



THE PHOENIX ALLIANCE
RISE FROM ASHES

News from the *Nest*

Second Quarter 2022

April-May-June

Mentoring Pregnant Teens

Right around the time Roe vs. Wade was being overturned, we received a message on our website. The man wrote, "Second to abortion, I believe that trafficking is the greatest evil in our country." He wasn't sure how he could help but wanted to do something to join our fight.

I found it interesting that he perhaps didn't see the overlap between trafficking and abortion. In the last several months we've counseled several teen girls who are dealing with unexpected pregnancies. It's not always a result of trafficking, but often because they are introduced to a certain lifestyle through earlier abuse. A lifestyle that leads them to believe that engaging in sexual relationships is how they will find true love. (Many of our girls were first introduced to trafficking through someone posing as a boyfriend in the first place, so their view is understandably distorted.) These sweet teen girls have texted us in a panic, thinking they may be pregnant. We're so thankful for the opportunity to be among the first people they go to, and always assure them that we will walk through this together.

Thankfully, we have access to some great crisis pregnancy centers and we do our best to connect our girls with them. We also offer to be with her when she talks to her parent or guardian. And we make sure she knows we're there to help her with resources she might need as she considers raising or adopting her child.

So far we have had a couple of girls experience miscarriages, but none have chosen to abort their babies. We pray that they will always know we are a safe place to call when they're scared and don't know what to do.

Navigating the Legal Process

This spring our Indiana team was contacted by law enforcement regarding a girl who had been trafficked. They asked for assistance in mentoring this girl, helping to set up and pay for trauma counseling, and more. One of the most important needs was for someone to walk with this young lady through the legal proceedings of the case against her traffickers. Shaana, our area director in Indiana, was able to connect her with various resources to help her prepare for trial and most importantly begin to heal.

From the onset we knew that this young lady would be required to testify in multiple trials. TPA continues to walk alongside her during this painful waiting period. Facing the prospect of reliving her exploitation and being under pressure to not testify has proven to be highly challenging. This young lady is still awaiting trial, and Shaana has continued to meet with her and encourage her. She's also met practical needs, from buying her appropriate clothing to lining up a job. It's a fragile time due to the pressure from family and the fact that she is still in the first stages of healing.

While the road has been long, and sometimes discouraging, we were thankful for a recent communication from a member of law enforcement. They had to speak off the record but said they are confident TPA's work with this girl is a huge reason the state is able to move forward with this case and that we are likely the only reason this girl is still alive. They said we will be the first call in future trafficking cases.

We are so glad they knew they had someone they could call to help this girl in need.

Join the Alliance!

***Donate at www.thephoenixalliance.org
or contact us about volunteer opportunities at
info@thephoenixalliance.org***

Dreams of an Empty Shoreline

We sometimes do things a bit differently here at TPA. If you've been with us for a while, you're probably aware that we don't use numbers and stats very often to brag about our work. There are a few reasons for this. First, we are pretty fond of our amazing kids, and we never want to see them as numbers on an infographic (It's sadly ironic how often victims of exploitation are rescued, and then exploited again for fundraising purposes). Also, in most cases the stories we share are about girls who really want their story told, even if it's anonymous. Lastly, we understand that many of our supporters have their own stories of hurt, abuse, and exploitation, and we want to avoid over-dramatizing our work in a way that might harm or manipulate anyone out there.

At the same time, it's important for us to be accountable to our supporters by offering an accurate account of our work. So we talk about various numbers, like how many girls are in our Thailand home, how many law enforcement officers have gone through our trainings, or how many JDC kids we've worked with.

Earlier this year, Kimberly and I were reminded why we do things this way. During a visit to our Thailand home, the first since the start of the pandemic, we reconnected with our beloved staff and many of our amazing survivors there. But there was an absence. We were missing some girls.

When covid hit and all the tourists were sent home, nearly all the bars and brothels temporarily closed their doors. This brought mixed emotions. We rejoiced over the countless kids who would, at least for a time, be safe from harm. But we also mourned knowing that so many of these kids would be cast into the gutter, as they were unable to earn money for their traffickers. Mari was able to bring a large number of these kids into our home. In fact, our roster grew by about fifty percent almost overnight.

And then, as covid restrictions began to ease up, one by one they left us. Guys, we don't lose kids. We just don't. Mari is mom to the girls, and they love her and trust her to guide them long after they are living independent, safe lives. So as you might imagine, this was devastating to us all.



The girls who came to us during covid were not numbers to be used on a chart. They are living, breathing children who are loved by God. They deserved, and received, our best care and our greatest effort to help them exchange the cold chains of exploitation for the loving arms of Jesus. Those who willingly returned to exploitation, most under pressure from their families, are still on our hearts and in our prayers. We remain in contact whenever possible. And we hope. We hope that the seeds planted during a time of global crisis will take root and be remembered when they are ready to find help. We trust that we'll have that chance with some of them. Lord willing, all of them. Not so we can brag about numbers. Each one is a beautiful little starfish, stranded on dry land, facing certain destruction. We want them to know the safety and comfort of the ocean they were created for. One at a time, we send them toward safety. And another, and another.

Until we can't find any more starfish on the shore.

Prayer Needs: We are being overwhelmed right now on our "support line" in both Indiana and North Carolina. Girls are texting often with big needs; shelter, food, clothing, counseling, and more. Please pray that we will have wisdom and resources to meet these needs.

IT'S COMING!

Our Storybook Gala is back! It will be held in Rockingham County, NC in early December. Ticket availability will be announced on social media as soon as the details are set. We can't wait to see you there!