

5-2014

Mandated Reporting and Child Maltreatment: Training and Experiences of Minnesota Teachers

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Recommended Citation

Butts, Allison N., "Mandated Reporting and Child Maltreatment: Training and Experiences of Minnesota Teachers" (2014). *Master of Social Work Clinical Research Papers*. Paper 299.
http://sophia.stkate.edu/msw_papers/299

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Mandated Reporting and Child Maltreatment:
Training and Experiences of Minnesota Teachers

by

Allison N. Butts, B.S.

MSW Clinical Research Paper

Presented to the Faculty of the
School of Social Work
St. Catherine University and the University of St. Thomas
St. Paul, Minnesota
in Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Social Work

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The Clinical Research Project is a graduation requirement for MSW students at St. Catherine University/University of St. Thomas School of Social Work in St. Paul, Minnesota and is conducted within a nine-month time frame to demonstrate facility with basic social research methods. Students must independently conceptualize a research problem, formulate a research design that is approved by a research committee and the university Institutional Review Board, implement the project, and publicly present the findings of the study. This project is neither a Master's thesis nor a dissertation.

Abstract

The state of Minnesota has no requirement for the training of mandated reporters for child maltreatment and teachers account for nearly 24% of child protection reports (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013b). This study looks to gain perspective on teachers' experiences with mandated reporting, if and where they have received training on mandated reporting and child maltreatment, where they believe they should be receiving training and what they feel it should include. A mixed-mode online questionnaire with questions from the Teachers and Child Abuse Questionnaire, ECAQ and created by the author were used to survey 65 Minnesota teachers (Kenny 2001a; Kenny, 2004). This study found that over half of teachers surveyed have had minimal or inadequate preparation about mandated reporting and child maltreatment in their preservice education or within a school district they work. Findings also suggest that many teachers feel prepared in their role as a mandated reporter, however evidence of how they would report indicates that they may not be as prepared as they believe to be. Responses also show that some school districts may have their own mandated reporting procedures that may not be congruent with the state law. Teachers felt they should have additional training in their school districts and preservice education that includes awareness of symptoms of abuse and neglect and the process of filing a report. Findings indicate that a more uniform training system should be implemented for teachers about mandated reporting and child maltreatment due to the discrepancies in knowledge across the profession.

Keywords: mandated reporting, child maltreatment, teachers, training, Minnesota

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my former research professor, Lance Peterson, for his guidance in the early development of this research project and directing me to my clinical research chair, Katharine Hill.

I would also like to thank Katharine for her support, insight, feedback and calm demeanor through out the research process. Her knowledge of statistical analysis and child welfare was fundamental in formulating and completing this study. I would also like to thank Katharine for her interest in my topic and encouraging me to pursue publication after the completion of this project.

I would like to thank my committee members, Lisa Grant and Laura Eiden for their feedback and professional insight. Lisa's experience as a school social worker was essential in attending the content of the paper on the micro, macro and mezzo levels and Laura's experience as a teacher was fundamental to creating the research questions and providing a teacher's lens about mandated reporting experience and training. I appreciate their input and interest in my topic, as well as the time they dedicated to help me complete this project.

Additionally, I would like to thank my parents, brothers, friends and boyfriend for their understanding, patience and love through out the many weeks of this project and my time as a graduate student. I appreciate their encouraging words, endless support and feel very fortunate to have such wonderful people in my life. I would also like to thank my dachshunds for their cuddles and sometimes-necessary distractions.

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Mandated Reporting and Child Maltreatment: Training and Experiences of Minnesota
Teachers

Child maltreatment is a detrimental issue that continues to impact thousands of children in the United States every year. In 2011, more than 4,300 children in Minnesota were subject of recorded abuse, with countless others undocumented (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). Like other states in the 1970's, Minnesota introduced mandated reporting to professionals who work with children to help protect them from child maltreatment (Alvarez, Donohue, Kenny, Cavanagh & Romero, 2005; Backstrom, 2011). A mandated reporter must provide any information about known or suspected maltreatment of the past three years to the local child welfare agency, police department, county sheriff or agency responsible for investigating a claim (Minnesota Statute 626.556, 2013).

For the purpose of this study, child maltreatment is defined as neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse or emotional abuse towards a child. According to the Minnesota Department of Human Services, neglect is the failure by a caregiver to provide “food, clothing, shelter, medical or mental health care, or appropriate supervision;” protection from conditions that endanger a child; or appropriate education as specified by the law (2013a, para. 2). Physical abuse refers to “any physical injury or threat of harm or substantial injury, inflicted by a caregiver upon a child other than by accidental means” (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013a, para. 3). Sexual abuse is identified as “the subjection of a child to a criminal sexual act or threatened act by a person responsible for the child’s care or by a person who has a significant relationship to the child or is in a position of authority” (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013a,

para. 5). Emotional abuse or a mental injury “is harm to the child’s psychological capacity or emotional stability evidenced by an observable and substantial impairment of the child’s functioning” (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013a, para. 4).

Nearly 24% of child protection reports in 2007 came from school personnel, indicating that educators are the second highest reporters of child maltreatment following law enforcement (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013b). The unique nature of the teacher-student relationship may allow for teachers to have the first point of contact in learning of a child’s maltreatment. While educators contribute to nearly a fourth of reports filed, there is no standard for training mandated reporters in Minnesota. This lack of consistency may contribute to the differing opinions of what constitutes as maltreatment and the variation of reports being made. The literature suggests that teachers have had limited training about their role as a mandated reporter and report feeling unprepared to serve in this role (Greytak, 2009; Kenny, 2004). Findings have further indicated that adequate training is effective and must be implemented for educators who serve as mandated reporters (Alvarez, Kenny, Donahue & Carpin, 2004; Hawkins & McCallum, 2001a; Hawkins & McCallum, 2001b; Kenny, 2007).

The amount of training teachers have had about mandated reporting, their confidence surrounding reporting procedures and knowledge of child maltreatment may be a pertinent issue for social workers at a variety of levels. School social workers could use this research to further discuss policies and practices surrounding mandated reporting within their schools and to further assure that teachers are using best practice while being confident in their abilities to help students who may be facing maltreatment. Additionally, county social workers and child protection advocates will be informed of

the level of knowledge surrounding mandated reporting and child maltreatment for one of the largest reporting groups. This study could further influence training for teachers about mandated reporting and child maltreatment. The present study was designed to explore teachers experience and comfort with mandated reporting, if and where they have received training on mandated reporting and child maltreatment, where they believe they should be receiving training and what information it should include.

Literature Review

Mandated Reporting

Much of the reviewed literature indicates that there is very minimal or inadequate mandated reporter training available for teachers (Goldman, 2010; Goldman & Grimbeek, 2009; Kenny, 2001b; Kenny, 2004). It is also important to understand mandated reporting laws and how they are practiced in Minnesota, which is the focus of the present study.

What is mandated reporting? Mandated reporting is intended to protect people in vulnerable positions such as children, people with disabilities and the elderly from physical or sexual abuse, neglect or other forms of abuse. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the mandated reporting for potential harm to children and adolescents. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974 created a variety of federal procedures to help protect children who may be subject to maltreatment (Alvarez et al., 2005). Out of this legislation, professionals who work closely with children are mandated by law to report any known or suspected abuse (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012). These professionals include: physicians and healthcare workers, mental health professionals and social workers, law enforcement, childcare providers, teachers,

principals and school personnel (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012). Currently, forty-eight states have designated that these professionals must report to law enforcement or a social services agency within a specific time frame (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012). In addition to the United States, countries such as Australia and Canada have laws surrounding reporting suspected abuse (Goldman & Grimbeek, 2011). All states and countries have differences in their definitions and procedures regarding mandated reporting and child maltreatment. The current study will focus on mandated reporting procedures in Minnesota, although literature will be reviewed from studies around the world.

Mandated reporting procedures in Minnesota. Minnesota has a state supervised, county administered child protection program in which counties and tribes create their own regulations for child protection (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2014). The state provides the legislation that directs counties and tribes towards practice (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2014). The state of Minnesota statute regarding Reporting of Maltreatments of Minors indicates,

“A person who knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused [...] or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years shall immediately report the information to the local welfare agency, agency responsible for assessing or investigating the report, police department, or the county sheriff [...]” (Minnesota Statute 626.556, 2013).

Reporting in Minnesota includes filing both an oral report within 24 hours and a written report within 72 hours to the county or tribal law enforcement or social service

agency in which the child lives in. Questions about the alleged victim and offender may be asked as well as the information known about the maltreatment. The mandated reporter must also provide their contact information, although their information will not be disclosed to the alleged parties unless it is necessary for court proceedings (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013b).

After a report is made, the child welfare agency will then assess if the report fits the laws definition of child abuse or neglect to decide if the case will be screened in and followed by an investigation or family assessment, or if the case will be thrown out or no longer inquired (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013b). A family assessment is conducted when a report indicates that a child's safety may be impacted, but is not at an immediate risk for harm. County social services will decide what steps could be taken to increase the safety of the child and if additional services could be beneficial to the family. An investigation takes place when a child is in serious danger. County social services will work with law enforcement to gather information about the situation through interviews, make a decision on the situation and provide additional services as needed (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2012a). The mandated reporter will then be notified within ten days about the outcome of the report and if further action will be taken (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013b).

Failure to report maltreatment. It is important to recognize that it is a misdemeanor offence if a mandated reporter fails to report suspected or known maltreatment (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013b). Additionally, a teacher who fails to report may be discharged from their position or have their teaching license suspended or revoked (Minnesota Statute 122A.20, 2013). If a report is made in good

faith or without malicious intent, a mandated reporter is immune to any civil or criminal liabilities (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013b). The law also indicates that a person who suspects abuse must be the person to file a report. It cannot be passed off to a supervisor or another professional (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2012b).

Barriers to Reporting

Lack of training and feelings of being unprepared. Much of the current research has indicated that there is very minimal or inadequate mandated reporting training for teachers (Goldman, 2010; Goldman & Grimbeek, 2009; Kenny, 2001b; Kenny, 2004). Kenny (2004) discovered that only 34% of teachers indicated that child abuse was included in their education to become a teacher. Of this percentage, 78% felt that it was minimally addressed or inadequate (Kenny, 2004). In another study by Kenny (2001a), it was found that the majority of teachers surveyed had never made a report about child maltreatment. Findings show that teachers have been made aware of their role as a mandated reporter, but are unfamiliar with many of the key components (Greytak, 2009; Hawkins & McCallum, 2001b as cited by Greytak 2009).

