

Call for Abstracts: **Journal of Child Sexual Abuse**
For a Special Issue on **Institutional Betrayal**

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Manuscript Deadline: February 01, 2027

Individuals trust and depend upon institutions to both prevent violence, abuse, and trauma and provide support when these experiences occur. When institutions fail to protect individuals, respond inadequately, or cause additional harm, these experiences constitute what Jennifer J. Freyd and Carly P. Smith have termed *institutional betrayal*. Research on institutional betrayal has expanded substantially over the past decade. Although initial research focused on sexual assault within university settings, growing scholarship has increasingly expanded to multiple forms of harm and adversity (e.g., discrimination, harassment, intimate partner violence, public health crises) across a range of institutional contexts (e.g., healthcare systems, schools/universities, workplaces, criminal legal systems, religious organizations, governments, and military institutions). Across studies, evidence suggests that institutional betrayal is associated with a wide range of outcomes, including psychological distress, physical health concerns, and reduced trust and help-seeking. Despite increasing recognition of the role institutions play in shaping experiences of harm and recovery, considerable work remains to understand the mechanisms, consequences, and broader implications of institutional betrayal.

This Special Issue aims to advance theoretical, empirical, methodological, and applied understandings of institutional betrayal across diverse contexts, types of interpersonal trauma and other harms, and populations. Manuscripts addressing a wide variety of topics involving institutional betrayal in the context of interpersonal trauma, abuse, violence, discrimination,

mistreatment, post-trauma disclosure, and more, are encouraged. Given the interdisciplinary nature of institutional betrayal research, we welcome submissions from multiple disciplines and methodological traditions that deepen understanding of institutional processes. Of particular interest are manuscripts that advance theoretical understandings of institutional betrayal, utilize novel or applied measurement approaches (e.g., culturally congruent measurement, cultural or institutional adaptations of measures), employ innovative methodological approaches (e.g., longitudinal, mixed-methods, ecological designs), and/or extend institutional betrayal research to populations disproportionately impacted by institutional betrayal (e.g., individuals with disabilities, marginalized racial and ethnic populations, LGBTQ+ individuals) and to understudied institutional contexts (e.g., immigration systems, religious and faith-based institutions, carceral systems, disability/social service systems, online institutional environments).

The *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* announces a call for abstracts describing proposed papers on institutional betrayal across diverse contexts, populations, and forms of harm. **Topics include but are not limited to:**

- Institutional responses to violence, discrimination, harassment, abuse, and other forms of harm across diverse contexts (e.g., healthcare systems, educational institutions, workplace organizations, legal and reporting systems, religious institutions, governmental systems)
- The impact of institutional betrayal and trauma on mental health, substance use, physical health, suicidality, wellbeing, spirituality, critical consciousness, advocacy, activism, and other outcomes (e.g., occupational, academic, interpersonal, social, institutional/organizational, cultural, and community outcomes)
- Effective strategies for individual and collective healing and recovery from institutional betrayal
- Theoretical models of institutional betrayal, including mechanisms and pathways linking institutional betrayal to health and behavioral outcomes (e.g., psychological, social, behavioral, and organizational processes)
- Measurement and methodological innovations related to institutional betrayal (e.g., longitudinal, mixed-methods, ecological designs);
- Disclosure experiences, reporting processes, and help-seeking behaviors
- Prevention, intervention, and policy approaches related to institutional betrayal
- Theoretical, qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods, translational, intervention, and interdisciplinary research
- Understudied populations, diverse contexts, and cultural considerations (e.g., intersectional perspectives, international samples, and developmental approaches, including across the lifespan of individuals, populations, and/or institutions)

To obtain well-rounded coverage of relevant issues, we ask potential contributors to submit article ideas via email to the guest editors in the form of a detailed summary (i.e., 250-500 words) that highlights the relevance of the proposed manuscript to the Special Issue theme and clearly demonstrates how the submission advances theoretical, empirical, methodological, and/or applied understandings of institutional betrayal across diverse contexts, populations, and experiences. Submission of an abstract represents a commitment to prepare a paper if accepted. Abstracts should be no more than 500 words and should describe the topic being addressed and the basic ideas and proposed contribution of the paper.

Proposed Target Audience

Manuscript submissions for the special issue may extend across disciplines (e.g., psychology, sociology, social work, anthropology, gender and feminist studies, race studies, public health, statistics, education, medicine, criminal justice). This Special Issue is intended for researchers, practitioners, educators, policymakers, advocates, and organizational leaders interested in understanding how institutions shape experiences of harm, response, and recovery.

Instructions

Abstracts/proposals for consideration should be sent to Alexis A. Adams-Clark, Ph.D., and Jennifer M. Gómez, Ph.D., at institutionalbetrayalsi.jcsa@gmail.com no later than **October 01, 2026**. Submissions will be invited by **November 01, 2026** and solicited submissions will be due no later than **February 01, 2027**. Guest editors will review submitted abstracts and solicit submissions for full-length manuscripts.

Submission Details

Abstracts and final papers should follow Instructions for Authors (IFA) on the journal homepage, including APA 7th Edition style and formatting. All articles undergo a double-anonymous peer review. Manuscripts approved for inclusion should be submitted directly to the journal by **January 15, 2027** via the Taylor & Francis Submission Portal. Be sure to select the special issue title upon submission.

Abstracts due: October 01, 2026

Acceptance of abstract by: November 01, 2026

Final submission of completed manuscript due: February 01, 2027

Questions or comments can be addressed to the guest editors at alexisadamsclark@gmail.com and gomezjm@bu.edu, please cc journals@ivatcenters.org and institutionalbetrayalsi.jcsa@gmail.com on all correspondence. **Full instructions for authors can be found on the journal homepage and must be adhered to upon submission.**

Provide up to 5 keywords or one key phrase for this Special Issue Call for Papers:

Institutional betrayal, violence, interpersonal trauma, help-seeking, organizational systems

Provide a short summary for this special issue call for papers to be used to promote the special issue and encourage submissions.

- Submit your research for a special issue on institutional betrayal across diverse contexts, populations, and forms of harm.