



# Shining a Light on Prevention of & Response to Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation

*In partnership with:*

**CHILDHOOD**

WORLD CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION  
FOUNDED BY H.M. QUEEN SILVIA OF SWEDEN

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE  
SALT LAKE CITY CONFERENCE  
JUNE 2-5, 2026  
WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT

# Global Situation

**One in five girls and  
one in seven boys  
experience  
childhood sexual violence**



# World Childhood Foundation USA

World Childhood Foundation USA supports groundbreaking programs and innovative solutions dedicated to ending the sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

## VISION

A world where all children are free from sexual abuse and exploitation.

## MISSION

To inspire, promote, and develop solutions to end the sexual abuse and exploitation of children.



The index was constructed by an Economist Impact team and supported by World Childhood Foundation USA

U.S. Out of the Shadows Index was developed to:

- Evaluate state-level efforts to prevent, respond to and ultimately eradicate sexual violence against children
- State level data needed, as many of the systems responsible for keeping children safe – including education systems, child protections, criminal justice and healthcare services – are primarily the responsibility of individual states.



# Ensuring a holistic approach to preventing and responding to child sexual abuse & exploitation



# Benchmarking States' Efforts

Using 170+ individual metrics aggregated into 20 indicators and four domains

## Legal Protections & Criminal Provisions

- Protections for gender & equality
- Protections for minors
- Laws criminalizing child sexual abuse
- Laws criminalizing sexual grooming, exploitation and CSAM
- Protecting children from unsafe environments

## Provision of Support Services

- Child welfare workforce & response
- Emergency response services & care
- Children's advocacy centers
- Survivors' rights & compensation

## Prevention Capacity Building

- Building individual skills & knowledge
- Educating providers
- Promoting community education
- Fostering coalitions & networks
- Changing organizational practice
- Influencing policy & legislation
- Data availability

## Justice Process

- Training and specialization in justice responses
- Survivor- and child-centered justice
- Perpetrator rehabilitation
- Monitoring & evaluation processes

