

Scoping Review: Evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse

Parenting Research Centre and the
University of Melbourne

Commissioned by Royal Commission into
Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse



Scoping Review: Evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse

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Disclaimer

The views and findings expressed in this report are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Royal Commission. Any errors are the author's responsibility.

The scoping review was conducted between January and March 2014, and papers and reports dated after this time were not included.

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Preface

On Friday 11 January 2013, the Governor-General appointed a six-member Royal Commission to inquire into how institutions with a responsibility for children have managed and responded to allegations and instances of child sexual abuse.

The Royal Commission is tasked with investigating where systems have failed to protect children, and making recommendations on how to improve laws, policies and practices to prevent and better respond to child sexual abuse in institutions.

The Royal Commission has developed a comprehensive research program to support its work and to inform its findings and recommendations. The program focuses on eight themes:

1. Why does child sexual abuse occur in institutions?
2. How can child sexual abuse in institutions be prevented?
3. How can child sexual abuse be better identified?
4. How should institutions respond where child sexual abuse has occurred?
5. How should government and statutory authorities respond?
6. What are the treatment and support needs of victims/survivors and their families?
7. What is the history of particular institutions of interest?
8. How do we ensure the Royal Commission has a positive impact?

This research report falls within theme two.

The research program means the Royal Commission can:

- Obtain relevant background information
- Fill key evidence gaps
- Explore what is known and what works
- Develop recommendations that are informed by evidence and can be implemented, and respond to contemporary issues.

For more information on this program, please visit

www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/research.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Overview

The aim of this scoping review was to map evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. It was conducted by the Parenting Research Centre and the University of Melbourne for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. This report describes the methods used to conduct the scoping review and the findings of the scoping review.

1.2 Methods

Systematic searches for existing evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse were conducted using an extensive list of electronic databases and websites, manually searching website publication lists (when no search engine was available) and searching the reference lists of potentially relevant studies. Results were then synthesised across study characteristics, including the methods employed and relevant key findings, and this was followed by a narrative interpretation of findings.

1.3 Characteristics of the included evaluations

Electronic database searches located 1,464 papers after duplicates were removed. A further 186 new papers were identified through website searches, through a concurrent review of child sexual abuse prevention in out-of-home care and via reference list checks. Twenty-five of these 1,650 papers were found to be suitable for inclusion in this scoping review.

The 25 relevant evaluations were categorised into three general pragmatic categories of evaluation approaches in order to facilitate an overview of their relevance. They consisted of:

1. 19 retrospective case studies or surveys (including six public or ministerial inquiries)
2. Four qualitative analyses of submissions or hearings
3. Two evaluations of classification tools.

The evaluations of the classification tools (category 3 above) found that tools for pre-employment screening that aimed to predict whether individual applicants would be at a high risk of committing sexual offences were neither sufficiently effective nor ethically feasible. As such, these two evaluations were not considered further in this scoping review beyond an explanation as to why such tools are unlikely to be reliable and valid.

Evaluations were conducted in Australia, New Zealand, the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States. Evaluations were located in all the countries identified at the outset of this scoping review as most relevant for the work of the Royal Commission, with the exception of Canada.

The target group (that is, the type of employment) addressed most commonly was child-related work, broadly defined. These studies addressed both paid employees and volunteers. Additional target groups included teachers and other private and public school staff, including volunteers; residential care providers or staff at children's homes; volunteers at organisations serving

children and/or youth; and foster care providers and other adults who live and/or work in these settings.

It is noteworthy that the majority of both the potentially relevant papers and the included evaluations were reports identified through website searches. Thus, the scientific discourse around these practices appears to be largely communicated through governmental and non-governmental agencies' reports (so-called 'grey literature') and to a lesser degree in peer-reviewed scientific journals.

1.4 Relevant key findings stated by evaluation authors

The review team compiled the findings, suggestions and recommendations of evaluation authors in each of the included studies in an effort to present a more nuanced understanding of the studies. These were not screened by the scoping review authors for methodological rigour and should be treated solely as the opinions of the authors, as stated in their evaluations. The authors of many of the included evaluations emphasised that criminal background checks appear to be universally considered as an important component of pre-employment screening practices. However, such statements were almost never made without emphasising the limited effectiveness of using criminal background checks as the only pre-employment screening practice to safeguard children from sexual abuse by staff. Indeed, many concerns were raised regarding factors that limit the feasibility and effectiveness of criminal background checks as a safeguard protecting children from sexual abuse, including (in order of most frequently to least frequently mentioned):

- Time delays in the recruitment process due to the time needed to complete a criminal background check and/or the resulting decision to employ a person before the check is complete
- The costs associated with conducting criminal background checks
- The risk that an applicant may have changed their name, or give a pseudonym or nickname
- The need to check for criminal offences in other jurisdictions (such as international or interstate jurisdictions)
- The risks posed by those exempt from mandatory criminal background checks (for example, parents who volunteer when their child is present, and other adults who share the home with the caregiver and child)
- A lack of reporting, confirmation and, therefore, criminal background checks of other adults who may be living in institutions (including foster or childcare homes)
 - Issues related to conflicting child protection and child welfare legislation regarding the need for, and actions to be taken based on, criminal background checks
 - Ethical concerns regarding infringing on a person's right to exoneration, privacy and/or rehabilitation due to sharing information about served, pardoned and quashed criminal convictions.

The pre-employment screening practices other than criminal background checks (often referred to as sources of 'soft information' in the literature) that evaluation authors identified as necessary components of a comprehensive pre-employment screening procedure included (in order of most frequently to least frequently mentioned):

- Conducting thorough reference checks (for example, those obtained directly from previous employers by asking direct questions about any concerns regarding the applicant's suitability to work with children)
- Holding employment interviews that focus on determining the applicant's suitability to work with children (such as value-based interviewing; for more information, see Erooga, 2009)
- Checking suspected or substantiated child abuse against other sources of information, such as child-abuse registries, children's court decisions or disciplinary body proceedings
- Critically examining an applicant's employment history and/or written application (to identify gaps in their employment history and thus clarify their cause, or to explain ambiguous responses to direct questions about criminal history)
- Verifying the applicant's identity using methods such as photo-based documents or fingerprinting
- Verifying the applicant's education or qualifications (in order to determine if they are qualified to undertake child-related work).

The need for comprehensive pre-employment screening practices was supported and underscored by many case examples where such practices were not followed and, as a result, unsuitable people gained employment in child-related work and went on to sexually abuse the children in their care.

That people identified as unsuitable to work with children following pre-employment screening should be disqualified from doing so was implicit in all the literature identified in this scoping review. However, case examples examined in the included evaluations highlight that enforcing employment prohibitions, even in the face of evidence of child sexual abuse, was not always a matter of course.

1.5 Concluding remarks

That this scoping review did not reveal any rigorous evaluations of the effects of pre-employment screening practices on rates of child sexual abuse is not surprising given the methodological difficulties inherent to this issue. Chief among these is the unknown but probably low, present day rate of reported institutional child sexual abuse by institutional employees, the difficulty of conducting large-scale clinical trials and the sensitivity of disclosing child sexual abuse. However, the literature available provides many insights into the need for comprehensive pre-employment screening practices that include not only criminal background checks but also other pre-employment screening approaches, such as those that aim to identify 'soft' information.

Many case examples highlighted the importance of comprehensive pre-employment screening practices, as did the opinions of many key stakeholders identified by the authors of the included evaluations – through qualitative survey analyses and submissions or hearings held by governmental bodies or commissions. Furthermore, the case examples raised the need for clear legislation permitting employment prohibitions based on the outcomes of pre-employment screening practices. However, there were also many legitimate concerns about such pre-employment screening practices, such as the costs and time delays associated with criminal background checks, or the risk that an applicant will take measures to conceal their identity and history. Additionally, consideration must be given to potential infringements on an individual's

right to privacy, rehabilitation and employment both before the implementation and during the subsequent monitoring, evaluation and revision of pre-employment screening practices.

The potential deterrent effect of comprehensive pre-employment screening practices may never be able to be quantified, but should not be disregarded solely for that reason. The literature suggests that, when combined with other policies and practices that promote a positive organisational culture, comprehensive pre-employment screening practices are likely to contribute to safeguarding children against child sexual abuse.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

In order to systematically examine the nature and extent of the international literature available on the effectiveness of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse, the Royal Commission requested in January 2014 that the Parenting Research Centre and the University of Melbourne conduct a scoping review. The research questions, methods and steps of this scoping review were collaboratively developed with representatives from the Research and Submissions teams at the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

2.2 What is a scoping review?

To answer questions about the effectiveness of interventions, full systematic reviews are widely accepted as the gold standard of research synthesis. High-quality systematic reviews reduce the risk of bias and can reliably draw conclusions about effectiveness. They may also involve meta-analyses. The rapid evidence assessment is a streamlined form of systematic review that is used when time or resources are limited. This method is less reliable than a full systematic review but can offer decision-makers a reasonable indication of intervention suitability in a shorter timeframe.

A scoping review methodology was used in this project – a rigorous approach for systematically and rapidly mapping the literature available on a specific topic or methodology (Levac, Colquhoun & O'Brien, 2010). Scoping reviews entail the systematic selection, collection and summarisation of existing published work in a broad thematic area. Unlike systematic reviews, they do not involve the detailed assessment of study rigour or bias, or any rigorous assessment of the effectiveness of the interventions or approaches being tested. Instead, they are used to 'scope out' the nature and extent of particular areas of research (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). Therefore, a scoping review should not be solely relied upon as evidence of the effectiveness of a given program or practice element to develop recommendations for policy and practice (Kavanagh, Trouton, Oakley & Harden, 2005).

Scoping review research questions are often broad in nature, as the focus is on summarising the breadth of literature available on a given topic (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005; Levac et al, 2010). They provide a useful tool when making decisions about future research directions. For example, they may identify gaps in the literature or, if there is sufficient literature to warrant it, facilitate a decision to conduct a rapid evidence assessment or systematic review of the evidence on a more specific research question, such as the evidence for a particular practice element.

2.3 Aims of this scoping review report

The aim of this report is to provide the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse with an overview of the nature and extent of the international literature available on evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. We anticipate that this report will provide a valuable overview of the literature available on this topic.

To achieve this aim, this report addresses the following questions:

- Which studies have evaluated pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse? Which evaluation methods did they employ?
- Which target groups (that is, the type of child-related work addressed) were been addressed in these evaluations? Where were the evaluations conducted?
- What were the key relevant findings of these evaluations, as stated by the evaluation authors? Which pre-employment screening types were highlighted in these evaluations (for example, criminal history checks or reference checks)?

We have structured this report to include definitions of key terminology (in this section), followed by a section outlining the research methodology, then the findings from our scoping review will be presented. The report ends with considerations as to the scope of the literature identified, including any apparent gaps in the literature; a comparison of the findings of this review against other reviews identified on the topic; a summary of the key findings stated by evaluation authors; and a section on the possible interpretations and implications of these findings.

2.4 Definitions

2.4.1 Pre-employment screening

For the purposes of this review, we will only consider pre-employment screening for child-related work that aims to prevent child sexual abuse. However, we acknowledge that pre-employment screening for child-related work may also have (and often does have) other child-related aims, such as preventing other forms of child maltreatment. As outlined in the first Issues Paper released by Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse ‘The sources used for screening checks ... may include a police check, criminal history check, relevant employment proceedings and/or findings from professional disciplinary bodies.’ (Issues Paper 1: Working with Children Check, 2013, p. 1). We have also included pre-employment screening practices such as reference checks and employment interview approaches that aim to screen for convicted or potential child sexual abusers. Employment prohibitions related to pre-employment screening are also considered (for example, the types of offences or pre-employment screening results that lead to a person being prohibited from engaging in child-related employment).

Many synonyms for criminal background checks exist in the international English language literature. Therefore, extensive online searches were conducted at the outset of this scoping review to identify synonyms for criminal background checks currently in use internationally (and thus develop the search terms used in database and website searches). The synonyms for criminal background checks identified can be seen in Box 1. They include police clearance, criminal history check, criminal record check, vetting disclosure, police vetting, disclosure and barring service checks, criminal history disclosure, protecting vulnerable groups scheme, independent safeguarding authority barred list, criminal records bureau checks, Garda (the police force of Ireland) vetting, vulnerable sector checks, and police records checks.

2.4.2 Child-related work

For the purposes of this scoping review, we decided not to define child-related work into strict employment types or positions in order to better capture the breadth of the literature available on pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. We therefore included studies for any type of work, paid or unpaid, in which the authors

of the evaluation, the organisation responsible for the policy or the relevant government bodies determined that the applicants may have sufficient contact with children to warrant pre-employment screening. The child-related work types explored in the evaluations included in this scoping review can be found in section 4.2, Study Characteristics.

2.4.3 Study type definitions

Due to the broad nature of the questions explored in this scoping review, we have aimed to identify all relevant evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse without restricting the types of study designs included (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). Therefore, for the purposes of this scoping review, we have based our taxonomy of different study types on that designed by the University of London's Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre) (EPPI-Centre Key wording Strategy for Classifying Education Research, Version 0.9.7, 2003). While this taxonomy was originally designed for studies within the field of education, it better reflects this unique context of social research than other study design taxonomies, as it has been designed on pragmatic grounds with the aim of creating a workable taxonomy that includes design and data analysis methods, as well as qualitative and quantitative forms of data.

Evaluations

Evaluations are studies 'which evaluate a policy, practice, programme or other intervention by assessing whether it works well in terms of, for example, its acceptability, feasibility, financial implications or intended, or unintended, effects on relevant outcomes' (EPPI-Centre, 2003, section A.13.3, pp. 13–14). They provide insight into what works, for whom, and under what circumstances. Evaluations can:

1. Use qualitative and/or statistical techniques
2. Explore the feasibility (often using qualitative techniques) and/or the effects of policies and practices on relevant outcomes (using statistical techniques)
3. Be based on assessments at different stages of implementing or trialling a new policy or practice:
 - After a policy or practice has been in place (post-test)
 - Before and after a policy or practice has been in place (pre- and post-test)
 - On several occasions before, during and after a policy or practice has been in place
4. Include a comparison group that did not experience the new policy or practice being evaluated, thus better enabling the effect of the new policy or practice to be isolated and causality to be explored.

Descriptive studies (excluded from this scoping review)

Descriptive studies aim to explore and describe a particular phenomenon or to document its characteristics. They are often conducted at one point in time (that is, they are cross-sectional). Descriptive studies do not:

1. Attempt to evaluate a particular policy or practice in terms of its feasibility
2. Examine associations between one or more variables
3. Test hypotheses.

For example, they can include studies such as an interview of public sector agency representatives to count how many have explicit policies on pre-employment screening; studies that describe the number of background checks conducted by a particular organisation, or in a particular jurisdiction, in a given period; studies of the pre-employment screening practices

employed at a particular organisation (without any qualitative evaluation of its acceptability or feasibility); case studies in which convicted sex offenders were employed in child-related work (without an explanatory, causal analysis of, for example, whether this was due to negligent hiring practices); or surveys in which key informants are asked whether they believe there is need for a new policy or practice (without having to have personal experience of implementing the said policy or practice).

Frameworks or guidelines (excluded from this scoping review)

Frameworks or guidelines include guidelines, handbooks, tip sheets, professional toolkits and/or policy documents describing pre-employment screening practices. These papers do not include evaluations of the effectiveness or feasibility of the approach described.

Opinion pieces (excluded from this scoping review)

Opinion pieces reflect the opinion of the author or publishing organisation. Although references to other studies may be included, they differ from narrative or non-systematic reviews in that the main purpose of the piece is not to review the literature but rather to put forward a particular argument or opinion.

Studies exploring relationships to generate theory (excluded from this scoping review)

Some studies are exploratory and aim to generate theory. Although these studies aid understanding and may provide insight into the types of policies or practices that may be relevant, they do not directly evaluate the feasibility or effectiveness of policies or practices. These studies may:

1. Examine relationships and/or statistical associations between variables in order to build theories and develop hypotheses
2. Describe a process or processes in order to explore how a particular phenomenon might be produced, maintained and changed.
3. Use qualitative and/or statistical techniques.
4. Explore variables such as type of out-of-home care or gender.

For example, a study may compare the types and frequency of pre-employment screening approaches in government and volunteer organisations, or the relationship between organisation size and pre-employment screening practices. These studies differ from evaluations in that they do not attempt to explore the acceptability, feasibility or effectiveness of pre-employment screening practices. They also do not entail an explanatory, causal analysis of, for example, whether the rate of child sexual abuse was a result of the pre-employment screening practices employed.

Systematic reviews

Systematic reviews transparently and systematically synthesise information, findings, opinions or conclusions based on the literature available on a particular issue. They therefore generate findings and recommendations that are less biased than traditional narrative reviews. A review can be classified as systematic if it is explicit in its use of systematic strategies for:

1. Searching for literature, including search terms, databases searched and details of the methods for searching any literature sources, such as websites
2. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for studies included in the review
3. Methods used for assessing study quality and the risk of bias, as well as the methods used for collating study results.

Narrative or non-systematic reviews (excluded from this scoping review)

Narrative reviews discuss a particular issue, drawing support from opinions, findings or conclusions from a range of previous studies. However, such reviews do not meet the transparent and systematic criteria discussed above under the definition of systematic reviews.

3. SCOPING REVIEW METHODS

This section provides an overview of the methods used to conduct the scoping review of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse.

3.1 Search strategy

Evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse were identified via a systematic search of the following sources:

- Electronic bibliographic databases: selected government and child welfare websites from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, as well as World Health Organization publications
- A concurrent scoping review being conducted by the Parenting Research Centre and the University of Melbourne on evaluations of out-of-home care practice elements that aim to prevent child sexual abuse (unpublished, Parenting Research Centre and the University of Melbourne)
- Reference lists of potentially relevant papers.

We conducted a search for systematic reviews on this topic in an attempt to identify high-quality syntheses of relevant literature. However, none were identified.

3.1.1 Electronic bibliographic databases

Search terms were developed that were designed to identify studies exploring the effect of pre-employment screening on child sexual abuse. We used various terms associated with pre-employment screening and children, as well as sexual abuse and the protection of children. These searches included truncation terms (denoted by an asterisk, the use of which returns all items containing the root term to the left of the asterisk) and keyword searches that included titles, abstracts and subject headings. No limits were placed on the year of publication. The search terms used appear in Box 1.

Box 1. Search terms used in searches of electronic bibliographic databases for the scoping review of pre-employment screening practices.

'background check*' OR 'background screen*' OR 'employ* screen*' OR 'pre-employment screen*' OR 'employment prohibition' OR 'employment restriction' OR 'employment requirements' OR 'reference check*' OR 'referee' OR 'past employment' OR 'employment history' OR 'character statement' OR 'court proceedings' OR 'previous convictions' OR 'prior convictions' OR 'employment proceedings' OR 'disciplinary action' OR 'disciplinary proceedings' OR 'working with children check' OR 'WWCC' OR 'working with children clearance' OR 'police clearance' OR 'criminal history' OR 'criminal record check' OR 'vetting disclosure' OR 'vetting procedure' OR 'safety check' OR 'police vetting' OR 'criminal record check' OR 'disclosure and barring service checks' OR 'DBS checks' OR 'criminal history disclosure' OR 'Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme' OR 'PVG scheme' OR 'garda vetting' OR 'vulnerable sector check' OR 'police records check' OR 'criminal records bureau checks' OR 'CRB checks' OR 'Independent Safeguarding Authority barred list' OR 'ISA barred list'

AND

'infant*' OR 'baby' OR 'babies' OR 'preschool*' OR 'pre-school*' OR 'child*' OR 'pre-teen*' OR 'preteen*' OR 'teen*' OR 'adolescen*' OR 'youth*' OR 'young people*' OR 'young person*' OR 'minor' OR 'toddler*'

AND

'sex* abus*' OR 'rape*' OR 'sex* assault*' OR 'sex* molest*' OR 'sex* coerc*' OR 'maltreat*' OR 'sex* misconduct' OR 'death' OR 'abus*' OR 'neglect' OR 'protect*' OR 'safety' OR 'prevent*'

Search terms were adapted to meet the individual requirements of each electronic bibliographic database. The following electronic bibliographic databases were searched:

- Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA)
- CINAHL
- Cochrane Library
- Criminal Justice Abstracts
- EMBASE
- ERIC
- MEDLINE with Full Text
- National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Abstracts Database
- PsycINFO
- Social Services Abstracts
- Social Science Citation Index (Web of Science)
- Sociological Abstracts.

3.1.2 Selected government and child welfare websites

Selected government and child welfare websites from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, as well as the World Health Organization's publications, were also searched systematically for published and unpublished papers exploring pre-employment screening for child-related work. These sources were chosen as they were identified as being the most relevant to the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Website search terms were based on those in Box 1 and were adapted to meet the requirements of the websites' search engines. If a website did not have a search engine, or it was insufficient to conduct complex searches, the website publication lists were searched manually. The purpose of this task was to identify additional published and unpublished (grey literature) papers that might add to those identified through the electronic database searches. A list of sites searched appears in Box 2.

3.2 Evaluation selection

3.2.1 Abstract screening

Abstracts and titles of studies identified in the database searches were initially screened by two independent raters to identify papers that met the following inclusion and exclusion criteria. During this abstract screening phase, papers were sorted into one of two groups: potentially relevant and not relevant.

Potentially relevant papers were identified as those that addressed:

- a) Pre-employment screening practices or related employment prohibitions,
- b) Child sexual abuse, *and*
- c) Child-related work.

In addition, only papers published in the English language were identified as potentially relevant.

3.2.2 Evaluation study eligibility

The titles, abstracts and full-text versions of all papers identified as potentially relevant in the abstract screening phase (section 3.2.1) were then screened for eligibility by a rater based on the criteria presented below. Full-text versions of potentially relevant papers were also located and screened by three independent raters through a wide-ranging set of website searches, a concurrent scoping review on evaluations of out-of-home care practice elements that aim to prevent child sexual abuse (unpublished, Parenting Research Centre and the University of Melbourne), and reviewing the reference lists of potentially relevant papers. Due to the time-limited nature of this project, studies that were identified as possibly relevant but not available online were excluded (the citation details for all studies not available online are available in Appendix 1). When an organisation's website had a free 'request a publication' service (either an online form or an email address), a request was made for an electronic copy (such as a PDF or Word document) of all the potentially relevant papers identified through all search approaches.

Scoping review inclusion criteria

Studies were included that:

- a) Met the criteria for 'potentially relevant papers' followed at the abstract screening phase, addressing:
 - i. Pre-employment screening practices or related employment prohibitions,
 - ii. Child sexual abuse, *and*
 - iii. child-related work
- b) Were evaluation studies (see definitions in section 2.3.3).

Scoping review exclusion criteria

Papers were excluded that fell into one of the following seven categories (see section 2.3.3 for study type definitions):

- a) Considered to be not relevant as defined by the criteria used in the abstract screening criteria listed in section 3.2.1
- b) Narrative or non-systematic reviews
- c) Frameworks or guidelines
- d) Legislation and/or summaries of legislation
- e) Opinion pieces
- f) Descriptive studies
- g) Studies exploring relationships to generate theory.

The number of papers that fell within exclusion categories b to g above was recorded and their citation details are listed in Appendix 1.

Note that the full-text versions and reference lists of all excluded papers, including narrative reviews, were searched for potentially relevant papers and these were then, in turn, screened for eligibility. The conclusions of any narrative reviews identified in this study were also used to contrast the findings of this scoping review in the discussion, section 5.3.

Box 2. Government and child-welfare websites searched for the scoping review of pre-employment screening practices.

Websites from Australia

Australian Government (publications only): www.australia.gov.au

Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia: www.cafwaa.org.au/publications.html

Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse: www.adfvc.unsw.edu.au/

Websites from Canada

Government of Canada: canada.ca/en/index.html

Canadian Child Welfare Research Portal: <http://cwrp.ca/>

Child Welfare League of Canada: <http://www.cwlc.ca>

Websites from New Zealand

New Zealand Government: <http://newzealand.govt.nz/search>

Barnardos New Zealand: <http://www.barnardos.org.nz/>

Websites from the Republic of Ireland

Department of Children and Youth Affairs: <http://www.dcyh.gov.ie>

Houses of the Oireachtas: <http://www.oireachtas.ie/parliament/>

National Youth Council of Ireland: <http://www.childprotection.ie>

Websites from the United Kingdom

UK Government (this site includes the Scottish Government; Department of Justice Northern Ireland; Department of Education Northern Ireland; Northern Ireland Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety; Northern Ireland Government Services): www.gov.uk/

Safe Network: www.safenetwork.org.uk

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (U.K.): www.nspcc.org.uk/

Social Care Institute for Excellence: www.scie.org.uk/

Disclosure Scotland: www.disclosurescotland.co.uk

Websites from the United States:

American Bar Association: <http://www.americanbar.org/aba.html>

National Criminal Justice Reference Service:

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/AbstractDB/AbstractDBSearch.aspx>

Child Welfare Information Gateway: www.childwelfare.gov

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: www.hhs.gov

U.S. Department of Education: <http://www.ed.gov/>

Child Care Aware: <http://coreissues.usa.childcareaware.org/key-issues/background-checks/>

National Recreation and Park Association: <http://www.nrpa.org/>

World Health Organization (publications only): <http://apps.who.int/iris/>

3.3 Data extraction

Two of the report authors extracted data from the eligible evaluations using a data extraction form (see Appendix 2 for a blank data extraction form). This data extraction approach was based on the criteria for scoping reviews developed by Arksey & O'Malley (2005).

Data extracted included:

- Publication type (journal article or report, for example)
- Citation details
- Type of pre-employment screening or relevant employment prohibition explored
- Target group (that is, the type of child-related work)
- Jurisdictions(s)/location
- Relevant aims of the study
- Evaluation methodology
- Sample selection/selection of participants (including number of cases/events examined)
- When the cases examined occurred/time period explored
- Relevant outcome measures
- Relevant key findings (as reported by evaluation authors).

3.4 Synthesis of scoping review findings

We aimed to present the findings of the scoping review in a format that provides an easily accessible overview of the evaluations. We therefore adopted a narrative analysis approach (complemented by tabulated data) built on the following three questions:

- Which studies have evaluated pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. Which evaluation methods did they employ?
- Which target groups were addressed in these evaluations (that is, which type of child-related work was addressed)? Where were the evaluations conducted?
- What are the key relevant findings of these evaluations, as stated by the evaluation authors? Which pre-employment screening types were highlighted in these evaluations (for example, criminal history checks or reference checks)?

4. SCOPING REVIEW FINDINGS

4.1 Flow of papers through the scoping review

Using all sources searched, we identified a total of 2,095 papers – 1,894 through bibliographic databases; 155 through website searches; 11 through a concurrent scoping review on evaluations of out-of-home care practice elements that aim to prevent child sexual abuse (unpublished, Parenting Research Centre and the University of Melbourne); and 36 through reference lists of potentially relevant papers. After removing duplicates from the results of the database searches (n=430), 1,464 abstracts were screened for inclusion. A total of 1,355 papers from database searches were considered irrelevant based on the criteria for abstract screening (see section 3.2.1 for abstract screening criteria). Sixteen studies were identified via multiple search approaches (for example, through both the database and website searches), and these duplicates were therefore removed.

