

The Refuge Heuristic Evaluation

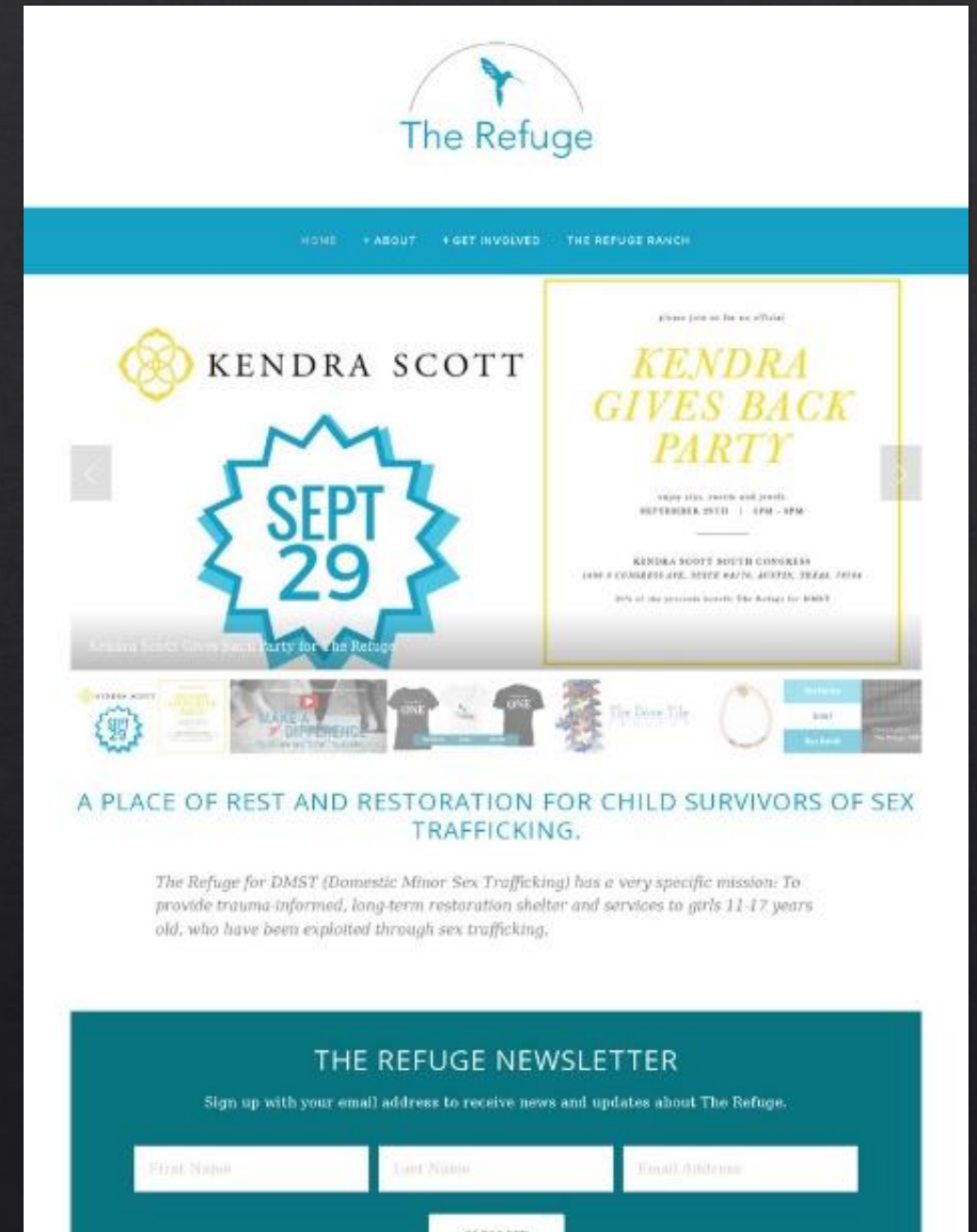
Taka Kodani | INF 385P | 10/3/16

Current Website

Overall design and layout are not terrible. They're simple and clean, but can any improvements be made to the website to improve usability and fulfillment of the organization's goals?

