

**CHILDREN IN NEED OF PROTECTION: REPORTING POLICIES IN ONTARIO  
SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

by

Samantha Jo Shewchuk

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to explore the factors (case, organizational, decision maker, and external) that influence teaching professionals when deciding to report children suspected to be in need of protection.

**Context:** Teachers report 24%, or 175,920 cases to Children's Aid Societies annually in Canada; researchers who have examined teacher reporting practices, speculate that teachers fail to report between 50 to 84%, or 87,960–147,773 cases of suspected cases to authorities.

**Method:** The conceptual framework for the study came from Baumann, Dalglish, Fluke, and Kern's (2011) decision-making ecology framework which claims that individuals consider case, organizational, external, and decision-maker factors when making a decision. Phase one included an analysis of 64 policies on reporting children suspected to be in need of protection from English speaking, public and Catholic school districts and geographically isolated school authorities. Crosson-Tower's (2013) policy analysis framework was used to analyze education factors, the legal system, document properties, procedures, support systems, training opportunities, and community relationships. Phase two consisted of one hour, semi-structured interviews ( $n = 7$ ) with individuals who are mandated to report, and who had made at least one report. Interview questions were based on the conceptual framework and from the findings from phase one.

**Results:** Many school districts omitted information that could have been beneficial to teachers who were required to report. For example, district policies *did not* provide information on: relevant legal definitions (35%), how to keep personal records on the child (53%), telephone numbers of local CAS (53%), common indicators of abuse (73%), and how to respond to students who have disclosed abuse (77%) within their documents. Throughout the province it also appeared that training opportunities were minimal, with only 31% of school districts stating that professional development opportunities would be provided to teachers. This study did not explore whether training actually took place in school districts. Interview data, although not generalizable due to the sample size, appeared to suggest a lack of communication between school districts and parents, and teachers and Children's Aid Societies (CAS).

**Conclusion:** More research is needed to see how much of the supports listed in school district policies, such as training opportunities and support systems, are actually implemented and the subsequent effect of these actions on teacher's reporting practices.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore the factors (case, organizational, decision maker, and external) that influence teaching professionals when deciding to report children in need of protection. The study occurred in two phases; phase one of the study analyzed school district child abuse reporting policies in Ontario and explored what training, resources, and supports school districts state they will provide to help teachers recognize and report cases where a child may be in need of protection, while phase two involved conducting interviews with teachers (n = 4), youth and recreation workers (n = 2), and a pre-service school counsellor (n = 1) to explore the experiences of those who have reported cases where they thought a child may be in need of protection.

In Ontario, *The Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O., 1990) requires all professionals who work with children, including teachers, to report children who may be in need of protection to child protective services, otherwise known as Children's Aid Societies (CAS). Additionally, the Ontario Ministry of Education's Policy Memorandum no. 9 allows school districts to create their own policies, administrative procedures, and professional development on reporting children in need of protection as long as they do not conflict with the reporting requirements of the *Act* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2001). Because school districts are each responsible for creating their own policy in relation to children in need of protection, it is possible that in-service teachers are being provided with different levels of resources and supports across the province.

### **Definition of "Child in Need of Protection"**

Under S. 37 (2) of *The Ontario Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O., 1990) a child is deemed in need of protection where the child has suffered, or will likely suffer from physical harm, sexual harm, emotional harm, or neglect. In addition, a child is deemed to be in need of protection if the child is under the age of 12 and has injured or killed someone, or has caused damaged to another person's property.

Finally, a child is in need of protection if he or she has been abandoned by his or her caregivers, or if the caregivers have died.

For the purpose of this study, the term “child in need of protection” is used to encapsulate all the types of harm that a child may experience. For the exact wording of what constitutes a “child in need of protection” as defined by *The Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O., 1990) see Appendix A. In addition, the term “abuse” is used throughout the study. *The Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O., 1990) states that when abuse is “used in reference to a child, it means to be in need of protection within the meaning of clause 37 (2).”

## **Context and Significance**

Annually, approximately 733,000 reports of children suspected to be in need of protection are made to Children’s Aid Societies. Teachers report 24% or 175,920 of these cases (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2008); however, based on research that studied teacher reporting practices, researchers have speculated that teachers fail to report between 50 to 84%, or 87,960–147,773 suspected cases to authorities (Beck, Ogloff, & Corbishley, 1994; Dombrowski, Ahia, & McQuillan, 2003). Consequently, children in need of protection may not be receiving the care that they need.

A large body of research has shown there are many social, emotional, cognitive, and short and long term physical consequences when a child is abused (Eckenrode, Rowe, Laird, & Brathwaite, 1995; Lamb, Gaensbauer, Malkin, & Schultz, 1985; Macdonald, 2001; Veltman & Browne, 2001). These children have been shown to consistently perform lower on language and other cognitive assessments (Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001) and abuse can also result in low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, phobias, sexually dangerous behaviour, and social skill deficits (Bolger, Patterson, & Kupersmidt, 1998; Kolko, 1992). The consequences of abuse have a negative effect on a child’s ability to succeed in school (Wodarski, Kurtz, Gaudin, & Howing, 1990) and often result in the affected children leaving school at an

early age, missing out on the essential skills needed to succeed in society (Walsh & Farrell, 2008). Some children may never fully recover from the effects of abuse, and can experience lifelong health issues and take part in criminal or dangerous behaviour which can put an economic strain on social services (Tite, 1993). As a result of these findings, many jurisdictions across the globe have enacted legislation in an attempt to stop child abuse from occurring.

Teachers are in a unique position to notice child abuse due to the extensive amount of time that they spend with their students (Crosson-Tower, 2002) and, therefore, are able to notice small changes in student behaviour and physical appearance. In an attempt to understand why teachers may not report, researchers have analyzed perceived teacher deterrents to reporting (Kenny, 2004), in-service teacher knowledge of child protection legislation (Beck et al., 1994; Hinkelmann & Bruno, 2008; Kenny, 2004; Tite, 1993, 1994; Walsh & Farrell, 2008) and, the level of training that pre-service teachers receive on recognizing and reporting abuse (Goldman, 2005, 2007; Hodgkinson & Baginsky, 2000; McKee & Dillenburger, 2009; Rossato & Brackenridge, 2009).

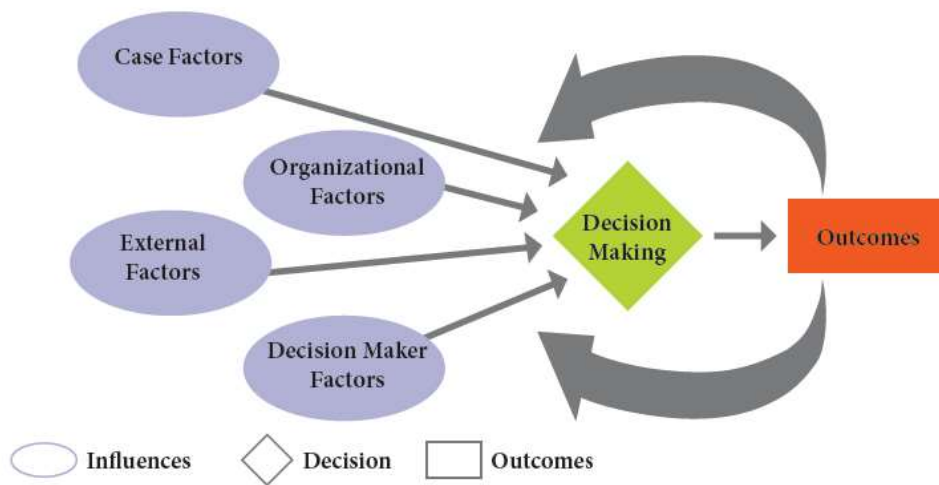
These studies revealed that while teachers may theoretically be in an excellent position to report abuse, there are several factors that can influence whether a teacher decides to report such as a teacher's: sex, personal experience, years of teaching experience, and the specific characteristics of each case (Beck et al., 1994; Kenny, 2001; McKee & Dillenburger, 2009). Moreover, teachers can face ethical dilemmas that may stop them from making reports (Yetman, 2007). For example, a teacher may feel that reporting abuse may ruin the parent/teacher relationship, may not be in the best interest of the child, or that a Children's Aid Society would not handle the problem appropriately (Dubowitz, 1997). However, researchers argue that teacher reporting can be improved by providing teachers with appropriate resources and supports (Tite, 1993) such as providing teachers with: professional development opportunities (Beck et al., 1994), explicit school district policies (Dombrowski & Grischler, 2006), and access to administrative supports to help guide teachers through the reporting process (Kenny, 2001, 2004).

To date, research by Tite (1993, 1994) has been the only research to examine teacher reporting in Ontario. Both articles report on the data collected for her doctoral thesis. First, she completed preliminary interviews with teachers (n = 10) to discover teacher attitudes and knowledge of abuse and mandatory reporting requirements in order to guide the design of a survey for the second phase of the study. Secondly, Tite surveyed a random sample of teachers and principals (n = 303) who taught in the elementary grades during the late 1980s. The survey sought to discover how teachers defined abuse, the level of experience they had in dealing with cases of suspected abuse, and inquired what action they took in each case. Teachers were also asked to describe any perceived procedural problems. Lastly, follow up interviews were conducted with a random sample of teachers and principals (n = 10) who had revealed in the survey that they had made a report of suspected abuse. Tite's study uncovered problems within *The Child and Family Services Act* (1984) which eventually led to the legislation being updated in 1999 and, as a result, forced school districts in Ontario to update their policies on child abuse.

There has been no research that reports on the content of school district policies in the province of Ontario, Canada that relate to child abuse. Therefore, the current study builds from Tite's research by examining the content of current school district policies on child abuse.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The study was guided by the Child Welfare Decision Making Model of Baumann, Dalglish, Fluke, and Kern (2011).



*Figure 1.* Conceptual Framework of Decision Making Model for Child Abuse Cases. Adapted from “The decision-making ecology,” by D.J. Baumann, L. Dalglish, J. Fluke, and H. Kern, 2011, Washington, DC: American Humane Association, p. 5. Adapted with permission.

All decision making models are guided by the principle that individuals are influenced by a variety of factors before making a decision. Baumann’s et al. (2011) model puts forth that in cases concerning child welfare, an individual is guided by case, organization, external, and decision maker factors. Table 1 outlines the factors in further detail.



Table 1

*Description of Factors*

| <b>Factor</b>  | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Case           | Includes characteristics of the child, such as socio-economic status, age, gender, and the risk of experiencing harm as perceived by the decision maker. |
| Organization   | Includes access to administrative supports, relevant policy, and any professional development made available to the decision maker.                      |
| External       | Applicable legislation, community relationships (i.e., collaborating with child protective services).                                                    |
| Decision Maker | Includes characteristics of the decision maker, such as sex, skills and knowledge, and personal experience.                                              |

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*Note.* Summarized from “The decision-making ecology,” by D.J. Baumann, L. Dalglish, J. Fluke, and H. Kern, 2011, Washington, DC: American Humane Association, pp. 5–7.

For the purpose of this study, decision makers were defined as professionals who are legally required to report children who are suspected to be in need of protection under s. 72 (5) of *The Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O., 1990). Section 72 (5) identifies teachers, principals, counsellors, health care professionals, social workers, children and youth workers, religious leaders, and youth and recreation workers as individuals who are legally required to report. External factors are considered in the literature review while the first phase of the study examined the organizational factors of Baumann’s framework and the second phase of the study looked at decision maker and case factors.

## **Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to explore the case, organizational, decision maker, and external factors that influence teaching professionals when deciding to report children in need of protection in Ontario school districts by (a) analyzing school district policies; and, (b) interviewing teaching professionals who have made a report. The study is guided by three research questions. Research questions 1 and 2 are addressed in the document analysis while research question 3 is addressed in the interviews.

1. What external factors influence teacher decision-making in reporting children suspected to be in need of protection?
  - a. To what extent is external legislation integrated into school district policies?
  - b. What community relationships are in place to support teachers?
2. What organizational factors are currently in place to support teachers?
  - a. What school district policies are in place in relation to children in need of protection?
  - b. What supports are described in school district policies?
  - c. What training opportunities are described in school district policies?
3. What are the case and decision maker factors of the teaching professionals who have made a report to child protective services?
  - a. What steps did the teacher take before and after reporting?
  - b. Did the decision maker feel adequately trained to handle the case?
  - c. What were the personal consequences to reporting?

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is organized in three sections. First, external factors concerning child abuse are explored. The second section outlines case factors, such as the characteristics of the children and families currently under the care of Children's Aid Societies and the perceived risk factors of abuse as reported by teachers in previous studies. Finally, the last section addresses organizational and decision-maker factors by providing an overview of empirical studies that have been conducted in the US, Canada, United Kingdom, and Australia about improving child abuse reporting in teachers. It is important to note, that while research has occurred in this subject area, many have been single studies that have occurred in different countries and contexts using unvalidated data collection instruments, which places limitations on the quality and generalizability of the data.

### **External Factors**

The following section contains five sub-sections. First, a historical analysis of child protection legislation in Ontario is provided. Second, the advent of mandated reporting is discussed, as well as the perceived advantages and disadvantages of mandated reporting as seen by researchers. The third section includes current legislation and discusses how this legislation affects teachers. Fourth, the role and duties of child protective services in Ontario are summarized. Finally, research on collaboration between community partners (i.e., schools and CAS) is reviewed.

**History of legislation in Ontario.** The first piece of child protection legislation in Ontario was implemented over 200 years ago and has been under a continual process of modification as a result of changes to public attitudes, attention of mass media, and legislative priorities throughout the years (Brade, 2007). After confederation, section 92 (10) of *The Constitution Act* (1867) gave each province the power and responsibility to fund and create legislation concerning matters pertaining to civil and property rights, which includes matters of child welfare. Therefore, child welfare services fall under the jurisdiction of

provincial and territorial authorities in Canada and, as a result, each province and territory has different legislation pertaining to child protection interventions. However, there is some federal and international involvement. Canada ratified the United Nations (UN) *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (United Nations Children's Fund, 1989) in 1991. The treaty affirms and describes the fundamental human rights of all children (all human beings under the age of 18). Article 19 of the treaty asserts that "children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated physically or mentally... governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence" (UNICEF, p. 1). Article 4 of the agreement further claims that governments must:

[Assess] their social services, legal, health, and educational systems, as well as the level of funding for these services. Governments are then obliged to take all necessary steps to ensure that the minimum standards set by the convention in these areas are being met.

By ratifying the UN agreement, Canada has assumed a legal obligation to implement the rights recognized by the treaty.

At the federal level, *The Youth Criminal Justice Act* (2003), *The Criminal Code* (1985), *The British North American Act* (1867), and *The Indian Act* (1951) all influence *The Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O., 1990). *The Youth Criminal Justice Act* stipulates that "at any stage of proceedings against a young person, a youth justice court judge may refer the young person to a child welfare agency to determine if he or she is in need of child welfare services" (p. 34). The federal government has the authority to make laws related to criminal law. While there is no specific offence on child abuse in *The Criminal Code* (1985), most acts of child abuse are crimes in Canada. Table 2 outlines the sections of the *Act* and how they relate to prosecuting individuals that have harmed children.

Table 2

*Criminal Offences Related to Child Abuse in The Criminal Code of Canada*

| <b>Type of Harm</b> | <b>Offence</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Physical            | <p>Assault (causing bodily harm, with a weapon and aggravated assault) (ss. 265-268)</p> <p>Homicide - murder, attempted murder, infanticide and manslaughter (ss. 229-231 and 235)</p> <p>Unlawfully causing bodily harm (s. 269)</p>                                                                                                                                            |
| Sexual              | <p>Trafficking in persons (ss. 279.01)</p> <p>Child pornography (s. 163.1)</p> <p>Sexual offences against children and youth (ss. 151, 152, 153, 155 and 170-172)</p> <p>Kidnapping and forcible confinement (s. 279)</p> <p>Abduction of a young person (ss. 280-283)</p> <p>Sexual assault (causing bodily harm, with a weapon and aggravated sexual assault) (ss. 271-273)</p> |
| Emotional           | <p>Corrupting children (Prohibits the morals of a child to be endangered by adultery, sexual immorality, habitual drunkenness or other forms of vice) (s. 172)</p> <p>Criminal harassment (Prohibits a person to engage in conduct which causes the other person to fear for their safety or the safety of anyone known to them)</p>                                              |
| Neglect             | <p>Duty of persons to provide necessities (It is unlawful to fail to provide the necessities of life for a child under 16 years of age) (s. 215)</p> <p>Abandoning a child (Prohibits unlawful abandoning or exposing to risk without protecting a child under the age of 10 so its life is endangered or its health will be permanently injured (s. 218)</p>                     |

*Note.* Adapted from “The Canadian Criminal Code: Applications of Abuse and Neglect,” by Saskatchewan Athletics.

As one can see, individuals can be convicted with a wide range of offences upon being charged with harming a child; however, the *Criminal Code* (1985) also offers a defense for people who are charged with physically harming their child. Section 43 of the *Code* states that:

Every schoolteacher, parent or person standing in the place of a parent is justified in using force by way of correction toward a pupil or child, as the case may be, who is under his care, if the force does not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances. (Barnett, 2008, p. 1)

This defense is otherwise known as the “spanking law”. The law is controversial as it expressly offers parents and teachers a defense when they physically reprimand a child. The law recently came under review in 2004 by the Supreme Court of Canada. The Court upheld the law, with a six to three decision; however, guidelines were set to outline key terminology. The first term defined by the Court was “by way of protection”:

The words “by way of correction” in s. 43 mean that the use of force must be sober and reasoned, address actual behaviour, and be intended to restrain, control, or express symbolic disapproval. The child must have the capacity to understand and benefit from the correction. (Barnett, 2008, p. 2)

This means that s. 43 does not justify force against children who are too young to understand why they are being spanked (under two) or those with particular disabilities. The second term defined “reasonable under the circumstances”:

The words “reasonable under the circumstances” in s. 43 mean that the force must be transitory and trifling, must not harm or degrade the child, and must not be based on the gravity of the wrongdoing. Reasonableness further implies that force may not be administered to teenagers, as it can induce aggressive or antisocial behaviour, may not involve objects such as rulers or belts, and may not be applied to the head. Corporal punishment itself is not reasonable in the school

context...however, teachers may use force to remove children from classrooms or secure compliance with instructions. (Barnett, 2008, p. 3)

*The British North American Act* (1867) and *Indian Act* (1951, 1985) come into play when an Aboriginal child enters into the care of a CAS. On-reserve child and family services are funded by the federal government, through Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010); maintenance costs for in-care, status First Nations children whose parents are ordinarily resident on-reserve are also covered by AANDC. The legislative framework for First Nations child welfare is further complicated by the 1985 *Indian Act* amendment which extended applicability of provincial laws to reserve communities; as a result, on-reserve child and family services agencies are funded by the federal government, but generally operate under the terms of legislation developed by provinces and territories.

This section revealed that there are an abundance of laws in place at the provincial, federal, and international level to stop child abuse. The purpose of law is to guide behaviour, maintain order and civility, and arise out of the values that our society holds. Therefore, one can see that stopping child abuse is one of the goals of our nation. To reach this goal, Canadian jurisdictions have instituted mandated reporting. The next subsection will provide information on the introduction of mandated reporting in Ontario.

**Introduction of mandated reporting.** The publication of a highly influential paper by Kempe, Silverman, Brandt, Droegemueller, and Silver (1962) entitled “The Battered-Child Syndrome,” along with much research effort, media frenzy, and political activism, resulted in the first mandatory reporting laws enacted. Mandatory reporting required certain professionals who worked with children to report any case where they suspected abuse had occurred to the proper authorities. Mandatory reporting was required in all American States by 1968. TenBensel, Rheinberger, and Radbill (1997) claimed that “these were the most rapidly adopted pieces of legislation in the history of the United States.” All Canadian

jurisdictions have also enacted mandatory reporting laws. Ontario introduced mandatory reporting in the 1984 version of *The Child and Family Services Act*.

This prompted the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) to create a procedure manual that outlined steps school personnel were to take if it was suspected that a student was in need of protection. These procedures required teachers to report all suspected cases to their principal, who would then determine if the suspicion should be reported to CAS. If the principal did not suspect abuse had occurred, but the teacher still felt it had, the teacher was responsible for calling CAS (Ontario Teachers' Federation, 1984, p. 21). All school district policies reflected the procedures set forth by OTF (Tite, 1994).

As previously mentioned, prior to the current study, research by Tite (1993, 1994) has been the only Ontario-based research to look at teacher reporting. First, she completed exploratory interviews with 10 teachers to discover teacher attitudes and knowledge of abuse and mandatory reporting requirements. Second, she used the information garnered during the interviews to help guide the creation of a survey. The survey was not a validated source of measurement; survey questions were chosen by analysing previous research on the topic. The survey asked teachers how they defined abuse, the level of experience they had in dealing with cases of suspected abuse, and inquired what action they took in each case. Teachers were also asked to describe the procedural problems as perceived by them. She surveyed a random sample of 500 female teachers and 100 principals who taught in the elementary grades in 1987-88. Two hundred and fifty-six teachers and 47 principals responded to the survey. The sample was drawn from the membership list of the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario (1987) and included teachers from every region of the province. Principals were drawn randomly from the Ontario Directory of Education (1987). Third, follow up interviews were conducted with a random sample of (n = 8) teachers and (n = 2) principals who had revealed in the survey that they had made a report of suspected abuse. The interviews during this phase of the study focused on the experience of reporting. As the number of interview participants was small, the findings should be generalized with



care. Tite's first (1993) article discussed how teachers define and respond to child abuse. Her second article (1994) examined the procedural difficulties teachers faced when abuse was suspected. Based on her survey data, Tite discovered that the OTF guidelines that required teachers to first report their concerns to their principal resulted in approximately half of the potential reports made by the teachers surveyed did not reach Children Aid Societies. She reported that this was, in part, due to teachers and principals having different definitions of abuse and out of deference to the principal, teachers claimed they were often reluctant to go against the principal's decision. Tite recommended that in order to better protect children, these procedures needed to change so that teachers were required to report directly.

In the late 1990s, the Ontario Child Mortality Task Force (1997) reviewed the deaths of 100 children from 1994 to 1995 who were in the care of Children's Aid Societies. The final report made several recommendations that addressed a range of concerns about child protection services. This review garnered much political and public attention and spawned additional reports by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Child Protection Review, and the Child Welfare Accountability Review, all of which called for amendments to be made to *The Child and Family Services Act* (1984) (King et al., 2003). In 2000, as a result of the government reports, the Ontario legislature passed Bill 6 to amend *The Child and Family Services Act* (CFSA) (1984). Tite's (1994) research, along with the recommendations of the Task Force lead to the insertion of a clause in the CFSA which made the requirements for reporting children suspected to be in need of protection more clear and put the onus to report on the person who originally suspected the child was in need of protection. This meant that teachers were no longer required to go through their principal if they suspected that abuse had occurred. In addition, legal penalties were instituted if professionals failed to report suspicions of abuse.

This section outlined how mandated reporting came to be and how legal requirements surrounding it have changed over the years as a result of independent and government sponsored research. It is relevant to my study because, as a result of these legislative changes, it is now the direct

responsibility of teachers to report child abuse; also, there are now penalties for teachers who fail to report children suspected to be in need of protection. These developments suggest that the stakes are higher than ever for educators working on the frontlines to be properly trained regarding child abuse and the processes in place in their school district for reporting. The next section provides arguments for and against mandated reporting.

**Arguments for and against mandated reporting.** There has been debate over whether mandated reporting is an effective way of stopping child abuse. This section provides an overview of the opposing views surrounding mandatory child abuse reporting. Ainsworth (2002) and Scott (2006) argued that mandatory reporting laws are ineffective and may actually cause harm by overloading the child protection system. The authors made the case that overloading the system results in children who are in need protection being missed as a result of superficial assessments or prematurely closed case files. Ainsworth and Scott analysed the introduction of *The Children and Young Persons Act* in New South Wales in 1998. The authors used 2001 statistics from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, a national agency, set up by the Australian Government. The new *Act* lowered the threshold and extended the grounds for the mandatory reporting of suspected cases of child abuse and introduced a penalty for professionals who failed to report. Scott stated that the number of notifications doubled in twelve months from 55,208 in 2001-2002 to 109,498 in 2002-2003 and that the number of referrals to family support services actually decreased due to the incapacity of the child protection service to make referrals. Scott's analysis revealed that only 21.3% of notifications lead to substantiation. Scott argued that this drastic increase in referrals would strain relationships between child protection service and mandated reporters as child protective services would have to begin gatekeeping as a result from the large gap between the threshold for making a notification and the threshold for opening a case. By comparison, Ainsworth analysed Western Australia, which did not have mandated reporting and discovered that 44.2% of notifications lead to substantiation. In Canada, 36% of investigations are substantiated (CIS, 2008).

