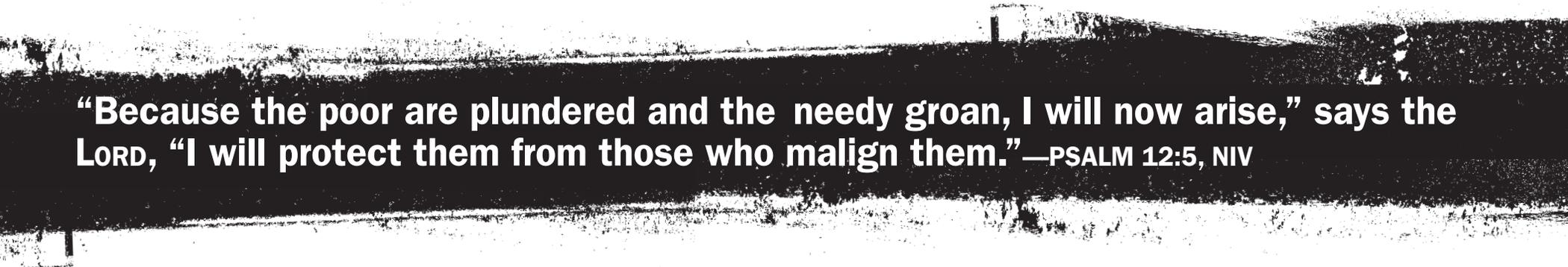


**BREAK THE CHAINS presents...**

# **PROTECT**

**A STRATEGY TO PREVENT  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN  
OUR COMMUNITIES**



**“Because the poor are plundered and the needy groan, I will now arise,” says the LORD, “I will protect them from those who malign them.”—PSALM 12:5, NIV**

*The Human Trafficking Task Force of  
the Evangelical Covenant Church:*

CHERITH ANDERSON, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin  
DEBBIE BLUE, Chicago, Illinois  
MARTI BURGER, Mt. Prospect, Illinois  
ADAM BUTLER, Bedford, New Hampshire  
MEAGAN GILLAN, Naperville, Illinois  
JEFF GROSSKOPF, Bellingham, Washington  
RUTH HILL, Seattle, Washington  
DAVID HILLIS, Tucson, Arizona  
CYD JOHNSON, Bloomington, Minnesota  
R. BOAZ JOHNSON, Deerfield, Illinois  
RONALD MARINKOVICH, Los Angeles, California  
DON MEYER, Chicago, Illinois  
JOHN TANAGHO, Chicago, Illinois

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## INTRODUCTION

Rescue, restore, and prevent are three primary ways to combat human trafficking. Until trafficking is abolished, our world needs people and organizations addressing all three facets of this human rights scourge. Rescue and restore are “downstream” methods: we become aware of people drowning in the river and call for help to rescue and restore them. Prevent, however, goes “upstream.” It involves discovering why our neighbors are drowning in the river and what we can do to prevent this from happening.

We created PROTECT to provide faith communities and other groups with seven tangible strategies to prevent human trafficking. It is our prayer that PROTECT will equip you to respond to God’s call to protect the vulnerable and prevent human trafficking—to be God’s agents who courageously and passionately “break the chains of injustice” (Isaiah 58:6, *The Message*).

## OUR INVITATION

**WE BELIEVE** in a God of justice and love who calls upon his children to act on behalf of the vulnerable and oppressed. We believe that Jesus Christ stepped into human history to reconcile to God a world gone awry and to show us how to live for others.

**WE GATHER** together as the people of God to participate in God's mission in the world. We work together using our creative gifts, talents, resources, perspectives, and passions to act on behalf of the enslaved members of the human family. We leverage our collective energy and follow the way of Jesus into a future where pain and suffering no longer plague humanity. We work to create a world where human life flourishes.

**WE INITIATE** conversations with people around us, call our representatives, distribute educational materials, scan our neighborhoods and streets, engage our neighbors and local business owners, critique culture, bring people together to pray for victims of trafficking, and develop new and innovative ways to support the abolitionist cause.

**WE INVITE** you to join the movement!

## OUR BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

All people are made in the image of God with inherent dignity. As such, we should endeavor to help create the conditions of social life that help people thrive and reach their God-given potential. In addition to the basics of survival—food, shelter, clothing—all humans deserve love, freedom, and to be treated with fairness and respect. Each day, God invites all people to recognize and enhance the dignity present in each person. Yet each day, some people choose to ignore the God-infused dignity of others by enslaving and exploiting them.

Modern-day slavery is a growing epidemic—a tsunami of injustice—that affects nearly thirty million people in our world today. When we become aware of people suffering injustice, we have a responsibility to seek justice on their behalf. Membership in the human community alone should move us to engage injustice. For Christ-followers, it is Christ’s love for us that compels us to seek justice on behalf of our neighbors, near and far.

God invites us to be agents of compassion and justice in an unfair and violent world. In the book of Proverbs, we read, “Rescue the perishing; don’t hesitate to step in and help. If you say, ‘Hey, that’s none of my business,’ will that get you off the hook? Someone is watching you closely, you know—someone not impressed with weak excuses” (24:11-12, *The Message*). As followers of Jesus, we are entrusted to continue his ministry as expressed throughout scripture, and as outlined in Luke 4, by addressing injustice that chokes the life out of those into whom God breathed life.

Modern-day slavery is an injustice that robs our neighbors of the dignity, freedom, and life that God gave them. And God invites us—as individuals and as faith communities—to intervene on behalf of the powerless and to “Speak up for those who cannot speak for

themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy” (Proverbs 31:8-9, NIV). To do so is our privilege, and it is our job. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, may we show up and rise up to bring God’s healing and justice to victims of human trafficking wherever they are.

### Definition

Human trafficking is the illegal trade of human beings for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation, forced labor, reproductive slavery, or any modern-day form of slavery. It includes the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons by the threat or use of kidnapping, force, fraud, deception, or coercion, as well as the giving or receiving of unlawful payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor.

### By the Numbers

- Human trafficking is one of the fastest growing criminal industries in the world. Traffickers reap \$32-36 billion in profits by using force, fraud, or coercion to rob victims of their freedom through labor or commercial sex.
- At the one end of the continuum of exploitation, the United Nations estimates that 12 million people are exploited worldwide for forced labor and sexual exploitation.
- On the other end of the continuum, the U.S. government estimates 2 to 4 million people are trafficked annually.
- Experts at Northeastern University estimated that there are a minimum of approximately 5,100 to 60,500 people trafficked into and within the United States each year.
- An estimated 100,000 children at risk of exploitation in prostitution within the United States each year—a brutal form of human trafficking.

(Sources: Polaris Project, U.S. News Centre, U.S. State Department, and University of Nebraska–Lincoln)

## THE POWER OF PROSECUTION: ENACTING LAWS TO PREVENT TRAFFICKING

by John Tanagho

**H**uman trafficking is an enormously profitable crime that carries less risk of arrest or prosecution than selling drugs or guns. Over the past decade, however, that has slowly started to change as state and federal law enforcement have targeted traffickers and protected their victims. Since 2000, the federal government and at least forty-two states have enacted anti-trafficking laws. Tough laws that criminalize trafficking and provide for victim protection enable prosecutors to charge traffickers with strong offenses that carry meaningful penalties. Without these tough laws, traffickers operate freely and with impunity because, according to International Justice Mission, “the only thing traffickers fear... [is] hard jail time.”

