



Back to School Screening Packet

Questions about Body-Safety Policies & Practices

Use this menu of questions for screening preschools, schools & daycare facilities about sexual abuse prevention practices. Think of screening as a conversation in which you are inquiring about and discussing your child's well-being. Listen for content and tone, and be wary of resistance and dismissiveness.

1. What is your background check process for employees and volunteers?

Background checks should be a standard part of any organization's hiring procedures. Administrators should check all prospective hires and volunteers against the state and local law enforcement databases and the [National Sex Offender Registry](#).

2. Beyond background checks, what is the screening process for new hires?

Ensure that the organization conducts personal interviews and checks references. Ideally, interviews should include questions about job candidates' attitudes toward sexually-inappropriate behavior and a discussion of the institution's zero tolerance of sexual abuse. Listen for tone and look for open communication.

3. What kind of child sexual abuse prevention training do you offer staff, volunteers, parents, and children?

At a minimum, organizations should have regular in-service training for staff about child sexual abuse prevention. The training should dispel common myths about sexual abuse, introduce body-safety policies, cover how sexual abusers groom children, and address warning signs that someone is abusing or being abused.

4. What policies are in place to minimize the risk of sexual abuse of students?

Look for policies that address:

- Adults spending time alone with children (2 adults to 1 child).
- Appropriate and inappropriate touch of children by adults.
- Appropriate and inappropriate touch of children by other children.
- Diapering, toileting, showering, and changing clothes.

In-home daycare providers should have specific policies about how non-staff family members interact with children.

5. How is the school environment set up physically to reduce the chances of sexual abuse?

All of the spaces where children study, play, and interact should be open and easily visible. Doors should have windows and bathrooms should not contain areas where children can be isolated.

6. How are interactions between adults and children and older youth and children monitored?

In the absence of monitoring, policies and practices are insufficient. Examples of monitoring include ample supervision during meals, recess or naptime; random visits to classrooms by directors; spot observations through the door; discussions at staff meetings; and body-safety evaluations in performance reviews.

7. What are your procedures for handling sexual misconduct?

Schools and daycare facilities should have a documented process for handling suspected or known sexual misconduct including:

- What actions will be taken
- Reporting mechanisms
- Notification of parents or guardian
- What will lead to removal from the institution
- Child confidentiality

Administrators should be able to give you examples of how these rules have been enforced, without revealing confidential information.

8. Has there ever been an allegation of sexual misconduct in this institution?

Administrators should be able to honestly and openly discuss how any past allegations have been handled by the school or program. While there may be legal limits on what can be divulged, note the seriousness with which the situation was addressed and how it informed changes to policies, practices, and monitoring activities.

Disclaimer: This is NOT legal advice. The above listed information is provided as an awareness tool and questions are intended to provide guidelines only. The author does not intend these policies and recommendations as a guarantee or promised result.