



Red Sand Partner Toolkit

20 26

HUMAN TRAFFICKING
AWARENESS
July 27-Aug 2, 2026



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Overview

Human trafficking remains a widespread crisis in the United States, impacting thousands of individuals each year. In 2024 alone, the National Human Trafficking Hotline received over 32,309 contacts and identified more than 8,024 cases involving victims and survivors.*

In the United States, on average, **every two minutes, a child is bought or sold for sex**. The average age of a child sold for sex is 13 years old, and Human Trafficking is the second-fastest-growing criminal industry, just behind Drug Trafficking.

According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, in 2023, out of 114 identified human trafficking cases in Tennessee, 23 were related to labor trafficking, accounting for approximately 20% of the cases that year.

Human Trafficking is modern-day slavery, plain and simple. It happens here. And it has to stop.

**Source: Polaris based on the 2024 National Human Trafficking Hotline report.*



Overview

In 2024, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation reported 1,170 human trafficking tips, with over 500 involving minors. While slightly down from 2023, the numbers remain high compared to five years ago.

Increased reporting from agencies like the Department of Children's Services and rising concerns about gang-related trafficking have kept human trafficking a major statewide focus. In response, Tennessee continues expanding the TBI's Human Trafficking Unit and public awareness efforts to combat exploitation.

The Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) invites partners across the state to organize human trafficking awareness events from **July 27 to August 2** by participating in the Red Sand Project.



Red Sand Project

HISTORY & FAQ

What is the Red Sand Project?

The Red Sand Project is an interactive art exhibition designed to raise awareness of human trafficking. By spreading red sand in sidewalk cracks, the project brings attention to those who have “fallen through the cracks” in society.

Who can be part of the Red Sand Project?

Anyone! The Red Sand Project has been implemented by individuals and organizations worldwide. Students, educators, businesses, nonprofit organizations, celebrities, and survivors have all joined the fight to end human trafficking.

Red Sand Project installations have taken place in 70 countries worldwide. Hundreds of thousands of sand kits have been distributed to over a million people.

How is a sidewalk installation hosted?

Sidewalk installations are simple. Red Sand can be used anywhere there is a crack in a sidewalk or a high foot-trafficked area in your community. Be sure to ask for permission before pouring sand.

What's in the Red Sand?

The sand is made from feldspathic rock, a natural, non-toxic, environmentally safe material. It is non-carcinogenic and colored red with an organic dye. It does not contain nuts, gluten, or wheat and is tested annually with safety standards for all people.

Event Flyer

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Join Us!

Red Sand Project is a nationwide participatory artwork by Molly Gochman that uses simple sidewalk actions to spark awareness and inspire community engagement around the vulnerabilities that lead to human trafficking, modern slavery, and exploitation.

Event Handout

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**See It. Say It.**
1-855-558-6484
Report Human
Trafficking in Tennessee



What is Human Trafficking?

 Human trafficking is the use of force, fraud, or coercion to exploit someone for labor or sex. It's modern-day slavery—and it's hiding in plain sight. In the United States, on average, every two minutes, a child is bought or sold for sex.

 In 2024, in Tennessee, TBI reports 1,170 human trafficking tips, with over 500 involving minors.

 Trafficking is closer than you think. Tennessee reports hundreds of trafficking cases each year. Victims are often recruited online, at malls, through friends, or even by family.

Know the Signs: Say Something

Physical Signs

- Branding: Scars, burns, tatoos
- Malnourished
- Serious dental issues
- Disoriented or confused
- Other signs of physical abuse
- Avoids eye contact or seems fearful
- Cannot speak freely or is controlled by someone
- Works excessive hours without breaks
- Shows signs of physical abuse or malnutrition

Verbal Signs

- Responds as if coached
- Allows someone else to speak for them
- Reluctant to discuss their injuries
- Fearful, anxious, or paranoid
- Mentions debts they cannot repay
- Has inconsistent stories or no ID

Medical Signs

- Chronic cardio or respiratory issues
- Urinary difficulties
- Pelvic pain
- Drug addiction
- Infections
- Sleep deprivation

Keep Talking About It

Learn the signs and raise awareness. Trafficking rarely looks like the movies—it hides in silence. Talk to kids and teens about online safety, boundaries, and self-worth. Traffickers often use manipulation—not abduction—to control their victims.

