

Panel Addresses Important Role Religions Play in Preventing Youth from Becoming Victims of Human Trafficking

US Attorney's Office Clergy Ambassadors discuss prevention measures during anti-trafficking panel

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, February 17, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- An online panel on human trafficking took a different look at this complex issue. Most discussions on trafficking focus on spotting the signs of trafficking and helping victims recover. This discussion covered those basics and then went into preventative actions that religious organizations can take to help prevent youth from becoming victims in the first place. The panel, sponsored by the US Attorney's Clergy Ambassador program, was aimed at religious leaders, and empowering them with helpful information.

A powerful local film created about child sex trafficking in Washington, DC, "[Nameless](#)," was shown to start the event. This film covers information about trafficking in the Washington, DC, area, including resources that are available for helping victims of trafficking to get out of their situations and aid long-term recovery. This film can be watched on YouTube.

The panel, consisting of Rev. Sylvia Stanard, Church of Scientology National Affairs Office; Rev. Arica Cox, Social Justice Minister, Peace Baptist Church; Rebecca Burney, Rights4Girls; and Lauren Haggerty, DC Attorney General's office, answered questions on what can be done about this, how to spot trafficking, and general questions about trafficking.

As the individuals featured in the film mentioned, predators target vulnerable youth, particularly those young people who have unstable households, are shy and do not have a circle of friends.



Rev. Sylvia Stanard spoke about religious organizations helping to mentor and protect youth before they become trafficking victims

Rev. Stanard and Rev. Cox both stressed that religious organizations can be aware of this and proactively work to reach out to such children. Rev. Stanard said, "Realizing these demographics is very important as churches can similarly assist vulnerable kids to become more confident and resilient by getting them involved in confidence building activities." She talked about the Church of Scientology sponsored Youth for Human Rights program which gets youth involved in learning their human rights and teaching them to others, saying, "With human rights training, vulnerable youth can change from being shy and withdrawn into strong advocates for their own rights and the rights of others."

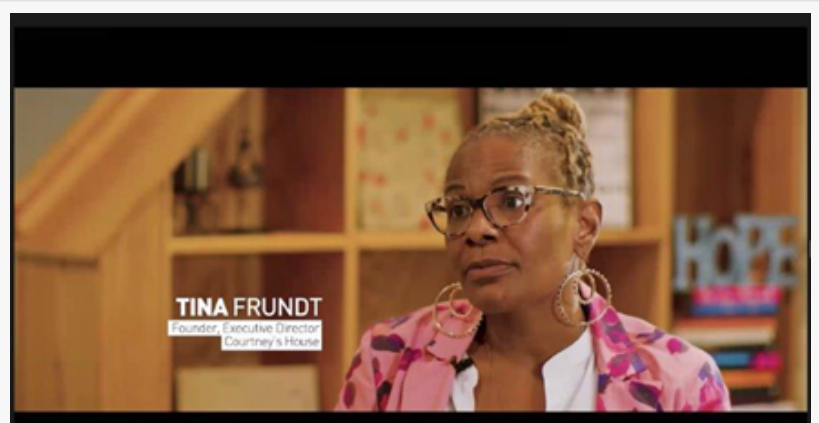
Free [Youth for Human Rights materials](#) are available online, including videos depicting each of the 30 human rights in the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Rev. Stanard also said that religious organizations and anyone else wanting to help with this problem can do fundraisers or pass the plate to support the service providers in their communities. In Washington, DC, both FAIR Girls and Courtney's House have facilities to help those escaping from trafficking.

Rev. Cox urged people to support vulnerable youth. She said helping them with essential supplies and meals is important. At Peace Baptist Church, senior ministers are assigned to specific youth who need help and can benefit from support and mentorships. Rev. Cox stressed that it is important that it is not just a youth ministry program but that the entire Church, from the head of the Church on down, should be involved.

Rebecca Burney from Rights4Girls spoke about her organization's fight to keep brothels illegal in many states, as legalization has led to increased victimization and trafficking. The police become restricted in what they can do once a such an activity becomes legal.

Lauren Haggerty from the DC Attorney General's office spoke about a recently created program



Ms. Tina Frundt, Executive Director of Courtney's House, being interviewed in the film



Youth for Human Rights International offers free materials as well as a free online course to educate students in basic human rights

called HOPE Court, where trafficked youth can get services and assistance related to being sentenced for crimes that they have been forced to participate in as part of their trafficking situation. The program works to sentence youth offenders to services and rehabilitative programs rather than jail.

The panel demonstrated that religious and community organizations are vital in the fight against trafficking and that many programs can work to prevent trafficking by focusing on positive support, mentorship, and involvement in social issues.

Youth for Human Rights International (YHRI) is a nonprofit advocacy group formed in 2001 that promotes human rights education throughout the world. YHRI has gotten out over four million

free booklets, videos, and informational materials about the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and has chapters in nearly 100 countries around the world working in their local communities to teach human rights. Youth for Human Rights works to inspire youth to become valuable advocates for tolerance and peace. YHRI advocates for human rights both in the

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Rev. Sylvia Stanard, Church of Scientology National Affairs Office



Youth for Human Rights materials can be delivered to your home or downloaded for free from www.youthforhumanrights.org

classroom and in nontraditional educational settings such as through art series, concerts and other interactive community events, including regional and international human rights summits which bring youth together from across whole sectors of the world. Their most recent campaign has included #KnowYour30 with the deliberate purpose of increasing awareness of the 30 human rights every person has - and how they are a part of everyday life. To learn more about human rights go to <https://www.youthforhumanrights.org>. For a [documentary](https://www.scientology.tv/series/voices-for-humanity/mary-shuttleworth.html) on Youth for Human Rights and its founder, go to <https://www.scientology.tv/series/voices-for-humanity/mary-shuttleworth.html>

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