Teachers also felt unprepared for their role as a mandated reporter or felt that they had a lack of knowledge about child maltreatment (Crenshaw, Crenshaw & Lichtenberg, 1995; Greytak, 2009; Kenny, 2004). Kenny (2004) discovered that teachers did not feel aware of the signs or symptoms of child abuse, even when they had some training. Greytak (2009) also indicated that student and alumni respondents of teaching programs were not confident in their ability to identify signs of maltreatment and even with any training they had received, they did not feel well-prepared for their role as a mandated reporter. Crenshaw et al. (1995) found that although 89% of respondents had some

familiarity with mandated reporting laws, teachers saw themselves as inadequate and unprepared to handle child abuse.

There are also variations in teachers' abilities to identify different types of maltreatment. McIntyre (1987, as cited in Hawkins & McCallum, 2001b) indicated that while some teachers had awareness of signs of physical and emotional abuse and neglect, 76% were unable to recognize signs of sexual abuse. Additionally, Besharov (1994) points out that neglect may also be easier to miss than that of other forms of abuse.

Training regarding child maltreatment appears to be an important topic to teachers. Goldman (2010) identified that Australian student teachers recognized the severity of child sexual abuse, but did not believe they had adequate training. Teachers indicated the want for more intensive training about child maltreatment and the surrounding processes (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Goldman & Grimbeek, 2009).

Lack of knowledge around reporting procedures. While it appears that many teachers are aware that they are mandated to report child maltreatment, there are difficulties surrounding reporting procedures (Kenny, 2001a). There are inconsistencies between how maltreatment reports are handled within the school system and passed along to Child Protective Services (CPS). While there are laws regarding mandated reporting training for professionals, schools may set up their own practices of handling maltreatment reports (Greytak, 2009; Kenny, 2004). For example, some teachers may make reports to administration, school counselors or social workers opposed to making a report to CPS. Abrahams, Casey and Daro (1992 as cited by Kenny, 2001a) noted that 87% of teachers surveyed has reported suspected abuse to school personnel, however

only a small amount of these reports were actually made to CPS. Some teachers may feel that it is the responsibility of school authority to report suspected maltreatment.

Payne and Payne (1991, as cited by Alvarez et al., 2004) noted that some school principals would prefer to investigate abuse allegations or handle situations within the school before making a report. This lack of knowledge around the laws and limitations to the schools authority may cause further confusion about who is required to make a report and how they must do so. Only 13% of teachers knew their schools procedures for reporting child maltreatment (Kenny, 2004). Although this evidence indicates the confusion associated with reporting, Kesner & Robinson (2002) argue that the training that is available for teachers is often focusing on the reporting process.

Additionally, Tite (1993, as cited by Hawkins & McCallum, 2001b) noted that some teachers believe that the school may be more effective in working with the case than CPS and they would rather explore resources at the school than provide a formal report. This indicates that there may be a lack of knowledge surrounding reporting procedures and an additional sense of responsibility that the teacher may feel to the child when noticing maltreatment. It could also signify a fear or unwillingness to make contact with CPS.

Fear of consequences. A barrier to reporting maltreatment includes fear of the consequences to both the teacher and their student or family. Although mandated reporting laws provide protections to teachers who report in good faith, it appears that this knowledge is not made clearly accessible to teachers. Kenny (2001b) found that teachers who had failed to report abuse, credited their failure to report to fear of inaccuracy, fear of looking foolish and not seeing any physical signs of abuse.

Additionally, Abrahams et al. (1992, as cited by Hawkins & McCallum, 2001b) found that 63% teachers feared the consequences of making a false report. This fear of reporting may demonstrate that there is a lack of knowledge surrounding mandated reporting procedures for teachers and that personal fear can inhibit judgment.

Teachers may also be wary of the consequences to the student or family. Some professionals fear that reporting abuse could make the situation more dangerous to the child or that they may be removed from their home, although this outcome is rare (Alvarez et al., 2004). CPS works to keep families together and attempts to reunite families if removal is used as a temporary precaution (Duquette, 1981 as cited by Alvarez et al., 2004). Teachers also fear that reporting may damage the relationship they have with their students and families (Abrahams et al., 1992 as cited by Alvarez et al., 2004). Through a review of literature, Alvarez et al. (2004) found that the majority of professional relationships with families became stronger, or did not change as a result of making a report to CPS. When understanding the fears of teachers in making a report to CPS, it is clear that many of these perceptions stem from a lack of knowledge about mandated reporting, maltreatment and the reporting process.

Training

Where do teachers receive training?

Training during education. Although it appears that there is limited training given to teachers about mandated reporting, it is also important to recognize the source of available training. Training for teachers about mandated reporting may be included in an undergraduate curriculum for students learning to be teachers (Goldman & Grimbeek, 2011; Kenny 2001a). Goldman and Grimbeek (2011) discovered that only 11% of student

teachers surveyed at a Queensland university had learned information within the classroom about Australia's mandated reporting policy. Kenny (2001a) discovered that 74% of teachers surveyed found their preservice or college education training on child abuse was minimal or inadequate. In another study, Kenny (2004) recognized that only 34% of teachers had training about child abuse in their college training.

Although it appears that there is some mandated reporter and child maltreatment training existing in the education to become a teacher, Kenny (2004) noticed a challenge within training available,

“Preservice education did not seem to make much of a difference in whether or not these teachers believed they had adequate knowledge of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. It may be that these teachers who have had some training, feel less aware of the signs and symptoms of child maltreatment, as they have been educated on the complexity of this issue. Those without training, may believe they possess all the knowledge they need to” (p. 1317).

Training within the workplace. Training for teachers as mandated reporters might also be included in the school district they work for (Kenny, 2001a). Kenny (2001a) found that 45% of teachers surveyed believed their on-the-job or post-service training was minimal, while 13% found it inadequate. Kenny (2004) additionally recognized that the lack of awareness of teachers in relation to school's reporting procedures indicates on the job training is minimal.

Effectiveness of training. Research exploring training programs has proven training to be effective (Hawkins & McCallum, 2001a; Hawkins & McCallum, 2001b; Kenny, 2007). When evaluating the South Australian Education Department Mandated

Notification Training program, Hawkins and McCallum (2001b) found that school personnel was more confident in recognizing signs of abuse, responsibilities as a reporter, and how to best respond to a child who been subject to abuse. Kenny (2007) also discovered that undergraduates studying to be teachers and counselors responded positively to online-based mandated reporter training. Participants increased knowledge about reporting procedures, legal penalties and statistical data regarding child maltreatment (Kenny, 2007).

Training can also be helpful for identifying specific types of abuse. Hawkins and McCallum (2001a) found that untrained participants who were exposed to hypothetical cases of obvious physical abuse and neglect were able to identify and report. However, trained respondents who were exposed to symptoms of emotional abuse were much more likely to identify and report than those who were untrained (Hawkins & McCallum, 2001a). These studies indicate that training is helpful to mandated reporters in feeling more confident in their abilities to detect signs of maltreatment and how to make a CPS report.

What information do teachers need to know about mandated reporting and maltreatment? Much of the literature suggests specific information that would be helpful for teachers to know about mandated reporting to further their capabilities in reporting (Alvarez et al., 2004; Besharov, 1994; Crenshaw et al. 1995). Crenshaw et al. (1995) suggests that teachers are taught the symptoms of child abuse and how they could be tied together to indicate that a child may be subject to maltreatment. Besharov (1994) additionally lists that training should include knowledge about when and how to report child abuse as well as the purpose of reporting to help the child and family. Alvarez et al.

(2004) suggests that the consequences for failure to report as well as signs of abuse and technicalities of reporting should be included while training education professionals. These studies demonstrate the need for change within current training systems for mandated reporters.

The American Psychological Association (APA) recommends that training to combat child abuse and neglect include definitions and prevalence of maltreatment as well as consequences of abuse, responses from CPS and prevention (Alvarez et al., 2004). Further, Tower (1992, as cited by Alvarez et al., 2004) believes that training should call attention to the fact that professionals do not need to verify that a child was maltreated in order to file a report to CPS.

Additionally, it is suggested that training should be available throughout a teacher's professional career (Alvarez et al., 2004; Kenny, 2001a). Alvarez et al. (2004) reports that training surrounding mandated reporting an abuse should be incorporated in undergraduate and graduate education, internships and practicum, postgraduate training and through continuing education. Kenny (2001a) further agrees that school administration should provide support and additional training for teachers about reporting maltreatment.

What kind of training is effective? In addition to where teachers learn about mandated reporting and child maltreatment and what information is crucial for their learning, it is important to recognize what kinds of training techniques are most effective in reaching a variety of learners. While lecture or presented information is necessary in understanding the overall picture of child maltreatment, Alvarez et al. (2004) notes that interactive group exercises that include vignettes are needed to further engrain

information. Thirty-seven percent of student teachers found that lectures and tutorials were effective in providing knowledge about a specific department of education question, while other policies learned through lectures and tutorials ranged from 10-25% (Goldman & Grimbeek, 2011).

Teachers Want to Help Students

Although research has indicated a lack of training and knowledge surrounding mandated reporting, it is clear that teachers want to be able to help their students (Besharov, 1994; Goldman & Grimbeek, 2009). Primary student teachers appear to have a lack of knowledge about mandated reporting, but qualitative responses show that they want to help protect students, as well as promote their students' psychological well being (Goldman & Grimbeek, 2009). Hawkins and McCallum (2001a, as cited by Goldman & Grimbeek, 2009) further indicated that 75% of respondents agreed with statements about teachers' responsibility to the well being of students and teachers should always report to authorities if suspecting maltreatment regardless of the rules associated. The majority of teachers are not failing to report due to a lack of care for children, but a lack of knowledge about the situation a child may be subjected to or a lack of education about reporting procedures (Besharov, 1994).

The consequence of not reporting or a lack of knowledge about reporting procedures is that abuse may continue to be subjected to a child (Kenny, 2001a). In order to best help students, it is imperative that training is further implemented for mandated reporters, especially teachers who spend a significant amount of time with their students. While many of these studies point toward the lack of training, knowledge and confidence that teachers possess around mandated reporting, there is also limited research about this

topic in Minnesota. Although the Department of Human Services (DHS) has developed an interactive online training to aid mandated reporters in the process of filing a report and the following actions that will be taken, as well as identifying signs of maltreatment and the penalties that are associated with not reporting, there is no regulation on the training's administration and no further training standard in Minnesota (Baier, 2012; Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013b). This study explores:

1. Teachers experience with mandated reporting
2. If and where they have received training on mandated reporting and child maltreatment
3. Where they believe they should be receiving training and what they feel it should include.

