

**VICTIMIZATION EXPERIENCES OF EXPATRIATE STUDENTS IN
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS: USING THE JUVENILE
VICTIMIZATION QUESTIONNAIRE WITH AMERICAN
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS
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As a professional in the field of sexual abuse prevention and treatment, as well as a mother with children in American international schools, I have become extremely concerned about the fact that my children, as expats, may not be protected from abuse by any law, often because international schools choose to ignore these laws. As a professional who focuses on this issue, many parents and teachers have shared with me their experiences from various international schools regarding sexual offenders in international school communities.

This report is both quantitative and qualitative (experiences collected from parents, counselors, and teachers within international communities), providing an initial exploratory look into an issue that requires further study. It is not comprehensive or complete. However, by bringing out information, this report hopes that local child protection agencies in cities where international schools operate will offer help to these schools, enhancing their capabilities by networking with local services and legal authority. This report also hopes to put into the forefront of international school agendas the issue of child protection, including intensive research.

Characteristics of Int'l Schools

"International schools were founded to meet the needs of expatriate citizens living in foreign countries. The first international school was founded in 1888.... The majority of international schools today are private schools established and operated by associations of parents of the children enrolled in the school..... The schools are open to nationals of all countries; their teaching faculties are multinational. Ownership and policy control are typically in the hands of associations of parents of the child enrolled. Some schools are highly structured formalized organizations incorporated in the U.S. or the host country; other schools are loosely organized cooperative ventures. All international schools are subject in varying degrees to the laws of the host country and to regulations pertaining to educational and personnel practices. Tuition paid by parents is the principal source of funds. International schools follow in the tradition of the best college preparatory schools of the public and private school systems of the U.S." (Faculty Integration in International Schools: An Application of the Organizational Health Inventory to the East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools, Dennis Larkin, 1994)

Over the years the international schools have organized themselves within regions for conferences and other professional networking to aid in further growth and development. For example, the East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools (EARCOS) consists of schools within Japan, Laos, Thailand, Hong Kong, Myanmar, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Singapore. "EARCOS is essentially a service organization designed to assist international school administrators and teachers and to promote program development through sharing, interaction, and mutual stimulation of its members. EARCOS representatives serve on a standing committee on school evaluation and accreditation with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in support of accreditation programs for schools in

East Asia." (Dennis Larkin) EARCOS is a support rather than an implementing organization.

In 1994 the EARCOS membership consisted of 85 schools in 14 countries through East Asia with 36,875 students enrolled. The emphasis in international schools is academic and designed to prepare students for acceptance to the best universities through the world. Administrators are employed primarily from the United States, with faculty hired from the U.S., from the host country, and from other countries around the world. "EARCOS schools are characterized by student bodies that are highly international and may be extremely transient..." (Dennis Larkin)

nationalities within international schools
sample from International School Manila, 2001

United States - 21%
Philippines - 19%
Korea - 16%
Japan - 9%
Europe - 9%
India - 5%
Australia - 3%
Taiwan - 3%
Canada - 2%
Malaysia - 2%
Other - 11%
Total nationalities = 59

International school academic standards are considered significantly higher than U.S. public schools, with nearly, if not all seniors attending university following graduation. Included in the high academic standards are other programs in art, music, drama, and sports where students enter international competitions in a variety of countries. EARCOS conferences prepare faculty and administrators for

quality education and educational counseling for a holistic educational experience. Schools are mandated to teach our children and international schools do a fantastic job. However, international schools tend to operate within a vacuum, a vacuum that does not exist for public and even private schools within the U.S. who receive support from the community by way of social services, child protection, mental health, and even medical services. Schools must be allowed to focus on the academic education of their students by trusting that other support services exist on behalf of their students with other needs. Schools should not have to be all things for all students - conflict of interest and blurred role boundaries could taint the goals of meeting the educational needs of their students.

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for international schools to attempt to provide education as well as family counseling. And each school operates autonomously from other local schools and international schools. Child protection is among the casualties in such a scenario.

Consider this scenario: An international faculty member counseling of a high school girl develops into a "romantic" relationship. The mother of the child, also a faculty member, confides in another faculty member, who agrees to keep the information confidential. Rumors around school get to other faculty and administrator ears, but nothing is ever reported. Even the offender's wife is aware of the relationship. A week before school ends, the offender resigns, stating he "stepped over the line" with a student, but basically resigns on his own terms. Within weeks he has gotten a letter of recommendation from a former principal unaware of his offense and has another job in another international school on another continent.