The full-text versions of a total of 295 potentially relevant papers were then screened for eligibility based on the criteria presented in section 3.2.2. It is noteworthy that 109 of these papers were located through database searches while 186 were identified through website searches, reference lists of potentially relevant papers and the concurrent review. This provides insight into the nature of the literature on pre-employment screening practices that aim to prevent child sexual abuse; the scientific discourse around these practices appears to largely be communicated through governmental and non-governmental agencies' reports (so-called grey literature) and to a lesser degree through peer-reviewed scientific journals.

A total of 270 papers were excluded from the scoping review. This included:

- Eight narrative or non-systematic reviews
- 51 frameworks or guidelines
- 70 legislation and/or summaries of legislation
- 69 opinion pieces
- 29 descriptive studies
- Three studies exploring relationships to generate theory.

This also included, 40 papers which were excluded. Of these, 13 papers were considered to be not relevant and we were unable to locate the full-text versions of 27 papers in time for possible inclusion in this scoping review (that is, they weren't available online). The unavailable studies tended to be dated, though it is possible that one or more would have met our inclusion criteria. The citation details of all 270 excluded papers are listed under each of these exclusion categories in Appendix 1.

4.1.1 Eligible studies included in the scoping review (n=25)

A total of 25 evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse were included in this scoping review after screening the full-text versions of papers for eligibility. Figure 1 depicts the flow of papers through the scoping review.

The following sections consist of a narrative synthesis of the data extracted from the 25 included evaluations. Tabulated summaries of data obtained from the data extraction forms is presented as a complement to the text. The completed data extraction forms for each of the 25 included evaluations can be found in Appendix 3.

We categorised the studies into three general pragmatic categories of evaluation approaches in order to summarise their relevance to the topic:

1. Retrospective case studies and/or surveys (including inquiries) (n=19)
2. Qualitative analyses of submissions or hearings (n=4)
3. Evaluations of classification tools (n=2).

Table 1 presents the citation details of the evaluations included in this review in alphabetical order, grouped by the three general pragmatic categories of evaluation approaches listed above. It is noteworthy that only eight of the 25 included evaluations were published in peer-reviewed journals, which confirms the observation that the scientific discourse around these practices appears to primarily be communicated through governmental and non-governmental agencies' reports (so-called grey literature).

In the next section (section 4.2), we report on the characteristics of these evaluations separately for each of these pragmatic evaluation approach categories, exploring the target groups addressed and where the evaluations were conducted. In section 4.3, we present a narrative synthesis and tabulated summaries of relevant key findings, as stated by evaluation authors of all of the included evaluations, grouped by type of pre-employment screening concerned.

Table 1. Full citation details of the evaluations included in the scoping review (n=25)

Evaluations included in the scoping review (n=25)	
<i>Retrospective case studies and surveys (including inquiries) (n=19)</i>	
1.	Attorney-General's Department (2011). Review of the operation of Subdivision A of Division 6 of Part VIIC of the Crimes Act 1914. Final Report. Canberra, Australia.
2.	Bichard, M (2004). The Bichard Inquiry Report. House of Commons, London, UK.
3.	Braga, WD (1993). Experiences with alleged sexual abuse in residential program: I. Case vignettes. Residential Treatment for Children & Youth, 11(1), 81–97.
4.	Brannan, C, Jones, JR & Murch, JD (1993). Castle Hill Report: Practice Guide. Shropshire County Council, Shrewsbury, UK.
5.	Budiselik, W, Crawford, F & Squelch, J (2009). The Limits of Working with Children Cards in Protecting Children. Australian Social Work, 62(3), 339–352.
6.	Budiselik, W, Crawford, F & Squelch, J (2010). Acting in the best interests of the child: a case study on the consequences of competing child protection legislation in Western Australia. The Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law, 32(4), 369–379.
7.	Davis, N & Wells, S (1994–1995). Effective Screening of Child Care and Youth Workers. Children's Legal Rights Journal, 15(1-2), 22–27.
8.	Department of Health (1996). Report on the Inquiry into the Operation of Madonna House. Dublin, Ireland.
9.	Government of Ireland (2009). The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse. Report (The Ryan Report). The Stationery Office, Dublin, Ireland.
10.	Hanly, C (2010). Practices in and attitudes towards staff vetting in children's residential centres in the Republic of Ireland. Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care, 9(2), 28–36.

Evaluations included in the scoping review (n=25)

11. Kirkwood, A (1992). The Leicestershire Inquiry 1992. Leicestershire County Council, Leicester, UK.
12. Kozlowski, JC (2000). NRPA Law Review: Duty To Educate Youth about Risk of Sexual Abuse by Volunteers. *Parks & Recreation*, 35(12), 36–41.
13. Kutz, GD (2010). K–12 Education: Selected Cases of Public and Private Schools That Hired or Retained Individuals with Histories of Sexual Misconduct. Report to the Chairman, Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives. U.S. Government Accountability Office, Washington, DC, USA.
14. National Crime Agency (2013). The Foundations of Abuse: A thematic assessment of the risk of child sexual abuse by adults in institutions. London, UK.
15. Smith, M & Aitken, J. Minister of Education (2012). Ministerial Inquiry into the Employment of a Convicted Sex Offender in the Education Sector. Wellington, NZ.
16. Sonntag, B (2012). State Auditor’s Office Performance Audit: Protecting Children from Sex Offenders in Child Care, Foster Care and Schools. State Auditor, Washington, USA.
17. U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) (1997). Fingerprint-Based Background Checks: Implementation of the National Child Protection Act of 1993. Report to the Honorable Fred Thompson, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC, USA.
18. U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) (2011). Child Care: Overview of Relevant Employment Laws and Cases of Sex Offenders at Child Care Facilities. Report to the Ranking Member, Committee on Education and the Workforce, House of Representatives (vol. GAO–11–757, p. 32), Washington, DC, USA.
19. Waul Webster, M & Whitman, J (2008). Who’s Lending a Hand?: A National Survey of Nonprofit Volunteer Screening Practices. The National Center for Victims of Crime, Washington, DC, USA.

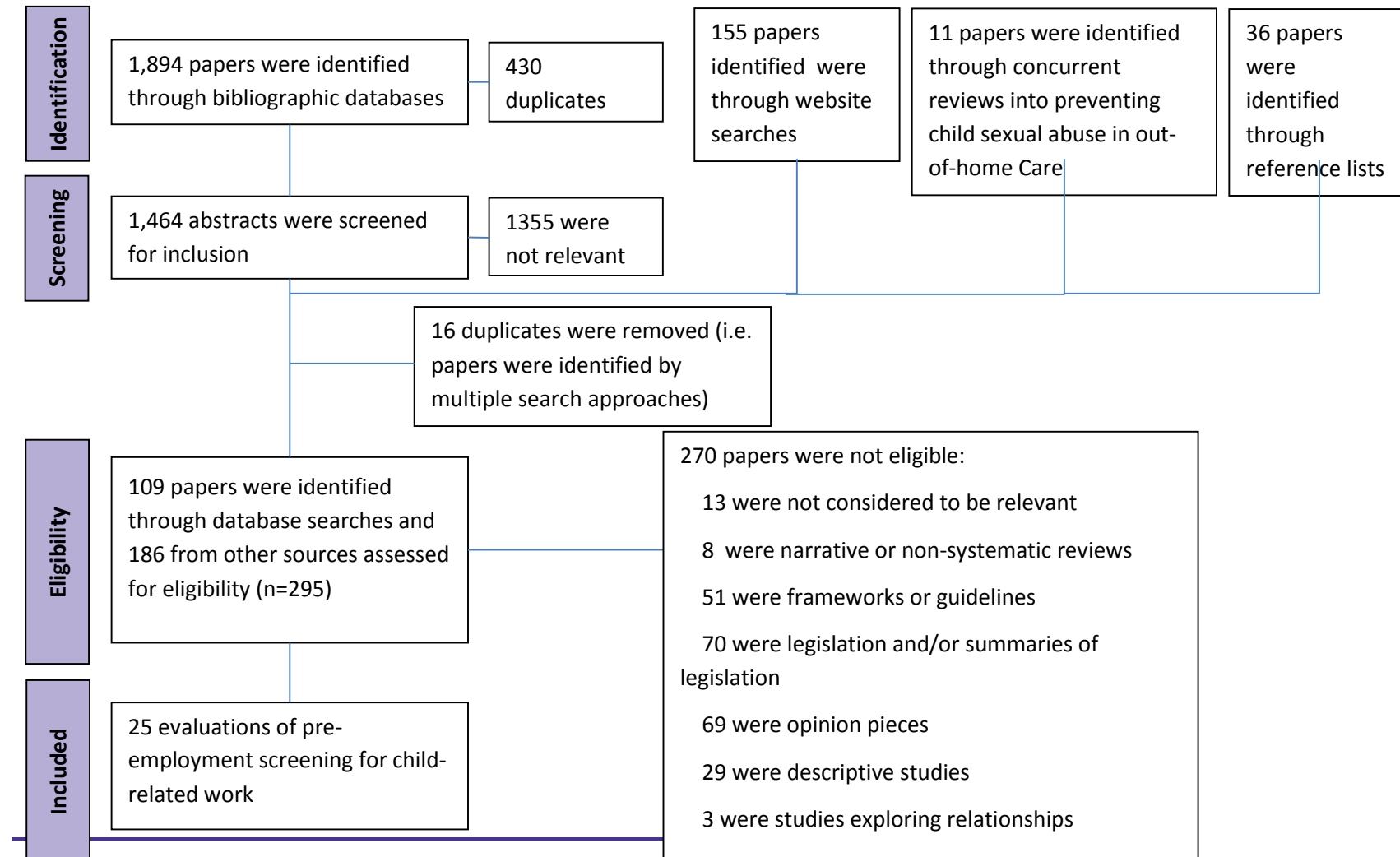
Qualitative analyses of submissions or hearings (n=4)

1. Hanafin, S & Brooks, AM (2008). Analysis of submissions made on national review of compliance with ‘Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children’. Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Minister for Health and Children, Dublin, Ireland.
2. Joint Committee on Child Protection (2006). Report on Child Protection. Houses of the Oireachtas, Dublin, Ireland.
3. Ministry of Social Development (2012). The Green Paper for Vulnerable Children: Complete Summary of Submissions. Wellington, NZ.
4. Productivity Commission (2010). Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector. Research Report. Canberra, Australia.

Evaluations of classification tools (n=2)

1. Abel, GG, Wiegel, M, Jordan, A, Harlow, N, Hsu, YS & Martinez, M (2012). Development and validation of classification models to identify hidden child molesters applying to child service organizations. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34(7), 1378–1389.
2. Herman, KC (1995). Appropriate Use of the Child Abuse Potential Inventory in a Big Brothers/Big Sisters Agency. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 20(3–4), 93–103.

Figure 1. Flow of papers through the scoping review of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse.



4.2 Study characteristics

4.2.1 Retrospective case studies and/or surveys (including inquiries) (n=19)

Nineteen of the 25 included studies adopted a retrospective case study and/or survey approach in order to evaluate pre-employment screening practices that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. Six of these 19 evaluations were public or ministerial inquiries into cases of child sexual abuse by paid or unpaid staff at child- or youth-serving organisations or institutions (Bichard, 2004; Brannan et al 1993; Department of Health, 1996; Government of Ireland, 2009; Kirkwood, 1992; Smith & Aitken, 2012).

These retrospective case studies and/or surveys were conducted in Australia, New Zealand, the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States (see Table 2). Relevant case studies and/or surveys were located in all the countries identified as most relevant for the work of the Royal Commission (and, therefore, the countries for which website searches were conducted, see section 3.1.2), with the exception of Canada.

Table 2. Countries in which the retrospective case studies and/or surveys were conducted (n=19).

Country in which evaluation was conducted	Number of retrospective case studies and/or surveys
Australia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attorney-General's Department (2011) 2. Budiselik et al (2009) 3. Budiselik et al (2010)
New Zealand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Smith & Aitken (2012)
Republic of Ireland	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Department of Health (1996) 2. Government of Ireland (2009) 3. Hanly (2010)
United Kingdom	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bichard (2004) 2. Brannan et al (1993) 3. Kirkwood (1992) 4. National Crime Agency (2013)
United States	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Davis & Wells (1994–1995) 2. Kutz (2010) 3. Sonntag (2012) <p>Figure 1 4. U.S. General Accounting Office (1997)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011) 6. Waul Webster & Whitman (2008)
Not stated explicitly, but likely US based on information provided	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Braga (1993) 2. Kozłowski (2000)

Child-related work, broadly defined, was the most commonly addressed target group (addressed in seven of the 19 relevant retrospective case studies and/or surveys). These studies addressed both paid employees and volunteers. Three of these studies (Budiselik, Crawford & Squelch, 2009, 2010; Attorney-General's Department, 2011) explored the Australian system and related definitions of child-related work (for an overview of the types of child-related settings subject to screening regulations in Australia, see Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2013). In the remaining international retrospective case studies and/or surveys, the institutions identified by evaluation authors as being relevant to a broad definition of child-related work included day care; faith groups; foster care; hospitals; hostels; industrial and reform schools; residential care homes/children's homes; schools; secure juvenile facilities; services for children with special needs; youth groups; and youth sports teams.

Four retrospective case studies and/or surveys solely addressed staff at schools, and another four addressed residential childcare providers or staff at children's homes. Three studies focused on volunteers at organisations serving children and/or youth (including sports and recreation, religious leadership, youth development and other non-profit human services).

The target group addressed in Braga (1993) was unclear; the only information provided was that a 'reference check for prior history of child abuse, a legally mandated procedure' (p. 85) was explored. However, the case identified as relevant to this scoping review examined the alleged sexual abuse of a child in a residential treatment program by a night-shift worker.

Table 3. Target groups addressed in retrospective case studies and/or surveys.

Target groups addressed	Number of retrospective case studies and/or surveys ¹	
Child-related work, broadly defined (including both paid employees and volunteers)	1. Attorney-General's Department (2011) 2. Budiselik et al (2009) 3. Budiselik et al (2010) 4. Davis & Wells (1994–1995)	5. Government of Ireland (2009) 6. National Crime Agency (2013) 7. U.S. General Accounting Office (1997) ²
Teachers and other private and public school staff, including volunteers	1. Bichard (2004) 2. Brannan et al (1993)	3. Kutz (2010) 4. Smith & Aitken (2012)
Residential childcare providers or staff at children's homes	1. Department of Health (1996) 2. Hanly (2010)	3. Kirkwood (1992) 4. Sonntag (2012)
Volunteers at organisations serving children and/or youth	1. Kozlowski (2000) 2. U.S. General Accounting Office (1997) ¹ 3. Waul Webster & Whitman (2008)	
Foster care providers and other adults who live and/or work in these settings	1. Sonntag (2012) 2. U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011)	
Unclear	1. Braga (1993)	
¹ Note that some studies addressed multiple target groups.		

Target groups addressed	Number of retrospective case studies and/or surveys ¹
² Note that one evaluation comprised two stages, each focusing on a different target group (U.S. General Accounting Office 1997).	

4.2.2 Qualitative analyses of submissions or hearings (n=4)

Four of the 25 included evaluations comprised of qualitative analyses of submissions or hearings held by governmental bodies or commissions. These were conducted in Australia (Productivity Commission, 2010); New Zealand (Ministry of Social Development, 2012) and the Republic of Ireland (Hanafin & Brooks, 2008; Joint Committee on Child Protection, 2006).

Three of these four qualitative analyses of submissions or hearings explored child-related work, broadly defined as paid and unpaid work involving unsupervised access to children (Hanafin & Brooks, 2008; Joint Committee on Child Protection, 2006; Ministry of Social Development, 2012). One focused on volunteers at Australian not-for-profit organisations working with children (Productivity Commission, 2010).

4.2.3 Evaluations of classification tools (n=2)

Two of the 25 included evaluations explored classification tools that were developed with the aim of identifying people applying for child-related work who may be 'hidden' child sexual abusers (offenders who are yet to be detected – also known as Dunkelfeld offenders) or potential child sexual offenders (those who have not yet committed an offence but may be at risk of doing so) (Abel et al, 2012; Herman, 1995).

However, the authors of both of these studies conclude that the evaluated classification tools were neither sufficiently effective nor ethically feasible and that further research is needed before such tools can be implemented. Abel et al (2012) found that their tool would result in 10 per cent of applicants being incorrectly identified as abusers, while only 50 per cent of abusers would be correctly identified as such. Herman (1995) concludes that the tool appeared limited in its ability to identify child sexual abusers, stating also that limited conclusions can be drawn based on this study due to the limited sample size, the subjective rating system and the lack of a matched control group comprising non-sexual offender males.

Therefore, these two evaluations of classification tools are not considered further in this scoping review. More information on the characteristics of these studies and key relevant findings stated by evaluation authors can, however, be found in the completed data extraction forms in Appendix 3.

4.3 Relevant key findings stated by evaluation authors

In this section, we attempt to provide an overview of the key findings of the included evaluations that are relevant to this scoping review on pre-employment screening practices that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. We note that scoping reviews do not involve an appraisal of the quality of the evidence or any assessment of the effectiveness of the interventions or approaches being tested (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). Thus, in this section we identify key themes in the findings or conclusions stated by the evaluation authors themselves, without making any judgement as to the validity of these statements from the supporting evidence available.

As mentioned in section 4.2.3, two of the 25 evaluations included in this scoping review were evaluations of classification tools. The authors of these two evaluations deemed these two classification tools to be neither sufficiently effective nor ethically feasible and recommended that further research be conducted before such tools can be implemented. Therefore, these two evaluation studies are not considered further in this section. Consequently, the following summaries of key findings stated by evaluation authors are based on the 19 retrospective case studies and/or surveys and the four qualitative analyses of submissions or hearings included in this review (that is 23 of the 25 included evaluations, with the two exclusions being the evaluations of classifications tools).

Two major topics emerged in the literature on pre-employment screening practices that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. The first related to the effectiveness and feasibility of criminal background checks. The second topic concerned other types of pre-employment screening practices, such as reference checks, employment interviews, checks of disciplinary body proceedings and verification of identity and education/qualifications. Such sources of non-criminal background information were commonly referred to in the literature as sources of 'soft information'. Definitions of soft information included 'information regarding people who may pose a risk to children but who do not have any criminal convictions for child abuse' (p. 29, Hanly, 2010), and 'information arising from previous investigations or inquiries or the experiences of others who have dealt with the individual in question, which gives rise to concern, but which was not or would not be a sufficient evidential basis for prosecution and conviction' (p. 87, Joint Committee on Child Protection, 2006). This section on relevant key findings stated by evaluation authors is therefore divided into two subsections: 4.3.1 'Criminal background checks', and 4.3.2, 'Other pre-employment screening practices'. Finally, employment prohibition findings related to the outcomes of such pre-employment screening practices are explored in section 4.3.3.

4.3.1 Criminal background checks

Criminal background checks as a potential pre-employment screening practice for preventing child sexual abuse were mentioned in nearly all the retrospective case studies and/or surveys and qualitative analyses of submissions or hearings included in this review (21 of 23, the exceptions being Brannan et al 1993, and Kirkwood, 1992).

Authors of all 21 evaluations expressed the opinion that criminal background checks are an important component of the screening process for people applying for child-related work. However, the effectiveness and feasibility of conducting criminal background checks on people applying to child-related work was also questioned by many of the authors of these 21 evaluations, as was the relative importance of criminal background checks and other pre-employment screening practices, such as those aiming to identify sources of soft information.

In support of the importance, feasibility and/or effectiveness of criminal background checks

Relevant key findings stated by evaluation authors in support of the importance, feasibility and/or effectiveness of criminal background checks are summarised in Table 4. Cases where criminal background checks *were not conducted* and unsuitable people with criminal backgrounds *were employed* in child-related work most commonly had findings that supported the importance, feasibility and/or effectiveness of criminal background checks.

Correspondingly, cases where criminal background checks *were conducted* and unsuitable people with criminal backgrounds were subsequently *not employed* in paid or unpaid (volunteer) child-related work also commonly had findings that supported the importance, feasibility and/or effectiveness of criminal background checks. Two studies provided such examples for unpaid (volunteer) child-related work specifically (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1997; Waul Webster & Whitman, 2008).

Table 4. Relevant key findings, as stated by evaluation authors, in support of the importance, feasibility and/or effectiveness of criminal background checks

Relevant key findings, as stated by evaluation authors, in support of the importance, feasibility and/or effectiveness of criminal background checks	Number of evaluations
Criminal background checks <i>were not conducted</i> and unsuitable people with criminal backgrounds <i>were employed</i> in child-related work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Braga (1993) 2. Kutz (2010) 3. National Crime Agency (2013) 4. Sonntag (2012) 5. U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011)
Criminal background checks <i>were conducted</i> and unsuitable people with criminal backgrounds were subsequently <i>not employed</i> in paid or unpaid (volunteer) child-related work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attorney-General's Department (2011) 2. Davis & Wells (1994–1995) 3. U.S. General Accounting Office (1997) 4. Waul Webster & Whitman (2008)
The perceived effectiveness of criminal background checks by those involved in recruiting people into child-related work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Davis & Wells (1994–1995) 2. Hanly (2010)
The perceived lack of effect of criminal background checks on the willingness of qualified people to apply for positions, including volunteer positions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Davis & Wells (1994–1995) 2. U.S. General Accounting Office (1997)
Information about served, pardoned and quashed criminal convictions is perceived by screening agencies to give a more accurate picture of the applicant's suitability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attorney-General's Department (2011)

The effectiveness of criminal background checks, as perceived by those involved in recruiting people into child-related work was explored in Davis & Wells (1994–1995) and Hanly (2010) (see Table 4). However, both these studies stress that, although respondents to their surveys felt that criminal background checks were an important component of pre-employment screening practices, respondents expressed reservations concerning the limited effectiveness of criminal

background checks alone in protecting children from abuse by staff. Hanly (2010) reports that 'Overall managers felt strongly that although vetting [criminal background checks] did provide a safeguard it was a minimum in terms of safeguards that could be applied and vetting alone could not be depended upon to provide a flawless safeguard to young people in residential care' (p. 32). Similarly, Davis & Wells (1994–1995) state that about one-third of agencies rated national, fingerprint-based (FBI) checks, and less than one-quarter rated local checks, as one of their top three most effective screening practices. Respondents to the survey conducted by Davis & Wells (1994–1995) most frequently selected employer reference checks and personal interviews as one of their top three most effective screening practices. Other types of pre-employment screening practices identified by evaluation authors as potentially being important in safeguarding children are explored in section 4.3.2.

The lack of effect of criminal background checks on the willingness of qualified people to apply for positions, as perceived by those involved in recruiting people into child-related work, supported the feasibility of criminal background checks as a pre-employment screening practice for the prevention of child sexual abuse. The U.S. General Accounting Office (1997) explored this issue specifically in relation to volunteer positions.

A review conducted by the Australian Attorney-General's Department (2011) explored the use of information about a person's served, pardoned and quashed Commonwealth convictions when determining whether individuals are suitable for working with children. It concluded that such information was perceived by screening agencies to give a more accurate picture of the applicant's suitability.

Concerns associated with conducting criminal background checks

Table 5 presents relevant key findings, as stated by evaluation authors, addressing concerns associated with conducting criminal background checks in order to safeguard children. The most commonly stated concerns relate to the feasibility of criminal background checks in terms of associated costs, and time delays in the recruitment process due to the time needed to complete a criminal background check and the resulting decision to employ a person before the check is complete. The Australian Productivity Commission (2010) highlighted that such costs and time delays in the recruitment process were especially a problem for not-for-profit organisations that are heavily reliant on volunteers. This was compounded by the lack of portability of criminal background checks across jurisdictions, resulting in an increased number of checks needing to be conducted. Concurring, the U.S. General Accounting Office (1997) noted that costs and time delays associated with criminal background checks were a particular problem for many youth-serving organisations with a large volunteer base due to the seasonal and/or part-time nature of the work.

Evaluation authors identified factors that may decrease the likelihood of, or preclude the possibility of, criminal background checks correctly revealing an applicant's relevant criminal history as concerns. One of the most commonly noted factors was the risk that an applicant may have changed their name, or give a pseudonym or nickname. Thus, unless criminal background checks were run against all possible names of the applicant, the applicant's relevant criminal history may be missed. Bichard (2004), Braga (1993), Kutz (2010) and Smith & Aitken (2012) provide multiple examples of cases where child sex offenders were unknowingly hired by organisations after a criminal background check run against a nickname, pseudonym or changed name resulted in no 'hits'. Another factor frequently identified by authors of the included evaluations was the risk that an applicant may have committed relevant offences in other

jurisdictions, thus highlighting the necessity of criminal background checks in other jurisdictions (international or interstate jurisdictions, for example) and legal frameworks to enable this.

Table 5. Relevant key findings, as stated by evaluation authors, addressing concerns associated with conducting criminal background checks.

Relevant key findings, as stated by evaluation authors, addressing concerns associated with conducting criminal background checks	Number of evaluations	
Time delays in the recruitment process due to the time needed to complete a criminal background check and/or the resulting decision to employ a person before the check is complete	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bichard (2004) 2. Davis & Wells (1994–1995) 3. Department of Health (1996) 4. Hanafin & Brooks (2008) 5. Hanly (2010) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Kutz (2010) 7. Productivity Commission (2010) 8. U.S. General Accounting Office (1997) 9. Waul Webster & Whitman (2008)
Costs associated with conducting criminal background checks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budiselik et al (2009) 2. Davis & Wells (1994–1995) 3. Kutz (2010) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Productivity Commission (2010) 5. U.S. General Accounting Office (1997) 6. Waul Webster & Whitman (2008)
The risk that an applicant may have changed their name, or give a pseudonym or nickname	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bichard (2004) 2. Braga (1993) 3. Kutz (2010) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Smith & Aitken (2012) 5. U.S. General Accounting Office (1997)
The need to check for criminal offences in other jurisdictions (international or interstate jurisdictions, for example)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budiselik et al (2009) 2. Department of Health (1996) 3. Hanafin & Brooks (2008) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Kutz (2010) 5. U.S. General Accounting Office (1997)
The risks posed by those exempt from mandatory criminal background checks (for example, parent volunteers whose child is present, or other adults that share the home with the caregiver and child)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budiselik et al (2009) 2. Hanafin & Brooks (2008) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Joint Committee on Child Protection (2006) 4. Sonntag (2012)
A lack of reporting, confirmation and, therefore, criminal background checks of other adults that may be living in institutions (such as foster or childcare homes)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sonntag (2012) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. U.S. General Accounting Office (2011)
Issues related to conflicting child protection and child welfare legislation regarding the need for, and actions to be taken based on, criminal background checks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budiselik et al (2010) 	
Infringing on a person's right to exoneration, privacy and/or rehabilitation due to sharing information about served, pardoned and quashed criminal convictions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attorney-General's Department (2011) 	

Risks posed by those exempt from mandatory criminal background checks (for example, parent volunteers whose child is present, or other adults that share the home with the caregiver and child) was another concern commonly identified by evaluation authors. These authors highlighted the need for criminal background checks to be mandatory for all types of child-related work. However, respondents to the Attorney-General Department's (2011) review raised issues with the ambiguity of broad definitions of employment types such as 'working with children' in legislation enabling criminal background checks across a wider range of child-related work. Thus, it is necessary to provide clear and specific definitions of the types of positions to which the legislation applies.

