

OFFICE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

An Office of the Administration for Children & Families

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Human Trafficking Victims Can Text “BeFree” to Get Help

The [National Human Trafficking Resource Center \(NHTRC\)](#), operated by Polaris Project and supported by a grant from the HHS Administration for Children and Families, has made it easier and safer for victims of trafficking to seek help.

Human trafficking victims can now send a text to “**BeFree**” (233733) and immediately connect with the **NHTRC hotline (1-888-3737-888)**.

According to Julie Cordua, Executive Director of Thorn: Digital Defenders of Children, which partnered with the Polaris Project to develop the NHTRC’s text messaging capacity, “technology is playing an increasingly prominent role in the sexual solicitation of children.”

Many children have cell phones and use them primarily to send text messages. While this technology is used to exploit children, it can now also be used as a discreet way for them to ask for help while they are under the eyes of their traffickers.

The NHTRC works to protect victims of human trafficking in the United States by providing callers with comprehensive services that include crisis intervention, referrals, tip reporting, anti-trafficking resources, and technical assistance for the anti-trafficking field.

Since Polaris Project assumed operation of the NHTRC in December 2007, the hotline has received over 70,000 calls and 5,600 emails. Polaris Project expects the addition of text messaging to increase the likelihood that a trafficking victim, particularly a young person, will contact the hotline, and do so sooner.

More information is available about [ACF's special initiatives on Human Trafficking](#), and the [Anti-Trafficking in Persons](#) program website for the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

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