



## TOP OHIO HEADLINES

### **Vinton County Child Endangerment**

Four adults arrested after 16 children were found living in unsafe conditions in Vinton County. Officials stated the investigation does not currently indicate human trafficking.

Status: Charges filed; investigation ongoing. Source: Associated Press

### **Former Bethel Police Chief Indicted on 70 Child Sex Crime Charges**

Former Bethel Police Chief Chad Essert was indicted on 70 felony charges involving alleged child sex crimes.

Status: Awaiting court proceedings. Source: WLWT News 5

### **Sex Offender Residency Concerns Near Schools**

Investigation highlights sex offender residency concerns near schools due to administrative and legal loopholes.

Status: Administrative review underway. Source: 10TV Columbus

### **Former Columbus Teacher Pleads Guilty**

Former Columbus teacher pleaded guilty to unlawful sexual conduct involving a 15-year-old student.

Status: Awaiting sentencing. Source: Signal Akron

### **Three Former LifeWise Volunteers/Workers Face Child Sex Crime Cases**

Three former LifeWise volunteers/workers face separate child sex crime cases.

Status: Charges pending. Source: WOSU Public Media

## LAWS & POLICY

### **AI-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material (Senate Bill 163)**

Ohio lawmakers continue considering legislation that would criminalize AI-generated child sexual abuse material and require watermarks on certain AI-generated content.

Status: Passed Senate; under consideration in the House. Source: Ohio General Assembly – Senate Bill 163

### **Privacy Protections for Crime Victims (Senate Bill 225)**

The Ohio Senate approved legislation expanding eligibility for the Safe at Home address confidentiality program for certain crime victims and members of their households.

Status: Passed Ohio Senate. Source: Ohio Senate – Senate Bill 225

### **Sex Offender Residency Restrictions (House Bill 102)**

Legislation expanding residency and loitering restrictions for registered sex offenders continues moving through the General Assembly.

Status: Pending in the Senate. Source: Ohio General Assembly – House Bill 102

4 adults arrested • 16 children removed • 70 felony counts • 1 guilty plea • 3 separate LifeWise cases

Legal Note: Criminal charges are allegations unless proven in court.

## COMMUNITY ALERTS

### Sex Offender Registry Updates

Three new Tier III sex offenders were added to Ohio's eSORN registry this week in Franklin, Cuyahoga, and Summit counties. Residents can search the registry and sign up for neighborhood alerts.

Source: Ohio eSORN — [icrimewatch.net/ohio](http://icrimewatch.net/ohio)

### FBI & ICAC Investigations

The Southern Ohio ICAC Task Force announced the arrest of two individuals in connection with online child exploitation. Both suspects face federal charges for distribution of child sexual abuse material.

Source: FBI Cincinnati Field Office — [fbi.gov/cincinnati](http://fbi.gov/cincinnati)

### School Safety News

Ohio Department of Education released updated guidelines for school threat assessment teams, emphasizing early intervention and mental health referrals for at-risk students.

Source: Ohio Dept. of Education — [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov)

## BY THE NUMBERS

- 122 arrests — Statewide anti-trafficking operation (sex buyers)
- 4 arrests — Vinton County child endangerment case
- 2 arrests — ICAC online child exploitation (federal charges)
- 3 Tier III offenders — Added to Ohio eSORN registry
- 16 children — Removed from unsafe living conditions
- 1 summit — 2026 Ohio Human Trafficking Summit (July 30, Columbus)

## ABOUT THE JANE DOE FOUNDATION

**Mission:** The Jane Doe Foundation empowers individuals and families affected by trauma, addiction, incarceration, mental health challenges, and other life hardships through education, advocacy, community partnerships, and hope.

We offer keynote speaking, school and youth programs, recovery and reentry workshops, human trafficking awareness programs, community presentations, corporate trainings, survivor advocacy events, and customized educational sessions.

