill D. McLeigh, PhD

Congressional Briefing

November 2, 2017; 1:30 p.m.

Washington, DC

*The **Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice** (formerly the American Orthopsychiatric Association) is a compassionate community of individuals and organizations dedicated to informing policy, practice, and research concerning behavioral health, social justice, and well-being.*



**GLOBAL
ALLIANCE**

for Behavioral Health
and Social Justice

<http://www.bhjustice.org/>



“Why have we seen so little progress in reducing the prevalence of child trafficking and related forms of exploitation? ... the reality is that most of the work continues to focus on prosecuting perpetrators and, to a lesser extent, on assisting survivors. Few significant efforts have been aimed at prevention.”

Source: Todres, J. (2014). A framework for addressing trafficking of children. *Michigan State International Law Review*, 22, 557-593.



GLOBAL ALLIANCE
for Behavioral Health and Social Justice

Key findings: What we know about child trafficking prevention

- ▶ Lack of consensus about the meaning of “prevention” as it relates to human trafficking.
- ▶ Lack of focus on primary prevention.



Key findings: What we know about child trafficking prevention

- ▶ Awareness raising campaigns and education/skill-building curricula.
 - ▶ Predicated on assumptions that (a) increasing people's awareness of human trafficking will lead to a reduction in risky behavior, and (b) knowledge and skills learned in training workshops will directly translate into effective practical action.
 - ▶ "... the nightmare I don't know is preferable to the nightmare I live every day at home"



Key findings: What we know about child trafficking prevention

- ▶ The responsibility for addressing prevention is often placed on agencies that are already overburdened and that are designed to address the protection of victims, not to focus on primary prevention (e.g., child welfare agencies).



Key findings: What we know about child trafficking prevention

- ▶ Demand often is not addressed, and when it is, the focus is legal remedies.
- ▶ Discussion of preventing individuals from becoming traffickers is missing.



Key findings: Summary

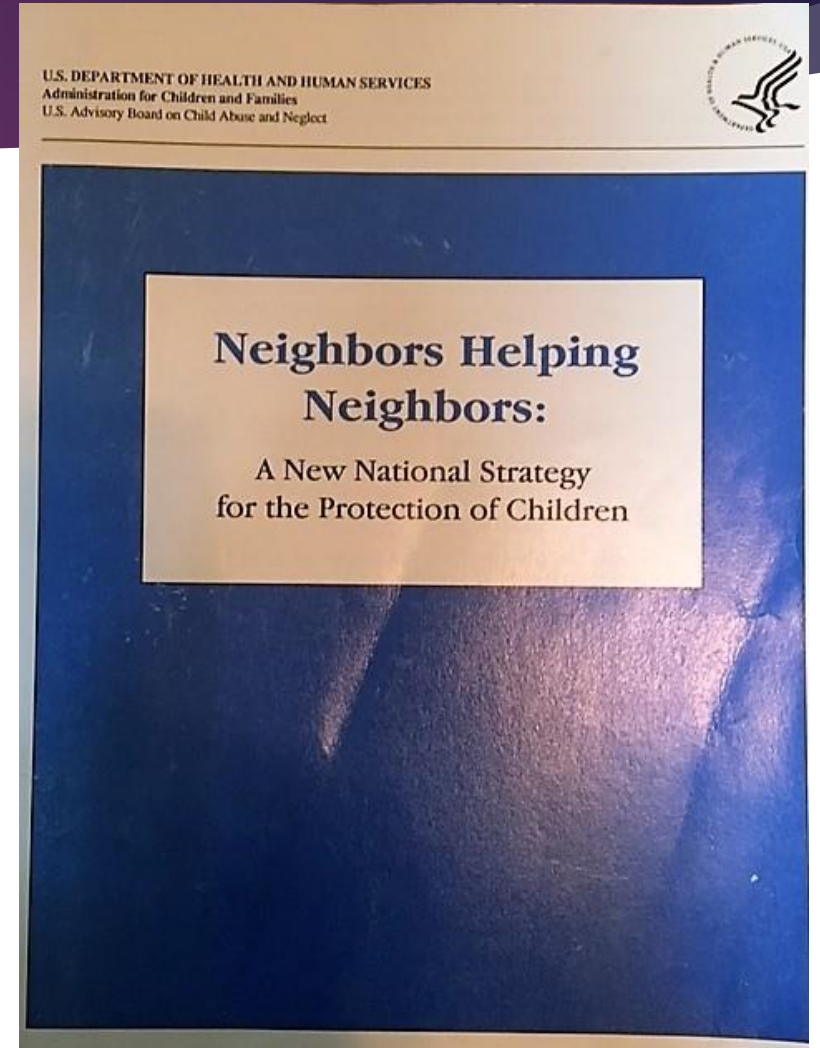
- ▶ A lot has been learned about what makes individuals and groups vulnerable to trafficking, but our prevention – “anti-trafficking” – strategies often do not address the factors that lead to vulnerability to becoming trafficked or becoming traffickers.
- ▶ Relatedly, trafficking is not a single, isolated problem.
- ▶ Need for a community-based strategy (e.g., population-focused; address environmental and social conditions)



