

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Over the years in the areas hosting the Super Bowl there has been an increase in human trafficking. In a little over 300 days, the Super Bowl will be played in New Jersey. While the teams will begin their effort starting in September, preparations are well underway to prepare the stadium and area for the event. The situation beginning in earnest here in New Jersey has been going on for many years in the US and the world – **Human Trafficking**.

A coalition of community and professional groups including the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education spearheaded by the Attorney General who is coordinating the effort to combat the evils of human trafficking which mostly involves the use of women for illegal activities but also includes those treated as slaves for labor and other purposes. Fifty percent of the victims are under 18 and as young as 9. That is why it is incumbent on schools to be alert to the situation and educate students of the evils. Many in the US and New Jersey believe it is a situation far away from us, but it is the belief that with the Super Bowl in 2014 the crime will become even bigger in New Jersey.

Some facts for staff in schools to know include:

What is Human Trafficking?

Human Trafficking is a form of modern day slavery. It is a rapidly growing criminal industry second only to drug dealing and equal in scope to arms dealing. Human Trafficking involves the use of force, fraud and/or coercion for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor. Contrary to popular belief under federal and state law, Human Trafficking does not require movement of people across borders.

There are many millions of slaves worldwide. The U.S. State Department estimates that 600,000-800,000 people are trafficked in the United States annually. New Jersey is a prime location for Human Trafficking because it is a major national and international transportation and shipping corridor.

Who Are the Victims?

Human Trafficking is a hidden crime that is seriously under-reported. Within the U.S., both citizens and foreign nationals – women, men, and children – can fall prey to traffickers who may threaten their lives and those of their families, isolate victims and/or make it impossible for them to escape. Many victims trafficked into the U.S. do not speak or understand English and are unable to communicate to seek rescue.

A number of bills have been passed and introduced in New Jersey and at the federal level to combat this evil and schools can assist by making students, staff and parents knowledgeable of the crime and be alert to potential victims by noting absences, strangers and comments or even rumors.

For more information:

Update on Legislation - <http://www.house.gov/chris-smith/>

Report Suspicious Activity - 1-888-373-7888

Project Gold – End Slavery - www.projectstaygold.org

Training Programs and Victims Support – www.polarisproject.org

To Join the New Jersey Coalition crc@ujcnj.org or call 973-929-3087