Other factors that may limit the effectiveness of criminal background checks as a safeguard were specific to residential settings where adults other than caregivers may be present (for example, foster or childcare homes). The ramifications of a lack of reporting, confirmation and, therefore, criminal background checks of other adults living in such settings were illustrated in Sonntag (2012) and the U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011). Sonntag (2012) identified 24 cases where confirmed sex offenders went undetected because foster care and childcare providers failed to inform agencies that offenders lived in their homes. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011) identified seven case examples where sex offenders were hired or allowed to reside at unlicensed or licensed childcare facilities by relatives or acquaintances who were aware of the offender's previous offences.

Other concerns associated with criminal background checks noted by evaluation authors included issues related to conflicting child protection and child welfare legislation regarding the need for, and actions to be taken based on, criminal background checks (Budiselik et al, 2010), and ethical concerns regarding infringing on a person's right to exoneration, privacy and/or rehabilitation due to sharing information about served, pardoned and quashed criminal convictions (Attorney-General's Department, 2011).

4.3.2 Other pre-employment screening practices

As noted in section 4.3.1, the authors of many of the included evaluations emphasised that criminal background checks appear to be universally considered an important component of pre-employment screening practices. However, such statements were almost never made without emphasising the limited effectiveness of using criminal background checks as the only pre-employment screening practice safeguarding children from sexual abuse by staff. Indeed, many concerns were raised regarding factors that limit the feasibility and/or effectiveness of criminal background checks as a safeguard protecting children from sexual abuse.

This section explores other, non-criminal background checks, and pre-employment screening practices that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. Evaluation authors identified these practices as being potentially effective and feasible complements to criminal background checks. These other pre-employment screening practices are often referred to in the included evaluations as sources of soft information; that is, 'information regarding people who may pose a risk to children but who do not have any criminal convictions for child abuse' (Hanly, 2010). Pre-employment screening practices other than criminal background checks identified by evaluation authors as necessary components of a comprehensive pre-employment screening procedure are presented in Table 6.

Need for thorough reference checks

The need for thorough reference checks was one of the most commonly reported findings regarding non-criminal background check pre-employment practices (see Table 6). A thorough reference check includes direct contact with previous employers (not relying solely on written references provided by the applicant) and direct questions to referees about any concerns they might have regarding the applicant's suitability to work with children. The importance of thorough reference checks is exemplified in cases where unsuitable people gained employment in child-related work following a lack of, or poorly conducted, reference checks and then went on to sexually abuse the children in their care (Bichard, 2004; Department of Health, 1996; Government of Ireland, 2009; Kirkwood, 1992; National Crime Agency (NCA), 2013; Smith & Aitken, 2012; Waul Webster & Whitman, 2008).

It was also highlighted that prospective employers need to be alert to the fact that ambiguous, evasive or undetailed references may actually reflect underlying concerns on the part of the referee. Hanly (2010) and the Government of Ireland (2009) present many case examples where referees were reluctant to share soft information regarding their concerns about a person's suitability to work with children for a variety of stated reasons, such as not knowing how to, or being afraid to, voice their concerns regarding an 'unmentionable' issue such as child sexual abuse; believing that the indications of sexual abuse they had observed were a 'one off' and would not occur again (for example, due to the offender's apparent repentance), despite a desire on their own part to see the person 'move on'; not wanting to sully a person's character without absolute proof that they had sexually abused children; and a desire to see the employee move on to other employment as quickly as possible due to their concerns about the risks this person posed to the safety of the children in their own organisation. Hanly (2010) noted the interesting dichotomy such reservations pose. They noted that many of the managers of residential centres for children who responded to a questionnaire and partook in semi-structured interviews '... referred to the need to obtain as much reliable and detailed information in a reference on a prospective employee and the dependency on trust in the author of the reference for all relevant information. On the other hand, some of those same managers did indicate reluctance on their own part to make some matters of concern known to prospective employers either in writing or verbally on the basis that their preference was to move the person on from their service.' (p 31, Hanly, 2010).

The need for checks against other sources of relevant information

Another common finding stated by evaluation authors was that criminal background checks may have limited effectiveness as they only reveal relevant conviction information (see Table 6). As presented in section 4.3.1 above, the Australian Productivity Commission (2011) noted the use of information about a person's served, pardoned and quashed Commonwealth convictions when determining whether individuals are suitable for working with children. In line with this were the calls by many evaluation authors to conduct not only criminal background checks, but also checks of an applicant's relevant history against other sources of information on suspected or substantiated child abuse. This could involve checks against, for example, child-abuse registries, children's court decisions, disciplinary body proceedings and/or teacher registries.

Table 6. Relevant key findings, as stated by evaluation authors, exploring other pre-employment screening practices.

Relevant key findings – other pre-employment screening practices	Number of evaluations	
The need for thorough reference checks (for example, by obtaining them directly from previous employers by asking direct questions about any concerns regarding the applicant’s suitability to work with children)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bichard (2004) 2. Davis & Wells (1994–1995) 3. Department of Health (1996) 4. Government of Ireland (2009) 5. Hanafin & Brooks (2008) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Hanly (2010) 7. Kirkwood (1992) 8. National Crime Agency (2013) 9. Smith & Aitken (2012) 10. Waul Webster & Whitman (2008)
The need for structured employment interviews with a focus on determining the applicant’s suitability to work with children	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bichard (2004) 2. Davis & Wells (1994–1995) 3. Department of Health (1996) 4. Government of Ireland (2009) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Kirkwood (1992) 6. National Crime Agency (2013) 7. Smith & Aitken (2012)
The need for other sources of information on suspected or substantiated child abuse (such as child abuse registries, children’s court decisions and disciplinary body proceedings)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budiselik et al (2009) 2. Davis & Wells (1994–1995) 3. Hanafin & Brooks (2008) 4. Hanly (2010) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Joint Committee on Child Protection (2006) 6. Smith & Aitken (2012) 7. U.S. General Accounting Office (1997)
The need to critically examine an applicant’s employment history and/or written application (to identify employment history gaps and thus be able to seek clarification on what these are a result of, or to identify ambiguous responses to direct questions about criminal history)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bichard (2004) 2. Department of Health (1996) 	
The need to verify the applicant’s identity using methods such as photo-based documents or fingerprinting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bichard (2004) 2. Braga (1993) 3. Kutz (2010) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Smith & Aitken (2012) 5. U.S. General Accounting Office (1997)
The need to verify the applicant’s education or qualifications (in order to determine if they are qualified to undertake child-related work)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brannan et al (1993) 2. Department of Health (1996) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Government of Ireland (2009) 4. Smith & Aitken (2012)

Need for structured employment interviews

The evaluation authors also commonly identified the need for structured employment interviews with a focus on determining the applicant's suitability to work with children (see Table 6). Cases where children were sexually abused by staff members who had not been screened with a thorough pre-employment interview exemplified this need (Bichard, 2004; Department of Health, 1996; Government of Ireland, 2009; Kirkwood, 1992; National Crime Agency (NCA), 2013; Smith & Aitken, 2012). The National Crime Agency (NCA) (2013) mentioned a particular approach that may assist in conducting structured employment interviews with a focus on determining the applicant's suitability to work with children – namely, value-based interviewing. The value-based interviewing approach was developed by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) in the United Kingdom. Erooga (2009) describes it as an 'interview process designed to systematically assess the values, motives, attitudes and behaviours of those who apply for jobs in organisations that work with and for children against a clearly defined framework, based on the values of the organisation' (see also Value Based Interviewing: Keep Children Safer through Recruitment: NSPCC factsheet, NSPCC, 2013).

Need to verify the applicant's identity

As noted in section 4.3.1, one of the more commonly noted factors that raise concerns as to the effectiveness of criminal background checks was the risk posed when an applicant changes their name, or gives a pseudonym or nickname. One commonly suggested approach that may minimise this risk is to verify an applicant's identity using methods such as photo-based documents or fingerprinting (see Table 6). Bichard (2004), Braga (1993), Kutz (2010) and Smith & Aitken (2012) provide examples of cases where this was not done and an applicant's relevant history was therefore not verified. Verification of an applicant's identity is not only necessary when conducting criminal background checks but also when conducting other pre-employment screening practices. This was exemplified by the case inquired into by Smith & Aitken (2012), where an individual who was unqualified to teach and was a convicted sex offender changed his name to usurp the identity of a person who was qualified to teach and did not have a criminal record in order to secure teaching positions in two schools.

Need to verify the applicant's education or qualifications

The evaluation authors presented numerous case examples that revealed the need to verify an applicant's education or qualifications in order to determine their suitability for child-related work (Brannan et al, 1993; Department of Health, 1996; Government of Ireland, 2009; Smith & Aitken, 2012) (see Table 6 also). One of the early inquiries conducted into cases of child sexual abuse in the United Kingdom, Brannan et al (1993), focused on the case of Ralph Morris, a principal at a private residential school ('Castle Hill') who sexually abused students. The inquiry team concluded that 'The detailed background of Ralph Morris is not included as a ghoulish reminiscence, rather an attempt to highlight the ease with which he was able to fool the system. His presenting image was accepted without question and his impressive list of qualifications never verified' (p. 27, Brannan et al, 1993).

The need to critically examine an applicant's employment history and/or written application

The evaluation authors also expressed the importance of critically examining an applicant's employment history and/or written application (see Table 6). It was suggested that such a practice should be conducted with the aim of, for example, identifying gaps in the applicant's employment history. Such gaps may indicate occurrences in the applicant's past that they wish to conceal, as they may bring their suitability to work with children into question; for example, that the employee was imprisoned for a period or in an employment position that ended in a dismissal due to suspected inappropriate behaviour. It was therefore suggested that clarification should be sought from the applicant on why these gaps existed in their employment history. Depending on the reasons given for possible gaps in employment, or the credibility of such reasons, the employer could then aim to be extra alert to possible issues that may affect the applicant's suitability to work with children when in contact with previous employers or criminal background screening agencies.

The evaluation authors suggested that written applications should be based on pro-forma documents that include direct questions requesting criminal background and other relevant information that may shed light upon the applicant's suitability to work with children. Prospective employers must then critically examine the answers to such questions and request follow-up information where relevant (from, for example, law-enforcement agencies, previous employers or the applicant themselves). Kutz (2010) highlighted the necessary, and unfortunately often overlooked, step of critically examining applicants' responses to questions regarding criminal history. They presented three case examples where schools failed to ask applicants, who all were registered sex offenders, about troubling responses to such questions. In the first case, an applicant answered 'yes' when asked if he had been convicted of 'a dangerous crime against children'. However, the school could provide no information to suggest that it followed up with the applicant or law enforcement about this admission before hiring the offender. The offender was later arrested for sexually abusing a young female student at the school. In the remaining two cases, applicants (who were also registered sex offenders) 'did not provide any response when asked about previous criminal history and school officials could not provide evidence that they had inquired about the discrepancy or required the applicant to provide the information' (p. 7, Kutz, 2010).

The relative effectiveness of criminal background checks and other pre-employment screening practices

The Davis & Wells (1994–1995) study was the only included evaluation that attempted to quantitatively test the effectiveness of criminal background checks compared to other pre-employment screening practices. They did this using a self-report survey of child- and youth-serving agencies. They reported that organisations that only conducted 'basic screening' (including personal interviews, reference checks with past employers and confirmation of educational status) were almost equally as likely to identify unsuitable applicants and have valid reports of child abuse as organisations that conducted 'basic screening' plus criminal background checks. However, we note that the information provided by Davis & Wells (1994–1995) regarding the data that formed the basis of this comparison is limited. The Davis & Wells (1994–1995) study is a summary report of a study described in full in another publication, Wells et al (1995), which was unfortunately not able to be obtained for inclusion in this scoping review as it is no longer available (Howard Davidson, Director, American Bar Association (ABA) Center on Children and the Law, personal communication, 16 January 2014).

4.3.3 Employment prohibitions based on the outcomes of pre-employment screening practices

Pertinent to both criminal background checks and other pre-employment screening practices is the need to disqualify people from working with children when the results of such pre-employment screening practices raise questions as to a person's suitability to work with children. This need was implicit in all 25 of the evaluations included in this scoping review, although few evaluations explored this topic specifically.

The few studies that did explore employment prohibitions highlight the fact that, even in the face of evidence of child sexual abuse, prohibiting a person from gaining further contact with children through child-related work is not always a matter of course. The Government of Ireland (2009) found that, 'When confronted with evidence of sexual abuse, the response of the religious authorities was to transfer the offender to another location where, in many instances, he was free to abuse again. Permitting an offender to obtain dispensation from vows often enabled him to continue working as a lay teacher' (p. 454, volume IV). In concordance with these observations is the finding of Waul Webster & Whitman's (2008) survey of non-profit youth-serving organisations that 'The majority of [but notably not all] organizations disqualify a volunteer for a child abuse report' (p. 14). The U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011) found that this was also an issue when other adults were living in childcare institutions. They identified multiple case examples where sex offenders were hired or allowed to reside at unlicensed or licensed childcare facilities by relatives or acquaintances who were aware of the offender's previous offences.

The Irish Joint Committee on Child Protection (2006) realised the need to address this issue, recommending the establishment of a statutory framework that makes pre-employment screening of employees and volunteers mandatory for all childcare organisations, as well as the establishment of provisions for the 'disqualification from working with children of persons found unsuitable for such work, and an offence of working with children while disqualified from so doing' (p. 88).

5. DISCUSSION

The aim of this report was to provide the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse with an overview of the nature and extent of the international literature available on evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse.

In order to provide an overview of the findings of this scoping review, section 5.1 discusses the findings in the context of their relevance to the questions outlined in the aims of this scoping review report (see section 2.2), namely:

- Which studies have evaluated pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse? Which evaluation methods did they employ? (Summarised in section 5.1.1, 'Study characteristics'.)
- Which target groups were addressed in these evaluations? Where were the evaluations conducted? (Summarised in section 5.1.1, 'Study characteristics'.)
- What are the key relevant findings of these evaluations, as stated by the evaluation authors? Which pre-employment screening types were highlighted in these evaluations (for example, criminal history checks or reference checks)? (Summarised in section 5.1.2, 'Relevant key findings stated by evaluation authors'.)

This discussion section also explores whether the findings of this scoping review suggest any gaps in the literature regarding evaluations of pre-employment screening practices that aim to prevent child sexual abuse (section 5.2); the accordance of the findings of this review with other non-systematic, narrative reviews on the topic (section 5.3); possible interpretations and implications of these findings (section 5.4); and the limitations of this scoping review (section 5.5).

5.1 Summary of findings

This scoping review identified 25 relevant evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse (for a list of included studies, see Table 1). In addition, eight narrative or non-systematic reviews, 51 frameworks or guidelines, 70 pieces of legislation and/or summaries of legislation, 69 opinion pieces, 29 descriptive studies, and three studies exploring relationships to generate theory were identified on this topic but excluded as they did not meet the evaluation inclusion criteria (see Appendix 1 for the citation details of all the studies excluded from this scoping review, grouped by exclusion category).

5.1.1 Study characteristics

The 25 relevant evaluations identified in this scoping review were categorised into three general pragmatic categories of evaluation approaches in order to facilitate an overview of their relevance:

1. Retrospective case studies and/or surveys (including inquiries)
2. Qualitative analyses of submissions or hearings
3. Evaluations of classification tools.

Category 1 above, retrospective case studies and/or surveys, comprised the majority of the included studies (19 of 25). Six of these 19 evaluations were public or ministerial inquiries into cases of child sexual abuse by paid or unpaid staff at child- or youth-serving organisations or institutions. Four of the 25 included evaluations comprised qualitative analyses of submissions or hearings held by governmental bodies or commissions.

The remaining two included evaluations of classification tools that were developed with the aim of identifying people applying for child-related work who may be ‘hidden’ child sexual abusers (offenders who are yet to be detected – also known as Dunkelfeld offenders) or potential child sexual offenders (that is, those who have not yet committed an offence but may be at risk of doing so). However, the authors of both these studies conclude that the evaluated classification tools were neither sufficiently effective nor ethically feasible and that further research is needed before such tools can be implemented. Therefore, these two evaluations of classification tools were not considered further in this scoping review. More information on the characteristics of these studies and key relevant findings stated by evaluation authors can, however, be found in the completed data extraction forms in Appendix 3.

The evaluations were conducted in Australia, New Zealand, the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States (see Table 2). Thus, evaluations were located in all the countries identified as most relevant for the work of the Royal Commission (and, therefore, for which website searches were conducted; see section 3.1.2), with the exception of Canada.

The target group addressed most commonly was child-related work, broadly defined. These studies addressed both paid employees and volunteers. Target groups addressed in the other studies included teachers and other private and public school staff, such as volunteers, residential care providers or staff at children’s homes, volunteers at child- or youth-serving organisations, and foster care providers and other adults who live and/or work in these settings.

It is noteworthy that the majority of the potentially relevant papers and the included evaluations were reports identified through website searches. This provides insight into the nature of the literature on pre-employment screening practices that aim to prevent child sexual abuse; the empirical discourse around these practices appears to largely be communicated through governmental and non-governmental agencies’ reports (so-called grey literature) and to a lesser degree through peer-reviewed scientific journals.

5.1.2 Relevant key findings stated by evaluation authors

In this section, we attempt to provide an overview of the key findings of the included evaluations that are relevant to this scoping review on pre-employment screening practices that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. We note that scoping reviews do not involve an appraisal of the quality of the evidence or any assessment of the effectiveness of the interventions or approaches being tested (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005). Thus, in this section we attempt to summarise the key themes in the findings or conclusions stated by the evaluation authors themselves, identified in section 4.3. This is done with the reservation that we have not made any judgements as to the validity of these statements using the evidence available to support them.

Two major topics emerged in the literature on pre-employment screening practices that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. The first related to the effectiveness and feasibility of criminal background checks. The second topic concerned other types of pre-employment screening practices, such as reference checks, employment interviews, checks of disciplinary body proceedings, and verifying identity and education or qualifications. Such sources of non-criminal

background information were commonly referred to in the literature as sources of soft information.

One of the most noteworthy and pervasive findings of this scoping review was that criminal background checks were seldom explored in isolation; other pre-employment screening practices such as those aiming to identify sources of soft information, were repeatedly raised by the evaluation authors as necessary components of comprehensive pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse.

Criminal background checks

Criminal background checks as a potential pre-employment screening practice for preventing child sexual abuse were mentioned in nearly all the retrospective case studies and/or surveys and qualitative analyses of submissions or hearings included in this review. All the evaluation authors expressed the opinion that criminal background checks are an important component of the screening process for people applying for child-related work. However, the effectiveness and feasibility of criminal background checks was questioned by many of the evaluation authors.

The evaluation authors reported the following findings supporting the importance, feasibility and/or effectiveness of criminal background checks:

- Examples of cases where criminal background checks *were not conducted* and unsuitable people with criminal backgrounds *were employed* in child-related work
- Examples of cases where criminal background checks *were conducted* and unsuitable people with criminal backgrounds were subsequently *not employed* in paid or unpaid (volunteer) child-related work
- The perceived effectiveness of criminal background checks by those involved in recruiting people into child-related work
- The perceived lack of effect of criminal background checks on the willingness of qualified people to apply for positions, including volunteer positions
- Information about served, pardoned and quashed criminal convictions is perceived by screening agencies to give a more accurate picture of the applicant's suitability.

We identified the following key themes addressing concerns associated with conducting criminal background checks in order to safeguard children against child sexual abuse in the findings of the evaluations:

- Time delays in the recruitment process due to the time needed to complete a criminal background check and/or the resulting decision to employ a person before the check is complete
- Costs associated with conducting criminal background checks
- The risk that an applicant may have changed their name, or give a pseudonym or nickname
- The need to check for criminal offences in other jurisdictions (such as international or interstate jurisdictions)
- The risks posed by those exempt from mandatory criminal background checks (for example, parent volunteers whose child is present, and other adults that share the home with the caregiver and child)

- A lack of reporting, confirmation and, therefore, criminal background checks of other adults that may be living in institutions (for example, foster or childcare homes)
- Issues related to conflicting child protection and child welfare legislation regarding the need for, and actions to be taken based on, criminal background checks
- Ethical concerns regarding infringing on a person's right to exoneration, privacy and/or rehabilitation due to sharing information about served, pardoned and quashed criminal convictions.

Many case examples were explored that stressed the very real risk that these concerns pose to the children, including cases where child sex offenders were unknowingly hired by organisations after a criminal background check run against a nickname, pseudonym or changed name resulted in no 'hits', as well as cases where sex offenders were hired or allowed to reside in foster and childcare homes due to a lack of reporting, confirmation and, therefore, criminal background checks on other adults living in such settings.

Other pre-employment screening practices

As noted above, the authors of many of the included evaluations emphasised that criminal background checks appear to be universally considered an important component of pre-employment screening practices. However, such statements were almost never made without emphasising the limited effectiveness of using criminal background checks as the only pre-employment screening practice safeguarding children from sexual abuse by staff. Indeed, many concerns were raised regarding factors that limit the feasibility and/or effectiveness of criminal background checks as a safeguard to protecting children from sexual abuse.

Evaluation authors identified the following pre-employment screening practices other than criminal background checks as necessary components of a comprehensive pre-employment screening procedure:

- Thorough reference checks (for example, those obtained directly from previous employers by asking direct questions about any concerns regarding the applicant's suitability to work with children)
- Structured employment interviews with a focus on determining the applicant's suitability to work with children (such as value-based interviewing; for more information, see Erooga, 2009)
- Checks against other sources of information on suspected or substantiated child abuse, (including, child-abuse registries, children's court decisions and disciplinary body proceedings)
- Critically examining an applicant's employment history and/or written application (for example, to identify employment history gaps and thus be able to clarify their causes, or to identify ambiguous responses to direct questions about criminal history)
- Verifying the applicant's identity using methods such as photo-based documents or fingerprinting
- Verifying the applicant's education or qualifications (in order to determine if they are qualified to undertake child-related work)

The need for pre-employment screening practices other than criminal background checks was supported and underscored by many case examples where such practices were not followed and,

as a result, unsuitable people gained employment in child-related work and went on to sexually abuse the children in their care.

Although thorough reference checks were one of the pre-employment screening practices most commonly identified as being necessary, an interesting dichotomy emerged in the literature regarding this topic. Many case examples were presented where referees were reluctant to share soft information regarding their concerns about a persons' suitability to work with children for a variety of stated reasons, such as not knowing how to, or being afraid to, voice their concerns regarding an 'unmentionable' issue such as child sexual abuse; believing that the indications of sexual abuse they had observed were a 'one off' and would not occur again (for example, due to the offender's apparent repentance), despite a desire on their own part to see the person 'move on'; not wanting to sully a person's character without absolute proof that they had sexually abused children; and a desire to see the employee move on to other employment as quickly as possible due to their concerns about the risks this person posed to the safety of the children in their own organisation. Thus, despite most people involved in recruiting people into child-related work positions considering reference checks to be an important source of soft information, many also admit their reluctance to share such information with other prospective employers.

The Davis & Wells (1994–1995) study was the only included evaluation that attempted to quantitatively test the effectiveness of criminal background checks compared to other pre-employment screening practices (note that this study did not explore child sexual abuse exclusively). They did this using a self-report survey of child- and youth-serving agencies. However, we note the limited nature of the information provided by Davis & Wells (1994–1995) regarding the data that formed the basis of this comparison. They reported that organisations that only conducted 'basic screening' (including personal interviews, reference checks with past employers and confirmation of educational status) were almost equally as likely to identify unsuitable applicants and have valid reports of child abuse as organisations that conducted 'basic screening' plus criminal background checks. More information may be available in the full report of this study (Wells et al, 1995) however this full report was unfortunately not able to be obtained for inclusion in this scoping review as it is no longer available (Howard Davidson, Director, American Bar Association (ABA) Center on Children and the Law, personal communication, 16 January 2014).

Employment prohibitions based on the outcomes of pre-employment screening practices

Pertinent to both criminal background checks and other pre-employment screening practices is the need to disqualify people from working with children when the results of such pre-employment screening practices raise questions as to a person's suitability to work with children. This need was implicit in all 25 of the evaluations included in this scoping review, although few evaluations explored this topic specifically. Findings from the included studies that did explore employment prohibitions highlighted the fact that, even in the face of evidence of child sexual abuse, prohibiting a person from gaining further contact with children through child-related work is not always a matter of course.

5.2 Gaps in the literature

Perhaps the most striking gap in the literature identified by this scoping review is the lack of quantitative tests of the effect of pre-employment screening practices on rates of child sexual abuse. The Davis & Wells (1994–1995) study was the only included evaluation that attempted to quantitatively test the effect of criminal background checks on child abuse compared to other

pre-employment screening practices (note that this study did not explore child sexual abuse exclusively). However, we note the limited nature of the information provided by Davis & Wells (1994–1995) regarding the data that formed the basis of this comparison. For example, no information was provided on how many agencies were surveyed, how the agencies surveyed were selected, the time period during which the survey was conducted, or if and how cases of child abuse were validated. This lack of information most likely due to the fact that the Davis & Wells (1994–1995) study is a summary report of a study described in full in another publication (Wells et al, 1995). This full report was unfortunately not able to be obtained for inclusion in this scoping review as it is no longer available (Howard Davidson, Director, American Bar Association (ABA) Center on Children and the Law, personal communication, 16 January 2014).

Although a range of concerns associated with criminal background checks were explored in the included evaluations (including those related to costs, delays in recruitment and other limitations), only one identified study evaluated ethical concerns related to criminal background checks. The Australian Attorney-General's Department (2011) reviewed the operation of Subdivision A of Division 6 of Part VIIC of the *Crimes Act 1914*, which allows information about pardoned, quashed or served convictions to be used by screening agencies when determining a person's suitability to work with children. This review considered concerns raised in submissions about how sharing such information could possibly infringe on a person's right to privacy, rehabilitation and employment. We did not identify any evaluation studies that explored such ethical concerns in relation to pre-employment screening practices other than criminal background checks (that is, sources of soft information). However, we note that such ethical concerns may be addressed in, for example, opinion pieces that were excluded from this scoping review, as the primary aim was to identify evaluations on the effectiveness of pre-employment screening practices that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. This topic is also discussed briefly in section 5.4.2, 'Interpretation and implications of key findings'.

Another notable gap in the literature is that few studies evaluated employment prohibitions based specifically on the outcomes of pre-employment screening practices, although the need to disqualify people found unsuitable from working with children was implicit in all the included studies.

In summary, this scoping review did not identify any rigorous quantitative evaluations of the effect of pre-employment screening practices and related employment prohibitions on rates of child sexual abuse.

5.3 Accordance with other non-systematic reviews of the literature

The findings of this scoping review are largely in accordance with those of other non-systematic reviews of the literature. Namely, that many evaluation authors highlight the need for comprehensive pre-employment screening practices including both criminal background checks and other sources of soft information. Furthermore, many of the other review authors note the scarcity of studies that attempt to quantitatively test the effect of pre-employment screening practices on rates of child sexual abuse.

In their synthesis on existing literature on 'educator sexual misconduct', Shakeshaft (2004) identified possible safeguards against child sexual abuse, including mandatory criminal background checks and asking former employers if the job applicant had a history of sexual misconduct. However, Shakeshaft (2004) noted that 'While there are no studies that examine the effectiveness of these strategies, best practice advice identifies these practices as possibly

creating a climate in which educator sexual misconduct is reduced or eliminated’ (p. 47), and specifically that ‘there is no data about the effectiveness of such legislation [fingerprint-based background checks] for preventing or detecting sexual abusers’ (p. 41).

