

project ● ● ● ●
respect
women matter

Future Directions 2009 - 2011

Today, we continue to see significant numbers of women facing domestic violence, sexual abuse, homelessness, and financial insecurity.

So for Project Respect there was no surprise when their Outreach Coordinator recently recorded statistics through her encounters with women in the sex industry with concerning results: **55% of the women spoke of childhood or adulthood sexual abuse and 68% of women were single mothers who entered the industry to provide for their children after leaving violent relationships.**

Women in the sex industry are often stereotyped as either happy, sex-loving hookers or hopeless drug addicts, and there remains much stigmatisation of them. The fact is the reality and reasons for entering the sex industry are very different and being in the sex industry can be a very harmful experience.

While the sex industry is legalised in most states and territories of Australia, legalisation has not removed the harm, violence and stigma of the sex industry.

The industry also includes trafficked women – women brought to Australia, kept in slavery, servitude or debt bondage, to do prostitution. Trafficked women are typically held in debt bondage, forced to pay off a made-up, legally unenforceable 'debt', commonly between \$35,000 and \$50,000. This involves 500 to 800 'jobs' with clients who they can't refuse – the women can't say no to sex without a condom, and sex, drunk or violent clients.

Based on research we conducted in 2004, we believe there could be up to 1000 women trafficked for prostitution, held in slavery-like conditions, in Australia, every year.

Project Respect was formed in 1998 to support and empower women in the sex industry. Using a strengths-based, feminist model of practice, we conduct outreach to women in brothels, provide individual counselling and holistic support, and offer emergency accommodation and support to trafficked women. We provide specialist, non-judgemental services, harnessing the strength and resilience of women from the industry, to challenge violence everywhere.

Over the years we have been instrumental in securing great breakthroughs, such as local government providing support for outreach to women in brothels and the Federal Government devoting resources to combating trafficking, but more needs to be done.

Our dreams and ambitions are still big. Project Respect reaches women in one-third of Victoria's legal brothels – we would like to reach women in all of Victoria's brothels and to be able to offer them specialist support, including accessing real pathways out of prostitution. We want to expand our shelter for victims of trafficking, so that more women have somewhere to stay, rest and recover. We would like to honour the vision of a survivor of trafficking and long-time friend of Project Respect, who wishes to open a Noodle Bar community enterprise, providing training and employment to survivors of trafficking.

To do this, we need your help. This comprehensive program of assistance, this base of support which will empower women to rebuild their lives, is only possible if people from all walks of life support what we are doing and the women we work with. We invite you to carefully consider partnering with us and join us on this journey.



Kathleen Maltzahn
Project Respect Founder



Nina Vallins
Project Respect Co-Ordinator

key statistics and milestones

- 4 staff and 10 volunteers
- 138 visits to women in brothels across Victoria in 07/08
- 676 one-on-one counselling hours with women in 07/8
- One of only two organisations in Victoria to conduct outreach to women in the sex industry
- Spearheaded national campaign in 2003 to recognise people trafficking as a problem in Australia resulting in the Government providing a \$20 million counter-trafficking package
- Established regular training on trafficking in 2004 aimed at Federal police, immigration, Government departments, community groups and non-government organisations

mission statement

Our mission is to support women in the sex industry in Australia and to help prevent the exploitation and enslavement of women, by the industry.

We aim to see this fulfilled through:

- **Empowerment:** of women who are or have been in the sex industry to rebuild their lives outside the industry and to become advocates on the issues of prostitution and trafficking;
- **Education:** of the community, led by women from the industry, to create a greater awareness of the harm of prostitution and trafficking, and to mobilise people to address these;
- **Advocacy:** promoting government, community and individual policies and practices which reduce the conditions that cause the sex industry to thrive and which promote feminist responses to prostitution and trafficking;
- **Activism:** which tackles the violence, discrimination and structural inequalities which support prostitution and trafficking, based on the expertise of women in the sex industry.

our vision

A world where there is no longer demand for prostitution and people trafficking.

