

Guideline Document for Training relating to Child Abuse and Mistreatment*

Preliminary

In compliance with the commitments made by the Government both nationally, through the Government Plan of Action for childhood and adolescence of 1997-1998, the National Plan of Action for the Protection of the Rights and Development of Children at a Formative Age of 2000-2001, and Law 285 of 28 August 1997, *Provisions on the Promotion of Rights and Opportunities for Children and Adolescents* (Art. 4 (1)(h)), and internationally, through ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed in New York on 29 November 1989 (Art. 19), approval and signature of the operational programme of the World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children held in Stockholm on 27-31 August 1996, and the successive guidelines and recommendations at European level, on the one hand increasingly profound reflection on phenomena of neglect, mistreatment and sexual abuse and the critical questions they raise has been taking place, while on the other significant practical measures have been taken to strengthen, amplify and innovate action to oppose these phenomena, with the strong commitment by the Government, the public administrations and the whole of civil society to design and deploy every possible strategy to prevent, contain and reduce the phenomenon.

In supporting this defensive campaign, it is essential in all areas of activity (social and welfare, health and justice) for the relevant ministries (Foreign Affairs, Justice, Interior, Equal Opportunities, Education, Health and Social Solidarity), the Regions, local authorities and Provincial Committees for public administration to target investments in information and training strategies to meet the new needs highlighted. The commitment by the Ministries involved to actively coordinate work by the public administrations for prevention, protection, rehabilitation and the reintegration of juvenile victims of sexual abuse goes in this direction.

1. Policy Strategies and Instruments for Prevention and Protection

* This document, drafted by the Department of Social Affairs and the National Childhood and Adolescence Documentation and Analysis Centre, has been approved on 6 April 2001 in joint session by the National Childhood and Adolescence Monitoring Centre and the Coordinating Committee for the Protection of Juveniles from Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (under Art. 17, Law 269/98).

Art. 17 of Law 269/1998, *Norms against the Exploitation of Prostitution, Pornography, and Sex Tourism harmful to Juveniles as New Forms of Slavery*, assigns to the Prime Minister's Office the functions of coordinating activities by all the public administrations relating to prevention, assistance including legal assistance, and protection of juveniles from exploitation and sexual abuse.

For these reasons the Minister, Livia Turco, has issued decrees setting up the Coordinating Committee for the Protection of Juveniles from Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, made up of representatives of the relevant administrations, experts and associations operating in the sector:

Ministry of the Interior, Tiziana Terribile; Ministry of Health, Fiorenza D'Ippolito; Ministry of Justice, Carlo Piergallini and Elvira Parasileno; Ministry of Education, Luigi Calcerano; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Emanuele Pignatelli; Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Crafts, Roberta Di Maula; Department for Equal Opportunities, Vittoria Tola; Ministry for University and Scientific and Technological Research, Sandra Troscia Graziosi; Department of Social Affairs, Paolo Onelli and Cinzia Grassi; National Childhood and Adolescence Documentation and Analysis Centre, Alfredo Carlo Moro; University of Rome, Massimo Ammanniti and Gabriel Levi; University of Naples, Paolo Crepet; Juvenile Court of Naples, Carmela Cavallo; Region of Piedmont, Anna Maria Colella; ECPAT, Mara Gattoni; Terre des hommes, Joseph Moyersoer; National Coordination for prevention and care in mistreatment and abuse of juveniles, Teresa Bertotti; Cultural Association of Paediatricians, Giorgio Tamburlini; AUSL Rimini, Francesco Nardocci; Movement for the Child, Maria Rita Parsi Di Lodrone; *Telefono azzurro*, Ernesto Caffo; *Telefono arcobaleno*, Don Fortunato Di Noto.