Although much progress has been made, there is still much to be done. For example, several states have done virtually nothing to fight trafficking and almost every state can strengthen its laws and do more. We each have a role to play to make that happen. While the following action steps can be done by individuals, they will be more effective if done as a group or faith community. In fact, often the best first step is to join with others in your community or state who are interested in fighting trafficking.

### Five Action Steps

#### Step One

Sign up with an anti-trafficking non-governmental organization

(NGO) to receive opportunities to ask state and national lawmakers to pass anti-trafficking legislation. While it may sound intimidating, contacting your legislator usually entails a simple conversation with a staffer where you describe the issue or bill that you care about and ask for the congressperson's support. Organizations like those listed below often provide a script or talking points.

- Polaris Project: to sign up for legislative action, go to [www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org). Click on "Sign Up" in the upper right corner of the page.
- International Justice Mission: to sign up for legislative action, go to [ijm.org/justice-campaigns](http://ijm.org/justice-campaigns).
- Shared Hope International: to sign up for alerts to pending legislation in your state, go to [www.sharedhope.org](http://www.sharedhope.org). Click on Protected Innocence Initiative, Take Action ([capwiz.com/sharedhope/home](http://capwiz.com/sharedhope/home))

### Step Two

You can identify the strengths and weaknesses of your state's anti-trafficking laws using the state ratings chart from the Polaris Project which are updated annually ([www.polarisproject.org/what-we-do/policy-advocacy/state-policy/current-laws](http://www.polarisproject.org/what-we-do/policy-advocacy/state-policy/current-laws)). These documents can also be found on the Covenant's human trafficking website: [CovChurch.org/trafficking](http://CovChurch.org/trafficking).

You can identify the strengths and weaknesses of your state's law to fight domestic minor sex trafficking through Shared Hope International's Protected Innocence Initiative. This in-depth research provides a grade as well as a clear blueprint for action to strengthen laws that will protect kids and punish perpetrators. You can find your state's grade by going to [www.sharedhope.org](http://www.sharedhope.org) and click on "Protected Innocence Initiative."

- Center for Women Policy Studies offers a summary of state trafficking laws. To download a copy go to [centerwomenpolicy.org](http://centerwomenpolicy.org). Click on "Programs," "US Pact," and "Fact Sheets."

### Step Three

Identify organizations in your state that are fighting trafficking and partner with one or more, lending your voice to their effort. In almost every state there are local NGOs, national NGO chapters, churches, or state agencies already engaged in the fight against human trafficking. Partnering with these organizations is often the best and most efficient way to have a meaningful impact in your state.

- End Slavery Now ([www.endslaverynow.com](http://www.endslaverynow.com)) works to support the efforts of grassroots activists and anti-slavery organizations, and to grow and advance the anti-slavery movement by consolidating and sharing resources, best practices, and events; and by promoting their work through various social media channels and free listings in the New Underground Railroad.
- Polaris Project ([www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org)), click on "Resources," "State Map" to see your state.

### Step Four

Identify legislators in your state who have a track record of fighting trafficking and lobby them. To learn which legislators have sponsored anti-trafficking bills or are sympathetic to the cause, download a copy of "Fact Sheet on State Anti-Trafficking Laws," which is updated each January and can be found at [centerwomenpolicy.org](http://centerwomenpolicy.org). Click on "Programs," "US Pact," "Fact Sheets." Examples of lobbying include:

- Compiling signature lists in support of important anti-trafficking legislation.
- With a local anti-trafficking organization, organizing a letter-writing campaign urging stronger support of anti-trafficking laws.
- Meeting with your legislators to discuss examples of human trafficking in your state and the legislation needed to combat it.
- Inviting your legislators to community events and forums on trafficking.

## Step Five

After learning about your state's anti-trafficking laws, find ways to raise awareness within your church and greater community about the reality of trafficking in your state; learn how people can help respond to the issue. While some people are learning about trafficking for the first time, others are already aware and ready to engage the issue. By consistently communicating news and events about human trafficking, people at different points in the learning process can become part of the solution. Here are a few examples:

- Add a column in your church's newsletter or bulletin with news on trafficking in your state and opportunities to be involved.
- Alert people in your larger community to upcoming legislative action and encourage them to support passage of needed laws in your state.
- Use the national Human Trafficking Awareness Day on January 11 to annually update people on your state's progress fighting trafficking.
- Share trafficking news and updates on your personal social networking pages.

## NGO Spotlight

Here is more information on three NGOs working to prevent trafficking by advocating for anti-trafficking laws.

### Polaris Project

Polaris Project's vision is for a world without slavery. Named after the North Star that guided slaves toward freedom along the Underground Railroad, Polaris Project has been providing a comprehensive approach to combating human trafficking and modern-day slavery since 2002.

It is one of the largest anti-trafficking organizations in the United States, operating at international, national, and local levels. Polaris Project's comprehensive approach to combating human trafficking includes conducting direct outreach and victim identification, providing social services and transitional housing

to victims, operating the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, serving as the central national hotline on human trafficking, advocating for stronger state and federal anti-trafficking legislation, and engaging community members in local and national grassroots efforts. Learn more about Polaris Project at [www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org).

### International Justice Mission

International Justice Mission (IJM) is a human rights agency that secures justice for victims of slavery, sexual exploitation, and other forms of violent oppression. IJM lawyers, investigators, and aftercare professionals work with local governments to ensure victim rescue, to prosecute perpetrators, and to strengthen the community and civic factors that promote functioning public justice systems. IJM's Justice Campaigns mobilize people around the country in support of U.S. policies that will lead to the abolition of sex trafficking and modern-day slavery and the creation of public justice systems abroad that protect the poor. Learn more about the ministry of IJM at [ijm.org](http://ijm.org).

### Shared Hope International

Shared Hope International (SHI) exists to rescue and restore women and children in crisis. SHI works to prevent and eradicate sex trafficking and slavery through education and public awareness. SHI identifies state laws that need to be improved or developed, and helps mobilize communities to lobby their legislators for more effective anti-trafficking laws that will help eliminate demand, prosecute traffickers, identify victims, and provide protection, access to services, and shelter for victims. Learn more about Shared Hope International at [www.sharedhope.org](http://www.sharedhope.org).

# PROTECT

## RESPONSIBLE CONSUMERISM

by Adam Butler

The things we buy don't just affect our lifestyle; those things are assembled, picked, served, and sold by real people. Have you ever considered the source of the clothing you wear, the food you eat, or the things you buy? Ever wondered how certain companies can sell goods so cheaply and still make a large profit? Modern-day slavery is present in the supply chain of many products we use on a daily basis. The International Labor Organization estimates 12.3 million persons—children and adults—are trapped in forced labor around the world.

According to the U.S. Department of State's "Trafficking in Persons Report 2010," "Consumer spending and corporate investment in business are leverage points that can turn around a system that has for too long allowed traffickers and economies to operate with impunity. There is an increasing push for consumer transparency, certification, and more rigorous regulation" ([www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt](http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt)).

### What Can You Do?

#### Be Informed

- Download a copy of the U.S. Department of Labor's "List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor" at [dol.gov/ILAB/programs/ocft/tvpra.htm](http://dol.gov/ILAB/programs/ocft/tvpra.htm)
- Visit [Free2Work.org](http://Free2Work.org), a Not For Sale Campaign website devoted to informing consumers about the supply chains of many companies.

- Download the Free2Work app on your smart phone so you can be aware of the people behind the goods you are buying.
- Check out [slaveryfootprint.org](http://slaveryfootprint.org) take a quiz that will help you determine your personal "slavery footprint," similar to a carbon footprint.