While Ainsworth (2002) did not offer an alternative option to mandatory reporting, Scott (2006) put forth that a public health model would be more appropriate as it “lends itself to tackling the underlying causal and contributory factors related to child abuse and neglect from a whole government prospective” (p. 14). A public health model:

Encourages us to think of ways to stop the spread of drug abuse or violence, for example, or how to prevent drug abusers from harming themselves or spreading infection to the community, or on initiating education programs in schools to teach young people how to recognize the possible onset of violence, how to prevent it, who to call if violence is experienced, etc. (Online Dictionary of The Social Sciences, 2014)

Scott argued that the rationale for this approach is that child abuse is strongly correlated with and shares common risk and protective factors with other problems such behavioral disorders, juvenile crime, teenage pregnancy, and non-completion of school. A meta-analysis of prevention programs for these problems revealed that multi-faceted strategies are more effective than those which only focus on a singular issue (Durlak & Wells, 1998). Therefore, in order to achieve a whole government perspective, primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention strategies would need to be implemented. Primary prevention strategies are population wide measures to help combat a problem. For example, this could be accomplished by implementing public service announcements (PSAs) to raise awareness about child abuse within the general population. Secondary prevention involves efforts directed at those groups within the population at greater risk. Scott stated that health and education services could be re-engineered so they work more effectively with vulnerable families and communities. Thirdly, tertiary prevention is focused on reducing the harm already established by abuse. This would come in the form of providing affected families with educational resources, supports, and counselling. Scott claims that these changes would have greater potential to reduce the level of child abuse within our communities.

Other researchers disagree with Ainsworth (2002) and Scott (2006) and argue that without mandated reporting laws, many cases of abuse would not be brought to the attention of authorities (Mathews & Bross, 2008). This claim is strengthened by the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect-2008 (CIS-2008) (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2008). The CIS-2008 is the third nation-wide study to examine the incidence of reported child abuse and the characteristics of the children and families investigated by child welfare. The CIS-2008 tracked 15,980 child protection investigations conducted in a representative sample of 112 Child Welfare Service organizations across Canada in the fall of 2008. The report stated that 68% of all referrals made to Children's Aid Societies were from mandated reporters. Mathews and Bross (2008) recognized that mandated reporting produces more referrals, which include some which are not substantiated and, as a result, requires resources to screen, assess, and investigate cases; however, they maintain that this is not an argument against mandated reporting, but against insufficient resourcing, ineffective reporter training, vague reporting laws, and ineffective screening measures.

This section provided arguments for and against mandated reporting. The number of substantiated cases in Canada is low (36%); therefore, one could argue that mandated reporting is not an appropriate measure to stop abuse as it can actually increase the burden on a system which already lacks resources as Children's Aid Societies must investigate more cases. However, Canadian legislatures are not likely to repeal mandated reporting laws as "the appeal of such legislation is that it communicates a high degree of concern with, and the appearance of, doing something about child abuse at very little cost [for the government]" (Hoyano & Keenan, 2007, p. 237). In fact, due to a recent death of a child under the care of CAS, there has been strong support for the CFSA to be updated so all people living in Ontario are mandated to report suspected abuse, or risk being fined (Kane, 2014). Therefore, Mathew and Bross (2008) have a strong case that in order to increase the number of substantiated reports, governments should properly train mandated reporters to recognize the symptoms of abuse. The arguments

surrounding mandated reporting and how effective these policies are as well as the unintended consequences that these policies might have are important, because efforts in these areas might not be the best way to target limited resources. Rather, the system might be better served by exploring preventative measures in relation to the community or putting these resources into more thorough training of teachers in order to ensure that teachers are not burdening the system with unfounded reports. The following subsection will provide information on the current legislation teachers must adhere to in regards to child abuse.

**Current Legislation in Ontario.** Today, Ontario teachers must adhere to Section 72 (1) of *The Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O., 1990) which stipulates:

If a person, including a person who performs professional or official duties with respect to children, has reasonable grounds to suspect, one of the following, the person shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to a child welfare agency. (Child and Family Services Act, R.S.O. 1999)

“One of the following” refers to the types of harm that were outlined in the definition of “child in need of protection” (Appendix A). Furthermore, subsection 72 (2) states that the duty to report is an ongoing obligation. If a professional has made a report to CAS and has additional reasonable grounds to suspect that the child is still in need of protection, that person must make a further report. Subsection 72 (3) of the *Act* orders that every person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection must make the report directly to CAS, and must not rely on anyone else to report on his or her behalf. Subsection 72 (4) of the *Act* makes it an offence for persons performing professional or official duties with respect to children to fail to report a child who, they suspect, is or may be in need of protection, with clause 72 (5) expressly identifying teachers, principals, counsellors, health care professionals, social workers, children and youth workers, religious leaders, youth and recreation workers, and any other person who performs professional or official duties with respect to a child as

persons that can be charged with failing to report. Finally, the mandatory reporting laws in child welfare legislation are considered to be Good Samaritan laws as subsection 72 (7) provides legal protection to those who make reports of suspected abuse in good faith. Good Samaritan laws offer legal protection to people who give assistance to those who are injured, ill, or in danger. The protection is meant to reduce the bystanders' hesitation to help the victim due to fear of being sued or prosecuted for causing unintentional harm.

Any professional who is convicted of the offence of failing to report a child who is suspected to be in need of protection “is liable to a fine of not more than \$50,000 or to imprisonment for a term of not more than two years, or both.” This penalty was introduced in the 2008 amendment to the *Act*. In earlier versions of the *Act*, the penalty was much lower, with convicted persons only having to pay a \$1,000 fine, with no risk of imprisonment. A search for statistics on mandated reporters that have been charged for non-reporting in Ontario resulted in none being found. The Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies, Statistics Canada, The Ontario College of Teachers, and Justice Canada were called. Each organization claimed that no statistics were collected in this area. A web-based search for Ontario citizens who had been charged also resulted in no cases being found. Hoyano and Keenan (2007) reported that one doctor in Alberta had been charged for failing to report when a child repeatedly came to the hospital with wounds that indicated abuse had occurred. The lack of available information suggests that very few individuals have been charged with failing to report. A lack of cases may be due to several reasons, such as the difficulty the prosecution faces in determining whether or not the defendant had reasonable suspicion to believe that the child was in need of protection (Avis, 1999), or the government’s wish to not appear overly punitive with professionals, or a lack of cases may suggest that it is difficult to find out who fails to report, or that the government has little desire to ensure professionals are reporting abuse.

School districts are guided by Policy Memorandum no. 9 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2001). The policy stipulates that all Directors of Education, Secretaries of School Authorities, Directors of Provincial Schools, and Principals of Elementary, Secondary, and Provincial Schools ensure that:

All staff members are aware and understand the relevant sections of *The Child and Family Services Act*, particularly the requirement to report suspected cases of children in need of protection ... and school district policies and procedures on reporting suspected cases of children in need of protection conform to the provisions of *The Child and Family Services Act*. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2001)

However, the Ministry's Policy Memorandum no. 9 is now outdated as it goes on to state that "if such a professional or official does not report the suspicion, he or she is liable, upon conviction for the offence, to a fine of up to \$1000." As previously stated, this penalty was replaced with a much larger penalty of \$50,000 and risk of imprisonment of up to two years in the 2008 amendment to the *Act*.

It is considered professional misconduct under *The Ontario College of Teachers Act* (1996), regulation 437/97, to "fail to comply with the member's duties under *The Child and Family Services Act*." While the *CFSA* legally requires all school personnel to report suspected abuse; the above policy reveals that school districts have a clear responsibility to educate teachers about their role and responsibilities on child abuse. Hence, this legislation shows the significance of the purpose of this study to explore these child abuse reporting policies in school districts in Ontario. The following subsection provides background information on the organization responsible for child protective services in Ontario.

**Child Protection Services.** In Ontario, child protective services are handled by Children's Aid Societies (CAS). The societies receive funding from, and are under the supervision of, the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS). The estimated total funding for CAS in Ontario in 2014 is \$1.464 billion (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, 2014). Children's Aid Societies are regarded as non-governmental organizations which allow a large degree of autonomy from MCYS.

These Societies are responsible for investigating all reports of potential abuse and have the authority to remove a child from his or her home if it is deemed the child is at risk of experiencing continual abuse. Children's Aid Societies are also responsible for providing support services for the children and families who are within their care, such as counselling, educational programs, and access to mental health services. Understanding the mandate of CAS is important for this study, because child abuse does not occur in a vacuum and is not dealt with by schools alone. Rather, child abuse reporting policies and activities sit at the intersection of two sectors – child welfare and education – and, as a result, are also influenced and governed by two Ontario ministries – the Ministry of Child and Youth Services and the Ministry of Education. This makes child abuse reporting even more complex as resources and reporting have to be coordinated across multiple organizations and ministries. When having to move information across different organizations, there is also a higher chance that cases or issues fall through the cracks (Rummler & Brache, 1995) as sometimes it is not clear whose role or responsibility it is to follow up or deal with particular tasks. The following subsection will explore the working relationship between CAS and teachers.

***Relationship between CAS and teachers.*** Researchers (Dombrowski et al., 2003; Laskey, 2012; Tite, 1993) contend that school districts should work to increase collaboration with Children's Aid Societies as teachers have developed a distrust of the child protection system's capacity to secure an improved situation for child victims. Teachers complain that CAS caseworkers put children at risk for further harm due to delays in investigations or that CAS does not do anything when the abuse has been reported (Alvarez, Kenny, Donohue, & Carpin, 2004). These beliefs arise out of differences in priorities between teachers and caseworkers. Teachers have been told to report all cases of suspected abuse; however, within child protective services, a need has arisen to limit caseloads (Ainsworth, 2002; Scott, 2006). Reports of children suspected to be in need of protection have substantially increased over the years while funding has not increased. In 2009, 49 CASs faced funding shortfalls of \$67 million, which



greatly affected their capacity to deliver the services required by legislation. In addition to the historic shortfalls that were not fully covered by the province, child protection services received \$23 million less than in 2008 but were expected to deliver the same level of mandated services (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, 2009). This lack of funding results in child protective services producing policies and procedures that are designed to reduce the number of reports accepted and to focus resources on the most serious cases, thus creating differences in what is viewed as reportable abuse between teachers and caseworkers (Alvarez et al., 2004).

In late 2013 the funding formula for Children's Aid Societies changed. The previous funding model was based on historical projections. If the caseload at a Society fell short of projections, money had to be returned to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. If the caseload exceeded projections, the Society got more money. With the new model, half of a Society's funding will be based on a three-year average of service volumes. The remaining funding will be based on abuse risk factors such as the socioeconomic status of the community, the number of lone-parent families in the community, the number of Aboriginal children in a society's catchment area, and geographical remoteness of the society (Daubs, 2013). Only time will tell if this new funding model will better serve Children's Aid Societies.

Distrust between teachers and CAS can be further deepened if the teacher feels he or she has not been properly notified about the status of the case after the report has been made to CAS (Laskey, 2012). It has been suggested that mandated reporters should be provided access to the files regarding the reports they initiate (Alvarez et al., 2004). This increased collaboration between school personnel and child protective services would serve to help to build rapport and demystify the process of reporting abuse (Hinkelmann & Bruno, 2008). In addition, schools could collaborate with CAS to provide professional development to school personnel on abuse as well as seminars to students and parents. Finally, establishing other school-community partnerships would help to further establish the district's schools as a resource for parents who require extra support (Valkyrie et al., 2008).

To have optimum working relationships, all parties must feel a sense of trust; however, this section revealed that teachers in Canada and across the globe have developed a lack of trust towards child protective services. Both parties want to ensure the safety of the children in their care; however, as separate organizations, they don't have a shared history with each other, and there is no foundation of trust to begin with and grow upon. Therefore, leaders of the two organizations need to be proactive and create an environment where there are opportunities to foster trust and improve these collaborative relationships.

### **Case Factors**

This section reviews Canadian data on the characteristics of the child, primary caregiver of the child, and their homes for substantiated cases of abuse as reported in the most recent edition of the Canadian Incidence Study of Child Abuse (CIS-2008) (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2008).

**Child.** The number of abuse-related investigations included in CIS-2008 (235,840) was nearly identical for males (51%) and females (49%). Of these investigations, 85,440 cases were substantiated, with males and females each comprising of half of the cases. In addition to documenting the child's sex, caseworkers use a child functioning checklist to document concerns during an investigation. Workers are asked to indicate if the problem had been confirmed by a diagnosis, directly observed by the caseworker, disclosed by the parent or child, or if the issue was suspected but was not verified. The checklist contains the following factors: depression/anxiety/withdrawal, suicidal thoughts, self-harming behaviour, Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder, attachment issues, aggression, child ran away from home, inappropriate sexual behaviour, Youth Criminal Justice Act involvement, intellectual/developmental disability, failure to meet developmental milestones, academic difficulties, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Effects, positive toxicology at birth, physical disability, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, and other. The checklist is not a validated source of measurement; however, the study found that

in 46% (n = 39,460) of investigations at least one factor was indicated by the caseworker. The most cited factor was academic difficulties (23%), with the second most common factor being depression/anxiety/withdrawal (19%). Fifteen percent of cases involved aggression, while 14% indicated the child had attachment issues. Most of the factors provided on the checklist can also be observed by teachers; therefore, teachers should pay special attention to students that are exhibiting one or more behaviours on the list to see if abuse is suspected.

Educational outcomes are worse for children that become Crown Wards (children under the care of CAS) than other students. Figure 2 shows the graduation rates of Crown Wards versus the general population.

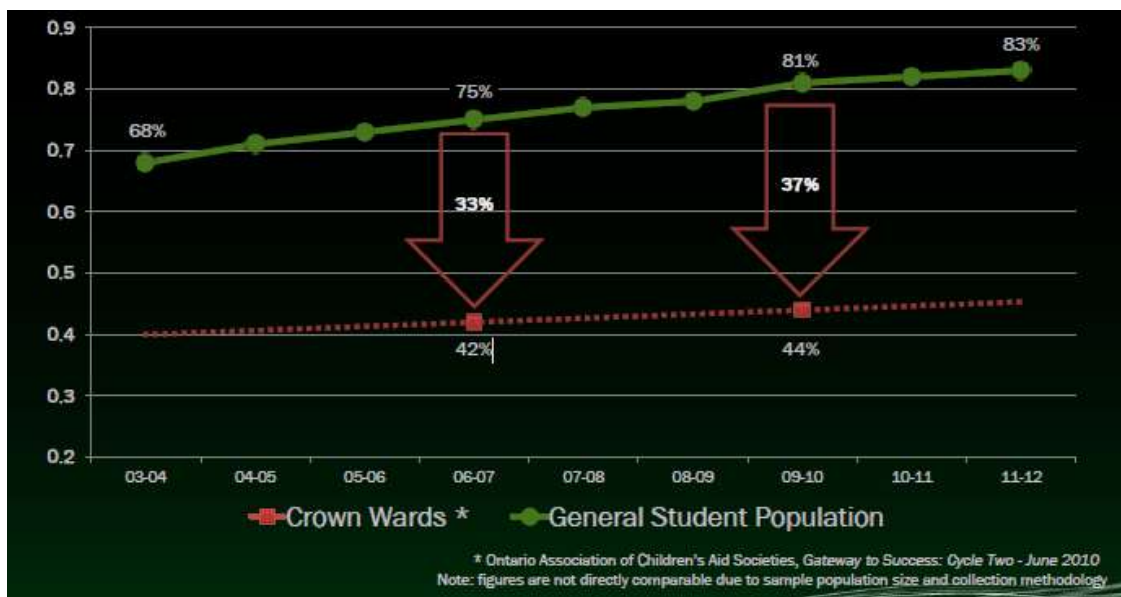


Figure 2. Comparison of graduation rates of crown wards vs. all students. Adapted from “Children and Youth in Care” by S. Bickford, 2014, Ontario Education Research Symposium. Presentation conducted at Toronto, Ontario. Adapted with permission.

This figure reveals that more than half of abused children that are under the ward of CAS (Crown Wards) will not graduate from high school. Moreover, while the graduation rate for Crown Wards increased by

2% from the 2006-07 school year to the 2009-2010 school year, the gap between the general population and Crown Wards increased from 33% to 37%. This indicates that there are continual difficulties in supporting abused children in Ontario schools and if left unchecked, the gap between graduation rates could continue to increase. This reveals another challenge that teachers and school districts face.

Students that end up entering the system or dealing with CAS after reported abuse by a teacher are likely in need of extra academic support (as well as other socio-emotional supports) in order to ensure that they pass their courses and continue on to graduation. This particular group of students is a vulnerable population, and reporting processes as well as the subsequent substantiation of abuse should lead to formal planning by student success teams and teachers in how best to minimize adverse impacts of the abuse on their learning.

This subsection contained information about the characteristics of abused children. Children that have been abused can display certain characteristics that might provide the CAS caseworker, or school teacher with clues that abuse has occurred. However, once under the care of CAS, abused children in Ontario are significantly less likely to graduate high school. This indicates that much more work needs to be done to improve the educational outcomes for these students. The following subsection will provide information on the primary caregivers of abused children.

**Primary Caregivers.** In 91% of substantiated investigations the primary caregiver was female. Forty-five percent of substantiated investigations involved caregivers between the ages of 31 and 40. Caregivers under 22 years old were rare (5%), as well as caregivers over the age of 50 (4%). Ninety-four percent of substantiated investigations involved children whose primary caregiver was a biological parent, with the other six percent living with a grandparent, adoptive parent, or other situation. CAS caseworkers are also provided with a checklist of nine primary caregiver risk factors to use during an investigation of child abuse. Caseworkers are asked to rate the primary caregiver on a four point scale (confirmed, suspected, no, unknown) on each of the nine factors. The factors are: alcohol abuse, drug abuse,

cognitive impairment, mental health issues, physical health issues, few social supports, victim of inter-partner violence, perpetrator of domestic violence, and history of being in a foster care or group home. This checklist is also not a validated instrument; however, in 78% (n = 66,282) of substantiated abuse investigations, at least one primary caregiver risk factor was identified by the case worker. More than one factor could be identified. The most frequently cited factors were victim of domestic violence (46%), few social supports (39%), mental health issues (27%), alcohol abuse (21%), and drug abuse (17%). This subsection revealed that most primary caregivers of abused children have one or more issues that may impede their ability to properly care for their child. Teachers may notice some of these factors; however, as a teacher’s interaction with the child’s parents is likely to be limited, the teacher should be careful when using the parent’s behaviour to judge if abuse may have occurred.

**Households.** When investigating the case, employees of CAS were asked to indicate the type of housing the family lived in. In 55% of substantiated investigations, the affected children lived in rental accommodations (44% private rentals and 11% public housing). In addition to the type of housing the family lived in, CAS employees also documented the primary caregiver’s source of income. Table 3 provides the household’s source of income in substantiated child abuse investigations.

*Table 3*

*Household Source of Income in Substantiated Investigations*

| <b>Household source of income</b>                     | <b>Number of</b>      |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
|                                                       | <b>investigations</b> | <b>%</b> |
| Full-time employment                                  | 43355                 | 51%      |
| Part-time/multiple jobs/seasonal employment           | 8264                  | 10%      |
| Social assistance/employment insurance/other benefits | 28159                 | 33%      |
| Unknown                                               | 4236                  | 5%       |

| Household source of income | Number of      |    |
|----------------------------|----------------|----|
|                            | investigations | %  |
| None                       | 1426           | 1% |

*Note.* Summarized from “2008 Canadian Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect,” by the Public Health Agency of Canada, p. 41. Ottawa, Ontario: Public Health Agency of Canada.

Sixty-one percent of caregivers had full or part-time employment while approximately 40% were not participating in the workforce. These figures reveal that child abuse can occur in every socio-economic level.

**Perceived Risk Factors by Teachers.** Researchers (Tite, 1993; Beck, 1994; Reyome & Gaeddert, 1999; Walsh, Schweitzer & Bridgstock, 2005) have reported that teachers are more prone to reporting some types of abuse over others. Tite (1993) reported that the teachers she surveyed felt that physical abuse cases were more reportable than other forms of abuse. She attributed this to teacher’s having difficulties recognizing indicators of some forms of abuse. In a study to assess British Columbia (BC) teachers’ knowledge, compliance and attitudes towards mandatory reporting laws, Beck et al. (1994) developed a survey and mailed it to 400 active K-12 teachers in lower mainland BC. The survey contained five sections; first, it elicited respondents demographic and background information. Second, respondents were asked to answer eight multiple-choice questions on BC’s reporting law. Third, respondents were asked about their reporting experiences over the last year. Next, respondents were provided with vignettes to assess whether teachers would report different types of abuse more. The fifth section was designed to measure attitudes toward child abuse reporting. The survey tool designed by Beck et al. was a validated source of measurement. To assure validity of the survey instrument, the tool was reviewed by two psychologists and one university professor, each of whom had read BC’s reporting law. All three persons agreed that the survey accurately represented the essence of the reporting law. In

addition, they were asked if the vignettes met the legal definition of child abuse, and to check the wording of each vignette. Each person agreed that the vignettes were reportable incidences of child abuse. To ensure respondent anonymity, the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) randomly selected the sample of active K-12 teachers through the BCTF computer database (1992) and distributed the surveys on behalf of the researchers. A 56% response rate was received. The researchers discovered that over half of the respondents were more likely to report physical and sexual abuse than to report emotional abuse and neglect. Teachers reported that this was due to the perceived lack of evidence of these types of abuse.

Reyome and Gaeddert (1999) surveyed elementary and secondary school teachers from five school districts in a rural county in upstate New York. A total of 87 teachers (43 elementary; 19 junior/middle school; 11 high school; 14 mixed grades) participated in the study. The survey was adapted from an earlier study on nurses' responses to child abuse; however, the survey instrument was not validated by the researchers. In addition, as the number of respondents was low, the sample might have been biased towards teachers who found the topic interesting, or had more knowledge in the area. The survey contained questions designed to measure: (a) subject's background (age, gender, grade level, years of experience in teaching, and previous training in child and adolescent abuse), (b) knowledge about child and adolescent abuse (25 items), and (c) beliefs about child and adolescent abuse (48 scenarios). Teachers in the study tended to rate sexual abuse as the most serious form of abuse followed by physical abuse and then neglect.

These studies highlight how teachers view different forms of abuse. Recognizing the different indicators for the different types of abuse is important for teachers to know. Identifying when abuse has occurred to a child is the first step to stopping the abuse from reoccurring. However, if teachers are unable to recognize children who are in need of protection, or do not feel that the abuse is serious enough to warrant a report, the child will continue to live in an environment where abuse occurs. Table 4

provides an example of common behavioral and physical indicators of abuse that teachers should be aware of.

*Table 4*

*Behavioural and Physical Indicators of Abuse*

| <b>Type of Harm</b> | <b>Physical Indicators</b>                                                                 | <b>Behavioral Indicators</b>                                                     |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Physical            | Bruises                                                                                    | Cannot recall how injuries occurred or offers                                    |
|                     | Welts                                                                                      | an inconsistent explanation                                                      |
|                     | Cuts                                                                                       | Wary of adults                                                                   |
|                     | Fractures                                                                                  | May cringe or flinch if touched unexpectedly                                     |
|                     | Burns                                                                                      | Infants may display a vacant stare                                               |
|                     | Injuries that are not consistent with explanation                                          | Extremely aggressive or extremely withdrawn                                      |
|                     | Presence of several injuries that are in various stages of healing                         | Indiscriminately seeks affection                                                 |
|                     | presence of various injuries over a period of time                                         | Extremely compliant and/or eager to please                                       |
|                     | Facial injuries in infants and preschool children                                          |                                                                                  |
|                     | Injuries inconsistent with the child's age and developmental phase                         |                                                                                  |
| Sexual              | Unusual or excessive itching in the genital or anal area                                   | Age inappropriate play with toys, self or Others displaying explicit sexual acts |
|                     | Torn, stained or bloody underwear (may be observed if the child needs bathroom assistance) | Age inappropriate sexually explicit drawing and/or descriptions                  |
|                     |                                                                                            | Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual                                         |



|           |                                                                             |                                                       |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
|           | Pregnancy                                                                   | knowledge                                             |
|           | Injuries to the genital or anal areas, e.g. bruising, swelling or infection | Prostitution                                          |
|           | Venereal disease                                                            | Seductive behaviours                                  |
| Emotional | Severe depression                                                           | Bed wetting that is non-medical in origin             |
|           | Extreme withdrawal or aggressiveness                                        | Frequent psychosomatic complaints,                    |
|           | Overly compliant, too well mannered, too neat or clean                      | Headaches, nausea, abdominal pains                    |
|           | Extreme attention seeking                                                   | Child fails to thrive                                 |
|           | Displays extreme inhibition in play                                         |                                                       |
| Neglect   | Poor hygiene                                                                | Pale, listless, unkempt                               |
|           | Unattended physical problems or medical needs, e.g. dental work, glasses    | Frequent absence from school                          |
|           | Consistent lack of supervision                                              | Inappropriate clothing for the weather, dirty clothes |
|           |                                                                             | Engaged in delinquent acts, alcohol/drug abuse        |
|           |                                                                             | Frequently forgets a lunch                            |

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*Note.* Adapted from “Signs of Abuse,” by Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies. Copyright 2010 by the Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies.

Recognition of child abuse is not normally based upon the detection of one or two indicators, but rather relies on the recognition of several indicators over a period of time. It is important to remember that some indicators, both physical and behavioral, may be the result of something other than abuse (Crosson-Tower, 2003). When teachers are made aware of what indicators they should be looking for, they will be better able to help the children and families that need it.

## **Organizational and Decision Maker Factors**

The following section reviews the research on the organizational (school district policy, administrative supports, and professional development) and decision-maker factors that influence a teacher's decision to report suspected abuse.

