

## ICJC Sex Crimes Subcommittee – Regular Meeting

March 26, 2026 @ 11:00 a.m.

### Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

**Meeting Location:** Office of the Idaho State Appellate Public Defender, 322 E. Front St., Suite 570, Boise, Idaho

#### Subcommittee Co-Chairs:

Erik Lehtinen, Director, Office of the State Appellate Public Defender

Tracy Basterrechea, Chief, Meridian Police Department

#### Members Present (13):

Erik Lehtinen

Elizabeth Spenner

Trina Allen

Meredith Heer

Scott Rowley

John Dinger

Roger Sherman

Dr. Megan Smith

Jean Fitzgerald-Mutchie

Ivie Smart

Collin Elias

Jean Fisher

Anthony Henry

#### Members Not Present (3):

Tracy Basterrechea

Aleshea Boals

Stu Hobson

#### Other Attendees (3):

Elizabeth Todd

Danielle Chandler

Emma Saulnier

#### Meeting Agenda:

1. Introduction of members

Erik Lehtinen, Elizabeth Todd, Anthony Henry, Collin Elias, Roger Sherman, Jean Fitzgerald-Mutchie, Dr. Megan Smith, Jean Fisher, Meredith Heer, Scott Rowley, John Dinger, Trina Allen, Ivie Smart, Elizabeth Spenner, Emma Saulnier, Danielle Chandler

2. Approval of February 26, 2026, regular meeting minutes

Jean Fitzgerald-Mutchie moved to approve the February 26, 2026, minutes, seconded by John Dinger. The motion passed.

3. Presentation and discussion: Upstream Prevention: Accounting for Risk and Protective Factors (Jean Fitzgerald-Mutchie & Dr. Megan Smith)

Jean Fitzgerald-Mutchie presented on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the importance of getting to the root cause of abuse to achieve real prevention and protection.

The presentation briefly covered why hospitals care about prevention and the different levels of disease prevention. Information was provided regarding how persistent social and economic challenges (e.g., cost of living) can lead to poor health and life outcomes.

It was emphasized that a one-size-fits-all approach to prevention does not work. Prevention may be handled differently in each community but getting to the root cause is most important.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and their relationship to Adverse Community Environments (the root causes) were discussed as the Pair of ACEs. It was noted that Idaho ranks higher than most states for children to have experienced three or more ACEs.

Information regarding upstream prevention and protective factors was provided (e.g., knowledge of parenting and child development, social connections, concrete support in times of need, children's social and emotional competence, nurturing and attachment, and parental resilience). It was emphasized that there is a reason a child behaves a certain way and being able to identify those behaviors is increasingly important.

The importance of Healthy Outcome from Positive Childhood Experiences (HOPE/PCEs) was discussed. It was noted that HOPE drives healthy development and mitigates long-term effects of ACEs. Statistics were shared regarding the relationship between PCEs and depression/mental health issues in adulthood. Children with high PCEs are less likely to report depression or other mental health issues in adulthood.

Building Community Resilience was discussed. A community resilience model (CRM) can result in fewer justice-involved youth, fewer foster care children, steady employment, strengthened families, and reduced crime. CRM offers bright spots and opportunities by training community members to help themselves and those around them. People in crisis need someone to listen to them. We need school-based mental health services and more resources.

An example of CRM in action was provided. The community school offers trusted adults, mentors, opportunities for engaging after school, adult education/support, food, and healthcare for school families. There are currently 65 community schools across Idaho.

A question was posed regarding current political attitudes toward the current examples of the community resilience model. A discussion regarding funding and the future of the community schools outside of their grants was held. More policy and advocacy are necessary for the future of community schools.

Dr. Megan Smith presented on youth upstream prevention: preventing negative outcomes long before they occur rather than reacting or responding to an issue that has become severe.

It was emphasized that we must look to the source of problematic behaviors to change experiences and make training beneficial. Instead of focusing on an individual's behavior, step back to view the big picture.

Vape detectors in schools were provided as an example. They do not address the root cause of the behavior; they allow schools to react to it, limiting the ability to effect real change.

The Idaho Department of Education's Youth Wellbeing Survey was discussed as well as what we do with the information it collects regarding risk and protective factors.

A list of risk factors was provided (e.g., social isolation, stress, lack of sleep, lack of family support, dating violence and coercion, etc.) Statistics were provided on how high social isolation relates to a clinical level of depression in children.

Benefits of upstream prevention were discussed. Amping up protective factors offsets risk factors. Upstream prevention helps everyone see the role they can play and brings communities together. There is evidence it works well.

More statistics were provided for children experiencing depression. The numbers continue to drop as education and resources are provided to communities.

Discussion was held about the lack of good youth data in Idaho. Health systems have data but that data is incomplete, as it only captures incidents of people engaging with hospitals at the crisis point. It was emphasized that survey data is needed. Survey hesitance is a large barrier. There is a greater need for data from specific communities and environments.

#### 4. Presentation and discussion: The Children's Trust Fund's Current Educational Efforts Aimed at the Prevention of Sexual Abuse (Roger Sherman)

Roger Sherman presented on the Stewards of Children Darkness to Light training programs.

The five steps to protecting children were discussed: Learn the facts, minimize opportunity, talk about it, recognize the signs, and react responsibly.

The importance of training was emphasized. It allows people to understand the signs of grooming/abuse and react appropriately.

Red flags and grooming behavior were discussed. Grooming behavior is complicated and difficult to recognize, which is why training is so important. Certain behaviors may be innocent, but it should never be a problem to talk about them.

There are 73 facilitators to provide training around Idaho, and they have trained over 25,000 adults.

Data from the University of Oregon was provided to show that prevention works.

Limitations of training programs were discussed. Reaching enough people to have an impact is difficult. Training is a part of the effort to educate people on prevention, but it can be difficult to put those things into action. Education and prevention need to be built into the culture of organizations.

The group discussed what factors make a perpetrator and what resources (e.g., speakers or additional committee members) may be helpful for the group to explore.

Examples of teachers being the perpetrator were provided. The group discussed how those individuals take advantage of their position. The group discussed whether there is a personality type that is more likely to be a predator. A member posed the question of which children are most susceptible and how does a teacher manipulate a child to gain the trust of that child.

It was discussed that the terms “predator” and “pedophile” are often used interchangeably, although those terms have different definitions. The difference between a pedophile, hebephile, and predator was briefly touched upon.

One member discussed a concern that some offenders may be assessed to represent a low risk to reoffend on psychosexual evaluations because of a lack of physical contact or violence in the offense and/or the evaluator’s dismissal or downplaying of the victim’s psychological harm. Members would be interested to hear from a psychosexual evaluator. Some would like to see evaluators consider the psychological harm offenders have caused.

A member mentioned that most perpetrators that commit contact sex offenses have a digital trail as well.

The group discussed perceived generational differences in how people react to being a victim of child sexual abuse. Some people do not want to talk about it and often excuse or dismiss experiences. Examples of the dismissive comments or behavior were provided. Further discussion was held regarding what the reporting data will look like in ten years and where Idaho ranks for child sex offenses now.

5. Discuss scheduling of future meetings

The group will aim to reconvene monthly and keep meetings to 90 minutes. Members agreed that regularity of meetings helps with scheduling. The group will continue to work toward a consensus on where the committee can do the most good.

Meredith Heer will present on the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) taskforce next time the committee meets.

Collin Elias and Ivie Smart may present on the different Idaho Health and Welfare programs next time the committee meets.