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ИНСТИТУТ РЕПОРТАЖЕЙ ВОЙНЫ И МИРА

WHITE PAPER

**based on the Monitoring Report of the Comprehensive
Plan for the Protection of Children from Violence, Sui-
cide Prevention and Ensuring Their Rights and Well-
Being for 2023-2025 in terms of the work of Psycho-
logical Support Centers and psychological services of
schools and the Desk Analysis of Documents**

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About the Private Foundation Just Support

Just Support Private Foundation is a Kazakhstan-based non-profit organization working in the field of violence prevention and the promotion of psychological well-being for children, adolescents, and families. The foundation implements educational and advocacy projects, develops trauma-informed support practices, and contributes recommendations for improving the state system for child rights protection. Since 2018, Just Support has been working comprehensively with families, educators, and professionals, combining scientific approaches, public education, and systemic change. The foundation's flagship project is the Anti-Bullying Community, which unites over 30 experts from 9 regions of Kazakhstan and works to create safe environments in educational institutions.

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ist of abbreviations (abbreviations and terms)

CLS&SR GPO RK	Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan
CPCR ME	Committee for the Protection of Children's Rights of the Ministry of Education
CP	Comprehensive Plan
RK	Republic of Kazakhstan
CSC	Child Support Center
CPS	Psychological Support Centers
FSC	Family Support Center
ШП	School Psychologists

I ntroduction

Children [make up](#) a third of the population of the Republic of Kazakhstan – 6.9 million people, of whom more than 4 million study in schools and colleges. Ensuring the rights of children, their safety and well-being are a priority for both the state policy of Kazakhstan and the education system as a whole. However, [according to UNICEF](#), in Kazakhstan every second child aged 2 to 14 years is subjected to violent forms of discipline in the family. Two thirds of schoolchildren have experienced or witnessed violence or discrimination from students or teachers. High levels of violence are observed in boarding schools and schools for children with behavioral problems. The situation with adolescent suicide is additionally alarming. [Suicide is currently the leading cause of death among adolescents and young people](#) in Europe and Central Asia. These statistics highlight the need for a systemic response and investment in prevention, mental health support and increased trust in services.

In response to these challenges, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan approved the Comprehensive Plan for the Protection of Children from Violence, Suicide Prevention, and Ensuring Their Rights and Well-Being for 2023–2025 (Resolution No. 748 of August 31, 2023). According to the CP, the protection of the rights and interests of children, protection from all forms of violence and the prevention of auto-aggressive behavior have become officially recognized priorities of the state policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The key measures for implementing the Comprehensive Plan are:

- development of methods for early detection and response to cases of bullying, cyberbullying and violence;
- creation of Psychological Support Centers (PSC) in the regions;
- launch of the 111 contact center;
- implementation of anti-bullying programs and personal safety lessons in schools.



According to the Committee for the Protection of Children's Rights of the Ministry of Education (CPCR ME) of the Republic of Kazakhstan (KOPD), [about 8 thousand psychologists and 4.5 thousand social workers work in the country's schools](#). Until 2024, the work of school psychologists was not accompanied by systemic methodological support. As part of the Comprehensive Plan, the creation of Psychological Support Centers was launched, which acted as an infrastructural and substantive base for assisting psychological services of schools and providing consultations to children and their families. According to official data from the CPCR ME (as of November 2024), 468 specialists work in the PSC, as of February 2025, according to information from the Scientific and Practical Institute of Child Welfare "Orken", - 595 specialists. In total, 20 Psychological Support Centers operate throughout the country, performing the function of regional hubs in the violence and bullying prevention system.

This document (white paper) has been prepared with the aim of analyzing the effectiveness of the implementation of these measures, comparing the Kazakh approach with international standards and developing practical recommendations for government agencies, educational institutions and civil society.

1. Relevance

In recent years, the Republic of Kazakhstan has been taking active measures to protect the rights and well-being of children, including combating violence, bullying and preventing teenage suicide. One of the key steps in this direction was the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan for the Protection of Children from Violence, Suicide Prevention and Ensuring Their Rights and Well-being for 2023–2025. As part of the plan, new models of interdepartmental interaction have been introduced, Psychological Support Center (PSCs) have been created, and mechanisms for early detection and assistance to children in crisis situations are being developed.

Nevertheless, the scale of the problem remains alarming. According to a review presented by Ranking.kz based on data from the CLS&SR GPO RK, in 2023 the number of completed suicides among minors in Kazakhstan increased by 30% compared to 2022. . [According to the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Records of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan](#), in 2024 the number of completed suicides among minors decreased and amounted to 175 cases against 204 in 2023. However, the total number of suicide attempts, on the contrary, increased: from 376 cases in 2023 to 453 in 2024.

Significant risk factors in protecting children from violence, preventing suicide, and ensuring their rights and well-being include bullying and cyberbullying. [According to UNESCO data](#), adolescents who are frequently bullied:

- are three times more likely to feel like outsiders at school;
- are twice as likely to miss school and to drop out of formal education after completing secondary school;
- are twice as likely to feel lonely, to suffer from insomnia, and to think about suicide compared to those who are not bullied.

This comprehensive analytical document, based on monitoring the implementation of the Comprehensive State Plan for Protecting Children from Violence, Preventing Suicide, and Ensuring Their Rights and Well-Being for 2023–2025 across key components related to violence against children and work with suicidal behavior in secondary education institutions (schools) and Psychological Support Centers, attempts to:

- summarize interim results of implementing the key measures of the Comprehensive Plan;
- assess the effectiveness of the new infrastructure for preventing bullying and violence;
- compare national practices with international recommendations;
- propose specific ways to improve the system of support for children.

