

# United States Snapshot

## School-Based Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Laws

Child sexual abuse is a serious, preventable public health issue. It happens in homes, schools and other places, but it can be prevented before it occurs. States and territories have applied a variety of legislative strategies to address the problem. To better understand what states are doing to prevent child sexual abuse, we collected and summarized relevant laws.

### Here's what we found in the U.S. as of 2022:



**EDUCATION & AWARENESS:** State laws intended to protect school children by educating them and/or the adults in their lives about the risks of sexual abuse and misconduct.

Policy Type	Statute	Description
School Curriculum and Trainings	Adults	35 state/territory statutes <b>required (27) or made optional (8)</b> child sexual abuse prevention education for adults.
	Children	35 state/territory statutes <b>required (25) or made optional (10)</b> child sexual abuse prevention education for children.



**SCHOOL PERSONNEL POLICIES:** State laws intended to create safe schools through hiring, dismissal and other personnel practices.

Policy Type	Statute	Description
Hiring/Dismissal Policy	Yes	52 states/territories <b>addressed</b> hiring and dismissal in law.
Fingerprints	Yes	49 states/territories <b>required</b> fingerprinting for hiring by law.
Background Checks	<b>CRIMINAL</b> Yes	50 states/territories <b>required</b> a criminal background check for different staff.
	<b>MISCONDUCT</b> Yes	18 states/territories <b>required</b> misconduct background checks for teachers.
	<b>DISCIPLINARY</b> Yes	13 states/territories <b>required</b> for disciplinary background checks for teachers.
Reference Checks	Yes	10 states/territories <b>required</b> reference checks for different school staff.
Licensure	Yes	44 states/territories <b>addressed</b> license revocation for school sexual misconduct by law.



**STANDARDS FOR CONDUCT:** State laws that set minimum standards for adults' conduct in schools.

Policy Type	Statute	Description
Code of Conduct/Ethics	Yes	14 states/territories <b>required</b> a code of conduct/ethics by law.



**LEGAL ACCOUNTABILITY:** State laws criminalizing sexual misconduct by a person in position of authority to further ensure safety in schools and communities.

Policy Type	Statute	Description
Position of Authority	Yes	29 states/territories <b>addressed</b> sexual relationships between youth and adults in a position of authority in law.

**WHAT'S NEXT?** The next phase of this project will evaluate whether these laws reduce school-based child sexual abuse. Together, we can create safe school environments for children and prevent child sexual abuse. Visit Prevent Child Abuse America's project page <https://preventchildabuse.org/research-cdc-coag/> to learn more.



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