

Assessment of International Schools and national child protection systems

Filling in the gaps when effective practices are not in place

Step 1. Review and compare existing research-based frameworks:

Australian State Governmental Frameworks:

<https://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Resources/Documents/Policies%20and%20Frameworks/SignsOfSafetyFramework2011.pdf>

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/childsafety/about-us/performance/child-protection-system-framework.pdf>

Canadian Governmental Commission:

<http://www.sustainingchildwelfare.ca/assets/jurisdictional-comparisons-child-welfare-system-design-20100721.pdf>

US Department of Health and Human Services Frameworks:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/pii_ttap_framework.pdf

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/overview/ecological.cfm>

UNICEF Assessment of Africa:

http://www.ncpsconferencedakar.org/IMG/pdf/ESAR_final_report_July_25_2011.pdf

Save the Children Framework for Child Protection:

<http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/child-protection/priority-areas/child-protection-systems>

According to the Save the Children framework, a national child protection system consists of:

- laws and policies that protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence and respond in the best interests of the child when violations occur,
- a central government coordination mechanism for child protection, which brings together central government departments, different provinces, central and local levels of government and civil society,
- effective regulation and monitoring at all levels, for example in childcare institutions and schools,
- a committed workforce with relevant competencies and mandates,
- mechanisms that bring perpetrators to justice.

In addition, a functioning child protection system should be informed by children's views and experiences and strengthens families in the care and protection of their children. It connects child and family support mechanisms in the community with child-friendly services at all levels. These are regulated by quality standards and delivered by the government or accredited social agencies.

<http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/child-protection/priority-areas/child-protection-systems>

Refer to AISA Child Protection Handbook, page 47

Step 2. Review and discuss components of an effective child protection system

An effective child protection system means that each individual has direct access to help from all elements of the system: child to parents, schools, social community, national laws/services; parents to children, schools, social community, national laws/services; schools to children, parents, social community, national laws/services; national laws/services to children, parents and the social community.

Use the illustration below to brainstorm the characteristics in your population and assess the relationships in the framework.

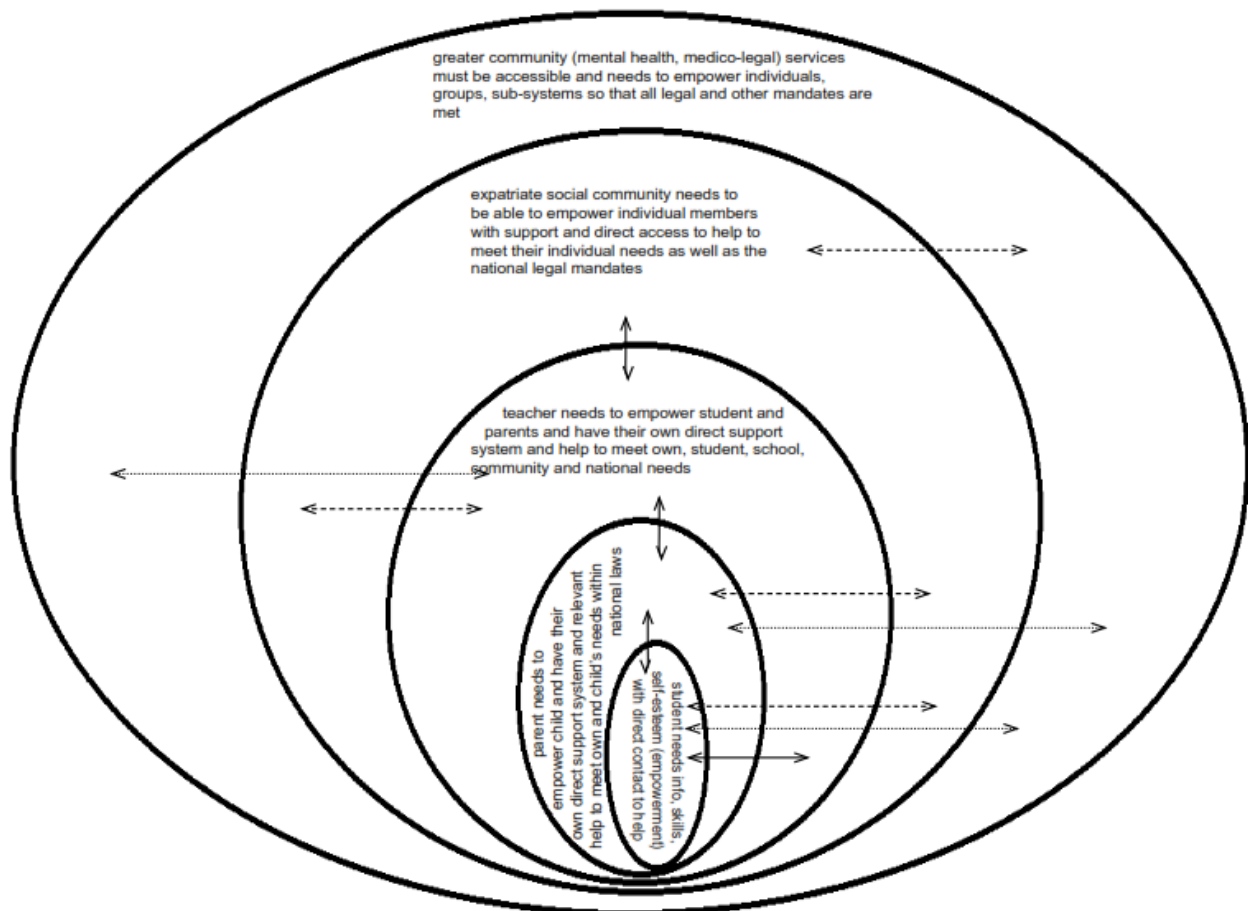
Guiding questions for discussion:

How could the parents block their children from getting help?