In the National Plan of Action for the Protection of the Rights and Development of Children at a Formative Age 2000-2001, approved by the Presidential Decree of 13 June 2000, the Government undertakes to guarantee, at all institutional and operational levels, the greatest possible coordination, prevention and monitoring activity in relation to application of the new law. The Government's commitment is further directed at supporting families in order to assure the child of satisfactory relationships. For these reasons, in line with the commitments outlined in the National Plan of Action and the document "Proposals for Action to Prevent and Oppose the Phenomenon of Mistreatment", drawn up by the National Committee for the Coordination of Actions relating to Mistreatment, Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Juveniles set up in February 1998 at the Department of Social Affairs, the meeting of the National Childhood and Adolescence Monitoring Centre held on 16 October 2000 in the presence of the Prime Minister took important decisions in order to oppose the phenomenon of mistreatment. The National Committee, in the course of its work, identified action strategies essential to challenge the phenomenon, to be activated by the public administrations with the collaboration

of the private social sector and the whole of civil society. It further provided, in implementation also of Art. 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, for a campaign to get to know the phenomenon, to take responsibility for children, for their protection and for the prevention of all the risk factors, as well as for disseminating a culture of boys' and girls' rights.

At the joint meeting of the National Childhood and Adolescence Monitoring Centre and the Coordinating Committee, convoked by the Minister, Livia Turco, on 16 October 2000 at Palazzo Chigi, in the presence of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Justice and the Undersecretary for Civilian Services of the Ministry of the Interior, key problems in the phenomenon, already highlighted in the document from the National Committee, were discussed. In line with the strategies outlined in the document, the need was further stressed to promote wide-ranging training activity on topics of mistreatment and abuse, aimed at all those concerned, especially teachers and health workers. Another commitment taken on by the Government in the Plan of Action and renewed on this occasion was information to new parents and parents of children starting school. For these reasons – in application of the 2000-2001 Plan of Action – the Department of Social Affairs, in collaboration with the National Childhood and Adolescence Documentation and Analysis Centre, has embarked on a parenthood support campaign, offering points to ponder in connection *inter alia* with the phenomenon of mistreatment and sexual abuse.

Following this meeting the Coordinating Committee, chaired by Minister Livia Turco, organized its work into four subgroups dealing with:

- defining the earmarking of the funds under Art. 17 of Law 269/98;
- defining a national operating protocol;
- defining homogeneous statistical survey procedures;
- identifying possible amendments to make to Law 269/98.

The National Childhood and Adolescence Documentation and Analysis Centre was also given the remit of coordinating the general approach in terms of training activities and carrying out some activities at national level, using the guidelines and all further developments furnished by the Coordinating Committee under Art. 17 of Law 269/98.

In parallel with the work of the National Childhood and Adolescence Monitoring Centre and the Coordinating Committee, the Minister of the Interior and the Minister for Social Solidarity agreed a circular addressed to the Prefectures, in which it was decided immediately to convoke the Provincial Committees for public administration, so as to enable immediate talks between the territorial authorities and third-sector organizations with an eye *inter alia* to defining possible strategies for action. According to the directives issued, weekly reports are to be drawn up and sent to the Ministry of the Interior and the Department of Social Affairs on the

phenomenon as a whole and the results obtained following actions undertaken.

Taking as a starting point the research and training activities coordinated between the National Childhood and Adolescence Documentation and Analysis Centre and the Coordinating Committee under Art. 17 of Law 269/98, along with the activities of the Provincial Committees for public administration, this document presents the general guidelines for training activities aimed at those involved in the social area: these training courses, uniformly planned and implemented, will allow the fragmentation and overlapping of actions concerned with children to be avoided, and enable optimum application of the best practices for tackling the phenomenon.

2. Context and Guidelines

In relation to the points highlighted by the National Committee for the coordination of actions relating to mistreatment, abuse and sexual exploitation of juveniles and the Coordinating Committee for the protection of juveniles from exploitation and sexual abuse, as well as to the critical points evident from the Report to Parliament on the state of implementation of Law 269/98, we would indicate:

- the need to start and support information and awareness campaigns aimed at public opinion in general as well as at social workers, boys and girls, and parents, where necessary developing dedicated aids;
- the increase in demand for assistance to victims of mistreatment and their family members both in social respects and from a psychological and clinical viewpoint, and the consequent need to offer an appropriate response in terms of both timing and quality of action, not always guaranteed since not all territorial units have sufficient numbers, training, organization and coordination of the workers involved;
- the evolution of the features of the phenomena of abuse and sexual exploitation, resulting also in new patterns of victim and abuser/paedophile typologies, with the consequent importance of deploying adequate training courses, with an eye also to facilitating access to the relevant services;
- the scarcity and difficulty of uniform collection of data on the phenomena of exploitation and sexual abuse, and the urgency of training targeted at monitoring and at information flows.