The victim's school is angry and confused. The parents are angry and confused. The former principal giving the letter of recommendation, after discovering what happened, is upset. The child was admitted into no university because her grades plummeted during the relationship, and she is presently on a

different continent from her parents but on the same one as her offender. The offender left on his own terms before any third party investigation was conducted. The offender's former and present schools have no policy relevant to this issue, except a vague reference to moral turpitude. The faculty offender broke the laws of that country, but was never reported, which is also an offense against the local law that mandates a report within 48 hours. The faculty offender broke the ethics of his licensing board in the U.S., but nothing was ever reported, and thus he is free to continue to offend. The final blow is that it has since been discovered that this student is not this offender's first victim and had been removed immediately from another country previously, also with nothing in writing.

The questions this scenario raises are numerous, yet to me the most important one is, "Are our students protected from sexual and other abuse within international schools?"

In beginning to examine the concern of sexual abuse within expatriate communities, focusing on international schools, I drew up some questions as a guideline:

- Does your school have a policy for defining child sexual abuse, for handling child sexual abuse, in particular when the offender is an employee of your school? In other words, are the students in your school protected under any policy or law? If not, why not?
- Is your school's policy linked to the legal procedures of the host country? If no, why not? If there are no laws in the host country, then do you know on which laws you could base your policies?
- Can your school in any way be considered a safe haven for offenders (both employees and others) for reasons such as:
 1. There is no reporting of suspected cases, or reporting is discouraged
 2. There is a lack of confidence in local laws or lack of awareness of local systems

3. There is weak implementation of existing policies
 4. Teachers suspected or admitting to sexual offenses are fired (and helped to leave the country or otherwise) with no third party investigation
 5. Employees of your school believe the school's reputation is considered linked with the offender, thereby encouraging silence from the school
 6. No direct questions on this issue are considered during interviews or reference checks of potential candidates
 7. No teacher suspected of a sexual offense is reported to his/her licensing board
 8. There are no policies in the contract related to the school's role in the protection of their students
 9. Relevant embassies are not reported to or involved in dealing with a sexual offender
- Does your school publish, post or otherwise distribute any policy you have on child sexual abuse so that all students and parents are aware of definitions and expectations, including procedures for reporting?

Now consider this scenario: An active pedophile seeks out countries with available victims due to poverty and high numbers of street children. He works in an international school in one country fitting this description, actively molests children he pays, then after several years he moves to another international school that fits his same needs and continues his acts of pedophilia. He does not molest expat students. He abuses prostituted boys. For one offender, the police came to the school for bribes, and the school protected themselves by shipping the offending teacher out within 24 hours. For another offender, the school never found out, but the next school was notified by an acquaintance of the offender

familiar with his behavior. Does the offender get reported, or will he just be fired and thus free to continue to offend?

The questions in this scenario are different, because these offenders will most likely not seek students as victims, but children outside the school. The questions here may be the credibility of the international school, or even the ability or willingness to cooperate with local authorities, respecting local laws. These sexual offenders WILL seek countries where they are freer to molest children, WILL seek schools with no or weak policies to protect their children. Do international school institutions take necessary precautions against being used as safe havens for the pedophile?

International schools need to understand the sexual offender. They are not the "dirty old man" drooling over girls with short skirts or cute boys with long eye lashes. They are, instead, among us, gifted manipulators, perhaps even gifted teachers or counselors or administrators, able not only to entice the child or adolescent to participate in the sexual behavior but also to overcome any resistance or suspicions of adults around them. Sexual offenders CANNOT be given a second chance in our schools UNLESS they are closely monitored and involved in a great deal of long term therapy (my own view about sexual offenders is that one offence is too many and they should never be employed in a school again!).

Now consider a far more common scenario, the domestic violence case: A child in an international school is noticed by his teacher because of heavy welts on his leg. The child tells the teacher the welts are due to being whipped by his mother. The teacher reports the offence to the school counselor. The counselor recommends reporting the incident to the local welfare office but is told by the head counselor that the case will not be reported and all domestic counseling will be conducted by the school. The decision to not report is the result of another child previously

being reported to welfare by a new counselor from the U.S. who followed the practice mandated by law in the U.S. to report such cases. In this case, the father of the child complained to the school administration. The counselor was called in by the school head and threatened that if she ever reported such cases again, she would be fired. Part of her reporting was also to the embassy, which had a file of domestic violence on that family and was trying to follow up to protect the children. Sexual offenders and perpetrators of domestic violence depend on secrecy and silence such as the practice in this school.

