

Child Trafficking Survivors Assist in Super Bowl Shocking 73 Recoveries

Survivor-led nonprofit In Our Backyard partnered with Santa Clara's Human Trafficking Task Force contributing to victim recoveries during Super Bowl operations.

SANTA CLARA, CA, UNITED STATES, February 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- While millions watched the Big Game, a coordinated anti trafficking response was unfolding across Santa Clara, powered by survivor leadership, community outreach, and law enforcement collaboration. The Santa Clara DA's office released results from their Human Trafficking Task Force operation surrounding the Big Game, reporting 10 minors recovered, 73 victims, and 29 trafficker arrests.



**HUMAN TRAFFICKING
IN OUR BACKYARD**
www.InOurBackyard.org

[In Our Backyard](#) (IOB), a national nonprofit, was named as one of the community partners, led by Cheryl Csiky, Executive Director, a child trafficking survivor herself. Cheryl Csiky, who sat in the room alongside IOB volunteers and law enforcement, generated reports of suspected trafficking in the region before feeding them into the Santa Clara Task Force operation for distribution to their agencies.

San Mateo County District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe told [ABC 7](#) that they had received two cases and made arrests, but expressed difficulty in prosecuting trafficking cases: "We need two things. We need evidence that shows the trafficker committed the crime, and number two, we need a cooperative victim. That is the difficulty," said DA Wagstaffe.

In its 17th year, IOB links arms with community partners, such as Securus Technologies and Spotlight by Canary, to identify unique data that enables survivor leaders to evaluate tip escalation and build a documented paper trail to show the heinous crime they are surviving.

“This work shows the power of survivor leadership and coordinated action,” said Executive Director Cheryl Csiky. “As a child survivor, if the DA office of a county will listen to us, we provide unique insight during operational efforts to increase recovery and prosecution that is survivor-centered.”

Additional community outreach efforts celebrate the results of faster searches for missing children. Children who run away make up the majority of missing children reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC). Within one week of the game, 19 of the 36 missing children featured in IOB outreach materials had been recovered. Missing children are highly vulnerable and face risks that include physical and sexual violence and child sex trafficking. Combined efforts of nonprofits and law enforcement to prevent, educate, and intervene are key to keeping children safer.

Within one hour of the outreach event on January 31st, 2026, a missing child shown in the IOB book was located within hours after a sighting was reported through a participating convenience store partner. IOB volunteers distributed 10,000 booklets, reaching an estimated 5 million people across the region to raise awareness and encourage people to report tips. According to NCMEC, 1 in 7 missing youth is likely trafficked, underscoring the urgency of prevention and rapid response. Community partners in the coordinated outreach included the South Bay Coalition to End Human Trafficking, Securus Technologies, the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS), and Santa Clara University’s Markey Center for Leadership and Ministry.

<https://abc7news.com/post/super-bowl-anti-human-trafficking-operations-lead-73-survivors-rescued-29-traffickers-arrested/18622735/>

<https://da.santaclaracounty.gov/super-bowl-anti-human-trafficking-operations-net-almost-30-traffickers-and-recovery-73-victims>

Contact Cheryl Csiky, Executive Director, In Our Backyard

cheryl@inourbackyard.org 541-639-5008

Cheryl Csiky

In Our Backyard

+1 224-456-1124

cheryl@inourbackyard.org

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