

Child Protection Practice for International Educators



International Centre™
FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN

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The International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children
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#ECISTEACHERS2022



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- 18 years in international education
- ICMEC regional trainer since July 2020
- MSW, University of California, Berkeley
- Several years in the court unit of Contra Costa County Children and Family Services, Richmond, California

Why are you here?

Why is child safeguarding and protection important?

Please discuss and share 3 reasons.



Safe Space

- Survivors and supporters are present
- Anonymize stories
- Ask permission to use stories
- No judgment
 - Different schools and people are at different places with CP

Norms:

- Take care of yourself
 - Be fully present
 - Take risks
 - Ask questions
 - Make mistakes—there is not one right answer
 - Be mindful of other learners
-

Housekeeping

- I will share PowerPoint
- I will also share all resources that we use
- Feel free to ask questions
- During discussions, please always appoint a reporter

Rights-Based Child Protection

UNCRC rights of child include:

- Right to be heard and give opinions
- Right to freedom of expression
- Right to choose their own friends
- Right to access information
- Right to not be punished in cruel or harmful ways
- Right to 'agency' or to act and make decisions
- More international legal instruments here:
<https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/International-Legal-Instruments.pdf>



Child Abuse Definitions

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

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

Neglect Persistent failure to meet basic needs for love, shelter, education, healthcare, hygiene, and supervision.

Sexual abuse Any act that a child experiences involving sexual content beyond their understanding or against accepted standards. Sexual abuse may be committed by adults or other children. Sexual abuse includes physical acts, discussions of sexual nature, and sharing of photos, videos, explicit drawings, and self-generated images.

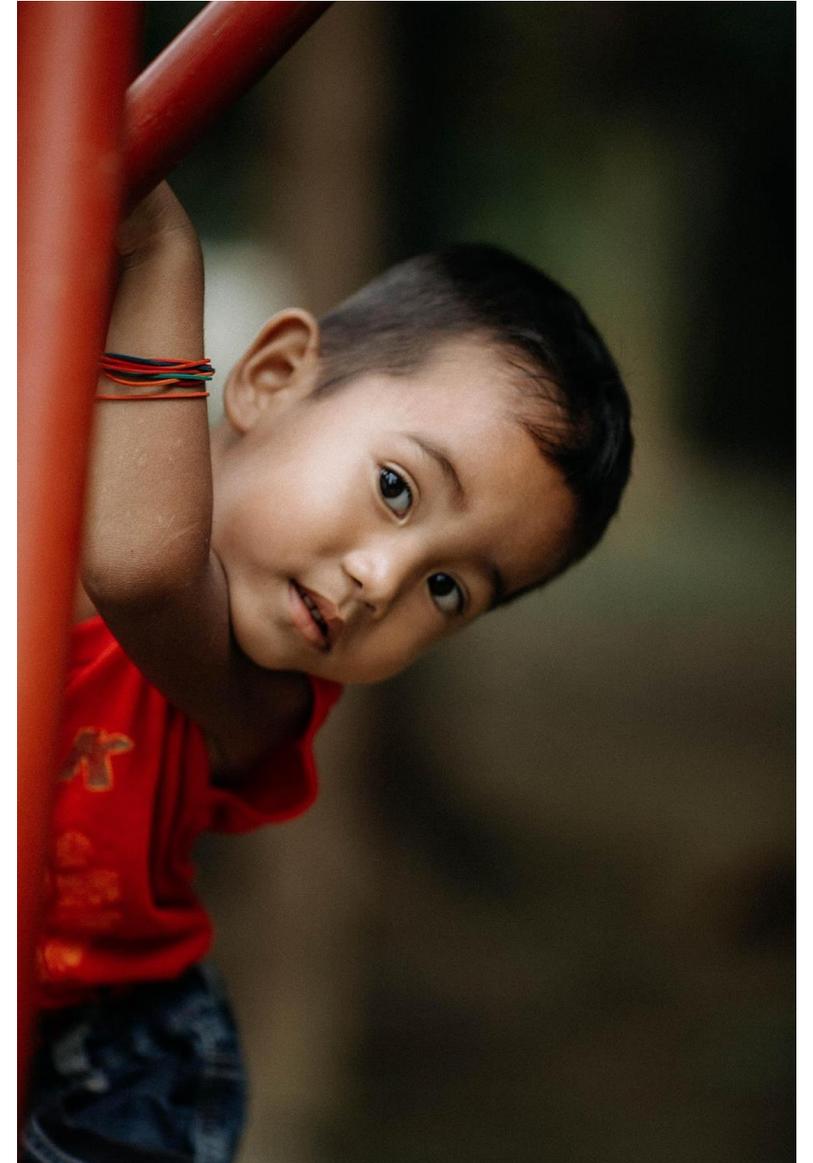
Other forms of abuse:

