



Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Research

A Bibliography

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**Championing and Strengthening the
Global Response to Child Abuse**

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Scope

This bibliography lists publications related to various topics surrounding the prevention of child sexual abuse.

Organization

Publications include articles, book chapters, reports, and research briefs and are arranged in date descending order under the headings below. Links are provided to full text publications when possible. However, this collection may not be complete. More information can be obtained in the Child Abuse Library Online.

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Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Research

A Bibliography

General Topics, Studies & Evaluations

Fix, R. L., Newman, A. T., & Letourneau, E. J. (2025). Messaging to promote the public's understanding of child sexual violence as preventable, not inevitable. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 169, 107700. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2025.107700

Many people in the United States view childhood sexual violence (CSV) as unpreventable, which can inhibit funding for interventions and policy related to CSV prevention. In response to widespread fatalism that CSV is inevitable, we developed and tested language to promote public perceptions of CSV as preventable. Twenty-two communications frames were developed by experts in the field and then evaluated through two waves of online surveys. We collected data from a nationally representative sample of 5389 people in the United States. Results suggest two types of tested language (i.e., frames) were most impactful in shifting thinking toward prevention. The frames that included treatment-focused information including providing real interventions to people with sexual attraction to children shifted public thinking toward CSV prevention (e.g., frame that described an available perpetration prevention program from a third-person perspective ($\beta = -1.79, p = .001$)). Additionally, an education-focused frame decreased concerns about why CSV cannot be prevented ($\beta = -2.21, p < .001$) increased support for collective efficacy to prevent CSV and reduced a focus on costly and ineffective policies as evidenced by written responses. Findings suggest that with relatively brief, targeted frames, advocates, practitioners, and researchers can help shift public perceptions about CSV. Further testing and development is needed to assess the longevity of these effects and whether additional priming or supplemental information is required to sustain perceptions of CSV as preventable. Ultimately, this study resulted in development of tools, resources, and training necessary to make the case for CSV prevention research funding and to inspire collective action.

Kenny, M. C., Hambrick, M., Assini-Meytin, L., Borelus, T., & Chang, M. (2025). Longitudinal analysis of a statewide, social ecological approach to child sexual abuse prevention in Vermont. *Child Maltreatment, 0*(0). DOI:10.1177/10775595251340025

In 2009, Vermont became the first state to enact a comprehensive health education policy that included child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention. This study describes the implementation efforts of CSA prevention programming led by Prevent Child Abuse Vermont, both one year prior to the policy enactment and ten years later (i.e., 2008–2019). We used data from the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) to obtain rates of substantiated CSA reports and examined their association with program implementation. Findings from longitudinal hierarchical linear modeling indicated that, in seven Vermont counties, an increased number of CSA prevention programs correlated with a decrease in substantiated CSA reports. Three adult focused programs, Nurturing Healthy Sexual Development, Informed Supervision, and Overcoming Barriers—were also associated with reduced substantiated CSA reports. These findings suggest that consistent implementation of CSA prevention programs across the state of Vermont was associated with lower rates of CSA incidents.

McCartan, K., & King-Hill, S. (2025). Developing a framework for the prevention of sibling sexual behaviour. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 162*(Pt 3), 106849. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2024.106849

Sibling sexual behaviour (SSB) is an existing, but poorly defined, area of professional practice and an emerging research area. Much of the research conversations are focused on defining the issue and thinking about the treatment and management of people affected by it. However, in line with other forms of sexual abuse, focus should also be on how SSB can be prevented from happening, alongside the prevention of repeat behaviors. In this paper the emerging debates around SSB prevention, what exists, and how it should develop is discussed. The recently developed sibling sexual behavior mapping tool (SSB-MT) is discussed along with the socio-ecological model and a

merged model, the sibling sexual behavior–socio–ecological mapping tool (SSB–SEMT). The alignment of SSB to existing EpiCrim frameworks. The prevention of SSB fits within the broader Child Sexual Abuse frameworks and that the sibling sexual behaviour–socio–ecological mapping tool (SSB–SEMT) can be used to develop and introduce prevention interventions across the four prevention stages.

Rayment–McHugh, S., & McKillop, N. (2025). ‘Just’ prevention of child sexual abuse: A critique and call to action. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 163, 107328.
DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2025.107328

The UN Sustainable Development Goals advocate for the protection of all children from sexual abuse. This inevitably links the safety of children with social justice principles, emphasizing the need to apply an equality lens to child sexual abuse prevention. This commentary paper offers a critical discussion that advances the field by reformulating the ‘just sustainabilities’ framework from urban and environmental planning, to guide a ‘just’ child sexual abuse prevention agenda. This reformulated framework is used to critique current prevention practice, utilizing Australian and international interdisciplinary literature and examples. It informs a call to action to adopt a ‘just’ prevention agenda for future child sexual abuse prevention policy and practice.

Dona, S. W. A., Bloxson, G., Green, J., Angeles, M. R., Humphreys, C., & Gold, L. (2025). [Economic evaluation of prevention interventions for child sexual exploitation or child sexual abuse: A systematic review](#). *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 26(3), 546–559. DOI:10.1177/15248380241284782

Child sexual abuse, including sexual exploitation, is a global issue, affecting 8% to 31% of girls and 3% to 17% of boys worldwide. This systematic review aims to synthesize economic evidence on the cost-effectiveness of community interventions to prevent child sexual abuse/exploitation to inform decision-making. A systematic search was conducted on eight databases for studies published until April 2023. Gray literature was searched using

Google. The inclusion criteria were economic evaluation of interventions targeted at children, perpetrators/offenders, or professionals addressing child sexual abuse/exploitation. There was no limitation by country, but an English language abstract was required for non-English articles. Studies without a specific focus on child sexual abuse/exploitation, such as physical, emotional, and domestic violence-related abuse, were excluded. All costs were adjusted to US\$ 2023. Reporting quality assessment was conducted using the Consolidated Health Economic Evaluation Reporting Standards 2022 checklist. Of 5,180 screened articles, 17 were included in the final synthesis, with most from the United States and focused on tertiary prevention delivered to offenders. While the intervention components varied across studies, all demonstrated promising and cost-effective results. The findings highlight a small but growing body of economic evidence for child sexual abuse/exploitation interventions. The existing economic evaluation evidence is dominated by tertiary prevention, which focuses on offenders and child victims and highlights the need for more research and action on primary and secondary preventative interventions for general and at-risk populations.

Harris, D. A., Sheath, M., & Shields, R. (2024). First, do no harm: Critically revisiting contemporary approaches to child sexual abuse prevention. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 153, 106859. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2024.106859

Crime prevention is typically presented in a tripartite model that includes primary, secondary, and tertiary domains. Almost every criminal justice intervention constitutes tertiary prevention and occurs reactively, in the aftermath of an offence. Child sexual abuse is no exception, and prevention science has long recommended we focus our intervention efforts further upstream. Such an approach would include earlier detection and disclosure (secondary prevention), or—even better—reducing the risks of early exposure to the environmental forces which facilitate sexual abuse in the first place (primary prevention). What is missing from the field, however, is a coherent framework through which to critique the unintended consequences of our well-intentioned

responses to child sexual abuse. Such consequences include secondary trauma for victim survivors and vicarious trauma for families and practitioners. In this article, we reflect on prevention from a critical perspective that centres the principle of “first, do no harm.” In doing so, we introduce the notion of ‘quaternary prevention’ for child sexual abuse. Public health has long recognised the risks of medicalisation, overdiagnosis, and unnecessary intervention. We encourage our field to engage within a framework of quaternary prevention to consider the iatrogenic effects of many contemporary practices and to take seriously the “do no harm” principle to improve practice across all levels of prevention.

Helpingstine, C. E., Murphy, C. A., Bernier, J., Crane, K., & Klika, J. B. (2024). Child sexual abuse in the United States: A commentary on current policy approaches to prevention and aspirations for the future. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 33*(7), 833–846. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2023.2300701

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a significant threat to the health and well-being of children in the United States (US). Public policies are a key public health strategy for the primary prevention of violence, including CSA. In 2021, the Enough Abuse Campaign and Prevent Child Abuse America published a comprehensive report entitled *A Call to Action for Policymakers and Advocates: Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Legislation in the States* to encourage state leaders to create a comprehensive strategy to prevent CSA in the US. Findings from the report show that the nation has made some effort to address CSA, but more focus needs to be given to primary prevention strategies that stop it from occurring in the first place. The report also illustrates the variability of CSA prevention policies across the US and highlights critical gaps in current approaches that must be addressed. In the spirit of the special issue, the authors reflect on key policy issues in the field, including the lack of a federal policy framework for CSA prevention, dedicated funding for the prevention of CSA, and research on the effectiveness of policies intended to prevent CSA. Suggestions for future directions in relation to policy development provided in this

commentary will be useful to a variety of stakeholders interested in the topic of CSA prevention policy.

Helpingstine, C. E., Zalaquett, V. C. J., Murphy, C. A., Merrick, M. T., Fickler, W., Bernier, J., & Klika, J. B. (2024). Prevention of child sexual abuse in the United States: Scoping review of United States legislative policies. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 152*, 106747. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2024.106747

States in the United States (US) have passed and enacted legislation for the purpose of preventing child sexual abuse (CSA) since 2000, but it is unknown whether these legislative policies reduce adult-perpetrated CSA. Review the literature from 2000 to 2023 to understand which US CSA prevention policies have been evaluated, the effectiveness of these policies, study populations, and barriers and facilitators associated with the implementation of CSA prevention policies. The study protocol was published prior to undertaking the review: PMC10603531. The review follows Joanna Briggs Institute methodology and is reported according to the PRISMA-ScR Checklist. We searched 27 databases, hand searched reference lists of included studies, and sent notice via listserv to other researchers in the field. Articles were included if the content focused on CSA prevention policies and the effects. No limits to methodology were applied. Methodological rigor was assessed. 2209 potentially relevant articles were identified; 20 articles advanced to full-text review, three satisfied the inclusion criteria. Three eligible studies focused on CSA prevention education policies, while the other focused on mandated reporting policies. Effects of these policies were mixed in relation to CSA reporting and substantiation rates. No study considered child demographics. Despite decades of legislative action for CSA prevention across the US, only a few studies have assessed the effects of these policies. These findings highlight the need for additional research to ensure that CSA prevention policies such as CSA prevention education in schools and mandated reporting practices are working as intended.

Innes, S. L., & Rayment-McHugh, S. (2024). It's more than a matter of trust: What parents and young children need to know to prevent intrafamilial child sexual abuse. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 33(1), 43–64. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2023.2291396

Programs aimed at preventing child sexual abuse typically focus on skilling up young children and, to a lesser extent, parents by imparting a range of protective messages. Many sexual abuse prevention programs include a focus on identifying or vetting “safe” or “trustworthy” people. The authors qualitatively analyzed the content of narratives from individuals with childhood experience of intrafamilial sexual abuse, an under-represented voice in the development of child sexual abuse prevention programs. The analysis of impediments to protection indicated that, within the family context, reductionistic judgments of familiar individuals’ perceived safety or trustworthiness impaired child safety. In addition to adults and children being unable to recognize sexually abusive behavior and warning signs, child-victim survivor narratives highlighted the barriers for prevention in family environments characterized by maltreatment, a lack of child rights or that were unsupported by external authorities. Implications for the content of messages young children and their parents need to prevent child sexual victimization in the context of everyday family life are discussed.

Kim, H., Song, E.-J., & Windsor, L. (2024). [Evidence-based home visiting provisions and child maltreatment report rates: County-level analysis of US national data from 2016 to 2018](#). *Child Maltreatment*, 29(1), 176–189. DOI:10.1177/10775595221107533

This observational ecological study examined county-level associations between evidence-based home visiting (EHV) provisions and child maltreatment report (CMR) rates, using national county-level data from 2016–2018. We found that longitudinal changes of EHV provisions were significantly negatively associated with county CMR rates while controlling for potential confounders. Our model estimated that after EHV provisions were launched in counties, their CMR rates decreased (or after they were ceased, rates increased) by 2.21 per 1000 children overall, 2.88 per 1000 children aged 0–5, 2.59 per 1000

children aged 6–11, 2.13 per 1000 male children, and 2.24 per 1000 female children. When limiting attention to EHV provisions funded by the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program, we found no significant association perhaps because MIECHV-funded EHV provisions were a small subset of all EHV provisions. These findings propose potential protective impacts of county EHV provisions on overall county CMR rates. Yet, the small effect sizes suggest that EHV provisions should be considered as a part of a complete response to child maltreatment rather than in isolation. Given that EHV is provided to a very small part of the population, nevertheless, our findings suggest that expanding coverage would increase effect sizes.

Rayment-McHugh, S., McKillop, N., Adams, D., Higgins, D. J., & Russell, D. H. (2024). [Context matters: Conceptualising and operationalising the contextual prevention of child sexual abuse](#). *Child Abuse Review*, 33(1), e2859. DOI:10.1002/car.2859

There is growing recognition of the contextual dynamics of child sexual abuse, with a developing evidence base supporting it, sparking calls to ensure prevention efforts are contextualised. Contextual approaches extend the focus of prevention beyond the individual, to include immediate situations, and the physical and social contexts in which abuse occurs. Although academic and industry support for contextual approaches is gaining momentum, there is no consistent definition of contextual prevention nor operational clarity currently available to inform research, policy and practice. This contributes to a lack of policy guidance and practice consistency; also impeding much needed evaluation research, and likely slowing scholarly and practice uptake. In this article, we address this important gap. Based on a critical review of relevant literature, we propose a conceptual definition of contextual prevention and its operationalisation and provide a framework and guidance for policymakers and practitioners tasked with protecting children from child sexual abuse.

Seto, M. C., Roche, K., Rodrigues, N. C., Curry, S., & Letourneau, E. (2024). Evaluating child sexual abuse perpetration prevention efforts: A systematic review. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 33*(7), 847–868. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2024.2356194

Many child sexual abuse prevention efforts focus on the prevention of victimization, through education of children and parents, bystander training, and policies and practices in youth-serving organizations (e.g. requiring criminal record checks). However, there has been growing attention to child sexual abuse perpetration prevention, targeted at individuals who are at risk of perpetration. We conducted a systematic review of studies reporting outcomes for child sexual abuse perpetration prevention interventions. Only seven studies were identified in our review, with five intended for adults and two intended for children. Four of the five adult studies had significant methodological concerns, precluding strong conclusions from these studies. We concluded that higher-quality evaluations of perpetration prevention efforts are greatly needed. We also identified intrafamilial perpetration prevention, particularly interventions for parents or caregivers, as a critical gap in the literature. Suggestions for child sexual abuse perpetration intervention evaluation and delivery are discussed.

Singh, S., & Nambiar, V. (2024). Role of artificial intelligence in the prevention of online child sexual abuse: A systematic review of literature. *Journal of Applied Security Research, 19*(4), 586–627. DOI:10.1080/19361610.2024.2331885

Online Child sexual abuse (OCSA) is a major menace in the digitalized world. Every year, more than a billion children between the ages of 2–17 years are sexually abused. Despite the harsh reality of most incidents, they remain unreported. Not only that but activities on dark web platforms go unmoderated and it becomes very difficult and complex to trace the origin of abuse and exploitation of children. In cases of online abuse, the sources through which detection can be done are evaded. Although several government and non-government initiatives have been implemented worldwide to curb this social menace, their effectiveness and accuracy remain questionable. AI-based services if

regulated and executed cautiously can be effective in diagnosing and preventing sexual abuse in children on virtual platforms. Existing literature implies that AI can be a potent armor to detect and predict child sexual abuse online. The ability of artificial intelligence to predict and stop sexual abuse in children is very promising. AI-based technologies that can aid in the identification and prevention of violence against children include mobile computing, the Internet of Things, chatbots, machine learning, pattern recognition, and cloud computing. Therefore, it is essential to examine the existing literature to highlight the emergent need for more applied and evidence-based research in the area. Thus, this study aimed to identify interventions driven by artificial intelligence in preventing online child sexual abuse, its limitations, and future implications. We conducted an extensive systematic literature review to understand the trends and efficacy of AI-based services. The selection of research studies was performed in accordance with the PRISMA standards and relevant studies were extracted from databases such as ScienceDirect, Springer, IEEE, and MDPI. Articles were selected and screened based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. This study identified 35 papers that were strictly limited to the prospect of AI interventions for online child sexual abuse. The review helped in deducing 3 current trends in the field of AI for preventing online child sexual abuse, algorithm evaluation (advantages and disadvantages of AI tools) in preventing OCSA, and recommendation for technique advancements of AI tools. However, there is scarce evidence that proves AI interventions are effective in solving online child sexual abuse issues, as shown in the paper, thereby encouraging more extant research to be conducted in the area.

Ferragut, M., Cerezo, M. V., Ortiz-Tallo, M., & Rodriguez-Fernandez, R. (2023). [Effectiveness of child sexual abuse prevention programs on knowledge acquisition: A meta-analytical study](#). *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 146, 106489.
DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106489

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a type of maltreatment considered a global health problem. CSA is a traumatic experience with important consequences for the victim's health. It is

essential to report the effectiveness of CSA prevention programs to offer society useful tools to combat this abuse. We aimed to study the effectiveness of CSA prevention programs on the knowledge acquisition based on comparing pre- and post-treatment changes, and also if their effectiveness is related to program-related and methodological variables. Standardised mean change (with studies that report pre-post program measures) of the effectiveness of CSA prevention programs published between 2014 and 2021 was carried out. The general effectiveness of these programs and whether the results were influenced by program-related variables (the duration, the target population, participants' age, or the type of intervention) or by methodology-related factors (the agent who taught them, the geographical area where they were carried out or the way the programs were evaluated) were analysed. A total of 43 samples analysing knowledge about CSA as a dependent variable were included. The results reported a combined effect size considered large ($d_{MR} = -0.96$, 95 % CI [-1.10, -0.82], $p < .001$). High inter-study heterogeneity was observed in the meta-analysis, although only the geographic area where the studies were conducted appears as a significant moderator. In conclusion, the prevention programs included in this analysis significantly improved the participants' knowledge acquisition.

Huizar, T., & DiLorenzo, P. (Eds.). (2023). *Child sexual abuse: Practical approaches to prevention and intervention*. CWLA Press.

Whether you are a Children's Advocacy Center leader, victim advocate, police officer, forensic interviewer, therapist, pediatrician, prosecutor, caseworker, or other child abuse professional, this book was created for you. We have effective tools to reduce human suffering as a result of child sexual abuse so that survivors can truly thrive in their adulthood. We also have millions of adult survivors and their allies who are working to reduce the stigma and silence of abuse and advocate for the resources needed to continue this vital work. It's a motivating time to be a professional who works with children who have experienced abuse, their families, and their communities.

Kewley, S., Mhlanga-Gunda, R., & Van Hout, M. C. (2023). [Preventing child sexual abuse before it occurs: Examining the scale and nature of secondary public health prevention approaches](#). *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 29(1), 1–33.
DOI:10.1080/13552600.2021.2000651

Preventing child sexual abuse (CSA) requires comprehensive multi-agency criminal justice and public health approaches. Yet, marginal attention has been given to secondary prevention strategies that target “at risk” populations. Thus, we carried out a scoping review examining secondary prevention interventions for people at risk of sexual offending by considering their effectiveness, challenges and barriers. We identified $N = 43$ sources and completed a qualitative analysis. Our appraisal found five themes: (a) essential features needed for secondary prevention programmes (plus summary of interventions); (b) barriers to examining, implementing and accessing secondary prevention programmes; (c) methodological limitations; (d) the ethical justification; and (e) economic benefits for preventing abuse before it occurs. Over the last two decades, sources report greater public tolerance to the notion of tackling CSA using public health prevention approaches. Thus, we call for policy makers to embrace this positive shift and invest resources to further examine this area.

