

## California Partnership Launches First Statewide Education Program, PROTECT, to Fight Human Trafficking

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SACRAMENTO, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--

A public-private collaboration of law enforcement, government, education and human trafficking leaders today announced the launch of [PROTECT \(www.protectnow.org\)](http://www.protectnow.org), an education program designed to reduce human trafficking in communities across California. PROTECT is being rolled out throughout 35 rural California counties over the next three years, with the goal of reaching potentially 325,000 students and teachers.

“Human trafficking is a global issue that preys on our most vulnerable populations, including children across California,” said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson. “PROTECT brings awareness about human trafficking directly to the classroom, and educates school staff about how to identify victims of trafficking. These resources can help a child who is being trafficked and hopefully, prevent a child from falling victim to human trafficking.”

PROTECT applies a three-pronged, trauma-informed approach to fighting human trafficking. It includes training for county leaders, educators, and community professionals; age-appropriate classroom curriculum for grades 5, 7, 9 and 11; and response protocols for supporting potential trafficking victims.

“We need to do a better job of teaching young people how to protect themselves and each other from being victimized by traffickers,” said Deputy Attorney General Maggy Krell. “Prevention, identification, and early intervention initiatives are vital to decreasing the number of victims and empowering our youth.”

Rural County Representatives of California ([RCRC](#)), a local government advocacy organization based in Sacramento, and National Homebuyers Fund, Inc. ([NHF](#)), a nonprofit public benefit corporation, have provided grants to fund a phased-in program that will reach 35 rural California counties through the [PROTECT](#) program over the next three years.

“PROTECT is critical for California’s rural counties, and we are inspired by how this program helps our community members identify and prevent human trafficking through education,” said RCRC/NHF CEO, Greg Norton.

The [PROTECT](#) program was developed by three anti-human trafficking organizations : [3Strands Global](#), [Love Never Fails](#) and [Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives](#). Collectively, PROTECT’s founders have educated more than 100,000 students in 20

California counties and three states (GA, NY and HI) over the last 10 years. As the leading prevention education program in the nation, PROTECT has partnered with the California Attorney General and the California Department of Education to provide a scalable and systematic prevention education program. PROTECT has also partnered with [CISCO systems](#) for the core Learning Management System technology, [TIP NOW](#) for its anonymous reporting mobile app and [The Institute for Social Research](#) at California State University, Sacramento, to provide program metrics and analytics.

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