

HB

233

<TARGET><BILL>HB 233</BILL><SUBJECT>HB
233</SUBJECT><COMM>HEDC28</COMM></TARGET>

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

H.B. 233: Erin's Law

Request for a Bill Hearing

To: Rep. Lynn Gattis, Chair, House Education Committee

From: Rep. Geran Tarr, prime sponsor, H.B. 233

Date: February 17, 2014

As prime sponsor of H.B. 233, Erin's Law, I would like to request a hearing on H.B. 233 by the House Education Committee. Attached is the most recent version of the bill, a sectional analysis, the sponsor statement, the list of testifiers, and supporting documents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Geran Tarr".

Rep. Geran Tarr

REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR(907) 465-3424 | State Capitol Building, Room 114 | <http://www.repgerantarr.com>**HB233** [Statement PDF](#) | [Sponsor's BILL Listing](#)**Sponsor****Statement****House Bill 233 "Erin's Law"**

Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. In 2010, there were more than 4,500 reports of child abuse. This puts us in the top five states for rates of child abuse. Also, today, more than 2,000 children statewide are in foster care, often removed from a home because of an abusive situation. The trend of high rates of abuse in Alaska must stop and prevention efforts are critical to that effort. We must break the cycle of abuse and give Alaskans the tools they need to protect themselves and help others.

This bill requires school districts to develop age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in grades kindergarten through 12. The bill is part of a national effort to enact "Erin's Law" in all fifty states (www.erinlaw.org). Erin Merryn is a survivor of childhood sexual abuse and made it her mission to have legislation passed across the country giving children the tools to protect themselves from abuse and school staff and administrators the ability to recognize the signs of abuse.

"Had someone taught me about safe touch, unsafe touch, safe secrets, and unsafe secrets, I would have known it was safe to tell. Instead I lived in my horror in silence. I am now on a mission to give children across this country the voice I never had as a child," said Merryn. To date, versions of Erin's Law have been enacted in eight states; twenty-five states, including Alaska, have a version of Erin's Law proposed this session.

This bill requires Alaska public schools to create age-appropriate curricula while allowing the flexibility to provide the training most beneficial to their community. Curricula should include warning signs of sexual abuse, referral and resource information, counseling and educational support, methods for increasing awareness of issues regarding sexual abuse of children, and actions a child may take to prevent and report sexual abuse or sexual assault. In many cases, by the time anyone other than the perpetrator and the victim know of the abuse, it is too late to stop it. Current numbers show that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before the age of 18. While teachers and administrators within the state say some education is happening to lower these numbers, they agree that we need to do more.

I ask for your consideration and support for Erin's Law to give Alaskans the tools they need to recognize signs of abuse, to protect themselves and their children, and to escape violence.

**REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR**

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

I ask for your consideration and support for Erin's Law to give Alaskans the tools they need to recognize signs of abuse, to protect themselves and their children, and to escape violence.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

House Bill 233: "Erin's Law"

Sponsor Statement

Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. In 2013, Office of Children's Services statistics show that there were 2,296 allegations of child sexual abuse with 1,817 unique victims, over 40% of whom were Alaska Native children. 884 of these cases were sent to law enforcement and OCS went on to assess 809 allegations. The trend of high rates of abuse in Alaska must stop and prevention efforts are critical to that effort. We must break the cycle of abuse and give Alaskans the tools they need to protect themselves and help others.

This bill requires school districts to develop age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in grades kindergarten through 12. The bill is part of a national effort to enact "Erin's Law" in all fifty states (www.erinslaw.org). Erin Merryn is a survivor of childhood sexual abuse and made it her mission to have legislation passed across the country giving children the tools to protect themselves from abuse and school staff and administrators the ability to recognize the signs of abuse.

"Had someone taught me about safe touch, unsafe touch, safe secrets, and unsafe secrets, I would have known it was safe to tell. Instead I lived in my horror in silence. I am now on a mission to give children across this country the voice I never had as a child," said Merryn. To date, versions of Erin's Law have been enacted in eight states; twenty-five states, including Alaska, have a version of Erin's Law proposed this session.

This bill requires Alaska public schools to create age-appropriate curricula while allowing the flexibility to provide the training most beneficial to their community. Curricula should include warning signs of sexual abuse, referral and resource information, counseling and educational support, methods for increasing awareness of issues regarding sexual abuse of children, and actions a child may take to prevent and report sexual abuse or sexual assault. In many cases, by the time anyone other than the perpetrator and the victim know of the abuse, it is too late to stop it. Current numbers show that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before the age of 18. While teachers and administrators within the state say some education is happening to lower these numbers, they agree that we need to do more.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

H.B. 233

Sectional Analysis

Section 1:

- Amends the Alaska Statutes by adding a new section for Erin's Law.

Section 2:

- Section (a) requires all Alaska school districts to adopt and implement a mandatory sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention training program for students K through 12 and employees.
- Section (b) lists the requirements for the policy, training, and notice to parents, students, and staff.

AMENDMENT

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

TO: HB 233

1 Page 1, line 2, following "schools":

2 Insert "; **establishing a task force in the Department of Education and Early**
3 **Development; and providing for an effective date"**

4

5 Page 2, following line 9:

6 Insert new bill sections to read:

7 **"* Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
8 read:

9 **SEXUAL ABUSE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT TRAINING ADVISORY TASK**
10 **FORCE.** (a) The Sexual Abuse and Sexual Assault Training Advisory Task Force is
11 established in the Department of Education and Early Development for the purpose of
12 reviewing and making recommendations to school boards on implementing the training
13 program required under AS 14.30.355, enacted by sec. 2 of this Act, including consideration
14 of curriculum materials, a timeline for implementation, consideration of cultural and other
15 differences in various areas of the state, and the best practices for providing student and staff
16 training in public schools.

17 (b) The task force consists of 15 members appointed by the governor by June 30,
18 2014, as follows:

19 (1) the commissioner of education and early development or the
20 commissioner's designee;

21 (2) one member from the state Board of Education and Early Development;

22 (3) one member from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority;

23 (4) one member from the office that provides for children's services,

1 Department of Health and Social Services;

2 (5) one member from the Association of Alaska School Boards;

3 (6) one member who is a licensed psychologist that specializes in children's
4 mental health in the state;

5 (7) one member who is a public school principal from Anchorage, Fairbanks,
6 or Juneau;

7 (8) one member who is a public school principal from a regional educational
8 attendance area in a rural area of the state;

9 (9) one member who is a public school teacher from Anchorage, Fairbanks, or
10 Juneau;

11 (10) one member who is a public school teacher from a regional educational
12 attendance area in a rural area of the state;

13 (11) one member of the Alaska Association of School Administrators;

14 (12) one member of a police department in Anchorage, Fairbanks, or Juneau;

15 (13) one member of a police department in a rural area of the state;

16 (14) one member of a children's alliance center in the state;

17 (15) one member from the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual
18 Assault;

19 (c) The president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives shall
20 jointly select one member of the legislature who is the chair of a committee with jurisdiction
21 over education to serve as an ex officio member of the task force.

22 (d) The members of the task force serve without compensation but are entitled to per
23 diem and travel expenses authorized for boards and commissions under AS 39.20.180.

24 (e) The Department of Education and Early Development shall, at the request of the
25 chair, provide reasonable assistance with staff, supplies, equipment, and other appropriate
26 items.

27 (f) The task force shall select a chair from among its members, shall meet by June 30,
28 2014, may meet as frequently as necessary, and may meet and vote by teleconference.

29 (g) The task force shall hold public hearings and use other means to solicit as much
30 helpful information as possible from state residents and experts in sexual abuse and sexual
31 assault and on training.

1 (h) The task force shall submit to the governor and the legislature a progress report by
2 January 1, 2015, and findings and recommendations by June 30, 2015.

3 (i) The task force terminates July 1, 2015.

4 * **Sec. 4.** Section 3 of this Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

5 * **Sec. 5.** Section 2 of this Act takes effect July 1, 2015."

AMENDMENT

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

TO: HB 233

1 Page 1, line 2, following "schools":

2 Insert "; establishing a task force in the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual
3 Assault; and providing for an effective date"

4

5 Page 2, following line 9:

6 Insert new bill sections to read:

7 "* Sec. 3. The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
8 read:

9 SEXUAL ABUSE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT TRAINING ADVISORY TASK
10 FORCE. (a) The Sexual Abuse and Sexual Assault Training Advisory Task Force is
11 established in the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, established in the
12 Department of Public Safety under AS 18.66.010, for the purpose of reviewing and making
13 recommendations to school boards and the legislature on the training program required under
14 AS 14.30.355, enacted by sec. 2 of this Act. The task force shall consider curriculum
15 materials, a timeline for implementation, the costs of implementation, and cultural and other
16 differences in various areas of the state, and shall conduct a survey of current efforts in child
17 sexual abuse prevention and best practices for providing student and staff training in public
18 schools.

19 (b) The task force consists of members of the Council on Domestic Violence and
20 Sexual Assault and members appointed by the governor by August 30, 2014, as follows:

21 (1) one member from the Association of Alaska School Boards;

22 (2) one member who is a licensed school psychologist or school nurse in the
23 state;

1 (3) one member who is a public school principal or superintendent from
2 Anchorage, Fairbanks, or Juneau;

3 (4) one member who is a public school principal or superintendent from a
4 regional educational attendance area in a rural area of the state;

5 (5) one member who is a public school teacher from Anchorage, Fairbanks, or
6 Juneau;

7 (6) one member who is a public school teacher from a regional educational
8 attendance area in a rural area of the state;

9 (7) one member of a children's advocacy center in the state.

10 (c) The president of the senate shall appoint one member of the senate, and the
11 speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint one member of the house to serve as ex
12 officio members of the task force.

13 (d) The members of the task force serve without compensation but are entitled to
14 travel expenses authorized for boards and commissions under AS 39.20.180.

15 (e) The task force shall select a chair from among its members, shall meet by
16 August 30, 2014, may meet as frequently as necessary but not less than four times, and may
17 meet and vote by teleconference.

18 (f) The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault shall, at the request of the
19 chair, provide reasonable assistance with staff, supplies, equipment, and other appropriate
20 items. The task force may accept private donations that may be appropriated to the task force
21 to carry out the purposes of the task force.

22 (g) The task force shall hold public hearings and use other means to solicit
23 information from state residents and experts in sexual abuse and sexual assault and from
24 experts in providing training.

25 (h) The task force shall submit to the governor and the legislature a progress report by
26 January 1, 2015, and findings and recommendations by June 30, 2015.

27 (i) The task force terminates July 1, 2015.

28 * **Sec. 4.** Section 3 of this Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

29 * **Sec. 5.** Section 2 of this Act takes effect July 1, 2016."

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

Nationwide Status of Erin's Law

State Passed	Governor	Year
Illinois	Pat Quinn (D)	2011
Missouri	Jay Nixon (D)	2011
Guam	Eddie Calvo (R)	2011
Connecticut	Dannel Malloy (D)	2011
West Virginia	Earl Ray Tomblin (D)	2012
Indiana	Mike Pence (R)	2012
Maine	Paul LePage (R)	2012
California	Jerry Brown (D)	2012
Michigan	Rick Snyder (R)	2013
Arkansas	Mike Beebe (D)	2013
Mississippi	Phil Bryant (R)	2013
Nevada	Brian Sandoval (R)	2013
Utah	Gary Herbert (R)	2014
New Mexico	Susana Martinez (R)	2014
Texas	Rick Perry (R)	2009 (equivalent of Erin's Law)
Vermont	Peter Shumlin (D)	2009 (equivalent of Erin's Law)
Proposed	Governor	Progress
Tennessee	Bill Haslam (R)	Final Vote
Minnesota	Mark Dayton (D)	
Alaska	Sean Parnell (R)	
Iowa	Terry Branstad (R)	
Ohio	John Kasich (R)	
Pennsylvania	Tom Corbett (R)	
North Carolina	Par McCrory (R)	
South Carolina	Nikki Haley (R)	
Kentucky	Steve Beshear (D)	
New York	Andrew Cuomo	Passed the Senate
Oklahoma	Mary Fallin (R)	
Nebraska	Dave Heineman (R)	
DC	Vincent Gray (D)	
Rhode Island	Lincoln Chafee (D)	
Kansas	Sam Brownback (R)	
Hawaii	Neil Abercrombie (D)	
Delaware	Jack Markell (D)	
Massachusetts	Deval Patrick (D)	
Georgia	Nathan Deal (R)	

Updated March 19, 2014

« Homepage

Time for new business cards
 KIP Administr... | Girdw...
 DA Tobacco... | Benc... | Anchr...
 Experience Su... | Veri... | Ancho...

CHANGE THE LIST

THE RAPIST NEXT DOOR



Alaska's rape rate is the highest in the country -- three times the national average. To find out why, I went to Alaska to talk with victims, politicians -- and the rapists. You voted for me to cover this topic as part of CNN's Change the List project.

By John D. Sutter
 Videos and photography by Brandon Ancil

John D. Sutter is a columnist for CNN Opinion and head of CNN's Change the List project. Follow him on Twitter, Facebook or Google+. E-mail him at ctl@cnn.com

Alaska (CNN)

Stand outside Ruth's wooden home here in Alaska and you'll hear only an occasional sound: A plane buzzes overhead, a reminder that the only way in or out of this village at this time of year is by air. Snowmobile tracks in her driveway, fossilized by the cold, creak and pop under your feet like brittle Styrofoam.

And the wind: The constant *shhhhh* as it rattles the tundra.

It sounds almost like a whisper.

Like this land is keeping secrets.

Next to Ruth's house is a shack: One room, wood stove, metal roof. Its plywood walls are so leaky that socks and towels are stuffed in the holes. In the shack lives Ruth's husband, Sheldon – love of her life, father to her many adopted children, a few of whom live with her next door. A clothesline, maybe 30 feet long, connects the homes. Ruth met Sheldon decades ago while ice fishing – was introduced by friends. He shared her love for the outdoors, her passion for camping all summer, soaking in 24 hours of sunlight afforded by the severe tilt of the Earth up here.

She loved him then. And she loves him now, she told me as we sat in her living room, wind chimes clanging outside on the porch. At least she thinks she does.

It's been harder lately -- since she learned what Sheldon was hiding.

Ruth told me her world nearly collapsed that day in 2003 when the police said her husband, over a course of years, had been raping and molesting Alice, one of her adopted daughters. Those unthinkable acts happened in her house, without her knowledge, she said.

But, amazingly, Ruth and Alice have opened their hearts again to Sheldon.

The mother and daughter have consented to ongoing contact with him, allowing him to live next door, for a powerful and counterintuitive reason:

They never want him to rape again.

'We can't answer that...'

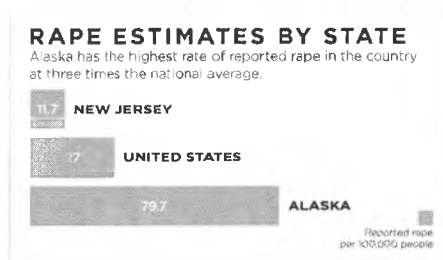
I spent more than two weeks in America's "Last Frontier" state in December trying to answer two questions: Why is Alaska the national epicenter for rape?

And, more importantly, what can be done to change that?

Readers prompted this quest when they voted for me to cover rape and violence against women in the United States as part of

CNN's Change the List project, which seeks to bring attention and support to bottom-of-the-list places like Alaska. This is the second of five topics readers commissioned as part of the series.

The extent of Alaska's problem with violence against women is both horrifying and clear: Alaska's per capita rate of reported rape is the highest in the country, according to 2012 FBI crime data. An estimated 80 rapes are reported in Alaska for every 100,000 people. That's nearly three times the national average of 27; and almost seven times the rate in New Jersey, the state where reported rape is least common. Those comparisons are imperfect, of course. But localized surveys in Alaska paint an even bleaker picture. A majority of women – 59% – have experienced sexual or intimate partner violence, which includes physical violence and threats; and 37%, nearly four in 10, have been raped or sexually assaulted, according to a survey of 871 adult women in Alaska, published in 2010.



Source: FBI Uniform Crime Report, 2012



Source: Alaska Victimization Survey



Source: Alaska Victimization Survey

There was a time when politicians in Alaska argued rape survivors were simply reporting rape more often in this state than elsewhere. Those arguments, however, have been largely abandoned as the scope of the violence has become clearer. If anything, the taboos surrounding rape here would suggest that the crime is underreported in Alaska, relative to other states.

What's unclear is exactly why the violence is occurring. "That's part of the problem," said Andre Rosay, director of the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center, and a national expert on this issue. "We can't answer that question. ..."

I asked Rosay what researchers had done to try to make sense of it. Had there been efforts to interview rapists? To understand what life experiences may have led them to rape? Or to try to figure out what might stop perpetrators from raping again?

No, he said. Not to his knowledge.

But, he offered: Maybe that would help.

That conversation and others like it led me to the small community where I met Sheldon – and to the decision to focus on offenders rather than victims. A common refrain from women's rights activists is that "rape won't stop until men stop raping."

I couldn't agree more. Victims aren't to blame; rapists are.

That's why I'm sharing the story of a rapist -- and a state -- trying to reform.

'There's no hiding'

I met Sheldon, the man who raped and molested his stepdaughter, in a cluttered conference room in the back of a metal building in rural Alaska. To protect the identity of Sheldon's victim, I've changed her

name as well as those of her family members, including her rapist. I'm also not revealing the name or characteristics of their community.

On the wall in the conference room was a poster of the logo for an innovative sex-offender treatment program that Sheldon is enrolled in: The image shows six people holding hands in a circle around a masked face.

Above the logo is this phrase, translated from the local language:

"Sexual abuse ends when we begin to talk."

The program surrounds rapists and child molesters who already have served jail time with a network of at least five "safety nets" – volunteers from the community who try to prevent the offenders from raping or molesting people again.

Sheldon is the person at the center.

His wife, Ruth, and several others are the safety net.

In this region, there are at least 300 of these volunteers.

The idea is based on two concepts dear to local indigenous culture: community and forgiveness. In many states, from California to Alabama, sex offenders essentially are banished from their homes after they're released from prison. Offenders are not allowed to live within a certain distance of schools, parks or child-care facilities – pushing them into places where they fly under the radar, unsupervised.

They often end up in homeless shelters, beneath overpasses and in rural environments where it's difficult to find work, support and counseling.

The goal here is exactly the opposite, said the clinical director of the local sex-offender treatment program, and who I'll call Robert.

Offenders are "right in the center" of a support circle, he said.

"There's no hiding here."

Sheldon entered the room, ready to talk, wearing a plaid shirt and camouflage-pattern pants. He's a friendly seeming guy with the

face of a marionette – all eyebrows and cheekbones. Big smile, hard to read.

A man in his 60s, Sheldon moved back to this community in 2008 after being released from prison in another part of Alaska. His probation officer helped enroll him in the state-funded program, which was new at the time, Robert said.



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Alaska treatment program

Since it began, the treatment program here has served 90 sex offenders, with only two known cases of sexual re-offense, according to Robert. It's a tiny sample, so it's difficult to draw broad conclusions, but that's a recidivism rate of about 2%, which is "pretty darn good," to borrow Robert's words. One study of 9,691 sex offenders nationwide found 5.3% reoffended within three years.

Our first conversation began with Sheldon telling me he welcomes the fact that the members of his "safety net"-- his wife, a law-enforcement official, a religious mentor, a tribal elder and others – watch his every move. He also blamed himself alone for the trauma he caused his stepdaughter, who turned him in.

"I'm taking full responsibility. I'm sick and tired of holding it in here," he told me, later. "I just need to puke it out. Vomit it out."

Sheldon confessed to authorities in 2003, as well.

"Looking back is so disturbing for me," he said. "It's frightening."

'Anger? Anger'

As a young boy, Sheldon learned the ways of traditional indigenous people: speaking the language, which is full of hard "k's" that pop in your throat and twisting "g's" that are

nearly impossible for outsiders to pronounce; hunting for blubbery seal; foraging for salmonberries; and hooking fish out of holes cut in the ice.

No one calls him it today, but Sheldon's indigenous-language name roughly translates to "a person you can go to for help." It was passed down, as is customary in the culture, in honor of an aunt who died shortly before Sheldon was born.

It would be years before the irony of that name would sting.

Demons haunted Sheldon from childhood.

When he was 7 or 8, he told me, an older man took him into an abandoned building and made Sheldon unzip his pants. "He fondled my genitals," Sheldon said. "I backed off and ran away. He tried to coerce me to cooperate with him: Candy, pop. He asked me if I'd seen my mother naked in the house."

The abuse continued for years.

"At the time I was so confused," Sheldon said. "Who am I? What is the expectation of this man? How am I supposed to respond to him? Confusion? Shame? Anger? Anger. Because he wouldn't listen to me when I told him to stop."

By the time he was 10, Sheldon decided to tell his parents.

It was an act of desperation, an enormous leap of faith.

Their response ended up haunting him as much as the abuse.

"Dad pulled my ears and hair and called me a liar," Sheldon told me. He "said I'd never change – would be a no good, mischievous boy ... I don't ever remember this man being arrested, reported. Sometimes it scares me. Maybe I was not the only one."

After being blamed by his father for the abuse, Sheldon made a vow: He would keep the abuse secret, deep inside his soul – and never let it surface.

"I've got to be a man," he thought. "And carry this with me alone."

'I could hurt them, too'

It's impossible, of course, to determine why a person becomes a rapist.

But I got some clues as I sat in a circle with about a dozen rapists and child molesters, along with three mental-health counselors, in the lobby of a local church.

The men, all clients of the sex-offender treatment program here, shook my hand and welcomed me to town. Are you used to this weather? How far are you from home? They wore ski bibs, hoodies and, in one case, a furry coat. I'd never have known these men were offenders had we met elsewhere.



Isolation in Alaska contributes to the state's high rate of reported rape.

Sheldon was in the circle, holding a directional microphone hooked into a pair of headphones that look like they were purchased with a Walkman tape player. He pointed the microphone at the men in the circle so he could hear.

It's important he takes in every word.

Sheldon aimed the mic at the counselor from the treatment program here.

How many of you were sexually abused as children? the man asked.

It's a question that had been on my mind.

A little fewer than half of the men in the circle raised their hands. (Nationally, about 30% of sex offenders were abused as children, according to a 2001 study that's widely cited by state governments and activists.)

Later, Sheldon pointed the microphone at me, and the group allowed me to ask a question. I told them that I came to Alaska to try to understand why rates of rape and violence against women are so high here. And I said I figured maybe someone in this group might have answers. Could they help me understand?

One man who was sexually assaulted as a child told the group that he abused other people "so I could hurt them, too. So I wouldn't be alone."

Another said he kept his own sexual abuse hidden for nearly 60 years. "If I opened up back then, when I was young," he said, "I probably wouldn't be in this situation."

"My personal experience, what started it all," another said, "was feeling unloved."

Sheldon's story, as well, starts with the abuse he suffered as a boy.



The lawless 'end of the land'

Nunam Iqua — which means "end of the land" — is one of 75 communities in Alaska with no local law enforcement presence. Lawlessness often coincides with high rates of violence against women, as John D. Sutter discovers.

[Read full story »](#)

The way his counselors describe it, he became intensely "sexualized" by those incidents (Sheldon says he was abused by a man and multiple women in his village as a boy) without understanding what that meant. That doesn't sound uncommon. I spoke with an Alaska state trooper who said authorities have responded to rape cases where the perpetrator is a boy of 7 or 8. It would be years before Sheldon would rape someone, but his patterns of abusive and inappropriate sexual behavior and touching began very young. Sheldon dived underwater in swimming holes so he could touch the genitals of his female classmates without their knowing what happened. He ran up to girls at school and fondled their breasts.

He was able to get away with it, he told me, because he lived in a remote village. Dozens of villages in Alaska have no law

enforcement presence. Troopers must fly in by plane. Some victims of Sheldon's abusive touching tried to turn him in, he said, but they either weren't believed or no one thought to take action. Authorities were never involved. Either the acts were unspeakable, or worse: They were too common.

'What you've done'

Nearly every square inch in Ruth's living room is put to use: In the center of the floor is a trash can full of ice Sheldon harvested from a river, and which they use as drinking water after it melts; the kitchen table is a swap meet of dried salmon scraps, coffee mugs, a bowl of seal oil and a Crisco jar; triangular sticks of firewood are stacked in the corner near the wood-burning stove; seal-skin mittens, which Ruth sews, are on the coffee table; and, most eye-catchingly, family photos are everywhere -- papering the walls, even hanging from a rope.



Video: Visit Nunam Iqua, a remote village with no local law enforcement presence.

Above a bay window, which looks out toward the shack next door, there's a portrait of the entire family taken in 2001, before Sheldon went to prison.

Sheldon sports his characteristic slim mustache and Ruth wears saucer-sized eyeglasses, her salt-and-pepper hair parted in the middle, her son Samuel's hands on her shoulder. Sheldon is standing next to Alice, the young woman he raped -- after coaxing her with candy and telling her to be quiet, he told me.

Alice is smiling in the photo, and wearing a lime-green sweater.

She was always the pretty one. "We treated her like a little doll," Ruth told me, her voice beaming. "We were happy to have a little girl, and she's always dressed up really pretty." She was strong, too, Ruth said. Strong as

any of her boys. And able to fish with the best of them. "We were so happy to have her," she said.

Behind the young woman's smile, though, were years of trauma.

The abuse "started off maybe when she was 6," Sheldon told me. "Touching her genitals outside her clothes. Pressing our genitals together. She was fighting that -- didn't want that ... All I heard was 'no,' but I kept at it. I remember I was mostly intoxicated at the house. She'd be sleeping in her bedroom and I'd sneak over there and touch her while she's sleeping, being careful not to wake her.

"Then if she stirred, I'd sneak off."

Alice realized what was happening.

