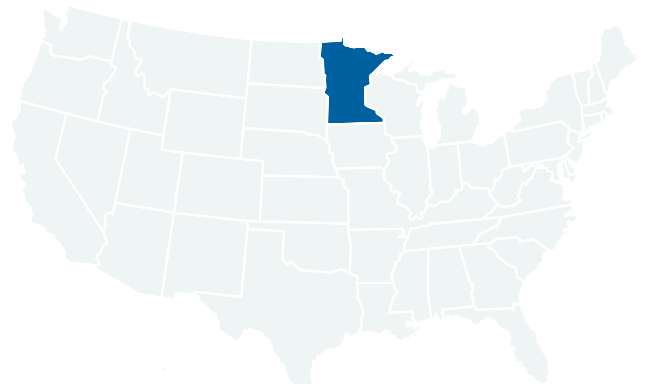


Minnesota

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)	5.6
Population under 18 (%)	24.3
Median household income (US\$)	71,306
GDP per head (US\$)	65,486

State summary

Minnesota has a strong legal framework for combating CSEA, including laws protecting against child marriage. This strong performance, however, is offset by weak sex education policies, limited training requirements for responders and low accessibility of Children's Advocacy Centers.

Where has progress been made?

Legal framework: Overall, Minnesota scores well on the Legal Framework and State Capacity pillar. In particular, it is one of only two states in the US pilot index that has taken progressive action to address child marriage by setting the minimum age for marriage at 18, and eliminating all exceptions.

Data collection efforts: The Minnesota Student Survey, conducted by the Minnesota Department of Education every three years in public, non-public, charter and tribal schools, is a valuable source of data on the current scale and nature of child abuse.

Child-friendly judicial processes: Minnesota has established child-friendly standards during investigations and criminal proceedings. For instance, the state permits the testimony of children (12 and under) to be taken outside the courtroom in cases of sexual abuse and discourages interviews with children that are unnecessary and duplicative.

What more needs to be done?

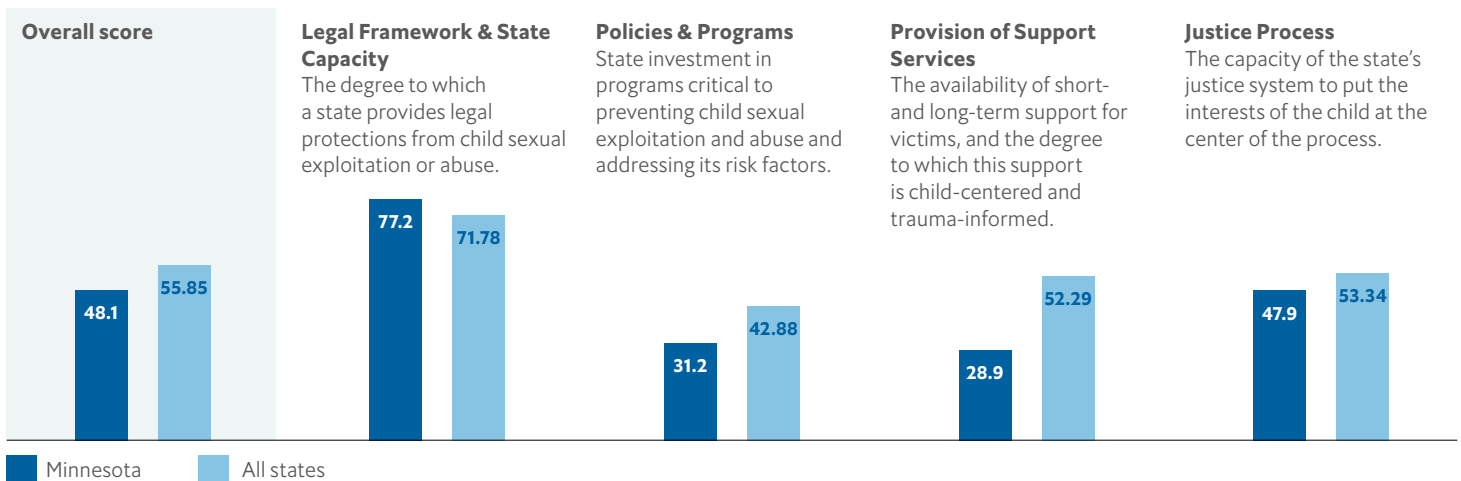
Limited training: The state has implemented few training requirements for law enforcement, the child welfare workforce, and judges and prosecutors on providing trauma-informed and child-friendly care in cases of child sexual abuse.

Greater specialization needed: The state does not require professional personnel trained in the examination of sexual abuse victims to be employed, or on call, at hospitals/medical centers throughout the state. Furthermore, there is no requirement for medical professionals to inform victim-survivors of their right/opportunity to have an advocate present during a forensic medical examination.

Poor access to CACs: The percentage of counties served by Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) is lower than in many other pilot states.





Lack of holistic sex education: Although Minnesota schools are mandated to provide sex education, the state has an 'opt-out' policy that allows parents/guardians to remove their children if they object to the content being taught. Furthermore, Minnesota has no requirement for sex education to include information on contraception and/or consent, or for instruction to be evidence based or culturally responsive.

Index scores



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

Indicator		Score/100	Indicator		Score/100
	Prevention	54.2		Response	34.8
1.1)	Gender Equality, Gender Protection and Marriage Laws	83.3	3.1)	Support - Child Welfare	41.1
1.2)	Consent Laws	100	3.2)	Support - Immediate Support and Recovery	30.7
1.3)	Laws Against CSEA	97.1	3.3)	Rehabilitation & Prevention	0
1.4)	Exemptions & Qualifiers	60	3.4)	Children's Response to Online Sexual Harms	87.5
1.5)	Background Checks/Disqualifications	30	4.1)	Child-Centered Emergency Response	39.5
1.6)	Data Availability	54.9	4.2)	Police Capacity	31
2.1)	Building Individual Skills & Knowledge	49.2	4.3)	Integrated Response and Coordination	75
2.2)	Educating Providers	16.7	4.4)	Judicial Processes	75
2.3)	Promoting Community Education	0	4.5)	Legal Representation & Advocacy	85.7
2.4)	Fostering Coalitions & Networks	0	4.6)	Monitoring & Evaluation	9.5
2.5)	Changing Organizational Practice	30			
2.6)	Influencing Policy & Legislation	70.8			

	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 Minnesota'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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