

# “No Child Left Behind “: “Trojan Horse” for Pentagon Recruiters

By [Global Research](#)

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The Pentagon has used the No Child Left Behind Act as a Trojan Horse to propagandize vulnerable teenage students, invade their privacy, harass them, and get them to enlist.

Passage of the NCLB in 2001 has given Pentagon recruiters “unprecedented access to public high schools and to students’ personal information” and has “changed the landscape of military recruitment in public high schools across the U.S.,” the American Civil Liberties Union(ACLU) charges.

Section 9528 of NCLB not only permits recruiters to obtain students’ personal information without prior parental consent but guarantees them access to public high schools without parental consent, ACLU says.

As such, NCLB violates Article 3 of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a treaty ratified by the Senate.

“Recruiters use the lists of students’ names and contact information provided pursuant to the NCLB to cold-call students for hours each day,” ACLU has found, adding the military is targeting “poor students and students of color.”

School districts that want to get Federal funds under Section 9528 of NCLB must provide recruiters with student information such as names, addresses, and phone numbers.

And while NCLB allows parents to “opt out” of providing the information, “many school districts do not have a clear process in place by which to do this,” ACLU says and don’t inform parents of this option.

The situation was brought to light in a 46-page ACLU report titled “Soldiers of Misfortune.”

Many parents are shaken to learn of the recruiters’ sweeping new powers. One parent of a freshman in a New York public school told the civil liberties group: “When I was informed about NCLB and the opt out provision, I was stunned. I would never have known that my child was open to this type of recruitment or that (recruiters) would be getting our information...I don’t like the idea that somebody would be contacting him independent of me, especially at such a young and vulnerable age.”

A joint survey by the ACLU and the Manhattan Borough President’s office of nearly 1,000 students in 45 high schools found that two in five respondents did not get a military opt-out form at the start of the 2006-07 academic year, in violation of City guidelines. Of those that

did receive them, more than a third said nobody from their school explained the form to them or told them of their right to withhold personal information from the recruiters.

In Edison, N.J., Andrew Arnaldi, a high school senior, said the recruiter that contacted him even after he filed an opt out letter “mocked his pacifist views,” adding, “They’re becoming more aggressive.” In East Los Angeles, Sam Coleman, the father of a Fountain Valley high school student, said despite his request to the school district not to do so, they turned over information to the recruiters. His son was called several times and got frequent mailings. Coleman said, “for all I know his information could be floating around in any number of databases.”

ACLU surveys in Arizona and Rhode Island also turned up evidence that school districts statewide either were doing a poor job of informing parents of the opt-out procedure or not protecting the privacy rights of students in interactions with military recruiters.

“Public schools serve as prime recruiting grounds for the military, and the U.S. military’s generally accepted procedures for recruitment of high school students plainly violate the Optional Protocol,” the ACLU says.

One military recruiter in Los Angeles reportedly does push-ups with students during physical ed classes and distributes key chains and T-shirts and posters in the lunch room reading “Think of Me as Your New Guidance Counselor.”

The ACLU says such activities constitute recruitment and that the Army’s recruiting handbook does not advise recruiters to limit their activities to youths aged 17 and over as required by the Protocol. “Instead, recruiters are encouraged to target the entire high school population, grooming prospective recruits as early as possible,” the ACLU says.

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