

## **Blanket Fort Hope: Hoops for Hope Basketball Tournament**

Blanket Fort Hope (BFH) is excited to announce its first 3-on-3 Hoops for Hope basketball tournament happening on Saturday, August 12, 2017, from 9:00AM – 6:00PM at Pelham High School! This tournament will be an opportunity for the community to gather for a full day of competition and fun. BFH encourages both the young and the seasoned to form teams through their families, friends, co-workers, businesses, churches, schools, sports teams, and community groups. Team registration is now open for adult and youth teams at \$100 per team (4 players). Sponsorship opportunities are available for businesses and community organizations. General admission is free to enjoy the entertainment, contests, children's activities, food, and basketball tournament. Donations are appreciated, with all funds raised from the tournament going to further the mission of BFH. Please contact Debbie Navez at [Deb@dreamgateevents.com](mailto:Deb@dreamgateevents.com) or visit [www.blanketforhope.org](http://www.blanketforhope.org) for more information about the event, team registration, and sponsorship opportunities.

The mission of Blanket Fort Hope is to love and care for child trafficking victims through housing, services, and long-term commitment to the children, and to prevent children from becoming victims by educating children, and professionals who work with children, about human trafficking. The exploitation of children through commercial sex acts and forced labor is a multi-billion-dollar industry. The average age a child is first exploited in the sex trade is 11-14 years old. It is estimated that at least 100,000 children are victims of sex trafficking alone in the United States each year, with many more becoming victims of labor trafficking. It is staggering to realize that these deplorable crimes are happening in the cities and communities where we live. In Alabama, interstates I-85, I-65, and I-20 converge to create a trafficking corridor by which victims are transported rapidly around the state and beyond.

These children experience deep trauma and need specialized care in order to begin healing. The care needed is oftentimes unavailable locally and nationally due to limited resources. BFH is one of the few organizations in the country dedicated to assisting children who have been trafficked, offering them healing, restoration, and the opportunity to thrive. By intentionally collaborating with national and local agencies, law enforcement, businesses, churches, and the general public, BFH exists to help identify child victims, make resources available for these children, and provide them safety. BFH attempts to keep children from becoming victimized by human trafficking in the first place through its prevention education. We envision a world where children are not disposable, but rather invaluable. Our communities need hope that today we can choose a different path besides one where countless children are preyed upon and exploited. Together, we can forge a path of purpose and hope for our children.