Article of the Week 9/7/15

# [Time to Get Children Out of Factories and Into Schools](http://thecnnfreedomproject.blogs.cnn.com/2014/08/31/time-to-get-children-out-of-factories-and-into-schools/)

Source: CNN.com By Nina Smith, August 31, 2014

Editor’s Note: Nina Smith is the founding CEO of [*GoodWeave International*](http://www.goodweave.org/home.php), a Washington DC-based non-profit organization that works to stop child labor in the carpet industry.

In a small village in central Afghanistan, 13-year-old Basma is about to start her first day of school –- ever. She’s a world away from the millions of western children who are now heading back to their classrooms for a new school year. Only weeks before, Basma was found working on a carpet loom. Her weaving fingers already showed signs of arthritis from holding tools since the age of nine, tying knots for 14 hours a day. She was rescued by GoodWeave, an international organization I head in the U.S. that seeks to eliminate child labor in carpet manufacturing.

According to the International Labour Organization, there are 168 million child laborers like Basma around the world, forced to sacrifice their youth and their education. Many of these boys and girls manufacture the very items that American consumers will have purchased this Labor Day weekend in anticipation of the new academic year –- as well as other parents across the world.

The U.S. National Retail Federation estimates that parents will spend $26.5 billion this back-to-school shopping season. Some of their purchases will include clothes stitched in Bangladeshi factories not far from Rana Plaza, the factory complex that collapsed last year, killing more than 1,100 garment workers [including some who were underage](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/preliminary_findings_actionaid_rana_plaza_anniversary_survey.pdf).

But a significant share of these dollars [will go on electronics](http://research.nrffoundation.com/Default.aspx?pg=9037#.VADdTVHD_s1), including devices from Apple, which has been working to tackle child labor in its supply chain in China. The causes of child **servitude** are not straightforward and neither are the solutions. Half of all child slaves are toiling in Asia, in poverty-stricken regions where government-funded school systems are broken, violence against women and children prevails, rule of law is non-existent and caste and economic discrimination are so intractable that even some victims believe their destiny is to serve those “above” them.

But the situation is improving. The total number of child laborers declined by about 22% between 2008 and 2012, from 215 million. A range of solutions supported by governments, corporations, NPOs and consumers have made a difference. For example, after Apple’s manufacturing process was exposed in 2012, the company improved its factory monitoring program in China, requiring outside monitors to inspects its suppliers’ factories. Apple began publishing a list of it’s suppliers and working with Chinese labor rights advocates. It joined the Fair Labor Association, and has worked closely with the nonprofit Verité to tackle labor trafficking, a common problem in overseas labor recruitment.

In California, the state passed the Transparency in Supply Chains Act in 2010. The law applies to any manufacturer or retailer doing business in the state with annual worldwide gross receipts over $100 million. It requires them to publicly disclose whether and how they are addressing human trafficking and slavery in their supply chains. A similar bill was introduced to the U.S. Congress by Representative Carolyn Maloney, a New York state Democrat, this summer. Supply chain transparency laws empower consumers to make responsible choices, and so do strategies like product certification.

Basma’s story illustrates this. The rugs she was weaving were destined for a U.S. company that is part of the GoodWeave certification program. The company tasked GoodWeave with ensuring that no child was **exploited** anywhere in its supply chain. They exposed their entire network of informal rug producers to GoodWeave’s rigorous system of continuous random inspections. Basma was found during one such inspection. In exchange for this supply chain transparency, the company’s rugs bear the GoodWeave symbol, a signal to consumers of the products’ ethical origins.

But for Basma and girls across Afghanistan, where the [female literacy rate is a **dismal** 12%](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=CEDAW/C/AFG/1-2&Lang=E) according to the U.N., and the Taliban still harasses schoolgirls, the stakes of holding a pencil are high. For the many activists around the world dedicated to ending child servitude and achieving universal primary education, getting children back to school is not only for September, but a year-round struggle.

To honor the 168 million girls and boys who are still not able to pick up that pencil, GoodWeave is releasing a three-minute video called [Stand with Sanju](http://www.goodweave.org/sanju), about one Nepalese girl, rescued from slavery in a carpet factory, who became the first person in her family to go to school. It is part of a global campaign that offers a range of concrete ways citizens can Stand with Sanju and help eliminate child labor –- by shopping responsibly, supporting legislation and more.

1. The underlined sentence contains a grammar error. Correct the error by writing the sentence correctly in the space below.

2. What is the central idea of the text? (You need four sentences for credit.)

3. What is a “supply chain”? Describe this concept in your own words using text evidence to explain.

4. Explain what “shopping responsibly” (in the last paragraph) means.

5. Use context clues to explain what the word **servitude** means (4th paragraph on page 1). **DO NOT USE THE DICTIONARY!** You must clearly explain how context clues help you determine the meaning of the word.

6. Use context clues to explain what the word **exploited** means (2nd paragraph on page 2). **DO NOT USE THE DICTIONARY!** You must clearly explain how context clues help you determine the meaning of the word.

7. Use context clues to explain what the word **dismal** means (3rd paragraph on page 2). **DO NOT USE THE DICTIONARY!** You must clearly explain how context clues help you determine the meaning of the word.

8. Create a multiple choice question. Circle the correct answer.