



ECAP Definitions

(from <https://ecap.net/standards/> on 3.7.2023)

Definitions provide the context to communicate ideal standards for child protection. For purposes of these ECAP standards, the following definitions apply. Please note that specific states may prescribe different definitions for legal purposes, so applicable laws should always be identified for legal compliance purposes.

Accused: An individual who has been identified as the alleged perpetrator of an incident.

Advanced Screening Techniques: Methods by which staff and volunteers are thoroughly vetted to identify perpetrator patterns and detect red flags or indicators to exclude individuals who will create an unacceptable risk if placed in positions that offer access to vulnerable people.

Agreement to Standards: Written consent from individuals working with children in any way to be bound to specific standards.

Child: A person who is under eighteen years old, and sometimes also known as a “minor”; the plural is children.

Child Emotional Abuse: Child emotional abuse “means injuring a child’s self-esteem or emotional well-being. It includes verbal and emotional assault — such as continually belittling or berating a child — as well as isolating, ignoring or rejecting a child.” (1)

Child Neglect: “Child neglect is failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, clean living conditions, affection, supervision, education, or dental or medical care.” (2)

ECAP Definitions

Child Physical Abuse: “Physical child abuse occurs when a child is purposely physically injured or put at risk of harm by another person.” (3) A non-accidental physical injury does not include appropriate medical care, appropriate restraints, or appropriate discipline.

Child Protection Program: The combination of governance, oversight, policies, committees, and operations that work together to ensure child safety and response within the organization. Also known as a **Child Safety Program**.

Child Safety Coordinator: Person responsible for managing child safety at the organization.

Child Sexual Abuse: “Child sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child. This can involve sexual contact, such as intentional sexual touching, oral-genital contact or intercourse. This can also involve non-contact sexual abuse of a child, such as exposing a child to sexual activity or pornography; observing or filming a child in a sexual manner; sexual harassment of a child; or prostitution of a child, including sex trafficking.” (4) State laws typically define this term similarly.

Code of Conduct: A set of biblically based rules or guidelines for behavior in a specific context. For example, an organization should have a Code of Conduct for employees and volunteers during the period that they work with or volunteer for the organization.

Compliance Audit: Comprehensive review of an organization’s adherence to ECAP’s accreditation standards, including evaluation of the strength and thoroughness of compliance preparations, policies, and risk management procedures.

Defamation: A false statement of fact (not opinion) that injures another person, and it may be written (libel) or spoken (slander), which is actionable as a civil tort (wrong). Truth is a defense.

Defendant: An individual or organization accused of wrongdoing in a court of law in a criminal or civil case.

ECAP Definitions

Employees: Employees are individuals who have been hired by representatives of the organization and receive compensation to perform duties for the organization.

Founded: A report of child abuse where there has been a judicial adjudication finding that a subject child has been abused, or Child Protective Services determines that there has been abuse. See also “substantiated” below.

Independent Service Provider (ISP): An independent contractor, vendor, or non-employee, or volunteer who is providing a service or outsourced function for the organization.

Interview: A discussion with an individual to gather information and evidence regarding an allegation. If a child is interviewed, the interview should be carried out by a trained child welfare professional who specializes in gathering information from children as part of a larger investigative process and potentially for use in a legal setting. This is called a forensic interview.

Mandated Reporter: A person who is legally obligated to report suspected or known child abuse, as provided by state or other applicable laws, and typically arising out of the person’s professional training or specific responsibilities (e.g., a nurse, doctor, social worker, or more broadly as identified in some state laws).

Parent: A Child’s biological mother, father, or other relative who is responsible for such child’s welfare, as well as another person who is the child’s legal guardian.

Perpetrator, Offender: An individual who is determined to have carried out a harmful act (often by means of a criminal act).

Personnel: Volunteers, independent contractors, or employees who work for an organization.

Plaintiff: A person who brings a civil case against another individual or organization in a court of law.

ECAP Definitions

Premises Monitor: An individual who walks around the facility and checks to make sure things on the premise are running smoothly.

Reporter, Complainant: A person who makes a report about an allegation.

Reporting System: A process or procedure used to facilitate reports of child abuse. This system should clearly identify who in the system is responsible for reporting accusations, tracking accusations, and passing information along to other decision makers.

Role/Risk Assessment, Threat Level Score: An organization evaluates staff positions or roles that may pose a greater threat to minors because of their amount of access and control within the organization and heightens child safety requirements accordingly.

Rule of Two: Generally, there should be at least two unrelated persons (an adult and another adult or a responsible teenager) with one child.

Sexual Abuse: According to federal law, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), sexual abuse is defined as the “employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct” and the “rape, and in cases of caretaker or inter-familial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children.” (5)

Substantiated: It is determined to be more likely than not that abuse has occurred (preponderance of the evidence). This is an evidentiary standard commonly used in private investigations and civil negligence/tort court actions. The term “founded” may be used by some government authorities as synonymous with “substantiated” or otherwise in reference to such evidentiary standards.

Suggested Best Practice: Recommended procedure for optimal or improved effectiveness, utility, or benefit.

ECAP Definitions

Unsubstantiated: Means not supported or proven by enough evidence or failed to meet the “preponderance of the evidence” standard (the allegations are more likely true than not true). Does not mean the allegation was a lie, only that there was not enough evidence to prove it based on a greater than fifty percent chance that the allegations were true. The term “non-substantiated” may be used as synonymous with “unsubstantiated.” Some government authorities may use the term “unfounded” as synonymous with “unsubstantiated” or otherwise in reference to such evidentiary standards.

Victim, Survivor: A person harmed or injured as a result of a crime, accident, or other event or action; an individual who has overcome a difficult experience that left the individual harmed or injured in some way. The term “V/S” may be used as synonymous with either “victim” or “survivor.”

Victim Advocate: A victim advocate provides emotional support, information about the criminal justice system, and resources and referrals to victims of crime. Victim advocates are generally employed by, or volunteer for a governmental agency or a non-profit organization with the mission of assisting and advocating for victims of crime.

Volunteers: Volunteers are individuals who have been approved by representatives of the organization to perform duties for the organization and do not receive compensation.

Worker: An adult or minor approved by the organization to work directly with children or youth. A worker may be an employee, volunteer, or independent contractor that has both access to and authority in the perception of a Child.

Zero Tolerance: Strict enforcement of regulations and bans against behaviors deemed undesirable, for example organizations should have zero tolerance for anyone who perpetrates Child Sexual Abuse.

1) Definition from the Mayo Clinic.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/child-abuse/symptoms-causes/syc-20370864>

ECAP Definitions

2) Definition from the Mayo Clinic.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/child-abuse/symptoms-causes/syc-20370864>

3) Definition from the Mayo Clinic.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/child-abuse/symptoms-causes/syc-20370864>

4) Definition from the Mayo Clinic.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/child-abuse/symptoms-causes/syc-20370864>

5) 42 U.S.C.A. § 5106g.