

Arizona Human Trafficking Council

Legacy Report



2015-2022



The Governor's Office
of Youth, Faith
and Family



Arizona Human
Trafficking Council

EndTrafficking.AZ.gov



STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

DOUGLAS A. DUCEY
GOVERNOR

MARIA CRISTINA FUENTES
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December 5, 2022

Governor Doug A. Ducey
1700 W Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Governor Ducey,

It is our distinct honor to serve as Co-Chairs of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council and we are proud of the many accomplishments of this dedicated group in the fight against human trafficking in Arizona. This report serves as a summary of the work carried out by the members of the Council, its workgroups, and our state task forces since the human trafficking Task Force was created in 2013 and then made into a permanent Council by your Executive Order in 2015. The expertise, talent and passion of the professionals on this Council continues to expand and improve our ability to prevent and respond to this heinous crime throughout Arizona. The following report includes an overview of activities, goals, outcomes and future work.

On behalf of the Council, we are proud to share the highlights of the outcomes and accomplishments from our work beginning in 2013 through today. During the last 10 years, the Council has worked tirelessly to develop recommendations and work to provide human trafficking victims with appropriate support; develop and deploy training for professionals throughout our state; expand trauma-informed, victim-centered services; and foster greater collaborations among law enforcement, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and others to ensure a statewide multi-disciplinary approach in this arena.

On behalf of the Council, we want to express gratitude for your commitment to this work and your leadership in the fight to end human trafficking in Arizona. We look forward to the tremendous outcomes of funding from the Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund and all that it holds for Arizona's future. It is our hope that our continued efforts and collaborative partnerships increase prevention, improve the way we serve victims, increase successful prosecutions of traffickers, and better support all of those that are affected by this terrible crime.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Claire Sechler Merkel".

Claire Sechler Merkel
Co-Chair
Arizona Human Trafficking Council

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "m Fuentes".

Maria Cristina Fuentes
Co-Chair
Arizona Human Trafficking Council

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COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

In accordance with Executive Order 2015-12, the Council is composed of individuals appointed by the Governor who serve at his pleasure without compensation. The following members currently serve on the Arizona Human Trafficking Council:

Claire Sechler Merkel, Co-Chair

The McCain Institute for International Leadership

Maria Cristina Fuentes, Co-Chair

Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family

Nicholas Alamshaw

Scottsdale Police Department

Sarah Beaumont

Phoenix Children's Hospital

Nathaniel Brown

Navajo Nation Council

Heather Carter

Greater Phoenix Leadership

Sarah Chung

Safal Partners

Regina Cobb

Arizona State House of Representatives

Doug Coleman

Apache Junction Justice Cour

Jennifer Crawford

Tucson Police Department

David Curry

Arizona Department of Transportation

Michael Faust

Arizona Department of Child Safety

Jim Gallagher

Central Arizona Project

Don Herrington

Arizona Department of Health Services

Debbie Johnson

Arizona Office of Tourism

Joseph Kelroy

Administrative Office of the Courts

Rick Leyvas

Phoenix Police Department

Lois Lucas

Catholic Charities

Zora Manjencich

Arizona Attorney General's Office

Rachel Mitchell

Maricopa County Attorney's Office

Sophia Philis-Ortiz

American Airlines

Jill Rable

HonorHealth

Dominique Roe-Sepowitz

Arizona State University

Tim Roemer

Arizona Department of Homeland Security

T.J. Shope

Arizona State Senate

Heston Silbert

Arizona Department of Public Safety

Brian Steele

Phoenix Dream Center

Jim Waring

Phoenix City Council

Michael Wisehart

Arizona Department of Economic Security

COUNCIL PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

Administered by the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family (GOYFF), the Arizona Human Trafficking Council is charged with collecting and analyzing data on human trafficking in Arizona; developing recommendations to provide human trafficking victims with appropriate services; fostering greater collaboration among law enforcement, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and the community at large; promoting public awareness about human trafficking, victim services, and prevention; and working to develop and facilitate training for first responders, law enforcement, and professions who serve the citizens of Arizona. The following report summarizes the many accomplishments and collaborative partnerships of the Council since 2013, when it first formed as the Governor's Task Force on Human Trafficking..

