

Encourage  
Enrich  
Equip



# THE BARNABAS

# 2020

**Crisis Care  
Training International**

**A Ministry of**

**WEC International**

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## In Focus

Greetings! We hope you will take the time to read our latest Barnabas Letter with the prayer that God's children will be better protected through what you learn.

As Linda Smith, founder of Shared Hope International, stated in September, "Please be warned: Child sex trafficking has not slowed in the pandemic era. It has accelerated. Because of COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions, children and youth are spending even more time online than before. ***Predators are seizing the moment!***"

Children are isolated as never before with all of the changes COVID 19 has brought to their lives. As reported in christianpost.com, 7/31/20, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stated that suicide was already the second leading cause of death for youth ages 10-14 in 2019 and the rate has nearly tripled for older teens, rising 76%, but the strain of COVID-19 has worsened these rates. With schools being closed, those who would normally report sexual and child abuse, or watch for signs of mental health decline, are not available to the children. Children are reaching out to any "friendly ear" who will listen to them through texting, Facebook Messaging, etc. Predators are aware of this and are taking advantage of these situations.

We pray that this issue of The Barnabas Letter can help you know how to respond and protect your kids from these online traffickers. As is always our goal, may you be enriched, equipped and encouraged to be His hands and feet for such a time as this!

*Serving Him Together,  
Amy Wilson, Director of Education*



# ***The Rise Online of Child Sexual Exploitation During the Covid-19 Pandemic***

*With these new,  
unprecedented times  
come new,  
unprecedented challenges.*

Unfortunately, the anti-trafficking community has become glaringly aware that online predators and sex traffickers are taking advantage of this new reality caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. Predators understand that many of us are distracted and consumed by our own worries, planning, and isolation, and are using these distractions to their advantage. In fact, the **National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)** recently reported that they have observed “predators openly discussing the pandemic as an opportunity to entice unsupervised children into producing sexually explicit material.”

Whether children are attending school in person, distance learning, or both, we know that they are now likely spending more time on the internet or gaming than during a normal school week. Even on weekends, when kids and teens would normally be spending time with friends or engaging in extracurricular activities, they are now spending more time in isolation, almost completely dependent on their devices to socialize. On top of all of that, parents are still balancing their own work and life demands with their new role as at-home educators, potentially resulting in hours of unsupervised screen time.

At the same time, adults are also spending an increased amount of unsupervised time on the internet. Whether unemployed or working from home, predators who may otherwise refrain from exploitive and predatory conduct while at work or in public are now far more likely to use their extra hours of isolation to identify, groom, and abuse children online.

Predators are leveraging every possible online channel: mobile apps, social media, chat, email, websites, via phones, tablets, video game consoles, the list goes on. NCMEC shared in July that reports to their Cyber tip line were up more than 90% between January and June 2020 over the same period last year.



Continued...

# ***The Rise Online of Child Sexual Exploitation During the Covid-19 Pandemic***

The intensifying challenges of these strange and difficult times, our resolve at Shared Hope has only strengthened. We are here to empower you to protect your child so that they never suffer the damage that sex traffickers and buyers have already inflicted on so many.

We offer everything from instructional videos about parental control options, to downloadable resources on internet safety conversation starters, to a webinar series featuring a myriad of leading experts—All available to download **FOR FREE** on our website.

Right now, Shared Hope is encouraging anyone who cares about children to take some time during isolation to make sure you are confident that the kids in their household are empowered to make safe choices while using the internet.

Here are some warning signs that a child in your life might be communicating with an online predator:

- If they withdraw from family and friends
- If they change screens or turn off the computer when someone enters the room
- If they become secretive or obsessive about online activity
- If they receive phone calls or gifts from an older person you do not know
- If they get overly-obsessed or panicked when they can't be online
- If they start engaging in sexting or downloading pornography

If you notice a child in your life exhibiting two or more of these signs, contact the **NCMEC** Cyber tip line at **1-800-THE-LOST** and your local law enforcement for help and support.

For more information about how you can protect children from online predators, visit: [sharedhope.org/internetsafety](https://sharedhope.org/internetsafety).



## ***Biography:***

Kelly McCaughey is the Internet Safety Specialist and Community Engagement Manager at Shared Hope International in Vancouver, WA.

Kelly supports and manages volunteers, both locally and nation-wide, serves as a community educator on domestic minor sex trafficking, and heads Shared Hope's internet safety initiative.



## Innocent Posting?

The following is an edited scenario of a real-life trafficking case and how innocently it happened that has been posted on Facebook, and has been copied and shared with permission. Please read and consider before you post anything!

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A guy sends you a friend request. He looks nice enough, so you check him out on Facebook before accepting. He's got a wife and the cutest kids. You don't know him, but he looks to be a family man and his profile looks good, so you accept his friend request. It's your baby girl's first day of school and she looks so adorable in her new dress. You take a photo and post it on Facebook for all of your family and friends to see. You are so excited as you are dropping her off that you "Check-In" to her school on Facebook saying, "I can't believe how big she has gotten. Time sure does fly! Proud mama and papa here."

Meanwhile, the mystery guy whose friend request you hurriedly accepted earlier, is saving that photo that you posted to his phone. He texts that photo to 60 other men throughout the world with the caption, "British Female, Age 8, Brown Hair, Brown Eyes, ID# R8000."

Not only did you provide a photo of your daughter to a child trafficker, you have handed him the name and location of her school on a silver cyber platter.

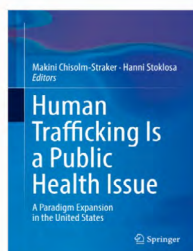
You go to pick her up at 3:00 at school that afternoon, but she is nowhere to be found. Little do you know that your precious baby girl has been sold to a 43 year-old pedophile before you even stepped foot off of the school grounds this morning. Now she is on her way to Asia, scared, crying and with a bag over her head.

A strange man that she has never seen before snatched her from school in less than ten seconds. She's alone, scared, unsure of where she is going and what is going to happen to her next. And YOU did this to her, unknowingly!

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### ***But now you know!***

Stop adding strangers to Facebook. And, stop posting everything about your kids and their lives as well. Avoid posting your child's photos or profiles. Change your hometown... those who truly know you already know where you live! Please share this with all parents and kids and **THINK** before you post. Thank you!



### Human Trafficking Is a Public Health Issue

A Paradigm Expansion in the United States



**Crisis Care  
Training International**

# Resources Page

## New Training Schedule

Beginning January 10 - March 5, 2021,  
the following On-line courses will be available:

Module 1: Trauma & Crisis Care  
On-line or Digital Video Course

Module 2: Street Children  
On-line Course

# ONLINE TRAINING

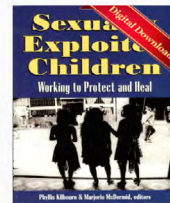


## BRAND NEW!

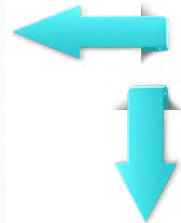
### Module 7:

Restoring Hope  
to Children with Disabilities

Please contact Denise by Dec. 11th,  
at [denise@ccti-wec.org](mailto:denise@ccti-wec.org) before all  
spaces are filled.



Sexually Exploited  
Children: Working to  
Digital Download



INTERNET  
SAFETY AMIDST  
THE COVID-19  
OUTBREAK

**Click Here  
Click There  
Click  
Everywhere!**

