

IMAP Canada and USA Advocates Combat Child Sexual Exploitation Online

Pierre Beauregard

March 26, 2024

**SEX TRAFFICKING AND OUR FAMILIES:
THE VICTIMS LIVE AMONG US**

Tuesday, March 26th, 2024: 2 PM EST

Michelle Abel
Survivor of familial trafficking and founder of Bridge2Future

Patrick Erlandson
Executive Director of Father-con

Pierre Beauregard
IMAP Canada Coordinator

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<https://us.upf.org>

IMAP-USA - The monthly International Media Association for Peace (IMAP) webinar on March 26, 2024 dealt with the topic "Sex Trafficking and Our Families." Moderator Mr. Pierre Beauregard led off by sharing a video clip of the recent US Senate Judiciary Committee meeting at which Senator Lindsey Graham told Meta CEO Mr. Mark Zuckerberg and other social media titans that they have "blood on their hands" due to numerous teen suicides in recent years as a result of sextortion.

Panelists Mr. Patrick Erlandson and Ms. Michelle Abel responded by detailing some of the ways they are working to combat the prevalence of sexual extortion and trafficking of kids online.

Mr. Erlandson is the founder and director of Father-Con, an NGO that offers support and community to fathers. In his speech, he focused on the role of fathers. He highlighted the vulnerability of children who are raised without fathers in the home, who are often targeted by predators. Data shows that runaway kids are also at high risk of sexual exploitation; one in five become victims. Father-Con organizes conferences and film screenings to encourage couples to recognize the vital role of men in the home and to raise sons to value fatherhood.

In 2018, Mr. Erlandson also founded the See It End It Film and Arts Festival and Global Platform, an annual event that features films, art and performances, as well as panel discussions and calls to action to end the epidemic of human trafficking. He understands that culture is a powerful tool used by predators, that can also be turned against them.

Ms. Michelle Abel spoke on the basis of her own experience as a survivor of familial trafficking and

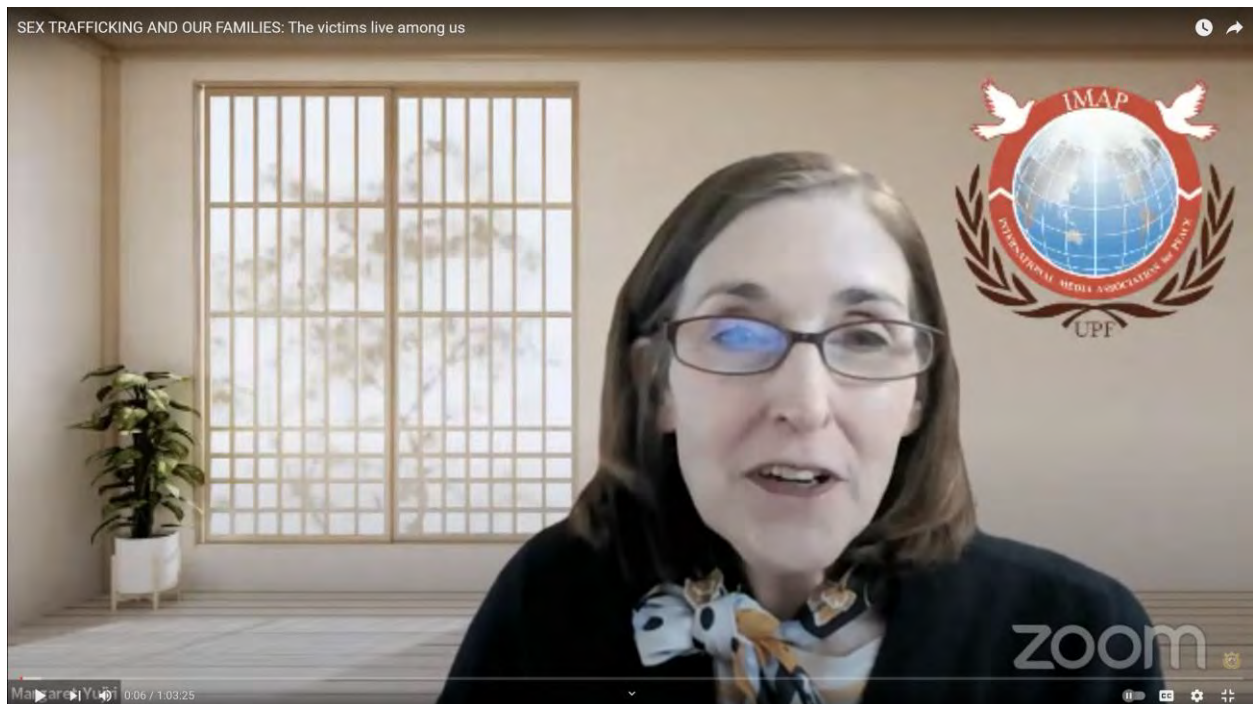
abuse throughout her childhood and teenage years. She explained that she had experienced some of the most heinous acts that can be committed against a child. Since her youth, Ms. Abel has sought to protect other children from the abuse she experienced. She has committed her life to actions to safeguard women and children.

In 2022 Ms. Abel founded Bridge2Future, a Canadian nonprofit that focuses on research and advocacy against generational trauma, intimate partner violence and commercial sexual exploitation of women and children. Her current focus is on safeguarding and empowering children to protect them from online harm. According to [Cybertips.ca](https://www.cybertips.ca), there has been a 150% increase in sextortion cases reported in the last six months. Recently released Meta internal documents, revealed in a New Mexico court case against Meta, show that 100,000 children are sexually harassed online daily on its platforms.

Due to the hidden dangers children are facing, she recommends that parents become more tech savvy and actively monitor their children's online activities. Ms. Abel stated that typical parents currently spend less than an hour talking to their children about online safety, during their whole childhood, and this must change so that it is an ongoing conversation.

Bridge2Future develops teaching materials for parents, including how to have age-appropriate discussions with children about online safety and how to recognize and combat the strategies of online predators.

IMAP was honored to be able to present the work of two champions in the field of protecting and strengthening families.



The webinar recording is available at this link:
www.youtube.com/live/n9E765rwbw8?si=JXcyl71RwSkGNm7S