Sexual and domestic violence offenders will seek communities who will provide them with this need. International communities are at risk to provide for this secrecy and do contribute to the silence. In many cases international communities provide minimal mental health services. Families move a great deal and thus do not bond with other families who could be aware of a problem and help them. This isolation further forces the non-offending members of the family to depend on each other and most especially on the offender (usually the father). International schools can and should help facilitate filling the void for abused children and families caught in the cycle of domestic and sexual violence.

Schools in the United States have always played an important part in child protection, as reported in the "Executive Summary of the Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect" by Sedlak and Broadhurt for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (updated April 6, 2001), p 17. "School sentinels recognized 59 percent of the children who suffered maltreatment as defined by the Harm Standard and 54 percent of the Endangerment Standard total. Other important sources of abused and neglected children were hospitals, police departments, social service agencies, and the general public."

For expatriates, however, the school plays a far larger part in the community, and hospitals, police department, and social service agencies often do not exist given language problems. And because the community is far smaller than usual communities in home countries, it becomes more difficult for the general public to report on each other.

Risk factors within the expatriate community

Power differential between parents (contract for father only)

Physical isolation of family

No Personal Safety in schools

Social isolation of frequent moves

Poor implementation of protection laws

DENIAL!

Social isolation due to lack of language

Poor implementation of laws against foreigners offending foreigners

Poor implementation of policies (if any) in schools

Let's look at a scenario of a mother-faculty member who, within the small international community, does actually report misbehavior of another faculty member.

“International Schools in countries in which there is no legal recourse for students, parents, and whistle blowing teachers outside of the school itself, have indeed become havens for predatory adults.....I, personally, resigned from a school in 1993 when a guidance counselor/teacher commonly known to be "fondling" my female students was promoted to HS principal. I had spoken up at a board hearing on many issues disturbing the school community at the time. The parents of the girls involved had been told that nothing could/would be done unless they "pressed charges". This was in [country] where the board and administration knew full well there was no way for parents to press charges. I could not continue teaching at a school under a principal who I knew to be abusing children, and I certainly was not going to keep my 6 year olds in a system under a Director who protected such abuse..... I returned to the U.S. I spoke to an education lawyer with a national reputation (U.S.) about what I had

experienced, and asked if there was any way to bring legal action in such a case. He said no.

“After a school I trusted, under a director I trusted, opened, I returned to the same city and was hired again at the old school. It too had a new director at the time, the offending HS principal was gone, and I hoped that such experiences would not be repeated. I was heartened when a subsequent case developed, and the new director and new HS principal called for an immediate hearing, immediately suspended the teacher in question, checked his background further, and fired him. I was disheartened when I learned several years later that in the process of firing this teacher, buying him out of his contract, the school had agreed to give him good references, and that he had gone on to another International School posting.

“After another change of Directors, several years later, I found myself once again applying to teach at the same school. My former principal recommended me, but the new Director kept stalling, without telling either the principal or myself what was going on, although there were many positions that had opened up for which I was qualified. Finally, after all the positions I wanted had been filled, the Director agreed to meet with me and the Principal. He pulled out a "confidential" letter that had apparently been placed in my personnel file in 1993, unbeknownst to me or the current principal, by the Director who had protected the abusive guidance counselor/teacher, and promoted him to HS principal. With absolutely no mention of issues involved, the letter warned that I should never be hired again.....

*“I believe ECIS/WASC and other accreditation agencies need to ensure that at the very least there is an independent panel to which teachers/students/parents can report and to which they can appeal on matters concerning child protection issues. As International Schools, operating within a legal limbo, there are too often absolutely no checks and restraints placed pedophiles.” (source *18)*

What are some other examples of how this issue was responded to by International School personnel?