Given the foregoing, and on the basis of the strategy lines identified by the National Plan of Action for children and adolescents and of the commitments made by the Government, it is appropriate to make provision for:

- specific courses on mistreatment of children given in connection with medical specialization (obstetrics and gynaecology, paediatrics, child neuropsychiatry) and in professional training courses for psychologists, social workers, educators and other professionals involved in disclosing the phenomenon;
- proper and widespread information on the phenomenon of mistreatment and sexual abuse for all professionals coming into contact with the child during the growth process;
- dissemination of the best protection, care and treatment experience accumulated to date in the public and private social sector, as modes of action that can be applied in varying contexts and territories;
- knowledge of the phenomenon in its various typologies and training for workers concerned, by creating multidisciplinary awareness and training programmes directed not only at those workers but also at managers and administrators, with direct involvement at national level of the Ministries of Health, Education, Justice, the Interior and Social Solidarity, and at local level of the Regions and the Provincial Committees for public administration, with coordination and implementation functions;
- awareness and training activities for the family-type and community structures that take in juvenile victims of abuse and sexual exploitation, with an eye to optimizing the service offered and reducing the potential risk of further trouble;
- creation of integrated services throughout the territory, able to act as reference point and support in cases of mistreatment, abuse and sexual exploitation;
- study and analysis of the most advanced experience with coordination at inter-institutional and operational level, so as to derive reference models transferable to other local situations;
- organization of multidisciplinary, integrated training courses, so as to favour the creation and sharing of a common stock of knowledge among those involved in coordination and the integrated taking of responsibility for the victims;
- promotion of targeted planning at territorial level, so as to enhance, both quantitatively and qualitatively, the number of projects aimed at creating services and structures to tackle the phenomena of abuse and sexual exploitation, with special reference to Law 285/97 and the Regional Plans for education and social and mother-and-child welfare;
- enhancing the quality of action, taking account of the special needs of immigrant juvenile victims of violence, at the disclosure and protection stages, promoting access to services and introducing a role for cultural mediators;
- strengthening specialized criminal investigation units of the police, to be made up of personnel with appropriate training, numerically sufficient for the territorial unit they operate in;
- creating specialized pools of magistrates for mistreatment offences in all prosecuting offices of magistrate's courts, and for sexual violence offences in all prosecuting offices

of the Republic under the courts, so as to give effective implementation to Law 66 of 15 February 1996, *Norms against sexual violence*.

3. Training and Monitoring of the Phenomenon

The needs highlighted in the guidelines indicated uphold the importance of deploying an organic system for monitoring the phenomenon of mistreatment and sexual abuse and the resources in being, to enable in-depth analysis of the various forms of sexual exploitation, offer proper information on the phenomenon by processing these data, and bring in training activities that best fit the needs disclosed.

There is not at present any way of checking of information flows relating to cases of abuse and sexual exploitation, nor any sufficiently exhaustive documentation on what is being done – at the level of local authorities, non-governmental organizations, and the voluntary sector – to tackle the sexual exploitation of juveniles and rehabilitate and offer treatment to the victims. This situation reflects the gross fragmentation that marks the operational context of both central and local public institutions and the non-governmental organizations, which does not allow the true dimensions of the complex and diversified work being done to be monitored either quantitatively or qualitatively.

This monitoring ought to provide for three levels of surveying and analysis of the phenomenon and of counter-actions undertaken:

- 1) analysis and processing of data on the phenomenon;
- 2) mapping of existing resources and services;
- 3) recognition of experience throughout the territory meeting minimum standards in relation to types of action undertaken and organizational models implemented.