Conceptual Framework

There are two theoretical frameworks that help to guide this study. The ecological perspective focuses on the person in their environment and how the environment can influence the behavior of an individual. This theory helps to identify how the environment impacts a teachers understanding of maltreatment and mandated reporting. Structural functionalism is additionally important in understanding patterns and predictability of a system. This focuses on how power dynamics and norms within a school may influence priorities and procedures.

Ecological Perspective

One theory that applies to the study is the ecological perspective. According to the Child Welfare Information Gateway, "child maltreatment is viewed as the consequence of the interplay between a complex set of risk and protective factors at the individual,

family, community and society levels” within the ecological framework (DePanfilis & Salus, 2003). These levels of involvement are also important in considering how teachers’ training and knowledge of maltreatment and mandated reporting may be interconnected to their environment. Germain (1991, as cited by Forte, 2007) notes that a person in their environment creates an interdependent relationship and that one cannot be understood without the other. A teacher’s environment may refer to the school or setting that he or she works within as well as the grade level, topic or ability he or she teaches. How a teacher will respond to child maltreatment may be in relation to if they have received training or not, as well as the environment they are working in or the administration they are working under.

Bronfenbrenner’s model of development indicates that the environment influences how a person will behave at a specific time (Forte, 2007). He believed that development is structured around relationships, physical environment, process and time (Forte, 2007). The model also varies at the different system levels: Micro, Meso, Exo, Macro and Chronosystems (Forte, 2007).

In regard to teachers, their immediate setting or micro system has a large part in their knowledge of maltreatment and mandated reporting. If they have not had training within their education or workplace, or been exposed to others who have knowledge about procedures, they may be unaware of what to do when faced with child maltreatment in the classroom. Their personal experiences also impact their understanding at this level. A teacher may have knowledge based on personal experience with maltreatment or have been mandated to report in other settings, which could make them more comfortable in the process.

The mesosystem connects two or more immediate settings (Forte, 2007). For example, teachers who have not had training in mandated reporting and child maltreatment in their education to be a teacher may be unaware of their lack of knowledge on the topic when in a classroom. Thus the teacher's education system and workplace systems are then connected and show how they may conflict or complement each other (Forte, 2007).

At the exosystem, or the level that influences the immediate setting, the school system may make decisions about what continuing education programs are necessary for teachers. Additionally, the higher-education accreditation board may have influence on what topics are crucial to be covered within teacher education. Both could impact the access teachers have to training.

The macrosystem may focus on the laws, values or cultural beliefs within society about child maltreatment and mandated reporting procedures and whether the treatment and wellbeing of children is something that should be enforced and further trained upon. Additionally, the chronosystem refers to the changes that happen to a person over time (Forte, 2007). Teachers may be faced with a child maltreatment situation that impacts their views and knowledge about mandated reporting in the future. A teacher could also recognize his or her comfort and capabilities with making a report and seek additional training or information on their own or within their work or education setting.

Structural Functionalism

Another framework that relates to this study is structural functionalism. This theory explains that a social system is driven by "formal and informal patterns of action" (Forte, 2007, p. 165). This creates predictability and knowledge of how a system may

process a given situation (Forte, 2007). Structural functionalism can be applied to teacher training and understanding of mandated reporting by recognizing how the school or agency they work in views child maltreatment. Forte (2007) discusses how worker behaviors within an institution are formed by norms, roles and the distribution of power. Within a school, administration often decides what topics are important to discuss and creates the policies and procedures for handling a variety of situations. Some schools may prioritize educating their teachers about mandated reporting, while others may focus on other curriculum or pressing matters. Teachers' thoughts and actions around reporting may be a result of the school structure and power dynamic. Additionally, different practices and procedures may be a more central focus to the teacher's role. These perspectives help to recognize why teachers may feel inadequate with their knowledge and training surrounding child maltreatment and mandatory reporting. It may also indicate that teacher's lack of knowledge could be the result of systems differing priorities.

Methods

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' experience with mandated reporting, recognition of child maltreatment and the training associated. This study evaluates the responses of Minnesota teachers through a survey instrument to better understand their awareness and comfort with reporting maltreatment, their training experiences and their suggestions for future training. The following research questions are addressed.

Research Questions

1. Where do teachers receive training about mandated reporting and child maltreatment?
2. Do teachers feel prepared in their role as a mandated reporter?
3. Where do teachers believe they should receive training?
4. What should training include for mandated reporters?

Research Design

The research design for this study is a mixed-mode questionnaire using both quantitative and qualitative questions. The survey was dispersed via email, Facebook and Twitter to participants using Qualtrics.com, an online survey program, with use granted by the University of St. Thomas. Survey questions were pulled from the Educators and Child Abuse Questionnaire (ECQA) (Kenny, 2004) and the Teachers and Child Abuse Questionnaire (Kenny, 2001a). Additional questions were created from the literature to include teachers' experiences and perceptions of training for mandated reporting and child maltreatment.

The use of an online survey was chosen in order to receive information from a large sample of teachers across Minnesota (Monette, Sullivan & DeJong, 2011). A survey was quick, provided maximum flexibility for participants and was the most generalizable across settings (Monette et al., 2011). By using both quantitative and qualitative research, there is an opportunity to have more quantifiable data about teachers experiences with mandated reporting and maltreatment, as well as subjective feelings, perceptions and ideas that are important to each teacher's individual experience (Monette et al., 2011).

Sample

The population for this study is teachers across the state of Minnesota. To attain the target participants for this study, a nonprobability snowball sample was used. The survey was launched via Qualtrics.com on February 12th, 2014 and closed on April 4th, 2014. The researcher began by emailing individuals who work as teachers in the Twin Cities area with the link to the survey. Contacts were asked to participate in the survey and to forward it on to other Minnesota teachers they know. The researcher also posted links to Facebook and Twitter to explain the need for teachers' participation. Other individuals who knew teachers that could participate also shared this link. The language in the email and social media posts asked participants and others to pass on the survey to teachers in Minnesota. Snowball sampling was chosen because of the close working relationship teachers often have with one another and people are often more likely to participate in a survey if it is suggested by someone with a shared experience (Monette et al., 2011).

The present study had 65 participants (male = 11, female = 54) who completed the study. However, three additional people chose not to continue on to the survey after reading the consent form. These participants were removed from the final data set. The sample for the present study was comprised of 11 men (17%) and 54 women (83%) (n = 65). No participants identified themselves as transgender or other. Participants' ages (n = 63) ranged from 23 to 65, with a median age of 34 and a mean age of 37.63. In regard to level of education (n = 65), 21 (32%) of participants had a bachelor's degree, 43 (66%) had a master's degree and one (2%) had a doctorate.

In regard to grade level taught (n = 65), the majority of participants taught elementary school (41 responses, 63%), with 22 (34%) of respondents teaching high

school. Most participants (41 responses, 63%) identified as a classroom teacher, while 19 (29%) participants identified as teaching regular education and both special education and specialists received seven (11%) responses. Twelve (18%) participants chose 'other'. Other responses included: "co-teach with classroom teacher," "substitute," "private tutor," "academic coordinator," and "support staff." Table 1 shows the sample of grade level and setting taught. Participants (n = 63) had a range of 1-38 years teaching, with a median of 8 and mean of 11.94 years teaching. In the sample (n = 65), 17 (26%) of participants indicated they worked in an urban setting, six (9%) participants indicated they worked in a rural setting and 42 (65%) participants indicated they worked in a suburban setting.

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents Regarding Grade Level Taught and Setting Taught

Grade Level Taught	Response	%	Setting Taught	Response	%
Elementary	41	63%	Classroom Teacher	41	63%
Middle School / Junior High	5	8%	Regular Education	19	29%
High School	22	34%	Special Education	7	11%
Other:	2	3%	Specialist	7	11%
			Other:	12	18%

Protection of Human Subjects

This study was reviewed and approved by a research committee, research chair and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of St. Thomas to guarantee the protection of human subjects before starting data collection. All participants were teachers (K-12), thus no participants were from vulnerable populations. The survey questions were of minimal risk for discomfort or harm as they relate to individuals

personal experience with mandated reporting and participants were assured confidentiality. Potential coercion was avoided by conducting the questionnaire online through Qualtrics. It was an anonymous and voluntary questionnaire. The investigator did not have any information that could identify participants. All participants were given information about the voluntary nature of this study through informed consent.

Participants were asked to participate in this study through email, Facebook and Twitter. Informed consent was given to all potential participants online, preceding the survey in Qualtrics (Appendix A). The informed consent provided information about the purpose of the study, why the participant was invited to participate, the potential risks and benefits, the voluntary nature of the study and how the participant's confidentiality would be upheld. The opening page of the survey informed potential participants about the study and explained that completion of the survey implies consent.

The researcher guaranteed the participants' confidentiality by keeping anonymous data saved and maintained in a file on the researchers personal password-protected computer. The researchers access to Qualtrics will be discontinued on May 24, 2014, at the end of the school year. The researcher will keep the anonymous data for potential use in publication.

There were minimal risks associated with participation in this study. Questions asked teachers about their past experience with making a report to CPS, as well as if they have ever not reported when they may have thought a child was mistreated. A link to additional training about child maltreatment and mandated reporting was provided at the end of the survey for participants to increase their own knowledge as desired. Potential benefits included self-awareness for the teacher about their experiences with mandated

reporting and child maltreatment and ideas of what they want out of training to increase their understanding of mandated reporting and child maltreatment.

Data Collection

Instrument. The instrument used in this study was an online questionnaire comprised of 29 quantitative and qualitative questions (Appendix B). The majority of the questionnaire is quantitative, beginning with demographic questions to learn about participants. Demographic information gathered includes questions about gender, age, level of education, grade levels taught, teacher setting, number of years teaching and the area in which the teacher works.

The survey collected data on teachers' awareness and comfort with being a mandated reporter as well as their training experiences through quantitative and qualitative questions. Five of the quantitative questions are taken from the Teachers and Child Abuse Questionnaire, including close-ended, yes or no questions and Likert scale questions (Kenny, 2001a). There are also two open-ended questions from the Teachers and Child Abuse Questionnaire included (Kenny, 2001a). Additionally, four Likert scale quantitative questions are used from the ECAQ (Kenny, 2004). The researcher also created 13 questions that fit within the research topic, including eight quantitative questions and five open-ended, qualitative questions.

