ICMEC Education Portal
Child Protection Training Slides

Safer Recruitment & Hiring
Awareness & Prevention

- Behaviors of Sexual Predators Fact Sheet: Grooming (MCASA)
- Best Practices, Fact Sheet on Staff Sexual Misconduct with Children, Leader Version (CIC, 2014)
- Best Practices, Fact Sheet on Staff Sexual Misconduct with Children, Staff Version (CiC, 2014)
- Brook Traffic Light Tool for Evaluating Peer to Peer Sexual Behaviours
- Characteristics of Staff Sexual Misconduct Infographic (US Department of Justice Study) New!
- Do Children Sexually Abuse Other Children? (StopItNow!) New!
- Evaluation of Sexual Behavior in Children (American Academy of Pediatrics)
- Online Grooming of Children for Sexual Purposes (ICMEC) New!
- Online Sexual Coercion & Extortion Definitions and Risks (Europol, multiple languages)
- Perils and Possibilities: Growing Up Online (UNICEF, 2016)
- Sexual Rights and Sexual Risks Among Youth Online (eNASCO – Livingstone and Mason, 2015)
- Social Media and Children’s Mental Health (Education Policy Institute, UK) New!
- Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (ECPAT, 2016)
- Understanding Finkelhor Model of Offender Behaviour (SECASA) New!

Characteristics of Staff Sexual Misconduct Infographic (DOJ)
When School Employees Cross the Line with Students
what you need to know about school employee sexual misconduct

School employee sexual misconduct occurs when a school employee (e.g., teacher, coach, administrator, volunteer, staff member) sexually abuses a child (i.e., contact or non-contact) while caring for that child in a K-12 school setting.

An estimated 1 in 10 students will experience school employee sexual misconduct by the time they graduate from high school.

A teacher will be transferred to three different schools before they are reported to the police. This practice is called Passing the Trash.

In 2014, there were 361 published cases of school employee sexual misconduct in the U.S.

One teacher offender can have as many as 73 victims, according to a 2010 GAO report.

93% of incidents occurred in public schools

26% occurred in urban schools
37% occurred in suburban schools

Schools’ Student Demographics:
49% Minority
53% Economically disadvantaged

52% of incidents occurred in the southern region of the U.S.

1 in 3 offenders had multiple victims

According to a 2010 Government Accountability Study, one teacher offender can have as many as 73 victims.

116 Offenders had multiple victims:
- 16% had 1 victim
- 11% had 2 victims
- 17% had 3 victims
- 24% had 4 victims
- 17% had 5 victims
- 11% had 6 victims
- 7% had 7 victims
- 7% had 8 victims
- 7% had 9+ victims

Types of Misconduct:
- 79% Contact
- 14% Non-Contact
- 8% Both

62% high school students

56% female

Average age 15

Approximately 3 out of 4 offenders used technology to communicate with victim(s)

Mobile devices were the most common use of technology

52%

On average, offenders were sentenced to jail for 47 months

90% Convicted
39% Required to register as a sex offender

36% Paid administrative leave
24% Resigned

Vicums

78%

Prior arrests

7%

Prior allegations made against them

50%

Offenders

21%

9%

68%

21%

music/art teachers

coaches

general education teachers

male

White

Average age 36
Case Study of K-12 School Employee Sexual Misconduct in US
Magnolia Consulting

One teacher offender can have as many as 73 victims, according to a 2010 GAO report.

Does this affect your role?
Recruitment

What are the minimum steps you should take when recruiting school personnel?

Find out more about reference checks, background checks and other practical measures for evaluating candidates.

As a first step in adopting these recommendations, the Task Force strongly recommends that all schools broadly post a statement of commitment to safer recruitment practices, including their public websites and all documents used as part of the recruitment and selection process:

*Aligned with the recommendations of the International Task Force on Child Protection, we hold ourselves to a high standard of effective recruiting practices with specific attention to child protection.*

**Recommended recruitment and screening resources include:**

- ITFCP Recommended Screening and Assessment Practices, 2017
- Acquaintance Molestation (screening guidance), Lanning
- Employment Law and Child Protection (Farrer & Co.) New!
- Preventing Abuse in Youth-Serving Organizations (recruitment, interview questions, reference and background checks), CDC
- Recruitment Practices BIS
- Reference Checking Advice
- Reference Writing Advice
- Sample Recruitment Policy UK_HLIS New!
- Screening and Hiring Procedures (Committee for Children)
- Verification of Educator Licensure US & Canada
Recruitment

What are the minimum steps you should take when recruiting school personnel?