**School district policy.** In American reports by Dombrowski and Grischler (2006) and Kenny (2004), school districts were further urged to establish explicit, district-wide policy supportive of mandated reporting. School district policy should support mandated reporting legislation and provide school personnel with the procedures to undertake when abuse is suspected. However, it is not enough for there to be policy; school personnel must also be aware of it and act upon the policy. Tite (1994) reported that almost 40% of teachers interviewed claimed that they did not know whether their school district had a child abuse policy. Of the teachers who reported their school districts did have a reporting policy, many were unable to articulate the document's definitions of abuse, with one teacher reporting that "I only know they have a policy; I have never seen it or heard what it contains" (Tite, 1994, p. 93). A more recent study by Kenny (2004) surveyed 200 teachers from one of the largest school districts in the United States, Miami-Dade County. The sample was ethnically diverse and adequately represented the population of the school district. The participants were administered the Educator's Child Abuse Questionnaire (ECAQ) which contained questions on knowledge concerning signs and symptoms of child abuse, laws, procedures for reporting, and number of reports filed. The author claimed that the ECAQ was a reliable measure of four factors: (1) awareness of signs and symptoms of child abuse, (2) Knowledge of reporting procedures, (3) attitudes toward discipline, and (4) seriousness of child abuse. However, she did not publish the article that explained how the instrument was validated. The study revealed that 84% of the teachers who participated were unaware of their schools' procedures on reporting abuse.

School districts are also advised to notify parents of the district's position towards abuse and its procedures on reporting children suspected to be in need of protection. Dombrowski and Grischler (2006) argued that this provides parents with "fair notice of the school professional's duty to report" and, therefore, should serve to "mitigate feelings of betrayal and guilt following a report being made" (Dombrowski & Grischler, 2006, p. 236). By informing both teachers and parents of their roles and responsibilities, schools can become more effective partners in the attempt to stop abuse.

This subsection has shown that many teachers are unaware or unsure of their schools' reporting procedures. Teachers need to understand these procedures, not only to better help abused children, but to ensure that the district and the reporting employee are legally protected in the event something goes wrong during the reporting process. The next subsection will explore how access to administrative supports can affect a teacher's choice to report suspected abuse.

**Administrative supports.** Teachers may hesitate to report suspected abuse because they are afraid that they will not be supported by their principals or district officials (Bryant & Milsom, 2005; Hinson & Fossey, 2000; Kenny, 2004). Kenny's (2004) research revealed that 76% (n = 152) of the teachers who participated in her research felt that they would not be supported by their school's administration if they had to make a report. After the release of the US Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect which indicated 84% of all suspected abuse cases in schools are never reported, Dombrowski and Grischler (2006) wrote an article that made recommendations to schools in an attempt to improve reporting. The authors did not complete a study, but rather used results from previous studies to make their recommendations. Dombrowski and Grischler claimed that school administrators that foster an open climate within their school will best support teachers throughout mandated reporting. An open climate is one of "cooperation and respect... between the faculty and the principal and among faculty members" (Dombrowski & Grischler, 2006, p. 237). The administrator is viewed by teachers as one who "listens, supports, and affords teachers freedom to perform duties without a high level of scrutiny"

(Dombrowski & Grischler, 2006, p. 237). An open school climate is necessary as teachers who make reports of abuse can experience a multitude of negative consequences such as nightmares, insomnia, effects on family and intimate relationships, unpleasant memories, anxiety, anguish over decision making, feelings of powerlessness, professional conflict, sense of helplessness, isolation, uncertainty about where to seek assistance, dissatisfaction, and role conflict (Skinner, 1999). By providing effective support networks both within and beyond the school context, a teacher can be provided with a greater level of confidence in his or her ability to cope (Skinner, 1999). To help create a supportive climate, schools could develop a school support team (e.g., counselor, social worker, and teachers) to serve as consultants for suspected cases of abuse within the school. These individuals would not assume the authority of the school reporter but would help school personnel to understand and navigate the process of reporting (Hinkelmann & Bruno, 2008; Valkyrie, Creamer, & Vaughn, 2008).

This subsection has shown that teachers who are provided with good support networks within their school will be better able to cope with the negative feelings that often accompany making a report. A caring principal, coupled with a school support team that fully understands the process of making a report could provide the teacher with a greater confidence when making the report. The last subsection will discuss the research done to date that has examined the training that teachers have received on child abuse.

**Professional development.** Because professionals face legal and professional consequences for failure to report child abuse, education in this area is necessary. Thorough training could alleviate stress associated with reporting for all involved (Remley & Fry, 1993). However, several studies have shown that teachers report feeling ill-prepared to handle situations of alleged child abuse due to receiving inadequate professional development opportunities during pre-service education and as an in-service teacher (Beck et al., 1994; Goldman, 2005, 2007; Hinkelmann & Bruno, 2008; Hodgkinson & Baginsky,

2000; Kenny, 2001, 2004; McKee & Dillenburger, 2009; Rossato & Brackenridge, 2009; Tite, 1993, 1994; Walsh & Farrell, 2008).

A study by Hodgkinson and Baginsky explored the coverage and effectiveness of child protection education workshops within teacher training courses in England (2000). Each teacher training program in England ( $n = 26$ ) was sent a questionnaire which inquired about the extent and content of the training provided. No information was provided on if the questionnaire was a validated source of measurement. A 56% response rate was received. Following the questionnaire the researchers interviewed course managers as well as with students within two of the programs. The study revealed that in the United Kingdom the majority of teacher training courses spend only between 1 to 3 hours informing pre-service teachers on child protection. While pre-service teachers are being informed about their reporting obligations in their training programs, the authors put forth that teachers are only being provided with “superficial knowledge of technical procedures” (Hodgkinson & Baginsky, 2000, p. 278). The researchers claimed that this might leave assumptions and deep misconceptions about abuse unchallenged. As a result, this would leave future teachers “unskilled and unprepared for the contribution they could and need to make to child protection” (Hodgkinson & Baginsky, 2000, p. 279). These sentiments are further echoed by Kenny (2004) and McKee and Dillenburger (2009).

Kenny’s (2004) study of 200 teachers reported that approximately two-thirds of pre-service teachers felt their training provided “inadequate” (23%) or “minimal” (43%) coverage. Many teachers (71%) also reported they felt unprepared to recognize the “signs and symptoms of neglect, physical and sexual abuse” (Kenny, 2004, p. 1315). McKee and Dillenburger (2009) researched whether there was a need for pre-service child-protection training for undergraduate college students in Initial Teacher Education, Early Childhood Studies, and Health and Leisure programs. The researchers surveyed 216 first-year student volunteers at Queen’s University of Belfast. The participants comprised 25 males and 191 females, which the researchers claim “reflected an overall under-representation of male students

typical for teacher training colleges” (McKee & Dillenburger, 2009; p. 323). The researchers created a self-completion, multiple-choice Baseline Assessment Test (BAT) to collect data. The content of the test addressed six categories: abuse statistics, defining and recognizing abuse, government policy, school procedures, and legislative frameworks, causes of abuse, and responding and reporting abuse. The test was adapted from McKee’s (2003) Early Years Questionnaire and Child Protection. The BAT was collected at the beginning of the first academic semester, prior to any abuse training (McKee & Dillenburger, 2009). No information was provided on if the instrument was a validated source of measurement. Results showed that while the students had some basic awareness of abuse issues, the knowledge was inconsistent across the group of participants. The researchers reported that the majority of students answered less than one third of the BAT correctly. Most of the correctly scored questions were related to general teaching practice components, such as the use of observations to note changes in children’s behaviour, and the general role of the teacher (70%). The more intricate questions relating to abuse all received much lower scores, including: indicators of abuse (58%), legislative requirements of the child protection process (47%), abuse statistics (40%), preventive work (40%), and responding to and reporting abuse (39%) (McKee & Dillenburger, 2009).

Pre-service teachers are not the only ones receiving less than adequate training regarding child abuse issues; in-service teachers also report feeling confused and unsure of their legal responsibilities. Several researchers (Beck, 1994; Kenny, 2001, 2004; Tite, 1993, 1994; Walsh et al., 2008) have discovered that teachers’ surveyed tended to only report suspected abuse if they deemed there was enough evidence for the report to be supported. Similar findings were also found by Hinkelmann and Bruno (2008) in a meta-analysis on child sexual abuse. Hinkelmann and Bruno (2008) discovered that many studies reported teachers feeling unprepared to handle situations of alleged abuse and may defer making reports out of a belief that there is a lack of evidence to support the case. In Canada, only reasonable suspicion and not evidence is required when reporting a child who may be in need of protection.

Reasonable suspicion means that when a mandated reporter, based on her training and experience in combination with what the reporter has observed or been told, or entertains the possibility that a child is being abused or is in imminent danger of being abused; she has reasonable suspicion. For example, a teacher may have reasonable suspicion when the explanation of a bruise provided by a child is inconsistent with the teacher's observations and experiences (Lau, Krase, & Morse, 2008).

Outside of Canada, similar findings were also discovered by Walsh and Farrell (2008) in a qualitative study to identify and evaluate early childhood educators' knowledge of child abuse and neglect (CAN). The researchers' purposely selected eight female early childhood educators who were university educated and who currently worked with children who were at risk of CAN. Potential participants were identified by word of mouth over a time period of six weeks. The authors recognized that this research had limitations. For example, as the number of interview participants was small, the findings from the study were not generalizable. In addition, because participants were identified through word of mouth, it is possible that the participants already had an interest in the subject matter, and therefore, knew more about the subject than the average teacher. Data were collected from open-ended interviews which lasted approximately two hours each. Interviews began by eliciting demographic data about the teachers and their teaching context (i.e., years of teaching experience, number of children in the program). Teachers were prompted to talk about what they did on a daily basis to support and manage abused children with a focus on situations, people, resources, preparation, and experiences. Interviews were augmented by detailed field-note observations taken in the participant's workplace. Interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim and analyzed using the constant comparative method of Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Grossman's (1995) typology of teachers' knowledge. The researchers discovered that there was a deficiency in teachers' knowledge of causes, incidence, prevalence, short- and long-term consequences, history, definitions, laws, and policies relating to child abuse. Teachers in this study were unaware that

only reasonable suspicion and not evidence were required when reporting suspected abuse (the same criterion as Canada).

The last subsection has shown that teachers are not receiving adequate training on child abuse and, as a consequence, teachers have incorrect information about their role and responsibilities. This can result in teachers making mistakes during the reporting process which can open the teacher and school district up to liability. Even more importantly, wrong information on child abuse can result in children who are in need of protection going unnoticed.

### **Summary of Literature**

There are laws in place at the provincial, federal, and international level to stop child abuse. Canadian jurisdictions have included mandated reporting requirements in their child protection legislation to reach this goal. While legislation demands teachers to report suspected abuse, Policy Memorandum no. 9 shows that school districts have a clear responsibility to educate teachers about their role and responsibilities on child abuse. Researchers have argued that teachers are not being adequately educated on child abuse. This argument is backed by studies that have shown teachers are often unaware what constitutes reportable abuse and are uninformed about their school district's policy on abuse. The researchers mentioned within the literature review call for increased training of both pre and in-service school personnel. Researchers argue that in order for teachers to be prepared they should have "adequate knowledge of the legal definitions, clinical presentations of child abuse, an understanding of the various types of abuse, and the ability to discriminate between typical child behaviors and common indicators of [abuse]" (Hinkelmann & Bruno, 2008), which can be obtained by requiring teachers to receive training in this area. Beck et al. (1994) and Walsh and Farrell (2008) advocate for in-service educators to receive regular and consistent training, access to relevant resources and school policy and increased administrative supports. Kenny (2001) argued that training should include informing teachers about child abuse reporting laws and procedures so teachers "understand their duty and legal obligation to report" as



well as “proper reporting protocol” (Kenny, 2001, p. 90). Moreover, such training needs to allow for “experiential exercises and hypothetical situations to help teachers develop the skills necessary to report abuse and attend to their concerns regarding their fears of making a false report” (Kenny, 2001, p. 90). Training requirements such as the ones outlined above would help better prepare teachers to report suspected cases of abuse. Teachers also feel there is a lack of trust between themselves and child protective services. In order to improve this relationship, leaders of the two organizations need to create opportunities for teachers and CAS caseworkers to have frank and open discussions about the roles of and responsibilities of all parties involved. To conclude, while there have been studies that have looked at a teacher’s duty to report abuse, most have been single studies that have occurred in different countries and contexts. In addition, very few survey tools that were used in these studies were validated sources of measurement and researchers who utilized qualitative interviews were unable to generalize their findings as the sample of participants was usually small. Moreover, there has been a dearth of empirical work in the Canadian context. This study addresses a significant gap in the literature on a topic of urgent importance to a vulnerable population in our school system.

### CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Data were collected sequentially in two phases in relation to the research questions and subsequent dimensions and variables of the conceptual framework (Table 1). First, the study conducted a comprehensive analysis of Ontario school district policies on reporting abuse in order to explore the organizational and administrative supports each district states it will provide decision makers. Upon completion of the analysis, in-person; semi-structured interviews were used to explore the experiences of decision makers who had, in the past, reported a case of suspected abuse. Table 5 provides an overview of the methodology employed for the study.

*Table 5*  
*Overview of Methodology*

| <b>Phase</b> | <b>Research Question</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Sample Selection</b>                                                         | <b>Data Collection</b>                                          | <b>Analysis</b>                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A            | 1b. What legislation is referenced in school district policies?<br>2a. What school district policies are in place ...?<br>2b. What administrative supports are described...<br>2c. What professional development opportunities are described...<br>2d. What community supports are described... | All English speaking (public and Catholic) school districts in Ontario (n = 64) | Web-based search for (n = 64) school district policy documents. | Excel templates with relevant categories based on the literature were used to generate descriptive statistics about the data. NVivo was then used to garner emergent themes. |

|   |                                                             |                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                     |                                                                        |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| B | 3. What are the personal experiences of decision makers ... | Interviews with teachers (n = 4) and counsellors (n = 3) Volunteers were recruited through the Faculty of Education at an Ontario University. | 1 hour, semi-structured interviews with participants. Interview protocol was informed by data analysis from Phase A | Coded and analyzed using NVivo. A-priori and emergent codes were used. |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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### Policy Analysis

Documents contain words and images that are produced, shared, and used in a socially organized way (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing and evaluating documents. Like other qualitative research methods, analyzing documents requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to gain meaning and understanding (Bowen, 2009). This study was completed using content and thematic analysis. Delaney (2002) described content analysis as:

The most pedestrian type of analysis, but it is also one of the most important and frequently neglected. It is an empirical description of an existing policy, in terms of its intentions, problem definition, goals, and instruments. This sort of description is frequently tedious and painstaking – if it is done well – but critical for most other types of analysis. One cannot assess the impact, logical consistency or ethical rationale of a policy unless one is absolutely clear about what the policy contains. (p. 37)

After the data was organized into categories related to the central questions of the research, the data were able to be counted and descriptive statistics were used to describe the data using Excel (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2005).

**Sample selection.** In Ontario there are 72 school districts and 11 school authorities, making the population of Ontario school districts to 83. School authorities are a type of school district created by the Ministry of Education to administer to smaller, more isolated school districts and to hospital-based school districts, for example, Moosonee School Authority oversees one public school with 275 students. To find an appropriate sample size, Raosoft, an online sample size calculator, was used ([www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html](http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html)). For a margin of error of  $\pm 5\%$  and confidence level of 90%, 64 school districts needed to be analyzed. Margin of error estimates the inaccuracy of a study's results due to sampling error which stems from the limitation of analyzing a sample within the population of interest. The confidence level informs the researcher how often the percentage of the population actually lies within the boundaries of the margin of error. Simply put, the researcher is 90% certain that the results from the policy analysis are accurate within  $\pm 5\%$ .

In order to be included within the sample for the current study, school districts had to be English speaking<sup>1</sup>. Both public districts (n = 31), Catholic districts (n = 29), and geographically isolated school authorities (n = 4) were included. Due to language restrictions, French speaking school districts (n = 12) were excluded from the analysis. The Provincial School District (n = 1) that caters to students who are Deaf, blind, deaf-blind, or have a specific learning disabilities was excluded from the analysis. As the focus was on the education sector, hospital-based school authorities (n = 6) were also excluded from the analysis.

**Data collection.** A web-based search was completed to discover English speaking public and Catholic school district (n = 64) policies on reporting suspected abuse (See Appendix G for links to school district documents). If a school district's policy was unable to be found online, the school district

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<sup>1</sup> The principle investigator is not bilingual

office was contacted by telephone to inquire about the status of the policy. If it was discovered that a school district did not have a policy, or if the district considered the policy to be private, that information was entered into Excel. In both instances, the districts were excluded from the future content and thematic analyses. Excel was utilized to track relevant website links, calculate frequencies, and to produce descriptive statistics for the data.

A policy analysis framework within Crosson-Tower’s (2013) report was designed as a tool for Massachusetts schools to use in order to improve their school’s reporting policies. The framework used in this study was adapted from Crosson-Tower’s (2013) report to fit a Canadian context as well as to include additional questions raised in the literature. The adapted framework contains sixteen questions which are divided into eight sections about the education system, legal system, document properties, information dissemination, procedures, and community partnerships (Table 6).

*Table 6*

*Policy Framework*

| <b>R.Q.</b>                                                     | <b>Section</b> | <b>Question</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2a. What school district policies are in place?                 | Education      | How many school districts have documents in place in relation to child abuse in Ontario?<br><br>How many teachers and students are affected by these documents?                                                                             |
| 1b. What legislation is referenced in school district policies? | Legal System   | Does the document reference the provincial law that requires educators to report suspected cases of abuse to Children’s Aid Societies?<br><br>Does the document reference any other laws that may interact with a teacher’s duty to report? |

Are key legal terms defined?

Document            How often are the documents reviewed or updated by the district?

Properties            What types of documents are there?

How long are the documents?

Document            How and when will the information in the documents be disseminated

Dissemination      to key actors (teachers, parents, and students)?

Procedures          What types of procedures are included?

Who becomes involved in the reporting process?

What information does the reporter need to know in order to report?

Who is responsible for following-up, monitoring, or receiving

feedback from CAS once the report is filed?

2b. What            Support            What support systems are provided?  
administrative      Systems

Systems

supports are

described...

2c. What            Training            What commitment is there to providing training?  
training            Opportunities

Opportunities

opportunities

are described...

2d. What Community Relationships Who does the school district collaborate with within the community? community Relationships supports are described...

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*Note.* Adapted from “Designing and Implementing School Reporting Protocols: A how-to manual for Massachusetts educators,” by C. Crosson-Tower, 2013, p. 4. Boston, Mass, US: Children’s Trust Fund.

**Data analysis.** All but one of the above questions were answered by analyzing the policies using NVivo and Excel for content and thematic analyses. However, to answer the question “How many teachers and students are affected by these documents,” every (n = 46) Ontario Children’s Aid Society was telephoned to ascertain the number of cases that were reported by schools to their Society. In addition, a freedom of information request was sent to the Ontario Ministry of Education and Ministry Child and Youth Services to see if statistics were kept on child abuse reporting.

**Content analysis.** Excel was utilized to track relevant website links, calculate frequencies, and to find descriptive statistics on the data in relation to the questions within the policy framework (Table 6).

**Thematic analysis.** The policies were entered into and analyzed using NVivo, a qualitative software program to aid in recording codes, themes and overarching patterns (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Open codes were used to find emergent themes in the analysis.

## **Interviews**

Interviewing is a way to collect data as well as to gain knowledge from individuals. Interviews allow participants to become involved and talk about their views, perceptions, and interpretation of the research topic (Weiss, 2008). One hour, semi-structured interviews were used to explore the experiences of decision makers who had, in the past, reported cases of suspected abuse. A semi-structured interview begins with a pre-determined set of open questions; however it does not limit respondents to a set of pre-determined answers. The interviewer is able to prompt discussion in an attempt to explore particular

themes or responses further and allows respondents to discuss and raise issues that may have not been considered by the interviewer. Semi-structured interviews are useful when attempting to discover how various systems can be improved (Bryman, 2012).

**Sample selection.** Ideally, the researcher wanted to interview in-service teachers in school districts across Ontario; however, upon further reflection, it was determined that it was unlikely that a Master's student would be granted access to interview teachers about the sensitive topic of child abuse. In addition, interviewing on sensitive issues, such as child abuse, may result in participants experiencing unpleasant memories from discussing their decision to report. This harm might have been compounded as the researcher had never completed interviews prior to this study. Therefore, the researcher chose to interview graduate students at a faculty of education, in part, on the assumption that these individuals were accustomed to being interviewed by fledgling researchers.

Interview participants ( $n = 7$ ) were recruited through a university's faculty of education in a mid-sized, southeastern city in Ontario. In addition to the reason provided above, students at the faculty of education were chosen for the sample as they may have had previous experience working with children where they were required to report. Inclusion criteria for the interviews required that participants were Ontario teachers who had made a report to CAS about a child who was suspected to be in need of protection.

***Changes to inclusion criteria.*** Due to the low number of teachers that responded to the original call to participate in the study, the participant pool was expanded. Two inclusion criteria were then utilized, the participant: (a) had to be a professional who was legally required to report cases of suspected abuse as outlined in s. 72(5) in *The Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O., 1990); and, (b) made a report of suspected abuse. As previously mentioned, 72(5) of *The Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O., 1990) identifies teachers, principals, counsellors, health care professionals, social workers,



children and youth workers, religious leaders, youth and recreation workers, and any other person who performs professional or official duties with respect to children as persons who are legally required to report. Teachers (n = 4), youth and recreation workers (n = 2) and a pre-service school counsellor (n = 1) volunteered to participate in the study. As a result of altering the inclusion criteria, the interviews are not a representative sample; rather they were used to explore the issues that professionals face when making reports of suspected abuse.

**Ethics.** Any research project involving human subject must receive ethics clearance. Therefore, prior to data collection, ethical clearance was sought and obtained from Queen's University through the Education Research Ethics Board and General Research Ethics Board (Appendix B). Participants were recruited on a volunteer basis by posting flyers throughout the faculty of education and by utilizing listservs (Appendix C). Participants were provided with a letter of information which described the study and outlined the demands placed on the participant. Consent from each participant was obtained prior to conducting interviews (Appendix D). Consent forms from the study are kept in a secure location where they will remain for five years, after which they will be destroyed.

**Potential benefits.** This study will help give a voice to professionals who must report child abuse.

**Potential harm.** The risks involved in participating in this study are minimal. Volunteers may feel uncomfortable or have unpleasant memories arise from discussing about their decision to report suspected abuse.

**Data collection.** The interviews consisted of semi-structured, open-ended questions which focused on the personal experiences of decision makers who have reported suspected child abuse. Interview protocol was largely based on information garnered from the Phase I data analysis and research questions (Appendix E).

**Analysis.** Audio-recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim using a word processing program as soon as possible after the data were collected (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Each interview participant was asked to review his or her interview transcript to ensure the participant was accurately represented. The data were then entered into and analyzed using NVivo. A-priori codes, based on the major research questions along with any subsequent questions found from the literature review and policy analysis were used to analyze the transcripts. After the initial coding process, codes were compared for duplication and merged together where possible. Codes were then grouped together into larger themes, and finally into patterns which related to the framework of the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Verbatim statements of the participants were reported in the findings of this study. A field log was used to contain the dates, time, places, persons, and activities for the data collected (Appendix F) (Patton, 2002; Stake, 2010).

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Chapter 4 is organized according to the two phases of the study (policy analysis, interviews).

### **Policy Analysis**

The following section is organized according to the sections from the policy analysis framework in Table 6: education, legal system, document properties, information dissemination, procedures, support systems, and community relationships.

**Education.** The subsection on education discusses the number of school districts with policies on reporting children suspected to be in need of protection and the number of teachers and students who are affected by reporting.

*School districts with policies.* Of the 64 school districts, 14% (n = 9) did not have policies outlining the procedures school personnel should take when abuse is suspected while just over 1% (n = 1) had their documentation under review. Therefore, 54 of the chosen school districts were analyzed for this study.

*Number of teachers and students affected.* In an attempt to discover the number of reports school personnel made to CAS during the 2011-12 school year, Societies were called to discover if they kept the statistics. Two Societies (Peel, Kingston and Frontenac) had statistics readily available. Kingston and Frontenac stated that approximately 4000 reports were made by school personnel while Peel stated that 13,000 reports came from school personnel. Two more Societies claimed they had statistics; but stated they could not be provided over the phone and required that they be sent to an email address. After providing the address, no emails were ever sent. Most calls went straight to voicemail, with no one returning calls. During one phone call, an intake worker claimed that Children's Aid Societies all have different data management systems, making it possible for one Society to have the data I required, while another Society would not be able to gather the data. I was then informed that the provincial government

have started a project to make all Societies use the same system. Further research revealed that the new system will be called the Child Protection Information Network. The plan for the new network was announced in 2011 (Vancouver Sun, 2011). It is intended to allow Children’s Aid Societies to securely share confidential child protection information with one another and to better manage case files and finances.

In addition to calling Children’s Aid Societies, I submitted a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to the Ontario Ministry of Education and Ministry of Child and Youth Services asking the Ministries to release any records they have on the number of school personnel that reported cases of suspected abuse. On August 28<sup>th</sup> 2013, I received a phone call from the Ministry of Education and was informed that the Ministry did not keep statistics on the number of school personnel that made reports of suspected abuse. I was also informed that the Ministry of Education had contacted the Ministry of Child and Youth Services to ascertain whether or not that Ministry kept the data on file; however, it was discovered that the data were not kept there either.

The Canadian Incidence Study of Child Abuse (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2008) reported that school personnel make approximately 9.34 reports per 1000 children annually. This statistic was gathered by analysing approximately 15,000 cases throughout Canada. To find the estimated number of reports made by school personnel, the average daily enrollment for each school district was found for the 2012-13 school year. Table 7 shows the estimated number of reports made by school personnel.

