

**CONVENIENCE STORES
AGAINST
TRAFFICKING**



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Human trafficking happens 365 days a year in every zip code in America. No community is immune. Human trafficking is the second largest and fastest growing crime in the world. Traffickers exploit people regardless of race, gender, citizenship, age, or socioeconomic status. Victims of human trafficking are denied the basic human rights of health, food, shelter, and safety. Traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion to profit off a victim's labor or commercial sex act.

While nonprofits and law enforcement are at the forefront of combatting this injustice, the convenience store industry has a uniquely vital role in disrupting this criminal enterprise and helping victims of human trafficking in America. With more than 150,000 locations in communities across the United States that serve half of the population daily, convenience stores can extend the reach of agencies working to stop this crime. Longer hours of operation, public restrooms, and ease of access increase the likelihood that convenience stores can help victims of human trafficking.

Convenience Stores Against Trafficking (CSAT), a program of national nonprofit In Our Backyard, empowers the convenience store industry to take a stand against the atrocity of human trafficking in America. CSAT provides training, victim outreach, and public awareness of human trafficking to convenience store partners. As the eyes and ears of our nation's communities, convenience store employees can learn to spot human trafficking, safely report traffickers, and save lives. CSAT is a vital link in stopping human trafficking in America.

Traffickers instill fear in their victims and a belief that no one cares. CSAT reaches out to victims through Freedom Stickers, which contain a message of hope and the National Human Trafficking hotline - a non-governmental agency with local networks of victim-centered responders. CSAT posts Freedom Stickers in convenience store restrooms because that is the safest place for a victim of human trafficking to call or text the hotline and arrange a safety plan and connect to services. Also according to research, posting the National Human Trafficking Hotline in public places is the number one way to increase arrests of traffickers (Northeastern University, 2016).

CSAT also provides training so that employees understand the indicators of human trafficking and proper response protocols, using a brief video and printed reference cards for in-store use. "Our hope is that an employee will trust their gut and make a phone call immediately after suspected traffickers and victims have left the store. That call can save a life and stop traffickers from exploiting more victims," declares Program Director Juliana Williams.

About Convenience Stores Against Trafficking

Convenience Stores Against Trafficking (CSAT) is a program of In Our Backyard, a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit known for its anti-trafficking work surrounding the past eight Super Bowls and for the critically acclaimed book by Founder and Executive Director Nita Belles: *In Our Backyard: Human Trafficking in America and What We Can Do to Stop It*. In Our Backyard Freedom Stickers are in all 50 states, providing a pathway to freedom for victims of human trafficking. CSAT equips the convenience store industry to take a stand against the atrocity of human trafficking in America through no-cost training, victim outreach materials, and public awareness of human trafficking. CSAT has partnerships in 22 states, representing more than 8,000 locations. The program is featured in the NACS Community Toolkit. To learn more, register your stores at no cost, or support our work with a donation, please visit: www.inourbackyard.org/csat