Find out more about reference checks, background checks and other practical measures for evaluating candidates.

Background checks may include a variety of verifications including identity, education, previous employment, professional licenses, social media, drug and health testing, credit and criminal checks. Screening helps prevent people with a history of violent or criminal behavior from gaining access to children in your organization. Background checks will be governed by national law and may only identify those convicted of a crime. Checking only sex offender lists is insufficient. A recent U.S. national study determined that most school employees convicted of sexual offenses against children were not added to sex offender lists.

Background checks must be coupled with thorough interviews and reference checks, detailed policies and procedures, comprehensive staff, student and parent training, and robust protocols for responding to allegations of inappropriate behavior and staff misconduct.

- Criminal Background Check Procedures by Country (CIS)
- Criminal Background Checks for EU Citizens
- FAQs for UK Citizens or those Employed in UK (Home Office) New!
- Flowchart Suitable Checking of Staff (DCI)
- Global Overview of Sex Offender Registration and Notification Systems
- Guidelines for Background Checks US
- Keeping Children Safe in Education UK
- National Sex Offender Quick Search for US Citizens (NSOPW, US Department of Justice) New!
- Passports and International Megan's Law (US Department of State) New!
- Safe Teachers, Safe Schools: criminal background checks & screening essentials (ISS)
- What You Need to Know Background Screening US
Recruitment FAQs

Q. What is best practice around employment contacts and release clauses? New!

A. A quick glance at recent headlines demonstrates that non-disclosure agreements and release clauses that seek to protect the reputation of the school do not stand up to scrutiny in the event of a sexual abuse allegation. They also may be superseded by local laws. One of the best safeguards is robust child protection policies.

An HR professional says, “Being strong on child protection is an inducement for excellent staff. Being hired by a school with high standards adds professional value. Firm child protection language is not something candidates are shying away from, it is something they expect and see as a benefit.”

Employment applications and employment contracts should be drafted in consultation with local legal counsel and should specify what actions the school will take if information comes to light concerning inappropriate behavior – either during or post-employment. Schools may even wish to take steps to formally remove the restrictions imposed by previous non-disclosure agreements.

Legal experts in the child protection field generally recommend that employment contracts contain language that provides assurances where no safeguarding concerns are raised and reserves the right to decline to give a reference in cases of unresolved safeguarding concerns.

Specific to settlement agreements, a legal professional says, “We would normally never advise a school to enter into a settlement agreement with someone against who safeguarding concerns have been raised and are being investigated. Schools should always seek advice from local lawyers on privacy, information sharing and other related employment law.”

Additional information can be found in Portal resources for employment law and child protection, handling cases of non-recent abuse and boundary violations.
Myths and realities about abuse:

**Abuse mostly happens at home**
Children are most commonly abused by someone they know outside the home. More than one third are abused by other children.

**Girls are victims and boys are offenders**
Both boys and girls can be victims of abuse and both men and women can be sexual offenders. We don’t use the term offenders to describe children who have caused harm.

**People who are abused commit abuse**
Adult survivors of abuse, minorities and LGBT-identifying people are NO more likely to commit abuse. Abuse happens in every culture, religious affiliation, and community.

**Abuse doesn’t happen here**
Abuse is not rare and no one action can prevent abuse from happening. Multiple barriers are necessary to make children safer.
Myths and realities about abuse:

Only adults initiate sexual activity
Children may initiate sexual activity with adults. They may be compliant with abuse by adults, but they cannot consent. It is the responsibility of adults to maintain appropriate boundaries.

