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WWRS: Women Who Rock with Success Investigates: Internet Sex Stings

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Intro Speaker 0:00

Blog talk radio.

Unknown Speaker 0:10

Welcome to women who rock investigates an affiliate of women who rock with success. We report case studies in the areas of policy and government, medical malpractices, health pandemics, biotech and fracking, global climate change, prison and police reform and more. Our topics are covered around the latest breaking news reports in the US and around the globe. We can be heard on Spotify, Google Play, Google podcasts, tune in, iTunes, pod bean, airtime pro and Sam broadcasting, radio stations, and more are handpicked experts on the show provide credible information from their fields of experience. Join us on Thursdays at 10am central standard time as we discover the latest in news reports. Now join us live in the studio with our show hosts, Mrs. Diane Winbush.

Diane Winbush 1:05

And Good morning, and welcome to the show on today. And thank you so much for joining us. Today we have a special edition of women who rock investigates usually we're in the pandemic field which we're going to pick that back up next week. And then we also explore other different policy and government topics for our audience and listeners. But today we will be discussing some information in regards to online sex stings. And so everyone has their view of pros and cons as to what this type of online activity brings.

There are two social sides to this. Some individuals feel that this is not right. Some individuals feel that this is entrapment, some individuals feel that this is something needed to protect the children. And so this is what the broadcast does. Broadcast brings both sides of the story to the public. So we can be able to decipher, we can also be able to learn from what our guest with their expertise can be able to share. So we have two guests that will be with us on today. And our first guest is Dan Wright, who is an advocate for criminal justice reform. And we also have special victim's prosecutor and she's also the member of the internet crimes against children [ICAC] Task Force. And she is none other than Kathryn Marsh. So good morning and welcome.

Dan Wright 2:40

Thank you, Diane.

Diane Winbush 2:43

Great. So we're gonna first start out with Kathryn. Is Kathryn on the line.

Diane Winbush 2:54

Okay, I'm not getting a reception out of her. So first of all, we can go to your Dan. While we can be able to get that tweaked right quick, tell us a little bit about you.

Dan Wright 3:06

Okay, thank you, Diane. So my background is more of a logical analytical mind, I have an electrical engineering degree. And I also have an MBA.

All of my education is back in the in the 90s. And then I got my MBA in 2010. And I really had no interest in criminal justice reform until just recently, about four years ago, when our son was actually arrested in one of these sex sting operation.

And since then, since 2016, I've been reaching out and it's almost like a part time hobby, working with others to find out about these things and do a lot of research and work with others. And we're finding there's a lot of injustice regarding the sentencing parts of these stings. [Unintelligible background noise.]

Diane Winbush 4:03

Okay. Okay, great. So, Kathryn, do we have you on the show? We're still not getting a reception from her. Okay. So we'll go to we'll continue with that. I think she's on, but I think it's a problem with her phones. I'm not for sure.

So we'll we'll continue on. Okay. So tell us a little bit about your purpose as an advocate, I know that you talked about you, you know, was kind of brought into this. This was not something that you kind of woke up off of a dream or something. This is something that you were brought into in regards to a family member of yours and give us the take on that.

Dan Wright 4:55

I'm sorry, I just got to kind of got distracted here. Diane, let me. Okay, so you're asking about, you know how I got involved in how this all got started? Yeah. Is that right?

Diane Winbush

Correct? Correct. Kind of elaborate a little bit more as to, you know, you don't have to bring in names or anything like that just kind of tell the audience as to why this is such a passion for you, as to what drove you into getting, you know, tuned in with these how law enforcement conducts online internet sex stings?

Dan Wright 5:36

Yeah, so it pretty much started back in 2016. Our son was in the Army. And he was looking online, to hook up or have a date with women. And he is this, this Craigslist, casual encounters to actually find a hookup or Friends with Benefits type of relationship. He was new to this the online dating world, he really [had not] dated much. And he was going out there trying to try to meet people and somehow conversed on an ad with someone who was an actual law enforcement and went down this sort of rabbit hole, so to speak, ended up conversing and talking to them and met up with them and got arrested.

When he got arrested, we got a call as he was in jail. And then we're like, oh, what do we do? So we had to hire a lawyer really quickly. And then we started getting in the mix of these, these stings. And that's when I got involved. And I started doing a lot of research. I said, well, what is it about these stings? How do they work? What are we facing, especially with these really egregious charges that they put on these, these people who get arrested, and the shaming they do by doing their press release out there. So with Ezra and the lawyer, they were telling us he was facing pretty much 69 months or more 69 to 90 months for his charge.

And the next thing I did is I went out there and looked at all these sting operations, and I started to put together a list and tried to figure out well, what's what are we really facing what's what's our best plea? What is our best option? Do we want to go to trial? How do we want to handle this because the lawyers, they didn't

seem to be that helpful. They they'll work with the prosecutors and the prosecutors will come back. And they did. And they came back with a blanket plea and said, Hey, you know, 60 months lifetime parole, indefinite sex offender registration, it's a Felony A! A very, very severe charges. So we said, well, we're just going to go to trial. And we did go to trial, and we lost and the jury didn't buy in. And it didn't matter that our son had a perfect record. He had no prior history. He had none of this child porn or anything like that on his own and no predisposition. Predisposition. They didn't, they didn't really care. And in these cases, there is there is no victim.

Um, in the end, he ended up getting sentenced to 50 months to life as it is in front of the board review. Though he was looking at around 69.75, the judge did give an exceptional sentence for his case. It's not the way it is, in many of these cases. Fortunately, the average sentence over six years, and the prosecutor wanted [81] month.

So it's kind of led us down the same path. Like why, why, why are they punishing these cases, without victims so severely, and it just didn't make sense to us. And I was able to connect up with other people when we were all fighting the same thing. Our sons, and husbands and friends are all getting these egregious balances. This isn't the state of Washington. Other states are kind of similar, but maybe less sentences.

