

January 30, 2015



*This Super Bowl Weekend, Illinois DCFS Wants to Remind You:  
Human Trafficking is Not a Game.*

(SPRINGFIELD, Ill) – In 2014, local, state and federal law enforcement agencies joined together to crack down on human trafficking and prostitution during Super Bowl weekend in the New York area. The sting netted 45 arrests and the rescue of 16 juveniles who were being trafficked into prostitution.

January is Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Month, and Illinois DCFS is reminding the public that human trafficking of children, including sex trafficking, occurs year-round right here in Illinois.

"It's important for everyone to understand that Illinois children are being trafficked and exploited every day," says Stacy Sloan, human trafficking coordinator for Illinois DCFS. "People can help keep children safe by knowing the signs of human trafficking and by immediately calling law enforcement. We want all children to be safe and the public can help."

KNOW THE SIGNS, a child who is being pimped or exploited may:

- Show signs of physical harm
- Become depressed, fearful or withdrawn
- Have a history of running away or currently be on the run
- Have expensive clothing, jewelry, manicures or pedicures
- Begin spending time with an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Have new tattoos or branding
- Become isolated from family and friends
- No longer in control of his or her driver's license or other identification
- Make reference to having a "pimp" or "daddy"

Often, young victims of human trafficking do not seek help because they are fearful, ashamed of their situation, distrust law enforcement or become dependent on the perpetrator. The Illinois Safe Children Act ensures that all children who are lured or coerced into prostitution/human trafficking are innocent and immune from criminal prosecution and will be placed in the child protection system instead of the criminal justice system.

In 2014, Illinois DCFS launched the "You are Not For Sale" human trafficking awareness and prevention media campaign (see art attached) to teach the public how to recognize and report human trafficking. If you suspect a child is victim of human trafficking, call 911 and the DCFS Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-800-252-2873 (800-25-ABUSE).

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