



CSA is not one group's problem; by expert accounts, it is a silent epidemic throughout the world, creating social havoc - for the children, adult survivors, and society. It can be prevented and it can be treated, but a conscious and sustained effort is both missing and essential.

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My name is Dr. Pamela Pine. I am the Founder and CEO of a charitable organization focused on the comprehensive prevention and treatment of child sexual abuse (CSA). I am involved with this issue because I am an international public health specialist who has worked throughout the world for 31 years and who, having learned in 2000 about the pandemic of CSA and its fallout, could not leave this issue alone. I, as a professional and human being, was compelled to do something about a complex issue that most of the society knows little about, or, are so horrified, afraid, ashamed, or threatened by, that they don't do anything. I have been asked to address why the bill sponsored by Assemblywoman Marge Markey and Senator Thomas Duane that addresses CSA and the statute of limitations in New York is important to support.

The research is solid: 90-94 percent of CSA is committed by family and community members. CSA impacts children and the adults they become, and our society in enormous ways. For children who do not get the help they need, we often see poor school performance, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and anti-social behaviors. But, without help, it does not end there. Seventy-three percent of runaway girls, 95 percent of teen prostitutes, and 60 percent of teen moms were sexually abused as children. The association of CSA and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), homicide and suicide (over 32 percent of convicted murderers were sexually abused as children), and chronic disease (due to the trauma on the developing brain and behavioral outcomes) is much too large for comfort.

The children who are abused rarely tell (only 1 in 10 do tell) due to shame, fear, and manipulation. The children who do tell are often not believed, ignored, or further shamed. These children often do not arrive at being able to act until they are adults if they ever do. Their offenders are left to their full freedom and all that means – they are free to offend for as long as they will. The violated children and the adults they become never arrive at justice. Are there other actions in addition to legal action that we need to take to prevent and treat CSA? Of course (education, training, and therapy for some are just a few of the steps that we also need to take), but the backing of legislation is one important step, forward. It sends a very strong message: We as a society simply cannot and will not allow this situation to continue.

If we do allow this to continue, if we continue not to address it on various levels included prosecution, let us count ourselves among those other societies in the world that rob their citizens of their basic human rights and justice. Do we really want to accept that place in the world? I can unequivocally say – and I think anyone who understands this issue well, will say – “Absolutely not.”

Thank you for considering our words and thoughts today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pine", with a large, stylized initial "P" that loops around the rest of the name.

Pamela Pine, PhD, MPH
Founder and CEO