Project Respect works towards:

- Adequate support given to women in the sex industry, including trafficked women, such as access to shelter, health care, legal support, compensation, and alternative employment pathways
- Eradication of the abuse and inequalities, including between men and women, different cultures and different classes, which underpin and are strengthened by the sex industry
- Individuals, organisations and communities informed and mobilised to support women in the sex industry



about us

At the centre of our work is daily outreach to women in the sex industry including women who have been trafficked into Australia for prostitution. We use a strengths-based model, promoting respect for all women.

Our work includes:

- Visiting brothels in Victoria, providing holistic support and individual counselling
- Referrals and information regarding services for health, housing, the law, child custody, domestic violence, drug and alcohol, and other issues
- Emergency accommodation and ongoing support for women who have been trafficked

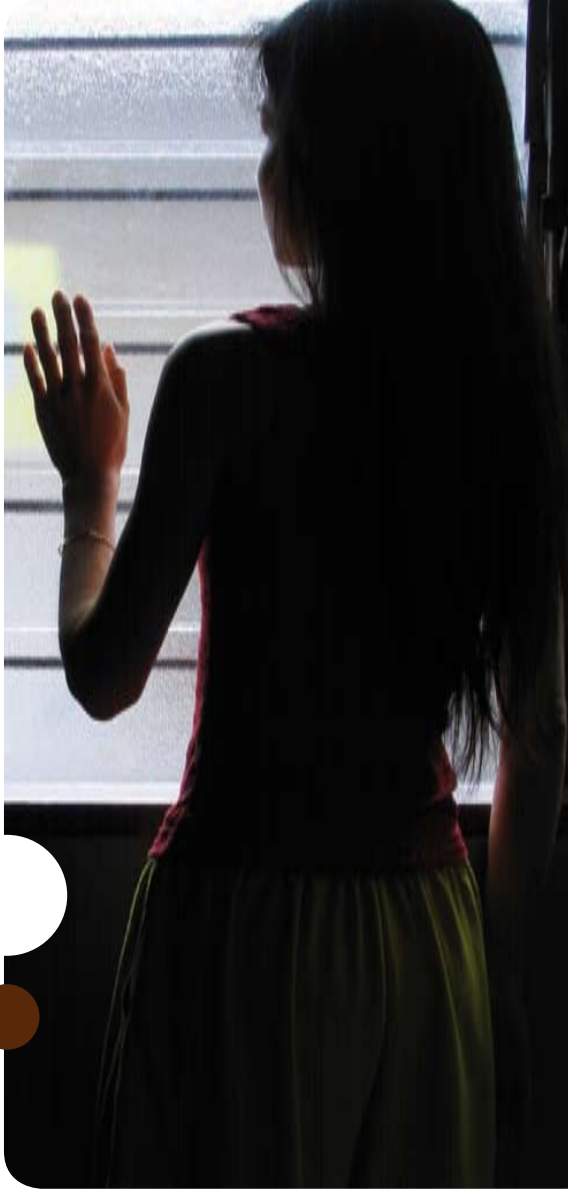
Complementing our direct outreach services we also take a key role in lobbying all levels of Australian government, advocating for clients to community organisations, as well as public education. We are committed to global solutions to the problem of violence against women in the sex industry, and we work closely with women in the industry to support them to advocate for themselves and other women.

Project Respect offers specialised training to community organisations, such as health centres and women's services, and government agencies, including police, prosecutors and immigration.

key statistics:

- In 2007 - 2008, Project Respect's Outreach Coordinator received at least 70 requests from women for support to leave the sex industry
- 55% of women in the sex industry encountered by Project Respect spoke of childhood or adulthood sexual abuse and approximately 90% of women show signs of a history of sexual abuse
- 68% of women encountered were mothers providing for their children, following relationship breakdowns

NOTE: Figures are based on 2007/8 compiled during Project Respect outreach to women in the sex industry.



human trafficking for sexual exploitation

Trafficking is the movement of a person, brokered by another person(s) through abduction, deception, coercion, or abuse of power or vulnerability, for the purpose of exploitation.

