

Shared Hope International to Host Free Youth-Led Anti-Trafficking Awareness Night in Battle Ground on April 16

On April 9, Shared Hope International opens its nationally recognized, survivor-informed training to the entire Southwest Washington community

BATTLE GROUND, WA, UNITED STATES, March 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Shared Hope International hosts a [free, youth-led community night on April 16 in Battle Ground](#) — because education is prevention, and protecting kids is everyone’s job

Last August, sixty officers from 20 agencies spent four days in Battle Ground, arresting 12 men on charges including attempted rape of a child and sexual exploitation of a minor. The men had come from Oregon, Washington, and New York. They ranged in age from 24 to 61. They traveled to Battle Ground believing they would find a child.

Law enforcement did their job. They always do. But they cannot be everywhere — and the predators know it.

On Thursday, April 16, 2026, Shared Hope International is bringing the community’s response back to Battle Ground: a FREE Youth-Led Community Awareness Night at the Battle Ground Farmers Market, where young leaders will stand up in front of their neighbors, parents, and peers and teach them how to fight back. Admission is free. Prizes will be given away. Register now at sharedhope.org/community-26.

This is not a night about what is happening to young people. It is a night led by them.

“Battle Ground made the news last August because predators came here. This April, Battle Ground makes news again — because the community is fighting back. And the ones leading that



sharedhope
INTERNATIONAL
PRESENTS...

KEEP OUR KIDS SAFE

COMMUNITY NIGHT

APRIL 16TH, 2026
BATTLE GROUND FARMER'S MARKET
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Learn how to protect friends and loved-ones from trafficking right here in our community
- Free food & refreshments
- Prizes, giveaways & t-shirts
- Student-led presentations
- Show up. Connect. Support.

Sex trafficking is happening right here in our neighborhoods, our schools, our cities. The **Keep Our Kids Safe Initiative** is a bold, community-wide movement to protect children in Southwest Washington from trafficking and exploitation.

We believe every child deserves to grow up safe, free, and full of hope. **That takes all of us.**

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY: **Maddox**

WITH SUPPORT FROM...

Contact Elizabeth@sharedhope.org to learn more

Join us for the Keep Our Kids Safe Community Awareness Night on Thursday, April 16, 2026 at the Battle Ground Farmer’s Market.

charge are young people. They are not just at risk. They are powerful agents of prevention, and we are giving them the platform to prove it.”

— Elizabeth Freisinger, Shared Hope International

Interactive Format Designed for Families and Community Members

Conversations about trafficking are too often distant, alarming, or aimed only at specialists. This event is different. It is warm, interactive, and built for real families in a real community. Youth leaders guide attendees through sessions that are honest without being frightening and practical without being preachy.

WHAT THE EVENING COVERS

- Online safety in plain language: how traffickers use social media, gaming, and messaging apps to reach young people instantly and anonymously
- Grooming tactics: the warning signs that are easy to miss — and what to do when something feels wrong



Battle Ground made the news last August because predators came here. This April, Battle Ground makes news again. The community is fighting back and the ones leading that charge are young people.”

Elizabeth Freisinger, Shared Hope International

- How to talk about it at home: age-appropriate frameworks for parents and grandparents to open the conversation
- Community protection: how neighbors, friends, and families can look out for one another every single day
- Local resources: who to call and what to do if you are ever concerned about a child
- Prizes and giveaways throughout the evening

WHO SHOULD COME

- Everyone is welcome — and everyone will leave with something:
- Parents and grandparents who want real tools for real

conversations at home

- Students and teenagers who want to understand what is happening in their world and how to look out for each other
- Neighbors and community members who believe in watching out for the kids on their block
- Faith community members seeking to protect the youth in their congregations
- Youth group leaders, coaches, and after-school mentors who notice peer pressure and behavioral shifts before anyone else
- Anyone who lives, works, or worships in Southwest Washington



Shared Hope International

No title or professional role is required to attend. Community members are encouraged to participate. That is enough. An alert community is a safe community. It takes a whole community coming together to say: not our kids, not in our community. This is that moment.

EVENT DETAILS

WHAT: [Keep Our Kids Safe](#): Youth-Led Community Awareness Night

WHEN: Thursday, April 16, 2026 | 6:30 – 9:00 PM

WHERE: Battle Ground Farmers Market (indoors) | Battle Ground, WA

COST: Free — Open to Everyone

REGISTER: sharedhope.org/community-26

Offered in partnership with the Vancouver Police Department, Clark County Sheriff's Office, and Battle Ground Police Department.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

This Community Awareness Night is the second flagship event of the Keep Our Kids Safe Initiative, launched by Shared Hope International in Southwest Washington. One week earlier, on April 9, professionals, parents, and grandparents from across the region gathered at the Hilton Vancouver for a free, full-day training. Now, youth are now being given the opportunity to impact the movement as well.

These events are not the end goal — they are the launch point. Those who attend will carry awareness back into schools, workplaces, congregations, and neighborhoods, becoming multipliers of prevention that keep this knowledge growing throughout the region for years to come. Southwest Washington is the pilot. The vision is national.

“Education is prevention. When a parent recognizes a grooming tactic, when a teenager knows how to speak up for a friend, when an entire neighborhood is paying attention — trafficking has no room to hide. That is exactly the community we are building here.”

— Elizabeth Freisinger, Shared Hope International

ABOUT SHARED HOPE INTERNATIONAL

For more than 27 years, Shared Hope International has led the national fight against child sex trafficking through survivor-informed prevention, policy advocacy, and community training. Founded in 1998 by former U.S. Congresswoman Linda Smith, Shared Hope hosts the nation's leading conference on juvenile sex trafficking and has helped shape anti-trafficking law across the country. All training materials are survivor-informed and developed in partnership with the professional groups they are designed for. The organization is headquartered in Vancouver, WA and is rated four stars by Charity Navigator.

EVENT REGISTRATION | sharedhope.org/community-26

Thursday, April 16, 2026 | 6:30 – 9:00 PM | Battle Ground Farmers Market | Free

Questions, sponsorship, or volunteer opportunities: Contact Elizabeth Freisinger at elizabeth@sharedhope.org or 360-693-8100.

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