#### Be Vocal

Your willingness to engage in conversation with business owners about issues within their supply chains can have a powerful impact. A group of university students recognized that their local coffee shop, a place they visited daily, did not identify the source of their coffee beans. As the students persisted in respectfully asking the managers for coffee produced without forced labor, the coffee shop eventually began stocking fair-trade coffee.

- Talk to those around you about buying responsibly, remembering that the money we spend affects real people's lives.
- Ask business owners if they know where their goods come from, and be ready to give them the resources to find out.

#### Be Active

- Email your local representatives about passing laws that protect the rights of people.
- Post reports about products tainted by slavery on your social media.
- Write or email companies that promote slavery and tell the companies why you object to their practices.
- Develop a task force to fight trafficking in your local church, using this resource to address the issue in your community.
- If you are a student, start a club at your school that will help to inform your school community about being a responsible consumer.

## The U.S. Department of Labor's Top Ten Most Dangerous Industries Based on Labor Practices

The U.S. Department of Labor's "List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor" identifies 128 goods made by child laborers. These include basic products we use every day. HuffingtonPost.com ranked these products by the number of countries that use child or forced labor to produce each good.

- 1) GOLD is produced in 17 countries by child or forced labor. The countries include: Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Mali, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Niger, North Korea, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, and Tanzania.
- 2) COTTON is produced in 16 countries by child or forced labor. The countries include: Argentina, Azerbaijan, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, China, Egypt, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Paraguay, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Zambia.
- 3) SUGARCANE is produced in 15 countries by child or forced labor. The countries include: Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Kenya, Mexico, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Thailand, and Uganda.
- 4) TOBACCO is produced in 15 countries by child or forced labor. The countries include: Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Malawi, Mexico, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Philippines, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.
- 5) BRICKS are produced in 15 countries by child or forced labor. The countries include: Afghanistan, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, China, Ecuador, India, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Peru, Uganda, and Colombia.
- 6) COFFEE is produced in 13 countries by child or forced labor. The countries include: Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, El Salvador, Kenya,

Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Tanzania, and Uganda.

- 7) CATTLE are produced in 9 countries by child or forced labor. The countries include: Bolivia, Brazil, Chad, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Namibia, Paraguay, Uganda, and Zambia.
- 8) RICE is produced in 8 countries by child or forced labor. The countries include: Brazil, Burma, Dominican Republic, India, Kenya, Mali, Philippines, and Uganda.
- 9) GARMENTS are produced in 6 countries by child or forced labor. The countries include: Argentina, China, India, Jordan, Malaysia, and Thailand.
- 10) DIAMONDS are produced in 7 countries by child or forced labor. The countries include: Angola, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Zimbabwe.

### Activity

List ten products you commonly buy, then use the resources provided to research the source of your commonly purchased items.

### Sources

- Free2Work: Grades companies based on their supply chains and policies at [Free2Work.org](http://Free2Work.org) (also available as an app on smart phones)
- U.S. Department of Labor's Report: "List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor" at [dol.gov/ILAB/programs/ocft/tvpra.htm](http://dol.gov/ILAB/programs/ocft/tvpra.htm)
- CNN Freedom Project: "How to Help: Businesses and Consumers" at [thecnnfreedomproject.blogs.cnn.com/2011/04/22/how-to-help-businesses-and-consumers](http://thecnnfreedomproject.blogs.cnn.com/2011/04/22/how-to-help-businesses-and-consumers)
- International Labor Rights Forum: "Sweatshop Hall of Shame 2010" at [laborrights.org/sites/default/files/publications-and-resources/sweatshop\\_hall\\_shame\\_2010.pdf](http://laborrights.org/sites/default/files/publications-and-resources/sweatshop_hall_shame_2010.pdf)

## ORIENTATION TO HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

### Part One: A Biblical Perspective on Slavery

by R. Boaz Johnson

What does the Bible teach regarding the prevention of human trafficking? The answer will depend on our answer to the next question. Is human trafficking a recent phenomenon, or has it been a problem throughout history? If we answer in the affirmative, then we agree that the Bible has a lot to say about how to prevent human trafficking. In fact, it's clear that the biblical answers are not thin, temporary, band-aid treatments. They are significant, "thick," if you will, lasting treatments.

The context of the Bible—the people groups of the Sumerians, Akkadians, Egyptians, Canaanites, etc. readily trafficked girls. In fact, it was the duty of the minority high-class society and royalty to enslave girls and boys who belonged to the majority lower classes. The famous Code of Hammurabi gives us a good example of this. "If a low-class woman squanders the possessions of her high class man, she destroys his honor. She must die by drowning" (Code of Hammurabi 144). Or, "A low-class, temple prostitute who enters a public domain must be put to death by fire. She has desecrated the domain of high-class humanity" (Code of Hammurabi 110).

Similarly, the Enuma Elish, the Babylonian creation myth says women are to be treated the same way that high-class male gods treated low-class female goddesses. Low-class people, both male and female, were seen as the product of the dismemberment of the body of the low-class goddess, Tiamat, by the high-class god, Marduk. Therefore, they are meant to be enslaved and sexually used (Enuma Elish VI:5-8; 30-40; V:71).

Other ancient religions, during the time of Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Isaiah, and the other prophets of the Old Testament, and religions of the Greeks and Romans, during the time of the New Testament writings, have similar, ghastly views of low-ethnic people, particularly women. It is clear that there was rampant abuse of women and low caste boys in these societies.

Historians of religion tell us that human trafficking of young girls and boys was highest during crisis points of societies. The years 1500 BC, 500 BC, and the first century AD saw trafficking at its highest levels. It is also important to note that the Bible—the Old and the New Testaments—was given its canonical shape during these eras. The Torah was given to Moses around 1500 BC; it, as well as the Prophets, Poetry, and Wisdom Literature were formed around 500 BC; and the New Testament was written in the first century AD.

A thoughtful reading of the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts makes it clear that the the canonical Bible deals squarely with the issue of human trafficking of young women.

Starting with Genesis 1, we see both the man and the woman, the male and female, (the Hebrew uses two words; both connote equality), are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). In fact, when both come together, they form a picture of who God is as they become One (Heb. Echad, Genesis 2:25), just like God himself is One (Deuteronomy 6:4).

This is the "thickest" possible answer to the problem of human trafficking, and clearly refutes any idea of women as mere creatures of sexual use and abuse. Indeed, the Bible goes a step further. In the Genesis 2 creation narrative, when the woman is created, she is called an *Ezer kendo* (Genesis 2: 18). The word *ezer*, rather unfortunately is translated as "suitable companion, or helper. In the Hebrew Bible, this word always refers to God himself. In the Psalms, the writer cries out, "God alone is my *Ezer*," (Psalm 2; 30:10; 54:4; 70:5; 72:12; 121:1, and more). The status of the woman in the introductory text of the Bible, it becomes clear, is a very strong one. She is a savior figure. This is in contrast to the very low view women in Ancient Near Eastern religions. The latter leads to slavery and abuse. The biblical text in contrast leads to emancipation and strength.

The Scriptures carry the image of a strong woman throughout.

The high point is found in the closing section of the Hebrew Bible, which is called Hebrew Writings and consists of Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther.

