

Managing the Risk of Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Between Staff/Volunteer and Client/Customer

Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure that your organization is ready to respond to allegations of sexual abuse or misconduct:

- A written policy prohibiting abuse was distributed to all staff and volunteers;
- The staff and volunteers who received the policy signed an acknowledgment of receipt
- Client complaints do not have to be in writing, and clients have several choices between staff members to whom complaints should be made;
- Staff training on sexual abuse issues is conducted;
- During an investigation, the organization will document all complaints and the steps taken by the organization in response to the complaint(s)
- Those involved in any investigation are reminded that the policy of confidentiality will be reasonably maintained but that information will be disclosed as necessary in order to conduct an effective investigation;
- A thorough investigation is initiated promptly after any complaint is made;
- Remedial action for the alleged victim is considered and implemented;
- Appropriate discipline is imposed on the wrongdoer;
- Follow-up monitoring occurs to ensure that the victim has not suffered retaliation and that the abuse or misconduct has not resumed;
- The organization conducts a self assessment: What went wrong? What can we do to prevent illegal abuse/misconduct in the future?

5 Part Preventative Safety System



Step 1: Awareness training for ALL employees and volunteers.

Employees must realize the importance of enforcing the policies in place and the dangers that can occur if they do not. Policies have a limited impact without the “why.” Employees will be better aware of a dangerous situation.

Step 2: Give skillful training to those who screen potential employees/volunteers.

This is a critical piece of the system as you do not want to let high risk people in to your organization. Train screeners to recognize high risk behaviors, life patterns, and responses.

Step 3 The criminal background check.

For many organizations this is the whole system which is a mistake. Make it one component, albeit an important one. The depth of the background check should match the degree of access to children.



Step 4 Create tailored policies & procedures

Go beyond the basics. There is no “one size fits all” form. Include bathroom checks, six month member rules, etc. Remember policies are only marginally effective without awareness training.

Step 5 Make sure you DO what you SAY you do

Periodically reviewing your system is very important to make sure your organization is following the hard work you have put in place. Make everyone accountable. All the policies, training, and background checks you say you are doing mean nothing if you have no idea what’s actually getting done.



Does your organization's system address the following facts?

Less than 10% of sexual predators will EVER encounter the criminal justice system.

So even if your criminal background check works PERFECTLY, you will only identify a small fraction of molesters targeting children's programs. Background checks are still very important, but cannot be the entire security system.

1 of 3 girls and 1 of 6 boys will be sexually molested before reaching age 18.

This is an issue of epidemic proportion.

66% of molestation victims will not tell until adulthood(if ever)

This makes preventative measures even more important, since stopping abuse in the act is often difficult since you won't know its even occurring.

Convicted male abusers preferring boys will molest an average of 150 victims before prosecution.

Convicted male abusers preferring girls will molest an average of 52 victims before prosecution.

85% of convicted molesters are men.

90% of child sexual abuse victims are molested by someone they know and trust.

Sexual molesters groom children AND gatekeepers prior to sexual behavior.

Staff members, volunteer leaders, and parents are gatekeepers. Employees must understand grooming behavior.

There is NO visual profile for a molester.

Most molesters appear helpful, trustworthy, and responsible.