2. Object, Subject, and Methods of the Study

The object of the study is the measures set out in the Comprehensive Plan for Protecting Children from Violence for 2023–2025, aimed at safeguarding children's rights in secondary education institutions (schools) and PSCs.

The subject of the study comprises regulatory and methodological documents developed within the framework of the Comprehensive Plan, as well as the practice of applying these documents in schools and PSCs.

The purpose of the study is, on the basis of the Comprehensive Plan for Protecting Children from Violence, Preventing Suicide, and Ensuring Their Rights and Well-Being for 2023–2025, and through the analysis of documentation related to the work of Psychological Support Centers and school psychological services, to assess the implementation of the measures of the Comprehensive Plan and to propose recommendations for systemic changes in the prevention of bullying, violence, and adolescent suicide in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Tasks

1. To assess the state of key child protection mechanisms in schools and Psychological Support Centers (PSCs).
2. To develop proposals for improving the regulatory framework and response practices.

Period and Scope The study was conducted in January–February 2025 and covered the experience of implementing the Comprehensive Plan since the launch of PSCs in 2024.

Research Methodology

1. Desk analysis. The research team reviewed 13 key documents, including:
 - the Comprehensive Plan;
 - orders of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
 - methodologies for working with violence and crisis cases;
 - regulations on the functioning of the 111 contact center; and others.
2. Semi-structured interviews with 40 respondents: 20 PSC staff and 20 school psychologists (SPs), geographically distributed as 2 from each of the 17 regions and 3 cities of republican significance in Kazakhstan. The interviews addressed issues of interagency cooperation, response mechanisms, support for children and parents, and the application of the Comprehensive Plan documents.
3. Additional activities. Monitoring of social media and information presence of PSCs (Instagram, 2GIS).

Sources of statistical data – responses received from the National Scientific and Practical Institute *Orken*, as well as from the Departments of Education and PSCs.

3. Desk analysis of regulatory documents of the Comprehensive Plan

The implementation of the Comprehensive Plan for 2023–2025 is accompanied by the development and adoption of a significant body of sectoral regulatory documents. As part of the desk analysis, 13 key acts adopted by the Ministries of Education, Health, Culture, Digital Development, and Internal Affairs were examined.

In December 2024 – January 2025, the Ministry of Education provided the following documents for analysis, developed within the framework of the Comprehensive Plan:

1. Joint Order of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 742 of 22.12.2023; the Minister of Labor and Social Protection of the Population No. 515 of 20.12.2023; the Minister of Culture and Information No. 531-KK of 21.12.2023; the Minister of Education No. 386 of 21.12.2023; and the Minister of Internal Affairs No. 917 of 21.12.2023 “Methodology for the Early Identification and Provision of Assistance to Minors Subjected to or Witnessing Violence, Bullying, or Cyberbullying.”
2. Order of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 398 “On Amendments to the Order of the Minister of Education of 3 March 2023 No. 61 ‘On the Approval of Methodological Recommendations on Maintaining Intra-School Records in Educational Organizations.’”
3. Order of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 31 of 13.02.2024 “On the Approval of Methodological Recommendations on Organizing the Activities of Psychological Support Centers under the Regional Education Departments of the Regions and the Cities of Astana, Almaty, and Shymkent.”
4. Order of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 55 of 05.03.2024 “On the Approval of Conceptual Approaches to the Activities of the Parental Pedagogical Support Center.”
5. Order of the Minister of Culture and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 256-NK of 14.06.2024 “On the Approval of the Rules for the Activities of Family Support Centers.”
6. Order of the Acting Minister of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 149 of 19.06.2024 “On the Approval of the Rules of Activity of the Regional Commissioner for the Rights of the Child in the Regions, Cities of Republican Significance, and the Capital.”
7. Order of the Minister of Digital Development, Innovation, and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 378/NK of 28.06.2024 “On the Approval of the Rules of Activity of Contact Center 111 on Family, Women's and Children's Rights Protection Issues and its Interaction with Central Government Bodies and Local Executive Authorities.”

8. Joint Order of the Ministry of Health No. 419 of 02.07.2024 and the Ministry of Education No. 170 of 04.07.2024 “On the Approval of a Unified Algorithm for Identifying Minors with Signs of Suicidal Behavior and Further Work with Them, as well as the Algorithm of Actions of State Bodies in Providing Assistance to a Child Who Has Attempted Suicide.”
9. Order of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 194 of 30.07.2024 “On Updating the Educational Program 'Birtutas Tärbie' in Educational Organizations.”
10. Order of the Committee for the Protection of Children's Rights of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 6-N of 20.09.2024 “On the Approval of the Methodology for Collecting Information on Violence Against Children in Educational Organizations.”
11. Order of the Acting Minister of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 377 of 25.07.2024 “On the Approval of the Rules of Activity of the Psychological Service in Secondary Education Institutions.”
12. Order of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 506 of 21.12.2022 “On the Approval of the Rules for the Prevention of Child Bullying.”
13. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 190 of 11.05.2020 “On Certain Issues of Pedagogical Ethics,” as amended and supplemented on 24.04.2024.

Their content covers interagency response algorithms, the activities of Psychological Support Centers (PSCs), schools, and Contact Center 111, as well as regulating the powers of regional commissioners for children's rights.

The central document is the Joint Interagency Order No. 742/515/531-KK/386/917 of December 2023, which establishes the *Algorithm for Identifying and Assisting Minors Subjected to Violence, Bullying, or Cyberbullying*. This order attempts to link into a unified system the actions of schools, police, PSCs, guardianship authorities, and healthcare institutions. Together with the Order of the Ministry of Education on the Approval of the Rules for Bullying Prevention, it provides the core framework for the functioning of this system.

