



News Release
For Immediate Release
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Mother-Daughter Team Launches Sex Trafficking Prevention Program for Teens

Austin, TX (May 2, 2018) Girls with Grit, a certified 501(c)3 non-profit organization, was formed last year by former business owner, Deborah Pfluger and Audrey Pfluger, a mother-daughter duo, in response to increasing recognition and alarm over the growing number of domestic children (U.S. citizens) who are being trafficked for commercial sex in the Austin area.

Girls with Grit provides free Personal Safety Programs and outreach to educate teens about the realities of sex trafficking and arms them with strategies needed to avoid becoming victims. “Our programs recognize that the key to keeping kids safe is to reach them before traffickers do,” says co-founder Audrey Pfluger. Girls with Grit facilitates its prevention program in the Austin area with a focus on reaching higher risk populations. “Ultimately, all kids, especially girls, are at risk for being targeted by sex traffickers and will benefit from the Not a #Number® curriculum that we deliver,” adds Pfluger.

“We adopted Not a Number because it was created specifically to help kids avoid being tricked by exploiters and lured into the often-times, dead-end road of prostitution,” says co-founder Deborah Pfluger. Not a Number was developed by Love 146®, an international human rights and anti-trafficking organization. It is a research-based and survivor-informed program that has been taught to thousands of kids across the U.S. **Girls with Grit is the first and only organization to bring this program to the Austin area.** “We chose to focus on prevention because we found a huge gap in this area. The number of organizations focused on prevention are few and far between,” says Deborah.

The five, one-hour classes include meals for participants, free t-shirts and self-defense instruction. 2018 classes are under way and more are being planned for the fall. Girls with Grit educates both girls and boys, ages 12 – 18, about the realities of sex trafficking. “We are gratified by the engagement we’ve seen with our students and the impact we are already having,” says Pfluger. One student told us that she was “so glad that we were talking about real stuff, not just another class about empowerment,” added Pfluger.

The statistics for Texas are staggering and growing. According to the most recent study by the University of Texas at Austin, there are over 300,000 victims of human trafficking in Texas alone. The 2017 research findings indicate that at least 79,000 minors (children) are trafficked for sex in Texas. Of those 79,000 kids, more than 80% of them are U.S. citizens.

Girls with Grit relies on individual and corporate donations to fund its programs. Contributions are used to provide free prevention programs throughout Central Texas. Go to www.girls-with-grit.org to donate.