Given the interconnections between monitoring and training, there is a need to engage in specific training activities on information flows, providing for seminar modules aimed at establishing skills in finding, archiving and processing data on the phenomenon.

As already recommended by the National Committee for the Coordination of Actions relating to Mistreatment, Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Juveniles and as provided for in the National Plan of Action for the Protection of the Rights and Development of Children at a Formative Age of 2000-2001, there are continuing needs to:

- define uniform criteria for organizing and classifying the statistical information collected at central and local level;
- provide for the securing of data on the phenomenon and the mapping of the services and resources available for purposes of prevention, counteraction and rehabilitation, by creating a unitary collection system able to make the information comparable, structured both at central level (departments and ministries) and at regional and provincial level, for instance through the Provincial Committees for public administration, as an instrument for linking up and monitoring the various information flows;
- promote the exchange of information at international level, so as to obtain a comparative analysis of the variations in the phenomena of abuse and sexual exploitation of juveniles, which are increasingly standing out as crimes with a transnational aspect;
- collect, analyse and classify experience to date accumulated in the area in the public and private sector, to identify methodological criteria transferable at national level, as well as study and define organizational models for managing the sector meeting minimum standards of quality and efficiency;
- adopt measures enabling constant monitoring of relevant data at the prosecution offices of the ordinary and juvenile courts, to permit increasingly detailed analysis of the state of implementation of the law;
- relaunch the creation and activation of the regional monitoring centres provided for by Law 451/97, in relation also to data regarding abuse and sexual exploitation, so as to obtain not just a snapshot of the phenomena considered, but wide-ranging information regarding the mapping of existing resources at both regional and local level.

4. Basic Training and Specialist Training

The panorama of training activities implemented in Italy in recent years is rich, but fragmented. The need is to design and deploy:

- a) information and awareness courses;
- b) basic, multidisciplinary, integrated courses to enable public and private workers to identify cases of mistreatment as early as possible, and equally speedily activate courses in protection and psychosocial and health care, which should be run by workers specialized in the sector;
- c) specialist training courses aimed at individual professional groups intending to go deeper into specific themes;

d) training courses to analyse management and organizational models, aimed at managers of territorial services, providing specific skills relating to the organization of the services and internal coordination, to build up and develop skilled integrated services capable of tackling mistreatment cases as a specialist support reference, dealing with themes like: the network of services and institutions responsible for care, draft agreements between services and institutions in the disclosure and reporting stage, organization of actions aimed at protection and at giving psychosocial care to the children and the families.

A key assumption is that all the workers should be supported by continuing training courses enabling them to acquire, maintain and enhance the technical abilities needed for such complex work, and on the other hand that training modules should be provided.

4.1 Training Objectives

Coming now to the specifics of the training objectives, the information and awareness courses ought chiefly to:

- a) disseminate and strengthen a new culture of childhood, for the protection and promotion of a positive growth process for children, pivoted round the child's right to be respected as a person;
- b) sensitize public opinion, workers, teachers and parent to looking after the child's welfare and creating an appropriate adult-child relational environment.

The basic training should essentially:

- a) supply an informative and critical general framework on the principal themes and the problem areas in connection with action in cases of violence and abuse involving children;
- b) make the course of the action comprehensible through sequential seminars with content bringing up the themes of disclosure, assessment and treatment;
- c) promote a multidisciplinary, integrated vision of the action.

The specialist training should be mostly oriented towards:

- a) deepening knowledge about the network of territorial services, their coordination and the context in which the action is set, strengthening an integrated vision;
- b) enabling the acquisition of specific skills relating to one's own profession.

4.2 Levels of Training and Addressees

In relation to the phenomenon of sexual abuse and mistreatment, training should be planned in three levels:

- 1) the finding;
- 2) the diagnosis;
- 3) the protection and/or treatment of juvenile victims of abuse and sexual exploitation.

The first level of training consists in acquiring and developing the ability to listen to the child, giving skill in disclosing the signs of trouble.

