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## Child Protection Update 5: awareness supports prevention

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Dear colleagues,

We are monitoring COVID abuse statistics and portal pageviews, and two trends are apparent in multiple parts of the world and in our portal traffic.

### Be prepared to identify and act on physical abuse

Significant spikes in physical abuse are reported in multiple countries and regions as some children are emerging from lockdowns and are seen by trusted adults in person. **Some reports indicate particular vulnerability of boys and adolescents.**

What to do:

- **Refresh staff** on signs and indicators of physical abuse.
- Provide **multiple reporting pathways**, including anonymous reporting to students.
- **Ask children about visible injuries and follow up** on hints or testing disclosure.
- **Identify vulnerable children** and check in with those children and caregivers separately.
- Support positive parenting: **publicize local parent support** lines, **give parents opportunities to support each other** with virtual meetups or platforms.
- Provide **progress and report card updates earlier in the week** which has reduced incidents of physical abuse by up to 25%.
- Report disclosure and suspicions to local authorities. **Be prepared to support the child with safety planning.** In the event you do not meet the local authority threshold for action, seek solutions to protect the child.
- **Train nursing staff in physical abuse signs** and indicators. See free training below.

**Announcing a free webinar series, Child Protection for School Healthcare Professionals and Response Teams, sponsored by the Office of Overseas Schools, US Department of State, presented by ICMEC staff and regional trainers.**

- [What is the role of the school nurse in prevention and response to abuse and neglect?](#) (26 October 13:00 -14:00 London GMT+1)
- [Supporting ethical response in child protection](#) (2 November 13:00 -14:30 London GMT+1, with regional breakout rooms)

For [information](#) or registration see your regional association or register by clicking the title. A full webinar and training schedule for child protection worldwide is [here](#).

### Provide student and parent education on online abuse prevention

Statistics on online grooming and sexual grooming in livestream gaming environments by a number of countries indicate 80% more reports over last year. **Of particular vulnerability are 8-12 year olds** who are more frequently online and less supervised at this time.

What to do:

- **Refresh parents** on signs and indicators of online grooming and what to do if it occurs.
- Provide **small group learning on digital safety** including **local or global hotlines for anonymous support/reporting** to students
- **Identify those with particular vulnerability.** Those may include students new to school/country; those with high usage and risk taking behaviors; LGBTQ presenting; and those with identified psycho-social, physical or learning disabilities.
- Provide **social-emotional learning** with a 'do no harm' orientation.

Portal resources to help you:

- [Signs and Indicators of Abuse](#) (all forms including online abuse and exploitation)
- [Activity Book for Online Safety Teachers Guide](#) and [Online Safety for Educators and Parents](#) (ITU-COP)
- Online Safety Support from [ThinkUKnow](#) and [CEOP](#)
- [Reporting and Support](#)
- [COVID.ICMEC.org](#) for links to research, reports and more information

The ICMEC Education Portal traffic to global reporting mechanisms page is up 220% compared to last year. As schools returned to in person or hybrid models in most of the world we have seen a surge in pageviews of international hotline and online tipline links. The [International Centre Response Team \(ICRT\)](#) case support is available this year thanks to ongoing funding by the US Department of State, Office of Overseas Schools.

Thank you for your work that helps keep children safe. Please share this with your child serving colleagues and organizational partners.

Global Educator Centre for Excellence

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Visit the Education Portal at [EdPortal.ICMEC.org](#)