Mehta, D., Kelly, A. B., Laurens, K. R., Haslam, D., Williams, K. E., Walsh, K., Baker, P. R. A., Carter, H. E., Khawaja, N. G., Zelenko, O., & Mathews, B. (2023). [Child maltreatment and long-term physical and mental health outcomes: An exploration of biopsychosocial determinants and implications for prevention](#). *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, 54(2), 421–435. DOI:10.1007/s10578-021-01258-8

Child maltreatment rates remain unacceptably high and rates are likely to escalate as COVID-related economic problems continue. A comprehensive and evidence-building approach is needed to prevent, detect and intervene where child maltreatment occurs. This review identifies key challenges in definitions, overviews the latest data on prevalence rates, reviews risk and protective factors, and examines common long-term mental health outcomes for children who experience maltreatment. The review takes a

systems approach to child maltreatment outcomes through its focus on the overall burden of disease, gene-environment interactions, neurobiological mechanisms and social ecologies linking maltreatment to mental ill-health. Five recommendations relating to the accurate measurement of trends, research on brain structures and processes, improving the reach and impact of teleservices for detecting, preventing and treating child maladjustment, community-based approaches, and building population-focused multidisciplinary alliances and think tanks are presented.

Robertson, A. L., Harris, D. A., & Karstedt, S. (2023). "It's a preventable type of harm": Evidence-based strategies to prevent sexual abuse in schools. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 145, 106419. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106419

The last two decades have seen global public recognition of the scale and impact of adult-perpetrated institutional child sexual abuse. A sizeable body of knowledge about generalized safeguarding measures has since been generated to inform organizations' prevention efforts. Apparent in the extant literature, however, is a notable lack of evidence-based and context-specific prevention strategies targeting perpetration in distinct institutional environments. This absence extends to educational settings where most reported contemporary cases occur or originate. The recommendations outlined in this article contribute to this gap. Derived from empirical findings establishing the role of context-specific rather than person-specific factors, a range of prevention strategies framed by Situational Crime Prevention are proposed for secondary educational settings. These recommendations are supplemented by the unique insights of interviewed experts with specialist professional knowledge. Recommendations center around targeting features of the environment such as high-risk locations, available guardians, and intimacy-promoting situations available in educational contexts. Taken together, this robust prevention and control agenda can create conditions for safer educational environments.

Bright, M. A., Roehrkasse, A., Masten, S., Nauman, A., & Finkelhor, D. (2022). Child abuse prevention education policies increase reports of child sexual abuse. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 134*, 105932. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2022.105932

It is well supported that engaging in prevention education increases a child's awareness of child sexual abuse. However, due to methodological limitations, prior research has yet to determine whether this knowledge leads to increases in reporting or substantiation of child sexual abuse. We used a quasi-experimental design to investigate the association between child sexual abuse report rates from 2005 to 2019 and presence of state legislation mandating school-based child sexual abuse prevention curricula. Child sexual abuse report data for school-aged children ages 5–17 were obtained from the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System child files. Data on state laws on prevention curricula were extracted from enoughabuse.org, Prevent Child Abuse America, ErinsLaw.org, and directly from published legislation. State education mandates were associated with an increase in the incidence of child sexual abuse reports made by education personnel (IRR = 1.22, 95 % CI, 1.01–1.48). Policies were not associated with increases in incidence of child sexual abuse reports made by non-education personnel (IRR = 1.08, 95 % CI, 0.95–1.22) or decreases in likelihood that any given report was confirmed (OR = 1.00; 95 % CI, 0.90–1.12). There is moderate evidence that adopting state mandates for child sexual abuse prevention education may increase disclosures and reporting of child sexual abuse by school-based sources. There is no evidence that mandates decrease the validity of child sexual abuse reporting by school-based sources.

Craig, E. (2022). [Teaching safeguarding through books: A content analysis of child sexual abuse prevention books](#). *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 31*(3), 257–275. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2021.1985672

Research attests that when children are given essential knowledge about Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) prevention, such as the maintenance of boundaries and personal space, the correct anatomical names for genitals, and information on how to distinguish

between appropriate and inappropriate touching, children are less likely to experience sexual abuse and more likely to disclose abuse they have already encountered. CSA prevention books aim to teach children safety skills, helping to inform them on how to assess a situation and what to do if they are made to feel uncomfortable. This research analyzes 44 CSA prevention books to ascertain whether they are in line with academic recommendations as to what knowledge children should be taught in order to protect them, as much as possible, from sexual abuse. While most of the books do follow advice derived from the academic literature, only 7 books contained 70% or more of the information research determined to be essential. Despite the documented importance of teaching children anatomically correct names for genitals, this was missing in 91% of books analyzed. It is recommended, therefore, in order to ensure sufficient coverage of essential information, that multiple CSA prevention books are obtained for, and read with, children.

Gerke, J., & Dietz, T. (2022). [Early prevention of maternal sexual abuse](#). *Childhood Vulnerability Journal*, 4, 1-11. DOI:10.1007/s41255-021-00018-z

Child sexual abuse has been discussed thoroughly; however, marginalized groups of victims such as victims of child sexual abuse in early childhood and victims of maternal sexual abuse have rarely been considered. This essay combines these two relevant perspectives in child protection and aims to pin out future directions in the field of child abuse and specifically maternal sexual abuse and its early prevention. In the course of the 7th Haruv International PhD Workshop on Child Maltreatment at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, in 2019 the topics of maternal sexual abuse and early prevention of child maltreatment in Germany were discussed and intertwined. Problems concerning the specific research of maternal sexual abuse in early childhood and prevention were identified. Both, maternal sexual abuse as well as sexual abuse in early childhood, i.e. before the age of three, are underreported topics. Society still follows a “friendly mother illusion” while recent cases in German media as well as research findings indicate that

the mother can be a perpetrator of child sexual abuse. Similarly, sexual abuse in early childhood, namely abuse before the age of three, is existent; although the recognition of it is difficult and young children are, in regards to their age and development especially vulnerable. Raising awareness on marginalized or tabooed topics can be a form of prevention. An open dialog in research and practice about the so far marginalized topics of maternal sexual abuse and sexual abuse in early childhood is crucial.

Kelly, C., & LeCroy, C. (2022). Can we measure risk in home visitation? An examination of the predictive validity of the Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI). *Children and Youth Services Review, 139*, 106571. DOI:10.1016/j.childyouth.2022.106571

The current study examined the validity of the Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI) to predict future risk of child abuse and neglect. Participants in the study were 2,088 parents participating in a single statewide home visitation program. Most parents were low-income mothers with a variety of socio-demographic risk indicators. Participants were administered the HFPI at program enrollment, then followed through administrative data for approximately one year for future official maltreatment reports. Pre-intervention HFPI composite and subscale scores demonstrated incremental predictive validity of a future official maltreatment report. The HFPI can be used successfully during home visitation at the time of program initiation to suggest needs and services that reduce the likelihood child maltreatment, and aid in the prediction of future child abuse and neglect.

Leckey, Y., Stokes, A., Hickey, G., & McGilloway, S. (2022). [Engagement with a multi-component, preventative program to reduce child maltreatment: Program satisfaction and acceptability](#). *Clinical Social Work Journal, 50*(4), 358-376. DOI:10.1007/s10615-021-00789-w

The development and implementation of interventions to prevent child maltreatment (CM) is particularly challenging in view of the numerous stressors experienced by families within the child welfare system (CWS). Difficulties engaging families, particularly those

who are most vulnerable, can lead to lower program dose and poorer outcomes. This qualitative study, conducted as part of a larger process evaluation, explored participant perspectives of a newly developed, multi-component, community-based intervention designed to reduce the risk of CM in families with young children. The study involved one-to-one interviews with a sub-sample of mothers (n = 12) recruited through statutory and community-based social work services. Several brief program satisfaction questionnaires were also completed by parents. Mothers reported a stronger parent-child bond and greater use of positive parenting strategies (e.g. improved communication and discipline strategies) following the intervention. Facilitator and group support emerged as strong themes throughout the interviews and were important factors in facilitating engagement and reducing drop-out. High levels of program satisfaction were also reported. The study findings demonstrate how a multi-component program, which combines an evidence-based treatment (EBT) with community-based supports, may offer a promising approach for social work practitioners in reducing CM and in better meeting the more complex needs of families within the CWS. However, a more thorough understanding of the factors which promote program engagement and retention, is crucial to maximizing the benefits of interventions designed to support more vulnerable families.

Nicol, S. J., Harris, D. A., Ogilvie, J., Kebbell, M. R., Craig, C., & Knight, R. (2022). Evading detection: What do we know about men charged with extrafamilial child sexual abuse following delayed detection?. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 31*(3), 333-352. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2022.2047856

Most child sexual abuse (CSA) remains unreported and undetected. Despite this, much of what we know about perpetrators of CSA is derived from samples of convicted CSA offenders. Significant knowledge gaps remain about those who have evaded detection. This study addresses this gap with an in-depth content analysis of the case files of ten convicted child sexual offenders (CSOs) with the longest detection lag, selected from a

broader group (n = 349) of men incarcerated at the Massachusetts Treatment Center (MTC). Participants were examined on a range of offender characteristics including Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), cognitive distortions, antisocial traits, indicators of pedophilia and Machiavellian or narcissistic traits, offense facilitating factors, and grooming behavior. A tentative profile emerged with the following characteristics: direct experience of childhood abuse, various cognitive distortions, specialized rather than versatile criminal history, pedophilic traits, Machiavellian traits, and engaging in a range of offense-facilitating behaviors including grooming. We provide insight into offenders who evade detection for CSA and set the foundation for further research to inform prevention strategies for law enforcement agencies and child-serving organizations.

Patterson, A., Ryckman, L., & Guerra, C. (2022). [A systematic review of the education and awareness interventions to prevent online child sexual abuse](#). *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma*, 15(3), 857–867. DOI:10.1007/s40653-022-00440-x

Online child sexual abuse is highly prevalent in current society, in part, due to how technologically advanced children and adults have become. While much of the focus has been on perpetrator intervention, it is prudent to consider responses safeguarding children from potential perpetrators. Therefore, this review aimed to identify all the available empirical research on the prevention methods linked to education and awareness to determine the approaches' effectiveness, successes, and failures to aid future interventions. Databases were systematically searched for studies published between 2000 to 2020. Nine studies providing different prevention methods for online child sexual abuse were selected. A total sample of n = 672 and a descriptive approach was used for this study. While the interventions seemed to improve knowledge retention of online safety, there was no significant change for risky online behavior. These findings provide specific suggestions for future interventions, particularly those focusing on risky online behaviors.

Cohen, N., & Katz, C. (2021). Preventing child maltreatment: Key conclusions from a systematic literature review of prevention programs for practitioners. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 118*, 105138. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.105138

Child maltreatment (CM) is a worldwide social problem and there is a large consensus that its prevention is of crucial importance. The current literature review highlights CM prevention studies that target practitioners, with the aim of assessing the knowledge in this area, informing future efforts and benefiting the international task of mitigating CM. Specifically, the study presents key conclusions from prevention programs evaluated in peer-reviewed journals from the last decade selected using the PRISMA systematic literature review guidelines. Out of the 26 manuscripts that discussed prevention programs targeted at practitioners, 20 programs were identified. While sexual abuse prevention programs were the most common, followed by programs addressing general child maltreatment, only two studies addressed child physical abuse. More than a third of the prevention programs were interdisciplinary, while healthcare providers had the highest number of specifically tailored programs. The discussion addresses the considerable lack of detail in the relevant manuscripts and urges future efforts to further elaborate on necessary details to enable other researchers and practitioners to better assess and determine the congruence between child maltreatment research and prevention programs. Additionally, some methodological issues in the included manuscripts, such as the lack of control groups and the related challenges, are discussed.

Lane, W. G., Dubowitz, H., Frick, K. D., Semiatin, J., & Magder, L. (2021). Cost effectiveness of SEEK: A primary care-based child maltreatment prevention model. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 111*, 104809. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104809

Funding for prevention interventions is often quite limited. Cost-related assessments are important to best allocate prevention funds. The study objective was to determine the (1) overall cost for implementing the Safe Environment for Every Kid (SEEK) model, (2) cost of

implementation per child, and (3) cost per case of maltreatment averted. 102 pediatric providers at 18 pediatric primary care practices. 924 families with children < 6 years receiving care by those providers. Practices and their providers were randomized to either SEEK training and implementation or usual care. Families in SEEK and control practices were recruited for evaluation. Rates of psychological and physical abuse were calculated by parent self-report 12 months following recruitment. Model costs were calculated including salaries for team members, provider time for training and booster sessions, and development and distribution of materials. Implementing SEEK in all 18 practices would have cost approximately \$265,892 over 2.5 years; \$3.59 per child per year; or \$305.58 (\$229.18-\$381.97) to prevent one incident. Based on a very conservative cost estimate of \$2779 per maltreatment incident, SEEK would save an estimated \$2,151,878 in health care costs for 29,610 children. The SEEK model is cost saving. Cost per case of psychological and physical abuse averted were significantly lower than the short-term costs of medical and mental health care for maltreated children. SEEK model expansion has the potential to significantly decrease medical, mental health, and other related costs associated with maltreatment.

Prikhidko, A., & Kenny, M. C. (2021). Examination of parents' attitudes toward and efforts to discuss child sexual abuse prevention with their children. *Children and Youth Services Review, 121*, 105810. DOI:10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105810

Prevention efforts for child sexual abuse (CSA) have focused on programming for children through schools while few parent-based programs are available in the community. Research over the past few decades show that parents lack access to such programs and aren't actively discussing CSA concepts with their children and continue to possess incorrect knowledge about risks. This study aims to analyzing parents' attitudes toward CSA, and their engagement in discussions about CSA with children. Three hundred and two parents (90% mothers) across the US completed an online survey. This study employed an explanatory mixed methods research design. Descriptive data analysis

focused on exploring the relationships between socio-demographic characteristics, knowledge about sexual abuse prevention, and communication about sexual abuse prevention. While most parents (64%) engaged in such discussions, they still desired more information from trusted sources and needed developmentally appropriate materials. Parents reported the need for education through courses, trainings, and/or support groups. The prevention concepts parents talked to their children about differed based on the gender of the child, as well as the marital status of the parent. Single parents discussed less CSA concepts than married. White/Non-Hispanic parents were more educated about sexual abuse compared to Hispanic/Latino parents and talked to their children more about prevention concepts. Parents also discussed CSA with girls more compared to boys. The majority of parents are discussing CSA and have adequate knowledge about prevention concepts, but still desire more assistance from experts. Some parents are in need of more assistance in conducting CSA discussions with their children.

Rizo, C. F., Chesworth, B. R., Franchino-Olsen, H., Klein, L., Villodas, M. L., Martin, S. L., & Macy, R. J. (2021). The state of programs for educating youth about sex trafficking in the United States: A nationwide scoping scan survey. *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 9(4), 513–531. DOI:10.1080/23322705.2021.1943944

Growing interest in preventing and addressing sex trafficking has led to an increase in the development and implementation of sex trafficking educational programming for youth. We conducted a nationwide scoping scan survey of U.S. programs focused on educating youth about sex trafficking to learn more about existing programs. Staff at 37 programs completed the survey and provided information on program development, content, structure, delivery, and evaluation. The majority of programs included youth and survivors in program development. Programs aimed to prevent and increase awareness of sex trafficking with trauma-informed content focused on trafficking dynamics, grooming, warning signs, and actions to take if trafficking is suspected. Slightly over half of the

programs also addressed labor trafficking and other forms of violence. Programs targeted youth and teachers, but varied in terms of delivery setting, format, and duration. About two thirds of the programs had undergone some form of evaluation, most by program developers, implementers, or staff. Study findings highlight the current landscape of sex trafficking education programming in the U.S. Recommendations are provided for advancing practice and research, including determining the most efficacious program content and delivery. Empowering youth through education and prevention are key steps to creating safe and inclusive communities.

Weeks, E. A., Whitaker, D. J., Pendarvis, S., Finkelhor, D., Neal-Rossi, C., & Rivers, D. (2021). Evaluation of the child safety matters curriculum for improving knowledge about victimization among elementary school children: A randomized trial. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 30*(8), 977-993. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2021.1960458

This project employed a randomized-control design to evaluate the effectiveness of the MBF Child Safety Matters® (CSM) curriculum. Six Georgia schools across 3 counties agreed to participate, and 136 K – 5th grade classrooms were randomized to either receive the CSM curriculum or be a wait-list control and to receive the curriculum after the evaluation. In total, 2,414 students participated at pretest (1195 CSM and 1219 control) and 2,260 participated at posttest (1159 CSM and 1101 control). Pre/posttests were collected from all students prior to the delivery of the CSM curriculum and again approximately a month later to measure knowledge gains related to child safety. Intervention students displayed a greater increase in knowledge for the information taught in the CSM program as compared to students who did not receive the intervention ($d = .29$).

Elfreich, M. R., Stevenson, M. C., Sisson, C., Winstead, A. P., & Parmenter, K. M. (2020).

Sexual abuse disclosure mediates the effect of an abuse prevention program on substantiation. *Child Maltreatment*, 25(2), 215–223. DOI:10.1177/1077559519874884

Although abuse prevention programs have proliferated, little research has explored the direct effects of such programs on actual child sexual abuse disclosure rates, and no research has explored the effects of such programs on child sexual abuse substantiation. Employing a quasi-experimental design, the present research reflects an exploration of the effects of exposure to the Think First and Stay Safe™ abuse prevention program on abuse disclosure rates of 319 children who underwent a child forensic interview within 2015–2018 in a Midwestern child advocacy center. Supporting our mediational hypotheses, children exposed (vs. not exposed) to the Think First and Stay Safe™ program were significantly more likely to disclose abuse during the forensic interview, which in turn predicted significantly increased abuse substantiation likelihood.

Russell, D., & Higgins, D. (2020). Safeguarding capabilities in preventing child sexual abuse: Exploratory factor analysis of a scale measuring safeguarding capabilities in youth-serving organizations workers. *Child Maltreatment*, 25(2), 233–242. DOI:10.1177/1077559519870253

Media reports and government enquiries have shone a spotlight on institutional child sexual abuse (CSA) globally. With youth-serving organizations seeking to identify how to improve policies and procedures developed to protect children, a gap exists in research and organizational quality assurance procedures. A new tool is needed to measure the capability of workers to implement and support effective child-safeguarding policies and practices. To address this, our aim was to develop the Safeguarding Capabilities in Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Scale. Participants (n = 345) from a range of youth-serving sectors in Australia answered 128 questions. Using exploratory factor analysis to assess the underlying factor structure and refine the item pool, items loaded onto four factors. Reliability coefficients ranged from .68 to .95. Results showed that knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy to take action, and awareness are all key capabilities related to creating

conditions of safety for children and young people and preventing CSA in youth-serving organizations.

Shields, R. T., Murray, S. M., Ruzicka, A. E., Buckman, C., Kahn, G., Benelmouffok, A., & Letourneau, E. J. (2020). Help wanted: Lessons on prevention from young adults with a sexual interest in prepubescent children. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 105*, 104416. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104416

Adolescents and young adults with a sexual interest in young children represent an underserved population. The needs of this group, and their implications for child sexual abuse prevention program development, are not well understood. The objective of this research is to advance knowledge about adolescents and young adults with a sexual interest in children to better inform the development of effective prevention and mental health efforts. The sample consisted of 30 young adults, ages 18–30, from North America, South America, Europe, and Australia. Researchers conducted telephone interviews with participants, and asked about when their interest in children emerged, how they responded to this sexual interest, and what resources could have been helpful during this process. Participants also completed a brief, online survey. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed using Dedoose software. Participants reported that their sexual interest in children emerged during adolescence, and as part of that process, they experienced a variety of emotions, including fear, shame, and feelings of isolation. Participants also noted the need for role models who are sexually interested in children and successfully navigating life, positive messaging, and support from families and the community. Young people with a sexual interest in children are largely hidden, vulnerable, and looking for help. Findings from this research can be used to direct the development of the prevention and mental health programs that are responsive to the needs of this community.