This is secured by an effective primary prevention policy on the territory, consisting in promoting, in the educational context, a schooling in relationships, emotions, the body and the development of sexuality, a culture of attention to and welcoming of the child's emotions, listening to them and observing their behaviour, and the non-verbal messages that may portend even grave trouble.

On the workers' side, it provides for production of training modules on such themes as: reporting – "how and to whom to report" in order to activate the protection network; the semeiotics of abuse and mistreatment; the handling of relationship modes in the ascertainment stage; the proper ways to transfer information following the disclosure of signs of trouble.

First-level training directed at disclosure follows a twofold path:

- 1) The first consists in sensitizing the community to the attention, care and well-being children must be assured of to grow up properly, taking the practical form chiefly of the strong call for an interpersonal relationship with the children. In this area the favoured target consists of teachers (especially in kindergarten and elementary schools) as the foremost addressees for effective awareness action in relation to mistreatment and abuse, as well as of parents, for whom action to support parental responsibility should be provided. These training courses should highlight the need to link up with competent field workers, whose task it is to disclose and decode calls for help.
- 2) The second is basic training action directed at each worker in the context of their specific

role in relation to the child. This involves all workers who, because of the role they fill, should in some way be promoting the harmonious physical and psychological development of the child, supplying a support function in the adult-child relationship and assisting the child in the passage through the various stages of development, including sexual development, covering themes like: risk factors and protective factors in typical and atypical development; communicating to the family and drafting the notification or report; criteria for validating the child's account.

The target consists of:

- a) workers in the health area (doctors, general paediatricians, nurses, child care officers) who look after the body and have a relationship with the parents, and can educate them in their relationship with their child, to the benefit of both;
- b) workers in the social welfare area (social assistants, educators, home assistants);
- c) workers in the psychological area (consulting-room and mother-and-child staff, child neuropsychiatry, school medicine);
- d) workers in the teaching area (course directors and headmasters, teachers and schoolmasters in every discipline, teachers acting as reference points in health education, psycho-paedagogists, coordinators for physical education and sport, truancy workers), collaborators and auxiliaries;
- e) workers in the socio-educational area (educators, leisure workers, sports workers, church and lay volunteer workers).

The first level accordingly has as its main objective early detection of the call for help, initial decoding of this request, and comprehension of the suffering underlying it. While certain workers are competent to make the diagnosis and others to care and protect, it is fundamental for every adult in contact with the child to have a minimum level of training to allow recognition and disclosure of the help signal, along with a minimum stock of information on the position regarding available services on the ground (specialist team, or other). Early disclosure allows further investigation to begin, with the support and assistance of other workers too, so as to ensure an adequately supported timely report. The workers (educational, social welfare or psycho-paedagogical, in the communities, in the police juvenile division, or others) who detected the signal very often remain protagonists of support and assistance actions at a subsequent stage.

The second level of training consists in the diagnosis. This course is aimed at training the workers who have to ascertain the sexual abuse and mistreatment; basically, it is directed at three categories of worker:

- 1) those in the medical area, who have to take the anamnesis and ascertain the physical and neuro-psychiatric damage to the child;
- 2) those in the social welfare area, who have to gather information on the child's family and social context of origin so as to assess the degree of harm and damage and any possible family resources;
- 3) those in the psychology area, who have to check on the psychological damage resulting from the mistreatment;
- 4) those in the legal area, who have to carry out a hearing of the presumed victim.

In the diagnostic course the three areas indicated overlap, and have to be integrated so as to permit the formulation of an overall multidisciplinary diagnosis.

In order to avoid "funnel" programming of the training activities, feeding the workers' sense of inability to do a long-term project for lack of the needed professional skills, equal priority in terms of investment of resources ought to go not only to disclosure and diagnosis but also to training aimed at therapeutic treatment, i.e. the third level of training.