We couldn't figure it out. And so that's kind of what led me down this path of research and do To find out more and try to fight this injustice and we still continue to this day to fight [with our son still in prison.]

Diane Winbush 10:06

Okay, okay, great. So you have been on several interview platforms in regards to advocating for your son and how you felt about the sentencing. You have shared also with me We have discussed this before the even the broadcast several weeks ago that you're not erasing his behavior or you're not trying to obscure his behavior of what he has done you, your voice to be to America is to in regards to the sentencing as to how harsh it was. *And by him pleading guilty to that, you felt that that was just a little bit too harsh.*

[Note: We took our case to trial, our son did NOT plead guilty.]

So even when you were on the Dr. Phil, I watched a little bit of that clipping on December the seventh, which was a I think it was several months, a couple of Monday's ago, and so or a few Monday's ago, so to speak. And so even with that, on what was you wanting to get that audience to be able to see on Dr. Phil, you know, our platform is a little bit probably does not have a huge high ratings as Dr. Phil. So why? What were you trying to get the audience to take away from your message about your so?

Dan Wright 11:28

Yeah. Um. First off, I was really in the audience of Dr. Phil, I wasn't on the show. That was Kathleen and Aracely, and their sons. I am familiar with everybody that was on the show, minus the commander. And I mean, the real point of what we're trying to get across here, and I don't think that came across on Dr. Phil, was that the law enforcement is going out. And there, they're performing their tactic on Adult dating websites of 18 and older websites, like Craigslist, like whisper, and like Grindr, and others.

They're going these sites. And they're posting, you know, messages and doing a bait and switch, so to speak. And they have different tactics where they'll act as a mother pimping out their children that act as a young, like 13 year old. But there's a lot of deception. And there are a lot of challenges for these guys that are responding to these ads.

And it's very, very deceptive. And even though, you know, Dr. Phil went in and pointed, but she said she's 13 year old. But everything else leads you not to believe that whether its pictures, whether its conversation, whether it's everything else, the people who are out there on these dating sites, they're playing the numbers game, they're trying to go out and they're trying to connect up and hook up or find a date, whatever the case may be. And they're responding, like our son did responded to like 10, nine to 10 ads in one day, and he got one conversation going. And he kept up with that conversation. And he wanted to establish a meeting and see what's going on, see if it's real. And I think a lot of these cases are very similar to that, where they want to have a conversation in person to see what's really going on, they don't necessarily believe that they don't believe there's a 13 year old or 11 year old or there's kids involved, it just doesn't make sense to them.

So when they're doing these, they are very deceptive. And they're also not following their own rules. You know, they're, they have manuals, and I hope Kathryn will show up. She's a member of this ICAC, they have a operational standard, and they're supposed to let the target which is the person, my son would be the case, set the tone and the pace and the subject matter. And he didn't set any of that he tried to set up a meeting ahead of time, they didn't allow it, they kept forcing the conversation in a certain direction. They got him to capitulate. And you know, they got to show up at the trap house. And they got him and the conversation kind of shows that they knew he wasn't any predator or anything like that. But in the end, that's the way they treated him no matter what his history was, and no matter what the psychological exam said.

Diane Winbush 14:48

Okay, and I think we have Kathryn. Oh, and I'm not sure if she's having technical difficulties with her line, but she is on the queue. So, Kathryn, are you able to chime in at this moment?

Kathryn Marsh 15:00

Are you able to hear me now?

Diane Winbush 15:04

I can hear you. Thank you.

Kathryn Marsh

Okay, wonderful. I'm so sorry.

Diane Winbush 15:10

Okay, no, no, you're fine. You're fine. So if you've been listening to most of what, and I'm going to, first of all, let you introduce yourself, Kathryn. So the audience, and then the next question is going to be for you, Dan, after she, after Kathryn, who's a special victims prosecutor in this in this cycles of field, Dan the next question is going to be for you, because we got to get both sides of the story. And the second question is going to the next question is going to be for you, after Kathryn has introduced herself as to some of the criticism that was shared in regards to the segment that your wife said on with on Dr. Phil. And it was in regards to they felt that you, but I guess your wife was kind of maybe trying to obscure it. Now. I know, we have personally talked. And you we're not trying to obscure the actions of your son. But somehow, due to some of the things that were stated on the Dr. Phil show, they felt that your wife did so hold opinion and with that we're going to allow Kathryn to come in and she's going to introduce herself to the panel. Okay, go ahead.

[Note: Dan's wife was not on the Dr. Phil show – Kathleen and Aracely were on with their sons.]

Kathryn Marsh 16:25

Thank you so much for having me. I have been able to listen to everything that you and Mr. Wright have discussed so far. My name is Kathryn Marsh, I am a special victims prosecutor. I've been a prosecutor for longer than I think I have half the time since 2003. And the last 15 years has been specialized in Special Victims cases. So child abuse, sexual assault and felony domestic violence cases have been my specialty. Part of my job does include working as a member of the internet crimes against children [ICAC] Task Force, and working on cases of child pornography and child solicitation cases.

Diane Winbush 17:08

Okay, okay, great. So the next question, then you can go ahead. And if you feel if you feel that that question is appropriate for you to answer, you can go ahead and answer it.

Dan Wright 17:22

All right. Well, I think I would have more of a question for Kathryn, in the sense that, you know, she's familiar, since she's working with ICAC about these stings, and they call them proactive stings. They have operational guidelines, I have that operational guideline. And I don't believe they are following the guidelines, the judges don't seem to care either. But in the end, after my case, and our son's cases in Washington State, they charged them with attempted rape of a child in the first degree because of the age of the child, the supposed child would get 69.75 months. And the challenge I see is that's a victimless crime. They're luring them in there on an adult dating site. It is entrapment, by all means, that the definition goes by even though they do not find a way to allow it. The prosecutors work with those who are conducting these things very closely to close the loopholes.

