



No TO CHILD SEX TOURISM.

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TRANSAT SUPPORTS BEYOND BORDERS ECPAT CANADA, THE COUNTRY'S VOICE AGAINST THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN WORLDWIDE.

Child sex tourism is a grave social issue. As a leading international tour operator, Transat is duty-bound to combat this abhorrent phenomenon, which affects the lives of hundreds of thousands of children and teens around the world.

To that end, Transat has partnered with the organizations Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada to help lead the fight against the sexual exploitation of children. It has taken steps to raise awareness among its employees, customers and partners of the seriousness of this social issue within the travel and tourism industry. It has also adopted internal policies to guide the actions of employees who could be witnesses to situations of abuse.

WHAT IS BEYOND BORDERS ECPAT CANADA?

Beyond Borders is the Canadian arm of ECPAT International, a global network of volunteers in 75 countries dedicated to defending the right of all children to live free of aggression and sexual exploitation. ECPAT stands for "End Child Prostitution And Trafficking."

WHAT IS CHILD SEX TOURISM?

Child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism is the sexual exploitation of children by travelers, who generally make use of tourism industry services and facilities to make contact with their victims and engage in such acts.

WHAT IS MEANT BY COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN?

Commercial sexual exploitation of children means sexual abuse of minors by adults where remuneration, in cash, gifts or food, is made to the child or a third party. Often, the children support their family with the profits of prostitution and, trapped in this cycle, they have difficulty escaping it. There are four types of commercial sexual exploitation of children: trafficking and sale of children, pornography, prostitution and sex tourism.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN?

Estimates worldwide indicate that sexual exploitation devastates the lives of hundreds of thousands of children and teens, a majority of whom are girls. These children are denied their fundamental rights to dignity, safety, health and education, among others. The money or goods and services given in exchange for sex does not necessarily wind up in the hands of the children; it often goes to third parties (middlemen, networks, or even parents) who profit from this business arrangement.

TOURISTS WHO EXPLOIT CHILDREN ARE ALL PEDOPHILES.

Myth. While some sex tourists are attracted to children and are ill-intentioned from the start, others simply succumb to temptation when an opportunity arises. The latter are known as situational offenders: people who would most likely never dare exploit a child under normal circumstances, but take advantage of a business or leisure trip to have an “exotic” experience, conveniently ignoring the rules they would otherwise respect in their country of origin. Some are under the impression that their actions are tolerated under the laws and customs of the country they are visiting.

PEDOPHILES ARE THE MOST FREQUENT KIND OF SEX TOURIST.

Myth. The so-called situational offenders make up the largest group. They can be men or women, married or single, and come from all socio-economic backgrounds. This is why all travellers must be made aware of the consequences of child sexual exploitation. By forcing them to reflect on the risks of their actions, their behaviour can be influenced.

WEALTHY NATIONS ARE IMMUNE TO THE PROBLEM OF CHILD SEX TOURISM.

Myth. There are child and teen prostitutes in all countries, even rich ones. Poor countries are more affected by the problem, however, including many emerging and developing regions of the world, such as Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe and Africa.

SEX TOURISTS OPERATE OPENLY.

Reality. Sex tourism is not necessarily hidden. It is therefore quite easy for someone to contact “suppliers” of children. These may be hotel doormen, bartenders, taxi drivers, tour guides, unscrupulous restaurant servers and even humanitarian workers, family members or other children.

SEX TOURISTS WHO ABUSE CHILDREN RUN FEW RISKS.

Myth. Tourists who engage in sexual activity with children are committing a crime, and are subject to grave consequences. Besides seeing their reputations destroyed, aggressors now face increasingly severe prison terms. There is also the danger of contracting sexually transmitted diseases and of developing psychological problems related to feelings of guilt.

SEX TOURISTS CAN'T BE TRIED IN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES FOR THE CRIME OF ABUSING A CHILD WHILE TRAVELLING ABROAD.

Myth. Some 40 countries, including Canada, France, the U.K. and the Netherlands, have passed extraterritorial legislation targeting sex tourists. This means that the courts in Canada can prosecute a Canadian citizen for a sexual offence perpetrated against a child in another country.

Myths vs. Reality