

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Research

A Bibliography



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*Local Service.
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**National Children's
Advocacy Center**

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Scope

This bibliography provides citations and abstracts to English language literature covering a wide variety of issues related to child sexual abuse prevention. Publications listed include books, chapters, journal articles, and reports published 2000-2022. This bibliography is not comprehensive. [Contact](#) the NCAC Digital Information Librarian for publications prior to 2000.

Organization

This bibliography is arranged in date descending order within each section listed below. When possible, the abstracts that were included with the original publication are used in this bibliography. Links are provided to open access publications.

General.....	4
Child-based.....	21
Parent-based.....	36
Community-based.....	43

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Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Research

A Selected Bibliography

General Topics

Craig, E. (2022). Teaching safeguarding through books: A content analysis of child sexual abuse prevention books. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*. Advance online publication.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2021.1985672>

[Full text](#)

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.

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*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/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.

Cohen, N., & Katz, C. (2021). Preventing child maltreatment: Key conclusions from a systematic literature review of prevention programs for practitioners. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 118*, Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/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.

Gerke, J., & Dietz, T. (2021). Early Prevention of Maternal Sexual Abuse. *Childhood Vulnerability Journal*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41255-021-00018-z>
[Full text](#)

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. They need protective adults in their environment, who are aware of sexual abuse in the first years of life. 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.

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*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/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*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/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*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/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.

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. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077559519874884>
[Full text](#)

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.
<https://doi.org/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. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/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. <https://doi.org/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. <https://doi.org/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.

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. <https://doi.org/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.

Kim, S., Nickerson, A., Livingston, J. A., Dudley, M., Manges, M., Tullledge, 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. <https://doi.org/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.

Shakeshaft, C., Smith, R. L., Keener, S. T., & Shakeshaft, E. (2019). A standard of care for the prevention of sexual misconduct by school employees. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 28(1), 105-124. <https://doi.org/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.

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. <https://doi.org/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.

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. <https://doi.org/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. <https://doi.org/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.

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.

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

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.

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.

Kerr, G., Stirling, A., & MacPherson, E. (2014). A critical examination of child protection initiatives in sport contexts. *Social Sciences*, 3(4), 742-757.

With the broadening of focus on child maltreatment beyond intra-familial settings, there is growing awareness of occurrences of maltreatment within the sport context. Millions of children participate in organized sport annually, and despite a tendency to view sport as a context by which to enhance

the overall health and development of children, it is also a context in which children are vulnerable to experiences of maltreatment. The well-documented power ascribed to coaches, the unregulated nature of sport and a “win-at-all-costs” approach contribute to a setting that many propose is conducive to maltreatment. A number of high profile cases of sexual abuse of athletes across several countries in the 1990s prompted sport organizations to respond with the development of child protection measures. This study examined seven child protection in sport initiatives in terms of the extent to which they originated from research, had content that was consistent with scholarly work and were evaluated empirically. The findings indicated that these initiatives were not empirically derived nor evaluated. Recommendations are made to more closely align research with these initiatives in order to protect children and to promote a safe and growth-enhancing experience for young participants in sport.

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.

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.

Finkel, M. A. (2013). An ounce of prevention or two... providing anticipatory guidance regarding personal space and privacy. A commentary. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 37(9), 631-632.

Smallbone, S., Marshall, W. L., & Wortley, R. (2013). *Preventing child sexual abuse: Evidence, policy and practice*. Portland, OR: Willan Publishing.

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

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.

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.

Wurtele, S. K., & Kenny, M. C. (2012). Preventing childhood sexual abuse: An ecological approach. In P. Goodyear-Brown (Ed.), *Handbook of child sexual abuse* (pp. 531- 565). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

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

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.

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.

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.

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. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2013 APA, all rights reserved)

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, Second Edition*, (pp. 431-448). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Child-based

Cohen, N., & Katz, C. (2021). What messages are communicated to children in maltreatment prevention programs? Conclusions of a scoping review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/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.

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. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838020916257>
[Full text](#)

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.

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.
<https://doi.org/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.

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.
<https://doi.org/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.

