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### Child sexual abuse prevention education: A review of school policy and curriculum provision in Australia

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# Child sexual abuse prevention education: A review of school policy and curriculum provision in Australia

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The past four decades have seen increasing public and professional awareness of child sexual abuse. Congruent with public health approaches to prevention, efforts to eliminate child sexual abuse have inspired the emergence of prevention initiatives which can be provided to all children as part of their standard school curriculum. However, relatively little is known about the scope and nature of child sexual abuse prevention efforts in government school systems internationally. This paper assesses and compares the policies and curriculum initiatives in primary (elementary) schools across state and territory Departments of Education in Australia. Using publicly available electronic data, a deductive qualitative content analysis of policy and curriculum documents was undertaken to examine the characteristics of child sexual abuse prevention education in these school systems. It was found that the system-level provision occurs unevenly across state and territory jurisdictions. This results in the potential for substantial inequity in Australian children's access to learning opportunities in child abuse prevention education as a part of their standard school curriculum. In this research, we have developed a strategy for generating a set of theoretically-sound empirical criteria that may be more extensively applied in comparative research about prevention initiatives internationally.

Keywords: *child sexual abuse; prevention; policy; curriculum*

## Introduction

In this paper, we present a study of the system-level provision of child sexual abuse prevention education in Australian primary (elementary) schools. The *policy*

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and curriculum scan undertaken involved a deductive qualitative content analysis (Krippendorff & Bock, 2009) comparing the policies and curriculum initiatives for child sexual abuse prevention education in primary schools in Departments of Education in states and territories across Australia. This study is the first stage in a programme of research seeking to identify the characteristics of effective child sexual abuse prevention initiatives and to promote the uptake of empirically-based research findings into school-based prevention efforts, internationally. The purpose of this study is to assess and compare the content of policy and curriculum documents in order to better understand the scope and nature of child sexual abuse prevention efforts in school systems. This is an important step towards a national goal of attaining ‘a substantial and sustained reduction in child abuse and neglect in Australia over time’ (Council of Australian Governments [COAG], 2009, p. 11) and ensuring that ‘child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented’ (p. 31).

No clear consensus exists regarding a universally accepted term to describe the educational activities that constitute school-based child sexual abuse prevention education. Some terms that have been used include: *personal safety education* (National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 1999); *protective behaviours* (Flandreau-West, 1984); *body safety* (Miller-Perrin & Wurtele, 1989; Wurtele, 2007); and *child protection education* (Department of Education and Children’s Services, South Australia, 2010). We use the term *child sexual abuse prevention education* to describe educational initiatives in this area as a term that can have international currency.

In this paper, we define *policy*, as do Birkland (2005) and Pal (2009), as a public statement expressing what a government intends to do—or not to do—to address a problem or a set of problems. Hence the terms *policy* and/or *policies* are used in this paper to mean the substance of official texts: in this case, education department policy and state education curriculum that outline government actions in relation to child sexual abuse prevention education. It is not our intention in this paper to analyse policy as discourse or according to sociological theories. Our task is rather more concrete in that it reviews the contents of policies *prima facie*.

The terms *curriculum* and/or *curricula* are used in this paper to refer to content developed by school authorities that specifies what children should learn as they progress through school. Curriculum is designed to be taught within the teaching time available during the school day and with the resources available at individual schools.

### *Why conduct a study that scrutinises system-level provision for child sexual abuse prevention?*

First, public policy, as represented by school policies and curricula, is a complex multidimensional phenomenon (Bennett, 1991). Children are situated within the many dimensions of this public policy context, including the dimension created by

formal schooling and its myriad policies and curricula that shape children's school experience, including their health. In developed countries such as Australia, primary schools are a universal service providing access to learning for virtually all children.<sup>1</sup> By virtue of this status, schools are viewed as key agencies for addressing a range of social issues impacting children's learning and development (World Health Organization, 1998). Child sexual abuse is one such issue. Based on a public health model, child sexual abuse prevention can be implemented at primary, secondary or tertiary levels. Primary prevention initiatives focus on preventing abuse before it actually occurs by addressing malleable factors such as environmental risks and social norms. School-based sexual abuse prevention programmes directed towards children are part of this approach (Lyles, Cohen, & Brown, 2009; Mikton & Butchart, 2009; Wurtele, 2009) and it has long been argued that schools should teach sexual abuse prevention because of their ability to 'reach large numbers of diverse children in a relatively cost-efficient fashion' and their capacity to 'eliminate the stigma of identifying specific children or families as being at risk for sexual abuse' (Wurtele & Kenny, 2010, p.108).

Second, child sexual abuse is a serious problem that warrants schools' efforts in prevention and intervention. A large body of research attests to the prevalence of child sexual abuse. Recent meta-analyses using data collected worldwide have estimated that 10–20% of female children, and 5–10% of male children, have experienced sexual abuse on a spectrum from exposure through unwanted touching to penetrative assault before the age of 18 years (Pereda, Guilera, Forns, & Gomez-Benito, 2009; Putnam, 2003; Stoltenborgh, Ijzendoorn, Euser, & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2011). Research also suggests that these figures are likely to underestimate its true prevalence because two-thirds of individuals never disclose their victimisation (London, Bruck, Ceci, & Shuman, 2005). The short- and long-term negative consequences of child sexual abuse are well established. In addition to the immediate threat of contracting sexually transmitted infections, children who have been sexually abused report higher rates of emotional and behavioural problems than their non-abused peers. Effects perpetuating into adulthood include higher rates of anxiety, depression, educational underachievement, eating disorders, post-traumatic stress, sleep problems, sexual revictimisation and suicide attempts (Chen et al., 2010; Paolucci, Genius, & Violato, 2001; Putnam, 2003). This burden for individuals also manifests in economic costs to families and communities in the form of primary health care, educational assistance, law enforcement and child protection services, including out-of-home care, treatment for offenders and victim support (Taylor et al., 2008). Importantly for this study, research has placed the time of greatest vulnerability for child sexual abuse between 7 and 12 years of age (Finkelhor & Barron, 1986)—that is, squarely in the primary school years.

Third, history has ascribed a prevention role for teachers. The first official statement on school-based child sexual abuse prevention education was issued in the United States by the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect following the enactment of the *Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act* (P.L. 93–247)

(CAPTA)<sup>2</sup> in its original inception in 1974. Thereafter, in a series of *User Manuals* designed to support professionals involved in the child protection system, educators were ascribed a role in ‘developing and implementing prevention programs for children and parents’ (DePanfilis & Salus, 1992, p. xxviii; Goldman, Salus, Wolcott, & Kennedy, 2003, p. 45).

