

Queensland University of Technology

Brisbane Australia

This is the author's version of a work that was submitted/accepted for publication in the following source:

Mathews, Benjamin P., Walsh, Kerryann M., Farrell, Ann, Butler, Desmond A., Rassafiani, Mehdi, & Kilby, Sam (2009) *Teacher reporting question-naire: Queensland Government Schools.* (Unpublished)

This file was downloaded from: http://eprints.qut.edu.au/48561/

© Copyright 2009 The Authors

Notice: Changes introduced as a result of publishing processes such as copy-editing and formatting may not be reflected in this document. For a definitive version of this work, please refer to the published source:



Drawing by Julia, aged 8 years. Julia has given us permission to use her drawing on our survey.

Teacher Reporting Questionnaire

Detecting and reporting child sexual abuse is one of the most challenging tasks a teacher may face, but it is also one of the most important.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. By doing so, you are helping us to work out features of the most effective legislative practice for teachers' reporting of child sexual abuse.

We greatly value your participation and appreciate your responses.

Teacher Reporting Questionnaire

for Queensland State School staff

Please mark the appropriate box **x** or write your response in the space provided.

ction A: Demographic Information	
1 What is your gender?	□ ₁ Male □ ₂ Female
2 How old are you?	years old
3 What is your marital status?	\square_1 Single \square_3 Separated or divorced \square_2 Married or cohabitating \square_4 Widowed
Are you a parent/guardian?	□₁ Yes □₂ No
5 What is your highest qualification	? □1 Diploma □5 PhD or Prof. Doctorate □2 Bachelor □6 Other (please specify) □3 Graduate Diploma □4 Masters □5 PhD or Prof. Doctorate □6 Other (please specify)
ction B: Work Information	
Which of the following best describes the main part of your current job?	☐ Preparatory Teacher ☐ Teacher Years 1-4 ☐ Teacher Years 5-7 ☐ Assistant/Deputy Principal ☐ Specialist Teacher ☐ School Counsellor/Guidance ☐ Officer ☐ School Chaplain ☐ Supply/relief teacher ☐ Other (please specify) ☐ Other (please specify)
On what basis are you currently employed?	☐ 1 Permanent (Full-time) ☐ 3 Contract ☐ 2 Permanent (Part-time) ☐ 4 Supply/relief teacher
8 Including this school year, how you worked as a teacher or sch	
9 Of these years, how long have	ou worked in your

Section C: Education/Training Information Have you had any <u>pre-service</u> 10 If No, please □₁ Yes \square_2 No teacher education related to go directly to If Yes, please Question 11 child sexual abuse? answer a)and b) a) How adequately did your pre-service education prepare you to identify indicators of child sexual abuse? \Box_4 \square_3 \square_1 \square_2 \Box_5 Inadequately Most adequately b) How adequately did your pre-service education prepare you to follow reporting processes for child sexual abuse? \square_2 \square_3 \square_4 \square_5 Inadequately Most adequately Have you had any formal 11 If No, please □₁ Yes \square_2 No in-service training related to go directly to If Yes, please Question 12 child abuse and neglect in answer a) to d) general? a) Approximately how much training? hours b) Did you attend in-service training in □₁ Yes the past 12 months? \square_2 No c) How adequately did your in-service training prepare you to identify indicators of child sexual abuse? \Box_4 \Box_5 \bigcap_1 \square_2 Inadequately Most adequately d) How adequately did your in-service training prepare you to follow reporting processes for child sexual abuse? \square_5 \Box_1 \square_2 \square_3 Most adequately Inadequately How much confidence do you have in your \square_1 \square_2 \square_3 \square_4 \square_5 ability to identify indicators of child sexual No confidence A great deal abuse? of confidence How much knowledge do you have about 13 \square_3 \square_4 \Box_1 \square_5 the indicators of child sexual abuse? No knowledge A great deal of knowledge **Section D: Reporting Information** → In this section, the term "reporting" refers to formal reports you have made to the school principal, child protection authorities, police etc. Is there an informed or knowledgeable staff member at □₁ Yes your school with whom you can discuss your concerns \square_2 No about cases of child sexual abuse?

