# Introduction to Situational Prevention

**Situational prevention...is about creating safer environments rather than creating safer individuals**" The rationale is that the organisation is better able to influence the environment and practices far better than the characteristics of particular individuals.

Our concept of Situational Prevention originates from criminology literature. Situational crime prevention "does not aim to change offenders in any permanent way but rather to eliminate or reduce their inappropriate behaviour in prescribed settings. It does this by systematically identifying and modifying aspects of potential crime scenes that encourage or permit misbehaviour."

It important that staff continually scrutinise and discuss how school "...practices and culture can enable, facilitate or precipitate abuse-related motivations and behaviour." Applying situational prevention, particularly in the school setting, "requires attention to how risks arise in the routine activities of ordinary adults, adolescents and children."

We use situational prevention strategies every day. For example, if there are students who experience an anaphylactic reaction to peanuts, the school uses a number of strategies to reduce and manage the risk to those students. Another example is teachers often have a specific seating plan to maximise particular student's attention and focus on work and minimise distraction and off task behaviour. We are just using another filter when we examine our environment and practices.

## Situational Prevention Principles

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| **Increase Effort** | Make a behaviour more difficult and more inconvenient to enact |
| **Increase Risk** | Make it more likely that a behaviour will be observed and detected |
| **Reduce Rewards** | Interruption/ early detection |
| **Reduce Temptations** | Identify and monitor/remove triggers for abuse related motivations |
| **Remove Excuses** | Clarify rules & expectations; clarify consequences |

Wortley, Richard, Stephen Smallbone, and William L. Marshall. *Preventing child sexual abuse: Evidence, policy and practice*. Willan, 2013.
Stephen Smallbone *Beyond the Royal Commission: Where to from here for Australian Schools* Training Workshop Manual, Anglicare Perth WA, 2018
Smallbone *Beyond the Royal Commission* Training Workshop Manual, Anglicare Perth WA, 2018

# SOME SITUATIONAL PREVENTION TECHNIQUES

## Controlling access
- Employment screening
- Visitor sign in/pick up register
- Perimeter control
- Regulating adult-child and child-child interactions (Code of Conduct and notification procedures)

## Rule setting and compliance
- Clear rules especially re: personal-professional boundaries (Code of Conduct)
- Healthy and respectful relationship modelling and education
- Staff education/ training
- Parent engagement

## Target Strengthening
- Teaching Child Protection Curriculum
- Identifying vulnerable students and providing targeted education

## Neutralising peer pressure
- Anti-bullying programs and strategies
- Healthy and respectful relationship modelling and education
- Responsible bystander education

## Controlling preconditions
- Identify risky behaviour and practices and remove
- Staff mentoring and supervision
- Pastoral care – observe and respond to personal need

## Utilise place managers
- Engage/train staff
- Reward vigilance

## Enhancing natural surveillance
- Routine movements of adults provide easy line of sight
- Formal surveillance for out of the way places
- "Unpredictable Interruptibility" – make surveillance unpredictable, so people don't know when they might be interrupted

## Promoting extended guardianship
- Make prevention everyone's business
- Systems for reporting/recording small concerns
- Protect/reward whistle blowers

## Clear policies and procedures
- Code of conduct embedded in practice.
- Regular discussion about expected behaviours