



The Human Anti-trafficking Response Team (**HART**) was created in order to focus on and reduce commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST).

Webpage: <http://www.ct.gov/dcf/cwp/view.asp?a=4743&Q=562246>

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH

January was Human Trafficking Awareness Month! We had a lot of great events across Connecticut to prevent and address sex and labor trafficking of residents and immigrants. We called people to action with several different initiatives designed to educate people about human trafficking and inspire them to take action. We asked people to take the following actions in January, but our efforts don't have to stop there. Please continue to take action against human trafficking to help prevent the devastating impact this crime is having on the lives of those who are victimized.

TAKE ACTION!

- **Like, Share, & re-Tweet Connecticut's NEW End Demand Campaign!**
Human Trafficking is fueled by those who pay to sexually abuse children and exploited adults. Join us in raising awareness and bringing attention to the demand side of human trafficking. For more information on the CT Campaign Against Demand, please visit www.enddemandct.org or like us on [facebook](#) or follow us on [twitter](#)!
- **Visit a Starbucks or Dunkin Donuts**
Many community members received information about human trafficking via a coffee/tea sleeve.
- **Write a Letter to the Editor**
People were asked to submit letters to the editor of their local newspaper about January being Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

- **Wear Blue on January 11th**

Wednesday, January 11th was National Human Trafficking Awareness Day! People were asked to wear navy blue on that day to show solidarity and join in the global movement to combat human trafficking. There was a HART Wear Blue Photo Challenge and the most creative photos were selected. The winners of the HART Wear Blue Photo Challenge were Journey House and the Waterbury DCF Office. These are the winning pictures:



- **Check Out Young Women Rising**

Several blog posts on human trafficking in Connecticut were posted throughout the month of January. Click on the links below to read them:

Another Type of Trafficking

<https://youngwomenrisingct.com/2017/02/01/another-type-of-trafficking/>

The Demand Side of Sex Trafficking: Buyers

<https://youngwomenrisingct.com/2017/01/10/the-demand-side-of-sex-trafficking-buyers/>

Sex Trafficking Isn't What You Think It Is

<https://youngwomenrisingct.com/2017/01/03/sex-trafficking-isnt-what-you-think-it-is/>

EVENTS

We hosted several amazing events in January. One of our biggest was the Gather Together Event at Promise Land Church of God in West Haven, which was sponsored by the Underground. Over 130 people from 16 churches attended the Gather Together event on January 14th in honor of National Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Participants learned about human trafficking from local experts including David Palmbach of the University of New Haven's Center for Forensic Investigation of Trafficking in Persons, as well as Andrew Zsigmond of Love 146. Participants also heard a



Some of the Underground team, event speakers and participants with the Evidence Collection Care Kits.

powerful personal testimony from trafficking survivor and Underground co-founder Theresa Leonard. Following the event, 14 men and women committed to being mentors through DCF. Attendees also created 72 Evidence Collection Care Kits for survivors of sexual assault that will be distributed by the Alliance to End Sexual Violence.

Other events that took place in January were a Movie Screening & Conversation about the Very Young Girls documentary hosted by the Alliance to End Sexual Violence, a press conference on CT Hotel/Motel Training Partnership and the Trafficking in Persons Council Meeting with a focus on the Demand Campaign. We were able to raise awareness about the existence of human trafficking in CT and we plan to continue this tradition in 2018.

HART SHINING STAR AWARDS

The HART shining star awards is a new initiative to honor the exceptional work being done by DCF staff, HART Committee Members, and community providers in CT who focus on eradicating human trafficking as well as empowering victims of this crime. Our recipients this quarter are:

LEADERSHIP AWARD

Latoya Lowery
HART Liaison
Norwalk DCF



Latoya Lowery is a knowledgeable individual with over 14 years of experience in substance abuse and social work. Ms. Lowery has a Bachelor's degree in Social Work from Southern Connecticut University and Masters in Social Work from Fordham University. In addition to being a Social Worker, she became a credentialed Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor (LADC), an Internationally Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (ICADC) and a Certified Addictions Counselor (CAC).