Website: [thejanedoefoundation.org](http://thejanedoefoundation.org)

Email: [WENDYPESANTE@YAHOO.COM](mailto:WENDYPESANTE@YAHOO.COM)

Find us on Facebook @ The Jane Doe Foundation

## PREVENTION TIP OF THE WEEK

**Ask your child:** "Has anyone online asked you to keep a secret from me?"

This one question can open a door to conversations about boundaries, trust, and safety. Pair it with these reminders:

- Never share personal info (school, address, phone) with online contacts
- If something feels wrong, tell a trusted adult immediately
- Screenshots can be used as evidence — save and report



## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

### If You Are a Victim of a Crime in Ohio, You Have the Right To:

- Be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect
- Be notified of all court proceedings and the offender's release
- Make a victim impact statement at sentencing
- Receive restitution from the offender
- Be present at all public court proceedings
- Have a victim advocate present during interviews and proceedings
- Apply for victim compensation through the Ohio Victims of Crime Compensation Program (1-800-582-2877)

### If You Suspect Human Trafficking:

- You are NOT required to have proof — report suspicions
- Call the National Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-373-7888
- Text 233733 (BEFREE)
- Ohio-specific: contact your local ICAC Task Force or call 911 if someone is in immediate danger

### Parents & Guardians:

- You have the right to request your child's school safety plan
- You can access Ohio's sex offender registry (eSORN) at any time
- You may request a safety zone restriction for registered offenders near schools



## WARNING SIGNS

### Red Flags of Human Trafficking:

- Person appears malnourished, fearful, or unable to make eye contact
- Signs of physical abuse, branding, or tattoos indicating ownership
- Cannot speak freely or appears coached in responses
- Has no personal ID or documents
- Lives and works in the same place; is never alone in public

### Red Flags of Online Grooming (Children & Teens):

- Secretive about online friendships or new contacts
- Receiving unexplained gifts, money, or devices
- Using apps or platforms parents don't recognize
- Sudden emotional changes after being online
- An older person showing excessive interest in a minor



## MYTH VS. FACT

**MYTH:** Human trafficking only happens in other countries.

**FACT:** Ohio ranks 4th in the nation for human trafficking reports. It happens in every county — urban, suburban, and rural.

**MYTH:** Trafficking victims are always kidnapped by strangers.

**FACT:** Most victims are recruited by someone they know or trust — a partner, family member, or online contact.

**MYTH:** Only women and girls are trafficked.

**FACT:** Boys, men, and LGBTQ+ youth are also targeted. Male victims are significantly underreported.



## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

**National Human Trafficking Hotline:** 1-888-373-7888 (call/text)

**Text:** 233733 (BEFREE)

**National Center for Missing & Exploited Children:** 1-800-843-5678

**CyberTipline (online exploitation):** CyberTipline.org

**Suicide Crisis Hotline:** 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline)

**Ohio Domestic Violence Hotline:** 1-800-934-9840

**Ohio Victim Compensation:** 1-800-582-2877

**FBI Tips:** tips.fbi.gov

**Local Emergency:** 911

## OHIO RESOURCE DIRECTORY

**Legal Aid:** Ohio Legal Help — ohiolegalthelp.org

**Counseling:** Ohio Mental Health & Addiction Services — mha.ohio.gov

**Housing Support:** Coalition on Homelessness & Housing in Ohio — cohho.org

**Addiction Treatment:** SAMHSA Helpline — 1-800-662-4357

**Trafficking Survivors:** Salvation Army STOP-IT Program — salvationarmyusa.org

**Reentry Services:** Ohio Reentry Coalition — reentrycoalition.ohio.gov

**Financial Literacy:** Ohio Treasurer's Office — ohiotreasurer.gov/financial-literacy

**Youth Services:** Ohio Children's Trust Fund — octf.ohio.gov

## DIGITAL SAFETY TIPS

### For Parents:

- Review your child's app list weekly — look for hidden or vault apps
- Enable parental controls on all devices and gaming consoles
- Know who your child is communicating with online
- Teach children that online 'friends' are strangers until verified in person

### For Teens:

- Never share personal info (school, address, schedule) with online contacts
- If someone asks you to keep a conversation secret, tell a trusted adult
- Screenshots are permanent — think before you send
- Block and report anyone who makes you uncomfortable

**Recommended Tools:** Bark, Qustodio, Google Family Link, Apple Screen Time

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Share this newsletter with 3 people in your community**
- **Check Ohio's eSORN registry for offenders in your neighborhood**
- **Talk to your children about online safety**
- **Submit a name: [thejanedoefoundation.org/300-names-that-matter](https://thejanedoefoundation.org/300-names-that-matter)**
- **Donate: [thejanedoefoundation.org/donate](https://thejanedoefoundation.org/donate)**
- **Volunteer: [thejanedoefoundation.org/volunteer](https://thejanedoefoundation.org/volunteer)**
- **Report suspicious activity: 1-888-373-7888**

**The Jane Doe Foundation**

Watch Us Rewrite the Story

From survival to stability — one person, one family, one community at a time.

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