"When I was getting molested, I was really scared to tell anybody," she said. "I tried to tell my mom, but she was too drunk to understand me. She was passed out. She was just grunting. If she would have known, she would have called the police right away."

Ruth, now sober, did not recall that incident.

Alice told me it was the only time she got up the courage to reach out for help. She was 9 at the time, she said. That's the age she recalls the sexual abuse beginning.

"I was too scared" to speak up again, she said. "I was scared everybody would blame me, or everybody would not believe me. I was scared they would get mad at me."

Ruth told me she blames herself for not knowing about the abuse. "I should've known," she said. The signs – depression, doing poorly in school – seem so clear in retrospect. If only her daughter felt like she could talk. Or if only she had heard.

In the silence, the abuse continued for seven years.

'EFFECTIVE. WORKS.'

Sheldon goes on long walks in the morning when the sun comes up, which is around 10:30 or 11 a.m. in December. The light peeks over the horizon and hovers there for a few hours, bringing no warmth (it was consistently 0 F, day and night, while I was in the area) but burning through the eyes of anyone who dares to look. The sun in

wintertime Alaska reminded me of that painful part of an eye exam when the doctor puts the light right up to your pupil, hoping to see what's invisible.

Sheldon meditates and prays as he walks, asking God to heal him. Ruth, like the sun on the horizon, never takes her eyes off Sheldon. She calls and texts any time he's away, even briefly. Where is he now? Has he been around children?

She's a 24-hour police force.

And then there's the ammonia.

Sheldon carries a vial of that chemical with him everywhere he goes. He keeps a plastic jug of it on a shelf near his bed in the shack, near a picture of his family that he's stuck to the wall with electrical tape. These words are written on the side of the bottle in black, permanent marker: "STOP. EFFECTIVE. WORKS. USE."



Sheldon sniffs ammonia when he gets inappropriate sexual urges.

If Sheldon gets an inappropriate sexual urge, he opens the vial and sniffs.

The chemicals jolt his brain back to reality, like "boom, your breathing stops," he said. "You can't breathe, your mind is going haywire."

His counselors prescribed it. For a time, he had to use it several times a day – every time a woman brushed his arm, every time he saw young girls.

"At first, I was practically using it all day – and at night," he said. "I would get up at night. I would get these very disturbing dreams."

Lately, it's been less frequent.

That's good news.

But every sniff of ammonia is a moment he could offend again.

'R-A-P-E'

Sheldon didn't know the word for "rape" in English until he'd already perpetrated that crime on his stepdaughter. When he learned the word and the meaning, he said, after hearing it used on an indigenous-language radio show, he started to panic.

He asked a priest about it.

"R-A-P-E."

The priest literally had to spell it out, he told me.

Internally, Sheldon wondered: Is that what I've done?

"The darkest moment that I felt was like this: I know it's wrong but it's something I wanted. I know it's wrong but I'm so excited. I'm all aroused.

"I can't stop myself."

His stepdaughter was 15 or 16, he said, the first time he raped her.

He raped her quietly, trying "to keep her calm."



States where rape is most common

Alaska is estimated to have the highest rate of reported rape, according to 2012 FBI data. Find out where your state ranks.

[Read full story »](#)

"I was careful," he said. "If I raped her forcefully, she is going to yell and scream."

These details were painful for me to hear. I'm sure they're hard to read. I included them not to open old wounds for Alice and other victims of sexual assault, but to give you a sense of exactly how horrifying his crimes are. That so many women in Alaska have suffered similarly is almost unthinkable.

Think back to the statistics:

-- 37% raped or sexually assaulted

-- 59% victims of intimate partner and/or sexual violence

It's clear Ruth would like to reassemble her family the way it appeared in that portrait hanging over the bay window. Everyone together and smiling.

But she knows the truth: Smiles hid the horror, then and now.

Alice talked with me by phone only after I'd left Alaska. While I was in the community, she was drinking heavily and staying away, she told me. When we spoke, she sounded sober and of clear mind. I called her on her mother's phone and she told me she was staying at home again. Alice has had trouble with substance abuse since she was a young girl, she told me. Started smoking pot at 12 and drinking by 14. She did it "to forget what happened," she said, "but it was always still there."

She was in rehab for alcohol abuse as a teenager when, in an outburst that surprised even her, Alice told a counselor she had been molested by Sheldon. She never intended to tell anyone – not after the experience with her mom.

Life hasn't been easier for her since. She got married while Sheldon was in prison, but she had trouble being intimate with her husband because images of her childhood abuse flashed to mind. "There were some days I would feel uncomfortable having sex," she said. "He would ask what was wrong. I didn't tell him."

Several years ago, her only child, an infant son, died unexpectedly of an illness after suffering from a long and nagging cold, Alice told me.

"I imagine how tall my son would be. I just imagine he's going to school."

Then, less than two years later, her husband drowned in a river when their boat sank. She was on the boat, too, and she threw him a gas container in hopes he could use it to float to shore. "I heard him say, 'I can't swim anymore,'" she said.

It was around that time that Sheldon was released from prison.

When Alice's mom, Ruth, decided to let Sheldon back into their lives, she made sure he understood how much pain he had caused their family. She met Sheldon not at the airstrip but on their frozen driveway. As Sheldon recalls it, she pointed to the shed beside her home and told him that this is what he had done – that the torn-up building was a visual manifestation of the invisible wreckage inside them all.

Sheldon looked over at the shed: Broken windows, a door off its hinges.

A violent couple had rented it, Ruth told me, and destroyed it.

"I hope you see what you've done to us here," Sheldon recalls Ruth saying.

"And she left me there."

'There's hope'

I couldn't help being alarmed when Sheldon told me about the ammonia.

After spending several days with him, it became possible, in brief interludes, to stop thinking about the fact that he had raped his daughter. But certain moments -- like hearing about the ammonia -- would spring me back to a very frightening reality. This is a man who counselors say can never be trusted, not 100%; who does everything he can to seem like he's on the right track; who, his therapist told me, had sex with a dead and frozen seal once because he was so aroused.

"I know (Sheldon) is changing," Ruth told me.



Counselors ask Sheldon to keep a journal about his progress and sexual thoughts.

Still, she worries.

And how could a person blame her?

Sheldon's struggle makes Ruth and Alice's acceptance of him – and this community's –

all the more powerful. I went to church with Sheldon, accompanied him to the post office, met the family's priest, saw Sheldon read and watch TV with the couple's young son. In none of these interactions did people seem to treat him differently. If anything, he seems to be a caring and loving father to the young boy.

The intellectual part of me understands this is best for everyone involved.

But it's hard not to retch at what he's done. How can you forget?

Ruth and Alice wrestle with these questions, too.

The terms of Sheldon's probation initially banned him from having any contact with his daughter, according to court documents. Alice, now in her mid-20s, has allowed Sheldon to live next door to her mother and to be in her presence while he is in recovery, said Robert, the clinical social worker from the program. That wouldn't have been legal without her consent, he said. Sheldon is not allowed to be in the presence of minor females without supervision, according to the terms of his probation.

Ruth is quick to police these points. That's one reason she wants Sheldon to live next door in the shack, instead of where he can't be watched.

Alice told me she approved the arrangement.

"I'm completely fine with him being around – just as long as my mom's around or somebody's around with us," Alice told me. "I feel safe as long as he's not sleeping under the same roof ... I believe he can change. If he could believe in me to succeed in school, I believe he could change. I know that changing is possible.

"I can't tell you the future or anything," she said, "but there's hope."

I asked if she had forgiven Sheldon.

To my surprise, she said she has.

"We were taught: forgive and forget," Alice said, "but I can't forget, and I won't forget ... I can forgive him but I won't forget ... It's a scar for life."

Her mother wants to forgive him but can't, not yet. She's considered leaving her husband.

I'm sure that's what many readers would expect – or demand – her to do.

But she thinks about it rationally, practically.



Meet Alaska's 'pioneer woman'

Caren Robinson turned her own experiences with rape and domestic abuse into a lifetime of advocacy. It started when she sheltered abused women in her houseboat in Juneau, Alaska.

[Read full story »](#)

She knows many sex offenders end up homeless.

She knows, too, that, without her, Sheldon would be more likely to reoffend.

She considers this her unwanted calling. Ruth comes from a highly religious family. She's a stout believer in forgiveness and redemption -- a person who used to take a large number of foster kids into her home, because she wanted to help them. She walks around town and many of these children call her "Mom." She knows – believes, with all her soul -- Sheldon can change. And Alaska can, too.

It can, right?

Sometimes she has to wonder.

'All of the secrets'

Before I visited Alaska, it was difficult for me to comprehend how stunningly common rape is in this state. As an outsider, when I heard about Sheldon's situation – a rapist living next door – I was flabbergasted.

That kind of situation isn't unheard of here.

It would be possible in any number of communities, activists told me.

There are so many perpetrators, so many victims. Communities in Alaska are small enough there's little choice but for lives to intersect again.

That was true enough in a 200-person Yupik village I visited, out by the mouth of the Yukon River. Nearly every woman in Nunam Iqua has been the victim of domestic abuse or sexual assault, according to several women there, a nearby women's shelter director, and the village's mayor. Nunam Iqua means "end of the land" in Yupik. It has no local law enforcement. When rape or other violence occurs, state troopers must fly into the village from other towns – a process that sometimes takes days, depending on the weather. A local husband and wife run a secret "safe house" for victims of sexual and intimate partner violence. To get formal help, however, victims would have to fly to a nearby town.

Abuse becomes normal in such an environment.

The PBS series "Frontline" visited one village where Catholic workers were alleged to have sexually abused nearly an entire generation of Alaska Native children in a rural part of the state.

There are decades of sordid history that need to be unpacked.

Many people here talk about the "multigenerational trauma" that has been inflicted on Alaska Native people, who are thought to have among the highest rates of rape and other violence. Entire generations were subjected to abuse as well as disease.

It's still within cultural memory, for example, that white missionaries and settlers brought flu that wiped out entire villages of Alaska Native people in 1918. "Suffering from influenza, many Eskimos and Native Americans found themselves unable to harvest moose or feed their traps and, in the wake of the pandemic, many people died of starvation," the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services says on a page devoted to the flu. "In some areas, the situation was especially acute as Eskimos did the unthinkable and ate their sled dogs. In other villages, hungry sled dogs turned on the dead and dying and ate them to survive."

Decades ago, children were punished harshly, beaten even, if they spoke their native language. Sheldon witnessed this as a child. And, like many others, he went away to boarding schools for indigenous people in Oklahoma and Kansas – foreign lands where he was disconnected from his roots. "It was totally a culture shock for me," he said.

Most of these traumas remain unspeakable today in rural Alaska. It's as if generations of elders have dealt with the past by silencing it. Experts tell me this is one of the reasons rape has been allowed to flourish. Generations of people are wandering the tundra lost – unemployed, drunk, angry, suicidal and violent.

"All of the secrets and the harm – the sexual violence – came after contact" between Alaska Natives and white settlers, said Joan Dewey, mental health clinician who works with sex offenders and has been trying to understand rape in the state.

None of this is an excuse for violence. There is none. But it does go a long way toward explaining why Alaska has the highest rape rate in America.

It would be a mistake to see rape as an isolated problem.

It and so many other social ills grow from the same root.

The social fabric of Alaska has been torn.

'I didn't feel human at all'

Of all the unique aspects of Sheldon's treatment program – the ammonia, the therapy sessions, the idea that sex offenders should be kept close, not pushed away – the most powerful to me is this: victims are among the volunteers.

I met a woman -- I'll call her Claire -- who was sexually abused by her brother as a young girl in a remote village, and who was raped by a taxi driver as an adult in Anchorage. After all of that, her daughter, a product of that rape, was sexually abused by her nephew after Claire gave the girl up for adoption.

I'm not using Claire's real name or image in an effort to further protect the identity of Sheldon's victim. She was willing to speak

openly, with her image and name. The soft-spoken 42-year-old with porcelain features and a beaming smile is convinced that, in order for Alaska to stop sexual violence, victims of rape need to speak up.

And perpetrators need to be given the opportunity to change.

Those beliefs come not in spite of but because of her personal experience.

Claire's brother started abusing her when she was 9 – coming into her room late at night and pressing his genitals up against her, with their sister in the room.

"The next day I tried to tell my mom," she said. "I don't know if they were in denial, or if they didn't want to face it. I don't know ... I just stopped telling my parents" after they didn't do anything to stop her brother from abusing her.

"It was like, do I exist?" she said. "Do I even have a voice?"



Alaska faces its 'resident evil'

John D. Sutter talks with Alaska Governor Sean Parnell about his efforts to end Alaska's "resident evil" of rape and domestic violence. Parnell says rape is an "epidemic" in Alaska, and the violence must end.

[Read full story »](#)

"Can't anyone hear me crying?"

It seems no one cared to hear. Claire was left to try to protect herself. She climbed in bed with her sister, who promptly pushed her out. She wore layers of cold-weather clothing -- piled blankets on top of that, hoping to deter him, or slow him down at the very least. She still hates the month of October because that's when the abuse always escalated, as Alaska's nights grew longer, stealing the day.

At 16, Claire told a teacher – turned him in. But the community blamed her, and her family disowned the high-school girl. She has to wonder, now, if it's because she was female and he was male. She didn't work and he hunted and fished – provided not just for her family but also for the entire Alaska Native village.

He was seen as valuable; she was not.

She ended up in foster care, part of the time in Anchorage, the city where she later would be raped.

People in this state have done everything they could to break Claire's spirit.

But it hasn't worked.

Two years after the rape in Anchorage, which she said she did not report because she was afraid she would be blamed, just as she was at home, Claire had a son from a consensual relationship. She decided to seek help – to find a group of women in her community who she could talk to about all of the shame and grief she carried.

"The perpetrator makes you feel so ashamed – like it's all my fault," she said. "It's what I wore. I don't deserve to feel love. I don't deserve to feel happy. There's a lot of things that my mind said ... I felt so dirty, so unclean.

"I felt worthless. I didn't feel human at all.

"I felt like I was just a thing."

Talking about it helped Claire realize that she was not to blame.

The shame was theirs, not hers.

She decided she wanted a different life for her infant son – didn't want him to be "born under the shadow of my ancestors' trauma," she said, as she was.

Now she is working with Sheldon's sex-offender treatment program. She's a "safety net" member, helping the nephew who sexually abused her own daughter. She believes he – and other sex offenders in Alaska – can change.

It's with Mandela-esque compassion that she says the state is failing them -- that communities must be rebuilt so they're safe for everyone.

So they don't encourage violence.

She thinks back to something an elder told her ages ago.

"He used to say, 'Our people are sleeping,'" she told me. "They're in a daze. They don't know what they're doing. So, the people who are ready, they need to prepare them a big feast. Prepare them their meals, because they're starting to wake up."

I asked Claire if she had any advice for Alice, Sheldon's victim.

Her answer was quick: Talk about it.

"You need to stop carrying the shame," she said, knowing that's easier said than done. "We need to stop wearing the masks that (the rapists) put on us."

'I told him to stop'

Sheldon's family has been settling into a new normal of sorts. Each day is difficult. Sheldon and Ruth don't talk like they used to. He spends his days doing chores – chopping wood, repairing her house – while she works temp jobs. Alice is living at home for now, but she's been in and out in recent weeks.

They live partly off Sheldon's pension from the Alaska Army Reserves, where he served for more than two decades. Their son, Samuel, chips in financially, too.

But Ruth owns both of their homes, their car and their snowmobile. Her income, from office jobs as well as selling indigenous art and clothing, makes it work. Some women feel trapped and stay with abusive husbands because they are financially dependent; it would be impossible to say that of Ruth.



One victim of rape and sexual abuse said she fears Alaska's long, dark winters because that's when the abuse became more frequent.

Sheldon tries to give back however he can. It's clear to me he wants to redeem himself, and is pained to see his stepdaughter struggling. He volunteers with search-and-rescue teams – helps translate the local language for sex-offender counselors. Walk around town with him and people smile and greet him like any other person.

It's almost surreal how much has changed.

"He hasn't re-offended, to our knowledge," said Sheldon's counselor, "and I think the polygraph would show us if he had."

But the work is never ending.

Sheldon's counselor has reservations about him living so close to his daughter. He wants him to be integrated into the family and community – it's safer that way.

But it's hard to know how close is too close.



5 ways to help

From donating to worthy organizations to starting petitions and sharing your story, here are five ways you can help reduce violence against women in Alaska.

[Read full story »](#)

Whether it's possible to reform rapists and sex offenders is perhaps the most controversial topic in advocacy and policy circles at the moment, said Scott Berkowitz, founder and president of the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), a leading advocacy group. Still, he shares my view that "we've got to keep trying," he told me, "even if it only is working 10% of the time."

It's easy to see why when you spend time with Sheldon and his family.

Alice has been quicker to forgive Sheldon than Ruth because Sheldon admitted what he had done -- and that was a life-changing thing for her, she told me. When her abuser

came back from jail, he told her that she was not to blame.

"It just made another block come off my shoulders," Alice said.

Samuel, one of Sheldon and Ruth's sons, had a similar experience. I met the 20-something in his room in the back of Ruth's house one afternoon. A curtain covers his door and I had to climb over clutter to reach the room. I had planned to ask Samuel about his dad's recovery, how his sister was doing, and how he felt about having a father who raped a family member. Was it safe? Did he know about the abuse? It is safe, he said, and no, he's not afraid of Sheldon.

Samuel told me he also was a victim of rape, too, by a stranger, not by Sheldon

"I told him to stop and get off" of me, Samuel told me. "He wouldn't."

The rape happened behind an abandoned building when he was 15, Samuel told me. Samuel, who is gay, has flashbacks to the rape whenever he gets close to someone now – especially if they're about to become intimate. He worries he will be raped again. That fear, and the flashbacks, have led to depression, shame and failed relationships and some trouble with substance abuse and the law.

The one bright spot in it all, he said, is what his dad told him.

"It's not your fault, (Samuel)," he recalls Sheldon saying. "It's not your fault."

He raped you. Only he is to blame.

If anyone can say that, it would be a rapist.

'Resident evil'

After talking with dozens of people in Alaska, here are the best theories I heard about why the state has the highest rape rate in the country:

1. The history of cultural trauma, abuse, disease and dislocation imposed on Alaska Native villages has led to a cycle of despair and violent behavior.
2. Rape is tolerated in some communities; when victims like Claire come forward, they're not believed or told to forget what happened.

3. Offenders are too rarely punished. Of nearly 1,000 cases of sexual assault studied by the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center, 46% were referred for prosecution and 22% resulted in a conviction. It's difficult to compare those rates with other states, said Andre Rosay, from the justice center. What's clear, he said, is that "the biggest hurdle really is in getting the case referred for prosecution," especially in villages with no local law enforcement presence. Sexual assault cases are 3 ½ times as likely to be prosecuted in communities with a Village Public Safety Officer, he said.
4. The state is so large – four times the size of California – and so sparsely populated, that it's nearly impossible to police. State troopers must fly to many remote villages, and that can take days, depending on the weather.
5. Long winters make it easy for offenders to perpetrate the crime.
6. There's a high rate of alcohol abuse, which doesn't cause rape, but can lower inhibitions for would-be offenders and can be used as a date-rape drug.



"We are the 59%"

Nearly six in 10 women in Alaska will face sexual violence, domestic abuse or the threat of violence in their lifetimes. Show solidarity and make a difference by sharing your own story of survival, anonymously if you'd like. We ask that you not name any individuals.

REQUIRED FIELDS

Your age is

You must be at least 18 years old to participate.

Your email address

CNN may contact you to follow up on your account

Your story

Please keep your story under 1,000 characters. We ask that you not name any individuals.

OPTIONAL FIELDS

Your name is

Your gender is

female male other

Your city, state and country are



Powered by CNN iReport and Google Drive

See CNN iReport terms, conditions and privacy notice.

See Google terms of service and additional terms.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Share your story

Below is a selection of submissions to **"We are the 59%."**

For more, visit [the project page](#).

If you are a survivor of sexual or intimate partner violence and need support, please call the Rape Abuse & Incest National Network hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE; the National Domestic Violence hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE; or the National Dating Abuse Helpline at 1-866-331-9747.

Tania, 21, Alamogordo, nm

I was born and raised in Dillingham, Alaska. I've never really told my story before. But after reading this story, everything came back to me. My story of abuse starts in a back room at a family friend's house. Their oldest son has me on the bed. I really don't remember, I was so young. Another time, quite often, the neighbor boy would take me to the woods. I don't remember knowing what was happening and to this day it haunts me. Both my brothers have touched me. I never did great in school and have always felt alone. I talked to my sister about it once, I found out that all 3 of my sisters had been raped too. I've always wondered if my social awkwardness came from these experiences...

If I placed a bet, it would be on a seventh reason: the silence.

It permeates every aspect of life in Alaska.

And it changes how the state must deal with rape and sex abuse.

Policy shifts are important, to be sure. The state should broaden the power of tribal courts; expand law-enforcement in rural Alaska; increase the number of women's shelters, so fewer victims will have to hop a plane to find safety; and expand sex-offender treatment programs like the one in which Sheldon participates.

But, for those to take hold, people have to start talking.

Some are pushing the conversation, and have been for years.

As I traveled the state, I met Elsie Nanugaq Tommy -- 104 and all smiles inside a fur-trimmed, hooded coat -- who started a secret safe house for abused women in Newtok, Alaska, decades ago. Her extraordinary work -- and her willingness to address issues others wanted to ignore -- inspired her granddaughter, Denise Tommy, who is now the director of the Tundra Women's Coalition. That organization runs rape-prevention programs and a shelter for abused women. It

pays to fly victims to the shelter from neighboring villages.

In Juneau, I met Alaska's governor, Sean Parnell. He has none of Sarah Palin's name recognition (the local press calls him the Oatmeal Governor because they think he's bland), but he's making important strides in terms of raising awareness about sexual violence. In an interview, he called rape a state "epidemic," and Alaska's "resident evil." "That's been the hardest part about the evil among us: We haven't been willing to talk about it," the governor told me.

"I'm also sending a message as a man to women who have endured this shame that they are not to blame," he said. "They do not need to carry the guilt and shame – and we are willing to embrace and love them unconditionally."

If you want to help, I'd encourage you to donate to CNN-vetted organizations that are working to end violence against women in Alaska.

Or join our online storytelling project: "We are the 59%." We're asking people to show their solidarity for the survivors, or to share their own stories of survival.

'Treatment is never over'

Journalists like to classify things – success or failure; good or bad. So it should be no surprise that I asked Sheldon's counselor if he considered him a "success story."

No sex offender is a success story, Robert told me. The harm caused to a victim of rape or sexual abuse can never be repaired. And there's always the chance of re-offense. "Treatment is never over for them," the clinical social worker said. "We equate it with diabetes – a physical disability. It's something you're going to have to manage the rest of your life." But Sheldon's, he said, is an encouraging case.

And he wouldn't be in this line of work if he didn't believe people could change.

It's impossible to trust Sheldon – not 100%. But I am rooting for him. I know he has the potential to grow into the meaning of his indigenous name: "a person you can go to for help." He proved that when he encouraged Alice, his stepdaughter and victim, to pursue

her GED diploma. She passed the test in December, she told me.

She said she wouldn't have been able to do it without him.

"He believed I could do it," Alice said.

I also hope Sheldon, Alice, Ruth and Samuel's willingness to speak about rape in Alaska will help a state -- and a country -- wake up to the horrors of violence against women, which is far too often tolerated or excused. Victims must feel comfortable to talk about the violence they've survived; and family members and friends have to be ready to listen. It is senseless that so many young people in Alaska are abused and feel like they must remain silent about it. That's not their fault, it's ours. If victims believed no one would judge them or think less of them for coming forward -- if they knew they would be supported and loved and helped -- this crisis would end.

If reading this story has been at all unsettling, let that be the most disturbing part: All of us have a role to play in perpetuating or ending the violence. It already exists in such high numbers in Alaska that the only way to stop the cycle is to speak its name -- to stop allowing rape and sexual abuse to be hidden.

Offenders like Sheldon do have a role in that process.

They're the ones responsible for this epidemic.

They can also help stop it.

And they deserve a chance at redemption.

Since I got home from Alaska, I've been thinking every day about the rapist I met and his family next door. The details of their stories -- the ammonia, the frozen seal, the flashbacks they have during sex -- have given me nightmares. I'm disgusted by what Alice and Samuel experienced. But the more lasting feeling I have is one of awe -- at the bravery and selflessness they've displayed in sharing their stories.

It's that kind of courage that will ensure the cycle of violence stops with them.

Alaska could use a few more people like that.

The opinions expressed in this story are solely those of John D. Sutter.

About this story

In 2013, more than 30,000 CNN.com readers voted for columnist John D. Sutter to cover five social justice issues as part of his Change the List project. Rape in the United States is the second of five issues selected for the series. Upcoming stories will focus on water scarcity, childhood poverty and wildlife trafficking. A sixth topic will be chosen by CNN's editors, based on your suggestions. This is journalism as democracy. For more, visit CNN.com/Change.

Change the List

You pick it, I'll cover it



Columnist John D. Sutter asked readers in 2013 to vote on their top five social justice issues of our time. Learn more about the vote and how you can get involved in the coverage.

The most unequal place in America



East Carroll Parish, Louisiana, has the dubious distinction of being the "most unequal" parish or county in America. The rich-poor gap there is wider than in any nation on Earth. John D. Sutter visits to find out why.

Comments for this thread are now closed. ✕

195 Comments D ⚙️

Sort by Best 🔗 Favorite ★



disqus_Ludf6UNYQq
• 3 days ago

I just wanted to say to John Sutter that this is an incredible and important piece of journalism. Well done. I truly hope this starts an important conversation.

