

The Respect for Child Survivors Act (S. 4926)

Sponsor: Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX); **Co-Sponsors:** Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE), Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC), and Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)

CHILD USA and CHILD USAAdvocacy support the Respect for Child Survivors Act (S. 4926), a bipartisan bill requiring the use of multidisciplinary teams to improve the way the FBI investigates cases involving child sexual abuse, child sexual abuse material, and trafficking.

About CHILD USA

CHILD USA is the leading national nonprofit think tank fighting for the civil rights of children. Our mission is to employ in-depth legal analysis and cutting-edge social science research to protect children, prevent future abuse and neglect, and bring justice to survivors. CHILD USA also formed the Game Over Commission to Protect Youth Athletes, which conducted the first independent investigation on the institutional failures to protect athletes from Larry Nassar. Read the Report [here](#).

About CHILD USAAdvocacy

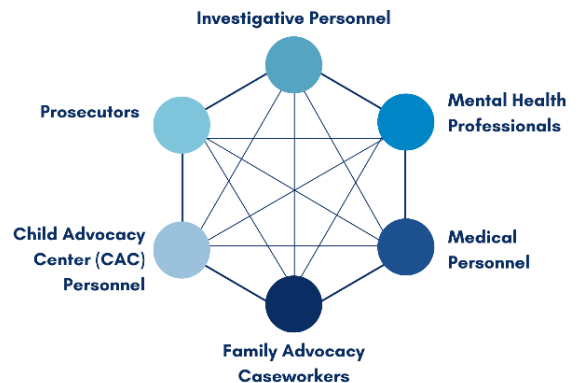
CHILD USAAdvocacy is a 501(c)(4) advocacy organization dedicated to ending child abuse and neglect by advocating for better laws for child protection. We draw on the combined expertise of the nation’s leading child advocates, specifically our sister organization, CHILD USA. We are committed to protecting children’s civil liberties and keeping children safe from abuse and neglect.

THE PROBLEM: During a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing examining the Inspector General’s Report on the FBI’s handling of the Larry Nassar investigation last year, retired gymnast and survivor McKayla Maroney shared disturbing testimony of how she was treated by the FBI personnel who interviewed her regarding her abuse by Nassar. Nassar, the former USA Gymnastics doctor, is currently serving decades in prison for abusing underage athletes over several years. The FBI knew of the allegations against him in 2015 but failed to act, allowing the abuse to continue. At the committee hearing in September 2021, Maroney said, “I disclosed all of my molestations I had endured by Nassar to them in great detail... I was shocked at the agent’s silence and disregard for my trauma, and after a minute he asked, ‘Is that all?’”

THE SOLUTION: Under this legislation, victims would be interviewed by those with expertise to appropriately address and treat their trauma. The bill would require the FBI to use multidisciplinary teams when investigating cases of child sexual exploitation or abuse, the production of child sexual abuse material, and trafficking. Investigations would be regularly reviewed by the team to share information about the case, address any investigative or prosecutorial barriers, and ensure victims receive the support and treatment they need.

These multidisciplinary teams would include:

- ❖ appropriate investigative personnel;
- ❖ mental health professionals;
- ❖ medical personnel;
- ❖ family advocacy caseworkers;
- ❖ child advocacy center personnel; and
- ❖ prosecutors.



We urge lawmakers to pass the Respect for Child Survivors Act (S. 4926) to prevent re-traumatization of victims who bravely choose to come forward. Multidisciplinary teams also ensure accountability and prevent cases from being forgotten or dropped through information-sharing and regularly scheduled case review requirements.

