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Campaign to raise awareness of human trafficking coming to Ontario truck stops this spring

By: Tyler Davie
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OTTAWA, Ont. -- Persons Against the Crime of Trafficking in Humans (PACT-Ottawa) is installing point-of-sale displays stocked with free CDs, posters and beverage coasters about how truckers can spot human trafficking at truck stops from Windsor to Ottawa for the TruckSTOP campaign.

"We see truck drivers as an untapped resource in helping to combat this issue," says TruckSTOP coordinator Kim Howson. "They may be witnessing instances of trafficking without even knowing it."

Inspired by the work of organizations such as Truckers Against Trafficking in the U.S., TruckSTOP materials will help truckers identify sex and labour trafficking.

Howson says signs truckers should watch for include people who look like they are being controlled or watched, fearing for their safety, tired or hungry, showing signs of physical or emotional abuse and not in possession of identification or travel documents.

TruckSTOP launches in April with a second wave over the summer.

Howson says the campaign will be evaluated in the fall with the help of truckers and industry groups, and PACT hopes to expand the program across Canada.

All materials will be available for free at PACT's Web site during and after the trial period of TruckSTOP.

PACT is funded in part by the Department of Public Safety and the organization is partnering with the RCMP, Crime Stoppers, and the Canada Border Services Agency for the campaign.

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