However, a comparison of these documents reveals structural inconsistencies and logical contradictions, in particular:

- lack of alignment in defining the coordinator across different documents: for example, Order No. 506 of 21.12.2022 designates a teacher (school psychologist, social pedagogue), while the Rules on Bullying Prevention identify the deputy director for educational work;
- unsynchronized roles and response procedures between PSCs and schools;
- documents not updated to reflect the amendments to the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Article 127-2) introduced in April 2024 regarding bullying and cyberbullying;
- absence of requirements for anonymous reporting of violence cases, including access via website, chatbot, or other digital formats.

Despite the coordination function established in Order No. 378/NK (2024), in practice Contact Center 111 is positioned as a “helpline,” which creates false expectations among children. In reality, the contact center does not ensure confidentiality, requires disclosure of personal information, and does not provide emergency psychological assistance. The regulations do not include provisions on consent for data processing, limitations on disclosure, or routing of reports. Public posting of school internal policies on bullying prevention is not required, although this is standard international practice.

The Algorithm lacks a definition of violence, does not specify which type of violence it applies to, and does not address atypical situations, including cases where the aggressor is a teacher. Bullying by a teacher is mentioned only in the Order on the Approval of Rules for the Prevention of Child Bullying. It remains unclear whether the mechanism for detecting and recording such incidents is the same as for bullying among students. The proposed response mechanism is the Council on Pedagogical Ethics, which in practice usually includes teachers from the same educational institution, i.e., colleagues of the potential aggressor.

Overall, the bullying response algorithm under Order No. 377 of the Ministry of Education and the Algorithm for responding to violence, bullying, and cyberbullying under the Joint Order of key Ministries do not align in their response mechanisms; further details are provided in the Appendix. Figures 1 and 2 in the Appendix present schematic representations of the algorithm based on a comparative analysis of both documents, as proposed in the Monitoring of the Comprehensive Plan.

Problems in response and interagency cooperation: The response algorithm imposes on the school the obligation to notify all relevant bodies (police, guardianship authorities, Commissions for Minors' Affairs, Regional Education Departments, Contact Center 111), regardless of the severity of the incident. This creates an excessive workload, duplication of functions, and leads to inefficient use of the entire system. The most rational approach appears to be assigning the coordinating function to Contact Center 111, which would centrally notify other authorities.

Interagency cooperation in the Methodology remains unresolved:

- it is not defined who administers mobile response teams, who forms them, and on what basis;
- the scope of authority for mobile teams is unclear: once deployed to the incident site, what further powers do they have;
- there are no clear requirements regarding the qualifications of staff interacting with affected children.

Legal and institutional risks. Regional Commissioners for Children's Rights (RCCRs) are appointed by akims but also report to the Regional Education Departments (REDs) and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The absence of clear subordination, lack of dedicated staffing and funding, as well as excessive responsibilities (including publications in the media and physical protection of children) render their position legally vulnerable and organizationally unstable. Performing state functions on a voluntary or community basis contradicts the Constitution and labor legislation.

Thus, the fragmented legal framework and inconsistencies between documents hinder the creation of a cohesive prevention and response system. Cases of violence against children within the family, and instances of bullying and cyberbullying at school—whether by students or school staff—are fundamentally different situations that must be treated separately.

International obligations of the Republic of Kazakhstan regarding children's rights are insufficiently considered, particularly concerning anonymity, confidentiality, and emergency assistance. The algorithms overload educational institutions with functions that do not correspond to their profile or resources. For example, according to the Algorithm, an educational organization is required to report incidents of violence, bullying, or cyberbullying to all authorized bodies—such as the Committee for the Protection of Children's Rights (CPCR), REDs, Contact Center 111, guardianship authorities, internal affairs bodies, and the Commission for Minors' Affairs—within the shortest possible time. Coordination with the higher-level education authority (RED) is not established. Meanwhile, the mechanism for coordinating and assessing incoming reports is embedded within Contact Center 111.

Particular concern arises from the requirement for RCCRs to “immediately report, through the media and social networks, facts of violence, bullying, or cyberbullying against minors and the measures taken by state authorities.” Public disclosure of such information carries the risk of victim identification and re-traumatization of both the child and their family. The main regulatory documents have not been updated to reflect changes in legislation and do not meet standards established in international practice.

4.

National Practice and Challenges in the Work of School and Extracurricular Psychological Services

Infrastructure and coverage. In accordance with the Comprehensive Plan for Protecting Children from Violence, the formation of regional Psychological Support Centers (PSCs) began in Kazakhstan in 2024. According to the National Scientific and Practical Institute (NSPI) Orken, by February 2025, there were 20 PSCs operating in the country, employing 595 specialists. PSCs perform coordination functions, provide methodological support to school psychologists, and offer consultative assistance to children and parents.

In schools across the country, approximately 8,000 psychologists and 4,500 social pedagogues are employed; however, in practice, coverage of students with professional support remains irregular. In some regions, a single school psychologist is responsible for more than 1,300 students, compared to the standard of no more than 500 students [Monitoring Report 2024–2025].

Requests for support. According to NSPI Orken, in 2024 PSCs received 241,869 client requests, of which 146,807 were from children and 51,642 from parents. Support was also provided to 43,420 school specialists. In January 2025 alone, 5,910 requests were recorded (including 3,168 children and 1,681 parents), demonstrating the high demand for PSC services as an institution.

At the same time, there is a low level of trust in psychological services in some schools. In certain cases, no reports regarding bullying or violence were submitted, even in institutions where incidents had previously been recorded. This indicates either underreporting or inefficiency of reporting channels.