*Table 7*

*Student Enrollment vs. Number of Suspected Reports Made by School Personnel*

| <b>School Districts</b> | <b>Average Daily Enrollment</b> | <b>Estimated Reports</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Analyzed for study      | 1,748,730                       | 16,336                   |
| Not analyzed for study  | 282,475                         | 2,638                    |

**Total**

**2,031,205**

**18,974**

---

During the 2012-2013 school year there were 115,493 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers, 7,327 FTE administrators (principals and vice-principals) and 4,390 early childhood educators, bringing the total number of school personnel to 127, 210 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013). This means that around 15% (18, 974 cases/127, 210 personnel) of school personnel made a report of suspected abuse during the 2012-2013 school year if each report was made by a different individual.

**Legal system.** The legal system subsection includes information on the number of districts that cited *The Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O., 1990) and provides details on additional legislation cited within district documents.

**Number of districts that cited *The Child and Family Services Act* (CFSA).** The *CFSA* (R.S.O., 1990) was cited by 52 of the 54 school district with public documentation, with the other school district alluding to it but not directly citing it. Figure 3 shows the percentage of districts that included additional information concerning a teacher’s duty to report under *The Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O., 1990).

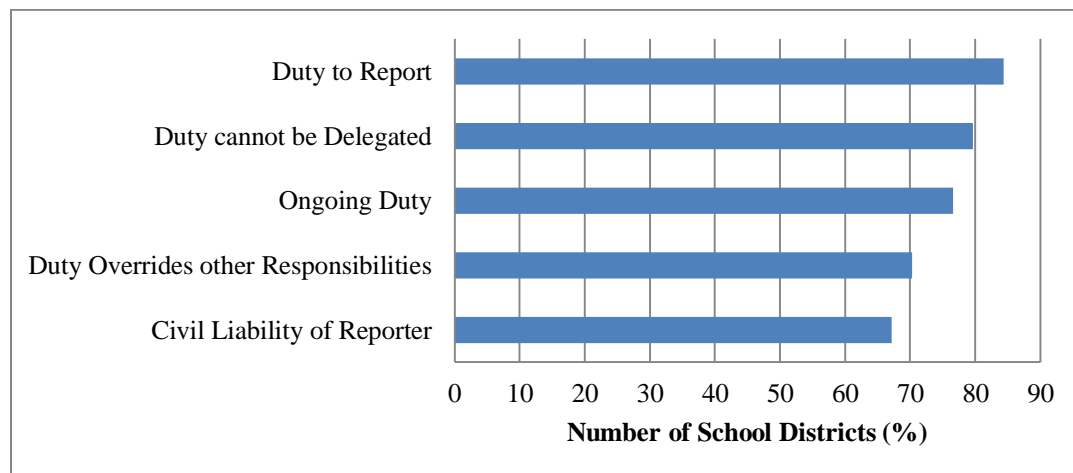


Figure 3. Requirements under *The Child and Family Services Act* cited in school district policies.

Figure 3 reveals that most school districts provided additional information on the requirements set out within the *Act*. However, 33% of school districts did not inform its staff that they would be protected from civil liability upon making the report. Moreover, none of the school district policies informed teachers that they faced a \$50,000 fine and risk of imprisonment for not reporting children suspected to be in need of protection. However, 45 districts, or 70% of school districts did include information on the previous penalty of \$1,000. PPM no. 9 also did not reflect the change in legislation; hence, both the school district policies and the policy that governed them were not updated as of 2014 when the study was conducted in relation to the changes made to the CFSA in 2008.

***Additional legislation cited.*** School district documents also cited additional legislation which interacts with a teachers’ duty to report. Figure 4 shows the percentages of the most popular *Acts* cited that are relevant to reporting child abuse.

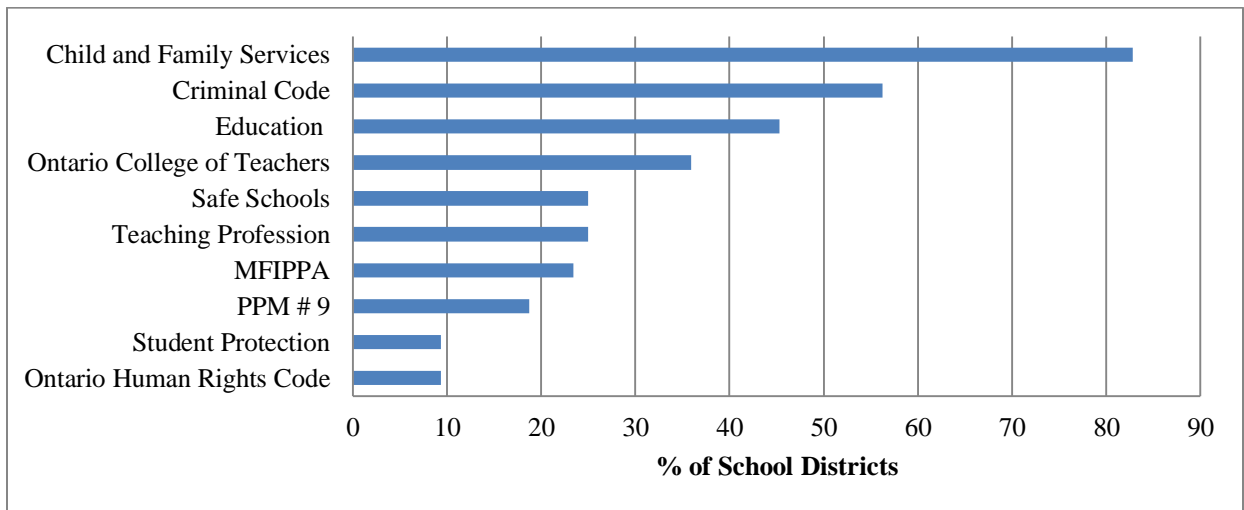


Figure 4. Acts cited in school district policies.

Of the school district policies, 84% informed their staff they had a legal duty to report. Progressively fewer districts informed their staff that the duty cannot be delegated to another individual, the duty to report is ongoing, the duty overrides other responsibilities, failure to report is considered an offence, and

that the reporter is protected against civil liability as long as the report was made in good faith. Close to two-thirds (63%) (n = 40) of school district policies provided definitions for legal terms used within the documents. The most common definitions were for the terms: child, child in need of protection, employee, caregiver, reasonable grounds, and sexual misconduct.

**Document properties.** The subsection on document properties reports the findings related to document review timelines, the types of documents school districts had, and the length of documents.

**Document review and updates.** Of the districts, 42% (n = 28) had reviewed or updated their documents within the past five years; however, only 19% (n = 12) of districts provided a review timeline for their documents.

**Types of documents.** A district could have any combination of policy, administrative procedures, regulations, or joint protocol. Thirty-three districts had policies; a policy was defined as a document that contains a principle which guides organizational decision making (Anderson, 2005). Twenty eight districts had administrative procedures; administrative procedures (AP) contain direction for an organization and are consistent with and are an extension of the organization's policy (Anderson, 2005). Six districts had regulations; regulations provide rules that are made and enforced by an organization (Webster's Online Dictionary, 2014). Thirty-three districts had joint protocols; joint protocols (JP) are written procedures that are agreed by more than one organization (Webster's Online Dictionary, 2014). Examples of each type of document are included in Appendix H. Figure 5 shows the percentage of school districts with different combinations of document types.

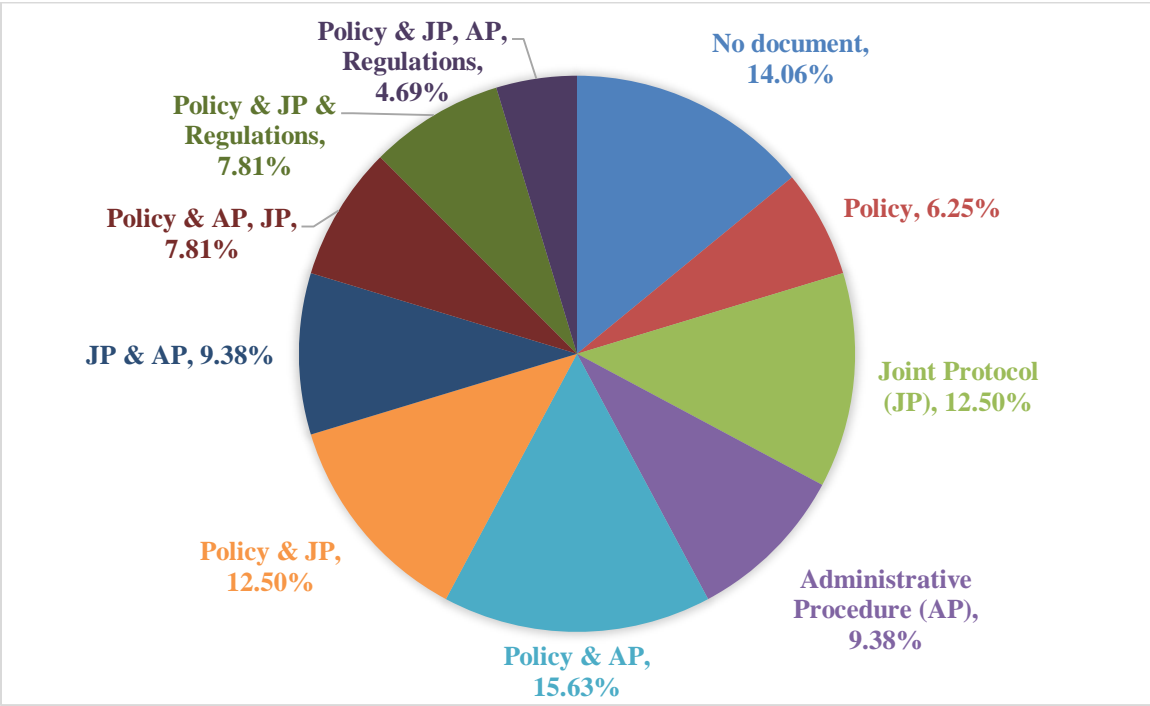


Figure 5. Percentage of school districts with each type of document.

Two administrative procedures and three joint protocols were mentioned within documents but were unable to be analyzed because they were not available on the school district’s website and could not be found through an internet search.

**Length of documents.** If multiple types of documents were combined into one file, each section was individually counted. For example, the District School Board of Ontario North East had one large document that was 55 pages. Within the document there was a policy that was one page, regulations that were one page, an administrative procedure that was forty-one pages, and a joint protocol that was twelve pages. Figure 6 shows the respective page lengths of policies, administrative procedures, regulations, and joint protocols together.



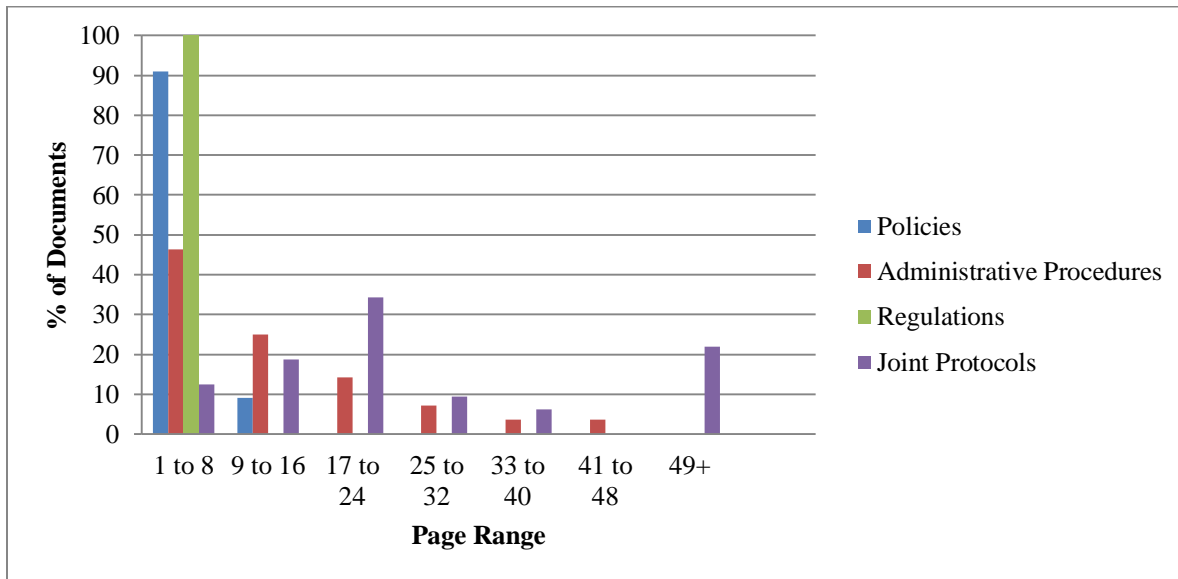


Figure 6. Types of documents by page size.

Administrative procedures and joint protocols tended to be longer than policies and regulations.

Table 8 shows the measures of central tendency of document page length.

Table 8

*Measures of Central Tendency of Document Page Length*

| Document Type            | Min. | Max. | Median | Mode | Mean |
|--------------------------|------|------|--------|------|------|
| Policy                   | 1.0  | 16.0 | 2.0    | 1.0  | 3.1  |
| Administrative Procedure | 1.0  | 41.0 | 9.5    | 7.0  | 13.0 |
| Joint Protocol           | 7.0  | 155  | 21.0   | 21.0 | 32.2 |
| Regulation               | 1.0  | 3.5  | 1.0    | 1.0  | 1.6  |

Table 8 shows that joint protocols were much larger than the other types of documents.

**Document dissemination.** School districts included two ways to share information with various audiences about child abuse and the teacher’s duty to report. School districts informed teachers about their duty to report by having principals review the district’s policy with staff at a meeting at the start of every school year. School districts also informed parents at the start of each school year of the school’s duty to report by sending a letter home with students. Approximately 41% (n = 26) of the districts stated in their policies that they would review their documentation with school personnel on annual basis, with even less (20%) (n = 13) saying that they would inform parents of the school’s duty to report prior to any report being made.

**Procedures.** The following subsection includes findings on the types of procedures school districts had on child abuse, and the persons involved in making a report.

**Types of procedures.** School districts included up to five types of procedures for school personnel to follow if abuse was suspected. Figure 7 shows the percentages of districts with each procedure.

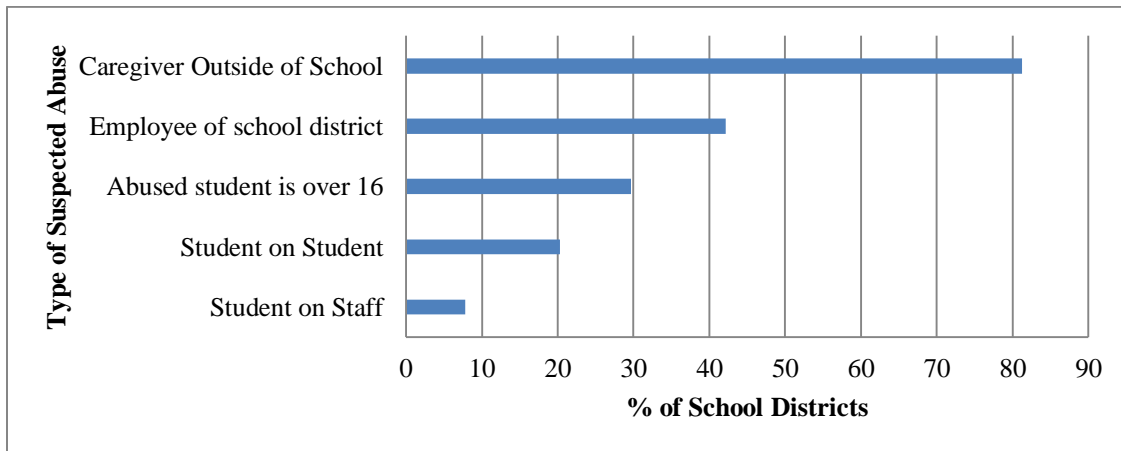


Figure 7. Types of abuse procedures found in school districts.

Almost all districts with publically available documents (81%) (n = 52) included procedures to follow if school personnel suspect that is in need of protection child from a caregiver. Just under half (44%) (n =

28) included procedures to follow if the suspected offender is an employee or contractor of the district. Two districts even included procedures to follow if the suspected offender was a Superintendent or Director of the district. Fewer than 10% of districts had procedures to follow if the suspected offender was another student who was in a position of power or if a student assaulted a staff member.

***Persons involved in the reporting process.*** The most suggested person to consult with prior to making the report was the school's principal (78%) (n = 50) or superintendent (63%) (n = 40). Approximately 39% (n = 25) of the district policies stated that the school personnel could consult with another employee if they were unsure if their suspicions warranted making a report. Other suggested people to consult were guidance counselors, special education resource teachers, past teachers of the suspected victim, or a public health nurse. In addition, 16% (n = 10) of district policies stated that school personnel could consult with a school-based social worker.

Over half of the school district policies (55%) (n = 35) included what information should be provided when on the telephone with the Society. For example, policies stated that the reporting employee should provide his or her name and position as well as general information on the student such as the student's: name, date of birth, name of parents, sibling information, home address, and telephone numbers. Policies also included that the reporting employee must provide details about the disclosure or suspicion such as: what the student said and to whom, when and where the incident occurred, name of the alleged offender, and a brief description of any injuries or marks. Moreover, policies stated that if there was to be an investigation the reporting employee should ask: for the time and location of the interview with the student, who is responsible for contacting the student's parents, and what information can be shared with the affected student and parents. Finally, policies informed employees that they should take note of the intake worker's name and contact information and ask whether the situation will be investigated. Telephone numbers to local Societies were included in 42% (n = 27) of procedures. Of the districts, 61% (n = 39) provided forms to fill out when school personnel are required to make a report.

After the report was made to a Society, 45% (n = 29) of districts included information on how the reporting employee would be updated about the case. For example, Durham School District's joint protocol states "The C.A.S. will attempt to provide feedback to the referral source...The person making the referral from the school is encouraged to contact the C.A.S. worker for an update if feedback is not forthcoming" (p. 17). While Grand Erie and Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk Catholic's joint protocol stipulates that "At the conclusion of an investigation, CAS will forward an outcome letter to the employee/volunteer with a copy to the Facility Administrator (school principal or appropriate department supervisor) outlining the results of the investigation" (p. 1). In addition, 17% (n = 11) of districts stated that a follow-up letter would be sent to the Society that received the report. Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic's Policy included an example letter for its teachers (Appendix I). The reporting teacher is charged with writing a one page letter to the CAS worker that the teacher reported to asking the CAS worker to confirm that the report had been made and to provide information concerning the resolution of the matter. The teacher must make a copy of the letter for the principal's records as well. If the Society decided not to investigate, 11% (n = 7) of districts stated that the reporting employee should make a note of the date, time, and name of the intake worker.

**Support systems.** Lists of behavioral and physical indicators of abuse were included in 27% (n = 17) of district documents as a resource for teachers to use when they are concerned that a child may be in need of protection. Additional resources detailing how to properly respond to students that disclosed abuse were provided in 23% (n = 15) of school districts documents. Teachers in 53% (n = 34) of districts were informed how to keep personal records on the child. After making the report, 11% (n = 7) of district policies advised its' employees to take time to process personal feelings. For example, Durham Catholic School District stated that teachers should "contact support staff if necessary" (p. 3), while Niagara Catholic School District stated that the teacher should "talk to someone you trust about your feelings" (p.

18). Eight percent of district policies (n = 5) informed personnel that supports are available through the districts' Employees' Assistance Program.

Under half (45%) (n = 29) of the districts included details on the supports provided to students, with 28% (n = 18) of districts stating that a child's right to privacy should be respected. CAS may choose to interview the child at the school. In this case, additional procedures were included if the student being interviewed had special needs in 30% (n = 19) of districts.

**Training opportunities.** Across Ontario, 31% (n = 20) of school district policies stated that ongoing professional development opportunities for staff were provided. Currently, training is being administered by different sources. Dufferin-Peel Catholic School District stated that superintendents are responsible for ensuring school administrators receive yearly in-service training with regard to the Child and Family Service legislation and general administrative procedures. Principals would then be required to pass on the knowledge to other school personnel during a staff meeting in September. School districts such as Halton Catholic have decided to use their local Children's Aid Society as a resource for the in-service training of district employees regarding the protection of children. Of the school districts that did claim training would be provided, the level of information given on what the professional development entailed varied depending on the district. Algoma School District stated that it sanctioned professional development seminars and workshops devoted to child abuse as well as specialized training opportunities; however, no information was given on who would provide the training or how often the training would be provided. School districts such as St. Clair Catholic and Lambton Kent have stated that training would be provided to staff on an annual basis.

Twenty-two percent (n = 14) of districts stated they would provide prevention education training for students through a series of classes on healthy living. Prevention education programs are designed to educate students on personal safety, healthy versus unhealthy relationships, etc.

**Community relationships.** Approximately 52% (n = 33) of district policies included processes to follow if CAS decided to interview the child at the school. Of the district policies, 36% (n = 23) included clear roles and responsibilities for staff and outside agencies such as CAS and local police forces. If the suspecting employee was unsure whether their suspicions warranted making a report, 61% (n = 39) of the districts suggested the employee should consult with an intake worker with their local Children's Aid Society. However, only 14% (n = 9) of policies included information on the possible scenarios that might occur to the child after a report has been made. Kawartha Pine Ridge School District and Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland, and Clarington Catholic School District included these scenarios in a joint protocol that was made between the two districts and local CAS. First, the joint protocol states that a child can be apprehended by a CAS worker if it is deemed necessary to remove the child from school property without the permission of the child's parents for the "purposes of interviewing, intervening, or receiving medical attention as part of an investigation" (p. 11). Second, the protocol states that CAS will determine the safest place for child to stay once apprehended. The child could either go back to the parents, be placed with an alternative family member, or within a foster home depending on the specifics of the case. Thirdly, the protocol informs employees that CAS workers are able to apprehend a child without a warrant, but must receive a warrant within five business days, or must return the child to the parents. Fourthly, the protocol outlines the steps CAS take to update the school on the status of the case. CAS must inform the school where the child is being placed (the name, address, and contact number of the foster parents); the legal status of the child; any concerns regarding parental contact (most recent court order); the child's change in legal status; and, the name and contact number of the worker (p. 12). Finally, the protocol states that teachers may not receive all the information concerning the case due to confidentiality issues. The protocol then provides examples of when information can be shared, for example: consent is obtained from the child's parents or caregivers; consent is obtained from the child who is twelve (12) years of age or older; the school is identified as part

of the safety plan for the child; if the CAS gains legal custody of the child and, they may choose to release information.

If a student under the care of CAS transfers schools, 19% (n = 12) of school districts informed its staff of individuals that needed to be notified of the transfer. Most provided similar, but slightly different information on the roles and responsibilities of employees within the varying organizations. For example, the School District of Toronto states that:

It is the responsibility of the principal or designate to notify the Children's Aid Society when a child who is known to have been reported to be at risk or found to be in need of protection and has transferred schools or moved to another district. (Toronto, Administrative Procedure, p. 8)

The Ontario North East School District's policy varied slightly by stating that the principal must also notify the receiving principal in addition to notifying CAS if a child moves:

If a student transfers to another school in Ontario, the principal or vice-principal must notify the receiving school principal of the existence of any substantiated reports involving the student in the Record of Suspected Child Abuse file. The principal must notify the children's aid society of such communication. (Ontario North East, p. 26)

Niagara Catholic stated that it was the responsibility of the child's caseworker and the principal of the incoming school to ensure a smooth transition to the new school:

The Child Protection Worker shall communicate with the current and new school to ensure a smooth transition. The Principal of the school in which the child is placed should contact the previous school for information that would assist in providing support to the student during a period of transition. (Niagara Catholic, p. 17)

Principals or school-based social workers were given the duty to refer and use any school and community resources that are appropriate such as family counselling and support centers in 13% (n = 8) of school districts.

## Interviews

The following section is organized according to the dimensions of Baumann et al.'s conceptual framework (Figure 1). Decision maker factors such as: age, sex, and the experience of the participants interviewed and case factors such as: age, sex, and socio-economic status of the child are given to provide context for why the participants decided to make a report of suspected abuse. External factors such as perceptions of legislation and organizational factors surrounding the participants' decision to report are also explored.

**Decision maker and case factors.** Seven participants were interviewed (2 male; 5 female) to report the experiences of those who have had to make reports of suspected abuse. Teachers (n = 4), youth and recreation workers (n = 2), and a pre-service school counsellor (n = 1) participated in the study. Table 9 shows the participants' pseudonym, role, gender, education level at the time of report, age at report, country where report was made, and number of cases reported.