Ms. Lowery has over 8 years of experience in Child Welfare and has held various roles within the Department of Children and Families. She is currently a Social Work Supervisor, Human Anti-trafficking Response Team Liaison (HART), Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) trainer for Region 1 and most recently the chair of the MDT/HART Data committee. She is also a trained facilitator for the "Not a Number" and "My Life, My Choice" curriculums. She continues to be committed to working with this population and helping Connecticut's most vulnerable youth. In addition to her work with the state she serves as the Vice Chair of the Board for Covenant to Care for Children.

"Latoya is one of the hardest working supervisors I know at DCF. Latoya is dedicated and committed to helping families. Latoya's passion lies in the work of human trafficking and she has been instrumental in educating our region and providers in this cause. Latoya stretches out her work day to work nights and she comes in with a smile and pleasant manner every single day."
– Yolanda Chapman Smith, Office Director

COMMUNITY AWARD

Sergeant Jason Amato Bridgeport Police Department

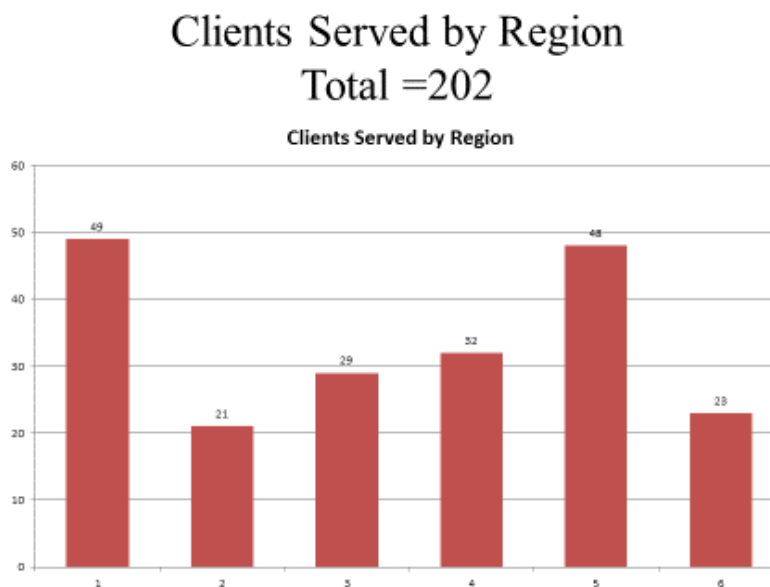
Sergeant Jason Amato was hired by the Bridgeport Police Department in 2002. He has worked in the Patrol for the east and central area of the city, NET team (Neighborhood Enforcement Team) and the Gang Task Force. He is a decorated police officer in the city of Bridgeport. He has received the Meritorious Service award, the Medal of Merit and the Excellent Arrest award. He does numerous trainings statewide and nationally on gang and narcotics awareness education. He now includes domestic minor sex trafficking in his trainings. Sergeant Amato was instrumental in the rescue of a DCF minor who was missing for weeks and was being trafficked. Sergeant Amato's commitment to ensuring the safety of our children and his excellent police skills lead to the timely rescue of this youth.

"Sgt. Amato didn't think twice when I asked him for help looking for Mary. Mary had been missing for more than 6 weeks. Sgt. Amato found her in 24 hours and he literally saved her life."