Participants were asked to participate in the survey through email, Facebook and Twitter and then directed to the Qualtrics online survey. Because the nature of a teacher's job is contact with students, an online survey was chosen to minimize the time taken out of participants' busy schedules. An online survey is also the easiest method to be passed on to other potential participants.

Reliability and validity. The questions used in this study were taken from the Teachers and Child Abuse Questionnaire (Kenny, 2001a) and the ECAQ (Kenny, 2004), as well as additional questions created by the researcher. Taking questions from past studies, as well as drawing from the literature to develop additional questions increases reliability of the questionnaire. This indicates that all questions have been founded in research or have been used in past research. The research committee reviewed the questions to establish if questions were clear and easy to understand. Additionally, the research committee and research chair evaluated if questions were ambiguous and provided feedback as how to modify questions.

The Teachers and Child Abuse Questionnaire established content-validity by administering a pilot questionnaire to a panel of teachers and child psychologists. The pilot participants then gave their opinions about the measure and several items were changed for readability. The definitions of neglect, physical abuse and sexual abuse in relation to the state statute were also included in the original survey to increase validity (Kenny, 2001a). The definitions of these concepts in relation to Minnesota were included in the current study. The questionnaire used in this study was reviewed by the research chair and committee members to ensure face-validity. This helped to establish if a “logical relationship exists between the variable and the proposed measure” (Monette et al., 2001, p. 115). Content-validity is further established through the creation of the questionnaire from past research. Committee members’ expertise and personal experiences in teaching, social work and research were crucial in further establishing reliability and validity for the study.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were created by the Qualtrics survey program for all quantitative questions including, gender, age, level of education, grades taught, number of years teaching and the area that the participant currently works in. Close-ended response questions about teachers' awareness and comfort with being a mandated reporter and their training experiences were also explored through descriptive statistics. Nominal and ordinal data were analyzed through chi-square analysis in Qualtrics and SPSS, a statistical analysis software. This demonstrates the relationship between teachers' feelings of being prepared as mandated reporters and their feelings about their pre and post service training to deal with cases of child abuse. Content analysis was used for qualitative questions to understand similar themes between participants' responses. Qualitative responses were edited for spelling by the researcher for easier readability.

Findings

To analyze data collected by the survey, the survey program, Qualtrics, generated descriptive statistics for each question. Additionally, chi-square analysis was used to depict the relationship between ordinal questions about teachers' awareness, comfort and training with mandated reporting and child maltreatment. SPSS and Qualtrics were used to create tables. Content analysis was used for qualitative questions to generate similar themes in participant's responses. Themes identified included: teachers' experiences with reporting, the level of preparedness in their role as a mandated reporter, their perceived awareness of signs of maltreatment, making the report, schools reporting procedures, where teachers are receiving training, where they feel they should be receiving training and what training should include.

Reporting

Of the sample (n = 65), 27 (42%) participants indicated that they had made a report of abuse to children's services, 38 (58%) said they had not made a report. Of 24 responses, the range of how many reports participants had made was from 1-20. Respondents indicated some uncertainty around the number of reports made: *"one for certain, maybe another long ago," "unsure 12?," "At least 10,"* and *"20?"* One respondent indicated discipline for reporting: *"Several over the years, but did not tell the district that I did it because they would discipline you."* Of 64 respondents, five (8%) participants responded 'yes' that there has been a time where they thought a child was being abused but did not report, 59 (92%) participants reported 'no'. Thirteen (20%) participants responded that 'yes' there has been a time when they thought a child had been neglected and 51 (80%) participants responded 'no.'

Do Teachers Feel Prepared in Their Role as a Mandated Reporter?

In response to the question, "Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?" (n = 64), over half of respondents (58%) indicated that they felt very prepared or prepared in their role as a mandated reporter. Thirteen (20%) said they were undecided; 12 (19%) said they were unprepared and two (3%) said they were very unprepared in their role as a mandated reporter. Table 2 indicates respondent's feelings of being prepared in role of mandated reporter. Feelings of being prepared were also looked at in association to two other questions of being prepared in pre and post service training.

Table 2

Distribution of Respondents in Feeling Prepared in Their Role as a Mandated Reporter

Do you feel prepared in role as a Mandated Reporter?	Response	%
Very prepared	7	11%
Prepared	30	47%
Undecided	13	20%
Unprepared	12	19%
Very unprepared	2	3%
Total	64	100%

Association between prepared in role as mandated reporter and level of preservice training. SPSS was used to conduct a chi-square analysis to observe if there was an association between teachers' feelings of being prepared in their role as a mandated reporter and the level of preservice training they feel they had to prepare them to deal with cases of child abuse. The crosstabulation and results of the chi-square analysis are displayed in table 3 (Appendix C).

Sixty-three respondents answered both questions in the Chi-square. Table 3 signifies the crosstabulation for the questions, "Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?" and "What level do you feel your preservice training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?" These results show that those who felt they were more prepared in their role as a mandated reporter, felt their preservice training in regard to preparation to deal with cases of child abuse was more likely to be good or adequate. Those who felt they were less prepared or undecided in their role of mandated reporter, thought their preservice training to deal with cases of child abuse was minimal or inadequate. This relationship is further explained by the overall Chi Square-analysis, which gave a Pearson Chi Square value of 26.89 and results in a p-value of .008. Because the p-value is less than .05, this analysis supports that there is a significant association

between teachers' feelings of being prepared in their role as a mandated reporter and the level of preservice training they feel they had to prepare them to deal with cases of child abuse.

Association between prepared in role as mandated reporter and level of post service training. SPSS was also used to conduct a chi-square analysis to observe if there was an association between teachers' feelings of being prepared in their role as a mandated reporter and level of post service training they feel they had to prepare them to deal with cases of child abuse. The cross tabulation and results of the chi-square analysis are displayed in table 4 (Appendix D).

Appendix D reveals that 63 respondents answered both questions in the survey. Table 4 shows the crosstabulation of the questions, "Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?" and "What level do you feel your post service training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?" These results show that those who felt they were more prepared in their role as a mandated reporter, felt their post service training in regard to preparation to deal with cases of child abuse was more likely to be good or adequate. Those who felt they were unprepared in their role of mandated reporter, felt their post service training in regard to preparation to deal with cases of child abuse was minimal or inadequate. This relationship is further explained in the Pearson Chi Square value of 42.882, which results in a p-value of .000. Since the p-value is less than .05, this analysis supports that there is a significant association between teachers' feelings of being prepared in their role as a mandated reporter and the level of post service training they feel they had to prepare them to deal with cases of child abuse.

Awareness of Signs

In regard to awareness of signs of child maltreatment, questions were asked to participants about their awareness of signs of physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. Table 5 displays respondents' results. The table shows that 84% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were aware of the signs of physical abuse. Similarly, 66% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were aware of the signs of neglect. While 46% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were aware of the signs of sexual abuse, 34% were undecided and 20% disagreed.

Respondents appeared to be less confident in their ability to identify signs of emotional abuse with 42% undecided and 14% disagreeing. No participants chose strongly disagree for any category.

Table 5

Distribution of Respondents in Awareness to Signs of Physical Abuse, Neglect, Sexual Abuse and Emotional Abuse in Percentages

	<u>Physical Abuse</u>	<u>Neglect</u>	<u>Sexual Abuse</u>	<u>Emotional Abuse</u>
Strongly Agree	17%	13%	8%	13%
Agree	67%	53%	38%	31%
Undecided	13%	30%	34%	42%
Disagree	3%	5%	20%	14%
Strongly Disagree	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total Respondents	63	64	64	64

Making the Report

Through content analysis, the qualitative question, "Hypothetically, if you had to file a report, how would you do so" was analyzed. Of the 57 responses, 46 participants indicated that they would contact a school social worker, the school principal or administration, the school nurse, psychologist, or counselor before making the report.

One respondent said, "I would ask the school counselors or social worker to direct me to

the number I had to call to report the abuse. I understand that I have to file the report myself,” “I would ask the school counselor for the district guidelines and state guidelines. I would then call the appropriate number and file a report.” Additionally, respondents gave a few different places they would file the report to, including CPS and County Social Services: *“I would contact my onsite social worker, and nurse, and then I would call CPS and make my report,”* and *“I would talk to my school social worker or principal in order to get the information and would call Hennepin County Social Services.”*

Some of these respondents felt they needed to contact one of the schools individuals, but were unsure of what was to happen next or how to make a report. One respondent said, *“I would go to the principal or the social worker and ask for their support because I don’t know how to do it.”* Another shared they would, *“Talk to the guidance counselor, social worker, or school psychologist. Other than that I really do not know!”* Another respondent would consult peers, *“I am not sure how to formally file a report. I would begin by consulting my grade level team for advice. If they did not know what steps to take I would move on and ask administration for assistance.”*

Eight respondents had a sense of the procedure and would file a report without getting additional guidance from school officials. One respondent said they would report, *“Via a form sent to cps in email and fax within 72 hours.”* Others said, *“call the number for county services I keep by my desk. If I’m not sure I have a ‘valid’ report, they provide support,”* *“I would call the CPS number and they would walk me through the steps. I would need to document evidence to have on hand.”*

Some indicated that their schools had a specific procedure and they would need to let their school handle the situation. One respondent said, *“We have steps set in place within our building. Evidence, talking with counselor, principal and then they take it to our psychologist and social worker for the next steps.”* Another said, *“I would contact the principal and notify him of the situation. Then I would follow the school protocol for making the call to report the incident. Following up with the proper documentation for the school,”* and *“We are expected to file through our school psych or administrator to fill out the report and turn it in.”* Another respondent indicated that they would be reprimanded by the school for reporting to CPS instead of going through the school’s procedure:

“I do it by calling children services but not let them know my position. There is a screening board at each school and if you go around them or their decision you may be reprimanded. Definitely spoken to my admin for overstepping our role.”