Children often make up stories about abuse
Children and even adult survivors of abuse often do not tell anyone what happened to them. False allegations are rare. The best way to prevent additional trauma is to believe disclosures of abuse and investigate thoroughly.

Abuse is never witnessed
Often some part of the abuse is in plain sight. Adults who abuse children rely on their reputation or a lack of awareness. Boundary crossing behavior is normalized by tacit acceptance making children less likely to report offenses.

Report only if you’re sure abuse happened
It’s the responsibility of all adults to keep children safe. Report if you suspect abuse or that an adult’s actions could harm a child.
Sexual, physical, emotional abuse & neglect

**Sexual abuse** Any act that a child experiences involving sexual things beyond his or her understanding or against accepted standards. Sexual abuse may be committed by adults or other children.

**Physical abuse** Causing pain or an injury on purpose. Includes sustained physical activity and sustained physical restraint.

**Emotional abuse** Persistent harm to child’s self-esteem, and emotional functioning. Includes insults, threats, belittling, fear, etc, and expectations beyond age or ability of child.

**Neglect** Failure to meet basic needs for love, shelter, education, healthcare, hygiene and supervision.

Abuse definitions are largely universal and based on children’s rights and child development, not culture. The impact of harm can affect everyone differently. This is called trauma.
Features of institutional grooming

Resetting institutional norms for ‘convenience or practicality’ and/or seeking roles where supervision is weak and situational access is high

- Establishing reputation as too valuable to question or exception to rules
- Establishing a context to interpret actions or conceal true motivation
- Pushing/crossing boundaries
- Undermining the authority of others
- Responding with outrage, threats, intimidation and other unprofessional conduct
Boundary crossings and violations

What kinds of staff behaviors should be a ‘concern’ at our school?

https://www.icmec.org/education-portal/risk-management/
Avoiding crossed boundaries

- Stay within your assigned role
- Be aware of power differences
- Maintain personal awareness as a role model
- Use appropriate settings (observable, interruptible)
- Model appropriate boundaries
- Value student choice and consent
- Protect student vulnerability to misconduct with other adults or peers
- Document and communicate when mistakes happen

https://www.icmec.org/education-portal/risk-management/
Maintain boundaries

Professionalism is protective

“We don’t catch them abusing, we catch them breaking the rules.”

https://www.icmec.org/education-portal/risk-management
Gatekeepers to culture

What’s your role?

✓ Protecting students
✓ Protecting staff
✓ Protecting community
✓ Protecting the institution
Key messages

Childhood sexual abuse is not rare, but it is *preventable*.

You can make your schools unattractive to sexual offenders with *multiple barriers*

**Protections are for students AND staff**
Effect of unmitigated risks

Screening out *and* screening in
Who to screen out?

Keep the water clear
What is safer hiring?

Acknowledgement of responsibility

✓ to keep children safe
✓ to keep children safe by keeping staff safe
✓ to telegraph that this place prioritizes child safety
✓ as the gatekeeper of ethos of prevention
Values-based hiring

Child protection is your top priority.

• Mentioned in position notice or vacancy announcement, position descriptions and interview
• Formal application, interview and screening tools, policy, and procedures
• Background and reference checks
• Contracts and induction training
• Rights and privacy of applicants respected
The interview

• Who is in the room? Is it in person?
• What kinds of questions do you ask?
• Multiple interviews?
• Is there a checklist?
• Evaluating suitability?
• What do your local employment laws say?
What are you looking for?

- Irregularities, inconsistencies in timelines
- CV irregularities
- Notice what isn’t said or answered
- Be wary of answers that indicate:
  Lack of understanding of children’s needs or perspectives
  Unrealistic expectations of children
  Use of children to meet own needs
  Inappropriate language
  Unclear about professional boundaries
The most dangerous belief...
Suitability questions you like?

• Describe a situation that illustrates your reputation as a teacher.
• What kind of supervisory style do you prefer?
• What is it about this position that appeals to you most?
• How would you characterize your relationships with students? Colleagues?
• What does ‘professional ethics’ mean to you in the context of child protection? Can you give an example of this?
• Have you challenged someone, formally, or informally about their conduct with children? Has anyone challenged you?
Follow up questions you like?