Have you ever reported child sexual ab	use? □₁ Yes ⇒ How many cases?
	\square_2 No
Have you ever suspected child sexual a decided not to report it?	abuse but ☐₁ Yes → How many cases? Please answer Questions 17 to 19
	☐ ₂ No — Please go directly to Section E
If legislation at the time required you to would you have reported them?	report these cases, \square_1 Yes \square_2 No
If educational authority policy or formal time required you to report these cases reported them?	
Generally, how important were the follo (Please mark one box ☑ per statement)	wing factors in your decision(s) not to report these cases?
	Very Important Somewhat Not A
) I feared being sued for making an unsubs	Important Important Important Impor
report	Important Import
report) I feared retaliation by parent(s)/community I feared reporting would cause more harm	
report I feared retaliation by parent(s)/community I feared reporting would cause more harm than good	
report) I feared retaliation by parent(s)/communication of the second reporting would cause more harm than good) I feared the child may be removed from how the second relationship with the child/child's parents.	Important Import
report) I feared retaliation by parent(s)/communication of the second reporting would cause more harm than good) I feared the child may be removed from head of the child may be remov	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$

 \Box_4

 \Box_4

 \Box_4

 \Box_4

 \Box_4

Оз

Пз

Оз

Ωз

 \square_3

h) I did not have enough evidence to be sure abuse

i) I thought it was better to work through the issue with the

actually happened

j) Other reason (please specify)

k) Other reason (please specify)

I) Other reason (please specify)

family first

 \square_2

 \square_2

 \square_2

 \square_2

 \square_2

 \square_1

 \square_1

 \square_1

 \square_1

 \square_1

Section E: Attitudes about Reporting Child Sexual Abuse

20

In relation to reporting child sexual abuse, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(Please mark one box **▼** per statement)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) I plan to report child sexual abuse when I suspect it.		\square_2	Пз	□ 4	□ ₅
b) I would be apprehensive to report child sexual abuse for fear of family/community retaliation.	\Box_1	\square_2	□з	□ ₄	□ ₅
 c) I would be reluctant to report a case of child sexual abuse because of what parents will do to the child if he/she is reported. 		□ 2	Пз	□ 4	□ 5
d) The procedures for reporting child sexual abuse are familiar to me.		\square_2	□з	□ 4	□5
e) I would like to fulfil my professional responsibility by reporting suspected cases of child sexual abuse.			Пз	□ 4	□5
 Reporting child sexual abuse is necessary for the safety of children. 		\square_2	Пз	□ 4	□ ₅
g) I feel emotionally overwhelmed by the thought of reporting child sexual abuse.	\Box_1	\square_2	□з	□ 4	□ 5
h) I would not report child sexual abuse if I knew the child would be removed from their home/family.		□ 2	Пз	□ 4	□ 5
 Reporting child sexual abuse can enable services to be made available to children and families. 		\square_2	Пз	□4	□ ₅
 j) I would consider not reporting child sexual abuse because of the possibility of being sued. 		\square_2	З	□ 4	□ 5
k) There is a lot of sensitivity associated with reporting child sexual abuse.		\square_2	Пз	□ 4	□ 5
Child sexual abuse reporting guidelines are necessary for teachers.		\square_2	Пз	□ 4	□ 5
m) It is important for teachers to be involved in reporting child sexual abuse to prevent long-term consequences for children.		\square_2	Пз	□4	□ 5
 n) I believe that the current system for reporting child sexual abuse is effective in addressing the problem. 		\square_2	Пз	□ 4	□ 5
o) Teachers who report child sexual abuse that is unsubstantiated can get into trouble.		\square_2	З	□ 4	□5
 p) It is a waste of time to report child sexual abuse because no one will follow up on the report. 		\square_2	Пз	□4	□ ₅
 q) I would still report child sexual abuse even if my school administration disagreed with me. 		\square_2	Пз	□ 4	□5
r) I lack confidence in the authorities to respond effectively to reports of child sexual abuse.		\square_2	Пз	□ 4	□ ₅
s) I will consult with an administrator before I report child sexual abuse.		\square_2	Пз	□ 4	□ ₅
t) I would find it difficult to report child sexual abuse because it is hard to gather enough evidence.		\square_2	Пз	□ 4	□ ₅
u) A child sexual abuse report can cause a parent to become more abusive toward the child.		\square_2	Пз	□ 4	□ ₅

Section F: Knowledge of Teachers' Duties to Report Child Sexual Abuse under DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND THE ARTS POLICY

