

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Assessment for Youth Programs

Prevention Improvement Process

The Change Process

- How does each policy or practice compare to best practices?
- What is the resulting level of risk in each area (High, Medium or Low)?
- How can each be improved to lower risk?
- Who needs to be involved to modify each of them?
- What obstacles must be overcome to improve them?
- What is the cost to improve each of them?
- Who can start the change process on each of them?

Determine Your Starting Point

- What prevention policies and practices exist?
- Are they board approved and formalized?
- Are they effectively and sufficiently documented?
- Are they effectively and sufficiently communicated?
- Are they effectively and sufficiently enforced?

Prioritizing Needed Changes

- Which changes are the easiest to make?
- Which changes are the least expensive to make?
- Which changes can be done strictly within the district?
- Which changes involve the least number of people?
- Which changes would create the biggest improvement in child safety?
- Which changes would most significantly lower the district's liability?

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Best Practices #1 - Determine Your Starting Point

- **Compile your formal child sexual abuse prevention policies.** What do you have documented in your:
 - Employee handbook?
 - Site safety plan?
 - Emergency plan?
 - Title IX procedures?
 - HR process?

- **Document your informal child sexual abuse prevention practices.** What are the known boundaries and behaviors that you and your staff practice that are not documented?

- **Identify organizational or cultural barriers.** Which of the following barriers are a challenge in your district?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Fear of being wrong<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of civil lawsuits<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of criminal charges for failure to report<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of retribution by the accused<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of increase in insurance premiums<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of loss of licensing or ability to continue operations<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of marred reputation in the community<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of reporter identity being kept confidential<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of opening a can of worms<input type="checkbox"/> Denial and disbelief<input type="checkbox"/> Culture of silence/secrecy<input type="checkbox"/> Culture of intimidation and victim harassment<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Investigation is best handled internally<input type="checkbox"/> Best handled internally<input type="checkbox"/> Putting adults' rights before children's<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive dissonance<input type="checkbox"/> Collegial/organizational loyalty<input type="checkbox"/> Report only abuse at home<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of time/money<input type="checkbox"/> Do the minimum the law requires<input type="checkbox"/> Abuser won't do it again<input type="checkbox"/> Not part of our core competencies<input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy of trust/forgiveness<input type="checkbox"/> Protecting friends/family<input type="checkbox"/> Damage control<input type="checkbox"/> Outright cover-up
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Best Practices #2 - Manage Access to Children

- **Document responsibility for your child sexual abuse prevention best practices program.**
 - Who is ultimately responsible for the protection of children in your youth programs?
 - Where is it documented?
 - How is it communicated to staff, parents, and youth?
- **Integrate child protection into the applicant screening process.**
 - Do you encourage or discourage your staff to respect their intuition?
 - Do you incorporate multiple interviews for staff and volunteers?
 - Do you include character focused questions in the interview process? If so, do you have a list of questions documented? If so, what are the questions?
 - Do you incorporate general and child sexual abuse boundary questions in your interviews? If yes, what questions do you ask? Are the questions documented along with responses that would be concerning?
 - Do you discuss your child sexual abuse prevention program with your staff and volunteer candidates?
 - How do you formalize the feedback process from interviewers so that they are making independent recommendations and are not influenced by 'Groupthink'?
 - Do you have a standardized process used by all staff who are conducting reference checks? If so, what is the process and where is it documented?
 - What is your standard process for background checks?
 - Is the process utilized for all staff and volunteers (long-term and event based)?
 - Do you do fingerprint based criminal background checks?
 - Are the criminal background checks nationally based?
 - Are the criminal background checks multi-state, if your candidate has moved out-of-state?
 - Does the background check process look at the Registered Sex Offender Registry?
 - Do you check the Child Abuse Registry through your local child protective services agency?
 - Do you check applicable licensing and certification agency records?
 - Do you check your candidate's personnel file, if they are within the city/county? How far back?
 - Do you check your internal records to see if the candidate (staff and volunteers) has been previously dismissed or disqualified during an earlier screening process?
 - Do you do an internet and social media search?
 - Is the full process completed prior to hiring or bringing on volunteers?
 - Do you have a list of pre-established disqualifiers that the results are checked against?
 - Are background checks done on a recurring basis after hire or volunteer assignment?
 - Do you have a list of red flags to look for in the screening process?
 - What are the red flags in the application process?
 - What are the red flags in the interview process?
 - What are the red flags in the reference check process?
 - What are the red flags in the background check process?

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Best Practices #3 - Set, Document and Enforce Boundaries