The qualitative question, “Hypothetically, if you filed a report, what do you think happens after a report is made” generated 58 responses. Twenty six participants felt that social services, child protection, law enforcement or the school would do some type of investigation or follow up. The following responses illustrate this: *“A CPS worker will investigate the claim if there is sufficient evidence of abuse,” “the correct steps by authorities are taken to intervene/investigate in order to make the follow up choices,” “the school investigates the situation and also keeps an eye out for more information.”*

Other participants were unsure of what happened after a report was made and did not make a guess as to what happens. Responses included, “?” *“I have no idea,” “I’m not sure. I’ve never gotten any follow-up information.”*

Some participants also felt it may be more harmful to the child if a report was made. One participant said, *“Based on my experience, absolutely nothing but get the child in more “trouble” with their parents.”* Another shared,

“Nothing much. So they come and take the child in protective custody. The child is worse off than before the report. Just read in the paper last Sunday about foster children bounced in and out. They take a child, do a police report, and the child is taken away. The parent is informed, throws a hissy fit and the child is returned to the home. Can you imagine the beating that child gets for telling family secrets, our system in this state has been awful in dealing with the welfare of students.”

Others felt that it would take multiple reports for a follow up to be executed. One respondent said,

“From my limited knowledge I think it depends on the severity of the report. I have heard that something has to be reported several times before CPS takes action, although I imagine if it is highly dangerous situation CPS would take action immediately.”

Another responded,

“Information is put into a file, or a file has already started for the child with the information that was reported will be added into the file. After enough reports are filed, or an incident involving the law, the file will be reviewed for further investigation”

One respondent had personal experience to share,

“From my personal experience and anecdotes I've heard, it is rare that the county follows up on cases of abuse unless there is strong physical evidence and lots of

previous cases in the family's file. I have not heard very positive reports of county responsiveness, so I have been told that in "borderline cases" the county will probably do nothing."

Other respondents felt that an individual might come to the school to follow up a report. One respondent said, *"would think that someone would come to the school and discuss the issue with other teachers and/or staff for further evidence."* Another noted,

"Depends. If the abuse is physical/sexual and serious and child is willing to say what happened and there is evidence, then county work would come to school and interview student, possibly the same day. If it is neglect; i.e. not enough food, dirty clothes or hair, or instances of "I fell down," or "I get lots of earaches and mom doesn't take me to the dr." then I think county waits for multiple reports or for something worse to happen."

School Reporting Procedures

When asked the question, "I am aware of my schools procedures for child abuse reporting" (n = 64), 70% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were aware of their schools procedures for reporting. Seven (11%) respondents said undecided; 10 (16%) participants indicated disagree and two (3%) respondents said strongly disagree.

Through review of qualitative questions, some respondents indicated that they might not be making the report themselves. *"I would speak to the school social worker and ask her about the process. I know there is a number to call but I am unsure if that is my responsibility or that of the social worker."* Another person stated,

“The adult that I reported to would call child protection and that agency makes the call as to whether or not to pursue it further. Also the adult that I reported to would spend some time talking to the child in a one-on-one situation.”

Some felt that it was another person’s responsibility to make the report. *“Social worker moves forward with reporting to child services and they proceed with investigation”* and *“Someone in charge of reporting (nurse) would follow through with paperwork and involve a social worker, law enforcement or whatever is needed to follow through”*

A few participants indicated that their school procedure was to have another individual make the report, *“My district provided in-district PD sessions. Although our mandated reporting structure had us notify a social worker, who the reported allegations to children's services.”* and *“I always approach our school social worker, who then completes a mandated report.”*

Where Do Teachers Receive Training About Mandated Reporting and Child Maltreatment?

The majority of participants (59%, n = 64) indicated that they received most of their information about being a mandated reporter from a school district that they worked for. Only 45% of participants believed that they got information from their preservice education, while 23% gained information from their personal experience. An additional 13% of respondents indicated ‘other’ which included training in Head Start, through the teacher’s union, AmeriCorps, Campfire USA and from other staff within the school.

Preservice. Only 38% of respondents (n = 63) felt that their preservice training prepared them good or adequate to deal with cases of child abuse, while 46% of

respondents felt that they had minimal preservice training and 16% felt their preservice training was inadequate. Thus indicating that the majority of respondents felt they did not have a strong level of preparation in their preservice training for dealing with cases of child abuse. Table 6 shows the preservice training participants had in preparation to deal with child abuse.

Table 6

Distribution of Respondents in Feelings of Being Prepared to Deal with Child Abuse Through Preservice Training

Level of preservice training for child abuse	Response	%
Good+	3	5%
Adequate	21	33%
Minimal	29	46%
Inadequate	10	16%
Total	63	100%

In regard to participants' preservice training in discussing their responsibilities as a mandated reporter, 47% of respondents (n = 64) felt that they had good or adequate level of training. However, 53% of respondents felt that they had minimal or inadequate preservice training about their responsibilities as a mandated reporter. This shows that more individuals did not feel they had a strong level of preparation in their preservice training to be a mandated reporter. Table 7 indicates preservice training in discussion of responsibilities of a mandated reporter.

Table 7

*Distribution of Respondents Feelings about Level of Preservice Training for**Responsibilities as a Mandated Reporter*

Level of preservice training for mandated reporter responsibilities	Response	%
Good+	12	19%
Adequate	18	28%
Minimal	25	39%
Inadequate	9	14%
Total	64	100%

Post service. While 43% of respondents (n = 63) felt that their post service training in preparation for dealing with cases of child abuse was good or adequate, 57% participants felt that their post service training for child abuse was minimal or inadequate. This displays that more individuals did not feel they has a strong level of preparation in their post service training to deal with cases of child abuse. Table 8 shows the post service training participants had in preparation to deal with child abuse.

Table 8

*Distribution of Respondents Feelings About Level of Post Service Training for**Preparation to Deal with Cases of Child Abuse*

Level of post service training for child abuse	Response	%
Good+	8	13%
Adequate	19	30%
Minimal	27	43%
Inadequate	9	14%
Total	63	100%

The qualitative question, “To what extent have you received any formal training provided by a school that you have worked in for mandated reporting?” received 51

responses. Content analysis found that 16 respondents indicated that they had had “*none*” or “*no formal training*” regarding mandated reporting in a school they had worked for. Four respondents shared that they had “*very minimal*” training. One respondent shared they had “*minimal training, basically a small amount of time on legal responsibility with less time on what to look for and how to deal with what you find.*”

Others shared the brevity of the information given. Some discussed that material was shared in a hire packet, handout or video, while others recall brief staff meetings discussing mandated reporting. For example, one person responded, they received “*Scattered information about what to fill out and who to seek information from during a staff meeting.*” Another participant shared they did not have much memory of training happening, but an awareness that they needed additional information: “*To be honest, I cannot remember much training from the district. I am aware that I need further training to understand mandated reporting (I have not encountered any opportunities to report anything so far in my career).*”

A few participants shared they had a lot of training about mandated reporting. One participant noted that they talked about mandated reporting monthly, others discussed trainings put on by the county for a variety of professionals who are mandated reporters. Others shared that the additional training for new teachers or their district was supportive in providing training and follow up. One participant shared, “*We have had numerous workshops on mandated training as well as other mental and physical health issue.*” Another responded, “*I took a two hour 'new teacher' class that discussed legality issues as a teacher. It was taught by the district's attorney.*” A third respondent

discussed, *“In a previous district where there was history of lots of needed reporting we received much training and follow-up with us after training and reporting”*

Where Do Teachers Believe They Should Receive Training?

Of the 64 responses, 52 (81%) of respondents indicated that they would like to have more training about mandated reporting procedures and child maltreatment. 12 (19%) of respondents indicated that they did not want more training about mandated reporting and child maltreatment. This indicates that the majority of participants would like to have more training.

Many of those who wanted more training shared that they felt they did not fully understand how to conduct mandated reporting. Some did not know what to look for or how to report, others wanted to be more comfortable in their role as a mandated reporter. One participant shared, *“As I am required by law to report, I don't feel like I fully understand how to do this and the risk factors involved.”* Others wanted to be prepared if they were faced with a situation to report,

“I work in an urban and extremely low income school and neglect is a problem among our children. Unfortunately I do not know how reporting is done or how serious the neglect must be to report. To my knowledge I have never had a child suffer from physical/sexual/verbal abuse, but I would like to be prepared in case that situation does arise.”

Some participants were unsure of the signs of maltreatment and wanted to have more awareness. A few participants shared that they specifically wanted more training in identifying signs of emotional or sexual abuse. One participant said, *“I would like more*

training about what to look for in cases of emotional or sexual abuse.” Another wanted more information about signs, but was unsure if it would be beneficial to the student,

“I’d like to know a little more about the signs that I can look for, although I’m not sure how much it would help. It seems that when kids want to hide things, they can be pretty good at it by the time they get to high school.”

Other participants considered the wellbeing of children in their desire for additional training. A few participants felt that ensuring the safety of their students was important. One participant said, *“I think continuing education for the safety of all children is critical.”* Other participants shared that they wanted to know how to intervene with students who may be facing maltreatment. One stated,

“I care a lot about child safety, but it feels invasive to me to ask a student about his/her situation at home; I would like to know more warning signs and learn about ways to initiate conversations with students that really work.”

Another said, *“I’d love to tell me more about this issue to be ready and attentive and able to help anyone suffering any abuse in their daily lives.”* One participant indicated that they saw the impact of what could happen if they were not aware of their role as a mandated reporter,

“As a parent I feel I am more tuned into students’ needs.... but I do not think we have ever had any formal training on it. I would HATE to have something happen to a student just because I didn’t understand what it meant to be a mandated reporter.”

Those who were not interested in additional training shared that they had enough training. One participant shared, *“training has been covered.”* Another felt their training

was too detailed, *“The training I attended was very detailed, more so than I needed. In my opinion, we need to know that it definitely needs to be reported, some signs to look for, but that's about it.”*

Others credited their personal experience with understanding the system and did not think additional training was necessary. One stated, *“After 18 years of working with many Special Ed and at risk students I have worked with many students that have been abused in the past and or currently are in the system getting help.”* Another shared,

“I've had previous training and in this district I went and found out the procedures when needed ... unfortunately the administrator I went to did not inform me of proper procedure, I had to follow up, dig deeper and find out myself.”

Others were no longer working in the schools and did not feel that additional training was necessary.

In response to the question, “Where should teachers receive training for their role as a mandated reporter? Check all that apply:” (n = 64). The majority of respondents (97%) felt that they should receive training in the school district that they work in. Additionally, 72% of respondents wanted to receive preservice training. A slightly smaller amount of participants thought that they should have some training from county child protection services. Table 9 indicates teachers’ responses for where they would like training.