Resources on Back >>>

Take Action

Raise Your Voice

Use social media to spread awareness. Share survivor stories (with permission), facts, and resources.

Partner or Volunteer with Local Groups

- The Nashville Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition
- It Has to Stop
- AncoraTN (formerly End Slavery Tennessee)
- Restore Corps
- Thistle Farms
- TBI's Human Trafficking Task Force
- Tennessee Counter-Trafficking Alliance
- Operation Rose
- Street Hope TN
- Community Coalition Against Human Trafficking
- Willowbend Farms
- Join local Red Sand Projects annually

Report or Get Help Call

Tennessee Human Trafficking Hotline

Phone: 1-855-558-6484

Alternate Number: 1-855-55-TNHTH

Availability: 24/7, confidential, toll-free

Purpose: Connects callers to local law enforcement, victim services, and resources within Tennessee.

National Human Trafficking Hotline

Phone: 1-888-373-7888

Text: Text "BEFREE" (233733)

TTY: 711

Availability: 24/7, confidential, toll-free, supports over 200 languages

Purpose: Provides nationwide support, connects victims and survivors to services, and accepts tips from the public.

Online Reporting

Website: www.ithastostop.com

Purpose: Allows individuals to submit tips online and access information about human trafficking in Tennessee.

Local Assistance in Nashville

Family Safety Center: 615-880-1100

Purpose: Provides support and resources for individuals affected by human trafficking in the Nashville area.

If you are in immediate danger call 911.

Social Media

TDH encourages using the following hashtags on your social media posts to spread awareness of human trafficking and the Red Sand project.

EVENT HASHTAGS

#RedSandProjectTN
#RedSandProject
#EndHumanTrafficking
#TNCares
#ItHasToStop

Tag Us!

Instagram: @tndeptofhealth
X: @TNDeptofHealth
Facebook: Tennessee Department of Health



Social Media Posts

Instagram | X | LinkedIn | Facebook

Post 1

Human trafficking isn't far away—it's here, in our communities, in every Tennessee zip code. From July 27–August 2, we'll stand together as red sand fills the cracks in sidewalks across the state, symbolizing those society too often overlooks. This act may be simple, but the truth it represents is not: we must protect those who are slipping through the cracks. #RedSandTN #TNCares #ItHasToStop

Post 2

Trafficking doesn't announce itself. It hides in plain sight—on our streets, in our neighborhoods, in our daily routines. During July 27–August 2, Tennesseans will pour red sand into sidewalks as a visible refusal to ignore the reality of human trafficking. Every handful is a statement: people are worth noticing, defending, and standing up for. #RedSandTN #TNCares #ItHasToStop

Post 3

When something feels wrong, it probably is. Trust your instincts—your voice could be the lifeline someone desperately needs. If you suspect human trafficking, contact the TBI Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-855-55-TNHTH, the National Hotline at 1-888-373-7888, or text “BeFree” (233733) anytime. Trained responders are available 24/7 in more than 200 languages. Saving a life starts with speaking up. #RedSandTN #TNCares #ItHasToStop

Post 4

Every grain of red sand represents a story—many painful, many unfinished, all deserving of attention. Between July 27 and August 2, organizations across Tennessee will join in this symbolic act, advancing a larger mission: to educate, act, and advocate. Awareness is only the first step. Ending trafficking requires persistence, compassion, and collective determination. #RedSandTN #TNCares #ItHasToStop

Post 5

Survivors of human trafficking carry extraordinary strength—and their resilience must not be overlooked. This Red Sand Week, we honor their courage while recommitting ourselves to prevention and protection. Their voices guide us; our responsibility is to listen, uplift, and respond. In Tennessee, awareness sparks action—and action changes lives. #RedSandTN #TNCares #ItHasToStop

