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The Nevada Chapter of the
American Academy of Pediatrics is
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Nevada Chapter

OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

Monday, March 3, 2025

Assemblymember Selena Torres-Fossett
Assembly Education
Nevada Legislature
via AsmED@asm.state.nv.us

RE: Support for AB205

Dear Chair Torres-Fossett,

On behalf of the pediatrician members of the Nevada Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), I stand in strong support for AB205.

The idea that any adult would sexually abuse a child is terrifying, especially for parents and caregivers. But like any risk youth might face, we need to be able to empower them with information that will help them recognize unsafe situations.

There most important step to keeping youth safe is [prevention](#). There are key things schools teach our children to reduce the chances they will fall prey to a sexual predator.

Child abuse is [widespread](#). What's more, **abusers are usually someone the child knows**. They may be family members, relatives, friends, teachers, coaches, babysitters and other grownups in positions of power or authority, and who are trusted by the child and caregiver.

Children frequently will not disclose their abuse, often for prolonged periods of time. When children do tell, it often is not parents that they relay this information to. That can be particularly difficult for parents and why helping children to identify other safe adults in their life is key.

They may also initiate ongoing contact with their abuser.

Child sexual abuse happens when a child or teen under 18 years old is involved in sexual activity that violates the laws or social taboos of society and that they:

- Do not fully understand
- Are unable to give consent to
- Are forced, manipulated or coerced into participating in

Childhood sexual abuse can affect how people think, act and feel throughout their entire lives. Research links early sexual abuse with serious [health risks in adulthood](#), ranging from heart disease, obesity and cancer to depression, PTSD, substance use and more.

Children and teens who feel in control of their bodies are less likely to fall prey to sexual abusers. And if they do suffer abuse, they are more likely to tell a trusted adult—which can make all the difference in stopping the events and subsequently helping them recover from this painful experience.

Pediatricians, as the most extensively educated providers of pediatric care, have the ability to manage, coordinate, and supervise the entire spectrum of health care, from diagnosis through all stages of treatment and in all practice settings. My role is to connect physician leaders at the Nevada AAP to you, our legislators, to ensure that you are aware of the most recent, evidence-based pediatric care thinking available as you make critical policy decisions for our state.

Thank you for considering this important legislation,

Lee

Leann D. McAllister, MBA
Executive Director

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