



HUMAN TRAFFICKING
IN OUR BACKYARD

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Chair Neron and Members of the House Education Committee:

My name is Cheryl Csiky, I am a child sex trafficking survivor leading as Executive Director at IN OUR BACKYARD, a nonprofit fighting human trafficking across Central Oregon and the United States. I sincerely thank you for your time in hearing about sex trafficking prevention for youth in Oregon. Since the pandemic, as a country, we have been in a situation of urgency combatting online sexual exploitive recruitment of youth from all demographics, genders, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic statuses. In April, we educated over 700 students in Florence, OR. To date, we have educated over 10,000 Oregon Students through our Teens Against Trafficking prevention program as a cost-free resource offered to Oregon schools and Human Trafficking Task forces.

I strongly support SB 473 as key to keeping all children safe from the manipulations of traffickers who, tragically, prey on youth in Oregon and beyond. Once a child knows what human trafficking looks like and how to report it safely, it becomes highly unlikely that the child will ever be trafficked.

In my own experience, I often share that as a child, a resource officer came into my school classroom between 4th-5th grade to talk about drug abuse and child abuse with students. Back then, it was the D.A.R.E program. She shared a poster that included a small child with a black eye and bruises on their arms while hugging a teddy bear. I felt so much compassion for this other child on the poster that, at that same moment, I decided not to report the abuse and exploitation I was experiencing on my own suburban street. I felt the abuse I faced was my fault since I wasn't being kidnapped and I had no bruises or marks for anyone to see. In addition, I would never have known as a child that the harmful exploitive abuse I experienced had a name that was called child sex trafficking. A prevention curriculum to reach a child like myself will save many lives. I am honored to help prevent human trafficking so that no one else falls prey to this atrocity.

I have attached statistics for your review as we work to keep Oregon youth safe for their entire lifetime.

Thank you,

Cheryl Csiky | Executive Director at IN OUR BACKYARD | cheryl@inourbackyard.org | 541-639-5008

According to the latest 2020 [research](#) findings in the United States:

- *online recruitment increased by a significant 22%. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, as the proportion of victims from common recruitment sites such as strip clubs (-46%), foster homes (-70%), and schools (-38%) went down drastically, the internet was reported as the top recruitment location for all forms of trafficking.*
- *Most notably, the analysis found a significant increase in the proportion of potential victims for whom Facebook and Instagram were the sites for recruitment into trafficking (120%). There was a 125% increase in reports of recruitment on Facebook over the previous year and a 95% increase on Instagram.*
- *In 2021, The National Hotline was contacted 50,123 times with calls, texts, and online chats and tips. In the state of Oregon, the [National Resource Hotline](#) was contacted 485 times, and of those, 177 were received from victims/survivors of human trafficking.*

Adult victims often report that they were first recruited as minors. They report they “know” their trafficker, and at the time of the harm, are not aware that what is happening to them is sex trafficking.

- ***SB473, Chief Sponsored by Senator Hansell***, unanimously passed the Senate with bipartisan support. It includes comprehensive language regarding the topic of child sex trafficking prevention curriculum to equip students with the necessary skills and tools to stay safe from child sexual abuse and child sex trafficking.
- ***In 2021, the bill was Senate Bill 644***, which directed the school district board to adopt a child sexual abuse prevention instructional program that addresses the sex trafficking of children.

For any questions or further information, please email info@inourbackyard.org.