HISTORY AND CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP

On April 8, 2013, former Governor Jan Brewer established the Governor's Task Force on Human Trafficking via [Executive Order 2013-04](#). Co-Chaired by Mrs. Cindy McCain and former Director of the Arizona Department of Homeland Security (AZDOHS) Gilbert 'Gil' Orrantia, the Task Force was charged with identifying ways to reduce trafficking in Arizona, assist victims and safeguard those most vulnerable. To better coordinate efforts in Arizona to fight this crime, Governor Brewer established the Human Trafficking Council in 2014. The Council was renewed and made a permanent Council by Governor Doug Ducey in December 2015 through [Executive Order 2015-12](#).

Mrs.Cindy McCain and Director Gil Orrantia spearheaded the Council admirably, until 2021 when the Council transitioned leadership to Director Maria Cristina Fuentes of GOYFF and Claire Sechler Merkel of the McCain Institute for International Leadership.

Director Orrantia's creative thinking, problem solving, and ability to get a variety of stakeholders to work together to discuss best practices for victims of human trafficking was an integral part of the early success of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council's annual symposium. Governor Ducey recognized Director Orantia for his dedication and tireless efforts to ensure Arizona was free of exploitation during his tenure as Co-Chair of the Council with a Commendation upon his resignation.

Upon confirmation to serve as United States (U.S.) Ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture at the end of 2021, Ambassador Cindy McCain resigned as Co-Chair of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council. Ambassador McCain has been a tireless advocate and leader in human trafficking prevention efforts in our state and around the world. During her tenure as Co-Chair, she played an integral role in leading efforts to combat human trafficking and increase multi-agency collaboration to prevent and respond to trafficking in our state. She was also an adamant advocate for victims and the need to increase and improve services and support for those recovering from this heinous abuse. Mrs. McCain's passionate advocacy, ability to rally leaders across sectors and her support for survivors has had an immeasurable impact on anti-trafficking efforts in Arizona.

SUMMARY OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

From 2015 - 2022, Council members have organized and participated in a variety of activities that furthered the mission of preventing and improving the state's response to human trafficking. Through collaborative and multi-agency strategies and initiatives, Council members and other key stakeholders have had the opportunity to learn how Arizona can better support and serve victims of trafficking, as well as demonstrated how the Council's efforts are far-reaching and applicable not only across the state, but across the nation. The Council has worked to identify policy barriers and opportunities to advance how the state prevents and responds to human trafficking. These discussions have helped inform a number of statutory changes in our state.

LEGISLATION

Crafted from the Human Trafficking Task Force's recommendations submitted to former Governor Jan Brewer in September 2013, [H.B. 2454](#) strengthened penalties against traffickers, buyers and those involved in the trafficking of persons, and provides increased protections and assistance to victims of trafficking.

Additionally based on recommendations from the Task Force, on April 6, 2015, Governor Ducey signed [H.B. 2553](#). This allows a person convicted of prostitution to apply to the court to vacate their conviction if the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that their participation in the offense was a direct result of being a victim of sex trafficking.

The now newly established Arizona Human Trafficking Council was once again at the forefront of legislative changes when [H.B. 2374](#) was signed into law by Governor Ducey on March 11, 2016. This legislation expands the offense of child prostitution to include knowingly providing a means for a minor to engage in prostitution. The main purpose of the bill was to allow prosecution of traffickers that have removed themselves from the scene of the crime by providing youth victims with cell phones, hotel rooms, and computers, in order to induce sexual acts for money. The bill designated the violation as a Class 2 felony.

On April 18, 2017, Governor Ducey signed [H.B. 2238](#), replacing the term "child prostitution" with "child sex trafficking." The legislation also adds "child sex trafficking" to the list of offenses eligible for lifetime probation, increasing the severity of the punishment.

These efforts led to essential clarifications within Arizona revised statute and stakeholder meetings designed to help providers navigate licensing requirements and develop protocols for preventing and serving trafficked youth. Additionally, this work resulted in successfully amending the Navajo Nation Criminal Code to enact the Navajo Nation Law Against Human Trafficking, providing the Navajo Nation with additional tools to prevent human trafficking, punish traffickers, and assist and protect victims on tribal lands.