Challenges faced by school psychologists and regulatory constraints. With the introduction of PSCs, many school psychologists noted improvements, such as the establishment of methodological support days.

Key barriers identified during monitoring include:

- 1) The inability to provide confidential support to a child without prior parental consent, even in crisis situations (e.g., suicide risk).
- 2) Accountability to multiple authorities (Regional Education Departments, PSCs, Prosecutor's Office).
- 3) Duplicative and outdated reporting, much of which is conducted manually.
- 4) Lack of dedicated offices, scheduled "psychologist hours," technical support, and administrative protection of confidentiality for many school psychologists.
- 5) High levels of professional burnout and absence of mandatory supervision or systemic support.

Challenges in the Work of PSCs and Regulatory Constraints.

The monitoring identified the following barriers:

- 1) Gap in preparedness and coverage between newly established PSCs and centers organized based on previously existing offices.
- 2) Absence of a unified coordination center for collecting information, evaluating and analyzing performance, and disseminating best practices.
- 3) Lack of a professional development system for PSC staff, including training on specialized topics and accessible supervision. Currently, some staff undergo supervision at their own expense or by arrangement with other employees.
- 4) High staff turnover. Salaries for PSC staff are significantly lower than those of school psychologists, despite higher workloads and functional responsibilities. In addition to providing consultative support, some PSC staff handle social support for families in difficult life situations; certain PSCs oversee not only school psychologists but also social pedagogues; provide psychological support to victims of various incidents; offer psychological assistance to children who have experienced violence upon request from the Prosecutor's Office; participate in juvenile court proceedings; and coordinate with the juvenile police.
- 5) Lack of uniformity in operating helplines. The Methodological Recommendations designate the helpline as a 24-hour service. However, practical implementation is challenging. Staff sometimes take the device home to answer calls outside working hours, which violates proper helpline procedures. In some cases, a personal phone number of a staff member is used as the helpline. To maintain confidentiality, the helpline should be based in the PSC, and calls should be answered by staff on-site during working hours.

These barriers negatively affect the effectiveness of both school psychologists and PSC staff.

Successful Practices. Despite existing challenges, several regions have demonstrated successful approaches that could be scaled up:

- 1) In Almaty Region, the digital project “*Parenting University*” has been implemented, providing online diagnostics, surveys, support, and referral services.
- 2) In several PSCs, case management and referral routing are applied in partnership with medical and social services.
- 3) There is a growing demand among school specialists for training on supervision and crisis response.
- 4) In some regions, an anonymous reporting mechanism for bullying has been introduced through the *Kundelik* platform, though this practice is not yet widespread.

Overall, interview analysis revealed significant challenges and regulatory constraints in the work of school psychologists and PSC staff. At the same time, successful practices were recorded in certain regions. Many of the identified limitations could be addressed through amendments to legislative frameworks and regulatory documents. Without changes to the legal framework (for example, regarding parental consent), the effectiveness of working with vulnerable children remains limited.

5. Barriers in Responding to Cases of Violence and Bullying

Despite the establishment of Psychological Support Centers (PSCs) and the presence of school psychologists in educational institutions in Kazakhstan, significant barriers remain in the early identification and response to cases of bullying, violence, and suicidal risk.

Legal constraints. One of the key limiting factors is the inability to provide a child with full support without written parental consent. Even in cases where a child exhibits warning signs—such as depression, self-harm, or exposure to violence—PSC specialists or school psychologists cannot begin intervention without the permission of a legal guardian, as confirmed by interview examples. As a result, children and adolescents who require support remain without assistance at their most vulnerable moments.

Low Level of Trust. Monitoring has shown that in some schools there are no recorded reports of bullying, cyberbullying, or violence. While insufficient oversight of report registration (e.g., to downplay problems) cannot be ruled out, the absence of registered reports may indicate:

- low trust in school psychologists;
- lack of safe and anonymous reporting channels;
- fear of disclosure or punishment.

For example, in one school with no official reports, psychological testing revealed that 13 out of 800 children reported suicidal thoughts. However, according to observations from the regional PSC, no further follow-up support was organized.

Insufficient or Ineffective Anonymous Reporting Tools. Most schools do not provide digital or paper-based forms for anonymously reporting bullying incidents. While QR codes for 111 are displayed in all schools, other practices are implemented only sporadically. In some regions, interaction through the Kundelik platform allows students to contact specialists without risking exposure of their identity. Most tools are not standardized, their use is not accompanied by explanatory work, and they do not cover the entire country.

Lack of Coordination Within Schools. Psychologists and teachers often work in isolation. Identification of bullying signs at the class teacher or curator level does not always result in referral to a specialist. There is no established practice of regular interdisciplinary meetings (psychologist – teacher – deputy principal – administration). Some school psychologists noted that teachers do not report even obvious cases of violence or aggression, fearing administrative burden or “exaggerating the conflict” (according to interviews with school specialists).

Low Digitalization. Even in schools where bullying cases are recorded, there is no digital system for prompt registration, monitoring, or analysis. Reports are maintained manually, and access to data is limited. This complicates the analysis of trends, response to repeated incidents, and transmission of information to PSCs and guardianship authorities. As a result, even when bullying or suicide risk is identified, the information often remains within the school and does not lead to systemic actions.

Thus, responding to cases of bullying and violence is hindered legally (issues of parental consent), technically (lack of digital tools), and psychologically (low trust, fear of disclosure). It is necessary to reform regulatory provisions to allow specialists to act promptly in crisis situations in the best interest of the child.

