

THE NEW HEROES

STUDENT VIDEO HANDOUT

Daughter Schools in Thailand featuring Sompop Jantraka

"In Thailand, 25 percent of the national economy is based on child prostitution." - Video

Sompop Jantraka and his wife have made it their life's work to rescue girls from the sex trade industry in Thailand. They provide education and social services for young girls, to show them alternatives to prostitution. They also operate a halfway house for young women trying to get out of the trade and get back to their home countries. Since 1989, they have worked with about 2,000 girls and young women.

This is a story about choices. Sompop expands options for girls who are growing up without opportunities. He shows families that they have other choices than to sell off their daughters. With education, he says, the girls "recognize themselves and see that they have choices."

In watching the video you will hear that one quarter of the country's economy is based on child prostitution. What do you think this means?

1. The video cites three groups who are responsible for child prostitution. What are the three groups?
2. Poor families in Thailand are also emigrating to the big cities, far away from home. What are they seeking in Thailand? Why are they "squatters?"
3. At what age does Sompop say girls are "lost" to his help?
4. Briefly describe everyday life for the villagers profiled in the video. What are some of the issues they face?
5. The video says girls are simply "lost" from the villages - that you don't see girls over about age nine. Is this similar to other events in history? Explain.
6. Consider the fact that the Thai government does not support Sompop's efforts in helping girls make better choices. Why doesn't the government wish to help?
7. The school profiled in the video creates a safe haven for girls. What do the girls gain? What taboo has he helped eliminate?