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## **Campaign to fight child sex trade**

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AT LEAST 1.8 million children are exploited in the global sex trade each year, according to the International Labour Organisation.

In a bid to raise awareness and funds to combat the issue, health and beauty retailer The Body Shop has partnered Ecpat International - a global network of grassroots organisations which combat child exploitation - to set in motion a new global initiative.

The three-year campaign, Stop Sex Trafficking of Children and Young People, was launched yesterday at Ann Siang Road.

From today till the middle of next year, Body Shop outlets will retail 'Soft Hands Kind Heart', a special-edition hand cream priced at \$19.90. All profits will go towards Ecpat, Unifem Singapore and the Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics which caters to migrant communities here. The retail chain hopes to raise \$80,000 from the sale.

This will go towards educational workshops, projects helping young victims, and research.

While there have been no arrests so far for sex trafficking here, a 2005 study by the Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, based in the United States, has linked tourism in areas such as Thailand and Batam to child sex trafficking.

'We hope this campaign will give all of us the chance to inspire real change on an issue which has been largely hidden from the world,' said Ms Josephine Chow, general manager of The Body Shop Singapore.



A campaign to put a stop to sexual exploitation  
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THE Body Shop has launched a campaign to Stop Sex Trafficking of Children and Young People (Stop), across its network of stores worldwide.

In Singapore, the movement kicks off today at all its stores here. Besides raising awareness, the aim is to raise funds for vulnerable or exploited children, and inspire decision-makers to offer children better protection.

Customers can chip in - with every purchase of a special edition Soft Hands Kind Heart Hand Cream. Priced at \$19.90, all profits will go to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (Unifem) Singapore and the Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics.

The money will fund workshops to create public awareness, research into the trafficking situation in Singapore, and a grassroots project helping young people who have been trafficked and at-risk children in South Vietnam.

Stop is part of a global initiative to stop the sexual exploitation of an estimated 1.8 million young people a year. In South-east Asia alone, more than a million children are exploited in the commercial sex industry.