Analysis of data collected during monitoring demonstrates significant differences between regions of Kazakhstan regarding the implementation of measures under the Comprehensive Plan, the level of activity of Psychological Support Centers (PSCs), accessibility of school psychologists, methodological support, and application of regulatory documents. These differences concern both the institutional readiness and the engagement of specialists in working with children at risk.

PSCs operate in all regions; however, organizational consistency varies. In some regions, PSCs actively conduct training for school psychologists, analyze incoming requests, implement case routing, and maintain digital communication with parents and children. In other regions, public activity is low, current information is not readily available, response to requests is slow, and assistance is provided in a formal, procedural manner. In certain cases, PSC staff reported not starting work with children due to lack of written parental consent or clarifications from Regional Education Departments.

Analysis of PSC engagement in school support shows that some centers have established regular and structured work with school psychologists, including online consultations, supervision, and case review. This was particularly noted in Kostanay Region (regular methodological support), Zhetysay Region (active involvement in training school psychologists on bullying issues), Astana, and Almaty (implementation of selected elements of online interaction and social media presence). In other regions, support is less structured, often limited to occasional correspondence or sharing of materials.

One of the most sustainable positive practices is the implementation of the “*Parenting University*” platform in Almaty Region, which combines online diagnostics of parental attitudes, automated recommendations, and routing to PSCs when risks are identified.

Despite positive examples, signs of institutional resistance were observed during monitoring. For instance, the PSC in Astana refused to provide statistical data, citing “confidentiality.” The PSC in Mangystau Region redirected requests to other structures without providing a response. Some schools and PSCs required permission from Regional Education Departments to conduct interviews, despite the provisions of the Law on *Public Oversight*. These facts indicate a continuing closed nature of the education system and insufficient understanding of the legal basis for cooperation with civil society.

Overall, it should be noted that regional differences in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan remain significant and affect the effectiveness of prevention systems. Kazakhstan requires a national audit of PSC practices and the development of a model of minimum operational standards, including digital and public presence. At the same time, the experience of certain regions can be scaled up with methodological and organizational support from the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan and partner NGOs (see Table 1).

Table 1 – Effective Practices of PSCs and School Psychologists in the Regions of Kazakhstan.

Practice	Region	Features / Key Characteristics
Online Platform for Psychologists	Almaty Region	Flexible model combining digital tools and case routing. Each psychologist has a personal account containing approved pilot diagnostics, which are used according to plan. Children log in with a special password, answer questions, and results are displayed immediately. For parents, the platform provides a selection of methodological materials, audio consultations, and video consultations. The platform also helps monitor the work of school psychologists.
Methodological Support	Kostanay Region, Pavlodar	Regular online sessions for school psychologists, case-seminars addressing bullying incidents, mentoring courses for young specialists, and “Conscious Parenting” courses for parents.
Promotion of the PSC via Instagram and 2GIS	Almaty, Zhetysu, Karaganda	Increasing awareness and reducing anxiety among parents
Social Media Monitoring	Individual regions	PSCs that practice monitoring social networks to track cases of bullying or suicidal behavior
Prompt support for children in acute cases via online communication	Most regions	Using video communication and instant messengers to provide prompt assistance to children and parents
Joint work of the PSC and police inspectors of the juvenile service	Most regions	Interdepartmental response to cases of violence (needs clarification and development of a model)

Support and counseling for parents when their child refuses to attend school	Most regions	Involving parents in resolving crises related to the isolation of a child and psychosomatics
Creation and placement of informational leaflets for parents and students	Most regions	Materials on assistance algorithms, contacts, children's rights (not standardized everywhere)

6. International Standards and Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis presented in this section was not included in the original monitoring report and was developed as an analytical add-on to it. It is based on a comparison of facts identified during field interviews and desk analysis in the regions of Kazakhstan with international standards and recommendations formulated by WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

Although the monitoring did not aim to conduct a formal assessment of the compliance of national practices with international requirements, the data collected allow for a reasonable assessment of the key components of the violence prevention and suicide prevention system among children. The comparative analysis serves as an additional tool for identifying growth points and developing priority areas for further work by government and non-governmental organizations in Kazakhstan.

The implementation of the Comprehensive Plan in Kazakhstan is taking place against the backdrop of stable international trends. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), suicide is one of the three leading causes of death among young people aged 15–29. UNICEF, analyzing the situation in Europe and Central Asia, [states that](#) among adolescents aged 15-19, the main cause of death is suicide.

Key international organizations, including UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO and the Council of Europe, have developed specific approaches to preventing bullying, supporting mental health and protecting children from violence in the educational environment. In particular, UNESCO emphasizes the need to develop a separate anti-bullying policy at the national level, regularly monitor the situation in schools using anonymous surveys, and actively involve children themselves, parents and school teams. Particular attention is paid to the availability of mechanisms for safe and anonymous appeals by a child without fear of being exposed or punished.

UNICEF emphasizes the need for a systemic interdepartmental approach, sustainable psychosocial support for children, and the creation of a favorable and safe school environment as a basis for early risk identification. An important element is also the introduction of digital solutions: chatbots, online platforms and mobile applications that allow children to seek help in a comfortable and accessible form. WHO, in turn, emphasizes the need for trained personnel, clear response algorithms, mandatory supervision of specialists and delineation of responsibilities between schools, medical institutions and social services. The Council of Europe in its [Strategy for the Rights of the Child](#) (2022–2027) recommends that states create a centralized monitoring system, appoint national child protection coordinators and ensure legal protection of the child in crisis situations even without parental consent.

