2022 Gold Achievement Award Entry
ENTRY CATEGORY:
Community outreach and public engagement initiatives

Los Angeles County Office of Education
Serving Students • Supporting Communities • Leading Educators

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ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION:
Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), is an education agency with approximately 1500 employees who support L.A. County’s 80 districts, which are comprised of more than 1,850 schools that serve approximately 1.4 million students.
Los Angeles County is one of the most popular points of entry into this country for victims of slavery and trafficking and California consistently has the highest human trafficking rates in the United States, followed by Texas, Florida, New York (source: world population review).

Prevention education for our students and communities is essential to protecting the safety and wellbeing of the children in our county. The Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) conducted one-on-one interviews with human trafficking prevention experts throughout LA County, focus groups with school administrators, mental health staff, and science teachers (responsible for implementing health curriculum) and collected existing data regarding incidences of human trafficking in Los Angeles County. Interviews with experts indicated that parents and guardians of victims were often unable to recognize the signs of grooming or coercion and that minors were not always able to identify unhealthy relationships. Educators noted that conversations around human trafficking were difficult to have and that parents/guardians did not have a full understanding of what it means to be trafficked or the pathways of entry. Local data indicated a high incidence of labor and sex trafficking. Large-scale events increase incidences of human trafficking and with LA County hosting the Super Bowl, we knew we needed to get information to the community in advance.

To address those findings, our team undertook the challenge of identifying speakers for a live webinar in the month of January (Human Trafficking Prevention Month) and in anticipation of the Super Bowl in February. We brought together six panelists, each speaking to a different area of need that was identified: LA County Dept. of Child & Family Services, LA County Dept. of Mental Health, LA Police Department, Saving Innocence, Zoe International, and the University of Southern California (USC). The name for the event was carefully selected as “Strategies to Keep Your Kids Safe from Today’s Hidden Dangers” as our focus group with educators indicated that parents/guardians were not receptive to learning opportunities centered around “human trafficking.” A virtual format was identified as the most equitable option for parents/guardians working multiple jobs, unable to afford child care, and/or who needed translation services. We delivered the webinar in English and Spanish and included a live Q&A component to create two-way communication with the audience. The webinar was recorded for future viewing. Marketing materials were developed in both languages.

The event was promoted using an integrated marketing strategy on digital platforms such as newsletters, social media, direct e-mails, and the channels of our partner organizations and school districts. Almost 700 individuals registered for the event. A post-event survey indicated that 100 percent of respondents left feeling more knowledgeable about human trafficking and that they felt they learned strategies to help keep children safe; 94.7 percent indicated that they would be interested in additional training. LACOE also provided attendees with resources and handouts that could be saved or printed for easy reference.
ADDITIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS

Web

Press release | LA County Office of Education Hosts Town Hall on Human Trafficking: Leaders convene an expert panel to offer insight, strategies to help end the rampant abuse of vulnerable populations

Resources and handouts | Human Trafficking Prevention Resources for Parents, Caregivers, Educators and the Community

Web page for district leaders and mental health professionals | LACOE Human Trafficking Youth Prevention Education program

Marketing Collateral
Webinar recording
WEBINAR: Strategies to Keep Your Kids Safe from Today’s Hidden Dangers

E-communications
Save the Date E-Blast
Register Today E-Blast

Social media
Save the Date
National Human Trafficking Awareness Day | Wear Blue Day
Register for “Strategies to Keep Your Kids Safe”

Survey responses

Virtual Town Hall: Strategies to Keep Your Kids Safe from Today’s Hidden Dangers
Post-Survey Results

Who attended?

Community Member 14.3%
Parent or Caregiver 44.4%
Educator 28.6%
Other 10.7%

“So thank you for this informative presentation. As a parent, I appreciate these tools and value the expert advice. I have learned so much in such a short period of time. Thank you!”
— Surveyor

So what do surveyors think? Let’s break it down!

100% 100% of surveyors either agree or strongly agree with the following statement
As a result of this training I am more knowledgeable about human trafficking

100% 100% of surveyors either agree or strongly agree with the following statement
This training taught me something which I believe will be useful in helping me keep my children and/or those children I work with safe

97% 93% of surveyors either agree or strongly agree with the following statement
This training taught me something which I believe will be useful in helping me to identify potential human trafficking

93% 95% of surveyors either agree or strongly agree with the following statement
I would be interested in additional trainings related to human trafficking

“The personal stories helped me realize how anyone could be affected. I appreciate that this was not just a training but real personal stories were shared.”
— Surveyor