Table 9

Distribution of Responses of Where Teachers Should Receive Training for Their Role as Mandated Reporters

Where should teachers receive training?	Response	%
In the school district they work	62	97%
Preservice training	46	72%
Department of Human Services	20	31%
County Child Protection Services	27	42%
Other:	3	5%

When asked, “In what format should teachers receive training?” (n = 61), the majority of respondents (64%) felt they should have a one-day training to learn about their roles as mandated reporters. Only 10% of respondents felt that an online training should be used, while 18% of respondents felt that another method could be used. Ideas included, that all of the training formats were used, “*all of the above--online as a refresher, one week to begin, one day every few years.*” One suggested that these methods should be used, but a written manual should be given to teachers. Others felt that training should be included into staff development days, “*Several times throughout the year at staff development days and workweek meeting.*” Table 10 shows respondents ideas for the format for training.

Table 10

Distribution of Respondents in Regard to Format to Receive Training

Format to receive training	Response	%
Online	6	10%
One-day training	39	64%
Week workshop	5	8%
Other:	11	18%
Total	61	100%

The open-ended question, “how often should teachers receive training?” created 59 open-ended responses. Nineteen respondents indicated that they wanted training “yearly” “every year” or “annually.” Twelve respondents thought that they would like to have training “every 5 years, with relicensure,” “every 5 years,” or “every licensure renewal period.” Other respondents felt that training could happen “bi annually” or “every three years.” Others wanted training to be when the laws changed regarding reporting. A participant shared, “I would say as often as laws change – is that yearly? Every few years?” Some participants thought training should be more in-depth for new teachers. One said, “required in first year, optional training each subsequent year with a requirement for re-licensure after 5 years.” Others felt it would be helpful for training to happen more frequently, with responses such as “ongoing,” “periodic 3 times during school and work week,” and “every month for about 30 minutes.”

What Should Training Include for Mandated Reporters?

When asked the question, “What content should training include for teachers as mandated reporters?: Check all that apply:” (n = 64). All participants (100%) wanted symptoms of neglect and emotional abuse to be covered in training. Similarly, 98% of respondents felt that symptoms of physical abuse and sexual abuse should be included.

Participants were also concerned with the process of filing the report (95%), who to file the report to (94%) and the consequences of failing to report (94%). Although still a very high percentage, fewer respondents were concerned with what happens after a report is filed (89%). Other responses (8%) included, who could be contacted if unsure of abuse, how to discuss the subject with a child and deciding if needing to make a claim, support from the state, as well as the importance of filing a report for a child. Table 11 shows what respondents felt training should include.

Table 11

Distribution of Respondents of What Training Should Include

What should training include?	Response	%
Symptoms of physical abuse	63	98%
Symptoms of neglect	64	100%
Symptoms of sexual abuse	63	98%
Symptoms of emotional abuse	64	100%
Who to file a report to	60	94%
The process of filing a report	61	95%
What happens after a report is filed	57	89%
Consequences of failing to report	60	94%
Other:	5	8%

Discussion

Teachers Experience with Mandated Reporting

The findings of this study have displayed themes that relate to and differ from previous research, as well as provide implications for policy, research and social work practice. The present study found that over half of participants (58%) had never made a report of abuse to children's services. This is similar to Kenny's (2001a) findings that 73% of teachers had never made a report. Although Kenny's findings are somewhat higher than the present study, both studies have found that more teachers have never

made a report to child protection. Additionally, the present study found that 8% of participants had experienced a time when they thought a child has been abused, but did not report. Again, this finding is similar to Kenny's (2001a) 11% of participants who suspected abuse but did not report. These findings may signify that there are teachers who are not completely aware of the mandated reporting procedures as well as what the signs or symptoms of maltreatment may be.

Do Teachers Feel Prepared in Their Role as a Mandated Reporter?

Over half of participants (58%) felt that they were very prepared or prepared in their role of mandated reporter, which is in contrast to previous literature that has indicated that teachers have felt unprepared in their role as a mandated reporter (Crenshaw, Crenshaw & Lichtenberg, 1995; Greytak, 2009; Kenny, 2004). However, although more teachers may have shared that they felt prepared in this role, qualitative responses show that many individuals may not be aware of the procedures in reporting, but are aware of school personnel (administration, social workers, counselors, psychologist, nurse) who could assist them in making a report. Through content analysis, it appears that many individuals look to contact an individual in their school first to either learn about the process of filing the report, report to school administration or to give to another individual to make the report. These findings show that teachers may feel more prepared than they actually are in practice.

Similarly, teachers were not always sure what happened after a report was filed. Some admitted that they did not know, while others made guesses that an investigation would take place with either law enforcement, child protective services or the school. Some were aware that it may take multiple reports for a follow up, while others thought

that nothing productive happened after making a report and the child could potentially be in more trouble after a report was filed. This shows a large discrepancy in what teachers believe to happen after a report has been filed. These findings may display that the role of child protection and the counties is not communicated to teachers or they may have a lack of trust in the system's ability to protect students, this should be further investigated.

Additionally, Chi-squares showed that there are associations between how prepared teachers feel in their role as a mandated reporter and the level of preservice and post service training in preparation for dealing with cases of child abuse. Both showed significant associations, which may point out that there is a relationship between how prepared one feels in their role and how well they feel that they have been trained to deal with cases of child abuse. This shows that training is important to be prepared to take on the role of mandated reporter. It also shows that a lack of training may lead to individuals feeling less prepared.

Where are Teachers Receiving Training?

It appears that the majority of participants got most of their information about being a mandated reporter from a school district they worked for and/or through their preservice training. However, responses indicated that over half of participants had minimal or inadequate preservice preparation for cases of child abuse and discussing responsibilities of being a mandated reporter. This displays that preservice training and the training about mandated reporting in colleges and universities have not provided adequate information to teachers. It appears that even within the university setting there is a lack of awareness of who teaches and in what courses mandated reporting and child maltreatment is covered. The researcher asked professors in the education departments at

Twin Cities universities to further inquire where this information was covered in the curriculum for education students and there was some difficulty in identifying who taught the information. One professor shared that they used the Minnesota Department of Human Services website to inform students about mandated reporting. She also identified that she “coached them through the mandated reporting process” if they had a concern about a child (S. E. Hansen, personal communication, December 9, 2013). However, there was difficulty in finding additional professors who had discussed mandated reporting and child maltreatment within the classroom.

Similarly, over half of participants felt that their post service training or training within a school or district had been minimal or inadequate. Again this indicates that there has not been adequate post service preparation provided for most teachers about dealing with cases of child abuse. Kenny (2001a) found similar results in that most participants had minimal or inadequate pre and post service training to deal with cases of child abuse. This indicates that there has not been much change in the level of preparation over the past 13 years, which is alarming due to the prevalence of child maltreatment. Content analysis further explored teachers’ level of formal training by a school they have worked in about mandated reporting and found that many had no formal training, while others indicated they had very minimal or brief information given. This also appeared to greatly differ between schools or districts as some teachers indicated that they had a lot of training from the district or their school put more emphasis on talking about mandated reporting and child maltreatment.

Awareness of Signs of Abuse and Neglect

The present study found that over half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were aware of signs of physical abuse and neglect, while almost half of the sample agreed or strongly agreed they were aware of the signs of sexual abuse. The ECAQ conducted by Kenny (2004) found the opposite, which the majority of the sample disagreed or strongly disagreed to be aware of the signs of neglect, sexual abuse and physical abuse. These studies are 10 years apart and there may have been a different level of overall awareness about maltreatment. This is a positive finding, however, if questions were asked to have participants demonstrate their knowledge through a vignette or scenario, there may be a difference in findings. This awareness should be considered in future research and built upon in trainings about mandated reporting and child maltreatment.

School Procedures

The current study found that 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were aware of their schools procedures for reporting child abuse. The ECAQ (Kenny, 2004) found that 79% of their respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed to knowing their school's procedures, a vastly different outcome to the current study. Ten years have passed between the past and current study. Additionally, it appeared that many respondents in the current study would approach school personnel when confronted with an issue of maltreatment. This indicates that schools may have in-house procedures that they follow when faced with a situation of maltreatment. In the future, this question should be followed up with additional information about the school procedure.

Another interesting finding was that some participants shared that they may not be making a report themselves. Some participants admitted to passing off a report to another

individual at the school, who would then make a report or decide the next steps. This is consistent with other findings of schools handling maltreatment within their own terms, although this is not consistent with the law (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2012b). Many people indicated that they would contact their school social worker (or other school personnel) first to decipher what to do in the case that they had to file a report. The literature discussed the lack of knowledge surrounding the reporting process for teachers and how some schools may create their own reporting processes to the social workers or administration despite the laws surrounding mandated reporting (Greytak, 2009; Kenny, 2004). Kenny (2001a) notes, “when teachers defer this responsibility, the abuse is less likely to be reported and more likely to continue, thus placing the child at risk for continued abuse” (p. 89). It is curious if in these cases, the school social worker files the report or directs teachers as to how to file the report on their own. If the school social worker does file the report, it is interesting that they are willing to do so when it is against Minnesota law (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2012b). This calls into question the awareness of education administration as well as social service professionals who work in the school system of their own knowledge about mandated reporting laws and procedures.

Where Should Teachers Receive Training?

Most participants indicated that they would like more training about mandated reporting procedures and child maltreatment. Some of those who wanted training felt unsure of what to look for when reporting or how to report. Others wanted to feel more comfortable in this role or be prepared if they encountered a situation. Some participants wanted more information about identifying signs of maltreatment. Additionally, many

teachers were concerned about the well being of their students and wanted to make sure they were safe, as well as know how to help them when faced with this situation. A smaller amount of participants shared that they did not want additional training due to having an abundance of training in the past or learning from personal experience. This finding indicates that there is a vast discrepancy in the amount of training that teachers have had about mandated reporting, but there also appears to be a need for more uniform training for teachers to be prepared for the sake of their students.

The majority of teachers' felt that they should receive mandated reporting training from a school district in which they work. Over half of participants also believed that training should come from their preservice or college education. This shows that teachers feel that it is the responsibility of their school districts and preservice education to give them the proper training on mandated reporting. Less than half of participants felt that county child protection should provide training, however, this group may be able to provide more consistent training across counties about specific mandated reporting procedures. Given the lack of information in school districts, it could be helpful to have a county employee come in to provide the training as needed.

