



# Safeguarding Best Practices: An Introduction for FADICA Members and their Grantee Partners

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## Agenda

- Review Essential Knowledge
- Components of a Safeguarding Policy Framework
- COVID-19 Challenges and Considerations

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## About Praesidium



"To help you **protect those in your care** from abuse and to help **preserve trust** in your organization."

Over **two decades** of experience

More than **4,000 clients** across diverse industries

Completed thousands of **root cause analyses**

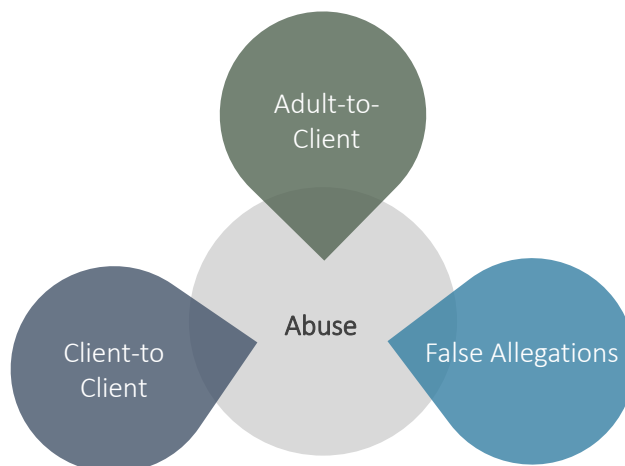
Developed proprietary **abuse risk management model**

Offer complete range of **risk management solutions**



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## Important Risks to Safeguard Against

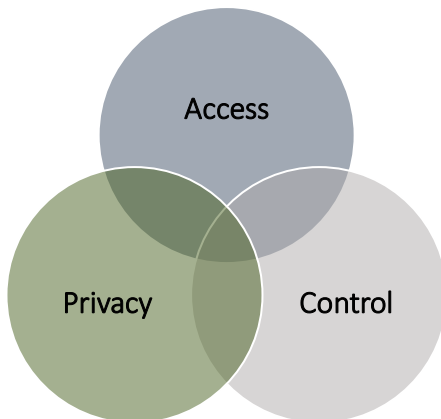


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## Types of Abuse

- Physical
- Sexual
- Verbal/Emotional
- Mental/Psychological
- Exploitation
- Neglect
- Financial/Economic

## How Adult Offenders Operate

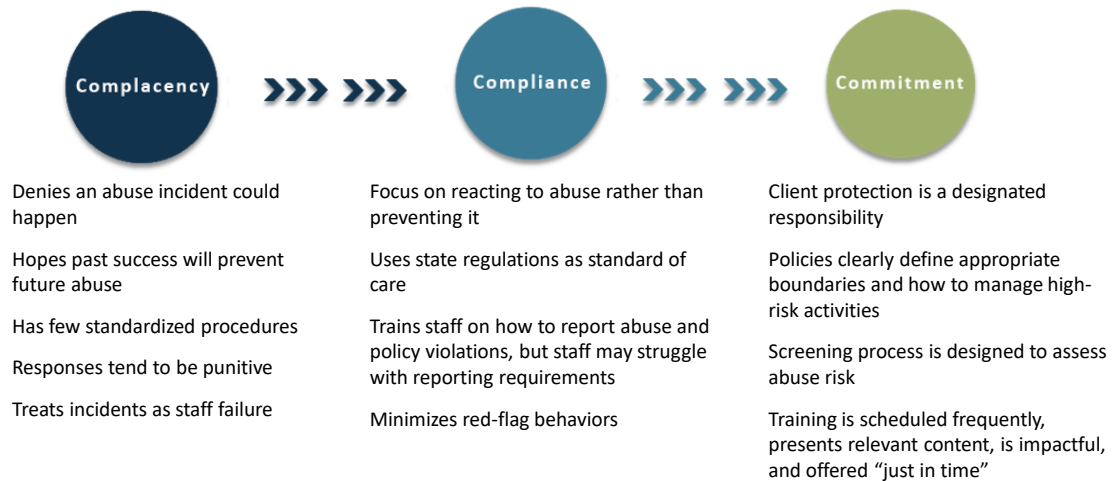


✓ Access

✓ Privacy

✓ Control

## Continuum of Commitment



## Factors Influencing Your Safeguarding Journey

- ✓ Industry and program specific characteristics (i.e. vulnerable populations, overnight activities, personal care assistance, outside contact, one-on-one interactions)
- ✓ Size of the organization (i.e. number of programs, number of locations, number of clients served, geographically distant)
- ✓ Wide range of programs in same organization
- ✓ Programs outside core competency (e.g. Higher Education, fitness facilities, resorts, etc.)
- ✓ Significant changes in the organization (i.e. budget, merger or acquisition, addition/subtraction of a program)
- ✓ High turnover of staff or leadership
- ✓ Volunteer based organization (i.e. mentoring, church, youth ministry)
- ✓ Externally Accredited



