



PACT-Ottawa

Persons Against the Crime of Trafficking in Humans
Personnes en Action Contre la Traite des Personnes

Media Advisory

New workshops in Ottawa teach youth about human trafficking

PACT-Ottawa launches **Project Protect** to educate youth in Ottawa on how to protect themselves from the dangers of human trafficking

OTTAWA, Ontario, March, 2013 – High school pupils in the Ottawa area are receiving invaluable training on the realities of modern day slavery thanks to the efforts of a local non-profit organization, PACT-Ottawa, and its volunteers. The organization has created Project Protect, part of which consists of a youth curriculum on human trafficking, targeting young people between the ages of 12-15. PACT-Ottawa has begun presenting the workshops in high schools and youth groups across the Ottawa region. The goal is that these presentations will enable young people to identify human trafficking when they see it, and protect themselves and those around them from being exploited and trafficked.

PACT-Ottawa aims to reach at least 1500 students with an initial schedule of 25 presentations. Thanks to a Safer and Vital Communities Grant from the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the non-profit is well on its way to achieving its goal with 19 workshops already booked, reaching over 800 youth in 7 establishments. The curriculum includes interactive workshops on: domestic trafficking of young women in a Canadian context; international trafficking and reducing your slavery footprint on a global scale; and a group activity to help youth gain a better understanding of the realities and impact of trafficking both domestically and internationally.

The organization believes that education is crucial for this age group. Of the millions who have been trafficked worldwide, it is predicted that half of these victims are children (UNODC). The average age of recruitment into the sex trade in Canada is 14: "This age range is the most sensitive as it is when traffickers begin to identify, attract and build relationships with potential victims. With two recent high profile cases of youth domestic trafficking and recruitment in Ottawa, this issue is gaining more attention and the need to educate and empower youth to protect themselves is even greater. We know that crime prevention through education is a major element in the fight against human trafficking." *Christina Harrison Baird, Chairperson & Director of Policy and Legal Affairs, PACT-Ottawa.*

As part of the grant, PACT-Ottawa has also developed a Train the Trainer program for front line service providers, which emphasizes the importance of tailoring their particular service to best fit the needs of a

trafficked person. The non-profit is currently offering 1-day training sessions for front line service providers and members of the community.

To schedule a youth presentation please contact: Tasha Henderson, Education & Training Coordinator at 438.880.8141 or t.henderson@pact-ottawa.org

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For more information please contact:

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About PACT-Ottawa

PACT-Ottawa is a registered non-profit organization committed to entrenching the protection of trafficked persons in Canadian law, and to securing the essential services that trafficked persons require to take back control of their bodies and their lives. Our organization's mission is to network with other groups to prevent the trafficking of persons and to increase the protection of those who have been trafficked.

For more information visit www.pact-ottawa.org, e-mail info@pact-ottawa.org, or call 613-875-PACT (7228).