Abel, G. G., Jordan, A., Harlow, N., & Hsu, Y. S. (2019). Preventing child sexual abuse: Screening for hidden child molesters seeking jobs in organizations that care for children. *Sexual Abuse, 31*(6), 662–683. DOI:10.1177/1079063218793634

Approximately 10% of children and adolescents are sexually abused by adults caring for them outside the home. The current study tested the validity and reliability of a child protection screen to identify job applicants who pose a sexual risk to children. The screen uses three separate measures. In combination, they attempt to identify two types of sexually problematic job applicants: hidden abusers and people with cognitive distortions that encourage child sexual boundary violations by themselves or tolerate them by others. The high specificity (97.8% for males and 98.7% for females) favored the high number of job applicants and volunteers who have not crossed sexual boundaries with children. The study included over 19,000 participants, and the screen correctly identified 77% of the men and over 72% of the women who posed a sexual risk. The test–retest correlation was statistically significant at $r(121) = .83$, and the screening methodology is valid and reliable. By identifying most of the job applicants who are hiding their history of sexually abusing a child or hiding their belief that adult–child sex causes no harm from the organizations they are attempting to join, this new preemployment screen methodology can help child-centered organizations protect children and adolescents in their care.

Grant, B. J., Shields, R. T., Tabachnick, J., & Coleman, J. (2019). “I didn’t know where to go”: An examination of *Stop it Now!*’s sexual abuse prevention helpline. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 34*(20), 4225–4253. DOI:10.1177/0886260519869237

This study examines data from Stop It Now!’s Helpline in the United States primarily over a 5-year, 3-month period and offers insights into the needs of individuals and families confronting issues related to child sexual abuse (CSA). Stop It Now!’s Helpline serves the global community by providing support, information, and guidance to those in need, such as helping to identify and respond to warning signs of sexually abusive behaviors in

adults, adolescents, or children. More than 7,000 (N = 7,122) nonidentifiable user records are the subject of this inquiry and reflect individuals who contacted the Helpline between December 1, 2012, and March 7, 2018. The article also places this analysis in a larger context through an overview that includes total user count of this service since its inception in 1995 (N = 21,030). Descriptive statistics revealed that the majority of Helpline users identified as bystanders, family members, or friends/acquaintances of an individual at risk to abuse. The majority of users knew both the person at risk to abuse (adult or youth) and the child at risk of being abused. Twelve percent of users had questions or concerns about their own feelings and/or behaviors that were or could be putting a child at risk of sexual abuse. Chi-square tests examined the relationship between Helpline contact type, level of assessment, and gender. Findings provide insights into this hidden population of individuals at risk to abuse, those who have abused, as well as their friends and families who are seeking support. Study findings also reinforce the importance of CSA prevention helplines that focus on reducing the isolation and secrecy that creates conditions which make children more vulnerable to abuse. Implications for future research and prevention programming are also discussed.

Rudolph, J., & Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J. (2018). Parents as protectors: A qualitative study of parents' views on child sexual abuse prevention. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 85*, 28–38. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2018.08.016

Although parents are essential to child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention efforts, their views on prevention and protection are not always represented in the research literature. In this qualitative study of 24 Australian parents, beliefs about CSA, its risk factors, prevention methods, and parents' role in CSA protection, and parents' approaches to protection of their own children, are examined. Findings were condensed into five themes: (a) parents' understanding of child sexual abuse, grooming and risk; (b) parent-led CSA education; (c) parents' beliefs about CSA education; (d) children recognizing and resisting CSA; and (e) parent responsibility for protection. Findings suggest that parents have a good

knowledge of CSA and its risks. However, they do not provide their children with the comprehensive prevention messages recommended by prevention campaigns and many concentrate on abduction dangers. This gap between knowledge and parental communication with children could be due to parents' beliefs that there may be harms associated with education of children about CSA (e.g., such as inciting new fears and worries or reducing trust in others) and that the method may not be effective in protecting children from CSA. This study adds to the existing literature by presenting information that could be useful in designing programs to include parents in CSA protection and by approaching CSA research with parents as the key agents in the protection of children.

Shakeshaft, C., Smith, R. L., Keener, S. T., & Shakeshaft, E. (2018). A standard of care for the prevention of sexual misconduct by school employees. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 28*(1), 105–124. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2018.1477219

This article describes the development of a standard of care for the prevention of adult to student sexual abuse in pre K-12 schools. Standard of care is not a phrase often used in educational practice, and yet, it is a legal concept that may be useful for school administrators. A sample of administrators, child sexual abuse specialists, and attorneys with experience in school employee sexual misconduct responded to 101 items that the literature indicates should be included in a standard of care. There was agreement on 94 of these items by sample participants. Categories of the standard of care were policies, hiring process, hiring screening, hiring interview, training, and reporting. Where there was disagreement by role of respondent, attorneys, child sexual abuse specialists, or both rated the item as more important for inclusion than did administrators.

Taylor, L. E., & Harris, H. S. (2018). Stewards of children education: Increasing undergraduate nursing student knowledge of child sexual abuse. *Nurse Education Today*, 60, 147-150. DOI:10.1016/j.nedt.2017.10.004

Child sexual abuse and exploitation are an increasing public health problem. In spite of the fact that nurses are in a unique position to identify and intervene in the lives of children suffering from abuse due to their role in providing health care in a variety of settings, nursing curricula does not routinely include this focus. The goal was to document the effectiveness of the Stewards of Children child sexual abuse training as an effective educational intervention to increase the knowledge level of undergraduate nursing students on how to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse and trafficking. Undergraduate nursing students were required to take the Stewards of Children training in their last semester prior to graduation. Students in the study were given a pre-test prior to the class and a post-test following the class. Pre- and post-tests were graded and the results were compared along with an item indicating the participants' perception of the educational intervention in improving their confidence and competence in this area. Data analysis revealed that post-test scores following training were significantly improved: pre-test mean = 45.5%; post-test mean score = 91.9%. The statistical significance of the improvement was marked, $p < 0.01$, $N = 119$. The mean response for the perceived values scale was 1.65 from a potential score of 2. This study found a statistically significant increase in the knowledge level of undergraduate nursing students on how to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse and trafficking following the Stewards of Children training. Students also reported a high level of confidence in how to prevent abuse and react skillfully when child sexual abuse had occurred. The authors concluded that Stewards of Children is an effective option to educate nursing students on this topic.

Nurse, A. M. (2017). Knowledge and behavioral impact of adult participation in child sexual abuse prevention: Evaluation of the protecting God's children program. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 26*(5), 608–624. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2017.1328475

This article presents findings from an evaluation of a popular adult training program (Protecting God's Children) used in Catholic institutions, including schools, churches, and social service agencies. The study explores knowledge and behavior change based on pretest/posttest questionnaires administered to over 500 adults and follow-up questionnaires sent six months after the training. The participants in the training were compared to a control group of adults who did not participate in the program. The results indicate that participants arrive at the training with fairly high rates of preexisting knowledge but that the program increases knowledge across demographic groups. Follow-up surveys suggest that the new knowledge is retained over six months. The study indicates that the program is associated with an increase in participants talking to their own children about child sexual abuse. Participants also report sharing information with other adults and monitoring behavior around children more closely.

Letourneau, E. J., Nietert, P. J., & Rheingold, A. A. (2016). [Initial assessment of stewards of children program effects on child sexual abuse reporting rates in selected South Carolina counties](#). *Child Maltreatment, 21*(1), 74–79. DOI:10.1177/1077559515615232

Child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention programs often include a focus on increased reporting of suspected abuse, in addition to other prevention components such as helping trainees recognize suspected abusive situations. This study aimed to determine whether the Stewards of Children prevention program is associated with increased CSA reporting. Analyses examined whether rates of CSA allegations increased over time in three counties in South Carolina (SC) targeted with program dissemination efforts and whether CSA reporting trends differed between the three targeted counties and three comparison counties that did not experience substantial program dissemination. CSA allegation data were obtained by county and year for predissemination and

postdissemination periods from the SC Department of Social Services. Results indicated that, for the targeted counties but not the nontargeted counties, estimated allegation rates increased significantly over time, corresponding with the onset of significant program dissemination efforts. Results also indicated significant between-groups differences in allegation trends for targeted versus nontargeted counties. These findings suggest that the Stewards prevention intervention may be associated with increased CSA allegations. However, results require replication with randomization of counties. Moreover, whether increased reporting is associated with decreased CSA incidence remains unknown.

Walsh, K., Zwi, K., Woolfenden, S., & Shlonsky, A. (2016). [Assessing the effectiveness of school-based sexual abuse prevention programs](#). *Australian Institute of Family Studies, 97*, 5-15.

The purpose of this paper is to introduce readers to the importance of systematic reviewing for understanding the effectiveness of school-based programs for the prevention of child sexual abuse.

National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (2015). [Six pillars for prevention](#).

The six key policy pillars the Prevention Coalition consistently identified as necessary to preventing sexual abuse and exploitation of children are listed below. The Prevention Coalition encourages its members to use these pillars as a tool to influence the conversation about a comprehensive prevention policy agenda and to expand what is currently considered as relevant prevention policy. The Prevention Coalition is a volunteer network that does not have the ability to actively advance policies on its own. The Coalition hopes these pillars are useful to expand the conversation and strategic planning around prevention related policies in communities across the country.

Van Horn, J., Eisenberg, M., Nicholls, C. M., Mulder, J., Webster, S., Paskell, C., Brown, A., Stam, J., Kerr, J., & Jago, N. (2015). Stop It Now! A pilot study into the limits and benefits of a free helpline preventing child sexual abuse. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 24*(8), 853–872. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2015.1088914

Stop It Now! aims to prevent child sexual abuse using a free anonymous helpline. It provides information, advice, and guidance to anyone concerned about child sexual abuse. It targets people who have sexually abused children or who are worried that they might do so. This article presents findings from a pilot study on the operation and outcomes of the helplines in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. The findings underline the strength of the public health approach to prevention efforts. More specifically, benefits reported by helpline users are shown to correspond with the aims of the helplines. A number of factors were reported by users that helped them modify their own or others' actions to minimize risk of abuse. However, a challenge that remains is ensuring that helplines are accessible to those most in need. Recommendations are included to further expand the effect of Stop It Now! in reducing CSA.

Rheingold, A. A., Zajac, K., Chapman, J. E., Patton, M., de Arellano, M., Saunders, B., & Kilpatrick, D. (2014). Child sexual abuse prevention training for childcare professionals: An independent multi-site randomized controlled trial of Stewards of Children. *Prevention Science, 16*(3), 374–385. DOI:10.1007/s11121-014-0499-6

Given the significant rates and deleterious consequences of childhood sexual abuse (CSA), identifying effective primary prevention approaches is a clear priority. There is a growing awareness that childcare professionals (e.g., teachers, childcare personnel, clergy) are in a unique position to engage in prevention efforts due to high accessibility to children and expertise in child development. However, CSA prevention programs targeting childcare professionals have received insufficient attention. The goal of this study was to conduct an independent multi-site controlled evaluation of an existing CSA prevention program, *Stewards of Children*, offered through both in-person and web-based formats. This study included 352 childcare professionals recruited from children's

advocacy centers across three states. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: (1) in-person training, (2) web-based training, or (3) waitlist control. Dependent variables included CSA knowledge, CSA attitudes, and self-reported CSA preventive behaviors. Results indicated that *Stewards* impacted knowledge, attitudes, and preventive behaviors. No differences were found between training modalities (i.e., in-person versus web-based) on knowledge and preventive behaviors. Results indicate that brief trainings for childcare professionals may impact CSA prevention efforts.

Kenny, M. C., & Wurtele, S. K. (2012). Preventing childhood sexual abuse: An ecological approach. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 21*(4), 361-367.

DOI:10.1080/10538712.2012.675567

Childhood sexual abuse is a significant public health problem that negatively affects victims, families, organizations, and society. This special issue presents innovative approaches designed to prevent the sexual exploitation of youth. Using both an ecological approach and the Spectrum of Prevention (Parks, Davis & Cohen, 2010), the articles collected for this special issue highlight cutting-edge prevention approaches educating children, parents, professionals, organizations, and the general public.

Walsh, K., Brandon, L., & Chirio, L. (2012). Mother-child communication about sexual abuse prevention. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 21*(4), 399-421.

DOI:10.1080/10538712.2012.675424

Two hundred and twelve Australian mothers completed an online survey examining features of mother-child communication about child sexual abuse prevention. Two-thirds (67.5%) of respondents had discussed child sexual abuse prevention with their children. Proportions of mothers talking with their children about child sexual abuse prevention varied according to age range (highest for mothers with children aged 5-12 years) and only child status (lowest for mothers of only children). The number of topics

discussed with their children differed according to child gender (greater number of topics discussed by mothers with both girls and boys) and age range (greater number of topics discussed by mothers with children aged 5–12 years). These findings provide new insights into mother–child communication about child sexual abuse prevention.

National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Exploitation (2012). [National plan to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation of children.](#)

This National Plan defines the nature and scope of child sexual abuse and exploitation; acknowledges the need to build on the foundation of existing research, advocacy, and treatment; discusses the value of a National Plan; encourages the development of prevention-focused policy; and describes a range of actions that includes individual, community and policy level strategies, to stop the demand for, and to prevent, child sexual abuse and exploitation.

Bowman, R. A., Scotti, J. R., & Morris, T. L. (2010). Sexual abuse prevention: A training program for developmental disabilities service providers. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 19*(2), 119–127. DOI:10.1080/10538711003614718

Persons with developmental disabilities are at an increased risk for becoming victims of sexual abuse. Research has revealed that the largest group of identified perpetrators of sexual abuse is developmental disability service providers. The purpose of the present study was to develop, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of a sexual abuse prevention training program. Participants were administered a survey assessing knowledge and attitudes before and after the training workshop. Small improvements in knowledge and attitudes about sexual abuse and the sexuality of persons with developmental disabilities were found; however, general attitudes about individuals with developmental disabilities did not change. Suggestions for future directions in this area are provided.

Smallbone, S., Marshall, W. L., & Wortley, R. (2008). *Preventing child sexual abuse: Evidence, policy and practice*. Willan Publishing. DOI:10.4324/9781843925606

Public policy responses to child sexual abuse are dominated by interventions designed to take effect only after offenders have already begun offending, and after children have already been sexually abused. Comparatively little attention has been given to alternative prevention strategies--particularly to those aimed at preventing sexual abuse before it might otherwise occur. Considerable knowledge has been accumulated on the characteristics, *modus operandi* and offending trajectories of offenders, the characteristics, circumstances and outcomes for victims, and the physical and social settings in which sexual abuse occurs, but little work has been done to systematically apply this knowledge to prevention. This book aims to fulfill this objective through integrating clinical and criminological concepts and knowledge in order to inform a more comprehensive and effective public policy approach to preventing child sexual abuse. Empirical and theoretical knowledge concerning child sexual abuse is integrated with broader developments in evidence-based crime and child maltreatment prevention, leading to new ideas about understanding and preventing child sexual abuse. This book will be useful reading for anybody with interests in this field.

Nation, M., Crusto, C., Wandersman, A., Kumpfer, K. L., Seybolt, D., Morrissey-Kane, E., & Davino, K. (2003). What works in prevention: Principles of effective prevention programs. *American Psychologist*, 58(6-7), 449-456. DOI:10.1037/0003-066x.58.6-7.449

The high prevalence of drug abuse, delinquency, youth violence, and other youth problems creates a need to identify, and disseminate effective prevention strategies. General principles gleaned from effective interventions may help prevention practitioners select, modify, or create more effective programs. Using a review-of-reviews approach across four areas (substance abuse, risky sexual behavior, school failure, and juvenile delinquency and violence), the authors identified nine characteristics that were

consistently associated with effective prevention programs: Programs were comprehensive, included varied teaching methods, provided sufficient dosage, were theory driven, provided opportunities for positive relationships, were appropriately timed, were socioculturally relevant, included outcome evaluation, and involved well-trained staff. This synthesis can inform the planning and implementation of problem-specific prevention interventions, provide a rationale for multi-problem prevention programs, and serve as a basis for further research.

Daro, D., & Connelly, A. C. (2002). Child abuse prevention: Accomplishments and challenges. In J. E. B. Myers, L. Berliner, J. Briere, C. T. Hendrix, C. Jenny, & T. A. Reid (Eds.), *The APSAC handbook on child maltreatment* (2nd ed., pp. 431-448). Sage Publications, Inc.

This chapter summarizes the collective strengths of current child abuse prevention efforts and highlights new avenues that prevention advocates might pursue if they are to keep pace with changes in family dynamics and social policy. The chapter begins by briefly outlining the theoretical frameworks that have shaped the development of child abuse prevention programming. Specific attention is paid to the impact different forms of maltreatment have had on the design and replication of specific prevention strategies. The authors then summarize the key program models emerging in this field and the empirical evidence regarding their relative effectiveness. Finally, the chapter outlines the challenges facing prevention advocates and offers suggestions on how new strategies might be developed.

Child Based

Dion, J., Attard, V., Guyon, R., De La Sablonnière-Griffin, M., Perreault, É., & Hébert, M. (2024). Implementing a sexual violence prevention program in two Canadian Indigenous communities: Challenges and lessons learned. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 148, 106271. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106271

The prevalence of child sexual violence remains overwhelming, particularly among Indigenous populations, despite increased awareness. Therefore, implementing efficient initiatives is crucial in preventing and reducing sexual violence rates among these groups. This study aimed to examine the processes involved in the implementation of a sexual violence prevention program in two Indigenous communities in Canada and assess application of culturally safe practices. Eight Indigenous and non-Indigenous project managers underwent semi-structured interviews before the program's implementation; five of them also participated in the follow-up interviews. Moreover, thirteen Indigenous service providers from the two communities answered open-ended questions when the included training ended. Thematic analysis revealed the importance of following an ongoing process (not only before implementing a program) to assess the needs of community members and involving them in decision-making. Administrative injunctions were also identified as a significant challenge during implementation. Results showed that participants reported the taboo of sexual violence as a challenge but that constant discussions about the prevention of sexual violence helped defuse the discomfort and foster trust between Indigenous and non-Indigenous professionals. Finally, participants provided recommendations to improve research and intervention practices. Several takeaways were discussed to improve research practices with, by, and for Indigenous peoples, such as using collaborative communication, developing common understanding relative to work agendas, and increasing cultural competencies to build trust within the partnership.

Cohen, N., & Katz, C. (2023). What messages are communicated to children in maltreatment prevention programs? Conclusions of a scoping review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 24*(1), 15-28. DOI:10.1177/15248380211016012

There is a worldwide consensus that the prevention of child maltreatment (CM) is critical in promoting children's safety. Furthermore, a significant part of the prevention efforts targets the children themselves. This scoping review aimed to map the characteristics of CM prevention programs that targeted children by examining studies that described the relevant implemented programs, published in peer-reviewed journals over the last decade. Thirty-one relevant manuscripts were identified from the online databases. The analysis, guided by scoping review guidelines, examined these programs in terms of content, context of delivery, and practitioners involved. A thematic analysis identified the key messages conveyed to the children. The findings showed that the vast majority of programs are school-based and focused on preventing child sexual abuse (CSA) with considerably less attention given to other forms of maltreatment. In addition, most programs did not promote active parental participation. The content descriptions of the CSA prevention programs revealed several common key messages that focused on children's individual safety skills, specifically recognition, refusal strategies, and disclosure. The discussion addresses the concepts of blame and guilt as crucial to rethinking the CM prevention messages conveyed to children. Key conclusions that were drawn from the current scoping review highlight the need to better align prevention efforts and recent CM research. Additionally, ceiling effects in several studies indicated that children's participation, as information sources and partners in program development, should be promoted, so that prevention efforts will meet their needs within their various relevant life contexts.