## Safeguarding Policy Framework: Key Components

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### Decision Points

- ✓ Scope of the Policy
- ✓ Code of Conduct / Boundary Guidelines
- ✓ Screening and Hiring
- ✓ Onboarding and Training
- ✓ Supervision and Support
- ✓ Responding and Reporting
- ✓ Governance and Accountability

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## Policy Structure Considerations

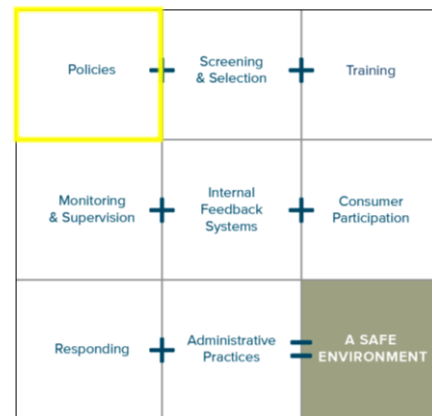
### Organization-level policies

*Define minimum expectations that apply to everyone*

- ✓ Zero tolerance
- ✓ Screening
- ✓ Training
- ✓ Response

### Program-specific policies

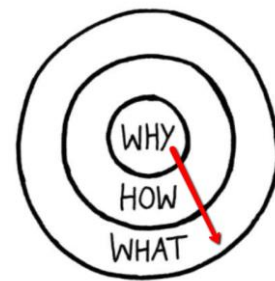
- ✓ Boundaries
- ✓ High-risk activities
- ✓ Response



## Safeguarding Policy – Component 1

### Introduction to the Organization's Purpose and Mission / Zero Tolerance for Abuse / Organizational Culture

- Describe why the organization is committed to preventing and responding appropriately to any harm against vulnerable clients (children & adults)
- Describe how safeguarding efforts promote and sustain the organization's mission and values
- Outline the organization's zero tolerance for abuse



## Safeguarding Policy – Component 2

### Behavioral Expectations and Interactions with Vulnerable Clients

- Describe defined expectations for safely and appropriately interacting with vulnerable clients
- Include the organization's Code of Conduct
- Outline both appropriate and inappropriate interactions to define the bandwidth of acceptable behavior

## Boundaries to Define

- Physical affection
- Verbal interactions
- Electronic communication
- Contact outside of program activities
- One-on-one interactions
- Gift giving and receiving



## Create Institutional Memory

- ✓ The safety of clients depends on **standardized** policies and procedures and an **institutional culture – not personnel**.
- ✓ Employees and volunteers **come and go**. You need the **same** level of policy adherence and understanding regardless of individuals.



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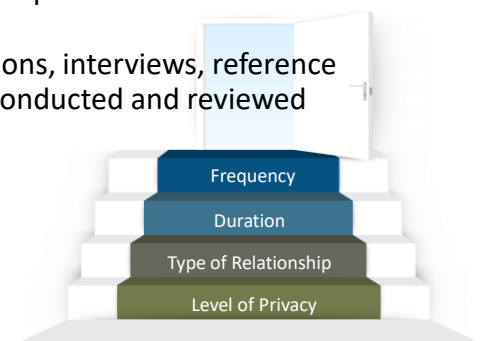
 PRAESIDIUM  
 25th Anniversary

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## Safeguarding Policy – Component 3

### Screening and Hiring Processes

- Describe the comprehensive and standardized process for screening and hiring individuals who will have access to vulnerable clients
- Identify whether process changes based on the position's level of access to vulnerable clients
- Identify whether and to what extent applications, interviews, reference checks, and criminal background checks are conducted and reviewed through an abuse prevention lens


