

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What would it take to end human trafficking in Colorado? Since 2005, the Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking (LCHT) has endeavored to answer that question more effectively while advancing anti-trafficking efforts across the state. The Colorado Project to Comprehensively Combat Human Trafficking 2.0 (CP2.0) represents an important milestone in that journey. The community-based research contained in this report, alongside the recommendations outlined in the supplemental Colorado Action Plan 2.0 (CAP2.0), will bolster our state's understanding of the crime in context. It will also empower communities and professionals involved in addressing this human rights abuse.

How CP2.0 Research Was Conducted

Building on the foundational work of our original Colorado Project (CP1.0), we visited 20 unique communities in 2018 in order to assess changes in the statewide movement, document successful strategies, name promising practices, and design a new set of actionable recommendations to advance anti-trafficking efforts both locally, as well as nationally. These efforts were largely aided by the participation of 16 human trafficking task forces around Colorado who completed focus groups and organizational interviews. In total, CP2.0 research activities included:

- 183 individual surveys
- 69 organizational interviews
- 29 focus groups

Key Takeaways

The CP2.0 Report reveals that in the past five years, Colorado communities have become more organized and prepared to respond to human trafficking. Six years after our original CP1.0 research, we see:

- Scattered efforts continue to exist, but more coordinated efforts are emerging within anti-trafficking coalitions/task forces.
- Colorado communities continue to cobble together resources, doing so by building on the strengths of their local capabilities and neighborhoods.
- Survivors who are provided support and resources within formal and informal social systems are being helped, and many are beginning to lead initiatives statewide.
- Traffickers are being prosecuted at greater numbers, and with more significant sentences.

Identifying Promising Practices

The CP2.0 Report identifies six promising practices, organized under the framework of the 4Ps (Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, and Partnership). They include:

1. **Acknowledging Root Causes:** Increasing awareness around geographic factors specific to Colorado's urban, rural, and frontier communities, as well as factors related to specific industries (construction, domestic service, commercial sex), immigration, and drugs.
2. **Trauma-Informed Counseling or Behavioral Health Resources:** Empowering survivors by developing more services that understand the trauma inherent to the experience of human trafficking.

3. **Engaging the Medical Community:** Recognizing health professionals as crucial players in identifying survivors who often present in emergency rooms, clinics, and other health centers.
4. **Having Survivors Inform the Community Response to Trafficking:** Understanding the ongoing need to prioritize survivors' voices in human trafficking research, program-design, and community-based efforts.
5. **Problem Solving and Diversion Courts for Survivors of Sex Trafficking:** Expanding innovative programs facilitated by District Attorneys and Special Victims Units that connect minor victims with appropriate support and resources.
6. **Intentional and Equitable Inclusion in Partnerships:** Developing more formal partnerships with coherent shared goals and diverse stakeholders at the table.

Addressing Gaps Through Colorado Action Plan 2.0

Working together to comprehensively end human trafficking will undoubtedly require increased investment in the promising practices identified in CP2.0. It will also require a greater focus on the clear gaps that remain in our statewide response. These concepts are more clearly articulated in the recommendations and activities within CAP2.0.

Perhaps the single most important need in the movement to end human trafficking across Colorado comes in the form of evaluation and measurement. This involves evaluating the success of various active programs, in addition to testing Colorado's capacity to address the root causes that can cause human trafficking. We look forward to promoting the kind of interdisciplinary response that makes expanded evaluation possible.

Toward a Solution

CP2.0 was only possible through the partnership of an array of community voices including survivors, advocates, law enforcement, and practitioners. We were humbled throughout the data-collection process to hear from so many people dedicated to the anti-trafficking movement. It is with great pride that we are able to deliver this report along with the survivor-informed action plan (CAP2.0) as roadmaps for working together toward a solution to end human trafficking in Colorado.

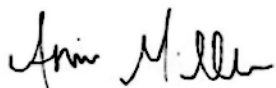
In solidarity,



Amanda Finger, MA

Executive Director, Co-Founder

Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking



Annie Miller, Ph.D.

Co-Principal Investigator

Colorado Project 2.0



AnnJanette Alejano-Steele, Ph.D.

Co-Principal Investigator

Colorado Project 2.0