Edwards, K. M., Banyard, V. L., Waterman, E. A., Mitchell, K. J., Jones, L. M., Kollar, L. M. M., Hopfauf, S., & Simon, B. (2022). [Evaluating the impact of a youth-led sexual violence prevention program: Youth leadership retreat outcomes](#). *Prevention Science, 23*(8), 1379–1393. DOI:10.1007/s11121-022-01343-x

Involving youth in developing and implementing prevention programs to reduce sexual violence (SV) has the potential to improve prevention outcomes. However, there has been little focus on youth-led SV prevention programs, and limited evaluation research to help guide efforts. The current study examined the effectiveness of Youth Voices in Prevention (Youth VIP) leadership retreats on SV victimization and perpetration, forms of violence related to SV (e.g., bullying), SV bystander behaviors and readiness, and perceptions of norms related to SV prevention. Results identified mixed findings for program impact, with variations in outcomes that can help guide future youth-led prevention program initiatives. Youth attending a large “kick-off” leadership retreat (that was less youth-led than subsequent smaller retreats) later reported more bystander behaviors, but also reported increased perpetration and victimization, compared to non-attending youth. However, youth attending smaller, more focused leadership retreats held during the school year, reported reductions in sexual harassment perpetration and improved bystander behaviors and attitudes compared to non-attending youth. Evaluation of moderator variables suggests that program impact was generally stronger for younger participants, sexual minority youth, and non-White youth (which were largely Native American youth in this sample). Findings suggest promise for youth-led prevention work but also highlight the need for testing the impact of different training structures and modalities.

Finkelhor, D., Walsh, K., Jones, L., Mitchell, K., & Collier, A. (2021). [Youth internet safety education: Aligning programs with the evidence base](#). *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 22*(5), 1233–1247. DOI:10.1177/1524838020916257

This review critically examines the messages of youth internet safety education programs in the light of research about both the dynamics of internet dangers and the efficacy of

youth prevention education. Using terms “internet safety education” and “digital citizenship,” a Google search identified 12 multi-topic safety programs. Review articles were identified via Google Scholar for six forms of online harm to youth that have been targeted by many of these programs: cyberbullying (19 articles); online sexual exploitation (23 articles); sexting (19 articles); online fraud, hacking, and identity theft (6 articles); online suicide and self-harm promotion (18 articles); and internet overuse or addiction (15 articles). There appear to be mismatches between dynamics revealed in the research about internet harms and the messages emphasized in educational programs, particularly on the issues of sexual exploitation and sexting. Overall, the review literature also suggests major advantages to integrating internet safety into already well-established and evidence-based programs currently addressing related off-line harms, for example, programs focusing on general bullying, dating abuse, or sexual abuse prevention. The advantages stem from four factors: (1) the considerable overlap between online harms and similar off-line harms, (2) the apparent greater prevalence of off-line harms, (3) the evidence that the same risk factors lie behind both online and off-line harms, and most importantly, (4) the substantially superior evidence base for the longer standing programs developed originally around the off-line harms.

Edwards, K. M., Siller, L., Leader Charge, L., Bordeaux, S., Leader Charge, D., & Herrington, R. (2020). Efficacy of a sexual abuse prevention program with children on an Indian reservation. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 29*(8), 900–910.
DOI:10.1080/10538712.2020.1847229

American Indian youth experience high rates of child sexual abuse (CSA). To date, however, we are aware of no programs that have assessed outcomes associated with an evidence-based CSA prevention program among American Indian children. The purpose of the proposed study was to assess the preliminary acceptability and efficacy of IMpower, a 12-hour curriculum that teaches children how to identify their anatomy, recognize risk, say “no,” and tell others if they are being hurt. Using a non-randomized,

single-arm pilot trial methodology (N = 48 4th and 5th graders), we found that some domains of children's knowledge of CSA as well as their efficacy to resist an attack increased from pre- to posttest. Moreover, 83% of children reported that they liked IMpower, and 96% of children reported that IMpower helped keep them safe. These data provide preliminary evidence that IMpower is an acceptable and effective CSA prevention initiative that requires further evaluation with American Indian children.

Rudolph, J., & Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J. (2018). Reviewing the focus: A summary and critique of child-focused sexual abuse prevention. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 19*(5), 543-554. DOI:10.1177/1524838016675478

Due to the high incidence, and widespread detrimental health consequences, of child sexual abuse (CSA), effective prevention remains at the forefront of public and mental health research, prevention and intervention agendas. To date much of the focus of prevention has been on school-based education programs designed to teach children skills to evade adult sexual advances, and disclose past or ongoing abuse. Evaluation of sexual abuse prevention programs demonstrate their effectiveness in increasing children's knowledge of CSA concepts and protection skills, but little is known about their effects on children's capacity to prevent abuse. Moreover, concerns persist about the unintended side-effects for young children such as anxiety, worry and wariness of touch. This paper summarizes the recent history of CSA prevention and the critique of child-focused protection programs in order to demonstrate the need to compliment or replace these programs by focusing more on protectors in the children's ecology, specifically parents, in order to create safer environments in which abuse is less likely to occur.

Letourneau, E. J., Schaeffer, C. M., Bradshaw, C. P., & Feder, K. A. (2017). [Preventing the onset of child sexual abuse by targeting young adolescents with universal prevention programming](#). *Child Maltreatment*, 22(2), 100-111.
DOI:10.1177/1077559517692439

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a serious public health problem that increases risk for physical and mental health problems across the life course. Young adolescents are responsible for a substantial portion of CSA offending, yet to our knowledge, no validated prevention programs that target CSA perpetration by youth exist. Most existing efforts to address CSA rely on reactive criminal justice policies or programs that teach children to protect themselves; neither approach is well validated. Given the high rates of desistance from sexual offending following a youth's first CSA-related adjudication, it seems plausible that many youth could be prevented from engaging in their first offense. The goal of this article is to examine how school-based universal prevention programs might be used to prevent CSA perpetrated by adolescents. We review the literature on risk and protective factors for CSA perpetration and identify several promising factors to target in an intervention. We also summarize the literature on programs that have been effective at preventing adolescent dating violence and other serious problem behaviors. Finally, we describe a new CSA prevention program under development and early evaluation and make recommendations for program design characteristics, including unambiguous messaging, parental involvement, multisession dosage, skills practice, and bystander considerations.

Anderson, G. D. (2014). Child sexual abuse prevention policy: An analysis of Erin's Law. *Social Work in Public Health*, 29(3), 196-206. DOI:10.1080/19371918.2013.776321

Child sexual abuse affects thousands of children in the United States and is vastly underreported. Tertiary prevention policies, primarily in the form of sex offender registries and community notification programs, have received the most attention and funding. Few policies have focused on school-based prevention. One law in Illinois mandates all

K–5 public schools to implement sexual abuse prevention programs. The law was championed by a young social worker, Erin Merryn. Through the multiple streams framework, this article examines the unique set of political circumstances, united with Merryn’s advocacy, which created the opportunity for the law to pass.

Kenny, M. C., & Wurtele, S. K. (2010). Children's abilities to recognize a “good” person as a potential perpetrator of childhood sexual abuse. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 34*(7), 490–495. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2009.11.007

This study examined the ability of children to recognize “good” people as potential perpetrators prior to and after completing a personal safety program. There were three objectives to the study. The first was to determine whether young children could recognize the inappropriateness of a sexual request coming from people described as either “good” or “bad”. Second, the study examined whether preschoolers could be educated to recognize inappropriate touch requests regardless of the good/bad descriptor. Finally, we explored if children's ability to learn the recognition skill depended upon their age. Ninety-three, primarily Hispanic (72%) preschool children (*M* age = 3.9 years) completed the Body Safety Training program (BST; [Wurtele, 2007](#)), a classroom-based behavioral program. They responded to questions about “good” and “bad” people requesting to touch their private parts prior to and after the educational program. At pre-testing, children had more difficulty recognizing inappropriate touch requests when made by “good” people compared to “bad” people. After completing the BST program, children improved in their ability to recognize the inappropriateness of requests made by both “good” and “bad” people. At pretesting, correct responding varied across age groups, with a greater percentage of older children (age 5) correctly responding to the “bad” cases compared to 3- and 4-year olds. At post-testing, a marginally significant age difference was found for cases involving “good” people and significant differences were found for cases involving “bad” people. Almost all 4- and 5-year-old children (94% and 96%, respectively) correctly responded to these inappropriate requests compared

with only 71% of the 3 year olds. Pre-test results demonstrated that young children had difficulty recognizing the inappropriateness of a request when it was made by a “good” person. Post-test findings demonstrated that children as young as 3 years of age can learn the inappropriateness of such requests even when coming from “good” people, although 3 year olds had more difficulty recognizing inappropriate-touch requests compared to 4- and 5-year-old children. Results support the challenge of helping young children learn to recognize potential perpetrators, especially those described as “good” people.

Finkelhor, D. (2009). [The prevention of childhood sexual abuse](#). *The Future of Children*, 19(2), 169-194. DOI:10.1353/foc.0.0035

David Finkelhor examines initiatives to prevent child sexual abuse, which have focused on two primary strategies—offender management and school-based educational programs.

Skarbek, D., Hahn, K., & Parrish, P. (2009). Stop sexual abuse in special education: An ecological model of prevention and intervention strategies for sexual abuse in special education. *Sexuality and Disability*, 27(3), 155-164. DOI:10.1007/s11195-009-9127-y

Children with disabilities are 3.4 times more likely to be sexually abused than their nondisabled peers. Moreover, the abuse will likely be committed by someone they know and trust such as a parent, sibling, teacher, day care provider, priest, or coach. Given this, it is critical that schools implement sexual abuse prevention and intervention programs for children with disabilities. Prevention and intervention programs based on Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model infused with the three categories of prevention: primary, secondary, and tertiary as espoused by the Centers for Disease Control is proposed.

Wurtele, S. K. (2009). Preventing sexual abuse of children in the twenty-first century: Preparing for challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 18*(1), 1-18. DOI:10.1080/10538710802584650

Child sexual abuse is a widespread social problem that negatively affects victims, families, communities, and society. This article briefly describes the scope and consequences of child sexual abuse and briefly critiques child-focused personal safety educational programs designed to prevent sexual victimization. The final section offers suggestions for expanding the focus of child-directed efforts and also includes recommendations for alternative approaches to primary prevention.

Kenny, M. C., Capri, V., Ryan, E. E., & Runyon, M. K. (2008). Child sexual abuse: From prevention to self-protection. *Child Abuse Review, 17*(1), 36-54. DOI:10.1002/car.1012

There are a growing number of child abuse prevention and education programmes, including primarily group-based parent and child education, which are taught by teachers within the school system. This article reviews some of the existing sexual abuse education and/or body safety programmes, as well as the research surrounding them. Advantages as well as criticisms of such programmes are reviewed. Issues such as target populations (i.e. children, teachers, parents), programme components and methodological limitations are addressed. Major findings include: children as young as three can be effectively taught self-protection skills, parental and family involvement in training is important, and repeated exposure helps children maintain knowledge gains. The components of successful programmes include teaching children to identify and resist inappropriate touching, reassuring children that it is not their fault and learning the proper names of their genitals. Finally, future directions for programme development, research and policy are explored.

Finkelhor, D. (2007). Prevention of sexual abuse through educational programs directed toward children. *Pediatrics*, *120*(3), 640-645. DOI:10.1542/peds.2007-0754

Davis, M. K., & Gidycz, C. A. (2000). Child sexual abuse prevention programs: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, *29*(2), 257-265.
DOI:10.1207/S15374424jccp2902_11

Conducted a meta-analytic evaluation of the effectiveness of school-based child abuse prevention programs. Literature searches identified 27 studies meeting inclusion criteria for use in this meta-analysis. The average effect size for all programs studied was 1.07, indicating that children who participated in prevention programs performed 1.07 SD higher than control group children on the outcome measures used in the studies. Analysis of moderator variables revealed significant effects for age, number of sessions, participant involvement, type of outcome measure, and use of behavioral skills training. Most important, programs presented over four or more sessions that allowed children to become physically involved produced the highest effect sizes. Although most often used only with younger children, findings suggest that active, long-term programs may be more effective for children of all ages.

Gibson, L. E., & Leitenberg, H. (2000). Child sexual abuse prevention programs: Do they decrease the occurrence of child sexual abuse?. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, *24*(9), 1115-1125. DOI:10.1016/S0145-2134(00)00179-4

The primary goal of the current study was to determine whether rates of child sexual abuse differed among undergraduate women who either had or had not participated in a sexual abuse prevention program during childhood. A secondary goal was to determine whether differences emerged in sexual satisfaction or avoidance of sexual activity between those women who had or had not participated in such a program. A survey was completed by 825 undergraduates from a New England state university on "sexual experiences" for research credit. Respondents were asked detailed questions

regarding past histories of child sexual abuse and participation in school-based prevention programs during childhood. Additionally, they responded to questions about their current sexual satisfaction and sexual behaviors. Sixty-two percent of the sample reported having participated in a “good touch-bad touch” sexual abuse prevention program in school. Eight percent of respondents who reported ever having had a prevention program also reported having been subsequently sexually abused, compared to 14% of respondents who did not ever have a prevention program. No differences were found in adult sexual satisfaction or on behavioral measures of sexual activity between those respondents who had and had not participated in a prevention program. This is the first study to find that school-based child sexual abuse prevention programs are associated with a reduced incidence of child sexual abuse. Additionally, contrary to concerns voiced in the literature, there was no evidence that prevention programs are associated with decreased sexual satisfaction or avoidance of sex in adulthood. Implications of the results for further study are discussed.

Tutty, L. (2000). What children learn from sexual abuse prevention programs: Difficult concepts and developmental issues. *Research on Social Work Practice, 10*(3), 275-300. DOI:10.1177/104973150001000301

Social workers have long been concerned about whether child-directed school-based programs are effective in preventing sexual abuse. Knowing children’s prior knowledge of abuse prevention concepts and what changes after intervention would be invaluable to program personnel. This secondary analysis involved 231 elementary school children who were randomly assigned (matched by age) to participate in the “Who Do You Tell” sexual abuse prevention program (N = 117) or in a wait-list control condition (N = 114). Chi-square analyses compared changes on each item of the Children’s Knowledge of Abuse Questionnaire-Revised based on treatment versus control condition and developmental level (ages 5 to 7 compared to ages 8 to 13). Three items significantly improved for

children in the program as compared to those in the control condition across ages. The results suggest several changes in teaching prevention concepts.

Caregiver Based

Ahmed, R. S., & Shaban, M. (2025). Breaking the cycle: A systematic review of intergenerational transmission of child maltreatment and preventive parenting interventions. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 169, 107743. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2025.107743

Child maltreatment is a major global public health concern with well-documented intergenerational patterns. Parents with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are at increased risk of perpetuating harmful parenting practices. However, evidence suggests that targeted parenting interventions can disrupt this cycle, particularly when grounded in trauma-informed care. Eighteen eligible studies (RCTs/quasi-experimental) with caregivers who had ACEs/trauma were systematically reviewed and the empirical evidence on the effectiveness of parenting interventions aimed at preventing the intergenerational transmission of child maltreatment among caregivers with histories of childhood trauma or adversity were synthesized. The search imposed no geographic limits, though all the studies were conducted in the United States, Canada, Ireland, South Korea, and Sweden. Participants were parents or primary caregivers with documented histories of ACEs or trauma, and children aged 0–18 years. A systematic search of six databases (PubMed, Embase, Web of Science, Scopus, CINAHL, and PsycINFO) was conducted through July 2025, following PRISMA 2020 guidelines. Studies were included if they evaluated parenting interventions with trauma-affected caregivers and reported outcomes related to parenting behavior, child development, or maltreatment risk. Risk of bias was assessed using ROB 2 and ROBINS-I tools. Data were synthesized narratively and thematically. Across 18 studies, effects clustered by intervention family. Child–Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) yielded moderate–large reductions in caregiver PTSD/depression and child PTSD/behavior ($\eta^2 \approx 0.22–0.31$). Parent–Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) reduced harsh/coercive parenting and child conduct problems, and in one trial lowered maltreatment recidivism versus services-as-usual. Group psychoeducation/attachment-support programs in the MEP/Mom Power family improved parenting stress and self-efficacy ($d \approx 0.41–0.74$). Mindfulness-based parenting increased mindful parenting and reduced parenting stress; video-feedback

(e.g., CAVES) reduced negative parental attributions; self-regulation curricula (e.g., UYCB) improved caregiver regulation with mixed short-term child outcomes; and safety-skills curricula (e.g., Safer Kids) showed high completion but no between-group advantage at short follow-up. Trauma-informed dyadic psychotherapy (CPP) and live-coaching behavioral training (PCIT) show the most consistent benefits—improving caregiver PTSD/depression and parenting/child behavior, with recidivism reduction documented for PCIT. Group psychoeducation, mindfulness-based parenting, and video-feedback appear complementary for stress regulation, self-efficacy, and reflective functioning. To ensure impact reaches families most affected by structural disadvantage, programmes should adopt equity-by-design (co-designed, hybrid/home-based, bilingual/bicultural, dose-flexible delivery with transport/childcare supports). Mechanism-focused and LMIC evaluations remain priorities.

Steedman, L. A., & Jeglic, E. L. (2025). [Child sexual abuse prevention among a sample of US parents](#). *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 34, 1099–1113. DOI:10.1007/s10826-025-03036-9

Parents play an important role in protecting their children from childhood sexual abuse. Yet, there is relatively little empirical research examining what parents in the United States are currently doing to keep their children safe. Thus, our study examined which strategies a sample of United States parents reported using to prevent childhood sexual abuse and assessed the attitudes and beliefs they hold about sexual violence prevention. Parents were recruited for participation using an online crowd sourcing platform and completed a survey assessing their attitudes and beliefs related to childhood sexual abuse prevention. To assess prevention behaviors, participants reported their engagement in certain behaviors, use of prevention resources, and strategies for assessing the safety of other adults. The final sample ($n = 383$) was primarily White and college educated, with a slight female majority, and reported households largely comprised of cohabitating mothers and fathers. We found that parents in this sample are generally reporting

implementing strategies reflecting best practice, including internet safety behaviors and parent-child discussions and education. Parents from this sample reported attitudes and beliefs thought to positively contribute to childhood sexual abuse prevention, including awareness of the prevalence of perpetration by known individuals, support for bodily autonomy, and use of correct anatomical terms for genitals. Lastly, a small negative correlation was found between parental perceptions of their child(ren) not being at risk for childhood sexual abuse and parental engagement in discussion-based practices.

Tamon, H., Suto, M., Yoshitsugu, H., Maruyama, N., Ogawa, K., Takehara, K., Tachibana, Y., & Kawashima, R. (2025). Interventions for expectant and new parents designed to prevent child abuse and neglect in at-risk families: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 160, 107154. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2024.107154

Early intervention may prevent maltreatment during infancy. This study examined the effectiveness of interventions initiated during the perinatal period to prevent child abuse and neglect. We searched the MEDLINE, PsycINFO, Embase, and Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials databases for articles published before February 2023. Randomized controlled trials of interventions that began during pregnancy or within the first year postpartum, aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect in at-risk families, were included. The risk of bias in each study was evaluated using RoB 2. Outcomes from each study were combined using random-effects meta-analysis. The certainty of the evidence was assessed using the GRADE approach. A total of 1746 articles were assessed for eligibility; 56 reports from international sources met the inclusion criteria, and 32 reports were included in the meta-analysis. Nineteen intervention studies based on 25 reports provided results regarding child maltreatment, and the overall risk ratio of the meta-analysis at the time of final reporting (evaluation period: 4–225 months) was 0.92 (95 % confidence interval [CI]: 0.79–1.07). In subgroup analysis by intervention type, the risk ratio for comprehensive support was 1.74 (95 % CI: 1.05–2.87). Few studies have demonstrated the overall effectiveness of abuse prevention interventions for pregnant women with

psychosocial risks. The timing and severity of child maltreatment reports must be considered, as they may reflect the effectiveness of early detection in preventing more serious future abuse.

