



# PROJECT PROTECT OUR CHILDREN

**DENISE M. MEARS**  
Founder & Executive Director  
Project Protect Our Children



# PROJECT PROTECT OUR CHILDREN



We are dedicated to preventing child sex trafficking, exploitation and abuse through proactive community engagement, preventative educational programs, awareness and empowerment opportunities.

## MISSION

## VISION

Our vision is a world where every childhood is free from predators, exploitation and abuse.



# HOLISTIC COMMUNITY APPROACH - ENGAGE, EDUCATE, AND EMPOWER



**Students**



**Safe  
and  
Protected  
Child**



**School Staff**



**Businesses**



**Community Members**



**Parents & Caregivers**



**ACTION + MEANS + PURPOSE =**

# **HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

## **ACTION**

Induces  
Recruits  
Harbors  
Transports  
Provides  
or  
Obtains

## **MEANS\***

Force  
Fraud  
or  
Coercion

## **PURPOSE**

Commercial Sex  
(sex trafficking)  
or  
Labor/Services  
(labor trafficking)



**ACTION + MEANS + PURPOSE =**

# **HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

## **ACTION**

Induces  
Recruits  
Harbors  
Transports  
Provides  
or  
Obtains

## **MEANS\***

**MINORS &  
INDIVIDUALS WITH  
DISABILITIES**  
induced into  
commercial sex are  
human trafficking  
victims, regardless  
if force, fraud, or  
coercion is present

## **PURPOSE**

Commercial Sex  
(sex trafficking)  
or  
Labor/Services  
(labor trafficking)



# SUPPLY = DEMAND

HIGH \$\$  
PROFIT

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS A MARKET DRIVEN CRIMINAL INDUSTRY

Traffickers perceive there to be little risk or deterrence to affect their operations. **High profit is worth the risk.**

Contributing factors are lack of training and awareness in:

- Government
- Law Enforcement
- Medical Community
- Education System
- Community



LOW RISK

As well as social blaming of victims and ineffective laws.

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1-888-373-7888



# THE PROBLEM



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# THE FACTS

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS THE FASTEST-GROWING  
CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE WORLDWIDE.**

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS THE SECOND-LARGEST  
CRIMINAL INDUSTRY IN THE WORLD.**

**ONLINE RECRUITMENT IS THE NUMBER ONE METHOD  
USED TO LURE INDIVIDUALS INTO  
SEX TRAFFICKING GLOBALLY.**

United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking Annual Report 2022

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APPROXIMATELY  
**234,000**

WORKERS ARE VICTIMS OF  
LABOR TRAFFICKING

IN TEXAS

THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY

**313,000** VICTIMS OF  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING

IN TEXAS

THERE ARE CURRENTLY AN ESTIMATED

**79,000**

MINORS AND YOUTH

VICTIMS OF **SEX**   
TRAFFICKING IN TEXAS

MINOR AND YOUTH SEX TRAFFICKING COSTS THE  
STATE OF TEXAS APPROXIMATELY

**\$6.6**  
BILLION

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Inspector General, 2015. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Inspector General, 2015. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Inspector General, 2015. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Inspector General, 2015. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Inspector General, 2015.

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**2024 TO 2025**  
**156 % INCREASE**  
**ONLINE ENTICEMENT OF A MINOR**  
**1.4 MILLION REPORTS - CYBERTIPLINE**



“

**55%** OF DOMESTIC  
MINOR VICTIMS OF  
SEX TRAFFICKING  
REPORTED THAT THEY  
FIRST MET THEIR  
TRAFFICKER VIA TEXT,  
WEBSITE, OR SOCIAL  
MEDIA APP.

*THORN Survivor Insights The Role of  
Technology in Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking*



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1-800-777-7000



THE MAJORITY  
OF SURVEY  
RESPONDENTS  
SHARED THAT  
THE GROOMING  
PROCESS TOOK  
**LESS THAN  
4 MONTHS**

2018 THORN SURVEY

**42%**  
SAID THAT THE  
TRAFFICKER  
EARNED THEIR  
TRUST WITHIN  
**1 MONTH**  
OF MEETING

2018 THORN SURVEY

**88%**  
SAID ONE WAY  
THE TRAFFICKER  
EARNED THEIR  
TRUST WAS BY  
TELLING THEM  
HE WOULD TAKE  
CARE OF THEM

2018 THORN SURVEY

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# STRANGER

# DANGER

# RELATIONSHIPS

(NEW OR OLD)

- Family
- Friends
- Romantic relationships
- Employer/employee relationship
- Teacher/student
- Coach

- Neighbors
- Babysitters
- Friends of friends/family
- Faith communities/ Faith leaders

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# OUR PROGRAMS



## YOUTH PREVENTION

- **Youth Action Board**
- Engaged, Educated, and Empowered Youth - Human Trafficking and Social Media Safety Presentation for Youth
- Human Trafficking, Social Media, and Internet Safety for Parents, Guardians, Caretakers, and Community Stakeholders
- **E3 Professional Development Workshops**





**WE CANNOT ALWAYS BUILD  
THE FUTURE FOR OUR YOUTH,  
BUT WE CAN BUILD OUR YOUTH  
FOR THE FUTURE.**

Franklin D. Roosevelt

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Scan to  
learn more!



