

THE SAFE CHILD PROJECT

THE PROBLEM

As Utahns, we value the health and safety of our families—especially our children. But when one in seven of our children is deeply harmed by child sexual abuse, it is our duty as adults to step in. Child sexual abuse casts a dark shadow over the lives of its survivors, leading to negative outcomes that persist into adulthood.



We have the power to prevent child sexual abuse.

The goal of The Safe Child Project is to expand child sexual abuse prevention education in Utah—a necessary step in keeping our children safe and allowing them to reach their full potential physically, mentally, and emotionally.



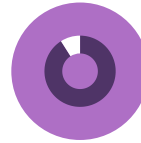
1 in 7

Utah children are sexually abused before age 18.*



7 to 13

year-olds are most vulnerable to abuse.



91%

of cases involve perpetrators known and trusted by the child.



50%

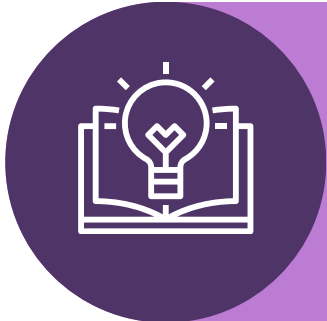
of abuse incidents are perpetrated by minors.

*This accounts for instances of physical contact alone and does not encompass other manifestations of sexual abuse.

THE SOLUTION

SENATE BILL 205: CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION AMENDMENTS

SB 205 passed unanimously in the Utah Legislature! It appropriates \$1.5 million in ongoing funding for prevention education in Utah elementary classrooms; creates a state contract with a primary prevention education provider responsible for state-wide outreach, tracking, and reporting; provides flexibility and funding for schools using other approved providers; and further ensures that prevention curriculum is age appropriate.



Utah's 2014 code 53G-9-207 remains in place and ensures prevention education is appropriate and effective:

- Parents' rights are respected. They can preview curriculum, be present during classroom instruction, or excuse children from instruction.
- School personnel receive training on child sexual abuse prevention.
- Curriculum must receive approval from the Utah State Board of Education (USBE).

Participation in prevention education...

1/2

Halves the likelihood of child sexual abuse.

!

Addresses a root cause of some of society's most pressing issues.

Shield icon

Protects children and strengthens families.

ALL children deserve to be protected.

However, prior to the passage of SB 205, less than 11% of Utah students received child sexual abuse prevention curriculum.



SURVIVOR STORIES

Sexual abuse is experienced by children across all demographics, communities, and regions in Utah.



"I was abused several times at age 8 by an older cousin in our grandparents' basement."



"I was 6 when the babysitter's son sexually abused me. I didn't know it was wrong."



"A 13-year-old neighbor molested my 3-year-old twins in my house while I was home."



"I was sexually abused by a trusted family member from age 5 to 15."

DOWNSTREAM EFFECTS

Child sexual abuse is a common factor in many of society's largest problems...

- Suicide
- Incarceration
- High school dropout rates
- Substance abuse
- Poor mental and physical health
- Difficulty forming meaningful relationships
- Employment challenges

CURRICULUM TOPICS

For a prevention curriculum to be approved by USBE, it must address...

- Being safe and self-aware in various situations
- Recognizing warning signs of sexual abuse
- Using technology safely
- Disclosing to trusted adults when sexual abuse is suspected

SAVING MONEY AND PROTECTING LIVES



It is estimated the impacts of child sexual abuse cost the state of Utah \$1 billion annually. Governor Spencer Cox said, "For every \$1 invested in prevention, Utah saves \$5.70."

Q

Q: Will increasing prevention education lead to negative results, like increased anxiety or false reporting?

A: Well-designed programs focus on age-appropriate content, minimizing the risk of anxiety while providing children with tools to protect themselves. A review of literature reveals that false allegations of sexual abuse among children are very uncommon, and offering prevention education does not result in an increase in false reporting.

A

Q: Where can I find more resources for survivors and tools for child sexual abuse prevention?

A: Prevent Child Abuse Utah (PCAU), Saprea, and the Utah Coalition Against Sexual Assault provide support for survivors and offer tools for child sexual abuse prevention.

F

Q: Why is it important that prevention curriculum be taught in schools?

A: Similar to substance-use prevention or bullying prevention, classroom abuse prevention programs ensure the highest number of Utah kids have the tools needed to stay safe. When teaching prevention strategies, connecting with a trusted adult—including parents and teachers—is the key to keeping a child safe.

Q: Will this prevention education increase the burden on teachers?

A: Educators from USBE-approved organizations, like PCAU, typically visit schools to deliver the curriculum. Schools can also assign trained professionals, like counselors, social workers, and therapists, to present the curriculum, reducing the burden on teachers.

If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual abuse, please contact law enforcement or the Utah Division of Child and Family Services at 1-855-323-3237 immediately to report your concerns.