Altafim, E. R. P., Magalhães, C., & Linhares, M. B. M. (2024). Prevention of child maltreatment: Integrative review of findings from an evidence-based parenting program. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 25*(3), 1938-1953.
DOI:10.1177/15248380231201811

This integrative review of the ACT Raising Safe Kids (ACT)—child maltreatment prevention program for parents—focuses on the program’s theoretical framework, examines the ACT studies about the effects on caregivers, and discusses the ACT’s implications for the practice and public policy. A systematic search of the PubMed, Web of Science, PsycINFO, and Lilacs databases was performed, along with a search on the ACT Program website and contacting program researchers. Twenty-five studies evaluating the ACT Program were reviewed. The evaluation studies were conducted in the United States, Brazil, Portugal, and Peru. The program improved parenting practices in general and targeted populations such as incarcerated parents, mothers with a history of childhood violence, and mothers of preterm children. Additionally, the program was effective in decreasing child behavioral problems. Overall, the ACT Program effectively decreased hostile, aggressive, and coercive parenting and child behavior problems, which are key predictors of family violence.

Guastafarro, K., Abuchaibe, V., McCormick, K. V., Bhoja, A., Abourjaily, E., Melchior, M., Grayson, C., Welikson, P., Dan, C., & Zeleke, M. B. (2024). [Adapting a selective parent-focused child sexual abuse prevention curriculum for a universal audience: A pilot study](#). *PLoS One*, 19(5), e0302982.
DOI:10.1371/journal.pone.0302982

Parents are an obvious, but underutilized player in the prevention of child sexual abuse (CSA). A handful of universal parent-focused prevention programs have emerged, however, the evidence for these programs is mixed and the programs suffer ubiquitously from barriers to implementation (e.g., poor engagement, low participation) thereby limiting public health impact. To combat these barriers and improve evidence, researchers previously developed and tested a selective parent-focused CSA prevention program. While promising, the selective approach still leaves a gap in the prevention landscape—parents from the universal audience. However, there appear to be no standardized methods to inform this type of adaptation—interventions designed as universal or selective have primarily been delivered as such. This study sought to adapt the selective curriculum for a universal audience and examined the acceptability and feasibility of the program for evaluation in a future trial. Using mixed methods, N = 31 parents (i.e., primary caregiver for a child under 13) completed pre- and post-workshop surveys followed by a brief individual interview conducted via Zoom. Interviews, coded using content analysis methods, focused on three themes: parents as agents of prevention (e.g., prior action, confidence), curriculum (e.g., content, design), and engagement (e.g., future marketing and promotion). Overall participants' mean score on CSA-related awareness and intention to use protective behavioral strategies increased. The participants found the curriculum highly acceptable noting strengths in the content and design. All told, the results of this pilot study suggest the acceptability and feasibility of examining the efficacy of the universal parent-focused curriculum in a larger trial. Procedural challenges, such as bots in recruitment, identify areas of caution in design of the larger trial and a roadmap for others seeking to adapt selective programs for universal audiences.

Rudolph, J. I., van Berkel, S. R., Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J., Walsh, K., Straker, D., & Campbell, T. (2024). [Parental involvement in programs to prevent child sexual abuse: A systematic review of four decades of research](#). *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 25(1), 560–576. DOI:10.1177/15248380231156408

This systematic review is the first to synthesize knowledge of parental involvement in child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention programs. Guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) criteria, 24 intervention evaluations met the inclusion criteria of aiming to change parental knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, behavioral intentions, self-efficacy, response-efficacy, or capabilities for prevention of CSA. Included papers were identified via a combination of electronic database searches (PsycINFO, Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar, Cochrane Library, World Health Organization’s International Clinical Trials Registry Platform, google.com.au, open.grey.eu, Global ETD, Open Access Theses & Dissertations, EThOS, and Trove) and direct communication with researchers. Improvement post intervention was found most commonly for parental behavioral intentions and response-efficacy, closely followed by parental behaviors, then capabilities, self-efficacy, knowledge, and lastly, parental attitudes. Improvements in behaviors, intentions, and response-efficacy occurred in 88 to 100% of the studies in which they were addressed, improvements in self-efficacy and capabilities occurred in 67 to 75%, and improvements in knowledge and attitudes occurred in only 50 to 56%. Many of the included evaluation studies suffered from methodological and reporting flaws, such as high participant attrition, lack of control group, lack of statistical tests, missed testing time points, and a lack of (or short) follow-up. Future parent-focused CSA prevention evaluations must address these concerns by conducting rigorous empirical research with sound methodologies and comprehensive reporting. Furthermore, study designs should consider measuring the real-world impact of increases in assessed parent variables, including their ability to prevent sexual victimization of children.

Russell, D. H., Trew, S., Harris, L., Dickson, J., Walsh, K., Higgins, D. J., & Smith, R. (2024). [Engaging parents in child-focused child sexual abuse prevention education strategies: A systematic review](#). *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 25(4), 3082–3098. DOI:10.1177/15248380241235895

Parents are their children’s first teachers and there are long-standing calls for their involvement in child sexual abuse prevention. In this rapid systematic review, we asked the following questions: what rationales are used to justify parental involvement in child-focused child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention programs? what approaches are used for parental engagement in child-focused CSA prevention programs? and what are the facilitators and barriers to parental involvement in child-focused CSA prevention programs? We searched CINAHL, Cochrane, ERIC, Medline, PsycInfo, Scopus, and SocINDEX in May 2021. A total of 57 papers met our inclusion criteria, comprised of 50 empirical studies, and 7 program descriptions. Rationales for parental involvement included monitoring and shaping parental attitudes toward CSA program delivery in schools; reinforcing children’s learning at home; promoting parent–child communication about CSA prevention; building parent capacity to respond to child disclosures; and supporting program delivery for preschoolers. Types of parental involvement included the following: communication, learning at home, volunteering, decision-making, and collaboration with the community. Barriers to parent involvement included ineffective program engagement modalities, and parental fears and misconceptions.

Del Campo, A., Fávero, M., & Sousa-Gomes, V. (2023). The role of parents in preventing child sexual abuse: Evaluation of previous knowledge and the results of a training program. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 20(1), 208–215. DOI:10.1007/s13178-022-00697-9

Child sexual abuse is a widespread type of abuse that has extremely negative effects on victims, both in the short and long term. Parents can play a key role in preventing sexual abuse, provided that they are aware of the risk and pass on this information appropriately to their children. This study evaluates the prior knowledge of a group of parents and the

changes that were made after taking part in a training program on the prevention of child sexual abuse. The sample was 252 parents (8- to 12-year-old children), were evaluated before and after taking part in a training program on sexual abuse, in 2020. The parents completed a questionnaire including items for assessing knowledge on child sexual abuse, parent-child communication about this topic and responses to a possible disclosure of abuse. Parents showed in the prior evaluation a significant lack of knowledge of child sexual abuse and scarce skills to detect and accept it. After taking part in the program, parents significantly improved their knowledge about this risk and their perceived ability to cope. The low level of knowledge of the parents on this subject and the number of inaccurate beliefs reveal the need to include them in sexual abuse prevention programs.

Fakunle, S. O., & Opadere, A. A. (2023). Cultural determinants and parent-child communication as an effective tool to prevent child sexual abuse: A quick qualitative study. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 32(4), 475–493.
DOI:10.1080/10538712.2023.2190736

The current study's sole specific goal was to use a qualitative approach, from the parents' emic perspective, to investigate the cultural determinants that influence using parent-child communication as an instrument to protect children from sexual abuse in the six electoral wards of Ife-East Local Government that covered the rural settlement of Ile-Ife. The study adopted a simple random sampling method to select a village from each ward and a convenient sampling method to select six parents from each village, making a total sample size of 36. The study utilized in-depth face-to-face interviews to garner the primary data and content analysis for data analysis. This study found and concluded that parents' economic activities, religious beliefs, fear of stigmatization or mockery, belief that giving a child sex education via parent-child communication promotes waywardness in the behavior of such a child, belief that sex education should be best confined to formal education, and overconfidence of the parents in their wards were among the cultural

determinants influencing the efficacy of parent-child communication as a device to shield young ones from being victims of sexual abuse in the study location. The study recommended public enlightenment via various social institutions on dealing with these cultural determinants.

Rudolph, J. I., Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J., Straker, D., Hambour, V., Hawes, T., & Swan, K. (2023). [Parental-led sexual abuse education amongst at-risk parents: Associations with parenting practices, and parent and child symptomology.](#) *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 32(5), 575–595. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2023.2222116

Considering the emphasis on parent-led sexual abuse education (PLSAE) in child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention, and the imperative of prevention in families living with demonstrated risk factors, it is important to understand the extent to which this group delivers PLSAE to their children, whether this is associated with any barriers or facilitators, whether parents are engaging in other protective behaviors (such as monitoring and involvement) and the relationship between these variables and other risk factors such as parent and child symptomology. We surveyed 117 parents, with children ranging in age from 25–89 months (67% boys), attending a parenting program for assistance with a range of parenting difficulties and child behavior problems from 2020–22. A large majority of parents reported not giving their children comprehensive prevention messages, discussing body integrity and abduction dangers to a greater extent. PLSAE was significantly positively associated with child internalizing and externalizing symptoms; parent and child age; and discussion of body integrity and abduction. However, PLSAE was not associated with any other measured variables (protective parenting; CSA knowledge; parenting self-efficacy; general and own-child risk appraisal; parent burnout, stress, depression or anxiety; child diagnosis; parental education level; employment or marital status; or income). The current findings suggest that investing resources into increasing parental knowledge, risk perception and confidence may be misguided. Future endeavors should consider helping parents be protective in other

ways, for example, through the creation of safe environments and reducing the risks of CSA.

Branco, M. S. S., Altafim, E. R. P., & Linhares, M. B. M. (2022). Universal intervention to strengthen parenting and prevent child maltreatment: Updated systematic review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 23*(5), 1658–1676. DOI:10.1177/15248380211013131

Child maltreatment is a severe worldwide public health problem because of its negative consequences and should therefore be prevented through parenting programs to improve parental behavior and practices. The present review aimed to update a published review of 5 years of empirical studies on universal parenting programs to strengthen positive parenting and prevent child maltreatment. A systematic search of the PubMed, Web of Science, PsycINFO, Lilacs, and SciELO databases was performed to identify the studies of group-based structured parenting programs published from 2015 to 2019. Eighteen studies were found that fulfilled the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The results showed that 14 different parenting programs were conducted in high-, medium-, and low-income countries, showing an increase in the number of studies in low-income countries compared with the previous review. In 89% of the studies, the parenting outcomes improved in the post-intervention. Additionally, studies have demonstrated that these programs also improved other parental outcomes such as mental health, couple relationships, coparenting, and coping ability of parents. From 18 studies, nine child variables were evaluated, and eight of them showed a decrease in behavior problems. Regarding the methodological quality of the studies, 55%, 28%, and 17% were classified as moderate, weak, and strong, respectively. In conclusion, the positive changes in parenting and child behavior outcomes encourage the implementation of parenting programs as a universal prevention strategy. Further research should increase the methodological quality of the design study.

Guastafarro, K., Felt, J. M., Font, S. A., Connell, C. M., Miyamoto, S., Zadzora, K. M., & Noll, J. G. (2022). [Parent-focused sexual abuse prevention: Results from a cluster randomized trial](#). *Child Maltreatment*, 27(1), 114-125. DOI:10.1177/1077559520963870

This study tested whether a child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention program, Smart Parents–Safe and Healthy Kids (SPSHK), could be implemented as an additional module in evidence-based parent training and whether the added module might detract from the efficacy of the original program. In a cluster randomized trial, six community-based organizations were randomized to deliver Parents as Teachers (PAT) with SPSHK (PAT+SPSHK) or PAT as usual (PAT-AU). CSA-related awareness and protective behaviors, as well as general parenting behaviors taught by PAT were assessed at baseline, post-PAT, post-SPSHK, and 1-month follow-up. Multilevel analyses revealed significant group by time interactions for both awareness and behaviors ($ps < .0001$), indicating the PAT+SPSHK group had significantly greater awareness of CSA and used protective behaviors more often (which were maintained at follow-up) compared to the PAT-AU group. No differences were observed in general parenting behaviors taught by PAT suggesting adding SPSHK did not interfere with PAT efficacy as originally designed. Results indicate adding SPSHK to existing parent training can significantly enhance parents' awareness of and readiness to engage in protective behavioral strategies. Implementing SPSHK as a selective prevention strategy with at-risk parents receiving parent training through child welfare infrastructures is discussed.

Rudolph, J. I., Walsh, K., Shanley, D. C., & Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J. (2022). [Child sexual abuse prevention: Parental discussion, protective practices and attitudes](#). *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(23-24), NP22375–NP22400. DOI:10.1177/08862605211072258

Understanding parental practices and attitudes regarding child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention could be used to improve CSA prevention, but little information is available. In this study, we summarise survey data collected from 248 Australian and UK parents (87% female) with at least one child aged 6-11 years ($M = 8.6$, $SD = 1.8$). This is the first study to

quantify parental use of protective practices, other than prevention education, which may guard against CSA. Parental media mediation, which may safeguard against online dangers, was another unique focus of this study. Participants reported their discussion of sensitive topics with their children including CSA; behaviors that may reduce the incidence of CSA (e.g., monitoring, supervision, delegation of care and checking-in with the child); mediation of their child's media use; and attitudes towards CSA prevention education. Parents reported discussing sexual abuse less than other sensitive topics such as abduction dangers, drugs, and death but more than issues surrounding puberty, sex and pornography. Parents reported using high levels of protective behaviours, however some areas of concern were revealed. Of concern was the low-moderate level of parental media mediation, with substantial numbers of children potentially exposed to online risks such as using devices unsupervised in bedrooms or chatting to individuals unknown to their parents and not having their devices checked for concerning content. Almost all parents were supportive of CSA prevention education and felt they should provide this education. However, two-thirds of parents thought CSA education may be associated with harms for the child and two-thirds of parents believed children could prevent their own abuse. Reported results will aid in our understanding of which areas of parenting could be strengthened to create safer environments for children. This research has particularly highlighted the need for parents to be more protective around their children's access to online devices.

Gubbels, J., van der Put, C. E., Stams, G. J. J., Prinzie, P. J., & Assink, M. (2021). [Components associated with the effect of home visiting programs on child maltreatment: A meta-analytic review](#). *Child Abuse & Neglect, 114*, 104981.
DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.104981

Home visiting programs are widely endorsed for preventing child maltreatment. Yet, knowledge is lacking on what and how individual program components are related to the effectiveness of these programs. The aim of this meta-analysis was to increase this

knowledge by summarizing findings on effects of home visiting programs on child maltreatment and by examining potential moderators of this effect, including a range of program components and delivery techniques. A literature search yielded 77 studies (N=48,761) examining the effectiveness of home visiting programs, producing 174 effect sizes. In total, 35 different program components and delivery techniques were coded. A small but significant overall effect was found ($d=0.135$, 95 % CI (0.084, 0.187), $p<0.001$). Programs that focused on improving parental expectations of the child or parenthood in general ($d = 0.308$ for programs with this component versus $d = 0.112$ for programs without this component), programs targeting parental responsiveness or sensitivity to a child's needs ($d = 0.238$ versus $d = 0.064$), and programs using video-based feedback ($d = 0.397$ versus $d = 0.124$) yielded relatively larger effects. Providing practical and instrumental assistance was negatively associated with program effectiveness ($d=0.044$ versus $d = 0.168$). Further, program effects were larger when percentages of non-Caucasians/non-Whites in samples and follow-up durations increased. In general, home visiting programs can prevent child maltreatment only to a small extent. However, implementing specific components and techniques can improve program effectiveness.

Landers, A. (2020). [*Examining outcomes of participants in fatherhood programs: Do gender, race, and class composition make a difference?*](#) (Publication No. 29288981) [Doctoral dissertation, Auburn University]. ProQuest Publishing.

For nearly two decades, there has been a powerful movement for fathers to become more involved in their children's lives, resulting in an increased number of fatherhood programs. These programs focus on various outcomes and can reduce the risk of child maltreatment. Four outcomes are measured in this study: interpersonal competence, parental involvement, child academic adjustment, and financial responsibility. While the evaluation of fatherhood programs is expanding, published documentation remains greatly limited. Very few have considered demographic factors that may influence program outcomes. Additionally, the current study is a novel test of class composition

and its effects on program outcomes. This study explored fatherhood program participants' baseline differences and tested whether immediate post-program changes in target outcomes differ based on the gender, race, and class composition of fatherhood program participants. The sample consisted of 723 participants, both male and female, from across the state of Alabama. Findings indicate enhanced benefits for participants in four groups immediately following program participation compared to baseline results in all targeted outcomes. The current study reflects some key takeaway findings. Results indicate there were no statistically significant baseline differences in gender. However, when examining baseline differences for race, Black participants reported higher levels of parental involvement and financial responsibility on average than White participants. All fatherhood program participants, regardless of gender and race, experienced statistically significant change in the desired direction immediately following program participation. Additionally, results do not indicate class composition influences participant outcomes. Male participants in a "males only" class changed similarly to males in a "mixed class" comprised of males and females. Results support the notion that female participants in the class do not have a negative impact on male participants in the same class. The current study supports previous findings that fatherhood programs positively influence both male and female participants' individual and relational skills and knowledge. The current study also advances the literature by discovering some variations at program start in specific fatherhood program outcomes based on demographic factors. These findings serve to inform practitioners to consider characteristics that may enhance or impede program effectiveness.

Rudolph, J., Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J., Shanley, D. C., & Hawkins, R. (2018). [Child sexual abuse prevention opportunities: Parenting, programs, and the reduction of risk.](#) *Child Maltreatment*, 23(1), 96-106. DOI:10.1177/1077559517729479

To date, child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention has relied largely on child-focused education, teaching children how to identify, avoid, and disclose sexual abuse. The

purpose of this article is to explore how prevention opportunities can include parents in new and innovative ways. We propose that parents can play a significant role as protectors of their children via two pathways: (i) directly, through the strong external barriers afforded by parent supervision, monitoring, and involvement; and (ii) indirectly, by promoting their children's self-efficacy, competence, well-being, and self-esteem, which the balance of evidence suggests will help them become less likely targets for abuse and more able to respond appropriately and disclose abuse if it occurs. In this article, we first describe why teaching young children about CSA protective behaviors might not be sufficient for prevention. We then narratively review the existing research on parents and prevention and the parenting and family circumstances that may increase a child's risk of experiencing sexual abuse. Finally, we make a number of recommendations for future approaches to prevention that may better inform and involve parents and other adult protectors in preventing CSA.

Mendelson, T., & Letourneau, E. J. (2015). Parent-focused prevention of child sexual abuse. *Prevention Science, 16*(6), 844–852. DOI:10.1007/s11121-015-0553-z

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a serious public health issue. Current after-the-fact approaches to treating victims and punishing offenders are not adequate to address a problem of this magnitude; development and rigorous evaluation of CSA prevention strategies are critical. We propose that CSA prevention efforts should target parents of young children. Parents have been neglected as a focus of CSA prevention; they merit attention given their potential to improve children's safety via effective communication and monitoring. This paper provides an overview of current strategies for reducing CSA prevalence and their limitations, presents a rationale for parent-focused CSA prevention, and discusses considerations pertinent to development of an effective parent-focused approach. Parent-focused CSA prevention offers potential as a public health approach to prevention of CSA, and it is time that we devote resources toward developing and studying this important area.