Across the 1980s and 1990s, school-based sexual abuse prevention programmes appeared to proliferate. During this time, one study estimated that 400–500 prevention curricula were developed for use in the USA alone (Trudell & Whatley, 1988). These initiatives were propelled forwards by the introduction of US federal and state policies whereby some states mandated the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention in schools (Plummer, 1999). A small wave of programme evaluation studies also appeared, showing that prevention programmes improved children’s sexual abuse knowledge and self-protection skills (Finkelhor, 2007) and highlighting that such outcomes were more likely for programmes with trained instructors; standardised materials; integration with the school curriculum; parental involvement; group participation; and active skills training (Hebert & Tourigny, 2004; Sanderson, 2004; Topping & Barron, 2009; Zwi et al., 2007). By 1990, in a US nationwide survey of teachers, over half (52%) of teachers had exposed their students to a child sexual abuse prevention programme in the previous year (Abrahams, Casey, & Daro, 1992). This uptake of school-based prevention programmes occurred concurrently with a decline in the incidence of child sexual abuse cases reported in the USA, leading some commentators to conclude that the implementation of school-based child sexual abuse prevention programmes has been at least partially responsible for the decline (Finkelhor, 2007).

Fourth, although the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention education is recommended by international guidelines (see for example, Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States [SEICUS], 2004; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 2009), relatively little is known about the scope and nature of government-led school-based child sexual abuse prevention education initiatives anywhere in the world. This situation is not germane only to Australia; for three decades since the 1980s, there have been calls from researchers internationally for more comprehensive examination of the provision of child sexual abuse prevention within education systems (see for example, Briggs, 1988; Finkelhor 2007; Kolko, 1988; MacMillan, MacMillan, Offord, Griffith, & MacMillan, 1994). A very small number of studies have examined the broader but related topic of the contents of state-wide sexuality education programmes (see for example, Gambrell & Haffner, 1993; Moore & Rienzo, 2000), or wellness policies (see for example, Moag-Stahlberg, Howley, & Luscri, 2008). But, to date, there are no published studies investigating the system-level foundations that support primary prevention efforts: the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of child sexual abuse prevention content in school policies and curricula. Without this information it is impossible to know what, if any, provision exists, how provision varies and/or converges across states and nations, and what the strengths and weaknesses are of different approaches.

*The study context*

Australia is a geographically vast nation comprising six states (New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, Western Australia) and two territories (Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory) with 36% of the population living outside the major cities in regional, rural and remote locations (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). In 2010 there were approximately 6,357 stand-alone primary schools throughout the country educating over 2 million children in grades K–7 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The age range of students in these grade levels varies slightly from jurisdiction to jurisdiction but generally encompasses children aged 5–12 years.

Australian schools have been slow to adopt child sexual abuse prevention initiatives at a systemic level. The *National Safe Schools Framework* (NSSF) was endorsed by the federal and all state and territory Ministers for Education in December 2010 (Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs [MCEECDYA], 2011).<sup>3</sup> The NSSF places emphasis on student wellbeing and child protection and integrates with relevant state and territory legislation and government policy (Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations, 2011). The NSSF is based on nine key elements. The teaching of ‘personal safety and protective behaviours’ (what we have called, child sexual abuse prevention education) is embedded within *Key Element 6: Engagement, Skill Development and Safe School Curriculum*. It is stipulated that this teaching should begin with younger children, requires teacher collaboration, and is best integrated across the curriculum (MCEECDYA, 2011, p. 33). Research on the implementation of the NSSF is scant and limited to evaluating the effectiveness of schools’ anti-bullying practices (see for example, Cross et al., 2009; Cross et al., 2011; McGrath, 2005). The effectiveness of the NSSF in promoting enhancements to school system policies and curricula relating to child sexual abuse prevention is currently unknown.

*The present study*

The purpose of this study was to assess and compare the content of policy and curriculum documents in order to better understand the scope and nature of child sexual abuse prevention in Australian government school systems. In designing a framework for analysis, we drew upon the principles contained within three important primary prevention frameworks: (1) Cohen and Swift’s (1999) *Spectrum of prevention*; (2) the Australian *National framework for health promoting schools 2000–2003* (Australian Health Promoting Schools Association [AHPSA], 2000); and the aforementioned *National Safe Schools Framework* (MCEECDYA, 2011). Tenets of these approaches, each of which emerged independently, can be applied to child sexual abuse prevention (Lyles et al., 2009). The *Spectrum of Prevention* approach is a framework that delineates a systems approach to injury prevention. It is comprised of six strategy levels beginning with a focus on individuals and

Table 1. Primary prevention principles expressed in three key frameworks

<b>Spectrum of prevention: levels of strategy (Cohen &amp; Swift, 1999)</b>	<b>Health promoting schools: key action areas (AHPSA, 2000)</b>	<b>National Safe Schools Framework: key elements (MCEECDYA, 2011)</b>
1. Strengthening individual knowledge and skills	1. Advocacy, promotion and publicity	1. Leadership commitment to a safe school
2. <i>Promoting community education</i>	2. Partnerships, collaboration and networking	2. A supportive and connected school culture
3. Educating providers	3. <i>Policy development</i>	3. <i>Policies and procedures</i>
4. Fostering coalitions and networks	4. Seeking equity and valuing diversity	4. Professional learning
5. Changing organisational practices	5. <i>Curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation</i>	5. Positive behaviour management
6. <i>Influencing policy and legislation</i>	6. Research	6. <i>Engagement, skill development and safe school curriculum</i>
	7. Monitoring and evaluation	7. A focus on student wellbeing and student ownership
		8. Early intervention and targeted support
		9. Partnerships with families and community

gradually increasing in scope to encompass policy and legislation (Cohen & Swift, 1999). It has recently been applied to child sexual abuse prevention (Lyles et al., 2009). The *Health Promoting School* (HPS) approach is a global concept that emerged from the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (WHO, 1986). The Australian framework depicts the interconnection between curriculum, school organisation, and partnerships and service, and is linked with eight key action areas to assist governments, schools, non-government organisations, teachers, parents and students to be more effective and strategic in their efforts to promote health in schools (AHPSA, 2000). The third approach is the *National Safe Schools Framework* (MCEECDYA, 2011), which was outlined in the previous section.

We identified significant consistency across the strategy levels (Cohen & Swift, 1999), key action areas (AHPSA, 2000), and key elements (MCEECDYA, 2011) expressed in these frameworks. Importantly for this study, there was considerable cohesion in the areas of policy and curriculum development, as highlighted in Table 1. Whilst not inclusive of all possible relevant frameworks, the use of these three frameworks provided ample scope for objective assessment of each state/territory's policy and curriculum. From these frameworks we distilled ten key criteria relevant to the provision of child sexual abuse prevention education in schools: base child protection policy, specific child sexual abuse prevention education policy, commitment, location in the curriculum, curriculum support, pedagogical support, assessment, parental permission, information for parents and communities, and partnerships. These are described in more detail in Appendix A (Table A1).

