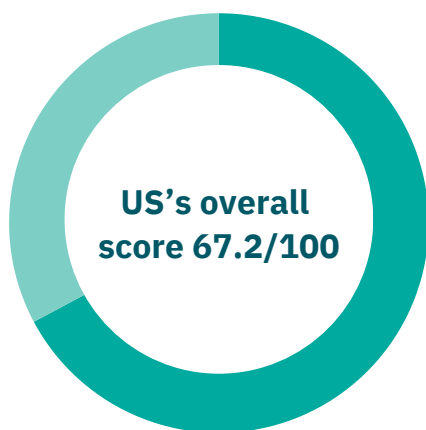


2026 Advocacy snapshot: United States

Overview of findings:



(global average: 52.6/100)

Point of recognition: The US received the 3rd top score in the Americas and Caribbean region and the 9th top score globally.

Explore the US's full results in the 2026 Out of the Shadows Index at: outoftheshadows.global/united-states

“Our score in the United States is a measure of what happens when survivors are treated as an afterthought instead of active stakeholders. We cannot build systems to prevent and respond to childhood sexual violence without the people who have lived through it at the heart and at the table, shaping what accountability and justice actually look like.”

- Leah Juliett, Survivor leader

Calls to action

**brave
movement**

- **Establish a national survivor council** to leverage the lived experience and expertise of survivors and strengthen policy development. Read more about why, and how, your government should institute a National Survivor Council at bravemovement.org/campaigns/national-survivor-councils.
- **Update your National Action Plan** to end childhood sexual violence to include a detailed implementation framework with responsible actors, costings, and timelines.
- **Strengthen legal protections**, including by criminalizing intrafamilial sexual abuse and abuse by people in positions of authority in all roles and settings, as well as clearly defining grooming as a pattern of conduct involving trust-building or emotional manipulation for the purpose of facilitating sexual exploitation.

Governance and accountability

51.3/100 (3rd in the region)

Area of progress: The US received full points for having a **national action plan** that specifically aims to prevent and respond to online sexual violence against children.

Opportunity for change:

The US **National Plan** to End Gender-Based Violence and the National Strategy for Child Exploitation Prevention and Interdiction could be strengthened with clear responsibilities, timelines, and costings. The US also has **no formal mechanism for survivor or child engagement** in policymaking.

Prevention

70/100 (Tied for 2nd in the region)

Area of progress: The US received full points for its **child helpline** and for the availability of **parenting and caregiver support** programs.

Opportunity for change:

There is no publicly available evidence that national legislation in the US requires **pre-service or recurring training** on sexual violence against children for general medical doctors who provide primary care to children. Additionally, the US does not mandate **background checks** for all adults working with children.

Explore our digital advocacy tools to support your advocacy efforts at outoftheshadows.global/en/advocacy-tools

Healing

65/100 (9th in the region)

Area of progress: The US received full points for having **health sector guidelines for the clinical and forensic evaluation** of children and adolescents who may have experienced sexual violence.

Opportunity for change:

In the US, survivors are not universally entitled to **legal aid**. Additionally, the cost of **medical care for victims and survivors** can present a barrier to access.

Justice

73.5/100 (3rd in the region)

Area of progress: The US received full points for having **legislation specific to child sexual abuse material** and for **mandating internet service providers to report** suspected child sexual abuse material to law enforcement.

Opportunity for change:

The US has no **minimum legal age for marriage** and has only prohibited **corporal punishment** in some settings. Additionally, state laws may not explicitly criminalize **intrafamilial sexual abuse** or abuse by people in **positions of authority**.

Tip: Your country made pledges at the First Global Ministerial to End Violence Against Children in 2024. Use the Index findings to show your government where more action is needed to deliver on those pledges. Explore pledges at endviolenceagainstchildrenconference.org

About the Out of the Shadows Index:

The Out of the Shadows Index is the global benchmark of national governments' efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children and adolescents. The Index is researched and developed by Economist Enterprise, with advocacy and engagement efforts led by Together for Girls. Learn more at outoftheshadows.global.