

Since the Obama Administration raised the priority level of human trafficking on the national agenda in 2012, a number of initiatives have been put forth to combat the issue by federal agencies. According to Ending Modern-Day Slavery & Commercial Sexual Exploitation of School-Aged Youth policy briefing in February 2013, the Department of Education (ED) is contributing to the administration's anti-trafficking efforts through several activities to empower stakeholders in the school system to address child trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of youth. These activities encompass creating and disseminating resources for schools, forming partnerships with federal partners, communities, and NGOs, and compiling a guide for educators to identify and respond to cases.

In terms of resources, ED has created [Human Trafficking of Children in the United States: A Fact Sheet for Schools](#) to assist school personnel in understanding the definition of human trafficking, the extent of the problem in United States school system, warning signs, and appropriate response protocol and resources. Similarly, information on commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and child labor is made available on the [Resources and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center website](#), as well as other related federal agencies, publications and reports.

ED has formed partnerships with community partners and non-government organizations to implement a range of activities. Examples of such activities include soliciting ideas and information from the field through ED's listservs, cohosting webinars, giving plenary presentations and training on CSEC and trafficking. ED is also connecting local school districts that are addressing child trafficking to resources and one another. ED is also placing emphasis on collaboration with these organizations to develop material and resources on CSEC that are salient to various target audiences.

Just as important as partnerships with community and non-government sector, ED is joining efforts with other federal partners to combat the problem. To date, ED has been participating in interagency workgroups, coordinating with Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to deliver trainings and presentations to chiefs of school police, school resource and security officers. Moreover, ED continuously develops, borrows, modifies and shares training and awareness raising materials with sister agencies.

Apart from the abovementioned activities, the Department of Education is in the process of compiling Educator's Guide on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. The Guide is currently being put together by the Office of Safe and Healthy Students, and the Director of Guidance and Wellness for Grossmont Union High School in San Diego with input from teacher union members and stakeholder groups. The document, expected to be complete by the end of 2013 will discuss the importance of

addressing CSEC in schools, identification and reporting protocol, school-based strategies, and resources on the issue. Moreover, it will contain best practices, trauma considerations, school climate, warning signs, model schools, and the role of mandated reporting.

ED has conceded that the issue is yet new. Thus, ED is relying on expertise of other agencies and organizations while evaluating ED resources that may be used to combat the issue. ED representative revealed at the policy briefing that the agency is trying its best to share information with federal partners, NGOs, and school districts with regards to CSEC prevention and elimination. To date, ED has not worked widely with school districts, but is collaborating with those districts that have reached out to ED for assistance, or have programs that can be models for other districts. ED is aware that it needs to direct more attention to training or raise awareness among pre-service teachers and mandated reporters in the school system.

