

Definitions

The United Nations (UN) defines child sex trafficking as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation." It acknowledges that children who are subjected to trafficking and exploitation are often in a vulnerable position, and it identifies the abuse of a position of vulnerability as a key element of child sex trafficking, even if the child initially consented to the situation.

Vulnerability can include being poor, female, living in rural areas, being displaced or a refugee, or have limited access to education or care. Other factors that increase vulnerability include gender, disability, and belonging to a marginalized group.

The UN asks countries to address the root causes of vulnerability in order to prevent child sex trafficking, including poverty, lack of education, discrimination, and violence while at the same time strengthen their social and legal frameworks and law enforcement capacity to investigate and prosecute individuals involved in child sex trafficking and provide support and protection services for victims and survivors.

Countries across the world have signed on to the UN Protocol on human trafficking, also known as the Palermo Protocol. This includes UK and India.

Ways that young people can get involved to combat human trafficking.

1. **Educate yourself and others:** Learn about trafficking and exploitation and raise awareness among your friends, family, and community. Share information on social media, organize awareness events, or start a conversation about these issues with your peers.
2. **Support anti-trafficking organizations:** Volunteer or Donate to organizations that are working to combat trafficking or volunteer your time and skills. Even small actions can make a big difference.
3. **Advocate for change:** Use your voice to advocate for stronger laws and policies to prevent and respond to trafficking. Write to your elected representatives, sign petitions, or join advocacy campaigns.
4. **Be a responsible consumer:** Avoid purchasing goods and services that may be linked to trafficking or exploitation, such as products made with forced labor or sex tourism.
5. **Look out for vulnerable individuals:** Be aware of signs that someone may be a victim of trafficking, such as poor living conditions, restricted movement, or signs of physical abuse. If you suspect that someone may be a victim, report it to the appropriate authorities.
6. **Support survivors:** If you know someone who has been affected by trafficking or exploitation, offer them support and empathy. Survivors may need a safe place to stay, access to healthcare, or legal assistance.

Some resources to learn, support, advocate:

1. UNICEF - Child Protection: UNICEF is a UN agency that works to protect children's rights and well-being around the world. Their Child Protection program focuses on preventing and responding to violence, exploitation, and abuse of children, including child sex trafficking. They have a range of resources available for young people, including stories, videos, and games that help raise awareness about these issues.
2. UN Women - Safe Cities: UN Women is a UN entity that focuses on gender equality and women's empowerment. Their Safe Cities program works to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls, including sexual harassment and exploitation. They offer resources and information for young people on how to stay safe in public spaces and how to be an ally to those who have experienced violence or harassment.
3. Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children: This partnership is a collaboration between the UN and other organizations that are working to end violence against children, including child sex trafficking. They offer resources and information on how young people can get involved in preventing and responding to violence and exploitation of children.
4. UN Office on Drugs and Crime - Education for Justice: The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) offers an Education for Justice program that provides resources for educators and young people on a range of topics related to crime prevention, including human trafficking and modern-day slavery. They have a range of educational resources and activities available for young people.

Here are some anti-child trafficking organizations in the Commonwealth countries.

1. Apne Aap Women Worldwide. (www.apneaap.org), India and US
2. Anti-Slavery International
3. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), UK
4. Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP)
5. Coalition against Trafficking of Women
6. ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes), International
7. Embrace Dignity, South Africa
8. The Salvation Army, International
9. Save the Children Fund, International
10. Your local community resources such as social workers, teachers, counselors, or NGOs, if they need support or assistance. These resources may be able to provide individualized support and assistance based on their specific needs and circumstances.

Discussion Questions

1. The book is written by an Indian author and primarily takes place in India. Do you think the issue of sex trafficking is specific to India or do you think it is a global issue?
2. Explain how the following themes crop up in *I Kick*, and *I Fly*:
 1. Coercion and exploitation:
 2. Vulnerability:

3. Human rights violations: (Clues: right to freedom, the right to education, the right to health, and the right to be protected from violence and exploitation).
5. Explain how the following themes crop up in *I Kick, and I Fly*
 1. Bullying
 2. Body Shaming
 3. Discrimination
6. What themes in *I Kick and Fly* connect with your own life?
7. What did you learn from the book that you didn't know before?
8. How can martial arts be used as a tool for social change and empowerment?
9. What is the significance of the title *I Kick, and I Fly*?
10. The author states that "prostitution is not inevitable." What are some of the societal and systemic factors that contribute to the perpetuation of prostitution, and how can they be addressed?
11. Ruchira Gupta writes about the importance of education for girls and how it can help break the cycle of poverty and exploitation. Do you think education is a key factor in reducing sex trafficking?
12. How does the book explore the issue of power and control? Who holds power in the story and how do they use it? What are some ways that power can be abused and how can we work to prevent it?

Activities:

1. research a local organization that works to prevent human trafficking and exploitation. Invite a representative to speak to the class about their work and how students can get involved.
2. Divide the class into small groups and have each group create a public service announcement (PSA) to raise awareness about human trafficking and exploitation. Be creative and use different media formats such as video, audio, or print.
3. Write a persuasive essay or letter to a local or national elected official, urging them to support policies and laws that help prevent human trafficking and protect victims.
4. Host a classroom or school-wide fundraiser to support an organization that works to prevent human trafficking and exploitation. Brainstorm different ideas for fundraising activities and involve students in the planning and execution of the event.
5. Join the author in her campaign against sex-trafficking by signing and sharing her pledge on www.ruchiragupta.com.