The book of Psalms describes worship in very emotive language and music. The next book, Proverbs talks about the life of wisdom, which is described as a woman. In fact, the Hebrew word for *wisdom* is a feminine noun: “lady wisdom.” The reader is repeatedly told, “The secret to the good life is to follow lady wisdom.” The book of Proverbs, then reaches its point in Proverbs 31. Sadly, the English translates Proverbs 31:10 to describe the woman as “virtuous wife” (KJV); “capable wife” (NRSV); “virtuous and capable wife” (NLT); “wife of noble character” (NIV); etc. The Hebrew phrase, *eshet chayil*, literally means a physically, emotionally, spiritually, mentally, strong woman. Further, the primary meaning of the noun *isha* is not “wife.” She is primarily a woman. Proverbs 31 describes the woman as a phenomenally strong person.

In the books which follow we see examples of an *eshet chayil*, a strong woman. These paradigmatic examples are found in the books of Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther. Turning to the *eshet chayil* in Ruth, it’s important to note that, in our English Bible, this book comes right after the book of Judges. This is done to place the books of the Bible in a chronological order. The idea is that the events in Ruth occurred during the time of Judges, so it is placed alongside it.

The Hebrew Bible, in contrast to this, suggests that the main focus of the book of Ruth is not these happenings. Rather, it is the focus on Ruth as an *eshet chayil*, a prime example of the woman of Proverbs 31. In fact, on more than one occasion, in the book, Ruth is called an *eshet chayil* (Ruth 3:11; 4:11). This is how everyone sees her. However, this is not how she was seen at the beginning. The book of Ruth is the story of a transformation from a woman who was sexually abused and trafficked to a strong woman, and *eshet chayil*.

The narrative of Ruth begins with a famine in Bethlehem, translated, “the House of Bread.” It is an irony that the place which was supposed to be the physical and spiritual source of bread should experience famine. To escape the famine, a family from Bethlehem, of a man named Elimilech, goes to Moab where women were treated very poorly. Many lower class women were taken into female

prostitution centers, which were linked to the worship of fertility gods and goddesses.

The narrative of Ruth tells us that the sons of Elimelech get sucked into the cultural view of women, and they “took the women of Moab” (Ruth 1:4). English translations render their action as, “they married Moabite women (NIV, NLT, NRSV, etc.). The Hebrew phrase is meant to be seen as, “they forcibly took Moabite women,” i.e. they raped them.

The context makes it clear that they suffered the consequences of their demeaning acts against the women of Moab. When one reads further, one discovers that the word, which is used for Boaz marrying Ruth, is a great contrast to the former word. Literally, Boaz exclaims, “Ruth the Moabitess, the woman of Mahalon, I have ‘recreated’ to be my woman to ‘resurrect’ the name of the dead... and the people at the gate and the elders said, ‘We witness. May the LORD make the woman coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built the house of Israel. May you be a *chayil*, in Ephrathah” (Ruth 4:10-11).

This is a great contrast to what the sons of Elimelech did. They engaged in human trafficking when they abused the Moabite women. Boaz, in contrast, orders his men to protect this woman, who was an alien, and therefore potentially trafficked. Then he redeems her and gives her the place of highest honor at the city gate, where historically the men and women of highest esteem gathered. Being honored in a Rose Garden ceremony at the White House would be a modern analogy.

The New Testament continues with the powerful story of restoration of women to a place of honor. The account of the life of Jesus in Matthew poignantly begins by underlining the lives of five women: Tamar (Genesis 38); Rahab (Joshua 2); Ruth; Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11-12); and Mary. Four of these women were sexually abused and trafficked by men in positions of power and authority. In spite of the horrible life faced by these women, the Bible elevates them to the highest status; they become the bearers of the Messiah’s seed. In this, the Bible elevates the status of all women who have been abused or trafficked as a result of the systemic evil in human history.

The fifth woman, Mary, also grew up among girls who were

regularly abused and trafficked by the Sadducees and Roman soldiers. This is the reason the most common name given to girls at the time was Miriam, meaning “bitter,” since girls’ lives were known to be full of bitterness due to sexual abuse and trafficking. Yet, miraculously one girl—Mary—was preserved. A virgin, she bore the Messiah of the world. Her status as a virgin derived not only from her purity, but also because of the miracle of her preservation. Mary becomes, in many senses, a symbol of hope for all girls and women throughout history, worldwide, who are trafficked and abused by fallen humanity. This is indeed a strong and reliable perspective on the sin of human trafficking.

Further, Jesus himself elevates the status of many women he encounters. He knew that his own mother had been ostracized by the higher-class people for carrying and bearing a child out of wedlock. He himself was called a *mamzer*, a term reserved for children born of women who were sexually abused by Roman soldiers.

During his public ministry, Jesus, knowing the horrible life faced by women, always reached and restored their dignity. A good example is Jesus’s encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4. He knew Samaritan women were molested on a far more regular basis than lower class Jewish women. They were considered the lowest class of people in Jesus’s world. They were constantly and systematically harmed and mistreated sexually, just because they were Samaritans.

During Jesus’s conversation with her, at a poignant moment, he asks her to, “Go call your man.” She shrugs her shoulders and says, “I have no man.” Jesus says to her, “I know what you have gone through. I know that you really have had no man. Each of the other five have sexually abused you and battered you. The person who has you now is not really your man” (John 4:17-18).

To this woman who had suffered so much because of systemic evil against women, Jesus offered the water of life which alone could heal her deepest wounds. The rest of the narrative is a powerful example of how Jesus heals and elevates the status of a trafficked woman. She goes back to her town, and the whole village listens to her words. This woman, who was sexually abused by men around her is suddenly transformed into an *eshet chayil*, a strong woman.

The whole Bible has one narrative after another of the

transformation of the status of women in society. It begins with a very strong place for the women. She is no ordinary helper to man. She is a divinely placed savior figure: *ezer kenegdo*.

Tragically, we see that throughout history, human beings have destroyed and desecrated women. Evil men have shattered their identity. Throughout history women have been sexually abused and trafficked. Yet, we see the restoration of identity for women throughout scripture, lifting them to the identity intended by God, as an *eshet chayil*, as emotionally, physically, spiritually, and mentally strong persons. Women were created to be savior figures for humanity, and in this we find the best scriptural response to the problem of human trafficking.

## Part Two: A Biblical Perspective on Male/ Female Relationships

by Ronald Marinkovich

### Critique of Culture

#### Foundational Questions:

- What do healthy relationships look like?
- What do unhealthy relationships look like?
- How does the broader culture portray healthy relationships?
- What is our reference point for healthy relationships?
- What does the Bible say about healthy relationships?

#### Step One—Start by reflecting on Scripture

One of the many themes that runs through the tapestry of Scripture is human flourishing. Below are a few verses and other resources that highlight this truth.

- “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against

them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (1 Corinthians 5:17-21, NRSV).

- “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:3-4, NRSV).

God intends for us to live in healthy relationships, and that’s one of the main reasons why Jesus came and lived among us. If the above passages from Scripture serve as a reference point, how do examples from our surrounding match up or contrast with Scripture?

### **Step Two—Spend time in small groups discussing what unhealthy relationships might look like**

Encourage people to share from their personal experience. Either individually or in groups, prayerfully reflect on your personal relationships and your observations of relationships in society.

- What are the physical actions, words, and body language people use that suggest they are not in a healthy relationship?
- How and why do these situations happen, and what are some direct influences that contribute to the problem?

### **Step Three—Involve a more focused examination of key culture-shaping forces**

- *Social Networks*—How have social networks changed the nature of relationships? What do we do about it?
- *Fashion*—How does fashion affect the way we perceive ourselves and others?
- *Entertainment*—What kind of relationships are portrayed in entertainment and media? Is pop-culture just painting a picture that reflects relationships as they often exist in

the world or are they selling drama and sensationalism?