399 ^ | 6 v • Share ›



John Sutter CNN ➔
disqus_Ludf6UNYQq
• 3 days ago

Thanks very much. Really appreciate that. Did you see the piece about how to help? I'd love it if you and other readers would get involved and push for change:
<http://www.cnn.com/2014/02/>

140 ^ | 3 v • Share ›



Ramil Sharma
➔ John Sutter
• 3 days ago

How do we get involved? How do we prevent such issues happening?

20 ^ | 2 v • Share ›



sammybaker
➔ Ramil Sharma
• 3 days ago
Raise your

[Home](#) | [Video](#) | [CNN Trends](#) | [U.S.](#) | [World](#) | [Politics](#) | [Justice](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Tech](#) | [Health](#) | [Living](#) | [Travel](#) | [Opinion](#) | [iReport](#) | [Money](#) | [Sports](#)

[Tools & widgets](#) | [RSS](#) | [Podcasts](#) | [Blogs](#) | [CNN mobile](#) | [My profile](#) | [E-mail alerts](#) | [CNN shop](#) | [Site map](#)

CNN © 2013 Cable News Network. Turner Broadcasting Systems, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

[Terms of service](#) | [Privacy guidelines](#) | [Ad choices](#) | [Advertise with us](#) | [About us](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Work for us](#) | [Help](#)

[CNN en ESPAÑOL](#) | [CNN México](#) | [CNN Chile](#) | [CNN Expansiön](#)

[العربية](#) | [日本語](#) | [Türkçe](#)

[CNN TV](#) | [HLN](#) | [Transcripts](#)

[About us](#) | [Full Site](#) | [Feedback](#)

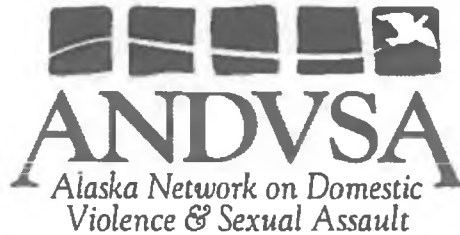
© 2013 Cable News Network, Inc.

A Time Warner Company.

All Rights Reserved.

Main Office

130 Seward St #209
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Phone: (907) 586-3650
Fax: (907) 463-4493
www.andvsa.org



Pro Bono Office

PO Box 6631
Sitka, Alaska 99835
Phone: (907) 747-7545
Fax: (907) 747-7547

February 19, 2014

The Honorable Representative Geran Tarr
State Capitol Bldg., Room
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: HB 233

Dear Representative Tarr:

The Alaska Network on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault (ANDVSA) is a statewide coalition of 23 victim service agencies and affiliates that provide direct services and advocacy for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, including child sexual abuse victims. In addition, our programs provide outreach and education presentations in schools, upon request, as resources allow. Unfortunately, due to limited resources and staff, our programs are not able to fulfill all current outreach requests, particularly in village schools.

Schools are an important partner in our prevention and education efforts and we support the use of new tools to raise awareness, educate and provide critical information about sexual abuse to children. We know from experience, that early prevention and education activities are essential in stopping perpetration before it ever occurs.

Thank you for bringing this important piece of legislation forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Peggy Brown', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Peggy Brown, Executive Director

cc: Lisa Mariotti, Policy Director

Member Programs

Anchorage AWAIC, STAR Barrow AWIC Bethel TWC Cordova CFRC Dillingham SAFE
Fairbanks IAC Homer SPHH Juneau AWARE Kenai LeeShore Center Ketchikan WISH Kodiak KWRCC
Kotzebue MFCC Nome BSWG Seward SCS Sitka SAFV Unalaska USAFV Valdez AVV

Transforming Communities to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation:

A Primary Prevention Approach

This document was prepared by Prevention Institute.

Principal authors are:

Annie Lyles, MSW

Larry Cohen, MSW

Margot Brown

© May 2009

265 29th Street
Oakland, CA 94611
510.444.7738
fax 510.663.1280

www.preventioninstitute.org

Prevention
Institute
Putting prevention
at the center of community well-being

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This policy brief presents the distilled research and critical thinking of a diverse group of local and national experts in the field of child sexual abuse and exploitation. Prevention Institute assembled this team and coordinated their efforts with the generous funding and support of the Ms. Foundation for Women.* Via candid dialog and interviews, these leaders developed and prioritized primary prevention strategies, analyzed environmental factors and norms that perpetuate these problems, and outlined policies and practices for transforming our communities and our nation during these turbulent political and economic times. This brief focuses especially on strategies that build on previous successes within this field and hold the greatest promise for transforming communities and preventing child abuse and exploitation.

We thank these leaders for their dedication to the field and for their thoughtful insights throughout this process. Likewise, we thank the Ms. Foundation for Women for sponsoring this vital initiative.

Sandra Alexander

Expert Consultant in Child Maltreatment
CDC, Division of Violence Prevention

Cordelia Anderson

Chair
National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Exploitation

Jetta Bernier

Executive Director
Massachusetts Citizens for Children

Suzanne Brown-McBride

Executive Director
California Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Deborah Donovan Rice

Executive Director
Stop It Now! National Office

Pat Eng

Vice President of Programs
Ms. Foundation for Women

Gena Fitzgerald

Executive Director
Journalism Center for Children and Families

Prevention Institute

is a nonprofit, national center dedicated to improving community health and well-being by building momentum for effective primary prevention. Primary prevention means taking action to build resilience and to prevent problems before they occur. The Institute's work is characterized by a strong commitment to community participation and promotion of equitable health outcomes among all social and economic groups. Since its founding in 1997, the organization has focused on injury and violence prevention, traffic safety, health disparities, nutrition and physical activity, and youth development.

Jim Hafner

Development Director
Stop It Now! National Office

Jeanine Hays

Program and Policy Associate
Family Violence Prevention Fund

Sara Kershner

Executive Director
GenerationFIVE

Jean Kilbourne

Senior Scholar
Wellesley Centers for Women

David Lee

Director of Prevention Services
California Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Diane Levin

Professor of Education
Wheelock College

Brenna Lynch

Program Associate, Safety
Ms. Foundation for Women

Larry Magid

Tech Journalist & Internet Safety Advocate
ConnectSafely.org and CBS News

Patrice Pascual

Reporter/Editor
Journalism Center for Children and Families

Elizabeth Sy

Program Coordinator/ Sexually Exploited Minor Advocate
Banteay Srei/Asian Health Services

Sally Thigpen

State-wide Coordinator
Stop It Now! Georgia

* Prevention Institute materials are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Ms. Foundation for Women.

OVERVIEW

“I have a ten-year-old daughter and a five-year-old boy. I want the world my children grow up in to be one where my daughter can live free of violence and my son will be expected to treat all women with respect. We need to invest at a level where we can create this future for our kids.”

Jim Hafner, Stop It Now! National Office

Preventing Abuse Before it Occurs: A Primary Prevention Approach

Over the last 30 years, advocates have worked hard to successfully educate us in child sexual abuse and its detrimental effects on children and society. Leaders and the general public alike have a greater understanding of the issue, and this awareness has reached a tipping point over the last ten years, resulting in mobilized groups advocating for social and political solutions to abuse. So far, the response to these demands has largely focused on after-the-fact actions like incarceration and individual protection efforts such as Internet safety campaigns. The next step requires expanding the overarching dialog, moving from a focus on the individual and after-the-fact efforts to an approach that can prevent child sexual abuse from ever happening. A primary prevention approach prevents abuse before it happens by addressing the environmental factors and societal norms that contribute to its occurrence in the first place. Leaders agree that the movement is poised for a greater emphasis on primary prevention, which honors and builds upon past successes and complements the field’s continued commitment to improving responses to this critical issue. This shift will require an increased effort to advance promising primary prevention approaches—essential to achieving dramatic reductions in rates of child sexual abuse and exploitation.

A primary prevention approach to child sexual abuse and exploitation promotes safe, healthy environments and behaviors, reducing the likelihood of abuse¹ in the first place. This approach is often confused with early intervention services for victims and perpetrators. Interventions, such as universal screening in health care settings, may help to alleviate trauma and potentially prevent future incidences; however, early identification is subsequent to actual or threatened violence and seldom alters the broader community and societal environment that gave rise to the violence. Primary prevention moves far upstream to change the environmental factors—such as economic inequalities, sexism, media, and marketing practices—that

We must begin to shift our focus from individuals to environments, from fear to wellness, and build national momentum for a balanced, targeted investment in quality prevention strategies.

A primary prevention approach to child sexual abuse and exploitation promotes safe, healthy environments and behaviors, reducing the likelihood of abuse in the first place.

shape norms and behaviors of an entire population. Primary prevention of child sexual abuse and exploitation is a systemic process capable of dramatically reshaping our environment and norms. It is a crucial component of community wellness.

Our success in preventing child sexual abuse depends on our ability to maintain a coordinated, comprehensive effort. Research confirms that the issue is deeply rooted in our environment and reinforced by our societal norms. It touches every community—the latest data reports that one in four girls and one in seven boys will be the victim of some type of sexual abuse/assault before age 18.² These numbers do not include the various ways children are sexually exploited through technology, pornography, and other commercial sexual exploitation. Further, we know that victims of abuse are at an increased risk for alcoholism, depression, sexually transmitted infections, intimate partner violence, and suicide attempts.³ The statistics provide an important challenge to our current norms and environments for children and adults: We must begin to shift our focus from individuals to environments, from fear to wellness, and build national momentum for a balanced, targeted investment in quality prevention strategies.

Quality prevention strategies counter environmental factors that support child sexual abuse and exploitation. Examples of these environmental factors include increased marketing towards children and a pervasive media presence with drastically high levels of sexualized messages and rigid gender roles. Root factors, such as marginalization—which increases the risks and decreases the resilience within specific communities—have not been widely acknowledged in policies and practices addressing child sexual abuse and exploitation. As one leader said, “There must be an increased awareness that child sexual abuse and exploitation does not occur in isolation, but instead, stems from deeply rooted social inequities and environmental influences.” These factors are relevant to all communities, and we can focus on them via comprehensive prevention initiatives. As a more progressive agenda is gaining momentum nationally, we have a prime opportunity to examine the current context and push for community transformation on multiple levels, incorporating successful projects from around the nation that help build resilience and protective factors at the individual and community levels. It is also a key moment to organize support for elected officials willing to adopt a legislative agenda that promotes healthy environments for all communities.

This brief is designed for advocates, practitioners, government officials, and funders who are interested in transforming broad social norms and our communities in order to prevent child sexual abuse and exploitation before it occurs. The following pages lay out a primary prevention approach with a special focus on effecting change by influencing policies and altering organizational practices. We begin with a short discussion of emerging environmental challenges followed by an examination of specific norms that contribute to child sexual abuse and exploitation. The third section, grounded in the belief that a single individual or sector cannot address the problem in isolation, provides the framework for a comprehensive strategy across the *Spectrum of Prevention* (see Figure 2, page 8) designed to transform environments so all children can thrive in safe and supportive communities.

Full Article Available here:

http://www.preventioninstitute.org/index.php?option=com_jlibrary&view=article&id=31&Itemid=127



LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICES

Alaska State Legislature
Division of Legal and Research Services
State Capitol, Juneau, AK 99801

(907) 465-3991 phone
(907) 465-3908 fax
research@legis.state.ak.us

Research Brief

TO: Representative Geran Tarr
FROM: Tim Spengler, Legislative Analyst
DATE: February 17, 2014
RE: Alaska Child Sexual Abuse Statistics, Fiscal Year 2013
LRS Report 14.254

You asked for information on child sexual abuse allegations in Alaska for the most recent year available.

The Office of Children's Services (OCS), Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, provided us with the sexual abuse allegation data below.¹

Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse Received by the Office of Children's Services in FY 2013²

- 2,296 total allegations received, involving 1,817 unique alleged child victims³
 - Of these allegations, 971 were in the Anchorage Region, 286 in Northern Region, 575 in Southcentral Region, 242 in Southeast Region, and 222 in Western Region
- 1,487 allegations were *screened out*, of which 884 were *screened out* to law enforcement⁴
- 809 allegations were *screened in* for initial assessment⁵

Of the 809 allegations *screened in*:

- 126 allegations were *substantiated*, involving 117 unique child victims
- 646 allegations were *not substantiated*⁶
- 37 allegations were in initial assessments that were closed without finding⁷

Of the 1,817 alleged child victims:

- 1,245 were female

¹ Naomi Harris, OCS Community Relations Manager can be reached at (907)465-3548. Definitions in the footnotes come from OCS Child Protective Services Manual (<http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/Publications/CPSManual/cps-manual.pdf>).

² What constitutes child sexual abuse is discussed in Alaska's Child in Need of Aid (CINA) statutes at AS 47.10.011(7).

³ One or more allegations may be associated with a single incident of abuse. The number of allegations should not be interpreted as the number of incidents.

⁴ A report is *screened out* when OCS determines the information received does not meet the definition of maltreatment (as described in AS 47.10.011) or for any of the following reasons: insufficient information to locate, multiple reports on same incident, child residing out-of-state, referred to a tribe that has exclusive jurisdiction, or referred to law enforcement. When allegations made to OCS are *screened out* to law enforcement, it generally means that the abuse was allegedly perpetrated by an individual who resides outside the child's home. These cases are investigated by law enforcement personnel.

⁵ During the initial assessment OCS gathers information to determine whether the child is unsafe or at high risk of maltreatment and the extent of the familial protective capacities. A report is *screened in* when the information received indicates a child may be unsafe or at high risk of maltreatment by a primary caregiver, parent, custodian or guardian.

⁶ At the conclusion of an investigation, OCS determines that an allegation was *substantiated* or *not substantiated*. A *substantiated* finding is one where the available facts indicate a child suffered harm as a result of abuse or neglect as defined by AS 47.17.290. A *not substantiated* finding is one where, based on the available facts, the worker is unable to determine if a child suffered harm as a result of abuse or neglect, or where there are no facts to support the allegation that a child suffered abuse or neglect.

⁷ An initial assessment may be closed without finding when the family cannot be located.

- 556 were male
- 16 the gender was unknown
- 747 were Native
- 951 were Non-Native
- 119 race was undetermined
 - Of the 1,817 alleged victims, 771 were in Anchorage Region, 238 in Northern Region, 485 in Southcentral Region, 183 in Southeast Region, and 147 in Western Region.⁸

We hope this is helpful. If you have questions or need additional information, please let us know.

⁸ Children may be alleged victims in one or more allegations and regions. In regional counts, alleged victims are counted once in each region reported. In Statewide counts, alleged victims are counted once. The sum of regional counts will not add to the statewide total.



Stop It Now!

Together We Can Prevent the Sexual Abuse of Children

PREVENTION TOOLS

Have questions?

Need resources?

Get Help Now!

Online Help Center
<http://GetHelp.StopItNow.org>

Stop It Now! prevents the sexual abuse of children by mobilizing adults, families and communities to take actions that protect children before they are harmed.



351 Pleasant Street
Suite B-319
Northampton, MA 01060
Phone: 413.587.3500
Fax: 413.587.3505
www.StopItNow.org
info@StopItNow.org
Helpline: 1.888.PREVENT

Warning Signs in Children and Adolescents of Possible Child Sexual Abuse

Any one sign doesn't mean that a child was sexually abused, but the presence of several suggests that you begin asking questions and consider seeking help. Keep in mind that some of these signs can emerge at other times of stress such as:

- During a divorce
- Death of a family member or pet
- Problems at school or with friends
- Other anxiety-inducing or traumatic events

Behavior you may see in a child or adolescent

- Has nightmares or other sleep problems without an explanation
- Seems distracted or distant at odd times
- Has a sudden change in eating habits
 - Refuses to eat
 - Loses or drastically increases appetite
 - Has trouble swallowing.
- Sudden mood swings: rage, fear, insecurity or withdrawal
- Leaves "clues" that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues
- Writes, draws, plays or dreams of sexual or frightening images
- Develops new or unusual fear of certain people or places
- Refuses to talk about a secret shared with an adult or older child
- Talks about a new older friend
- Suddenly has money, toys or other gifts without reason
- Thinks of self or body as repulsive, dirty or bad
- Exhibits adult-like sexual behaviors, language and knowledge

Signs more typical of younger children

- An older child behaving like a younger child (such as bed-wetting or thumb sucking)
- Has new words for private body parts
- Resists removing clothes when appropriate times (bath, bed, toileting, diapering)
- Asks other children to behave sexually or play sexual games
- Mimics adult-like sexual behaviors with toys or stuffed animal
- Wetting and soiling accidents unrelated to toilet training



Signs more typical in adolescents

- Self-injury (cutting, burning)
- Inadequate personal hygiene
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Sexual promiscuity
- Running away from home
- Depression, anxiety
- Suicide attempts
- Fear of intimacy or closeness
- Compulsive eating or dieting

Physical warning signs

Physical signs of sexual abuse are rare. If you see these signs, bring your child to a doctor. Your doctor can help you understand what may be happening and test for sexually transmitted diseases.

- Pain, discoloration, bleeding or discharges in genitals, anus or mouth
- Persistent or recurring pain during urination and bowel movements
- Wetting and soiling accidents unrelated to toilet training

What You Can Do If You See Warning Signs

- Create a [Safety Plan](#). Don't wait for "proof" of child sexual abuse.
- Look for patterns of behavior that make children less safe. Keep track of behaviors that concern you. This [Sample Journal Page](#) can be a helpful tool.
- See our [Let's Talk Guidebook](#) for tips on speaking up whenever you have a concern.
- If you have questions or would like resources or guidance for responding to a specific situation, visit our [Online Help Center](#), <http://GetHelp.StopItNow.org>.

Remember, the most effective prevention takes place before there's a child victim to heal or an offender to punish.

For more information and guidance, please visit our Online Help Center, <http://GetHelp.StopItNow.org>.



The RESOURCE

Newsletter of the National Sexual Violence Resource Center

Fall/Winter 2005

Recollections of a Hurricane

LaFASA Director Recounts Katrina's Devastation

By
Judy Benitez

In the following piece, the Executive Director of the Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault (LaFASA) presents a revealing and moving glimpse into the devastation that touched so many lives in the Gulf Coast region as a result of Hurricane Katrina in August 2005. With journal-type entries, Judy Benitez tells us about the impact this disaster had on her life and her family and friends, and about her deep concerns, as a coalition director, regarding the sexual victimization of residents and evacuees and for the programs in storm-ravaged areas.

Saturday, Aug. 27, Dad's birthday: My friend and co-worker Misty and her new husband, Doug, planned their wedding reception for tonight at her parents' house in Mandeville, since so many people couldn't get to the wedding earlier in month. I took my kids along, and Martha from the office went too. But our co-worker, Vita, stayed home, expecting her parents to arrive soon, since they were evacuating from their home on the west bank of the Mississippi.

The party was fun, but much of the conversation focused on the coming storm. Most people had the attitude, "We live far enough away from the coast. We stayed through Andrew; we'll stay through this." Remembering how miserable it was after Andrew - five days without electricity and air-conditioning in south Louisiana in August had tempers flaring and putrid meat rotting in the freezer - I found little comfort in that thought. But I did not plan on leaving either.



Boat rests on roof of Louisiana home after Hurricane Katrina, August 2005

It took us almost three hours to make the 45 minute trip home. We avoided the interstate, knowing it would be jammed and slow-moving; the two-lane state highway we took was not much better. Several times the kids and I talked about how glad we were that we don't live in New Orleans.

(Continued on page 4)

Consent and the Court of Public Opinion

By
Anne Munch, JD and Patti Powers, JD

The surge of media attention surrounding high profile sexual assault cases in the last few years has brought the question of what the crime of sexual assault really means to the forefront of our minds and into our conversations. Attitudes and opinions held by the public have fueled a lively

debate on this topic. These ideas and beliefs held by the public reflect what the court of public opinion believes about this crime. Many of the jurors who ultimately decide these cases in a courtroom spend time debating the issue in the court of public opinion first.

(Continued on page 2)

NSVRC

Inside The Resource

- 3 CSA in Bearing Straits
- 8 Coalition Spotlight
- 11 Focus on Prevention
- 15 SAAM and Poetry Slam
- 15 Relief Fund

The following article by an Inupiat woman from a very remote region of Alaska offers a rare and important view of Child Sexual Assault (CSA). More than a survivor story, this remarkable piece represents her attempt to understand CSA as a social problem, and her effort to help others. It is especially remarkable because there are virtually no sexual assault services in this region. She approaches the personally painful subject with insight and an obvious need to learn more and to share information; she encourages openness and therapy for others. Throughout, her voice resonates with a simple reality that goes beyond the value of any statistics.

Although Alaska has the highest rate of sexual assault of all states, we have relatively few first-hand accounts of its prevalence or impact; clearly this primary source document is a rare, unique resource.

Child Sexual Abuse in the Bering Straits Region

By
Karlene Sagoonik

I am a survivor of child sexual abuse and much of my life has been plagued with emotional, spiritual, and physical consequences of the abuse, and this is part of my reason for writing on the subject. I live in a small town (population: approx. 240) in the Bering Straits region of Alaska, and I know that there are others that have suffered in many of the same ways that I have. So I decided to write this paper and interview some people of different generations in my area to help me understand how they deal with child sexual assault (CSA).

Unlike most of the people I interviewed for this paper, I have received counseling and have gone through different types of therapy at different intervals in my lifetime. As a result, I am able to talk about my experiences more openly. However, I have problems that may never go away, even though counseling has helped me understand and deal with the issue. In writing this paper, I suffered memories, which made me physically ill, angry, frustrated, very lonely, and my mental and physical self acted as though the assault had just happened, even though it was a long time ago.

In spite of these things, I feel that I need to reach out to people who are weary of keeping their secrets. I need to let them know that this kind of abuse happened to many others and it is okay to go to people who are willing and able to help. It is important for people to recover from CSA and therapy is a very important part of the healing process. I recommend that anyone who is a victim of CSA and who has not received help, get help through some type of counseling.

It is difficult to determine how prevalent child sexual abuse is in the Bering Straits Region because statistics are inadequate and present a different viewpoint than the one you find when talking with actual victims and

others in a community in the Bering Straits. I want to show the reader different viewpoints from statistics; discuss some actual victims of child sexual abuse; and consider what can aid in their restoration.

Reports of how prevalent people think child sexual abuse is in the Bering Straits Region differ. According to a census of the population of the Bering Straits Region, 40% of 9,176 people are between the ages of 0-19 (3,670), and statistics from Kawerak's Child Advocacy Center in Nome say 51 cases of child sexual abuse were reported in the region for the entire year of 2003. That means that approximately one child per 180 (of total population of region) or one in 72 (of youth population in the region) was sexually victimized. But these reported cases are far fewer than the incidents I heard about when I asked people from my region.

(Continued on page 10)



Child Sexual Abuse in the Bering Straits Region

(Continued from page 3)

Two researchers, Burgess and Holmstrom, tell us what signs to look for in a victim of sexual abuse and what should be done to aid the healing process.* They say that the healing process depends on how sexual abuse is approached and defined in our immediate environments and communities. So I looked to my environment and communities here in the Bearing Straits Region.

As I interviewed people from my area and I found that attitudes towards CSA have changed over time. ** It seemed that people in different age groups hold different ideas about CSA. To show how these attitudes have changed, I interviewed people from different generations. I talked with some people who were at least thirty or over in a small town and a neighboring village in the Bering Straits Region. Nearly all the women and one in three of the men I interviewed had been sexually abused before they reached adolescence.

A man, in his thirties, said to me, "My cousin and I were little kids and we started playing this game of 'let me see your thing, and I'll show you mine.'" He said it turned into having sex with each other. He said he was too little to know how to do it, but his cousin no older than him knew how and he felt it was CSA. He also said that all his buddies were sexually abused and that one of them committed suicide.

A woman I have known my entire life has told me more than once that she was sexually abused by her brothers, cousins, and an uncle. She has not gotten any kind of help. Instead she just keeps doing drugs and drinking. To this day, I don't think her parents know about the abuse.

I also know of another older woman from the same family who used to babysit people's kids. She was sexually abused by one of her brothers. Years later, she beat him up when they were both in a drunken stupor, and there are stories that she sexually abused some young men when they were adolescent boys. People who are abused sometimes wind up being abusers themselves. I know that she has never gotten any kind of help either. She just keeps drinking and doing drugs.

As I talked with more and more people, I became more and more aware that the statistics of sexual abuse of children do not reflect all the occurrences. According to three different people in their forties they either knew of someone who was sexually abused who did not report it or receive any kind of

help, or they were victims of sexual abuse themselves. One woman from a neighboring town said she knows her cousin was sexually abused as a child, and she has grown into a bitter, miserable person who seems to have no sort of relief in sight from the experience. This woman said, "[CSA] affects people all their life and talking with a friend or a professional would help."

Someone in her forties told me some time ago that she was sexually abused over and over during her adolescent years, but she never tried to get any kind of help. Instead, she has taken to drinking alcohol for years. Another woman in her forties was also abused when she was a child and now she abuses crack cocaine, alcohol and other drugs. Someone once said she traded one of her daughters for sex so she could get a piece of crack cocaine. Her daughters are doing drugs, drinking, and each one has had at least one baby before she turned 18. It was her sister who told me that she had confided in her. Some of these instances were hearsay or confidential conversations, but they do indicate how many people there have had some sort of damaging sexual experience before they reached adulthood.

As I interviewed the older generations, the subject of CSA was either unknown or they had been forbidden to speak of it back when they were young. I asked a man in his fifties if sexual abuse was a problem when he was a kid. He said he did not know if there were problems with sexual abuse, but that he did not start hearing about sexual abuse until he was in his twenties. A woman in the same age group said either there was no problem or that it was never talked about. When I asked her to clarify herself, she said there could have been a problem in the community, but she did not know because it was never talked about.

As I talked with more and more people, I became more and more aware that the statistics of sexual abuse of children do not reflect all the occurrences.