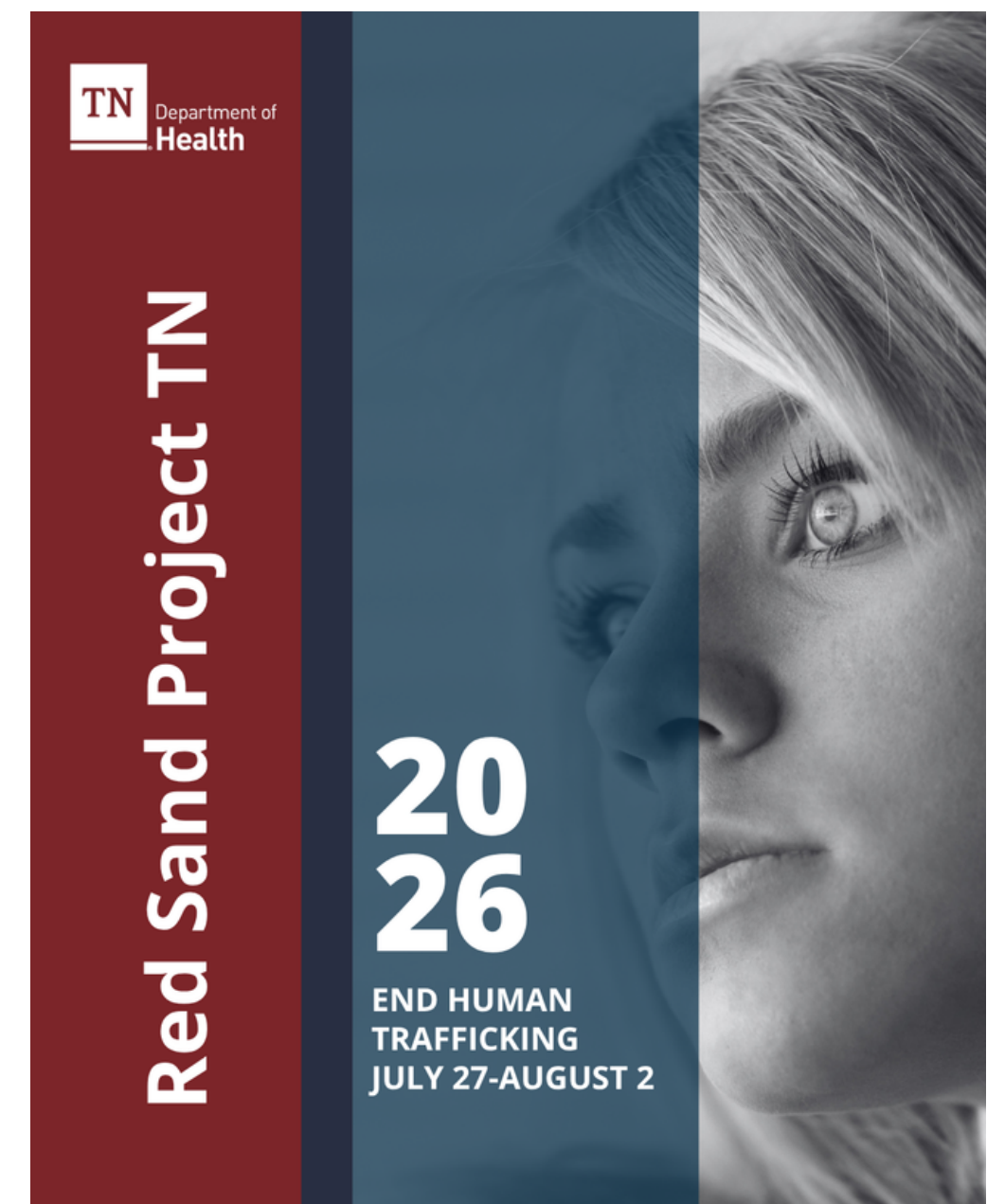
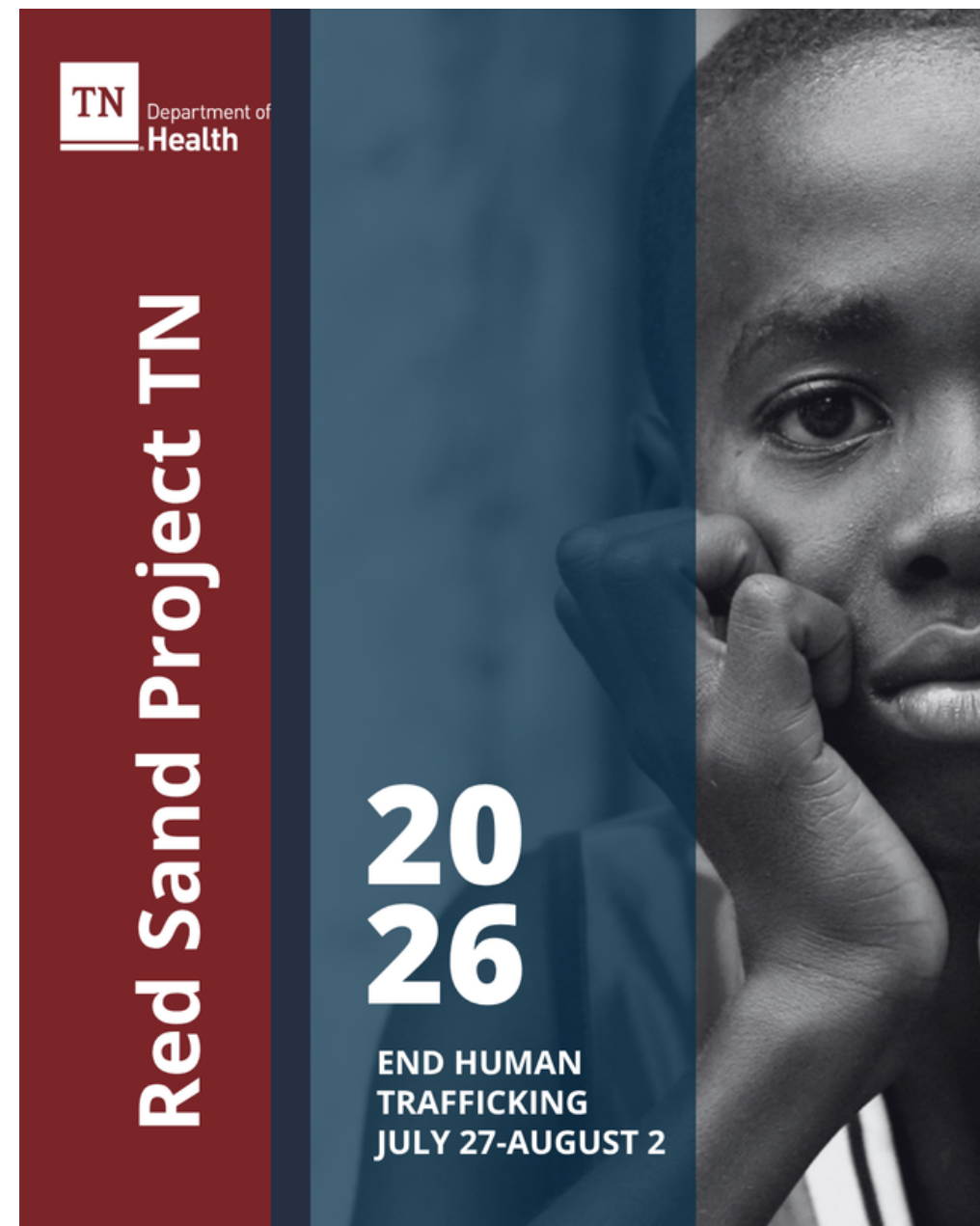
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Social Media Graphics