- *The effects of marketing*—Why do people market to us the way that they do? To consider this question, look at the BBC documentary *The Century of the Self* or the YouTube videos “Media Affects Body Image” and “Teen Truth: Body Image”

### **Step Four—Move the audience from deconstruction to reconstruction in their ideas regarding relationships**

There are no clear-cut answers. Help the group you lead create a clear framework for action in the personal lives and spheres of influence.

- What are we to do now?
- How do we promote reconciliation and the growth of healthy relationships in society?

### **Facilitating Dialogue about Male/Female Relationships**

The purpose of this section is to provide “scaffolding” for a small group discussion about male/female relationships. The format also promotes the process of learning and discovery within the community. The result is the development of common knowledge about God’s concern for justice and healthy relationships. This common front will help motivate the group to action when the time is right. (Discussion time: 60-90 minutes)

### **Step One—Discuss the characteristics of unhealthy relationships in Scripture**

Before gathering, ask members of the small group or a few select members of a larger group to find passages of Scripture that illustrate what unhealthy relationships look like. Then ask them to look up the passages in commentaries or seek help from a pastor (Google Books, [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com), and [biblios.com](http://biblios.com) provide free access to a vast library of commentaries). Try to identify themes, principles, and other helpful information as people share what they learned.

The passages will vary depending on the group. That’s okay,

as long as they are appropriate and engaging. Under Critique of Culture, step one provides a couple of relevant passages.

### **Step Two—Discuss how Scripture informs our understanding of healthy relationships**

A group can discuss many different themes. However, at some point include the theme of human flourishing and use the flow described in step one. Examples can be drawn from the Garden, the faith journey of God's chosen people, the many calls to repentance made by the prophets, the life of Jesus and his references to the kingdom, life in community described in the Epistles, and the fullness of the kingdom described in the Apocalypse.

Allow people the freedom to ground the passages in life experiences. Let them tell their stories. Keep it brief if necessary, but create space to make it relevant to your context and audience. Again, note common themes and principles. Use a whiteboard or other device to take notes, and break up into smaller groups if it helps facilitate dialogue.

### **Step Three—Examine how relationships are portrayed in broader society**

Our surroundings have tremendous influence in shaping our understating of right relationships. Movies, music, television, social media, blogs, and other creative expressions influence how we see the world and often determine what we believe is normal behavior. Sports, politics, commerce, and education are other products of culture that can be woven into the discussion. Ask how these cultural forces condition us to interact with others in unique ways. Create a list of questions and introduce them as time permits. Also, ask other members to contribute their own questions and share their perspectives. Here is a short list of questions to help you get started:

- What patterns of behavior have we developed as a result of the influence of particular cultural forces?
- Are these patterns good, bad, or both?
- What are short-term and long-term effects of these patterns of behavior?

- How do resulting sentiments contribute to creating a society where slavery is present?

Participants should at some point discover how a breakdown in healthy relationships leads to marring the image of God in another person. This breakdown happens individually and collectively in a society. Slavery is one of the end results of this breakdown.

### **Wrapping It Up**

The last segment of this discussion should move from deconstruction to reconstruction. As a community, talk about how you would like to live life together. What do you envision? How can you live out this vision today? How does Scripture serve as a reference point to ground our understanding of right relationships? List some of the principles and maxims that emerge. Then help the group create a provisional framework for community action, as well as for action in their personal lives and spheres of influence.

# TRAINING TO IDENTIFY AND REPORT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

by Ruth Hill & Cherith Anderson

Contrary to common assumptions, human trafficking is not just a problem in other countries. Cases of human trafficking have been reported in all fifty states, Washington D.C., and U.S. territories. Victims of human trafficking can be children or adults, U.S. citizens or foreign nationals, male or female.

According to U.S. government estimates, thousands of men, women, and children are trafficked to the United States for the purposes of sexual and labor exploitation. An unknown number of U.S. citizens and legal residents are trafficked within the United States primarily for sexual exploitation and, to a lesser extent, forced labor.

Recognizing the signs of trafficking can help free victims. In-depth training is available for people whose professions are more likely to put them in contact with victims (service providers, law enforcement officials, etc.).

The information provided here is intended for people who want to help identify trafficking victims. It is not intended to train people to participate in actual victim rescue. The information is presented to three groups: concerned citizens, educators, and service providers, followed by instructions on how to report a suspected incidence of trafficking.

Please read this entire section to know both what to look for and what to do when you suspect someone is being trafficked.

*Note:* Further training is available in all areas of trafficking education. You are encouraged to seek it out and take advantage of the sound educational resources available.

## I. For Concerned Citizens

### How to Identify a Victim of Trafficking

The following is a list of signs that may indicate someone is being trafficked. They are potential “red flags” that should cause the observer to be on alert. If you observe several of these behaviors in one person, you are encouraged to report it according to the guidelines discussed in Section IV.

#### Observation of Behaviors

The individual(s) in question:

- Demonstrates a sudden change in attire, behavior, or material possessions.
- Does not make eye contact.
- Has a “boyfriend” who is noticeably older (10+ years).
- Has bruises, exhibits depression, fear, nervousness, or is overly submissive.
- Is always accompanied by a controlling person and does not speak on own behalf.
- Exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behavior after bringing up law enforcement.
- Is not allowed or able to speak for him or herself (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating).

The following signs require a greater depth of knowledge and/or contact with the individual. They are more indicative of trafficked behaviors and conditions and should be reported to your local police or the National Trafficking Hotline (see Section IV).

#### Observation of Work and Living Conditions

The individual(s) in question:

- Does not control his/her own schedule, money, ID, or travel documents.
- Is transported to and from work, or lives and works in the same place.
- Is under 18 and is providing commercial sex acts.

- Is in the commercial sex industry and has a pimp or manager.
- Is unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips.
- Works excessively long and/or unusual hours.
- Is not allowed breaks or suffers under unusual restrictions at work.
- Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off.
- Was recruited through false promises regarding the nature and conditions of his/her work.
- Works and/or lives in locations with high security measures (e.g., opaque windows, boarded up windows, bars on windows, barbed wire, security cameras, etc.).

### **Observation of Poor Physical Health**

The individual(s) in question:

- Lacks health care.
- Appears malnourished.
- Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture.

### **Observation of Lack of Control**

The individual(s) in question:

- Has few or no personal possessions.
- Is not in control of his/her own money, no financial records, or bank account.
- Is not in control of his/her own identification documents (ID or passport).

### **Other Observations**

The individual(s) in question:

- Claims of just visiting and/or has the inability to clarify where he/she is staying or to give an address.
- Lacks knowledge of whereabouts and/or does not know what city he/she is in.

- Has a loss sense of time.
- Has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story.

(Sources: Polaris Project: [www.polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/recognizing-the-signs](http://www.polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/recognizing-the-signs); Covenant House: [www.covenanthouse.org](http://www.covenanthouse.org). Click on “Get Involved,” and “Human Trafficking”)

## **II. For Educators**

Trafficking can involve school-age children—particularly those not living with their parents—who are vulnerable to labor exploitation, domestic servitude, or commercial sexual exploitation (i.e., prostitution, pornography).

Sex traffickers target children because of their vulnerability and gullibility, as well as the market demand for young victims. Those who recruit minors into prostitution violate federal and state anti-trafficking laws, even if there is no coercion or movement across state lines. The children at risk are not just high-school students—studies demonstrate that pimps prey on victims twelve years old or younger. Traffickers have targeted their minor victims through telephone, on chat-lines, in clubs, on the street, on public transportation, through friends, on social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), or at malls. They also use girls to recruit other girls at schools and after-school programs. See E—Education to Protect the Most Vulnerable (p. 28) to learn how girls and boys can protect themselves from predators.

