



Highlights from the November 16-17, 2015 OCJS Conference: *Enhancing Ohio's Frontline Response to Human Trafficking*

The Rescue and Restore Victims of Human Trafficking Regional Program is a grant partnership between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP) office and the State of Ohio's Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) to strengthen the state's response to human trafficking. Through the grant, three core Regional Coalition Partners in Columbus, Cincinnati and Toledo work with OCJS to identify and refer foreign born victims of human trafficking, provide training and technical assistance on identification, build capacity of local anti-trafficking coalitions and raise awareness of human trafficking in Ohio.

To support the program's goals, on November 16th and 17th OCJS hosted a statewide conference titled *Enhancing Ohio's Frontline Response to Human Trafficking*. In partnership with the Governor's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, the Ohio Network of Anti-Human Trafficking Coalitions and the Ohio Network Children's Advocacy Centers, this two-day conference funded by OTIP provided an engaging forum for anti-trafficking advocates and leaders across the state to discuss critical issues in Ohio's trafficking response, such as trends in labor trafficking and foreign born victimization, developing a community-based continuum of care for survivors and implementation of Ohio's Safe Harbor Law for minors in the juvenile justice system. Eighty people attended the conference, including local anti-trafficking coalition leadership, Child Advocacy Center directors, representatives of the Ohio Attorney General's office and policy staff from the Governor's Task Force.

A unique aspect of the gathering was the focus on relationship building across the state, in order to strengthen a sustained statewide network of response. After the first day of the conference, attendees met up at the Roosevelt Coffeehouse for an evening reception at a community-oriented venue that actively supports anti-trafficking efforts in Central Ohio. Below are conference highlights:

Overview of State and Local Response:

The meeting kicked off with a welcome from Ohio Department of Public Safety Director John Born, and then a session aimed at showing participants how far the state has come in recent years. The grant Project Director and state Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, Elizabeth Ranade Janis, presented Ohio's progress in developing a comprehensive response to human trafficking at the state and local level. She provided an update on the Governor's Task Force model of



response and its key policy initiatives, such the state's public awareness campaign, youth prevention programs, significant legislative changes, training programs for state boards and commissions and law enforcement and data collection initiative. Michelle Hannan, Director of Professional and Community Services of the Salvation Army of Central Ohio, shared the progress made from the long-term efforts of the Ohio Network of Anti-Human Trafficking Coalitions and the importance of focusing on particularly underserved groups such as foreign born victims and LGBT youth. And Amy Deverson



Roberts of the Ohio Network of Children's Advocacy Centers provided an update on the progress of the child advocacy centers as the key partner of the Governor's Task Force in serving as a service provider for minor victims of trafficking throughout Ohio.



Labor Trafficking and Foreign Born Victimization:

Representatives from Crime Victim Services of Northwest Ohio, the Lucas County (Toledo) Human Trafficking Coalition, The Salvation Army of Central Ohio, Homeland Security Investigations and Asian American Community Services participated in a lively panel discussion facilitated by the Rescue and

Restore Project Director. The panelists provided an in-depth conversation around the identification and referral of foreign born victims of human trafficking, including: technical skills and assistance necessary to be successful in identification as well as in court proceedings; case management and victim advocacy; and discussions of recent cases in Ohio. Of particular note were the cultural insights offered by Asian American Community Services on the recent massage parlor cases in which 17 Chinese survivors were recovered from sex-for-pay massage parlors in Central Ohio.

Anti-Trafficking Data Reporting: A session was devoted to the coalition data pilot initiative led by the Governor's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, OCJS and the Ohio Network of Anti-Trafficking Coalitions. Kristina Nicholson gave a compelling presentation on the importance of obtaining and citing accurate data as it relates to coalitions, and provided technical assistance to the coalition managers on how to report data through the Google Drive document.