In 2004 Project Respect estimated that there were up to 1,000 women trafficked for prostitution in Australia every year. We do not believe these numbers have dropped, however new research is desperately required to understand the current reality.

Women who are trafficked to Australia for prostitution are told that they will get good jobs and be able to make money, which they can send home to their families. Once in Australia the nightmare begins - they are told that they owe a huge debt and they have to 'pay it off' by being a slave. They are subjected to violence, threats and deprived of their freedom of movement.

Often former trafficked women face significant social, legal, economic, cultural and gender-related disadvantages. Recovering from the trauma of having been trafficked can take a long time and women should receive support including housing, health care, compensation and long-term visas in the destination country or reintegration assistance for home if they prefer.

future directions 2009 - 2011

Project Respect relies on the support of donors and philanthropic organisations to conduct our work. Over the last few years we have expanded our outreach to women in the sex industry and support to women trafficked for sexual exploitation. We have also implemented new initiatives such as a unique pilot exit program for women wishing to leave the sex industry, which recognised that they face considerable disadvantage and discrimination and provided specialist support and training. We have also run an exciting theatre project with women from the sex industry, providing a powerful community education and advocacy tool as well as a supportive and creative environment for women to discuss their experiences of the sex industry.

To continue our current work as well as develop new initiatives we need your support. In this prospectus we have outlined key outcome areas we want to see fulfilled over the next few years. We ask that you would carefully consider how you or your organisation can support these initiatives and see more women in the sex industry, including trafficked women, supported and empowered.

Outcome One: 500 women and their children supported practically and emotionally every year

Outreach workers play a vital role in supporting women in the sex industry through visits to brothels and one-to-one assistance in areas such as legal, domestic violence, sexual assault, and drug and alcohol issues. We currently employ two outreach workers in Melbourne and want to increase this over the coming years to support more women in the sex industry. We offer weekends away and support for women and their children but we recognise that there are particular needs for the children, and would like to conduct research into child-specific services to expand our program of support.

Key areas for funding:

- Employ 3 new outreach workers across Victoria
- Professional development and training for all outreach workers
- Employ a part-time dedicated counsellor
- Children's program in partnership with specialist children's services
- Vehicles for outreach workers to support women
- Bigger office space to accommodate new outreach workers and to provide a drop-in centre



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Outcome Two: 20 women each year who wish to exit the sex industry have alternative employment and educational pathways

During 2008 Project Respect implemented a pilot exit program for women wanting to leave the sex industry. The Pathways Program addresses the need for specialist support and skills training and aims to empower women to be work/education ready, with the skills and support to feel successful in their lives.

Going forward we want to see this very successful pilot as an ongoing program including the expansion of educational, employment and mentoring support.

Key areas for funding:

- Employ a pathways program coordinator and peer support worker
- Run four peer support weekends away each year
- Develop ongoing educational resources
- Establish an employment mentoring program

Outcome Three: Community enterprise business offering employment for former trafficked women

One way Project Respect aims to support victims of trafficking is to provide training and employment within a community enterprise project. Our vision is to open a Thai Noodle bar in Melbourne to serve and assist victims of trafficking offering long-term sustainable employment.

