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CREATING EVIDENCE IN THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING MOVEMENT

HOUSTON, TEXAS – Child trafficking has gained increased attention over the last several years, with growing community consensus that resources must be allocated towards targeted and effective solutions. To end child trafficking, we must prevent it from occurring in the first place. While many prevention education curriculums have been developed, to date, no child trafficking prevention curriculum has undergone a rigorous external outcome evaluation to show evidence-based impact – but that is about to change. After years of curriculum development and implementation, Love146’s *Not a Number* prevention education curriculum will be evaluated by Lisa Jones, Ph.D. and her team at the University of New Hampshire’s Crimes Against Children Research Center.

Child trafficking impacts children across the United States, in every type of community. Based on research, as well as Love146’s own work with survivors of child trafficking, the *Not a Number* curriculum was launched by Love146 in 2015, and is currently being used in 22 states. *Not a Number* is an interactive child trafficking prevention curriculum designed to provide information, build skills, and help youth use healthy support systems to decrease their vulnerabilities.

The evaluation of the *Not a Number* program will take place through partnership with Houston area public schools. This milestone is also made possible with the forward-thinking and strategic investment of Love146’s funders, including the Salah Foundation, a private foundation that operates by invitation only. Evaluations such as this are difficult, resource intensive, and require significant collaboration between nonprofits, academic institutions, school districts, and funders.

Aria Flood, Director of U.S. Prevention at Love146 shared, *“It is our hope that this evaluation will not only demonstrate the efficacy of Not a Number but also inspire others in the anti-trafficking movement and beyond to undergo similar rigorous evaluations. As a field that is now more than 20 years old, we believe that we owe it to the children we serve to ensure that our programs are having the intended impact. Preventing the trafficking of children cannot be achieved by one organization alone or our best intentions; we must come together to ensure that our solutions are effective.”*