- Sexual exploitation
 - Transactional; children are exploited in exchange for money, status, affection, drugs, gifts, etc.
 - Online sexual abuse and exploitation
 - Online grooming with a sexual motive
 - Creating, viewing, or distributing child sexual abuse material (CSAM)
 - Witness to domestic violence (DV)
 - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
 - Extremism/Radicalization involving potential harm
 - Trafficking (for sexual or labor purposes)
-

Poll

True or False

- It's important to teach "stranger danger."
- Girls are the victims and men are the offenders.
- People who are abused commit abuse.
- Abuse doesn't happen at our school.
- Only adults initiate sexual activity.
- Children often make up stories about abuse.
- Abuse is never witnessed.
- You should report only if you are absolutely certain that abuse occurred.



Terminology for Sexual Abuse Concerns

Use	Avoid
Offender <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Situational• Preferential	Pedophile Predator
Grooming behavior	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Victim/Survivor• Child who was harmed• Child who has harmed	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harmful Sexual Behavior (HSB)• Problematic Sexual Behavior (PSB)	
Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)	Child Pornography

Short and Long Term Impacts of Abuse

Poor educational achievement Poor peer relations
Substance abuse Sleeping and eating disorders Inability to
cooperate with others Lack of self-worth Inability to
express love or accept love Obsessive disorders Health
problems Mental health problems Depression and anxiety
Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) Attachment
difficulties Self-harming behavior Rage disorders

Resilience factors may lessen or mitigate the long- and short-term impacts of harm or Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).



A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Mandatory Reporting and Duty of Care Expectations

- What are our:
 - Legal obligations
 - Institutional requirements
 - Reporting pathways

Receiving a Disclosure

- **DO:**

- Stay calm and show no signs of shock;
 - Listen and respond with empathy in a non-judgmental and open way;
 - Consider the disclosure seriously;
 - Remain calm, supportive, and reassuring;
 - Validate the child's feelings;
 - Mirror the child's language when appropriate (use and clarify the vocabulary that the child uses);
 - Explain what you need to do (report to the director/counselor) and why;
 - Allow the child control when feasible;
 - Ask open-ended questions to gather information and detail;
 - Consider the child's language needs and whether support in another language is necessary;
 - Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in coming forward and that they are currently safe; and
 - As soon as possible following the disclosure, make a written report and write notes from the conversation.
-

Receiving a Disclosure

- **DO NOT:**
 - View images of children (rather ask for a brief description and secure a device as possible evidence for law enforcement);
 - Take photos (if the child shares an injury, seek medical attention);
 - Interview the child, ask leading or unnecessary questions, or provide language for the child;
 - Take notes during the disclosure;
 - Make promises that may not be able to be honored (such as promising you won't tell anyone or that this will never happen again);
 - Suggest that the child may be to blame in any way for what happened; or
 - Ask the child to wait until another person can be present to witness the disclosure.

 - [MANAGING ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE BY EDUCATORS AND OTHER ADULTS: Protocol for international schools, September 2018, by the International Task Force on Child Protection \(ITFCP\)](#)
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Obstacles to Reporting

In all countries and cultures, abuse is underreported.

- What are some obstacles to adults reporting?
- What are some obstacles to students reporting?



What are our risks and resiliencies?

Risk assessment	At our school...
What are the vulnerabilities in our students?	
What risks lie in our school? Staff? Buildings? Location?	
What vulnerabilities lie in our wider community?	
What protective factors can we create or support?	

