



Connecticut

Out of the Shadows Index: Shining a Light on Prevention of and Response to Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in the United States

It takes place mostly in the shadows, but sexual violence against children is happening everywhere, irrespective of income level, age, race, religion and sexual orientation. Yet, child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) can be solved, and there are strategies that have proved to be successful in reducing it. When CSEA is approached as a public health problem, with the child at the center of reforms, progress is possible.

The Out of the Shadows Index United States pilot (the US pilot index) aims to understand how states are tackling CSEA both in person and online. It serves as a tool for policymakers, frontline workers and civil society, capturing state action to combat CSEA and identifying key areas for attention.

Background indicators

Population (m)	3.6
Population under 18 (%)	21.7
Median household income (US\$)	78,444
GDP per head (US\$)	76,779

State summary

Connecticut has taken some important steps to combat CSEA, including ensuring wide availability of child-friendly services for victim-survivors through Children’s Advocacy Centers. Their efforts could be further strengthened by enacting training requirements for all frontline responders and improving data collection.

Where has progress been made?

Access to Children’s Advocacy Centers (CACs): Every county in the state is served by a National Children’s Alliance-member CAC¹, ensuring the availability and quality of centers providing child-friendly services to victims of CSEA. The state could do more, however, to ensure consistent funding for CACs.

Child sexual abuse prevention in schools: State law requires public schools provide education helping children understand and protect themselves against sexual abuse, as well as requiring districts to adopt dating policies.

Ensuring a strong start for children: Connecticut has made progress toward implementing programs that support young children and their families, including evidence-based home visiting programs and Early Head Start, which can help prevent child maltreatment.²

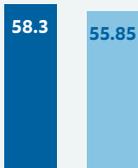
What more needs to be done?

Training requirements: Connecticut lacks requirements that child welfare case workers, prosecutors and judges be trained on responding to cases involving sexual abuse in a child-friendly and trauma-informed way, although such training is required for law enforcement personnel.

Data collection: Although the state collects data on CSEA-related convictions, these efforts would be improved by collecting similar data on arrests, charges and backlog of cases.

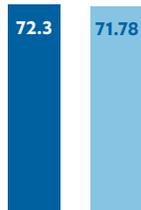
Index scores

Overall score



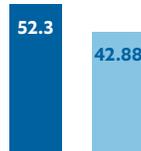
Legal Framework & State Capacity

The degree to which a state provides legal protections from child sexual exploitation or abuse.



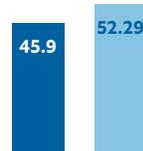
Policies & Programs

State investment in programs critical to preventing child sexual exploitation and abuse and addressing its risk factors.



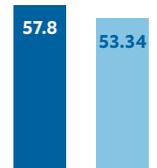
Provision of Support Services

The availability of short- and long-term support for victims, and the degree to which this support is child-centered and trauma-informed.



Justice Process

The capacity of the state’s justice system to put the interests of the child at the center of the process.



Connecticut All states

¹ <https://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org/cac-coverage-maps/>
² <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/CAN-Prevention-Technical-Package.pdf>

Out of the shadows: Shining light on the response to child sexual abuse and exploitation

Indicator	Score/100	Indicator	Score/100		
Prevention		Response			
	62.3		49.6		
1.1)	Gender Equality, Gender Protection and Marriage Laws	50	3.1)	Support - Child Welfare	49.7
1.2)	Consent Laws	75	3.2)	Support - Immediate Support and Recovery	31.9
1.3)	Laws Against CSEA	81.1	3.3)	Rehabilitation & Prevention	50
1.4)	Exemptions & Qualifiers	91	3.4)	Children's Response to Online Sexual Harms	89.7
1.5)	Background Checks/Disqualifications	60	4.1)	Child-Centered Emergency Response	73.1
1.6)	Data Availability	62.8	4.2)	Police Capacity	45
2.1)	Building Individual Skills & Knowledge	72.5	4.3)	Integrated Response and Coordination	75
2.2)	Educating Providers	16.7	4.4)	Judicial Processes	45
2.3)	Promoting Community Education	33.3	4.5)	Legal Representation & Advocacy	49
2.4)	Fostering Coalitions & Networks	0	4.6)	Monitoring & Evaluation	38.1
2.5)	Changing Organizational Practice	90			
2.6)	Influencing Policy & Legislation	64.5			

- First quartile (100-75)
- Second quartile (74.9-50)
- Third quartile (49.9-25)
- Fourth quartile (24.9-0)

For a full explanation of indicators, weightings and more detailed information on Connecticut's performance, please see the interactive Excel model available on the [US pilot index website](#).

In addition to the full methodology, a report outlining the overall findings is also available.

What is the Out of the Shadows Index?

The World Childhood Foundation USA's (Childhood USA) US pilot Out of the Shadows Index, developed by Economist Impact, examines how stakeholders are responding to the threat of child sexual abuse and exploitation in 12 states. It does not attempt to measure the scale of the problem or incorporate information on the prevalence of sexual violence against children in each state. Rather it uses 182 individual metrics aggregated into 22 indicators and grouped into four categories to measure the extent to which states are acknowledging the problem of sexual violence against children, and whether they are implementing measures to prevent and address the problem holistically.

While the US pilot index can help highlight key areas for attention, existing resources such as the Center for Disease Control's [Technical Package on Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect](#) and [Prevent Child Abuse America](#) offer more detailed information and support for implementation of solutions.

Please use the following when citing this state profile:

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