

CHILD TRAFFICKING IN CALIFORNIA

Adopted by Convention Delegates, May 2010

- WHEREAS,** California law defines human trafficking as “all acts involved in the recruitment, abduction, transport, harboring, transfer, sale or receipt of persons, within national or across international borders, through force, coercion, fraud or deception, to place persons in situations of slavery or slavery-like conditions, forced labor or services, such as forced prostitution or sexual services, domestic servitude, bonded sweatshop labor, or other debt bondage”; and
- WHEREAS,** California is a ripe location for traffickers because of its international borders, harbors, airports, powerful economy, increasing population, and large immigrant population; and
- WHEREAS,** Individuals can learn signs to identify a victim of child trafficking and how to respond quickly; and
- WHEREAS,** The California State PTA believes that all children deserve to live and work in safety and dignity; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That California State PTA urges its units, councils, and districts to promote programs that increase awareness of the prevalence of child trafficking in California, and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA urges its units, councils, and districts to educate parents, guardians, and others responsible for the welfare of children and youth about child trafficking and ways to identify, prevent, and stop child trafficking, and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA and its constituent organizations encourage the California State Legislature to create a “Child Trafficking Awareness Day.”

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Resolution: Child Trafficking in California, continued

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

National PTA adopted a child trafficking resolution in June 2009 which indicates that “at least 200,000 or more children may be victims of domestic trafficking within the United States.”

Child trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery. Trafficking is defined as all acts involved in the transport, harboring, or sale of persons within national or across international borders. Children may be forced, coerced, kidnapped, deceived, or by fraudulent means be subjected to sexual exploitation in prostitution or the sex entertainment industry or forced to do labor in domestic servitude, restaurant work, janitorial work, sweatshop factory work and migrant agricultural work. It is a violation of the human body, mind and spirit. The trafficker has stolen the child’s freedom and dignity and uses a variety of ways to instill fear in the child to keep them enslaved. Some children are kept under lock and key, while others are isolated from the public, family members and/or their ethnic group, and threatened with violence toward themselves or their family. The trafficker may shame the child by threatening to expose their circumstances to their family or take control over the victim’s money.

“There is a special evil in the abuse and exploitation of the most innocent and vulnerable. The victims see little of life before they see the very worst of life, an underground of brutality and lonely fear. Those who create these victims and profit from their suffering must be severely punished. Those who patronize this industry debase themselves and deepen the misery of others.” – Former President Bush, in an address to the U.N. General Assembly, September 23, 2003.

Child trafficking occurs right here in our state of California as a destination and a source for this crime. It is on the rise with the money that can be made because of it and/or because a person’s economic status has deteriorated.

We each have a place in the fight against modern-day slavery. If our government, businesses, civil society, and individuals work together in our communities and at the national and international levels, we can change children’s lives forever. California State PTA needs to encourage research to uncover the secret atrocities, protect and care for the children who have been trafficked, and raise awareness in the broader community to prevent and expose child trafficking.