



**House Bill 342
House Ways and Means Committee**

**Education – Health and Safety of Students – Notification of Problematic Student Behavior
SUPPORT**

January 14, 2021

Dear Committee Members,

On behalf of No More Stolen Childhoods please accept this letter as support for HB342 involving the notification of parents when problematic sexual behavior occurs in school settings.

According to the [National Center on the Sexual Behavior of Youth \(NCSBY\)](#), “While adults who sexually abuse children may have deviant sexual arousal, it is very different for children. The sexual behaviors of children usually take place for other reasons, such as when a child feels anxious or angry, is reacting to a traumatic experience, is overly curious after seeing sexual materials, seeks attention, is trying to imitate others, or is merely trying to calm him or herself.

Problematic sexual behaviors in children are not limited to any particular group of children or gender. Problematic sexual behaviors occur in children across age ranges, socioeconomic (income) levels, cultural groups, living circumstances, and family structures. Some children with problematic sexual behaviors have parents who are married; some have parents who are divorced. Some have abuse histories; some have no history of abuse or other trauma. But they are all children first. They are children who have shown a behavior that is not acceptable and that needs treatment.”

Our organization’s passion to change the public perception about childhood sexual abuse, actively work to prevent abuse from occurring, and to help those who have been abused find the resources they need to heal and seek justice. We know that when children exhibit behaviors that is outside social or cultural norms, trusted adults need to step in and take action.

The [National Children’s Alliance](#), a training and technical support organization for Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) across the country has developed several best practices and training options for trained professionals in Child Advocacy Centers to effectively work with both children involved in the identified Problematic Sexual Behavior. It is the position of NMSC that our partners in the Maryland Child Advocacy Centers are best equipped to work with both children and their care givers at addressing these issues.

None of that therapeutic work or healing can happen if notification does not occur in a timely manner. It is our perspective that it is in the best interest of having children, who engage in problematic sexual behavior in a school or educational setting, engaging with trained professionals to address the behavior and identify any underlying concerns. That cannot happen if notification does not occur or if it does not occur in a timely manner. We recommend that parents be notified of the incident and be provided with access to available resources in their jurisdiction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vanessa Milio". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vanessa Milio
Executive Director