**GROWING THE YOUTH-DRIVEN ANTI-TRAFFICKING MOVEMENT**

# **STUDENT-LED/STUDENT-DRIVEN ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING CLUB PROGRAM**

**Research-Based, Survivor-Informed, and Trauma-Informed.  
Available at NO COST, with a Campus Sponsor Stipend.**

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# STUDENT OUTCOMES & OPPORTUNITIES



DEFINE & IDENTIFY  
HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING



RECOGNIZE RED  
FLAGS &  
GROOMING



ASSESS & AVOID  
VULNERABILITIES



ACTIVELY ENGAGE  
IN SOCIAL MEDIA  
SAFETY



UNDERSTAND HOW  
TO REPORT  
CONCERNS



BUILD LEADERSHIP  
AND COMMUNICATION  
SKILLS



EMPOWER TO  
PROBLEM SOLVE AND  
ADDRESS GAPS

ABILITY TO EARN THE  
PRESIDENTIAL  
VOLUNTEER SERVICE  
AWARD



ABILITY TO EARN SCHOLARSHIPS

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OUR **2024-2025** YAB MEMBERS  
SPREAD HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
AWARENESS TO

*over* **32,715**

OF THEIR PEERS, SCHOOL STAFF, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS



# ENGAGE EDUCATE EMPOWER

 Project Protect Our Children

The E3 Professional Development program is designed to Engage, Educate, and Empower youth who are at high risk for or have faced experiences of trafficking, exploitation, and abuse, are entangled in the complexities of the justice system or foster care system, and may be experiencing homelessness through a series of workshops, speakers, and skill-building activities. We aim to provide youth with the tools, knowledge, and connections they need to make positive choices and build a brighter future for themselves.



# OUR PROGRAMS



## PROFESSIONAL TRAININGS

- Human Trafficking Training for Educators, Administration, School Support Staff, Youth-Serving Professionals, and Community Stakeholders
- Human Trafficking 101, Curated Professional Trainings for a Myriad of Professions





**MOST OF THE  
DOMESTIC  
MINOR SEX  
TRAFFICKING  
VICTIMS  
SURVEYED WERE  
ATTENDING  
SCHOOL WHILE  
BEING  
TRAFFICKED.**

*THORN 2018 Survivor Insights The Role of Technology  
in Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking*

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# OUR PROGRAMS



## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Leveraging Your Company In The Fight To End Human Trafficking
- Human Trafficking 101 For Every Employee - 26-minute training module in English and Spanish



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# HUMAN TRAFFICKING 101 FOR EVERY EMPLOYEE

Project Protect Our Children's 26-minute modules in English and Spanish provide general knowledge every employee should know about Human Trafficking, **closing one of the most significant identified gaps in the prevention and identification of human trafficking within our communities.**



of respondents **increased in knowledge and understanding** in one or more of the following areas based on their pre and post-test results:

- the definition of human trafficking
- how traffickers recruit their victims
- red flags of human trafficking
- how to report suspected human trafficking



of respondents **answered all the questions correctly** at the end of the training.

Questions checked for understanding on:  
identifying the means and methods used by traffickers, identifying tactics and tools of traffickers, recognizing red flags of labor and sex trafficking, and how to report suspected human trafficking.



Pre-test results showed that 30% of the respondents had **no knowledge of human trafficking prior to the training**, with post-test results reflecting a **100% knowledge increase**, resulting in respondents feeling confident that they could:

- define human trafficking,
- knew how to report human trafficking,
- knew how traffickers recruit their victims and
- knew the signs of human trafficking.

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# HUMAN TRAFFICKING 101 FOR EVERY EMPLOYEE



We started Human Trafficking training last year [2021] in the first quarter for our existing employees and present the training in all new hire orientations. I hear comments such as, "It really could be anyone" or simply, "I didn't know." I personally am glad our Company has partnered with Project Protect, Our Children. It raises awareness for our employees to share with their families and their communities.



*Michèle Rivers, Director of Human Resources, Palmer Logistics*





# CONTACT US



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