Most recently, Governor Ducey signed [S.B. 1660](#) on July 9, 2021. The legislation required that within 30 days of a child being placed in out-of-home care and at least eight years old unless otherwise recommended by a doctor or therapist, the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) must provide developmentally and age-appropriate materials and resources about sexual abuse and child sex trafficking and exploitation; including a definition of sexual abuse, information

about the dangers of online and in-person predators, and methods for reporting abuse, such as a 24-hour hotline number.

In addition to ensuring children in DCS care receive age-appropriate education on sexual abuse and child sex trafficking, S.B. 1660 ensured increased protections for victims through the revision of ARS 13-4253. This amendment prohibits a pro se defendant accused of child sex trafficking, taking a child for the purpose of prostitution, or abuse of a child or vulnerable adult from directly questioning the victim. Prior to this, an accused perpetrator who represented themselves in court may have used this tactic as a means of intimidation and further control, ultimately leading to the retraumatization of a victim and preventing them from receiving proper justice. With this change, the state has increased mechanisms for the court to ensure victims and survivors can actively participate in the justice system without fear of direct confrontation from those who have harmed them.

RESEARCH

The Arizona Human Trafficking Council has supported over **30** studies through the Data and Research Workgroup, illuminating the human trafficking landscape in Arizona and across the United States. These studies have provided insight on how systems of care can better serve survivors of human trafficking, aiding in strengthening protections for victims, and increasing penalties for perpetrators.

- In July 2014, Arizona State University's School of Social Work, Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research (ASU STIR), in collaboration with homeless youth agencies across the state, developed the Youth Experience Survey (YES) to determine service needs for particularly vulnerable populations and explore the prevalence of sex trafficking. Administered annually, YES has expanded to include insight on labor exploitation and Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) scores among youth experiencing homelessness. The YES study continues to serve as an important tool in making research and data informed decisions among service providers working directly with unhoused populations, as well as agencies where homelessness intersects with other issues such as substance misuse and mental health, victim and social services. The 2022 YES survey found that:
 - 40.4% of the participants, or two out of every five, reported experiencing one form of exploitation.
 - 23.6% of the participants reported experiencing sex trafficking, with the age range in which they first experienced sex trafficking from 12 to 21 years old. The average age being 16.9 years old.
 - 23.6% of the participants reported experiencing labor trafficking, with the age range in which they first experienced labor exploitation being from 12 to 20 years old. The average age being 16 years old.
 - 33.3% of participants identified their relationship to their sex trafficker as being a friend, which was higher than the relationship of boyfriend compared to previous years' studies.
- In November 2014, the Arizona Human Trafficking Council partnered with the Arizona State Board of Nursing to dedicate the quarterly issue of their magazine to the subject of

sex trafficking. Council member Dr. Dominique Roe-Sepowitz authored the literature, which was distributed to **120,000** medical professionals across the state. The journal's focus was to inform nurses of red flags and warning signs to assist in identifying victims of sex trafficking.

- In February 2015, ASU STIR with support from the McCain Institute, produced a multi-year study reporting on the demand for prostitution during the Super Bowl. Building upon previous research from the 2014 Super Bowl, researchers sought to quantify the net effect of the Super Bowl on local, regional, and national sex trafficking in an empirical fashion, using source data collected from the leading internet based adult services website and data collected. Findings from data collected resulted in a number of surprising results. Overall, the sex selling and sex buying markets significantly increased in both Northern New Jersey and Phoenix when the two years were compared. The study found that 73.3% of buyers were from local area codes, indicating the problem is local and not necessarily correlated with large-scale events. The overall increase in sex buyer volume and the number of commercial sex ads indicated that public awareness and concern about sex trafficking and increased law enforcement attention on the crime has yet to reduce the overall demand for commercial sex or the supply of sellers.