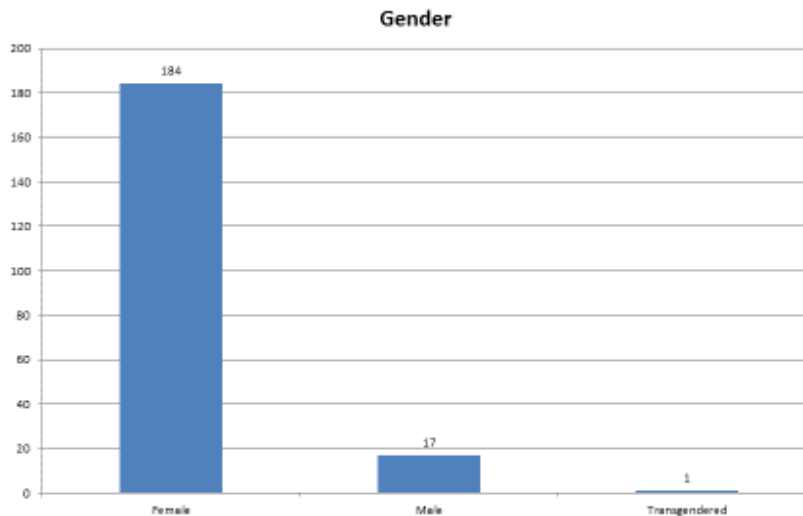
– Carmen Torres, Mary's Social Worker

HART DATA

In 2016 we received 202 unique referrals for high risk or confirmed victims of DMST. This was an increase from our previous year where we received 133 unique referrals. Below are key indicators for our 2016 data.



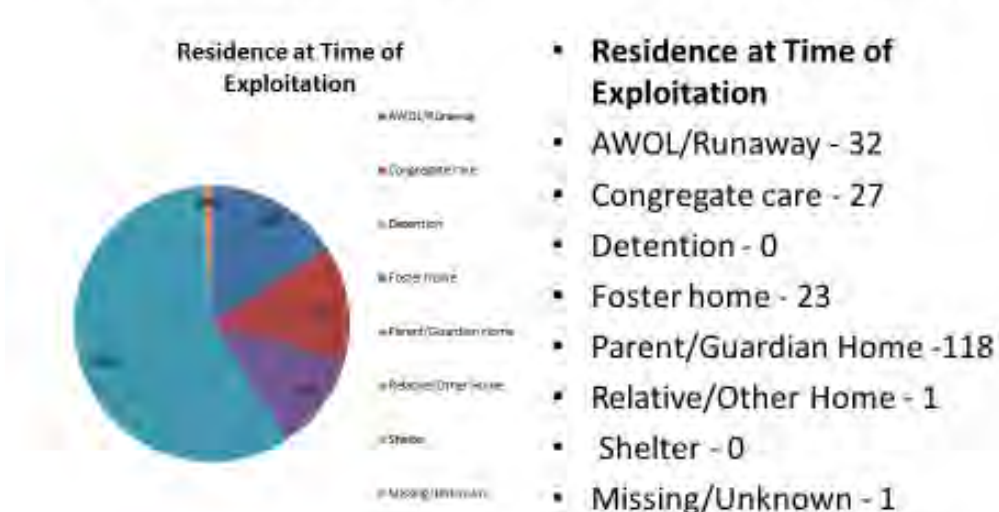
Gender



Race/Ethnicity



Residence at Time of Exploitation



STAY INFORMED

The following is information from our Introduction to DMST in CT Law Enforcement Curriculum. This information highlights how exploiters/traffickers identify, groom and trap young children in a life of exploitation.

GROOMING / MANIPULATION PHASE

- Making wise investments in girls
- Studying their victims online
 - Social Media / Dating Websites / Chat Rooms
- Pretending to be their boyfriend
- Acting as a modeling Agent or manager
- Peer Recruitment



HART Law Enforcement Curriculum
November 2016

SCOUTING PHASE

- Scouting where children and youth are known to frequent
 - Malls
 - Cinemas
 - Juvenile Courts and Detention Facilities
 - Bus/Train Stations
 - Schools
 - Congregate care settings
- Looking for weaknesses
 - Low Self Esteem
 - No where to go
 - Appears gullible and easy to manipulate



HART Law Enforcement Curriculum
November 2016

Trapping Phase

- Threatened use of force on family and friends
- Beating victims regularly
- Keeping victims addicted to drugs
- Blackmail



I AM JANE DOE MOVIE SCREENING AND PANEL DISCUSSION

On March 1st, The Underground, in collaboration with HART, presented the documentary "I Am Jane Doe" to a sold out audience. There were over 300 people in attendance. Individuals from 48 faith communities and 25 different agencies gathered at Wintonbury Church to learn about sex trafficking in the digital age.

In case you missed it, Backpage is an online advertiser that, according to the documentary, derives the majority of its vast profits from escort ads. Backpage has come under fire recently for allegations that it facilitates sex trafficking. A [Senate report](#) found that Backpage was changing words in its ads to conceal criminal sexual exploitation of minors.