Other cases where there are victims, they're getting much less sentencing. One case where it was 13 year old, the guy got like 12 months. Another case that just recently came out, lacrosse mom, assaulted an 11 year old did many times and she got a 10 year sentence with a suspended I'm served and only get to serve one year in jail before serving out the rest of her sentences. So they the ICAC, and the rest of the organizations are prosecuting these very, very harshly and we don't think that's fair. We don't agree with any of their tactics that they're using. We think there's deception and we think there needs to be a more manageable means of dealing with these people who get arrested that have no prior history or no prior intent or predisposition.

Kathryn Marsh 19:37

Would you like me to respond Diane? You can Yeah, Kathryn, go ahead.

Okay. So, first, I need to preface that I do not work in the same jurisdiction that Mr. Wright's son's cases from I'm actually on the opposite coast, in Maryland, and so our laws are vastly different than Washington State. So for us when we are dealing with online internet crimes or solicitations of a minor, we actually have a separate charge that's called solicitation of a minor, which is where these kinds of crimes fall under. So if somebody is online with somebody who's an actual minor, or law enforcement posing as a minor, and request a sex act from that individual, it will fall under the sexual solicitation of a minor. We actually have to show as well that they've taken a step in furtherance of just the conversation. So if the individual has been like, where do you live and has, you know, maps that information for how to get there or has tried to arrange the setup, that's the step in furtherance of just the request. Now, in my jurisdiction, that crime has a maximum penalty of 10 years. But if an individual, as Mr. Wright's describing with his son, for example, has no prior record, whatsoever, and there was no injury to the child, if it was a real child, or to law enforcement posing as a child, but guideline would actually be for us would be about six months to three years. And that's where the sentencing range would fall. And that's not mandatory. In Maryland, a judge can still go above or below guidelines, but they have to have a reason.

Difference is if we actually have a case where we have attempted rape, and that we have to show more than the conversation, we would have to show there was actual contact to attempt that rape. Our guidelines, if it was a 13 year old, would be about five to 10 years. If we have an actual attempted rape or rape on somebody who was 11 like the case Mr. Wright was describing that got I think he said 10 years, that's a mandatory minimum of 15 years for us if we have an attempted rape or rape on an 11 year old. And so we are our guidelines and our crime seem to be set up vastly different than Washington State for these kinds of offenses.

Diane Winbush 22:12

Okay, okay. Okay, great. So what is what is the purpose? And you know, we've everything has a purpose, because people are concerned about their children, and people and this question is for Kathryn as well. People are concerned about their children, you know, we have all types of chat rooms, we have I have grandchildren myself, where they were, they have been approached through certain, you know, games and what have you. And people are concerned about that. So what is the purpose? What, what is the law enforcement trying to narrow down with online sex stings?

Kathryn Marsh 22:55

So absolutely, I should preface this with I, myself have a mom of three boys. And so, you know, keeping our children safe is my number one goal every single day. And I think part of this is needing to understand how prevalent crimes against children are, and how prevalent internet crimes against children are, to understand why we have the different things that we do. And when we look at some of these statistics, you know, it's, it's really quite terrifying. The main target age range for online crimes against children is 11 to 15 years of age. And when we're talking about four going into sex trafficking, we're about at 11 to 13 is the average age at which children are recruited into sex trafficking.

When we look at sex torsion, which is the blackmailing of children to send intimate pictures or videos of themselves, the average age for that is 15, but the age range is actually the age of 8 to 17. And so these are the real crimes that happen every day, that internet sex stings are set up to try to protect if we can stop one child from going into sex trafficking. That's what we want to do. If we can protect one child from being a victim of sextortion. And having all kinds of intimate pictures of themselves broadcast online, that's what we want to do. And so that's, that's the ultimate goal of these, these internet stings is to protect the children that are very real victims.

And, and I will say Mr. Wright is absolutely correct, that there are very specific guidelines that are used, that the officer cannot be the one to initiate the meeting, the conversation about the sex acts, and things like that. And so, and there, and I think we should preference There are a variety of different kinds of internet, sex stings that go on any given day. So there are ones that are set up kind of like Mr. Wright was describing, which are done with the intent to meet either for a dating app, or for truly what we've considered human trafficking for commercial sex trade.

And those are ones that are set up for that specific once we other we have all kinds of other internet stings, where we have law enforcement officers who are on social media apps, where we get lots of tips that children are being, you know, recruited, or are being inundated with child pornography on these apps who go on the apps and poses children to see is this going on? And is there a particular users who are doing this more often than others? So like I said, there's a variety of internet, sex things that go on at any point in time. The one Mr. Wright was describing falls more in lines with the ones that are in line with sex trafficking and to reduce sex trafficking and reduce sex trafficking of minors.

Diane Winbush 26:21

Okay, okay. So in Dan's case, and after I This question is for Kathryn, and but you also can respond to this day, and after Kathryn has completed her statement, so in Dan's case, he feels that it was a term of entrapment simply because of the fact that it was not an actual female or a child that was on the line, it was an actual law enforcement posing as a potential person that was interested or that was under age or what have you. And so he feels that that is kind of basically entrapment. And it was not fair, correct me if I'm wrong, Dan, it was not fair for law enforcement to conceal their identity, and arrest their son for those amount of months, knowing that it was not an actual individual, it was basically like a decoys.

That's for Kathryn. Right. So you can Okay, I was gonna say...