In addition to the annual YES Study, the Data and Research Workgroup published several studies since the Council's inception in 2015, including:

- Sex Trafficking Awareness and Recovery Group (STAR) at Estrella Jail Report
- Child Sex Trafficking Survivor Roundtable Report
- Three-Year Analysis of the Maricopa County Sex Trafficking Collaborative
- Arizona Human Trafficking Needs Assessment
- Juvenile Probation Sex Trafficking Screening Tool
- Maricopa County STRENGTH Court Process Evaluation

TRAINING

Since 2015, the Arizona Human Trafficking Council has worked to increase the number of Arizonans who are trained to identify and serve human trafficking victims using a trauma- and survivor-informed approach. To date, approximately **50,000** individuals have received training, including: legislators, law enforcement, correctional staff, social services, health care professionals, tribal communities, school staff, faith based organizations, and businesses. The Training Workgroup has made great strides in ensuring accessible and comprehensive resources are available for all sectors that interact with victims and survivors. Most importantly, the workgroup has focused on capacity building to ensure that these efforts are not only sustained, but continue to grow throughout the state. Highlights include:

- In collaboration with the Arizona Human Trafficking Council, the Arizona Prosecuting Attorney's Advisory Council (APAAC) dedicated the December 2014 web-based continuing education training module to the issue of human trafficking. This module was made available to more than **781** full-time state, county, and municipal prosecutors. Since this first event, APAAC, in partnership with GOYFF and the McCain Institute, have continued to ensure law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim services providers have

access to statewide and national best practices through their annual Human Trafficking Conference. To date, this event has provided training to **532** individuals.

- Since 2015, training sessions and toolkits have been provided to Adult Probation Officers, DCS, Health Care Providers, EMS Providers, Mental Health Providers, and School Educators and Administrators. ASU STIR has also developed brochures for teens, English and Spanish materials for parents, and a Labor Trafficking training tool available in English, Spanish, and Arabic. These assets continue to be used by trainers across the state, ensuring that participants continue to have access to the information and connection to subject-matter experts at the very beginning of their course and/or grow their capacity to identify and serve survivors of all forms of exploitation. In addition to targeted training, the Arizona Human Trafficking Council partnered with ASU STIR to establish a Training of Trainers program, allowing stakeholders to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to bring this important information back to their organization or community. To date, **154** individuals have become certified as trainers by utilizing the Council's Introduction to Human Trafficking curriculum.

OUTREACH AND AWARENESS

The Outreach and Awareness Workgroup is tasked with expanding public awareness through community presentations, outreach materials, public service announcements (PSAs) and community engagement. Through a shared community understanding created by public awareness efforts, every citizen can aid in identifying trafficking victims and work to create safe and accepting avenues for victims to disclose abuse.

The Outreach and Awareness Workgroup leads the state's efforts to increase awareness of what trafficking is, as well as promote victim-serving resources and services throughout Human Trafficking Prevention Month recognized during January. These efforts have included:

- Partnering with the Arizona State Lottery to display human trafficking awareness ads on point-of-sale lottery machines.
- Development of two PSAs featuring Governor Doug Ducey and Ambassador Cindy McCain, reaffirming Arizona's commitment to end trafficking throughout the state. View the 2016 PSA [here](#). View the 2020 PSA [here](#).
- Published 'See Something, Say Something' Indicator Cards and Human Trafficking Awareness Bracelets that included the national human trafficking hotline.
- Partnered with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) in 2018 and 2019 to display the national human trafficking hotline number on their variable message highway signs during Martin Luther King (MLK) Jr. weekend, making the hotline number available to Arizonans in need.
- Lit the Arizona State Capitol dome blue, along with other state agency buildings throughout the month of January to increase awareness of Arizona's commitment to end trafficking throughout the state.
- Joined national efforts in proclaiming the month of January as Human Trafficking Prevention Month since 2018.

POLICY

The Policy Workgroup strives to improve the quality and access to care received by victims to best meet victims' needs and ensure offender accountability by strengthening prosecution for traffickers and sex buyers. This Workgroup reviews current policy and develops recommendations on improving the quality of care for victims, as well as strengthening prosecution for traffickers and purchasers. Policies regarding human trafficking include: victim protections, state statutes and city codes impacting criminal records, language and terms used to define and describe human trafficking, enhancing tools for law enforcement and prosecutors to find buyers and traffickers, and developing necessary services through legislative action. The Workgroup strives to unmask myths related to victims' rights, educate all Arizona State Legislators, and identify areas where collaboration can be improved. In 2018, their efforts led to the establishment of the Arizona Guidelines Regional Response to Youth Sex Trafficking.