- **Boundary Documentation.** As you review each category to see what boundaries you already have in place, answer the following questions for each boundary or process:
 - Does a formal boundary policy or process exist?
 - Does an informal boundary or process exist?
 - If both exist, do they conflict in any way? What actions should be taken to resolve the conflicts?
 - Do the formal or informal boundaries and processes meet informed best practices?
 - What is the level of risk of your existing boundaries – high, medium, or low?
 - How can they be modified to minimize the risk of sexual misconduct?
 - Have these boundaries and processes been reviewed and approved by appropriate authorized administrators?
 - Where are these boundaries documented?
 - Employee handbook?
 - Site safety plan?
 - Title IX procedures?
 - Registration package?
 - By mail, e-mail, electronic newsletter?
 - City/County or program website?
 - Other?
 - How is the documentation communicated, distributed, and accessed by:
 - Staff?
 - Volunteers?
 - Parents?
 - Youth?
 - Are the documentation locations as well as the communication, distribution, and access methods sufficient to keep the information top-of-mind and ingrained in the culture?
 - How are these boundaries integrated into the daily routine and culture of the organization?
 - How often are the boundaries and processes reviewed and assessed for effectiveness?
 - Does the review process include feedback from staff, volunteers, parents, and youth?
 - Who is responsible to lead the review process?
- **On-Site Boundaries: Access.** What boundaries and processes are in place to protect children from unauthorized people accessing them when they are on your premises? Do you have policies regarding:
 - On-site visitor registration and supervision?
 - Approval and supervision of registered sex offenders' who request on-site access to their children?
 - Hardcopy or electronic possession or storage of sexually explicit images or materials on campus?
 - Internet access for staff, volunteers, parents, and youth in all areas accessed by youth or by city/county owned devices?
 - General usage policies for staff, volunteers, parents, and youth - for facility installed electronic devices, city/county owned/supplied electronic devices, and personal electronic devices?
 - Social media and electronic app usage on city/county property?
 - Systematic enforcement of your electronic boundaries?

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Best Practices #3 - Set, Document and Enforce Boundaries (continued)

- **On-Site Boundaries: Isolation.** What boundaries and processes are in place to prevent 1) youth from being isolated, and 2) failure to supervise, when they are on your premises? Do you have policies regarding:
 - One adult - one child situations?
 - Approved and off-limits on premise locations?
 - Pulling children out of their regularly scheduled program?
 - Before or after school/program help?
 - Monitoring infants, toddlers and non-verbal children?
 - Video cameras in locations serving children with disabilities and other high-risk areas?
 - Family members working together?
 - Monitoring nap time?
 - Supervision during movies and other lights out activities?
 - Observable diapering and bathroom monitoring?
 - Use of rovers?
 - Parental access and supervision for infants and pre-school age children?

- **On-Site Boundaries: Behavioral.** What boundaries and processes are in place to protect children from others' inappropriate behavior when they are on your premises? Do you have policies regarding:
 - Unprofessional behavior?
 - Inappropriate comments, stories, jokes
 - Being flirtatious
 - Snapping bra straps
 - Comments about hair, clothing, and make-up
 - Staff talking about their personal hygiene, struggles, or sex-life
 - Giving preferential treatment to a student
 - Hanging out with students
 - Intimidation: Secrets, lies, threats, coercion, and violence?
 - Sexual discussions and exposing youth to pornography or sexually explicit material?
 - Limiting physical touch?
 - Kissing
 - Massage
 - Stroking hair or body
 - Front-to-front or front-to-back hugs
 - Sitting on laps
 - Physical horseplay, piggy back rides, or typical games
 - Assisted instruction that includes body-to-body touching such as batting, violin, etc.
 - Excessive touching of any kind

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Best Practices #3 - Set, Document and Enforce Boundaries (continued)

- **On-Site Boundaries: Behavioral.** (Continued)
 - Showering with children or changing clothes in front of each other?
 - Entering children's rooms at night?
 - Limiting medical exams and treatments by staff?
 - Sharing of alcohol, illicit drugs, prescription drugs, or over-the-counter drugs?
 - Photographs of kids?
 - Hands in other people's pockets?
 - Keeping hands where they can be seen?
 - Masks, blindfolds, bondage, scatting, fetishisms, and rituals?

- **Off-Site Boundaries.** What boundaries and processes are in place to protect children when your programs require off-premises travel? Do you have policies regarding:
 - List of evaluated and approved locations?
 - Written authorization processes for staff requests and parental permission?
 - Transportation control and supervision?
 - Parent chaperones?
 - Staff and volunteers meeting with children in hotel rooms?
 - Staff and volunteer alcohol and drug use (illicit and prescription)?

- **Off-Hours Boundaries.** What boundaries and processes are in place to protect children from inappropriate staff relationships during off-hours that cannot be monitored by other city/county staff? Do you have policies regarding:
 - Babysitting and tutoring?
 - Visits to personal residences and sleepovers?
 - Attending birthday parties and family gatherings?
 - Hanging out with or traveling with students?
 - Dating students?

- **Electronic Communication and Social Media Boundaries.** What boundaries and processes are in place to protect children from isolated electronic communication? Do you have policies regarding:
 - Using social media applications for program communication, etc.?
 - Sharing phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and screen names?
 - Staff and volunteer's privacy settings and use of inappropriate images and content on social media?
 - Being 'friends' or 'following' on social media applications?
 - Communicating with children by video chat applications or any other electronic means?

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Best Practices #3 - Set, Document and Enforce Boundaries (continued)

- **Child-to-Child Boundaries.** What boundaries and processes are in place to protect children from being abused by other minors? Do you have policies regarding:
 - Visibility and monitoring during nap time?
 - Monitoring bathroom visits?
 - Separating age groups?
 - Avoiding inadvertent creation of authority of older minors?
 - Supervision of children, especially when in mixed age groups?
 - Supervision of children with disabilities, especially those who are immobile or non-communicative?

- **Gift Boundaries.** What boundaries and processes are in place to keep children and families from becoming indebted, inappropriately influenced by, or blackmailed by staff and volunteers? Do you have policies regarding:
 - Tangible and intangible gifts to children?
 - Tangible and intangible gifts to parents or caretakers?
 - Loans to parents or caretakers?