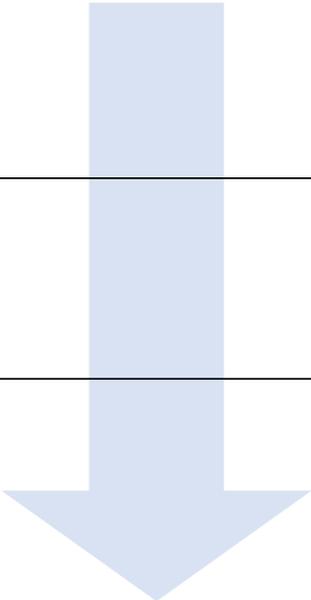
<https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Team-assessment-of-risks-and-protective-factors.pdf>

What are your institutional risks and vulnerabilities?



Assessment of Risks Associated with Institutional Abuse

"Perpetrators are active decision makers."

Risk or vulnerability	At our school (highlight or tick those that can be mitigated)
What vulnerabilities lie in our students?	
What risks or situations provide opportunities for abuse?	
What risks and vulnerabilities are associated with our institution or program? (host & community cultures, facilities, climate, etc.)	
What protective factors mitigate situational and institutional risks? What resilience factors mitigate student vulnerabilities?	

Why establish a team?

- Reduce burden of a “one-person decision”
- Allow for different views on the concern
- Allow for debate/agreement on difficult decisions like a plan of action or a person’s suitability to work with children
- Ensure a comprehensive review of facts
- Identify other possible victims or children at risk of harm

Anything else?

International school case (Part I)



Case to consider:

- Female member of staff is seen at local bar by another teacher with recently graduated students. School is still in session. She appears to be 'with' one of the students.
- *Do you have any clarifying questions?*

International Case review (Part II)



Senior class nominated that teacher to be speaker at graduation. She spoke extensively of their emotional support of her during a difficult time. A number of staff found it unprofessional and unexpected.

- Were policies reinforced by training, policies, and ongoing conversations?
- What should the school head do in this case?

Teacher is unapologetic and has not violated code of conduct. You have provided a recommendation and she is employed next year at another school.

International Case review (Part III)

Parents are asked about relationship, and they do not find anything concerning.

“We’re European and are not upset by such things.”

Professional boundaries

The verbal, physical, emotional, and social distances that an educator must maintain in order to ensure structure, security, and predictability in an educational environment.

Who is responsible for maintaining appropriate boundaries?

