

INDICATIONS & WARNING TRAFFICKING INTELLIGENCE FUSION CENTER REPORT

A mile a minute....
that is how fast your child can disappear

NATIONAL SEARCH CENTER FOR MISSING & TRAFFICKED CHILDREN

New Legislation Protects Sexually Exploited Children



California and New York are leading the charge in protecting minors involved in sex trafficking. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger of California signed a bill into law that would help young prostitutes. The legislation decriminalizes the actions of minors involved in the sex trade. Instead of punishing them, they would be treated as victims.

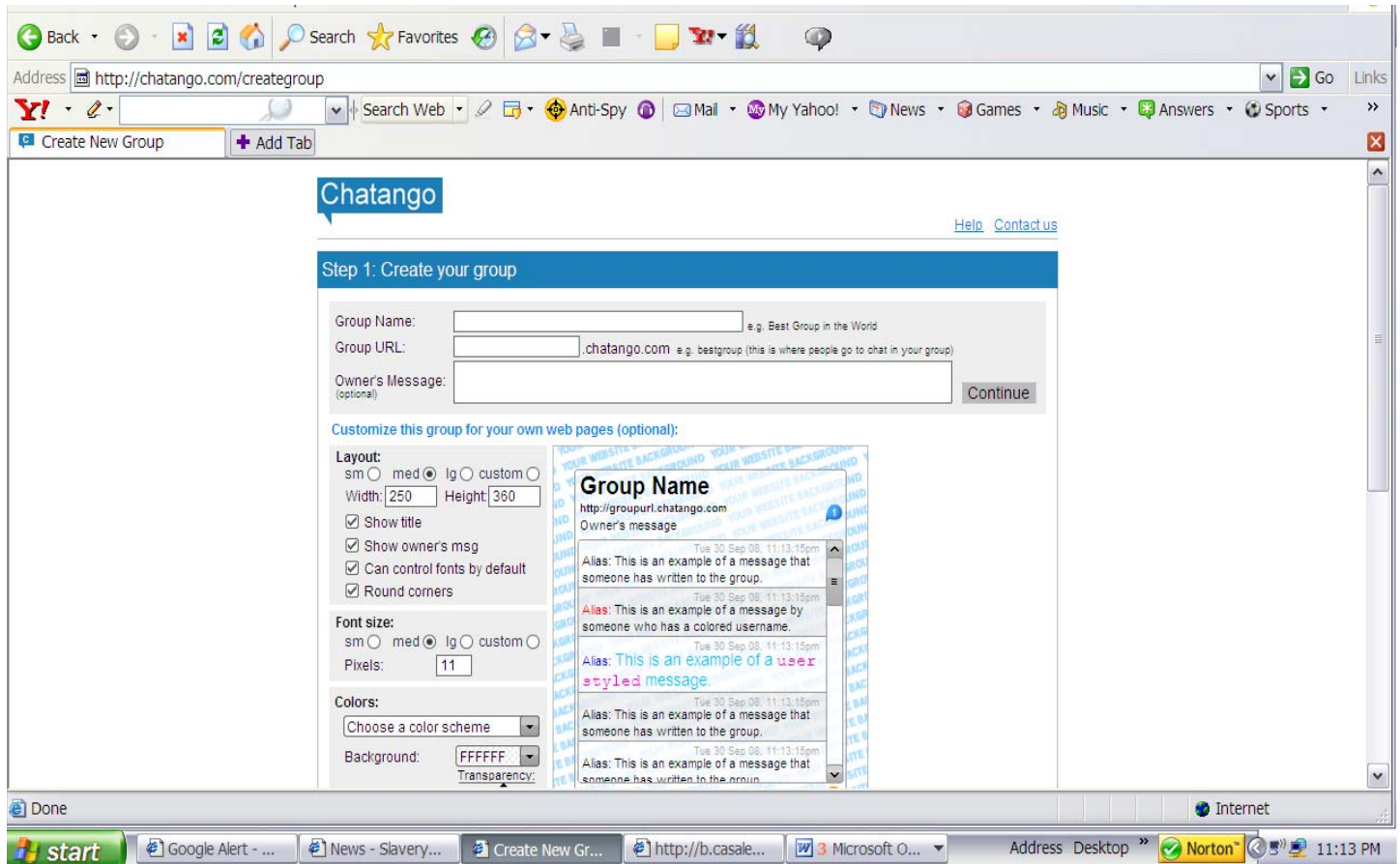
Under the new law, a pilot program would be created in Alameda County that would train law enforcement how to properly treat sexually exploited minors as victims rather than criminals.

