

## A Study



# Attachment Patterns and Exiting Challenges in Adults with Experiences in the Commercial Sex Trade, Sex Trafficking and Exploitation

Persons involved in the commercial sex trade are often vulnerable to exploitation, violence, trafficking, prostitution and other forms of human rights violations. Human trafficking is a crime. It involves a trafficker's use of multiple forms of coercion to exploit another for monetary profit. Existing psychosocial and health services are not fully equipped to address the unique needs of people with lived experience in the commercial sex trade. As a result research to inform the development of specialized services is urgently needed.

Study findings will contribute to the evidence to inform promising practices for outreach, psychological services, health services, employment, and advocacy for people with lived experience.

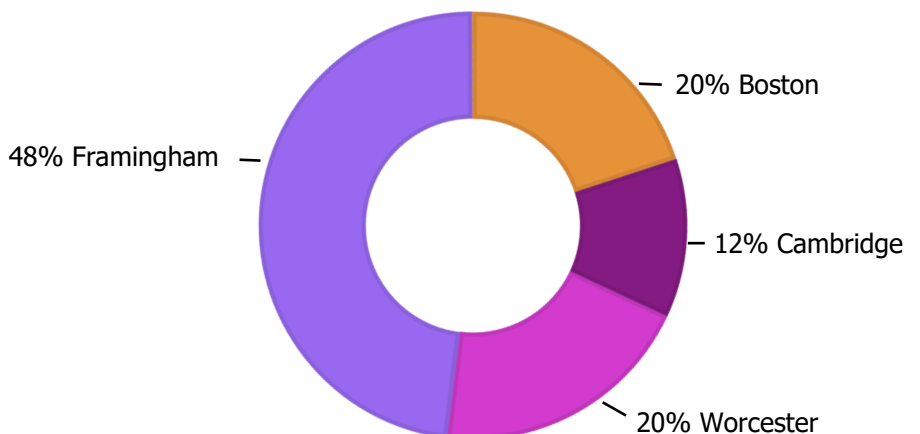
## Participants

Those who participated in the study had all exchanged sex for something of value. Their experiences include, but are not limited to, prostitution, pornography, stripping, live cams, chat rooms, body work, massage, brothel, sugar daddy and escort services.

Fifty adults were interviewed for the study, therefore in the case of all data presented, n=50.

## Geography

Interviews took place in Boston, Cambridge, Framingham and Worcester.



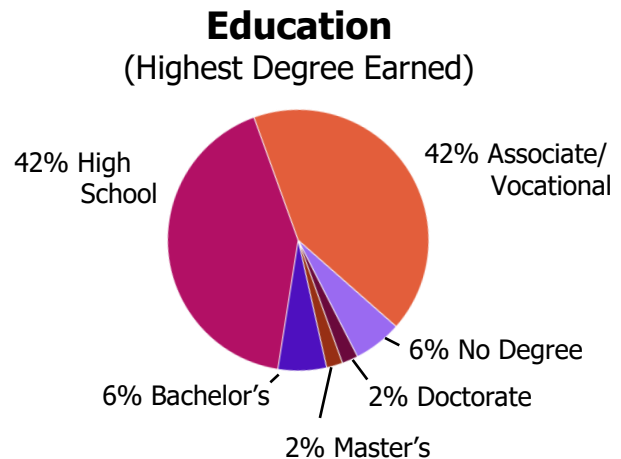
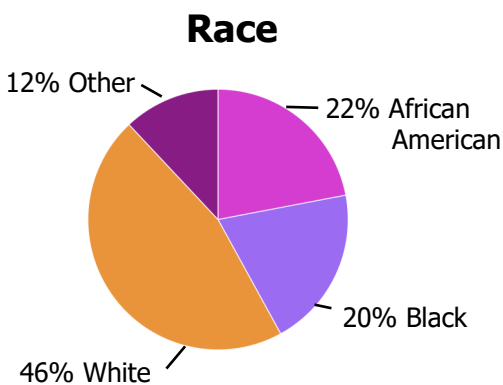
## In Collaboration

RIA House &  
William James College

IRB Approval # 20170026

## Demographics

- 84% of study participants are women, 14% are men and 2% identify as other
- Almost 75% have one or more children
- 50% made less than \$12K in the last year, while 6% of participants made between \$50K - \$75K
- 46% of participants are between 35 & 54 years of age, 34% are between 18 & 34, and 20% are 55+
- 60% of participants are heterosexual, 24% are bisexual and 10% are homosexual/gay/lesbian
- 12% of participants identify themselves as Latino/Latina
- 96% of participants have participated in therapy
- 88% of participants have participated in substance abuse services



## Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)

An ACE score measures three different types of childhood trauma - abuse, neglect and household dysfunction. The original CDC-Kaiser ACE Study showed a relationship between a person's ACE score and potential health risks (Felitti et al, 1998). As one's ACE score increases so does one's risk of disease as well as social and emotional problems. An ACE score of 4 or more increases the likelihood of chronic pulmonary lung disease by 390%, depression by 460%, hepatitis by 240% and attempted suicide by 1,220% (Lanius, Vermetten & Pain, 2010). An ACE score of 4 or more also increases the likelihood of alcoholism, drug use and intimate partner violence (Center for Disease Control & Prevention [CDC], 2016). The CDC-Kaiser ACE Study measured ACE scores of over 17,000 participants and percentage of those with ACE scores of 4 or more was 13% (CDC, 2016).

The Attachment study measured participant ACE scores and found that **82% reported 4 or more ACE's.**

Felitti, V. J., Anda, R. F., Nordenberg, D., Williamson, D. F., Spitz, A. M. ... Marks, J. S. (1998). Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 14:4, 245-258, DOI: [10.1016/S0749-3797\(98\)90017-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0749-3797(98)90017-8).

Lanius, R. A., Vermetten, E., Pain, C. (2010). *The Impact of Early Life Trauma on Health and Disease: The Hidden Epidemic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

US Dept of Health and Human Services. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's): About the CDC-Kaiser ACE Study*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acesstudy/about.html>

