

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education and Response

The Maine legislature requires schools to implement a policy to address the prevention, response, and reporting of child sexual abuse within the school setting (20-A MRS §254, sub-§18). The RSU 19 Board is committed to implementing best practices to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse, and to ensure that all children attend a school which is a safe and secure learning environment. The policy herein is consistent with 20-A MRS §4502, sub-§5-C.

Definitions

Child sexual abuse – All sexual engagement either through hands-on or hands-off activities between an adult and a child is sexual abuse. Sexual engagement between children can also be sexual abuse when there is a significant age difference between the children or if the children are very different in development, size, or other power differential.

Evidence-informed practice or program - Programs that use the best available knowledge and research to guide program design and implementation; the program has clearly identified intended outcomes and conducts evaluations to measure those outcomes.

Qualified instructor – An individual who has the knowledge, skills and comfort level necessary to professionally address child sexual abuse prevention education, aligned to research and best practices. A qualified instructor may be school personnel or from a community-based organization.

School personnel – Any individual required to be certified, authorized, or approved by the Department of Education under Chapter 501 or 502 of Title 20-A.

Child Sexual Abuse Awareness and Prevention Education for School Personnel

Child sexual abuse awareness and prevention education for all RSU 19 personnel shall be:

1. Required for all school personnel;
2. Delivered by a qualified instructor(s);
3. A minimum of one hour;
4. Evidence-informed;
5. Completed within 6 months of hire; and
6. Updated every four years pursuant to 22 MRS §4011-A, sub §9.

The training will:

1. Increase awareness of developmentally appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviors in children, and
2. Increase ability to identify indicators of sexual abuse, including physical and psychosocial indicators on a spectrum (including lower to higher probability);
3. Increase ability to effectively respond to sexual behavior or disclosures or suspicions of child sexual abuse; and
4. Includes *local resources listed at the end of this policy.

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education Pre-K through Grade 5 Curriculum Programs

Age-appropriate child sexual abuse prevention education curriculum programs shall be:

1. Delivered by qualified instructors;
2. Part of the written comprehensive school health education curriculum;
3. Aligned to the Maine Learning Results Health Education Standards for grades Pre-K through 5 (pursuant to 20-A MRS §6209); and
4. Follow an appropriate scope and sequence.

The classroom curriculum will be consistent with evidence-informed, age-appropriate child sexual abuse prevention education for students, and include:

1. Age-appropriate education regarding physical and personal boundaries, including biologically accurate body terminology;
2. Helps children identify unsafe or uncomfortable situations including a range of feelings, touches or violations of physical boundaries;
3. Helps children identify safe adults with whom they could discuss unsafe or uncomfortable situations; and
4. Helps children identify and develop skills to support a friend who may be experiencing unsafe or uncomfortable situations.

Resources and Services

Service providers related to local and statewide child sexual abuse and sexual assault can be found at:

1. The Maine Department of Health and Human Services;
2. The Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault (www.mecasa.org); statewide sexual assault support line: 1- 800-871-7741); and
3. *Local resources listed at the end of this policy.

Prevention education resources related to child sexual abuse can be found at:

1. The Maine Department of Education Health Education website (www.maine.gov/doe/healthed/areas/index.html);
2. The Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault (www.mecasa.org); and
3. *Local resources listed at the end of this policy.

Resources related to mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse can be found at the Maine Department of Health and Human Services Office of Child and Family Services:
(<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/mandated-reporters.shtml>)

*Local Resources

1. Penquis Cap Sexual Assault Response Services 262 Harlow Street, Bangor, ME 04401
www.penquis.org/services/sexual-assault-response 973-3500
2. Children's Safety Partnership
www.childrencyasafetypartnership.org
3. Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault
www.mecasa.org

4. Maine Human Rights Commission

19 Union Street, Augusta, ME 04330
624-6290

5. Prevent Child Abuse Vermont

www.pcavt.org

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §§ 254(18), 4502(5-C)
22 MRSA §4011-A
20-A MRSA §§ 5051-A(1)(C); 5051-A(2)(C)
20 USC § 1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Cross Reference: JLF – Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect
JLF-E – Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect Report Form