Tell me more about that? What have you learned?

Can I ask your employer for more information?

How could you have responded differently?

Do you know of any reason in your personal or professional life that you might represent an elevated risk of harm to a child?

Is there anything that might make you a risk of harm to children either directly or indirectly?
Reference check questions you like?

- Would you hire this person again?
- What was their reputation among colleagues?
- How would you characterize their relationships with students?
- Do you have any child protection concerns?
- Can you confirm why they left?
- Would they take a policy or collaborative approach to educational problems or be more likely to use personal solutions?
What if there is something of concern?

- If concerns are expressed or information is incomplete or vague, contact by phone, and keep written record. If significant ask for details in writing.
- Self-disclosure forms (risk assessment req)
  - Be empathetic and sensitive
  - Gather relevant information
  - Have someone to take notes
  - Plan questions carefully and keep discussion focused on individual and their attitudes.
Self disclosure considerations

- Nature of offense and seriousness
- Relevance to staff, children, families
- Length of time since offense
- Length of sentence
- Isolated incident or pattern?
- Circumstances
- Have circumstances changed and does that increase or reduce likelihood
- Has individual changed, what led to this?
- Level of remorse, and any efforts to change
- New role provides opportunity to re-offend
- Legal constraints, such as ability to receive visa?
Patterns of negative indicators

- Evidence the applicant lacks understanding of child’s needs and/or perspective
- Unrealistic expectations and perspectives of children
- Evidence they focus on own needs, rather than the needs of the child
- Uses inappropriate or concerning language
- Lacking awareness of child protection implications
- Unclear on or resistant to acceptable boundaries
**Phase 1**
Prepare Key Stakeholders & Develop a Protection Policy

**Action Items:**
- Review accreditation requirements and policy template on Education Portal
- Revise recruitment and hiring procedures
- Train child protection designates (CPDs) and school leadership
- Committees develop reporting procedures, Codes of Conduct, multidisciplinary team (MDT), and student abuse prevention curriculum
- Staff and community informed of policies, procedures, and Codes of Conduct

**Phase 2**
Train Teaching Staff & Pilot Student Abuse Prevention Curriculum

**Training Topics:**
- Overview of abuse: definitions, myths, and attributes
- Grooming & offender behavior
- Features of peer-to-peer abuse
- Barriers to reporting
- Role of the first responder
- Creating a trauma-informed organization
- Handling incidents
- Creating a local support network

**Phase 3**
Implement Whole Staff Training & Abuse Prevention Curriculum

**Ongoing Tasks:**
- Curriculum evaluated and publicized to community
- Community and all staff trained on prevention topics and curriculum approach
- Evaluation of policies and procedures
- Intake training and annual child protection training established and tracked
- Code of Conduct and boundary violations recorded and evaluated
Process and Collaborators for Policies

Research Stage 1
- Portal search: Foundational beliefs and rights

Development Stage 2
- Identify key elements: Draft policy and identify procedures

Consultation State 3
- Seek input: Survey, focus group, etc.

Implementation and Revision Stage
- Training
- Publicizing
- Addressing Gaps
Steps in process

✓ Review national employment law and requirements for teachers
✓ Review accreditation requirements
✓ Write your policy and procedures
✓ Train staff and publicize policy
✓ Monitor and improve processes
✓ Ensure concerns addressed and failures trigger reevaluation
Policy categories and topics

- Principles and beliefs (including definitions and expectations)
- Roles and responsibilities (including codes of conduct)
- Recruitment and selection of staff
- Managing concerns and allegations
- Child protection program and training

Supplemental Policies:
- Communications policy
- Changing room/intimate care
- Whistleblowing
- Travel/trip policies
- Board policy
The research shows...

Effective prevention is predicated on creating a positive, open and inclusive organizational culture in which the safety of children is paramount.

This culture should be led by senior management and wholeheartedly endorsed and owned by staff at all levels.

- Australia Royal Commission, Risk Factors for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse, Kaufman and Erooga, 2016
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