

Super Bowl Puts Human Trafficking Awareness Groups on High Alert

Nearly 100 million Americans and others worldwide will gather this Sunday to watch Super Bowl XLVII. Since the sporting event is commonly known as the single largest human trafficking event in the U.S., organizations across the country are gearing up for awareness campaigns.

Traffick Free is one such organization working to raise awareness about the **human trafficking** industry. Leader Theresa Flores, a sex slave survivor, explains how criminals take their victims.

“These guys are masters of coercion and trickery. They target the vulnerable and then use threats, manipulation, and blackmail to force them into commercial sex labor while they gain financially,” she said.

Law enforcement have stepped up efforts to stop sex slavery taking place near the stadium in recent years. This year’s **Super Bowl** will take place in New Orleans at the Mercedes-Benz Superdome.

“It is imperative the outlying parishes support the city’s efforts and initiate strong steps to curtail and enforce such illicit activities and in particular the activities involving human trafficking,” Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff Daniel Edwards told .

“Law enforcement officials throughout the country have been experiencing human trafficking and related activities in epidemic proportions and this problem is expected to ascend to maximum intensity particularly during conventions, sports events and any and all events attracting out of town

visitors," he added.

reports that police are getting special training to identify possible victims. Anti-human trafficking advocates say it is a problem in the New Orleans area year-round, but with two major events—the Super Bowl and Mardi Gras—taking place this month, efforts are increasing.

“Between federal law enforcement here in New Orleans, state law enforcement, nonprofits, there are a lot of people coming together,” said Kara Van de Carr, executive director of Eden House, a home for trafficking victims in New Orleans. “They recognize this is an issue. There have been multiple trainings, conferences, and there are people coming in to actually combat the problem.”