San Francisco voters will also have an opportunity to help those in the sex worker industry. Measure "K" on the ballot would allow prostitutes to report crimes like assault or rape without fear of prosecution. It also calls for the full enforcement of laws against assault or rape in cases involving sex workers.

Gov. David A. Paterson of New York has signed into law the "Safe Harbor for Exploited Youth Act" which requires local districts to provide crisis intervention services and community based programming for exploited youth. This bill decriminalizes child prostitution, recognizing these children as victims, not criminals, and provides them with necessary social services.

"As a society we must do everything in our power to prevent sexual exploitation, but when it does occur we must be prepared to assist our youth with appropriate outreach services. For too long we have been disciplining young children who are the victims of brutal sexual exploitation instead of providing them with the necessary services to reintegrate them into society and ensure they receive adequate crisis intervention," said Paterson. "This law establishes a Safe Harbor Act which will ensure that sexually exploited youth receive counseling and emergency services as well as long term housing solutions." ■

The following sources were utilized in the creation of the report:
Legislation - Sources: Fox-Reno and North Country Gazette;
Chatango -Source: KlaasKIDS Search Center; Exploitation of
Children is Growing - Source: FBI; Abducted Children vs.
Runways - Source: WCVB Boston; Organized Sex Trafficking
Ring - Source: Houston Chronicle



CHATANGO.COM

Traffickers and pimps are turning to technology to recruit and advertise girls for prostitution, but they are also using it to communicate with each other.

MySpace and Facebook accounts are readily used by pimps to communicate and coordinate actions but in some regions they are creating "Chatango" sites to facilitate their discussions.

The increasingly popular Chatango.com website offers the ability to create a chat room style format that is being used by pimps to communicate with one another. These chat rooms can be formatted as a website or added to a user's social networking page. ■

The Economy is shrinking but the exploitation of children is growing

FBI Director Robert Mueller says the exploitation of children has become a "growth industry".

Speaking recently at the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center Crimes Against Children Conference, Mueller noted how pervasive these crimes have become. "In just the past decade, we have moved from lone predators with limited reach to global communities of pedophiles on the Internet," he said. "We have moved from back-alley bookstores to criminal enterprises that treat children as merely another commodity for sale in the global marketplace. We have moved from videos in plain brown packages to

(Continued on Next Page)

(Continued from Page 2)

encrypted websites, flash drives, and cell phones capable of storing thousands of images.”

How big is the problem?

Several months ago federal authorities with their state and local counterparts, in 16 cities, conducted a five-day sweep as part of the Innocence Lost program. During the sweep, authorities identified and disrupted several child prostitution rings, resulting in the arrests of 389 people and the recovery of 21 children.

Agents at several of the Bureau’s field offices say this growth is fueled by expanding technologies that extend the reach of child predators. Parents have always had to worry about chat rooms and the Internet. Now, child predators are targeting kids by playing video games through Internet connectivity with devices like the X-Box, pretending to be kids themselves.

Agents explained the Internet is also fueling a rise in child prostitution. Predators and pimps not only use the Internet to advertise girls for sex but are increasingly using websites to recruit young girls as escorts.

The Innocence Lost program features 24 task forces and working groups around the country involving federal, state,

and local law enforcement and U.S. Attorney’s Offices. The Innocence Lost Child Prostitution Database puts more than 17,000 records of children and predators at the fingertips of investigators. According to Mueller, since the program began in 2003, we have— together with our partners— recovered 433 children, convicted 308 criminals, and dismantled 32 criminal organizations. ■

Abducted Children vs. Runaways – either way, they’re Somebody’s Daughter

The often cited statistics of 200,000 to 300,000 children at risk of child exploitation coupled with the alarming number of over 700 children abducted each day in the United States is a quandary to popular thinking. Most people see children involved in child prostitution as destitute runaways. These statistics, along with recent reports, suggest that some of these children are actually abducted into these trafficking rings.

Recently, a New York man was accused of kidnapping a teenager in Massachusetts and bringing

her to New York to work as a prostitute. Michael Smith, 34, was charged with one count of kidnapping for his alleged role in the June 11 incident. Officials said that Boston police officers responded to a 911 call made from a pay phone on Washington Street in Brighton at about 3 a.m. on June 11.

