

# NEWS RELEASE

ARIZONA SUPREME COURT

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January 28, 2016

## **One in 20 Youth in Juvenile Probation Identified as Victims of Sex Trafficking**

PHOENIX – A new study by Arizona State University’s (ASU’s) Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research found 271 teenagers in Arizona’s juvenile probation system are victims of sex trafficking. The results were presented to the Arizona Human Trafficking Council at its meeting on Wednesday. The report details the incidence of sex trafficking among youth in the justice system and offers recommendations for enhanced trainings, screening tools, and more.

ASU’s research followed a mandatory training program that involved 567 juvenile probation officers, supervisors, other probation staff, and community partners. Key findings from the study show:

- *103 (57.5%) of the respondents reported they had at least one client on their current caseload that was a victim of sex trafficking.*
- *A total of 271 sex trafficking victims currently receiving services from Arizona Juvenile Probation Services were identified.*
- *When applied to the monthly average of adjudicated youth on probation of 3,849, the reported number of sex trafficking victims on juvenile probation, 208, totals 5.4% of the monthly juvenile probation population.*
- *Seven respondents (23.5%) reported that they believed one of the sex trafficking victims they identified was currently being sex trafficked.*
- *Twenty-seven of the respondents provided details about 34 sex trafficking victims receiving juvenile justice services through the Arizona Juvenile Probation Department.*

The study also identified risk factors such as homelessness, history of sexual abuse, drug or alcohol addiction, history of running away, prior involvement in the juvenile justice system, and other possible factors.

“This is another in a series of proactive steps Arizona is taking to identify the scope of the problem, determine ways to combat sex trafficking, and how to best deliver trauma-informed care that helps victims successfully emerge from that life,” said ASU’s Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz. “ASU remains committed to collaboration with all branches of government, charitable organizations, and the community as a whole to provide accurate data and actionable recommendations.”

“As part of the Arizona judiciary’s strategic objective of combatting human trafficking, the Juvenile Justice Services Division of the Supreme Court has collaborated with ASU on a number of training, recognition, and awareness initiatives, including this study,” said Joe Kelroy, Director of Juvenile Justice Services. Kelroy said funding for the study came from the Arizona Governor’s Office of Youth, Faith and Family.

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NOTE: The complete ASU study is posted here <http://links.asu.edu/azjp>