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Super Bowl a magnet for under-age sex trade

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By Mickey Goodman

ATLANTA | Tue Feb 1, 2011 1:16pm EST

(Reuters) - Pimps will traffic thousands of under-age prostitutes to Texas for Sunday's Super Bowl, hoping to do business with men arriving for the big game with money to burn, child rights advocates said.

As the country's largest sporting event, the game between the Green Bay Packers and the Pittsburgh Steelers will make the Dallas-Fort Worth area a magnet for business of all kinds.

That includes the multimillion dollar, under-age sex industry, said activists and law enforcement officials working to combat what they say is an annual spike in trafficking of under-age girls ahead of the Super Bowl.

"The Super Bowl is one of the biggest human trafficking events in the United States," Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott told a trafficking prevention meeting in January.

Girls who enter the grim trade face a life of harsh treatment and danger, according to a Dallas police report in 2010. Few who emerge are willing to speak about it. Tina Frundt, 36, is an exception.

Now married and living in Washington D.C., Frundt was lured into sex work at 14 after she fell for a 24-year-old who invited her to leave home in 1989 and join his "family" in Cleveland, Ohio.

That family consisted of the man and three girls living in a motel. When Frundt declined on the first night to have sex with her boyfriend's friends they raped her.

"I was angry with myself for not listening to him, so the next night when he sent me out on the street and told me ... (to earn \$500) I listened," she said in a telephone interview.

Frundt paced the streets for hours and finally got into a client's car.

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When she came home in the morning with just \$50, her pimp beat her in front of the other girls to teach them all a lesson and sent her back onto the street the next night with the warning not to return until she had reached the quota.

The scenario was repeated night after night as Frundt's pimp moved his stable across the Midwest. Any sign of rebellion led to further beatings. Escape seemed out of the question.

"I was a teen-ager in a strange town with no money and no place to go," she said. She finally escaped by getting arrested.

ENSNARED

Up to 300,000 girls between 11 and 17 are lured into the U.S. sex industry annually, according to a 2007 report sponsored by the Department of Justice and written by the nonprofit group Shared Hope International.

Some 90 percent of runaways and children whose parents force them to leave home fall into the trade and are often beaten, drugged, raped or imprisoned to force compliance, said a section of the report which referred to Atlanta.

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