Key areas for funding:

- Employ and support women who have been trafficked into Australia for prostitution
- Train trafficked women and provide them with business skills
- Establish a Thai take-away Noodle Bar with equipment, stock and cover rental fees
- Recruit operations manager to oversee the ongoing development of the Noodle bar, community enterprise projects and Project Respect operations

“ Debi’s story

“The Pathways Program was great; at last I was able to talk with women who had similar experiences. No taboos. I was able to work through the past and look towards the future. We have a lot of guest speakers from different areas e.g. psychology, counselling, legal services. The knowledge of these people, as well as that of the facilitators who have lived the experience of the sex industry, and of the other women in the group has been helpful to me in many areas of my life. Project Respect has improved the quality of my life and I will now move on to their advocacy training. I hope to raise the status of prostitution in society, assist women to get out, support them if they can’t, and generally acknowledge the self worth of each and every one of us.”

key facts

- Research conducted by Project Respect in 2004 indicated that there are around 1,000 women in Australia under ‘contract’ by a trafficker at any one time
- Trafficked women are told they owe a ‘debt’ and can only pay this off by providing sexual services. A typical debt is between \$35,000 and \$50,000
- The High Court of Australia recognised that trafficking can be a form of slavery in the Wei Tang case of 2008

future directions 2009 - 2011

Outcome Four: Short-term accommodation for up to 12 women who have been trafficked into Australia

Project Respect currently has emergency accommodation for a small number of women; however our vision is to expand this to provide short-term accommodation for more trafficked women and to provide ongoing counselling and specialist services as well as educational and employment pathways.

Key areas for funding:

- Short-term accommodation for up to 12 women in Melbourne
- Employ 2 case workers to support the women
- Furniture, bedding and kitchen supplies for the shelters
- Provide English classes and other education and training opportunities



Daojai's story

In 2002, Daojai needed money urgently to pay for her mother's health care as she was sick and Daojai's father had gambled away their savings. A friend told her she could come to Australia to do Thai massage and earn good money.

When she arrived, her passport was taken away and she was told that she would have to do prostitution, whatever the customer wanted her to do, including sex with no condom. She argued with the trafficker and tried to escape but the windows and doors were locked and the trafficker was violent towards her. After a few days, she gave in, hoping that she would be able to send some money to her mother and that she could get this over with quickly.

She was told that she had to pay off a large debt bondage 'contract' before she could be free. Some clients were very rough with her. If Daojai asked them to be gentle, they would complain to the manager and get their money back – and this would be added to her 'debt'.

She had to do 1,000 'jobs' to finish off her debt bondage 'contract'. She was under 'contract' for 8 months and was lied to and hit by her boss. Another woman who ran away was hunted down, locked in a room without food or drink, and another \$2000 was added to her contract.

Now Daojai still lives in Sydney. She ended up sending a lot of money to her mother but her mother died. Daojai hopes to learn to read and write English and to start a business with a friend.

future directions 2009 - 2011

Outcome Five: More women in the sex industry including trafficked women supported through visa reforms, adequate legal and financial support as well as exit programs

Project Respect wants to continue its history of successful advocacy to our governments regarding their response to trafficking, slavery and prostitution. We want to see further improvements to policies and practices, promoting a human rights-based response to trafficking, visas for all victims of trafficking, better access to compensation for victims of crime and improved support for all women in the sex industry.

Key areas for funding:

- Advocacy coordinator to conduct research and to lobby Federal, State and local Governments.
- Develop relationships with other NGO's to work together on research and strategic advocacy campaigns.
- Training coordinator to conduct regular training workshops to the Australian Federal Police, immigration and Government departments as well as local community organisations

Outcome Six: Educate and mobilise community groups in relation to prostitution and trafficking within the sex industry

Prostitution and people trafficking are still issues which are often little understood by the general community in Australia. Women in the sex industry are often stereotyped as either happy, sex-loving hookers or hopeless drug addicts, and there remains much stigmatisation of them. Project Respect believes that educating the community about these issues is pivotal in combating the harm of prostitution and abolishing trafficking.

Key areas for funding:

- Develop communication and educational resources to raise awareness amongst Schools, Universities and community groups
- Develop our ground-breaking play Prostitute – Who is She? to become a major theatre production as well as a smaller workshop-style piece to be performed in schools, for police, and other organisations
- Deliver advocacy training for women in the sex industry
- Conduct research on the sex industry and trafficking for prostitution in Australia



Endorsements



Chris Payne

Former Australian Federal Police agent

I've been involved in the anti-trafficking campaign since '92 and I thought I knew it all, reckoned I was the cop that discovered it all. But it's as if Project Respect has always been there. No-one has done more than them to campaign, to educate - they certainly educated me - and to help the victims.

