

In Their Own Words

Testimonies of Survivors

"So what's it really like for us?"

"I couldn't do anything to stop it."

"They beat them the hardest."



Rosa, 14 Years old, Trafficked in Florida

"I was smuggled into the United States through Texas to Orlando, Florida. It was then the men told me that my employment would consist of having sex with men for money. I had never had sex before, and I had never imagined selling my body. And so my nightmare began. Because I was a virgin, the men decided to initiate me by raping me again and again, to teach me how to have sex. Over the next three months, I was taken to a different trailer every 15 days. Every night I had to sleep in the same bed in which I had been forced to service customers all day. I couldn't do anything to stop it. I wasn't allowed to go outside without a guard. Many of the bosses had guns. I was constantly afraid. One of the bosses carried me off to a hotel one night, where he raped me. I could do nothing to stop him."

Vi, Trafficked in American Samoa

"We were taken to American Samoa and not the U.S. As soon as we landed our passports were confiscated. At a Daewoosa shop, I had to work from 7 a.m. to 2 a.m. and sometimes to 7 a.m. the next day, and also on Saturdays and Sunday without being paid. We had to pay \$200 for room and board, which they said that they would provide according to the contract... There was no air ventilation. Workers slept right next to each other. The temperature in the rooms sometime went up to over 100 degrees. We were not allowed to step out for fresh air. The supervisor even kept count on how many times we went to the toilet... We lived 36 people in one room. [Mr. Lee] called pretty ones into his office and forced them to have sex with him... The guards paid special attention to the five or six workers known to have supported the lawsuit against Mr. Lee. They beat them the hardest. Ms. Quyen, the key witness in this lawsuit, was held by her arms on two sides by two guards. A third guard thrust a pointed stick into her eyes. As a result, she lost sight of one eye."

Rachel Lloyd, Founder of GEMS in NYC and child sex trafficking survivor

"So what's it really like for us? The pimps tell us about the sneakers and jeans they'll buy us, but they never tell us that we'll never see any of the money we make. They don't tell us what will happen when we don't make the quota they have set for us that night, the beatings, the physical torture we'll receive if we break one of the ever-changing complex set of pimp rules. Looking at another pimp, for example, can earn a severe beating, so we learn very quickly to look down at all times to protect ourselves no matter what, to be loyal or faithful to the man that scares us the most."