The Refuge Website Goals:

- Increase donations
- Increase traffic
- Attract more partners
- Increase awareness

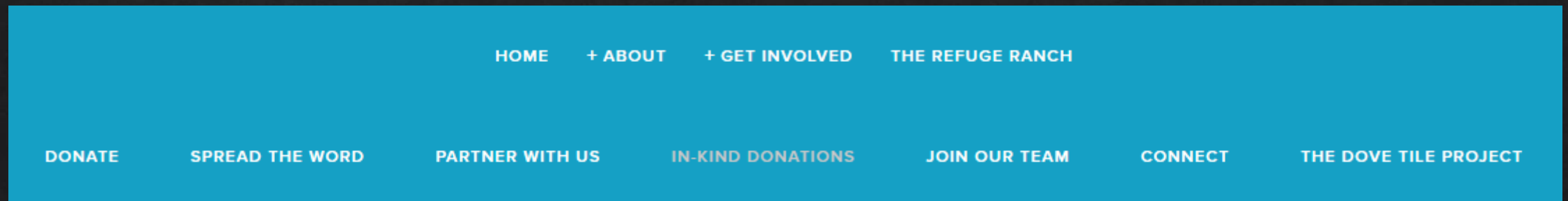


Visibility of System Status

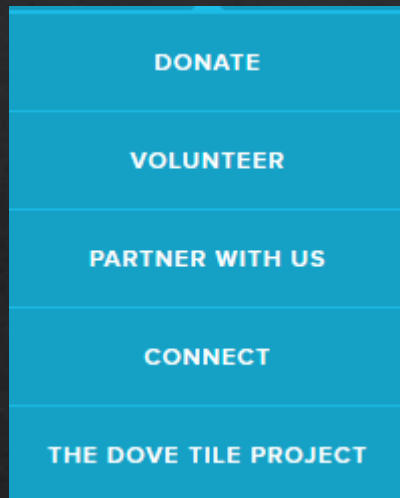
The website employs an interactive, horizontal navigation bar.

Two possible issues:

- Could the navigation bar be overly responsive? It's a distraction when you're just trying to scroll down and view the contents of a page.
- The site tells you which page you're on by highlighting the label in a light gray color, but it's a little hard to distinguish it from the other white text in the menu/submenu.



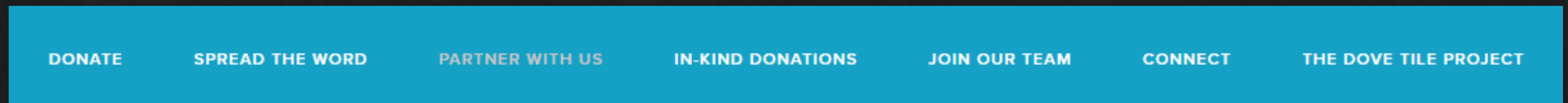
Consistency and Standards



The “Get involved” drop-down submenu items (left) are slightly different from the “Get involved” horizontal submenu navigation bar items (bottom) when you are either on the “Donate” page or the “Volunteer” page. Namely, “Spread the word” and “In-kind donations” links.

In addition, the horizontal submenu navigation bar does not show up at all when you are either on the “Donate” page or the “Volunteer” page.

Is this intentional or just some weird website quirk?



☒ One time gift
☐ Recurring gift to be given Weekly

Address: *

City: *

State: *

Zip Code: *

Email: *

Phone: *

How did you hear about The Refuge? *

* Required

BILLING INFORMATION

Payment method:

Credit Card



Credit Card Type: *

Credit Card Number: *

Card Expiration: *

Credit Card CVV2: *

Cardholder First Name: *

Cardholder Last Name: *

Zip Code: *

Submit

NOTE: Please only click the "SUBMIT" button once. Your payment may take time to process.



Error Prevention

With the goal of increasing donations being the biggest priority, it's important that users are able to fill forms properly. The website does check to see all required fields are filled and shows a popup window when a field isn't filled, but it does not validate the content of each field.

- Input validator?
- Perhaps showing error message immediately instead of displaying popup window at the end after user hits the submit button?
- I have not gone past the form, but is there a verification page and a confirmation page after user submits personal/payment info? Do the users receive feedback to know they did what they think they did?
- Same goes for all the other donation and signup pages.

Website Structure

Main navigation menu items include “Home,” “About,” “Get Involved,” and “The Refuge Ranch.”

“About” section is further divided into “Core Belief,” “Our Story,” “Circle of Care,” “Leadership,” “Partners,” and “Media.” Each page is not too clunky and provides a succinct description of the respective elements that make up the organization.

“Get Involved” section is further divided into “Donate,” “Volunteer,” “Spread the Word,” “Partner with Us,” “In-kind Donations,” “Join Our Team,” “Connect,” and “The Dove Tail Project.” Each page serves to cater to specific users who may be seeking to contribute to the organization in their own ways.

While this website structure is not bad, could there possibly be a better method of organizing the pages so that user participation—whether through donations or through signing up for the newsletter or whatever—is better elicited?