Additionally, over half of teachers felt that a one-day training would be a helpful way to learn about their roles as mandated reporters. Many participants also thought that a yearly training would be useful, while others thought training with re-licensure every five years could serve as helpful to teachers. Surprisingly, only 10% of participants wanted to engage in an online training, which may be the most cost effective and least time consuming option. While there appears to be some variation on the opinion of

training medium and frequency of training, it is clear that many of the teachers felt that they should have additional training provided to them.

What Should Training Include?

Findings display that most participants felt that the content options in the survey were important to be included in mandated reporter and maltreatment training.

Participants thought that training should include symptoms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse as well as neglect, who to file a report to, how to file a report and what happens after a report is filed. This response is consistent with previous findings that teachers wanted more training about child maltreatment and the reporting process (Goldman & Grimbeek, 2009). A limitation to this question is that participants may have thought of additional choices if it had been an open-ended question. Participants were given the opportunity to give other responses, but different answers may have been generated if it had been left as an open-ended question.

Additional Discussion

Through qualitative analysis the researcher identified additional findings that could be important. A few teachers brought up wanting to help their students deal with the challenges they were facing or were interested in finding ways to discuss these issues with the student. It appears that teachers want to support their students and the student-teacher relationship is unique to the amount of time they spend together. Teachers may benefit from additional training with inquiring further about maltreatment, as child protection agencies may want them to have a detailed report. More research should be done to explore if teachers feel that it is their responsibility to investigate claims themselves or to be a resource for students who are facing maltreatment.

Additionally, some teachers felt that it was their responsibility (and that of other school personnel) to decide if they should report potential maltreatment. The Department of Human Services states that mandated reporters should call the child protection unit to gain insight as to whether they have a reportable situation, to reduce the responsibility on the individual (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2012b). This may demonstrate that some teachers are misinformed of this practice. Another interesting finding was that some individuals felt that reporting maltreatment was not helpful to the child and that they could potentially endure more harm for disclosing any maltreatment. Kenny (2001a) notes, "In other words, these teachers stated that they often feel that protective services do not assist victims, which may be based on their experience dealing with these agencies" (p. 90).

Implications for Social Work Practice

This information can be helpful for social workers at various levels. Child protection advocates may use this research and the previous literature to inform their practice when interacting with individuals who are mandated reporters. There is a clear indication that the level of preparation varies across teachers who are mandated reporters and there could be additional differences across different professionals. Child protection advocates can also use this information to guide individuals through the process and provide additional support for training for schools or preservice education. This information is also helpful to school social workers that may be organizing or conducting the training in their schools or are a point of reference for teachers who have encountered child maltreatment. School social workers could use this research to advocate to school officials for more training around mandated reporting and child maltreatment. School

social workers could additionally use these findings to share the importance of training with their teachers, based on the lack of information known. County social workers may be informed of the deficiencies in mandated reporter training and be able to provide more comprehensive training to teachers, as well as school administration and student teachers. Social workers on a policy level could also push for social change in mandated reporting training practices and advocate for the safety and security of all children.

Implications for Policy

There appears to be discrepancy of knowledge about mandated reporting and child maltreatment across teachers in Minnesota, and that is concerning for the safety and well being of students. The results of this study and the previous literature call for policy changes in the current education system with regard to mandated reporting training. Findings suggests that most teachers would like more training about this topic and all teachers should have a consistent level of awareness for identifying signs of child maltreatment, knowledge about how to make a report and have misinformed practices dispelled. This study could also inform school districts of the need for their teachers to have this training and to additionally shed light on the apparent process of dealing with child maltreatment within the schools or districts. This appears to be practiced in Minnesota schools, however, it is also not in compliance with the state law that indicates individuals must do their own reporting (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2012b). This information could be useful to colleges and universities with programs in education, as there is a lack of emphasis on mandated reporting training within preservice education. Additionally, policy makers could push for a reform in mandated reporting laws requiring that university and college education programs as well as school districts

provide helpful information to their teachers. The Minnesota Department of Education and Minnesota Board of Teaching could be notified of this research and the desire for many teachers to have more knowledge about mandated reporting and child maltreatment to ensure that training is included in licensing requirements and provided more uniformly. By utilizing the results of this study, policy makers could have a better idea about what it is that teachers would like out of their training and a format that would be engaging to them.

Implications for Research

The results of this study have indicated that there is a need for additional training for teachers who are mandated reporters. More research should be conducted on this topic to further explore how prepared teachers are with mandated reporting, as this study indicates that teachers may feel that they are more prepared than they actually are. Additionally, it would be helpful to conduct more studies with other professionals who are mandated reporters to gauge the training they have about mandated reporting and maltreatment, as well as the failure to report across professions. It would be useful to compare mandated reporters across professions to have a clearer picture of individuals who report. Researchers should also study school reporting procedures, due to the indication that many schools or districts may conduct their own investigations or handle student maltreatment internally. It would be helpful to get a better scope of how many schools and districts have created mandated reporting procedures and to understand why they do so.

In addition, it would be interesting to learn more about what preservice training looks like at post secondary institutions. This study asked a quantitative question about

this training, but it may be helpful to have a more thorough analysis from teachers or student teachers about the education they receive on mandated reporting and child maltreatment. It would be helpful to ask more follow-up questions about who provided preservice training, as it is unclear what college and university classes provide information about mandated reporting and child maltreatment or if this information was provided elsewhere in preservice education. This follow-up should additionally include post service training to see who provides the training within the school or district.

Another area of research to explore is the child protective services and county practices for screened in and screened out calls. While it is not the responsibility of the mandated reporter to decide what maltreatment should be reported or not, teachers in the current study were wary of the current child protection system and it would be helpful for mandated reporters and others to have a better understanding of the work CPS does and the reasons for not following up on a child maltreatment report. Another interesting area of study would be to gather more information about school social workers and other professional social workers' understanding of mandated reporting. The in-school reporting procedures that have been adapted to fit the school district questions if school social workers are aware of the mandated reporting laws themselves.

Strengths and Limitations

Strengths. This study has a variety of strengths, including the use of an online questionnaire. Through email, Facebook and Twitter distribution, a wide variety of participants were able to easily access the questionnaire without assistance from the researcher (Monette et al., 2011). The anonymity of the online questionnaire may also have reduced any discomfort felt by the nature of the questions surrounding child

maltreatment and mandated reporting, as well as minimizing feelings of social desirability (Monette et al., 2011). Participation in this study additionally increased self-awareness about one's own experiences as a mandated reporter and if individuals felt comfortable in this role. Another strength of this study was its exploratory nature and use of qualitative questions to gain a broader understanding of teachers' experiences as mandated reporters.

Limitations. Limitations of the study include the use of a non-probability snowball sample. This method makes the study less generalizable (Monette et al., 2011). Additionally, this study could be limited by the use of an online questionnaire as there are many qualitative questions that could be further explored through qualitative interviews (Monette et al., 2011). The use of the online questionnaire also makes it difficult to be sure that all individuals who participated in the study were teachers in Minnesota. Another limitation is the lack of reliability and validity of the study from creating additional research questions that have not been standardized. There also were not controls on the survey to ensure that respondents would answer all questions, thus there was a different number of respondents for each question. Furthermore, some of the quantitative questions in the study made it difficult to gain a broader perspective from participants. It would have been helpful to have an open ended question about what should be included in training get a better assessment of what teachers felt was important to their learning about mandated reporting and child maltreatment. Although we are aware that the topics provided are very important to teachers in their learning, it would have been helpful to see if different or additional responses were generated from an open ended question as well as producing additional qualitative questions to gain further

insight into individual experience. Due to the amount of individuals who failed to report abuse or neglect, it would have also been helpful to have a question about why a teacher would fail to report. This would give a better understanding of why teachers may not report when suspecting maltreatment.

Conclusion

While more research must be done on this topic, there is a clear indication that teachers should have additional training in both their preservice education and while they are working in a school. The current study was able to address its research questions and found that over half of teachers receive limited preparation about mandated reporting and child maltreatment, mostly in their pre and post service placements. Many teachers shared that they feel prepared in their role as a mandated reporter, however evidence of how they would report indicates that they may not be as prepared as they believe to be. Minnesota teachers would also like to have additional training in their school districts and through their preservice education. The majority of respondents felt that a one-day training would be helpful and many thought that training should happen yearly or with every licensure period. Participants also indicated that training should include symptoms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse as well as neglect, who to file a report to, how to file a report and what happens after a report is filed. Although there are limitations to this study, it is clear that teachers in Minnesota could benefit from additional training about mandated reporting and child maltreatment. There are a variety of resources for training and it is recommend that child protection workers and advocates, the Department of Human Services, county social service agencies, The Minnesota Department of Education, district board of education and school social workers take into consideration

the impact that a lack of teacher training in mandated reporting and child maltreatment could have on their students.

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Appendix A

CONSENT FORM
UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS
GRSW 682 RESEARCH PROJECT

**Mandated Reporting and Child Maltreatment:
Training and Experiences of Minnesota Teachers**

I am conducting a study to explore teachers' experiences with mandated reporting, recognition of child maltreatment and the training associated. I invite you to participate in this research. You were selected as a possible participant because of your experience as a teacher in Minnesota. Please read this letter before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Allison Butts, a MSW student at the School of Social Work, St. Catherine University/University of St. Thomas under guidance of Katharine Hill, PhD, MPP, LISW, MSW, Professor at the School of Social Work at St. Catherine University/University of St. Thomas.

Background Information:

This study will evaluate the responses of Minnesota teachers through a survey instrument to better understand their awareness and comfort with reporting maltreatment, their training experiences and their suggestions for future training. Previous research suggests that there is a lack of training surrounding mandated reporting and child maltreatment for teachers and that there may be cases that go unreported due to the lack of knowledge surrounding this topic. In Minnesota, there is currently no standard for training professionals who are mandated reporters. School personnel file nearly 24% of all maltreatment reports and it is important to learn where teachers are receiving their training and information to make a report.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be directed to complete a 29-question, online questionnaire that will take approximately five to ten minutes of your time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

The study has minimal risk. Questions will ask teachers about their past experience with making a report to CPS as well as if they have ever not reported when they may have thought a child as mistreated. The questionnaire data will be used for the purpose of this study and unidentifiable data will be kept in the event that publication is sought. You will only be answering questions related to your experiences and do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. A link to additional information and training about child maltreatment and mandated reporting will be provided through the Minnesota Department of Human Services at the end of the survey for participants to increase their knowledge as desired. There are no direct benefits to this study.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept confidential. In any sort of report I publish, I will not include information that will make it possible to identify you in any way. Due to the nature of the study, the researcher will not know the identity of the respondents. Research records will be kept in a file on a password-protected, personal computer that cannot be accessed by anyone else. The analysis of this data will be included in a paper I turn in to my professor and present to a

committee, but will not contain information that could identify participants. All data submitted will be anonymous and kept by the researcher if publication is sought.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer and may end the survey at anytime. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with St. Catherine University, the University of St. Thomas, or the School of Social Work. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. Should you decide to withdraw, any data collected about you will only be used with your permission.