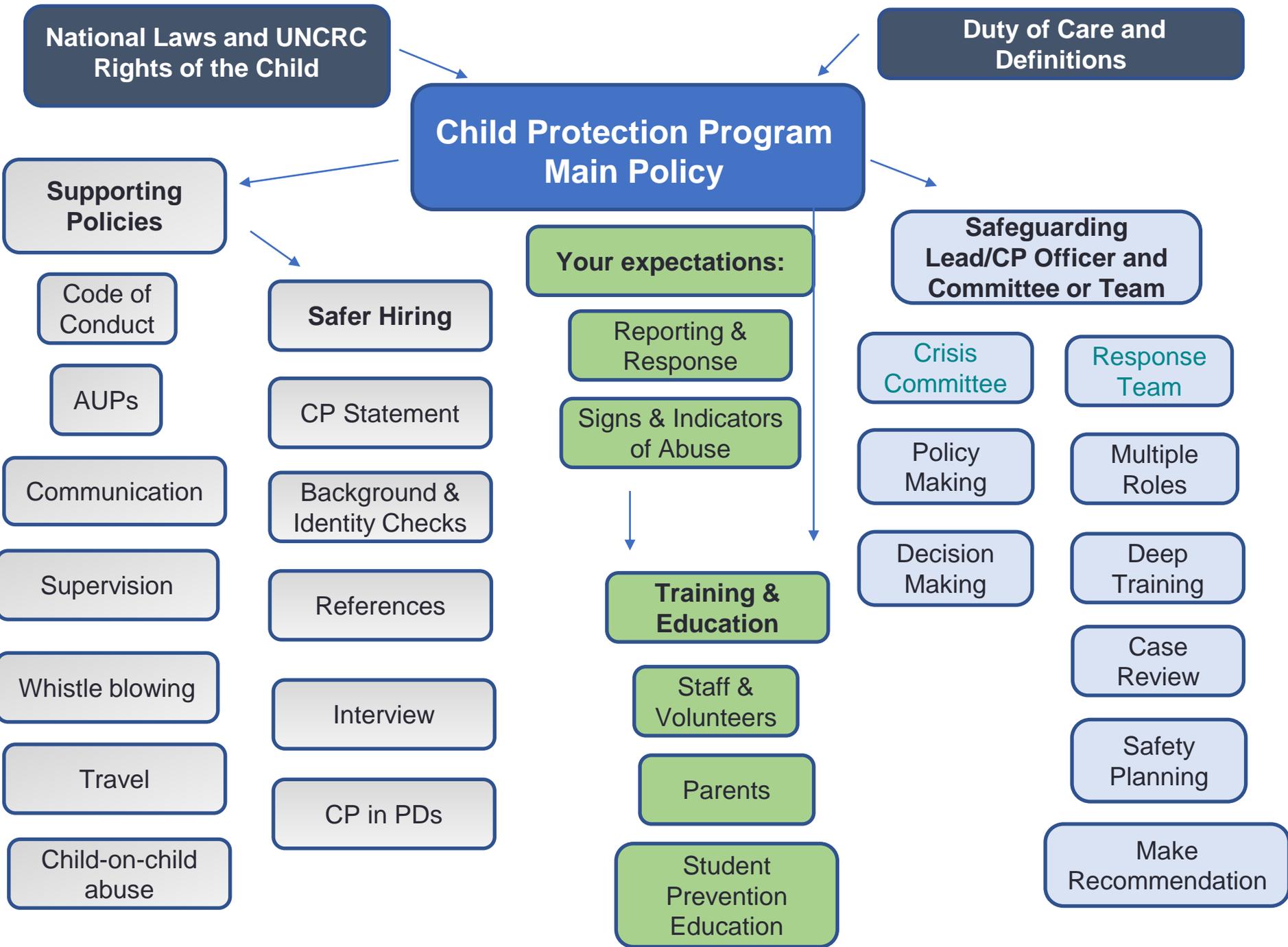
Our CP program includes:

- Prevention and response
- Reporting and response procedures
- Code of Conduct
- Student abuse prevention education
- Induction, staff, and parent training
- Multiple policies including:
 - Safe hiring
 - Child-on-child abuse
 - Intimate care
 - Communication/AUP/social media
 - Travel and trips
 - Supervision
 - Low-level concerns
 - Whistleblower

Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct should include guidance on communication, appropriate contact, and pictures.

- Communication with children is governed by the key safety concept of transparency. The following steps will reduce the risk of private or otherwise inappropriate communication between parents, administration, teachers, personnel, volunteers, and minors:
 - Any dual relationships with students (close family friendships with parents of students, volunteer positions outside of school that involve students, etc.) are governed by the professional expectations of behavior and adhere to all other points in this Code of Conduct.
 - Any one-on-one encounters with minors must be observable and interruptible.
 - Where possible, email exchanges between a minor and a person acting on behalf of the school are to be made using a school email address.
 - Faculty, staff, and volunteers who use any form of online communications including social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and text messaging to communicate with minors may only do so for activities involving school business.



Case study on boundary crossing in international school:

- ◆ Popular Teacher was supportive of **new students** and was known to have **'favorites'**
- ◆ He was active as extracurricular activities leader and had **close contact** with both students and local families. Students sometimes walked teacher's dog, so **colleagues became used to** seeing students come and go.
- ◆ Parents considered teacher to be a good influence on their children, and **many wanted their children to be selected for his attention** and special programs.
- ◆ One parent complained about 'touchy' manner, which the school took to mean his **casual attitudes about physical contact** as he gave foot and back rubs on school outings.
- ◆ Teacher had close friendships with parents that **made it difficult for their children to say anything negative about the teacher.**
- ◆ As the school year continued, the offending teacher used a touchy manner to **progress to touching** the victims on the outside of their clothing to putting his hand inside clothing.
- ◆ A number of complaints from colleagues had been made, but without any specific allegation or code of conduct, **leadership 'reminded or reprimanded' teacher** about appropriate conduct.

At what stage would you have felt alarm if this was a staff member at your school?

As a member of the CP Team at your school, what policies would you use to guide your actions?

