



On March 1, Institute for Human Services' staff member, [Pamela Miller](#), met with U.S. Congressman Greg Landsman about a federal bill seeking justice for children who have been abused by a school employee, coach, or volunteer. This bill was co-authored by Miller, who is Deputy Director at the [Center for Child Policy](#), a partnership between the [Institute for Human Services \(IHS\)](#), the [American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children](#) and the [New York Foundling](#), and Jessica Schidlow, Legal Director of [Child USA](#). While most people think of Title IX (Title 9) as prohibiting discrimination against women in college, Title IX also creates a cause of action (right to sue) for K-12 students and college students who survive violence and abuse at the hands of school employees or volunteers.

Currently, federal courts hearing a Title IX claim apply the Statute of Limitations of the state in which they sit, with different rules about the timeframe and age at which kids can access the courts and seek justice. This bill will change the language of Title IX so that in cases of abuse or violence, there is a standard 5-year Statute of Limitations AND the abuse survivor has 5 years from the time they discover or realize that they were abused, not 5 years from when it happened.

This rule is consistent with how younger K-12 students come to understand and disclose abuse. Disclosure is usually a process over time and requires physical safety, psychological safety, and distance from the perpetrator. Younger children may forget certain details and be unable to affix a date and time to the incident(s). This is consistent with the cognitive abilities of younger children and should not cause anyone to doubt the child's veracity.

As part of this project, Miller authored a standard, Capitol Hill "one-pager" to explain the science of children's abuse disclosures and why children need longer periods of time to be ready to file a lawsuit against their abuser. Rep. Landsman and other Congress members will distribute this document among both Congressional houses, as a bipartisan effort. The new statutory language makes explicit that Title IX includes child physical abuse, child sexual abuse, and child torture, committed in any location by a school employee or volunteer. Senator Dianne Feinstein will introduce the bill in the Senate.

The Institute for Human Services and the Center for Child Policy are proud to be advising Congress on critical child maltreatment issues.