The third level of training is the one aimed at workers developing a psychosocial assistance course to treat the mistreatment (now diagnosed), oriented to supporting and rehabilitating the child, and where possible the family unit. The training courses must be highly specialized and diversified on the basis of the target populations. At this level there are interactions also from the legal instruments for protecting the child and those intended to ascertain the offence of mistreatment or sexual acts and punishing the culprit of the violence; among those coming in here (they may already have been involved at previous levels) are the police forces, the juvenile courts, the prosecution services of juvenile courts, the Prosecution Service of the Republic at the ordinary courts, the preliminary examining magistrate, the magistrate for separations and sometimes also the wardship judge; it thus becomes still more essential to share a culture of integrated working.

It is accordingly indispensable for workers in the area of justice too (police forces, advocates and magistrates) to receive minimum basic training on how to relate to a child victim of mistreatment, with an eye also to better application of Law 269/98 against the sexual

exploitation of juveniles, which calls for new skills. In particular, this need is stressed in relation to the hearing of the child, to factors that may obstruct the child's own statements, to criteria for the credibility of the account, to interview techniques, to activation of resources for taking into care, and to selecting the expert.

5. The Institutions and their Powers

The prevention and treatment of abuse of children and other forms of sexual exploitation require the deployment of specific strategies for action and the acquisition of instruments to disclose, diagnose and care for the juvenile victims.

A practical strategy for prevention and treatment calls for close collaboration and thorough integration not just of the services present on the territory, but also between these and the various institutions that deal specifically with promoting the welfare of children and young people, be they political, legal, administrative or didactic.

The complexity and diversification of the actions provided for *inter alia* by the National Plan of Action for the Protection of the Rights and Development of Children at a Formative Age of 2000-2001 accordingly make it necessary to guarantee the conditions for achieving effective coordination, through clear definition of the competences of the various institutions involved. This need also arises when it comes to training courses directed at all workers involved in disclosing and treating the phenomenon, to collect the data and map available resources in the sector.

5.1 The Role of the National Childhood and Adolescence Documentation and Analysis Centre

The National Centre, active since 1995 at the Istituto degli Innocenti in Florence, was instituted by Law 451 of 28 August 1997, with the intention of potentiating the actions of the Italian Government, Parliament, Regions and local authorities in relation to documentation and analysis. It is now a reference point in terms of documentation, culture and training for many other individuals and agencies operating in Italy, and constitutes one of the most significant instruments for promoting information, knowledge and innovation relating to action to protect and promote the youngest citizens.

Alongside the constant collaboration with the National Childhood and Adolescence Monitoring Centre and the Department of Social Affairs that created it, on behalf of which it has also handled an awareness campaign in support of parenthood, the National Centre has developed

fruitful relations with the representatives of the various Regions, which has led to the joint organization of information events and training seminars aimed at implementation of Law 285/97.

Moreover, since 1998 the National Centre has embarked on growing and significant research activities on issues not adequately known on Italian territory and subject to the action of social policies. Studies already completed or soon to conclude have concerned: juveniles in residential educational welfare institutions, children and young people in foster care, juveniles not chargeable with offences, educational services for early childhood, and services for adolescents.

For these reasons the Minister for Social Solidarity, Livia Turco, in agreement with Minister of the Interior Bianco, has decided that as from 2001 coordinated training activities in the sector of sexual abuse and mistreatment should be brought forward by the National Centre, which should in carrying out these activities make use of the best Italian experts in the sector as well as representatives of the most important associations and NGOs that have in recent years been heavily engaged in preventing and treating every form of sexual violence, and also organize training events on specific themes.

In particular, the National Centre is to hold investigative seminars on the main critical points associated with the phenomenon, as inputs able to bring out new lines and approaches; it will produce material for specific professional people working with children at a formative age; it will produce some multidisciplinary basic national training modules and specialist training modules going further into specific themes, to be pursued as a complement to the training activities provided for at territorial level.

5.2 The role of the Regions

Framework Law 845 on professional training, of 21 December 1978, confers on the Regions the exercise of legislative power in relation to vocational guidance and training. Among activities provided for, the Regions also carry out training actions directed at updating, reskilling and further training for workers.

