



## Sharing Resources

As May begins, our team continues to share resources for those who need support during this time. Our sincere gratitude to all of the other local organizations that have been sharing information and continuing their work to support the community, including [DC Kincare Alliance](#), [The Children's Law Center](#), and more.

On March 16, 2020, Amara staff began working remotely to ensure client, staff, and community safety. We continue to provide legal services to our clients, albeit virtually by video, phone and/or e-mail. We attend scheduled training sessions, and stakeholder meetings and events virtually. As you are no doubt aware, courts have curtailed operations and postponed their dockets which include our clients' litigation matters. Two of our client intake locations are not operational as they are housed in D.C. Public Schools. Other intake locations have also voluntarily closed due to COVID-19. Nevertheless, we continue to conduct intake sessions telephonically and follow-up by telephone for referrals received from our partner organizations and Amara's intake line. We have received nine calls/referrals and six new clients since going remote.

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## Surviving Now

Last week, our staff attorney, Caroline Ackerman, served as a panelist in a podcast sponsored by [Karana Rising](#) that discussed issues concerning the intersection between sex trafficking and domestic violence. You can listen [here](#).

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## Important Conversations

We participated in a live Twitter chat with the [D.C. Office of the Attorney General, Karl A. Racine](#). We were joined by other area nonprofits, including [Fair Girls, Inc.](#), [Courtney's House](#), the [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#), and Dr. Watkins-Laws of the [DC Child Guidance Clinic](#) to discuss child sex trafficking prevention and awareness.

We want to thank Attorney General Racine and his office for inviting us to share in this opportunity to provide accurate information and resources to our community. Here are just a few of the questions and our responses:



**Amara Legal Center** @AmaraLegal · Apr 21

A victim of child sex trafficking can display warning signs such as involvement in a controlling relationship, a diagnosis of multiple sexually transmitted diseases in a short period of time, a lost sense of time, and scripted or inconsistent stories. [#AskDCOAG](#) [#CSTFreeDC](#)



**AG Karl A. Racine** @AGKarlRacine · Apr 21

Q1: What is child sex trafficking? [#AskDCOAG](#) [#CSTFreeDC](#)

[Show this thread](#)



↻ 29

♥ 42



**Amara Legal Center** @AmaraLegal · Apr 21

The two most common forms of trafficking that we see in DC are parental trafficking and relationship trafficking (often referred to as a "Romeo Pimp"). [#AskDCOAG](#) [#CSTFreeDC](#)



**AG Karl A. Racine** @AGKarlRacine · Apr 21

Q2: What does Child Sex Trafficking look like here in the District? [#AskDCOAG](#) [#CSTFreeDC](#)

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↻ 3

♥ 5



**Amara Legal Center** @AmaraLegal · Apr 21

Because there is less adult supervision and much more time spent on the internet (particularly chat/direct messaging websites), traffickers have easier access to minors and can start grooming techniques by using the internet. [#AskDCOAG](#) [#CSTFreeDC](#)



**AG Karl A. Racine** @AGKarlRacine · Apr 21

Q5: How has the increased use of technology during the COVID-19 pandemic impacted online enticement and online sexual exploitation? How can I protect my child on his or her computer or phone? [#AskDCOAG](#) [#CSTFreeDC](#)

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The screenshot shows a Twitter thread on a dark background. At the top, Amara Legal Center (@AmaraLegal) posts a message about reducing sex trafficking. Below it, AG Karl A. Racine (@AGKarlRacine) asks a question (Q6) about talking to friends or kids. The thread continues with Amara Legal Center providing statistics on cell phone usage among teenagers and a reminder to know children's friends. Finally, AG Karl A. Racine asks another question (Q7) about what to do if a child goes missing.

**Amara Legal Center** @AmaraLegal · Apr 21  
One of the most important ways to reduce sex trafficking is to accurately and openly talk about it. Make sure that you are using appropriate language and emphasize personal safety. #AskDCOAG #CSTFreeDC

**AG Karl A. Racine** @AGKarlRacine · Apr 21  
Q6: What are some ways you can talk to your friends or kids about child sex trafficking?  
#AskDCOAG #CSTFreeDC  
[Show this thread](#)

**Amara Legal Center** @AmaraLegal · Apr 21  
Currently, 75% of teenagers own cell phones, 25% use cell phones for social media, 54% use cell phones for texting, and 24% use cell phones for instant messaging.  
  
It is important to know who your children's friends are and reach out to them.  
  
#AskDCOAG #CSTFreeDC

**AG Karl A. Racine** @AGKarlRacine · Apr 21  
Q7: What should you do if your child goes missing/runs away?  
#AskDCOAG #CSTFreeDC  
[Show this thread](#)

You can explore the #AskDCOAG and #CSTFreeDC hashtags on [Twitter](#) and/or visit our [Twitter page](#) to see the full chat and responses from other organizations.

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## Giving Tuesday

[GivingTuesday](#) is coming early this year! Amidst this global pandemic, Tuesday, May 5th, has been designated Giving Tuesday to support organizations like Amara. Your support is needed more than ever. Our organization is still offering services and providing essential resources to our clients during this time. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to support our work, you can donate to Amara Legal Center [here](#), or when you shop on Amazon using [Amazon Smile](#).

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## Donations Under the CARES Act

The passage of the Stimulus Package Bill, also known as the CARES Act, was an important step in providing funds to those in our community who are impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. We know that many individuals in our community are amazingly generous and regularly make donations to non-profit organizations. Here is some information about changes in tax-deductible donations under the CARES Act.

If you do not itemize deductions on your taxes and elect the standard deduction, the CARES Act allows up to \$300 in charitable contributions to be an above-the-line deduction, meaning you don't have to itemize to claim the deduction. Contributions must be cash donation(s) to qualified charities. For those who do itemize when filing your taxes, the bill increases the cap on annual giving from 60% of adjusted gross income to 100%. For more information, please consult your tax advisor.

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## National Crime Victims' Rights Week

We observed [National Crime Victims' Rights Week](#) (NCVRW) from April 19-25. This week was officially recognized in the 1980s to advocate for and raise awareness of resources to support victims of crime nationwide. Many events to commemorate the week were postponed but organizations like the [D.C. Forensic Nurses](#) and [National Alliance of Victims' Rights Attorneys & Advocates](#) used online tools to host virtual events like a screening of the Netflix limited-series *Unbelievable*, or the [National Crime Victim Law Institute's](#) celebration of 20 years of service.

Even though the official week of observation is over, we continue to promote the theme set by the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC): "Seek Justice, Ensure Victims' Rights, Inspire Hope." All of us at Amara plan to promote NCVRW's sentiments and action throughout the year. You can learn more by visiting the OVC's [website](#) or watching this video about the 2020 NCVRW's theme:



Amara Legal Center  
600 Pennsylvania Ave. SE #15255  
Washington, DC 20003  
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