

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Research

A Bibliography



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

210 Pratt Avenue, Huntsville, AL 35801
256-533-(KIDS) 5437 • nationalcac.org



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Scope

This bibliography provides citations and abstracts to literature covering a wide variety of issues related to child sexual abuse prevention. Publications listed include books, chapters, journal articles, and reports published in English, 2000-2015. 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.

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Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Research

A Selected Bibliography

General Topics

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.

School-Based

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 ($p\text{-value} \leq .001$). The measurement instrument used to assess student gains functioned well in terms of reliability ($\alpha = .82$). The effect size was large with a Cohen's *d* effect size of 1.09. The results indicated that completion of the *Safer, Smarter Kids* curriculum was followed by a significant increase in students' knowledge of key prevention concepts with a 77 % increase in scores post intervention.

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. (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.

Parent-Based

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.

Community-Based

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.