Crossing boundaries (rule breaking)

Grooming is intentional manipulation to:

- Build trust
- Gain access
- Initiate abuse
- Maintain abuse

These actions help to:

- Hide abuse and prevent discovery

Who was 'groomed'?

Institutional grooming

Intentional manipulation to build trust, gain access, and initiate or maintain sexual abuse. These actions help to hide abuse and prevent discovery.

Talking about sex and/or providing illicit experiences

Gift giving or favor granting

Progressive intimacy and limit testing

Meeting parents needs or alienating child from parents

Secrets, threats, blackmail

Adapting an environment to make behavior seem normal

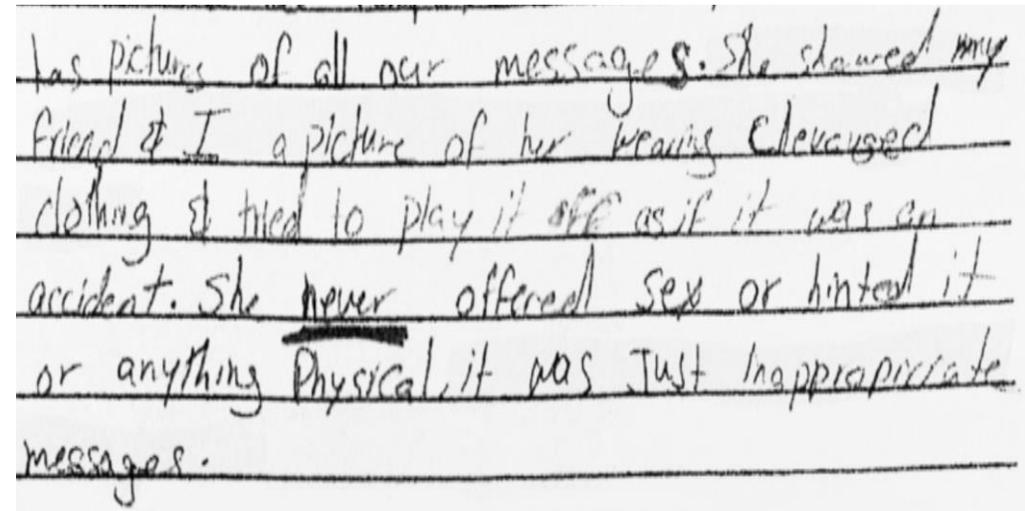
Create emotional interdependence or inappropriately extending relationships beyond role

Making the child believe they consented to abuse

Texting Case evaluation

Fifteen-year-old student complains about excessive texts from his teacher over Facebook and other social media platforms. He provided screenshots of some messages.

*“She showed my friend and I a picture of her wearing (clothing showing cleavage) & tries to play it off as if it was an accident. She **never** offered sex or hinted anything physical. It was just inappropriate messages.”*



has pictures of all our messages. She showed my friend & I a picture of her wearing cleavage clothing & tried to play it off as if it was an accident. She never offered sex or hinted it or anything physical, it was just inappropriate messages.

What are your actions/recommendations?

Student is interviewed

Student's phone shows texts received nearly every day from teacher. They have no sexual content. *'WYD? (what you doing?), Sure you're busy..., Hope you and your 'girl' work out'* are typical examples. Student says: "After messaging me every day the conversation got weird and I told her I'm going to erase all my social media (so she doesn't think I blocked her). She said 'I didn't want you to feel uncomfortable' and blocked our messages but I blocked her completely."

Does this change your actions? Who do you want to talk to?
What do you want to ask?

Case conclusion

Teacher resigns. Student shares additional texts that do have a sexual context including some saying he was 'really handsome' and teacher saying she would send pictures of herself naked. Student did not share these earlier because he felt embarrassed and guilty about getting her in trouble. He tells staff, "She was lonely."

- What are your recommendations?
- What would they be if the teacher did not resign?
- What policies and procedures are needed in light of this?

Scenario 3

- An upper elementary student sends his teacher a message to report that, during online learning at home, his mother hit him when he did not complete his work on time.
- Student has diagnosed learning disabilities.
- There are no laws against physical punishment in the country.
- What helpful tools do you hope are in place at your school?
- What are your options for helping this family?

