



VECAA Early Childhood Day Presentation

Developed by Jonathan Williams, Executive Director

jwilliams@pcavt.org 802-222-1656

PCAVT at a glance

- Prevent Child Abuse serves the entire state of Vermont, in all 14 counties; this year is our **50th** anniversary.
- In 2025 PCAVT served **7,694** adults, **3,451** children, and indirectly impacted an additional 86,481 children.
- 4 Key Programs:
 - Family Support Programs: Parenting education, support, and skill-building classes in community locations, parent child centers, corrections facilities, turning point centers, and other locations
 - Healthy Relationships Project: teaches abuse prevention and healthy relationship skills to students and educators in schools, day care facilities, and online
 - Safe Environments for Infants and Toddlers: teaches shaken baby prevention, safe sleep practices, and coping strategies
 - Vermont Parents' Home Companion: a trusted, published resource for parents and caregivers for more than 35 years.
- 10 employees, \$1.1 million budget.

What is the issue?



VT AOE DOESN'T CONDUCT
BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR
CONTRACTORS, INCLUDING THOSE
WORKING IN SCHOOLS



PCAVT AND VECAA WOULD LIKE
TO SEE THIS FIXED IN STATUTE

- Issue highlighted by **Vermont Public** story published in July 2025
- **Vermont Agency of Education** hired a local filmmaker for a web design and copy-editing job that included shooting footage in schools
- Criminal background checks aren't part of the agency's standard hiring procedure for contractors.
- Individual secretly filmed two minors in a changing room and posted the video online, where it was ultimately viewed millions of times. In February 2024, a jury in a civil lawsuit ordered the individual to pay the victims millions of dollars for invading their privacy and causing severe emotional distress.
- Individual was never charged with a crime because the statute of limitations had passed by the time police learned of the videos.

Local News

A man was ordered to pay millions for filming teens undressing. Then he got an education agency job

Vermont Public | By [Liam Elder-Connors](#)
 Published July 29, 2025 at 12:33 PM EDT



▶ LISTEN - 4:27



Lola Duffort / Vermont Public

A sign in front of the Agency of Education building. The department recently hired a man who'd previously been investigated for filming two teenage girls in a changing room.

Key Statistics

- In 2023, Vermont's Department for Children and Families received over 20,000 reports of suspected child maltreatment.
- VT Workforce reports that total new AOE contractors in 2024 were AOE Service for contracts figure totaled **153**, so a rather small number- and only a portion of those are working in schools or around youth.

Further Information and a Proposed Solution

- Vermont law (16 V.S.A. § 255) requires schools to conduct background checks on employees, but it does not extend that requirement to individuals hired by the Agency of Education who enter schools, including those contracting with the agency
- In 2019, a state audit found that 20% of Vermont school districts had failed to complete required background checks for new hires, illustrating the importance of clear, uniform policy
- Amend 16 V.S.A. § 255 to require background checks for all Agency of Education employees and contractors who enter schools. This update will close a known loophole, ensuring every adult who interacts with students in Vermont schools meets the same child safety requirements.
- Legislative vehicle in Misc. Education bill...hopefully



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PCAVT and VECAA advocating
for this fix



We can answer any additional
questions or requests for data.



Thank you for your attention