- ❖ TIE (The International Educator newspaper) responded to me in 1997 that the issue has never come up in their experience. When I requested an article on the subject, they said that because it was not felt to be a pressing issue, they would consider placing something from me in the letters to the editor section. It was never published. Only in 2002 when a school head, raised the issue did they agree to print the article.
- ❖ *“I believe that our school has a proactive stance on issues of student victimization and bullying through a very successful Peer Mediation*

*program..... I believe that the pressures for international students is fundamentally different [from U.S. students]." (source *7)*

- ❖ Silence from Heads, and frustrations from site-personnel, such as counselors: *"I have come upon obstacles along the way with administrators who themselves were not ready to deal with this issue, so have been a frustrated child advocate in my counseling role at times.... You are so right in saying that a type of thinking perpetuates the problem and we are in ways just like the Catholic church in many schools." (source *1)*

Here is yet another scenario: At one of the international school conventions, one of the workshops offered was on The U.N. Rights of the Child. Not one international teacher attended. However, when this same workshop was offered in the host country for public school teachers, the room was packed. Why is it that international schools are not involved with the causes of abuse and violence against children to the same degree as the educators in host countries and U.S. schools?

Many of us in Asia use the CRC a great deal in working with children and families. In an attempt to work with International Schools, using the CRC as an International Document and Law seems an excellent strategy. However, certain countries have reservations to articles that could actually infringe on the rights a child would have in his/her home country. An example are two reservations in Malaysia, Articles 13 and 15, both eliminating our expatriate children from these rights.

Article 13 - freedom of expression. The child shall have the right to express his or her own views, obtain information, make ideas or information known, regardless of frontiers.

Reservation: only Malaysian children are entitled to such freedom.

Article 15 - freedom of association. Children have the right to meet with others, and to join or form associations.

Reservation: only applies to Malaysian citizens.

But can using the CRC help? How active can UN offices be, and what is their mandate? A UNICEF Regional Officer I contacted on this issue, seeking help, responded below:

"Thank you for sharing your concern regarding child protection policies for expat schools. As you probably know this issue does not directly fit within the mandate of our UNICEF Regional Office - unless it is addressed as special policy for International Schools within the national legislation of countries where we have programmes of cooperation.

Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), State Parties have obligations to all children within their jurisdiction regardless of nationality, citizenship or immigration status. In addition, all countries, with the exception of the US (one of only 2 countries that has not ratified the CRC), have obligations to their nationals. So there is certainly a basis for dialogue with International Schools.

*Having said this, it is not surprising to find more child friendly and responsive services in international schools for expat children than for children in national schools. More human and financial resources are available. The issue of course is whether there is any policy or mandate related to child protection and what kind of training is provided for the staff." (source *17)*

Given the mass media about the effects of child sexual and other abuse, especially recent media attention about the extent of such abuse, it is inexcusable for international schools to ignore this issue. A school's integrity is not based on whether cases of abuse exist. They DO exist, sadly they exist in silence, perhaps as a result of the lack of interest and response of many schools. Instead, a school's integrity is based on their acceptance that the problem exists, the trust available to students to disclose, and appropriate responses to children in pain.

I am extremely pleased with the amount of energy N. American and European international schools presently are placing in teaching emotional and social skills.

These are all skills children need to help protect themselves from sexual and other forms of domestic violence and abuse. However, no matter how many social or life skills we give our children, they are relatively powerless to protect themselves from abuse, requiring instead adults to protect them through the implementation of strict policies within schools and laws within countries. When cases of child abuse go unreported, all involved are hurt, the child, the family, the community, the school, even the offender.

The purpose of this study, based on the scenario of many international schools and international families/communities, was to:

1. gather data to show that international school students experience similar victimization as their counterparts in home-countries where laws and policies exist to help children; and then extended to
2. gather data about the policies that do exist within international schools to begin the process of bridging gaps in services to children at risk.

Background of survey implementation and international school responses

1. I first confronted this issue head on with a group of international school faculty at a presentation on the issue at an EARCOS Counselor's Conference, 1999, where I heard the need for data in order to set policies that at that time did not exist. It was this conference that led me down the road towards this study. Contact was made with the Crimes Against Children Research Center (University of New Hampshire), directed by Dr. David Finkelhor. I was put into direct contact and received support from Dr. Sherry Hamby to use the Juvenile Victimization Questionnaire.

2. Pre-testing was accomplished with grade 7 students in one (1) EARCOS school, indicating no difficulties except with ESL students. (This school refused participation in the actual survey.)
3. Letters to heads of schools and board chairs were sent to 35 schools within the EARCOS district during August 2001, and follow-up emails sent to relevant counselors from those same schools. The respondents for the survey were to be all students in any middle school grade of the school's choice.
4. Received a positive response of interest from 4 schools, but only 1 actually accomplished the survey.