Scenario 4

- Monday morning, a female secondary student tells her teacher that on Friday night, at a party at a student's home, she was sexually assaulted. Both she and the person who assaulted her had been drinking.
- Why does the school need to act?
- What are your next steps?
- What work do you need to do with the two students involved in this incident?
- What helpful tools do you hope are in place at your school?
- What work do you need to do with all secondary students and their families?

Thank you!

CONTACT

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#ECISTEACHERS2022



ECIS Child Protection Workshop

5 November 2022

Key Resources

- [ICMEC Education Portal](#)
- [Response Team Training Resources](#)
- [Allegation Protocol](#)
- [Guidance on Handling Disclosure from a Child](#)

Resources for further support:

1. New child protection standards adopted by school evaluation teams

This document includes the recommendations produced by the International Working Group on Child Protection. We invite you to adopt a multifaceted approach to child protection in a manner consistent with the recommendations given in this document. To download it please click here.

<https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/New-Standards-for-Child-Protection-Adopted-by-School-Evaluation-Agencies-2.pdf>

2. Definitions

Understanding what we mean when we talk about abuse and identifying the different types is key for understanding what the signs and indicators are. Through this document you will be able to learn a little more about abuse. Please include these definitions in your discussions with your team.

<https://cdn.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Forms-of-abuse-definitions-signs-and-indicators.pdf>

3. Child Protection audit for safe schools

Conducting an annual audit will help your school to effectively protect children and adolescents as well as school personnel, volunteers, and all members of the community while improving and protecting the reputation of your school. For this reason, we provide this document that can give you feedback to determine how your institution is facing protection issues.

<https://aisa.or.ke/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/AISA-Annual-Safe-Schools-Audit-.pdf>

4. Child Protection Legal Instruments

Here you can find a list of international laws and other legal instruments related to missing and exploited children. It is not an exhaustive list, but a sampling of important resources.

<https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/International-Legal-Instruments.pdf>

You can also find country-specific child protection laws here:

<https://www.icmec.org/education-portal/international-national-law/>

5. Risk assessment

Risk assessment seeks to identify and reduce the risks presented in the school environment, as well as to create action plans to reduce the risk or impact of something happening. Knowing the risks is essential to ensure compliance with children's rights to be safe and to interact in a protective environment.

<https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Team-assessment-of-risks-and-protective-factors.pdf>

6. School Policies

Clear and well established child protection policies and procedures are the key to effectively preventing and responding to concerns of abuse. School policies should be a protection roadmap and include everything that the school does to prevent and respond to events that violate the rights of children and adolescents.

<https://www.icmec.org/education-portal/school-policies/>

7. School Personnel Conduct

Schools must demonstrate a strong commitment to the elimination of behaviors known as adult sexual misconduct (ASM) by school personnel, including teachers, coaches, administrative staff, bus drivers, and others who interact with children before and after school. For this reason it is necessary that schools adopt a Code of Conduct. Check out this training guide for administrators and educators on addressing adult sexual misconduct in schools:

<https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/PreWork-Chapter-1-ASMTrainingGuide-USDOE.pdf>

8. Key elements to establish a Child Protection Team

Policies and procedures are key to protecting the rights of the child. To develop and share these policies, it is essential to create a committed and responsible Child Protection Team. In the following links you will find some key elements for creating a strong team for your school.

Creating a child protection team: https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Committee-for-Children_Best-Practices_Creating-a-Child-Protection-Team.pdf

CP Response team roles: <https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Response-Team-Roles-final.pdf>

9. Case studies for child protection professional development sessions

Case studies are an easy way to engage your colleagues in discussions about child protection issues and evaluate whether you are prepared to respond to

concerns of abuse. You can find case studies for your use, complete with questions for discussion, on the EdPortal.

<https://www.icmec.org/education-portal/serious-case-review/>

10. Safeguarding Curriculum to Prevent Abuse

This is an excellent tool for evaluating child protection curricula. Make sure you have safeguarding policies and procedures in place, and you are ready to respond to a disclosure of abuse, before you implement a child protection curriculum.

<https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Sample-Characteristics-of-an-Effective-Abuse-Prevention-Curriculum.pdf>