Another evaluation included in this scoping review, U.S. General Accounting Office (1997), conducted a non-systematic review of the literature on the effects of criminal background checks on volunteerism. However, they identified only two opinion pieces – both published by the Boy Scouts of America – that explored this topic. These pieces raised the issue of the potentially negative effects of fingerprint background checking fees on rates of volunteerism. However, the U.S. General Accounting Office (1997) noted these findings to be purely speculative, as such fees were not actually in place at the time these pieces were published. However, the findings stated by the evaluation authors concurred with this opinion, noting that costs associated with conducting criminal background checks were of particular concern for organisations with a large volunteer base (Productivity Commission, 2010; U.S. General Accounting Office, 1997).

The inquiry into the operation of Madonna House in Ireland (Department of Health, 1996) included in this scoping review also involved a non-systematic review of the literature. The Department of Health concluded that ‘Recommendations of inquiries and reviews, as well as the findings of research studies, make proposals that alleviate, or would seem likely to alleviate, the problem of institutional abuse. However, little evaluation has taken place and there is clearly a need for research to establish their effectiveness’ (p. 41, Department of Health, 1996).

Hanly (2010) (also included in this scoping review) undertook another non-systematic review of the literature and concluded that it ‘demonstrated that there has been little direct research conducted on vetting either in Ireland or elsewhere and, in particular research that examines the views of those responsible for this task’ (p. 28). The authors noted that the majority of the literature comprised inquiry reports and that these reports emphasised the importance of ‘police/Garda checks, reference checks, comparison of employees’ records with references supplied, and the sharing of “soft information” amongst relevant professionals in the area’ (pp. 28–29, Hanly, 2010).

5.4 Interpretation and implications of the scoping review findings

In this section, we attempt to interpret the findings of this scoping review and the key themes that emerged in the findings of the evaluations, as stated by the evaluation authors. We also discuss the implications of these findings in the context of research, policies, legislation and other frameworks addressing pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. In accordance with the approach taken throughout discussion of the findings of this scoping review, we have divided this section into two sub-sections. In the first section, we interpret and discuss the implications of the types of evaluations identified in this scoping review. The second section interprets and discusses the key findings identified in this scoping review.

Many of the findings identified in this scoping review are relevant to the issues raised by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in *Issues Paper 1: Working with Children Check*, including whether or not the WWCC should be national and, if so, what features should be included in such a scheme; the records that should be included in the check; and how the effectiveness of any existing or proposed WWCC should be evaluated and/or monitored.

5.4.1 Interpretation and implications of the types of evaluations identified in this scoping review

As indicated in section 5.1, we identified only one evaluation that attempted to quantitatively test the effect of criminal background checks on child abuse compared to other pre-employment screening practices. The limitations associated with this evaluation were noted in section 5.1.

The lack of quantitative evaluations of the effectiveness of pre-employment screening practices has been noted in other non-systematic narrative reviews on pre-employment screening. This finding is not surprising as the nature of this issue presents several methodological difficulties that are not easily overcome. The first is that it is difficult to explore the effects of specific pre-employment screening practices in isolation (an issue also noted by Davis & Wells, 1994–1995). It is likely that organisations employing comprehensive pre-employment screening practices are also characterised by other factors that may minimise the risk of child sexual abuse, and vice versa (for more information on ‘positive organisational cultures’, see Irenyi, Bromfield, Beyer & Higgins, 2006, and the further discussion later in this section). Furthermore, the potential deterrent effect of pre-employment screening practices on the number of child sexual abusers seeking child-related work is even harder to isolate, as noted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1985).

Another issue that creates methodological difficulties is the unknown but probably low, present day rate of reported institutional child sexual abuse by institutional employees. Statistically speaking, it is extremely difficult to detect and test for differences between groups with respect to the number of times a given event occurs (in this case, children who have been sexually abused in an organisation versus children who have not), as well as to discover reliable and valid risk factors, when the rate of occurrence is low (that is, the event is ‘rare’). There are many reasons why the event may be ‘rare’, and, in this instance, it may involve positive improvements in institutional care, such as pre-screening, as well as the more insidious nature of child sexual abuse, including fewer incidents being reported than actually occurred due to the fear, shame repression or other barriers to disclosure faced by child sexual abuse survivors. Consensus exists as to the numerous methodological difficulties posed by rare events in the statistical literature, and it is an issue frequently raised in the risk assessment literature (Gambrill & Shlonsky, 2000; Shlonsky & Wagner, 2005). A very large sample size would be needed to detect differences in a low rate of child sexual abuse (for example, if 2 per cent of all children across all organisations were sexually abused) between two groups (such as organisations that conduct criminal background checks and organisations that do not conduct criminal background checks). In this example, only two events would occur on average across both groups in a random sample of 100 children in each organisation, thus making any differences between groups impossible to detect. Moreover, the sexual abuse would have to be disclosed and would have had to occur at the institutions being evaluated. However, with a sample size of 100,000, one would expect an average of 2,000 events across both groups. In this scenario, there may be a sufficient number of events to detect differences between the two types of organisations. However, such a study, at least prospectively conducted, would be prohibitively expensive. Compounding the challenge of a low base rate, which will be discussed in more detail later in this section, are low rates of disclosing, supervising, monitoring and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse in organisations. The influence that such factors may have on any measure of the effect of pre-employment screening on the observed rates of child sexual abuse are not easy to predict. For example, organisational cultures that encourage disclosing child sexual abuse (see section 5.4.2 for a discussion of these) may also have more comprehensive pre-employment screening

practices. Thus, the rate of disclosed and reported child sexual abuse may be confounded by such organisational characteristics.

Another methodological difficulty was raised by the Australian Attorney-General's Department (2011) (one of the evaluations included in this scoping review). They noted that 'Screening agencies were able to provide some data about the Commonwealth criminal history information they receive. However, there is currently no requirement to collect data and the data provided generally did not cover the full range of information sought by the review. Several screening agencies indicated that data about the quantity and nature of convictions disclosed to them is not collected or stored in an easily accessible manner. Collecting and compiling such information was not feasible due to the costs and labour involved' (p. 6, Attorney-General's Department, 2011). They therefore recommended that the quality of the data collected by these agencies be improved. Issues such as these are likely to apply to both criminal background screening agencies and organisations that conduct other types of pre-employment screening worldwide.

In summary, evaluations of effectiveness can only be of as high quality as the outcome data they are based upon (in this case, the quality of data on rates of child sexual abuse). Until sufficient data on rates of child sexual abuse and pre-employment screening practices employed to prevent its occurrence are available to quantitatively test the effectiveness of pre-employment screening practices (which may not eventuate), this topic is arguably best explored as it has been to date: namely, by conducting in-depth case studies and inquiries into cases where child sexual abuse has occurred in organisations, with the aim of identifying the factors that may have contributed to these factors. This scoping review identified many such case studies and inquiries. The remainder of this section will discuss the implications arising from the findings of the case studies and inquiries, in addition to the implications of findings that represent the opinions of key stakeholders through qualitative analyses of surveys and through submissions or hearings held by governmental bodies or commissions.

5.4.2 Interpretation and implications of key findings

One of the most noteworthy and pervasive findings of this scoping review was that criminal background checks were seldom explored in isolation; evaluation authors repeatedly raised other practices, such as those aiming to identify sources of soft information, as necessary components of comprehensive pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. The authors of many of the evaluations included in this scoping review emphasised that criminal background checks appear to be universally considered as an important component of pre-employment screening practices. However, such statements were almost never made without emphasising the limited effectiveness of using criminal background checks as the only pre-employment screening practice to safeguard children from sexual abuse by staff. Indeed, many concerns were raised regarding factors that limit the feasibility and/or effectiveness of criminal background checks as a safeguard protecting children from sexual abuse.

A factor frequently identified by authors of the included evaluations was the risk that an applicant may have committed relevant offences in other jurisdictions, thus highlighting the necessity of criminal background checks in international or interstate jurisdictions, and legal frameworks to enable this. This is in line with the work in Australia towards implementing nationally consistent approaches to Working With Children Checks and a framework for exchanging criminal history information across jurisdictions (Department of Families, Housing,

Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (2011)). Also of particular relevance are concerns related to the risks posed by those exempt from mandatory criminal background checks (for example, parent volunteers whose child is present, and other adults that share the home with the caregiver and child), and a lack of reporting, confirmation and, therefore, criminal background checks of other adults that may be living in institutions (such as foster or childcare homes). These concerns suggest that the monitoring and regulation of child-related services provided in private homes is of particular concern. Other issues raised in relation to criminal background checks included associated costs and time delays, which are of particular relevance to not-for-profit organisations with a large volunteer base and organisations that need to recruit for work that is seasonal and/or part-time.

The literature on pre-employment screening practices highlights a range of components that are considered necessary to safeguard children against child sexual abuse, including those identified in this scoping review: reference checks; structured employment interviews (including value-based interviewing; for more information, see Erooga, 2009); critically examining the applicant's employment history and/or written application; verifying the applicant's identity using methods such as photo-based documents or fingerprinting; verifying the applicant's education or qualifications; and checking against other sources of information on suspected or substantiated child abuse, such as child-abuse registries, children's court decisions and disciplinary body proceedings.

In Australia, the latter form of soft information mentioned above is generally considered in Working with Children Checks. These checks include not only criminal history information (including pardoned, quashed or served Commonwealth convictions, Attorney-General's Department, 2011), but also other sources of soft information such as 'relevant employment proceedings and disciplinary information from professional organisations (e.g. organisations associated with teachers, childcare service providers, foster carers, and health practitioners)' (Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2013). The use of soft information for pre-employment screening practices in the Republic of Ireland was recently permitted by the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 (note that soft information is referred to as 'specified information' in this bill). This bill was introduced following the recommendations of a series of inquiries, committee reports and reports of the Irish Special Rapporteur on Child Protection (Shannon) (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2013; Government of Ireland, 2009; Hanafin & Brooks, 2008; Houses of the Oireachtas, 2008; Joint Committee on Child Protection, 2006; Joint Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality, 2011; Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, 2008; Shannon, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2013). In the Irish National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012, soft or specified information includes information received by the National Vetting Bureau from the police (such as that obtained during investigations) and by other organisations (such as, for example, the teaching, medical or dental councils; the Mental Health Commission; or the National Transport Authority) that – as a result of investigations, inquiries or regulatory processes – suspect that an individual may pose a risk to children. However, it must be noted that the use of such forms of soft information is not without its ethical and legal concerns. Thomas (2004) states that passing soft information such as 'details of acquittals or decisions not to prosecute where the circumstances would give cause for concern' (Thomas, 2004, citing the Home Office Circular 102/1988, Protection of children: disclosure of criminal background of those with access to children, para 17) was considered an infringement on civil liberties prior to 2002, when the Criminal Records Bureau was established in the United Kingdom.

Although thorough reference checks were one of the pre-employment screening practices most commonly identified as being necessary, many people also admitted their reluctance to share soft information with other prospective employers.

Referees' reluctance to share their concerns about a persons' suitability to work with children reflects an underlying issue that is common among both abused children and other adults in their environment when disclosing child sexual abuse. This point, although not related to the practical aspects of conducting pre-employment screening, is central to the feasibility and effectiveness of screening for criminal conviction information and other pre-employment screening practices, such as those aiming to identify sources of soft information. Without disclosure of sexual abuse, there would be no relevant criminal conviction or soft information to identify through pre-employment screening practices, no matter how comprehensive these practices are. Related to this, the low conviction rate and therefore low rate of sexual abusers with criminal records has repeatedly been raised as an issue affecting the effectiveness and feasibility of pre-employment screening practices (see, for example, Beyer, Higgins, & Bromfield, 2005; Department of Health and Human Services, 1985; Moriarty, 1990; Williams, 1991).

It is necessary to ensure that policies and procedures are in place for supervising, monitoring and responding to allegations of child sexual abuse, in addition to those that encourage disclosing child sexual abuse (for a summary of the literature available on this topic, see Irenyi et al, 2006). When combined, such practices will contribute to child sexual abuse being 'on the record' and therefore available for identification through pre-employment screening practices. The many cases presented in the report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (The Ryan Report) exemplified the need for such practices. This commission concluded that 'Cases of sexual abuse were managed with a view to minimising the risk of public disclosure and consequent damage to the institution and the Congregation. This policy resulted in the protection of the perpetrator. When lay people were discovered to have sexually abused, they were generally reported to the Gardaí [the police force of Ireland]. When a member of a Congregation was found to be abusing, it was dealt with internally and was not reported to the Gardaí' (p. 454, volume IV, chapter 6, Government of Ireland, 2009). The National Crime Agency (NCA) (2013) presented a case where a high level of child sexual abuse took place in a care home. Although concerns were escalating, key reports relating to allegations made by children were misplaced. They concluded that this was partly because 'Fragmented leadership combined with a demoralised workforce to stifle reporting, and appropriate pathways for making complaints were unclear' (p. 26, National Crime Agency, 2013). The case explored in the Ministerial Inquiry into the Employment of a Convicted Sex Offender in the Education Sector in New Zealand also highlighted this issue. Even after the sex offender had been arrested and physically removed from the school, the principal did not report this information to the New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC). The principal erroneously assumed that this information would get to the NZTC through the police and had not realised the obligation to report this event (Smith & Aitken, 2012).

One of the evaluations included in this scoping review (Kozlowski, 2000) presented an interesting case that highlights the futility of conducting pre-employment screening for criminal background information when no such information exists. In this case, a plaintiff, who was repeatedly molested by his scoutmaster, claimed the Scouts were negligent in hiring the scoutmaster without a proper background check. However, the appeals court found the Scouts were not negligent in their hiring practices as there was 'no information accessible to the Scouts that would cause them to suspect that Paz [the scoutmaster] had a propensity to molest children' (p. 38, Kozlowski, 2000, citing appeals court decision). This decision reflects the fact that, when

no criminal background or soft information exists regarding an individual's suitability to work with children, pre-employment screening practices are futile. In this case, the appeals court took this line of reasoning one step further, concluding that an organisation could not be found culpable for failing to conduct a criminal background check when no information about a person's criminal background was available.

In their narrative review of the literature, Irenyi et al (2006) identified key components necessary to minimise the risk of child maltreatment in organisational settings. When combined, these components build a 'positive organisational culture' where adults and children are confident that disclosure will be responded to appropriately; children are treated as individuals with rights; inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated; management styles are open and egalitarian; both adults and children feel confident to raise concerns; all paid and unpaid staff are trained in and have knowledge of aspects of child abuse such as child and adult grooming; and there is a focus on being 'child friendly' and not just 'child safe' (for references supporting the need for each of these components, see Irenyi et al, 2006).

The need to disqualify people identified as unsuitable to work with children following pre-employment screening was implicit in all of the literature identified in this scoping review. This is not surprising given the fact that without the intention to disqualify people who are shown to be unsuitable to work with children based on pre-employment screening practices such practices are pointless. Nevertheless, case examples presented and examined in the included evaluations highlighted that the enforcement of such employment prohibitions, even in the face of evidence of child sexual abuse, was not always a matter of course. This highlights the importance of employment prohibitions related to Negative Notices on Working With Children Checks in Australia, and the associated penalties for any individuals and organisations not adhering to these prohibitions.

Only one of the studies included in this scoping review included an evaluation of concerns related to possible infringements on a person's right to privacy, rehabilitation and employment; namely, the Australian Attorney-General's Department (2011). Their review considered concerns related to sharing information about pardoned, quashed or served Commonwealth criminal convictions (as allowed by Subdivision A of Division 6 of Part VIIC of the *Crimes Act 1914*). A number of the bodies invited to share their views on the operation of Subdivision A raised such concerns. However, the Attorney-General's Department (2011) reported that no formal complaints had been received by the information and privacy bodies that responded to the review, including the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. Furthermore, they reported that, based on information obtained in the review, the screening agencies appear to comply with relevant safeguards aimed at ensuring 'that information provided under Subdivision A is only disclosed where there is a legislative requirement to do so, and is treated in accordance with relevant privacy laws' (p. 17). The Attorney-General's Department (2011) acknowledges privacy concerns raised by respondents, concluding that 'Although information received by the review does not suggest that the provisions have had an unjust impact on people seeking to work with children, further monitoring is required to establish with greater certainty whether or not any issues are arising' (p. 17).

The Irish Joint Committee on Child Protection (2006, also included in this scoping review) touch on this issue in association with their recommendation that 'further study of the means by which a comprehensive vetting system incorporating "soft information" might be established' (p. 88). However, they did not report any findings where their analyses of submissions to the Committee resulted in a possible infringement on a person's right to privacy, rehabilitation and employment.

The Joint Committee on Child Protection (2006) appears to dismiss the possibility that such ethical concerns preclude the use of soft information in screening practices, stating that '[t]he Committee does not consider that the constitutional protection of the good name of the citizen is an insurmountable obstacle to achieving this aim. [...] The Constitution does not prohibit this; what it requires is that the good name of the individual be protected from unjust attack and, in the case of injustice done, that the State, by its laws, should vindicate the good name of the citizen. There is no injustice in the State's putting in place the means to assess the suitability of individuals to engage in occupations or become involved in situations where they may have unsupervised access to children, and providing the means for publishing that assessment.' (p. 87, citing Article 40.3.2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Ireland). However, the Irish Special Rapporteur on Child Protection was later more cautious (Shannon, 2013), noting that while recent legislative measures are welcome (including the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012, the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 and the Children First Bill 2012), '[t]he application of these provisions will have to take account of the competing rights of privacy and a good name as protected under the Constitution' (p. 13).

Although only one evaluation identified in this scoping review reported findings related to possible infringements on an individual's right to privacy, rehabilitation and employment, we must stress that identifying such ethical studies was not the primary aim of this scoping review. Such ethical concerns may be addressed in, for example, opinion pieces that were excluded from this scoping review, as its primary aim was to identify evaluations on the effectiveness of pre-employment screening practices that aim to prevent child sexual abuse. We raise this issue in this section simply to stress the need to incorporate knowledge of ethical implications when considering the implementation of such practices.

In summary, the literature available provides many insights into the need for comprehensive pre-employment screening practices, which include criminal background checks as well as other pre-employment screening approaches, such as those that aim to identify soft information. Furthermore, there is a need for clear legislation permitting employment prohibitions based on the outcomes of pre-employment screening practices. However, many legitimate concerns were raised in relation to such pre-employment screening practices, such as, the costs and time delays associated with criminal background checks, or the risk that an applicant will take measures to conceal their identity and history. Additionally, consideration must be given to potential infringements on an individual's right to privacy, rehabilitation and employment, both before implementation and during the subsequent monitoring, evaluation and revision of such practices.

5.5 Limitations of this scoping review

As stated in the scoping review methods, the aim of a scoping review is to systematically and transparently 'scope' or 'map' the nature and extent of the literature available, both published and unpublished, in a particular area of research. This was achieved through systematic searches of an extensive list of electronic databases and websites, manually searching website publication lists (when no search engine was available), contacting experts in the field and searching the reference lists of potentially relevant studies. It is important to note that scoping reviews do not assess study rigor, bias, or the effectiveness of the interventions or approaches being tested (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005).

However, due to the time-limited nature of this project, several methodological decisions were made that may have a bearing on the results of this study. First, while the search terms used were fairly inclusive, an expanded list might have yielded more studies. For example, the set phrase 'sex* abus*' was used to cover such terms as 'sexual abuse', 'sexually abused', 'sexually abusive' and 'sexual abusers'. An expanded form of this set phrase would be to search for the terms 'sex*' and 'abus*' near each other in a sentence, but perhaps in another order (for example, 'children who have been abused sexually') or with words in between ('many children were abused at this institution, often sexually', for instance). We also did not cover such terms as 'sexual assault' or similar, and these may have allowed us to find more relevant evaluations. That said, the possible derivations of terms employed cover the majority of studies in this area. Another factor that reduces the impact of the decision not to expand the search terms is the fact that the majority of the potentially relevant papers and the included evaluations in this scoping review were reports identified through the tailored website searches. Furthermore, the reference list checking and extensive tailored website searches provide assurance that the vast majority of applicable studies were located.

Another decision that may have yielded more studies was to disregard (albeit transparently) studies that were identified as possibly relevant but were not available online (n=27). We note, however, that when an organisation's website had a free 'request a publication' service (either an online form or an email address), a request was made for an electronic copy (such as a PDF or Word document) of all of the potentially relevant papers identified through all search approaches. Nonetheless, we believe that this compromise was acceptable, as almost all of these papers were quite dated. Of the 27 unavailable papers, 22 (81 per cent) were published before 2000 (see Appendix 1 for a complete list of excluded studies). We felt that, given the nature of the work conducted by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the time was better spent providing more rigorous summaries of later studies.

In addition, this scoping review differed from the approach of a systematic review in that it did not involve any contact with the authors of the eligible evaluations in order to ask for clarification or additional sources of unpublished information.

We have based our definitions of different study designs on those presented in the EPPI-Centre Keywording Strategy for Classifying Education Research (EPPI-Centre Keywording Strategy for Classifying Education Research, Version 0.9.7, 2003). These definitions were designed on 'pragmatic grounds' (EPPI-Centre Keywording Strategy for Classifying Education Research, Version 0.9.7, 2003, section A.13, pp. 12–13), and although we found them to be particularly useful for this scoping exercise, future syntheses of the evidence (such as rapid evidence assessments or systematic reviews) may need to redefine these study design classifications based on more rigorous statistical and research design principles.

5.6 Concluding remarks

That this scoping review did not reveal any rigorous evaluations of the effects of pre-employment screening practices on rates of child sexual abuse is not surprising given the methodological difficulties inherent to this issue. However, the literature available provides many insights into the need for comprehensive pre-employment screening practices that include criminal background checks as well as other pre-employment screening approaches, such as those that aim to identify soft information.

The need for comprehensive pre-employment screening practices was supported and underscored by many case examples, as well as the opinions of key stakeholders identified by the authors of the included evaluations through qualitative analyses of surveys and submissions or hearings held by governmental bodies or commissions. Furthermore, the need for clear legislation permitting employment prohibitions based on the outcomes of pre-employment screening practices was raised. However, many legitimate concerns were also raised in relation to such pre-employment screening practices, such as concerns about costs and time delays associated with criminal background checks, or the risk that an applicant will take measures to conceal their identity and history. Additionally, consideration must be given to potential infringements on an individual's right to privacy, rehabilitation and employment both before implementation and during the subsequent monitoring, evaluation and revision of such practices.

The potential deterrent effect of comprehensive pre-employment screening practices may never be able to be quantified, but should not be disregarded solely for that reason. When combined with other policies and practices that promote a positive organisational culture, the literature on comprehensive pre-employment screening practices suggests that such practices likely contribute to safeguarding children against child sexual abuse.

6. References

(Includes only references cited in the text of this report. Refer to Table 1 for citation details of the 25 studies included in this review. Refer to Appendix 3 for details of all 270 excluded papers, listed by exclusion category – see section 3.2.2.)

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7. List of appendices in accompanying documents

Appendix 1: Citation details of all 270 excluded papers by exclusion category

Appendix 2: Blank data extraction form

Appendix 3: Completed data extraction forms for each of the 25 included reports



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Scoping Review: Evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse

Appendix 1: Citations details of all 270 excluded papers by exclusion category

Parenting Research Centre and the
University of Melbourne

Commissioned by the Royal Commission into
Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse



Scoping Review: Evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse

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Disclaimer

The views and findings expressed in this report are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Royal Commission. Any errors are the author's responsibility.

The scoping review was conducted between January and March 2014, and papers and reports dated after this time were not included.

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Appendix 1: Citation details of all 270 excluded papers by exclusion category

1.1 Papers considered to be not relevant (n=13)

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Scoping Review: Evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse

Appendices 2 and 3: Data extraction forms for scoping review

Parenting Research Centre and the
University of Melbourne

Commissioned by the Royal Commission into
Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse



Scoping Review: Evaluations of pre-employment screening practices for child-related work that aim to prevent child sexual abuse

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Disclaimer

The views and findings expressed in this report are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Royal Commission. Any errors are the author's responsibility.

The scoping review was conducted between January and March 2014, and papers and reports dated after this time were not included.