21	The Department of Education, Training and the Arts has a format policy under which teachers must report suspected child sexual abuse:	
22	Do you think you are familiar enough with your reporting duty under Department of Education, Training and the Arts policy to answer questions about it?	☐₁ Yes → Please answer questions 23 to 29 below ☐₂ No → Please go directly to Section G
	ase answer to the best of your memase mark one box 🗷 per question.	ory. Your answers will assist in preparing future training.
23	report:	 All reasonable suspicions of child sexual abuse, no matter who the suspected perpetrator is Only reasonable suspicions of child sexual abuse where the suspected perpetrator is an employee of the school I am unsure
24	report:	 Only when I am certain that a child has been or is being sexually abused Whenever I have a reasonable suspicion that a child has been or is being sexually abused I am unsure
25	report child sexual abuse:	 Only when I think the child is suffering (or is at risk of suffering) a significant detrimental effect to his or her physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing Even when I think the harm to the child is insignificant or there is no apparent harm at all I am unsure
26	report child sexual abuse:	 Only when I think it has already happened When I think it has already happened, or, when I think it is likely to occur in the future I am unsure
27	generally report to:	 ☐₁ The school principal ☐₂ Department of Child Safety ☐₃ I am unsure
28	report in good faith, my	□ ₁ Yes □ ₂ No □ ₃ I am unsure

29	Under the <i>policy</i> , if a teacher to a student has been sexually at who is <u>not an employee of the</u> forward the report to the relevan	oused by someone school, I must	 □₁ Even if I do not reasonably suspect the child has been sexually abused □₂ Only if I do reasonably suspect the child has been sexually abused □₃ I am unsure 	ıild
ectio	n G: Knowledge of Teachers' l	Duties to Report Chil	ild Sexual Abuse under LEGISLATION	
30	Do you think you are familiar enough with your reporting dut under <i>legislation</i> to answer questions about it?		 Please answer questions 31 to 41 below Please go directly to Section H 	
Pleas	se answer to the best of your mem	orv. Your answers will a	assist in preparing future training.	
	se mark one box 🗷 per question.		account propagation and an analysis	
31	As a teacher or school staff member in a State school in Queensland, I am required by legislation to report:	the suspected p \Box_2 Only reasonable	suspicions of child sexual abuse, no matter who perpetrator is le suspicions of child sexual abuse where the petrator is an employee of the school	
32	Under the <i>legislation</i> , I must report:	abused	n <u>certain</u> that a child has been or is being sexually ve a <u>reasonable suspicion</u> that a child has been lly abused	
33	Under the <i>legislation</i> , I must report child sexual abuse:		nk the harm to the child is <u>significant</u> nink the harm to the child is <u>insignificant or there</u> arm at all	<u>) is</u>
34	Under the <i>legislation</i> , I must report child sexual abuse:		nk it has already happened has already happened, or, when I think it is likely future	/
35	Under the <i>legislation</i> , I must report child sexual abuse to:	☐₁ The school princ ☐₂ Department of C ☐₃ I am unsure	ncipal or the principal's supervisor Child Safety	
36	Under the <i>legislation</i> , I must report child sexual abuse:		s soon as I have a reasonable suspicion s of developing a reasonable suspicion	

→ For <u>Principals</u> only:

37	Under the <i>legislation</i> , I must report the relevant details of sexual abuse:	\square_1 \square_2 \square_3	In an oral staten In writing (e.g. fa I am unsure		, , ,
38	Under the <i>legislation</i> , if I make a report in good faith, my identity as the reporter is protected from disclosure:	\square_2	Yes No I am unsure		
39	Under the <i>legislation</i> , if I do not make a report of child sexual abuse when required to, I am liable to a maximum penalty of:	\square_2	\$1,500 \$22,000 I am unsure		
40	Under the <i>legislation</i> , if I make a report in good faith which is <u>not</u> substantiated:		I can be held lia I cannot be held I am unsure		e
→ For	Principals only: Under the <i>legislation</i> , if a teach suspect a student has been se		•		Even if I do not reasonably suspect the child has been sexually abused
	employee of the school, I must to the relevant authority:	t forw	ard the report	□ ₂	Only if I <u>do</u> reasonably suspect the child has been sexually abused I am unsure

Section H: Scenarios

Next comes 6 scenarios that you might encounter as a teacher or school staff member. Please read them carefully and respond to the best of your knowledge.