## Method

The present study applied deductive qualitative content analysis (Krippendorff & Bock, 2009) to analyse the content of Australian state and territory education policies and curriculum documents. While we were ultimately interested in the extent to which child sexual abuse prevention education was included in the curriculum in Australian primary schools, this study was also focused on comparing provision across the states and territories and identifying strengths and weaknesses in school-based child sexual abuse prevention initiatives. The internet was used as the research medium for data collection (Lee, Fielding, & Blank, 2008). The data corpus included only publically accessible documents traceable via electronic means. Data collection demanded a format to permit gathering of comparable data. An evaluation matrix was developed using the ten key criteria which were put into operation in the form of sharply defined guiding research questions (see Appendix A).

### *Search strategy*

A search strategy was designed to identify relevant policies, curriculum guidelines, syllabus documents and resources: information which resides in semi-compatible formats on Australian state and territory government websites. To ensure



consistency, we harmonised data collection by using standardised search terms and access tools (Fernandez, 2008). Search terms used included *sexual abuse, prevention education, protective behaviours, personal safety, safety, policy*.

Departmental websites were systematically searched, first to determine the presence or absence of each of the ten key criteria, and then to extract information about the nature of the measures covered by these criteria. Coders made a judgement about the absence or presence of information according to each item. Relevant information was lifted from the websites and added to the matrix. This procedure was completed by two trained research associates, who performed the data extraction independently at three-month intervals in 2011. Information in the matrix was validated by a third research associate after a further six-month interval. There were very few discrepancies in coding. Where these were evident they were resolved via discussion with the first author.

Qualitative data extracted using the evaluation matrix were coded for each criterion, resulting in an overall sense of alignment with key initiatives to promote child sexual abuse prevention education in schools. The key criteria served as content analytic units. Categories were developed inductively for each key criterion using processes outlined by Graneheim and Lundman (2004).

## Results

The findings of the analyses of policy and curricula documents are organised according to the ten criteria and their guiding research questions that are presented in Appendix A.

### *Criteria 1: Base child protection policy*

*Do child protection policies exist?* Policies are important tools that can be used to improve the health and safety of children in schools (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008). All Departments of Education across the state and territories have what we termed a 'base' child protection policy, serving as a foundation for government education departments' child protection initiatives (Mathews, Cronan, Walsh, Farrell, & Butler, 2008).

*What is the nature of the policy?* Typically, the main focus of the base child protection policy in each of the states and territories is to prescribe the teacher's role in identifying and reporting child maltreatment (i.e. physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse). In some states/territories where teachers have comprehensive legislative reporting duties, educational policies are designed to reinforce these duties (for example, in the case of New South Wales), while in others, policies extend a weaker or partial legislative obligation (for example, in Queensland and Victoria).<sup>4</sup> With respect to child sexual abuse, despite minor variations, teachers in all states and territories are required by their educational policies to report all cases of suspected child sexual abuse via the school principal to statutory authorities. Appendix B (Table B1) lists these base policies.

*Does the base policy mention child sexual abuse prevention?* In addition to stipulating reporting duties, the base policies define further dimensions to teachers' roles in protecting children from abuse and neglect, such as the provision of support to children who have already been abused (for example, in Western Australia). Importantly, however, there was little evidence of base policies ascribing a specific *prevention* role to teachers. Only three states—Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia—mention the term prevention within the base policy.

*Does the base policy mention child sexual abuse prevention education?* Teachers' roles in child sexual abuse prevention education are addressed specifically in policies from Australian Capital Territory, South Australia and Western Australia. South Australia has the most comprehensive approach. The base policy specifies that school students will engage in learning from an approved child protection curriculum that teaches them explicitly about personal safety, their right to personal safety, help-seeking and self-protecting behaviours. School staff engaged in teaching the approved child protection curriculum (known as *Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum*), must receive approved training, and ongoing professional development and support. The curriculum is to be taught only by staff with training in its use and the approved child protection curriculum is to be reviewed periodically in response to emerging evidence (Department of Education and Children's Services, South Australia, 2011, section 6.12–6.14).

Similarly, but not as comprehensively, the base policy in the Australian Capital Territory specifies the principal's responsibility to ensure lessons in protective and safe behaviours are taught, and protective behaviours programmes are implemented in their schools. The policy specifies that the department must provide professional learning for school staff to effectively teach these lessons (Department of Education and Training, Australian Capital Territory, 2010, section 4.8–4.10).

In Western Australia, according to the base policy, school principals must implement preventive curriculum as part of the overall health and wellbeing curriculum for all students with a recommendation that principals collaborate directly with other agencies (for example, Department of Child Protection, Police, Corrective Services) to implement prevention programmes. The Department of Education is required to report compliance on this directive to government (Department of Education, 2009, section 4.19).<sup>5</sup>

*What related policies and documents are evident?* In each of the states and territories there were links from the base child protection policy to related policies and documents. The most common of these are summarised in Table 2. On some departmental websites, what appears to be a central policy repository is, in fact, a maze of related policies and documents. For example, in Victoria it is unclear which document constitutes the base child protection policy and which are supporting documents. In contrast, South Australia provides links to other policies and documents in a hierarchy, beginning with reference to international instruments, followed by national policies, state legislation, state policies, and departmental policies, programmes and guidelines. This department's base child protection policy is distinctively contextualised within a broader policy ecology.

Table 2. Related policies and associated documents linked to the base child protection policy in each state

Related Policies	State/Territory									
	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA		
Code of conduct policies <sup>a</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes		
Safe school policy	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No		
Student welfare / wellbeing policy	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No		
Inclusive education policy	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No		
Criminal history check policy	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes		
Police/visitors in schools policy	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes		
Behaviour management policy	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes		
Other	No	No	No	Yes <sup>b</sup>	Yes <sup>c</sup>	Yes <sup>d</sup>	Yes <sup>e</sup>	Yes <sup>f</sup>		
<b>Associated documents</b>										
Child abuse and neglect reporting guidelines	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes		
Interagency framework	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes		
National safe schools framework	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No		
Child protection curriculum	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No		

<sup>a</sup> Code of conduct policies are inclusive of ethical practice policies pertaining to staff-student interactions, and policies for managing allegations of misconduct made against staff.

<sup>b</sup> Approximately 18 other related policies or procedures were also nominated.

<sup>c</sup> Policies were organised in a hierarchy: international conventions (1 link); national policies (3 links); state legislation (2 links); state policies (4 links); DECD policies (8 links).

<sup>d</sup> Two other policies related to specific child protection issues: care and protection orders; and family group conferencing.

<sup>e</sup> Five other policies were nominated (e.g. drug prevention; excursions; transportation).

<sup>f</sup> Approximately 15 other related policies were also nominated and five other links to government documents were provided.