(L-R) Annmarie Boulay, Yvette Young, Tammy Sneed, Timothy Palmbach, and Jillian Gilchrest

According to Timothy Palmbach of the University of New Haven's Center for Forensic Investigation of Trafficking in Persons, there are approximately 600-700 new sex ads in CT each day.

Although families across the U.S. have tried to pursue justice against Backpage for its role in sex trafficking minors, a law from the 1990's called the Communications Decency Act (CDA) shields Backpage and other similar advertisers from liability. You can learn more about the CDA [here](#).

Now it's time to change the CDA and make it clear to our courts that those who facilitate sex trafficking can be held accountable. We are proud that our very own Senator Richard Blumenthal is leading the charge!

WE NEED YOUR HELP:

Call Senator Blumenthal and thank him for his leadership: (860) 258-6940 or (202) 224-2823.

Make sure to mention that amendments to the CDA should include:

1. Possible civil and criminal liability
2. Protections for both children and adults who are victims of sex trafficking
3. Ability to prosecute under both State and Federal law

CT DEMAND CAMPAIGN

By Jillian Gilchrest, MSW, Chair, Trafficking in Persons Council

Who is buying sex and how do we stop them?

From 2006-2016, prostituted individuals in Connecticut were three times more likely to be arrested than those buying sex. When an arrest was made for buying sex, only 20% of those arrests resulted in a conviction, compared to the 51% of prostitution arrests that resulted in conviction during that same time period. The discrepancy in the attention given to those buying sex as compared to and those selling sex isn't unique to law enforcement practices. Most of the public discourse surrounding the commercial sex industry focuses on the individual's "choice" to sell sex. The act of buying sex is rarely, if ever, questioned. In fact, buying sex is considered such an unremarkable act that we, as a culture, refer to those who buy sex as "johns."

When it comes to human trafficking, though, there is no "choice" to sell sex; but there certainly is a choice to buy sex. It has been estimated that a victim of human trafficking may be sexually violated by between 5-25 buyers per day. Even if we use a conservative estimate of five buyers per day, the number of children who have been identified by the Department of Children and Families as high risk for human trafficking far outweighs those being arrested and convicted for buying.

During the 2016 Legislative Session, the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Council discovered a provision in state law that actually protected those buying sex. In 2013, when state lawmakers increased the penalty for patronizing sex from a minor to a felony charge, they included a "mistake of age" provision. This provision offered those illegally buying sex from a minor the opportunity to argue

that the individual they purchased looked older than age 16 (*Connecticut's prostitution law was based on the age of 16 until October 2016*) and avoid a felony charge. This problematic provision was removed during the 2016 legislative session, but was a huge impetus for those working to prevent and address human trafficking to focus their efforts on the demand side of sexual exploitation.

The TIP Council has initiated the Connecticut Campaign Against Demand, a campaign to raise awareness and focus attention on those paying to sexually exploit children, women and men. By engaging the public, the TIP Council is hopeful that we will be able to build public will for policies and law enforcement practices that target demand. The TIP Council is actively working with law enforcement partners who have experience and interest in demand efforts and will be conducting outreach to municipalities to join the anti-demand campaign. The campaign has released materials that can be shared via social media and is in the process of developing a three-year plan. We welcome everyone to share the information with their networks to raise awareness about the demand side of sex trafficking and build statewide momentum to end demand.

LOVE 146 SURVIVOR CARE PROGRAM

Due to generous state funding from the Department of Children and Families (DCF), federal funding from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime, and private individuals and foundations, Love146 has recently expanded services to survivors of human trafficking statewide. With this funding, Love146 anticipates providing Long-Term Services to approximately 50-60 youth and Rapid Responses to over 150 youth identified as high-risk/suspected and confirmed victims of human trafficking annually.

Love146's Long-Term Services are provided by Licensed Social Workers and are grounded in individual care plans, developed with youth in conjunction with their providers and caregivers. Through these care plans, Love146 works with youth and their support networks to:

- Identify goals and measurable objectives around safety, emotional well-being, and skill development
- Develop strategies and interventions to anticipate, avoid, and mitigate potential problems
- Access and engage in needed support services

Love146 works with youth on a weekly basis to help them achieve their care plan goals. In addition, Love146 participates in case meetings to help inform the services youth receive, and provides support services to providers and caregivers so that they are better able to meet the needs of these youth. Love146 staff are also available for after-hours support to participants, caregivers, and service providers when urgent situations arise.