The silence on the subject of CSA may be a result of cultural admonition on the older generations not to discuss sexual abuse. When talking with

a sixty year old woman, she said she was molested when she was 12 years old and tried to tell her aunt, but her aunt told her, "Don't talk like that." After that, she said it was years before she told anyone, because she got the idea that people did not talk about stuff like that.

(Continued on page 12)

Child Sexual Abuse in the Bering Straits Region

(Continued from page 10)

Some time ago, I spoke with a woman who is now in her seventies, and the closest she came to admitting that she was a victim of sexual abuse was that she said to me, she knew how I felt. According to her, people used to get drunk a long time ago and things happened that they could not talk about. It would appear that a lot of things people could not talk about were associated to abuse.

Reported or not, child sexual abuse is a problem that needs to be addressed and dealt with in a positive way. One of the first steps in a community is just to get more information about CSA and to treat it as a severe injury, with symptoms and consequences, and methods of treatment, and not as a subject for shame.

Burgess and Holmstrom point out some signs to look for in child sexual abuse victims, and they describe two phases: the acute (immediate) phase and the reorganizational phase. *

Acute Phase

"The acute phase [can] last from a few days to several weeks. [It's when a] victim's life has been ... disrupted, and going through disorientation and shock".* Victims go through physical and emotional symptoms common to someone who has experienced a terrible tragedy. Physical reactions may include muscle soreness and bruises, feeling tired and problems with sleeping, eating too much or not enough, and feeling jumpy. As a CSA victim, I have gone through most of the physical reactions and many of the emotional reactions as well.

Emotional reactions in this phase can be of two different kinds, expressed and controlled. The expressed reactions are visible and include laughing or crying, making jokes or becoming stiff or shaking. The controlled reactions are invisible to others. The victim appears not to feel anything but is actually depressed, angry, feeling shameful, or having thoughts of revenge. I remember feeling disgust, shame, or guilt while appearing calm. Other victims have mentioned masking feelings too: two of the women I spoke with, the one who was abused by her brothers and uncle, and the forty something woman who

said she was abused repeatedly as an adolescent mentioned that they felt this way. Victims may also alternate between expressed and controlled responses, and these responses may surprise or catch the victim off guard. Emotions may go from one extreme to another.

Reorganizational Phase

In the reorganizational phase, the victim comes to terms with the sexual abuse experience. This phase can last from "a couple of months to years." * How long this phase lasts depends on how old the person is, their character, and the kind of help the person receives.

During this phase, the victim makes adjustments in his or her life, moves to a new location or changes their phone number, makes new friends, changes schools or jobs, fears being alone, or fears things associated with the place

or circumstances of the sexual assault. After that, victims reorganize and prioritize their lives, making choices, which Burgess and Holmstrom say is healthy. According to them, "sexual assault is the ultimate loss of personal control." Knowing that a CSA problem exists and what victim suffers from are two steps toward acquiring help for the CSA victim.

Knowing how the healing process for victims of CSA begins is also helpful towards restoration. I interviewed a child sexual abuse counselor and she said, "There are different kinds of therapy." They include, play therapy, art therapy, narrative therapy and group therapy.

The Bering Straits region does not lend itself to group therapy because a few of the Village Based Counselors (VBC) (*these are counselors usually associated with clinics*

in a given village) have not had enough training yet to get one started. In the Nome area, no clinicians are available to get one started because they are travelling around the region and area and are short-staffed. One thing I brought up with the

*Reported or not,
child sexual abuse is a problem
that needs to be addressed
and dealt with in a positive way.*

*I remember feeling
disgust, shame, or guilt
while appearing calm.*

(Continued on next page)

Child Sexual Abuse in the Bering Straits Region

counselor was the fact that, in our village, the VBC tried to get different groups started, but the circle of trust was broken. The circle of trust is the most important part of group therapy, and they are afraid to have it happen to them. There is just way too much gossip in the village.

Another kind of therapy involves the parents and a moderator in the counseling of the CSA victim. The kind of therapy used depends on how long the abuse has been going on and what is best suited to the child's needs. Therapy can take anywhere from six weeks to six months, but the child can carry the trauma throughout their lives. What a clinician does through therapy is to teach the victims coping skills to help them deal with suicidal thoughts and depression because self-esteem is always an issue. I am so glad to have been taught to think positively through therapy, reading, and talking to people who used to be negative thinkers. All of these things make a big difference.

The clinician from Norton Sound Health Corporation says there are workbooks that specifically target sexual abuse. These workbooks include topics on anger management, coping skills, self-esteem, anxiety issues, and identifying feelings. They teach CSA victims to get in touch with their feelings and they discuss how their bodies respond to CSA. Victims have a tendency to dissociate themselves from their bodies to what is happening around them. When the sexual abuse has happened frequently, this dissociation is a common reaction.

Therapy for dreams and nightmares treat a victim's tendency to hold secrets and not communicate with people, and there is also therapy for kids who have to go to court that helps them prepare to face the perpetrator of the CSA. A child may or may not get the help she or he needs and sometimes, whether a child gets help or not depends on how child sexual abuse is viewed by the community.

My interviews suggested to me that how the community sees CSA depends on the viewpoint of different generations in the community. For example, someone in their thirties might be more willing to talk about sexual issues or CSA than an elderly person. People in their forties were told not to talk about such things. The lack of communication about CSA seems to have lead to destructive circle after destructive circle.

According to the thirty-something people, CSA was something that happened to them and they were able to tell someone about it, but they could never see themselves asking

for therapy because there is so much shame and fear of being judged and gossiped about. They talked about the abuse, but it was mostly buddies telling secrets to buddies.

According to the people in their forties, CSA was something they absolutely could not mention when they were young. If they said they were sexually abused or molested, they were blamed by family and community members. It was their fault. For them, CSA was something they told someone about many years later. They never got any help at all, and the wounds of the sexual abuse and all the problems associated with it have just festered. These are the people who have spent much of their lives abusing drugs or alcohol because they were not allowed to talk about the pain they suffered.

People in their fifties either had no idea CSA occurred, or it was forbidden to ever mention child sexual abuse. The same goes for the people in their sixties and seventies.

Many of these people are unable to get help because of the shame, blame, guilt, and misconceptions that surround getting help for a problem that is so much more widespread than people are willing to admit.

It is very hard to admit to someone that you have been sexually abused, but it is the best thing a person can do for one's self. Anyone who has been victimized by CSA should get help through some type of counseling because it is important for the healing process. Norman Vincent Peale once said, "The secret of life isn't what happens to you but what you do with what happens to you."



Notes:

* Ann Wobert Burgess D.N.S.C. and Lynda Lytle Holmstrom, PhD. "Rape Trauma Syndrome" *American Journal of Psychiatry* 131:9, September 1974.

** Confidential interviews of various residents in the Bearing Straits region conducted by Karlene Sagoonick, March and April 2004.

NBER WORKING PAPER SERIES

DOES CHILD ABUSE CAUSE CRIME?

Janet Currie
Erdal Tekin

Working Paper 12171
<http://www.nber.org/papers/w12171>

NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH
1050 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
April 2006

We would like to thank Neil Guterman, Christina Paxson, Chris Ruhm, Joyce Tabor, Volkan Topalli, and participants in seminars at the City University of New York, Columbia's School Social Work, Columbia's Teachers College, 2005 Population Association of America Meetings, 2005 IZA/SOLE Meetings, 2005 SEA Meetings, Georgia State University, MDRC, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Koc University for helpful comments. Roy Wada provided excellent research assistance. The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Bureau of Economic Research.

©2006 by Janet Currie and Erdal Tekin. All rights reserved. Short sections of text, not to exceed two paragraphs, may be quoted without explicit permission provided that full credit, including © notice, is given to the source.

Does Child Abuse Cause Crime?
Janet Currie and Erdal Tekin
NBER Working Paper No. 12171
April 2006
JEL No. I1, K4

ABSTRACT

Child maltreatment, which includes both child abuse and child neglect, is a major social problem. This paper focuses on measuring the effects of child maltreatment on crime using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). We focus on crime because it is one of the most socially costly potential outcomes of maltreatment, and because the proposed mechanisms linking maltreatment and crime are relatively well elucidated in the literature. Our work addresses many limitations of the existing literature on child maltreatment. First, we use a large national sample, and investigate different types of abuse in a similar framework. Second, we pay careful attention to identifying the causal impact of abuse, by using a variety of statistical methods that make differing assumptions. These methods include: Ordinary Least Squares (OLS), propensity score matching estimators, and twin fixed effects. Finally, we examine the extent to which the effects of maltreatment vary with socio-economic status (SES), gender, and the severity of the maltreatment. We find that maltreatment approximately doubles the probability of engaging in many types of crime. Low SES children are both more likely to be mistreated and suffer more damaging effects. Boys are at greater risk than girls, at least in terms of increased propensity to commit crime. Sexual abuse appears to have the largest negative effects, perhaps justifying the emphasis on this type of abuse in the literature. Finally, the probability of engaging in crime increases with the experience of multiple forms of maltreatment as well as the experience of Child Protective Services (CPS) investigation.

Janet Currie
Department of Economics
Columbia University
420 W 118th St.
New York, NY 10027
and NBER
jc2663@columbia.edu

Erdal Tekin
Department of Economics
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies
Georgia State University
P.O. Box 3992
Atlanta, GA 30302-3992
and NBER
tekin@gsu.edu

Full paper available at: http://www.nber.org/papers/w12171.pdf?new_window=1

The Prevention of Childhood Sexual Abuse

David Finkelhor

Summary

David Finkelhor examines initiatives to prevent child sexual abuse, which have focused on two primary strategies—offender management and school-based educational programs. Recent major offender management initiatives have included registering sex offenders, notifying communities about their presence, conducting background employment checks, controlling where offenders can live, and imposing longer prison sentences. Although these initiatives win approval from both the public and policy makers, little evidence exists that they are effective in preventing sexual abuse. Moreover, these initiatives, cautions Finkelhor, are based on an overly stereotyped characterization of sexual abusers as pedophiles, guileful strangers who prey on children in public and other easy-access environments and who are at high risk to re-offend once caught. In reality the population is much more diverse. Most sexual abusers are not strangers or pedophiles; many (about a third) are themselves juveniles. Many have relatively low risks for re-offending once caught. Perhaps the most serious shortcoming to offender management as a prevention strategy, Finkelhor argues, is that only a small percentage of new offenders have a prior sex offense record that would have involved them in the management system. He recommends using law enforcement resources to catch more undetected offenders and concentrating intensive management efforts on those at highest risk to re-offend.

Finkelhor explains that school-based educational programs teach children such skills as how to identify dangerous situations, refuse an abuser's approach, break off an interaction, and summon help. The programs also aim to promote disclosure, reduce self-blame, and mobilize bystanders. Considerable evaluation research exists about these programs, suggesting that they achieve certain of their goals. Research shows, for example, that young people can and do acquire the concepts. The programs may promote disclosure and help children not to blame themselves. But studies are inconclusive about whether education programs reduce victimization. Finkelhor urges further research and development of this approach, in particular efforts to integrate it into comprehensive health and safety promotion curricula.

Finkelhor also points to evidence that supports counseling strategies both for offenders, particularly juveniles, to reduce re-offending, and for victims, to prevent negative mental health and life course outcomes associated with abuse.

www.futureofchildren.org

David Finkelhor is the director of the Crimes against Children Research Center and a professor of sociology at the University of New Hampshire.

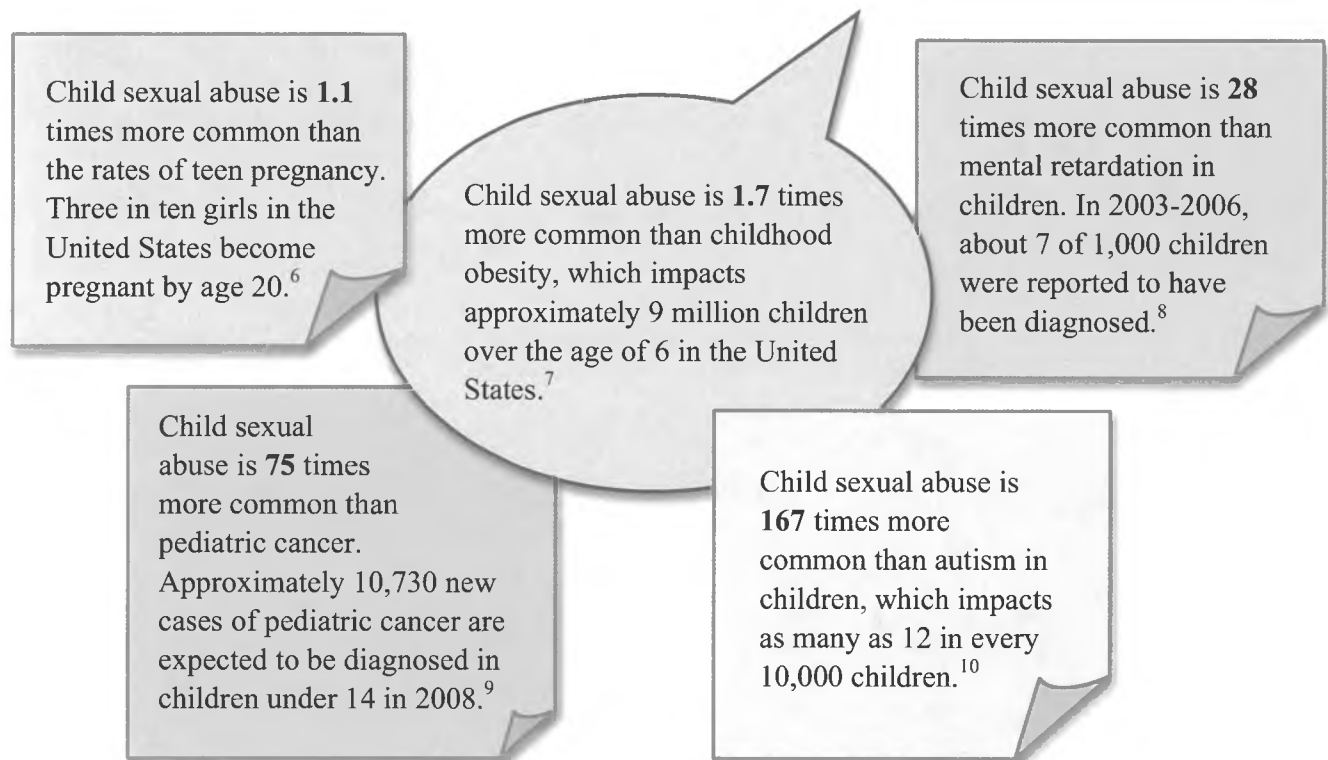
Full article available at:

https://www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/docs/19_02_08.pdf

FACTS FOR PREVENTION: The Health Impact on Children & Youth

One study suggests that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 7 boys will be the victim of some type of sexual abuse or assault before the age of 18.¹ With 75 million children in the United States,² this translates to almost 15 million children who will be sexually victimized and abused over the next 18 years.³ The exploitation of children, and its resulting host of negative health outcomes, should be dealt with as a public health concern.⁴

Consider child sexual abuse in a social context:⁵



Adapted with permission from Chris Newlin, National Children's Advocacy Center

"I am well aware that child sexual abuse and exploitation are huge factors in children's health and in the broader public health. A culture that values its children, invests in its children. It's time to invest in prevention of such abuse." Sharon Cooper, M.D.¹¹

Research indicates that:

- The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study estimates that 25% of females and 16% of males have experienced sexual abuse as children. The same study indicates that sexual abuse has been associated with significant negative short-term and long-term health impacts for the victims.¹²
- Child sexual abuse impacts health care costs across a lifespan. Healthcare costs are 16% higher for women who experienced child sexual abuse and 36% higher if they experienced both sexual and physical abuse.¹³

- Children now spend 45 hours a week with media, 17 hours with their parents, and 30 hours in school. A strong connection has been proven between media exposure and childhood obesity, smoking, and sexual activity.¹⁴
- Media viewing is a critical risk factor for aggression, linking media viewing and physical behavior.¹⁵
- Teens exposed to high levels of televised sexual content were twice as likely to experience a pregnancy during the three-year period, compared to teens with lower levels of exposure.¹⁶
- Childhood sexual abuse can involve a wide number of psychological sequelae, including low self-esteem, anxiety and depression. Numerous studies have noted that child sexual abuse victims are vulnerable to later sexual victimization as well as the link between child sexual abuse and later engagement in high-risk sexual behavior. Survivors of child sexual abuse are more likely to have multiple sex partners, become pregnant as teenagers, and experience sexual assault as adults.¹⁷
- Data from 67,853 women in a Nurses Health Survey II, analyzed in 2009, examined lifetime abuse reported in 2001 with risk of diabetes from 1989-2005. The results showed child or teen physical abuse reported by 54% and sexual abuse by 34% of participants. Moderate to severe physical and sexual abuse in childhood and adolescence have dose-response associations with risk of type 2 diabetes among adult women. This excess risk is partially explained by higher BMI of women with a history of early abuse.¹⁸
- Girls exposed to sexualizing and objectifying media are more likely to develop body image dissatisfaction, eating disorders, depression, low self-esteem and possibly lower academic functioning. The American Psychological Association's Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls noted that consequences of sexualization ranged from mental health issues to negative impact to girls' and women's physical health.¹⁹

1. Dube SR, Anda RF, Whitfield, CL, Brown DW, Felitti VJ, Dong M, Giles WH. Long-Term Consequences of Childhood Sexual Abuse by Gender of Victim. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. 2005; 28:430-438.
2. Table 2: Annual Estimates of the Population by Sex and Selected Age Groups for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2007 (NC-EST2007-02). Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau. Release Date: May 1, 2008.
3. Ibid. Under 18 Males: 37,817,635 (1 in 7 = 5,402,519) Under 18 Females: 36,084,098 (1 in 4 = 9,021,024) for a total of 14,423,543 children under the age of 18.
4. JA Mercy. "Having New Eyes: Viewing Child Sexual Abuse as a Public Health Problem." *A Journal of Research & Treatment*, 1999; Pamela McMahon & Robin Pruett. "Child Sexual Abuse as a Public Health Issue: Recommendations of an Expert Panel." *Behavioral Science*, 2004, volume 11, number 4, pages 257-266.
5. **Extrapolated from:** Newlin, Chris. Keynote Address: Putting Child Abuse Into Social Context: How Does it Relate to Other Issues Affecting Children? 9th Current Thinking/New Directions Conference; Hyannis, MA; September 25-26, 2008. Adapted with permission from the National Children's Advocacy Center, 2008.
6. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. (2006) *Fact Sheet: How is the 3 in 10 statistic calculated?* Washington, DC: Author.
7. Childhood Obesity in the United States: Facts and Figures. (2004) Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. Washington, DC: National Academies.
8. Measure D7: Children Reported to have Mental Retardation, by Race/Ethnicity and Family Income. America's Children and the Environment (ACE). (2000, 2003) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Health Interview Survey.
9. A Snapshot of Pediatric Cancers. (2008) National Cancer Institute. Washington, DC: U.S. National Institutes of Health.
10. National Institutes of Health. (2001). *Fact Sheet: Unraveling Autism*. Bethesda, MD: National Institutes of Health.
11. Dr. Sharon Cooper. Direct quote, 2010.
12. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC). (1997 & 2007) The Adverse Childhood Experience Study. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention.
13. Bonomi, A., M. Anderson, F. Rivara, E. Cannon, P. Fishman, D. Carrell, R. Reid, and R. Thompson. (2008) Health Care Utilization and Costs Associated with Childhood Abuse. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 23(3) 294-300.
14. Nunez-Smith, M., E. Wolf, H. Huang, P. Chen, L. Lee, E. Emanuel, and C. Gross. (2008) Media and Child and Adolescent Health: A Systematic Review. San Francisco, CA: Common Sense Media, Inc.
15. Boxer, P., R. Huesmann, B. Bushman, M. O'Brien, and D. Mocerri. (2008) The Role of Violent Media Preference in Cumulative Developmental Risk for Violence and General Aggression. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*. Article in press. Received 2 July 2008/Accepted 21 August 2008.
16. Chandra, A., S. Martino, R. Collins, M. Elliott, S. Berry, D. Kanouse, and A. Miu. (2008) Does Watching Sex on Television Predict Teen Pregnancy? Findings from A National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. *Pediatrics*. 122(5): 1047-1054.
17. Lalor, K. & McElvaney, R. (2010) Child Sexual Abuse, Links to Later Sexual Exploitation/High-Risk Sexual Behavior, and Prevention/Treatment Programs. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*. 11(4) 169-177.
18. Rich-Edwards, J., Spiegelman, D., et al. (2010) Abuse in Childhood and Adolescence as a Predictor of Type 2 Diabetes in Adult Women. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. 39(6) 529-536.
19. APA Taskforce on the Sexualization of Girls. (2007) Report of the APA Taskforce on the Sexualization of Girls. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.



D DARKNESS TO LIGHT'S
5 STEPS
TO PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN™

A guide for responsible adults

DARKNESS TO LIGHT®

We are a national nonprofit organization that seeks to empower adults to prevent child sexual abuse. Our programs raise awareness and educate adults about how to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.



What is child sexual abuse?

- Any sexual act between an adult and a minor, or between two minors, when one exerts power over the other.
- Forcing, coercing or persuading a child to engage in any type of sexual act. It also includes non-contact acts such as exhibitionism, exposure to pornography, voyeurism and communicating in a sexual manner by phone or Internet.
- Often a traumatic experience for children and teens.
- A crime punishable by law.



This booklet is only the beginning.

Child sexual abuse is a complex problem and this booklet touches on only a small part of it. The information we provide is not a substitute for the advice of professionals or more thorough training. But, taking these *5 Steps* in families and youth settings creates safer communities and helps protect the wellbeing of the children we love.



7 Radcliffe Street, Suite 200, Charleston, SC 29403

© 2013 Darkness to Light. All models are for illustrative purposes only.

5 Steps to Protecting Our Children™

We believe that protecting children from sexual abuse is an adult responsibility.

About 1 in 10 children experience child sexual abuse before their 18th birthday.

Child sexual abuse happens in families, but also in organizations. Children brave terrible abuses alone, and repeatedly, often with no protection. Sometimes adults have simply lacked prevention knowledge, or not had the awareness to recognize signs. Sometimes we've dismissed gut feelings, and missed opportunities for courage. Some have covered up sexual abuse at the expense of our children.



But this is only one part of the truth.

1 in 10 is a rate that is down from previous generations. Our culture is changing.

We're starting to face the pain of child sexual abuse and do what needs to be done.

We can uncover and prevent child sexual abuse – child by child.

We must act as a community.

STEP**1****LEARN THE FACTS**

1 in 10 children are sexually abused. This means realities rather than blind trust should influence our choices regarding children's safety from sexual abuse.

It is likely that you know a child who has been or is being abused.

- Experts estimate that about 1 in 10 children are sexually abused before their 18th birthday.
- Youth are the victims in 66% of all sexual offenses reported to law enforcement.
- Youth are 2.5 times more likely to be raped than adults.
- About 40% of victims are 11 years old or younger.
- 9% of 10-17 year olds receive a sexual request while on the Internet.
- Sexually abused children are at greater risk for psychological, emotional, social and physical problems, often lasting into adulthood.



**Child pornography is child sexual abuse.
All child pornography is illegal.**

A child is being abused whenever sexual acts are recorded in the production of child pornography.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children is also child sexual abuse.

- Anytime money or something of value is promised or exchanged, it is commercial sexual exploitation of children.
- 90% of children who are sexually exploited have a history of child sexual abuse.

Most child victims never report sexual abuse.

If you discover child pornography or commercial sexual exploitation of children, you must call your local law enforcement or the Cyber Tipline® 1-800-THE-LOST, operated by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Or visit <http://www.missingkids.com/CyberTipline> to make a report online.

It's also likely that you know an abuser. The greatest risk to children doesn't come from strangers, but from people we know and trust.

- 90% of children who are sexually abused know their abuser.
 - 30% are abused by family members.
 - 60% are abused by people the family trusts. Those who abuse gain access to the child in a school, church, sports club, etc. and often move into a position of trust within the family.
- Only about 10% are abused by strangers.
- 40% are abused by older or larger youth, like babysitters or cousins.

**People who sexually abuse children
often go out of their way to appear trustworthy.**

Research demonstrates that sexually abused children are more likely to experience serious consequences during childhood and *throughout their lives*. Some of these are:

- Post traumatic stress disorder
- Anxiety and depression
- Substance abuse
- Aggression, oppositionality, and defiance
- Criminal behavior and violent offenses
- Sexual Promiscuity
- Teen pregnancy and motherhood
- Self-inflicted harm
- Delinquency
- Decreased school performance and dropout
- Health problems
- Suicide

STEP 2 MINIMIZE OPPORTUNITY

Eliminate or reduce isolated, one-on-one situations to decrease risk for abuse.

More than 80% of sexual abuse incidents happen in isolated, one-on-one situations with a child.

- Choose group situations and have multiple adults supervise children.
- Scan the physical environment for hidden areas and correct dangers.
- Make sure interactions can be observed and interrupted.
- Remember that older youth should not be in isolated, one-on-one situations with younger children.

Ask for these best practices in schools and organizations that serve your children.

- Background checks
- In-person interviews for new hires and volunteers
- Personal and professional reference checks
- A code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- A policy for responding to disclosures and discoveries of child sexual abuse
- A policy for responding to inappropriate behavior, breaches in policy, and suspicions of abuse
- Prevention training for employees, volunteers, parents, and caregivers



**Prevention training for staff, volunteers,
and parents creates a culture of awareness.**

**It gives people the skills
to create safer environments.**

**It makes them more willing to intervene
in unsafe behaviors by adults with children.**

**Prevention training for adults creates
an environment with much less opportunity
for those who may offend.**

***Stewards of Children* is a program that teaches adults to:**

- Prevent sexual abuse before it can happen.
- Recognize signs of sexual abuse in children.
- Recognize unsafe behaviors by adults.
- React responsibly when a child discloses, or when an adult discovers or suspects sexual abuse.