Only in South Australia were links provided from the base child protection policy to that state's child protection curriculum: the *Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum*. This curriculum includes five separate documents corresponding with learning bands within the South Australian curriculum framework: *Early Years Band* (ages 3–5 years), *Early Years Band* (Reception<sup>6</sup> to Year 2), *Primary Years Band* (Years 3–5), *Middle Years Band* (Years 6–9), and *Senior Years Band* (Years 10–12). One further document pertains to *Learners from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds* (P–12). Successive versions of the *Keeping Safe* curriculum have been implemented in South Australia since 1985 (Department of Education and Children's Services, South Australia, 2010).

The state of New South Wales also has a *Child Protection Education* curriculum (New South Wales Department of School Education, 1997). However, the base child protection policy did not link to this curriculum. This is curious since child protection education is a 'mandatory component' of the school curriculum in the key learning area known as Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) from Kindergarten to Year 10.

### *Criteria 2: Specific child sexual abuse prevention education policy*

*Does a specific child sexual abuse prevention education policy exist?* Importantly for this study, none of the states or territories had a specific child sexual abuse prevention education policy.

### *Criteria 3: Commitment*

*Is teaching of child sexual abuse prevention education optional or compulsory?* The Australian states/territories can be conceptualised along a *commitment continuum*. The term *commitment* is used here as an indicative measure of the expressed strength of departmental adherence to the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention education. Three states/territories, Australian Capital Territory, South Australia and Western Australia, are positioned at one end of the continuum, expressing strong commitment to the provision of child sexual abuse prevention education in base child protection policies. Although the term 'compulsory' is not used, all three jurisdictions plainly state that it must be taught.

Two states, New South Wales and Victoria, appear part way along the continuum, with a somewhat weaker expressed commitment to child sexual abuse prevention education evident in curriculum documents but not in the base child protection policy. Curriculum documents from New South Wales state that child protection education is a 'mandatory component' of the PDHPE curriculum. However, whether or not it is taught in each year level is considered to be a school decision along with the number of lessons that should be taught (New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 1998, p. 1). Curriculum documents from Victoria state that it is 'compulsory for government schools to provide

sexuality education within the Health and Physical Education domain, including assessment and reporting against the Victorian Essential Learning Standards' (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2011, Sexuality Education in Victorian Schools section, para 1). Readers must follow a trail to other documents where it is described that sexuality education encompasses the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention. The trail leads to the new curriculum resource for teaching sexuality education in Victoria's primary schools, *Catching on Early* (Department of Education & Early Childhood Development, 2011) linking sexuality education and child sexual abuse prevention education. In one of 12 reasons proposed for the importance of teaching sexuality education in primary schools, *Catching on Early* states that 'sexuality education can be protective against sexual abuse' (p. 14) and that 'protective behaviours education and personal safety education programs can be a part of, but not the whole of, good sexuality education ... if we only teach students negative aspects of sexual behaviour, we may increase student's embarrassment and reluctance to disclose or ask questions. It is important not to inadvertently teach students that sexuality is dangerous and harmful' (p. 23). The remaining three states/territories, Northern Territory, Queensland and Tasmania, have no publically expressed commitment to the provision of child sexual abuse prevention education.

#### *Criteria 4: Location in the curriculum*

*Where is child sexual abuse prevention education located in the primary school curriculum?* Generally, child sexual abuse prevention education subject matter is located within the learning area known as *Health and Physical Education* (HPE) in all states except New South Wales, where this learning area is known as *Personal Development and Physical Education* (PDHPE), and Tasmania, where it is known as *Health and Wellbeing* (H&W).

States and territories have either an explicit or implicit approach to articulating content and pedagogy relating to child sexual abuse prevention education. Those having an explicit approach (Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales and Western Australia) specifically nominate child sexual abuse prevention/personal safety/protective behaviours as teaching topics. For example, in the Australian Capital Territory, essential content in health education, under the topic of safety, includes explicit statements about: student opportunities to learn about and understand appropriate and inappropriate touching (12.EC.10); recognise safe and unsafe situations (12.EC.12); and respond to situations that make them feel unsafe and identify people who can help (12.EC.14) (Department of Education and Training, ACT, 2007). States/territories having an implicit approach (Northern Territory, Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria) do not specifically mention child sexual abuse prevention, personal safety, or protective behaviours in learning statements, although its teaching may be inferred as appropriate within the scope of the curriculum. For example, in Queensland's HPE curriculum, it is possible that Year 5 students could learn about child sexual abuse prevention under the broad

concept area ‘individual and group action can promote health and wellbeing, including safety’ (Queensland Studies Authority, 2007, p. 2).

In the lower primary school,<sup>7</sup> the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention education (either explicitly or implicitly) tends to be located within topics associated with safety education. In the upper primary school,<sup>8</sup> it can also be located within topics associated with sexuality and/or healthy relationships education. For example, in Tasmania’s H&W syllabus, which adopts an implicit approach, child sexual abuse prevention can be taught with younger children as part of *Strand 1: Understanding Health and Wellbeing*, under the topic of safety, and for older children as part of *Strand 3: Skills for Personal and Social Development*, under the topics of relationships and self-management skills (Department of Education, Tasmania, 2012). Victoria differs from all other states/territories, showing the unique approach of locating child sexual abuse prevention education within sexuality education for all primary school year levels. This information is summarised in Table 3.

#### *Criteria 5: Curriculum support (materials)*

*What curriculum support is offered to schools and/or teachers in the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention?* The provision of curriculum support materials for the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention is crucial to its success. Examples of such resources include teachers’ notes; lesson plans; unit or module plans; and links to websites with further information, detail and strategies. In every state/territory, the relevant departmental website provides a network within which a vast array of resources is publicly available. We noted, however, that the structure for provision of these resources might be overwhelming for teachers. For example, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for regular classroom teachers without specific training to judge the quality of some of the linked materials or to determine which, if any, materials from external agencies were endorsed or preferred.

The states having a specific child protection curriculum, New South Wales and South Australia, have a relatively comprehensive package of curriculum support materials for teachers, although all of the South Australian documents are not publicly available on a website and can only be accessed by teachers after they have undertaken approved training. While the base child protection policies in Australian Capital Territory and Western Australia espouse commitment to provision of protective behaviours and personal safety education, we could not find further evidence of the implementation of a child sexual abuse prevention curriculum in either jurisdiction.

