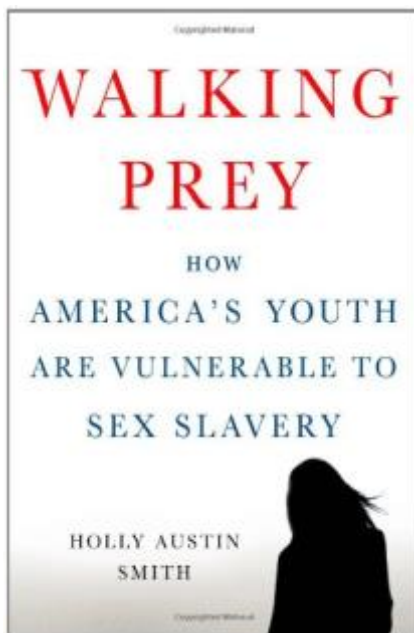


BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION: WALKING PREY

Books can offer a good basis for discussion and further understanding of important subjects, and book clubs can be a great method for NCJW members and supporters to get more involved and active. Reading a book about sex trafficking with a group is an excellent way to raise awareness about the issue of sex trafficking.

Looking for a book recommendation? Look no further...



Walking Prey, by Holly Austin Smith: Without consistent positive guidance or engagement, Holly was ripe for exploitation at age fourteen. A chance encounter with an older man led her to run away from home, and she soon found herself on the streets of Atlantic City. Perhaps most importantly, *Walking Prey* highlights how middle class suburban communities are fast becoming the new epicenter of sex trafficking in America. Through her experience, Holly has become one of the foremost advocates for trafficking survivors.

Invite Holly Austin Smith to Speak! Advocate and trafficking survivor Holly Austin Smith spoke at NCJW's 46th National Convention in St. Louis, Missouri about her own experience. To invite Ms. Smith to speak to your section or at a community anti-trafficking event, contact Jody Rabhan in NCJW's Washington Office (Jody@ncjwdc.org).

Preparation for the Book Club Gathering:

- ▶ Remind participants to be prepared to discuss how the book relates to NCJW's mission.
- ▶ Encourage participants to bring statistics and information about sex trafficking in your community.
- ▶ Confirm the location and decide who is bringing snacks and beverages.

Discussion Questions to Consider:

- ▶ The author challenges the image of girls who are trafficked for sex. For example, the author also thought of herself as a "willing victim" — she did not self-identify as a victim and did not think of herself as needing help. How does this relate to or differ from your own conception of the children who are trafficked for sex?

- ▶ What do you think provoked the author to return to Atlantic City?
- ▶ Ms. Smith describes her aftercare experience. How did the after-care system fail her?
- ▶ Many of the warning signs that the author describes are often behaviors associated with typical teenagers. What cues should we look for to recognize that a child is vulnerable to a trafficker?
- ▶ What intervention might have helped the author's parents better communicate with her to help her?
- ▶ The author describes a culture that objectifies women, glamorizes prostitution, and uses sex to attain material goods or services or status. Ms. Smith says that unsupervised exposure to media, like MTV, is a big factor often missed in discussing the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Sometimes it's as simple as teaching a girl to value herself and say "no." How could parents, extended family, community members, your NCJW section, and you play a part in changing this? How may we equip our children to resist these messages of romantic love, glamour, and fame as the answer to everything?
- ▶ In the book there are suggestions for parents and educators to engage adolescent girls in ways meant to offer them alternatives to the media storm of hyper-sexualization, such as after-school activities and clubs. Do you agree these activities could help? Could you think of other ways to re-direct the thinking of vulnerable youth?
- ▶ The author offers several appendices on how teachers, counselors, law enforcement, and social service agencies may be enlisted to provide assistance. How may you or your NCJW section form a relationship with any of these organizations? For example, is there an agency in your community already doing this work? If there is, how could your section partner with the agency? If there isn't, what steps might you take to help these groups collaborate in your community? *For ideas and information visit my.ncjw.org/trafficking.*

Looking for more book club ideas? Visit <https://www.ncjw.org/act/action-resources/basics-sex-trafficking/>.

Questions? Contact Jody Rabhan in NCJW's Washington Office (Jody@ncjwdc.org).