Visit D2L.org

- To find a facilitator who can bring *Stewards of Children* to your organization.
- To take *Stewards of Children* online today.

STEP**3****TALK ABOUT IT**

Have open conversations with children about our bodies, sex, and boundaries.

Understand why children are afraid to tell.

- The abuser sometimes threatens the child or a family member.
- The abuser may try to confuse the child about right and wrong.
- Many abusers tell children the abuse is “okay” or “a game.”
- The abuser may shame the child, blame the child, or tell the child that his/her parents will be angry.
- Children are afraid of disrupting or hurting their family.
- Some children who did not initially disclose are afraid to tell when it happens again.
- Some children are too young to understand.

Know how children communicate.

- Children may ask questions about bodies, interactions, or sex, rather than talk directly about something they’ve experienced.
- Children may tell parts of what happened, or pretend it happened to someone else, to check your reaction.
- Children who disclose sexual abuse often tell a trusted adult other than a parent.
- Children will often shut down and refuse to tell more if you respond emotionally or negatively.

***One of the best protections is
our relationship with children.***



Talk openly with children.

Talking about boundaries and sex forges a protective bond between parent and child, and instills knowledge that makes children and teens less vulnerable. Other adults in the child's life can find ways to teach sexual and body safety as well.

- Talk with children when they are young, and use proper names for body parts.
- Tell children what sexual abuse is, and when age appropriate, about sex.
- Tell children what parts of the body others should not touch. Use examples with situations and people in their lives.
- Teach children that they have the right to tell any person "NO" to unwanted or uncomfortable touch.
- Tell children it is not OK for adults or older youth to use sexual words with them, or to act in a sexual way.
- Explain that secrets can be harmful, and if someone asks them to keep a secret, they should tell you about it.
- Teach children not to give out email or home addresses, phone numbers or other personal information while using the Internet or handheld devices.
- Ask children about their online experiences and learn about the sites and services they use.
- Explore with children who their trusted adults are in the settings they frequent.
- Speak and listen quietly and calmly. It's important that children feel safe and loved in all of these discussions.

"No one should touch you where a bathing suit covers."

***"Your whole body is private when you want it to be.
You get to decide who touches you."***

"Sometimes touch might just feel uncomfortable, even if you like the person. Whenever it's uncomfortable, you can say no."

Know the signs of abuse to protect children from further harm.

Learn the signs in children and teens.

Physical signs are not common, but the following should be carefully examined by a professional:

- Bruising, bleeding, redness, rashes, bumps or scabs especially around the genitals
- Urinary tract infections
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Abnormal discharge
- Chronic stomach pain, headaches or other ailments that can't be explained medically

Emotional and behavioral signs are more common.

- Withdrawal
- Depression
- Anger, rebellion, defiance
- Agitation or inability to concentrate
- Fear of situations or people
- Sexual behavior and language that are not age-appropriate
- Falling grades
- Use of alcohol or drugs, especially at a young age
- A change in behavior

Call child protective services or the police in your area.

Use a Children's Advocacy Center whenever possible. To find one, visit the National Children's Alliance at www.nationalchildrensalliance.org or call 1-800-239-9950.

Signs don't always mean sexual abuse, but signs can be a reason to take more interest in the child.

STEP**5****REACT RESPONSIBLY****Understand how to respond to risky behaviors and suspicions or reports of abuse.**

There are 3 reasons we need to react to sexual abuse.

- A child discloses it to us.
- We discover it ourselves.
- We have reason to suspect it.

Disclosure

A child has broken through secrecy, fear, and shame and has chosen you as the person he or she trusts enough to tell. Honor that with attention, compassion and belief.

- Listen calmly and openly.
- Don't fill in the gaps, or rush to "get to the bottom of it."
- Don't ask leading questions about details.
- Ask only open ended questions like, "What happened next?"
Or say, "It's ok to tell me more."
- Believe the child.
- Tell the child he's done nothing wrong.
- Affirm the child's courage.
- Seek the help of a professional who is trained to talk with the child about sexual abuse.

Few reported incidents are false.

Discovery

You've witnessed a sexually abusive act by an adult or youth with a child, or you know by some other way that abuse has taken place. For example, a friend or coworker may have told you something definitive.

In cases of disclosure or discovery, report immediately to local law enforcement or to child protective services in the county in which the child lives.

- Tell the child's name and where the child lives.
- Tell the facts. This may include what the child has told you, or behaviors from the alleged offender that you saw.
- Tell what signs you've seen in the child.
- Tell what access the alleged offender has to the child.

And remember, if you've discovered child pornography, you've discovered sexual abuse. Report child pornography to the police or to the Cyber Tipline at 1-800-THE-LOST.

Suspicion

You've seen signs in a child, or you've witnessed boundary violations by an adult or youth toward a child. ***Suspicion means, at a minimum, you need to set some limits or ask some questions.***

People who offend are rarely seen in the act of sexually abusing a child, but they are often seen breaking rules and pressing boundaries.

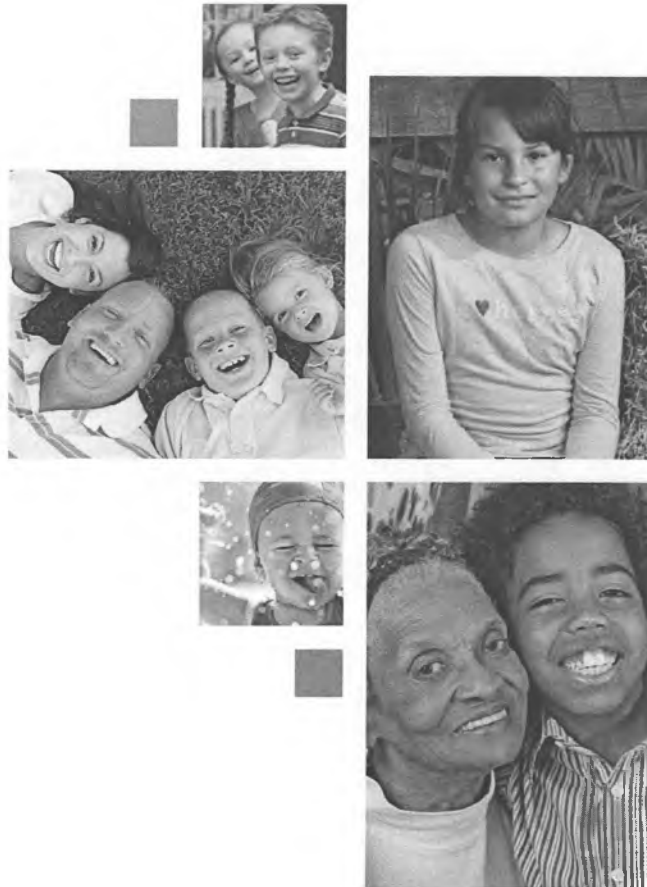
A bystander is a person who witnesses a boundary violation or sees a situation in which a child is vulnerable.

Bystander Intervention

- 1. Describe the inappropriate behavior or the boundary violation to the person who has crossed it.**
"It looks like you're forcing Chloe to kiss and hug. She looks uncomfortable."
- 2. Set a limit with the person who has crossed the boundary.**
"Please stop. We let Chloe decide who she wants to show affection to."
- 3. Move on.**
"Chloe, let's go see what the other children are up to."

If there is a pattern of boundary violations or you've intervened and boundary violations continue, you may have reasonable suspicion. Make a report to the police or child protective services.

***We can make a difference
step by step, and these steps add up
to happier, healthier children
and stronger communities.***



Child Abuse Helplines have staff who are trained to answer questions about suspected child sexual abuse.

Darkness to Light's helpline: 1-866-FOR-LIGHT to be routed to resources in your community.

Childhelp USA National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4-A-CHILD

Children's Advocacy Centers coordinate all the professionals involved in a case (legal, social services, and medical.) If you're unsure about whether to make an official report or just need support, contact a children's advocacy center. The staff will help you evaluate your suspicions and next steps.

To find center near you, contact The National Children's Alliance at www.nationalchildrensalliance.org or 1-800-239-9950.



This *5 Steps to Protecting Our Children* booklet is part of a larger training program called *Stewards of Children*.

Visit D2L.org to take the *Stewards of Children* training online, or to find a facilitator to lead it as training for your organization.

The references for this booklet can be found at D2L.org/5steps



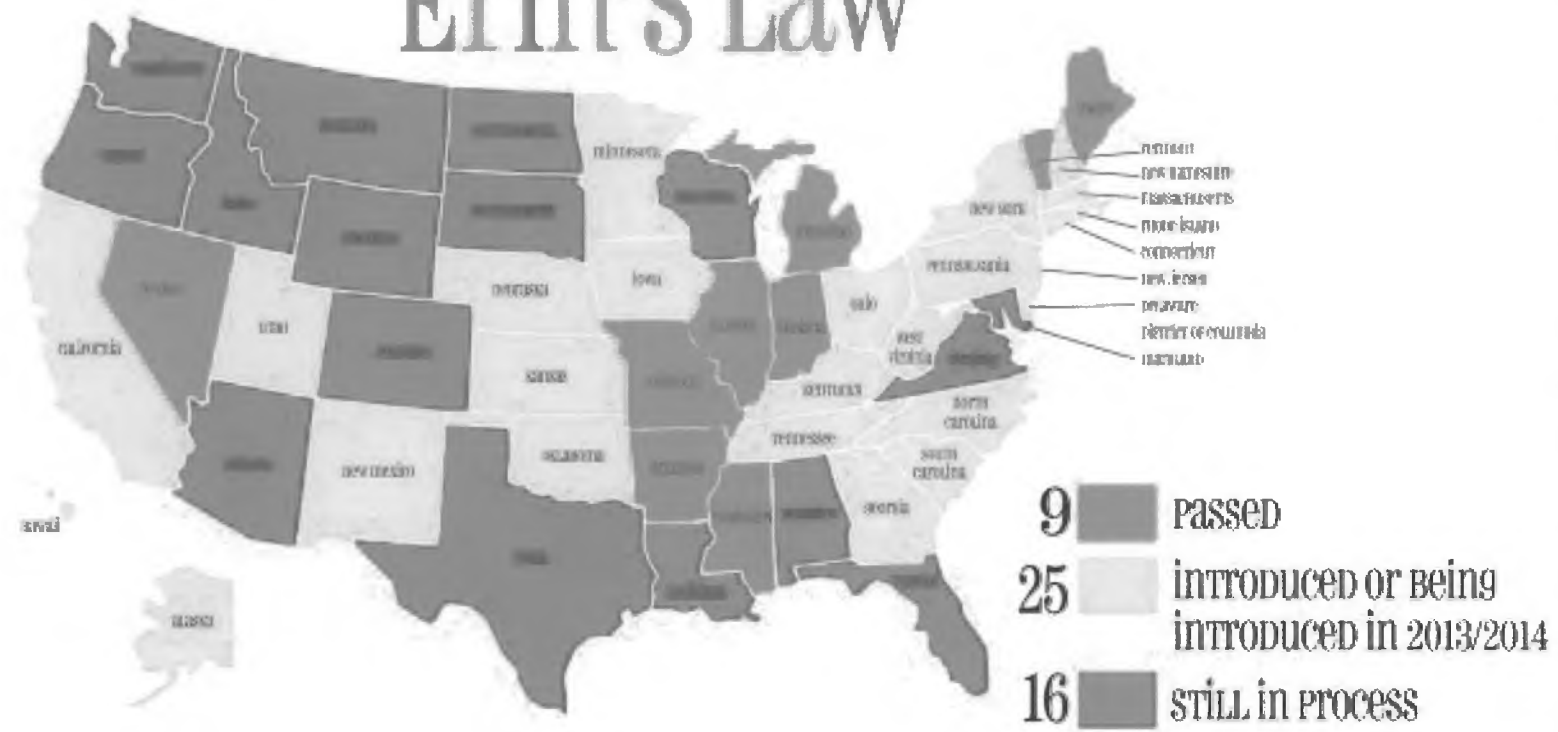
© 2013 Darkness to Light. All rights reserved.

There are 42 million sexual abuse survivors in America; 3 million are children, which would fill 46 national football stadiums.

93 percent of children know their abuser; 7 percent is by a stranger.

1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before the age of 18.

ERIN'S LAW



current as of 01-28-14

we teach kids 8 ways to say no to drugs, but where are the 8 ways on how to get away and tell today?



January 28, 2014

The Honorable Lance Kinzer, Chairperson
House Committee on Judiciary
Statehouse, Room 165-W
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Representative Kinzer:

SUBJECT: Fiscal Note for HB 2432 by House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice

In accordance with KSA 75-3715a, the following fiscal note concerning HB 2432 is respectfully submitted to your committee.

HB 2432 would require each school district to adopt and implement a plan to address child sexual abuse for each of its schools offering any of grades kindergarten through six. The plan would be required to include training and education for teachers in order to assist with teacher awareness of child sexual abuse, as well as age-appropriate instruction for students that is related to child sexual abuse.

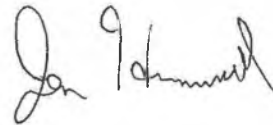
Prior to providing any instruction on sexual abuse, each district would be required to inform parents that they may examine and review the educational materials and decide if the child would be instructed with the materials. If a parent decides that his or her child should not be taught using the materials, the parent would have to inform the school in writing. The State Board of Education would develop materials and guidelines that local boards of education could use in implementing a plan for sexual abuse education.

Estimated State Fiscal Effect				
	FY 2014 SGF	FY 2014 All Funds	FY 2015 SGF	FY 2015 All Funds
Revenue	--	--	--	--
Expenditure	--	--	\$28,600	\$28,600
FTE Pos.	--	--	--	--

The Honorable Lance Kinzer, Chairperson
January 28, 2014
Page 2—HB 2432

The Department of Education estimates that enactment of HB 2432 would require additional expenditures totaling \$28,600, all from the State General Fund, or approximately \$100 for each of the state's 286 school districts. The estimate include the cost of engaging outside consultants and agencies in the area of child sexual abuse, as well as making the materials accessible to educators and parents on the Department's website. Any fiscal effect associated with HB 2432 is not reflected in *The FY 2015 Governor's Budget Report*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon Hummell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jon Hummell,
Interim Director of the Budget

cc: Dale Dennis, Education



Senate Fiscal Agency
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536

BILL ANALYSIS



Telephone: (517) 373-5383
Fax: (517) 373-1986

Senate Bills 1112, 1113, and 1114 (as enacted)
Sponsor: Senator John Proos (S.B. 1112)
Senator Rebekah Warren (S.B. 1113)
Senator Judy K. Emmons (S.B. 1114)
Senate Committee: Health Policy
House Committee: Education

Date Completed: 2-6-13

CONTENT

Senate Bill 1112 amended the Child Protection Law to do the following:

- Create the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children.
- Require the Task Force to make recommendations for reducing child sexual abuse in Michigan, and for school policies that address the sexual abuse of children.
- Require the Task Force to submit to the Governor and the Legislature a final report containing its recommendations within 365 days.
- Abolish the Task Force when the final report is submitted.

Senate Bill 1113 amended the Revised School Code to require the board of a school district or intermediate school district or board of directors of a public school academy to adopt and implement a policy addressing sexual abuse of children.

Senate Bill 1114 amended the Revised School Code to require a pupil's parent or guardian to be given advance notice of pupil instruction under the policy adopted under Senate Bill 1113, and allow the parent or guardian to have the pupil excused from the instruction.

Senate Bill 1113 was tie-barred to both of the other bills, which were tie-barred to Senate Bill 1113. All of the bills took effect on January 9, 2013.

PUBLIC ACTS 593-595 of 2012

Senate Bill 1112

The bill created the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children within the Department of Human Services (DHS). The Governor, in consultation with the Department, must appoint members to the Task Force. The appointment of members must reflect the State's geographic diversity. Task Force members must include the following:

- Individuals who have experience and expertise in the fields of intervention and prevention of child abuse and neglect, education, or child welfare.
- One representative each from the Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence, the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board, and the Michigan chapter of the National Children's Alliance.
- An administrator or staff member of a child assessment center.
- A licensed therapist trained to counsel or treat child sexual abuse victims.
- A circuit court judge or his or her designee.
- A member of the board of a school district, intermediate school district, or public school academy.

The DHS Director or his or her designee must serve as the Task Force's presiding officer. Task Force members will serve without compensation and may not be reimbursed for their expenses.

The Task Force must make recommendations for reducing child sexual abuse in Michigan, as well as for school policies that address the sexual abuse of children. In making those recommendations, the Task Force must do all of the following:

- Gather information concerning child sexual abuse throughout the State.
- Receive reports and testimony from individuals, State and local agencies, community-based organizations, and other public and private organizations.
- Review steps taken and programs established in other states to reduce child sexual abuse.
- Create goals for State policy that are aimed at preventing child sexual abuse.
- Develop a child sexual abuse protocol to be used by all community partners in order to help identify, prevent, and investigate child abuse.

In addition, the Task Force must create recommendations and guidelines for all of the following:

- School policies addressing sexual abuse of children according to Section 1505 of the Revised School Code (enacted by Senate Bill 1113).
- Age-appropriate, evidence-based child sexual abuse awareness.
- School personnel's appropriate response to pupils affected by sexual abuse.
- The provision of educational material to parents and guardians on the warning signs of child sexual abuse and information on assistance and referrals or resources.

The recommendations may include proposals for specific statutory changes and methods to foster cooperation among State agencies and between the State and local government.

Within 365 days after its members are appointed, the Task Force must submit a final report with the recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature.

The Task Force must consult with DHS employees who work on child protection matters, the Department of State Police, the State Board of Education, and any other State agency or department necessary to accomplish the Task Force's responsibilities.

Upon written request from a child or his or her parent or legal guardian, the child must be excused, without penalty, from participating in the Task Force's information-gathering efforts.

Upon submission of the required final report, the Task Force will be abolished.

Senate Bill 1113

The bill allows the board of a school district or intermediate school district (ISD) or the board of directors of a public school academy to adopt and implement a policy addressing sexual abuse of children. If a board chooses to do so, the policy must be substantially consistent with the recommendations and guidelines set by the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children. The policy may address any of the following, but is not limited to these topics:

- Age-appropriate, evidence-based curriculum and instruction for pupils in grades pre-K to five concerning child sexual abuse awareness and prevention.
- Training for school personnel on child sexual abuse, including training on supportive, appropriate response to disclosure of abuse.
- Available counseling and resources for pupils affected by sexual abuse.
- Emotional and educational support for a pupil affected by sexual abuse to allow the pupil to continue to be successful in school.
- The provision of educational information to parents or guardians on the warning signs of a child's being sexually abused and information on needed assistance, referral, or resources.

The educational information may be provided in the student handbook distributed to pupils and parents and guardians.

In addition, the policy may address a review of the system in place in the school district, ISD, or public school academy to educate and support school personnel who are required to report child abuse or neglect under the Child Protection Law, and the process in place for making those mandatory reports. The bill states that this review should include an analysis of the level of compliance with the mandatory reporting

requirements and suggestions to improve compliance.

Any instruction, training, or information provided pursuant to the policy must be substantially consistent with the Task Force's guidelines and recommendations, and may address, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- Methods for increasing teacher, pupil, and parent awareness of issues regarding sexual abuse of children, including knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a child might be a victim of sexual abuse.
- Actions that a child who is a victim of sexual abuse should take to obtain assistance and intervention.
- Available counseling options for pupils affected by sexual abuse.

Pupil instruction under the bill is subject to Section 1505a of the Code (which Senate Bill 1114 added).

Senate Bill 1114

Under the bill, if a school district, ISD, or public school academy provides instruction to pupils on child sexual abuse pursuant to the policy adopted under Senate Bill 1113, a pupil may not be given the instruction unless his or her parent or guardian is notified in advance of the instruction and its content, given a prior opportunity to review the materials to be used, and notified in advance of his or her right to have the pupil excused from the instruction. Upon the written request of a pupil's parent or legal guardian, the pupil must be excused from the instruction without penalty or loss of academic credit.

MCL 722.632b (S.B. 1112)
380.1505 (S.B. 1113)
380.1505a (S.B. 1114)

Legislative Analyst: Julie Cassidy

FISCAL IMPACT

Senate Bill 1112

Creation of the Task Force will result in marginal costs to the State and possibly to local units of government. Associated costs could include printing, organizing and posting meetings, and distributing a final report.

Senate Bill 1113

The option for a school board to adopt and implement a policy on sexual abuse likely will result in a cost to school districts that choose to adopt a policy and do not already have such a policy in place. The extent of the cost will depend upon the type and breadth of sexual abuse policy that is adopted and implemented. The cost is therefore inestimable, but will be at the discretion of the district.

Senate Bill 1114

The requirement for schools to inform parents of upcoming instruction on child sexual abuse likely will cause minimal increases in administrative costs, associated with the costs of notification.

Fiscal Analyst: Frances Carley
Kathryn Summers

S1112\1112es

This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

Consolidated Fiscal Note – 2013-14 Session

Bill #: H1316-0 **Complete Date:** 04/22/13

Chief Author: LESCH, JOHN

Title: ERIN'S LAW-CHILD SEX ABUSE SCHL PLCY

Fiscal Impact	Yes	No
State	X	
Local	X	
Fee/Departmental Earnings		X
Tax Revenue		X

Agencies: Education Department (04/17/13)
 Health Dept (04/22/13)
 Legislature (04/22/13)

Public Safety Dept (04/17/13)
 Human Services Dept (04/19/13)

This table reflects fiscal impact to state government. Local government impact is reflected in the narrative only.

Dollars (in thousands)	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Net Expenditures					
-- No Impact --					
Revenues					
-- No Impact --					
Net Cost <Savings>					
-- No Impact --					
Total Cost <Savings> to the State					

	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Full Time Equivalents					
-- No Impact --					
Total FTE					

Consolidated EBO Comments

It is unclear which agency will staff the advisory taskforce and coordinate the report due February 15, 2014. No agency assigned to this fiscal note assumed staffing responsibilities. The agency responsible to staff the taskforce will incur administrative expenses through February 16, 2014.

EBO Signature: KRISTY SWANSON
 Date: 04/22/13 Phone: 651-201-8082

Fiscal Note – 2013-14 Session

Bill #: H1316-0 **Complete Date:** 04/17/13

Chief Author: LESCH, JOHN

Title: ERIN'S LAW-CHILD SEX ABUSE SCHL PLCY

Fiscal Impact	Yes	No
State		X
Local	X	
Fee/Departmental Earnings		X
Tax Revenue		X

Agency Name: Education Department

This table reflects fiscal impact to state government. Local government impact is reflected in the narrative only.

Dollars (in thousands)	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Expenditures					
-- No Impact --					
Less Agency Can Absorb					
-- No Impact --					
Net Expenditures					
-- No Impact --					
Revenues					
-- No Impact --					
Net Cost <Savings>					
-- No Impact --					
Total Cost <Savings> to the State					

	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Full Time Equivalents					
-- No Impact --					
Total FTE					

Bill Description

Section 1 of this bill requires school districts to adopt and implement a policy to prevent and address child sexual abuse. The requirements for the policy are listed.

Section 2 creates an advisory task force on preventing child sexual abuse. The membership of the task force includes the commissioner of education or the commissioner's designee. The task force is required to recommend to the commissioner of education and the legislature how schools can help reduce child sexual abuse in Minnesota. A report is due by February 15, 2014 at which time the task force expires.

Assumptions

One representative from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) will participate in the task force.

MDE will not be in charge of coordinating the task force and the required report.

There is no compensation for task force members.

Expenditure and/or Revenue Formula

None

Long-Term Fiscal Considerations

Task force expires on February 16, 2014.

Local Government Costs

School districts will incur costs creating and implementing policies to prevent and address child sexual abuse.

Agency Contact Name: Dykoski, Karen 651-582-8766

FN Coord Signature: KAREN DYKOSKI

Date: 04/17/13 Phone: 651-582-8766

EBO Comments

I have reviewed this Fiscal Note for accuracy and content.

EBO Signature: KRISTY SWANSON

Date: 04/17/13 Phone: 651-201-8082

Fiscal Note – 2013-14 Session

Bill #: H1316-0 **Complete Date:** 04/19/13

Chief Author: LESCH, JOHN

Title: ERIN'S LAW-CHILD SEX ABUSE SCHL PLCY

Fiscal Impact	Yes	No
State		X
Local		X
Fee/Departmental Earnings		X
Tax Revenue		X

Agency Name: Human Services Dept

This table reflects fiscal impact to state government. Local government impact is reflected in the narrative only.

Dollars (in thousands)	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Expenditures					
-- No Impact --					
Less Agency Can Absorb					
-- No Impact --					
Net Expenditures					
-- No Impact --					
Revenues					
-- No Impact --					
Net Cost <Savings>					
-- No Impact --					
Total Cost <Savings> to the State					

	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Full Time Equivalent					
-- No Impact --					
Total FTE					

Narrative for HF1316-0

Bill Description

This bill establishes a new law under Minnesota Statutes 2012, chapter 121A that requires school district policies to address child sexual abuse and creates an advisory task force on the prevention of child sexual abuse.

Assumptions

Section 2 of the bill creates an advisory task force on preventing child sexual abuse, to include the Commissioners of Education, Health, Human Services and Public Safety. It is assumed that a representative of the Department of Human Services (DHS) would participate in the task force that would make recommendations on how schools can help reduce child sexual abuse in Minnesota and that DHS would not have the lead in convening the advisory task force. Participation would fall under the current scope of work of the department, therefore there are no fiscal impacts to DHS.

