Feds rescue 69 child   
prostitutes; bust 99   
pimps and hundreds   
of other adults in   
nationwide sting

BY [Philip Caulfield](http://ezurl.co/75c1)  
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GettyFederal agents busted more than 880 adults in a   
three-day sting that focused on breaking up child   
prostitution rings across the U.S.

A three-day federal crackdown on child prostitution   
across the country busted 99 pimps and led to the   
rescue of 69 teenage prostitutes in 30 states and the   
District of Columbia, the FBI announced.

The FBI said federal agents and local and state   
police rounded up more than 880 adults on charges   
related to the sexual exploitation of minors, human   
trafficking and prostitution activities.  
  
The children and pimps were rounded up during a   
72-hour nationwide sweep of 40 cities known as   
Operation Cross Country V, an annual crackdown   
targeting child prostitution as part of the Innocence   
Lost National Initiative, the FBI said.  
  
More than 2,100 police and law enforcement   
officials were involved in the operation.  
  
The rescued children were between 12-and- 17-  
years-old. Twenty-four children, nearly a third of   
those rescued, were found in the greater Seattle   
region, the largest group to be found in a single   
city.  
  
The Seattle area has led the nation in number of   
juvenile prostitutes saved for the past three years,   
an FBI spokesman told local radio station [KPLU](http://ezurl.co/62b51).    
  
FBI executive assistant director Shawn Henry told [The Associated Press](http://ezurl.co/62b61) that child prostitutes are often   
recruited by loose knit groups that specifically seek   
out young drug users or scared runaways.  
  
"There are groups of people out there preying on   
naive kids who don't have a good sense of the way   
of the world," Henry said. "Sometimes there's a threat   
of force, threats of violence. A lot these kids operate   
out of a sense of fear."  
  
As part of the operation, Feds scoured truck stops,   
casinos, seedy city streets, websites and chat   
boards looking for prostitutes, pimps and Johns.   
  
Seattle wasn't the only major city left red-faced after   
the nationwide sting. Police and agents in the   
Chicago area busted 39 adults and six pimps and   
rescued at least three underage girls, the [Chicago](http://ezurl.co/62b71)

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[Sun-Times](http://ezurl.co/62b71) reported.  
  
In the Bay Area, police and agents busted 72 pimps,   
prostitutes and Johns and recovered three children,   
the [Contra Costa Times](http://ezurl.co/62b81) reported.  
  
Authorities are working with the National Center for   
Missing and Exploited Children to confirm their   
identities, the FBI said.  
  
Nearly 1,250 child prostitutes have been located   
and removed from prostitution since 2003, when   
the FBI and the Justice Department launched the   
Innocence Lost National Initiative.  
  
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