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Appendix 2: Blank data extraction form

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	
Date of data extraction	
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	
Publication Type	
Title	
Full citation of paper	
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	
Evaluation Methodology	
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	
Relevant Outcome Measures	
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	

Appendix 3: Completed data extraction forms for each of the 25 included evaluations

1.1 Abel et al. (2012)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	23/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Abel et al. (2012)
Publication Type	Journal article
Title	Development and validation of classification models to identify hidden child molesters applying to child service organizations
Full citation of paper	<p>Abel, G. G., Wiegel, M., Jordan, A., Harlow, N., Hsu, Y. S., & Martinez, M. (2012). Development and validation of classification models to identify hidden child molesters applying to child service organizations. <i>Children and Youth Services Review</i>, 34(7), 1378-1389. doi: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.03.017</p> <p><i>Note Corrigendum published in 2013:</i> Abel, G. G., M. Wiegel, et al. (2013). ""Development and validation of classification models to identify hidden child molesters applying to child service organizations": Corrigendum." <i>Children and Youth Services Review</i>, 35(1): 204.</p>
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Classification models derived from linear regression analyses designed to identify individuals who have a higher likelihood of having sexually touched underage individuals (17 years of age or younger) in the past
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Staff or volunteers applying for organizations caring for children
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	N/A see Evaluation Methodology
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	"The goal of the present study was to develop a screening methodology to identify individuals who have a higher likelihood of having sexually touched underage individuals (17 years of age or younger) in the past." (p.1382)
Evaluation Methodology	<p>Development and validation of a classification model</p> <p>"[...] the current study built on part of an existing sexual abuser-specific assessment instrument, the Abel Assessment for sexual interest™ (AASI) and</p>

	<p>adapted it for use with the general population (Abel, Huffman, Warberg, & Holland, 1998; Abel, Lawry, Karlstrom, Osborn, & Gillespie, 1994; Abel et al., 2001). A pool of variables was identified in the AASI data, which included some of the “red flags” proposed by McCormack and Selvaggio (1989) and others. Then based on a sample of community volunteers (non-sexual abusers) and individuals who had sexually abused children but were concealing this from evaluators (concealing sexual abusers of minors), two classification models were developed: one for males and one for females. The classification models used penalized least squares regression analyses. The models were tested for age and race bias, and were cross-validated using bootstrapping methods.” (p.1382)</p>
<p>Sample Selection/Selection of Participants</p> <p>(including number of cases/events examined)</p>	<p>“The model building sample included two groups: non-sexual abusers and concealing sexual abusers of minors.</p> <p>The non-sexual abuser sample came from two sources: community volunteers and individuals who had taken previous versions of a screen to identify those who had a higher probability of sexually abusing children.” (p.1382)</p> <p>“Individuals comprising [... the concealing sexual abusers of minors] group had to have been convicted of molesting a child, denied the current accusation/charge of sexually abusing a child, have the evaluating therapist report his or her belief the client was an abuser, and either have been accused of sexual abuse by children from more than one family or have been convicted of a sex crime against a child (see Fig. 3). The concealing child sexual abusers had all been referred to a specialized sex offender program for evaluation or treatment for the sexual abuse of a child or adolescent.” (p.1382)</p> <p>“The male model building sample included 2316 concealing sexual abusers of minors and 764 volunteers determined to be non-abusers. The female sample contained 102 concealing sexual abusers of minors and 658 volunteers determined to be non-abusers.” (p.1382)</p>
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	N/A see Evaluation Methodology
Relevant Outcome Measures	<p>Specificity of the models- i.e. the proportion of negatives which are correctly identified as such</p> <p>Sensitivity of the models- i.e. the proportion of actual positives which are correctly identified as such</p>
Key Findings	
<p>Relevant Key Findings</p> <p>(as reported by evaluation authors)</p>	<p>“For the male classification model, the specificity [<i>the proportion of negatives which are correctly identified as such</i>] was 90.3% and the bootstrapped sensitivity [<i>the proportion of actual positives which are correctly identified as such</i>] was 51.0%. For the female classification model, the specificity was 90.0% and the sensitivity was 37.1%. Thus, this classification model was able to correctly identify approximately 50% of men and 40% of women who have sexually abused a child in the past.” (abstract, p.1378)</p>

1.2 Attorney-General's Department (2011)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	23/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Attorney-General's Department (2011)
Publication Type	Report
Title	Review of the operation of Subdivision A of Division 6 of Part VIIC of the Crimes Act 1914. Final Report.
Full citation of paper	Attorney-General's Department (2011) <i>Review of the operation of Subdivision A of Division 6 of Part VIIC of the Crimes Act 1914. Final Report</i> . Australian Government
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Sharing of criminal history information about a person's spent, pardoned and quashed Commonwealth convictions under Subdivision A of Division 6 of Part VIIC of the Crimes Act 1914
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Child-related work (working with children)
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Australia
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	<p>"Subdivision A allows information about pardoned, quashed or spent convictions to be disclosed to and taken into account by prescribed persons or bodies for the purpose of assessing whether a person is suitable for work with children. This serves as an exception to the general rule that such information is not to be disclosed or taken into account." (p.1)</p> <p>"The object of Subdivision A is to help protect children from sexual, physical and emotional harm.³ In conducting the review, the Attorney-General's Department sought to establish whether the availability of information about Commonwealth pardoned, quashed and spent convictions has helped to achieve this objective by improving screening agencies' decision-making when assessing people's suitability for working with children." (p.5)</p>
Evaluation Methodology	Analysis of responses to questions asked as part of the Attorney General's Review of the operation of Subdivision A of Division 6 of Part VIIC of the Crimes Act 1914 (see Sample Selection/Selection of Participants)

<p>Sample Selection/Selection of Participants</p> <p>(including number of cases/events examined)</p>	<p>“On 30 June 2011, the Minister for Justice, the Hon Brendan O’Connor MP, wrote to prescribed screening agencies, Government agencies and a range of other organisations to gather information and views about the operation of Subdivision A. Responses were requested by 11 August 2011.</p> <p>Responses were received from all prescribed screening agencies and 16 other bodies. A list of agencies and bodies that provided responses is at Appendix A.” (p.4)</p>
<p>When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored</p>	<p>Cases between the <i>Crimes Amendment (Working With Children—Criminal History) Act 2010</i> (Cth) in March 2010 and the time that this survey was conducted (30 June 2011- see Sample Selection/Selection of Participants)</p>
<p>Relevant Outcome Measures</p>	<p>“Prescribed screening agencies were asked the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has access to criminal history information about a person’s spent, pardoned and quashed Commonwealth convictions enhanced your agency’s decision-making when determining whether individuals are suitable for working with children? If yes, how and in what ways? <p>It would be particularly useful if you could provide information or data about the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the number of instances in which information about a person’s pardoned, quashed or spent Commonwealth convictions has led to a finding that someone is not suitable for working with children - the number of checks conducted that have taken into account information about a person’s pardoned, quashed or spent Commonwealth convictions - the types of Commonwealth conviction that are being disclosed to your agency, or - any other information which you consider relevant.” (p.5) <p>- “Other bodies were invited to share any views on the operation of the provisions.” (p.6)</p>
<p>Key Findings</p>	
<p>Relevant Key Findings</p> <p>(as reported by evaluation authors)</p>	<p>Screening agency views: The utility of information about a person’s spent, pardoned and quashed Commonwealth convictions (provided under Subdivision A) when determining whether individuals are suitable for working with children</p> <p>“All screening agencies expressed the view that information provided under Subdivision A has improved their ability to assess risks to children, particularly in light of its role in the broader ECHIPWC [<i>Exchange of Criminal History Information for People Working with Children between the Commonwealth, States and Territories</i>] scheme. Having access to more extensive information about a person’s criminal history allows a more thorough assessment to be made about that person’s suitability and has increased screening agencies’ confidence in their decisions.” (p.6)</p> <p><i>Quantitative data:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examples of cases as described by screening agencies in which information provided under Subdivision A has resulted in a person being denied permission to engage in child-related work are given. For some States’ screening agencies (Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia), some limited quantitative data was available and reported on the number of cases in which this was the case.

	<p>- “However, there is a low level of statistical information available about the Commonwealth criminal history information being provided to screening agencies.” (p.16)</p> <p>- “At present, there is only one confirmed instance in which a person has been denied permission to work with children on the basis of Commonwealth criminal history information shared under Subdivision A.” (p.16)</p> <p>Other bodies’ views on the operation of the provisions</p> <p>- “Responses from the Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory and the National Children’s and Youth Law Centre expressed support for the scheme while acknowledging the importance of issues relating to a person’s right to privacy, rehabilitation and employment.</p> <p>- The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory emphasised the importance of ensuring that differences in legislation between the Commonwealth, States and Territories do not lead to varying degrees of quality and thoroughness in the conduct of Working with Children Checks across Australia.” (p.13)</p> <p>- Responses indicated concerns about the disclosure of information about pardoned and quashed convictions, the disclosure of convictions relating to any type of offence, the absence of a definition of ‘working with children’ under Subdivision A and the effectiveness of the safeguard</p> <p>- “Several responses considered the disclosure of information about pardoned and quashed convictions to interfere with a person’s right to exoneration” (p.13)</p> <p>- “The Law Council noted concerns expressed by the Law Society Northern Territory about the ability of the Northern Territory about the ability of the Northern Territory’s privacy requirements to operate effectively in very small communities.” (p.15)</p> <p>- “The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner and other privacy bodies noted the desirability of screening agencies being subject to applicable privacy laws.” (p.15)</p> <p>- “No formal complaints about the operation of Subdivision A have been received by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. State and Territory privacy bodies that responded to the review and prescribed screening agencies are also unaware of any formal complaints.” (p.16)</p> <p>- “Information from screening agencies indicates that they continue to comply with relevant safeguards. These safeguards help ensure that information provided under Subdivision A is only disclosed where there is a legislative requirement to do so, and is treated in accordance with relevant privacy laws. In addition, the safeguards help ensure that avenues exist for reviewing screening agencies’ decisions and that those decisions are made in accordance with relevant frameworks for assessing a person’s suitability for work with children.” (p.17)</p> <p>- “The Attorney-General’s Department acknowledges the range of concerns that have been expressed about Subdivision A. Although information received by the review does not suggest that the provisions have had an unjust impact on people seeking to work with children, further monitoring is required to establish with greater certainty whether or not any issues are arising” (p.17)</p>
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1.3 Bichard (2004)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	21/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Bichard (2004)
Publication Type	Report
Title	The Bichard Inquiry Report
Full citation of paper	Bichard, M. House of Commons (2004) <i>The Bichard Inquiry Report</i> London, U.K.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employment interview process <p><i>As outlined in the guidelines of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) "Recruitment and Selection Procedures: vetting teachers and staff who will have contact with children":</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examination of the applicant's employment history - Reference checks <p><i>As according to the arrangements set out in Home Office Circular 47/93</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police vetting checks
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	<p><i>Employment interview, employment history and reference checks:</i> Teachers and other staff (as according to the guidelines of the DfES)</p> <p><i>Police checks:</i> "people who were applying to local authorities or schools for work that would give them 'substantial unsupervised access, on a sustained or regular basis ... to children under the age of sixteen'." (p.179)</p>
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	U.K.- Cambridgeshire and Humberside. The murders were committed in Soham, Cambridgeshire.
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	<p>"This Inquiry was set up by the Home Secretary to:</p> <p>'Urgently enquire into child protection procedures in Humberside Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary in the light of the recent trial and conviction of Ian Huntley for the murder of Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells. In particular to assess the effectiveness of the relevant intelligence-based record keeping, the vetting practices in those forces since 1995 and information sharing with</p>

	other agencies, and to report to the Home Secretary on matters of local and national relevance and make recommendations as appropriate.’ “ (p.1)
Evaluation Methodology	Public Inquiry
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	Public Inquiry into a single case
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	The events preceding the murders of Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells in 2002. Including allegations of eight sexual offences between 1995 and 1999 (in Humberside) and the employment and vetting of Ian Huntley at Soham Village College in late 2001.
Relevant Outcome Measures	<p><i>Interviews with the Principal of the school (Soham Village College) where Ian Huntley (the applicant) was employed. These interviews covered:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The employment interview process - Whether or not the school’s examination of the applicant’s employment history and reference checks conformed to the guidelines of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) <i>Recruitment and Selection Procedures: vetting teachers and staff who will have contact with children.</i> <p><i>An examination of the police check procedures followed by the personnel service provider, EPM and Soham Village College. Including interviews with key staff at EPM and the Principal of the school.</i></p> <p><i>An examination of the vetting-related procedures of Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Humberside Police. This included interviews with key staff members.</i></p>
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p><i>Employment interview process at Soham Village College</i></p> <p>“In his evidence, Mr Gilbert [the school Principal] recognised that the interview could have been more focused and that more guidelines might be useful.” However, such guidelines were available in “the 1992 report by the Committee of Inquiry, chaired by Norman Warner, <i>Choosing with Care</i>” (p.55)</p> <p><i>Soham Village College’s examination of the Ian Huntley’s employment history</i></p> <p>“Mr Gilbert accepted that checking for any gaps in an applicant’s employment history, and obtaining a satisfactory explanation, formed an important part of recruitment. However, he had no recollection of going through the dates with Huntley at the interview to find out exactly when one period of employment started and another stopped.” (p.56)</p> <p>Thus, the procedure stated in the guidelines of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) <i>Recruitment and Selection Procedures: vetting teachers and staff who will have contact with children</i> was not followed. (see pp.55-56)</p> <p><i>Soham Village College’s reference checks</i></p>

	<p>Only 'open' or 'to whom it may concern' style references were provided (p.56).</p> <p>Thus, the procedure stated in the DfES guidelines (see above) that " 'References should always be taken up, and should be obtained directly from the referee. It is not good practice to rely solely on references or testimonials provided by the candidate.' " was not followed (p.57).</p> <p>" None of the open references provided by Huntley addressed [...the candidate's suitability to work with children ...]. However, as the school did not contact any of the referees or follow up the references in any way, this issue was never raised with them. Mr Gilbert [the school Principal] accepted that the references should have been followed through and that not to have done so was a mistake." (p.57)</p> <p><i>Police Check Process of the Soham Village College and the personnel service provider, Education Personnel Management (EPM)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Mr Gilbert believes that Huntley provided a driving licence, passport or birth certificate, but cannot recall which. The guidance given to schools by EPM when Home Office Circular 47/93 was issued was that the proof-of-age document should be the birth certificate." (p.58) - Huntley was offered the position at Soham Village College on the 9 November 2001 (p.57), before the Police Check Form was even completed (exactly when the form was filled in could not be recalled by Soham Village College, p.58). The author concludes that "There was no reason why the police check process could not have been completed before Huntley started work at the school." (p.107) <p><i>The vetting-related procedures of Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Humberside Police</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Humberside Police "had taken an unacceptably long time for management to make the CPD available for vetting purposes" (p.96) - One form of police check conducted by Cambridgeshire Constabulary (the PNC check) was only conducted in the applicant's changed name 'Ian Nixon' but not his birth name 'Ian Huntley' (p.69) - There were several other 'mistakes' made during the vetting process by Cambridgeshire Constabulary (see page 103), including a failure to anticipate and prepare for the increased volume of applications following the Cambridgeshire Constabulary's Criminal Record Bureau's (CRB) launch (p.106). The author concludes that "The errors and failings I have identified were serious, but not systemic and corporate." (p.107)
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1.4 Braga (1993)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	21/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Braga (1993)
Publication Type	Journal article
Title	Experiences with alleged sexual abuse in residential program: I. Case vignettes
Full citation of paper	Braga, W. D. (1993). Experiences with alleged sexual abuse in residential program: I. Case vignettes. <i>Residential Treatment for Children & Youth</i> , 11(1), 81-97. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1300/J007v11n01_06
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	"reference check for prior history of child abuse, a legally mandated procedure" (p.85). No further information provided.
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	No information provided, see also Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Not stated directly, but likely New York as the New York Child Abuse Prevention Act of 1985 is mentioned multiple times
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	"to illustrate the wide variety of complex circumstances that are categorized as alleged sexual abuse and to comment on the learned lessons as these cases were managed clinically and administratively." (p.81)
Evaluation Methodology	Four case vignettes are presented and briefly discussed. "These have been disguised sufficiently to protect confidentiality, but effort was made to maintain content areas unaltered." (p.83)
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	Four cases that came to the author's attention while working as a psychiatric consultant to various therapeutic settings in the years 1984-1991. <i>Note that case vignettes 2-3 concern child-child sexual behaviour in OOHC and alleged sexual abuse by staff at schools and are therefore not considered here.</i>
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	The events presented in case vignette 1 (the only case of relevance for the purposes of this review, see Sample Selection/Participants) "occurred prior to the implementation of the New York Child Abuse Prevention Act of 1985" (p.83)

Relevant Outcome Measures	No information is reported on how the information presented in the vignettes was acquired (other than by personal experience with the cases- see Sample Selection/Participants).
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p><i>Case 1- 16-year old girl in residential treatment programme with history of sexual abuse accuses a young male worker on night shift of attempting to sexually molest her</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worker's reference check for prior history of child abuse came back negative. However a call to local police revealed that he had given the agency a pseudonym when hired and was wanted by the military authorities. - "In this case, finger-printing might have alerted us for his AWOL status as well as his pseudonym." (p.87) <p><i>Note that the other three vignettes presented in this study concern child-child sexual behaviour in OOHC and alleged sexual abuse by staff at schools and are therefore not considered here.</i></p>

1.5 Brannan et al. (1993)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	JF
Date of data extraction	21/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Brannan, Jones, & Murch (1993)
Publication Type	Report
Title	Castle Hill Report: Practice Guide
Full citation of paper	Brannan, C., Jones, J. R., & Murch, J. D. (1993). Castle Hill Report: Practice Guide. Shrewsbury: Shropshire County Council.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	The registration of private residential schools, with a focus on: - Verification of staff qualifications (in this case the proprietor and Head of School's)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Staff at private residential schools
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Britain- Shropshire
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	To provide a case study/Inquiry into a case of a Principle that sexually abused students.
Evaluation Methodology	Public Inquiry
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	Public Inquiry into a single case
When the case examined occurred/time period explored	The inquiry began in April 1989 and ended in July 1989 following several allegations dating back to December 1987
Relevant Outcome Measures	"The inquiry involved the joint interviewing of 106 young men from different authorities all of whom had, at one time been placed at Castle Hill School" (p.2)
Key Findings	

<p>Relevant Key Findings</p> <p>(as reported by evaluation authors)</p>	<p>“The detailed background of Ralph Morris is not included as a ghoulish reminiscence, rather an attempt to highlight the ease with which he was able to fool the system. His presenting image was accepted without question and his impressive list of qualifications never verified” (p.27)</p> <p>“The history of Castle Hill suggests the need for more rigorous checks and balances to ensure high quality care provision. Some suggested means of achieving this would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The confirmation and validation of staff qualifications and backgrounds b) The duties and responsibilities of the registration and inspection unit need to be defined in relation to the child protection role of the local authority” (p.27)
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1.6 Budiselik et al. (2009)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	JF
Date of data extraction	21/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Budiselik, Crawford, & Squelch (2009)
Publication Type	Journal Article
Title	The Limits of Working with Children Cards in Protecting Children
Full citation of paper	Budiselik, W., Crawford, F., & Squelch, J. (2009). The Limits of Working with Children Cards in Protecting Children. <i>Australian Social Work</i> , 62(3), 339-352. doi: 10.1080/03124070902964624
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Criminal record checks as mandated by the <i>Working with Children</i> (Criminal Record Checking) 2004 Act (and the associated working with children (WWC) card)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	"all employees and volunteers in child-related work" (p.340)
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Western Australia, Australia
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	To explore WA's Working with Children Act and identify limits to its effectiveness
Evaluation Methodology	Three case studies
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	<p>Three cases that appealed the WA Department for Child Protection (DCP)'s decision to issue them with a negative notice:</p> <p>"WA's Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) 2004 Act (the Act) was passed on 1 February 2006." (p.340)</p> <p>"To 30 June 2008, the DCP had issued 128,147 cards and 46 negative notices. Of the individuals issued with a negative notice, eight appealed the DCP's decision to the Tribunal (Department for Child Protection, 2008). Of these eight cases, three have now been decided. Subsection 105(2) of the State Administrative Tribunal Act 2004 (WA) allows for appeals of the Tribunal's decisions to a court only on a question of law. Two of the decided cases involved appeals to the Western Australian Supreme Court of Appeal (the Court). These three cases are now discussed in more detail." (p.343)</p>

When the case examined occurred/time period explored	<p><i>Case 1-</i> Applied for a Working with Children card in April 2006</p> <p><i>Case 2-</i> Applied for a Working with Children card in 2006</p> <p><i>Case 3-</i> Not clear exactly when a Working with Children card was applied for. According to other details reported it was most likely between Feb 2006 (when the Act was passed) and June 2008 (see Sample selection/Participants).</p>
Relevant Outcome Measures	Not stated directly but cite and take direct quotes from tribunal records
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p>“These three cases raise concerns about the value of cards as a child abuse prevention measure” (p.350)</p> <p>Limitations to the cards effectiveness include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exemptions from requiring a card- “The Act makes provision for a number of exemptions including: when a volunteer is under the age of 18; in most circumstances when a parent volunteers, provided their child participates in the activity; short-term visitors to WA; and employers of children” (p.347) 2. WA’s inability to access criminal records internationally and from other Australian jurisdictions-“The state does not have the agreements in place with other countries or the means to check relevant overseas records, which is significant given the 2001 census showed that 27% of the state’s population were born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). Additionally the state’s checking unit is unable to obtain information from all other Australian states and territories about a person’s criminal record” (p.347) 3. The screening not extending to the relevant records of people who do not have a criminal record-“It is considered by these authors to be inconsistent that information derived by child protection workers from a state-sanctioned child abuse investigation, substantiated to the satisfaction of expert and appropriately delegated professional officers and used as the basis of removing a child from their parents or prosecuting a case in the Children’s Court or determined in other courts, cannot be used to assess a person’s suitability for a card. Currently such information only comes into play if the person who applies for a card is one of a small percentage of applicants who has been charged or convicted of a relevant offence.”. (p.348) 4. Costs and duplication with the federal governments’ National Police Certificate system 5. A limited role for child protection expertise.

1.7 Budiselik et al. (2010)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	22/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Budiselik et al. (2010)
Publication Type	Journal article
Title	Acting in the best interests of the child: a case study on the consequences of competing child protection legislation in Western Australia
Full citation of paper	Budiselik, W., Crawford, F., & Squelch, J. (2010). Acting in the best interests of the child: a case study on the consequences of competing child protection legislation in Western Australia. <i>The Journal of Social Welfare & Family Law</i> , 32(4), 369-379. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09649069.2010.539356
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Criminal record checks as mandated by the <i>Working with Children (WWC) (Criminal Record Checking) 2004 Act</i> (and the associated working with children (WWC) card)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Child-related employment including “individuals working under an employment contract, on a voluntary basis or in a religious organisation” (p.370)
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Western Australia, Australia
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	“In the discussion that follows, the application of the WWC Act is considered in the context of the John Citizen case, in which a negative notice was issued, alongside the consequences that arose in relation to competing child protection and child welfare legislation.” (p.370)
Evaluation Methodology	Single case study
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	No information provided on how this particular case was selected.
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	The events surrounding the case of <i>CEO, Department for Child Protection v. John Citizen</i> in 2007

Relevant Outcome Measures	No information provided on where the information presented in this case study was obtained. Tribunal records are cited.
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p>“In this case, the fact that the grandparents were caring for Barry under a state protection order is classified as ‘child-related work’. Therefore, the grandparents had to have WWC cards, which Mr Citizen was not able to get as he had a conviction for a serious criminal offence [attempted incest and indecent assault, see below]. The consequence of this was that Barry had to be removed from their care and separated from his sibling who was not under the care of a protection order.” (p.377)</p> <p>“Moreover, the DCP was aware of John Citizen’s convictions for attempted incest and indecent assault but this did not seem to be a barrier to him being a child carer following the psychological assessments.” (p.377)</p> <p>“In order to resolve this statutory conflict, it would seem that the DCP had limited options: it could have sought to have Barry’s protection order discharged by the Children’s Court, so his grandparents could care for him and his sister; or it could have removed Heather from her grandparents’ care, if they were deemed to be unsafe. [...]”</p>

1.8 Davis & Wells (1994-1995)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	22/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Davis & Wells (1994-1995)
Publication Type	Journal article
Title	Effective Screening of Child Care and Youth Workers
Full citation of paper	<p>Davis, N., & Wells, S. (1994-1995). Effective Screening of Child Care and Youth Workers. <i>Children's Legal Rights Journal</i>, 22-27.</p> <p><i>Note: The data presented in this study are based on that collected and published in another, longer, report by the American Bar Association (ABA) Center on Children and the Law (a study contracted by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency prevention (OJJDP)) with the same title:</i></p> <p>Wells, S., Davis, N., Dennis, K., Chipman, R., Sandt, C., & Liss, M. (1995) <i>Effective Screening of Child Care and Youth Service Workers</i>. American Bar Association (ABA) Center on Children and the Law. Washington, DC.</p> <p><i>Unfortunately, this report is no longer available (Howard Davidson, Director, ABA Center on Children and the Law, personal communication, 16th of January 2014). Therefore, it was unable to be included in this scoping review.</i></p>
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Screening mechanisms used by the agencies included in this study, including “reference checks, applications, interviews, criminal record checks, child abuse registries, testing (drug/alcohol, psychological), and observations (job, home visits)” (p.2)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Child and youth-serving agencies: “a broad spectrum of agencies classed by primary services: day care, schools, hospitals, juvenile facilities, youth development, and foster care” (p.22)
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	U.S.- National survey
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	“in 1992 the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) contracted with the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law to examine the screening practices currently used nationwide in child and youth service settings, and outline what is known about the effectiveness of these practices.” (p.22)

Evaluation Methodology	<p>National Survey</p> <p>“The national survey involved collection of data from a broad spectrum of agencies classed by primary services: day care, schools, hospitals, juvenile facilities, youth development, and foster care.”</p>
<p>Sample Selection/Selection of Participants</p> <p>(including number of cases/events examined)</p>	<p>No information provided on how the surveyed agencies were selected or how many agencies received and replied to the survey than that provided under ‘Evaluation Methodology’ above.</p>
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	<p>Not stated clearly- responses seem to reflect current practices at the time of the survey which was likely conducted in or around 1992 (see Relevant Aims of the Study).</p>
Relevant Outcome Measures	<p>“The National Survey conducted as part of this study collected data from child and youth-serving agencies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the screening mechanisms they use (including costs, timeliness of information, quality and perceived effectiveness) [...] - their opinions on the need for specific national child and youth worker screening policies - whether they had identified any applicants they considered unsuitable to work with or around children, and - whether they experienced any valid cases of abuse involving a staff person.” (p.2, SS’s own punctuation)
Key Findings	
<p>Relevant Key Findings</p> <p>(as reported by evaluation authors)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The majority of respondents conduct basic screening of <i>potential employees</i> (including personal interviews, reference checks with past employers, confirmation of educational status, and criminal record checks (state and local checks are more common than FBI checks)) - Personal reference checks and personal interviews are the most common screening mechanisms of <i>volunteers</i>, criminal record checks are conducted in a third of the cases (state and local checks are more common than FBI checks) - Less than 10% use psychological testing, home visits, mental illness/psychiatric testing, home visits, mental illness/psychiatric history checks, alcohol or drug testing, or state sex offender register checks on <i>potential employees and volunteers</i> <p>Perceived effectiveness of background screening approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “<i>Employer reference checks</i> were most frequently selected as one of the three most effective screening mechanisms by day care centers, hospitals, public school districts and private schools; <i>personal interviews</i> were perceived as the more effective practice by youth development organizations and foster care agencies. An equal number of juvenile detention/corrections facilities perceived both employer reference checks and personal interviews to be their most effective practice.” (p.23)

	<p>- 47% of those agencies using state criminal record checks ranked these as one of their top 3 most effective screening practices</p> <p>- only about 1/3 agencies rated FBI checks, and less than a 1/4 local checks, as one of their top 3 most effective screening practices</p> <p>- “Less than one-fourth of respondents (22 percent) said they identified any unsuitable <i>employees</i> during screening; only 8 percent screened out <i>volunteers</i> they deemed unsuitable.</p> <p>- Organizations which, at a minimum, use "basic" screening but no criminal record checks, were almost equally as likely to identify unsuitable applicants as those that do basic screening and at least one type of criminal record check.” (p.23)</p> <p>Cost and timeliness of selected background screening mechanisms</p> <p>- “Over half of respondents (52 percent) reported that information was not provided on a timely basis and 46 percent said that the criminal record screening process was too time consuming, creating delays in hiring.” (p.24)</p> <p>Effect on the willingness of qualified people to apply for positions</p> <p>- “87 percent said that conducting criminal record checks did <i>not</i> reduce the number of qualified persons willing to take a position within their agency/organization.” (p.24)</p> <p>Relationship between whether or not agencies conduct criminal background checks and valid abuse involving staff</p> <p>- “10 percent of responding organizations which use criminal record checks had any valid reports of abuse, compared to 5 percent of those which do not check criminal records.” (p.24)</p> <p>Opinions on the usefulness of a national registry of child abusers for screening</p> <p>- “58 percent of responding organizations recommended the development of a national registry of child abusers for screening purposes, making it the most frequently selected recommendation; training and education on available background screening, and how to identify potentially abusive staff were the number two and three recommendations.” (p.24)</p>
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1.9 Department of Health (1996)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	06/03/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Department of Health (1996)
Publication Type	Report
Title	Report on the Inquiry into the Operation of Madonna House
Full citation of paper	Department of Health (1996) <i>Report on the Inquiry into the Operation of Madonna House</i> . Dublin.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Staff recruitment and selection procedures, including garda vetting, interviews, format of application forms, reference checks, and verification of educational and employment background.
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Staff at the children's home "Madonna House"
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Republic of Ireland, "Madonna House" - a home operated by the Sisters of Charity
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	<p>"In September, 1993, the then Minister for Health was informed by the Eastern Health Board that the Board, in cooperation with the Garda Síochána, was investigating allegations of sexual abuse and other misconduct made against a number of members of staff at Madonna House." (p.vii)</p> <p>"The purpose and remit of the Inquiry was to carry out a review for the Sisters of Charity of the management and operation of Madonna House. This process was principally concerned with an inquiry into the qualifications, competence, and the manner in which care duties were discharged by staff members at Madonna House in the light of various allegations made." (p.5)</p>
Evaluation Methodology	Inquiry
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	<p>Inquiry into multiple allegations of abuse at Madonna House</p> <p>"The Inquiry Team could identify no significant differences in the experiences and histories of the children admitted to care in the 1970s and early 1980s from those of the young children admitted to care more recently.</p>

