

Gift of Freedom Premieres in Texas: Helps Rescued Children of Trafficking Heal, Grow and Thrive with Free Counseling

Three Women-Owned Trucking Company Founders Create Gift of Freedom to Help Child Sex Trafficking Survivors Get Free Counseling

DALLAS, TX, UNITED STATES, October 23, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Three transportation company founders,

friends, and mothers – Sharon Siar,

Nicole Glenn, and Kristy Knichel – were horrified by the large number of child sex trafficking survivors who struggle to recover without access to the mental health counseling they need to move past the trauma of being trafficked.



“

Gift of Freedom partners with a network of organizations and counselors who provide specialized care for child victims to help build self-esteem, reclaim their lives, and create a bright future.”

Sharon Siar, Founder

Human trafficking is a global crime in which people are bought and sold for forced labor or commercial sex. Traffickers use violence, manipulation, and false promises of work opportunities or romance to exploit victims. It is estimated that about 25% of human trafficking victims are children.

After children are rescued, their healing journey with therapy and medical needs has just begun. Often foster families are not equipped to help this level of trauma. Sharon, Nicole, and Kristy decided to do something about it and form [Gift of Freedom](https://giftoffreedom.org/). First launching in Texas, Gift

of Freedom is partnering with a strong referral network of organizations and counselors who can provide specialized care and rehabilitation for victims so that these children can build self-esteem, reclaim their lives, and create a bright future. Gift of Freedom is approved by the IRS as a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization.

Why Texas?

Texas ranks second (after California) in the nation for reported cases of human trafficking, and in

2020, a total of 987 human trafficking cases in Texas were reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. However, this is a fraction of the actual number of cases. Researchers at the University of Texas Social Work estimate that at any given time, 313,000 people are being trafficked in Texas. Of them, 79,000 are children.

According to Sharon Siar, Founder of Gift of Freedom, “Numerous organizations save trafficked children from their abductors and abusers. However, after a rescue, there are not enough facilities or mental health professionals available to provide counseling services. As a result, many victims return to the streets because it’s all that they know”. She added, “We started Gift of Freedom to focus on survivors and help them to reclaim and restart their lives.”

Liz Williamson is a trafficking survivor who now advocates for victims to get counseling as early as possible. Liz’s mother “sold her” at the age of six which led to years of abuse. After escaping her situation, Liz ultimately went back to being “pimped out” after she couldn’t support herself. At the time, counseling was not an option. “Providing mental health counseling after a child is rescued can be the difference between life and death,” said Ms. Williamson.

“The level of trauma survivors experience is off the charts and they desperately need a trained professional to help them process the pain and move on to build a healthy, rewarding life,” she added.

How It Works

Gift of Freedom raises funds to help make the connection between mental health counselors and victims. They are building a strong referral network of mental health professionals who are willing to provide expert care free of charge to victims of trafficking. Additionally, they provide funding and/or counseling services through Texas Human Trafficking Shelters and Prevention Organizations. Gift of Freedom also partners with like-minded organizations including ministries; law enforcement and government entities; family law attorneys; and social workers.

According to Ms. Siar, they also work with several Child Advocacy Groups that provide counseling and even housing to child victims. There are 68 centers across 172 counties throughout Texas. Currently, over 40,000 children are assisted — of which 75% are victims of sexual assault.

[For more information and to donate](http://www.giftoffreedom.org), visit Gift of Freedom’s website at www.giftoffreedom.org.

About Us

[Gift of Freedom’s mission](#) is to create a world where every child survivor of trafficking has the opportunity to heal, grow, and thrive by having free, direct access to counseling services. Starting in Texas, Gift of Freedom is partnering with a strong referral network of organizations and counselors who can provide specialized care and rehabilitation for victims so that these

children can build self-esteem, reclaim their lives, and create a bright future. Gift of Freedom is approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. For more information and to donate, visit www.giftoffreedom.org.

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