- → In this section, the term "reporting" refers to formal reports to the school principal, child protection authorities, police etc.
- An 11 year old boy in your class is usually well behaved, completes homework consistently and performs well academically. However, he has been behaving in an out of character way for several weeks. He has been misbehaving in class, often arrives at school without having done his homework, and his grades have plummeted. During a quiet period, he tells you that for some weeks a neighbourhood acquaintance of his parents has been showing him pornography on the internet after school, and that while they looked at the pornography the man would touch the boy's private parts and his own.

a)	Do you think you have reasonable grounds for suspecting sexual abuse has occurred?	□₁ Yes □	□ ₂ No	□ ₃ I am unsure
b)	Do you think significant harm has been caused, or is likely to be caused, to the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing?	□₁ Yes 〔	□ ₂ No	□₃ I am unsure
c)	Does Department of Education, Training and the Arts policy require you to report this?	□₁ Yes □	□ ₂ No	□ ₃ I am unsure
d)	Does legislation require you to report this?	□₁ Yes □	⊃₂ No	□₃ I am unsure
e)	Would you report this case?	□₁ Yes →	Please go	to Question 43
		□ ₂ No →	Please ans	swer f) and g) below
If you	responded that you would not report this case:			
f)	Would you report if you knew that <i>Department Training and the Arts policy</i> required you to?	of Education,	□₁ Ye	s □ ₂ No
g)	Would you report if you knew that <i>legislation</i> re	equired you to?	□₁ Ye	s □ ₂ No

	t to go home until 5pm when her Mum gets hom and offers to help you with jobs. You know that							
a)	Do you think you have reasonable grounds for suspecting sexual abuse has occurred?	O ₁	Yes	□ ₂	No	3	lan	n unsure
b)	Do you think significant harm has been caused, or is likely to be caused, to the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing?	□ 1	Yes	\square_2	No	□3	lan	n unsure
c)	Does Department of Education, Training and the Arts policy require you to report this?	\Box_1	Yes	\square_2	No		lan	n unsure
d)	Does legislation require you to report this?		Yes	□ ₂	No	□3	lan	n unsure
е)	Would you report this case?	\square_1	Yes	→ P	lease	go to Q	uestio	n 44
		<u></u>	No	→ P	lease	answer	f) and	d g) below
lf yo	u responded that you would not report this case:							
f)	Would you report if you knew that Department Training and the Arts policy required you to?	of Edu	catio	n,	\Box_1	Yes	\square_2	No
g)	Would you report if you knew that legislation re	quirec	l you	to?	□ 1	Yes	□ ₂	No
	and the second s	4	. ,					

A 10 year old girl in your class who is usually sociable and cheerful has gradually become withdrawn

a) Do you think you have reasonable grounds for suspecting sexual abuse has occurred? b) Do you think significant harm has been caused, or is likely to be caused, to the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing? c) Does Department of Education, Training and the Arts policy require you to report this? d) Does legislation require you to report this? d) Does legislation require you to report this? 1 Yes □2 No □3 I am u e) Would you report this case? 1 Yes → Please go to Question 4 □2 No → Please answer f) and g) If you responded that you would not report this case: f) Would you report if you knew that Department of Education, □1 Yes □2 No Training and the Arts policy required you to? g) Would you report if you knew that legislation required you to? □1 Yes □2 No	The g any s	to not know well. You know the girl's mother and girl is well behaved and consistently happy and sign of concern about the man picking her up follects the girl from school, he gives her a pat	she sho from so	ws no hool.	signs You n	of c	distress that s	s. Nor somet	does she imes whe
caused, or is likely to be caused, to the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing? c) Does Department of Education, Training and the Arts policy require you to report this? d) Does legislation require you to report this? □1 Yes □2 No □3 I am u e) Would you report this case? □1 Yes → Please go to Question 4 □2 No → Please answer f) and g) If you responded that you would not report this case: f) Would you report if you knew that Department of Education, Training and the Arts policy required you to?	a)		O ₁	Yes		No		ı Ian	n unsure
the Arts policy require you to report this? d) Does legislation require you to report this? □1 Yes □2 No □3 I am u e) Would you report this case? □1 Yes → Please go to Question 4 □2 No → Please answer f) and g) If you responded that you would not report this case: f) Would you report if you knew that Department of Education, Training and the Arts policy required you to?	b)	caused, or is likely to be caused, to the child's physical, psychological or emotional		Yes		No		₃ Ian	n unsure
e) Would you report this case? □¹ Yes → Please go to Question 4 □² No → Please answer f) and g) If you responded that you would not report this case: f) Would you report if you knew that Department of Education, □¹ Yes □² No Training and the Arts policy required you to?	c)		□ 1	Yes	□ ₂	No		l an	n unsure
☐2 No → Please answer f) and g) If you responded that you would not report this case: f) Would you report if you knew that Department of Education, ☐1 Yes ☐2 No Training and the Arts policy required you to?	d)	Does legislation require you to report this?	□ 1	Yes	□ ₂	No		lan	n unsure
f) Would you report if you knew that Department of Education, Training and the Arts policy required you to?	e)	Would you report this case?							
		Would you report if you knew that Department		cation),		Yes	\Box_2	No
	g)		equired	you t	0?		Yes		No

