



"A Community Response to Human Trafficking"

The Safety Net

June 2015

Human Trafficking and the Law in NC

We in North Carolina are fortunate that we have realistic and protective measures that are in place to support victims of human trafficking when they are discovered. This occurs through the passage of a law in our state in 2013 known as the "Safe Harbor" Law. According to Partners Against Trafficking Humans (PATH) in NC, the "NC Safe Harbor legislation required rewriting the prostitution statutes, including higher penalties:

- Solicitation of prostitution and/or patronizing a prostituted person (engaging in sexual acts) is now a felony offense, except when first offense is with an adult victim.
- Promoting prostitution (pimping and facilitating) is now a felony offense in all cases.
- The level of felony offense is now graduated when victim of the offense is a minor under age of 18 or a profoundly mentally disabled person.

Safe Harbor Legislation includes stronger protection for victims:

- All minors, under the age of 18, are protected from prosecution for charges of prostitution
- Consent of a minor, under the age of 18, cannot be used as a defense
- Mistake of age cannot be used as a defense

- Prostitution offense can be erased from a human trafficking victim's record
- First offender program created for prostitution offense committed by an adult
- Requires offender to compensate their victims, according to the Fair Wages Act."

Victims who are rescued and recovered from human trafficking can now legally enjoy benefits that many others across our country do not experience!



We who fight human trafficking need to be aware of this critical piece of legislation and communicate this to others who are in need of the rights and benefits that are now accorded to rescued victims of trafficking in our state!

Getting The Word Out



SAFE presented our message of prevention and reporting of trafficking at Braswell Memorial Library on Thursday, June 26, 2015, as part of the Library's "Heroes" Program Series. A frank and intense discussion was held with the participants, most of whom were in high school and college, about the realities of grooming and the need to report whenever someone sees something that does not seem right. SAFE is grateful for the opportunity to reach out, and thanks LaKeshia Joyner and the staff of Braswell Memorial Library for their cooperation and kindness in making this presentation possible!



PLEASE NOTE!

SAFE is planning a conference for next year! The Conference is slated for Friday, April 8, 2016 at Church On The Rise. More information will be coming soon!

Just In Case....

Important numbers to know!

Sergeant Wayne Morris, RMPD (252) 343-3173

National Hotline (to get help) 1-888-373-7888



SAFE Executive Board

Kenny Sumner, SAFE Director

Brooke Mickelson, Eastpointe

Kim Hickerson, Eastpointe

Tobie Larson, SAFE Development

Sonya Leonard, DJJ

We meet monthly to discuss issues and activities of SAFE, and to make plans for future outreaches and events. Please contact any of us if you have any ideas you would like to share so that we can have you join us at one of our monthly get-togethers!

My Turn...



USE YOUR VOICE! SPEAK UP!

If you see something that doesn't look right, say something! Call Sgt. Morris at 252-343-3173 to report anything that looks suspicious to you. You never know when one tip could lead to someone's freedom!

“SAFE” THE DATE!



SAFE has changed to a **new** meeting format. We now meet once every quarter. The next SAFE meeting is **Thursday, October 22, at 10:00 a.m.** at Eastpointe! Hope you're there!

This week, I had the pleasure of presenting our message of prevention, identification, and reporting of human trafficking to a group of young ladies, all in high school and college. I had no idea prior to that night who would be attending the presentation and how the evening would go.

To my surprise, these young ladies had a LOT to say about sexuality, about freedom, about safety, and about trafficking. These girls knew that their friends at school were sexually active, had been abused, and were vulnerable. They realized that they themselves could not afford to be where their parents did not want them to be or know they were. The girls communicated to me that their mothers require them to have their own friends come over to THEIR house, so that their mothers would know they were safe.

What these girls did NOT know was how sneaky, clever, and manipulative traffickers were in their sick attempt to groom victims. They had NO IDEA that traffickers deliberately hang out at the mall, at Burger King, at the bowling alley, or anywhere young people like to frequent. They were very quiet when I shared with them how traffickers operate when they are targeting a potential victim.

So I walked away pleased at how fortunate these girls were to have parents in their lives who CARED where they were and what they were doing at all times. That is a relief to know that! I am also pleased that these girls were now aware of other dangers that are lurking out there in their daily lives, even at school, where some girls posing as new “best friends” are actually seeking to groom the girls themselves and convince them to spend the night at their house so that they can be trafficked without the parents ever having a clue about what was going on...

We have a LOT of work to do!

Kenny Sumner, Director