Babatsikos, G. (2010). Parents' knowledge, attitudes and practices about preventing child sexual abuse: A literature review. *Child Abuse Review, 19*(2), 107–129.
DOI:10.1002/car.1102

Increased concern about high rates of child sexual abuse has led to the demand for more prevention programmes, particularly those aimed at parents. Research on how parents manage and reduce the risk of child sexual abuse can help plan programmes. This literature review explores published research on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of parents on the risk and prevention of child sexual abuse and identifies gaps and needs for further research. The majority of studies reviewed originated in North America and Asia, were quantitative, surveyed mainly mothers and were more than ten years old. Recommendations are made for more current and country specific research, further research to gain a deeper understanding of how parents manage the risk of child sexual abuse, more comprehensive research covering a range of knowledge, attitude and practice variables, and greater inclusion of fathers in research.

Kenny, M. C. (2010). Child sexual abuse education with ethnically diverse families: A preliminary analysis. *Children and Youth Services Review, 32*(7), 981–989.
DOI:10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.03.025

This study assessed the effectiveness of a parent–child psychoeducational program, Kids Learning About Safety (KLAS), aimed at educating families about general safety and personal safety related to childhood sexual abuse. Following assessment of both parents and children (ages 3 to 5 years and primarily Hispanic), families participated in 16 sessions of simultaneous psychoeducational groups. Children were taught general safety and body safety (e.g., touching rules). Sessions lasted 1-hour and were held twice a week. Group facilitators employed modeling, didactic instruction, and bibliotherapy. Paired t-tests using pre-test and post-test scores from 105 children and their parents demonstrated improvements in preschoolers' knowledge of general safety concepts as well as personal safety rules. No negative side effects or increases in sexualized behaviors

were reported. At the three-month follow-up, parents reported maintenance of their child's knowledge and continued satisfaction with the program. Suggestions for future prevention studies are offered.

Wurtele, S. K., & Kenny, M. C. (2010). Partnering with parents to prevent childhood sexual abuse. *Child Abuse Review, 19*(2), 130–152. DOI:10.1002/car.1112

Although research demonstrates that child-focused sexual abuse prevention programs can teach children personal safety knowledge and skills, childhood sexual abuse (CSA) prevention programs that involve parents have a number of distinct advantages. The more knowledge parents have about CSA, the greater likelihood they can create safer environments for their children and thus prevent the occurrence of sexual exploitation. Research has demonstrated that parents lack crucial information about CSA and can benefit from even brief educational efforts. This paper will identify potential barriers to participation and offer practical suggestions for enhancing both recruitment and retention rates. Recommendations for parent education programs are offered, including improving parents' confidence and skills in educating their children about CSA, providing them with parent-friendly materials to use and developing Internet applications.

Wurtele, S. K., & Kenny, M. C. (2010). Primary prevention of child sexual abuse: Child and parent-focused approaches. In K. L. Kaufman (Ed.), *The prevention of sexual violence: A practitioner's sourcebook* (pp. 107–119). NEARI Press.

Deblinger, E., Thakkar-Kolar, R. R., Berry, E. J., & Schroeder, C. M. (2009). Caregivers' efforts to educate their children about child sexual abuse: A replication study. *Child Maltreatment, 15*(1), 91–100. DOI:10.1177/1077559509337408

The current investigation examined parental efforts to educate their children about sexual abuse. Approximately 750 surveys were distributed to parents of kindergarten

through third grade youngsters (mean age 8.5) in three New Jersey elementary schools. Participants were 289 guardians (39% response rate) who voluntarily completed a survey assessing demographic characteristics, caregivers' direct or indirect experience with child sexual abuse, and their efforts to educate their children about the issue. As found previously, parents continue to disproportionately focus on strangers as potential offenders and provide limited information particularly in terms of the nature of sexual abuse and the secrecy associated with it. Parents with no direct or indirect experience with child sexual abuse were least likely to talk with their children about the issue in general and when they did so provided less information. These findings were surprisingly similar to earlier investigations despite methodological and sampling differences across investigations. Implications and limitations of the current survey findings discussed.

Wurtele, S. K., Moreno, T., & Kenny, M. (2008). Evaluation of a sexual abuse prevention workshop for parents of young children. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma, 1*(4), 331-340. DOI:10.1080/19361520802505768

This study examined the effectiveness of an educational workshop designed to inform parents about childhood sexual abuse (CSA), promote parent-child communication, and help parents create molester-free environments for their children. Forty-seven parents of young children (mean age = 4.6 years) completed preworkshop questionnaires, participated in a 3-hour parent educational workshop led by a CSA prevention expert, and were tested 1 month later. Parents who attended the workshop gained knowledge about CSA and reported increased communication with their children about CSA. This study provided evidence that a relatively brief parent educational program can improve parents' knowledge and ability to talk with their children about personal safety. Suggestions for future program development and evaluation are provided.

School Based

Hong, Y. S., Pac, J., & Berger, L. M. (2026). Universal pre-kindergarten for child maltreatment prevention. *JAMA Pediatrics*. DOI:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2025.5822

Universal pre-kindergarten (UPK) programs are expanding across the US. Given the detrimental consequences of child maltreatment on children's health and well-being, it is important to assess whether high-quality, full-time UPK programs can function as a population-level child maltreatment prevention strategy. This study examined the association between provision of a full-time UPK program and child protective services (CPS) investigation rates by leveraging the implementation of New York City's Pre-K for All program. This cross-sectional study used county-year-child age-level data from the 2010 to 2019 National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System Child Files to compare CPS investigation rate trajectories for children aged 4 and 8 years before and after UPK implementation. The data were analyzed from January to May 2025. A total of 1 606 525 children (mean [SD] age, 5.9 [2.0] years; 820 519 males [51%]) were included in the study. Of these children, 555 003 (35%) identified as Hispanic, 382 662 (24%) as non-Hispanic Black, 444 285 as non-Hispanic White (28%), and 213 576 children (13%) identified as other non-Hispanic race or ethnicities. The difference-in-differences analysis estimated that UPK implementation was associated with 4.0 (95% CI, -6.77 to -1.11) fewer CPS investigations per 1000 children aged 4 years relative to investigations among children aged 8 years. This finding was attributable to reductions in the rate of child neglect investigations, with no statistically significant change in physical abuse investigations. The event study models illustrate that UPK implementation led to greater reductions in CPS investigations over time, reaching a reduction of 8.0 (95% CI, -11.72 to -5.10) fewer neglect investigations per 1000 children 2 years after implementation. This study found that UPK may be associated with reduced CPS involvement, particularly for child neglect, and may help mitigate racial and ethnic disparities in CPS involvement. Reductions in child neglect associated with UPK could benefit children's health and well-being in the short- and long-term; these findings offer insights for policymakers and advocates

regarding broader benefits associated with UPK. Moreover, the subgroup analyses by race and ethnicity show that reductions in neglect investigations were disproportionately concentrated among racial and ethnic minority populations, particularly the non-Hispanic Black population, which had a reduction of 80 (95% CI, -176.47 to -17.02) neglect investigations per 1000 children 2 years after implementation.

Assini-Meytin, L. C., Muempfer, E., DeSilva, A., Tasharski, L., Mathews, B., Kaufman, K. L., Letourneau, E. J., & Palmer, D. (2025). Guiding leaders to prevent and address child sexual abuse within K-12 schools: A qualitative study on educators' perspectives. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 163, 107340. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2025.107340

Large organizations for recreation and culture in the U.S. have engaged in several best practices recommendations to keep children safe from sexual abuse. Informed by a deep characterization of such practices, in 2020, a group of researchers published a Leadership Desk Guide encouraging organizational leaders and staff to consider aligning their policies and practices under eight logical and overarching child-safe principles. The feasibility and applicability of such principles within K-12 school settings remained unknown. In order to qualitatively assess the feasibility of applying the Leadership Desk Guide framework to prevent child sexual abuse (CSA) in K-12 school settings, and identify areas for enhancement, we obtained information from key stakeholders, including district- and school-level administrators ($N = 15$) and teachers ($N = 20$) via online interviews and focus groups. Participants were exposed to an overview of the eight Leadership Desk Guide principles and asked about implementation barriers and facilitators. Thematic analysis of responses elicited areas of consensus and salient topics for further consideration. Results indicated consensus among administrators and teachers regarding the necessity and adaptability of the child safety principles from the Leadership Desk Guide to K-12 settings. Implementation considerations included teachers' work demands, the inclusion of substitute teachers and volunteers in training, and the incompatibility of some recommendations (e.g., increasing direct line of sight)

with contemporary challenges (e.g., school shootings). Findings can help organizations identify and overcome barriers and increase the adoption of child safety strategies to prevent CSA and related boundary-violating behaviors by educators in K-12 schools.

Bright, M. A., Ortega, D. P., Bodi, C. B., & Walsh, K. (2024). School-based victimization prevention education programs for children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities: A scoping review. *Child Maltreatment, 30*(2), 357-379. DOI:10.1177/10775595241276412

Youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) are at significantly higher risk of experiencing multiple types of interpersonal victimization across their lifespan compared to their peers without IDD. Despite the extensive literature on efficacy of prevention education programs for children without IDD, very little is known about comparable programs for children with IDD. In this scoping review, we synthesized the literature on existing programs for children with IDD. We identified thirteen programs which we critically assessed against established best practice criteria for prevention and special education and evaluation. The current literature on prevention education programs for children with IDD exhibits significant limitations, such as weak research designs and poor measurement of outcomes.

Meador, J. A., & Foster, J. M. (2025). [The role of school counselors in preventing child sexual abuse](#). *Journal of School-Based Counseling Policy and Evaluation, 7*(1), n1. DOI:10.25774/jscpe.v7i1.337

Violence against children is a pervasive, global problem. Child sexual abuse (CSA), a specific type of adverse childhood experience (ACE), affects children across all racial and socio-economic backgrounds. CSA is associated with the potential for serious and long-term outcomes. Thus, as part of a trauma-informed approach, schools necessitate multi-level preventative strategies aimed at increasing safety, awareness, and policy. School counselors hold a pivotal role in implementing prevention programs and providing early

interventions for child victims. This article examines a systemic plan that trains school staff, builds community awareness, educates parents, and facilitates programming for students. Recommendations for successful implementation and program evaluation are provided.

Celik, P. (2024). [The effectiveness of school-based child sexual abuse prevention programmes among primary school-aged children: A systematic review.](#) *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 7, 100348.
DOI:10.1016/j.ijedro.2024.100348

This systematic review provides a comprehensive overview of child sexual abuse prevalence globally, along with an examination of the effectiveness of school-based prevention education programmes for primary school-aged children. These prevention programmes utilise social cognitive learning theories to teach children the importance of identifying and responding to abusive situations. A total of 676 papers were evaluated with 13 Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) or cluster RCT design studies identified as meeting the study's inclusion criteria. These studies were published in English between January 2000 and May 2022, and focus on outcomes of school-based prevention programmes designed for primary school-aged children (5–12 years old). To ensure a comprehensive and academically rigorous analysis, the following databases were included: Science Direct, Web of Science, Scopus, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) PsycINFO, Ovid Medline, and Embase. The studies reviewed aim to evaluate the effectiveness of various child sexual abuse prevention programmes in improving children's knowledge and recognition of, and response to potentially unsafe situations. In terms of outcomes and results, the interventions have significantly impacted knowledge, skills, confidence, and awareness in the short and long term. These studies used different intervention methods, including mobile applications, personal safety programmes, and protective behaviour programmes, delivered in various formats such as web-based,

textbooks, and in-person sessions. This systematic review highlights the importance of child sexual abuse prevention programmes in schools and the need for further research.

Letourneau, E. J., Schaeffer, C. M., Bradshaw, C. P., Ruzicka, A. E., Assini-Meytin, L. C., Nair, R., & Thorne, E. (2024). [Responsible behavior with younger children: Results from a pilot randomized evaluation of a school-based child sexual abuse perpetration prevention program](#). *Child Maltreatment*, 29(1), 129-141.
DOI:10.1177/10775595221130737

Many efforts to prevent child sexual abuse (CSA) aim to teach children strategies for recognizing, resisting, and reporting victimization. There is limited evidence that victimization-focused efforts actually prevent CSA. Moreover, these efforts often overlook the fact that many children and adolescents engage in problem sexual behavior against younger children. Responsible Behavior with Younger Children (RBYC) is a novel universal school-based perpetration-focused intervention that aims to prevent the onset of inappropriate, harmful, or illegal sexual behavior by adolescents against younger children.¹ Responsible behavior with younger children was designed to provide adolescents and their parents with the knowledge and tools to help adolescents interact appropriately with younger children and avoid CSA behaviors. In this paper we describe intervention development, summarize lessons learned from implementing RBYC in four urban schools, and report results from our pilot randomized waitlist-controlled trial (RCT) with 160 6th and 7th grade students. Results indicate RBYC was associated with increased accuracy in youth knowledge about CSA and CSA-related laws, and with increased behavioral intention to avoid or prevent CSA with younger children and peer sexual harassment. Although the sample was small and the effects were relatively modest, the findings do suggest that RBYC holds promise for preventing the onset of problem sexual behavior.

Bódi, C. B., Ortega, D. P., Hawkins, L. B., James, T. G., & Bright, M. A. (2023). Parents' and professionals' perspectives on school-based maltreatment prevention education for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 145*, 106428. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106428

Youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) are at a significantly increased risk of experiencing maltreatment and abuse. Child maltreatment prevention education programs are effective at improving safety of children and youth, generally. The goal of this study was to understand challenges, benefits, and important considerations of developing an IDD-tailored prevention program. In total, we recruited 21 professionals and parents who have experience with a child with IDD from New York, Indiana, and Florida. Participants were segmented into three focus groups, which were conducted through web-based videoconferencing. Focus groups were moderated by experts in child maltreatment prevention and recorded for data collection. Recordings were transcribed and subsequently coded using a qualitative content analysis approach. The analysis identified several challenges to implementing child maltreatment prevention to students with IDD and pedagogical strategies to overcome those, such as the use of visuals, standardized vocabulary, and relatable examples. Benefits of a prevention program were also mentioned, including feelings of empowerment that can be cultivated by providing opportunities where children with IDD practice being assertive. Considerations for program developers and staff were discussed to ensure that prevention programs are easily adaptable to suit the needs of students with IDD across the continuum. Previous research has indicated an unmet need for child maltreatment programs among children with IDD. Implementation of an IDD-tailored program must be preceded by gaining invaluable insight from professionals and parents. Findings provide insight into implementation challenges and methods to inform prevention programs.

Guastafarro, K., Shipe, S. L., Connell, C. M., Holloway, J. L., Pulido, M. L., & Noll, J. G. (2023). [Knowledge gains from the implementation of a child sexual abuse prevention program and the future of school-based prevention education](#). *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 32(7), 845–859. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2023.2268618

School-based child sexual abuse (CSA) programs effectively increase students' CSA-related knowledge. This study focuses on an implementation trial of *Safe Touches*, an empirically supported, school-based CSA prevention program, that was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We sought to demonstrate gains in CSA-related knowledge following *Safe Touches*, but were limited to a pre-post design. A total of 2,210 students across five counties in a Mid-Atlantic state received the *Safe Touches* workshop between September 2019 and March 2020. McNemar's chi-square test was used to assess changes in proportion of correct responses pre-workshop (Time 1) and one-week post-workshop (Time 2). Students' CSA-related knowledge increased significantly based on changes in mean CSA knowledge scores and the number of correct item-level responses assessed at Time 1 and Time 2 ($p < .000$). Leveraging the experience of the facilitators' who delivered these workshops prior to the disruption of implementation, we gathered facilitators' perspectives to explore the viability of offering *Safe Touches* virtually. In July 2020, sixteen facilitators completed an electronic survey designed to understand the viability of a virtual *Safe Touches* workshop. Three themes emerged from facilitator feedback on virtual programming: student engagement concerns, handling disclosures, and technology access to a virtual program. The findings of this study indicate that the *Safe Touches* workshop significantly increased CSA related knowledge and, overall, facilitators supported further exploration and development of a virtual *Safe Touches* workshop. The transition of empirically supported school-based CSA prevention programs to a virtual delivery modality is necessary to maintain an effective means of primary prevention and opportunity for disclosure.

Lu, M., Barlow, J., Meinck, F., & Neelakantan, L. (2023). [Unpacking school-based child sexual abuse prevention programs: A realist review](#). *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 24(4), 2067–2081. DOI:10.1177/15248380221082153

Existing efforts to understand school-based child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention programs mainly focus on the effectiveness of these programs in increasing participants' CSA knowledge and self-protective skills. There are currently no reviews addressing the underpinning pathways leading to these outcomes. In order to increase our understanding about the underpinning causal and contextual factors and inform the further development of school-based CSA prevention programs, a realist review was conducted to synthesize existing evidence from a broad range of data. An iterative search of electronic databases and grey literature was conducted, supplemented with citation tracking to locate relevant literature. For quantitative evidence, we considered evaluation studies that focused on students aged 5–18 years, who were enrolled in primary or secondary schools; for other types/formats of studies/documents, no population restrictions were applied. We included school-based CSA prevention programs that focused on improving knowledge of CSA or self-protective skills. Outcomes of interest included knowledge of CSA or self-protective skills. We did not apply methodological filters in terms of the types of studies to be included. Thematic content analysis was conducted to synthesize data. Sixty-two studies were included. Five themes and five overarching Context-Strategy-Mechanism-Outcome configurations (CSMOs) that contributed to the success of school-based CSA interventions were identified, including tailoring programs to participants' cognitive developmental levels, repeated exposure of key concepts and skills, utilization of interactive delivery methods and positive feedback, delivery of positive information and application of the 'train-the-trainer' model. Findings from this realist review provide insights into the underlying program theory of school-based CSA prevention programs, which can aid in the development and implementation of these programs in the future.

Ortega, D. P., Walsh, K., Bódi, C. B., Hawkins, L. B., & Bright, M. A. (2023). School-based prevention education for children and youth with intellectual developmental disabilities. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 145*, 106397. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106397

Children with intellectual developmental disabilities (IDD) are at a heightened risk of experiencing child maltreatment (CM) when compared to their peers without IDD. Despite expanding evidence supporting the efficacy of school-based CM prevention programs, there are limited programs that tailor their lessons to the unique needs of children with IDD. This discussion first presents information regarding the prevalence and risk factors of CM among children with IDD. We then present existing peer-reviewed CM programs that have been developed for children with IDD. Finally, based on the latest research of CM prevention and special education, we present our considerations for a comprehensive school-based CM prevention program for children with IDD. Prevention programs for children with IDD may increase risk awareness among children with IDD and their parents, equip children with IDD with the protective skills necessary to navigate unsafe situations, and decrease the overall incidence of CM against this population.

Robertson, A. L., Harris, D. A., & Karstedt, S. (2023). "It's a preventable type of harm": Evidence-based strategies to prevent sexual abuse in schools. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 145*, 106419. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106419

The last two decades have seen global public recognition of the scale and impact of adult-perpetrated institutional child sexual abuse. A sizeable body of knowledge about generalized safeguarding measures has since been generated to inform organizations' prevention efforts. Apparent in the extant literature, however, is a notable lack of evidence-based and context-specific prevention strategies targeting perpetration in distinct institutional environments. This absence extends to educational settings where most reported contemporary cases occur or originate. The recommendations outlined in this article contribute to this gap. Derived from empirical findings establishing the role of context-specific rather than person-specific factors, a range of prevention strategies

framed by Situational Crime Prevention are proposed for secondary educational settings. These recommendations are supplemented by the unique insights of interviewed experts with specialist professional knowledge. Recommendations center around targeting features of the environment such as high-risk locations, available guardians, and intimacy-promoting situations available in educational contexts. Taken together, this robust prevention and control agenda can create conditions for safer educational environments.

