



### ABOUT THE BLUE CAMPAIGN

Human trafficking is an extremely widespread and complex phenomenon encompassing child and adult sex trafficking, forced labor, and domestic servitude. Due to the complexity and widespread nature of this phenomenon, a variety of approaches are needed at the global and national levels to prevent human trafficking from occurring, protect victims, and prosecute traffickers.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) developed a national public awareness campaign designed to educate the public, law enforcement, and industry partners to recognize the indicators of human trafficking and on how to appropriately respond to possible cases--the [Blue Campaign](#). The Blue Campaign develops general awareness trainings, as well as specific educational resources to help reduce victimization within vulnerable populations. This study aims to test the effectiveness of Blue Campaign training materials across a diverse set of cohorts.

### EVALUATING THE CAMPAIGN

The DHS Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) is conducting an impact evaluation of the Blue Campaign with the following objectives:

- Evaluate the impact of the Blue Campaign videos in raising awareness about human trafficking.
- Identify and evaluate the use of specific indicators to raise awareness about human trafficking.

The proposed evaluations will look at the following cohorts: the first responder community, teacher and school staff, school counselors, and campus law enforcement. The research design utilizes a mixed-methods multidisciplinary approach that exposes cohorts to Blue Campaign awareness materials, while surveying them before and after exposure to such materials at regular intervals. The study's primary goal is to understand if the level of awareness about human trafficking increases over time and if the knowledge acquired helps them recognize potential instances of human trafficking and take appropriate actions. The secondary goal will be to gather information from the cohorts on risky behaviors they have observed that should be included in awareness campaigns.

### CURRENT FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS

DHS S&T submitted a manuscript to the *Journal of Human Trafficking* titled "A Quasi-Experimental Intervention Trial to

Test the Efficacy of a Human Trafficking Awareness Campaign: The Blue Campaign." The results of this study indicate that the Blue Campaign is effective in improving knowledge about human trafficking among first responders, and more specifically, knowledge about different types of human trafficking, differences between smuggling and human trafficking, and the indicators used to recognize potential victims of human trafficking.

Future evaluation efforts will analyze the impact of exposure to the Blue Campaign videos on youth risk factors, with a sample of teachers and school staff using a pre/post intervention questionnaire. Additional efforts include an expanded literature review to include screening forms and reporting protocols used by law enforcement for other vulnerable populations, which will inform enhanced screening methods. The impact evaluations will provide critical feedback to DHS and relevant stakeholders on Blue Campaign awareness. It will also give stakeholders the ability to identify suspected human trafficking in the course of their daily duties and how to report it. Long-term knowledge gain should be factored into timeline and method development. This expansion and support to DHS will build upon the [National Action Plan](#), as well as the [DHS Strategy](#) and accompanying Implementation Plan focused on combatting human trafficking.

### IMPACT

This impact evaluation will provide critical feedback to the DHS Blue Campaign staff and relevant stakeholders by highlighting effective aspects of the videos and trainings for incorporation into future campaigns. These evaluations will aid in building evidence of indicators and methods to increase DHS personnel awareness of potential victims and traffickers.

### MILESTONES

- **FY23 Q3** – Publication in *Journal of Human Trafficking*
- **FY23 Q3** – School guidance counselors longitudinal study
- **FY23 Q4** – Campus law enforcement study
- **FY24 Q3** – Literature review to include informant interviews
- **FY25 Q4** – Final evaluation report

### PERFORMERS, PARTNERS, STAKEHOLDERS

- Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston, MA
- DHS Blue Campaign, Washington, DC
- Federal, state, local, tribal and territorial partners, and the general public