Contacts and Questions

My name is Allison Butts. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact me at ____ or email me at ____ You may also contact my professor and advisor for this assignment, Katharine Hill, at _____ or _____. You may also contact the University of St. Thomas Institutional Review Board at ____ with any questions or concerns.

Completion of the survey implies your consent. If you agree to participate in this study, please click 'Continue/Agree'.

Appendix B

Mandated Reporting and Child Maltreatment: Training and Experiences of Minnesota
Teachers Survey
Allison Butts
IRB Tracking Number: 552253-1

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined as followed:

- Child Maltreatment is neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse or emotional abuse towards a child.
- Neglect is failure by a caregiver to provide “food, clothing, shelter, medical or mental health care, or appropriate supervision;” protection from conditions that endanger a child; or appropriate education as specified by the law (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013)
- Physical Abuse is “any physical injury or threat of harm or substantial injury, inflicted by a caregiver upon a child other than by accidental means” (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013)
- Sexual abuse is “the subjection of a child to a criminal sexual act or threatened act by a person responsible for the child’s care or by a person who has a significant relationship to the child or is in a position of authority” (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013)
- Emotional Abuse or a mental injury “is harm to the child’s psychological capacity or emotional stability evidenced by an observable and substantial impairment of the child’s functioning” (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2013)

Please pick the answer that best fits you.

1. Gender:
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Transgender
 - d. Other/Choose not to identify
2. Age: _____
3. Level of education: *
 - a. Bachelors
 - b. Masters
 - c. Doctoral
4. What grade level do you teach? Check all that apply:
 - a. Elementary
 - b. Middle School / Junior High
 - c. High School
 - d. Other: _____

5. In what setting do you teach? Check all that apply:
 - a. Classroom Teacher
 - b. Regular Education
 - c. Special Education
 - d. Specialist
 - e. Other: _____

6. Number of years teaching: * _____

7. What area do you work in?
 - a. Urban
 - b. Rural
 - c. Suburban

8. Have you ever made a report of abuse to children's services? **
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

9. If yes, how many reports have you made to children's services? *: _____

10. Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?
 - a. Very prepared
 - b. Prepared
 - c. Undecided
 - d. Unprepared
 - e. Very unprepared

11. Where did you get most of your information about your role as a mandated reporter? Check all that apply:
 - a. Preservice education
 - b. In a school district that I have worked in
 - c. Personal Experience
 - d. Other: _____

12. At what level do you feel your preservice training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse*?
 - a. Good⁺
 - b. Adequate
 - c. Minimal
 - d. Inadequate

* Indicates question from the Teachers and Child Abuse Questionnaire (Kenny, 2001a)

⁺ Option was added by the researcher

13. At what level do you feel your preservice training discussed your responsibilities as a mandated reporter?

- a. Good
- b. Adequate
- c. Minimal
- d. Inadequate

14. At what level do you feel your post service training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse*?

- a. Good+
- b. Adequate
- c. Minimal
- d. Inadequate

15. To what extent have you received any formal training provided by a school that you have worked in for mandated reporting? _____

16. I am aware of my schools procedures for child abuse reporting ^^

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Undecided
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

17. Have there ever been times when you thought a child was being abused but did not report? *

- a. Yes
- b. No

18. Have there ever been times when you thought a child was being neglected but did not report?

- a. Yes
- B. No

19. Hypothetically, if you had to file a report, how would you do so? _____

20. Hypothetically, if you filed a report, what do you think happens after a report is made? _____

21. I am aware of the signs of child neglect: ^

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Agree
- c. Undecided

^^ Indicates question from the Educators and Child Abuse Questionnaire (ECQA) (Kenny, 2004)

- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

22. I am aware of the signs of child sexual abuse: ^

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Agree
- c. Undecided
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

23. I am aware of the signs of child physical abuse: ^

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Agree
- c. Undecided
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

24. I am aware of the signs of child emotional abuse:

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Agree
- c. Undecided
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

25. Would you like more training about mandated reporting procedures and child maltreatment? Please describe why or why not:

- a. Yes: _____
- b. No: _____

26. Where should teachers receive training for their role as a mandated reporter? Check all that apply:

- a. In the school district they work for
- b. Preservice training
- c. Department of Human Services
- d. County Child Protection Services
- e. Other: _____

27. In what format should teachers receive training?

- a. Online
- b. One-day training
- c. Week workshop
- d. Other: _____

28. How often should teachers receive training? _____

29. What content should training include for teachers as mandated reporters? Check all that apply:

- a. Symptoms of physical abuse
- b. Symptoms of neglect
- c. Symptoms of sexual abuse
- d. Symptoms of emotional abuse
- e. Who to file a report to
- f. The process of filing a report
- g. What happens after a report is filed
- h. Consequences of failing to report
- i. Other: _____

Thank you for completing this survey! Please share or forward this survey to other K-12 teachers in Minnesota.

For additional information and training about mandated reporting and child maltreatment please refer to the child protection page on the Minnesota Department of Human Services website at

[http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION
&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=id_000152](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=id_000152)

Appendix C

Table 3. Crosstabulation for feeling prepared in role as a mandated reporter and preservice training in preparation to deal with cases of child abuse

Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter? * What level do you feel your preservice training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?* Crosstabulation

			What level do you feel your preservice training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*				Total
			Good+	Adequate	Minimal	Inadequate	
Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	Very prepared	Count	2	4	0	1	7
		Expected Count	.3	2.3	3.2	1.1	7.0
		% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	28.6%	57.1%	.0%	14.3%	100.0%
		% within What level do you feel your preservice training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	66.7%	19.0%	.0%	10.0%	11.1%
		% of Total	3.2%	6.3%	.0%	1.6%	11.1%
Prepared		Count	1	14	11	4	30
		Expected Count	1.4	10.0	13.8	4.8	30.0
		% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	3.3%	46.7%	36.7%	13.3%	100.0%

	% within What level do you feel your preservice training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	33.3%	66.7%	37.9%	40.0%	47.6%
	% of Total	1.6%	22.2%	17.5%	6.3%	47.6%
Undecided	Count	0	1	10	1	12
	Expected Count	.6	4.0	5.5	1.9	12.0
	% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	.0%	8.3%	83.3%	8.3%	100.0%
	% within What level do you feel your preservice training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	.0%	4.8%	34.5%	10.0%	19.0%
	% of Total	.0%	1.6%	15.9%	1.6%	19.0%
Unprepared	Count	0	2	7	3	12
	Expected Count	.6	4.0	5.5	1.9	12.0
	% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	.0%	16.7%	58.3%	25.0%	100.0%
	% within What level do you feel your preservice training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	.0%	9.5%	24.1%	30.0%	19.0%
	% of Total	.0%	3.2%	11.1%	4.8%	19.0%

Very unprepared	Count	0	0	1	1	2
	Expected Count	.1	.7	.9	.3	2.0
	% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	.0%	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	% within What level do you feel your preservice training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	.0%	.0%	3.4%	10.0%	3.2%
	% of Total	.0%	.0%	1.6%	1.6%	3.2%
Total	Count	3	21	29	10	63
	Expected Count	3.0	21.0	29.0	10.0	63.0
	% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	4.8%	33.3%	46.0%	15.9%	100.0%
	% within What level do you feel your preservice training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	4.8%	33.3%	46.0%	15.9%	100.0%

N = 63

Pearson Chi-Square: Value = 26.890, df = 12, Asymp. Sign. (2-sided) = .008

Appendix D

Table 4. Crosstabulation for feeling prepared in role as a mandated reporter and post service training in preparation to deal with cases of child abuse

Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter? * At what level do you feel your post service training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?* Crosstabulation

			At what level do you feel your post service training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*				Total
			Good+	Adequate	Minimal	Inadequate	
Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	Very prepared	Count	5	2	0	0	7
		Expected Count	.9	2.1	3.0	1.0	7.0
		% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	71.4%	28.6%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
		% within At what level do you feel your post service training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	62.5%	10.5%	.0%	.0%	11.1%
		% of Total	7.9%	3.2%	.0%	.0%	11.1%
Prepared		Count	3	14	10	3	30
		Expected Count	3.8	9.0	12.9	4.3	30.0
		% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	10.0%	46.7%	33.3%	10.0%	100.0%

	% within At what level do you feel your post service training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	37.5%	73.7%	37.0%	33.3%	47.6%
	% of Total	4.8%	22.2%	15.9%	4.8%	47.6%
Undecided	Count	0	3	8	1	12
	Expected Count	1.5	3.6	5.1	1.7	12.0
	% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	.0%	25.0%	66.7%	8.3%	100.0%
	% within At what level do you feel your post service training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	.0%	15.8%	29.6%	11.1%	19.0%
	% of Total	.0%	4.8%	12.7%	1.6%	19.0%
Unprepared	Count	0	0	8	4	12
	Expected Count	1.5	3.6	5.1	1.7	12.0
	% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	.0%	.0%	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
	% within At what level do you feel your post service training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	.0%	.0%	29.6%	44.4%	19.0%
	% of Total	.0%	.0%	12.7%	6.3%	19.0%

Very unprepared	Count	0	0	1	1	2
	Expected Count	.3	.6	.9	.3	2.0
	% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	.0%	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	% within At what level do you feel your post service training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	.0%	.0%	3.7%	11.1%	3.2%
	% of Total	.0%	.0%	1.6%	1.6%	3.2%
Total	Count	8	19	27	9	63
	Expected Count	8.0	19.0	27.0	9.0	63.0
	% within Do you feel prepared in your role as a mandated reporter?	12.7%	30.2%	42.9%	14.3%	100.0%
	% within At what level do you feel your post service training prepared you to deal with cases of child abuse?*	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	12.7%	30.2%	42.9%	14.3%	100.0%

N = 63

Pearson Chi-Square: Value = 42.882, df = 12, Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) = .000