Stanley, N., Devaney, J., Kurdi, Z., Ozdemir, U., Barter, C., Monks, C., Edwards, R. T., Batool, F., Charles, J., Farrelly, N., Hayes, D., Millar, A., Thompson, T., Winrow, E., & Radford, L. (2023). What makes for effectiveness when starting early—Learning from an integrated school-based violence and abuse prevention programme for children under 12. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 139*, 106109. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106109

Integrated programmes addressing varying forms of violence and abuse are increasingly delivered to children under 12 but uncertainty remains about what should be delivered to whom, when and in what dose. In order to examine the impact of Speak Out Stay Safe (SOSS) – an integrated prevention programme for children under 12 – and whether impact varied by age, gender and context. A representative UK sample of primary schools in receipt of SOSS was matched with comparison schools not receiving SOSS. At 6 months follow-up, 1553 children from 36 schools completed the survey. The matched control study incorporated economic and process evaluations. Survey measures included: children's knowledge and understanding of different forms of violence and abuse, readiness to seek help, knowledge of sexual abuse, perceptions of school culture and health and wellbeing. Perceptions of children, teachers, and facilitators were captured. At 6 months, children aged 9–10 who received SOSS retained their improved knowledge of neglect and their ability to identify a trusted adult who they would tell about violence or abuse. Children aged 6–7 receiving a shorter version of the programme were less likely to benefit and boys made fewer gains than girls. SOSS

improved the knowledge of children with low knowledge of abuse. School culture was closely associated with programme impact. School-based prevention programmes deliver benefits at low cost but should acknowledge and engage with the specific school context to achieve school readiness and embed programme messages.

Bright, M. A., Ortega, D., Finkelhor, D., & Walsh, K. (2022). [Moving school-based CSA prevention education online: Advantages and challenges of the "new normal"](#). *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 132, 105807. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2022.105807

One of the many outcomes of the COVID-19 pandemic was a shift in the delivery of elementary (primary) education. Schools transitioned swiftly to e-learning and prioritized education that was already or could be easily adapted to virtual formats. Given the paucity of online content available, it is not likely that child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention education was prioritized. Given that CSA prevention education has demonstrated success in increasing knowledge, protective behaviors, and disclosures, and the potential long-term need for e-learning options, there is a demand for an exploration of how CSA prevention can be implemented using e-learning strategies. In the current discussion, we explore how school-based CSA prevention education could be implemented in a "new normal" context of e-learning. We first present the existing e-learning content for CSA prevention education. We then describe how best practices for prevention education can be applied to e-learning. Finally, we present considerations for the use of e-learning specifically for CSA prevention education. In short, implementing CSA prevention programs through e-learning offers many affordances for program accessibility and reach, flexibility in implementation and opportunities for greater exposure to content, and a wide range of ways to demonstrate effective skills and engage children in cycles of practice and feedback. E-learning, may also, however, limit important conversations between children and trained instructors that lead to disclosures. The extant literature leaves us unsure as to whether implementing CSA prevention programs through e-learning will result in better or worse outcomes for children. However, given the increasing

demand for e-learning options, and the promise of some new e-learning programs, further research on the effectiveness of e-learning CSA prevention programs is warranted.

Kenny, M. C., Long, H., Billings, D., & Malik, F. (2022). School-based abuse prevention programming: Implementation of child safety matters with minority youth. *Child Abuse Review, 31*(3), e2742. DOI:10.1002/car.2742

Schools are a natural choice for providing prevention information about victimisation to children and young people. This study examines the implementation of the Monique Burr Foundation's Child Safety Matters program with minority youth attending public school. The program was implemented with children aged four to 13 years, primarily in schools in low-income areas in a large, multicultural public school system. Pre- and post-test assessments of the program showed small significant improvements over time regardless of grade or gender, though with ceiling effects in the pre-tests. Regarding the most important information learned, youth responded with themes of bullying, safety rules, Internet safety and abuse. Five children made direct disclosures of sexual or physical abuse to the presenter and were subsequently reported to the child abuse hotline. Teachers, in whose classrooms the program was delivered, reported satisfaction with the program, and an increased sense of competence in identifying abuse. Implications for administering and assessing prevention programs are provided.

Kenny, M. C., & Prikhidko, A. (2022). [Mothers attitudes toward child sexual abuse prevention in schools: A preliminary examination](#). *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma, 15*(2), 297–306. DOI:10.1007/s40653-021-00361-1

Providing school-based child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention programs ensures that the majority of children will participate in programming. Since many parents may feel ill equipped to have such discussions with their children, programs offered in education

settings can bring awareness to this issue. A sample of mothers ($N = 268$) from across the United States completed an online survey related to their experiences with and attitudes toward school-based CSA prevention programs. Most mothers (70%) had no exposure to prevention programs during their childhood, but the majority (95%) had a positive attitude toward programming for their children. Most mothers believed that offering CSA prevention in schools was important and could provide a safety net. Mothers desired programming that was age appropriate, involved parents and was activity based. These results can help inform schools' prevention programming.

Walsh, K., Pink, E., Ayling, N., Sondergeld, A., Dallaston, E., Tournas, P., Serry, E., Trotter, E., Spanos, T., & Rogic, N. (2022). [Best practice framework for online safety education: Results from a rapid review of the international literature, expert review, and stakeholder consultation](#). *International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction*, 33, 100474. DOI:10.1016/j.ijcci.2022.100474

Children spend increasing amounts of time online prompting parents and carers, educators, school systems, and governments to raise concerns about their online safety. In a world first, Australia's eSafety Commissioner (eSafety) was charged with developing a national framework for online safety education. The Framework was developed in a two-stage sequential mixed-methods study involving collaboration between researchers, eSafety, experts and stakeholders. Stage 1, a rapid review of eight evidence sources provided the foundation for a multi-component Framework addressing key elements and effective practices for online safety education. Stage 2, tested and refined the Framework via individual interviews with online safety experts, and focus groups with stakeholders representing school-sector organisations and children's advocacy groups. The final Framework comprises 5 elements and 22 effective practices. The Framework will support schools in teaching online safety, assessing the quality of programs and approaches, and guiding best practice.

Ruzicka, A. E., Assini-Meytin, L. C., Schaeffer, C. M., Bradshaw, C. P., & Letourneau, E. J. (2021). Responsible behavior with younger children: Examining the feasibility of a classroom-based program to prevent child sexual abuse perpetration by adolescents. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 30*(4), 461-481.
DOI:10.1080/10538712.2021.1881858

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a preventable public health problem typically addressed with either after-the-fact interventions or prevention programs focused on teaching children to protect themselves and report abuse. Such responses do little to prevent CSA victimization, leading to calls for prevention efforts targeting individuals most at risk of perpetrating CSA. These individuals include young adolescents, who are prone to making mistakes and bad decisions when it comes to their sexual behaviors. To begin to address this call to action, we developed Responsible Behavior with Younger Children (RBYC), a universal school-based prevention program to provide sixth and seventh grade students (and their parents and educators) with the knowledge, skills, and tools to prevent engaging younger children in sexual behaviors. School-based CSA prevention interventions are often met with feasibility and acceptability concerns including that (a) people at risk of offending are impervious to prevention efforts, (b) schools do not have the resources to take on additional programs, and (c) the content is too sensitive for educators, parents, and students. The goal of this article is to describe how the RBYC program was developed to address these concerns. We also summarize data on the feasibility of the RBYC program obtained from focus groups with educators, parents, and students during the development of the program and interviews with educators after a pilot randomized controlled trial (RCT). Feedback received during program development and after the pilot RCT suggests that RBYC is relevant, salient, palatable, and feasible for implementation in middle schools.

Kim, S., Nickerson, A., Livingston, J. A., Dudley, M., Manges, M., Tullidge, J., & Allen, K. (2019). Teacher outcomes from the Second Step Child Protection Unit: Moderating roles of prior preparedness, and treatment acceptability. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 28*(6), 726–744. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2019.1620397

Teachers play a critical role in child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention and intervention efforts. We examined the impact of the Second Step Child Protection Unit (CPU) on improving teacher awareness, attitudes, and teacher–student relations for 161 teachers. Teacher baseline scores and treatment acceptability were examined as moderators. Structural equation modeling (SEM) revealed a significant effect of the CPU on teachers' awareness, attitudes, and teacher–student relations, particularly for teachers with lower prior knowledge, attitudes, and student relationships. Teachers' acceptability of the CPU also moderated outcomes, where a higher level of acceptability of CSA interventions was associated with an increase in outcomes.

Walsh, K., Berthelsen, D., Hand, K., Brandon, L., & Nicholson, J. M. (2019). [Sexual abuse prevention education in Australian primary schools: A national survey of programs](#). *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 34*(20), 4328–4351. DOI:10.1177/0886260519869246

In the 2017 final report of the Australia's Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, recommendations noted the importance of school-based prevention efforts to create child-safe communities. In this study, we report on a national evaluation of the nature and availability of child sexual abuse prevention programs delivered in Australian primary schools. A survey instrument, anchored in empirical evidence, was distributed to all providers of child sexual abuse prevention programs in Australian primary schools serving children aged 4 to 13 years. Respondents were program coordinators or facilitators who provided data on 35 school-based child sexual abuse prevention programs that reached 631,720 children (approximately 26% of the Australian primary school student population) in 1 year. On average, each program reached 18,049 children in a calendar year (ranging from 200 to 80,000 children). Median child age for

program exposure was 8 years. However, program duration was poorly reported so it was difficult to establish what program dosage was received. Most programs (80%-94%) covered specific item content, "always or often," for 13 important areas of content, including five of seven items that had the strongest evidence of effectiveness, derived from a recent Cochrane Review (e.g., distinguishing appropriate and inappropriate touching). Programs less frequently addressed such content as safety in using technology and perpetrator strategies (e.g., grooming). The findings provide important information about the scope and nature of child sexual abuse prevention programs, and baseline data against which future program advancements can be tracked.

Brown, D. M. (2017). Evaluation of Safer, Smarter Kids: Child sexual abuse prevention curriculum for kindergartners. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 34*, 213-222. DOI: 10.1007/s10560-016-0458-0

This study assessed the effectiveness of the *Safer, Smarter Kids* kindergarten sexual abuse prevention curriculum in meeting its educational objectives of increasing children's knowledge of safety risks and self-protection strategies. The study utilized a two-phase non-probability convenience sample of public school kindergarten students. The sample consisted of 1169 students in four school districts in Florida. Using an alpha level of .05, a paired-samples *t* test was calculated to compare the mean pretest scores to the mean posttest scores of the youth participants. The mean difference was significantly greater than zero ($p\text{-value} \leq .001$). The measurement instrument used to assess student gains functioned well in terms of reliability ($\alpha = .82$). The effect size was large with a Cohen's *d* effect size of 1.09. The results indicated that completion of the *Safer, Smarter Kids* curriculum was followed by a significant increase in students' knowledge of key prevention concepts with a 77 % increase in scores post intervention.

Barron, I. G., Miller, D. J., & Kelly, T. B. (2015). School-based child sexual abuse prevention programs: Moving toward resiliency-informed evaluation. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 24*(1), 77-96. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2015.990175

Although recent years have seen an increase in the range of child sexual abuse prevention programs delivered in schools, there have been relatively few efficacy studies. Those conducted have focused primarily on intrinsic child factors and have often lacked an explicit theoretical framework. We offer resiliency theory as a useful and apposite theoretical framework for program evaluation. Resiliency theory suggests that a wider range of factors should be considered, including intrinsic (personal characteristics) and extrinsic (environmental) factors. Such factors may increase risk or, alternatively, protect children from the negative effects of adversity. We argue that a resiliency perspective to efficacy studies should recognize a long-term view on children's capacity to cope and can employ both standardized and contextual resiliency-informed measures.

Brassard, M. R., & Fiorvanti, C. M. (2015). School-based child abuse prevention programs. *Psychology in the Schools, 52*(1), 40-60. DOI:10.1002/pits.21811

Child abuse is a leading cause of emotional, behavioral, and health problems across the lifespan. It is also preventable. School-based abuse prevention programs for early childhood and elementary school children have been found to be effective in increasing student knowledge and protective behaviors. The purpose of this article is to help school psychologists understand the potential positive impact of abuse prevention programs in their school, choose a high-quality program for their population, and be aware of the practical considerations of implementation.

Pulido, M. L., Dauber, S., Tully, B. A., Hamilton, P., Smith, M. J., & Freeman, K. (2015). [Knowledge gains following a child sexual abuse prevention program among urban students: A cluster-randomized evaluation](#). *American Journal of Public Health, 105*(7), 1344–1350. DOI:10.2105/AJPH.2015.302594

We evaluated a school-based child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention program, Safe Touches, in a low-socioeconomic status, racially diverse sample. Participants were 492 second- and third-grade students at 6 public elementary schools in New York City. The study period spanned fall 2012 through summer 2014. We cluster-randomized classrooms to the Safe Touches intervention or control groups and assessed outcomes with the Children's Knowledge of Abuse Questionnaire. Hierarchical models tested change in children's knowledge of inappropriate and appropriate touch. The intervention group showed significantly greater improvement than the control group on knowledge of inappropriate touch. Children in second grade and children in schools with a greater proportion of students in general (vs special) education showed greater gains than other participants in knowledge of inappropriate touch. We observed no significant change in knowledge of appropriate touch among control or intervention groups. Young children benefited from a school-based, 1-time CSA prevention program. Future research should explore the efficacy of CSA prevention programs with children before the second grade to determine optimal age for participation.

Walsh, K., Zwi, K., Woolfenden, S., & Shlonsky, A. (2015). [School-based education programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse: A systematic review](#). *Campbell Systematic Reviews, 11*, 1–180. DOI:10.4073/csr.2015.10

This Campbell systematic review examines the effectiveness of school-based education programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse. The review summarises findings from 24 trials, conducted in the U.S., Canada, China, Germany, Taiwan and Turkey. Six metaanalyses are included assessing evidence of moderate quality. This study is an update to a previous review and covers publications up to September 2014. School-based education programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse are more effective than

alternative programmes or no programme at all in strengthening children's knowledge about child sexual abuse prevention and their protective behaviours. Children retain the knowledge gained from programme participation, though no study has assessed retention over a period of longer than six months. No studies examined the retention of protective behaviours over time. Disclosures of previous and current occurrences of child sexual abuse increase for participants of school-based education programmes. However, the evidence supporting this finding is weak and should be interpreted with caution.

Wood, M., & Archbold, C. A. (2015). Bad touches, getting away, and never keeping secrets assessing student knowledge retention of the "Red Flag Green Flag People" program. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 30*(17), 2999–3021.
DOI:10.1177/0886260514554426

School-based prevention programs that target sexual abuse are commonplace in many elementary schools across the United States. This study examines the efficacy of the "Red Flag Green Flag People" program presented to elementary school children in two school districts in the Midwest. A brief, 11-question survey is given to students to assess knowledge retention of the curriculum from this sexual abuse prevention program. The results of this study indicate that students are retaining information taught in the Red Flag Green Flag People program for up to two years after the program was administered.

Barron, I. G., & Topping, K. J. (2013). Exploratory evaluation of a school-based child sexual abuse prevention program. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 22*(8), 931–948.
DOI:10.1080/10538712.2013.841788

Internationally, efficacy studies of school-based child sexual abuse prevention programs display a series of methodological shortcomings. Few studies include adolescent participants, recording of disclosures has been inconsistent, and no studies to date have assessed presenter adherence to program protocols or summated the costs of program

implementation. A pretest–posttest waitlist control design was used to evaluate the Tweenees program delivered to grade 6 (n = 88) and grade 7/8 students (n = 117) compared to a control (n = 185). Outcome measures included a knowledge/skills questionnaire, systematic coding of disclosures, and video interaction analysis of lessons. Costs were calculated per student, class, and school. Adolescents made small knowledge and skills gains indicating a program ceiling effect. Implementation analysis suggests low levels of adult control facilitated disclosures. Program costs were relatively inexpensive. Recommendations are made for future research.

Kenny, M. C., Wurtele, S. K., & Alonso, L. (2012). Evaluation of a personal safety program with Latino preschoolers. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 21*(4), 368–385.
DOI:10.1080/10538712.2012.675426

This study evaluated a personal safety educational program designed for Latino families attending preschools in a large metropolis. Seventy-eight children who participated in the Kids Learning About Safety program were compared to 45 control children. Compared with controls, participating children demonstrated enhanced ability to recognize inappropriate touches, learned correct genital terminology, were able to recognize the inappropriateness of touch requests made by “good” people, demonstrated higher levels of personal safety skills, and learned general safety rules. Gains in knowledge were maintained at three-month follow-up testing for all content areas except genital terminology. Although feedback provided by participating families was positive, recruiting participants and maintaining attendance at sessions was difficult. Discussion includes recommendations for future research and engagement of this population.

Topping, K. J., & Barron, I. G. (2009). [School-based child sexual abuse prevention programs: A review of effectiveness](#). *Review of Educational Research*, 79(1), 431-463. DOI:10.3102/0034654308325582

In this systematic and critical review of purely school-based child sexual abuse prevention program efficacy studies, 22 studies meeting the inclusion criteria differed by target population, program implementation, and evaluation methodology. Measured outcomes for children included knowledge, skills, emotion, risk perception, touch discrimination, reported response to actual threat or abuse, disclosure, maintenance of gains, and negative effects. Many studies had methodological limitations (e.g., sampling problems, lack of adequate control groups, lack of reliable and valid measures). However, most investigators claimed that their results showed significant impact in primary prevention (increasing all children's knowledge or awareness and/or abuse prevention skills). There was little evidence of change in disclosure. There was limited follow-up evidence of actual use and effectiveness of prevention skills, and the evidence for maintenance of gains was mixed. Several programs reported some negative effects. Very few studies reported implementation fidelity data, and no study reported cost-effectiveness. Implications for future research, policy, and practice are outlined.

Zwi, K. J., Woolfenden, S. R., Wheeler, D. M., O'Brien, T. A., & Tait, P. (2007). [School based education programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse](#). *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 3(1), 1-40. DOI:10.4073/csr.2007.5

School-based education programmes on the prevention of sexual abuse may increase children's knowledge and protective behaviour but this does not necessarily reduce the number of incidents of abuse. The programmes should be seen as part of a community approach to prevent child sexual abuse. This is the conclusion of this Campbell/Cochrane systematic review of the best international research findings.

Dake, J. A., Price, J. H., & Murnan, J. (2003). Evaluation of a child abuse prevention curriculum for third-grade students: Assessment of knowledge and efficacy expectations. *Journal of School Health, 73*(2), 76-82. DOI:10.1111/j.1746-1561.2003.tb03576.x

Researchers investigated the effects of a child abuse prevention program on third-grade students' knowledge of child abuse and efficacy expectations regarding abusive situations. The 26-item pretest and posttest questionnaires was completed by 341 students (n = 166 for the intervention group, n = 175 for the control group). Results indicated a statistically significant increase in child abuse knowledge from pretest to posttest with the intervention group, with no change in knowledge for the control group. However, no significant increases occurred in efficacy expectations regarding abusive situations from pretest to posttest for either the intervention or control groups. Results from this study can be used to improve child abuse prevention programs through addressing program components that may affect factors other than student knowledge of abuse.

Ko, S. F., & Cosden, M. A. (2001). Do elementary school-based child abuse prevention programs work? A high school follow-up. *Psychology in the Schools, 38*(1), 57-66. DOI:10.1002/1520-6807(200101)38:1<57::AID-PITS6>3.0.CO;2-W

Despite the widespread use of school-based abuse prevention programs, few studies support their effectiveness in helping children avoid victimization. Most studies that evaluate prevention programs measure changes in children's knowledge and not subsequent behavior. Further, the link between knowledge, behavior, and the ability to avoid or reduce victimization has not been established. In this study the impact of a school-based prevention program was assessed by surveying students at a high school in southern California where students from feeder elementary and junior high schools were known to have had abuse prevention programs available to them. Data were collected anonymously on 137 high school students during their Health class. A quasi-experimental design was utilized, comparing the 72 students who had attended one or

more school-based abuse prevention program with the 65 who stated they had not participated in a prevention program. Demographic similarities between the two groups were established. Students who attended prevention programs were more knowledgeable about abuse concepts and reported fewer incidents of abuse. However, the effectiveness of students' responses to abuse, even when they were using strategies taught by the prevention programs, was variable. Questions about the effectiveness of these strategies with familial and non-familial abuse are discussed.

