

October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017

Dear School Administrators and Educators,

**Re: A Reminder for Your Students: Choose Appropriate Halloween Costumes**

With Halloween fast approaching, Children of the Street Society would like your assistance in reminding students, parents and care-givers about inappropriate Halloween costumes which sexualize children and youth and glamorize sex trafficking (forced prostitution), sex exploitation, and gang lifestyles.

Costumes such as “prisoner of love” and “pimp and ho” create false perceptions of the perpetrators and victims, glamorizing the crime and minimizing the life-long pain of victims. The reality for young people who are lured into exploitive situations falls far short of the images often portrayed by Hollywood and the media.

In fact, sexual exploitation annually affects 300,000 children and youth in North America. Victims endure multiple barriers and challenges like addiction, mental illness, homelessness, poor health and life-long trauma from physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking are crimes that rely on individuals being unaware or misinformed on the issue. Wearing Halloween costumes that stereotype or make light of these harmful forms of exploitation, only contributes to the problem.

**Please encourage your students to avoid glamorizing sexual exploitation by refusing to wear Halloween costumes that re-victimize those who have suffered the devastation of this crime.**

On Behalf of Children of the Street Society,



Diane Sowden Executive Director, Children of the Street Society