Kathryn Marsh

I don't know if that was Mr. Wright's concern about the entrapment? Because and I'm only saying that because I know he posed the question to me about, you know, aren't law enforcement supposed to follow certain guidelines. But I think just for all the listeners, we need to be clear what entrapment is under a legal definition. And then we can explore the parameters a little more. So entrapment is actually a criminal defense. And so it can be a defense to a crime. But to use it, you have to establish that the law enforcement officer, or if they're using an agent, on their behalf, is the one who originated the idea of the crime, and induced the accused to actually engage in that crime. So the officer will just use would have to be the one to say, let's do an armed robbery, and set up the parameters and basically get the other party to agree to do the armed robbery. That's just one broad example of entrapment.

Now, in order to use entrapment as a defense to the action, the person charged with the crime actually has to admit to committing the activity. So if we use the armed robbery example, they would say, Yeah, I was part of the armed robbery, but I only was a part of it, because the officer is the one who brought it up, and they're the ones who induced me to commit the crime.

So that's how entrapment works in the law. So for a sex sting what typically happens is, if we're talking about sex trafficking, commercial trafficking and trying to stop that, there'll be an ad posted on Craigslist, on a variety of different sites that are used, and a person responds to the ad. The posting of the ad is not entrapment, because it's, they very rarely on an ad are going to discuss anything more than being a date or an escort.

If the conversation goes further, and it's request for actual sex acts, and for what you know, in the vernacular we call prostitution and for that is where it's up to the person who's charged with the crime. They need to be the ones to bring the conversation beyond the response to a date ad.

So the person who was charged with the crime, they would be the one who would have to bring up, you know, engaging in sexual activity, the cost of sexual activity, or things like that. When it comes to internet stings for minors, the officer who's posing as a minor does have to indicate that they are a minor. They can't, you know, wait till the person shows up at the door and then says, oh, by the way, I'm 12. That has to be part of the communication back and forth. Before there's ever the attempted meet.

Diane Winbush 30:41

Okay, okay. Make sense? Dan, would you like to respond to that?

Dan Wright 30:46

Yes, yes. Pretty much nailed the entrapment argument, it's very similar in Washington State. And where they, most of these guys get tripped up. And the judges don't allow it is when they say that defense is not

established by going that only law enforcement merely afforded the defendant an opportunity to commit the crime, you got to go a little bit beyond that. And that's where the judges say, oh, no, the ordinary citizen wouldn't have gone through with this. But I, you know, again, I would counter otherwise. Because what they are doing is they are posting these ads on these 18 and older websites, or apps, you know, Craigslist, Baidu, whisper, Tinder, OkCupid. These are websites and apps where my son and other adults are going seeking out other adults. And they're not just deciding, hey, I'm going to go look for a child, and I'm going to go look for a child on Craigslist or whisper, Baidu, or whatever it may be. These guys are not intending to find a child, they are responding to ads.

Like I mentioned, my son responded to nine ads that day, and one of them happened to be a sting ad. So then they the conversation starts. And it progresses and it's pretty quick, they are very, very quick to respond and react. And I again, I argue that who is setting the tone and the pace, and the subject matter is law enforcement, what they end up doing is they say, Hey, you know, yes, they might throw out an age. But in this in our son's case, there was a mom involved and he was seeking the mother and the mother wanted to bring in the children. And then she wanted to see somebody have sex with those children for whatever reason.

But, um, you know, there's a lot of confusion that goes through these things. Whether it's a mother or it's a minor, they send out photos that do not look like minors, the pictures might show older adults, like in the case on Dr. Phil, the, the person looked like a 24 year old and the conversation continued, because he did not believe that the person on the other end was a 13 year old. And that's generally how these things go, there's a lot of disbelief, it's very easy to get pulled in. And the other thing I would argue is that law enforcement, they're not targeting, they're just casting a very wide net. They're randomly going after people by posting on Craigslist posting an ad or responding to an ad or whatever they may do. And it's a very, very broad net. They're putting in a lot of different people. And most of those people are not going to be predators. They're going to be just regular adults, and they just decide to continue the conversation. And law enforcement will also tell you, Hey, bring some lube or bring a condom so they can help bolster their case and show intent. They'll try to say bring a gift like a Slurpee or a movie or a cash a gift card or something so that they can trump up another charge like commercial sex abuse, they'll try to get you to talk to the fake minor as well to get you to get a charge of communication with a minor for immoral purposes.

So there's a lot of questionable tactics they're using. And some people they'll drop off. They'll say, oh, maybe there's a 13 year old, okay, I better drop off. They're wise, they stop. But realize when law enforcement does do these things, they're getting like 500 responses and maybe 90% drop away and then the other 50 they continue the conversation. It's just like anything else. It's it's in the numbers.

And there are people who might be more gullible than other people, or suckers or curious seekers that get brought in on this. And again, I'll argue that our son tried to meet four or five times before they asked him, Well, what do you really want to do, and then he capitulated. And basically, then Then he asked for more times, that he wanted to meet somewhere in a neutral place and talk about this in person. And he eventually capitulated again, and ended up going to the trap house. So that's how our case worked. And we tried to argue, and we lost again in a trial.

And that's, that's kind of what I'm trying to get across is, they're not always following the rules. They're posting on dating websites, where there are adults not looking for children. And some people are getting sucked up into these things, even though they're not predators, and they don't care and they prosecute these people anyway. And that's the problem we have is there needs to be a, you know, a reform and that or a compromise, and a reasonable solution, rather than throwing somebody like our son into prison, and he got 50 months, there are other people that I know and I converse with, they've gotten 200 months, there's another guy, his son, he got 108 months, and he should have only got 90 at max, and they should allow a

youth mitigation and they didn't. So they are, they're heavily coming down and prosecuting these. And it's, it's very unfortunate, and it's devastating to a lot of these families. And we want to, that's where I get involved. And that's what we're trying to do with our little group to bring reform in to bring the awareness that they're going a little bit too far and what they're doing.