*Table 9*

*Participant and Case Characteristics*

| <b>Pseudonym<br/>(Gender)</b> | <b>Role</b>                       | <b>Education</b> | <b>Age</b> | <b>Country</b>             | <b># of Reports ( age and<br/>type)</b>       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Alex<br>(Male)                | Teacher                           | Master's         | 34         | Canada<br>(Central,<br>ON) | 3 (10, physical; 11,<br>neglect; 12, neglect) |
| Brittany<br>(Female)          | Youth and<br>recreation<br>worker | High School      | 18         | Canada<br>(GTA, ON)        | 3 (8, physical; 6,<br>physical; 9, physical)  |
| Colleen<br>(Female)           | Youth and<br>recreation           | High School      | 18         | Canada<br>(GTA, ON)        | 2 (6, neglect; 10,<br>neglect)                |



|                       | worker                              |               |    |                              |                                             |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|----|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Dahlia<br>(Female)    | Teacher                             | Master's      | 35 | Canada<br>(NB)               | 1 (9, physical)                             |
| Erin<br>(Female)      | Teacher                             | Master's      | 36 | Canada<br>(Northern,<br>ON)  | 3 (5, physical; 4,<br>neglect and sexual)   |
| Gabrielle<br>(Female) | Pre-service<br>school<br>counsellor | Undergraduate | 23 | Canada<br>(BC)               | 2 (14, sexual; 12,<br>physical and sexual ) |
| Henry<br>(Male)       | Teacher                             | Undergraduate | 38 | United<br>Kingdom<br>(Essex) | 1 (14, physical and<br>sexual)              |

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Teachers were between 30-40 years of age when they made reports while the youth and recreation workers and the pre-service school counsellor were between 18-24 years old. The two youth and recreation workers (Brittany and Colleen) were not students at the education graduate program at the University; however, the participants were in an undergraduate program at the University and asked to participate upon seeing posters on the study. The pre-service school counsellor (Gabrielle) made her report in British Columbia while one of the teachers (Henry) made a report in the United Kingdom. Participants made fifteen reports of suspected abuse, with the average participant making two reports while working with their employer. The reports were made over the span of twenty-three years. Two participants made reports between the years 1990-2000, two made reports between the years 2000-2010, and three made reports between the years 2011-2013. Participants made reports to CAS about fourteen children, with one participant making two separate reports about the same child. The following

subsection gives context on each participant's decision to report to CAS, in addition to the results from making each report

### **Participants' decisions to report suspected abuse.**

This subsection provides information behind why participants chose to report. Each story includes information on: the pseudonym and profession of the participant, the location where the report was made, the type of abuse suspected, and the age and sex of the child. In addition, the stories contain the participant's reasoning for suspecting that abuse had occurred. Finally, each story includes details on what happened after each report was made and how making the report affected the participant emotionally.

The first story comes from Erin, a teacher from Northern Ontario, and involves a disclosure of physical abuse from a five year old girl. Erin began by discussing what caused her to suspect abuse had occurred: "Underneath her eyes, on the lower lids, they were all bloodshot, like little blood blisters." In order to find out what happened to the child she pulled the child aside and asked "what happened to your eyes?" The child claimed that her father had choked her the night before. Upon hearing the girl's story, Erin immediately called CAS to report the disclosure. After investigating the case, CAS decided there was not enough evidence that child abuse had occurred. Erin then went on to say how reporting affected her:

I found that I was very stressed about it. It was a very small community and I know I did the right thing for sure but there was a lot of negative attitude within the community towards me for reporting, very negative. It was shortly before grade 8 graduation; at the graduation the parents were really boycotting me or ignoring me because I had phoned, and yet I know that I did the right thing. It's sad that the person that suffered the most was me and yet I felt that nothing got done.

The above quote shows that Erin was ostracised by her community for making a report of suspected abuse. Ostracism by the community may seem unlikely, since one would be hard-pressed to find an individual that would say that suspected child abuse should not be reported. However, researchers have noted that ostracism by the community does occur (Child Care Law Center, 2005). This behaviour by the community can have the effect of stifling future reports as individuals may feel that reporting will only serve to bring trouble onto them.

Luckily, Erin did not allow her first experience to suppress her voice when she suspected that another child may have been abused. Erin was responsible for making two more reports: one for suspected neglect and the other for suspected sexual abuse. Both of the reports were about the same child, a four year old girl. The first report was made when the child hitchhiked to class one January day:

She had missed the bus, and her parents were still asleep. She got up in the home by herself, she had her pajamas on, she grabbed a couple of bagels left in the bag for her lunch, and she put on her rain boots with no socks and went out on the road to wait for a bus which had already passed her house. A parent who volunteered in my classroom was driving by on her way to school when she saw the little girl on the side of the road. She picked her up and brought her to school.

Erin went on to explain that she was “flabbergasted that the child arrived in her pajamas and was not properly dressed for winter.” Erin decided that this incident required her to make a report to CAS; however, upon calling, CAS informed Erin that the incident “wasn’t enough to get involved.” Erin explained that this lack of response by CAS made her feel very upset and that she ended up receiving support from her school’s counsellor as a result. At the end of the school year, Erin had to make a second report on the same child. Public health nurses had come to the class to discuss body care and to talk to students about private versus public body parts. When the nurses came to the part of the presentation on private versus public areas, the student said “someone was touching me there and I asked them to stop but they wouldn’t stop.” After investigating the case, CAS told Erin that “the parents said that she

misinterpreted it, that a man was tickling her.” The case file was closed after the parents were interviewed by CAS. This case highlights another issue: CAS does not usually give details as to why a case is closed or no further action was taken. This can result in teachers having a lagging feeling that something is still going on in the home. It can cause distress for the teacher if they are still worried that a student might be in a potentially dangerous situation. When asked, Erin stated that she made the reports out of her moral obligation to help the children, not because she was legally mandated to report.

The next participant, Brittany, made three reports over a span of three years as a youth and recreation worker at a summer camp in the Greater Toronto Area. The first case involved the suspected physical abuse of an eight year old girl. The child in question had been quiet all day and did not want to play with other children; this was unusual for the child as she normally took on a leadership position in her group. While Brittany was providing her group with instructions on a game they were about to play, the child began to cry. Brittany’s co-counsellor took the child on a walk to calm her down. When the co-counsellor and the child came back, the child was no longer crying. However, Brittany claimed that the co-counsellor now appeared to be in distress. Upon talking to the co-counsellor Brittany discovered that the child had disclosed that her mother had beaten her the night before and that “she was really worried about her younger brother being at home, because she was not home to protect him from their mom.” In addition she told the counsellor that “her mother often told her that she was ugly and stupid, she would never be good at anything, nobody loved her, and that she didn’t have any friends.” Brittany went on to say that the two counsellors got another employee to look after the children so they could go make the report. After making the report, the child was subsequently taken out of camp and never returned. Brittany did not receive any information from CAS on the results of the investigation. Brittany stated that she still thinks about the little girl and often wonders what happened to her. Like Erin, a lack of information from CAS regarding the outcomes or details of an investigation lingers with the reporter as they worry about a child that may still be in need of urgent assistance.

The next story from Brittany's interview involves the suspected physical abuse of a six year old boy. The child had lost his hat during his day at camp and when he noticed that his hat was missing he started to scream. Brittany went on to explain that she "had never heard a child scream like that... I could not calm him down." She took the child to the lost and found where he picked up three different hats that he knew weren't his and he kept claiming "this is mine, this is mine, this is mine; I have to have a hat when I come home." The boy then stated that he couldn't go home without his hat or his mother was going to beat him. Brittany called CAS as soon as the child was on the bus. CAS told Brittany that they would be at the location where the bus dropped off the child to ensure that there would not be time for the mother to harm the boy. Brittany then discussed what happened the following day:

The next day, the mom showed up at the camp and began talking with the director. She was obviously upset but she was still level headed and she asked to speak with whoever her child's supervisor was. My director called me over and I got up from the bench where I was sitting with my other co-counsellors before camp had started. When she saw me, she went feral. The whole time she was hunched over, screaming at me.

Brittany claimed that the mother screamed at her for 45 minutes; the conservation area staff had to come by because they were worried that there was going to be a security issue. Eventually, her assistant director pushed her into a trailer and locked the door because he was afraid that the mother would physically harm Brittany. The mother left the premises shortly after when the director threatened to call the police. Brittany was not informed about the results of the investigation from CAS. However, the child was not removed from camp, and the mother of the child stipulated that Brittany could never interact with that child again and forced the camp to remove the child from her group. Based on this information, Brittany hypothesized that the child was still under the ward of his mother and that CAS did not open a case on the child.

The final story from Brittany concerns the suspected physical abuse of a nine year old boy. Brittany noticed that a child “had a bunch of mosquito bite looking scabs all over his arm but there were no actual mosquito bites just the bump stage.” Brittany claimed that this made her suspicious because she “had been working at the same camp for three years and... had never heard of a kid having that many bug bites.” One day she decided to pull the child aside to ask him about the marks on his arm. She claimed that the child “turned away from me and mumbled that they were the pain and suffering on his soul.” She asked him to repeat what he had said; he replied that “they were bug bites.” At this point Brittany was still unsure of what to do; therefore, she decided to ask him what the marks were from again in an attempt to gain more information. She ended up asking the child two more times about the marks on his arms. One time he claimed that he didn’t know where the marks were from and the final time he repeated that they were bug bites. Brittany thought that the marks were inconsistent with the child’s explanation; consequently, she reported the incident to CAS. She went on to state that the child came back to the camp the next day. Brittany was not informed by CAS whether or not the case was investigated.

Alex, a teacher from south-central Ontario, made reports on three children during the time he worked with his school district; however, only one case was discussed in depth during the interview. His story involves the suspected physical abuse of a 12 year old boy. Alex worked with exceptional students who were partially verbal to non-verbal. The children in his class (including the child in question) had a history of being violent against themselves and to others; therefore, it was reasonable for the children to have a certain level of bruising. Due to these circumstances, Alex required the parents to inform him whenever there was a new bruise in order to reduce the potential number of false reports being sent to CAS. For accountability purposes, the children would be checked for bruises upon arrival to the school and before the children went home each evening. One morning, an educational assistant noticed that the child had a bruise that had been unreported by the parents. Because he had found an unexplained bruise, and because there were extenuating circumstances in the home, Alex suspected that abuse might have

occurred. Because of these suspicions, he reported the incident to CAS. He went on to claim that CAS did not update him about the status of the case; however, he hypothesised that the parents had not harmed the student based off his past experience working with the family.

The next story comes from Henry, who taught in the United Kingdom. Henry decided to report when he suspected that a student (female, 14) had been sexually and physically abused. Henry reported that this student's name "had come up at various staff meetings as somebody who was in an at-risk group." On one occasion, Henry had noticed she had a fresh bruise and a bloody lip. Knowing the family background, Henry pressed the question and asked "What happened... was it anybody at the school?" The girl responded that it wasn't anybody at the school and that she had "got mugged in her own home." Henry tried to get more information from the student, but she ran off. He decided to report the incident as he had reasonable suspicion that the student had been abused. Henry did not receive any information from child protective services on whether the incident was looked into.

Dahlia, a teacher from New Brunswick, called CAS when a nine year old boy disclosed he had been physically abused. The boy claimed that his mother had punched him in the nose three times when he was asked why he had a swollen and bloody lip. Dahlia explained what happened when the call was made to CAS:

[CAS] said that they were going to send someone to the school to talk to the child, and they did because it was a question of the swelling going down and not being seen later on. The child was actually taken off of school premises without parental notification. We notified the principal as soon as they said that they would be coming. CAS came near the end of the school of the school day so it was the principal's responsibility to call the parent and keep her occupied while the child was being taken off of school property to be interviewed.

The above quote shows how CAS and schools work together when abuse is suspected. A Canadian lobby group has attempted to argue that it is illegal for schools to detain children so CAS can apprehend the

child (Family Justice Review Committee, 2013). The lobby group has not proved their claims in court. Dahlia went on to explain that there were no “direct consequences by CAS” and that it was “up to [the school] to keep meeting and to create plans for the child where community supports could be accessed.” Dahlia reported that student was put into a specialised program to help improve his social skills and to increase his level of engagement in school.

The next story comes from Colleen, a youth and recreation worker, who made two reports while working at a summer camp in the Greater Toronto Area. The first story involves the suspected neglect of a six year old boy. At first she noticed that the boy wasn't well behaved; however, as many children at the camp had behaviour issues, Colleen did not suspect anything was wrong. She began to notice that something was unusual about the child when the child would “just start screaming.” This made Colleen more wary, but she still did not suspect abuse. However, she began to suspect that the child was being neglected when the child continually came to camp with “just one sandwich with two pieces of bread and a square of cheese.” In addition, the child would “bring [the sandwich] in the same bag every day; you could see the crumbs from the day before.” Colleen also noticed that the child seemed unusually attached to his sandwich. After she had noticed the same behaviour for a week, Colleen decided to report her suspicions because she felt that the lunches that were provided for the child were not adequate and that the child may be experiencing neglect in the home. Colleen explained that she did not hear back from CAS; however, she noticed that the child's lunches began to improve after the report had been made. Therefore, she hypothesized that CAS began to help the mother. Neglect occurs when a caregiver fails to provide basic needs such as adequate food, sleep, safety, supervision, clothing, or medical treatment. These issues often arise when a family is in poverty. Therefore, CAS faces difficulty when establishing the parents' accountability for providing less than adequate necessities for their children due to issues of poverty. Because the child stayed at the camp, it is likely that the child was not removed from his home. If the family did not have the financial resources to provide the child with enough food, CAS might have



helped the family find and access supports, such as local food cupboards. Food cupboards provide those who are in need with free food supplies once a month.

The second story from Colleen involves the suspected neglect of a ten year old boy and his younger brother. Colleen was only responsible for the older child while she was employed at the camp; therefore, she made the report mostly based on her interactions with the older child. She claimed that “the parent would often be late picking up the children at the bus stop, or would not pick them up at all.” Colleen noticed that the child “would swear a lot and would tell the other kids they should swear too.” The child also “seemed very tough for a 10 year old.” Before Colleen decided to make a report to CAS, she claimed that she “tried to talk to the mom after the first time [she was late for the bus] but it didn’t really seem like she cared at all.” Colleen decided to contact CAS after she noticed that the parent was late picking the children up on several occasions. She reported that the children remained at the camp; however she claimed that she “didn’t notice much difference with the older boy.” Colleen was not updated on the case by CAS. This case highlights the challenges that can arise when contacting parents about their child’s behaviour or issues that might be occurring in the home. Parents can be defensive or dismissive of the teacher or counsellor. As a result, teachers or counsellors might feel that CAS is the only avenue left after making no progress assessing the situation from interactions with the guardian of the child.

The final two stories come from Gabrielle’s interview. She reported two cases of suspected abuse while she was a pre-service school counsellor in British Columbia. The first story involves the suspected sexual abuse of a 14 year old girl. Gabrielle worked with this student on a regular basis as she had a history of self-harm. Gabrielle reported that this student would often question the confines of confidentiality and wanted to understand what information would force Gabrielle to break the confidentiality agreement between them. Because of the sheer number times that the student asked these questions, Gabrielle began to suspect that the student may have been abused. One afternoon, Gabrielle’s

suspicions were confirmed when the student disclosed that one of her mother's boyfriends had sexually abused her when she was eight. The student also claimed that she had told her mother about the abuse but the mother did not believe that it had occurred. Upon hearing the student's story, Gabrielle informed the student that she would have to make a report to CAS. Gabrielle was updated on the outcome of the investigation through a short letter by CAS. She claims the letter told her "Thank-you for reporting, this was the second time that this event had been disclosed by the child, an investigation had already occurred. In the future we encourage you to report again." CAS, however, did not provide details about whether or not this abuse was substantiated and whether any charges had been laid against the alleged abuser. Gabrielle hoped that no more circumstances would arise where she would be required to make another report.

Gabrielle did report again when a 12 year old girl disclosed she had been physically and sexually abused by her father. The student came into her office in distress; she "was so upset she could not even talk." The student started by disclosing that her dad hit her; however, Gabrielle suspected that more abuse would be disclosed. Because Gabrielle's placement was almost over at the school, she felt that the student should continue her disclosure with another counsellor who would be better able to support the student over a prolonged period of time. She was able to successfully transfer the student to another counsellor. Gabrielle noted that the child stayed with the other counsellor for at least "an hour and a half." The counsellor eventually came out and informed the other counsellors that the student had disclosed that she had been sexually abused by her father on a nightly basis for two years. The counsellors "really worked together as a team and helped each other. We all helped get the information that was needed to make the report and filled out all the paperwork." Approximately half an hour after the report was made to CAS, caseworkers and police officers arrived at the school to take statements and to apprehend the girl. Gabrielle reported that "the whole ordeal was very stressful." She claimed that she remembered feeling "sick to my stomach, and extreme anger towards the parent accused of hurting the

child.” She sought support from a friend, a certified counsellor, who helped her work through the emotions she was experiencing. These cases can be especially difficult for pre-service teachers; consequently, training in pre-service programs might better prepare teachers to address these issues once they are in-service.

The preceding stories are powerful. The participants wanted to ensure the children in their care were safe from harm, even though the experiences resulted in some participants experiencing negative emotions or consequences from the community as a result from reporting. Participants felt upset if they perceived that CAS was not doing anything to help the child. Participants also felt anger towards the alleged abuser. These emotions can even evoke physical response, with Gabrielle reporting having an upset stomach. Two participants sought help from certified counsellors in an attempt to work through their emotions.

Nine out of fifteen (60%) reports were made as a result of children disclosing (in part, or in full) information that caused the participant to believe that abuse had occurred. This number seems high as research has argued that between 60-80% of children withhold disclosure until adulthood (Alaggia, 2010). Children were most often reported for suspicion of physical abuse (nine cases), with neglect and sexual abuse suspected in three cases each. Participants received minimal or no updates on the children after they had reported. In addition, direct action on behalf of CAS was not perceived to be taken by some of the participants. The two reports from Erin’s interview were not opened due to claims by CAS that there was a lack of evidence from the investigation to support the suspicion. In Dahlia’s case, no direct action was perceived to be taken; however, this does not mean that CAS was not working with the family. Finally, Colleen noticed that one of her reports resulted in the affected child bringing more appropriate lunches to school, but failed to see any difference from making the second report.

To conclude, all participants decided to report for every case they encountered and none of the participants stated they had suspected abuse but decided not to report. No participant could claim that

they had a good experience reporting; however it did not appear to hinder their desire to help future children. Brittany stated it best: “The only thing that could possibly be worse is not making that call. I do it, I make the call, I get through it, and I cry and then I am over it.” All participants claimed that they would continue to report in the future, no matter what their experiences were like due to a duty they felt to the children in their care.

### **External factors.**

***Legal requirement to report.*** All interview participants agreed that they should be legally responsible for reporting cases of suspected child abuse.

***Community relationships.*** The experiences participants had with CAS were often described as negative in nature, for example, Alex claimed that that “CAS was often surly and rude.” Participants felt they were left out of the loop after making reports to CAS. For example, Gabrielle claimed CAS “was kind of a black hole; I knew everything that I needed to do, but I wasn’t sure whether someone was going to contact the home or if someone was going to call me back.” These sentiments were echoed by Alex, who stated that “it was like dealing with the men in black or the secret service.” Dahlia even claimed that “there was one EA that was really distrustful of the system...She had worked for the system in a different province so she had background knowledge of what was going on.” Erin felt disenfranchised as a result of working with CAS:

They did not think about the fact that I was emotionally concerned about the children in my care.

It was like they thought that since I did my part that I was no longer an issue, there was no way they cared about how I felt.

Dahlia felt frustrated with a lack of perceived action on behalf of CAS “The systems seem to be working ok, except for the frustration you felt when there was nothing being done about it.” These findings support research that argues that teachers perceive that CAS caseworkers put children at risk for further

harm due to delays in investigations or by not doing anything when the abuse has been reported (Alvarez, Kenny, Donohue, & Carpin, 2004).

Even though experiences with CAS were often negative, participants claimed they would still like to collaborate and improve relations with CAS. For example, Alex stated that “I would like to have someone come in from CAS to the schools...that way you would get a sense about how they do things and their process works.” These sentiments are further supported by Gabrielle, the pre-service school counsellor “I would have liked to know when you call that A might happen, or B might happen, or C might happen in order to help you prepare.” Finally, all participants felt that they should be provided with more information about the case in order to help the child:

We need to know everything in order to help them the most in their daily existence, because we are there with them every minute of every day in a school setting. The best way we can help the child is by knowing the whole situation... The fact that teachers are too often kept out of the loop is very detrimental. (Erin)

In summary, the participants’ experiences with child protective services have aligned with previous research that has shown that there is a noticeable disconnect between the two organizations. However, participants reported that they wanted to see improved relationships with CAS. Participants claimed that the relationship could be improved if CAS provided more information on the role of their organization. In addition, participants would like to receive more updates concerning the child they reported.

**Organizational factors.** The following section discusses the findings pertaining to Baumann’s organizational factors that arose during the interviews. Topics include: knowledge of employer policy, reporting procedures, administrative supports, training opportunities provided, and community supports.

***Knowledge of employer policy.*** Most participants (n = 6) stated they were aware of their employer's policy. One participant was aware of the school district's procedures, but was not sure where the written policy was kept.

***Reporting procedures.*** Participants described similar reporting procedures. Participants discussed their suspicions with their supervisor before making the call, or as soon as possible after the calls were made. Participants reported this was done to confirm suspicions and to inform the administration of what was happening. The youth and recreation counsellors were informed not to discuss the report with their peers but to discuss their suspicions only with a supervisor in order to protect the privacy of those involved. After the report was made, participants documented the report by writing down what the child said (using the child's words), the placement of any bruising, and filled out any paperwork that the employer required.

Mistakes were made during and after the reporting process with two participants. One participant, Alex, called the parents himself instead of allowing CAS to determine when best to call the parents because he claimed it was the policy of the school that it was better to hear it from the school instead of CAS.

**Question:** Did CAS tell you specifically to call the parents, or was that something that you did on your own accord, or with the school?

**Answer:** That's a good question. No, I don't think CAS told us to call the parents but I think that the rationale behind that was that we had no choice to call because we needed more information. It was the process in that school. We figured it was better that the parent hear it from the school than from CAS.

However, the interview participant's school district policy on child abuse otherwise states "it is the responsibility of the social worker to notify the parents or guardian if the removal of a student has been

necessary.” This shows that there was disconnect between what was supposed to happen, as per the school district’s policy, and what actually happened at the school. This could suggest that this teacher was either unaware of the specifics within the policy (other than the duty to report) or that this participant misunderstood different aspects of the district policy.

The other participant, Brittany, had made a report of suspected abuse; however, the following day the accused parent came to the participant’s place of work and asked the Director where the employee was who looked after her child. The director, mistakenly, had the counsellor come over to speak with the parent which resulted in the parent verbally attacking Brittany. Police had to be called in order to persuade the parent to leave. As Brittany was not a teacher with an Ontario school district, her employer’s policy was not analysed for the current study to assess if the policy discussed the procedure to take if a parent asked the employer to disclose who made the report.

***Administrative supports.*** Most (n = 6) interview participants agreed that their direct supervisor (i.e., principal) was a good support; however, one participant, Henry, stated that his experience was “pretty depressing really; the general feeling was does this really have to be reported because now we have to talk to social services.” So school leadership might be a factor influencing teachers’ decisions to report. Participants also turned to their peers to help them through the reporting process. For example, two participants mentioned they made the report as a team. After reporting, two participants were offered or received support through employer counselling. In addition, the employer of the reporting individual often offered supports to the affected child and family. Participants stated that employers created breakfast and lunch programs, sponsored families at Christmas time, and kept extra clothing at school for children in need.

***Training opportunities.*** All participants agreed that while no level of training can completely prepare the individual for making the report, increased training can improve the level of preparedness.

Participants reported receiving different levels of training, depending on the employer. Two felt their training was minimal or poor, two felt their training was adequate or moderate, and three felt their training was good. The participants who said their training was good were two youth and recreation counsellors and the pre-service school counsellor.

The youth and recreation workers were provided with training that included: yearly training of approximately three hours in length, guest speakers, information on the physical and behavioral abuse indicators, information on how to speak with the child if the child discloses, the telephone numbers to call when abuse is suspected, the reporting procedures for the organization, and information on what to expect from CAS once the report was made. The pre-service school counsellor was provided training in a larger course on counselling ethics. The training was approximately six hours in length and included: outlining the legal responsibilities of counsellors, case studies, lawsuits that occurred from when reporting did not go well, physical and behavioral abuse indicators, and the general reporting procedure.

All of the four teachers interviewed claimed that their training was minimal or adequate. Teachers were provided with training that was usually infrequent, informal, and under an hour in length. Dahlia stated that her training “was not extensive details, not a lot of information, just bullet points.” Henry reported that his training was “bang, bang, bang, bang, then they gave us a leaflet.” Training included informing teachers of the physical and behavioral indicators of abuse, the school policies, the teacher’s legal responsibilities, and the reporting procedures.

Participants were asked what they would have liked included in their training, if they could have asked for anything. Participants stated they would like training that included: clear guidelines on how to support the student after abuse was reported, more information about the law and related policies, a checklist so the participants know they followed all the procedures correctly, and for employees of CAS to come and discuss their role after the report has been made.



## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Four main issues arose from the data; the following chapter is organized into main discussion points: the role of professional judgement when deciding to report; the complexity of policies versus their functionality; increases in collaboration between organizations such as the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services are required; and, increased communication between schools and parents is needed.

### **Role of Professional Judgement When Deciding to Report**

Teachers use their professional judgement daily. Professional judgment is a process used to reach a well-reasoned conclusion that is based on the relevant facts and circumstances available at the time of making a decision. A fundamental part of the process is the involvement of individuals with sufficient knowledge and experience. Professional judgment requires the individual to identify reasonable alternatives and must be careful and objective when considering information (Moore, 2009). Their judgments cover diverse domains such as how to best layout the classroom, how much class time to devote to a project, and how to best support the needs of each student in the class. As mandated reporters, teachers must also judge when or if to involve child protective services if the teacher feels that a child is at risk of being harmed.