Homepage

On the homepage we see that the “Get Involved” link is placed on the same level as the other links in the navigation bar. If the organization wants increased user engagement, is there anything we can do to make it stand out more?

Seeing as how this is the first page new users see upon visiting the website, immediate impression is important. Therefore, it seems wise to ask if the current homepage is sufficient enough to motivate them to stick around, learn about the organization, and get involved, or if there is a better way to grab their attention.



Trust

One of the issues is being able to balance creating a sense of legitimacy with protecting the identity of the victims. Users need to be able to trust the charity before “becoming involved,” but the charity must speak of its activities in broad strokes due to its sensitive nature of operation.

The three pages here (under “About”) explains its mission, its background, and what it does. Do the users find all this info, and the way it is presented, convincing?



CORE BELIEF

Our belief is that each girl in our care is **created by God** for a **special purpose** in this world. We acknowledge that part of her life story is that she is a **survivor** of sex trafficking. We also believe every girl has the ability to **create a new life** for herself as she is **encircled** with the support and love necessary to begin the healing process. We believe that every survivor of sex trafficking has the potential to be a **change agent** in this world, and to become a leader in her generation and a champion in the fight to eradicate the insidious crime of sexual exploitation of children.

WHY THE REFUGE?



OUR STORY

The development of a place where child survivors of sex trafficking can find safety, and have access to the proper therapeutic services for healing from the trauma they’ve endured, has been a long-time passion of our Founder and Executive Director, Brooke Crowder. Upon moving to Austin in 2010, she discovered many others with the same passion. With strategic relationships built in her international work with survivors and others in the movement to end trafficking, along with strong community will and **leadership** in Austin, The Refuge for DMST was launched in November 2013. The primary purpose of The Refuge for DMST is to develop The Refuge Ranch, a long-term therapeutic ranch just outside the city of Austin, with on-site

comprehensive services for girls, ages 11-17, who are survivors of sex trafficking.

Our Story is the story of a community reaching out to the broken-hearted, the weak and weary, and the one who feels forgotten, in order

CIRCLE OF CARE

What do we mean by a “**Circle of Care**?” Some people refer to this as a continuum of care, but we like the circle analogy. We want to appropriately and sensitively surround each girl with the services she needs for her individualized healing plan. These services will be critical relational points of entry into the life of each girl in order to convey love, safety, and care.



PSYCHOLOGICAL

The residents of The Refuge will attend one-on-one therapy sessions with a Master’s-level licensed therapist specializing in Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy. They will also have

PHYSICAL

Every girl who has experienced the complex trauma of repeated sexual abuse by multiple offenders needs ongoing medical care. In partnership with a local multi-disciplinary medical group,

Credibility

The three pages here (“Leadership”, “Partners,” and “Media”) tries to build on that sense of legitimacy by showing who the Refuge is, the partners it works with, and the media coverage it has received thus far.

I think this is good, but is there more that the website can do—or something it can do differently—to make the website credible to users unfamiliar with the organization and better garner the users’ trust and attention, perhaps even empathy and relatability?

LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeri Brock

Ben Cannatti

Brooke Crowder

Linda Dill

ORGANIZATIONS WE PARTNER/RESPECT/HAVE COMMON MISSION:



In addition, the faith community of Austin has encircled The Refuge for DMST in much the same way we encircle the girls in our care. Local churches have provided financial resources, prayer support, volunteer teams, and individuals with specialized professional skills that have been a tremendous part of our success.

THE REFUGE IN THE MEDIA

PRESS CONTACT:

Steven "Flyer" Phenix
512-806-0558
steven@therefugeaustin.org

HAVEN FOR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IN CENTRAL TEXAS STILL SEEKING FUNDS

(AUSTIN AMERICAN STATESMAN) "When Brooke told me the ideal target in Austin for human trafficking was a 12-year-old girl, it broke my heart. I have a 12-year-old girl," [Pastor Randy Phillips] said. 'Joining with Brooke to empower her dreams at the Refuge became our mission.'

"But Crowder said the work is not done. She is focused on raising the remainder of the \$2 million the group needs by the end of the year." [Read More >>>](#)

SAFE HAVEN FOR SEX TRAFFICKED GIRLS COMING TO TEXAS

(BREITBART) "When we talk about domestic victims, we are talking about girls born and raised in


“Get Involved”

Potential donors, partners, and volunteers have the option of contributing to the org by visiting one of the pages catered to them and filling out a form.

It’s crucial that they can complete their respective task without frustration, lest they leave without lending any aid.

There does not seem to be much that may hinder that process (aside from what I already mentioned in the error prevention slide), but it will be good to do some testing regardless.

