



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT
OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
AVERY D. NILES, COMMISSIONER

A MESSAGE FROM THE
OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES

Commissioner Announces Human Trafficking Prevention Month

(DJJ Central Office – Atlanta, GA) In partnership with local, federal and other state law enforcement agencies, DJJ Commissioner Avery D. Niles announces the Department of Juvenile Justice will observe **“National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month”** during January 2014. The awareness project coincides with the 150th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln’s historic Emancipation Proclamation.

“This anniversary is a powerful reminder to rededicate our awareness to bring an end to human trafficking and slavery wherever it still preys on the oppressed,” said Commissioner Avery Niles. “Human trafficking is the most extreme violation of a person’s civil rights,” Commissioner Niles said. “..And yet it still afflicts humanity in this century through the profitable business of sex trafficking or disguised in the form of domestic labor hiding human servitude.”

Every year, up to 300,000 children are at risk for becoming victims of Human Trafficking. One of the most shocking statistics of our lifetime is that more than 80% of youth who run away from home are fated to become new victims of Human Trafficking.

It’s an international crime that’s become known as Commercial Sexual Exploitation. The average age of child exploitation victims here is just 12 years old. Sadder still, the longer and more often our children are left vulnerable on the streets, the higher the risk they will be victimized.

The Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, through its Office of Victim Services provides statewide leadership and outreach services in collaboration with law enforcement, government, private agencies and other concerned community stakeholders.

“We all work together to educate professionals and the public about how to identify and respond to victims of human trafficking,” said DJJ’s Commissioner Niles. The DJJ Office of Victim Services and DJJ Security Management and Response Teams (SMRT) have formed a multi-agency partnership with an FBI Taskforce called “MATCH” (the “Metro Atlanta Child Exploitation Task Force”).

By increasing awareness and recognizing the risk factors involved with human trafficking, DJJ has become more proficient at identifying Human Trafficking victims, protecting the basic rights of the victims in our care, and providing appropriate victim related services.

“As we continue to broaden our network of partners and service providers, we expand our capacity to identify and recover sexually exploited youth,” the Commissioner said. “As our multi-agency partnership helps to bring more perpetrators to justice we are finding more ways to shield the innocent victims.”

For information about Georgia's observance of **“National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month”** contact the DJJ Office of Victim Services at 1-866-922-6360 or visit the website, www.djijnnewsandviews.org/victimservices/csec.html. For additional resources, visit the Governor's Office for Children and Families/CSEC Training at www.dhs.gov.

“While the fight to combat Human Trafficking is a daily task, January will serve as a month-long reminder of our ongoing mission to keep communities safe for our youth, to continue raising awareness, and to bring justice to vulnerable children throughout the State of Georgia,” Commissioner Niles said. “We hope all DJJ Staff will remain vigilant with us and help Georgia meet this mission.”

(END RELEASE)