Officers found a visibly shaken and upset victim, then 17, who told them she had just escaped from the vehicle of a man she knew as “Daddy,” for whom she said that she had been working as a prostitute in New York. She told them she had just fled from a vehicle, where she had been confined by him and two of his associates.

The teen was transported to Children’s Hospital, where a rape kit was performed, and she was treated for scratches on her face and arms, a swollen cheek and red finger marks on her neck.

The Assistant District Attorney said the victim worked as a prostitute for Smith and gave him all of the money she earned. Smith allegedly threatened her continuously, and told her that he would kill her if she disobeyed him.

Evidence further suggests that Smith sexually assaulted the teen on multiple occasions,

(Continued on Page 5)

A look inside an organized sex trafficking ring

SIGNS OF HUMAN SLAVERY

The Maria Bonita Cantina in 2005 was designed to conceal the sale and storage of women and girls used as sex slaves.

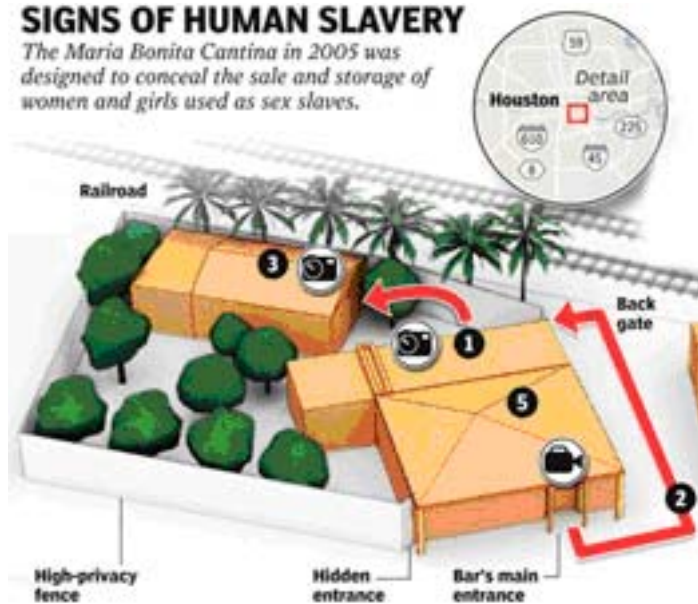


Photo Credit: Houston Chronicle

How the rendezvous were concealed

1. Women and teenaged girls, obeying orders to sell themselves from their captors, left the bar's bathroom via a door hidden behind a mirror.
2. Customers left the bar but reentered its grounds via a guarded gate in a high privacy fence.
3. Both reunited inside a small outbuilding inside the fence perimeter.
4. Another outbuilding doubled as living quarters and overflow meeting spot for six to eight women.
5. When police arrived, the bartender pushed a button causing lights to blink in the outbuildings as a warning.

Gerardo Salazar, who called himself El Gallo – the Rooster, trolled Mexican villages for years in search of women and girls he could

seduce. Once he expressed his love for these girls he would arrange their smuggling across the border, ultimately ending up in Houston. Love and marriage were not his plans, once across the border Salazar would force these women and girls into the seedy underworld of prostitution in Houston cantinas.

Salazar, who had a federal indictment naming him a leader of an international human trafficking ring, could have been arrested three years ago instead he escaped to Mexico. Despite law enforcement efforts, human traffickers and prostitution operators have constructed an organized network of franchise-like cantinas that continue to operate and prosper in the region.

The network that used camouflaged brothels, secret doors and hidden gates came to light after law enforcement rescued a teenager allegedly held captive. One of these cantinas, the Maria Bonita, was a favorite haunt of Salazar's. The lavender-colored bar with its backyard concealed behind a high fence in the 7900 block of industrial Clinton Drive in Houston was repeatedly used for prostitution, underage drinking and human trafficking. Each night, Gerardo Salazar and others ferried victims to cantinas and sold them to customers – pocketing about \$50 for each transaction. During the day, Salazar warehoused the women in a nearby apartment complex.

State alcohol inspectors first noticed something odd at the Maria Bonita Cantina: Women went to the restroom and never came out. An undercover police operation revealed that the women's bathroom mirror doubled as a door that led to a fenced backyard. Meanwhile, clients left the bar and went to the backyard through a guarded gate, then entered an outer

(Continued on Next Page)

(Continued from Page 4)

building to meet with the girls they had paid the bartender for.