New South Wales and South Australia, along with Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia, have dedicated websites containing relevant curriculum support materials for teaching in the broader field of sexuality education. In Queensland these resources consist of archived copies of past syllabus documents in which it appears that topics relevant to child sexual abuse prevention were treated in more detail than is currently the case. In Victoria, extensive sexuality education support

Table 3. Patterns in the location of child sexual abuse prevention education in the curriculum

State/ Territory	Learning area	Learning areas with <i>explicit</i> reference to CSA prevention education	
		Lower primary	Upper primary
ACT <sup>a</sup>	Health and Physical Education	ELA12: The student takes action to promote health ELA14: The student manages self and relationships	ELA12: The student takes action to promote health ELA14: The student manages self and relationships
NSW <sup>b</sup>	Personal Development, Health, and Physical Education	Strand 8: Safe living Child protection education curriculum	Strand 8: Safe living Child protection education curriculum
SA <sup>c</sup>	Health and Physical Education	Strand 3: Health of individuals and communities Keeping safe: Child protection curriculum Outcome 4: Self management skills	Strand 3: Health of individuals and communities Keeping safe: Child protection curriculum Outcome 1: Knowledge and understandings Outcome 4: Self management skills
WA <sup>d</sup>	Health and Physical Education		
State/ Territory	Learning area	Learning areas with <i>implicit</i> reference to CSA prevention education	
NT <sup>e</sup>	Health and Physical Education	<b>Lower primary</b> Strand 1: Promoting individual and community health Strand 2: Enhancing personal development and relationships Strand 1: Health	<b>Upper primary</b> Strand 1: Promoting individual and community health Strand 2: Enhancing personal development and relationships Strand 1: Health
QLD <sup>f</sup>	Health and Physical Education		
TAS <sup>g</sup>	Health and Wellbeing	Strand 1: Understanding health and wellbeing	Strand 3: Personal development Strand 1: Understanding health and wellbeing
VIC <sup>h</sup>	Health and Physical Education	Dimension 2: Health knowledge and promotion	Strand 3: Skills for personal and social development Dimension 2: Health knowledge and promotion

See Appendix C for Sources a-h

materials are provided on easily navigable websites allied with the *Catching on Early* suite of resources, with some documents containing learning sequences and suggested teaching strategies and resources. Notably, in Western Australia, the *Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships* website has been developed as a collaborative initiative between that state's Departments of Education and Health and supported by the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia. This is the only initiative of this type that we were able to identify as having been independently evaluated, with reports made publicly available on the website.

Every departmental website, except the Northern Territory, provides one or more links to internet safety resources for teachers. The most commonly cited resource is the Cybersmart website (Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2009), an Australian federal government initiative targeting children, young people, parents, teachers and library staff on issues relating to cybersafety and cybersecurity.

None of the departmental websites nominate external providers of child sexual abuse prevention education, although there are many known to be currently delivering programmes in the states and territories (see Tomison & Poole, 2000). Australian Capital Territory and Victoria are the only states to offer guidelines for school staff regarding the use of external providers for prevention programmes. No states/territories have a system for accrediting or registering non-government community organisations for providing sexual abuse prevention education. This information is presented in Table 4.

#### *Criteria 6: Pedagogical support (training)*

*What training is offered to schools and/or teachers in the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention education?* States and territories differ in the extent to which they invest in teachers' learning about child sexual abuse prevention. The base child protection policy in South Australia and Australian Capital Territory stipulates that teachers must be provided with training in delivering child sexual abuse prevention. Specifically, teachers in South Australia must receive approved training, ongoing professional development and support. Teachers in the Australian Capital Territory must receive training in protective and safe behaviours. Teachers in New South Wales are required to attend annual child protection training but it is unclear whether or not this pertains to curriculum matters in addition to mandatory reporting requirements. There are no publicly available recommendations or specifications for teacher training in any of the other states/territories.

Uniquely, in South Australia it is a condition of employment in the Department of Education and Child Development that every person must have attended a full day's face-to-face training entitled *Responding to Abuse and Neglect—Education and Care*. Staff must also attend three-yearly updates of this training. Additionally, teachers must undertake a full-day professional learning programme prior to implementing the *Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum* (Department of Education and Children's Services, South Australia, 2010, 2011b). The



Table 4. Details of curriculum support (materials)

State/Territory	Child protection curriculum	Other curriculum support materials	Link to Cybersafety resources	Guidelines for use of external agencies
ACT	No	No	Australian Federal Police cybersafety unit plan Digital citizenship website	Yes No
NSW	Child Protection Education (Stages 1–3)	Teaching sexual health website		
NT	No	No	Cybersmart website	No
QLD	No	HPE Years 1–10 Sourcebook; HPE Years 1–10 Sourcebook Modules	eSmart website Cybersmart website	No No
SA	Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum (6 versions) <sup>a</sup>	Sexual health information, networking and education SA website	CyberQuoll website Digital citizenship website Cybersmart website	No
TAS	No	No	Stay Smart Online website	No
VIC	No	Sexuality Education website; Catching On Early resources	eSmart website Cybersmart website	Yes
WA	No	Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships website & resources	SuperClubs Plus website Budd:e website Cybersmart website CyberSmart USA website Think UK now website	Yes

<sup>a</sup> Early years (ages 3–5 years), Early years (Reception to Year 2), Primary years, Middle years, and Senior Years. A sixth document is for Learners from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (P–12).

department maintains a database of teachers who have been trained, and this training can be viewed as compulsory. Training is outsourced to registered training authorities (Government of South Australia, 2011).

#### *Criteria 7: Assessment*

*Is student learning in child sexual abuse prevention education assessed?* Four states/territories, Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria, use a framework for curriculum organisation known as *Essential Learnings*, which by its very nature implies that learning is assessable. However, only one state, Victoria, has a clear statement of assessment intention. In Victoria, curriculum documents specify that learning in sexuality education (which, as noted above, encompasses child sexual abuse prevention education) must be assessed and reported against the Victorian *Essential Learning Standards* (Department of Education & Early Childhood Development, 2011 Sexuality in Victorian Schools section, para 1). In all other states/territories, it can be assumed that assessment of child sexual abuse prevention education occurs at teachers' discretion as with any other curriculum component.

None of the states/territories specify standards of achievement for learning on this topic. The Australian Capital Territory has 'markers of progress' for *Essential Learnings*. For example, in the Curriculum Framework for ACT Schools (*Early Childhood Essential Learning Achievements*) essential content is nominated as *recognising safe and unsafe situations*. Markers of progress are as follows: 'Children distinguish between feeling safe and unsafe and they identify safe and unsafe situations. They describe protective strategies they can use in unsafe situations and identify people who can keep them safe and help them when they feel unsafe' (Department of Education and Training, Australian Capital Territory, 2007, p. 63).

