



## NEWS RELEASE

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
**Federal Bureau of Investigation**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**October , 2015**

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### **FBI Announces Results of Nationwide Human Trafficking Operation, Whereas Three Minors and Seven Pimps were Arrested within Louisiana.**

Officials from the FBI, U. S. Attorney's Office – Eastern, Middle, & Western Districts of Louisiana, Homeland Security Investigations, Louisiana Department of Justice – Office of the Attorney General, Louisiana State Police, Louisiana Department of Probation & Parole, Bossier City Police Department, Bossier City Marshal's Office, Bossier Parish Sheriff's Office, East Baton Rouge District Attorney's Office, East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, Baton Rouge Police Department, Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office, Kenner Police Department, New Orleans Police Department, Shreveport Police Department, St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office, and the DELTA Task Force, announced today that 149 underage trafficking victims were recovered and 153 pimps were arrested in a nationwide human trafficking operation conducted throughout the United States last week. The initiative, dubbed Operation Cross Country IX, is a national effort spearheaded by the FBI and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, along with federal, state and local law enforcement partners across the country. The initiative, now in its ninth year, targets the criminal enterprises responsible for the commercial sex trafficking of children.

The youngest victim in this year's operation was 12 years old. Of the 149 victims recovered, three of those minors were transgender, and three were males. During the operation, 90 victim specialists provided on-scene direct services to the victims of sex trafficking while 105 child victims received on-site direct services which may have included crisis intervention and resources for basic needs like medical, food, clothing and shelter. Due to the size of the operation, FBI victim specialists coordinated with local law enforcement victim advocates and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who provided additional support to the victims. In New Orleans, FBI officials announced that 3 underage victims were recovered and 7 pimps were arrested as part of the takedown.

“Human trafficking is a monstrous and devastating crime that steals lives and degrades our nation,” said Attorney General Loretta Lynch. “As a result of the FBI's outstanding coordination and exemplary efforts alongside state and local partners during Operation Cross Country, more children will sleep safely tonight, and more wrongdoers will face the judgment of our criminal justice system. The Department of Justice will continue to aggressively and persistently fight this heinous crime, and to hold its perpetrators accountable to the fullest extent of the law.”

Operation Cross Country IX is the largest in the nine-year history of the initiative, with 53 FBI field offices and 73 Child Exploitation Task Forces, which include federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, taking part in the operation in 135 cities across America, including New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Shreveport. Nationwide, more than 500 law enforcement officials, including investigators and officers from federal, state and local law enforcement organizations, conducted both “in-call” and “out-call” operations in hotels, casinos, truck stops and in other areas known to be frequented by both prostitutes, sex-traffickers, and their customers.

“We’re proud to partner with the FBI and provide support to both law enforcement and victim specialists in the field as they work to locate and recover survivors of child sex trafficking,” said Linda Krieg, Acting Chief Executive Officer of NCMEC. “The number of children recovered and pimps arrested in this year’s operation highlights the importance of these efforts today and every day in protecting our children from exploitation.”

Operation Cross Country is part of the FBI’s Innocence Lost national initiative, which began in 2003. Since the program’s inception, more than 4,800 children have been recovered from underage prostitution and prosecutors have obtained more than 2,000 convictions, including at least 15 that have resulted in life sentences. For additional information on Operation Cross Country IX, and the Innocence Lost initiative, please visit [www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov).

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