Over the past two years, Kazakhstan has taken significant steps consistent with these international approaches. In particular, a network of Psychological Support Centers (PSCs) has been created, a Comprehensive Plan has been approved, trainings and methodological support for school psychologists have been launched. However, as monitoring shows, it has not yet been possible to implement key components related to anonymity, legal independence of the child in accessing assistance, and digital mechanisms for informing and appealing. In most regions, there is no regular survey of children, schools and PSCs do not use standardized channels of anonymous communication, and psychologists are limited in their work due to the requirement to obtain parental consent, even in crisis cases. At the same time, individual regions demonstrate examples of approaching international standards through digitalization of work, educational activities, and regular support of specialists on the ground. We tried to structure the main aspects in Table 2.

Table 2 – Comparative analysis of compliance of Kazakhstan's practice with international standards in the field of child protection

Criterion	International standards	Practice in Kazakhstan (on monitoring)	Conformity assessment
Regulatory framework in the field of protection of children's rights	Recorded in international documents and national legislative norms	Legislation is actively developing, but there is no clear mechanism for implementation at the school level; there is no unified system for collecting data; unstable coordination between departments	Partially complies
Personnel potential	As a rule, a clear division of roles and specialization, clinical training	Training in the direction of "educational psychologist" is as broad as possible with an emphasis on the pedagogical profile, no specialization and clinical training	Does not correspond.
Anonymous and safe channels of communication for children	Mandatory presence of anonymous feedback forms, chat bots, digital platforms	Implemented locally through "Kundelik" and some pages on Instagram, but there is no unified system	Partially complies
Regular monitoring of the school environment and emotional climate	National surveys, anonymous questionnaires, risk monitoring, statistics collection	The key responsible body has not been identified. The monitoring itself is not carried out systematically, it is carried out within the framework of international grant programs	Partially complies

Access to psychological assistance in a crisis situation without parental consent	Possibility of providing assistance to children without prior parental consent in the event of a health threat	Assistance is limited by the requirement to obtain parental consent even in the event of signs of violence	Not compliant
Systematic supervision and support of school psychologists	Mandatory supervision, support, methodological training, mental hygiene for specialists	Absent systematically; conducted episodically or at the initiative of the PSC in certain regions	Partially complies
Institutional and digital support infrastructure (PSC, online access)	Availability of specialized services, digital solutions, accessible online services, national coordinators	PSC operate in 20 regions, however, some aspects are not fully developed (for example, a helpline), there is no unified online platform	Partially complies
Openness to public monitoring and NGO participation	Council of Europe standards call on countries to ensure public monitoring and NGO participation in the assessment of child protection systems	Despite the Law on Public Monitoring (2023), PSCs and education authorities often ignore requests, require permission from above, or refuse interviews	Not compliant
Transparency of the work of services and informing the population	According to UNICEF and WHO standards, the work of child protection services must be transparent, accompanied by the publication of statistics and reports (UNICEF, Child Protection Strategy 2021–2030).	Activity reports are not published, data on the number and nature of requests are not publicly available, and there is no transparency in terms of performance indicators	Not compliant

7.

Conclusions from the results of monitoring the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan in terms of the activities of Psychological Support Centers and school psychologists

Monitoring the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan for the Protection of Children from Violence and the Prevention of Suicidal Behavior has revealed important structural shifts in the psychological assistance system in Kazakhstan. The creation of a network of Psychological Support Centers (PSCs), the expansion of the staff of school psychologists, the launch of primary forms of methodological support and educational resources - all this is an absolute achievement. However, in the process of implementing key measures, there are significant limitations that hinder their effective use.

Human resources and professional sustainability. Psychological Support Centers (PSCs) are experiencing a shortage of personnel, especially in new regions where the centers are opened "from scratch". At the same time, many centers have been operating for less than a year, and some were created on the basis of methodological offices, which is reflected in the varying levels of staff readiness.

Staff turnover problems are due to low wages, high emotional and administrative stress, the lack of a standardized working day, supervision and the possibility of advanced training during working hours. The level of training of the PSC specialists and school psychologists is uneven. Of particular concern is the limited knowledge of the key orders and algorithms of the Comprehensive Plan.

In addition, the formally set indicators of the Comprehensive Plan (for example, the number of teachers covered, reduction of offenses, etc.) without taking into account the qualitative component do not provide an objective picture of its effectiveness. This emphasizes the need to focus on substantive aspects - accessibility, effectiveness, safety and trust in the psychological assistance system.

Lack of an effective system for coordinating and exchanging practices.

Interaction between the CPC and other structures is limited. There is no centralized mechanism for exchanging experience, analyzing deficits, and coordinating actions at the republican level. There is no mechanism for redirecting “difficult cases” from school psychologists to the PSC. This reduces the efficiency of routing assistance and creates a risk of bureaucratization.

Working conditions and administrative barriers. School psychologists are overloaded with reporting: they are often subordinate to several authorities at once (PSC, akimats, prosecutor's office), which reduces the quality of work with children. The standard of 1 psychologist per 500 students is not met in a number of regions, especially in small and overcrowded schools. There is no “psychologist's hour” in the schedule, despite the corresponding standard in the documents, which makes the work fragmented and episodic.

Violations of professional and ethical standards. Helplines do not meet established standards: they are used as recording lines, do not work around the clock, and violate confidentiality. Helplines are provided on the private numbers of employees, therefore there is a risk of losing the client base. School psychologists work with a workload that is several times higher than the standard, in most cases without supervision, without standardized digital reporting, with duplicate paperwork. This increases the risk of professional burnout and reduces the quality of work with children. Work outside of working hours is not paid, which is contrary to the Labor Code. The boundaries of contact with clients are violated: children and parents call specialists directly, including at night. This requires a revision of standards and increased protection of specialists. Lack of targeted work with parents. Working with parents is a key factor in effectiveness, but most PSCs and schools lack a systematic practice of information and educational activities for families. Parents in private schools are especially poorly involved; they are practically excluded from all processes of implementing the Comprehensive Plan, are not included in interaction channels, and do not follow standards. The level of trust of parents and adolescents in existing services remains low. In many schools, there are no requests for bullying or violence, despite the fact that signs of suicide risk are recorded during testing. This suggests that prevention is not perceived as a safe and accessible resource, especially in the context of restrictions related to the need to obtain parental consent.