#### *Criteria 8: Parental permission*

*Is parental permission required for children's participation in child sexual abuse prevention education at school?* There are two discernible approaches to achieving parental/caregiver permission for teaching of school-based child sexual abuse prevention education. The first approach involves acquiring the active consent of parents/caregivers. This occurs only in New South Wales. According to publicly available, but potentially dated, information from the departmental website, permission by parents or caregivers is required before primary school students can participate in child protection education and other aspects of PDHPE dealing with sensitive issues. This permission is required and sought annually (New South Wales Department of School Education, 1997). The second approach, adopted in South Australia and Victoria, does not require written parental permission, but provides an option for parental withdrawal of children from participating in sexuality education. For example, in Victoria where sexuality education is considered a compulsory part of the Health and Physical Education curriculum, schools are not

required to seek parental permission for its teaching. Alongside this approach are strong expectations that sexuality education is the shared responsibility of parents/caregivers and schools. The *Catching on Early* document provides a caveat that parents may decide not to allow their child to participate (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2011, p. 18); however, no further information is provided regarding the mechanisms for withdrawal. South Australia adopts a similar approach for the *Keeping Safe* child protection curriculum. Parents/caregivers are kept informed about the teaching of the curriculum but schools are not required to obtain parent/caregiver permission. Withdrawal requests are dealt with 'cautiously' (Department of Education and Children's Services, 2010, p. 11).<sup>9</sup> For the Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory, Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia there is no discernible information in the public domain to assist in determining whether these five states/territories require parental permission.

#### *Criteria 9: Information for parents and communities*

*What information is provided to parents and/or communities about child sexual abuse prevention education at school?* Reviews of the international literature on child sexual abuse prevention suggest that parents/caregivers should be involved in child sexual abuse prevention education because they are able to offer support to children and reinforce knowledge and skills, and their participation makes it more likely that they will communicate more freely with their children about sexual abuse (Hebert & Tourigny, 2004). UK researchers, Duane and Carr (2002), recommend that information for parents should include an overview of child abuse and child protection issues: previews of the children's programme lesson plans; information on local child protection procedures; and ways that parents can support children's learning.

We noted that publicly available information for parents and their communities is very scant. For example, Queensland and Tasmania only provide links to cyber-safety information for parents. The Northern Territory Department of Education and Training has a fact sheet for parents to use to help their children develop protective behaviours when travelling between school and home. Only those states with a child protection curriculum (i.e. New South Wales and South Australia) or sexuality education curriculum (i.e. Victoria), have any more specific information targeting parents. Curriculum resources in New South Wales and Victoria included proforma letters which could be distributed to parents/caregivers when children were learning about a specific component of child sexual abuse prevention education known as *Safety Networks*. Although the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention education is compulsory in Western Australia, no information was publicly available for parents. In South Australia, within the version of the *Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum* for learners from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (but in no other versions) the appendices had six pages of information for parents. However, curriculum is a teacher resource rather than a

Table 5. Information for parents/caregivers

State/territory	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
Overview of topics to be covered	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Previews of lesson plans	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Information about child protection policies	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Ways that parents can support children's learning	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Proforma letter relating to specific curriculum content	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Links to support services/agencies	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes

parent resource and its accessibility to parents is questionable. In South Australia, information for parents included: themes to be covered in the curriculum; how parents could become involved in child sexual abuse prevention education by reinforcing messages at home; a letter template; and contact details and links to relevant child protection services and specialist agencies. This information appeared to be available only in English. Details are presented in Table 5.

#### *Criteria 10: Partnerships*

*What partnerships are evident with relevant community services or agencies when schools teach child sexual abuse prevention education?* Partnerships with community organisations are important. Rigorous evaluations of specific programmes have found that programmes involving multiple members of the child's social systems are more effective (known as multimodal or multisystemic programmes) (Duane & Carr, 2002).

In all states/territories, these key partnerships were generally invisible, at least in the information publicly available on websites. A notable exception is Western Australia, which has a dedicated child protection web domain or portal providing an informative 'one-stop-shop' for information about child protection, using the eminently sensible universal resource locator: <http://det.wa.edu.au/childprotection>.

Partnership-related links which we identified as important but were generally missing from most departmental websites across the states/territories were:

- links to external providers of child sexual abuse prevention education. These could include the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect; Protective Behaviours Associations, which exist in each state/territory; Bravehearts, which has offices in all Eastern states; and government-funded regional sexual assault services which also provide child sexual abuse prevention education in Victoria and Tasmania. Many of these services have been providing child sexual abuse prevention education in schools for many years, yet their presence and activities are not visible;

- clear, easily navigable links to, and information about, child protection services (such as child safety or families departments) and police for the reporting of child sexual abuse;
- links to peak bodies<sup>10</sup> providing broader professional education about the effects of child sexual abuse, such as the Australian Childhood Foundation;
- links to support children's independent help-seeking, such as Kids Helpline (including contact details, hours of operation, and web links for information);
- links to organisations disseminating up-to-date information about child sexual abuse support services throughout the country, such as Childwise;
- links to clearinghouses with empirically-based information and resources about child sexual abuse, such as the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, and the Australian Crime Commission; and
- recommended processes for schools to establish networks of local support services including child protection authorities, police, counsellors with expertise in treating children and adult survivors of child sexual abuse, and court advocacy services.

## **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to assess and compare the content of policy and curriculum documents in order to better understand the scope and nature of child sexual abuse prevention efforts in school systems. This research highlights the need for significant enhancements to Australian state and territory government education departments' provision of child sexual abuse prevention education. In summary, all Australian state/territory government departments of education have a base child protection policy, but only three (37.5%) mention child sexual abuse prevention education within this base policy and demonstrate commitment to its compulsory inclusion in the school curriculum. No state/territory has a specific or stand-alone policy.

The teaching of child sexual abuse prevention education is typically located within the learning area of Health and Physical Education, with four states/territory (50%) having an explicit approach that nominates the topic specifically as content to be covered, and the remainder having an implicit approach where content can be inferred as appropriate within the scope of the curriculum. In the lower primary curriculum, child sexual abuse prevention education tends to be covered within topics relating to safety education, whilst in the upper primary curriculum it tends to be taught within sexuality and/or healthy relationships education. Two states/territories (25%) have a specific child protection curriculum, and curriculum support materials are more comprehensive in these jurisdictions.

In two states/territories (25%), the base child protection policy specifies that teachers must be provided with training in delivering child sexual abuse prevention education, and in one further state, teachers must attend annual child protection training, although it is unclear whether this addresses curriculum as well as

mandatory reporting. None of the states/territories have addressed student assessment of learning about child sexual abuse prevention. In one state/territory (12.5%), active parental permission is required for students' participation in the child protection curriculum. In two further states/territories, parents have the opportunity to withdraw their children from child sexual abuse prevention education. Information for parents and communities is generally scant as were links to relevant community services or other agencies that would be helpful (arguably necessary) for a whole-of-community approach to child sexual abuse prevention (Lyles et al., 2009).

Clearly, in Australia, some states/territories have a much stronger approach to primary prevention with detailed provision, and others have what appears to be limited provision. This observation is supported by our detailed investigation, using 10 key criteria, of publicly available electronic data on state/territory government education department websites. Our study suggests that child sexual abuse prevention education occurs unevenly: only three of eight states and territories have a clearly espoused commitment in education policy and a fourth state developed a child protection curriculum more than 15 years ago but has not secured its delivery in education policy. There are many possible reasons for this inconsistency that must be explored in future research.

