

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires school districts to work with the schools of the school district that serve students in any of grades 6-12 to identify the most appropriate methods of informing parents and guardians of human trafficking prevention resources.
- 2) Requires schools to implement the identified methods by an unspecified date.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “The state currently requires teachers and students to be provided information related to trafficking. Considering that perpetrators frequently groom their victims by instilling in them a distrust of authority figures, or by isolating them from their families, students often try to hide their victimization from teachers and law enforcement. While children spend a significant amount of time at school, there are certain behaviors that parents are more adept at identifying like sudden changes in behavior, depression, unexplained cash, fake identification, or signs of abuse. Considering that California leads the nation with the most reported cases of human trafficking, it is critical that the state require information and resources to be provided to parents and guardians.”
- 2) ***Human trafficking and schools.*** In 2015, the U.S. Department of Education released a report titled “Human Trafficking in America’s Schools,” which noted that victims experience severe physical, emotional, and psychological trauma, which may manifest as problematic behaviors, such as aggression and truancy. Trafficking is also associated with learning disabilities. The report further argued that “everyone who is part of the school community—administrators, teachers, bus drivers, maintenance personnel, food service staff, resource officers, and other school community members—has the potential to be an advocate for child victims of human trafficking.” The report noted that in order to maintain healthy school environments, school personnel should be knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of trafficking, ways to support disclosure, and the steps to take when there is a suspicion of trafficking.
<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/HumanTraffickinginAmericasSchools.pdf>

A 2015 study conducted by the University of San Diego and Point Loma Nazarene University of gang-related sex trafficking further suggests that trafficking is a real risk for students in some schools. This research was the first to use schools as a source of data for sex trafficking research. The study, which included focus groups at 20 area high schools, reported that between 8,830 and 11,773 victims—mostly girls—were trafficked in San Diego County each year. All of the 20 San Diego high schools confirmed that recruitment of their students for sex trafficking was occurring. School personnel reported a total of 69 distinctly named gangs, of which 31 were seen as involved in sex trafficking. In total, the high school staff in 20 high schools across the county identified 417 reported victims along with an additional 60 suspected victims in the past 5 years

(averaging approximately 95 victims at least suspected per year). The study's authors recommended that San Diego County increase resources for the training of school personnel in identifiers and protocols, as well as awareness training for students from middle and high schools.

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/249857.pdf>

- 3) **Existing resources.** The California Department of Education's website includes the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children site, which provides information about available curriculum and links to outside entities that work to end human trafficking. This website does not clearly include information targeted to parents. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/vp/commsexexploitationchild.asp>

The California Department of Social Services administers the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Program. Among other things, this program provides information on specialized service providers by county; some counties provide parent education on commercial sexual exploitation-related issues such as internet safety and parental awareness.

<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Child-Welfare-Protection/CSEC>

- 4) **Unspecified date.** This bill requires schools to implement identified methods of informing parents of human trafficking prevention resources by an unspecified date. **Staff recommends an amendment** to require schools to implement their identified method of informing parents by January 1, 2020.
- 5) **Related legislation.** AB 1861 (Rodriguez) requires school districts to educate students on the use of social media and mobile device applications in human trafficking. AB 1861 is pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SUPPORT

California Federation of Women's Clubs (sponsor)
 American Academy of Pediatrics, California
 California Catholic Conference
 California Federation of Teachers
 California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
 Children's Law Center of California
 Operation SafeHouse
 Riverside Sheriffs' Association

OPPOSITION

None received

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