

Legislative
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71 ELIZABETH II, 2022

Bill 17

**An Act to proclaim Abuse Prevention Week and
to establish an Abuse Prevention Framework Advisory Committee**

Mr. M. Mantha

Private Member's Bill

1st Reading August 30, 2022

2nd Reading

3rd Reading

Royal Assent



EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Bill enacts *Abuse Prevention Week Act, 2022*.

The Act proclaims the week beginning on the first Sunday in October in each year as Abuse Prevention Week. The Act establishes an Abuse Prevention Framework Advisory Committee to provide recommendations to the Minister of Education, and requires the Minister of Education to issue curriculum guidelines respecting abuse prevention in accordance with the Committee's recommendations. The curriculum is required to be taught during Abuse Prevention Week.

An Act to proclaim Abuse Prevention Week and to establish an Abuse Prevention Framework Advisory Committee

Preamble

The Government of Ontario does not currently provide education and prevention tools to help children of elementary school or secondary school age deal with physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

Abuse often affects children under the age of five, and 93 per cent of abuse is perpetrated against children or young people by individuals they trust. Statistically, two in five girls and one in six boys have suffered abuse in Canada. Additional cases of abuse may go unreported.

Issues of abuse transcend culture, socio-economic status and religion and abuse may result in long-term injury, creating in children and youth feelings of stigma, shame, guilt, anxiety and isolation. These feelings can result in bullying, self-harming behaviours, depression, youth addiction and even suicide.

Evidence-based early education is an intervention framework that will increase awareness and empower children and young people, which will in turn help reduce bullying, youth anxiety, depression, trafficking and suicide for child abuse victims and early offenders.

Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

Abuse Prevention Week

1 The week beginning on the first Sunday in October in each year is proclaimed as Abuse Prevention Week.

Abuse Prevention Framework Advisory Committee

2 (1) The Minister of Education shall,

- (a) establish an Abuse Prevention Framework Advisory Committee whose mandate is to establish an abuse prevention framework that includes recommendations to the Minister of Education respecting,
 - (i) training for educators on issues relating to abuse,
 - (ii) changes to the curriculum guidelines respecting abuse prevention, and
 - (iii) potential opportunities for collaboration with community partners;
- (b) appoint the members of the Committee, and designate one member as chair and one or more members as vice-chair; and
- (c) determine the terms of reference of the Committee.

Membership

(2) The Committee shall consist of experts on abuse prevention and other stakeholders in the education sector.

Report

(3) On or before the day that is six months after the Committee is established, the Committee shall report its recommendations to the Legislative Assembly.

Curriculum during Abuse Prevention Week

3 (1) The Minister shall issue curriculum guidelines respecting abuse prevention in accordance with the recommendations of the Abuse Prevention Framework Advisory Committee.

Board to ensure course of study

(2) During Abuse Prevention Week, each board within the meaning of the *Education Act* shall provide instruction in elementary schools and secondary schools under the board's jurisdiction in a course of study respecting abuse prevention that is developed from the curriculum guidelines issued under subsection (1).

Commencement

4 This Act comes into force on the day it receives Royal Assent.

Short title

5 The short title of this Act is the *Abuse Prevention Week Act, 2022*.