### **Observations of Student Behaviors**

The individual(s) in question:

- Has unexplained absences from school for a period of time, and is therefore a truant.
- Demonstrates an inability to attend school on a regular basis.
- Runs away from home frequently.
- Makes references to frequent travel to other cities.
- Exhibits bruises or other physical trauma, withdrawn behavior, depression, or fear.

- Lacks control over her or his schedule or identification documents.
- Is hungry, malnourished, or inappropriately dressed (based on weather conditions or surroundings).
- Shows signs of drug addiction.
- Makes references to terminology of the commercial sex industry that are beyond age specific norms; engages in promiscuous behavior and may be labeled “fast.”

(Source: U.S. Dept. of Education: Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools at [ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/factsheet.html](http://ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/factsheet.html))

### III. For Service Providers

Service providers and law enforcement officials are better positioned and equipped to pose more probing questions of an individual to discern the possibility of trafficking. While they are encouraged to seek training appropriate for their professions, the following is offered as a first-screening tool until that training is available. It is not recommended that non-service providers and non-law enforcement people attempt to identify if a person is being trafficked by using these questions. Instead, refer to the reporting of a possible victim as described in Section IV.

#### Sample Screening Questions for Identifying a Victim of Human Trafficking

- What type of work do you do?
- Are you being paid?
- Can you leave your job?
- Can you come and go as you please?
- Have you or your family been threatened?
- What are your working and living conditions like?
- Where do you sleep and eat?
- Do you have to ask permission to eat/sleep/go to the bathroom?
- Are there locks on your doors/windows that you cannot unlock?

- Has your identification or documentation been taken from you?

(Source: Rescue and Restore, HHS, “Look beneath the Surface” question card; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website, 2006)

### IV. How to Report a Suspected Incidence of Human Trafficking

- 1) In cases of immediate emergencies, it is best to call your local police department or emergency access number.
- 2) Report suspected trafficking crimes by calling the national 24/7 toll-free Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-373-7888. This center will help you: determine if you have encountered a victim of human trafficking; identify local resources available in your community to help victims; and coordinate with local social service providers to help protect and serve victims so they can begin the process of rehabilitation and restoring their lives. When appropriate, the resource center makes referrals to local organizations that assist victims with counseling, case management, legal advice, and other appropriate services, as well as to law enforcement agencies that help trapped victims reach safety.
- 3) For sexually exploited or abused minors call the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) hotline at 1-800-THE-LOST (843-5678) to be connected with the most appropriate assistance in your area.
- 4) You can report suspected instances of trafficking or worker exploitation by contacting the FBI field office nearest you at [www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field/field-offices](http://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field/field-offices) or by contacting the Department of Justice’s Human Trafficking Office at 1-888-428-7581.

(Source: U.S. Dept. of Education: Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools at [ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/factsheet.html](http://ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/factsheet.html))

## V. Real Life Stories

These stories tell of the impact of trafficking on real people, and are shared here to bring the reality and impact of trafficking to light.

### Mari

With four children between them and a sixteen-year relationship, Mari couldn't imagine leaving Darrell. She didn't see any viable options, even though he was physically abusive and forced her into commercial sex when money was tight.

Darrell was verbally, physically, and sexually abusive to Mari. When he wanted extra money, he would call his friends and force Mari into commercial sex. She had tried to leave Darrell in the past; however, he either threatened to hurt their children, or convinced Mari that she had no other options other than staying with him. He controlled all of her money, did not allow her to keep her own bank account, and forbade her from getting her driver's license. Mari could not see any alternatives for leaving.

One evening, Darrell, Mari, and Janice, an eighteen-year-old girl, who Darrell was forcing into prostitution, were pulled over by a patrol officer for a traffic violation. When Darrell pulled out his identification, the officer noticed that he had the women's IDs in his wallet. The officer was suspicious and asked to speak to them all privately. During his conversation the officer realized both women were being forced and coerced into prostitution. He referred both women to Polaris Project for emergency services and they relocated out of state with the children. She still struggles daily with her decision to leave Darrell (from Polaris Project).

### Brittany

Approached by a man at a mall in her hometown, Brittany was asked if she was looking for a job. He gave her the business card for a restaurant he owned, and when she called the number on the card, the man confirmed that he was looking for waitresses to start immediately. Brittany needed the job and asked for the restaurant's address, but the man told her he would pick her up at the mall where they first met. Instead of going to the restaurant, the man drove her to a nearby hotel and told her that she was going to be a prostitute

instead of a waitress. At gunpoint, Brittany was forced to drink bottles of vodka and take blue pills that made her dizzy and disoriented. Brittany tried to look for help but was locked in the hotel room without access to a phone. After three days of being beaten, drugged, and forced to have sex with at least sixty men, Brittany managed to escape and asked the first car she saw to call the police. Polaris Project provided case management services to Brittany, and with time and a strong support system she was able to enroll in school.

### Tammy

Born to an abused, drug-addicted, prostituted mother who was in and out of prison, Tammy was exposed to violence and was a victim of sexual and physical abuse early in life. She learned to survive, exchanging sex for shelter, and at age fifteen, her mother's friends turned her toward prostitution, through a so-called "escort service." By then, Tammy was addicted to hard IV drugs, which she could get easily. She spent years in this lifestyle trying to escape overwhelming feelings of hopelessness and uselessness, working strip clubs, escort services, and the streets.

Eventually Tammy met volunteers from a rescue organization in her community, but had resigned herself to a life of drug addiction and street prostitution. She didn't know any other way to live and was sure she would die this way, regularly being raped, beaten and robbed.

But one cold winter night she was picked up by a man who held her hostage, raping, beating her beyond recognition before shooting her and leaving her for dead. There was no help available for Tammy, until the volunteers from the rescue organization found her and helped her get medical care, safe shelter, and entry into a drug rehab program. They helped her become employable, and she soon landed a good job and is in college (from Shared Hope International).

# PROTECT

## EDUCATION TO PROTECT THE MOST VULNERABLE

by Ronald Marinkovich and Adam Butler

This section of PROTECT focuses on the importance of educating children and adolescents about human trafficking. The following subsections include ideas for programs and ways to engage your community, as well as a brief list of helpful resources.

### Educating Youth in Faith Communities

Raising our children in the Christian faith extends beyond traditional forms of spiritual formation. Children and adolescents need to be prepared to better understand the real threat of evil in the world and how they are vulnerable to it. Thus, it is important to educate parents and youth leaders about human trafficking so they can make this information accessible to the children in their lives.

Talk to your pastor, church staff, and leadership about developing an annual program to educate adults and youth on tactics and trends in human trafficking. Youth leaders should also receive special training, especially when serving in communities with children known to be at-risk.

Other ways to incorporate materials into the faith community's agenda are through breakout sessions at staff retreats, youth camps, or volunteer training sessions. Short-term mission teams, missionaries, and partner organizations might also benefit from the resources you gather and the programs that emerge from your experience.

### Educating Youth in Schools

Children and adolescents in local schools are another segment of the population that needs to be educated about modern-day slavery. Start by gathering information from teachers and administrators and determine if there is an exceptionally vulnerable population that you should focus on first. Follow up by either developing a program to reach out to students or seek help from organizations like Live2Free, Oasis USA, or Born2Fly.

#### Real-life Example: Oasis USA's Traffick Free Community of Pasadena

In the summer of 2011 a group of abolitionists in Pasadena, California, gathered information about their community. After speaking with local school teachers and administrators, they uncovered statistics revealing that the Pasadena School District had one of the largest populations of children in foster-care in the state of California. A disproportionate number of children in foster-care are seduced by traffickers because they lack the dependable social safety net that other children have.

The Traffick Free Community decided to develop a trafficking awareness class for a summer program in one of the schools. Some spearheaded the effort while others stepped in to help where needed. The group also partnered with a local faith community that will continue to invest in the lives of students throughout the year.

This story presents just one of several opportunities waiting to be discovered in your community where you can advocate for at-risk children near your church or home. It starts with asking questions, then processing the information, and developing a unique response. Raising awareness is one of many important steps. Building healthy relationships with vulnerable children is just as important.

### Brief List of Resources

**Born2Fly** specializes in prevention by making information about trafficking accessible to the youngest members of our communities. Born2Fly developed a curriculum that consists of wordless, picture book stories that can be easily adapted to different

contexts. Tactics that traffickers use on small children are illustrated in the story. Both local advocates and short-term mission teams can benefit from using the resources found at [born2fly.org](http://born2fly.org).

**Live2Free** focuses on raising awareness about responsible consumerism and after-care for women and children who have been freed from sex slavery in Orange County, California. The organization also visits local schools to facilitate workshops and training sessions for children and adolescents. Consider contacting them and requesting help with resources and guidance when developing an education program for your youth group. Live2Free home page: [live2free.org](http://live2free.org).

**National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation** published “The National Plan to Prevent the Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children” in 2008. The report provides useful information and an action plan that can help focus your community’s effort to develop an educational program. Download this report at [missingkids.com/en\\_US/documents/NCPCSE\\_NationalPlan.pdf](http://missingkids.com/en_US/documents/NCPCSE_NationalPlan.pdf).

**International Labour Office** published a helpful packet for abolitionist educators. In the report, “Combating Trafficking in Children for Labour Exploitation: A Resource Kit for Policy-makers and Practitioners” provides in-depth information that can help educators effectively raise awareness after developing a broader understanding of how children become vulnerable. Download this kit at [ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/2008/108B09\\_252\\_engl.pdf](http://ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/2008/108B09_252_engl.pdf).

**UNICEF** publishes extensive reports on all issues that children face around the world. Reports on child trafficking focus on particular regions. Go to [unicef.org/protection/index.html](http://unicef.org/protection/index.html) and see “Resource Centre” toward the bottom of the home page for links to several in-depth studies.

Protecting vulnerable people in your community can be done. By raising awareness about the existence of slavery in our world and local communities, we can help protect people at risk of becoming victims. Helping our faith communities make smart decisions regarding safety comes through education. The more people talk about and engage the problem of slavery in our world, the harder it becomes for trafficking in our communities to stay hidden.

## COMMUNITY RESPONSE

by David Hillis

### How to Start a Community Coalition

#### Step One—Learn the needs in your own community

A local coalition can work together to address concerns in the community to fight trafficking. Knowing what the needs are and sharing those with others will help mobilize people to join forces. For example, have community leaders (law enforcement, first responders, service providers, teachers, etc.), been trained to identify victims? Do teens know how to protect themselves from predators?

#### Step Two—Pray

Ask God how he might use you to make a difference, and boldly step out and allow God to use you! Consider prayer-walking areas where trafficking is known to take place. As you read articles in newspapers and other media, pray by name for traffickers, asking God to intervene in their lives and cause them to end trafficking activity. Pray for victims as criminal busts are publicized, asking God to comfort, heal, and restore each individual.

#### Step Three—Get to know people

Start by meeting with leaders of faith communities of all kinds in your area. Let them know of your desire to see all working together to combat trafficking.

#### Step Four—Host a gathering

Choose a neutral gathering place and invite those you have met to join you for lunch or dessert. Discuss how a local coalition could best work together to help make a difference. Give those gathered

an opportunity to get to know each other, share their stories and passions around the issue, and get feedback on where to go from that point on. Identify the primary contact from each faith community to facilitate ongoing communication. Choose the next meeting date and place before closing the meeting.

**Step Five—Host an anti-trafficking symposium and educate through networking**

If there isn't a lot of awareness about trafficking in the faith communities of your area, consider hosting an anti-trafficking symposium or gathering in which guest speakers share their knowledge and expertise. Include local law enforcement personnel, leaders in organizations helping with prevention, education/awareness, or aftercare of victims. This way you can further educate the broader community.

Create a display area and invite local anti-trafficking and abuse organizations to represent their work with videos or displays. Schedule workshops and seminars with those working to prevent trafficking; bring in a knowledgeable person to address the group in a plenary session. See how other Covenant groups have been reaching their communities when you check out these stories on Covenant Newswire:

- [CovChurch.org/news/2011/11/07/highlighting-the-realities-of-trafficking](http://CovChurch.org/news/2011/11/07/highlighting-the-realities-of-trafficking)
- [CovChurch.org/news/2011/09/06/anti-human-trafficking-focus-of-october-conference](http://CovChurch.org/news/2011/09/06/anti-human-trafficking-focus-of-october-conference)
- [CovChurch.org/news/2011/08/08/registration-open-for-two-day-anti-trafficking-conference](http://CovChurch.org/news/2011/08/08/registration-open-for-two-day-anti-trafficking-conference)
- [CovChurch.org/news/2011/07/21/churches-hold-combined-anti-trafficking-worship-service](http://CovChurch.org/news/2011/07/21/churches-hold-combined-anti-trafficking-worship-service)

**Step Six—Begin working on a plan**

Brainstorm ideas, and decide together on a program, project or event that will get buy-in and cooperation from as many on the team as possible. Make sure to keep first and foremost a specific goal, with each faith community/coalition member having a specific, manageable task involved to reach the goal. Meet regularly to stay

motivated and on task. Keep your group focused on the goals you've set and drive toward them, working to keep momentum going. Examples of goals, some of which can be done in partnership with local schools, first responders, and/or other local churches:

- Community education and awareness events which could include screening films with trafficking themes, Q&A events with first responders, or youth/parents event to describe how to prevent further prevent victimization in your community, etc.
- Classes or small group studies on topics such as what the Bible says about justice, the oppressed, etc.
- Fundraising events for organizations fighting human trafficking (walk/run/5K, Valentine's party with free trade coffee/chocolate, showers or holiday giving drives to gather toiletries and other basic needs that first responders can give to victims, etc.)

**Step Seven—Seek support and ideas from others**

Research government and non-profit organizations for resources. Oasis USA, for example, has valuable tips on creating traffick-free communities. Go to [oasisusa.org](http://oasisusa.org), click on "Our Work" and then "TraffickFree Communities."

The Evangelical Covenant Church has representatives doing similar work in their local areas. Contact them to talk through your community's challenges and share ideas.

- *David Hillis*, Pacific Southwest Conference  
1-520-575-1444, [david@gracetucson.org](mailto:david@gracetucson.org)
- *Ruth Hill*, North Pacific Conference  
1-773-315-2229, [ruth@sharedhope.org](mailto:ruth@sharedhope.org)
- *Adam Butler*, East Coast Conference  
[abutler@vikings.northpark.edu](mailto:abutler@vikings.northpark.edu)
- *Cherith Anderson*, Central Conference  
[cherithanderson@gmail.com](mailto:cherithanderson@gmail.com)
- *John Tanagho*, Central Conference  
[jtanagho@hotmail.com](mailto:jtanagho@hotmail.com)

## TRAINING TO SUPPORT AT-RISK YOUTH

by Cyd Johnson and Meagan Gillan

Children raised in the midst of severe family stress or family brokenness are especially at risk for human trafficking. As the O—Orientation to Healthy Relationships (p. 10) section notes, the key to human flourishing is establishing a healthy sense of self in the context of human relationships.