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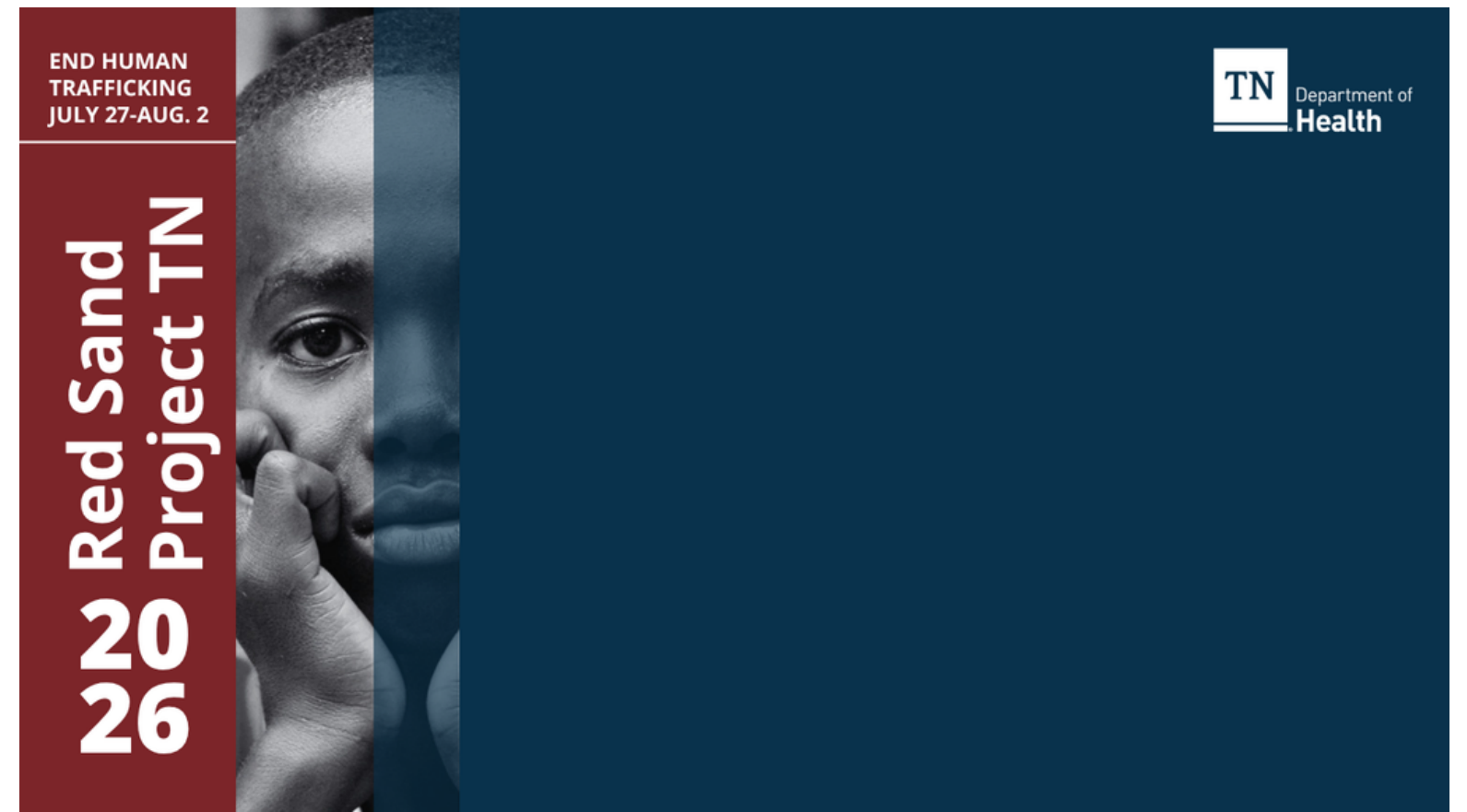