Wrap-Around Services for Survivors: Representatives from the Franklin County (Columbus) Municipal Court, Gracehaven, The Salvation Army of Greater Cincinnati, the Child Protection Center of Ross County (Chillicothe) and She Has a Name cleaning services participated in a panel discussion addressing successes and challenges of developing wrap-around services in their communities, as well as the specific issues of housing minor victims of trafficking (Gracehaven) and job readiness for survivors (She Has a Name). The panelists discussed the importance of building capacity within the state's local coalitions to address the unique needs of survivors including but not limited to: shelter, case management, employment opportunities and social enterprise. The panel





discussion was facilitated by Vanessa Perkins, a survivor of human trafficking and staff member of the Columbus City Attorney’s Office, in an effort to increase survivor-led discussion and initiatives within the state.

Engaging with the Media: To help coalitions and survivors effectively engage the media in a way that is survivor-led and effective, the Ohio Department of Public Safety’s Communications Team provided technical assistance on how to have a successful interview, as well as how to equip survivors to tell their stories to the press. Attendees were given Media Tip Cards (pictured below) to disseminate to survivors and coalition members.

Human Trafficking Survivors Media Tips

Media Tips for Human Trafficking Survivors and Their Advocates

The following tips were created to offer practical advice when participating in interviews or sharing your anti-human trafficking efforts with a reporter.

Requests for interviews

You have a story to tell and it can benefit the general public. Your words are valuable and can have a positive impact to the community, so don’t be afraid to share your experience.

You aren’t obligated to speak to the media, but if you choose to participate in an interview, be sure to consult with the proper team members to make sure you won’t compromise a court case.

You have control over the when, where and how you proceed with an interview. Most members of the media staff are willing to work with you to convey your message. If they can’t comply, you have the right to withdraw.

Human Trafficking Survivors Media Tips

Getting the Message Out

Focus on three keys messages that you want the reporter to know about your experience and allow him or her to serve as a guide during the interview.

It’s okay if you don’t have an answer to a question, and it’s also okay to tell the reporter that you don’t have the information available at this time, but will make sure to follow-up after the interview.

Own your message. You have an opportunity to encourage someone with your story, so take the opportunity and offer valuable information from your experience.

For more tips and detailed information visit www.CrimeVictimServices.org






The Ohio Network of Anti-Human Trafficking Coalitions

Ohio’s Safe Harbor Law 3 Years Later: Representatives from Advocating Opportunity (a Local Outreach Partner through the Rescue and Restore grant), the Franklin County Juvenile Court in Columbus, Office of the Ohio Public Defender and Summit County Juvenile Court in Akron led an insightful panel discussion on their experiences implementing Ohio’s Safe Harbor Law locally, including issues of interpretation of the statute, and successes and challenges to making the law a reality for exploited youth and children in the juvenile justice system.

Evening Reception: On the evening of November 16, all conference attendees were invited to an evening reception at The Roosevelt Coffeehouse, a locally owned coffee shop built to fight the injustices of human trafficking, hunger and unclean water. With a state of 88 counties and over 15 local anti-trafficking coalitions, the reception brought together coalition leadership, human trafficking survivors and other local responders to mingle, network and leave the conference with a greater sense of partnership with other anti-trafficking advocates from around Ohio.





Strengthening Ohio's Continuum of Care: During the second day of the conference, Michelle Hannan from The Salvation Army facilitated a two-hour coalition breakout session to support coalitions' efforts to develop local models of response. In her presentation, she walked the audience through the Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition's continuum of care, reviewed Ohio's coalition model developed through the grant, discussed coalition service standards and common response gaps and suggested ways coalitions can increase capacity through new partnerships and building on the existing model. Immediately following the presentation, conference attendees gathered in small groups based on their counties to discuss their region's response and alignment to the coalition model and continuum of care.



Understanding how the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline Works: Courtney Walsh from Polaris Project and the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) helpfully “de-mystified” the national hotline for Ohio's coalitions by providing an in-depth presentation on the role of the NHTRC, how the hotline is operated and how NHTRC collaborates with state and local coalitions to identify and refer victims.



Caring for our Caregivers: The conference closed-out with a session highlighting the importance of self-care. As many anti-trafficking advocates already know, instances of vicarious trauma and burnout are not uncommon among service providers and those working with victims of severe forms of violence and trauma. A presentation from Mt. Carmel Hospital's Crime and Trauma Assistance Program (CTAP) was followed by an engaging discussion on methods of refreshment and self-care in the midst of difficult work.

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