



# TRANSIT AGAINST CHILD TRAFFICKING

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact PACT:**

Nicole Levi

[TACT@WeArePACT.org](mailto:TACT@WeArePACT.org)

503-718-4727

## **New Campaign Launches to Disrupt Child Sex Trafficking at the Intersection of Public Transit**

New York — Today, [Protect All Children from Trafficking \(PACT, formerly ECPAT-USA\)](#) is launching a new research-based behavioral change campaign aimed at disrupting child sex trafficking at the intersection of public transportation by educating public transportation riders and employees on how to identify the signs of child sex trafficking and safely report.

The campaign — [Transit Against Child Trafficking \(TACT\)](#) — is initially launching with two transit partners: Capital District Transportation Authority in the Albany region of New York and Rio Metro Regional Transit District in the Albuquerque-Santa Fe region of New Mexico. The campaign is being developed in collaboration with survivors of child sex trafficking who are part of PACT Survivors' Council. Using learnings from this first phase, the campaign will be rolled out in other regions over the next year in partnership with other transit agencies.

TACT leverages decades of expertise from some of the nation's leading experts on mass transit and data analytics. Specifically, the public awareness and education campaign will include social media, text messages, email communications, advertisements in and around public transit locations, signage in and on buses and trains and within transit authority offices, as well as training recommendations developed for transit personnel.

“Through our research and our many conversations with survivors, PACT recognizes that sex traffickers exploit public transportation to move their victims in plain sight of people going about their day,” said PACT Chief Executive Officer Lori L. Cohen. “Through this campaign, we will equip public transportation riders and employees with credible information to increase their awareness about child sex trafficking and the tools to respond to it safely.”

According to the Polaris Project – detailed in their report "[A Roadmap for Systems and Industries to Prevent and Disrupt Human Trafficking](#)" — **1 in 3 human trafficking survivors report utilizing public buses, and 1 in 5 used subways or metros while being trafficked.**

[The Department of Transportation Advisory Committee on Human Trafficking](#) has acknowledged a lack of national data on the intersections between transportation industries and human trafficking. Typically data is fragmented, with only regional numbers and local statistics available in the country, failing to provide a holistic view of the issue. PACT is leading a federally-funded research project in partnership with a team of researchers, which will produce one of the only national reports about child sex trafficking at the intersection of public transportation to paint a more complete picture of the landscape.

“CDTA is proud to be a leader in educating the public on this important issue,” **said CDTA CEO Carm Basile.** “The DOT created an advisory council because they recognize the work that needs to be done across the transit industry. Educating the community on what signs to look for and how to report potential incidents safely and effectively without causing further harm makes our region as a whole safer. If we can contribute in some small way to make a difference, we have a responsibility to our community and those children to participate.”

“We want to ensure that everyone who relies on the New Mexico Rail Runner Express or one of our Rio Metro buses is safe – especially our young riders,” said Robert Gonzales, Director of Operations for Rio Metro. “We will do everything we can to inform our transit passengers on what they can do to protect the youngest members of our communities.”

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## **About PACT**

PACT is the leading anti-child trafficking organization in the United States seeking to end child sexual exploitation and trafficking through education, partnerships, and legislative advocacy. PACT is a member of ECPAT International, a global network with one common mission: to eliminate the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children around the world. For more information, visit [www.WeArePACT.org](http://www.WeArePACT.org).

## **About Rio Metro**

The Rio Metro Regional Transit District is the primary regional transit provider for Bernalillo, Sandoval, and Valencia counties, offering transit service between municipalities and across county lines. Rio Metro manages the New Mexico Rail Runner Express commuter rail and operates and/or funds select bus routes in the three-county area. Rio Metro's services also provide links to other statewide destinations and transportation markets including Santa Fe, Taos, and Socorro. The agency's top priority is providing service that enables customers to access regional destinations, a critical transportation need since tens of thousands of trips occur each day between different towns, cities, Tribal areas, and counties in the service area. For more information, visit [www.riometro.org](http://www.riometro.org)

## **About CDTA**

The Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) was created in 1970 by the New York State Legislature, as a public benefit corporation, to provide regional transportation services by rail,

bus, water and air. Today's CDTA is the premier mobility provider in the Capital Region, providing regular route bus service, shuttle systems and paratransit services. CDTA subsidiaries own and operate the Rensselaer Rail and Saratoga Springs Train Stations. CDTA also operates the Northway (NX) Xpress Commuter Service between Saratoga County and downtown Albany. For more information, visit [www.cdt.org](http://www.cdt.org)