At the time, David Salazar, a U.S. citizen held the liquor license for the Maria Bonita, owned the property and controlled its business name.

In 2005, a 16-year-old girl, branded by Gerardo Salazar with a rooster tattoo, was picked up at an apartment by rescue workers who took her to a woman's shelter. But when she was told police would want to question her, she returned to Gerardo Salazar. Court documents show that upon her return Salazar hit her with a belt, slapped her, kicked her in the stomach and forced her to return to prostitution.

Investigators spent the next weeks trying to find her again. A month later she was discovered among other women at a cantina near the Maria Bonita called La Costeñita. This time authorities persuaded her to cooperate. Two months later, authorities raided the apartment complex where the girls were being held.

They first arrested Gerardo Salazar's two nephews and another accomplice. Weeks later, they captured his two sons. But Gerardo Salazar got away.

Despite evidence that his bar was a center for trafficking used by Gerardo Salazar's gang, David Salazar continued to own it until last year. He and his mother also ran another Houston cantina the El Club Guerrero. Court documents show that it was there that David Salazar is accused of selling a 16-year-old sex slave himself.

The girl told detectives she met David Salazar in 2007 when he bumped into her as she was walking home from school, scattering her books. David Salazar paid a coyote to bring her across the border in January 2008. Once she got to the Houston area the girl was locked up in his mother's house and forced to sell herself five to six nights a week in his cantina.

The yard where she was kept was fenced and guarded by pit bulls. House windows were barred, and the storage room where the girl slept was padlocked. She only managed to call for help after a cantina customer slipped her a cell phone and showed her how to dial 911.

Suspected family ties and other possible links between David Salazar, his mother, fugitive Gerardo Salazar and organized crime groups in Mexico remain under investigation. ■

(Continued from Page 3)

Abducted Children vs. Runaways – either way, they're Somebody's Daughter

beating her with his hands and a wooden hanger, police said. The victim was not allowed to leave the motel room and was watched at all times.

The defendant, victim, and the female driver drove to Massachusetts, stopping briefly in Connecticut, where they picked up a second female outside of a hotel and continued driving. When they got off the highway in Brighton and proceeded to stop at a light in Oak Square, the victim escaped from the vehicle and called 911 for help. ■

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WANTED

In August we featured MARIBEL VASQUEZ VALENZUELA wanted for sex trafficking and conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of minors.

We are pleased to announce her capture.



Amparo Altagracia Montas Hernandez, aka Iris, and her son, Eddy Vasquez, are wanted for allegedly harboring illegal aliens in Southwest Florida. Hernandez is alleged to have operated brothels that were staffed by Latin American females who were indebted to human smugglers. Hernandez allegedly paid the debts, and made the females work off debts as prostitutes. Her son allegedly handled day-to-day operations at one of the brothels. Federal warrants have been issued for the arrests of Hernandez and Vasquez. **CONTACT:** If you have any information concerning this case, please contact your local FBI office or the nearest American Embassy or Consulate.

WANTED
SEX TRAFFICKING
OF CHILDREN
GERARDO
SALAZAR

Alias: The Rooster



DESCRIPTION

Date of Birth Used: December 24, 1964
Place of Birth: Mexico
Hair: Black
Eyes: Brown
Sex: Male
Height: 5'4"
Weight: 160 pounds
Race: White (Hispanic)
Nationality: Mexican
NCIC: W657924093
Occupation: Unknown
Scars and Marks: None known
Remarks: Salazar has ties to Houston, TX

CAUTION

Gerardo Salazar is wanted for his alleged involvement in a human trafficking ring. Salazar, better known as "El Gallo," was allegedly the leader of a group of men who provided women and girls for prostitution in Mexico and Houston. Between the early months of 2004 through July 2005, Salazar and other members of his group allegedly recruited and enticed young Mexican females, including two minors, to engage in prostitution. Salazar and his associates would romance the victims and convince them to come to the United States as their girlfriends. While in the United States, Salazar and his traffickers allegedly forced the victims into prostitution through beatings, threats, deception, and other forms of coercion. It was also reported that the victims were raped. Though Salazar remains a fugitive, five of his co-conspirators have plead guilty and are serving jail time. On July 26, 2005, a state arrest warrant was issued for Gerardo Salazar by the 339th District Court, Houston, Texas, for the sexual assault of a child. Additionally, on November 9, 2005, Salazar was charged federally with sex trafficking of children, and a federal arrest warrant was issued by in the United States District Court of Texas.

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