VICTIM SERVICES

Through data collection, network mapping, and collaborative efforts, the Victim Services Workgroup enhances the network of services for human trafficking victims in Arizona. The workgroup identifies gaps in care, engages new community partners, and ensures that victim services are victim-centered, strength-based, and survivor- and trauma-informed. Through a collaborative approach, the workgroup had accomplished the following:

- Convened with state agencies and service providers to share knowledge and best practices in serving victims of all forms of exploitation.
- Engaged in annual strategic planning to ensure inclusivity of diverse groups, and to address unique vulnerabilities and exploitative dynamics they experience.
- Created training videos on best practices to serve victims during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Reviewed and developed a screening tool matrix to ensure service providers working directly with potential or confirmed victims could assess for indicators to determine next steps in the continuum of care.

PREVENTION, IDENTIFICATION, AND SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS

Prevention

ASU STIR and the McCain Institute partnered to develop [Project Starfish](#), a free online resource for individuals working in school communities to teach middle and high school students about the issue of human trafficking. The website includes training modules for educators, school nurses, social workers and resource officers, permission slips, student activities, case studies and sample lesson plans based on Common Core standards to reduce barriers in bringing this critical information to those at highest risk. ASU STIR has since increased its efforts to support teachers and professionals working in Special Education programs, serving youth with complex vulnerability, misconception, and stigma associated with victimization. Additionally, the McCain Institute began convening stakeholders for a Prevention Working Group to help inform the development of a free toolkit for any youth-serving organization or individual. In addition to information on formal prevention programs available in Arizona and nationally, the toolkit provides information and resources on how individuals or organizations can leverage knowledge

on social determinants of health to increase protective factors, community awareness, importance of safe communities and trusted adults for mitigating vulnerability.

Collaborative Process for Trafficked Youth

In order to prevent the victimization of at-risk youth, Mercy Care, the Phoenix Police Department Human Exploitation and Trafficking (HEAT) Unit, and DCS partnered to coordinate efforts to ensure victims received the appropriate care and placement needed to support the healing process. This included a 23-hour mental health assessment and medical screening that prioritized emergent needs of the youth returning from absence without official leave (AWOL), as well as allowed their DCS Special and the Welcome Center to refer youth to trauma-informed placement, equipped to care for their complex needs. Volunteers, community service providers, staff and administration were trained in crisis prevention that addresses the behavior process rather than based on behavior management. Security within facilities were increased to include sensory modulation areas to improve self-regulation for survivors and the onboarding process was increased from two hours to a week. This increase helped to establish a victim's sense of physical and emotional safety to decrease instances of running away. Since the inception of the collaborative, the retention rate has increased to **89%**, allowing providers to be able to identify more kids.

After three years of anecdotal success, ASU STIR evaluated the process as an emerging best practice for serving sex trafficked youth. The study mapped the various stakeholders and services needed for success, including DCS, law enforcement, health insurers, behavioral and mental health providers, survivor mentors, medical services, residential treatment, group homes and adolescent psych evaluations, among others. In addition, it provided insight on victim demographics, vulnerability, and the need for continued support and evaluation to ensure process efficacy. Coinciding with the published report was the development of the Mercy Care DCS Comprehensive Health Plan (Mercy Care DCS CHP). Through a partnership with the McCain Institute, regional task forces, and coalitions launched statewide guidance for minor victims of sex trafficking. This continued collaborative process worked with direct service providers to understand existing efforts in each community, best practices, and resources to support minor victims, as well as opportunities to increase coordination and communication among diverse stakeholders. Work continues across the state to ensure community-specific, survivor-informed, and equitable services to prevent victimization among youth at risk, and ensure those who have experienced exploitation receive victim-centered care.

Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund

In Fiscal Year 2021, the Arizona State Legislature revised Statute Title 26 to include monies allocated to the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA) specified as the [Anti-Human Trafficking Grant Fund](#). The Anti-Human Trafficking Grant funds programs that reduce human trafficking throughout Arizona by providing assistance, equipment and analytical services to law enforcement agencies, as well as providing services to victims and training to law enforcement agencies, prosecutorial agencies and the public on preventing and identifying human trafficking.

The Arizona Human Trafficking Council serves in an advisory role to DEMA for their content expertise ensuring that funding has the largest and most effective impact on fighting human

trafficking in the State of Arizona. The distribution of these monies to local law enforcement agencies and their partners paves the path to making transformational changes to how we better protect and serve victims of trafficking.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH

To better educate Arizonans on how to recognize the indicators of trafficking and how to appropriately respond to possible cases, the Council partnered with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (USDHS) to launch a statewide outreach and awareness campaign in November 2014. The nationally recognized Blue Campaign materials that included the phone number to the national hotline were distributed to more than **5,000** locations across the state prior to the 2015 Super Bowl.