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.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260519869246>
[Full text](#)

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.

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.
<https://doi.org/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.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077559517692439>
[Full text](#)

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.

Brown, D. M. (2016). Evaluation of Safer, Smarter Kids: Child sexual abuse prevention curriculum for kindergartners. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 1-10. Online ahead of print. 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 -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.

Walsh, K., Zwi, K., Woolfenden, S., & Shlonsky, A. (2016). Assessing the effectiveness of school-based sexual abuse prevention programs. *Family Matters*, (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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

Wood, M., & Archbold, C. A. (2014). 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.

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.

Zwi, K. J., Woolfenden, S. R., Wheeler, D. M., O’Brien, T. A., & Tait, P. (2014). School-based education programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse. *Cochrane database of systematic reviews, (4)*, 1-7.

While this review found improvements in knowledge and protective behaviours among children who had received school-based programs, these results should be interpreted with caution. The reasons for a need for caution is that there were problems with the way that many of the original studies were analysed, children's knowledge was tested only a short time period after the program, the studies were conducted in North America and therefore may not apply to other countries and cultures, and several studies reported harms, such as increased anxiety in children. Potential harms need to be closely monitored in future studies and existing school based programs. It is difficult to know if the changes in children's knowledge and protective behaviours seen in the studies will result in prevention of child sexual abuse. As such, school-based programs should, at best, be seen as part of a community approach to the prevention of child sexual abuse.

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.

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.
<https://doi.org/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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Barron, I., & Topping, K. (2008). School-based child sexual abuse prevention programmes: The evidence on effectiveness. *Journal of Children's Services*, 3(3), 31-53.

This narrative review explored the efficacy of school-based child sexual abuse prevention programmes between 1990 and 2002. There were 22 efficacy studies that met clear inclusion criteria. Results covered both methodological design and the range of outcome measures. Methodology was analysed through four dimensions (target population, prevention programme implementation, evaluation methodology and cost-effectiveness). Outcomes for children covered nine categories (knowledge, skills, emotion, perception of risk, touch discrimination, reported response to actual threat/abuse, disclosure, negative effects and maintenance of gains). The studies had many methodological limitations. Prevention programmes had a measure of effectiveness in increasing children's awareness of child sexual abuse as well as self-protective skills. Beyond minimal disclosure rates, there was no evidence to demonstrate that programmes protected children from intra-familial sexual abuse. For a small number of children prevention programmes produced minimal negative emotional effects. Recommendations for future research, policy and practice, include realistic outcomes for child participants and locating programmes within wider abuse prevention measures.

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.

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. Copyright © 2008 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Finkelhor, D. (2007). Prevention of sexual abuse through educational programs directed toward children. *Pediatrics*, 120(3), 640-645. Commentary

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.

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.

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. © 2001 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

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.

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.

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

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.

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. © 2000 Elsevier Science Ltd.

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.

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

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. <https://doi.org/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 SPHSK as a selective prevention strategy with at-risk parents receiving parent training through child welfare infrastructures is discussed.

Branco, M. S. S., Altafim, E. R. P., & Linhares, M. B. M. (2021). Universal intervention to strengthen parenting and prevent child maltreatment: Updated systematic review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/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.

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*. Advance online publication.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.104981>

[Full text](#)

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?.

[Full text](#)

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. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077559517729479>
[Full text](#)

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.

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.

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. Copyright © 2009 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Kenny, M. C. (2010). Child sexual abuse education with ethnically diverse families: A preliminary analysis. *Children and Youth Services Review, 32*(7), 981-989.

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.

Although research demonstrates that child-focused sexual abuse prevention programmes can teach children personal safety knowledge and skills, childhood sexual abuse (CSA) prevention programmes 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 programmes 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. Copyright © 2010 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

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). Holyoke, MA: 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.

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), 1-10.

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.

Community-Based

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*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/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.

Today, 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. <https://doi.org/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., ... & Trevino, S. (2021). Stewards of children: A qualitative study of organization and community impact. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 30*(2), 146-166. <https://doi.org/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.

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.

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.
<https://doi.org/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.