Diane Winbush 37:12

Okay, so, with that, Dan, is it is it that you feel? I mean, I'm trying to question this is like an in a neutral situation, because I guess, you know, online sex sting investigations have been out ever since the early 90s. And so I guess when it comes to law enforcement they're trying to do their part is for is the public concern. They're trying to protect the children, they're trying to make sure they in a lot of times, sometimes the government judicial officers, or judicial platforms, they look at it, well, this could be my child. So let's go in here, and let's pass a law. And let's see if we can be able to protect them. Let's go online. So you know, I used to work for the for the US Marshals some years ago, we, you know, hit the deal with a lot of them. And I tried my best to stay neutral, even back then, in the early 2000s. So and you were saying something in regards, which has got to be the next question for, for Karen or Kathryn, I'm sorry, in regards to the reform. So because we have discussed You and I, Dan, in regards to that, about prisons, having some type some type of program for individuals that are perhaps maybe caught up in sex stings or have I don't know sexual life issues or what have you and things because we can't erase the fact that he was on the on the line himself. Okay. How enforcement with by doing it, I was not there that sure that your son's trial case, it we're not here to judge that, you know, factor is, as well as we're not trying to, you know, mitigate the issue and stuff in regards to they should throw away, you know, the own line sex stings, because individuals there with the law enforcement, entire primary focus and goal is trying to protect children. Sometimes people may be better, sometimes other laws, sometimes other states may attach different clauses to their laws to say, Hey, I'm going to go in here and we're going to do it do it this way, or what have you. So that would be the next question for Kathryn. Does. Institutions from your experience? Are they working on anything like that? I know when, when I was working for the federal institution, they had a program. I don't know if it was tailored to that, but they had different types of programs where offenders could be able to, you know, go to school, college, different things like that had substance abuse, courses and classes that they could be able to take. Is that something that we have here in America Where we can, where individuals can be able to, you know, get some sort of restitution from their actions by taking programs while they're incarcerated.

Kathryn Marsh 40:11

Yes, ma'am. And again, every jurisdiction is different. And the laws are different everywhere across the country. So I can only speak to my experience, obviously. So one thing I want to stress just because January is human trafficking Awareness Month, and we're talking about sex trafficking stings. Mr. Wright brought up the point of saying, you know, they were posting on an ad for adults. Well, there is no website in the country that allows the posting of sex with a minor, but 76%, of sex trafficking of minors. And we're, again, we're talking in that age range of 11 to 14 76% of the sex with these minors, begins online. And it does begin with the posting of the website. And like I said, law enforcement has to be very clear from the beginning that they are minor, and they are putting that out there before they even get into a menu of items or prices or anything like that.

And again, just because it is human trafficking Awareness Month, I think it is important that we emphasize the real harm that is done, you know, to children who are being trafficked, and the statistics show that every 30 seconds a child is being trafficked.

Now, when we're talking about sexual solicitation, which is again, as I said, in my jurisdiction, what we have it is if it's all online, and there's nothing beyond that there's no actual intercourse or sexual contact. We have that as one crime. We have child pornography, if they solicit, you know, child pornography images, and that's another crime.

I make a requirement that before I even come to a sentencing decision myself, or at least what I offer to criminal defendants, is to get a psychosexual evaluation. Go see an expert in the field, who can provide to me into the court or report is this somebody who has a low risk to reoffend a moderate risk to reoffend or a high risk to reoffend because every single person who comes into our criminal justice system is different. And every single case needs to be a personal case, where you take into account every single person who's in the system for that case, the victim, the defendant, and who they are, as well as the requests and desires of the victim. And so it's very hard if all we know about the criminal defendant is what we read on messages and exchanges, back and forth. Because sometimes they're really reprehensible. And you get an awful picture of the person. And so, I work with our parole and probation division, we have amazing psychologists and psychiatrists, providers who can do psychosexual evaluations and provide an unbiased report to the court. I've had reports come back where I really thought somebody was a really bad person. And the report comes back and says, Listen, they're a low risk to reoffend they would be best treated, best served by intensive outpatient treatment in the community.

I've had other ones who come and I thought there was no history. And through the psychosexual evaluation, the person has admitted to, oh, by the way, I've in fact had sex with three 12 year olds. And all of a sudden, they're a high risk, and they are a danger. And so these are factors that I think it's important for everyone to know.

The other thing that we have is, I'm very fortunate in my jurisdiction, where we have, if somebody warrants a prison sentence, if they're getting 18 months or more, and they're not staying in our local jail, they're going to the prison. We have one of our prisons that is geared for mental health treatment. And so anybody that I have, who has a sex offense, underlying crime or anything like that, I will make a referral for them to go to that institution. And again, it's a voluntary program, that criminal defendant has to say if they want to go in it or not. And they have a program called the eligible persons program that is geared specifically for sex offenses. And it goes through treatment, and it has individual counseling, it has group counseling, it has all kinds of resources. Because when the ultimate goal is that we have rehabilitated citizens, we don't want anybody to reoffend, especially when we're talking about child sex crimes. So if I'm sending somebody to jail or to prison, or the judges, I'm just requesting it. But I'm not asking for resources or services for that individual, that I'm failing at my job. I need to make sure that with the punishment comes some form of treatment as well.

Diane Winbush 45:18

Okay, okay. Great. You would like to respond to that, Dan, and to the fact that where your son is in Washington, is there any type of reform that he is receiving at this moment?

Dan Wright 45:36

Yes, I, I'd like to respond. Thank you, Kathryn. I think you nailed it. I wish you were the prosecutor we had in Washington State. Because I think we could have done much better job at rehabilitation and restoring and not punishing. And you're exactly right. The psychosexual examination is important, we did that they ignored it. They gave us a blanket plea. We went back and forth with the prosecutors, they weren't willing to change. So a lot more harsh, unfortunately, in Washington, even though there was no porn or anything on his phone.

So definitely, there needs to be rehabilitation. Is there a program like that in the prisons in Washington State? Yes, there is, they have two prisons dedicated to that. So our son will most likely go through that if he can get into it.