a)	Do you think you have reasonable grounds for suspecting sexual abuse has occurred?	□₁ Yes	□ ₂ No	□₃ lam u	nsure
b)	Do you think significant harm has been caused, or is likely to be caused, to the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing?	□₁ Yes	□ ₂ No	□ ₃ lam u	nsure
c)	Does Department of Education, Training and the Arts policy require you to report this?	□₁ Yes	□ ₂ No	□₃ Iam u	nsure
d)	Does legislation require you to report this?	□₁ Yes	□2 No	□₃ Iam u	nsure
e)	Would you report this case?	□₁ Yes -	→ Please g	o to Question 4	l 6
		□2 No -	→ Please a	nswer f) and g)	below
	u responded that you would not report this case.		· -		
f)	Would you report if you knew that Department Training and the Arts policy required you to?	or Education	7, □ ₁ Y	es □₂ No)
g)	Would you report if you knew that legislation re	equired you t	:o? 🗆 1	es □₂ No)

An 8 year old girl in your class with whom you have a good rapport tells you that her father has been

a)	Do you think you have reasonable grounds for suspecting sexual abuse has occurred?	□ 1	Yes	□ 2	No	Эз	lan	n unsure
b)	Do you think significant harm has been caused, or is likely to be caused, to the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing?	□1	Yes	□ ₂	No	□₃	lan	n unsure
c)	Does Department of Education, Training and the Arts policy require you to report this?	\Box_1	Yes	\square_2	No	□3	l an	n unsure
d)	Does legislation require you to report this?	1	Yes		No	3	I an	n unsure
e)	Would you report this case?	\square_1	Yes -	→ Pl	ease	go to Q	uestic	on 47
		\square_2	No -	→ Pi	ease	answer	f) and	d g) below
lf yοι f)	u responded that you would not report this case. Would you report if you knew that Department Training and the Arts policy required you to?		ıcation,	,	□ 1	Yes	□ ₂	No
g)	Would you report if you knew that legislation re	equired	d you to	?	□ 1	Yes	□ ₂	No

a)	Do you think you have reasonable grounds	\Box_1	Yes	\square_2	No	Пз	I am unsure
	for suspecting sexual abuse has occurred?						
b)	Do you think significant harm has been caused, or is likely to be caused, to the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing?	\Box_1	Yes	\square_2	No	Пз	I am unsure
c)	Does Department of Education, Training and the Arts policy require you to report this?	\square_1	Yes		No	□3	I am unsure
d)	Does legislation require you to report this?	\square_1	Yes	□ ₂	No	Ωз	I am unsure
e)	Would you report this case?	\Box_1	Yes —	→ PI	ease tu	rn the	page
		\square_2	No —	→ PI	ease ar	nswer	f) and g) below
If you	u responded that you would not report this case: Would you report if you knew that Department Training and the Arts policy required you to?		cation,		□1 Ye	es	□2 No
			 I vou to	 2	1 Ye	 00	 □ ₂ No

Thank you for taking the time to complete the TRQ.

Your responses will be very helpful to us and to teachers in the future.

Please enclose the survey in the envelope provided and return it to the contact person at your school.

Place your consent form in the separate envelope and return it to the contact person at your school. The consent form and questionnaire must be kept separated by the research team as part of the ethical approval to conduct the study.

If you would like to volunteer for possible follow up by the research team, please enclose the tear off slip in the reply-paid envelope and return it to us at your convenience.

If you have any comments regarding the questionnaire, please write them here: