iEmpathize 2013 Annual Report

iEmpathize
We are a 501c3 non-profit that combats crimes against children. Our mission is to eradicate child exploitation and engage culture in creative solutions. We work in prevention, intervention, aftercare and advocacy.

Exploitation:
Exploitation happens in diverse ways and child trafficking is one of the worst versions of it. Human trafficking is the fastest growing crime business in the world generating billions of dollars each year. Victims are exploited through force, fraud, or coercion.

Empathy:
The exploitation of our children is not just a criminal problem but also a cultural one. The long term solution requires a cultural shift from apathy, and even sympathy, to empathy. Sympathy is feeling badly for the suffering of others. Empathy compels us to engage the exploitation and move towards ending it.

Empowerment:
We empower youth, sectors of society, and regions most affected by the issue. We implement solutions in the field through strategic partnerships. We build tools in the form of documentaries, media based campaigns, curricula, and immersive experiences which enable communities to recognize and respond to exploitation.

The Annual Report will highlight the impact of our work in 2013, while also giving a snapshot of what lies ahead in 2014.

A girl smiles as she participates in a human trafficking prevention camp in Mexico City, Mexico.
Infographic: Our Mission and Work Explained

EXPLOITATION

[ex-ploi-ta·tion]: taking advantage of someone’s vulnerability to obtain personal gain.

Vulnerable children are specifically targeted for exploitation in a myriad of ways, and human trafficking is one of the worst forms. It is a multi-faceted issue that affects all aspects of society. Two key factors enable this injustice to develop and take root.

PUSH FACTORS
There are factors that a person or people group has little to no control over that can push them into vulnerability.

PULL FACTORS
Society creates pulls that impact the path of a person or people group. Some are positive. Some are negative.

Exploitation occurs when social pushes and pulls intersect in a negative way.

Our mission is to empower the kids, communities, industry sectors, and geographic regions most impacted by the issue.

iEmpathize believes that child exploitation and human trafficking are not just criminal problems - they are also social problems. Because of this, we must go beyond working to pass tougher legislation against trafficking. We must shift the sentiment of society.

An apathetic, and even sympathetic, society will do nothing more than feel badly for the suffering of others. An empathetic society on the other hand will be engaged, and work towards ending the suffering of others.
We have identified three spaces that best allow empathy to funnel into every reach of society. These are the home, work, and social spaces. By engaging individuals within these three spaces, iEmpathize is able to empower them to be alert for signs of human trafficking that may be intersecting with the normal rhythms of their lives.
OVERVIEW:
The root causes of vulnerability that lead to exploitation often begin in homes. Our efforts begin by enacting empathetic homes, but that then spreads into neighborhoods, communities, cities, and regions. An empathetic society is more educated, vigilant, and engaged in the issue. This is the setting in which child exploitation will end, and it can all begin in our homes.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE:
A group of women with a desire to promote social justice learned about the mission of iEmpathize and decided to see what they could do to help. Their first step was to host an event in their home where one of our staff members shared our vision and media. The women asked questions, discussed their skill sets, and decided to dive deeper. These women are now watching the area around their homes and apartments with a different lens. They are equipped to respond appropriately if they do encounter exploitation. Beyond that, these women have volunteered, contributed towards making our events successful, and have promoted our cause to their sphere of influence. This is one awesome small group of women that are expanding their influence exponentially in the fight against trafficking.

“Thankfully, many of our friends were inspired to get involved at a deeper level: Some of them have been inspired to give financially on a regular basis. Some have been inspired to contribute their talents to efforts like video production. Some have been advocates and have hosted events of their own.”

-Keely, Home Event Host

This year, we worked to refine the home event system, so it can be implemented anywhere in the US. We now have a step-by-step guide for individuals interested in opening their home to share more about the issue of human trafficking, how iEmpathize works to combat trafficking, and how they can help. We expect significant growth in the number of home events in 2014.
Home Space

It is becoming more apparent that traffickers are targeting middle and high school students as potential victims. iEmpathize has recognized this. In 2013 we continued to pilot our Empower Youth High School Curriculum in at-risk schools. Over 2,000 students, educators, and administrators have experienced our curriculum and are now empowered to recognize and effectively respond to instances of exploitation. We have received amazing feedback from each school that invited us to present. We are now creating a finalized version that will be distributed across the United States, as well as Mexico and Russia.

How does this fit into the Home Space? Schools are often a portal into the homes of students. The Empower Youth School Curriculum can be used as a part of on-site training provided by schools or incorporated into the foster care system that many vulnerable students are placed in. Students’ schools are often in their own neighborhoods, and using the school as a platform to disseminate this training into the hands of the community allows for a comprehensive response to exploitation in that area.

In order to eradicate child exploitation, we believe we must upstream the issue. This starts in our homes and with our kids.

“I am now more aware of my surroundings and I will watch out for those around me.”

-High school student at New America School’s Aurora campus

2,000+
The number of students, educators, and administrators that have experienced our curriculum and are now empowered to recognize and effectively respond to instances of exploitation.

At-risk students learn to recognize and respond to exploitive situations during an iEmpathize Empower Youth Curriculum Assembly.
OVERVIEW:
The Social Space is where people come together beyond their work and home. These areas frequently prove to be a potential intersection with vulnerability and victimization, as well as an opportunity for iEmpathize to engage culture in fun and innovative ways.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE:
This summer iEmpathize hosted our first golf tournament. Over 60 golfers came together to enjoy a beautiful day with friends and colleagues. The event raised over $7,500 in support of our ongoing projects, but the real win was creating an opportunity where men could be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

Throughout the year iEmpathize also hosted two poker tournaments, engaged multiple universities with Empathy Weeks, participated in a day at the Colorado State Capitol, presented at a Denver Public Schools anti-trafficking conference, interacted with numerous faith communities, presented at the Women in the World Summit, emceed the Stop Modern Slavery “Unbound” Walk in Washington D.C., along with many other amazing events.

“What I’ve learned over these years is that no matter what it is, you can make a difference. Just you! That blows my mind when I think that the world normally tells people they can’t do anything to change social injustice.”

-Cody, Social Event Volunteer

52,000+
The number of individuals we engaged directly through events.

129:
Events iEmpathize participated in during 2013
iEmpathize equips oil boom communities to proactively manage the negative social impact of an oil boom in their area.

OVERVIEW:
The spaces in which individuals work can naturally intersect with the issue of child exploitation. Engaging and educating schools, industries, governments, law enforcement agencies, and hotels among many others, is therefore fundamental to our mission. We must equip those who may come in contact with vulnerable and victimized children through their line of work to recognize and respond to instances of exploitation.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE
With the help of an iEmpathize expedition team we hosted a human trafficking prevention camp, Somos Uno, where we taught vulnerable kids to stay safe from the ploys of traffickers. Camp Somos Uno also provided survivors with leadership opportunities as they joined our team as camp leaders.

“My favorite part of this year was during the summer camp, Somos Uno, in Mexico City. The part that stood out the most occurred after a whole week working together side by side with vulnerable kids. One of the survivors [who is in ReIntegra’s program and was a team leader] stood up in front of everyone and shared her story, including being a victim of human trafficking. She explained to all of those kids that she was not that different from them, that something like that could happen to them and they need to be aware of this problem. But she also showed herself as a girl who had conquered that, and demonstrated how important it was that they can help others to not have to suffer something like what she went through.”

-Alejandro, Mexico City Hub

We finished filming a new media campaign called “Boom” that will be used to expose the social impacts that come along with oil and gas booms. In order to authenticate the issue for this piece one of our team members went under cover, working in the oil fields, for six months.

