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## DOH-COLLIER RAISES AWARENESS AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING



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**Naples, Fla.** — January is Human Trafficking Prevention Month and the Florida Department of Health in Collier County (DOH-Collier) is committed to raising awareness and promoting action against human trafficking.

Human trafficking is a human rights violation and form of modern-day slavery that involves exploiting a person for labor, services, or commercial sex through force, fraud, or coercion. There are an estimated 14,500-17,500 people trafficked in the United States each year and Florida is the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest trafficking destination in the country, with half of all victims younger than 18 years old.

During the month of January, DOH-Collier is collaborating with community partners to bring awareness to human trafficking and act against trafficking in Collier County. DOH-Collier will be distributing print materials to schools, health care providers, and other organizations to help recognize the signs of human trafficking and connect them with services. Additionally, a private screening of the movie, "I Am Jane Doe" will be held at the end of the month that follows the real stories of American girls trafficked on internet-based classified ads.

Anyone can become victims of human trafficking; however, traffickers prey on those who are vulnerable, living in an unsafe or unstable situation, or in search of a better life. In many cases, victims are deceived by false promises and forced, lured, or blackmailed into working in undesirable situations with little or no pay. Victims can be in plain view or hidden behind closed doors, so during the month of January, DOH-Collier is urging residents and visitors to learn the signs of human trafficking in support of Human Trafficking Prevention Month. It is important that "if you see something, say something." There are common indicators that can help identify a human trafficking victim that include:

- Avoids eye contact
- Shows signs of being denied food, water, sleep, or medical care
- Not allowed to speak for themselves or a third party insists on being present
- Has inconsistencies in his/her story
- Child that has stopped attending school
- Bruises in various stages of healing
- Is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, nervous, or paranoid
- Few or no personal possessions

It is important to remain vigilant to keep our community safe from human trafficking. If you have information about a potential trafficking situation or believe you are the victim of a trafficking situation, call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) at 1-888-373-7888.

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The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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