[DONATE](#) [SPREAD THE WORD](#) [PARTNER WITH US](#) [IN-KIND DONATIONS](#) [JOIN OUR TEAM](#) [CONNECT](#) [THE DOVE TILE PROJECT](#)



Thank you for your interest in The Refuge! Please use the contact form for any questions or more information.

IMMEDIATE HELP:
If you believe you're a victim of sex trafficking or know someone who is and need immediate help please dial **(888) 373-7888** and the National Human Trafficking Resource Center will find you local assistance. Or you can text "**HELP**" or "**INFO**" to the number **233733** for discreet help.

THE REFUGE MAIN NUMBER: 512-806-0555

CONNECT WITH US

Name *

First Name Last Name

Email Address *

Phone *

(###) ### ####

Subject *

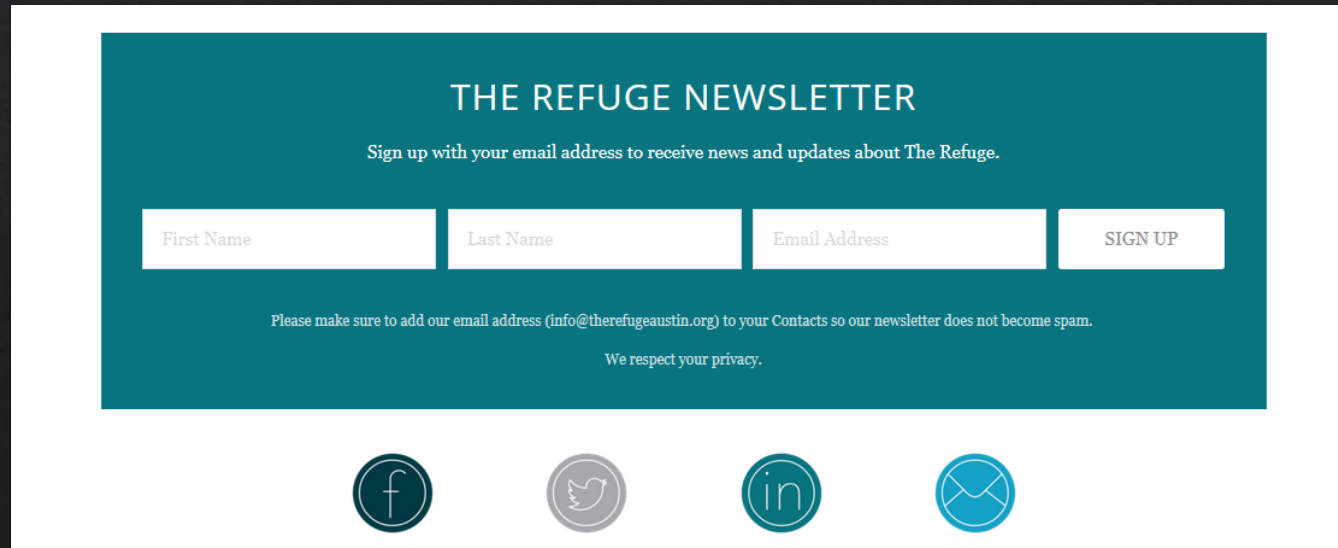
Message *

Newsletter and Social Media

Both the newsletter signup form and social media links are exclusively placed in the middle of the homepage.

Is this a good place to put them?

Is there a better way to get users to sign up and/or click on the social media links?







THE REFUGE NEWSLETTER

Sign up with your email address to receive news and updates about The Refuge.

First Name Last Name Email Address SIGN UP

Please make sure to add our email address (info@therefugeaustin.org) to your Contacts so our newsletter does not become spam.

We respect your privacy.

Seeking Help

At the bottom of each page (and in the “Connect” page) is a block of text that provides information for victims and for those who know someone who may need help.

As they are possible users of the site, the question is whether they, especially the victims, are able to find this particular resource quickly and easily. Putting it on the bottom of the page may make looking for it a little more difficult than it should be.

Is there a way to make this resource more visible?

If you believe you're a victim of sex trafficking or know someone who is and need immediate help please dial (888) 373-7888 and the National Human Trafficking Resource Center will find you local assistance. Or you can text "HELP" or "INFO" to the number 233733 for discreet help.

The Refuge for DMST is exempt from federal taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and has received a ruling that it is a public charity organization as described in sections 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) of the Internal Revenue Code. All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

The Refuge for DMST, PO Box 90804, Austin, TX 78709-0804

info@therefugeaustin.org

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Design by [rachelhosdesign](#)