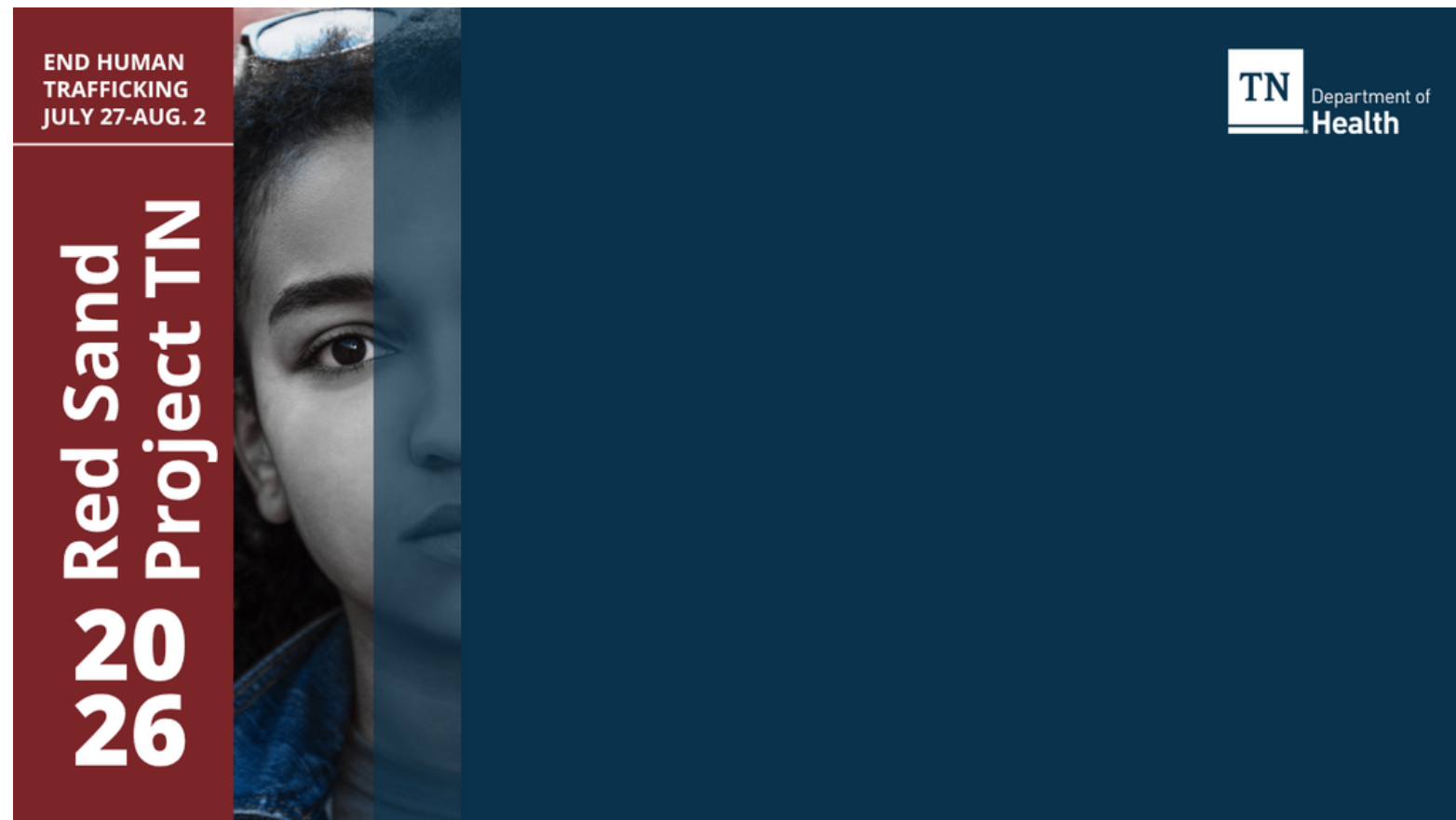
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2026 RED SAND TOOLKIT