It is an aggressive program, I would rather see him do it on the outside, and we would pay for that. It is expensive. But we would we would do that and have no problem doing that. And I think it's all about the

proper rehabilitation and restoring and maybe every one of these people have some issue, whether it's porn addiction, or sex addiction, addiction, or whatever. And there probably does need to be some counseling, and there needs to be some rehabilitation. So I think we'll agree with that. And we do agree that we need to protect the children, we're not against any of that. If these people do commit those crimes, they need to be punished. And they need to be rehabilitated properly. Those who kind of get swept up in it, like our son, and like so many others in Washington state, we want the proper restoration of them of their rights and the rehabilitate them properly. So there are different avenues for this. And again, I wish they were more sensical here in Washington State, but they're not.

Diane Winbush 47:55

Okay. Okay. So we've got a couple more questions before we end the show. And so we want to kind of touch on the Net Nanny. And so what this will do is to be able to also share with the listeners and the audience of what the Net Nanny is, and guess what the purpose and the primary goal for the Net Nanny, and because a lot of times individuals can know that certain things are inappropriate, and sometimes they will still go to the site, even if they know that it is wrong from the jump. So we want to make sure that we put all feet and all hands in. And so this, this kind of helps the audience to be able to understand a little bit more about the online fix things. And then, you know, sometimes, of course, we you know, I've seen several takedowns, you know, on the FBI channel.

That's one of my favorites and what have you. And so is it incorrect for them to do that? I don't think that it is because the individuals, this is my opinion, still being neutral. I don't think that there's a problem with that people are concerned about their kids, they want their children to be able to surf the internet in some sort of peaceful way where their children are not approached or presented something or attacked or what have you. This is not referring to anything about your son Dan, we're just speaking in terms of you know how to look at the situation on all sides. You see it in the law enforcement, it was wrong, how they may have approached your son. It was wrong, how they may have a sentence him to the harsh months that they gave him and what have you, the parents may say the same thing. We're looking at the facts, we want our children protected, no matter what. So we're trying to stay on both sides of the fence, bring information to that. So in either one can be able to respond to that but I would rather for Kathryn to be able to respond to it on a legal perspective. And then Dan, you can be able to share a little bit if you decide to in regards to the Net Nanny. So we'll go with Kathryn first as to what the Net Nanny project is.

Kathryn Marsh 50:16

Okay, so there's different projects all over the country. And when we looked at the Operation Net Nanny that is one that centered most on the west coast. And so I'm going to talk about the internet stings in general, because it would not be fair for me to comment on the operations, or the evidence in Net Nanny, since that's not one I've reviewed. And I would never comment on a case I haven't reviewed the evidence on. But so you have the internet settings that are set up. And when we're looking at a specific target area, it's oftentimes because we know this has now become a hot zone for human trafficking, commercial sex trafficking, or we know that we have a high number of missing or Exploited Children that are going in an area. And so when we have data factors that are indicating to us that this is a target rich environment, we have children who are at risk, or we have a large number of offenders that are coming in through cyber tips or things like that. We will work as an organization and law enforcement takes the lead to create the internet stings. And you have a task force, you have all kinds of people who are involved in setting it up, you establish the parameters, what are the goals. And typically the goal in something like this is we want to make sure that we're getting individuals who are trying to target minors, that we want to make sure that our children in this area is safe. Okay, great. How is that going about? How long are we going to set up the ads for how long are we going to have this thing going on? How many officers are we going to have involved? What's our safety words, all kinds of planning, like that will go into the operations. And then they'll go forward. What will happen is, if individuals, you know,

solicit sex with a minor, show up to actually have sex with the minor, they will then be arrested for the crime, it's appropriate in their jurisdiction, the evidence will all go to a prosecutor who will review does this evidence meet the standard for the crime? Do I meet all of the elements I need? And can I prove it beyond a reasonable doubt? And are there any legitimate defenses to it?

And if there's a legitimate defense, or it can't be proven beyond a reasonable doubt, prosecutors not going to go forward on that case. If there's not, then they're the person is going to be charged, they're going to be indicted and the criminal trial process will begin.

Plea offers are always extended as part of a criminal trial process. It is defendant's choice to accept the plea or not. Oftentimes, I'll have criminal defendants or defense attorneys come back to me with a counteroffer, and say, Well, how about this? If I have a live victim, I'm going to talk to my victim every single time and find out what do they want before I go forward with any plea agreement? If we can't work out a plea agreement, it is the defendants absolute right to have a trial. And they can select a trial by a jury or trial by a judge. And nobody can make that decision for the defendant but themselves that is guaranteed to them by the Constitution. And then we'll have the trial, and the jury will decide if there's enough evidence beyond a reasonable doubt to convict them of the crime.

And I think I just want to point out that a lot of times where I said we're looking for, is it a target rich environment? Do we have a lot of missing children in this area? Do we have a lot of tips coming in, that commercial sex trafficking is going on things like that. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has a website that's cybertip.org that takes in tips all over the country for anything that somebody is concerned about. That's going online with a child. In 2019, just because I don't have the stats for the 20. The year that is 2020 that will live in infamy. The cybertip.org website received tips that amounted to over 69.1 million images of videos or other files related to child sexual exploitation in this country.

The majority of them actually came from internet service providers who themselves are finding this just in their day to day work. And they'll send the tip to the [cybertip](http://cybertip.org). And then it'll go to the proper internet crimes against children task force for that area. And you know that that's the data that we're looking at because our goal is to recover children. You see it on the news when it's 300 children were recovered during this internet sting operation, 64 missing children were recovered during the sting operation. That's the goal of them. We want to get these children who are in awful trafficking situations home, we want to get them recovered, we need them to be in a safe place. And so that's the data that we're looking at, like I said, just for 2019, it was 69.1 million images, videos and files of child sexual exploitation.