Participants appeared to accumulate evidence to reach what they considered to be a reportable threshold of suspicion. Three examples are provided; first, Colleen observed a child and his lunches for a week before deciding to make a report to CAS on suspicions that the child was being neglected. Second, Brittany spoke with one of the children she reported on several occasions about the marks on his arms before deciding to make the report. Third, Alex used his knowledge of the student's home life, coupled with the fact that the child had an unexplained bruise to come to the suspicion that abuse may have occurred. Researchers in the field have long argued that professional judgement plays a large factor in

reporting suspected abuse (Beck, 1994; Kenny, 2001; Tite, 1994) In a more recent Australian study by Walsh, Bridgstock, Farrella, Rassafiani, and Schweitzer, data were collected from (n = 254) teachers using a survey. The response rate was low, with only 24% of potential participants deciding to complete the survey. This may indicate that the sample was biased towards teachers who found the topic interesting, or had more knowledge in the area. The questionnaire was reviewed by two primary school teachers, and four researchers knowledgeable about questionnaire design and health promotion. In addition, it was piloted with 15 Bachelor of Education students to check for face validity, comprehensibility, and ease of use (Goebbels, Nicholson, Walsh, & De Vries, 2008). In the final section of the survey, vignettes were used to measure the case characteristics which influenced teachers' ability to detect and report hypothetical cases of child abuse. The researchers argued that the notification process is a two-part decision in which teachers must first judge if abuse has occurred, and then report it. At the judgement stage, the researchers proposed that teachers look at the characteristics of the case, such as the distinguishing signs and symptoms of abuse such as perceived seriousness, frequency, and impact on the child. At the reporting stage, the researchers anticipated that teachers respond to suspicions of abuse based on their own personal and school characteristics such as their knowledge of laws, policies and procedures for reporting, their personal values and attitudes, their beliefs about whether reporting is likely to lead to a positive outcome for the child, and the features of their school environment that facilitate or impede reporting. A strong relationship was found between teachers' ability to detect abuse and reporting scores. Despite the complex interplay of factors, where teachers in this sample were reasonably sure that abuse occurred in the hypothetical cases, they were likely to report it (Walsh et al., 2008).

Legislation states that all teachers must report, or face potential charges and fines; however, Erin claimed that her reports were made out of a moral obligation to protect the students in her care and not because of the legislative requirements. This claim supports studies which have shown teachers perceive the most important reason for reporting abuse is to protect and care for the child (Beck, 1994; Brosig &

Kalichman, 1992). The results from Walsh et al. (2008) reveal the importance of teachers understanding the various indicators of abuse, how abuse can affect children in the short and long term, and how to support the student after the report has been made (even if a case was not opened). This information will provide teachers with a better ability to judge if abuse has occurred, and how to continue to support the child long-term. The ability to support a child, both emotionally and academically, after a report of abuse has been made is essential as Figure 2 has shown that Crown Wards (children under the care of CAS) in Ontario are 37% less likely to graduate from high school than the general population.

### **School District Policies and Government Documents Need to be Updated**

**Many are misinformed about new \$50,000 penalty.** As previously stated, the new penalty for failing to report is up to a \$50,000 fine and up to two years of imprisonment. These legislative changes took place in 2008, and six years later in 2014 the ministry policies and school policies remain out of date. Policy memorandum no. 9 is currently out of date as it claims that teachers only risk a fine of \$1,000. In addition, none of the policies analysed informed teacher's about the new penalties for failing to report suspected abuse. Even more importantly, the Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services website and CAS websites need to update their websites to reflect this increased penalty. Updates to these documents are needed as professionals are currently misinformed about the seriousness of the penalty for failing to report.

**Content of policies.** One can reasonably assume that policies on reporting child abuse were created with the intended result of improving teacher reporting, which will, in turn, prevent children from being further abused. This means that teachers need to be provided with enough information within the policy to successfully guide the teacher through the entire reporting process; therefore, research question 2a sought to answer what school district policies are in place in relation to child abuse reporting. It was discovered that there were four different types of documents: policies, regulations, administrative

procedures, and joint protocols. As can be seen in Figure 3 (p. 61), most documents, with the exception of joint protocols, were between 1 to 8 pages long, with most joint protocols being 17 to 24 pages long; however, 22% of joint protocols were over 48 pages in length, with one document being 155 pages long. No research has been done exploring what the most effective length of a policy might be; however, it could be argued that it should not be so long and detailed that teachers cannot make sense of it or so short that it does not provide adequate guidance about what procedures to follow to recognize and report child abuse.

The policy analysis revealed many school districts left out information that could have been beneficial to teachers who were required to report. Thirty-seven percent of districts failed to provide legal definitions within their documents. Legal definitions are needed to help provide clarity surrounding a teacher's duty to report. For example, the definitions of a 'child' and a 'child in need of protection' can be confusing. *The Child and Family Services Act* (R.S.O, 1999) defines a child as a "person under the age of eighteen years"; however, it goes on to state that Children's Aid Societies are only required to investigate abuse claims for 'children in need of protection' who are defined as youth who are under sixteen years of age. CAS will only continue to care for children who are older than fifteen years if the child has a pre-existing protection order with the Society. Therefore, teachers need to be aware that calling CAS may not result in action being taken for older students. In addition, teachers should be informed what reasonable grounds to suspect abuse entails. Multiple studies have shown that teachers often feel they must have definitive evidence that abuse occurred and are unaware that only reasonable suspicion is required (Hinkelmann & Bruno, 2008; Kenny, 2004; Walsh & Farrell, 2008). Putting off making a report until a teacher feels that there is sufficient evidence can result in the child experiencing more abuse.

In addition to providing legal definitions, school districts should include more comprehensive procedures that include a variety of abuse scenarios. For example, less than half (42%) (n = 27) of the

districts included procedures to follow if the suspected abuser was a school employee, while 70% (n = 45) of school districts did not include abuse reporting procedures pertaining to students over the age of 15. Teachers need to be aware of the procedure to follow when the implicated person is another teacher as the CFSA (R.S.O., 1990) overrides a teacher's responsibility to provide the implicated employee with a copy of an adverse report or any information about the report if the employee was alleged to have sexually abused a student. An adverse report is usually required under the regulations made under *The Teaching Profession Act*, subsection 18 (1). If a teacher was not aware of the CFSA's ability to override legislation and had informed the implicated teacher of the report prior to the CAS investigation, the implicated employee would have an opportunity to destroy evidence that would be instrumental to the case.

Teachers also need to be aware of the school procedures to help children who have been abused but are over the age of 15 as the CFSA (2000) only covers children from 0-15 years old. If a student who is over the age 15 of discloses they have been abused "the principal/designate will advise the student to report the abuse to the Police Service, and to consult with appropriate community agencies...With the student's permission, the Principal/designate may make the contacts for the student" (Ontario North East, p. 6). However, if there are siblings "who might be at risk, the principal, and/or the person with this knowledge, shall notify the Police and the Children's Aid Society" (Durham Catholic).

School district policies also included information on: keeping personal records on the child (53%) (n = 34), telephone numbers of local Societies (47%) (n = 30), common indicators of abuse (27%) (n = 17), and how to respond to students that have disclosed abuse (23%) (n = 15). These topics are meant to support teachers in recognizing and coping with disclosures of abuse. Personal records serve two purposes; first, notes may provide the teacher with enough information that warrants the teacher to suspect that the child is being abused. This information can be subpoenaed in court if a case arises; therefore, records must only contain facts, observations, and direct conversations with the alleged victim. Less than 30% of district policies contained lists of common abuse indicators. As a result, many Ontario

teachers may not know what to look for especially in cases that are emotional or sexual in nature as symptoms of these types of abuse have been reported by teachers as not being easily identifiable. By themselves, behavioral or physical indicators do not prove abuse; however they do reveal that closer attention needs to be paid to the child in case he or she is in need of protection. In addition, it is essential for teachers to understand how to properly respond to students who have disclosed they were abused as several major child abuse cases have been dismissed in court because it was decided that the initial interviewers had biased the children (Crosson-Tower, 2003). The first things a mandatory reporter should do are: believe the child; reassure the child that telling you was the right thing to do; and, maintain a calm appearance. Secondly, the reporter should be truthful with the child. Children sometimes fear repercussions or consequences for parents or other family members. Because of this, a child might ask an adult to promise secrecy before disclosing; however, such a promise should not be made as the reporter is legally required to report and breaking the child's promise can result in the child feeling even more abandoned during this troubled time. Thirdly, it is important the child does not feel rushed or panicked and that the mandatory reporter has plenty of time to calm and reassure them. The reporter should be a supportive listener and should let the child use their own words to describe events. It is important not to ask questions that suggest the right words to a child or young person, or that can be seen as putting words in the child's mouth as a judge can throw out a case if she feels the child may have been coerced. Next, let the child person know what you will do next. Child abuse can cause children to feel disempowered and give them a sense of a lack control in their own life. By making sure the child is fully aware of each step, the reporter can help make the process less intimidating and can attempt to return a sense of control and safety to the child. Finally, the reporter should not confront the person believed to be an abuser. Confrontation has the potential to place the child, the mandatory reporter, or others at risk.

Providing teachers with the above resources may help alleviate some of the stress that accompanies making a report by removing the fear of the unknown. However, these resources can only

be of use if the teacher is informed and is knowledgeable about the policy and how to access it prior to making a report of suspected abuse. Teachers can be informed of their district's policy during district sanctioned training opportunities.

***Minimal training stated in policy documents to help teachers understand their role and responsibilities.*** Many researchers have argued for teachers to receive regular and consistent training on child abuse; (Beck et al., 1994; Dombrowski & Grischler, 2003; Kenny, 2001, 2004; Tite, 1993, 1994; Walsh & Farrell, 2008); therefore, research question 2b sought to discover what training opportunities were described in school district policy documents. It was found that approximately 70% (n = 44) of school district policies did not include information on how or when teachers would receive professional development on child abuse. This does not mean that professional development on child abuse was not occurring in schools; however, as policies are intended to provide the rules and guidelines of an organization, a lack of information in the policies on professional development may result in administrators overlooking the need for such training. Upon coding and analyzing the data from the interviews, it was discovered that the training that teachers received was markedly different from the training received by the youth and recreation workers and pre-service school counsellor. The major differences between the two groups were the length and amount of training provided, as well as the type of information included within the training. Teachers reported receiving less than an hour of training while the other participants reported receiving three or more hours of training that included case studies, vignettes, and guest speakers. The following section outlines the types of information that should be included in training workshops for in-service.

***Information to be included in training.*** Based on the analysis of the documents and the interview data, training for teachers should be much more thorough. Training programs should include how to identify abuse, make a report, and support the child after the report. As stated previously, just

over a quarter of school district policies listed physical and behavioural indicators of abuse. I put forth that not only should districts include these indicators within the district policy, but districts should also teach teachers how to recognize these indicators during training seminars. In Tite's (1994) study of 303 Ontario teachers and principals she discovered that almost all (98.4%) of the teachers surveyed said it was difficult to detect sexual abuse, 93.7% said it was difficult to detect physical abuse, 88.5% said it was difficult to detect symptoms of emotional abuse, and 62.7% said they would have trouble detecting indicators of neglect. Detecting abuse can be difficult because all children at some point come to school with cuts, scrapes, and bruises due to hurting themselves during normal child activities, such as riding a bike. Therefore, a child with a bruise may not stand out to the teacher. However, if a teacher did notice an injury, 86% of teachers and principals surveyed by Tite claimed that the child offered a plausible explanation for the bruise, for example, a student may claim that she fell off a swing. Children lie about being abused out of fear that their parent will get into trouble and possibly be taken away from them (Summit, 1983). In addition, abusive parents often threaten children to stay quiet about the abuse (Summit, 1983). For these reasons, teachers need to be better trained to be better able to recognize what is normal and what is not.

Next, training sessions should also provide teachers with an understanding of applicable laws and the district's procedures so teachers understand their duty to report as well as proper reporting protocol (Kenny, 2001). It is promising to see that all interview participants stated that they were aware that their employer had policy related to reporting suspected abuse; however, one should be wary of how informed employees actually are of current policies as two participants reported mistakes were made during the reporting process. While most interview participants followed reporting procedure, mistakes were made by two participants that could have resulted in a botched investigation in one instance and the physical harm of an employee in the other. As the number of interview participants was small, these findings are



not generalizable; however, they do illuminate some issues that might arise as a result of insufficient policy knowledge.

Teachers should also be trained on how to properly support the child after the report has been made. After a report of abuse has been made, the life of the reported child will likely be filled with stress, especially if the child must be removed from her home. Separation from parents, no matter how abusive or neglectful they were, can have a traumatic impact on a child that often leads to feelings of guilt, anger, helplessness, depression, and feelings of separation and loss (Crosson-Tower, 2003). Schools are able to provide a caring, nurturing, and stable environment that the children may not have when they go home; therefore, classroom teachers and other school personnel should be mindful of a child's needs and try to meet them (Crosson-Tower, 2003).

In order to increase the quality of teacher training, school districts have two options. First, districts could inform schools to collaborate with Children's Aid Societies by having schools call local societies on an annual basis to ask for a social worker to be sent to the school to provide a workshop for teachers. This would provide opportunities for educators and CAS employees to have frank discussions about their concerns with each other, such as teacher concerns over a lack of communication by CAS. Secondly, districts could choose to employ social workers to look after an individual school or family of schools. School social workers could assume responsibility for counselling, linking families with community resources, and planning with school staff on how best to meet a child's social and emotional needs. In addition, they could provide annual workshops for teachers to update their skills on recognizing and reporting suspected child abuse. Moreover, school social workers could provide prevention education for students.

***Lack of stated supports for teachers in policy documents.*** Research question 2c asked what organizational supports are described in school district policy documents. It was discovered that only 10% of school district policies provided information on the available supports to help teachers cope

emotionally after making a report of suspected abuse, with only 8% of school district policies informing teachers that they could receive assistance through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Of the districts that did mention supports, most suggested that the reporting employee discuss their feelings with a colleague or someone they trusted. It has been shown (Skinner, 1999) that professionals who make reports of abuse can experience a multitude of negative consequences such as those discussed by the interview participants (extreme nervousness, upset stomach, anger, hopelessness). While making a report of suspected abuse was not a pleasant experience, the participants who were interviewed firmly believed it was their responsibility to prevent further harm from occurring to the students within their care and would continue to report in the future. If school districts provide more effective support networks, both within and beyond the school context, a teacher could be provided with a greater level of confidence in his or her ability to cope. Therefore, school districts should consider increasing the level of organizational supports provided for teachers.

Increased support could be accomplished through a variety of measures. First, school districts should ensure that all employees are aware that they are able to receive counselling through the district's employee assistance program (EAP). This can be accomplished by first updating the district's policy to include a clause stating that supports are available to the teacher through the district's EAP. Next, districts can remind teachers by sending an email through the district's email listserv and by providing a verbal reminder at a school meeting at the beginning of the school year. Secondly, as recommended in the previous section, school districts could hire a social worker for a school or for a family of schools. These social workers would work as a resource for teachers prior to, during, and after making a report of suspected abuse. For example, if a teacher is unsure of whether their concerns warrant making a report, the teacher would be able to discuss her concerns with the social worker. While this consultation would not remove the teacher's responsibility to report, the social worker could help guide the teacher through the process of reporting in order to ensure procedures were followed correctly. The school social worker

could also serve as an emotional support to the teacher after the report by offering counselling services to the affected teacher. Finally, the school social worker could work as a bridge to Children's Aid Societies. For example, if a child and their family were being investigated by CAS, the school social worker could work with CAS to help develop a school plan to better support the affected child and family. In addition, the school social worker would be responsible for updating the child's teacher and/or reporting employee about the status of the case.

Thirdly, Child Protection Teams or crisis teams can be formed. The Office on Child Abuse and Neglect (OCAN), Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, and the Department of Health and Human Services in the United States of America (Goldman, Wolcott, Kennedy, 2003) provided 3-year grants to develop and implement projects that addressed child abuse identification, prevention, and treatment in collaboration with preschool, elementary, and secondary school districts. The projects identified that enlisting school staff in efforts to prevent and intervene in cases of child abuse improved outcomes for these children. The teams would be composed of various professionals within the school and may include the principal or vice principal, teachers, the school social worker (if employed by the district), educational assistants, and other school staff. The team would be dedicated to responding to child abuse reports and other school-based crises. As previously mentioned, the school social worker or child protection team would not remove the reporting teacher's duty to report suspected abuse; instead, the team would be responsible for supporting the reporting teacher before, during, and after making the call to CAS. In addition, the team would be responsible for collaborating with local CAS in order to create a school safety/success plan for the abused child. By bringing together professionals from different perspectives, children can be better served because team members have specific roles and expertise.

### **Increases in Collaboration are Required**

**Education sector and CAS.** Research question 1b inquired about the community relationships that were available to support teachers while research question 3 investigated the personal experiences of teachers who had made a report of suspected abuse. The current study found that these two questions were related. Participant experiences with CAS aligned with studies that have stated that teachers have developed a distrust of the child protection system due to a perceived lack of communication by CAS (Alvarez, Kenny, Donohue, & Carpin, 2004; Dombrowski et al., 2003; Tite, 1993). Due to the small sample of interview participants, the findings are not generalizable; however, these results confirm findings from many previous studies on the topic. The Ontario Ministry of Education (MoE) has recently funded pilot programs to increase opportunities for the education sector and CAS to collaborate together and share relevant information (Memorandum to Directors of Education, January 16, 2013). Increased collaboration between these two organizations is essential as there currently are no systems in place for them to share data. For example, it was discovered that both MoE and the Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services (MYCS) have no system in place for either organization to know the number of teachers that reported for a given year. Data on teacher reporting is collected at the local CAS level; however, these data are not synthesized and reported regionally or provincially. This information could be beneficial for statistical and legal reasons. For example, knowing the number of reports per school district could serve to inform the education sector where more supports for students may be required. While these pilot projects are a good start, I suggest three options to improve the relationship between the education sector and Children's Aid Societies. Firstly, MoE and MCYS could create a joint program office in order to improve interdisciplinary collaboration between the two agencies. In an article on interdisciplinary collaboration, Bronstein (2003) claimed that "interdisciplinary collaboration is an effective interpersonal process that facilitates the achievement of goals that cannot be reached when individual [organizations] act on their own". That being said, interdisciplinary collaboration is fraught with challenges. The two ministries have their own mandates, initiatives,

structures, history, and culture. The decision to collaborate raises questions about who leads, who pays, and who gets credited for success, or blamed for failure (Hager & Curry, 2009). Figure 8 shows how MoE and MCYS currently work.

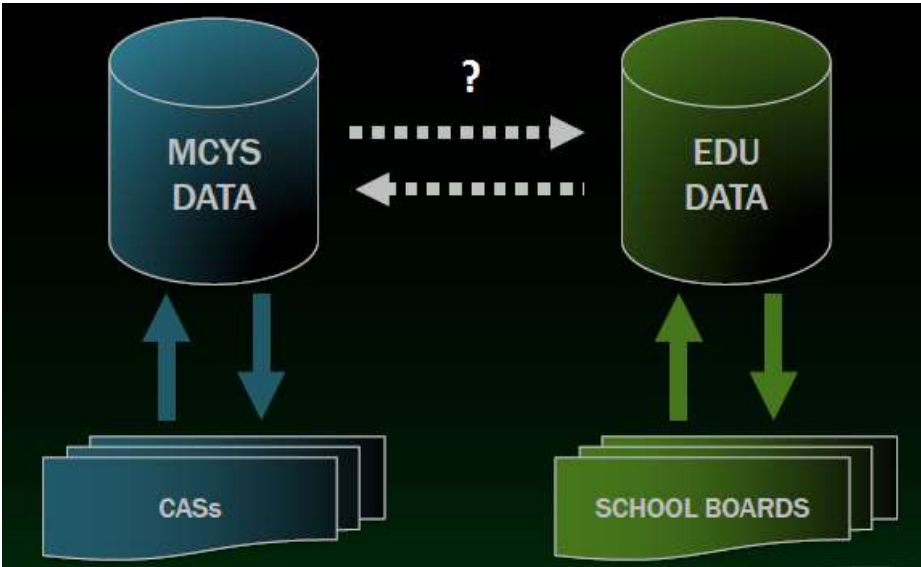
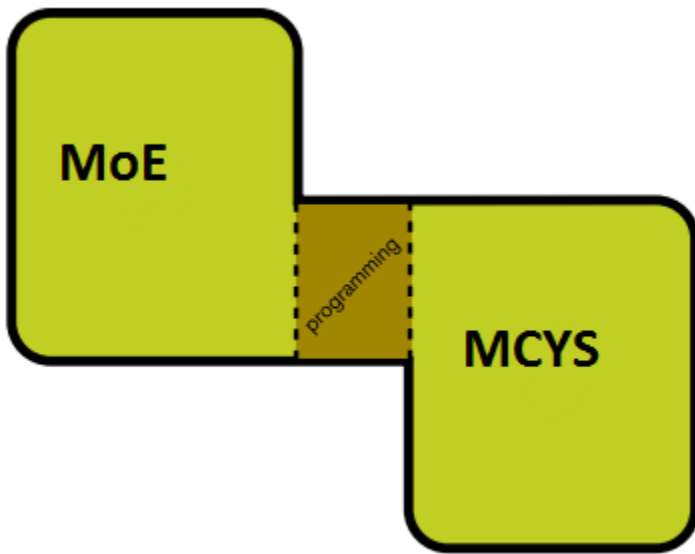


Figure 8. MCYS and MoE current operating system. Adapted from “Children and Youth in Care” by S. Bickford, 2014, *Ontario Education Research Symposium*. Presentation conducted at Toronto, Ontario. Adapted with permission.

Currently, MoE and MCYS are completely separate organizations with no system in place that allows for collaboration between MCYS and MoE. Therefore, a joint program office would facilitate communication and collaboration on shared issues. This would enable them to remain separate from each other, but would allow them to combine efforts on one or more programs in order to collaborate (Hager & Curry, 2009). Figure 9 provides a pictorial representation of what a joint program office would look like.



*Figure 9.* Pictorial representation of a joint program office. Adapted from “Models of Collaboration: Non-profits Working Together” by M. Hager, and T. Curry, 2009, p. 4. Copyright 2009 by Arizona Board of Regents for and on behalf of the ASU Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Non-profit Innovation, College of Public Programs, and Arizona State University. Adapted with permission.

Challenges to this type of collaboration include determining what staff comes from each organization and which organization is responsible for funding the new program, and establishing lines of communication from the joint office to each organization. Benefits of collaborating include synergy from joined forces, economies of scale for selected services, efficient use of resources, and the retained autonomy of the organizations (Hager & Curry, 2009). I recommend that the joint program office be responsible for creating a universal joint protocol between local CAS and school districts, collecting data related to schools and reporting (such as the number of reports made by each school district), creating and facilitating training workshops for school districts, and other matters related to helping children affected by abuse.

If there is not enough funding for MCYS and MoE to create or maintain the joint program office, I offer cheaper alternative solutions. The first less costly alternative would be to create a liaison position between the two ministries. The liaison would be responsible for sharing data and acting as the knowledge broker across both ministries. In addition, two positions could be created (one from MoE and one from MCYS) to share responsibility for facilitating this brokerage. The next option would have MoE and MCYS remain separate organizations; however, MoE and MCYS would be responsible for creating and implementing a data sharing agreement between the two organizations. As previously mentioned, CAS are currently in the process of updating their data management systems. This new system will allow for much easier data collection as each CAS will be using the same system. Therefore, I suggest that MoE and MCYS create a data sharing agreement where MCYS would be responsible for providing MoE with an annual report on child abuse statistics that are related to schools. If a data sharing agreement is not feasible, MoE should begin collecting its own data about child abuse. For example, schools would be responsible for submitting the statistics on the number of reports made to the school district. The school district would then submit the statistics to the Ministry, and then MoE would be responsible analysing and using the data as the organization sees fit. For example, MoE's Education Statistics and Analysis Branch is responsible for collecting, managing, analysing, and reporting education data in the Ontario School Information System. Statistics on child abuse reporting could become a section of this report.

The last alternative is to create a third-party, non-profit organization that focuses on creating opportunities for collaboration for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to work together across traditional barriers within a neutral space to find, discuss, and facilitate the implementation of what research has shown works for children and youth whom are currently disadvantaged in the education system, such as children that have been abused or are under the ward of CAS. Australia has implemented a similar organization called The Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY). ARACY was developed in order to try to address problems on poverty, child abuse, substance abuse, and

Aboriginal disadvantage by implementing policies and programs that have been backed by research (Bammer, Michaux, & Sanson, 2010). It has been shown many times that when practices based on customs or ideologies are replaced with evidence based practices, better results follow (Cooper, Levin, Campbell, 2009). These types of organizations, known as knowledge brokers are needed because those responsible for making policies, such as former Australian cabinet member and secretary of the department of the Prime Minister, Terry Moran, has said:

I've given up long since seeking to get pieces of research done by academics as a contribution to important policy problems because it's generally late and in a form that then has to be further translated before it can be used in government. (Australian Council for the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, 2011)

The above quote shows that researchers and policy makers often run into communication barriers which results in research being left out of policy. In Canada, an organization similar to ARACY was created. PART (Practice and Research Together) is a Canadian research utilization initiative. PART's core function is to distil and disseminate practice-relevant research findings to child welfare practitioners including front line practitioners, senior leaders, and caregivers. PART also provides support to individual member agencies as they implement evidence-informed practice. Due to the fact that this organization is already in place and has been established for eight years, I suggest a new non-profit organization is not required, but that PART might take a part in the leadership necessary to coordinate these systems. If PART is unable, unwilling, or requires help in the task of coordinating these systems, the Ontario Education Research Panel could offer assistance. In order to increase the use of research in educational policies, in 2006, the Ontario government implemented a knowledge brokering organization called the Ontario Education Research Panel (OERP). The organization includes 12 members from educational research, policy, and practice (Cooper, Levin, & Campbell, 2009) and their mission is to harness, encourage, promote, and disseminate good examples of research-to-practice that have already



been developed in districts, schools, and classrooms and to build capacity for educational research by creating and strengthening relationships among existing organizations and individuals, such as school boards, faculties of education, researchers, professional organizations, community agencies, and ministries. Both PART and OERP could provide valuable assistance to creating more substantial collaboration between MoE and MCYS.