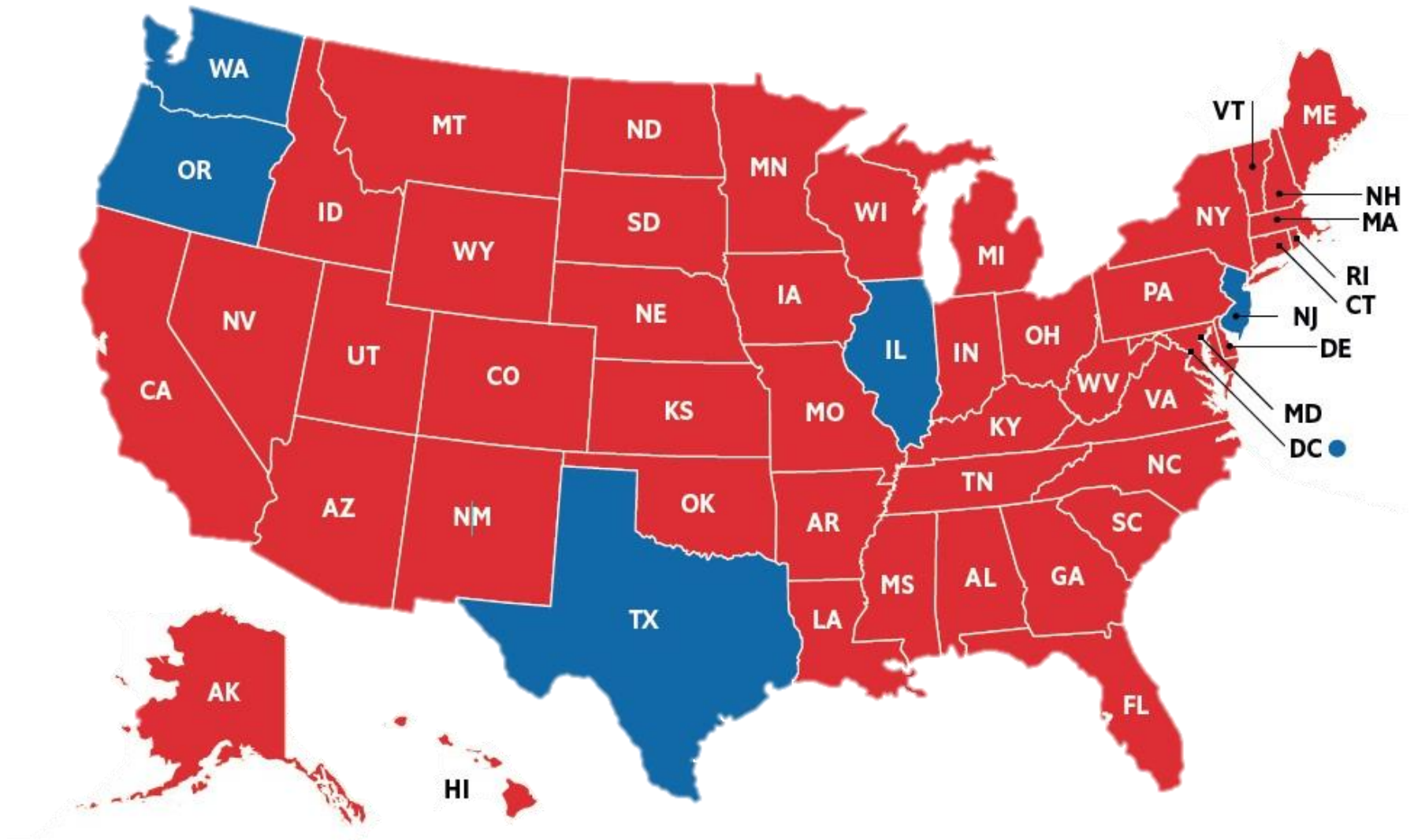


# CSAE is a Preventable, Not an Inevitable Problem



# Grading the prevention of and response to CSAE

■ Score <60 (Grade F) ■ Score >60 (Grade D)



# Overall Scores

The Out of the Shadows Index evaluated all 50 states and DC on their prevention of and response to CSEA

**64** **Maximum**  
Washington received the highest overall score

**49.9** **Average**  
The average overall score is 50

**35.2** **Minimum**  
Wyoming received the lowest overall score

## Top 10 States

rank	state	score
1	Washington	64
2	Illinois	64
3	Texas	63
4	New Jersey	62
5	District of Columbia	61
6	Oregon	60
7	Connecticut	59
8	Maryland	58
=9	Pennsylvania	57
=9	Vermont	57

## Bottom 10 States

rank	state	score
42	Arizona	42
=43	Alabama	42
=43	South Carolina	42
45	Idaho	41
46	North Carolina	41
47	North Dakota	41
48	Mississippi	41
49	Kansas	40
50	South Dakota	38
51	Wyoming	35



# Issue brief topics



1. Strengthening the legal framework against CSAE



2. Online sexual harms



3. Building prevention capacity



4. Children's advocacy centers



5. Building trauma-informed and survivor-centered systems



6. Expanding access to justice, compensation and healing

7. Responding to youth engaged in problematic sexual behavior





## 1. Strengthening the legal framework against CSAE by:

- Ensuring that anti-grooming legislation explicitly criminalizes patterns of behavior intended to facilitate or lead to sexual abuse of a child, both in-person and online.
- Raising the minimum legal age of marriage to 18 without exceptions
- Providing statutory definitions of key terms concerning sexual offenses, particularly those involving minors



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## Preventing the Cycle

**ONLY 1 IN 5 STATES HAS A DEDICATED ACTION PLAN TO PREVENT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.**



Experts urge **all** states to implement programs to protect children.  
**Contact your legislator to take action NOW.**

**CHILDHOOD**  
WORLD CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION

Data  
from

**ECONOMIST  
IMPACT**



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## Survivors deserve **time** — not **time limits**.

Survivors of sexual abuse often need many years before they're ready to disclose. Yet **statutes of limitations (SOL)** — the legal deadlines to file criminal charges or civil claims — remain a major obstacle in many states, preventing survivors from accessing justice and healing.

**CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR TO  
DEMAND SOL REFORM.**



“There can be no keener revelation  
of a society’s soul than the way  
in which it treats its children.”

Nelson Mandela