Expenditure and/or Revenue Formula

Fiscal Summary (000's)						
Fund	BACT	Description	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017
		Total Net Fiscal Impact	0	0	0	0
		FTE				

Long-Term Fiscal Considerations

Local Government Costs

References/Sources

Christeen Borsheim, Director Child Safety & Permanency
Children & Family Services
Minnesota Department of Human Services
(651) 431-3857

Agency Contact Name: Jenny Ehrnst 651-431-3831
FN Coord Signature: JAYNE RANKIN
Date: 04/19/13 Phone: 651-431-3432

EBO Comments

I have reviewed this Fiscal Note for accuracy and content.

EBO Signature: SUSAN MELCHIONNE
Date: 04/19/13 Phone: 651-201-8035

Fiscal Note – 2013-14 Session

Bill #: H1316-0 **Complete Date:** 04/22/13

Chief Author: LESCH, JOHN

Title: ERIN'S LAW-CHILD SEX ABUSE SCHL PLCY

Fiscal Impact	Yes	No
State		X
Local		X
Fee/Departmental Earnings		X
Tax Revenue		X

Agency Name: Health Dept

This table reflects fiscal impact to state government. Local government impact is reflected in the narrative only.

Dollars (in thousands)	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Expenditures					
-- No Impact --					
Less Agency Can Absorb					
-- No Impact --					
Net Expenditures					
-- No Impact --					
Revenues					
-- No Impact --					
Net Cost <Savings>					
-- No Impact --					
Total Cost <Savings> to the State					

	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Full Time Equivalents					
-- No Impact --					
Total FTE					

Bill Description

This bill requires school districts to adopt and implement a policy to prevent and address child sexual abuse and establishes an advisory task force on preventing child sexual abuse to recommend to the legislature how to reduce child sexual abuse throughout Minnesota.

Section 2, item (5), indicates that the commissioner of health or the commissioner's designee will be included as a member of the advisory task force.

Assumptions

It is assumed that an existing staff person from the Health Department's Injury and Violence Prevention Unit will be designated by the commissioner to serve on the advisory task force on preventing child sexual abuse. Serving on the task force will be considered part of that staff person's duties. Therefore, this legislation will not have a fiscal impact on MDH.

Expenditure and/or Revenue Formula

No fiscal impact.

Long-Term Fiscal Considerations

None

Local Government Impact

None

References/Sources

Child sexual abuse is within the current scope of the Injury and Violence Prevention Unit.

FN Coord Signature: DAVE GREENMAN
Date: 04/22/13 Phone: 651-201-5235

EBO Comments

I have reviewed this Fiscal Note for accuracy and content.

EBO Signature: SUSAN MELCHIONNE
Date: 04/22/13 Phone: 651-201-8035

Fiscal Note – 2013-14 Session

Bill #: H1316-0 **Complete Date:** 04/22/13

Chief Author: LESCH, JOHN

Title: ERIN'S LAW-CHILD SEX ABUSE SCHL PLCY

Fiscal Impact	Yes	No
State		X
Local		X
Fee/Departmental Earnings		X
Tax Revenue		X

Agency Name: Legislature

This table reflects fiscal impact to state government. Local government impact is reflected in the narrative only.

Dollars (in thousands)	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Expenditures					
-- No Impact --					
Less Agency Can Absorb					
-- No Impact --					
Net Expenditures					
-- No Impact --					
Revenues					
-- No Impact --					
Net Cost <Savings>					
-- No Impact --					
Total Cost <Savings> to the State					

	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Full Time Equivalents					
-- No Impact --					
Total FTE					

Bill Description

HF 1316 creates the Advisory Task Force on Preventing Child Sexual Abuse. The 14 member task force will be composed of two representatives, two senators, four state employees and six public members. The Department of Education, Health and Human Services, and Public Safety will provide staff assistance to the task force. The task force will submit a report of its recommendations to the Department of Education and the Legislature by February 15, 2014.

Task force members will serve without compensation and shall not be reimbursed for their expenses. The task force expires on February 16, 2014.

Assumptions

This bill has no fiscal impact on the Legislature since the legislative members of the task force must serve without compensation or reimbursement of expense.

Expenditure and/or Revenue Formula

N/A

Long-Term Fiscal Considerations

N/A

Local Government Costs

N/A

References/Sources

Greg Hubinger, Legislative Coordinating Commission

FN Coord Signature: DIANE HENRY-WANGENSTEEN
Date: 04/19/13 Phone: 651-296-1121

EBO Comments

I have reviewed this Fiscal Note for accuracy and content.

EBO Signature: MICAH INTERMILL
Date: 04/22/13 Phone: 651-201-8044

Fiscal Note – 2013-14 Session

Bill #: H1316-0 **Complete Date:** 04/17/13

Chief Author: LESCH, JOHN

Title: ERIN'S LAW-CHILD SEX ABUSE SCHL PLCY

Fiscal Impact	Yes	No
State	X	
Local		X
Fee/Departmental Earnings		X
Tax Revenue		X

Agency Name: Public Safety Dept

This table reflects fiscal impact to state government. Local government impact is reflected in the narrative only.

Dollars (in thousands)	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Expenditures					
-- No Impact --					
Less Agency Can Absorb					
-- No Impact --					
Net Expenditures					
-- No Impact --					
Revenues					
-- No Impact --					
Net Cost <Savings>					
-- No Impact --					
Total Cost <Savings> to the State					

	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Full Time Equivalents					
-- No Impact --					
Total FTE					

Bill Description

House File 1316 mandates that school districts adopt and implement policies to prevent and address child sexual abuse including eight specific requirements listed in the bill. In addition, the bill creates an advisory task force that would include the Commissioner of Public Safety or his/her designee.

Assumptions

The Department of Public Safety/Office of Justice Program (OJP) would supply the Commissioner's designee.

Expenditure and/or Revenue Formula

Staff time and travel would be required to attend task force meetings. These costs would be absorbed using existing state funds.

Agency Contact Name: Jeri Boisvert 651-201-7305

FN Coord Signature: LARRY FREUND

Date: 04/11/13 Phone: 651-201-7050

EBO Comments

I have reviewed this Fiscal Note for accuracy and content.

EBO Signature: KEITH BOGUT

Date: 04/17/13 Phone: 651-201-8034

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 81ST LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

May 30, 2009

TO: Honorable David Dewhurst , Lieutenant Governor, Senate
Honorable Joe Straus, Speaker of the House, House of Representatives

FROM: John S. O'Brien, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: HB1041 by Parker (relating to school district policies addressing sexual abuse of children and establishment of a state strategy to reduce child abuse and neglect and improve child welfare.), **Conference Committee Report**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would create a 9-member task force to establish a strategy for reducing child abuse and neglect and improving child welfare. The provisions relating to the task force would take effect on September 1, 2009 and would expire on September 1, 2011. It is assumed that any costs associated with the bill would be minimal and could be absorbed within available resources.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

Costs for school districts, in implementing the bill's requirement to develop and implement a policy addressing sexual abuse of children, are not expected to be significant.

Source Agencies: 530 Family and Protective Services, Department of, 537 State Health Services,
Department of, 696 Department of Criminal Justice

LBB Staff: JOB, JSp, CL, NM, MB



Approved: 05/17/12 *MAC*

125th MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 1705

LR 2353(05)

Resolve, To Create the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children

Fiscal Note for Bill as Engrossed with:

C "A" (H-796)

S "A" (S-571)

Committee: Health and Human Services

Fiscal Note

Legislative Cost/Study

Legislative Cost/Study

The general operating expenses of this task force are projected to be \$2,430 in fiscal year 2012-13, assuming 4 task force meetings. The Legislature's budget includes \$10,000 for studies to be conducted during the interim after the 2nd Regular Session. The Legislative Council has authorized funding for this task force from that budget.

Fiscal Detail and Notes

Additional costs to the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services associated with department representatives serving on the task force can be absorbed within the departments' existing budgeted resources.

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
OVERSIGHT DIVISION

FISCAL NOTE

L.R. No.: 0248-02
Bill No.: Truly Agreed To and Finally Passed SCS for SB 54
Subject: Education, Elementary and Secondary; Teachers; Elementary and Secondary Education Department; Children and Minors; Highway Patrol; Social Services Department
Type: Original
Date: June 1, 2011

Bill Summary: This bill creates the Amy Hestir Student Protection Act and Erin's Law.

FISCAL SUMMARY

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE FUND			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
General Revenue	(\$105,750)	\$0	\$0
Total Estimated Net Effect on General Revenue Fund	(\$105,750)	\$0	\$0

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON OTHER STATE FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>Other</u> State Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Numbers within parentheses: () indicate costs or losses.
 This fiscal note contains 11 pages.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FEDERAL FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Federal Funds	(\$105,750)	\$0	\$0
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>All</u> Federal Funds	(\$105,750)	\$0	\$0

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Total Estimated Net Effect on FTE	0	0	0

Estimated Total Net Effect on All funds expected to exceed \$100,000 savings or (cost).

Estimated Net Effect on General Revenue Fund expected to exceed \$100,000 (cost).

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON LOCAL FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Local Government	\$0	\$0	\$0

FISCAL ANALYSIS

ASSUMPTION

The following agencies indicated this bill would have no fiscal impact on their respective agencies: **Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Department of Public Safety - Missouri State Highway Patrol, Office of State Public Defender, Office of State Auditor, Office of Prosecution Services, Office of Administration - Office of Child Advocate.**

Officials from the **Department of Public Safety - Office of the Director** assume any costs associated with this bill may be absorbed with existing resources.

Officials from the **Department of Health and Senior Services** state this bill will have no fiscal impact on their agency.

Officials from the **Department of Social Services - Division of Youth Services and Children's Division** state this bill will have no fiscal impact on these respective divisions.

According to officials from the **Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR)**, this bill should not create any additional fiscal impact above current appropriations to JCAR.

Officials from the **Office of State Courts Administrator** state this bill will have no fiscal impact on the Courts.

Officials from the **Department of Mental Health** state this bill would not appear to add any requirement or responsibility to the their agency that would result in a fiscal impact.

According to officials from the **Office of Secretary of State (SOS)**, many bills considered by the General Assembly include provisions allowing or requiring agencies to submit rules and regulations to implement the proposal. The SOS is provided with core funding to handle a certain amount of normal activity resulting from each year's legislative session. The fiscal impact for this fiscal note to the SOS for Administrative Rules is less than \$2,500.

Oversight assumes the SOS could absorb the costs of printing and distributing regulations related to this proposal. If multiple bills pass which require the printing and distribution of regulations at substantial costs, the SOS could request funding through the appropriation process. Any decisions to raise fees to defray costs would likely be made in subsequent fiscal years.

ASSUMPTION (continued)

Officials from the **Department of Corrections (DOC)** state that, currently, the DOC cannot predict the number of new commitments which may result from the creation of the offense(s) outlined in this proposal. An increase in commitments depends on the utilization by prosecutors and the actual sentences imposed by the court.

If additional persons are sentenced to the custody of the DOC due to the provisions of this legislation, the DOC will incur a corresponding increase in operational cost through supervision provided by the Board of Probation and Parole (FY10 average of \$3.92 per offender, per day or an annual cost of \$1,431 per offender).

In summary, supervision by the DOC through probation would result in some additional costs, but it is assumed the impact would be \$0 or a minimal amount that could be absorbed within existing resources.

Officials from the **Office of the Attorney General (AGO)** identify two provisions in this bill that may result in additional costs to AGO:

§162.068.3 requires that, if a school employee provides certain information regarding personnel information of a fellow employee (presumably to a potential employer), the AGO would represent the employee providing the information in the event that employee is sued for providing it. Because AGO cannot project the number of cases that could be generated from this provision, AGO assumes that costs would be unknown but under \$100,000 per year, but if there is a significant increase in claims over time, the AGO may seek appropriations to adequately enforce the proposal.

Oversight assumes the that cases that might be generated due to this bill are speculative and for fiscal note purposes only, will assign no fiscal impact.

§168.071 provides some additional crimes which, if committed by a licensed teacher, would subject the teacher to automatic license revocation. Because the AGO handles these revocation cases before DESE, AGO assumes that this amended section could generate additional cases in the event a licensee commits one of the newly enumerated crimes. AGO assumes that any costs associated with this provision could be absorbed within existing resources, but if there is a significant increase in claims over time, the AGO may seek appropriation to adequately enforce the proposal.

ASSUMPTION (continued)

§168.133

Officials from the **Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)** state that OA-ITSD has determined that automation will be required to share data between DESE, Department of Health and Senior Services, Department of Public Safety, Department of Corrections, and Department of Mental Health. Additional work by the licensure staff would be required as well.

Currently the certificated and non-certificated school employees are not always kept in the same data storage area. In order to make this process the most efficient, that would need to change. Because of outdated and unsupported software, a new system is currently in process of being developed. That system is estimated at \$1.5 million and is being funded primarily through a federal grant. This system also would accomplish the goal of verifying all employees are on the Family Care Safety Registry and Access Line (FCSR) system, once that system is fully automated. This system also would accomplish the goal of verifying the appropriateness of Social Security Numbers and gather information from national clearing houses for infractions in other states.

The annual cost of verifying that all school employees are registered in the FCSR will be approximately \$1,200,000 (\$10 per person for 120,000 certified teachers). In order to accomplish these requirements, DESE will require 1.5 FTE administrative assistant.

DESE further notes that according to officials with the Missouri Highway Patrol, a "RAP-BACK" system is currently being constructed which will automatically perform checks on all persons currently registered in the FCSR; therefore, once this system is implemented, the annual cost to DESE will no longer exist.

Oversight assumes this system will be in place during FY 11, so **Oversight** will be showing no cost to DESE.

§168.133.4 states that the Missouri State Highway Patrol(MSHP) will provide ongoing electronic updates to criminal history background checks. MSHP is currently in the process of establishing a Rapback system that would provide electronic updates to criminal history background checks. It is estimated that the program will be implemented in 2011. Until the MSHP RapBack system is implemented, the annual criminal background check and sex offender registry check will be included as part of the Family Care Safety Registry. Therefore, the MSHP anticipates no fiscal impact.

ASSUMPTION (continued)

Oversight notes that in response to a similar proposal from last session (SCS/SB 631 FN 3358-06) the certificated and non-certificated school employees are not always kept in the same data storage area. Because of outdated and unsupported software, a new system would need to be developed to accomplish the goal of verifying all employees are on the Family Care Safety Registry and Access Line (FCSR) system. That system is estimated at \$1.5 million. This system also would accomplish the goal of verifying the appropriateness of Social Security Numbers and gather information from national clearing houses for infractions in other states. **Oversight** notes that apparently a federal government grant has been obtained to develop the new system.

§210.152.3

According to officials from the **Department of Social Services (DOS)**, §210.152.3 is the only section that has a fiscal impact on DOS business systems. The Family and Children Electronic System (FACES) would require modifications to allow a concluded investigation to be re-opened for review and/or investigation in certain instances up to one year after the children's division rendered a decision. This requirement impacts the Investigation and Assessment and the Case Management components of FACES.

Passage of this proposal would require modifications to FACES allow the re-opening of formerly concluded and closed investigations, including those where the call has been expunged. Effort includes:

- Business requirements definition
- Updates to high level design documents
- Updates to technical specification documents
- Coding and unit testing
- System testing
- Regression testing

Two enhancements would be needed in the Family and Children Electronic System:

1. Modifications required to reopen cases in FACES that have not been expunged:
 - Modify the Appeal and Conclusion to "ReOpen" a closed case. This will invalidate the previous conclusion.
 - o Appeal - 80 hrs
 - o Conclusion - 160 hours
 - o Documentation & Testing -180 hours

ASSUMPTION (continued)

2. Modifications required to re-open cases in FACES where the call has been expunged requires creation of an Expunged Record Retrieval Screen to select the records to be retrieved. Create a batch program to search FACES expunged tapes and restore records into FACES.
 - o Expunged Record Retrieval Screen - 800 hrs
 - o FACES Expunged record search batch program - 800 hrs
 - o FACES Expunged Record Restore program -- 800 hrs

Contractor rate for systems work on FACES averages \$75.00 per hour.

Total Cost = 2,820 hours X \$75.00/hr = \$211,500.00

Assumptions:

Modify the Appeal and Conclusion to "ReOpen" a closed case. This will invalidate the previous conclusion.

Currently, records to be expunged from FACES are written to an expunge table. CD has 30 days to retrieve the records before they are expunged and the "Original Call documents" are shredded.

To retrieve Records expunged from FACES

- o Create a Screen to select the records to be retrieved. Use Call ticket #, DCN, name, etc.
- o Batch program to search FACES expunged tapes and restore records.
- o Records are restored into the FACES database as they were.
- o Call is "ReOpened"

Fund sources for FACES are 50% GR and 50% Federal.

Cost from General Revenue Funds	\$105,750
Cost from Federal Funds	<u>\$105,750</u>

Total Cost **\$211,500**

ITSD would be required to complete all system changes in FY12 and do not anticipate additional costs beyond FY12.

LMD:LR:OD (12/02)

ASSUMPTION (continued)

Officials from the **Jefferson City Police Department, Springfield Police Department, and the Columbia Sheriff's Department** state this proposal does not create a fiscal impact on their respective departments.

Officials from the **Parkway School District** and the **St Louis Public School District** stated this proposal would have no fiscal impact on their respective districts.

Officials from the **Special School District of St Louis County (SSD)** state the only question regarding fiscal impact would be the cost of mediation which is not expected to be material as SSD only has seven schools.

Officials from the **Independence School District** estimated an annual cost of \$50,000, but did not elaborate on what that cost would cover.

DESE assumes there might be some increased time by school employees to meet the provisions of this proposal. **Oversight** assumes, based on responses from school districts, that costs would be minimal and could be absorbed with existing resources. The criminal background check and fingerprint collections permitted in §168.133.9 are at the school districts' expense but are permissive so no cost is assigned.

§160.2100 & 160.2110 - Erin's Law

Officials from the **Department of Corrections, Department of Social Services, Department of Health and Senior Services, Office of Attorney General, Department of Public Safety-Missouri State Highway Patrol, and the Missouri House of Representatives** state this portion of the bill will have no fiscal impact on their respective agencies.

Officials from the **Department of Elementary and Secondary Education** state their agency could incur expenses related to the duties of the task force; however, those expenses are not expected to be significant.

Officials from the **Missouri Senate** state this bill either has no fiscal impact as it relates to their agency, or minimal costs which can be absorbed by present appropriations.

Officials from the **Office of the Governor** state there should be no added cost to the Governor's Office as a result of this bill. If additional duties are placed on the office related to appointments resulting from other legislation, there may be the need for additional staff resources in the future.

<u>FISCAL IMPACT - State Government</u>	FY 2012 (10 Mo.)	FY 2013	FY 2014
GENERAL REVENUE			
<u>Cost - Department of Social Services - Programming expenses (\$210.152.3)</u>	<u>(\$105,750)</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
ESTIMATE NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE	<u>(\$105,750)</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
FEDERAL FUNDS			
<u>Cost - Department of Social Services - Programming expenses (\$210.152.3)</u>	<u>(\$105,750)</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE	<u>(\$105,750)</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
<u>FISCAL IMPACT - Local Government</u>	FY 2012 (10 Mo.)	FY 2013	FY 2014
	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

FISCAL IMPACT - Small Business

No direct fiscal impact to small businesses would be expected as a result of this bill.

FISCAL DESCRIPTION

§210.152

The Department of Social Services - Children's Division may reopen a case for review at the request of any party to the investigation if information is obtained that the investigation was not properly conducted under the provisions of Chapter 210, RSMo, or if new information becomes available. For any case previously investigated by the Children's Division for which there was a finding of "unsubstantiated", the Children's Division must reconduct its investigation one time at the request of the Office of the Child Advocate if the Child Advocate has reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing. The Children's Division must not reopen an investigation if a court of law has entered a final judgment on the matter.

This legislation is not federally mandated, would not duplicate any other program and would not require additional capital improvements or rental space.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Department of Social Services
 Children's Division
 Division of Youth Services
Department of Health and Senior Services
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Department of Public Safety
 Missouri State Highway Patrol
 Office of the Director
Joint Committee on Administrative Rules
Office of Secretary of State
 Administrative Rules Division
Office of State Courts Administrator
Office of Administration
 Office of Child Advocate
Department of Corrections
Office of the Governor
Missouri House of Representatives
Missouri Senate
Office of Prosecution Services
Office of State Auditor
Office of State Public Defender

L.R. No. 0248-02
Bill No. Truly Agreed To and Finally Passed SCS for SB 54
Page 11 of 11
June 1, 2011

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Continued)

Office of Corrections
Department of Mental Health
Office of Attorney General
Local Law Enforcement
 Springfield Police Department
 Jefferson City Police Department
 Boone County Sheriff's Department
School Districts
 Parkway
 St Louis Public School District
 Independence
 Special School District of St Louis County



Mickey Wilson, CPA
Director
June 1, 2011

Tracking in:
0 private files



2013 NY A 661: Sponsor Memo - 01/08/2013

SPONSORS MEMO:

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION

submitted in accordance with Assembly Rule III, Sec 1(e)

RETRIEVE BILL

BILL NUMBER: A661

SPONSOR: Dinowitz(MS)

TITLE OF BILL: An act to amend the education law, in relation to enacting **"Erin Merryn's law"**

PURPOSE OR GENERAL IDEA OF BILL; Enacts "Erin Merryn's Law" to require provision of instruction to prevent child sexual exploitation and abuse in grades kindergarten through eight.

SUMMARY OF SPECIFIC PROVISIONS: Section 1. Short title "Erin Merryn's law"

Section 2. Legislative findings and intent

Section 3. Amends section 803-a of the education law, as added by chapter 658 of the laws of 1994 to add prevention of child sexual abuse and exploitation to instruction students already receive in the prevention of child abduction. The duties of the local boards of education to select curricula and the commissioner to provide technical assistance are unchanged.

Section 4. Effective date.

EXISTING LAW: Section 803-a of the education law currently requires all public school students in grades K-8 to receive instruction designed to prevent child abduction. The law does not mandate how much time must be allocated to the subject, or how frequently the instruction must be given. It must, however, be given under the direct supervision of a regular classroom teacher, even if outside speakers are used. This requirement ensures the quality of the instruction and that the time spent on these important lessons counts toward required classroom time.

JUSTIFICATION: Awareness of the epidemic of child sexual abuse has come a long way since section 803-a was enacted in 1994 and quality school safety programs are already evolving to teach children that abduction by strangers is not the only, or the most common, danger they face. Like other sex crimes, most child sexual abuse is committed by people who know their victims. Trusted acquaintances are most often the perpetrators, followed by family members and then strangers. Updating the language of New York's education requirement to reflect the current understanding of both the sources and warning signs of child predation will help ensure that more children receive practical and age-appropriate instruction that they can incorporate into their daily lives.

As more and more abuse victims of all ages are coming forward to share stories of horrifying abuses, we are regularly reminded of our sacred obligation to prepare the next generation children to meet life's major challenges. Despite greater openness about these crimes, feelings of shame or stigma still keep many victims and witnesses silent. Many young people suffering abuse or exploitation are still unaware of when and from whom to seek help. Concerned parents may not even know about the latest techniques being used by predators to meet and groom their victims through electronic communications, the internet and social media.

Expanding the required instruction under 803-a to encompass child sex abuse and exploitation prevention will require the state education department to make revisions to its technical advisories but it need not require districts to devote any additional time or staffing resources to student safety instruction. With our growing understanding of the many dangers facing our children and the lifelong injuries sexual abuse and exploitation can inflict, the cost of not providing this vital safety information is simply too high.

PRIOR LEGISLATIVE HISTORY; .UP OFF;: 2011-12 - A.8993 - HELD FOR CONSIDERATION IN EDUCATION/S.6182 - PASSED SENATE

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: Minimal. The state education department will continue to provide technical assistance to school districts in their development of age-appropriate curricula.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act shall take effect immediately, provided, however, that the amendments to subdivision 1 of section 8-3-a of the education law, made by section 3 of this act, shall take effect July 1, 2014.

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

200 W. Washington, Suite 301
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(317) 233-0696
<http://www.in.gov/legislative>

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6088
BILL NUMBER: SB 267

NOTE PREPARED: Mar 11, 2012
BILL AMENDED: Feb 23, 2012

SUBJECT: Education Concerning Child Abuse.

FIRST AUTHOR: Sen. Rogers
FIRST SPONSOR: Rep. Behning

BILL STATUS: Enrolled

FUNDS AFFECTED: GENERAL
DEDICATED
FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: This bill requires the Department of Education(DOE), in collaboration with the Department of Child Services and organizations that have expertise in child abuse, including child sexual abuse, to identify or develop model education materials, response policies, and reporting procedures on child abuse, including child sexual abuse, for use by schools for Grade 2 through Grade 5.

Effective Date: July 1, 2012.

Explanation of State Expenditures: The education materials and procedures referred to above have to be made available to schools no later than July 1, 2013. The education materials may include topics such as warning signs of child abuse (including sexual abuse), basic principles of child abuse (including sexual abuse), prevention, and methods of student, teacher, and parental education and outreach.

The model child abuse and child sexual abuse response and reporting policies may include defining how a victim of abuse may seek assistance, how staff personnel may intervene when they suspect or recognize that a student is a victim of abuse, identifying the counseling options and the educational support available to assist a victim of abuse, and outlining how to report such incidents.

Education materials would probably be obtained from local and national organizations. However, the Department would have to organize and distribute the materials to schools. The DOE would have to carry out these provisions within its existing level of resources.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: Under the guidance of DOE, schools would have to implement child abuse and child sexual abuse education programs, response, and reporting procedures in Grade 2 through Grade 5. School health education curriculums may have to be modified to include instruction on child abuse, but this can be carried out within the existing level of school resources.

The immediate impact would be the cost of training materials for students and staff. Training for staff could be accomplished during teacher in-service days.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Department of Education.

Local Agencies Affected: Schools.

Information Sources: American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry website:
<http://www.aacap.org/>

Fiscal Analyst: Chuck Mayfield, 317-232-4825.