**Current collaboration efforts.** The Ministry of Education and MYCS are in the process of developing a Student Achievement Protocol template to encourage local protocols between CAS and school districts; however, it is unclear how the two organizations have decided to collaborate to create the protocol (MCYS, 2013). At the 2014 Ontario Education Research Symposium, a presentation by the Ministry of Education stated that the new template will encourage school districts and local CASs to develop joint protocols that: establish the roles and responsibilities of the adults dedicated to supporting abused children; plan for student success; and, outline training opportunities for teachers, school staff, and CAS staff to better support children affected by abuse. This government initiative is consistent with findings which show that school district policy can and should be improved. However, the structure and organizational norms of public education in schools, school districts, and ministries are not always conducive to collaboration and the development of common understanding of policy (Lane & Hamann, 2004). The current study supports the notion that local policy adaptation is susceptible to incoherence and wide variability in policy implementation (Lane & Hamann, 2004). For example, current findings revealed that attempts to create local protocols resulted in school districts having different ways of sharing information between schools and CAS if a child was required to transfer schools. This could result in miscommunication if a child transferred between districts that had different protocol requirements. The previous example indicates that direction is needed at the ministry level in order to increase consistency within the protocols; yet it has been shown that top-down mandates cannot ensure cohesiveness and fidelity of policy implementation (Lane & Hamann, 2004). In order to increase policy

cohesiveness, I put forth that MoE and MCYS do not simply encourage that school districts create similar protocols with local CAS; instead, MoE should mandate that all school districts in Ontario must implement the Student Achievement Protocol as created by MoE and MCYS. School districts would then be encouraged to meet with local CAS to work out any additional details that may not have been included in the policy. This would remove most of the variability that was discovered in the policies during the current study. Next, in order to create policy fidelity, I put forth that MoE and MCYS must ensure that all levels of the education system are made aware of the contents of the policy, the implications of the policy, and why the policy is important and needed instead of simply transferring the message of the policy “in a linear fashion from the...district office down through subordinates until school principals or teachers receive the message” (Lane & Hamann, 2003). Transferring policy messages is not sufficient as policy is hardly ever implemented as intended; instead policy implemented in the field is a result of repeated interpretations and assumptions that occur amongst all individuals in the education system (Levinson & Sutton, 2001). McLaughlin (1987) argued that individual will (or motivation) and interpretation of policy dramatically influences how a policy is implemented and that, in order to increase the probability of successful implementation, policy creators must create a system of supports to help implement the policy and attempt to remove any pressures that may impede policy implementation. Therefore, I suggest that MoE and MCYS consider creating supports through providing training sessions for both principals and teachers. In some school district policies it was stated that principals would receive training on child abuse on a yearly basis and would then be expected to pass on this information to teachers. While this may seem to translate into less training costs for the Ministry, I suggest that MoE and MCYS do not take this approach when attempting to implement the new protocol. By only training principals, the Ministry must rely on the principals to retain all of the information learned at the training session and then accurately relay all the information to the teachers in their schools. This may result in teachers receiving information about administrative matters that are not relevant to them or not receiving enough

information to recognize and report cases. I put forth that principals should receive training that largely focuses on legalities and their administrative duties concerning reporting child abuse and how reporting affects the school as a whole. Teachers should receive separate training that is facilitated by MoE and MCYS and that largely focuses on how to recognize, document, and report abuse, and how to support the student after the report. Ensuring that all of the education system is properly trained about child abuse will improve the educational experience for these students.

**The relationship between joint protocols and collaboration.** Half of the school districts had joint protocols. Joint protocols are developed in response to the specific difficulties that have arisen when service divisions and agencies such as school districts, Children’s Aid Societies, and local police forces are required to work together. Morris and Wates (2006) authored a knowledge review to see how policies and practice address the needs of parents who are disabled. In combination with analyzing a survey completed in 2002 of 200 local authorities in England, the researchers developed a good practice survey and sent it to 40 local authorities in Wales and Northern Ireland. Focus groups were also held with five agencies. The researchers found that developing joint protocols was an important part of the process of achieving joint-working between agencies. A report by Kearney, Levin, Rosen, and Sainsbury (2003) focuses on the policies and practices that promote integrated services to families that experience from alcohol, drug, and mental health problems. The authors also state that creating joint protocols is an essential step to building partnerships and put forth that “the collaboration required to produce them [protocols] is also a model for good working practices in applying them” (p. 4). Table 10 provides the steps to successfully implement a protocol.

*Table 10*

*Steps to Successfully Implement a Protocol*

| <b>Before</b>                                                           | <b>During</b>                                                                                | <b>After</b>             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Identify desired outcomes                                               | Include instructions and role                                                                | Disseminate protocol     |
| Identify key stakeholders                                               | requirements                                                                                 | Train employees          |
| Identify relevant legislation                                           | Be authoritative                                                                             | Measure effectiveness    |
| Identify what is already in place and what still needs to be integrated | Include legislation, policy, and procedure                                                   | Keep protocol up-to-date |
| Identify gaps in working together                                       | Be easy to use                                                                               |                          |
|                                                                         | Be specific about new ways of working together and address key issues (sharing of resources) |                          |
|                                                                         | Encourage organizations to work together for the good of the families affected by abuse.     |                          |

*Note.* Summarized from “Families that have alcohol and mental health problems: A template for partnership working,” by P. Kearney, E. Levin, G. Rosen, and M. Sainsbury, 2003, Social Care Institute of Excellence.

Teams function best when everyone understands their roles and responsibilities; therefore, by providing clear, well defined documentation and instruction of roles and responsibilities, organizations can set clear expectations for team members, increase communication, and help avoid misunderstandings and disputes.

### **Lack of Communication with Parents**

Eighty percent of school district policies failed to state how they would inform parents of the school’s duty to report suspected abuse. One district stated that its document would be shared if the parents asked to see it; however, it did not state that it would inform parents of the district’s duty to report prior to a case occurring. This is concerning as it has been argued that by providing parents with “fair notice of the school professional's duty to report” it will help to “mitigate feelings of betrayal and guilt

following a report being made” (Dombrowski & Grischler, 2006, p. 236) . Therefore, school districts need to inform parents of the district’s roles and responsibilities regarding reporting child abuse by ensuring that notices are sent to parents at the start of every school year outlining the district’s responsibilities to report suspected abuse. This notice could be included in the school’s September Newsletter and could also provide a list of parenting resources for those who might require them. This information should also be included on the school’s website. Additionally, schools can take a preventive approach to stopping abuse by holding parenting seminars for parents. These seminars could cover topics on parenting skills such as appropriate child discipline, and could occur during parent/teacher night, or on another occasion when parents are most likely at the school. Parents would be reminded of the school’s duty to report during the seminars. These options enable schools to become more effective partners in the attempt to stop abuse.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

Six recommendations have arisen as a result of the study. First, the Ontario Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services (MCYS) are encouraged to continue their newly formed collaboration in order to improve outcomes for children and youth in the care of CAS by creating a more formal collaboration by implementing a joint program office and data sharing system. However, if there is a lack of funds to create a joint program office, PART or the Ontario Education Research Panel is encouraged to bring MoE and MCYS together to facilitate long-term collaboration between these organizations. Secondly, once the Student Achievement Protocol has been created by MoE and MCYS, MoE should require all school districts to implement the protocol, instead of using the protocol as a means for encouragement for school districts to create a similar protocol with local CAS. A province-wide, consistent, protocol would result in all organizations following the same set of rules. Thirdly, school districts are encouraged to reassess the content of their procedures during the district’s next policy review. As stated previously, school districts should implement the Student

Achievement protocol when it has been released by MoE and MCYS; however, if the protocol was not released by the time of the district's next policy review, the district should include content related to: clearly defined roles and responsibilities for staff and outside agencies, detailed procedures for varying scenarios (teacher as abuser vs. student as abuser), a parent notification process to inform parents of the board's position towards abuse and its legal obligation to report suspected abuse at the start of each school year, legal definitions, indicators of abuse, how and when training will occur, and contact information for teachers about their local CAS. Fourthly, districts without joint protocols are encouraged to produce them as a way to increase collaboration between local Children's Aid Societies and schools, and to provide each organization with a more detailed understanding of the other's roles and responsibilities. Next, due to the fact that teachers face legal ramifications for not reporting abuse, MoE and MCYS should provide free training for all school professionals who are in contact with children. This has been done in areas of the United States such as New York, Wisconsin, and Maine as well as in Australia. If MCYS and MoE choose not to provide mandatory training, school districts are advised to reassess their current professional development opportunities to determine how to best inform teachers of their roles and responsibilities on reporting suspected child abuse. Last, schools are encouraged to inform parents of the school's duty to report suspected abuse and to provide preventative education to families.

### **Limitations of Study**

As the number of interview participants was small, the results are not generalizable. In addition, as interview participants largely did not consist of Ontario-based teachers, the interview data does not speak to the data found from the document analysis. Ideally, sampling would have been done to ensure that teachers were included from districts that had small, medium and large policies in order to see whether or not the characteristics of the policies influenced the actual training and reporting practices of the teachers in particular districts; however, this was not possible due to the scope of the Master's thesis.

Just because something is not written in the policy documents does not mean that it is not being done at school. Information on topics such as professional development, or policy review procedures may be kept in a separate policy/document which was not read for the analysis. For example, St. Clair Catholic School District stated that “there are corresponding procedures relating to hiring, staff training, responding to students with special needs, investigating employee misconduct, and cooperating with appropriate investigative agencies (St. Clair Catholic School District, p. 1). Likewise, just because something is written within the document does not mean that it is actually happening within schools. Further research is needed to evaluate how these policies are understood and implemented and to try to increase professional capacity to address child abuse cases.

### **Future Research**

Figuring out how to stop abuse “exercise[s] the minds of members of the community at large, policymakers, providers of various services, researchers, and young people themselves” (Bammer, Michaux, & Sanson, 2010, p. xv). It has been widely acknowledged in countries such as Britain, Australia, and Canada that high-quality research is required in order to support governments in making effective decisions (Bammer et al., 2010). This, in turn, will help ensure that taxpayer dollars are well spent on interventions that work (Spring, 2007). Therefore, future research needs to focus on bringing together researchers, policy creators, and the knowledge of other stakeholders, such as parents and other community members such as Children’s Aid Societies. Future research building on the current study should focus on finding: teacher understanding of school board policies and procedures on child abuse; what teachers need from their school districts to better support them through the process of reporting; and what kinds of training (i.e., in-person versus online modules) are most effective.

In order to understand what teachers currently know about their duty to report, researchers could develop a survey to ask questions in three areas: awareness of school board policy; training opportunities provided; school district supports to assist teachers in addressing child abuse cases. Data could then be

gathered through a web-based, anonymous survey of teachers. The data gathered from the survey could then inform the creation of tailored interventions by school district that attempt to increase support for teachers regarding child abuse. Researchers could then have groups of schools across Ontario implement a variety of interventions (online module, CAS workshops etc.). For example, if a number of interventions were tested, researchers could have some school districts assigned to each intervention. Data for this phase would be collected through a post-survey and by having teachers discuss their perceptions of the interventions through focus groups.

## **Conclusion**

Child abuse is a multifaceted topic that is fragmented across international, federal, and provincial agencies, as well as research centers (both private and public). Reporting abuse affects the child, the child's family, the person who made the report, and society as a whole. As the researcher for the current study is a teacher, the question of how to stop child abuse was more narrowly framed by asking what the teacher and wider education system can do to help stop abuse.

Throughout the province it appeared that many school district policies, government documents, and even CAS websites failed to include valuable information to help inform teachers of their role and responsibilities in reporting suspected abuse. Minimal supports and training were reported to be in place to assist teachers in reporting child abuse within school district policy documents. Of the school districts that did state training would be provided, the level of detail provided varied depending on the district and the parties responsible for training the district's teachers. While the policy analysis revealed that there are some supports stated to be available for teachers, more work is needed to see how supports are implemented and to discern the subsequent effect on teacher's reporting practices. More work is also needed to outline what academic support (in addition to socio-emotional supports) children need that have been victims of abuse.



Data garnered from the interviews revealed that teachers make professional judgements when deciding what qualifies reportable abuse. Without sufficient knowledge, teachers are at risk of making mistakes which could result in the child or reporter being harmed. Furthermore, there appears to be a lack of communication among: the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Child and Youth Services, teachers and Children's Aid Societies, and school districts and parents. A lack of communication can result in the individuals' involved receiving inadequate information about child abuse, and the teacher's duty to report. This can lead to feelings of distrust developing between those involved in the reporting process and may result in cases being mishandled or going unreported. Therefore, more effort needs to go into creating and nurturing collaborative relationships between all of the actors involved.

To conclude, children depend on many adults as they grow up—parents, teachers other community members. A child needs food, clothing, and shelter as well as love and attention. Children deserve to be safe and if caregivers cannot provide that safety, educators must intervene in order to help vulnerable youth. The system has a responsibility to help who are children in need of protection. Teachers are already committed to improving the lives of the students in their classrooms and, with the proper training, teachers could do even more to support at-risk youth.

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**APPENDIX A: “Child in need of Protection” as defined under The Child and Family Services Act (R.S.O., 1990)**

s. 37 (2) A child is in need of protection where,

- (a) the child has suffered physical harm, inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person’s,
  - (i) failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child, or
  - (ii) pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child;
- (b) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer physical harm inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person’s,
  - (i) failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child, or
  - (ii) pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child;
- (c) the child has been sexually molested or sexually exploited, including by child pornography, by the person having charge of the child or by another person where the person having charge of the child knows or should know of the possibility of sexual molestation or sexual exploitation and fails to protect the child;
- (d) there is a risk that the child is likely to be sexually molested or sexually exploited as described in clause (c);
- (e) the child requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering and the child’s parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, the treatment;
- (f) the child has suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by serious,
  - (i) anxiety,

(ii) depression,

(iii) withdrawal,

(iv) self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, or

(v) delayed development,

and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the emotional harm suffered by the child results from the actions, failure to act or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child;

(f.1) the child has suffered emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) or (v) and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm;

(g) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) or (v) resulting from the actions, failure to act or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child;

(g.1) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) or (v) and that the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, services or treatment to prevent the harm;

(h) the child suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the child's development and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, treatment to remedy or alleviate the condition;

- (i) the child has been abandoned, the child's parent has died or is unavailable to exercise his or her custodial rights over the child and has not made adequate provision for the child's care and custody, or the child is in a residential placement and the parent refuses or is unable or unwilling to resume the child's care and custody;
- (j) the child is less than twelve years old and has killed or seriously injured another person or caused serious damage to another person's property, services or treatment are necessary to prevent a recurrence and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, those services or treatment;
- (k) the child is less than twelve years old and has on more than one occasion injured another person or caused loss or damage to another person's property, with the encouragement of the person having charge of the child or because of that person's failure or inability to supervise the child adequately; or
- (l) the child's parent is unable to care for the child and the child is brought before the court with the parent's consent and, where the child is twelve years of age or older, with the child's consent, to be dealt with under this Part (Child and Family Services Act, R.S.O., 1990)

## **APPENDIX B: General Research Ethics Board Letter of Approval**

July 15, 2013

Dear Ms. Shewchuk:

The General Research Ethics Board (GREB), by means of a delegated board review, has cleared your proposal entitled "An exploration of child abuse policies in school districts in Ontario: Resources, training and supports provided to teachers to recognize and report cases" for ethical compliance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (TCPS) and Queen's ethics policies. In accordance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (article D.1.6) and Senate Terms of Reference (article G), your project has been cleared for one year. At the end of each year, the GREB will ask if your project has been completed and if not, what changes have occurred or will occur in the next year.

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the GREB, with a copy to your unit REB, of any adverse event(s) that occur during this one year period (access this form at [https://eservices.queensu.ca/romeo\\_researcher/](https://eservices.queensu.ca/romeo_researcher/) and click Events - GREB Adverse Event Report). An adverse event includes, but is not limited to, a complaint, a change, or unexpected event that alters the level of risk for the researcher or participants or situation that requires a substantial change in approach to a participant(s). You are also advised that all adverse events must be reported to the GREB within 48 hours.

You are also reminded that all changes that might affect human participants must be cleared by the GREB. For example, you must report changes to the level of risk, applicant characteristics, and implementation of new procedures. To make an amendment, access the application at [https://eservices.queensu.ca/romeo\\_researcher/](https://eservices.queensu.ca/romeo_researcher/) and click Events - GREB Amendment to Approved Study Form. These changes will automatically be sent to the Ethics Coordinator, Gail Irving, at the Office of Research Services or [irvingg@queensu.ca](mailto:irvingg@queensu.ca) for further review and clearance by the GREB or GREB Chair.

On behalf of the General Research Ethics Board, I wish you continued success in your research. Yours  
sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan Stevenson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Joan Stevenson, Ph.D. Professor and Chair

General Research Ethics Board

cc: Dr. Amanda Cooper, Faculty Supervisor

Dr. Don Klinger, Chair, Unit REB

Erin Wicklam, c/o Graduate Studies and Bureau of Research

## **APPENDIX C: Email Sent to Graduate Listserv**

Subject: Participants needed for research on child abuse policy

Samantha Shewchuk is looking for participants for her research study. You are receiving this email because you are an education graduate student at Queen's University. Your address was obtained from the office of graduate studies at the Faculty of Education.

### **An exploration of child abuse policies in school districts in Ontario: Resources, training and supports provided to teachers to recognize and report cases**

Teachers in Ontario are legally required to report all suspected abuse to Children's Aid Societies. Many district school boards have implemented policies to help guide teachers' through the process of reporting. This research will explore what training, resources and supports school districts state they will provide school personnel in its policy documents to help recognize and report cases of suspected child abuse. In addition it will report the opinions, experiences, and feelings of teachers who have, in the past, required access to these resources and supports.

To participate in the study you must have made a report of suspected child abuse in your duties as a school professional. If you take part in this study, you would be required to participate in an hour-long interview with the researcher to discuss:

- The case factors surrounding your decision to report
- The steps you took before and after reporting?
- If you felt adequately trained to handle the case?
- What were (if any) the personal consequences to reporting?

If you choose to participate in the study all information you provide is considered completely confidential. You and your school will be assigned a pseudonym to protect your identity. The name of the district school board you worked for when you made the report will not be revealed. In addition, in



order to protect the identity of the child you will not be asked to reveal the name of the child or any of the family members affected by the report.

You may be asked to participate in a follow-up interview of approximately thirty (30) minutes in length may to clarify any information gathered during the first interview.

In appreciation for your time, you will receive a \$10 gift certificate to Tim Horton's and will be entered to win a \$50 gift certificate to Chapters/Indigo Bookstores.

If you are interested in participating or have any questions about the study, please email Samantha Shewchuk at [s.shewchuk@queensu.ca](mailto:s.shewchuk@queensu.ca) or call (613) 659-3203. A letter of information has been attached to this email to provide you with more information about the study.

Queen's University allows researchers use email to send its faculty, staff, and student information about research opportunities. The content of this email message has been approved by the Queen's University General Research and Ethics Review Board.

## **APPENDIX D: Letter of Information and Consent Form**

A study exploring child abuse reporting policies in school districts in Ontario

Investigators:

Principal Investigator: Samantha Shewchuk

Department of Education

Queen's University

Kingston, Ontario, Canada

(613) 530-5562

E-mail: s.shewchuk@queensu.ca

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Amanda Cooper

Department of Education

Queen's University

(613) 533-6000 x 77286

E-mail: a.cooper@queensu.ca

### **Purpose of the Study**

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I am conducting as part of my Master's degree in the Department of Education at Queen's University under the supervision of Dr. Amanda Cooper. School personnel in Ontario are legally required to report all suspected abuse to Children's Aid Societies. Many district school boards have implemented policies to help guide teachers through the process of reporting. This research will explore what training, resources and supports school districts provide school personnel in their policy documents to help recognize and report cases of suspected child abuse. In addition it will report the opinions, experiences, and feelings of teachers who have, in the past, required access to these resources and supports.

### **Procedures involved in the Research**

To participate in the study you must have made a report of suspected child abuse in your duties as a school professional. Participation in this study is voluntary; it will involve an interview of approximately one (1) hour in length to take place in a mutually agreed upon location. A follow-up interview of approximately thirty (30) minutes in length may be required to clarify any information gathered during the first interview. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences by advising the researcher. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the interview has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of the report of our conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish. I will be asking questions about your perceptions of the supports provided to you throughout the reporting process, how you decided to report, and the previous knowledge and skills you had relating to child abuse. I will also ask you for some demographic information like your age and educational background.

### **Potential Harms, Risks, or Discomforts:**

The risks involved in participating in this study are minimal. You may feel uncomfortable or have unpleasant memories arise from discussing about the decision to report suspected abuse. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. If you feel like you need to talk to someone as a result of this interview you can contact the Mental Health Hotline (1-866-531-2600)

### **Potential Benefits**

There are no direct benefits to participating in this research, but I hope that what is learned as a result of this study will help us to better understand the policy landscape of Ontario district school boards and the various resources and supports that are provided to teachers.

### **Payment or Reimbursement**

You will be compensated with a \$10 gift certificate to either Tim Horton's or Subway Restaurants. You will also be entered into a draw to win a \$50 gift certificate to Chapters/Indigo Bookstores.

### **Confidentiality**

All information you provide is considered completely confidential. You and the school you worked for when you made the report will be assigned a pseudonym to protect your identity. In addition, I will not reveal the name of the district school board you worked for when you made the report of suspected abuse; however, I will state the general region of where the district school board is located (i.e. Southeast or North etc.) , as well as state the size of the policy document (i.e. small, medium, or large). Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study; however, with your permission, quotations may be used.

To protect the identity of the child you will not be asked to reveal the name of the child or any names of the family members affected by the report; however, during the interview you will be asked to provide information about the child's age, gender, and the circumstances surrounding the suspected abuse. The name of the child or affected family members will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study.

Data collected during this study will be retained for five (5) years in a locked office in my supervisor's lab. After five (5) years the data will be destroyed. Only I and my supervisory committee will have access.

### **Participation and Withdrawal**

If you decide to be part of the study, you can decide to withdraw, at any time, even after signing the consent form or part-way through the study. If you decide to withdraw, there will be no consequences to you. In cases of withdrawal, any data you have provided will be destroyed unless you indicate otherwise. You must submit your desire to withdrawal from the study in writing via e-mail to

s.shewchuk@queensu.ca. If you do not want to answer some of the questions during the interview you do not have to, but you can still be in the study.

### **Information about the Study Results**

I expect to have this study completed by approximately August, 2014. If you would like a brief summary of the results, please let me know how you would like it sent to you.

### **Questions about the Study**

Any questions about study participation may be directed to Samantha Shewchuk at (613) 659-3203 or to Dr. Amanda Cooper at (613) 533-6000 x 77286. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Queen's University Research Ethics Board. However, the final decision about participation is yours. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.

---

### **CONSENT**

I have read the information presented in the information letter about the study being conducted by Samantha Shewchuk of Queen's University. I understand that the information I provide will remain confidential and that pseudonyms will be used to protect me, my school, and my district school board's identity. I understand that I will not be asked to reveal the name of the child or any family members affected by the report in order to protect the identity of the child. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details I requested. I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I may withdraw from the study at any time. I have been given a copy of this form. I agree to participate in the study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

1. I agree that the interview can be audio recorded to facilitate collection of information.

Yes  No

2.  Yes, I would like to receive a summary of the study's results. Please send them to this email

address \_\_\_\_\_ or to this mailing address

\_\_\_\_\_

No, I do not want to receive a summary of the study's results.

3. I agree to be contacted about a follow-up interview, understanding that I can always decline the request

Yes. Ho  p contact me \_\_\_\_\_ No

## APPENDIX E: Sample Interview Questions

Thank you for agreeing to be a part of my study on examining a teacher's duty to report suspected abuse. This interview should take approximately one hour of your time. If it is okay with you, I will be tape-recording our conversation. The purpose of this is so that I can get all the details but at the same time be able to carry on a conversation with you. I assure you that all your comments will remain confidential. You and the employer you worked for when you made the report will be assigned a pseudonym to protect your identity. Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study; however, with your permission, quotations may be used. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences by advising me by email.

To protect the identity of the child you will not be asked to reveal the name of the child or any names of the family members affected by the report; however, during the interview you will be asked to provide information about the child's age, gender, and the circumstances surrounding the suspected abuse. The name of the child or affected family members will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study.

Before we get started, please take a few minutes to read and sign this consent form.

- 
1. What was your educational background when you made the report?
  2. Where did you work when you made the report?
  3. How old were you when you made the report?
  4. What year did you make the report?
  5. Do you feel that teachers should be legally required to report suspected abuse?
  6. Did you receive training about child abuse prior to making the report?

7. What information did you learn (types of abuse, indicators, legislated duty, school/legal procedures)?
8. Would you say that the training that was provided was “minimal”, “adequate”, “good” or “excellent”
9. How old was the child when you made the report?
10. What was the sex of the child?
11. Can you please describe the situation that led to your decision to report?
12. Was it one incident, or was it a series of smaller incidents that led you to believe the child was being abused?
13. Were you aware of your employer’s policy prior to making the report?
14. Can you please describe the steps you took once you suspected abuse?
15. Did you discuss your suspicions with anyone?
16. What did you do after you reported?
17. Did you receive support from your place of work?
18. Were you kept informed of the case after you reported?
19. Did you access any employer or community supports for either you or the child?
  
