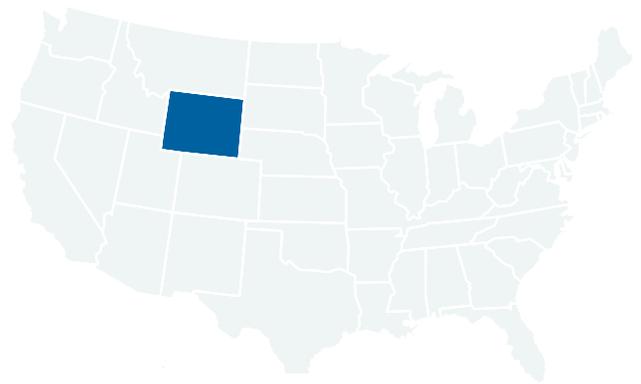


Wyoming

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)	0.58
Population under 18 (%)	25.1
Median household income (US\$)	64,049
GDP per head (US\$)	62,923

State summary

Wyoming has the weakest prevention and response system to address CSEA of any state considered in this pilot study. Overall, the state's response system is stronger than its prevention system, which is primarily a result of the existence of rehabilitation services for victim-survivors and child-friendly judicial processes.

Where has progress been made?

Legislation protecting at-risk minors: Wyoming's regulations protecting minors that might be more at-risk than their peers are more comprehensive than other states in the pilot. Regulations include a specific prohibition of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), comprehensive standards for foster homes, and protections against authority figures using their positions to perpetrate CSEA.

Support services in schools: Wyoming has some of the most comprehensive support services for minors and educators in schools. These include mental health services, professional standards/codes of conduct for appropriate relationships between school personnel and students, and mandatory safety posters covering CSEA in schools.

Sexual health and contraception services for minors: Wyoming explicitly allows minors to consent to STI/HIV testing and treatment and contraceptive services without informing parents.

What more needs to be done?

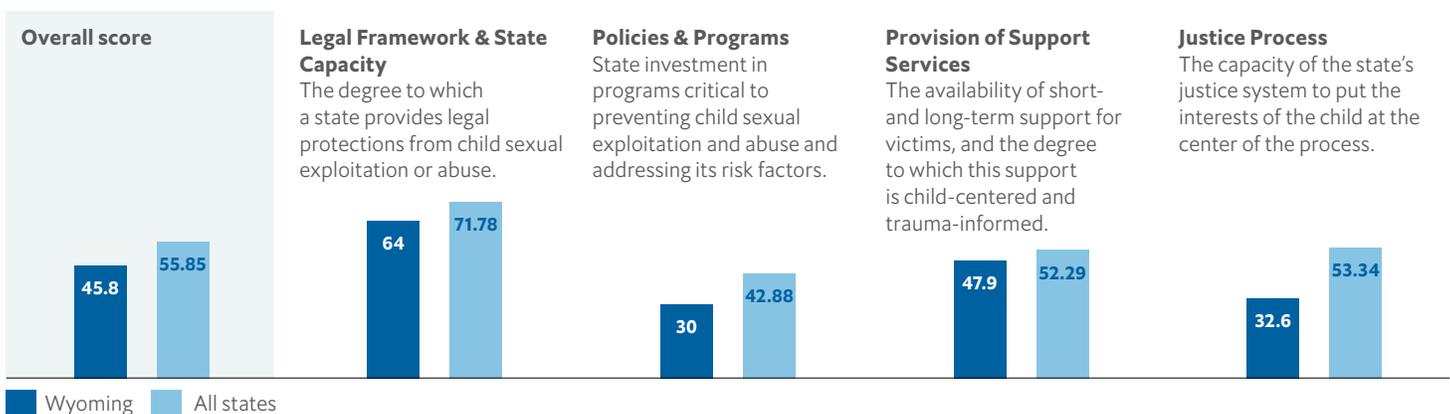
Legislation supporting victim-survivors and minor offenders:

Wyoming law does not prohibit a mistake of age in all cases involving child sexual abuse, which can prevent perpetrators from being convicted for committing statutory rape. Additionally, Wyoming has not set a minimum age of criminal responsibility nor a minimum age at which a juvenile can be transferred to a criminal court and prosecuted as an adult. This means that children with problematic sexual behavior may face incarceration, instead of evidence-based treatment options.

Sex education: Although Wyoming has strong support services in schools, the state does not mandate sex education, CSEA prevention education, or online safety education, and it does not have a school dating violence policy. Children, therefore, are less likely to have the tools they need to protect themselves from both CSEA in-person and online.

Training and support for child welfare workers and Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs): Child welfare agencies do not have access to guidelines for how to assess, intervene and plan throughout a CSEA case and do not receive training on CSEA, culturally sensitive practice or trauma-informed care consistently, which can hinder their ability to respond effectively. This lack of training is further complicated by weak coverage of CACs across the state and a lack of reliable funding for CACs responsible for coordinating the response across the state.

Index scores



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

Indicator	Score/100	Indicator	Score/100		
Prevention		Response			
	47		43.1		
1.1)	Gender Equality, Gender Protection and Marriage Laws	36.8	3.1)	Support - Child Welfare	26.8
1.2)	Consent Laws	75	3.2)	Support - Immediate Support and Recovery	39.8
1.3)	Laws Against CSEA	82.5	3.3)	Rehabilitation & Prevention	50
1.4)	Exemptions & Qualifiers	41.7	3.4)	Children's Response to Online Sexual Harms	85.2
1.5)	Background Checks/Disqualifications	60	4.1)	Child-Centered Emergency Response	31.4
1.6)	Data Availability	43.1	4.2)	Police Capacity	27.4
2.1)	Building Individual Skills & Knowledge	28.9	4.3)	Integrated Response and Coordination	50
2.2)	Educating Providers	0	4.4)	Judicial Processes	55
2.3)	Promoting Community Education	33.3	4.5)	Legal Representation & Advocacy	39.5
2.4)	Fostering Coalitions & Networks	0	4.6)	Monitoring & Evaluation	0
2.5)	Changing Organizational Practice	40			
2.6)	Influencing Policy & Legislation	48.8			

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 Wyoming'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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