Primary Prevention: Lessons from Child Maltreatment

“...attention has shifted ... to creating environments that facilitate a parent’s ability to do the right thing. It is increasingly recognized that environmental forces can overwhelm even well-intended parents, communities can support parents in their role, and public expenditures might be most cost-beneficial if directed toward community strategies.”

(Daro & Dodge, 2009, p. 68)



Themes Identified by the Advisory Board

Community mobilization

- Asset-based
- Changing norms
- Universal
- Increasing sense of competence

Resources “Plus”

- Financial
- Social (relationships)
- Access to services (formal and informal)

Strong Communities



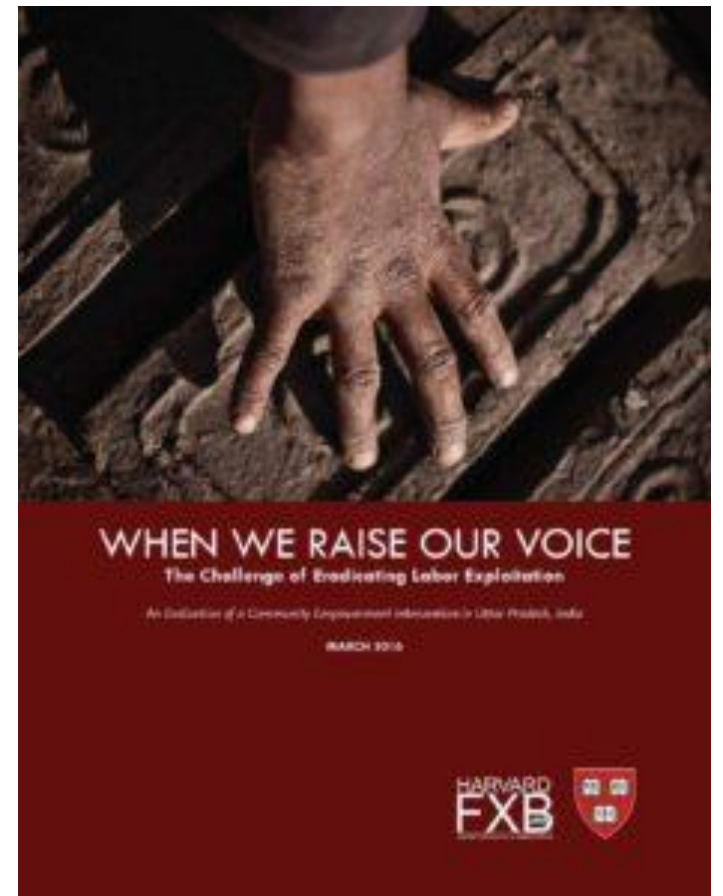
- ▶ In relation to a comparison group, the Strong Communities sample showed significant changes in the expected direction for:
 - ▶ social support and collective efficacy
 - ▶ child safety in the home, observed parenting practices, parental stress and parenting efficacy, self-reported parenting practices,
 - ▶ rates of child maltreatment, and rates of ICD-9-coded child injuries suggesting child maltreatment.



Free the Slaves: Community-based model for fighting slavery

Model

1. Conduct contextual research
2. Increase organizational capacity
3. Foster community resistance and resilience
4. Sustain reduction in slavery



Opportunities for Federal Policy Makers

- ▶ Facilitate community efforts to protect children and to evaluate such efforts.
- ▶ Include community-based primary prevention in grants and other funding mechanisms for efforts related to trafficking.
- ▶ In RFPs, require human trafficking impact statements.
- ▶ Have task forces place greater emphasis on primary prevention.
- ▶ Use the bully pulpit to establish norms regarding what we should be doing as community members to keep our kids/neighbors safe.