Rapid Responses are one-time services that provide youth with critical information and safety planning related to human trafficking in a one-on-one setting. Topics typically covered during a Rapid Response include: the realities of human trafficking; different recruitment and grooming processes; behaviors that increase vulnerabilities; healthy relationships; internet safety; and individualized safety planning. Each youth is given a Rapid Response backpack, filled with a range of items youth and service providers have identified as being critical for this population.

Following the Rapid Response, Love146 completes a Rapid Response Summary Form, which provides a written overview of what was discussed during the Rapid Response and offers recommendations for follow-up service provision. As of January 31, 2017, 92% of youth who participated in a Rapid Response reported learning something new and 87% reported an intent to change their behaviors/activities as a result of engaging in our services.

For more information on Love146, go to love146.org.

ST. FRANCIS TRAINS STAFF ABOUT DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING

Through our Violence and Injury Prevention Program, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center sponsored an Introduction to Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) training, conducted by CT's Department of Children and Families. Our goal was to sponsor a training that included medical staff, law enforcement, community leaders, social workers and family & children safety advocates.

Out of the 85 attendees, 21 were Social Workers, 8 were law enforcement, 8 were St Francis Physicians, 14 St. Francis Nurses, and 34 were safety advocates. Participants who attended the training are now able to better identify who a victim of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking may be; understand what is DMST; what the risk factors/vulnerabilities as a result of exposure to Trauma are and learn engagement techniques. Attendees will be able to implement protocols and improve practice guidelines when dealing with a victim of DMST. Our St. Francis Trauma Department and Emergency Department will work closely to better screen victims of DMST and/or Traffickers.



(L-R) Dr. Vijay Jayaraman (Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center), Marisol Feliciano (Violence and Injury Prevention Program Coordinator / SFHMC), Assistant U. S. Attorney Sarala V. Nagala (Deputy Chief Major Crimes and National Security Section), Dr. Christopher H. Comey (Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center / Chairman, Department of Surgery), Tammy Sneed (Department of Children and Families), Dr. James Feeney (Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center / Director of Department of Trauma)

SAVE THE DATE



Date: May 17, 2017

Time: 8:30am – 4:30pm

Location: First Cathedral Church

1151 Blue Hills Ave, Bloomfield, CT 06002

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Offering a diverse selection of session topics, this conference is an opportunity for law enforcement, child protective services staff, lawyers, social workers, therapists, teachers, forensic interviewers, medical professionals and child advocacy center staff to come together and learn how to strengthen their response to child abuse and exploitation cases across Connecticut.

Two tracks will be available during the conference. One on general child abuse (inclusive of all forms of child abuse) and one on child abuse with a focus on human trafficking. Registration for this Conference will open soon.

In 2014, CT DCF Human Trafficking Response Team began partnering with Connecticut's multidisciplinary teams and child advocacy centers to provide a more comprehensive and supportive response to minor victims of human trafficking. CT's MDT's and CACs have been responding to child abuse victims in CT since 1995 and have proven that a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach is the best way to ensure each child receives the appropriate services from response to recovery. Together CCA and HART hope to bring awareness to the fact that victims of domestic minor sex trafficking deserve the same level of response as all child abuse victims.

CONFERENCE PARTNERS

Human Anti-trafficking Response Team (HART): The Human Anti-trafficking Response Team (HART) was created in order to focus on and reduce commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST). The State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) has increasingly sharpened its focus on the growing issue of DMST and CSEC afflicting children across the State. Since 2008, over 600 children have been referred to

DCF as possible victims of DMST/CSEC. Connecticut DCF has put forth tremendous efforts to end the sale of our children.

Connecticut Children's Alliance (CCA): The Connecticut Children's Alliance is a coalition of Children's Advocacy Centers and Multidisciplinary Teams that work together to improve the system in which child abuse cases are handled. We are dedicated to the enhancement of timely and comprehensive multidisciplinary response to child abuse victims and their families. Currently, CT has 17 multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) and 10 child advocacy centers (CACs).

HART CONTACTS



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