

## Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What is Senate Bill 401?

Effective July 1, 2018, [Senate Bill 401](#) requires:

- Annual age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in kindergarten through grades 9 (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-143).
- The provision that professional learning may include participating in or presenting at in-service training on sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200).
- In-service training programs on sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention for professional personnel that will be providing instruction in annual age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in K through grade 9 (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-201).

### 2. Are resources available for student instruction?

Georgia's Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force, led by the Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, published a [Technical Assistance Resource Guide \(TARG\) on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention](#). Although the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) cannot recommend a specific program or curriculum, the TARG is an excellent resource for systems as they develop or adopt local curriculum. It identifies best practices, principles of prevention, resources for the classroom, and age-appropriate teaching suggestions. It also explains how to develop a prevention plan and provides a detailed analysis of specific programs and guidelines for program implementation and evaluation. The [Georgia Center for Child Advocacy](#) can provide consultation and/or deliver the TARG presentation to local health and wellness committees to inform their decision-making process. Evidence-based child sexual abuse prevention programs provide personal safety and anti-victimization training in age-appropriate ways.

### 3. Will the Georgia Department of Education provide or recommend training content or materials for educators?

The GaDOE collaborated with the Office of the Child Advocate, Georgia Center for Child Advocacy, Prevent Child Abuse Georgia, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, and Division of Family and Children Services to update the existing mandated reporter online training module to include sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention for all educators. In addition, more in-depth training modules are being developed for educators who are responsible for providing instruction to students and for those who want a deeper understanding of the content. It is essential that school staff and faculty be equipped with the skills to recognize signs of child sexual abuse and handle disclosures appropriately.

### 4. What program should I implement or adopt?

Although we cannot recommend a specific program or curriculum, the [TARG](#) is an excellent resource for systems as they develop or adopt local curriculum. Criteria for program analysis as well as other programs for consideration may be found in the [TARG](#). Additional programs are currently being analyzed and will be updated as they become available.

**5. If I am already implementing a program, do I need to change what I am doing?**

If you are already providing annual, age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education you are not required to change programs. All instructional programs should be reviewed on a regular cycle and revised as needed.

**6. Is there a specific process to add new materials to cover this content?**

Yes. Pursuant to State Board Rule [160-4-2-.12 Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Program Plan](#), each local board of education shall establish a committee to review periodically sex/AIDS education instructional materials and make recommendations concerning age/grade level use. Recommendations made by the committee shall be approved by the local board of education before implementation. The committee shall be composed primarily of nonteaching parents who have children enrolled in the local public schools and who represent the diversity of the student body augmented by others such as educators, health professionals and other community representatives. The committee shall also include a male and female student currently attending the 11th or 12th grade in the public schools.

**7. Can my system develop its own training?**

All materials and resources should align to the existing standards as well as State Board Rule [160-4-2-.12 Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Program Rule](#). The Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Program Rule provides guidance for Health and Physical Education curriculum. It is important that local systems have flexibility when developing local curriculum and selecting instructional resources; thus, the guidance in the Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Program Rule identifies the minimum requirements. Local systems can always exceed the minimum.

**8. What is considered age-appropriate instruction?**

[Georgia's Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation Prevention Technical Assistance Resource Guide \(TARG\)](#) outlines a sequence by grade level. Specific information on age-appropriate instruction can be found in Chapter 3 of the TARG.

**9. What grade levels are to be instructed?**

[O.C.G.A. § 20-2-143](#) requires that students in grades K through 9 receive annual age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education.

**10. In grades 6-9, if the students do not take a PE/health education class, is the sex abuse/assault information still required each year?**

Yes, it is required every year. If students are not registered in a health education class, they must still receive the age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention instruction.