



# Berks Women in Crisis

Main Office

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[www.berkswomenincrisis.org](http://www.berkswomenincrisis.org)

Safe House

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## BERKS COALITION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING SPONSORS SCREENINGS OF “VERY YOUNG GIRLS” DOCUMENTARY

**Reading, Pa.** - The Berks Coalition Against Human Trafficking (BCAHT), along with Berks Women in Crisis and FREE (Freedom and Restoration for Everyone Enslaved) will host three free screenings of the documentary film *Very Young Girls* in January, which is National Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

BCAHT is a coalition comprised of professionals and community members whose goal it is to establish a response protocol and delivery of resources to human trafficking victims in Berks County. The group also works to raise awareness and provide education on the issues. FREE is a grassroots group of Berks County citizens that raises awareness of human trafficking, advocates for legislative action around the issue, and mobilizes individuals and organizations into action in collaboration with the coalition.

Internationally acclaimed, the documentary *Very Young Girls* is the first film of its kind that documents the buying and selling of young girls for sex in the U.S. The September conviction of a Reading man for the sex trafficking of minors reinforces why Berks County residents need to watch this film. *Very Young Girls* will change the way law enforcement, the media, and society as a whole look at the commercial sexual exploitation, street prostitution, and human trafficking.

The film identifies hope for these girls in the organization GEMS (Girls Educational and Mentoring Services), a recovery agency founded and run by Rachel Lloyd, herself a survivor of commercial sexual exploitation. GEMS is committed to ending commercial sexual exploitation and domestic trafficking of children by changing individual lives, transforming public perception, and revolutionizing the systems and policies that impact commercially sexually exploited youth. The film also addresses the following:

- Demystifies stereotypes about girls involved in the commercial sex industry
- The relationship between child sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children
- Contradictions between laws that protect girls from sexual abuse/exploitation and laws that criminalize girls who are exploited
- The tactics of pimps or trafficker
- Specific types of services required to help restore the lives of commercially sexually exploited youth



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There are the three opportunities to screen the film. It is approximately 80 minutes in length and each screening will be followed by a discussion group.

1. **Sunday, January 15, 2012 at 2pm**, at the RC Reading Movies 11 and Imax Theatre, 30 N. Second Street, in Reading.
2. **Monday, January 23, 2012 at 7pm**, at Alvernia University, Bernardine Hall Lecture Hall, on campus.
3. **Monday, January 30, 2012 at 7pm**, at Kutztown University, Old Main Room 25

The BCAHT, BWIC and FREE are currently working on raising awareness of all issues related to Human Trafficking, including the sexual exploitation of our children. Please plan on attending one of these screenings/discussion groups to become more educated on the issue as a first step toward Making Berks County communities safe from sexual exploitation.

For more information, contact Christine Gilfillan at Berks Women in Crisis, at 610-373-1206, or [christineg@berkswomenincrisis.org](mailto:christineg@berkswomenincrisis.org).

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