Hébert, M., Lavoie, F., Piché, C., & Poitras, M. (2001). Proximate effects of a child sexual abuse prevention program in elementary school children. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 25(4), 505–522. DOI:10.1016/S0145-2134(01)00223-X

The effects of the sexual child abuse prevention program *ESPACE* were evaluated by means of a Solomon-type design with first and third grade children. *ESPACE* is an adaptation of the American Child Assault Prevention Program (CAP). Possible side effects of the program were also examined. A total of 133 children (64 first-graders and 69 third-graders) participated in the study. Children completed a knowledge questionnaire and a video vignette measure designed to evaluate preventive skills towards abusive and potentially abusive situations. A follow-up measure (two months) was administered to verify whether knowledge and skills were maintained. Results indicated that children participating in the prevention program showed greater preventive knowledge and skills relative to children not participating. Follow-up data showed knowledge gains were maintained while the preventive skill gains may attenuate. However, while global skill scores decreased between post-test and follow-up, children still showed greater preventive skills at follow-up than before the program. In terms of unanticipated side effects, results revealed that almost half of the parents noted positive reactions following children's participation in the *ESPACE* program. Furthermore, the majority of parents did not identify negative reactions in their children following their participation in the

workshop. The findings suggest that the Quebec adaptation of the CAP program was effective in training children in abuse prevention concepts and skills.

Community Based

Bódi, C. B., Ortega, D. P., Walsh, K., & Bright, M. A. (2025). Community-based victimization prevention education for children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities: A scoping review. *Child Maltreatment, 30*(4), 760–781.
DOI:10.1177/10775595251345432

Children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) face a high risk of victimization (including child abuse, neglect, bullying), yet prevention strategies for this population remain underrepresented and under-evaluated. This scoping review analyzes ten community-based victimization prevention programs for youth with IDD (ages 10–25) across North America, the Middle East, Europe, and Australia. Programs varied in structure, content, and teaching strategies, with all delivered over multiple sessions and most including evaluations of learning outcomes or implementation quality. However, none were adapted on a broad scale across multiple settings, populations, or geographic regions or addressed multiple forms of victimization. Given the effectiveness of prevention education in related fields, rigorous evaluation and tailored, evidence-based approaches are needed to enhance their impact. This review highlights existing programs, their methodologies, and the available evidence on their effectiveness, identifying key areas for future research and development in victimization prevention for children and youth with IDD.

Noll, J. G., Felt, J., Russotti, J., Guastaferrero, K., Day, S., & Fisher, Z. (2025). Rates of population-level child sexual abuse after a community-wide preventive intervention. *JAMA Pediatrics, 179*(5), 521–528.
DOI:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2024.6824

Child sexual abuse (CSA) impacts 15% of girls and 8% of boys worldwide, incurring high public costs and devastating consequences for survivors. US incidence rates have stagnated over the past 15 to 20 years, signaling a dire need for innovation in primary prevention. In 2024, the US Preventive Services Task Force reported that there is insufficient evidence for the effectiveness of child abuse preventive strategies, and none have shown

decreases in incidence rates at the population level. This population cohort study used synthetic control methods with a counterfactual condition and CSA incidence data from a statewide child welfare information system to test whether a coordinated, community-wide preventive intervention could significantly reduce population-level incidence rates of CSA. Participants included a population-based sample in the state of Pennsylvania. Within 1 year of intervention launch, CSA reports were significantly reduced in intervention counties, as compared with control counties for both substantiated (average treatment of the treated [ATT] = -17.22; 95% CI, -34.15 to -4.20) and unsubstantiated reports (ATT = -36.04; 95% CI, -74.40 to -3.88). In this evaluation of a place-based, coordinated, countywide intervention, reports of both substantiated and unsubstantiated CSA were shown to be significantly reduced at the population level.

Piper, S., Zarate, J., Luther, S., Metcalfe, R. E., Bogner, J., & Todahl, J. L. (2025). 'Protect Our Children' system-level impacts: Preventing child sexual abuse in rural populations. *Child & Family Social Work, 30*(4), 708-716. DOI:10.1111/cfs.13214

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a public health issue that may have a disproportionate impact on children in rural areas due to lack of resources, lack of knowledge in the community and community norms that discourage reporting. In order to effectively prevent CSA in rural communities, there is a need to better understand the impact of prevention programming outside of the impacts on individual participants. The present study used a mixed-methods approach to evaluate the unintended impacts of a CSA prevention program in rural communities throughout Oregon and Northern California from the perspective of the implementing staff. Participants ($n = 38$) indicated changes in their organisational identity, changes in community norms and the impact of having a network of other organisations across the state who were implementing the same program. Implications for research and potential for statewide prevention systems are discussed.

Majebi, N. L., Adelodun, M. O., & Anyanwu, E. C. (2024). Community-based interventions to prevent child abuse and neglect: A policy perspective. *International Journal of Engineering Inventions*, 13(9), 367-374.

Child abuse and neglect remain pervasive issues affecting millions of children worldwide. Effective prevention strategies are crucial to addressing these problems, and community-based interventions play a significant role in mitigating the risk of abuse and neglect. Community-based interventions aim to address the root causes of child abuse and neglect through local, targeted efforts. These interventions often focus on enhancing community awareness, providing parenting support, and engaging schools and childcare centers. Policy support is critical in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of these community-based interventions. Multi-sector collaboration is another essential component. Effective prevention of child abuse and neglect requires the involvement of various sectors, including social services, healthcare providers, and law enforcement. By coordinating efforts and sharing resources, these sectors can create a comprehensive support system for at-risk families. Additionally, policy-based training and capacity building can enhance the effectiveness of community-based interventions by equipping professionals with the skills and knowledge necessary to address trauma and abuse. However, implementing community-based interventions comes with its own set of challenges. Resource and funding constraints can limit the reach and effectiveness of these programs, particularly in under-resourced communities. Cultural and societal barriers may also pose obstacles, as resistance due to cultural norms or stigmas can hinder program participation. To address these challenges, policies should focus on increasing funding for preventive services, incentivizing community engagement, and supporting long-term program sustainability. Ensuring sustained support through funding, collaboration, and targeted legislation is essential for maximizing the impact of these interventions. By prioritizing community-based approaches and addressing systemic challenges, policymakers can significantly contribute to the protection and well-being of children, fostering safer and healthier communities.

McCain, J. L., Herbst, J. H., Merrill-Francis, M., Willis, L. A., Miedema, S. S., & Shortt, J. W. (2024). [Review of policies and practices to prevent technology-facilitated child sexual abuse within youth-serving organizations in the United States](#). *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 33(5), 545–564. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2024.2381457

Technology-facilitated child sexual abuse (TF-CSA), or child sexual abuse that occurs online or through electronic communication, is a preventable public health problem that can be addressed within youth-serving organizations (YSOs). This study is a review of a purposive sample of organizational policies and practices designed to prevent TF-CSA collected from 13 national and local YSOs in the United States. Documents were coded to identify practices to prevent TF-CSA related to YSO activities or YSO staff, volunteers, or participants. Qualitative analysis indicated that YSOs included seven common practices to prevent TF-CSA in their documents. These practices included transparent electronic communication between youth and YSO staff; codes of conduct and online behavior agreements related to youth; monitoring the YSO's online presence; parental controls for youth online activity; safety behaviors for online activity for staff, parents, and youth; parent and youth trainings for youth online engagement and prevention of TF-CSA; and practices to address staff policy violations. Most prevention practices documented by YSOs identified in this study are consistent with emerging literature on TF-CSA prevention. Key gaps include protections for youth from groups inequitably burdened by TF-CSA and evaluation of the implementation and effectiveness of practices in preventing TF-CSA across settings and populations.

Fix, R. L., Newman, A. T., Assini-Meytin, L. C., & Letourneau, E. J. (2023). The public's knowledge about child sexual abuse influences its perceptions of prevention and associated policies. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 146, 106447. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106447

Child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention requires efforts from all members of society. The current study aimed to examine factors associated with (1) perceptions of CSA as unpreventable and (2) support for policies to prevent CSA and to punish people who

perpetrated CSA. We focused on the roles of knowledge and misperceptions about child sexual abuse. We collected survey data online from a large ($N = 5068$), nationally representative sample of adults in the United States. Analyses revealed factors promoting perceptions of CSA as unpreventable. Support for or against policies that aim to prevent CSA or to punish perpetrators of CSA were associated with individual factors such as older age ($B = 0.08, -0.13$), Republican political affiliation ($B = 0.10, 0.07$), and misperceptions about CSA ($B = 0.15, 0.06$). Findings highlight malleable factors that could be targeted to collectivize calls for CSA prevention and to promote support for effective policies to prevent CSA. In particular, ensuring accurate knowledge about CSA, and collective responsibility and government efficacy specific to CSA prevention, were identified as helping shape views of CSA as preventable.

McCartan, K., & Kemshall, H. (2023). [Incorporating quaternary prevention: Understanding the full scope of public health practices in sexual abuse prevention](#). *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 67(2-3), 224-246. DOI:10.1177/0306624X211049204

This discussion piece argues for a refinement in our understanding of prevention in sexual abuse, suggesting that we include quaternary prevention on the grounds that this concept from medical literature has potential and helpful application to criminal justice and particularly to work with those who cause sexual harm. Located within the paradigm of Epidemiological Criminology (EpiCrim), quaternary prevention extends the prevention spectrum to enable a stronger distinction between tertiary level responses and long-term safe, sustainable reintegration into communities, particularly of those who sexually abuse others. The key principles of quaternary prevention are adapted and refined from current medical literature, and the potential usefulness of quaternary prevention to crime and sex abuse prevention is explored.

Corso, P. S., Ingels, J. B., & Walcott, R. L. (2022). [Costs of evidence-based early childhood home visiting: Results from the Mother and Infant Home Visiting Evaluation](#). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Children develop fastest in their earliest years, and the skills and abilities they develop in those years lay the foundation for their future success. Similarly, early adverse experiences can contribute to poor social, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and health outcomes both in early childhood and later life. Children who grow up in families with lower incomes tend to be at greater risk of encountering adverse experiences that negatively affect their development. One approach that has helped parents and their young children is home visiting, which provides individually tailored support, resources, and information to expectant parents and families with young children. In 2010, Congress authorized the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program, which also appropriated funding for fiscal years 2010 through 2014. Subsequent laws extended funding for the program through fiscal year 2022. The initiation of the MIECHV Program began a major expansion of evidence-based home visiting programs for families living in communities that states identified as "at risk." The legislation authorizing MIECHV required an evaluation of MIECHV in its early years, which became the Mother and Infant Home Visiting Program Evaluation (MIHOPE). The overarching goal of MIHOPE is to learn whether families and children benefit from MIECHV-funded early childhood home visiting programs as they operated from 2012 through 2017. In addition, MIHOPE includes a cost analysis to estimate the cost of providing evidence-based home visiting to families. This report describes local programs' home visiting costs for the year after families begin receiving services and how those costs are allocated between meeting specific families' needs and other home visiting program activities. The analysis presented in this report has two main goals: (1) Examine the allocation of resources at MIECHV-funded programs in the MIHOPE cost analysis sample; and (2) Estimate the cost for each family served in MIHOPE and investigate how these costs differ across families, local programs, and evidence-based models.

Kim, H., Flowers, N., & Song, E. J. (2022). [Community home visiting services and child maltreatment report rates, Illinois zip codes, 2011-2018](#). *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 134, 105884. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2022.105884

Research is sparse on the community-level impacts of home visiting programs on child maltreatment. This article aims to examine community-level associations between state-funded home visiting programs (i.e., IDHS-HV), federal-funded home visiting programs (i.e., MIECHV), and child maltreatment report (CMR) rates, overall and within subgroups of age, sex, and maltreatment type. 3,824 zip code-years during 2011–2018 in Illinois for IDHS-HV/CMR associations and 1,896 zip code-years during 2015–2018 for MIECHV/CMR associations. We measured county-level IDHS-HV rates (per 1,000 children aged 0–5) since data were only available at that level. MIECHV rates (per 1,000 children aged 0–5), CMR rates (per 1,000 children), and all controls were measured at the zip code level. We used spatial linear models to handle spatial autocorrelation. Adjusted for controls, longitudinal increases of IDHS-HV rates were significantly associated with decreased overall CMR rates (coefficient: -0.28; 95% CI: -0.45, -0.11), age 0–5 CMR rates (-0.52; -0.82, -0.22), age 6–11 CMR rates (-0.31; -0.55, -0.06), male CMR rates (-0.25; -0.45, -0.05), female CMR rates (-0.29; -0.49, -0.08), and neglect report rates (-0.13; -0.24, -0.02). In contrast, longitudinal increases of MIECHV rates were significantly associated with increased CMR rates within several subgroups. Our findings suggest that increasing state-funded home visiting services in communities may have benefits in lowering their CMR rates. Given the very low MIECHV service rates and the federal policy that requires MIECHV to target at-risk communities, the significant positive MIECHV/CMR associations we found might indicate MIECHV programs are typically in higher risk communities.

Fix, R. L., Busso, D. S., Mendelson, T., & Letourneau, E. J. (2021). Changing the paradigm: Using strategic communications to promote recognition of child sexual abuse as a preventable public health problem. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 117*, 105061. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.105061

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is common, severe, and substantively contributes to the global burden of disease through its impact on physical, mental, and behavioral health problems. While CSA is preventable through non-justice system response efforts, the vast majority of resources support criminal justice efforts to identify, prosecute, punish and monitor offenders after CSA has already occurred. Policy makers have not supported CSA prevention efforts in part because the public does not view CSA as a preventable public health problem. Here, we describe a program of research to be conducted to bridge the gaps between expert and public opinion about CSA as a preventable public health problem. We propose such research use a three-step approach to alter the way experts communicate about CSA to increase audiences' understanding of CSA as preventable. The three steps are: 1) identify consensus expert and public perspectives about CSA and the differences between these perspectives; 2) develop and test communication strategies to align public with expert perspectives; and 3) broadly disseminate validated communication strategies. Through this approach, we seek to develop and disseminate an informed communications strategy that effectively and accurately translates the science of CSA prevention to the public and the media.

Todahl, J. L., Brown, T., Barkhurst, P., Maxey, V., & Simone, A. (2021). Pathways to child abuse prevention: Seeking and embedding public opinion. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 36*(17-18), 8538-8558. DOI:10.1177/0886260519845714

Child abuse and neglect is a perplexing public health, human rights, and social justice issue that persists at unacceptable levels. This qualitative survey, involving brief oral conversations (n = 721) about perceptions of child abuse and neglect and its solutions, was drawn from a randomized telephone survey of residents in two U.S. communities. The study focused on two research questions: (a) individual and collective actions that would

give child abuse and neglect prevention the best chance for success and (b) what participants would expect to see in a local child abuse prevention effort to have faith in its effectiveness. Participants were mostly female (61%), with the average age of 55.7 years, and had a median income of US\$35,000 to US\$49,000. Thirty-one percent identified as mandatory reporters and 76% were a primary caregiver for a child at some point in their lives. Thematic analysis identified six themes and one subtheme for the first research question and four themes for the second research question. Participants emphasized the importance of awareness raising, education, broad public support and the value of a locally developed plan, credible leadership, and reliable follow-through. Participants' beliefs and recommendations were mapped to existing and promising child abuse prevention frameworks and implications for prevention planning are outlined.

Today, J. L., Schnabler, S., Barkhurst, P. D., Ratliff, M., Cook, K., Franz, D., Schwartz, S., Shen, F., & Trevino, S. (2021). Stewards of Children: A qualitative study of organization and community impact. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 30*(2), 146-166. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2021.1885547

Child sexual abuse is a persistent public health, human rights, and social justice issue that continues at unacceptable levels. This qualitative study investigated organizational and community impact of Stewards of Children (SOC) in the context of a statewide initiative to prevent child sexual abuse. Participants, representing 11 sites, were SOC trainers or in administrative and leadership roles with their organizations. The study focused on four research questions: 1) How has your organization been impacted (by SOC), if at all? 2) How have your relationships with other organizations and groups changed, if at all? 3) How has the perception of your organization changed in the community, if at all? and 4) Have you noticed changes in your community as a result of Stewards of Children trainings? The findings include three themes and seven subthemes. Participants uniformly agreed that SOC had an impact on their organization, their relationship with partner and new-partner organizations, and that it contributed to increased awareness

about a) the problem of child sexual abuse overall, b) their organization among multiple groups and partners, and c) the full array of services and expertise provided by SOC organizations.

Kaufman, K. L., Erooga, M., Mathews, B., & McConnell, E. (2019). Recommendations for preventing child sexual abuse in youth-serving organizations: Implications from an Australian Royal Commission review of the literature. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 34*(20), 4199–4224. DOI:10.1177/0886260519869239

Evidence suggests that tens of millions of children and adolescents are involved in youth-serving organizations (YSOs) outside of their homes on a daily basis. Children's involvement with YSOs clearly offers a broad array of emotional, social, and personal development benefits. This involvement can, however, also be associated with a variety of safety risks, including the potential for child sexual abuse (CSA) victimization and the myriad short- and long-term consequences to its victims and their families. Recognizing the significance of CSA within YSOs, the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse funded a comprehensive review of the literature on risk and protective factors related to CSA in institutions. This yielded more than 400 primarily research articles from the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia, examining institutional CSA victims, perpetrators, and settings. Findings were provided regarding six specific types of institutional settings, including faith-based, early childhood education, childcare and schools, health care, out-of-home/foster care, and sport. This article is based on the findings of Kaufman and Erooga's comprehensive literature review and Royal Commission findings. It provides a brief review of critical risks associated with CSA victims, perpetrators, and organizational settings, as well as highlights risks particular to specific types of YSOs and risks that are present across these organizations. Optimal prevention directions and strategies are outlined in response to identified patterns of organizational risk. Recommendations for YSO policy enhancements are also provided to complement the article's prevention focus. Finally, suggestions are offered for future

research directions to foster the development of an evidence-based foundation for work in this area.

Davis, D. W., Pressley-McGruder, G., Jones, V. F., Potter, D., Rowland, M., Currie, M., & Gale, B. (2013). Evaluation of an innovative tool for child sexual abuse education. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 22*(4), 379-397. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2013.781092

Child sexual abuse poses a serious threat to public health and is often unreported, unrecognized, and untreated. Prevention, early recognition, and treatment are critically important to reduce long-term effects. Little data are available on effective methods of preventing child sexual abuse. The current research demonstrates a unique approach to promoting awareness and stimulating discussion about child sexual abuse. Qualitative methods have rarely been used to study child sexual abuse prevention. Qualitative inductive analyses of interviews from 20 key informants identified both positive and negative assessments with six emergent themes. The themes revealed inherent tensions in using narrative accounts to represent the complex cultural context within which child sexual abuse occurs. More research is needed, but the program shows potential as a methodology to raise awareness of child sexual abuse.

Self-Brown, S., Rheingold, A. A., Campbell, C., & de Arellano, M. A. (2008). A media campaign prevention program for child sexual abuse: Community members' perspectives. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 23*(6), 728-743. DOI:10.1177/0886260507313946

This study examines the face validity and feasibility of materials included in a multimedia child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention campaign. A quantitative survey method assessed participants' comfort level, knowledge gain, and likelihood of behavioral change in response to the media campaign. Furthermore, a focus group method explored participants' attitudes and opinions regarding the campaign and the unique effects of ethnic or cultural norms on participants' acceptance of the media materials. Six groups,

established based on participant ethnicity (i.e., three Caucasian groups, two African American groups, one Hispanic group), met at two sites in the Charleston, South Carolina, area. Quantitative data suggest that participants reported increased CSA knowledge and low levels of discomfort or anxiety related to exposure to the materials. Focus group results suggest that study participants, regardless of ethnic background, agreed that the media campaign can have a positive impact on public knowledge of CSA. Implications and directions for future research are discussed.