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Issue Human trafficking is the second largest black market crime in the U.S., just after the drug trade. It is also the fastest growing crime. About 80% of trafficking victims are subjected to sexual exploitation, and the average age for teens entering the sex trade is 12-14 years old. While recent legislation changes the way victims are penalized, more can be done to end to human/sex trafficking.

Project Description StandUp is a student-led organization at my school that focuses on putting an end to sex trafficking. We put efforts towards spreading information and educating youth, parents, and those who influence youth. We also raise money to help fund services for victims and organizations that support stopping sex trafficking or helping victims. Last year we donated more than \$1000 to Breaking Free, a Minneapolis-based non-profit social justice organization dedicated to helping women break free from cycles of prostitution/sexploitation through advocacy, housing, direct services and education. We have also work very closely with Gracemarie of Gracemarie's Song, a victim of sex trafficking who created an organization to combat sexual exploitation by raising awareness, educating, devising prevention and assisting victims. We worked with her to develop a script for a "reader's theater" to spread awareness about exploitation, which will be shared with other junior and senior high schools.

Project Outcome As long as sex trafficking is an issue, we will continue to advocate and serve. We hope that by spreading awareness and supporting victims we can eventually put an end to sex trafficking/sexploitation/prostitution. Prostitution should be seen as a modern-day enslaving of women, not a profession.

Request While legislature like the Safe Harbor laws in MN and the SETT bill are bringing us closer to a solution, more can be done. This legislation does great things to assist minors who have become victims of sex trafficking and seeing them as victims instead of delinquents in the eyes of the law, but what about adults that have been victimized? What about the root causes of trafficking?