

Claims of exploitation by police, social workers

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Child prostitutes have told an Auckland researcher they have been exploited by people who were meant to help them - including police.

Natalie Thorburn spoke to ten sex workers, aged 12 to 16, as part of her Masters of Social Work course at the University of Auckland.

She said three of the children claimed they were pressed to provide sexual services by people in social services or the police, who took advantage of their vulnerable positions.

However, she said they would not press charges.

"They know that they can contact me for help, but at the same time they will never seek prosecution for any of the offences committed against them because they simply have too big a distrust of the legal system and authority."

Police said they were not aware of the allegations, and would welcome more information so a proper assessment could be made.

The Ministry of Social Development said it would be impossible to comment on the claims without further details.

Article Link - <http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/276730/claims-of-exploitation-by-police,-social-workers>