	Of the nine former long-stay residents of Madonna House interviewed by some members of the Inquiry Team, all except one had allegedly experienced incidents of either physical or sexual abuse while in care in Madonna House.” (p.94)
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	<p>Inquiry was opened in September 1993 to investigate allegations of sexual abuse against staff at Madonna House dating back to children admitted to care in the 1970s (see also Relevant Aims of the Study and Sample Selection/Selection of Participants)</p> <p>“On 31 May, 1994, the Sisters of Charity announced that Madonna House was to be phased out.” (p.vii)</p> <p>“The sexual abuse for which Staff Member A was subsequently convicted took place over an approximate five-year period between 1985 and 1990.” (p.93)</p>
Relevant Outcome Measures	“This Inquiry was voluntary in nature. The Inquiry Team did not hear evidence on oath. It did not have any power of subpoena and could not require any particular person to assist us, nor indeed could we dictate the manner or extent of any such assistance. The Inquiry Team in its work adopted a procedure of seeking information and explanations from various current and former staff members, former residents, and other persons connected with Madonna House in an informal and private setting.” (p.5)
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p><i>Describe shortcomings in management staffs' actions in relation to the recruitment and selection of staff:</i></p> <p>“In relation to staff selection, the Assistant Resident Manager's duties as described included assisting the Resident Manager with staff recruitment, development and training. The Assistant Resident Manager has described this job description to the Inquiry Team as "a work of fiction". There is no evidence of his being involved in anything other than sitting in at interviews for new staff. He has stated that the actual responsibility for staff selection, securing of references etc. rested with the Resident Manager.</p> <p>Two other Staff Members had some involvement in staff selection, but in discussion with the Inquiry Team distanced themselves from authority or responsibility in this regard.</p> <p>The Resident Manager acknowledged her awareness of the relevant guidelines regarding recruitment and states that she "didn't specifically decide" not to follow them. It was "not a conscious decision ... had to get right staff immediately etc".</p> <p>The Resident Manager stated that she had "always had C.Vs and letters of application ... would have file and kept it and from that if I felt they had what was needed post offered to them ... there were often times because of resources ... because of pressure from staff ... because of numbers in house and someone out sick ... staff left on their own ... had to pull from what I had available and from those I interviewed get the qualifications I was looking for. If I had to advertise when places came up you are talking about a month; in the meantime what happens to staff or the number of children".” (p.71)</p> <p><i>Relevant recommendations of the inquiry on improved recruitment and selection procedures:</i></p>

	<p>“12.7 Service Contracts each residential children’s centre should have a time-limited service contract with the Health Board which specifies: [...] Recruitment policy [...]” (p.108)</p> <p>“12.8 Boards of Management [...]The Boards of Management should approve and periodically review the policy and procedures of the centre in relation to issues such as recruitment and promotion of staff [...]” (p.109)</p> <p>“12.10 Garda Reports Residential child care workers are involved with the most vulnerable children in society and residential child care positions are qualitatively different from other positions which involve working with children. Consequently, securing Garda reports on potential staff should be compulsory prior to appointment of all grades of staff in children's residential centres.</p> <p>Garda reports should not be seen as a substitute for comprehensive recruitment procedures.</p> <p>Delay has been experienced in other jurisdictions in obtaining police reports. A specified time period for processing of Garda reports should be agreed.</p> <p>Application forms for all positions in children's residential centres should provide for applicants to list convictions and give permission for the securing of all relevant information from the Gardai in Ireland and police forces in other countries.” (p.110)</p> <p>“12.11 Personnel The recruitment of all grades of staff for children's residential centres should be the subject of regulation.</p> <p>The filling of permanent and promotional posts should be the subject of open competition following advertisement with detailed job specifications available.</p> <p>The Department of Health should develop a specimen application form.</p> <p>Detailed records covering the composition of interview boards and arrangements for short-listing of candidates should be maintained.</p> <p>Interview boards should include a nominee of the funding agency and an appropriately qualified person from outside the children's residential centre.</p> <p>References should be obtained directly by the Resident Manager from previous employers. Specific inquiries should be made as to whether there is any impediment or concern regarding the applicant's capacity to provide care for vulnerable children.</p> <p>The educational and employment background of candidates should be checked and verified prior to employment. [...]” (p.110)</p> <p><i>Comments on progress in implementation of recommendations:</i></p> <p>“Vetting of Applicants for Employment</p> <p>1.21 New directions have also been issued by the Department of Health in relation to the recruitment and selection of staff for children's residential centres. Under these directions, employers must obtain Garda clearance on all persons being considered for appointment as a member of staff of a children's residential centre. These directions have recently been extended to include the recruitment of staff to any area of the Health Services where they would have substantial access to children or other vulnerable individuals. The directions also require that posts in children's residential centres be advertised and appointments be made by open competition. These measures are in accordance with recommendations made by the Inquiry Team.” (p.xi)</p>
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1.10 Government of Ireland (2009)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	11/03/2014-12/03/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Government of Ireland (2009)
Publication Type	Report
Title	The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse. Report (The Ryan Report)
Full citation of paper	<p>Government of Ireland (2009) <i>The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse. Report (The Ryan Report)</i>. The Stationery Office, Dublin.</p> <p>PDFs of each Chapter in this five-volume report can be retrieved from http://www.childabusecommission.com/rpt/pdfs/ (last accessed 12 March 2014)</p>
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Garda vetting, recruitment and selection with a focus on reference checks and contact with previous employers. Also explore the selection of foster carers.
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	<p>Primarily Industrial and Reformatory Schools, in addition to:</p> <p>“[...] primary and second-level schools, Children’s Homes, foster care, hospitals and services for children with special needs, hostels, and other residential settings” (p.26, Executive Summary)</p>
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Republic of Ireland
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	<p>“The principal functions conferred on the Commission, as laid down in section 4(1) of the Principal Act of 2000 and as amended by section 4 of the 2005 Act, were:</p> <p>(1) (a) to provide, for persons who have suffered abuse in childhood in institutions during the relevant period, an opportunity to recount the abuse, and make submissions, to a Committee,</p> <p>(b) through a Committee—</p> <p>(i) to inquire into the abuse of children in institutions during the relevant period,</p> <p>ia) to inquire into the manner in which children were placed in, and the circumstances in which they continued to be resident in, institutions during the relevant period,</p> <p>(ii) to determine the causes, nature, circumstances and extent of such abuse, and</p>

	<p>(iii) without prejudice to the generality of any of the foregoing, to determine the extent to which—</p> <p>(I) the institutions themselves in which such abuse occurred,</p> <p>(II) the systems of management, administration, operation, supervision, inspection and regulation of such institutions, and</p> <p>(III) the manner in which those functions were performed by the persons or bodies in whom they were vested, contributed to the occurrence or incidence of such abuse,</p> <p>and</p> <p>(c) to prepare and publish reports pursuant to section 5.” (pp.1-2, Volume I- Chapter 1 “Establishment of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)”)</p>
Evaluation Methodology	<p>Commission to inquire into the abuse of children in Irish institutions, including sexual abuse. Information sources included written statements, oral hearings and examination of official records and documents.</p> <p>“The Commission comprised two separate and distinct Committees which were required to report separately to the Commission as a whole: the Confidential Committee, and the Investigation Committee. [...]</p> <p>The specific mandate of the Confidential Committee was to hear the evidence of those survivors of childhood institutional abuse who wished to report their experiences in a confidential setting. [...]</p> <p>The powers of the Investigation Committee¹⁰ were, inter alia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to direct the attendance of witnesses,¹¹ • to direct the production of documents,¹² and • to give such other directions that appear to be reasonable, just and necessary.¹³ <p>The Investigation Committee also had the power:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to require the discovery of documents,¹⁴ • to furnish interrogatories (or questions) which must be replied to,¹⁵ and • to require parties to admit facts, statements and documents.¹⁶ <p>The evidence obtained was presumed to be prima facie evidence of the matters to which it related.¹⁷ Finally, the Investigation Committee also had the power to take evidence of a person’s conviction for abuse of a child as evidence before the Committee of that abuse.¹⁸” (pp.3-4, Volume I- Chapter 1 “Establishment of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)”)</p>
<p>Sample Selection/Selection of Participants</p> <p>(including number of cases/events examined)</p>	<p>“The Confidential Committee heard from 1,090 witnesses who applied to give oral evidence of abuse they experienced in Irish institutions.” (p.3, Volume I- Chapter 1 “Establishment of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)”)</p> <p>The Investigation Committee conducted investigations into all institutions where the number of complainants was more than 20. (p.2, Executive Summary)</p> <p>The Investigation Committee sent questionnaires to, and conducted hearings with, “the Department of An Taoiseach, the Department of Finance, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the Department of Education and Science, and the Department of Health and Children. Statements were received from all of the 18 Religious Congregations that contributed to the Redress Fund, and statements were received from 10 survivor groups.” (p.8, Volume I- Chapter 1 “Establishment of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)”)</p>

	<p>For a full list of the 18 Religious Congregations see p.15, Volume I- Chapter 1 “Establishment of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)”</p> <p>For a full list of the 10 survivor groups see p.28, Volume I- Chapter 1 “Establishment of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)”</p> <p>The institution where the abuse took place was identified in the report, but the person or each person who committed the abuse was only named if he or she had been convicted of an offence in respect of abuse (p.4, Volume I- Chapter 1 “Establishment of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)”)</p>
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	<p>“The ‘relevant period’ of the inquiry was from 1940 to 1999, but the Commission had power to extend it in either direction. The Commission exercised this power for the Investigation Committee by extending the beginning of the period back to 1936, by a decision of 26th November 2002. The relevant period for the Confidential Committee was determined to be between 1914 and 2000, being the earliest date of admission and the latest date of discharge of those applicants who applied to give evidence of abuse to that Committee.” (p.5, Volume I- Chapter 1 “Establishment of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA))</p>
Relevant Outcome Measures	<p>Retrospective case studies/inquiries into multiple cases of abuse at Irish institutions. Evidence included witness statements, court proceedings (where available) and other official records maintained by the institutions (for example files from the Christian Brothers’ archives in Rome, p.110, Volume I- Chapter 7 “St Joseph’s Industrial School, Artane (‘Artane’), 1870-1969” and archives from the office of the Rosminian Order in Rome, p.31, Volume II- Chapter 2 “St. Patrick’s Industrial School, Upton (‘Upton’), 1989-1996”)</p> <p>The Confidential Committee heard confidential witness statements. These are collated and summarised by factors such as type of abuse, perpetrator and location.</p> <p>The Investigation Committee sent out questionnaires to State institutions and Religious Congregations which addressed issues such as: “[...] (c) the timing and manner in which allegations of child abuse emerged as an issue in respect of institutions under the management or regulatory control of the body; (d) a brief account of the protocols or procedures, which were in place from time to time within the body which were designed to prevent, investigate or deal with allegations of child abuse; [...]” (p.8, Volume I- Chapter 1 “Establishment of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA)”)</p> <p>Oral hearings were also conducted by the Investigation Committee with key government officials, representatives of Religious Congregations and survival groups.</p>
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p><u>The Investigation Committee Report on Institutions, Volumes I-II</u></p> <p><u>Selected Relevant Excerpts from Inquiries into specific cases of sexual abuse and the institutional responses to this abuse</u></p> <p><i>The Congregation of Christian Brothers, Chapters 6-13 of Volume I</i></p>

	<p>“The documentation made available to this Committee disclosed that allegations of child abuse, and particularly child sexual abuse, were a recurring and persistent problem for the Congregation.” (p.86, Volume I- Chapter 6 “The Congregation of Christian Brothers”)</p> <p>“No contemporaneous information exists concerning the criteria that were used to assess the suitability of Brothers for particular postings. However, the records of the Congregation show that, on a number of occasions, individuals who were accused of sexual abuse were transferred to other residential or day schools. In some cases, Brothers who had been sexually abusing children were, in their later careers, appointed to senior positions within the Province. When asked at the Phase I hearing for Letterfrack [one of the Christian Brothers’ schools] how this had happened, Br Gibson explained that, because the leadership in the Congregation changed every 12 years, there was no memory within the organisation of offences committed before that. He acknowledged that there was a personal file for each Brother and concluded that these files were not consulted in making appointments.” (pp.79-80, Volume I- Chapter 6 “The Congregation of Christian Brothers”)</p> <p><i>Chapter 14 presents a case study exploring the case of ‘Mr John Brander’ who began his career as a Christian Brother and, after sexually abusing boys, was granted dispensation from his vows and went on to progress through six different schools where he continued to sexually abuse children.</i></p> <p><i>Cappoquin Industrial School run by the Sisters of Mercy, Chapter 8 of volume II</i></p> <p>The case of Mr Restin, a lay care worker, is explored. He sexually abused boys at Passage West Industrial School Co Cork (another school run by the Sisters of Mercy) and then moved to work at Cappoquin Industrial School where he was subsequently convicted of child sexual abuse. The Resident Manager at St Joseph’s Industrial School, Sr Vita, made a Garda statement saying that she had “sent word to Cappoquin Orphanage through a nun here that [Mr Restin] was not a suitable person to be with children.”. However, Mr Restin “said that he assumed he would have sought a reference from Sr Vita for the course and for his move to Cappoquin, but there was no record of any such request or reference on file in either Cappoquin or Passage West.” (p.382, Volume II- Chapter 8 “St Michael’s Industrial School, Cappoquin, County Waterford (‘Cappoquin’), 1877-1999”)</p> <p>The Investigation Committee concluded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “- Mr Restin’s unsuitability for work with children was clear from his time in Passage West, but that information was not effectively communicated to Cappoquin. - Although his unsuitability to take part in a childcare course was known to the management of Passage West and to the Department Inspector, he was able to remain in his position in Cappoquin. - If proper inquiries had been made, he should not have been employed in Cappoquin.[...] (p.383, Volume II- Chapter 8 “St Michael’s Industrial School, Cappoquin, County Waterford (‘Cappoquin’), 1877-1999”) <p><i>St Joseph’s Industrial School run by the Sisters of Charity, Chapter 14 of Volume II</i></p> <p>The case of Thomas Pleece, a care worker at St Joseph’s who sexually abused children is described. A volunteer at the school recalls reporting the sexual abuse of residents by Thomas Pleece to the Resident Manager, Sr Astrid, after being approached and told of the abuse my residents. However, Sr Astrid was adamant that she had not been told of sexual abuse and that Thomas Pleece was asked to resign due to physical abuse. Thomas Pleece went on to other</p>
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	<p>positions working with children, including fostering two young boys who he sexually abused.</p> <p>“In September 1977, Thomas Pleece got a job in a probation hostel in Cork which accommodated boys in their late teens. He assumed they would have sought a reference from St Joseph’s for him there, although he did not see one. He and his wife applied to foster two young boys in 1978. They were vetted before being accepted. He said that it never crossed his mind that the fact that he had been asked to leave for sexual abuse in Kilkenny was a disadvantage to his application for foster children: [...] He assumed that they would have contacted his previous employers but, as this was during the period when he still had regular contact with Sr Astrid and the convent, he was not concerned that he would not be given a reference by them.” (p.530, Volume II- Chapter 13 “St Joseph’s Industrial School, Kilkenny, 1873-1999”)</p> <p>Sr Astrid, the Resident Manager, is cited as saying “I remember getting phone calls from different places where Thomas Pleece applied when he left St Joseph’s. I know the only answer I ever gave was “I wouldn’t have Thomas Pleece back in St [Joseph’s]” – or I wouldn’t reply.” (p.533, Volume II- Chapter 13 “St Joseph’s Industrial School, Kilkenny, 1873-1999”)</p> <p>The Investigation Committee concluded that: “Having dismissed Thomas Pleece, Sr Astrid should not have given him a reference for another job that would bring him into contact with children.” (p.533, Volume II- Chapter 13 “St Joseph’s Industrial School, Kilkenny, 1873-1999”)</p> <p><u>The Confidential Committee Report on Institutions, Volume III</u></p> <p><i>Confidential Committee abuse reports (Volume III- Chapters 7,9 and 13-18)</i></p> <p>Chapter 7 “describes the nature and extent of abuse reported in evidence to the Committee by 413 male witnesses in relation to 26 Industrial and Reformatory Schools in Ireland.” (p.53, Volume III- Chapter 7 “Record of Abuse (male witnesses)”). “Two hundred and forty two (242) male witnesses (59%) made 253 reports of sexual abuse in relation to 20 Schools.” (p.78, Volume III- Chapter 7 “Record of Abuse (male witnesses)”).</p> <p>Chapter 9 “summarises the nature and extent of abuse reported to the Committee by 378 female witnesses in relation to Schools in Ireland that admitted girls.” (p.133, Volume III- Chapter 9 “Record of Abuse (female witnesses)”). “There were 128 reports of sexual abuse from 127 female witnesses (34%).” (p.150, Volume III- Chapter 9 “Record of Abuse (female witnesses)”).</p> <p>Chapter 13 “presents witness evidence of abuse in schools and residential services¹ providing care and education for children with special needs as a result of learning, physical, visual, hearing or speech impairment and disability.” (p.235, Volume III- Chapter 13 “Special needs schools and residential services”). “Thirty six (36) of the 58 witnesses who reported abuse in schools and residential services for children with special needs reported being sexually abused. The 36 reports were from 29 male and seven female witnesses in relation to 10 separate special needs facilities.” (p.243, Volume III- Chapter 13 “Special needs schools and residential services”).</p> <p>Chapter 14 “presents the evidence provided to the Confidential Committee by witnesses in relation to their experiences of abuse in Children’s Homes in Ireland over a period of 73 years between 1919 and 1992. The majority of</p>
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	<p>Children's Homes, previously known as orphanages and approved schools, were managed by Catholic religious communities or Boards of Trustees affiliated to Protestant churches. In latter decades a number of Children's Homes were managed and funded by State agencies. [...]Sixty one (61) witnesses, 38 male and 23 female, gave evidence to the Committee about their experiences of abuse in 19 Children's Homes." (p.263, Volume III- Chapter 14 "Children's Homes"). "Twenty nine (29) witnesses, 20 male and nine female, reported being sexually abused in 15 Children's Homes." (p.277, Volume III- Chapter 14 "Children's Homes").</p> <p>Chapter 15 presents evidence "from 24 witnesses, eight male and 16 female, who reported being abused while in foster care. The reports related to 22 foster care placements." (p.303, Volume III-Chapter 15 "Foster care"). "The Committee heard 15 reports of sexual abuse from two male and 13 female witnesses in relation to foster care placements. The reports relate to 13 foster homes." (p.308, Volume III-Chapter 15 "Foster care").</p> <p>Chapter 16 "summarises witness reports given in evidence to the Confidential Committee in relation to 18 different facilities categorised under the general heading of Hospitals." (p.327, Volume III- Chapter 16 "Hospitals"). "Fourteen (14) witnesses reported being sexually abused [...] The 14 reports of sexual abuse refer to 12 different hospital facilities [...]" (p.334, Volume III- Chapter 16 "Hospitals").</p> <p>Chapter 17 "presents evidence given to the Confidential Committee by 70 witnesses, 56 male and 14 female, of their experiences of abuse in schools in Ireland between 1932 and 1992." (p.349, Volume III- Chapter 17 "Primary and secondary-level schools"). "Forty (40) witnesses, 34 male and six female, made 40 reports that they were sexually abused in 35 schools: 23 primary, 11 second-level and one vocational/technical school." (p.355, Volume III- Chapter 17 "Primary and secondary-level schools").</p> <p>Chapter 18 "presents evidence from witnesses about a range of other settings that were outside the main groupings already covered in this Report. These included residential laundries, hostels, Novitiates, short-term residential services for children and adolescents, and other residential settings. The facilities were generally funded and managed either by the State or by voluntary agencies." (p.373, Volume III- Chapter 18 "Residential Laundries, Novitiates, Hostels and other Out-of-home settings"). "Ten (10) witnesses, eight male and two female, made 10 reports of being sexually abused in eight residential settings." (p.378, Volume III- Chapter 18 "Residential Laundries, Novitiates, Hostels and other Out-of-home settings").</p> <p><u>Relevant Conclusions of the Commission, Volume IV- Chapter 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Sexual abuse was endemic in boys' institutions. The situation in girls' institutions was different. Although girls were subjected to predatory sexual abuse by male employees or visitors or in outside placements, sexual abuse was not systemic in girls' schools." (p.453, Volume IV- Chapter 6 "Conclusions") - "Cases of sexual abuse were managed with a view to minimising the risk of public disclosure and consequent damage to the institution and the Congregation. This policy resulted in the protection of the perpetrator. When lay people were discovered to have sexually abused, they were generally reported to the Gardai. When a member of a Congregation was found to be abusing, it was dealt with internally and was not reported to the Garda." (p.454, Volume IV- Chapter 6 "Conclusions")
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	<p>- “The recidivist nature of sexual abuse was known to religious authorities [...] Contrary to the Congregations’ claims that the recidivist nature of sexual offending was not understood, it is clear from the documented cases that they were aware of the propensity for abusers to re-abuse.” (p.454, Volume IV- Chapter 6 “Conclusions”)</p> <p>- “When confronted with evidence of sexual abuse, the response of the religious authorities was to transfer the offender to another location where, in many instances, he was free to abuse again. Permitting an offender to obtain dispensation from vows often enabled him to continue working as a lay teacher.” (p. 454, Volume IV- Chapter 6 “Conclusions”)</p> <p>- “Sexual abuse by members of religious Orders was seldom brought to the attention of the Department of Education by religious authorities because of a culture of silence about the issue. [...] Men with histories of sexual abuse when they were members of religious Orders continued their teaching careers as lay teachers in State schools. (p.455, Volume IV- Chapter 6 “Conclusions”)</p> <p><i>Conclusions based on witness statements of the Confidential Committee</i></p> <p>- “The predatory nature of sexual abuse including the selection and grooming of socially disadvantaged and vulnerable children was a feature of the witness reports in relation to special needs services, Children’s homes, hospitals and primary and second-level schools. Children with impairments of sight, hearing and learning were particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse.” (p.458, Volume IV- Chapter 6 “Conclusions”)</p> <p>- “Children in isolated foster care placements were abused in the absence of supervision by external authorities. They were placed with foster parents who had no training, support or supervision. The suitability of those selected as foster parents was repeatedly questioned by witnesses who were physically and sexually abused.” (p.458, Volume IV- Chapter 6 “Conclusions”)</p> <p><u>Relevant Recommendations of the Commission, Volume IV- Chapter 7</u></p> <p>- “ Management at all levels should be accountable for the quality of services and care. Performance should be assessed by the quality of care delivered. The manager of an institution should be responsible for: [...] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vetting of staff and volunteers • Ensuring that staff are well trained, matched to the nature of the work to be undertaken and progressively trained so as to be kept up to date [...]” (p.463, Volume IV- Chapter 7 “Recommendations”) </p> <p>- ““Children First: The National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children’ should be uniformly and consistently implemented throughout the State in dealing with allegations of abuse.” (p.464, Volume IV- Chapter 7 “Recommendations”)</p> <p><i>Note: The latest version of the Guidelines referred to in the Recommendation directly above are listed in Appendix 1 of this Scoping Review report under “Frameworks or Guidelines”:</i></p> <p>Department of Children and Youth Affairs (2011) Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children. Dublin.</p> <p><i>These guidelines include the following relevant section on p.5:</i></p>
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	<p>“Consistent with the principles of Children First, every organisation, both public and private, that is providing services for children or that is in regular direct contact with children should:</p> <p>(i) ensure best practice in the recruitment of staff or volunteers, which includes Garda vetting, taking up of references, good HR practices in interviewing, induction training, probation and ongoing supervision and management; [...]”</p>
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1.11 Hanafin & Brooks (2008)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	23/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Hanafin & Brooks (2008)
Publication Type	Report
Title	Analysis of submissions made on national review of compliance with "Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children"
Full citation of paper	Hanafin, S., & Brooks, A.-M. (2008) <i>Analysis of submissions made on national review of compliance with "Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children"</i> . Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. Minister for Health and Children. Dublin.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Garda (police) vetting
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	All those who have contact with children
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Republic of Ireland
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	"The key focus was on the extent to which each area of the [Children First] guidelines was being implemented. Provision was also made on the response form for information to be reported on the extent to which the principles of best practice in child protection were being adhered to. These included issues such as [...] whether every action and procedure ultimately considers the overall needs of the child." (p.3)
Evaluation Methodology	<p>Analysis of submissions made on national review of compliance with "Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Descriptive statistics were undertaken on quantitative data generated through the structured response form, facilitated by the Keypoint software. - A thematic analysis was undertaken on all qualitative data submitted." (p.3)
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants	"One hundred submissions were received using the structured response form and a further 36 received in addition to these." (p.3)