Children with patterns of social awkwardness, difficulty identifying with peers, or participating as a member of a group may be vulnerable. They may seek belonging in a variety of ways, and may readily place trust in those who might manipulate or misguide them.

At-risk youth may be identified by pastors, youth directors, other church staff members, Sunday-school teachers, family, or friends. These children are candidates for special attention. Since all children are in need of healthy adult and peer relationships, we urge churches and communities to approach this concern holistically, considering the need of every child to fit in and belong and implementing preventative measures that will serve all.

While the Christian community includes families and children who are well known to its members, it may also have the privilege of welcoming young people who come alone or with friends to participate in programs. The church has a great opportunity to establish a loving and nurturing faith home that can develop relational safeguards for young people, as well as to participate in healing wounds of those who have suffered family pain or victimization.

Too often churches unconsciously adopt a “Believe-Behave-

Belong” model with youth that sends the message that “You must believe what we believe and behave the way we behave in order to earn the right to belong.” Tragically, the very sense of belonging that youth desperately need can sometimes be found more readily in places that do more harm than good. The church has a profound opportunity to offer unconditional belonging and nurture in wise and welcoming ways that serve the needs of at-risk students to belong to a community.

Experts in the area of homeless youth identify “belonging” as the primary need among this population. Being emotionally and socially vulnerable, this group of young people is at tremendous risk for being exploited by traffickers. A homeless young person is often one who has suffered abuse or some form of family brokenness. Job loss, chemical dependency, divorce, and mental illness, and all painful events of family life, are opportunities for the church to be proactively alert and ready to minister to vulnerable children and teens.

Consider Heidi’s story, which tragically points to the need to show the love of Christ to those being used and abused.

### From Church to Prostitution

“I remember feeling too dirty to go to church.”

Heidi, interviewed by *Christianity Today*, went through ten years of sex slavery. She grew up going to church in Minnesota. Experiments with alcohol in college distanced her from her church-going parents and made her vulnerable to a man who said he would be her “daddy.” After taking enough time to pose as a boyfriend, he sent her out to different strip clubs all over the Midwest, beat and raped her numerous times, and forced her to take addictive drugs. She describes having no way out of the nightmare; her pimp told her repeatedly, “If you leave me, I will kill you.”

The only contact she had with the church during this time was the Christians standing outside her motel, holding up signs that read “Whore.” Trapped, she remembers searching the TV channels for religious shows. “I remember crying, being high and beat up, but feeling too dirty to go to church. Christians need to understand that the prostitute is not the enemy. She’s a victim. She could be your

daughter” ([www.sourcemn.org/ARTICLES/prostitution.htm](http://www.sourcemn.org/ARTICLES/prostitution.htm)).

Young people may show signs of risk for exploitation at almost any age during childhood and teen years. See T—Training to Identify and Report (p. 20) for key observations that will provide helpful, effective guidelines to enable responsible adults to identify those in need of help as well as direction for intervening appropriately. Church and community leaders should create a plan of action that includes awareness of local resources for victims of abuse and trafficking.

## Action Steps

Church staff and adult leaders can review the following steps and consider how to incorporate them in youth programs, Sunday school, children’s and family ministries.

- 1) Focus on activities that develop a sense of belonging and significance in each child. Strive to avoid games that humiliate or embarrass students, seeking instead to include, welcome and extend grace.
- 2) Establish a churchwide “Safe Place” policy to assure screening and presence of healthy and safe adult leadership with all children in your church.
- 3) Find ways to establish healthy relationships between adults and the children of your church. Consider using discipleship mentors, confirmation mentors, cross-generational events or trips.
- 4) Resist the temptation to strictly provide entertainment in your programming, seeking instead to engage meaningfully with students, encouraging healthy interaction between them. Provide relationship-building experiences and guidance; these will last a lifetime.
- 5) Consider connecting with homeless youth organizations or ministries in your area to establish relationships and give support.
- 6) Consider supporting or establishing transitional housing for survivors of trafficking. For example, the partnership of First Covenant Church in Oakland and Women Ministries of the

ECC to develop New Day for Children residential support shelter in Northern California.

## Focus Questions

- 1) Does your faith community provide a welcoming environment for children and youth? What are you doing well? What could you change to make young people feel more welcome?
- 2) When and how are young people welcomed into the culture of your church? Are there roadblocks to belonging related to dress or appearance or music preference? Are students expected to be ‘seen but not heard?’ Are they present only during official youth functions, or is the warm welcome of Christ available at anytime?
- 3) Do your worship patterns recognize the needs and preferences of young people? Does your main style of musical worship appeal to children or youth? What could be done in worship planning that would incorporate young people and involve their participation and input?
- 4) Does your faith community have a means of establishing avenues for healthy adult-youth relationships? What are you doing well? What efforts might you add that will enable effective cross-generational interaction and welcome?
- 5) Do the staff and leadership of your faith community know where to go for help if you suspect a child or youth is being abused or exploited? Have your volunteers been trained to recognize potential abuse and report it?

## KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

### Human Trafficking and Related Tips, Referrals, and Reports

#### 9-1-1 – Local Emergency Number

- Will dispatch a patrol officer from your local police department to the scene (Note: may not be trained to respond to the specific needs of trafficking cases, but best for immediate emergency situations that require an urgent law enforcement response).

#### U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) National Human Trafficking Resource Center (Operated by Polaris Project)

- 1-888-373-7888, toll-free
- National in scope
- Non-law enforcement
- 24-hour capacity
- Call to report a potential case of human trafficking; connect with anti-trafficking services in your area; or to request training, technical assistance, or general information on human trafficking.

#### U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Trafficking in Persons and Worker Exploitation Task Force Line

- 1-888-428-7581, toll-free

- National in scope
- Direct call to Federal law enforcement
- Only operates on weekdays, 9am-5pm EST
- Call to report a potential case of human trafficking.

#### National Domestic Violence Hotline

- 1-800-799-SAFE (799-7233), toll-free
- National in scope
- 24-hour capacity
- Ability to make local referrals to crisis shelters in cities and towns across the U.S.
- [www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org)

#### Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN)

- 1-800-656-HOPE (4673), toll-free
- National in scope
- 24-hour capacity
- [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)

#### National Runaway Switchboard

- 1-800-RUNAWAY (786-2929), toll-free
- National in scope
- 24-hour capacity

#### Covenant House NineLine

- 1-800-999-9999, toll-free
- National in scope
- 24-hour capacity
- Key Numbers to Call | Polaris Project
- For youth and runaway/homeless teens
- [www.nineline.org](http://www.nineline.org)

**National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
(NCMEC) National Hotline**

- 1-800-THE-LOST (843-5678), toll-free
- National in scope
- 24-hour capacity
- [www.cybertipline.com](http://www.cybertipline.com)

(Source: Polaris Project works to empower and mobilize people from diverse backgrounds and of all ages to take meaningful action against human trafficking. Register with [www.polarisproject.org/signup](http://www.polarisproject.org/signup) to receive regular updates on human trafficking in the United States. Copyright © 2009 Polaris Project. All Rights Reserved. Polaris Project, P.O. Box 53315, Washington, DC 20009; tel: 202-745-1001; web: [PolarisProject.org](http://PolarisProject.org); email: [info@polaris.com](mailto:info@polaris.com))

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