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

SENATE BILL NO. 449

PRINTERS NO. 2248

PRIME SPONSOR: Vance

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13
General Fund	\$0	\$0

SUMMARY: Senate Bill 449 amends the Public School Code concerning child abuse recognition and reporting. It would take effect in 180 days.

ANALYSIS: This legislation requires school entities and independent contractors of school entities to provide employees who have direct contact with children with mandatory training on child abuse recognition and reporting. The training must address certain topics enumerated in the bill.

School entities and independent contractors may provide the training through the internet or other distance communications systems. Employees must complete a minimum of three hours of training every five years and employees required to undergo continuing professional education will receive credit toward these requirements if the training program has been approved by the Department of Education in consultation with the Department of Public Welfare.

FISCAL IMPACT: Enactment of the legislation will have no adverse impact on Commonwealth funds.

PREPARED BY: Jeff Miller
House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: June 18, 2012

Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.

ALL ALASKA



PEDIATRIC
PARTNERSHIP

February 12, 2014

Dear Representative Tarr,

Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. To overcome the high rates of abuse in Alaska, prevention efforts need to be deployed at multiple levels in order to break the cycle of abuse and give children in Alaska the tools they need to reach their full potential.

Unfortunately, the trauma and sustained stress associated with child abuse has been shown to undermine a child's development. Such factors damage the developing brain and adversely impact a child's learning and behavior, making academic achievement more difficult. Moreover, such factors increase susceptibility to physical and mental illness and put children at higher risk for involvement in delinquent and/or criminal activities. When children do not have equal opportunity for healthy growth and development, we are putting the future society of Alaska at risk.

The All Alaska Pediatric Partnership supports Erin's Law (House Bill No. 233) as one component of a statewide prevention system needed to help reduce child abuse and neglect. Alaska's schools need comprehensive health education standards that can compliment a statewide prevention system with funding to support improved outcomes.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Monahan
Executive Director

Matthew Hirschfeld, MD/PhD
Co-Chair—Executive Committee

Emily Stevens, RN, BSN, MSN

Emily Stevens
Co-Chair—Executive Committee

The All Alaska Pediatric Partnership
PO Box 230567
Anchorage, AK 99523
www.a2p2.com

February 13, 2014

P.O. Box 4105
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Re: HB No. 233

Representative and Senators,

I am writing to support Representative Tarr's HB 133, "Erin's Law". Unlike many Alaskans, I have first-hand experience working with students to raise awareness of sexual abuse and assault. For twelve years, I was an Assistant District Attorney for the State. For a decade I worked in the Palmer District Attorney's Office where I was the sole attorney working on all sexual abuse and sexual assault cases in the Valley. I now own a business where I routinely give internet safety education presentations to students of all ages, which includes awareness on sexual assault and abuse, and I have presented to staff and counselors on mandatory reporting issues. Finally, though this letter is my personal opinion, I do sit on the Governor's Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault as a public member.

School districts must be involved in educating our youth in these areas. Violence affects many children, which in turn affects their ability to learn. Schools need to teach not just reading, writing and arithmetic, but also issues that affect the emotional well-being and future of children.

Erin's Law is another tool for the State to use to reduce our ranking as the number one state in incidences per capita of rape and child abuse. Erin's Law is proactive not reactive, and the first step in prevention is being proactive.

I encourage and urge you to support HB 233 and help reduce sexual violence against our youth.

Sincerely,

Rachel K. Gernat



NEA-ALASKA

Affiliated with the National Education Association

February 13, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of NEA-Alaska's 13,000 teachers and education support professionals, as well as Alaska's 130,000 public school students, I am voicing support for HB 233, "Erin's Law."

As education professionals, student safety is of the highest concern. From the moment students step onto the school bus in the morning until the time they finish their extracurricular activities in the evening, Alaska's most precious and valuable resource is in our care. It is our job to make sure their learning environment is safe, and to prepare them to protect themselves in the wider world.

Sexual assault and abuse prevention and awareness programs are a key component of keeping Alaska's children safe. Such programs allow Alaskan educators to recognize the signs of such violence more quickly, and provide an immediate and direct route of aid for students. It is important that every Alaskan child knows that he or she can speak out to find safety from sexual assault and abuse.

As educators, our students' safety always comes first. We wholeheartedly urge the passage of HB 233, which would mandate sexual assault and abuse awareness and prevention in Alaska's schools. Thank you to Rep. Lynn Gattis and the House Education Committee for taking the time to address this most important issue.

Sincerely,

Ron Fuhrer
President, NEA-Alaska

Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

February 5, 2014

Re: H.B. 233, Erin's Law

Dear Legislators,

As representatives of numerous youth groups throughout Alaska, we are writing today in support of H.B. 233, Erin's Law. Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. Many of us have been subject to or know someone who has been a victim of abuse, be it physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, or neglect. As children, we suffered in silence thinking that this was just how life was. We were rarely empowered to speak up for ourselves and, even if we were, we did not know who to talk to.

This bill requires Alaska public schools to create lessons teaching kids, teachers, and staff how to recognize abuse and know who to talk to. We think that if kids and the adults they spend most of their days with had this knowledge, a lot of kids can be taken out of situations that lead to other problems later in life. Child abuse frequently leads to other major societal problems, like criminal behavior, drug use, mental illness, and emotional instability. Kids who are abused are also more likely to become abusers.

We all visited the Legislators this year and work for our organizations in order to be part of the solution to these problems. Every day, we meet youth with addiction problems, emotional trauma, and criminal tendencies. Giving these kids the power to speak up for themselves and giving adults the tools to listen could really make a difference in how they live day to day. This is why we are writing to ask for you to think about how much better Alaska could be and support H.B. 233.

Sincerely,

Nate Bennett
Nate Bennett

Juneau, AK

Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

February 5, 2014

Re: H.B. 233, Erin's Law


Dear Legislators,

As representatives of numerous youth groups throughout Alaska, we are writing today in support of H.B. 233, Erin's Law. Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. Many of us have been subject to or know someone who has been a victim of abuse, be it physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, or neglect. As children, we suffered in silence thinking that this was just how life was. We were rarely empowered to speak up for ourselves and, even if we were, we did not know who to talk to.

This bill requires Alaska public schools to create lessons teaching kids, teachers, and staff how to recognize abuse and know who to talk to. We think that if kids and the adults they spend most of their days with had this knowledge, a lot of kids can be taken out of situations that lead to other problems later in life. Child abuse frequently leads to other major societal problems, like criminal behavior, drug use, mental illness, and emotional instability. Kids who are abused are also more likely to become abusers.

We all visited the Legislators this year and work for our organizations in order to be part of the solution to these problems. Every day, we meet youth with addiction problems, emotional trauma, and criminal tendencies. Giving these kids the power to speak up for themselves and giving adults the tools to listen could really make a difference in how they live day to day. This is why we are writing to ask for you to think about how much better Alaska could be and support H.B. 233.

Sincerely,



Roseann Agoney

My name is Roseann Agoney, I'm 20 years old, and I live in Anchorage, Alaska. I was in and out of foster care for three to four years. After my dad got my siblings and I back somewhere back in 2005/2006 we've all been struggling since. I've dealt with drug abuse and alcoholism since then, but I can say now that I no longer am.

Ever since I was little all I can really remember is being around alcoholics and drug users. Seeing my parents and other family members drink and smoke I thought it was okay that did those things too. At the age of ten I would often steal alcohol, cigarettes and marijuana from my parents. At first it was to get the approval of my friends, but later on I was stealing those things because I felt that I needed them. After my dad got us back from OCS we lived in Anchorage and for me it was such a dramatic change that I started to do poorly in school. I was in middle school when I decided to be homeschooled and after that all I was interested in was getting high, just so I could escape the reality I lived in. Because my dad was into drugs and my siblings and I couldn't be around each other for long without trying to kill one another. Since my dad is disabled he couldn't work and due to that we were always struggling day to day.

I was always being put down by my dad almost every other day. In his eyes I was never going to amount to anything because I was smoking weed every day and drinking from time to time. It had gotten to the point that I had tried to commit suicide, but I thought about my younger sisters and who was going to take care of them.

When I was sixteen I wanted to prove him wrong so I tried to cold turkey everything the first time and ended up doing the same old things. So I started smoking and drinking less each time until I was like nope I don't feel like doing that. Because I realized how much of a better person I was when I wasn't high or drunk. I learned how to love myself; I saw how much I improved afterwards. I did better in school I graduated on time; I even had an internship with the RAISE Program! My younger sisters look up to me. But I'm still trying to be a better person, a good role model for my sisters. I'm trying to get a higher education so that I may get a good paying job so I can give them a home where they can grow and put roots down instead of drifting from place to place.

I hope that you keep supporting counseling, treatment, and job support for the youth in Alaska, so we can have a better brighter future. And to show that there are people out there who care, who are willing to help. Thank you for listening to my story.

Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

February 5, 2014

Re: H.B. 233, Erin's Law

Dear Legislators,

As representatives of numerous youth groups throughout Alaska, we are writing today in support of H.B. 233, Erin's Law. Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. Many of us have been subject to or know someone who has been a victim of abuse, be it physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, or neglect. As children, we suffered in silence thinking that this was just how life was. We were rarely empowered to speak up for ourselves and, even if we were, we did not know who to talk to.

This bill requires Alaska public schools to create lessons teaching kids, teachers, and staff how to recognize abuse and know who to talk to. We think that if kids and the adults they spend most of their days with had this knowledge, a lot of kids can be taken out of situations that lead to other problems later in life. Child abuse frequently leads to other major societal problems, like criminal behavior, drug use, mental illness, and emotional instability. Kids who are abused are also more likely to become abusers.

We all visited the Legislators this year and work for our organizations in order to be part of the solution to these problems. Every day, we meet youth with addiction problems, emotional trauma, and criminal tendencies. Giving these kids the power to speak up for themselves and giving adults the tools to listen could really make a difference in how they live day to day. This is why we are writing to ask for you to think about how much better Alaska could be and support H.B. 233.

Sincerely,

Brooke wes
Brooke wes
nightmoonbw@gmail.com

My name is Brooke wes I'm from Juneau

I fully support the passing of this bill. when I was a child I was sexually abused by my father and my older sister. I think people who sexually abuse others learned it from someone else. so I think it is a learned behavior I would really like to break the cycle
Thank you

Story Practice Sheet

- Is your story short and to the point? Is it only 1-3 minutes and only one page?
- Is it "real"? Does your story come from your heart and inspire others?
- Does your story let listeners know what outcome or action you're asking for -- the "ask"?
- Use the reverse side, or a separate piece of paper, if you need extra space.

Introduce yourself -- your name and residence, subject, and purpose. (2-4 sentences)

Hello my name is Brookewes. I am 22 years old. I was in foster care until I was 13 and then I got adopted.

Tell Your Story -- the experience or challenge, the action, the result. (5-15 sentences)

I don't remember most of my childhood. I do know that a lot of the time my siblings and I did not have food or water or blankets. We went days in our dirty clothing and were born at home. I was born into a family that badly abused drugs and alcohol. We got beaten so badly that I could not sit for days. We got taken away a few times but for some reason they would put us back but when I was 5 years old I was in a very bad accident and we got taken away for the last time.

Wrap it up -- state your "ask" and say thank you. (3-5 sentences)

I think kids should be seen and heard. You never know what goes on behind closed doors and the disabilities that might be even more affected by it. So take the time to see and hear. Thank you!

Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

February 5, 2014

Re: H.B. 233, Erin's Law

Dear Legislators,

As representatives of numerous youth groups throughout Alaska, we are writing today in support of H.B. 233, Erin's Law. Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. Many of us have been subject to or know someone who has been a victim of abuse, be it physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, or neglect. As children, we suffered in silence thinking that this was just how life was. We were rarely empowered to speak up for ourselves and, even if we were, we did not know who to talk to.

This bill requires Alaska public schools to create lessons teaching kids, teachers, and staff how to recognize abuse and know who to talk to. We think that if kids and the adults they spend most of their days with had this knowledge, a lot of kids can be taken out of situations that lead to other problems later in life. Child abuse frequently leads to other major societal problems, like criminal behavior, drug use, mental illness, and emotional instability. Kids who are abused are also more likely to become abusers.

We all visited the Legislators this year and work for our organizations in order to be part of the solution to these problems. Every day, we meet youth with addiction problems, emotional trauma, and criminal tendencies. Giving these kids the power to speak up for themselves and giving adults the tools to listen could really make a difference in how they live day to day. This is why we are writing to ask for you to think about how much better Alaska could be and support H.B. 233.

When I first was meeting with a social worker in 2nd grade, I was asked why I didn't tell anyone about the abuse. I told that social worker that I did, I had told my teacher. I don't know why the teacher didn't help me.

Ciara Goodman
Ciara M. Goodman

Story Practice Sheet

- Is your story short and to the point? Is it only 1-3 minutes and only one page?
- Is it "real"? Does your story come from your heart and inspire others?
- Does your story let listeners know what outcome or action you're asking for – the "ask"?
- Use the reverse side, or a separate piece of paper, if you need extra space.

Introduce yourself – your name and residence, subject, and purpose (2-4 sentences)

I am born & raised Alaskan Native, Ciara Goodman. I am a college student @ UAA in Anchorage. Currently 22 yrs old. I aged out of foster care, graduated residential treatment, and lived in many places of Alaska. I consider myself an intelligent, empathetic, and genuine person and I want to help make a difference.

Tell Your Story – the experience or challenge, the action, the result (5-15 sentences)

My childhood was filled with inconsistency, multiple homes & schools, rejection from family, early medication and a loss of my will to live. Addiction, manipulation, greed & lack of love contributed to the trials of my childhood. As much as it hurt to feel like nothing more than a file it was more painful to witness that I was not alone. That many, hundreds more, children carried the same burden as me, if not worse. And more so we could not see a light at the end of this dark & confusing tunnel. As I realized the depths of the issues concerning many homeless youth I felt the need to do something. Yet I was powerless then. The change that is seriously needed can only source from the power in charge, & unfortunately they didn't know the problem existed. These painful truths gave me the drive to carry on in hopes that I can find a way to break light into that tunnel and see that no foster kid walks through it alone, again.

Wrap it up – state your "ask" and say thank you (3-5 sentences)

It is my desire to join the forces that will aid these youth and to help influence change for a better & brighter tomorrow. I hope to minimize the number of children facing the same sorrows and pain as I did and to increase those filled with love, hope, & fulfillment. Thank you for listening and please join me in supporting Alaska's Youth.

Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

February 5, 2014

Re: H.B. 233, Erin's Law

Dear Legislators,

As representatives of numerous youth groups throughout Alaska, we are writing today in support of H.B. 233, Erin's Law. Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. Many of us have been subject to or know someone who has been a victim of abuse, be it physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, or neglect. As children, we suffered in silence thinking that this was just how life was. We were rarely empowered to speak up for ourselves and, even if we were, we did not know who to talk to.

This bill requires Alaska public schools to create lessons teaching kids, teachers, and staff how to recognize abuse and know who to talk to. We think that if kids and the adults they spend most of their days with had this knowledge, a lot of kids can be taken out of situations that lead to other problems later in life. Child abuse frequently leads to other major societal problems, like criminal behavior, drug use, mental illness, and emotional instability. Kids who are abused are also more likely to become abusers.

We all visited the Legislators this year and work for our organizations in order to be part of the solution to these problems. Every day, we meet youth with addiction problems, emotional trauma, and criminal tendencies. Giving these kids the power to speak up for themselves and giving adults the tools to listen could really make a difference in how they live day to day. This is why we are writing to ask for you to think about how much better Alaska could be and support H.B. 233.

Sincerely,

Alex Krause
Alex Krause.

1/5/14

Story Practice Sheet

- Is your story short and to the point? Is it only 1-3 minutes and only one page?
- Is it "real"? Does your story come from your heart and inspire others?
- Does your story let listeners know what outcome or action you're asking for - the "ask"?
- Use the reverse side, or a separate piece of paper, if you need extra space.

Introduce yourself - your name and residence, subject, and purpose (2-4 sentences)

Hello My Name is Alexandra Krause, I'm From North Pole Alaska. I currently live in Fairbanks, I work at QuizNoz and I ride in my car with my fiancée, who is a college student, and my Dog Romeo

Tell Your Story - the experience or challenge, the action, the result (5-15 sentences)

I grew up rough. Never around positive influences. Drug addicts and moving from home to home. I've struggled with homelessness my whole life. Growing up I had 13 child protective services cases on me and my younger sister. But we never got taken from my mother. I often wonder if life would have been better if they did take us. A Gang through that I learned to lie about things so I could stay with my mom, they made it too easy. I moved out when I was 11. And no one noticed, as was long gone. There I found S.O.A.P. They helped for a long time. When they started losing funds.

Wrap it up - state your "ask" and say thank you (3-5 sentences)

I can't receive help from SOAP any more because they have too many clients, and too little money. I'm not worried about myself. This has been my life. But those kids are me and local homeless programs need much more funding and

services available to them. 2014 Youth Policy Summit Application - Page 5 of 5

Thank You!

Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

February 5, 2014

Re: H.B. 233, Erin's Law


Dear Legislators,

As representatives of numerous youth groups throughout Alaska, we are writing today in support of H.B. 233, Erin's Law. Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. Many of us have been subject to or know someone who has been a victim of abuse, be it physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, or neglect. As children, we suffered in silence thinking that this was just how life was. We were rarely empowered to speak up for ourselves and, even if we were, we did not know who to talk to.

This bill requires Alaska public schools to create lessons teaching kids, teachers, and staff how to recognize abuse and know who to talk to. We think that if kids and the adults they spend most of their days with had this knowledge, a lot of kids can be taken out of situations that lead to other problems later in life. Child abuse frequently leads to other major societal problems, like criminal behavior, drug use, mental illness, and emotional instability. Kids who are abused are also more likely to become abusers.

We all visited the Legislators this year and work for our organizations in order to be part of the solution to these problems. Every day, we meet youth with addiction problems, emotional trauma, and criminal tendencies. Giving these kids the power to speak up for themselves and giving adults the tools to listen could really make a difference in how they live day to day. This is why we are writing to ask for you to think about how much better Alaska could be and support H.B. 233.

Sincerely,

 2/4/14
James LeBlanc - Tweedy

Story Practice Sheet

- Is your story short and to the point? Is it only 1-3 minutes and only one page?
- Is it "real"? Does your story come from your heart and inspire others?
- Does your story let listeners know what outcome or action you're asking for – the "ask"?
- Use the reverse side, or a separate piece of paper, if you need extra space.

Introduce yourself – your name and residence, subject, and purpose (2-4 sentences)

My name is James Alexander Lettland-Tucay. My name before adoption was James Robert LeBlanc. I am 17, only year 10 and live in Dunbar Ak. I was placed in foster care when I was 10 and was in and out of treatment and jail till I was 19.

Tell Your Story – the experience or challenge, the action, the result (5-15 sentences)

I can always remember when I was young, in the small and state, I was always getting into trouble. When I was placed in foster care with my two younger brothers I was 10 and my brother was 10. When in foster care I never committed but accepted it after being placed in residential treatment. I was sent to treatment at the age of 14 for a crime I did not commit. I was then placed on probation. Now I have been between jail and treatment since I was 19. I was then homeless until now although I am now living in the glory hole.

Wrap it up – state your "ask" and say thank you (3-5 sentences)

I hope the story I have presented to you will help you look at the youth systems and make the changes that would make young children's lives happier and something they can be proud of. Thank you for reading my story, I hope it helps you make the needed changes that are needed. Thank you for your time.

Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

February 5, 2014

Re: H.B. 233, Erin's Law

Dear Legislators,

As representatives of numerous youth groups throughout Alaska, we are writing today in support of H.B. 233, Erin's Law. Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. Many of us have been subject to or know someone who has been a victim of abuse, be it physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, or neglect. As children, we suffered in silence thinking that this was just how life was. We were rarely empowered to speak up for ourselves and, even if we were, we did not know who to talk to.

This bill requires Alaska public schools to create lessons teaching kids, teachers, and staff how to recognize abuse and know who to talk to. We think that if kids and the adults they spend most of their days with had this knowledge, a lot of kids can be taken out of situations that lead to other problems later in life. Child abuse frequently leads to other major societal problems, like criminal behavior, drug use, mental illness, and emotional instability. Kids who are abused are also more likely to become abusers.

We all visited the Legislators this year and work for our organizations in order to be part of the solution to these problems. Every day, we meet youth with addiction problems, emotional trauma, and criminal tendencies. Giving these kids the power to speak up for themselves and giving adults the tools to listen could really make a difference in how they live day to day. This is why we are writing to ask for you to think about how much better Alaska could be and support H.B. 233.

Sincerely,

Deborah

Deborah
Yunak

Yunak

Scammon Bay

Scam Bay

Story Practice Sheet

- Is your story short and to the point? Is it only 1-3 minutes and only one page?
- Is it "real"? Does your story come from your heart and inspire others?
- Does your story let listeners know what outcome or action you're asking for – the "ask"?
- Use the reverse side, or a separate piece of paper, if you need extra space.

My name is Deborah Yunak, I'm 19 yrs. old, and I live in Scammon Bay Alaska. I went to a residential treatment in the year of 2010 to Fairbanks for 9 months for substance abuse and depression.

once I got into Junior high I started to get into trouble with marijuana use and alcohol. I thought it would make me cool and have more friends by doing substance abuse, I used it daily to where I got addicted. I started to miss school more often because I was so depressed missing my aunt that passed away. I'd always let my friends make me alcohol. I use to think doing substance abuse would help me go to my aunt, but nothing happen, my mom finally realize that I haven't been home, so she called the school attendant to see if I've been going school, she told my mom that I haven't been to school for a week now. when I finally went home I went home drunk, my mom scold me, I took it the wrong way and hung my self.

I hope that the support of our community programs help our young people with counseling, treatment, and jobs so they can be close to our loved ones, and our friends to stay out of big trouble. And I want to say thank you for listening to my story.

Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

February 5, 2014

Re: H.B. 233, Erin's Law

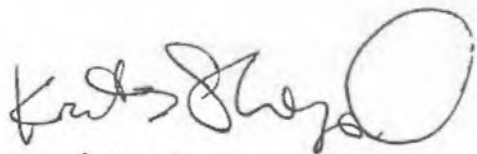
Dear Legislators,

As representatives of numerous youth groups throughout Alaska, we are writing today in support of H.B. 233, Erin's Law. Child abuse in Alaska is a chronic and devastating problem. Many of us have been subject to or know someone who has been a victim of abuse, be it physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, or neglect. As children, we suffered in silence thinking that this was just how life was. We were rarely empowered to speak up for ourselves and, even if we were, we did not know who to talk to.

This bill requires Alaska public schools to create lessons teaching kids, teachers, and staff how to recognize abuse and know who to talk to. We think that if kids and the adults they spend most of their days with had this knowledge, a lot of kids can be taken out of situations that lead to other problems later in life. Child abuse frequently leads to other major societal problems, like criminal behavior, drug use, mental illness, and emotional instability. Kids who are abused are also more likely to become abusers.

We all visited the Legislators this year and work for our organizations in order to be part of the solution to these problems. Every day, we meet youth with addiction problems, emotional trauma, and criminal tendencies. Giving these kids the power to speak up for themselves and giving adults the tools to listen could really make a difference in how they live day to day. This is why we are writing to ask for you to think about how much better Alaska could be and support H.B. 233.

Sincerely,



Kristie Lynn Sheppard 2-5-14

Mountain Village, AK

Hello, my name is Kristie Lynn Sheppard, eighteen years of age from Mountain Village, Alaska. I was born in Bethel, Alaska. I am a Senior in High School, during the summer I work with Kivikpak Fisheries. My favorite things to do are math, writing poems and singing.

I have a lot of experienced with being in foster care. The first time I ever got taken away from my mother I was five years old. My younger sister wasn't around. I stayed in an OCS facility for a while, then moved to a foster home where they treated me horribly. But I was too afraid to tell anyone. After about six months I moved with my mother and sister in treatment. A couple years later my two twin baby sisters were born. When they were about one year old we all got taken away by OCS. We all stayed in an OCS facility for a while, then were separated into different foster homes. We were all reunited after a few months, been to two different foster homes, then I moved to Mountain Village with my sister, the youngest ones are now adopted. I've also been to about ten different schools my whole life, which was pretty complicated.

This kind of experience is very hard to go through, no one deserves it. But sometimes we just have to deal with it. Children who go through this must get stronger because I had to. Well, thank you very much for listening to my experience and I hope this story would be able to help others. And I hope you can help by listening to our stories!

Hi my name is Nathaniel Bennett and I currently live in Anchorage, Alaska. I am part Alaskan native and African American and I have experience growing up in rural Alaska for about 10 years in the village of Chevak. I am a for intern for Alaska Native Justice Center assisting two Youth Advocates on working with you who have been in trouble with Alcoholism. I also attend the University Of Anchorage, AK as a Justice Major. I've experienced about 2 days of treatment at North Star behavioral center for underage drinking, which my parents sent me to. I've also had trouble growing up through bullied in school which led to problems from child hood to teen hood.

Since I was growing up at a young age I spent most of my life in the village. From the time I entered elementary I was bullied by my classmates and kids around the village because I looked different from the other kids in my village. Experiencing bullying at that young of an age caused me to lash out in anger against my classmates and caused me to verbally attack my teachers because they did not prevent the bullying that the kids were putting me through. So my parents stepped in and spoke to the principal and teachers to help stop the bullying. Since they did little to prevent the problem, my parents moved me out of the village and into the city. When they did that my anger and disruptive behavior quickly diminished against my new teachers and classmates. By the time I entered middle school and high school I formed a phobia with socializing with other people because I thought that they were judging the way I looked and spoke. So that caused me to live a very isolated and private life style. So after a while I became very lonely and depressed and decided to drink alcohol to relieve the social anxiety. When I would drink alcohol, it made me feel more "accepted" by others and I felt like I could talk to anyone without feeling judged and without feeling uneasy. After a while of drinking, I would

either get arrested for being intoxicated, wake up with severe hang overs, and get into fights with family and friends which would strain relationships between my parents and siblings.