In addition, monitoring has recorded the institutional isolation of the education system. Psychologists and PSCs often require permission from education departments even to participate in interviews as part of public monitoring, which indicates legal uncertainty and the absence of a culture of open interaction. Prevention measures remain highly uneven across regions: the activity of PSCs, their accessibility, recognition, and readiness for interdepartmental interaction depend on the specific local context. Some centers have demonstrated a high level of initiative and digital transparency, while others do not provide statistics, do not conduct public communication, and do not participate in supporting school specialists.

The lack of centralized tools for collecting and analyzing data, weak integration with social services, and formal support from regional authorities create a risk that even the best regional practices will not be scaled up.

Serious systemic gaps have been identified in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan for the Protection of Children from Violence and the Prevention of Suicidal Behavior:

- 1) There is no single center for coordination, monitoring, and methodological support for the PSC and school psychologists.
- 2) There is no mechanism for regulatory specialization within teams of psychologists in schools.
- 3) The legal framework for emergency assistance to children without parental consent, especially in cases of violence and suicidal risk, is not regulated.
- 4) Low level of digitalization and analytics at all levels (from statistics collection to a single diagnostic platform).
- 5) There is no system for assessing the quality of state advanced training programs (Orken, Orleu, etc.).

If the current prevention model remains at the level of scattered local initiatives, then in the medium term Kazakhstan may face a number of serious risks:

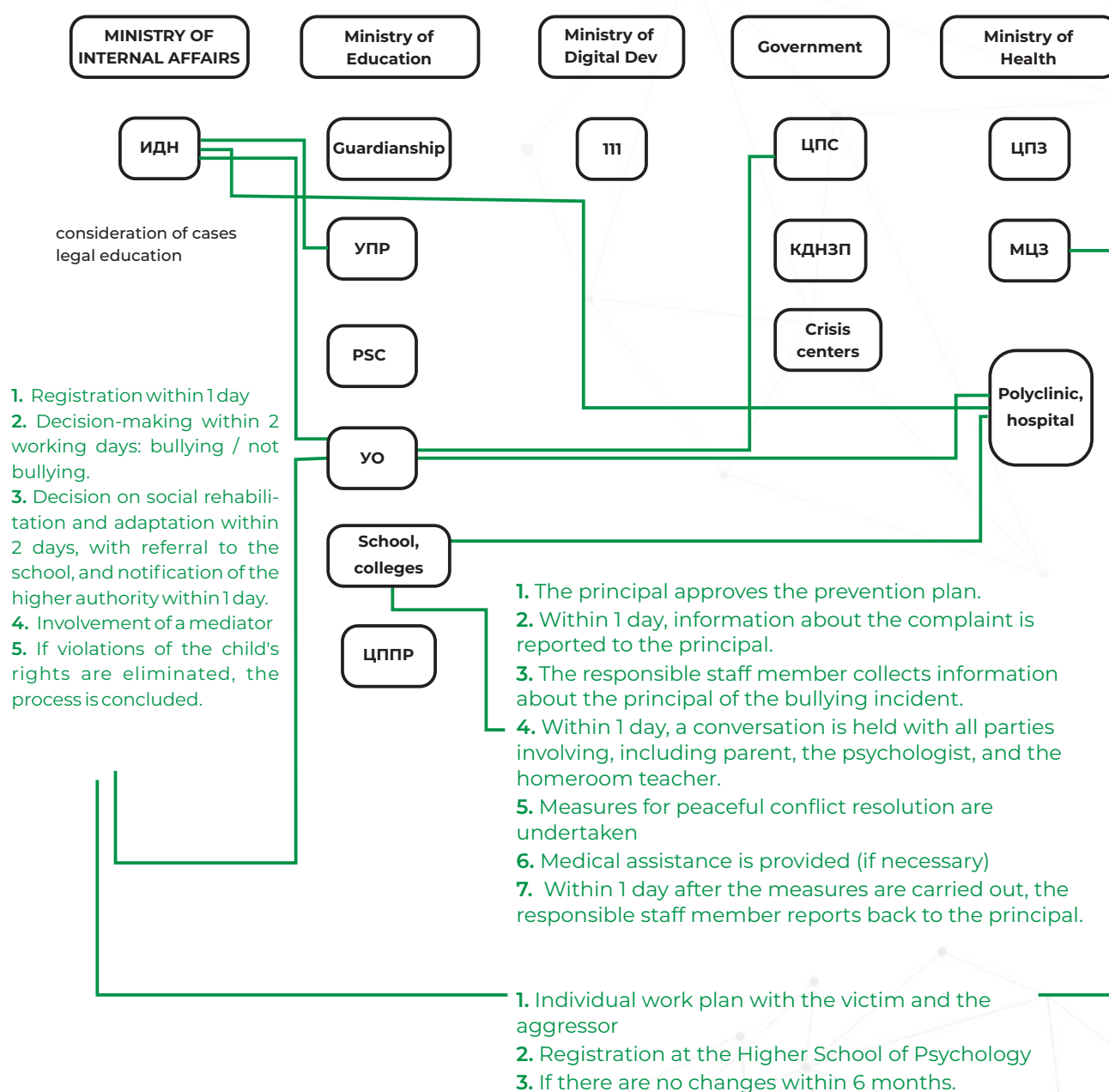
- an unavoidable increase in the number of suicides among minors;
- increasing mistrust of children and parents in the education system and government services;
- increased digital and physical bullying without response mechanisms;
- demotivation and burnout of specialists.

