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CRY NOT spreading awareness about human trafficking in Dufferin and Caledon

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Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A local group of volunteers is working hard to spread awareness about human trafficking.

National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is today (Feb. 22), and CRY NOT is bolstered its message on the important day.

CRY NOT is a volunteer organization that was created by the Rotary Club of Orangeville and Compass Community Church, organizations that were moved to action when they were made aware of the threat of human trafficking and sex trafficking in Dufferin and Caledon. CRY NOT stands for Compass Rotary Youth ? No Trafficking and its goal is to bring awareness to the threat, tactics, symptoms, and resulting devastating personal effects of human trafficking to the Dufferin and Caledon communities.

Sheri Moir, a volunteer with the Rotary Club of Orangeville who has been involved with CRY NOT since its inception in 2019, says the group was inspired by a presentation from Caledon Dufferin Victim Services.

?The best thing we can do with this horrific crime? is spread the knowledge and awareness of what's happening,? said Moir.

She explained one of the ways CRY NOT spreads awareness is through delivering presentations.

It does presentations on human trafficking in person, and during the pandemic they also delivered presentations online. Any community group is able to request a presentation from CRY NOT on the organization's website, crynot.ca.

The presentation teaches people the signs of human trafficking and how criminals lure victims into it.

?We welcome any parent council, any adults, any community service club? anyone who would like the presentation can request it,? said Moir.

Moir said CRY NOT has reached well over 1,000 people through its presentations. CRY NOT members are also dedicated to educating themselves, receiving presentations from Caledon Dufferin Victim Services, the OPP Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, and judicial officials to name a few.

?We're taking everything we've been able to learn and we're trying to bring it to the community,? said Moir.

CRY NOT currently has a radio campaign going, and has also enlisted the help of local municipalities to make proclamations to recognize National Human Trafficking Awareness Day.

Moir said she's come to learn that human trafficking is a multi-billion-dollar business for organized criminals, who can make hundreds of thousands of dollars per year off of a victim.

?They're trapped into this? it's happening in our communities, so whatever I can do to stop that from happening? that's why I'm involved,? said Moir.

She said in 2022, for example, Caledon Dufferin Victim Services helped 16 victims of human trafficking. From 2017 to 2019, Caledon Dufferin Victim Services helped 77 victims of human trafficking.

Moir said that CRY NOT's website can be used to find valuable resources for parents and young people, and encourages people to

check it out.