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For Immediate Release

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## Illinois DCFS Releases Public Service Announcement to Prevent Child Human Trafficking *January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month in Illinois*

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – The human trafficking of children for sex in Illinois happens in every small town and big city throughout the state. Since 2011, The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services has investigated more than 600 allegations of child human trafficking in our state. Most of the reports involved children being victimized within blocks of where they live.

Unlike the sale of illicit drugs, a child can be sold multiple times a day. Sadly, child sex trafficking is a multi-billion dollar industry in the United States. It is important to know that both boys and girls, many as young as 12, some younger, are victims. In fact, anyone under the age of 18 involved in this crime is a victim.

The public can help us stop this by knowing the signs and by reporting the crime.

What are some potential indicators of trafficking a child? The child may:

- Show signs of physical harm
- Become depressed, fearful or withdrawn
- Have a history of running away or currently be on run
- Have expensive clothing, jewelry, manicures, pedicures, etc.
- Begin spending time with an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Be found in a hotel/motel
- Have new tattoos or branding
- Be performing work inappropriate for his or her age
- Become isolated from family, friends or sources of support
- No longer have control of his or her driver's license or other identification documents

To learn more about how to recognize the signs of human trafficking, visit [www.DCFS.Illinois.gov](http://www.DCFS.Illinois.gov).

If you suspect or know a child is a victim of human trafficking, call 911 and the DCFS Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-800-25-ABUSE. Remember, our children are not for sale.

To download the audio PSAs in English or Spanish, visit: [HT PSA](#)

*DCFS receives, investigates and acts upon a report of child abuse or neglect every five minutes. Tens of thousands of children are safer thanks to those who call our Child Abuse hotline, 1-800-25-ABUSE (252-2873) each year. Working together, we can ensure a safe, loving home and brighter future for every child.*