Interest / yes	Deny	No response
4	12	19

samples of responses from schools: (*N refers to emails and other responses)

- ❖ *"I have discussed this matter at the Board level and the consensus of opinion is that, at this stage, we do not feel that we would wish to be included in the research you outlined.... I would wish to let you know that the Board and Administration of [school] take serious their responsibility for the care and welfare of all our students." (source*2)*
The counselors in this school, however, had been grappling for a long time on the lack of policy for their guidance and the fact that the suggested policy states, in direct defiance of the law, that *"reporting to local authorities is not mandatory, but may be reported to local authorities if deemed appropriate by the Superintendent."*
- ❖ Many principals and counselors were not consulted in the head's decision not to participate in the survey. The lack of participation in

the survey is not the issue, but I feel that the decision making process is important because my initial contacts, prior to sending letters to heads of schools, were all with counselors and principals who had stated a willingness, sometimes a desire, to participate because they recognized the need to better meet the needs of the students that they know have problems.

The fact that heads were making decisions without talking with the direct staff indicates a possible problem when confronting this issue with international schools. An example is a response from one principal, finding out about the study through outside channels, "*We would be happy to consider participating in this research effort. Anything that might provide insight and new options!*" (source*3) unaware that the head of that school had already responded with, "*I received the packet... I'm afraid, however, that [school] will not be able to participate in the study at this time.*" (source*4)

- ❖ One example shows conflicting information given by the head to principals and to me concerning the study: The head writes, "*I have discussed your proposed research project with the Administrative Council and the [school] Board of Directors. We have, respectfully, declined to participate.*" (*12) The principal from that school indicates clearly that, although he is a part of the Administrative Council mentioned, the decision was already made prior to meeting with that body: "*The decision was made at the [regional body] heads conference regarding participation....(*13)...concern was expressed about administering it so it was decided that we wouldn't participate.*" (*14)

- ❖ Those schools giving me a rationale for not participating varied from the WTC crisis (*"In the current crisis following the terrorist attack on WTC and the heightened alert in the Islamic world pending possible US action in Afghanistan, we are not able to complete this survey. I am sorry that we are not able to help."* *5) to school crisis (*"Between the terrorist crisis - living in a Muslim country - and a recently departed staff member in a coma with brain cancer, our plates are full. However, I am very interested in the survey and will file this away for a calmer time."* *6).

- ❖ International schools, being independent bodies, are placed with an added burden of accreditation and community involvement in terms of public relations and curriculum initiatives. Some schools were already well under way with their own agendas and thus *"the real reason is that we have several major initiatives going on already. I don't want to sidetrack these efforts by introducing this issue and therefore becoming a distractor for our kids."* (*7) This statement says a great deal about this issue's priority in general within international schools. Another school, although very sensitive to this issue with a counselor working hard to set up policies, responded with, *"I have met with the administration regarding administering the survey at [school]. They have decided that [school] will not participate mainly due to the fact that our students are being surveyed quite frequently because of our strategic plan."* (*8)

- ❖ Some negative responses were positive, however, for example: *"Our principals, after consultation with the grade 7 health and science teacher, have decided to decline to participate in the survey that you*

*have offered. We do address the issues through our curriculum and believe that the topic is an important one." (*9) Another example: "We are in the midst of some serious issues on campus and do not want to embark on a survey at this time. Our K-8 counselor is working with teachers on Second Step violence prevention materials. This week, the elementary is presenting a workshop to parents on this topic." (*15) And finally, "I have shared your information with our Board and they are not willing to participate in the study. I know you will gain valuable information, and I wish you well in your research." (*16)*

❖ *One response was blatantly honest, with, "Unfortunately, this topic is just too much of a "hot potato," especially here in [country.]" (*10)*

5. One school that had agreed to participate in the survey and were making arrangements to do so, were unable to participate due to a school crisis, *"we had a suicide in the high school which naturally derailed everything for a long time. We can't even get cooperation to do follow-up suicide prevention!" *(11)*

6. With only data from one (1) EARCOS school, the study was then expanded to the Near East South Asia (NESAs) Council of Overseas Schools in an informal manner. One school principal approached me during a presentation on the issue at the 2000 NESAs teacher's conference, and given his awareness and concern, agreed to his school participating. Another NESAs school was approached given the superintendent's similar awareness and concern.