(including number of cases/events examined)	<p>“More than two-thirds of the submissions were made on behalf of an organisation (n = 69) and a further 28 were received from individuals. Three respondents chose not to indicate whether their submission was made on behalf of an individual or an organisation. Respondents were asked to identify whether they were ‘service providers’ (72%), ‘service users’ (4%) or ‘other’ (24%). A little more than one-third of submissions (37%, n = 31) were received from male respondents. 16% of respondents requested that the content of their submission remain confidential.” (p.3)</p> <p>“As part of a broader review of the <i>Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children</i> (1999), interested parties were invited by the Office of the Minister for Children (OMC) to make a submission. Invitations were issued through an advertisement placed in the following national and local newspapers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 Sunday newspapers on 19 March 2006 (including the Irish language newspaper <i>Foinse</i>); • 4 national newspapers on Monday, 20 March 2006; • 44 provincial newspapers during the week of 20 March 2006. <p>The advertisement also appeared on the OMC’s website (www.omc.gov.ie) and on www.activelink.ie/ce. In addition, organisations and individuals known to be interested in this area were contacted by the OMC and invited to make a submission.” (p.1)</p>
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	<p>N/A. See Evaluation Methodology.</p> <p>“The closing date for submissions was Friday, 28 April 2006. Submissions received after this time, however, were also given full consideration.” (p.1)</p>
Relevant Outcome Measures	<p>A complete list of the items in the structured response form are not provided.</p> <p>Open comments (qualitative data) were analysed thematically, one theme was of relevance to this scoping review “Joint working and cooperation between Gardaí and HSE [Health Service Executive]” (p.8) and “Allegations of abuse against employees and volunteers” (p.20)</p> <p>(see Relevant Key Findings for more details)</p>
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p>“Joint working and cooperation between Gardaí and HSE [Health Service Executive]” (p.8)</p> <p>- “[...] areas highlighted as problematic in the relationship between the HSE and the Gardaí were: [...] Garda vetting.” (p.9)</p> <p>- “The final issue raised in this section was about Garda vetting and there were a substantial number of comments on this. In essence, a number of organisations reported recruitment difficulties because of the delay involved in getting Garda clearance. As noted in one submission from a voluntary youth organisation:</p> <p><i>It is very difficult, bordering on impossible, to get the Garda Síochána to vet prospective leaders.” (p.9)</i></p> <p>“There were recommendations for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Garda vetting to be put on a statutory basis; - additional funding and resources to be made available for this service;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Garda vetting of all those who have contact with children, including retrospective vetting in respect of employees and volunteers for whom vetting was not available at the time of their recruitment; - regular assessments of progress in implementing the vetting system. <p>In addition, a non-governmental umbrella organisation for children suggested the following changes be made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the vetting procedure to be enhanced along the lines of the system in Northern Ireland (which checks for disciplinary procedures and other forms of 'soft information', as well as criminal convictions); - ensure that full background checks are carried out using records from other jurisdictions; - a system to be put in place whereby parents and young people can receive confirmation that groups or organisations have a vetting policy."(pp.9-10) <p>"Allegations of abuse against employees and volunteers" (p.20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Other issues were also identified, relating to: [...] the need for a more comprehensive Garda vetting system [...]" (p.21) - "Following on from that, it was noted that 'Garda clearance', while limited in the amount of information it provides, is nevertheless 'a relevant tool in terms of a comprehensive recruitment and selection process', along with 'taking up references'. - It was suggested, however, that until Garda clearance across <i>all</i> child care workers and volunteers comes into existence, the area will be open to abuse by people. - There were several calls to introduce mandatory Garda vetting of new employees." (p.21)
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1.12 Hanly (2010)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	12/03/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Hanly (2010)
Publication Type	Journal article
Title	Practices in and attitudes towards staff vetting in children's residential centres in the Republic of Ireland
Full citation of paper	Hanly, C. (2010). Practices in and attitudes towards staff vetting in children's residential centres in the Republic of Ireland. <i>Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care</i> , 9(2), 28-36.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	"two distinct aspects of the vetting process were explored - the attainment of Garda checks and obtaining three written references which are then verified." (p.29)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Non-statutory residential child care sector
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Republic of Ireland
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	<p>"The aim of the study was twofold;</p> <p>to explore the practices of residential child care centre managers in vetting staff for employment in residential child care, and</p> <p>to explore the attitudes of these managers towards current vetting requirements in the Republic of Ireland." (p.28)</p> <p>"The author hoped that information on current practice in the area may give some indication of the difficulties experienced by managers in completing the vetting process as per the expected requirements as well as helping to establish some of the reasons why the current guidelines on the area are not consistently adhered to in full by employers in the non-statutory residential child care sector. An exploration of attitudes may lend insight towards the value that these managers place upon vetting practices and may highlight some of the influences on these practices." (p.30)</p>

Evaluation Methodology	Phase one of the research consisted of semi-structured interviews and the second phase of the research consisted of the distribution of a self-completion questionnaire
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	<p>“The target group identified for the purpose of the research was managers of children’s residential centres in the non-statutory sector in the Republic of Ireland. The author had relatively easy and quick access to this group through work colleagues nationally. [...]</p> <p>The participants in the study were chosen by means of purposive sampling. Phase one of the research consisted of eight semi-structured interviews and the second phase of the research consisted of the distribution of a self-completion questionnaire to 69 managers of children’s residential centres out of a total of 70 agencies nationwide. One manager was excluded on the basis of potential bias as the author was involved with this service in her professional capacity at the time of the research being conducted. Forty-three completed questionnaires were returned giving a response rate of 62 percent.” (p.30)</p>
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	No information reported on when the study was conducted- responses reflect current practices at the time of the survey and interviews.
Relevant Outcome Measures	<p>“The semi-structured interview questions [phase one of the research] focussed on the manager’s awareness of the wider practice of vetting staff in children’s residential centres, vetting practices within the centre, and the manager’s experience of vetting as a safeguard for children in residential care. [...]</p> <p>The questionnaire [used in phase two of the research] drew on themes and practices which emerged from the interviews and focussed on these in an attempt to ascertain the validity of these findings across a larger and national perspective.</p> <p>In the process of data analysis, which was mainly informed by the grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), a system of coding was applied to the responses and information gathered in the interviews. The answers presented in the survey were subject to content analysis, which consists of identifying key themes and establishing the frequency with which these themes are present in the data accumulated.” (pp.30-31)</p>
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p>The author identified 3 themes that emerged in the analyses, which are summarised here.</p> <p>1. <i>Adequacy of the current system of vetting (i.e. Garda check and three written references)</i></p> <p>Around half of the managers felt that the current vetting arrangements were adequate</p> <p>The other half that felt that they were not adequate referred to issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A dependency on the honesty of the prospective employer to complete paperwork - Garda checks only highlighting convictions, and not covering suspicions of inappropriate behaviour - Needing to rely on previous employers to provide accurate and honest information when writing references

	<p>- The possible benefits of pro-forma documents when writing references</p> <p>The author noted that the findings presented a dichotomy “Managers in both phases of the research referred to the need to obtain as much reliable and detailed information in a reference on a prospective employee and the dependency on trust in the author of the reference for all relevant information. On the other hand, some of those same managers did indicate reluctance on their own part to make some matters of concern known to prospective employers either in writing or verbally on the basis that their preference was to move the person on from their service.” (p.31)</p> <p><i>2. Vetting as a safeguard for children in residential care</i></p> <p>“[...] only half of participants were of the view that the process of vetting staff is a safeguard for children in residential care and within this group there was emphasis on stating that it is not the only safeguard” (p.32)</p> <p>“Overall managers felt strongly that although vetting did provide a safeguard it was a minimum in terms of safeguards that could be applied and vetting alone could not be depended upon to provide a flawless safeguard to young people in residential care.” (p.32).</p> <p>The importance of gathering and exchanging soft information in a safe and structured environment was indicated by the vast majority of participants.</p> <p><i>3. Influencing factors on the vetting process</i></p> <p>“Four distinct factors emerged from the interviews as influencing managers to comply with vetting requirements. In order of influence, these factors were</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the legal aspect of vetting; an awareness of past abuse in residential care settings; the registration and inspection process enforced by the Health Service Executive; knowledge obtained by staff members in college on the matter.” (p.32) <p>Delays in the recruitment process due to the time to complete Garda checks was an issue that lead to premature recruitment of staff- only 27% indicated that they would not employ a person without having completed the vetting process.</p> <p>“The role of the HSE Registration and Inspection Service was a significant influence on managers in terms of complying with the expected requirements in the vetting process. Managers referred to this both in their interviews and in the survey. While it is somewhat reassuring to know that a regulatory body does have an impact in ensuring compliance with requirements, it is not influential enough to ensure full compliance rates across the sector.” (p.33)</p> <p><i>Selected relevant conclusions made by the author:</i></p> <p>“Vetting of staff should be placed on a legislative basis as a matter of priority. This legislation should allow for the exchange of ‘soft information’ amongst professionals working in the area of residential child care in order to further safeguard young people.</p> <p>Whilst the author acknowledges that vetting is only one aspect of the safeguarding process for young people in residential care, it is imperative that expected requirements for vetting staff is stringently adhered to at all times.” (p.35)</p>
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1.13 Herman (1995)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	24/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Herman (1995)
Publication Type	Journal article
Title	Appropriate Use of the Child Abuse Potential Inventory in a Big Brothers/Big Sisters Agency
Full citation of paper	Herman, K. C. (1995). Appropriate Use of the Child Abuse Potential Inventory in a Big Brothers/Big Sisters Agency. <i>Journal of Social Service Research</i> , 20(3-4), 93-103. doi: 10.1300/J079v20n03_05
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Child Abuse Potential (CAP) Inventory “The CAP is a 160-item self-administered screening device originally designed to identify physical child abusers in protective services settings (Milner,1986)” (p.94)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Big Brothers/Big Sisters (BB/BS) of America volunteers
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	N/A see Evaluation Methodology
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	<p><i>Two studies are presented</i></p> <p>Study 1 aim and hypotheses</p> <p>“because the CAP [Child Abuse Potential Inventory] was validated on protective service populations, limited data have been gathered to assess its validity in screening child care workers or volunteers.</p> <p>The goal of the present project was to address this shortcoming by assessing the CAP's accuracy in screening BB/BS [Big Brothers/Big Sisters] volunteers.</p> <p>Three hypotheses were investigated in the first study: (a) the mean CAP Abuse scores for a group of BB/BS volunteers would not differ significantly from the norm data in the CAP manual, (b) the CAP could discriminate between BB/BS volunteers rated excellent versus bad by case managers who worked with the volunteers, and (c) the CAP could discriminate between volunteer applicants</p>

	<p>who were accepted versus rejected by traditional BB/BS screening procedures.” (p.95)</p> <p>Study 2 aim</p> <p>“The CAP was not designed to screen sexual child abusers. [...] The goal of the second study was to assess further the CAP's potential for screening this disorder in community populations such as BB/BS by collecting CAP scores of non-incarcerated sexual offenders against minors.” (p.95) (see also Type of Pre-employment Screening above)</p>
Evaluation Methodology	<p>Study 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compared the average CAP scores for the study population with that for the norm scores listed in the CAP manual. - Examined whether the CAP scores for the study population coincided with the ratings of BB/BS case managers. <p>Study 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examined whether the CAP could be used to identify sexual offenders against minors by examining whether these subjects had CAP scores that were above the cut-off values given in the manual.
<p>Sample Selection/Selection of Participants</p> <p>(including number of cases/events examined)</p>	<p>Study 1:</p> <p>“The total sample consisted of 73 BB/BS volunteers and volunteer applicants.” (p.95)</p> <p>“Case managers [at BB/BS] who supervised volunteers through monthly contact were asked to identify 15 "excellent" (top 10% of all active volunteers) and 15 "bad" volunteers (lower 10%). Informed consents, disclaimer forms, and the CAP were mailed to each of these volunteers. Twelve excellent volunteers and eight bad volunteers completed a CAP protocol [n=20].” (p.96)</p> <p>“Between February 1992 and February 1993, all 53 volunteer applicants to a northwest BB/BS agency completed the CAP.” (p.96)</p> <p>Study 2:</p> <p>“Twenty-one of 26 males from a northwest sexual offender treatment center participated in the study. All had committed a sexual offense against a minor, twelve intra-familial, nine extra-familial. Each was actively participating in treatment which included individual and group work.”</p>
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	N/A see Evaluation Methodology
Relevant Outcome Measures	<p>Study 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether the average CAP scores for the study population differ from the norm scores listed in the manual. - Whether the CAP scores coincide with case managers’ evaluations of volunteers and with existing screening procedures.

	<p>Study 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether sexual offenders against minors had CAP scores that were above the cut-off values given in the manual.
Key Findings	
<p>Relevant Key Findings</p> <p>(as reported by evaluation authors)</p>	<p>Study 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “The average CAP abuse score for these volunteers was 85.56, slightly lower, though not significantly different than the average norm score listed in the CAP manual (91.0; Milner, 1986). This suggests that the volunteer sample in this study was similar to the norm population.” (p.96) - “The mean score for Excellent volunteers [as judged by BB/BS case managers] (44.67) was similar to scores typical of nurturing parents (39.6) (Milner, 1986). [...]The small sample size and the subjective rating system limit the conclusions that can be drawn. Further research is necessary to confirm these findings.” (p.97) <p>Study 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “The average CAP abuse score for these subjects [sexual offenders against minors] was 160.33, significantly higher than the norm score from the manual, however, still below the cut-off score. [...] On average, though, no subscales exceeded their respective cut-off scores.” (p.98) - “Several shortcomings must be noted. The most glaring deficit is the lack of a matched control group of non-sexual offender males. Without such a group, statistical conclusions are inappropriate. Comparison to the norm group is the extent of our work.” (p.98)

1.14 Joint Committee on Child Protection (2006)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	23/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Joint Committee on Child Protection (2006)
Publication Type	Report
Title	Report on Child Protection
Full citation of paper	Joint Committee on Child Protection (2006) <i>Report on Child Protection</i> . Houses of the Oireachtas. Dublin.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	“vetting applicants for employment and other persons through the offices of the Garda Central Vetting Unit.” (p.87)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Sex offenders applying for work with children
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Republic of Ireland
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	No clearly stated aim relevant to this scoping review. However, Part VI of the report (“Other Issues and Recommendations”) covers “Sex Offenders Registration and Supervision- Vetting” (Section 15.3, pp.87-88)
Evaluation Methodology	Qualitative analysis/summary of submissions to the Joint Committee on Child Protection
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	“The Committee decided at the outset of its work to invite submissions from interested bodies and to advertise publicly for submissions. These invitations and advertisements resulted in the Committee receiving more than 50 detailed written submissions as well as a substantial volume of correspondence.” (p.5) “The Committee was also pleased to receive a limited number of oral submissions from relevant experts in the areas of criminal law and child protection law, childrens’ rights, the operation of the criminal justice system, child and adolescent psychiatry, and forensic psychiatry.” (p.5)

When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	N/A. See Evaluation Methodology.
Relevant Outcome Measures	No details given, for example on whether or not the submissions followed a structured response form. (see Evaluation Methodology)
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p>“In the submissions made to the Committee, and its analysis of those submissions, two areas of concern emerge. The first is that the system operates on a voluntary basis [... <i>and second</i>] there may be a basis for concern about the suitability of any particular person for employment or other positions involving unsupervised access to children, even in the absence of a previous conviction.” (p.87)</p> <p>Recommendations of the Committee:</p> <p>“The Committee recommends further study of the means by which a comprehensive vetting system incorporating “soft information” might be established, the development of proposals to put in place the necessary statutory and institutional framework, and the provision of resources for their implementation.” (p.88)</p> <p>“The Committee recommends that consideration be given to establishing a statutory framework including provision for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a register of persons unsuitable for employment with children, based on “soft” as well as “hard” information, especially information arising out of previous employment - an obligation on child-care organisations to vet employees and volunteers - an obligation to report dismissal or other disciplinary proceedings related to allegations of harming a child or inappropriate behaviour towards a child - disqualification from working with children of persons found unsuitable for such work, and - an offence of working with children while disqualified from so doing.” (p.88)

1.15 Kirkwood (1992)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	JF
Date of data extraction	21/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Kirkwood (1992)
Publication Type	Report
Title	The Leicestershire Inquiry 1992
Full citation of paper	Kirkwood, A. (1992). The Leicestershire Inquiry 1992. Leicester: Leicestershire County Council.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	"The method of selection in use at the time- written application, single interview and two written references" (p.309)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Staff at children's homes
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	England-Leicestershire
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	"The task of the Inquiry has been to investigate how management responded to complaints and other prima facie evidence of abuse and malpractice or other related matters in Leicestershire's Children's Homes between 1973 and 1986, as well as any other relevant management or personnel management matters during the period or subsequently." (p.309)
Evaluation Methodology	Public Inquiry
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	"An early task of the Inquiry, therefore was to try to identify which complaints or other prima facie evidence of abuse or malpractice had found their way to Management Officers. In doing that, the inquiry was greatly assisted by being afforded by the Leicestershire Constabulary access to the 383 witness statements and voluminous documentary evidence that they had obtained. It was then possible to identify which of those witnesses thought they had made some kind of complaint at the times and to follow what progress, if any, towards Management Officers the complaint had made" (p.4)

	“Although the Inquiry has not been confined to homes in which Mr Beck worked, the period 1973 to 1986 coincides with Mr Beck’s employment in Leicestershire. ” (p.309)
When the case examined occurred/time period explored	The Inquiry opened in January 1992 to assess allegations in the period between 1973 and 1986
Relevant Outcome Measures	Witness statements and documentary evidence
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p>“The Report contains an account of a series of complaints which, taken together, establish that in Mr Beck’s successive homes there was a regime of physical, sexual and emotional abuse.” (p.309)</p> <p>“The method of selection in use at the time, by written application, single interview and two written references, was not likely to have shown up significant defects of personality. It is, however noted that it has transpired that one of the references hinted at possible reservations felt by the referee. A discussion with him might well have alerted management. The second referee did not appreciate that Mr Beck had proposed that he do therapeutic work” (p.309)</p>

1.16 Kozlowski (2000)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	JF
Date of data extraction	21/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Kozlowski (2000)
Publication Type	Report
Title	NRPA Law Review: Duty To Educate Youth about Risk of Sexual Abuse by Volunteers
Full citation of paper	Kozlowski, J. C. (2000). NRPA Law Review: Duty To Educate Youth about Risk of Sexual Abuse by Volunteers. <i>Parks & Recreation</i> , 35(12), 36-41.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Criminal background check. No further information provided.
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Youth volunteer (Scoutmaster)
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Not stated but believed to be U.S because U.S websites and government papers are cited as measures for pre-employment checks
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	To highlight a legal case in which the plaintiff, who was repeatedly molested by his scoutmaster, claimed the scouts were negligent in hiring the scoutmaster without a proper background check
Evaluation Methodology	One case presented and discussed
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	No information provided
When the case examined occurred/time period explored	From February 1990 to December 1990
Relevant Outcome Measures	No information provided but direct quotes are included from the Appeals Courts, the Scouts and the Victim

Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p>"[...] in this particular instance, the court found nothing in the volunteer's background which would have provided a specific warning that this particular individual posed an unreasonable risk to minors." (p.36)</p> <p>As there was "no information accessible to the Scouts that would case them to suspect that Paz had a propensity to molest children" (p.38, citing appeals court decision), the appeals court found that the Scouts were not negligent in their hiring practices.</p>

1.17 Kutz (2010)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	21/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Kutz (2010)
Publication Type	Report
Title	K-12 Education: Selected Cases of Public and Private Schools That Hired or Retained Individuals with Histories of Sexual Misconduct
Full citation of paper	Kutz, G. D. (2010) <i>K-12 Education: Selected Cases of Public and Private Schools That Hired or Retained Individuals with Histories of Sexual Misconduct. Report to the Chairman, Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives.</i> US Government Accountability Office. Washington, DC.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	<p>Pre-employment criminal history checks of as mandated by the relevant states laws</p> <p>Employment application appraisal and follow-up of 'red flags' in the form of ambiguous or alarming answers to self-report questions on application forms about the applicant's criminal background</p>
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Employees (including teachers, administrative staff, maintenance workers, volunteers, and contractors) at private and public schools
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	U.S., 11 states (Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Virginia)
Evaluation Details	

Relevant Aims of the Study	“(1) examine the circumstances surrounding cases where K-12 schools hired or retained individuals with histories of sexual misconduct and determine the factors contributing to such employment actions [...]” (p.2)
Evaluation Methodology	15 case studies
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	<p>“Ultimately, through a combination of our data matching and public records searches, we selected 15 case studies from 11 states.” (p.2)</p> <p>“To select our case studies, we compared social security numbers (SSN) in the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) to SSNs in employment databases maintained by 19 states and the District of Columbia⁴ and covering approximately the years 2007 to 2009.⁵ From this comparison, we identified hundreds of potential cases of registered sex offenders working in schools.⁶ For each of these cases, we attempted to validate the identity of the offender and verify that their term of employment was after their conviction for a sex offense by using public records searches and contacting employers. We did not conduct any further investigation if we could not confirm that a registered sex offender had gained or retained employment at a school following their conviction. We also searched public records and identified dozens of cases from 2000 to 2010 in which sexual misconduct by school employees ultimately resulted in a criminal conviction.” (p.2)</p>
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	2000 to 2010
Relevant Outcome Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “interviewed related parties, including current and former school officials, law enforcement officials, and representatives from state agencies to investigate the factors contributing to the hire or retention of the individuals in these cases.” (p.2) - “Where applicable, we reviewed police reports, witness statements, court documents, offenders’ personnel files, and employer policy manuals.” (p.2) - “In addition, to the extent possible, we conducted searches to determine whether the sex offenders in our cases had previous criminal histories or were the subject of previous allegations of abuse.” (p.3) - “We also interviewed experts in fields related to child abuse investigations, prosecutions, and prevention.” (p.3)
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p>Criminal history checks not conducted</p> <p>“In 10 of our 15 cases, school officials did not perform preemployment criminal history checks [...]. As a result, registered sex offenders were allowed to gain access to both public and private schools.</p> <p>“In 7 of these 10 cases, the offenders had been convicted for offenses against children and in at least 2 of the cases, they subsequently committed sexual crimes against children at the schools where they were working or volunteering.” (p.5)</p> <p><i>Reasons for not conducting criminal record checks:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they felt that the process was too time-consuming and costly

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the positions in question would not require daily interaction with children - they do not perform criminal history checks for support staff, such as maintenance workers, until after they have reported to work. (p.5) <p>Inadequate criminal history checks</p> <p>“Schools in eight of our cases told us that they conducted state criminal history checks, which only reveal offenses committed by a prospective employee in the state where it is conducted. [...] Although we did not identify any cases where conducting a state criminal history check resulted in hiring an employee who committed an offense in another state, such an outcome is highly likely.” (p.6)</p> <p>“We identified one school in Michigan that used a name-based criminal history search to hire an administrative employee. This online search required officials to search for the precise name under which an individual’s criminal background is recorded. However, the officials used a common nickname instead of the applicant’s full name, so the search did not reveal his eight convictions, which included various sex offenses. A fingerprint criminal history check would likely have revealed these charges. “ (p.6)</p> <p>‘Red flags’ on employment applications</p> <p>“Many of the schools we spoke with require job applicants to self-report basic information regarding their criminal background, but in three of our cases, schools failed to ask applicants about troubling responses.” (p.7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One applicant answered yes to when asked if he had been convicted of “a dangerous crime against children.” - The school could provide no information to suggest that it followed up with the applicant or law enforcement about this admission before hiring the offender - The offender eventually was arrested for sexually abusing a young female student at the school. <p>“In the two remaining cases, applicants did not provide any response when asked about previous criminal history and school officials could not provide evidence that they had inquired about the discrepancy or required the applicant to provide the information.” (p.7)</p>
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1.18 Ministry of Social Development (2012)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	23/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Ministry of Social Development (2012)
Publication Type	Report
Title	The Green Paper for Vulnerable Children: Complete Summary of Submissions
Full citation of paper	Ministry of Social Development (2012) <i>The Green Paper for Vulnerable Children: Complete Summary of Submissions</i> . New Zealand.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Vetting by police and Child, Youth and Family (CYF)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Workforce for children
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	New Zealand
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	"The Government released the Green Paper for Vulnerable Children in July 2011, to promote a national discussion about how New Zealand can improve the lives of its vulnerable children." (p.4)
Evaluation Methodology	<p>Analysis and summary of submissions to The Green Paper for Vulnerable Children</p> <p>"All submissions were given unique identifying numbers, and all submissions were archived. The large number of submissions received and the diversity of the responses meant we had to devise a careful recording system.</p> <p>We grouped the various ideas from the submissions into common categories, and recorded the frequency with which those ideas came up. Using a sample of submissions, our team of analysts finalised a set of broad themes (or "codes") which were structured into a coding framework. Analysts used this framework to record each submission in specifically-designed databases.</p> <p>Key quotes were also selected from submissions and transcribed into the databases. Some of these quotes have been included in reports on submissions." (p.7)</p>

<p>Sample Selection/Selection of Participants</p> <p>(including number of cases/events examined)</p>	<p>“Individual members of the public and people who worked with children tended to respond [to question and answer submissions], although some NGOs also submitted in this manner.” (p.6)</p> <p>The number of responses to the different types of Question and answer submissions (see Relevant Outcome Measures) were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 43 Questions- 1,109 responses - Priority 9 questions- 4,035 responses - Postcards- 605 responses (numbers taken from table on p.6)
<p>When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored</p>	<p>N/A See Evaluation Methodology</p> <p>“The Government released the Green Paper for Vulnerable Children in July 2011 [...] Submissions closed on 28 February 2012, although submissions received after that date were counted and included for consideration.” (p.4)</p>
<p>Relevant Outcome Measures</p>	<p>“Question and answer submissions: These submissions answered specific questions posed in the 43-question Green Paper consultation document, the nine priority questions on the free-post submission forms, the questions posed on the www.childrensactionplan.govt.nz or www.saysomething.org.nz websites, the single-question postcards, and online questionnaires, or the questions available through pop-ups on news media websites.” (p.6)</p> <p><i>Questions relevant to this scoping review:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “What principles, competencies or quality standards should be included in the minimum standards for a workforce for children?” (p.151)
<p>Key Findings</p>	
<p>Relevant Key Findings</p> <p>(as reported by evaluation authors)</p>	<p>“Some submissions identified the importance of thorough vetting of staff and volunteers working with vulnerable children and families.” (p.148)</p> <p>Responses to Question and answer submissions:</p> <p><i>“What principles, competencies or quality standards should be included in the minimum standards for a workforce for children?”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Vetted: A small minority [=below 10 per cent, see p.7] of frontline workers and a minority of the general public and other organisations said workers should be investigated to ensure they do not pose a risk to children.” (p.152)

1.19 National Crime Agency (NCA) (2013)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	19/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	National Crime Agency (NCA) (2013)
Publication Type	Report
Title	The Foundations of Abuse: A thematic assessment of the risk of child sexual abuse by adults in institutions.
Full citation of paper	National Crime Agency (NCA) (2013) <i>The Foundations of Abuse: A thematic assessment of the risk of child sexual abuse by adults in institutions</i> . London, UK.
Pre-employment screening approach explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Criminal background checks (vetting), reference checks, value-based interviewing
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Institutions defined as : "The educational and pastoral strand considers schools, youth groups and youth sports teams; the care category includes residential care homes and secure units; and the corporate and religious group encompasses all faith groups and denominations, as well as companies and charities that engage with children." (p.7)
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	"Case research was limited to England and Wales" (p.7) "all the Case Studies have been sanitised to remove names and identifiable locations" (p.24)
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	"ii. to identify the common characteristics of institutions which make them higher risk locations for the sexual exploitation or abuse of children and young people; iii. to consult widely with subject matter experts and safeguarding practitioners; and iv. to identify and recommend practical options for addressing the characteristics of institutions that either escalate risk and/or cause individual or organisation-wide risk aversion." (p.7)
Evaluation Methodology	Presents literature review and case studies. "Information on the cases was gathered through open source material including news reports, serious case reviews and inquiries. Open source reporting was verified by talking directly to the case officers involved in the investigation. Additional information was provided by interviews with agencies and officers involved in the cases." (p.24)
Sample Selection/Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	"Following [...a literature review], a scoping exercise was conducted and six cases from each identified strand [i.e. institution category- see Study location] were selected for further analysis and research." (p.7)

	18 cases are presented in Appendix 1 (pp.24-28)
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-period explored	No time provided on the period of literature on cases that was examined, no information on when the cases explored occurred or when interviews with case officers and agencies were conducted.
Relevant Outcome Measures	N/A qualitative analysis of information gathered. See Relevant Aims of Study and Relevant Key Findings
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p>Relevant case study: "Case Study 9 109. A number of offenders sexually abused children within a care home. A high level of offending took place within this institution, where poor and ineffective management led to failures in escalating concerns and where key reports relating to allegations made by children within the care home were misplaced. Fragmented leadership combined with a demoralised workforce to stifle reporting, and appropriate pathways for making complaints were unclear. Ultimately, this led to poor standards of behaviour towards the children in care becoming widely accepted within the institution and a wide range of abuse – ranging from physical and emotional through to sexual – was perpetrated against children. A lack of effective vetting allowed those with a sexual preference for children to be employed by the care home." (p.26)</p> <p>Recommendations relevant to this scoping review on pre-employment screening: "From the analysis and through liaison with stakeholders and partners, the NCA CEOP Command has produced a number of recommendations for mitigating the potential risk to children from sexual abuse in institutional settings. In some instances stakeholders have presented divergent views regarding particular recommendations – these differences have been highlighted where appropriate. [...]"</p> <p>- Improve Protection Through Safer Recruitment:- whilst effective vetting cannot create entirely safe institutions, its role in reducing offender's access to children, and as a deterrent, cannot be underestimated. Safe recruiting and selection of volunteers goes further than just vetting. References must be insisted upon and followed up and applicants for roles engaging with children should participate in a value-based interview." (pp.21-22)</p>

