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February 13, 2013

Honorable Thomas J. Borris
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Judge Borris,

The Placentia Police Department has received the Orange County Grand Jury Report, "SEX TRAFFICKING OF GIRLS." The Department is pleased to form a partnership with the Grand Jury in an effort to decrease these types of events from occurring. I have reviewed the findings and in compliance of California Penal Code 933 and its respective sub-sections, I offer the following responses to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations.

The Placentia Police Department's response to the Grand Jury's findings are as follows:

Finding F1: The Human Trafficking Task Force (HTTF) recognized that more law enforcement training is needed in sex trafficking.

The Placentia Police Department accepts the finding and agrees there is a need for more training. The Department makes every effort to educate and train its officers and supervisors on the subject matter. Training begins in the police academy with Police Recruits receiving the prescribed training hours in Human Trafficking. Upon completion of the police academy, officers and supervisors receive, "in-house" training specific to human trafficking by way of Briefing Training, Guest Speakers, and informational DVD's.

Finding F2: Child victims of sex trafficking require specialized shelter.

The Placentia Police Department accepts the finding and agrees there is a need for more training. At this time, the only "specialized shelter" that is recognized by the Placentia Police Department is Orangewood Children's Facility available through Orange County Child Protective Services.

Finding F3: Child victims of sex trafficking are often misidentified. Due to lack of proper identification of the child's age, law enforcement agencies may be unable to charge the trafficker/pimp with child related sex trafficking violations.

The Placentia Police Department accepts the finding and agrees there is a need for more training. Through additional/more training, we can help eliminate those occurrences and help bring the trafficker/pimp to justice through the proper judicial process.

Finding F4: Trafficked minors often flee non-secure shelters. Law Enforcement and prosecutors may request detention of a child to protect them from repeated exploitation by pimps.

The Placentia Police Department accepts the finding and agrees there is a need for more training on how to ensure the child is properly placed in a secured environment to help alleviate the child's propensity for trying to escape.

Finding F5: California Penal Code 1275.1 allows the courts to set conditions on bail, including presenting probable cause that the bail money (or the security for the bond) was illegally obtained. This provision allows law enforcement and the courts to hold the perpetrators, which may keep them from intimidating and victimizing young girls once released.

The Placentia Police Department accepts the finding and encourages officers and supervisors to seek bail enhancements in these types of investigations and seek counsel from the Judicial Hearing Officer if possible.

Finding F6: No safe group home currently exists in Orange County to shelter the victim from a trafficker or pimp and provide for stabilization.

The Placentia Police Department accepts the finding and agrees there is a need to develop such a shelter to safely house these victims and protect them from those who prey upon them.

Finding F7: No current data base is available to law enforcement agencies to check and identify victims of sex trafficking.

The Placentia Police Department accepts the finding and agrees there is a need for the development of such a data base. A data base such as "Coplink" would be most advantageous as it is a collective data base and allows for agencies countywide to access.

The Placentia Police Department's response to the Grand Jury's recommendations are as follows:

R1: Police and Sheriff's Departments should provide additional training for officers to clarify law enforcement's understanding and awareness of minor sex trafficking of girls.

This Grand Jury recommendation has been implemented by the Placentia Police Department. The Placentia Police Department received training in July and August of 2011 by members of the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force. In an effort to maintain ongoing training, in August of 2012 the Placentia Police Department imparted on its personnel a 15 minute DVD titled, "Response to Human Trafficking of Minors." It is the goal of the Placentia Police Department to maintain training on this serious topic as it is available.

R2: The Sheriff's Department, city police departments and responsible Orange County agencies should develop a data base using a single term such as "Minor Sex Trafficking" to allow the trafficked victims to be systematically tracked with the result of a proper identification and status as a victim of a crime. A consistent label for the crime would allow multiple agencies, communities and regions to research and intervene in a single coordinated effort.

This Grand Jury recommendation has not been implemented by the Placentia Police Department. However, through our Records Management System, we do have the ability to search/locate victims of this crime and provide data as needed.

R3: Law Enforcement agencies and district attorneys should consider using the provisions of California Penal Code 1275.1 more frequently if they have cause to believe that the source of the bail money for a 'pimp' or 'john' was illegally obtained.

This Grand Jury recommendation has not been implemented by the Placentia Police Department. However, the Placentia Police Department would incorporate this information and provide it to all personnel involved in these types of investigations.

R4: The County Executive Officer should direct responsible agencies to develop a strategic plan to eliminate this growing problem and meet the immediate need for food, shelter, treatment and protection from exploitation. The establishment of a safe group home in Orange County would be instrumental in meeting this need.

The Placentia Police Department agrees with this recommendation and is willing to assist in the development of this facility however necessary.

The Placentia Police Department is proud to be in partnership with the Grand Jury in an effort to protect children at a higher level, and making our community safer as a whole.

Sincerely,



R.A. Hicks
Chief of Police