Future research should focus on why state/territory differences exist and whether they are due to such factors as differences in resources, for example the availability of external non-government and community agencies to support school delivery, the circulation of preferences for broader sexuality education rather than child sexual abuse prevention specifically, or lack of diffusion of what constitutes effective content and pedagogy in relation to the topic. The barriers and facilitators to systemic implementation of coordinated and comprehensive universal child sexual abuse prevention education must also be identified and addressed. As long as this work remains outstanding, the effect is one of disunity and unequal provision across the country such that we are a long way from achieving the sixth supporting outcome for the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020 (COAG, 2009), that 'child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented and survivors receive adequate support' (p. 11). To advance this outcome, it will be important for government policymakers to harness the harmonisation possibilities offered by the current national curriculum reforms<sup>11</sup> in addressing the asymmetries we have identified. Diffusing knowledge among states and territories regarding the spectrum of approaches that are possible may be a useful starting point, including the translation of knowledge about empirically supported elements for effective school-based child sexual abuse prevention education (see for example, Hebert & Tourigny, 2004; Sanderson, 2004; Zwi et al., 2008). Thereafter, ensuring state and territory child protection policy coherence with the new national curriculum will be an impending challenge.

Obvious questions arising from these conclusions are: Does differential system-level provision result in differential protection? What is the relationship between school policy and curriculum and the actual prevalence of child sexual abuse?

Does school-based sexual abuse prevention education delivered as part of the standard curriculum actually prevent child sexual abuse? These questions are important because it appears that children in Australia receive a 'spatially variant probability' (Galster & Killen, 1995, p. 23) of receiving sexual abuse prevention education depending on the state or territory in which they live. Furthermore, children are also subject to a temporally variant probability of receiving child sexual abuse prevention education depending on the time in which they attended primary school and whether or not the state/territory in which they lived had a school policy and curriculum in place at that time. These questions and issues must also be addressed in future child victimisation prevalence and/or incidence studies.

### *Strengths and limitations of the policy and curriculum scan*

The strengths of this policy and curriculum scan lie in its innovative approach in this context, and its broadly applicable design. Teaching child sexual abuse prevention is recommended by international guidelines (SEICUS, 2004; UNESCO, 2009), yet until now, relatively little has been known about the scope and nature of government initiatives underpinning school-based child sexual abuse prevention education initiatives anywhere in the world. In this research, we have developed an illustrative strategy for generating a set of theoretically-sound comparable criteria that may be more extensively applied to comparative research across nation-states in the study of child sexual abuse prevention education; and across other health curriculum areas (for example, bullying or dating violence prevention). Such comparative research holds rich potential for insightful policy and curriculum discussion, redevelopment and reform. Arguably, such research must be done across nations for truly global comparison of education institutions' efforts to fulfil international obligations under the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which clearly advocates children's inalienable human right to freedom from sexual violence and exploitation. Of interest in future investigations of child sexual abuse prevention education will be variations in the structure and extent of provision, but also barriers and facilitators to systemic implementation, and a greater understanding of the relationship between school-based provision and actual prevention.

This study also has limitations that should be discussed. First, we are aware that some Australian jurisdictions have undergone recent changes to child protection policy and processes which may not be reflected in this scan. For example, we are aware that in Queensland, the Department of Education, Training, and Employment is currently developing a child safety curriculum based on a rigorous review of what is used elsewhere, and what is empirically supported as best practice (see for example, Zwi et al., 2008).

Second, while we are confident that we were able to access information about child sexual abuse prevention education that existed in the public domain, it is possible that additional information is provided for school staff members on staff intranets which may not be publicly available and thus not included in the results of our scan.

Third, a policy and curriculum scan cannot show how widely or well curriculum and policies are implemented, nor what impact they are having. Although more objective than self-report data, this scan has no way of ascertaining the extent to which prescribed curriculum is enacted. South Australia is the only state to have conducted independent research into the implementation and outcomes of their child protection education curriculum (see for example, Briggs & Hawkins, 1994; Johnson 1995, 2000, 2008). A detailed national audit of the uptake and use of child sexual abuse prevention initiatives in schools is long overdue. Also essential and overdue are rigorous field trials and implementation studies which are able to reveal the extent to which the curriculum (as intended) is planned and enacted in schools and individual classrooms and the extent to which student learning of concepts is assessed in practice. Research of such quality and depth is sadly lacking in Australia.

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### Notes

1. The primary school enrolment ratio for Australian children, averaged from 2005 to 2009, was 96% for boys and 97% for girls (UNICEF, 2011).
2. In 1974, the United States Congress enacted this Act, establishing the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN) (DePanfilis & Salus, 1992). NCCAN developed a series of user manuals, some of which described professional roles and responsibilities in relation to child protection. It has been suggested that this constituted the first official statements of professional roles for professionals involved in the child protection system.
3. The first iteration of the *National Safe Schools Framework* was endorsed in 2003 and later reviewed. In the first iteration, state and territory education ministers agreed to report annually on their strategies and initiatives to provide safe, supportive learning environments through the *National Report of Schooling in Australia* (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 2005).
4. Legislative and policy-based child maltreatment reporting obligations for teachers in Australia are critically examined in Mathews et al. (2008), and Mathews, Walsh, Butler, and Farrell (2006).
5. This compliance is required under a recommendation of the Gordon Inquiry (2002). The Inquiry recommended the provision of protective behaviours education to students in all schools through existing curriculum frameworks in the WA Department of Education. It advised the Department of Education to seek assistance from other agencies in providing such education (Recommendations 116 and 117).
6. Reception is the term used for the first year of formal school for five-year-olds in South Australia.



7. We use the term *lower primary school* to refer to grade or year levels K–3.
8. We use the term *upper primary school* to refer to grade or year levels 4–7.
9. The relevant statement is repeated verbatim in each of the six curriculum documents but with different page references.
10. A peak body is a representative organisation providing information dissemination, professional development, advocacy, policy analysis, and other services for organisational members and the general public.
11. Since 2008, a *National Curriculum* has been under development in an effort to unify curriculum provision and to set out what all young Australians are to be taught, and the expected quality of learning as they progress through school (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2012, p. 14). The eight core learning areas within the curriculum are English, mathematics, science, humanities and social sciences, the arts, languages, health and physical education, and technologies.