1.20 Productivity Commission (2010)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	23/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Productivity Commission (2010)
Publication Type	Report
Title	Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector. Research Report.
Full citation of paper	Productivity Commission (2010) <i>Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector. Research Report.</i> Canberra.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Background checking of volunteers to protect vulnerable clients (both police checks and Working with Children checks)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Volunteers at not-for-profit organisations
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Australia
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	<p>“The Commission has been asked to undertake a research study into Australia’s not-for-profit (NFP) sector. The objectives of the study are to: [...]”</p> <p>- identify unnecessary impediments to the efficient and effective operation of NFPs and measures to improve their productivity [...]” (p.1)</p> <p>“Chapter 10 addresses workforce issues, where NFPs face distinct challenges regarding volunteering and underfunding of government funded services.” (p.10)</p>
Evaluation Methodology	<p>Analysis of submissions to the Productivity Commission in response to an issues paper</p> <p>“In conducting the study, the Commission is to: [...] seek public submissions and consult widely with State and Territory Governments, government agencies, the community sector, business, and other interested parties” (p.v)</p>
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants	<p>“The Commission [...]”</p> <p>- released an issues paper calling for submissions on April 7 2009 [...]</p>

(including number of cases/events examined)	<p>- undertook consultations in most states and territories with representatives from across the NFP sector as well as government agencies that engage the sector in the delivery of services or draw on the sector as intermediaries or advisers. [...]</p> <p>- In addition, it held meetings with specific interest groups as well as various state and Commonwealth agencies.</p> <p>- The Commission received a total of 319 submissions. A list of consultations and submissions is provided in appendix A. " (p.11)</p>
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	N/A. See Evaluation Methodology and Key Findings.
Relevant Outcome Measures	No details given, for example on whether or not the submissions followed a structured response form. (see Evaluation Methodology)
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p>From Chapter 10- The not-for-profit workforce</p> <p>"In submissions and consultations, NFPs which are largely dependant on volunteers identified a number of concerns in relation to: [...]</p> <p>- the difficulties associated with the cost and consistency of background checking." (p.250)</p> <p><i>From Section Increasing costs of engaging volunteers- Background checks</i></p> <p>- [...] A concern commonly raised by participants was the cost, amount of administrative work, slow processing times and lack of portability between organisations and across jurisdictions associated with police checks. The cost of police checks across jurisdictions ranges from \$5 to \$52 per volunteer. Furthermore, some jurisdictions require employees and volunteers to obtain both police checks and 'Working with Children' checks." (p.257)</p> <p>Relevant recommendations:</p> <p>"Improving arrangements for effective sector development- Addressing workforce issues" (p.lvii)</p> <p>Current problem:</p> <p>"The regulation of volunteers (such as police checks) is imposing a growing compliance burden." (p.lvii)</p> <p>Proposed response:</p> <p>"Mandatory vetting requirements for working with children and vulnerable people should be streamlined and police checks should be portable within jurisdictions. Portability across jurisdictions should also be explored." (p.lvii)</p> <p>Main benefits of change:</p> <p>"Removing impediments to maximising the contribution of volunteers." (p. lvii)</p>

1.21 Smith & Aitken (2012)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	22/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Smith & Aitken (2012)
Publication Type	Report
Title	Ministerial Inquiry into the Employment of a Convicted Sex Offender in the Education Sector
Full citation of paper	Smith, M., & Aitken, J. Minister of Education (2012) <i>Ministerial Inquiry into the Employment of a Convicted Sex Offender in the Education Sector</i> . New Zealand.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	<p>“- the registration of teachers by the New Zealand Teachers Council in accordance with Parts 10 and 10A of the Education Act 1989, including the authorisation of a limited authority to teach</p> <p>- policies and procedures established for those purposes, including vetting (Section 139AZD of the Education Act 1989)</p> <p>- the recruitment and hiring procedures employed by school boards of trustees and/or principals” (pp.5-6)</p>
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Education sector
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	New Zealand
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	<p>“the processes by which a convicted sex offender was able to be employed in the education sector in New Zealand” (p.2)</p> <p>“The Inquiry has therefore directed its investigation toward identifying and commenting on the management and effectiveness of processes [...] such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • registration providing an authority to teach, together with vetting arrangements • recruitment and hiring processes in schools of teachers and others who may be involved with children attending a school [...]” (p.5)
Evaluation Methodology	Ministerial Inquiry

Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	Ministerial Inquiry into a single case (see Relevant Aims of the Study)
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	The events prior to the arrest of 'Miki' in 2012 (see p.53-55)
Relevant Outcome Measures	Interviews of people employed at involved government agencies, relevant organisations, as well as parents, boards and staff of the several affected schools (p.7) No further information provided
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p>"The use by Miki of the law and administrative processes to steal the identity of Person X, and the utilisation of that stolen identity, and with it the teaching qualifications held by Person X that enabled Miki to gain entry to the education system, provides an almost fictional scenario." (p.6)</p> <p>Registration and related vetting of teachers by the New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC)</p> <p>"To gain full registration, a teacher must have at least two years teaching experience and, as attested by the principal of the school and one other senior teacher, have successfully completed a mentoring and induction programme.</p> <p>[...]We were advised that this attestation is not invariably a rigorous process, and in general, we understand, school principals and senior staff members on whom the NZTC relies are highly likely, and generally for good reason, to report positively on the teacher concerned."</p> <p>"The Inquiry noted several registration-related matters that merit Council attention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the risks arising (most acutely in the current Miki case) when a name is changed on the register for any number of legitimate and fraudulent reasons, and the number is retained but any or all initial or earlier name(s) are expunged from the NZTC record b. the reason for any name change sought or recorded on the register [... see also p.78] d. substantial tightening up of the means by which the authenticity of academic qualifications from any tertiary provider (including overseas providers), written, telephonic or verbal or emailed attestations as to fitness to teach, good character, previous work history and teaching experience are validated and verified" (p.25) <p><i>Related Recommendations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "The Inquiry recommends that a police vet be obtained when any person seeks to move from provisional to full registration. [...] - The Inquiry recommends that any notation, including any information about a change of name(s) and the reason for that name change, made beside a registered teacher's name on the NZTC Register, be readily accessible by any bona fide inquirer (e.g. a potential school employer). [...]

	<p>- The Inquiry recommends that biometric photographic evidence for identity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. be mandatorily required by the NZTC for any person seeking registration, be held on the Teachers Register, and be accessible to any future employer; and that b. a second biometric photograph be taken of any preferred candidate for an appointment to a school teaching position, or for a LAT; and c. before any appointment is confirmed, compared by the employer with that held on the NZTC Register.” (p.120) <p>Recruitment and hiring procedures employed by school boards of trustees and/or principals</p> <p>“[...] this Inquiry has amply demonstrated three specific issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the current NZTC test of “good character” is necessary but far from sufficient as a means to protect children from the risks of exposure to persons such as Miki b. without close independent monitoring of the way boards handle their hiring role, employment choices made by naïve, ill-prepared or inexperienced trustees and principals will easily trump an otherwise reliable registration and vetting system. This directly exposes children to a variety of unacceptable risks [<i>see also citation below from p.74</i>] c. without greatly improved cross-sector, cross-agency data and Information Sharing, system and process failures will continue to present real (albeit somewhat indirect) risks to the well-being of children in schools.” (p.36) <p><i>Vetting:</i></p> <p>- “a notable gap in the information readily available to boards of trustees is the absence of any reliable register of convicted child sex offenders who could, as in this case, succeed in gaining registration, a practising certificate and employment in any part of the New Zealand education sector” (p.109)</p> <p><i>Interview and reference check process:</i></p> <p>“[...] we found extremely uneven performance amongst boards. For instance, as exemplified in the Miki case:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. candidate interviews are not always conducted and where they are, the appointing board/principal may overly rely on this tool, which best HR practice evidence shows to be quite inadequate b. we found no sound evidence (if any) of consistently careful, thorough reference checks by the boards of schools that had employed Miki. Based on what we were told by NZSTA, ERO, other officials, the unions and principals’ associations, we are not confident that this is well or consistently done throughout the school sector c. nor did we find evidence that boards take up the opportunity provided when applicants consent to a wide search for references, beyond the two or three they may have named. Sometimes none or only one of the named referees is consulted, and it is clear from this Inquiry that few if any efforts are made to authenticate the referee’s suitability, honesty, reliable knowledge of the applicant or any potential conflicts of interest that could affect the value of the reference.” (p.74) <p>Pages 80-81 raise areas of guidance that could be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How boards verify the identity of a person applying for a teaching position - How, why and when boards decide to make reference checks and who makes these checks
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What steps are taken to ensure the appropriateness, impartiality, veracity and relevance of the named referee(s) - What questions are asked of referees <p>Pages 81-82 explore aspects of recommendations that are unique to Māori community (e.g. the weight of an applicant's whakapapa).</p>
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1.22 Sonntag (2012)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	22/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Sonntag (2012)
Publication Type	Report
Title	State Auditor's Office Performance Audit: Protecting Children from Sex Offenders in Child Care, Foster Care and Schools
Full citation of paper	Sonntag, B. (2012) <i>State Auditor's Office Performance Audit: Protecting Children from Sex Offenders in Child Care, Foster Care and Schools</i> . State Auditor. Washington.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	"Washington's child and foster care programs are generally required by law to conduct criminal background checks on all providers, as well as anyone aged 16 or older who lives or works in these settings." (p.3)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Child and foster care providers, as well as anyone aged 16 or older who lives and works in these settings
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Washington state
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	<p>"The audit was designed to answer the following question:</p> <p>Can Washington's sex offender database be used to enhance monitoring of state-regulated facilities with children?" (p.3)</p> <p><i>Note that the main focus of this audit is on the monitoring of child and foster care settings and schools by using Washington's sex offender database. However, some of the findings are relevant to this Scoping Review (see Relevant Key Findings)</i></p>
Evaluation Methodology	State audit
Sample Selection/Selection of Participants (including number of cases/events examined)	<p>28 cases were identified and explored in which sex offenders lived in child and foster care homes.</p> <p>"We obtained sex offender and kidnapping registration data (Offender Watch) from WASPC, which included reported offender addresses from 1990 through August 2011, and conducted an electronic data match against the data sources</p>

	<p>shown in Exhibit 3 to determine if offenders currently or previously worked or lived in child or foster care settings or schools.” (p.10)</p> <p><i>Note that they also identified and explored 1 case in which a sex offender worked as a high school janitor undetected for nine years. However, he was employed prior to being convicted of a sex offence. His mandated criminal background check at the time of employment (as mandated by state law) came back clean. Thus, this case is not of relevance to this review of pre-employment screening practices.</i></p>
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	28 cases in which sex offenders lived in child and foster care homes occurred between 2002 and 2012 (p.12)
Relevant Outcome Measures	<p>“For identified matches, we did not rely solely on the data from the computer systems; we worked collaboratively with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the audited agencies, - WASPC [Washington Association of Sheriff s and Police Chiefs], and - local law enforcement. <p>The matches served as a starting point for further investigation into whether a sex offender currently or previously lived or worked in a state facility with access to children. We relied on numerous sources of corroborating information and investigations by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - child care regulating agencies, - school districts, and - local law enforcement [...]” (p.11, SS’s own punctuation)
Key Findings	
Relevant Key Findings (as reported by evaluation authors)	<p><i>Note that the main focus of this audit is on the monitoring of child and foster care settings and schools by using Washington’s sex offender database. However, the following findings are relevant to this Scoping Review on evaluations of pre-employment screening:</i></p> <p>Child and foster care homes</p> <p>Identified 28 cases where confirmed sex offenders lived in child and foster care homes.</p> <p>“In 24 of the 28 cases, sex offenders went undetected because providers failed to inform agencies offenders lived in their homes.” (p.4)</p> <p>In the remaining four cases, this occurred because “because administrative rules did not address situations where child and provider share a home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrative rules are clear that when the caregiver comes to the child’s home, only the caregiver must be checked, and - when the child goes to the caregiver’s home, background checks are required for all household members 16 and older. - It was unclear what rule should apply when child and provider share the home.” (p.16 SS’s own punctuation) <p>“In several of these cases, the caregiver and the offender were related” (p.14)</p>

1.23 U.S. GAO (1997)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	22/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) (1997)
Publication Type	Report
Title	Fingerprint-Based Background Checks: Implementation of the National Child Protection Act of 1993.
Full citation of paper	U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) (1997) <i>Fingerprint-Based Background Checks: Implementation of the National Child Protection Act of 1993. Report to the Honorable Fred Thompson, U.S. Senate.</i> Washington, DC
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	Fingerprint-based background checks
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Volunteers at 'youth-serving organizations' Other child-related work fields including teachers, foster carers and volunteers (when exploring effectiveness of fingerprint-based background checks)
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	Five states (California, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia)
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	<p>"-To what extent have selected states enacted statutes authorizing national background checks of child care providers? Also, what fees are charged for background checks of volunteers, and how do these fees compare with the actual costs in these states?</p> <p>- What effects have these states' laws and related fees had on volunteerism? For instance, have the laws and fees discouraged volunteers from participating in child care programs at nonprofit entities?</p> <p>- Have selected state agencies and other organizations found national background checks a useful screening tool? More specifically, for selected job or position categories in selected jurisdictions, how often have fingerprint-based background checks identified individuals with criminal histories?" (p.1)</p>
Evaluation Methodology	- Interviews

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Descriptive data on the number of FBI criminal background checks resulting in 'hits' and, when such data wasn't available for a state, - Selected case examples
<p>Sample Selection/Selection of Participants</p> <p>(including number of cases/events examined)</p>	<p>"[...] five judgmentally selected states—California, Florida, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Generally, these selections were among the states suggested to us by officials at the public and private organizations mentioned above, that is, knowledgeable officials with national perspectives. Among other considerations, we selected states to reflect a range of (1) laws authorizing background checks and (2) experiences with automated fingerprint services." (p.19)</p>
<p>When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored</p>	<p>Not stated directly. The request for this review was made on January 3, 1996 by Senator Thompson, and was to "review certain implementation issues under the National Child Protection Act of 1993" (p.1). The report was published in 1997.</p>
<p>Relevant Outcome Measures</p>	<p><i>Summarised studies exploring the effect of state criminal background check laws on fees and voluntarism:</i></p> <p>"As applicable and permitted by available data, we reviewed the scope and methodology of the studies identified [...]" (p.23)</p> <p><i>Supplemented the findings of these studies with interviews:</i></p> <p>"we obtained opinions, anecdotes, and other pertinent information from officials at the various national and local nonprofit entities contacted. [...]" (p.23)</p> <p><i>To explore the usefulness of national fingerprint-based national criminal background checks as a screening tools:</i></p> <p>"we obtained both quantitative data (e.g., number of applicants disqualified on the basis of criminal histories [as detected by <i>fingerprint-based</i> background checks]) and qualitative data (e.g., opinions offered by experienced managers responsible for personnel decisions at various organizations) [...]"</p> <p>Note that in some states, quantitative data on fingerprint-based national criminal background checks was not available or insufficient and examples of individuals who had been detected by background checks were instead given by officials.</p>
<h2>Key Findings</h2>	
<p>Relevant Key Findings</p> <p>(as reported by evaluation authors)</p>	<p>"each of the five study states has enacted statutes authorizing national fingerprint-based background checks regarding paid and/or volunteer positions at various types of child care-related organizations, such as public schools, day care centers, and youth sports leagues" (p,4)</p> <p>"Even when national fingerprint checks have been authorized, few volunteers have been checked" (p.7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three of five states have authority to request national checks of volunteers - Officials suggest that these checks have been limited because statutes permit rather than require checks

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That statutes may permit rather than require checks due to concerns about fees and long turnaround times which may be unacceptable for many organizations due to the seasonal or part-time nature of the work - Another reason may be that organizations aren't aware that they are authorised to conduct checks. <p>“Voluntarism apparently not affected by background check laws and related fees, although concerns exist” (p.9)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “because nonprofit youth-serving organizations had requested relatively few national fingerprint-based checks on volunteers, the applicable statutes and related fees do not appear to have negatively affected volunteerism” (p.9) - we identified only two studies—completed in 1994 and 1995, respectively—that had attempted to assess the potential effects of background check fees on volunteerism. Both studies were conducted or sponsored by the Boy Scouts of America. The respondents to both studies generally endorsed the concept that adult volunteers should be required to have a background check, but the respondents also indicated that personal cost was a factor influencing their willingness to maintain their volunteer status. Due to sampling and other methodological limitations, however, neither study can be used to draw conclusions about the overall scouting volunteer population. Also, the reported results are speculative because reactions were solicited regarding fees not actually in place.” (pp.9-10) <p>“National [FBI fingerprint-based criminal background] checks may serve as a deterrent and also can identify some unsuitable applicants not readily detectable by other means” (p.10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “In the opinion of officials at the organizations we contacted, the authority to request national fingerprint-based checks is useful irrespective of the hit rates. - These officials emphasized that although it is not quantifiable, the deterrent effect of the prospect of national background checks is significant—and, indeed, is a factor perhaps more important than any other aspect of such checks.” (p.10) - Officials felt that national fingerprint-based checks are an important supplement as they may identify people who change names or move from state to state - Officials felt that such checks should not be solely relied upon as such records may be incomplete or missing for some individuals <p>Examples of cases where individuals with a criminal background were detected when applying for child-related work positions through FBI fingerprint-based criminal background checks (including teachers, foster carers and volunteers) were given. When available, data on the number of FBI fingerprint-based criminal background checks in child-related work fields was also presented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By presenting this data, the authors conclude that they “were able to identify situations clearly showing the usefulness of national fingerprint-based checks” (p.11)
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1.24 U.S. GAO (2011)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	JF
Date of data extraction	21/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	U.S Government Accountability Office (GAO) (2011)
Publication Type	Report
Title	Child Care: Overview of Relevant Employment Laws and Cases of Sex Offenders at Child Care Facilities
Full citation of paper	U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) (2011). Child Care: Overview of Relevant Employment Laws and Cases of Sex Offenders at Child Care Facilities. Report to the Ranking Member, Committee on Education and the Workforce, House of Representatives (Vol. GAO-11-757, pp. 32). Washington, DC.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	<p>Criminal history checks as mandated in the relevant jurisdictions.</p> <p>“The vast majority of states require that criminal-history checks for employees and other staff be fingerprint-based and be conducted in both national and state databases, but many do not specify that the checks must be completed prior to an employee’s start date” (p. 8)</p>
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Employees and other residents at child-care facilities
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	United States-Washington D.C, New York, Missouri, Arizona, South Carolina, Kentucky, Illinois, North Carolina, Arkansas
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	“To identify case-study examples of child care facilities that employed or provided residence to registered sexual offenders who committed serious sexual offenses” (p.2)
Evaluation Methodology	<p>Ten case studies</p> <p>“we identified instances of relatives and acquaintances who knowingly hired offenders to work at child care facilities and facilities that unknowingly hired offenders because they did not perform preemployment criminal-history checks. Our investigation also found instances where child care facilities employing sex offenders operated without licenses or received federal funds” (p.9).</p>

<p>Sample Selection/Selection of Participants</p> <p>(including number of cases/events examined)</p>	<p>“Through a combination of our data matching, review of open-source information, public records, and interviews, and by focusing on the offenders who had been convicted of serious sexual offenses in the past, to include violent sexual offenses and crimes involving children, we selected 10 cases from eight states and the District of Columbia. Of these cases, 8 were selected from open-source information while the remaining 2 were selected from our comparison of SSNs in the NSOR with SSNs in employment databases.” (p.3)</p>
<p>When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored</p>	<p>“First, we compared social security numbers (SSN) that we obtained from the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) National Sex Offender Registry (NSOR) to SSNs in employment databases maintained by 20 states and the District of Columbia for the years 2007 to 2009. [...] We reviewed open sources published between the years 2000 through 2010.” (p.2)</p>
<p>Relevant Outcome Measures</p>	<p>The data are from records including police reports, court documents, and interviews</p>
<p>Key Findings</p>	
<p>Relevant Key Findings</p> <p>(as reported by evaluation authors)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “In at least 7 of our 10 cases, sex offenders were hired or allowed to reside at both licensed and unlicensed facilities by relatives or acquaintances who were aware of the offenders’ previous offenses” (p.9) - “At least two cases show examples in which licensed child care facilities unknowingly hired employees who were sex offenders because they did not conduct required criminal-history checks. The documents we reviewed and the officials we spoke with indicated that the child care facilities did not perform these checks because of poor oversight and an unclear understanding of background check requirements” (p.11)

1.25 Waul Webster & Whitman (2008)

Citation and Extraction details	
Person extracting data	SS
Date of data extraction	23/02/2014
Author (or Organisation if no author) and Year	Waul Webster & Whitman (2008)
Publication Type	Report
Title	Who's Lending a Hand?: A National Survey of Nonprofit Volunteer Screening Practices
Full citation of paper	Waul Webster, M., & Whitman, J. (2008) <i>Who's Lending a Hand?: A National Survey of Nonprofit Volunteer Screening Practices</i> . The National Center for Victims of Crime. Washington, DC.
Pre-employment Screening Approach Explored	
Type of Pre-employment Screening or Relevant Employment Prohibition Explored	All screening practices, including: interviewing potential volunteers, checking references, background checks using state-wide or national databases (including criminal history, sex offender registry, child protective services and credit history background checks)
Target Group (i.e. the type of child-related work addressed)	Volunteers at nonprofit human service organizations (a wide variety of organizations including adoption, youth sports and recreation, child day care, children's and youths services, religious leadership- youth development, group homes, and youth centres and clubs, Table 1, p.8)
Jurisdiction(s)/Location	U.S.- National Survey
Evaluation Details	
Relevant Aims of the Study	<p>"Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:</p> <p>1- What is the current state of background screening of volunteers by human service nonprofits in the United States (i.e., are they conducting background checks and, if so, what kinds of checks)?</p> <p>2- Are there differences in volunteer screening practices among human service organizations based on variables like the size of the organization, whether they have a paid volunteer coordinator, and what population they serve?</p> <p>3- What experiences have organizations had with victimization of clients by unscreened or inadequately screened volunteers that could be instructive for the nonprofit community?" (p.6)</p>

Evaluation Methodology	<p>Telephone survey to answer aims 1 and 2 of the study (see Relevant Aims of the Study above)</p> <p>Aim 3 was answered through interviews with key people to collect anecdotes (see Relevant Aims of the Study above)</p>
<p>Sample Selection/Selection of Participants</p> <p>(including number of cases/events examined)</p>	<p>Telephone survey to answer aims 1 and 2 of the study (see Relevant Aims of the Study above)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Survey respondents were drawn from a random sample of 2,251 nonprofit organizations within certain categories of work that had filed Form 990 with the Internal Revenue Service between 1998 and 2006. [...] Organizations with less than \$25,000 in annual gross receipts are not required to submit Form 990 and, therefore, were not included in the sample.” (p.19) - “Executive staff or volunteer coordinators of 517 nonprofit organizations nationwide completed the telephone survey. Completed surveys represent a 23 percent response rate.” (p.19) - The types of organizations surveyed included adoption, youth sports and recreation, child day care, children’s and youths services, religious leadership-youth development, group homes, and youth centres and clubs (Table 1, p.8) <p>Interviews with key people to collect anecdotes- Aim 3 (see Relevant Aims of the Study above)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “To develop a list of potential respondents, the National Center sent an online survey to 6,045 victim service providers across the country and to the approximately 500 members of the National Crime Victim Bar Association to ask if they were aware of cases of client victimization by a nonprofit volunteer or employee (not necessarily within their own organization). - The National Center received 145 responses, of which 71 reported knowing of a case of victimization by a volunteer or staff member of a nonprofit organization. - Of these, 17 respondents agreed to a confidential telephone interview. - The National Center completed follow-up phone interviews with seven respondents. Respondents included current and former employees and volunteers of nonprofit organizations and attorneys representing clients who had been victimized by volunteers of organizations where they once received services. - Two of the resulting accounts are included as sidebars in this survey report.” (p.20, SS’s own punctuation)
When the Cases Examined Occurred/Time-Period Explored	<p>The survey was conducted between February and April 2007 (to answer aims 1 and 2- see Relevant Aims of the Study and Evaluation Methodology above)</p> <p>Interviews were conducted between June and July 2007 (to answer aim 3- see Relevant Aims of the Study and Evaluation Methodology above)</p> <p>These surveys and interviews regarded current practice at the time they were conducted.</p>
Relevant Outcome Measures	<p>Telephone survey results (appear to be in response to set questions with multiple-choice answers, however the questionnaire is not provided)</p> <p>Anecdotes collected during interviews to answer aim 3 (see Relevant Aims of the Study and Evaluation Methodology above)</p>

Key Findings

Relevant Key Findings

(as reported by evaluation authors)

Survey results (aims 1 and 2- see Relevant Aims of the Study and Evaluation Methodology above)

Present descriptive statistics describing the number and size of organizations that screen volunteers, as well as the type of screening conducted and how organizations use screening information. E.g.:

- "Twelve percent of the organizations surveyed said they do not screen volunteers at all." (p.9)
- "Most organizations conduct interviews; fewer check references; and fewer still conduct background checks of volunteers." (p.10)
- "The majority of organizations disqualify a volunteer for a child abuse report." (p.14)

- *"Most commonly reported obstacle in completing background checks is cost.[...] Nearly one in three organizations that reported experiencing obstacles cited the cost of background checks as the primary challenge. One in four reported that the process takes too long and the organization cannot wait for the results before putting volunteers to work. A handful of organizations [2%, Figure 3, p.13] cited objections from either the volunteers or the staff. The most common responses captured in the "other" category cited delays in receiving information either from the volunteer or from the agency conducting the check."* (p.13)

- *"Nearly half of organizations indicated that screening has identified inappropriate volunteers. Of the organizations that conduct regular volunteer screening, 46 percent said that their screening process has identified volunteers who were "inappropriate" for their organization. In the context of this survey question, "inappropriate" could have a broad range of meanings, from someone who was found to have a criminal record to someone who did not appear to support the mission of the organization or did not have the appropriate skill set for the position."* (p.14)

Relevant anecdote collected during interviews to answer aim 3 of study (to answer aim 3- see Relevant Aims of the Study and Evaluation Methodology above)

- *"Victimization by an insufficiently screened volunteer" (p.13). A 10- and 12-year old girl were victimised by their softball coach. The people given as referees said they only knew the person slightly, but this was accepted. Furthermore, a background check was only conducted with local law enforcement. A national check would have revealed that they had committed crimes against children in other jurisdictions.*

Note that one other anecdote was presented in this report (see Sample Selection/Selection of Participants), although this involved a case of an adult victim so is not presented here.



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