RHODE ISLAND

Total Score: 4.5 Points of 8 Total Available

- **TASK FORCE:** .5 of 1.5 total points
- **PREVENTION EDUCATION:** 3.5 of 4.5 total points
- **DEFINITION OF ABUSE:** .5 of 1 total points
- **STAFF TRAINING:** 0 of 1 total points

Why did my state receive this grade? Rhode Island has elements that are friendly to prevention but should take further action to make prevention education viably accessible to youth.

Who does this exploitation and trafficking impact? Each year millions of children are victims of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, affecting communities small and large. This happens all over the world, including in your own community.

How does this happen? Children are most often exploited by an acquaintance (significant other, friend, family member, etc.). They are targeted, groomed, tricked, and manipulated.

**RHODE ISLAND BY NUMBERS**

- 27 calls to the human trafficking hotline.
- 11 human trafficking cases reported.
- 4 cases concerned a minor.
- 10 cases involved females, <3 involved males.

**RHODE ISLAND LAWS AND PROVISIONS**

- **Mandated Task Force?**
  - Rhode Island Human Trafficking Task Force

- **Terms included in Rhode Island's Definition of Abuse:**
  - Exploitation only (Trafficking not included)

- **Prevention Education Law, Scope, and Grade Levels**
  - Topics: Sexual abuse; sexual exploitation; child abduction; dating abuse/violence
  - Mandated for K-8

- **Staff Training Requirements**
  - Neither mandated nor recommended
EXPLOITATION BY NUMBERS

- Approximately 1.6 million children run away every year in the United States.\(^2\)
- Of the nearly 27,000 runaways reported to NCMEC in 2017, one in 7 were likely victims of child sex trafficking.\(^3\)
- There were 8,524 human trafficking cases reported in the United States in 2017 and 32% of those cases involved a minor.\(^4\)
- In 2017, 88% of trafficked children were in the care of social services at the time the exploitation began.\(^5\)

RECOMMENDED STEPS AND LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

**TASK FORCE**
- Amend state task force to include a focus on the prevention of child exploitation and trafficking.
- Direct that a seat on the task force is filled by a child exploitation prevention expert.

**STATE DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE**
- Amend state statute defining child abuse to include trafficking.

**PREVENTION EDUCATION CURRICULUM**
- Mandate child exploitation prevention curriculum in all state public schools for all grade levels.
- Identify within the curriculum the need to educate youth with age appropriate curriculum on child exploitation, child trafficking, and child abuse.

**STAFF TRAINING**
- Mandate all state public school staff are trained to effectively recognize and respond to the signs of child exploitation and factors that make youth vulnerable to child exploitation.

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1 Polaris Project, Human Trafficking Hotline, 2017 State Statistics: [https://humantraffickinghotline.org/states](https://humantraffickinghotline.org/states). Note that not all demographics are captured by every report to the hotline.
4 National Human Trafficking Hotline Statistics: [https://humantraffickinghotline.org/states](https://humantraffickinghotline.org/states)

MISSION: We equip adults to empower youth to eradicate exploitation.
For more info visit: [http://iempathize.org/educators/the-prevention-priority/](http://iempathize.org/educators/the-prevention-priority/)