And for such an issue; it's not feeding the famines or saving cute marsupials; it's third-world sex workers. You couldn't invent a harder issue to work on; these people are seriously dedicated. PR are a genuine NGO, not some UN sinecure, they were around long before sexual servitude trafficking became attractive. William Wilberforce would be proud of 'em.



Dr. Sallie Yea

International expert on trafficking in persons

Project Respect is Australia's leading feminist organisation devoted to trafficked women and violence against women in the sex industry. Project Respect has been at the forefront of advocacy and research activities on human trafficking issues in Australia, and played a pivotal role in bringing about pressure for reform in the way women trafficked to the sex industry have been perceived and assisted. I have served on the Committee of Management for Project Respect for several years and assisted them with other activities such as research and public education around trafficking issues. I applaud the valuable work Project Respect undertake.



Liz O'Brien

Convenor, National Association of Community Legal Centres

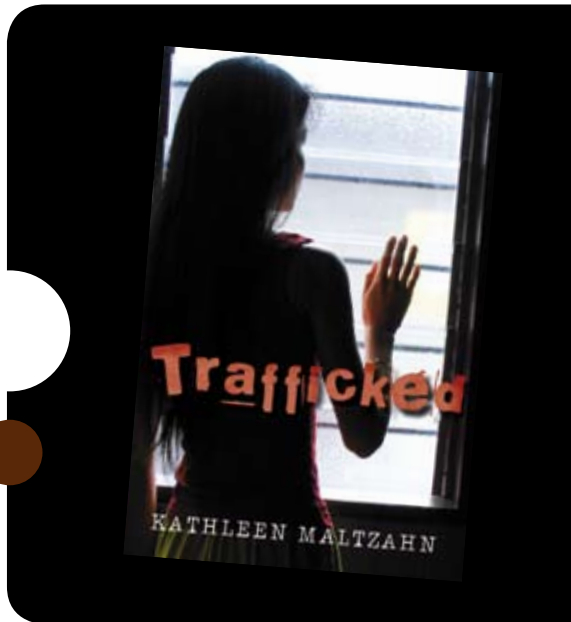
Project Respect is the leading community-based, human rights organisation, that works to prevent exploitation and enslavement of women by the sex industry. Community legal centres work extensively with Project Respect to ensure that women have access to justice through free legal advice, community legal education and policy and law reform. Their work is invaluable.

about our Founder Kathleen Maltzahn

Kathleen has worked on violence against women for many years, including five years in the Philippines where she primarily worked with women in street, bar and military prostitution. Kathleen founded Project Respect in 1998 and in 2004 was awarded an RMIT Research award, with Dr Sallie Yea, for 'Countering Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation in Australia'.

In 2005 she was awarded the inaugural Dame Phyllis Frost Award from the National Council of Women of Victoria in recognition of her work on trafficking.

Kathleen has recently written a book, '**Trafficked**' which has been short listed for an Australian Human Rights Commission Human Rights Award for non-fiction literature.



about Nina Vallins Project Respect Coordinator

Nina Vallins has worked with Project Respect in various roles since 2002. Her first position involved outreach to women, alongside Kathleen, and she was also the coordinator of the highly successful international conference, Stop the Traffic 2, in October 2003.

Nina has previously worked in South-East Asia on a regional criminal justice project addressing people trafficking, taught English to women in the sex industry in Bangkok, volunteered at a shelter for trafficked women in Rome, and worked with asylum-seekers in Bangkok and Melbourne. Recently, Nina conducted research on best practice in support for victims of trafficking for the Australian Institute of Criminology.



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