I decided to give up drinking in order to show my parents, siblings, and friends that I was no screw up. I found myself in a prison without a job or diploma and decided it was time for me to be responsible for myself and to live a productive life. I studied for about a 6 months to prepare for my test for my diploma. I took the test and earned my diploma. As soon as I earned my diploma I applied for jobs. I had got hired for various different jobs that were involved in construction. I wanted to take a break from that type of work, and gain more experience in data entry, working with youth, and computer programs. I searched around for job openings, so that I could gain experience in helping people. So I got a job working with youth who were in trouble with drugs and alcohol at the Alaska Native Justice Center. With experience in living a negative life style into a productive and positive one, I plan to show other youth that they too can make a difference in their lives to stop underage drinking and drug usage and to be responsible in their lives by earning an education, staying out of trouble, finding career that they are interested in, and to be a productive citizen in their community.

I know that pretty soon the government will create classes, clubs, or programs to help educate youth from abusing alcohol/drugs, to stop underage drinking, and to ignore peer pressure from family and friends. Also to help show them the steps to live a healthy life style, to go to college or trade school, and to maintain their paths to success. I appreciate your patience to read my personal story, thank you and have a good day.

Transforming Communities to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation:

A Primary Prevention Approach

This document was prepared by Prevention Institute.

Principal authors are:

Annie Lyles, MSW

Larry Cohen, MSW

Margot Brown

© May 2009

265 29th Street
Oakland, CA 94611
510.444.7738
fax 510.663.1280

www.preventioninstitute.org

Prevention
Institute
Putting prevention
at the center of community well-being

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This policy brief presents the distilled research and critical thinking of a diverse group of local and national experts in the field of child sexual abuse and exploitation. Prevention Institute assembled this team and coordinated their efforts with the generous funding and support of the Ms. Foundation for Women.* Via candid dialog and interviews, these leaders developed and prioritized primary prevention strategies, analyzed environmental factors and norms that perpetuate these problems, and outlined policies and practices for transforming our communities and our nation during these turbulent political and economic times. This brief focuses especially on strategies that build on previous successes within this field and hold the greatest promise for transforming communities and preventing child abuse and exploitation.

We thank these leaders for their dedication to the field and for their thoughtful insights throughout this process. Likewise, we thank the Ms. Foundation for Women for sponsoring this vital initiative.

Sandra Alexander

Expert Consultant in Child Maltreatment
CDC, Division of Violence Prevention

Cordelia Anderson

Chair
National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Exploitation

Jetta Bernier

Executive Director
Massachusetts Citizens for Children

Suzanne Brown-McBride

Executive Director
California Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Deborah Donovan Rice

Executive Director
Stop It Now! National Office

Pat Eng

Vice President of Programs
Ms. Foundation for Women

Gena Fitzgerald

Executive Director
Journalism Center for Children and Families

Prevention Institute

is a nonprofit, national center dedicated to improving community health and well-being by building momentum for effective primary prevention. Primary prevention means taking action to build resilience and to prevent problems before they occur. The Institute's work is characterized by a strong commitment to community participation and promotion of equitable health outcomes among all social and economic groups. Since its founding in 1997, the organization has focused on injury and violence prevention, traffic safety, health disparities, nutrition and physical activity, and youth development.

Jim Hafner

Development Director
Stop It Now! National Office

Jeanine Hays

Program and Policy Associate
Family Violence Prevention Fund

Sara Kershner

Executive Director
GenerationFIVE

Jean Kilbourne

Senior Scholar
Wellesley Centers for Women

David Lee

Director of Prevention Services
California Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Diane Levin

Professor of Education
Wheelock College

Brenna Lynch

Program Associate, Safety
Ms. Foundation for Women

Larry Magid

Tech Journalist & Internet Safety Advocate
ConnectSafely.org and CBS News

Patrice Pascual

Reporter/Editor
Journalism Center for Children and Families

Elizabeth Sy

Program Coordinator/ Sexually Exploited Minor Advocate
Banteay Srei/Asian Health Services

Sally Thigpen

State-wide Coordinator
Stop It Now! Georgia

* Prevention Institute materials are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Ms. Foundation for Women.

"I have a ten-year-old daughter and a five-year-old boy. I want the world my children grow up in to be one where my daughter can live free of violence and my son will be expected to treat all women with respect. We need to invest at a level where we can create this future for our kids."

Jim Hafner, Stop It Now! National Office

Preventing Abuse Before it Occurs: A Primary Prevention Approach

Over the last 30 years, advocates have worked hard to successfully educate us in child sexual abuse and its detrimental effects on children and society. Leaders and the general public alike have a greater understanding of the issue, and this awareness has reached a tipping point over the last ten years, resulting in mobilized groups advocating for social and political solutions to abuse. So far, the response to these demands has largely focused on after-the-fact actions like incarceration and individual protection efforts such as Internet safety campaigns. The next step requires expanding the overarching dialog, moving from a focus on the individual and after-the-fact efforts to an approach that can prevent child sexual abuse from ever happening. A primary prevention approach prevents abuse before it happens by addressing the environmental factors and societal norms that contribute to its occurrence in the first place. Leaders agree that the movement is poised for a greater emphasis on primary prevention, which honors and builds upon past successes and complements the field's continued commitment to improving responses to this critical issue. This shift will require an increased effort to advance promising primary prevention approaches—essential to achieving dramatic reductions in rates of child sexual abuse and exploitation.

A primary prevention approach to child sexual abuse and exploitation promotes safe, healthy environments and behaviors, reducing the likelihood of abuse¹ in the first place. This approach is often confused with early intervention services for victims and perpetrators. Interventions, such as universal screening in health care settings, may help to alleviate trauma and potentially prevent future incidences; however, early identification is subsequent to actual or threatened violence and seldom alters the broader community and societal environment that gave rise to the violence. Primary prevention moves far upstream to change the environmental factors—such as economic inequalities, sexism, media, and marketing practices—that

We must begin to shift our focus from individuals to environments, from fear to wellness, and build national momentum for a balanced, targeted investment in quality prevention strategies.

A primary prevention approach to child sexual abuse and exploitation promotes safe, healthy environments and behaviors, reducing the likelihood of abuse in the first place.

shape norms and behaviors of an entire population. Primary prevention of child sexual abuse and exploitation is a systemic process capable of dramatically reshaping our environment and norms. It is a crucial component of community wellness.

Our success in preventing child sexual abuse depends on our ability to maintain a coordinated, comprehensive effort. Research confirms that the issue is deeply rooted in our environment and reinforced by our societal norms. It touches every community—the latest data reports that one in four girls and one in seven boys will be the victim of some type of sexual abuse/assault before age 18.² These numbers do not include the various ways children are sexually exploited through technology, pornography, and other commercial sexual exploitation. Further, we know that victims of abuse are at an increased risk for alcoholism, depression, sexually transmitted infections, intimate partner violence, and suicide attempts.³ The statistics provide an important challenge to our current norms and environments for children and adults: We must begin to shift our focus from individuals to environments, from fear to wellness, and build national momentum for a balanced, targeted investment in quality prevention strategies.

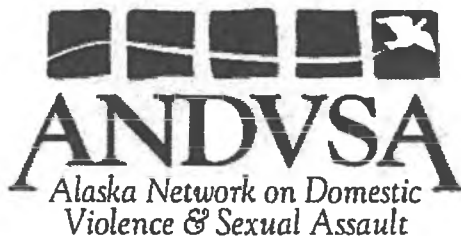
Quality prevention strategies counter environmental factors that support child sexual abuse and exploitation. Examples of these environmental factors include increased marketing towards children and a pervasive media presence with drastically high levels of sexualized messages and rigid gender roles. Root factors, such as marginalization—which increases the risks and decreases the resilience within specific communities—have not been widely acknowledged in policies and practices addressing child sexual abuse and exploitation. As one leader said, “There must be an increased awareness that child sexual abuse and exploitation does not occur in isolation, but instead, stems from deeply rooted social inequities and environmental influences.” These factors are relevant to all communities, and we can focus on them via comprehensive prevention initiatives. As a more progressive agenda is gaining momentum nationally, we have a prime opportunity to examine the current context and push for community transformation on multiple levels, incorporating successful projects from around the nation that help build resilience and protective factors at the individual and community levels. It is also a key moment to organize support for elected officials willing to adopt a legislative agenda that promotes healthy environments for all communities.

This brief is designed for advocates, practitioners, government officials, and funders who are interested in transforming broad social norms and our communities in order to prevent child sexual abuse and exploitation before it occurs. The following pages lay out a primary prevention approach with a special focus on effecting change by influencing policies and altering organizational practices. We begin with a short discussion of emerging environmental challenges followed by an examination of specific norms that contribute to child sexual abuse and exploitation. The third section, grounded in the belief that a single individual or sector cannot address the problem in isolation, provides the framework for a comprehensive strategy across the *Spectrum of Prevention* (see Figure 2, page 8) designed to transform environments so all children can thrive in safe and supportive communities.

Full Article Available here:

http://www.preventioninstitute.org/index.php?option=com_jlibrary&view=article&id=31&Itemid=127

Main Office
130 Seward St #209
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Phone: (907) 586-3650
Fax: (907) 463-4493
www.andvsa.org



Pro Bono Office
PO Box 6631
Sitka, Alaska 99835
Phone: (907) 747-7545
Fax: (907) 747-7547

February 19, 2014

The Honorable Representative Geran Tarr
State Capitol Bldg., Room
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: HB 233

Dear Representative Tarr:

The Alaska Network on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault (ANDVSA) is a statewide coalition of 23 victim service agencies and affiliates that provide direct services and advocacy for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, including child sexual abuse victims. In addition, our programs provide outreach and education presentations in schools, upon request, as resources allow. Unfortunately, due to limited resources and staff, our programs are not able to fulfill all current outreach requests, particularly in village schools.

Schools are an important partner in our prevention and education efforts and we support the use of new tools to raise awareness, educate and provide critical information about sexual abuse to children. We know from experience, that early prevention and education activities are essential in stopping perpetration before it ever occurs.

Thank you for bringing this important piece of legislation forward.

Sincerely,

Peggy Brown, Executive Director

cc: Lisa Mariotti, Policy Director

Member Programs

Anchorage AWAIC, STAR Barrow AWIC Bethel TWC Cordova CFRC Dillingham SAFE
Fairbanks IAC Homer SPHH Juneau AWARE Kenai LeeShore Center Ketchikan WISH Kodiak KWRCC
Kotzebue MFCC Nome BSWG Seward SCS Sitka SAFV Unalaska USAFV Valdez AVV

NBER WORKING PAPER SERIES

DOES CHILD ABUSE CAUSE CRIME?

Janet Currie
Erdal Tekin

Working Paper 12171
<http://www.nber.org/papers/w12171>

NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH
1050 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
April 2006

We would like to thank Neil Guterman, Christina Paxson, Chris Ruhm, Joyce Tabor, Volkan Topalli, and participants in seminars at the City University of New York, Columbia's School Social Work, Columbia's Teachers College, 2005 Population Association of America Meetings, 2005 IZA/SOLE Meetings, 2005 SEA Meetings, Georgia State University, MDRC, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Koc University for helpful comments. Roy Wada provided excellent research assistance. The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Bureau of Economic Research.

©2006 by Janet Currie and Erdal Tekin. All rights reserved. Short sections of text, not to exceed two paragraphs, may be quoted without explicit permission provided that full credit, including © notice, is given to the source.

Does Child Abuse Cause Crime?
Janet Currie and Erdal Tekin
NBER Working Paper No. 12171
April 2006
JEL No. I1, K4

ABSTRACT

Child maltreatment, which includes both child abuse and child neglect, is a major social problem. This paper focuses on measuring the effects of child maltreatment on crime using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). We focus on crime because it is one of the most socially costly potential outcomes of maltreatment, and because the proposed mechanisms linking maltreatment and crime are relatively well elucidated in the literature. Our work addresses many limitations of the existing literature on child maltreatment. First, we use a large national sample, and investigate different types of abuse in a similar framework. Second, we pay careful attention to identifying the causal impact of abuse, by using a variety of statistical methods that make differing assumptions. These methods include: Ordinary Least Squares (OLS), propensity score matching estimators, and twin fixed effects. Finally, we examine the extent to which the effects of maltreatment vary with socio-economic status (SES), gender, and the severity of the maltreatment. We find that maltreatment approximately doubles the probability of engaging in many types of crime. Low SES children are both more likely to be mistreated and suffer more damaging effects. Boys are at greater risk than girls, at least in terms of increased propensity to commit crime. Sexual abuse appears to have the largest negative effects, perhaps justifying the emphasis on this type of abuse in the literature. Finally, the probability of engaging in crime increases with the experience of multiple forms of maltreatment as well as the experience of Child Protective Services (CPS) investigation.

Janet Currie
Department of Economics
Columbia University
420 W 118th St.
New York, NY 10027
and NBER
jc2663@columbia.edu

Erdal Tekin
Department of Economics
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies
Georgia State University
P.O. Box 3992
Atlanta, GA 30302-3992
and NBER
tekin@gsu.edu

Full paper available at: http://www.nber.org/papers/w12171.pdf?new_window=1



West Anchorage High School

1700 Hillcrest Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99517
(907) 742-2500
FAX (907) 742-2525

"Home of the Eagles"

To Whom It May Concern:

March 27, 2014

It is without pause I write to encourage the passing of Erin's Law in the state of Alaska. As a teacher of English at West Anchorage High School, the programs and educational experiences supported through Standing Together Against Rape (STAR) have proven indispensable. My students have interacted with educators from STAR, Victim's for Justice, the FBI, Anchorage Police Department, and Alaska Youth Advocates, to name a few, in order to gain a better understanding and a closer realization of sexual assault awareness and prevention.

Providing a Comprehensive Health Education Program for schools, students, and teachers would continue to provide appropriate materials for all ages to hear. In addition, it enables educators, and those working with children ages 4-18, with the proper tools to alert and inform individuals of the high rates of sexual abuse in Alaska. Personally, I have invited educators to my room for seven years in order to prepare my students with the proper knowledge of awareness and prevention before they head off to college, the military, or the work place. The educators have also helped some of my students, who were victims, reach out and find proper support.

If teachers in Alaska were asked to attend professional development activities to strengthen their understanding in conveying this essential information in their classrooms, or simply being aware for observation purposes, the advantages would be limitless. Just in my seven years of working with these outside resources, I have had students practice using the Internet more safely, come forward about abusive households, find encouragement from trustworthy adults, and realize ways they can start preventing these crimes from continuing.

Alaska would be remiss to not pass Erin's Law. As educators, we agree to provide a well-rounded educational experience for all students. Personally, I aim to prepare my students for a life after graduation that is balanced, knowledgeable, and communicative. In order to keep doing so effectively, the participation in awareness and prevention programs, as outlined in Erin's Law, is the integral components in offering success. Finally, Erin's Law is essential in moving Alaska forward in the hopes to decrease the high statistics of sexual abuse and assault across the state. Please pass Erin's Law; our students are counting on it!

Sincerely,

Angela M.C. Mazur, M.A.Ed.
West Anchorage High School
English Instructor

Samantha Weinstein

From: Amanda Price <aprice@staralaska.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2014 1:25 PM
To: Samantha Weinstein
Subject: LOS for hearing tomorrow
Attachments: image001.jpg

From: Kenning_Lisa <Kenning_Lisa@asdk12.org>

REPRESENTATIVE(S) Tarr, Gara, Drummond, Josephson, Kito III, Millett, Nageak, Munoz, Holmes, Edgmon, Costello

I've been an educator in the Anchorage School District for the past 25 years.

As most of you are aware, we currently have a curriculum on personal safety that is taught in grades K-6. If we are lucky enough to have a supportive principal, we can also invite S.T.A.R. into our classrooms for additional support. S.T.A.R. is an amazing organization that does an incredible job with our students.

As an educator, we need to be supported and provided the material and resources to educate our students on personal safety, which is an enormous problem in our state. I strongly support HB233.

Lisa Kenning
Health Specialist

Samantha Weinstein

From: Amanda Price <aprice@staralaska.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2014 1:24 PM
To: Samantha Weinstein
Subject: FW: Erin's Law

From: McGee_Molly <mcgee_molly@asdk12.org>

Subject: Erin's Law

To all Legislators,
My name is Molly McGee and I have been a Health Teacher K-6th grade at Government Hill Elementary School in Anchorage for the past five years. I have taught abuse prevention to all students K-6th grade and I have seen from first hand experience how essential this topic is. Every year I have made 1-2 reports to Child Protected Services in order to keep students safe and/or to stop abuse from happening in the home. Abuse prevention is a topic that we cannot ignore, especially in the state of Alaska where sexual abuse is such a major problem. When a student tells a trusted adult about an abuse, this action can and does change the course of their life forever.

As an educator and a mom I strongly encourage you today to vote for the Erin's Law to build awareness, safety and most importantly to stop the cycle of abuse from happening and keeping all of our youth safe. Please call me or email me with any further questions. Thank you for your time.

Best, Molly McGee
(907) 229-8006
mcgee_molly@asdk12.org

Molly McGee
Health Teacher
Government Hill Elementary
(907)-742-5000

Rep. Geran Tarr

From: Esther Smith <smith.l.esther@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2014 7:40 PM
To: Rep. Lynn Gattis
Cc: Rep. Geran Tarr
Subject: H.B. 233: Testimony in Support

Dear Chair Gattis,

I stand strongly in support of H.B. 233, which relates to sexual abuse and sexual assault awareness and prevention efforts in public schools throughout the state of Alaska.

Legislation of this strength, scope, and content is long overdue in this state. We know that violence is a learned behavior, which means that we can prevent it from occurring with proper, comprehensive education policies. "Erin's Law" seeks to fill a much needed gap within our education system by recognizing the need for mandatory training and awareness on the subjects of sexual abuse and sexual assault.

As a young adult who has spent the last several decades living in Eagle River and, now, Juneau, Alaska, I cannot count the number of loved ones that have bravely shared with me their traumatic childhood experiences with sexual violence and abuse. Their experiences, told so many years after the violence occurred, highlight the power and control and manipulation tactics that perpetrators use to groom and isolate victims.

Throughout this state, there is so much shame and blame directed at victims of sexual abuse and violence. People feel deeply uncomfortable discussing this subject and it's treated like a Pandora's Box: the moment people address Alaska's horrific rates of violence, they have to recognize how endemic this issue is and how the perpetrators are our neighbors, our friends, and our family members. It's a deeply uncomfortable realization that quite a few people would prefer to avoid. But it is a deeply important conversation that needs to be occurring throughout the entire state and within our schools.

The question is not whether or not violence is preventable. The question is how do we best prevent it. H.B. 233 provides a succinct, comprehensive approach to a very real challenge by recognizing that our legislature has a role in promoting violence prevention and our school system has a role in educating students, parents, and staff about this very serious subject.

As the Chair of the Committee on Education, you play a powerful and unique role in addressing the needs of Alaska's children and youth through meaningful, thoughtful legislation. Please seize this opportunity and employ empathy as you listen to testimony tomorrow morning.

Sincerely,
Esther Smith

Rep. Geran Tarr

From: Christine Gerlock <cmgerlock@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2014 7:42 PM
To: Rep. Lynn Gattis
Cc: Rep. Geran Tarr
Subject: HB 233

Rep. Gattis,

Please consider supporting House Bill 233, Erin's Law which will provide age appropriate sexual abuse education to children in public schools. This is an important step in empowering children to recognize and report child sexual abuse. Since Alaska has a high rate child sexual abuse, this is an amazing opportunity to change the lives of Alaskan children and their families.

Thank you for your consideration,
Christine M. Gerlock

STATEMENT OF POSITION

The League of Women Voters of Alaska believes all individuals have the right to live in a fear-free environment, and to be safe from sexual assault (SA); psychological, emotional and physical abuse; and neglect. A special degree of protection is needed for vulnerable, dependent people of any age.

Intervention by public agencies should take place when there is evidence of sexual assault or of physical, psychological or emotional abuse (including stalking) of one family member by another or one partner by another (including dating partnerships). However, this is not to suggest that mandated reporting be instituted as this may actually increase danger for victims/survivors. When necessary to separate family members, it is preferable to remove the perpetrator rather than the victim from the home, particularly if the victim is a child. Physical or sexual assault should be prosecuted whether or not the victim presses charges.

Federal, state and local governments should share responsibility for the health and safety of family members, with primary responsibility at state and local levels. Adequate funding is necessary for the care and protection of the spouse (including ex-spouse, partner, etc.) and children victimized by violence; and costs must be shared by all levels of government, private charitable contributions, and a special fund into which perpetrators are required to pay. To the maximum extent possible, perpetrators should be held financially responsible for these costs, and no victim should ever be required to pay any costs associated with a domestic violence (DV) or sexual assault incident.

Domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault require a coordinated response by law enforcement officials, prosecutors, judges, social service/victim agencies, and the medical community. All people who work with domestic violence and sexual assault incidents must receive special training specific to working with victims, including trauma and its effects. Training can be provided by experts in the field such as those at local DV/SA agencies. This training should be customized to the area of practice of the service providers and include basic training for new hires and periodic follow-up training for all those who work with victims.

AMPLIFICATION

The following areas should be addressed in any comprehensive program concerning domestic violence and sexual assault.

PREVENTION:

1. Focused and directed preventive programs for domestic, sexual, emotional, physical and economic abuse of any person (women, children, men) must be developed throughout statewide agencies and services. These programs must be multi-faceted, comprehensive, and culturally relevant.
2. Preventive education should begin early in schools, using age-appropriate, skill-based curriculum, on the issues of: human rights, domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, anger, power, and control issues, including: conflict resolution, safety training, problem identification, and available assistance. Evidence-based healthy relationship and dating violence prevention should be introduced into every middle and high school. Social-emotional curricula can be used in the earlier grades.

(Continued)

PUBLIC SERVICES TO VICTIMS:

1. Public services should be available to all victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, regardless of the person's ability to pay.
2. Responsible, knowledgeable and informed policy, intervention, and protection should be in place and available.
3. Shelter for victims and their dependents is essential.
4. A sufficient number of social workers, trained in all aspects of DV/SA, must be available as well as foster care, in needed.
5. Adequate counseling and advocacy support for victims and other affected family members, as appropriate, should be provided.
6. Trauma-informed medical care, including mental health care, must be provided.
7. Access for victims to representation for divorce/separation, custody, child support, child custody, protective orders, and debt/property division issues that arise as a consequence of the abuse must be available. This should include recognition of Alaska's rebuttable presumption that a parent who has a "history of perpetrating domestic violence" (as stated in HB385 2004) against another parent should not be awarded sole or joint legal or primary or shared physical custody, based on the tremendous impact domestic violence has on children.
8. Alcohol and drug abuse treatment for all age groups, including teens, should be available.
9. All pertinent agencies should offer coordinated, trauma-informed social services.
10. Routine screening should be done in all health-care and social service settings, followed by informational outreach when indicated.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFENDERS:

1. Batterer's accountability programming for all offenders should be required.
2. Rehabilitation and batterer's accountability programming for incarcerated offenders should be required.
3. When appropriate, alternatives to incarceration should be used that include batterer's accountability programming.
4. Alternative housing for perpetrators should be arranged, when appropriate.

Special attention must be paid to groups who have been inadequately served in the past, such as adolescents, people who experience disabilities, and the elderly

(Continued)

Definitions:

“Domestic Violence” means physical, psychological or emotional harm, including stalking or the threat of physical, psychological or emotional harm between and among household or family members.

“History of perpetrating domestic violence” includes one incident of violence that causes serious physical injury or more than one incident of domestic violence. If one parent has a “history of perpetrating domestic violence”, then the offending parent must show that he or she has successfully completed a batterer’s intervention program, that he or she does not engage in substance abuse, that he or she is in compliance with appropriate gun control laws, and that the best interest of the child require his or her participation as a custodial parent because the victimized parent is absent, has a mental illness or has a substance abuse problem that affects parenting abilities. (In the matter of substance abuse and/or mental illness, care must be taken to determine if the substance abuse or mental illness is a result of the abusive relationship. It should be note tat frequently abusers claim that their partners are mentally ill or addicted.) If the abusive parent cannot prove this he or she is generally permitted only supervised visitation.

“Household or family members” include spouses or former spouses, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, foster parents and children, members of a social unit comprised of those living together in the same dwelling, or persons in a dating, courtship, or engagement relationship.

“Physical, psychological or emotional harm” includes abuse, neglect, stalking and sexual assault.

“Sexual assault” means engaging in sexual contact without consent or in violation of law, as provided in Alaska Statutes 11.41.410-460. This includes sexual contact with someone under the age of consent even though contact is consensual or with a person who is incapacitated or incapable of consenting. It is also a crime to attempt sexual contact without consent. Sexual offenses often include the use of physical force, verbal or emotional threats, intimidation, coercion, and manipulation.

“Stalking” means a violation of the law, as provided in Alaska Statutes 11.41.410-460.

“Sexual harassment” reflects certain entitlement beliefs and attitudes linked to domestic violence and sexual assault. Given that connection, the formal definition of sexual harassment is included here: “Sexual harassment includes all of the following: Verbal assaults such as whistles, jokes, comments, and insults about gender, sexuality, or sexual activity; visual assaults such as exposing oneself or exposing someone to nude or pornographic images against someone’s wishes, or gesturing or mimicking sexual acts; and physical assaults such as intimidating behaviors and postures or unwanted physical touching such as tickling or wrestling.



Adopted 1986; Revised 1995; 2010. Reaffirmed each year since at LWVAK Convention.