Diane Winbush 55:38

Okay, so basically, also in a nutshell, sometimes on the online sex sting, not sexting. But you know, what I'm trying to say the online activity between... [unintelligible with two conversations]

It kind of starts with the telephone leading up and then it leads to the human trafficking, am I kind of getting that right? Because I want to make sure that the audience is getting a very good descriptive as to how steps may be taken and May, you know, go beyond just the telephone, it may start with the telephone, and then it goes to another level. And they may it may go to the to another level, I know the country of I think is Greece, if I'm not mistaken. I think the Christian leader, Joyce Meyer had went there to that country and kind of exposed a lot of human trafficking in that area. So I just wanted to, I guess, get a full description as to how it may start, it may start to maybe live conversations. Conversation on the phone, then they meet up, and then it may lead to something else later on.

Kathryn Marsh 56:54

Right. So I mean, in your right where it's been, it's all over the globe, human trafficking itself is \$140 billion industry, and \$90 billion of it is in the sex trafficking arena. And so it's prevalent, it's everywhere, like I said, every 30 seconds, we have a child who has been trafficked. So it is a very real threat in every single corner of the globe. Now Diane, you dated us a little bit by saying on the phone, because yes, that's how both of us probably started our career. But now the majority of it actually starts through social media apps, and an online, they get to the phone later. [laughing]

So typically, what will happen is it will start through just a social media app, or online gaming is huge. And then from there, it'll be like, oh, now that we've talked a bit, or we've exchanged information or pictures this way, now, give me your phone number. And now we'll start texting or we'll go through another app on the phone.

And so right, that's kind of how it starts is we're looking for where are children most at risk, and where are children are most at risk based on what the data is showing us is where we want to set up these internet stings. Because again, our goal isn't to try to entrap an innocent person in any way, shape, or form. Our goal is to keep children safe and to rescue children who are in bad situations.

Diane Winbush 58:24

Absolutely, absolutely.

Kathryn Marsh 58:27

One part. Sorry, I was gonna say a lot of times we do the reverse stings. Where its officers responding to ads to see if it's a minor, so they could go to a hotel room and rescue a minor. And so you can have both going on simultaneously.

Diane Winbush 58:46

Okay, okay. So go ahead, Dan.

Dan Wright 58:50

Yeah, thank you. I'm all for protecting the children.

I'm all for making sure that law enforcement does this the right way. And I think by being on social media, Facebook, or what have you, where there are minors, where minors go is the right approach. I think they we need to be very careful about them on these dating sites. And I know, Kathryn, you mentioned that there is human trafficking going on. I don't

dispute that there. There's some of that stuff going on. But I think they law enforcement or the media over blows it, I know that the statistics Do state that generally around 95% of issues with minors or encounters or sexual abuses or what they may be, are often done by acquaintances or family members and maybe 5% ish is by strangers or people they don't know.

On the Net Nanny I wanted to point out that in one of the press releases, they did say the *operations that targeted individuals who wanted to sexually exploited children*. And my argument is that the Washington State Patrol, in this case they posted on Craigslist casual encounters. And they either responded to an ad or somebody responded to their ad, these individuals weren't going after children. They were lured in by law and law enforcement who offered who ended up offering a building or were acting as a minor. So I want to just emphasize that no individuals were targeted, these are all random people. And if they do go after targeted people who have some kind of background, I think we'd be okay with that. I don't I don't have an issue there.

I wanted to also state in Washington State, they do have a special rule, like a sex offender, special sentence sentencing agreement. And the problem is you have to show a relationship with the victim. And we try to use that in our case, so that our son would only have to serve up to a year in jail, but they didn't allow it because there was no victim. So a lot of what they did in Washington State is they tried to get around all these loopholes, and we couldn't use any of them to our advantage.

So, you know, there's a balance in these stings. And I think they need to be done in a, there's a better approach, and then there's a better resolution, and that's kind of my last point there.

Diane Winbush 1:01:48

Okay, okay. Okay. And, you know, it's your opinion, and you're entitled. [Laughter] And so we thank you so much for that. And I'm pretty sure that law enforcement, or perhaps maybe increasing their skills as to how to go by. I don't know eradicating it a little bit more different or a little bit more better. I'm not sure. I don't live in Washington, and I'm not from Maryland, either. But the purpose of today was to kind of get both sides of the story, get both sides of the actual topic, just like I stated before, parents will probably be outraged. You know, in regards to that, if they don't your perspective, you felt that, you know, the law enforcement may have done some things that were out of their jurisdiction that they shouldn't have done, as to how they perhaps maybe have culture sign up into this sting, and what have you. And so I think I'm just going to leave it like that. I don't think I'm gonna say anything else. In regards to any last tips or points of Kathryn to like leave.

Kathryn Marsh 1:03:02

I think it's an important one for parents and for any youth to understand there is the cyber tip line .org. If any parent or child is concerned about internet activity, solicitation of their child, or anything that goes on like that, it can be an anonymous report, they can file that report, it'll get to the appropriate law enforcement officer, somebody can make the report if they're concerned about a friend, our goal is to make sure we have our children safe and any assistance we can get that is what we want to do.

Diane Winbush 1:03:37

Okay, perfect. So today, audience we have heard on both sides of, of the calibration. We talked about online, internet sex stings. Mr. Dan Wright shared his personal story as to what happened with his son and as to how he felt that law enforcement should have perhaps maybe adjudicated the issue. And then also, we had prosecutor Kathryn Marsh that brought us a ton of resources, wealth of knowledge, and as to how all of us or individuals use especially to keep themselves abreast of online activity that is not appropriate, or what have you. And I would like to leave this part and I really don't want to, but I would like to leave it in regards to that.