7. Letters of assent to parents sent out, letters of assent to students on the day of the survey. Surveys were completed in December 2001 and March 2002 by 3 schools, N = 161. Only 4 parents declined to allow their child to participate.

Survey results

N	Female	Male
161	75 47%	79 49%

Non-physical/ neglect/witnessing	Physical	Sexual
21.8%	18.18%	7.83%

Comparison of survey results done in USA

"Children as Victims of Violence: A National Survey" Finkelhor and Dziuba-Leatherman, 1994, PEDIATRICS Vol 94, No. 4, October 1994, Table 1, p. 415

Type of victimization (ever)	%	Int'l Schools survey
Any victimization (excl. corporal pun.)	51.3%	
Family assault	13%	15.2%
Parent perpetrator	4.5%	5.6%
Corporal punishment	74.5%	
Physical assault		18.2%
Theft/nonphysical/witnessing/neglect		21.8%
Sexual abuse	10.5%	7.8%
Rape	0.7%	4%
Violence to genitalia	9%	16%
Kidnapping	6.1%	5%

Knowing that abuse does exist in international school communities and thus that child-centered protection policies are needed, we now go back to the guideline questions:

1. Does your school have a policy for what is child sexual abuse, handling child sexual abuse, and in particular if the offender is an employee of your school?

Requested	Received
7	5 (1=draft)

Gathering policies from schools was not an original objective of this study. The need for the study arose from the general lack of policies within international schools on child protection, information that came out of the EARCOS 1999 Counselor's Conference at which I presented. Lengthy discussion brought out the concern of counselors of the lack of policies. One counselor shared that their school was forced to make a policy given a crisis around rape, but then in their attempt to make the policy culturally sensitive, it became instead so diluted and thus ineffective. An example from another school about the concern of culture can be seen in their drafted policy questioning, "*Are medical practitioners available who are knowledgeable and sympathetic to western attitudes towards and definitions of child abuse?*" (*24) When I could not get schools to participate in the survey, I then asked several schools at which I have personal contacts for their child protection policy as samples from which to design generic policies for schools needing assistance.

The general lack of policy is seconded to the fact that 4 of the 5 policies/draft policies I received included possible expulsion from the school if parents do not cooperate with the school in their efforts to help the child.

- ❖ "*If abuse or neglect continues the parent(s)/guardian(s) may be asked to withdraw the child from the School.*" (*21)

- ❖ *"In the event of a severe or repeated incident, the Principal will notify the Superintendent. In cooperation with the Principal and the Psychologist, the Principal will communicate with the parents and parents' company sponsor, the conditions under which the parents may continue to enroll their child in the school." (*22)*
- ❖ *"The recommendation will include whether a child's continuance at the School is in the best interests of the child and the school population. Consequences will also be detailed, in the event that recommendations to the parents are not followed. These might include exclusion of the child from the School." (*23)*
- ❖ *"The school may stipulate, as a condition for the child's continued enrollment, that the child and/or perpetrator follow-up with counseling or psychotherapy." (*24)*

Of the 5 policies/draft policies, 4 did not include investigation by a third party. Instead, decisions appeared to be made by those in the school and the limited information they may have or be able to gather.

None of the policies referred to the issue of the offender being an employee of the school.

An example of the entire policy of one school:

" Personnel shall immediately inform the School counselors or psychologists of any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. The counselor or psychologist shall inform the Administration and shall immediately schedule an appointment to discuss the case with the parents/guardians.

*If conditions of the case warrant it, the counselor or, the psychologist shall require the parent(s)/Guardian(s) to obtain counseling from an outside source. If abuse or neglect continues the parent(s)/guardian(s) may be asked to withdraw the child from the School." (*21)*

2. Is this policy linked to the legal procedures of the host country? If no, why not? If there are no laws in the host country, then from where would you base your policies?

The only one policy I received was well designed, working with the local authorities as well as their laws and abuse definitions. (*20) All others were based on investigation, reporting, and even counseling procedures within the school.

3. Are the students in your school protected under any policy or law? If not, why not?

Of the 5 schools providing their policy or draft policy, the fact that only 1 school based their policy on local law and with local authority networking, raises the question whether the children in the other 4 schools, and in fact most international schools, are protected by the law because of the lack of implementation of the local law. The responses I have had from many counselors is the fear of a disclosure, what can they do, will a disclosure create more damage to the child?

