

# Call For Help as SW Florida's Selah Freedom Aims to Raise Awareness, Fund Fight Against Human Trafficking

*Florida is in the lead for combatting human trafficking. Our major programs protect and empower survivors, prosecute traffickers, and help eradicate this crime.*

SARASOTA, FL, UNITED STATES, January 18, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- January commemorates National Human Trafficking Awareness Month, declaring our nation's continued commitment to combating all forms of human trafficking.



• Many of the survivors at Selah Freedom report sexual abuse beginning between 3-4 years old

The timing couldn't be better to further elevate more awareness of this horrific crime that affects millions of American boys and girls from every socioeconomic level regardless of race, color, national origin, disability, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, education level.

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*Stacey Efaw, Executive Director, Selah Freedom*

On the national level, dominating the news is the recent verdict in the trial of Ghislaine Maxwell, where a Brooklyn jury found Maxwell guilty on five of six counts related to her role in Jeffrey Epstein's sexual abuse of minors between 1994 and 2004. The Maxwell trial is only the tip of the iceberg in exposing sex trafficking in our society

On the state level last week, Florida legislature has proposed a new human trafficking bill that aims to further protect victims and go after sex buyers fueling the crime. If passed, the bill would raise the penalty for first-time sex buying. And in 2019, Florida became the first state in

America to require schools to teach K-12 students about child trafficking prevention. Florida

ranks third in the nation for reported human trafficking cases.

A Sarasota-based nonprofit organization called [Selah Freedom](#) has been at the forefront of this movement to eradicate this insidious pandemic. For years, Selah Freedom has been operating programs in eight counties in Florida, helping the exploited through four strong initiatives: Awareness, Prevention, Outreach and Residential. Combatting human trafficking is a top priority for Selah Freedom and their law enforcement partners.

"We are a country built on the promise of freedom and dignity for every person. Unfortunately, it's a promise that we continue to see broken all too often for the most vulnerable among us," said Stacey Efav, Executive Director, Selah Freedom. "Victims of sex trafficking are not only exploited in the worst ways, but they also live in constant fear. They wake every morning to threats of violence and outright abuse. Help us help them by calling our intake number at: 1-888-8-FREE-ME (888-837-3363)."

"Jane" is a trafficking survivor who now works as an intern at Selah Freedom to help others. "Having the opportunity to work with Selah Freedom's prevention team has been an amazing experience. Completing Selah Freedom's Residential Program gave me the power to step away from the place of victimhood and step into the position of a survivor. Before my involvement with the program I was afraid and even shameful to open up about my experiences with sex trafficking. Now I can be that bridge for youth, letting them know that sex trafficking is real. Being able to engage with youth, answer their questions, and give them information that changes and may even save their lives one day, and that is great feeling!"

Consider these statistics:

- 1 in 10 children are sexually abused. At Selah Freedom, most survivors report being sexually abused as children
- Many of the survivors at Selah Freedom report sexual abuse beginning between 3-4 years old
- 2 million children are sold each year through sex trafficking
- Child sex trafficking has been reported in all 50 states

Selah Freedom relies on [philanthropic efforts and donations](#) to continue their life-saving programs. [Click Here](#) for more details and to see how you can help. 87% of survivor graduates of Selah Freedom's Residential & Outreach Programs do not return to "the life."

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