I feel that if is if a room is dark, and we know we shouldn't be in the room, don't walk into the room. And if a door is open, I don't have to walk in it just because it's open. So in regards to that, you know, like I stated before people can see this topic on both sides of the fence. And we have to maintain law. That's number one. And then also law needs, you know, reform, I feel greatly about that as to how individuals are being reformed from some issue that they may have, and what have you and if they become incarcerated. I'm not saying it's the institution's full responsibility to reform an offender, I can't say that because that will be at the taxpayer. And then that would make the law enforcement teams seem as if they're a parental guidance to all offenders. But I feel that if a person is repetitive in a specific issue, I feel that now, you know, some sort of prison reform should be activated for that individual, so they can be able to get some help. And, and just a quick note, while I was working for the federal facility, it was this gentleman had came in, and he was in there for sex, you know, online activity, and it was with a male. And so the judge sent him a bond, the judge was nice, I'm going to give you a bond. As soon as he gave the gentleman, a bond, we don't like to call people inmates and prisoners and things like that people are citizens of America as well. But as soon as the judge gave the offender, the gentleman a bond, we had to go back and pick him up just a few days later. And so he came back to the

federal institution. And then after that, he stayed there about three weeks or something like that, the judge was gracious to him again, and he gave him another opportunity to be able to get it right. And the individual went right back out there and did the same thing to the same person for the third time. So those are the types of individuals that are on my perspective, that really needs the reform because something is not clicking in or perhaps maybe they have a low self-esteem about themselves. And they feel that they don't have to, you know, maybe seek out help or what have you, and things that may be a loner, I'm not for sure what the issue is, I feel that prison reform programs for prisoners are for those that have a repetitive offense, they continue to do the same act over and over and over.

If I do something one time, a program is not going to stop me from doing it again. It has to come from some mental estate first, I've got to want to stop, I have to have it made up in my mind that I want change. I'll do this a different way. But I'm the one that's making the change. And so that's what I tried to help individuals as well myself, is to be able to see both sides of the fence. So with that being said, Kathryn, if you would like to at this time, you could be able to share with the audience, if you like of how they can be able to follow you in social media platforms and in publications that you may have written in the classes that you may have up that you're teaching for the public, you can be able to do that at this time.

Kathryn Marsh 1:08:11

Thank you very much, Diane. And thank you for bringing attention in both sides of the issue on this very important topic. Easiest way to follow me or information is through on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter, No Gray Zone, rrc. And also we have our website, which is right response consulting dot com (<https://www.rightresponseconsulting.com/>). We have articles on there that we have published our goal again, and we have our podcast, no gray zone. And that podcast focuses specifically on issues of sexual abuse, sexual assault, domestic and workplace violence. We try to keep it short just tips of how to protect yourself or a loved one. And what to do, if you ever get in the situation. We try wholeheartedly to, I mean, quite frankly, I would love to be put out of business on the prosecution side and not have another child abused, or a another person be a victim of sexual assault at all. We have trainings coming up with the public safety training center that people can go to and sign up or you can catch any of the ones we've taught before, as well as the National criminal justice Training Center. If anybody would like us to come and talk to their community organization, we have specific trainings on just Internet safety for kids that's geared for them and for parents on signs and what to look for. And you can just shoot us an email or dm us right through the social media. Again, I'd love to put myself out of business if I could, and make sure that we just create a safer environment for everyone.

Diane Winbush 1:09:49

Absolutely. Okay. And Dan, this is your opportunity if you like to you could be able to share more about the advocacy that you are trying to push in the in America for your son's case and in how you see as your perspective as how things were done the on the law enforcement wheel, you can be able to share whatever upcoming movements that you have, you can do that if the time and even if you want the listeners to be able to follow you and your wife, your significant other, you can do it do it at the time.

Dan Wright 1:10:31

Okay, thank you, Diane, I appreciate you having me on today. And then given voice to this side of the story. And I, a good friend of ours, that it's not the justice system. It's a system of laws. And if you want justice, you need to change the laws. And, and that's what we're about in our group. And we formed a little group and we call it C.A.G.E, our website is cage dot fyi (<https://cage.fyi/>). And it's Citizens Against Government Entrapment. And we concentrate more on the sting operations. And what we want to do is try to fix these and reform the law.

So if anybody out there is caught in a sting, or have a family member caught in a sting, just reach out to us at our cage dot FYI website, and we're gonna help and support however we can.

I did want to toss out a Bible verse. Because I am a Christian, there are two, Proverbs 18:21, which is: *The tongue as the power of life and death.* And James 3:8, *But no human being can tame the tongue. It is a relentless evil, full of deadly poison.* And, you know, you got to be very careful what you say out there, online. You have to be careful if you go to dating sites or hookup sites, you know, there are fakes and scammers there is human trafficking, as we know, prostitution, there's all kinds of illicit activities. And sometimes there's law enforcement.

You know, as we said today, you know, if the conversation seems suspicious, it probably is. And if it's too good to be true, Watch Out, STOP and get away. And just be very careful online, in real life, what you say and what you do, and don't lose sight of your moral compass. And be careful what your gut tells you got to listen to that.

So that's, that's, that's how I got it. And I thank you [trailing off]

Diane Winbush 1:12:42

Okay, and you are so welcome. And I thank you for wanting to be a guest to be able to have your voice to be heard on that topic. And I certainly think Kathryn for taking out the time on her busy schedule for providing the resources and the training for us because a lot of times we can get caught up in the fact of something that we disagree with. But we have to have facts in order to substantiate what it is that we are pushing for our specific movement. So thank both of you for being a guest on the show today.

And for all upcoming event listeners, you can be able to go to our website@ [www Women Who Rock with Success dot com \(http://www.womenwhorockwithsuccess.com/\)](http://www.WomenWhoRockwithSuccess.com). So thanks again, everyone and take care.

Kathryn Marsh 1:13:25

Thank you very much.

Dan Wright 1:13:28

Thank you.

[Closing Music]