The Council joined forces once again with USDHS in December 2022 to launch an updated statewide Blue Campaign that includes the phone number to contact the Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center (ACTIC), the newly established statewide tipline to report signs of trafficking. Placement of campaign assets were dependent on the needs of individual communities, focusing specific messaging around labor and sex trafficking in the areas they are most likely to occur. The multifaceted strategies utilized to distribute messaging and resources to the public include: static and digital billboards, geo-fencing, materials in bathrooms of high transient locations (malls, restaurants, and bars), etc. By promoting Arizona-specific victim-serving information and resources, Arizona is able to better identify, respond, and support victims of trafficking, reaffirming that the State of Arizona has never, and will never, tolerate any form of trafficking.



TRAFFICKERS DON'T DISCRIMINATE
Anyone can become a victim of human trafficking.

Arizona Tip Line
1-877-4AZ-TIPS

Learn more:
dhs.gov/BlueCampaign



LOS TRAFICANTES NO DISCRIMINAN
Cualquiera puede ser en una víctima de la trata de personas.

Arizona Tip Line
1-877-4AZ-TIPS

Aprende más:
dhs.gov/BlueCampaign



ANNUAL ARIZONA HUMAN TRAFFICKING SYMPOSIUM

Beginning in January 2019, the Council, in partnership with the McCain Institute for International Leadership, has hosted four annual day-long Arizona Human Trafficking Symposiums, three of which were convened in a hybrid format, encouraging engagement from across Arizona to strengthen multidisciplinary collaboration efforts to improve the response to trafficking. Attendees have included representatives from law enforcement, health care, social services, non-profits, education, and government officials.

STATE AND NATIONAL COLLABORATION

The Arizona Human Trafficking Council serves as a state and national leader in responding to human trafficking and facilitating systemic change. To ensure Arizona communities receive the highest level of resources, the Council hosts presentations from state and national representatives on best practices and promising programs aimed at addressing human trafficking.

Quarterly Regional Human Trafficking Task Force Meetings

Beginning in 2020, former Co-Chair Gil Orrantia began hosting Quarterly Regional Human Trafficking Task Force Meetings. These meetings are designed to bring together the many regional task forces in Arizona to collaborate, share information and best practices, discuss needs, and update the Council on regional activities. Representatives of the following regional task forces have participated in these meetings throughout the years: Arizona Coalition of Victim Services (ACVS), CARE 7, Central Arizona United to Stop Exploitation Taskforce (CAUSE), Coalition Against Human Trafficking in Northern Arizona, Flagstaff Initiative Against Trafficking (FIAT), Mohave County Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence Coalition, Phoenix Human Trafficking Taskforce, Pinal Alliance Against Trafficking Coalition, San Luis Police Department, Southern Arizona Anti-Trafficking Unified Response Network (SAATURN), Yavapai County Trafficking Taskforce, Yuma Community Taskforce and the McCain Institute for International Leadership.

National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children & Youth in the United States

The National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States was established in 2017 pursuant to the [Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014](#). The Committee advises the U.S. Attorney General and the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services on practical and general policies that are designed to improve the nation's response to the sex trafficking of children and youth.

In Fall 2018, Governor Ducey was appointed to the National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States (U.S.). Governor Ducey is one of only two Governors appointed to this Committee, and it is in great part due to the work of the Council.

In May 2019, the Council hosted the Committee during their visit to Arizona to discuss best practices being utilized in Arizona and toured service provider facilities, Phoenix Dream Center and STARFISH Place.

In September 2020, the Committee published [Best Practices and Recommendations for States](#), containing more than 127 recommendations to provide states with resources and examples to combat the sex trafficking of children. The report also included 34 recommendations for federal agencies. Following the release of the report, in March 2021, the Committee requested that states assess the extent to which they have worked to address the sex trafficking of children and youth by completing the Committee's Recommendations and State Self-Assessment Survey. Published in January 2022, the [Preliminary State Self-Assessment Overview](#) highlights the results of the 29 states who participated in the assessment.