It is necessary to introduce a system for assessing the quality of psychological services based on such principles as safety for clients and specialists, professional competence and regular professional development of employees, accessibility and cultural acceptability of services, as well as the participation of the recipients of assistance themselves in planning and feedback.

Thus, the system created for the purpose of protecting children requires not only support, but also a critical review of the interaction mechanisms, legal framework and response standards. It is also worth noting that the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan largely depends on the sustainability of the created mechanisms after the end of its term. It is necessary to ensure institutional continuity and long-term support of psychological assistance systems, including funding, training and monitoring. The participation of civil society, including NGOs, is critical for independent assessment, promotion of children's rights and building trust between the system and people. In this regard, it is important to develop mechanisms for public control and dialogue between government agencies and the civil sector.

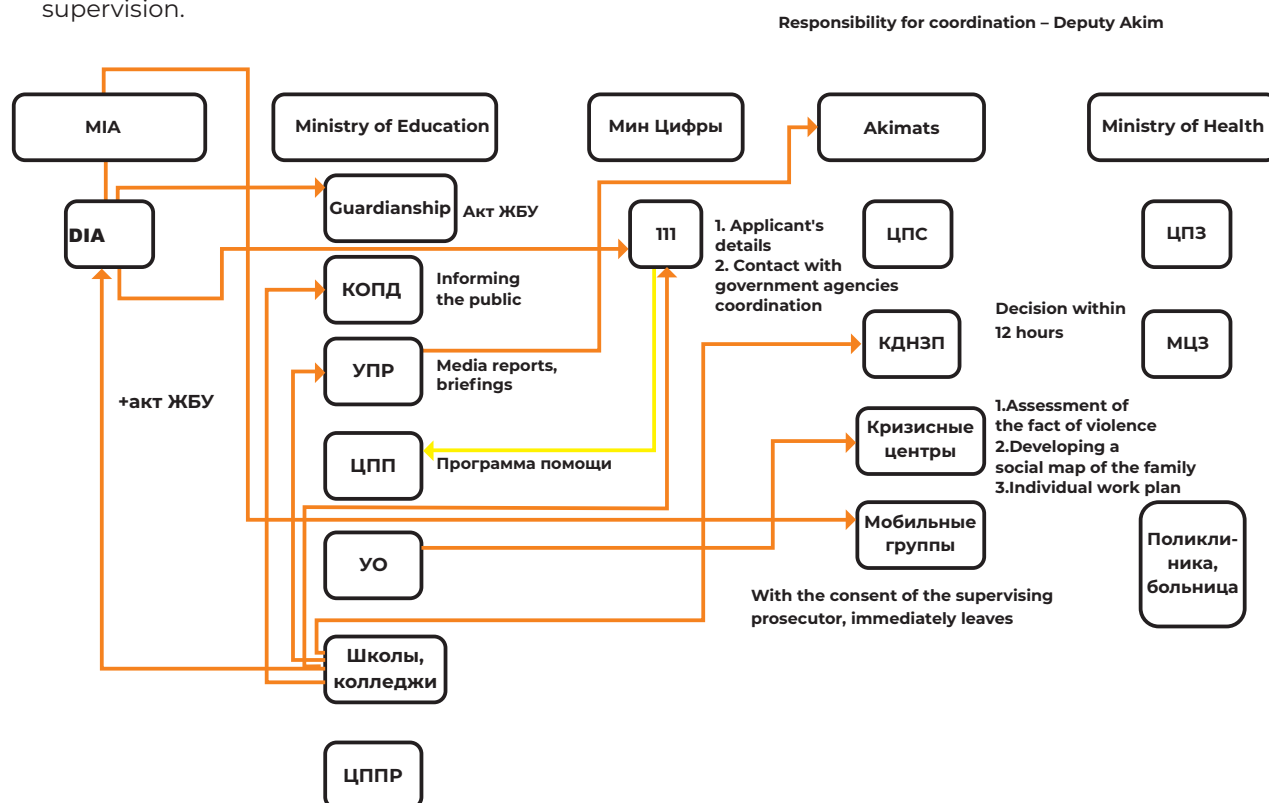
Appendices

Diagram 1. Algorithm for responding to bullying according to the Order of the Ministry of Education No. 377



Scheme 2. Algorithm for responding to violence, bullying and cyberbullying according to the Joint Order of Key Ministries

1. Registration in the Unified Register of Pre-trial Investigations
2. Professional interviews
3. Investigative activities, assignment of examinations the prosecutor's office ensures supervision.



1. Child protection Coordinator
2. Contact and identification by the class teacher, subject teacher, teacher- psychologist, social worker.
3. Immediately inform the director
4. Confidentiality
5. Responsibility for failure to report
6. Registration
7. Within an hour to the guardianship
8. Within an hour to the KOPD

Comprehensive assessment of the situation
 Legal education Individual work plan
 Familiarization with the list of organizations
 Psychological support for the victim and parents

Identification:

1. Door-to-door canvassing
2. Receiving of the citizens
3. Appeals of individuals and legal entities
4. Monitoring of the information space
5. Identification by employees of organizations (medical, police, social protection)

Must be informed: all authorized bodies: DIA, Prosecutor's office, education, health, social protection, UPR, RUPR.

Urgent measures to create security until the decision of the Commission on Juvenile Affairs.

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