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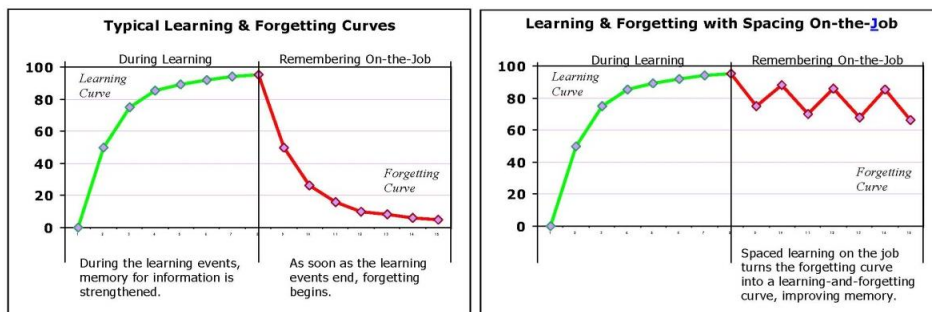
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## Safeguarding Policy – Component 4

### Onboarding and Training Requirements

- Describe onboarding and training requirements to equip staff with abuse prevention and safeguarding knowledge and skills
  - Content might include discussions on organization's zero tolerance for abuse, maintaining appropriate boundaries with clients, identifying and managing high-risk interactions and activities, internal and external responding and reporting procedures
  - Describe frequency (initial onboarding, annual, monthly staff meetings) and delivery systems (formal orientation, in-person discussion, online modules, group/team meetings) in which information and training will be delivered
- Identify whether requirements change based on the position's level of access to vulnerable clients
- Describe how the organization will maintain and verify compliance with defined training requirements

## Spacing Effect



Source: Thalheimer, W. (2006, February). *Spacing Learning Events Over Time: What the Research Says*. Retrieved October 23, 2013, from <http://www.work-learning.com/catalog/>

## Safeguarding Policy – Component 5

### Supervision and Support

- Describe the variety of ways in which the organization monitors and supervises:
  - Staff (employees and volunteers)
  - Vulnerable clients (peer interactions)
  - High-risk activities (overnight/residential, transportation, one-on-one interactions)
  - High-risk locations and architectural risks (bathrooms, bedrooms, isolated areas)
- Describe how the organization intervenes and supports staff and clients (supervision meetings, progressive discipline process, implementation of safety or supervision plans)

## Safeguarding Policy – Component 6

### Systems for Responding and Reporting

- Define the organization's internal response procedures for:
  - Red flag behaviors and policy violations
  - Suspicions or allegations of abuse
  - Client to client inappropriate behaviors
- Describe internal procedure for conducting investigations or incident reviews
- Describe how the organization seeks to remove barriers to reporting concerns or incidents
- Identify mechanisms for supporting victim-survivors

## Safeguarding Policy – Component 7

### Governance Involvement and Accountability

- Describe how the organization's governing body is involved in supporting and enforcing the safeguarding policy and its initiatives for keeping staff and clients safe:
- Identify when and under what circumstances the governing body is to be notified of concerns/incidents
- Outline what kind of trending information is regularly presented to the governing body
- Define how often the governing body reviews and gives feedback on program development, quality improvement, and safeguarding leadership
- Explore how safeguarding policy and its initiative overlay with external partners and third-party relationships

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## Summary Considerations



## Decision Points

- ✓ Scope of the Policy
- ✓ Code of Conduct / Boundary Guidelines
- ✓ Screening and Hiring
- ✓ Onboarding and Training
- ✓ Supervision and Support
- ✓ Responding and Reporting
- ✓ Governance and Accountability

## Safeguarding Best Practices

- ✓ Written policies regarding interactions and boundaries
- ✓ Criminal background and reference checks
- ✓ Annual abuse prevention training
- ✓ Written procedures for managing high-risk activities (1:1, bathroom, transportation)
- ✓ Written supervision requirements of staff and volunteers
- ✓ Analysis of trends or patterns to impact decision making and risk reduction
- ✓ Education and empowerment of vulnerable populations
- ✓ Written procedures for responding and reporting
- ✓ Board involvement/awareness
- ✓ Demonstrated commitment from leadership
- ✓ Low tolerance for drift from standards

## COVID-19 Challenges

- Maintaining professionalism through virtual and online interactions
- Empowering clients to report concerns
- Engaging parents and families
- Providing support and supervision to teams



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## KEEP IN TOUCH

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