Decree-Law 112/98 – in Art. 138(1)(a), (c) and (f) – delegates to the Regions tasks of planning the integrated range of training between schooling and vocational training; subdividing the regional territory, *inter alia* on the basis of proposals from the local authorities, into functional areas so as to improve training functions; and actions and promotional activities relating to the tasks conferred. All the Regions have approved the text of the decree in

Committee; eleven Regions out of fifteen have approved the text in Regional Council; the Regions of Abruzzo, Basilicata, Emilia Romagna, Lazio, Liguria, Lombardy, Molise, Marches, Piedmont, Tuscany and Umbria have already adopted regional laws to implement the decree concerned.

Framework Law 328 of 8 November 2000, on the creation of an integrated system of social actions and services, allots the Regions tasks of programming, coordination and guidance in social actions, as well as monitoring their implementation at territorial level. In compliance with the provisions of the above-mentioned Decree-Law 112/98, the Regions are in particular to draw up and fund plans for training and refresher courses for staff engaged in social activities (Art. 8(3)(m)).

Finally, Art. 2(2) of Law 285/97 provides that 5% of the resources transferred to the regions be used to set up interregional exchange and training programmes in relation to services for children and adolescents.

5.3 The role of the Provinces

The transformations brought to the local autonomy system as from 1990 through Law 142 and the recent amendments to it by Law 265/99 explicitly allot the provinces an active role in coordinating and promoting local development, assigning programming tasks that bring out their autonomous role as an active link, since they are intermediate bodies between Region, Municipality and inter-municipal contexts.

Decree-Law 112/98, in implementation of the delegation contained in Law 59/97 which directly identifies the local authorities as ultimate addressees of all administrative functions not explicitly reserved to the State and redefines the pattern of powers among the various territorial levels, confers on the Provinces a broad range of functions of their own, in accordance with detailed rules laid down by the regions, *inter alia* in the area of education and training.

Framework Law 238 of 8 November 2000, in Art. 7, strengthens the role of the Provinces in programming the integrated system of social actions and services; in particular, Art. 7(c) allots them functions of promoting training initiatives, in agreement with the municipalities, particularly regarding basic vocational training and refresher courses.

It is accordingly part of the task of the Province to promote training and refresher-course initiatives in the sector of abuse and mistreatment.

5.4 The role of the Provincial Committees for Public Administration

The Provincial Committees for public administration were set up by Decree-Law 152 of 13 May 1991, converted to law by Law 203 of 12 July 1991, Art. 17 of which concerns «Urgent Measures relating to the Fight against Organized Crime and the Transparency and Smooth Running of Administrative Activities».

Circular 070100 of 3 October 2000 allots the Provincial Committees for public administration the following functions in connection with strategies to prevent abuse and sexual violence against juveniles:

- monitoring phenomena of mistreatment, abuse and sexual exploitation that can be found at the time of reporting the crime (such as age of victim and aggressor, typology of aggressor, context of violence that has occurred, duration, etc.) and links with the organs of the magistracy (Prosecution Services of juvenile and ordinary courts), so as to collect the data on the phenomenon in unitary fashion;
- mapping resources present on the territory (number of social and health workers involved, specialist public and private sector structures in being, etc.) *inter alia* to promote organic and unitary collection of data, in association with the National Childhood and Adolescence Documentation and Analysis Centre;
- coordination and networking of training activities promoted throughout the territory, in agreement with local authorities, so as to avoid overlapping or duplication in the programming of the various initiatives and guarantee integrated training courses at the planning and implementation stages

5.5 The role of the Municipalities

Legislative decree 267 of 18 August 2000, the consolidated text on the provisions governing local authorities, allots to the municipality all the administrative functions that concern the population and the municipal territory, above all in the organic sectors of services to the person and the community, planning and utilization of the territory and economic development, unless explicitly allotted to other institutions by national or regional law, in accordance with their respective powers (Art. 13(1)). Services to the community include powers in the area of adult education that is integrated with that of the Regions and Provinces in the supply of training.