

Not Just Another Statistic

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Natalia was sold as a sex slave. On a day that she went on a date with a guy her friends introduced her to, her life went horribly wrong. One minute, she's laughing and having a good time, the next, she's drugged and passed out in her "date's" car. She was smuggled into Greece, through corrupt guards who let the trafficker go through as long as they were paid off. In Greece, she was raped and beaten multiple times, then two weeks later, she was sold as a sex slave. Around the globe, Human Trafficking is the number one fastest rising crime, ranking in about 27 million people in slavery. This number is rising by the seconds. 1.4 million people of those 27 million are sex slaves. Europe, Italy, Greece and especially Amsterdam, are hotspots for Human Trafficking. Human Trafficking awareness statistics, presented by awareness groups, say that every 30 seconds, someone is forced into this modern-day slavery.

The thing that disgusts every single person I've told this to, is that girls as young as the age of six go missing, into this slavery, and they, along with every other woman and teenage girl, are forced to "service" up to 40 men *a day*. Approximately 800,000 women and girls are sold into the sex industry every year. Unfortunately, only 1% of victims are ever rescued, and only 1 in every 100,000 traffickers are ever convicted. Natalia was one of the lucky 1% who was rescued and was moved to a safe house owned by an organization called A 21. At the safe house she received stitches for her open cuts and injuries, and full medical care, including STD tests. Natalia also went through remedial classes to help her get back on her feet and restoring her self-confidence and dignity. Organizations like A 21 strive towards making the world a more friendly place for women and children, in places where they don't have to worry. Human Trafficking is a violation of every natural freedom that everyone has, and we can't let them be denied that freedom, or be just another number. We can't ignore the cries of help from the people who are being demoralized and defiled every day. Stand up and make a difference at www.theA21campaign.org. or simply just spread the word. With a group of teens from Watertown high going to Greece over the span of a couple weeks, I highly encourage them to have a good time, but to also be cautious. Not all of Greece is bad, in fact, most of it isn't. However, like every country around the globe, it has it's dark side.