We participated in FBI and Law Enforcement trainings, continued to expand our presence in the trucking industry with our partner, Truckers Against Trafficking, presented at the Michigan State Capitol per the request of a state senator, and expanded our pilot support to include Connexion Mosaico, Sin Trata, and Rosi Orozco’s personal organization that fights trafficking in Mexico.
This year, in partnership with Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT), we attended the Mid America Trucking Show in Louisville, KY, the Great West Truck Show in Las Vegas, NV and the Great America Truck Show in Dallas, TX. Together over 100,000 industry professionals from Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Mexico, China, and all over the United States convened. iEmpathize shows up at these strategic industry intersections in order to engage the trucking industry. We install our multimedia trucking exhibit in a booth, loop our training film, hand out wallet cards, and ignite industry participation with TAT. We inspire a cultural shift towards empathy and train drivers to recognize and respond to exploitive situations at truck stops and on lots.

“iEmpathize has specifically strengthened the impact of TAT by the production of the TAT training DVD. It is one thing to talk to people about the existence of human trafficking, it is quite another to become educated about it through a media experience that not only communicates the level of the problem here in the United States via law enforcement interviews and a survivor’s firsthand story, but also effectively shows how human trafficking intersects with the trucking industry and what they can do about it. The training DVD iEmpathize created for TAT is so compelling that it immediately began opening doors in the trucking industry for TAT to form partnerships so that drivers and truck stop employees could be trained.”

-Kendis Paris, President of TAT, explaining the impact of our partnership with TAT.

Truckers are ranked as the 6th largest demographic reporting potential human trafficking cases to the national hotline number; they are also one of the fastest growing demographics in terms of calls to the hotline. Hundreds of calls have been made from over 30 states.

President of TAT, Kendis Paris, was recently nominated as an Ashoka Fellow, TAT was highlighted in Forbes and named one of the UN Global Initiative to Fight Trafficking’s Best 100 practices to combat human trafficking. The success of TAT is the success of iEmpathize. We are proud of this strategic partnership and seeing an increasing number of trucking companies and drivers empathize, engage, and make a call when they suspect exploitation.
OVERVIEW:
Safe homes can play an important and life changing role in a survivor's recovery. Primarily, we invest based on individual survivor needs, but vetted aftercare programs receive ongoing support in diverse ways including funding, consulting services and media production. We strategically select each of our after-care partners based upon their methods and evidential outcomes, including recidivism rates, provisions for transitioning-out, and best practices.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE
Our priority is to prevent child exploitation and trafficking from ever happening, but survivors have immediate needs that also must be met. That’s where the Survivor Fund comes in. Through the Survivor Fund we directly finance the needs of survivors regardless of placement. In the US, the Survivor Fund addresses the gaps in the US System. For a variety of reasons, safe homes are easier to establish in other countries. Due to the requirements of Social Services, the legalities involved in serving minors, and the sheer lack of beds available, very few survivors are being placed in safe homes in the U.S. Instead, victims are placed in a myriad of scenarios including foster care, group homes and detention centers. Funding both emergencies and opportunities, the Survivor Fund provides an innovative system for social workers, safe home directors and victims specialists to request funds to meet the urgent, tangible needs of the survivors they serve.

We are currently investing in survivors primarily in Colorado, Southern California, Mexico City and Tijuana with future expansion to the US cities struggling the most with child exploitation.

In Mexico City, iEmpathize supports Camino A Casa, which provides aftercare and restoration for up to 25 girls ages 8 to 19. We also support ReIntegra, an aftercare program for girls ages 18-25. We help meet immediate needs and emergencies, fund opportunities and collaborate on shifting culture from apathy to sympathy to empathy through telling the stories of survivors in a dignifying way.