These are relevant fears and understandable "excuses" heads of schools may use for having no policy, but I think the time for excuses is far past. It is now time to begin the long process to train teachers and counselors, whole school communities on the values and standards that international schools should have in the protection of their students, and then implement the policies designed with the help of local authority and agencies focusing on women and children.

4. Does your school publish, post or otherwise distribute any policy you have on child sexual abuse so that all students and parents are aware of definitions and expectations, including procedures for reporting?

This question was not asked. However, considering that most schools appear to not have a policy nor discuss the issue openly, then parents and students are not educated on the issue. When schools do design policies, part of the implementation must be to make parents aware of their standards for child protection, let students know these standards along with how to get help, and finally, all school personnel, not just counselors, must be trained in the issue of child protection and handling disclosures.

5. Can your school in any way be considered a safe haven for offenders (both employees and others) for reasons such as:

- ***There is no reporting to authority of suspected cases*** "... the Principal will communicate with the parents and the parents' company sponsor..." (*22) "In extreme cases where the student's welfare is deemed to be in jeopardy, the parents' employer and/or the appropriate embassy may be informed." (*23) "Reporting to local authorities: Reporting of child abuse is not mandatory in [country]." (*24)
- ***There is a lack of confidence in local laws or lack of awareness of local systems*** "When problems like this have surfaced, and they do periodically, we've had to forge ahead with little support from outside agencies. Most often, we've worked with a local group of trained expatriate counselors, children's parents' companies and embassies.

*In my twelve years in [city], we've never involved the [country] police or other governmental offices - too risky." *3*

- ***There is weak implementation of your policies*** - This cannot yet be answered. This can be determined only after policies are designed and schools have experienced reporting and handling cases of sexual abuse and domestic violence within the expat community. Further studies need to be made, interviewing those schools that have reported to local authorities, documenting experiences and lessons learned.
- ***Teachers suspected or admitting to sexual offenses are fired with no third party investigation*** - This also needs further study, although I suspect that firing personnel is confidential information and thus limited information will be available. However, international communities are small with information known by many who aren't supposed to have access to such information.
- ***The reputation of the school is considered linked with the offender encouraging silence from the school*** - This question must remain with each school as they examine their motives for the lack of child protection policies and practices.
- ***No direct questions on this issue are considered during interviews of candidates*** - This question must remain with the Heads of schools and recruiting agencies assisting the international schools in locating personnel.

- *No teacher suspected of a sexual offense is reported to his/her licensing board* - An additional question begs to be asked here and that is, do schools even know the addresses of relevant licensing boards?
- *There are no policies in the contract related to the school's role in the protection of their students* - I am assuming that without policies, certainly this is a far reaching and moot question.
- *Relevant embassies are not reported to when dealing with a sexual offender* - this issue must be dealt with embassies, determining the mandates of these bodies.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

International Schools are excellent institutions for the education of expatriate children. International Schools can achieve excellence because of their resources, financial and human, as well as their autonomy that gives them freedom to focus on meeting the educational needs of their particular population. However, the population of International Schools is similar to those in the United States in terms of victimization experiences and thus the need for child protection policies and practices. The autonomy of international schools puts them at risk from having to abide by laws and mandates of schools within the United States or even from local child protection laws when they exist. The autonomy of international schools also limits the outside resources and support that schools within the United States receive from social service mandates, hospitals, police and other authority.

International schools need both pressure and support from outside sources to provide child protection policies and practices.

1. Additional intensive research is needed to build on this report to guide international schools towards practices that better meet the child protection practices on behalf of their students.
2. Local resources, especially in countries (such as the Philippines) with well developed child protection policies and laws, need to extend their support to international schools to bring the school communities out of their vacuum. These local resources include UNICEF.
3. Accreditation Boards need to include child protection as part of their mandate, thus providing support from the United States to international schools in this issue.
4. International school support services such as EARCOS and NESAs need to look at alternatives for schools within countries that do not have any or have poorly developed child protection services, alternatives including the CRAN (Child Rights Advocacy Network) services that are being developed by international schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
5. Embassy bodies need to be studied to determine their level of possible support, this includes how American DoD schools provide their students with child protection services.

Schools need help to come out of their vacuum and stop assuming too many non-educational responsibilities. International schools need help to remove some of these burdens so that international schools can concentrate on education, what they are best at, but without compromising child protection!