How could schools be the problem for accessibility to help?

How does the social community interfere with help in cases of child abuse?

How does the national laws/services inhibit access to help for international school students?



The dashed lines indicate “at-risk” or “weak” relationships based on characteristics of particular populations. The dotted lines indicate “probable weak” or “non-existing” relationships.

Guiding Questions for discussion:

How can international schools working in specific national and cultural environments form networks of peer schools to come together and discuss the creation of helping relationships that must be in place to ensure an effective child protection system?

How can international schools form multidisciplinary teams to help build new or strengthen existing relationships in particular national or cultural contexts?

Step 3. Determining the next steps in your country or cultural context.

The following child abuse case flow is based upon effective practices used in the United States. Use this chart to review existing child protection services and systems in your country/culture.

Task: Fill in the column on the right to determine the systems and actions that must be put into place in your country or cultural context.

NEED	EFFECTIVE PRACTICES	EXAMPLES	HOW WILL WE ADDRESS THIS GAP?
PREVENTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protective behaviors are taught to all children 2. Protective behaviors are taught to all families 3. Child Safety policies are in place at the school. 3. Protective practices and relevant services are in place in the community to ensure the right to feel safe at all times. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amy and Joe are taught Personal Safety in school. 2. Their school has a strong child protection policy in place that includes training for all teachers. 3. Their parents have been provided with the school policy stating the rights of children. 4. Communities are aware of child protection laws and services that are accessible locally. 	<p><i>Potential actions may include:</i></p> <p><i>Creation of materials for students, teachers, parents, guards, visitors, administrators, board members.</i></p> <p><i>Establishment of relationships with relevant local authority and nongovernment social workers.</i></p>
REPORTING	A clear path is in place to provide access to relevant authorities at all levels in schools, hospitals, communities, police stations, hotlines, welfare	Amy and Joe need help. Joe talks with his teacher about abuse by his father.	<p><i>Form an international school support network in your city.</i></p> <p><i>Form a multidisciplinary team</i></p>

	centers to report suspected abuse.	<p>Amy talks with her mother about abuse by a local community member.</p> <p>Joe's teacher reports to his principal who calls local child protection services to investigate.</p> <p>Amy's mother calls the local hotline number.</p>	<i>(MDT) with police, doctor, lawyer, social worker, psychologist</i>
INTERVENTION			
1. Legal	1. Child sensitive investigators	1. Amy is visited by a social worker, Joe is visited by the police; both are trained to interview children. Joe's case is referred for legal processing.	<i>Work with the local government to train an appropriate person to investigate.</i>
2. Medical Health	2. Hospital and community-based services for all	2. Joe is sent to a hospital for evidence gathered by a child-sensitive doctor with age-appropriate interview methodologies.	<i>Visit local hospitals that do medico-legal checks (often on the MDT).</i>
3. Mental Health	3. Hospital and community-based services for all	3. Amy and Joe receive counseling, with options for individual or group counseling. Supporting parents are also counseled.	<i>Have a list of culturally appropriate services (at least one on the MDT).</i>
4. Safety	4. Offender leaves home in incest cases, safety within home, trained foster care, and for last resort in short-term residential centers	4. Amy remains safe at home, with no more access to her offender. Joe's father is removed from the home pending trial.	
5. Court	5. Family Court	5. Joe is prepared for his case and given an advocate to support him and his mother.	<i>Include a human rights lawyer on the MDT.</i>
RESEARCH	Accurate statistics of prevalence of abuse and effectiveness of practices are known in the local school community.	The principal and social worker access the same statistics or common research instrument as a resource.	<i>Identify research reports from the country or cultural context and ensure the information is accessible.</i>
TRAINING	Ongoing seminars are held at the level of need and for all populations	Trainers receive relevant training and have experience themselves within the country or cultural context.	<i>Schedule workshops in local communities.</i>
TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT			
1. Indigenous materials	1. Materials are based on research and culture	A common website is well known where the community can access information and	<i>Establish or access a website where up to date</i>

2. Indigenous practices	2. Publication of effective practices	resources for prevention, reporting and support.	<i>information and resources are available.</i>
FORMAL NETWORKING	A formal network is in place for standards, research, policy setting, and legal lobbying at all levels	A network has been formed to support the specific national or cultural context.	<i>Fund a project/agency to support child protection in international schools.</i>
ADVOCACY	Annual campaigns and distribution of materials	At national and regional levels including international and regional associations that support the internationally-mobile community	<i>Identify and contact suitably trained and vetted experts to sustain awareness and training.</i>

Summary: The typical flow for a case of suspected child abuse looks like this.

Task: Confirm the gaps in your country or cultural context as identified above.

SERVICE NEEDED	SERVICE PROVIDED	GAP
Listen to the disclosure		
Report the case to a school official		
Report the case to the relevant child protection service		
Gather information		
Investigate		
Follow-up		
Provide support to the school community		

International Task Force on Child Protection

School Policies and Resources Committee

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