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**Appendix A**

Table A1. Policy and curriculum evaluation matrix including ten key criteria and descriptors in the form of guiding questions

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
1 Base child protection policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does a child protection policy exist? Identify the policy by name and provide universal resource locator (URL).</li> <li>• What are the broad categories of content in this base policy? List.</li> <li>• Is a prevention role ascribed to teachers in this base policy? Describe.</li> <li>• Is child sexual abuse prevention mentioned in this base policy? Describe.</li> <li>• Is the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention education mentioned in this base policy? Describe.</li> <li>• What related policies and documents are referred to, nominated or listed? Record as a list.</li> </ul>
2 Specific child sexual abuse prevention education policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a specific policy about child sexual abuse prevention education? Identify the policy by name, provide URL, and record details.</li> </ul>
3 Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is child sexual abuse prevention education optional or compulsory? Describe.</li> <li>• How do schools report on compliance if it is compulsory? Describe the reporting mechanisms.</li> </ul>
4 Location in the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where is child sexual abuse prevention education located in the primary school curriculum? Nominate key learning area(s), strands, and specific details.</li> <li>• Is this positioning explicit/implicit? Clear/unclear?</li> </ul>
5 Curriculum support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What support is offered to schools and/or teachers in the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention education? List materials and resources clearly publicly available.</li> </ul>
6 Pedagogical support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What training is offered to schools and/or teachers in the teaching of child sexual abuse prevention education? List training opportunities, documents about teaching strategies, materials and resources.</li> </ul>
7 Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is student learning in child sexual abuse prevention education assessed? If so, how? Describe.</li> </ul>
8 Parental permission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is parental permission required for children's participation in child sexual abuse prevention education at school? If so, how? Describe.</li> </ul>
9 Information for parents and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What information is provided to parents and/or communities about child sexual abuse prevention education delivered at school? Describe.</li> </ul>
10 Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What partnerships are evident with relevant community services or agencies when schools teach child sexual abuse prevention education in schools? List and describe, especially in relation to support services.</li> </ul>

**Appendix B**

Table B1. Base child protection policies for each State and Territory, including policy identifier and Universal Resource Locator (URL)

<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Child Protection Policies</b>	
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	Policy	Child Protection and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect in ACT Public Schools (2010) – Policy
	Identifier	Identifier: CPRCAN201007
	URL	<a href="http://www.det.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/142096/ChildProtection_Policy_updated.pdf">http://www.det.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/142096/ChildProtection_Policy_updated.pdf</a>
New South Wales (NSW)	Policy	Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People Policy (2010)
	Identifier	Reference No.: PD/2002/0067/V02
	URL	<a href="https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/child_protection/prot_children/PD20020067.shtml?level=Schools&amp;categories=Schools%7CWellbeing%7CChild+protection">https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/child_protection/prot_children/PD20020067.shtml?level=Schools&amp;categories=Schools%7CWellbeing%7CChild+protection</a>
Northern Territory (NT)	Policy	Safeguarding the Wellbeing of Children – Obligations for the Mandatory Reporting of Harm and Exploitation (2010)
	Identifier	DET File: 2008/1297
	URL	<a href="http://www.det.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/14379/SafeguardingWellbeingOfChildren.pdf">http://www.det.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/14379/SafeguardingWellbeingOfChildren.pdf</a>
Queensland (QLD)	Policy	Student Protection (2011)
	Identifier	Doc. Ref. 10/303490
	URL	<a href="http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/students/smspr012/procedure.html">http://education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/students/smspr012/procedure.html</a>
South Australia (SA)	Policy	Child protection in schools, early childhood education and care services (2011)
	Identifier	File number: DECS 05/2011
	URL	<a href="http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/childprotection/legislationPolicies/">http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/childprotection/legislationPolicies/</a>
Tasmania (TAS)	Policy	Child protection and children in care (2005)
	Identifier	No file number or reference supplied
	URL	<a href="http://www.education.tas.gov.au/school/health/childprotection">http://www.education.tas.gov.au/school/health/childprotection</a>
Victoria (VIC)	Policy	Student Safety: School Policy and Advisory Guide (2011)
	Identifier	No file number or reference supplied
	URL	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/safety/default.htm">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/spag/safety/default.htm</a>
Western Australia (WA)	Policy	Child Protection (2009)
	Identifier	Trim No: D11/0563705
	URL	<a href="http://www.det.wa.edu.au/policies/detcms/policy-planning-and-accountability/policies-framework/policies/child-protection.en?oid=au.edu.wa.det.cms.contenttypes.Policy-id-11894311protection.en?oid=au.edu.wa.det.cms.contenttypes">http://www.det.wa.edu.au/policies/detcms/policy-planning-and-accountability/policies-framework/policies/child-protection.en?oid=au.edu.wa.det.cms.contenttypes.Policy-id-11894311protection.en?oid=au.edu.wa.det.cms.contenttypes</a>



## Appendix C

### *Sources relating to Table 3*

<sup>a</sup>Source: ACT Government, Department of Education. (2007). Every chance to learn: Curriculum framework for ACT schools Preschool to year 10. Braddon, ACT: ACT Government. Retrieved 30 April 2012 from [http://activated.act.edu.au/ectl/resources/ECTL\\_Framework.pdf](http://activated.act.edu.au/ectl/resources/ECTL_Framework.pdf)

<sup>b</sup>Source: Board of Studies, New South Wales. (2007). Personal development, health and physical education K–6 syllabus. Sydney: Board of Studies, NSW. Retrieved 30 April 2012 from [http://k6.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/files/pdhpe/k6\\_pdhpe\\_syl.pdf](http://k6.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/files/pdhpe/k6_pdhpe_syl.pdf)

<sup>c</sup>Government of South Australia, Department of Education and Children's Services. (2001). South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework. Adelaide, SA: Government of South Australia. Retrieved 30 April 2012 from [http://www.sacsa.sa.edu.au/index\\_fsrc.asp?t=Home](http://www.sacsa.sa.edu.au/index_fsrc.asp?t=Home)

<sup>d</sup>School Curriculum and Standards Authority. (1998). Health and physical education learning area statement. Osborne Park, WA: School Curriculum and Standards Authority. Retrieved 2 May 2012 from [http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/internet/Years\\_K10/Curriculum\\_Framework](http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/internet/Years_K10/Curriculum_Framework)

<sup>e</sup>Northern Territory Government, Department of Education and Training. (2002). Health and physical education learning area. Darwin, NT: Northern Territory Government of Australia. Retrieved 30 April 2012 from [http://www.det.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0016/2365/learning\\_areas\\_hpe.pdf](http://www.det.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/2365/learning_areas_hpe.pdf)

<sup>f</sup>Curriculum Studies Authority. (2007). Health and physical education (HPE) essential learnings. Spring Hill, Qld: The State of Queensland. Retrieved 30 April 2012 from <http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/7294.html>

<sup>g</sup>Tasmania. (2012). The Tasmanian curriculum health and wellbeing K–10 syllabus and support materials. Retrieved 30 April 2012 from <http://www.education.tas.gov.au/curriculum/standards/health/syl-hw-all.pdf>

<sup>h</sup>Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. (2008). Victorian essential learning standards: Health and Physical Education. East Melbourne, Vic: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Retrieved 30 April 2012 from [http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/downloads/vels\\_standards/velsrevisedhpe.pdf](http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/downloads/vels_standards/velsrevisedhpe.pdf)