Examples of needs and opportunities our Survivors Fund met in 2013 include: tuition, transportation to treatment, educational outings, and therapy. 2013 aftercare support and collaborations include: the Rocky Mountain Innocence Lost Task Force, Saving Innocence, Red Binacional de Corezones, Camino a Casa and ReIntegra.
OVERVIEW
iEmpathize is committed to moving people towards empathy. Developing new media is a key strategy we use to achieve just that. This year, we completed a truly stunning amount of new media campaigns and we created two new empathy exhibits.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE
In Mexico City, we produced an exhibit for the use of our aftercare partners, collaborators and team. The multi media empathy exhibit has been installed on universities, hosted by faith communities, and has been featured at strategic counter trafficking events for the Mexican Senate and other government entities and offices. In Southern California, the empathy exhibit we produced for our aftercare partners, collaborators and team was featured at the Tijuana marathon, in faith community and university events.

We also expanded our aftercare support to include Saving Innocence in Los Angeles and Red Binacional de Corazones in Tijuana. We produced a media piece for each program, enabling them to tell their story, raising awareness and funds for their aftercare programs. We also completed a joint media piece called One Border which educates, empowers and enables the public to recognize the overlapping ties human trafficking has along both sides of the Southern California/Tijuana border.

We produced two sector specific media pieces in 2013: Boom, a media piece focused on empowering oil industry and oil boom communities, and a new piece for the trucking industry and our partner, Truckers Against Trafficking. We launched Be Relentless, an epic new undertaking that will undergo filming in 2014. Our media is working: more and more people are empathizing and engaging. We are excited to continue that pattern moving into 2014!

$20,000.00 =
The cost of the media pieces and exhibits that iEmpathize produced for our partners in Mexico City and Southern California.

Our media reaches audiences even outside of the framework of our partners. In 2013 iEmpathize media was used by major media outlets such as PBS, it was also featured at events such as the Indy 500, and was used in all public counter trafficking trainings by the Department of Transportation.
OVERVIEW
2013 was a huge year of internal growth for iEmpathize. We launched our expansion strategy through starting Hubs in Los Angeles and Mexico City. We believe that our Hub strategy is simple, replicable, efficient and effective at empowering the kids, communities, regions, and sectors - and the spaces within those sectors - most affected by exploitation to intercept the issue when they come face to face with it.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE
Besides launching two Hubs, we opened three offices-in Boulder, Los Angeles and Mexico City. Our team also more than doubled in the number of relentless empathizers giving their days to combat child exploitation. Our Hub locations are strategically selected. We focus on the cities where human trafficking and exploitation is happening the most, while also focusing on cities that will have a regional impact beyond the zip codes of their city. Our LA Hub works in multiple cities and zip codes, including parts of Nevada, Arizona, California and northern Mexico. Our Boulder/Denver Hub is responsible for the Rocky Mountain region and the midwest. Our Mexico City Hub has an impact on a local and national level.

The expansion of our Hubs is focused on the cities and regions most impacted by child exploitation issues. We anticipate this growth and expansion to continue in 2014.

9:
The number of empathizers that joined the iE team full time in Denver, Boulder, Los Angeles and Mexico City

$10,000.00:
The investment iEmpathize made in media production for our Hubs.
A lot of important projects are on the horizon for iEmpathize in 2014. A new training film for our partner, Truckers Against Trafficking, will premier. Our film campaign, Boom, will start making an impact in oil boom communities across the States. Our curriculum for high school students will be filmed and turned into a product that can be used all over the nation. Denver will get its own media tool demonstrating the unique problem of trafficking in the Mile High City. iEmpathize will also produce our most ambitious project yet: an epic documentary telling the bi-national stories of victims and their advocates from Mexico City to Washington D.C. The film will feature Norma Bastidas – mother, advocate, and ultra-athlete – as she completes the world’s longest triathlon as an act of passion, shattering a world record and human trafficking along with it. 2014 will be a year to remember. Become a monthly donor, volunteer, or host a home space event. Whatever you do, please join us in making 2014 a year of empathy for kids and thank you for making 2013 our most incredible year yet.

Brad Riley
Found and President of iEmpathize