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Why We Must Arrest Child Prostitutes

IT MAY SOUND CRUEL, BUT IT COULD BE THE ONLY THING THAT SAVES THEM



By **Evann Gastaldo**, Newser Staff
Posted Mar 4, 2011 1:29 PM CST



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A 13 year-old girl forced into street prostitution walks by a road in Kinshasa on November 7, 2010. (Getty Images)

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(NEWSER) – With the average age of a girl entering prostitution at 13—and getting lower—the idea of decriminalizing childhood prostitution certainly sounds compassionate. After all, isn't arresting a young girl, who's presumably been victimized by a pimp, like punishing her a second time? Precisely the opposite, write Janice Shaw Crouse and Penny Young Nance for [Aol News](#). In fact, "ask rescued children ... and many will say that their arrest is the only reason they are alive today." And that's why decriminalization, an idea that has already become law in four states, "is a well-meaning but flawed solution that will only make the problem worse."

Decriminalizing child prostitution means effectively "removing the only safe and secure protection these vulnerable children have from the pimps—being arrested and placed under the protective custody of law enforcement," they continue. In fact, it will allow pimps to manipulate children by telling them "law enforcement can't touch them and won't help them." And while sending child prostitutes to shelters or treatment programs, rather than jail, also sounds good on paper, the truth is that if these kids are not charged with a crime, their participation in such programs is voluntary: "They are free to walk out at any time." Click for the full piece, including [two more reasons not to decriminalize](#).

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genxandy Mar 4, 2011 11:14 PM CST

Hasn't anyone thought about getting the information of who the pimps are from the kids and arrest the pimps? Doesn't take a genius to figure that out.



SPHeroid Mar 4, 2011 9:18 PM CST

I think the prospect of real prison time and huge fines for the "Johns" might go a long way to solve this problem... Supply is created by demand, and the men that use this "service" are equally culpable as the damn pimps...



sallythedoctor Mar 4, 2011 5:28 PM CST

The problem with this logic is that it ignores a common occurrence among young prostitutes. They're too young to realize that getting in trouble with the law is better than staying put, and they have been told they'll go to jail just as easily as the pimp. If they knew they had no chance of being arrested, they'd come to the police more often.

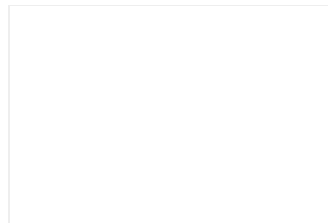
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