20. How did reporting affect you?
21. Looking back, did you feel prepared to handle this case?
22. What types of supports would have made reporting a better experience for you?
23. Is there any other information that you think I should know?

Thank you. This concludes the interview. I will now write-up the transcript from the interview. I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of the report of our



conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish. Here is a gift certificate to Tim Horton's. I will also be entering your name into a draw to win a larger gift certificate to Chapters/Indigo bookstores.

**APPENDIX F: Record of Communication with Participants**

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Type</b> | <b>With</b> | <b>Requested By</b> | <b>Reason</b>                                               | <b>Outcome</b>                                                |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2013-09-26  | Email       | Alex        | Alex                | Initial contact: requested more information about the study | Provided participant with letter of information on 2013-09-26 |
| 2013-09-26  | Email       | Henry       | Henry               | Initial contact: requested more information about the study | Provided participant with letter of information on 2013-09-26 |
| 2013-09-26  | Email       | Dahlia      | Dahlia              | Initial contact: requested more information about the study | Provided participant with letter of information on 2013-09-26 |
| 2013-09-26  | Email       | Erin        | Erin                | Initial contact: requested more information about the study | Provided participant with letter of information on 2013-09-26 |
| 2013-09-26  | Email       | Gabrielle   | Gabrielle           | Initial contact: requested more information about the study | Provided participant with letter of information on            |

2013-09-26

|            |           |           |                        |                                                                                              |                                                                  |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2013-09-29 | Email     | Gabrielle | Cont. contact          | Find potential interview times.                                                              | Interview date set                                               |
| 2013-10-04 | Email     | Dahlia    | Principal Investigator | Remind participant about interest in study; confirm interview date                           | Participant responded on 2013-10-15; interview date set          |
| 2013-10-08 | Email     | Alexander | Principal Investigator | Remind participant about interest in study; confirm interview date                           | Participant replied on 2013-10-09. Interview date set.           |
| 2013-10-09 | Email     | Erin      | Principal Investigator | Remind participant about interest in study; confirm interview date                           | Participant replied on 2013-10-09. Interview date set.           |
| 2013-10-17 | In-person | Dahlia    | Mutual                 | Interview                                                                                    |                                                                  |
| 2013-10-22 | Email     | Dahlia    | Principal Investigator | Provide completed transcript for participant to check for accuracy. Edits to be completed by | Participant did not respond with feedback by pre-determined date |

2013-10-31

|            |       |          |                        |                                                                    |                                                               |
|------------|-------|----------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2013-10-24 | Email | Brittany | Brittany               | Initial contact: requested more information about the study        | Provided participant with letter of information on 2013-10-24 |
| 2013-10-27 | Email | Colleen  | Colleen                | Initial contact; requested more information about the study        | Provided participant with letter of information on 2013-10-27 |
| 2013-10-29 | Email | Colleen  | Cont. contact          | Find potential interview times                                     | Interview date set                                            |
| 2013-11-01 | Email | Henry    | Principal Investigator | Remind participant about interest in study; confirm interview date | Interview date set                                            |
| 2013-11-11 | Email | Brittany | Principal Investigator | Remind participant about interest in study; confirm interview date | Interview date set                                            |
| 2013-11-16 | Email | Brittany | Principal Investigator | Remind participant about upcoming interview                        | Interview date confirmed                                      |

|            |               |           |                           |                                                |                                                                                         |
|------------|---------------|-----------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2013-11-16 | Email         | Erin      | Principal<br>Investigator | Remind participant about<br>upcoming interview | Interview date<br>confirmed                                                             |
| 2013-11-16 | Email         | Colleen   | Principal<br>Investigator | Remind participant about<br>upcoming interview | Interview location<br>changed to<br>accommodate<br>Cersei. Interview<br>date confirmed. |
| 2013-11-18 | In-<br>person | Brittany  | Mutual                    | Interview                                      |                                                                                         |
| 2013-11-18 | In-<br>person | Erin      | Mutual                    | Interview                                      |                                                                                         |
| 2013-11-18 | In-<br>person | Colleen   | Mutual                    | Interview                                      |                                                                                         |
| 2013-11-18 | Email         | Alexander | Principal<br>Investigator | Remind participant about<br>upcoming interview | Interview date<br>confirmed                                                             |
| 2013-11-18 | Email         | Henry     | Principal<br>Investigator | Remind participant about<br>upcoming interview | Interview date<br>confirmed                                                             |

|            |           |           |                        |                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                           |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2013-11-19 | In-person | Gabrielle | Mutual                 | Interview                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                           |
| 2013-11-19 | Email     | Brittany  | Principal Investigator | Brittany mentioned potential other interview participants during interview. Sent email to see if she would forward letter of information to these individuals | Information was forwarded to potential participants; no response received |
| 2013-11-20 | In-person | Alexander | Mutual                 | Interview                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                           |
| 2013-11-20 | In-person | Henry     | Mutual                 | Interview                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                           |
| 2013-11-30 | Email     | Alexander | Principal Investigator | Provide completed transcript for participant to check for accuracy. Edits to be completed by 2013-12-07                                                       | Participant replied on 2013-11-30 with transcript edits                   |
| 2013-12-01 | Email     | Colleen   | Principal Investigator | Provide completed transcript for participant to                                                                                                               | Participant did not respond with                                          |

|            |       |           |                        |                                                                                                         |                                                                  |
|------------|-------|-----------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
|            |       |           |                        | check for accuracy. Edits to be completed by 2013-12-08                                                 | feedback by pre-determined date                                  |
| 2013-12-01 | Email | Erin      | Principal Investigator | Provide completed transcript for participant to check for accuracy. Edits to be completed by 2013-12-08 | Participant replied on 2013-12-07 with transcript edits          |
| 2013-12-09 | Email | Alexander | Principal Investigator | Ask for additional information on number of reports made                                                | Participant replied on 2013-12-09 with information               |
| 2013-12-10 | Email | Brittany  | Principal Investigator | Provide completed transcript for participant to check for accuracy. Edits to be completed by 2013-12-17 | Participant did not respond with feedback by pre-determined date |
| 2013-12-11 | Email | Dahlia    | Principal Investigator | Ask for additional information on number of reports made                                                | Participant did not respond back                                 |
| 2013-12-11 | Email | Gabrielle | Principal              | Ask for additional                                                                                      | Participant replied                                              |

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Investigator information on legal on 2013-12-11 with  
details for counsellors information

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## APPENDIX G: List of Analysed School Districts and Links to Documents

| School District      | Avg. Daily<br>Enrollment | Link to Documents                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thunder Bay Catholic | 7396                     | <a href="http://www.tbcdsb.on.ca/files/u16/604_Child_in_Need_of_Protection_0.pdf">http://www.tbcdsb.on.ca/files/u16/604_Child_in_Need_of_Protection_0.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Kenora Catholic      | 1355                     | <a href="http://www.kcdsb.on.ca/upload/documents/ap315-safe-schools-child-abuse-january-2012.pdf">http://www.kcdsb.on.ca/upload/documents/ap315-safe-schools-child-abuse-january-2012.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Keewatin-Patricia    | 4491                     | <a href="http://www.kpdsb.on.ca/SiteAdmin_PDF/Policy/310.pdf">http://www.kpdsb.on.ca/SiteAdmin_PDF/Policy/310.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www3.kpdsb.on.ca/boardInformation/docs/policies/310B.pdf">http://www3.kpdsb.on.ca/boardInformation/docs/policies/310B.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Northwest Catholic   | 1,113                    | <a href="http://www.tncdsb.on.ca/new/resources/PRO%20H01%20Child%20Abuse%20Reporting%20Procedures.pdf">http://www.tncdsb.on.ca/new/resources/PRO%20H01%20Child%20Abuse%20Reporting%20Procedures.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Lakehead             | 8862                     | <a href="http://www.lakeheadschoools.ca/sites/default/files/docs/policy_procedures/6040_Reporting_of_Children_Need_Protection_pol.pdf">http://www.lakeheadschoools.ca/sites/default/files/docs/policy_procedures/6040_Reporting_of_Children_Need_Protection_pol.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www.lakeheadschoools.ca/sites/default/files/docs/policy_procedures/6040_Reporting_of_Children_Need_Protection_pro.pdf">http://www.lakeheadschoools.ca/sites/default/files/docs/policy_procedures/6040_Reporting_of_Children_Need_Protection_pro.pdf</a> |
| Rainy River          | 2338                     | <a href="http://www.rrdsb.com/sites/www.rrdsb.com/files/brdadmin/policies/section4/4%2000%20Reporting%20Suspected%20Child%20Abuse.pdf">http://www.rrdsb.com/sites/www.rrdsb.com/files/brdadmin/policies/section4/4%2000%20Reporting%20Suspected%20Child%20Abuse.pdf</a> ; and,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

|                                |       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                |       | <a href="http://www.rrdsb.com/sites/www.rrdsb.com/files/brdadmin/procedures/section4/4%2000%20Reporting%20Suspected%20Child%20Abuse.pdf">http://www.rrdsb.com/sites/www.rrdsb.com/files/brdadmin/procedures/section4/4%2000%20Reporting%20Suspected%20Child%20Abuse.pdf</a>                     |
| Superior-Greystone             | 1424  | <a href="http://www.sgdsb.on.ca/upload/documents/510---suspected-child-abuse-june-10-09.pdf">http://www.sgdsb.on.ca/upload/documents/510---suspected-child-abuse-june-10-09.pdf</a>                                                                                                             |
| Superior North Catholic        | 637   | N.A.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Ontario North East             | 7096  | <a href="http://docushare.dsb1.edu.on.ca/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-15512/2.1.3.pdf">http://docushare.dsb1.edu.on.ca/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-15512/2.1.3.pdf</a>                                                                                                                         |
| Northeastern Catholic          | 2108  | <a href="http://www.ncdsb.on.ca/board/pdfs/pm/F-07.pdf">http://www.ncdsb.on.ca/board/pdfs/pm/F-07.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic | 2691  | <a href="http://www.npsc.ca/media/69965/s_10.0_-_prevention_of_abuse_and_protection_of_students_from_potential_abuse.pdf">http://www.npsc.ca/media/69965/s_10.0_-_prevention_of_abuse_and_protection_of_students_from_potential_abuse.pdf</a>                                                   |
| Huron-Superior Catholic        | 4393  | <a href="http://www.hscdsb.on.ca/Userfiles/companies/1/file/POLICIES/Students/8000.pdf">http://www.hscdsb.on.ca/Userfiles/companies/1/file/POLICIES/Students/8000.pdf</a>                                                                                                                       |
| Algoma                         | 9159  | <a href="http://www.adsb.on.ca/uploads/info/listings/6.02.ChildAbuseReportingPolicy.pdf">http://www.adsb.on.ca/uploads/info/listings/6.02.ChildAbuseReportingPolicy.pdf</a>                                                                                                                     |
| Near North                     | 9565  | <a href="http://www.nearnorthschools.ca/board/Administrative%20Guidelines/Partnerships/School%20and%20Children%27s%20Aid%20Society%20Protocol.pdf">http://www.nearnorthschools.ca/board/Administrative%20Guidelines/Partnerships/School%20and%20Children%27s%20Aid%20Society%20Protocol.pdf</a> |
| Rainbow                        | 12604 | <a href="http://www.rainbowschools.ca/boardroom/Policies/POL6.09.pdf">http://www.rainbowschools.ca/boardroom/Policies/POL6.09.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                           |
| Sudbury Catholic               | 5754  | N.A.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Simcoe County                  | 48207 | <a href="http://www.scdsb.on.ca/Board/Procedures%20Documents/A7620_Children-in-Need-of-Protection.pdf">http://www.scdsb.on.ca/Board/Procedures%20Documents/A7620_Children-in-Need-of-Protection.pdf</a>                                                                                         |
| Simcoe Muskoka Catholic        | 12433 | <a href="http://www.scdsb.on.ca/Board/Procedures%20Docu">http://www.scdsb.on.ca/Board/Procedures%20Docu</a>                                                                                                                                                                                     |

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                    |       | ments/A7620_Children-in-Need-of-Protection.pdf                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Trillium Lakelands                                                 | 15847 | <a href="http://tldsb.ca/index.php?option=com_mtree&amp;task=att_download&amp;link_id=319&amp;cf_id=30">http://tldsb.ca/index.php?option=com_mtree&amp;task=att_download&amp;link_id=319&amp;cf_id=30</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Bluewater                                                          | 15933 | <a href="http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/director/policies/BP_6850-D.pdf">http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/director/policies/BP_6850-D.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/director/Procedures/AP_6850-D.pdf">http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/director/Procedures/AP_6850-D.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Bruce-Grey Catholic                                                | 3347  | Document emailed to researcher using researcher's Queen's University email account.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Upper Canada                                                       | 26044 | <a href="http://www.fixcas.com/social/finalVersion01.pdf">http://www.fixcas.com/social/finalVersion01.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Eastern Ontario Catholic                                           | 12590 | <a href="http://www.cdsbeo.on.ca/policies/B2-15_Duty_to_Report.pdf">http://www.cdsbeo.on.ca/policies/B2-15_Duty_to_Report.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www.fixcas.com/social/finalVersion01.pdf">http://www.fixcas.com/social/finalVersion01.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Peterborough Victoria<br>Northumberland and Clarington<br>Catholic | 13294 | <a href="http://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca/uploads/104/Doc_635062951210230276.pdf">http://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca/uploads/104/Doc_635062951210230276.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca/uploads/104/Doc_635062951036740276.pdf">http://www.pvnccdsb.on.ca/uploads/104/Doc_635062951036740276.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Kawartha Pine Ridge                                                | 31124 | <a href="http://kprcontentlibrary.kprdsb.ca:8080/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1121/ES-1.1%20Safe%2c%20Caring%20and%20Restorative%20Schools.pdf">http://kprcontentlibrary.kprdsb.ca:8080/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1121/ES-1.1%20Safe%2c%20Caring%20and%20Restorative%20Schools.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a 455="" 490="" 906="" 924"="" data-label="Page-Footer" href="http://kprcontentlibrary.kprdsb.ca:8080/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-955/ES-&lt;/a&gt;&lt;/td&gt; &lt;/tr&gt; &lt;/table&gt; &lt;/div&gt; &lt;div data-bbox="> <p>136</p> </a> |

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|-----------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ottawa Catholic                   | 35657 | 1.1.4%20Safe%2c%20Caring%20and%20Restorative%20Schools%20-%20Child%20in%20Need.pdf<br><a href="http://www.ottawacatholicschools.ca/images/policies/Section-F-4/OCSB-Policy-F-4-22.pdf">http://www.ottawacatholicschools.ca/images/policies/Section-F-4/OCSB-Policy-F-4-22.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic  | 10699 | <a href="http://schools.alcdsb.on.ca/policies/Policies%20Document%20Library/S-2008-02-1%20Child%20in%20Need%20of%20Protection%20Policy%20Statement.pdf">http://schools.alcdsb.on.ca/policies/Policies%20Document%20Library/S-2008-02-1%20Child%20in%20Need%20of%20Protection%20Policy%20Statement.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://schools.alcdsb.on.ca/policies/Policies%20Document%20Library/S-2008-02-1%20Child%20in%20Need%20of%20Protection%20Policy%20Statement.pdf">http://schools.alcdsb.on.ca/policies/Policies%20Document%20Library/S-2008-02-1%20Child%20in%20Need%20of%20Protection%20Policy%20Statement.pdf</a> |
| Renfrew County Catholic           | 4216  | Document emailed to researcher using researcher's Queen's University email account.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Renfrew County                    | 8848  | <a href="http://www.rcdsb.on.ca/uploads/83/Doc_634931738953920805.pdf">http://www.rcdsb.on.ca/uploads/83/Doc_634931738953920805.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www.rcdsb.on.ca/uploads/83/Doc_635065407866342785.pdf">http://www.rcdsb.on.ca/uploads/83/Doc_635065407866342785.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Hastings and Prince Edward County | 14763 | <a href="http://www.hpedsb.on.ca/ec/policiesprocedures/archive/Administrative%20Procedures/300%20Students/Procedure%20325%20Reporting%20Child%20Abuse.pdf">http://www.hpedsb.on.ca/ec/policiesprocedures/archive/Administrative%20Procedures/300%20Students/Procedure%20325%20Reporting%20Child%20Abuse.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Ottawa -Carleton                  | 66467 | <a href="http://www.ottawacatholicschools.ca/images/policies/Section-F-4/OCSB-Policy-F-4-22.pdf">http://www.ottawacatholicschools.ca/images/policies/Section-F-4/OCSB-Policy-F-4-22.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

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|------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Limestone              | 19038  | <a href="http://www.limestone.on.ca/board/documents/procedures/AP-341.pdf">http://www.limestone.on.ca/board/documents/procedures/AP-341.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Niagara Catholic       | 21467  | <a href="http://www.niagaracatholic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Family-and-Children-Services-Board-Protocol.pdf">http://www.niagaracatholic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Family-and-Children-Services-Board-Protocol.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Dufferin-Peel Catholic | 79713  | <a href="http://www.dpcdsb.org/NR/rdonlyres/968A5950-6EC9-41F5-AC7D-B146380BA78C/121578/0653.pdf">http://www.dpcdsb.org/NR/rdonlyres/968A5950-6EC9-41F5-AC7D-B146380BA78C/121578/0653.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www.dpcdsb.org/NR/rdonlyres/FDCCFC92-A298-4DF9-8DB6-550D085FC677/123937/ChildinNeedofProtection.pdf">http://www.dpcdsb.org/NR/rdonlyres/FDCCFC92-A298-4DF9-8DB6-550D085FC677/123937/ChildinNeedofProtection.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www.fixcas.com/social/CAP2002.pdf">http://www.fixcas.com/social/CAP2002.pdf</a> |
| Peel                   | 143015 | <a href="http://www.fixcas.com/social/CAP2002.pdf">http://www.fixcas.com/social/CAP2002.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Toronto                | 234828 | <a href="http://www.tdsb.on.ca/AboutUs/Policies,ProceduresForms/Detail.aspx?docId=281">http://www.tdsb.on.ca/AboutUs/Policies,ProceduresForms/Detail.aspx?docId=281</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Durham                 | 64874  | <a href="https://www.intranet.durham.edu.on.ca/Applications/DDSBPPI.nsf/0/8525751600711c4f852566330067b625/\$FILE/Child%20Abuse%20Guidelines.pdf">https://www.intranet.durham.edu.on.ca/Applications/DDSBPPI.nsf/0/8525751600711c4f852566330067b625/\$FILE/Child%20Abuse%20Guidelines.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Toronto Catholic       | 85195  | <a href="http://www.tcdsb.org/Board/Policies/Pages/S17.aspx">http://www.tcdsb.org/Board/Policies/Pages/S17.aspx</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www.tcdsb.org/Board/Policies/Documents/Other/Procedures%20for%20the%20Investigation%20and%20Reporting%20of%20Child%20Abuse.pdf">http://www.tcdsb.org/Board/Policies/Documents/Other/Procedures%20for%20the%20Investigation%20and%20Reporting%20of%20Child%20Abuse.pdf</a>                                                                                                                               |
| Durham Catholic        | 21122  | <a href="http://www1.dcdsb.ca/images/DCDSB/CEC/lizbecks">http://www1.dcdsb.ca/images/DCDSB/CEC/lizbecks</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

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|----------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                  |        | <a href="#">tead/Policies/PO607%20Student%20Protection.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Halton                           | 55078  | <a href="http://www.hdsb.ca/Policy/ChildAbuseProcedure.pdf">http://www.hdsb.ca/Policy/ChildAbuseProcedure.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Halton Catholic                  | 28521  | <a href="http://www.hcdsb.org/Board/Policies/PoliciesProcedures/II-20%20Child%20Abuse%20and%20Protection%20of%20Students.pdf">http://www.hcdsb.org/Board/Policies/PoliciesProcedures/II-20%20Child%20Abuse%20and%20Protection%20of%20Students.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www.hcdsb.org/Board/Policies/PoliciesProcedures/VI-32%20Child%20Abuse%20and%20Protection%20of%20Students.pdf">http://www.hcdsb.org/Board/Policies/PoliciesProcedures/VI-32%20Child%20Abuse%20and%20Protection%20of%20Students.pdf</a> |
| York Region                      | 111827 | <a href="http://www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/pdfs/p&amp;p/a/policy/610.pdf">http://www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/pdfs/p&amp;p/a/policy/610.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| York Catholic                    | 52218  | Document under review                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Upper Grand                      | 31195  | <a href="http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/uploadedFiles/policies/502.pdf">http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/uploadedFiles/policies/502.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Lambton Kent                     | 21385  | <a href="http://www.lkdsb.net/Board-Info/Policies/Child%20Abuse%20Policy.pdf">http://www.lkdsb.net/Board-Info/Policies/Child%20Abuse%20Policy.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Grand Erie                       | 24967  | Document emailed to researcher using researcher's Queen's University email account.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk Catholic | 9293   | Document emailed to researcher using researcher's Queen's University email account.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Waterloo Catholic                | 20009  | <a href="https://www.wcdsb.ca/AP_Memos/PDF/APS020.pdf">https://www.wcdsb.ca/AP_Memos/PDF/APS020.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| St. Clair Catholic               | 8492   | <a href="http://www.st-clair.net/Data/Sites/1/media/public/Policies/3.13%20Child%20Abuse%20and%20Neglect.pdf">http://www.st-clair.net/Data/Sites/1/media/public/Policies/3.13%20Child%20Abuse%20and%20Neglect.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

|                             |       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Windsor-Essex Catholic      | 21027 | <a href="http://www.wecdsb.on.ca/pdf/policies/SC08.pdf">http://www.wecdsb.on.ca/pdf/policies/SC08.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www.wecdsb.on.ca/pdf/policies/PrSC08.pdf">http://www.wecdsb.on.ca/pdf/policies/PrSC08.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Thames Valley               | 69179 | <a href="http://www.tvdsb.ca/files/filesystem/policydocs%5Cchild_abuse_&amp;_protection.pdf">http://www.tvdsb.ca/files/filesystem/policydocs%5Cchild_abuse_&amp;_protection.pdf</a> ; and,<br><a href="http://www.tvdsb.ca/files/filesystem/Reporting%20Suspected%20Child%20Neglect%20Abuse%20Procedure.pdf">http://www.tvdsb.ca/files/filesystem/Reporting%20Suspected%20Child%20Neglect%20Abuse%20Procedure.pdf</a> |
| Wellington Catholic         | 7630  | <a href="http://www.wellingtoncssb.edu.on.ca/DistrictOffice/Policies/Documents/P.SMW.G.1%20Child%20Abuse%20and%20Protection.pdf">http://www.wellingtoncssb.edu.on.ca/DistrictOffice/Policies/Documents/P.SMW.G.1%20Child%20Abuse%20and%20Protection.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                           |
| London Catholic             | 18399 | <a href="http://www.ldcsb.on.ca/Board/policies/Section%20J%20%20Students/J-5-02-Children-in-Need-of-Protection%202010.pdf">http://www.ldcsb.on.ca/Board/policies/Section%20J%20%20Students/J-5-02-Children-in-Need-of-Protection%202010.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Huron-Perth Catholic        | 4156  | <a href="http://www.huronperthcatholic.ca/Portals/0/Policies/3D11.pdf">http://www.huronperthcatholic.ca/Portals/0/Policies/3D11.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Avon Maitland               | 15171 | <a href="http://yourschools.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/pdf/admin_procedures/students//346-Children%20in%20Need%20of%20Protection.pdf">http://yourschools.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/pdf/admin_procedures/students//346-Children%20in%20Need%20of%20Protection.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                           |
| Waterloo                    | 58040 | <a href="http://staff.wrdsb.ca/policyprocedure/files/2012/07/AP1490-Child-Abuse1.pdf">http://staff.wrdsb.ca/policyprocedure/files/2012/07/AP1490-Child-Abuse1.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Greater Essex County        | 33815 | N.A.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic | 27002 | N.A.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Hamilton-Wentworth          | 27002 | N.A.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

|                            |       |      |
|----------------------------|-------|------|
| Niagara                    | 34617 | N.A. |
| James Bay Lowlands         | 177   | N.A. |
| Moose Factory Island       | 600   | N.A. |
| Moosonee                   | 275   | N.A. |
| Penetanguishene Protestant | 250   | N.A. |

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## APPENDIX H: Examples of Document Types

| Type of Document         | Link to example                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Policy                   | <a href="http://www.tcdsb.org/Board/Policies/Pages/S17.aspx">http://www.tcdsb.org/Board/Policies/Pages/S17.aspx</a>                                                                                                             |
| Regulations              | <a href="http://www.tcdsb.org/Board/Policies/Pages/S17.aspx">http://www.tcdsb.org/Board/Policies/Pages/S17.aspx</a>                                                                                                             |
| Administrative Procedure | <a href="http://www.hdsb.ca/Policy/ChildAbuseProcedure.pdf">http://www.hdsb.ca/Policy/ChildAbuseProcedure.pdf</a>                                                                                                               |
| Joint Protocol           | <a href="http://www.niagaracatholic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Family-and-Children-Services-Board-Protocol.pdf">http://www.niagaracatholic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Family-and-Children-Services-Board-Protocol.pdf</a> |

**Appendix I: Sample Follow-up Letter to CAS**

(Date)

(Name of CAS Worker)

(CAS)

(Etc.)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of this letter is to confirm our telephone conversation on (Date), during which I reported a child protection concern to you. We would appreciate receiving information concerning the resolution of this matter.

Sincerely,

c: School Principal