Virtual Backgrounds

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Best Practices

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OPTIMIZING & REPORTING ON EVENT DAY

- **Wear red** or a matching team color on event day to build camaraderie.
- Appoint one person to be your organization's **Red Sand Event Contact** with TDH for this project.
- Consider designating one person in your group as your **Red Sand Event Photographer** on the event day.
- Instruct others in your group to **share their photos** to one email source within your organization.
- Use **TDH hashtags** to push your event recognition online and join in the momentum throughout the state.
- Encourage friends and colleagues to **share your social media posts online**. Tag or DM them to keep awareness high pre- and post-event.
- **IMPORTANT:** Within a week following your event, complete the Post Event Survey and upload photos to TDH.

Inspiration

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NOT SURE WHERE TO BEGIN ON EVENT DAY? HERE ARE SOME PHOTOS TO INSPIRE YOUR TEAM.

2026 RED SAND TOOLKIT



TDH Photo Release Form



Photo/Video/Quote Release Form

Date: _____

I, _____ (Name of person, or parent if subject is under 18), give permission for the Tennessee Department of Health to use my or my child's image and/or comments for publicity and promotion purposes. I hereby waive all claims for any compensation for such use or for damages. I waive any right that I may have to inspect or approve the finished product or the copy that may be used in connection with the use of such photography and/or comments.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20____

Signature _____

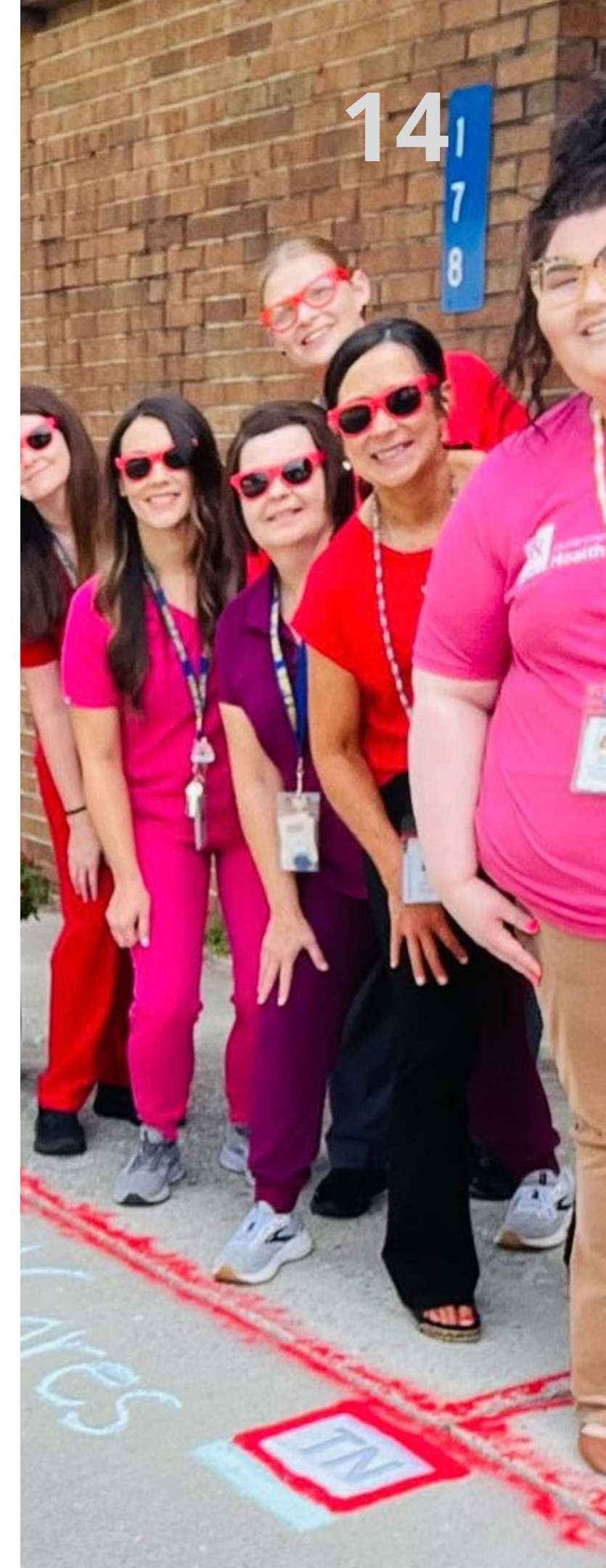
Printed Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____ Telephone _____

Witness _____ Date _____



Questions? Clarifications?

We'd love to help!

Reach out to J'la Jenkins at SPARK.Health@tn.gov



Dept. of Health Authorization #NB5DC2-1,
Electronic only, June 30, 2026
This public document was promulgated at zero cost.

