

# Safeguarding Responsibilities for Responding and Reporting

Presented by  
**PRAESIDIUM**  
In partnership with FADICA

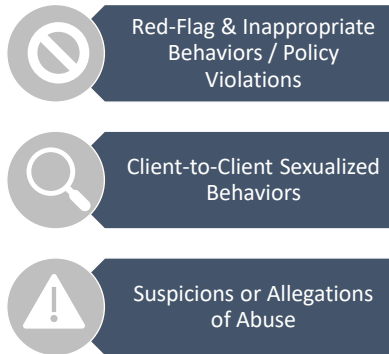
1

## What is Responding?

Comforting	Comforting and finding assistance for victims
Interrupting	Interrupting inappropriate behaviors/policy violations and determining corrective action
Reporting	Reporting incidents as appropriate within the organization (to supervisors, administration) and externally (to authorities, parents, funders, media)
Evaluating	Evaluating and changing practices to reduce the chance of future incidents

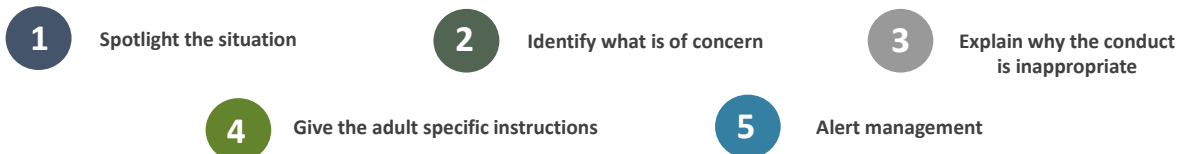
2

## Responding and Reporting



3

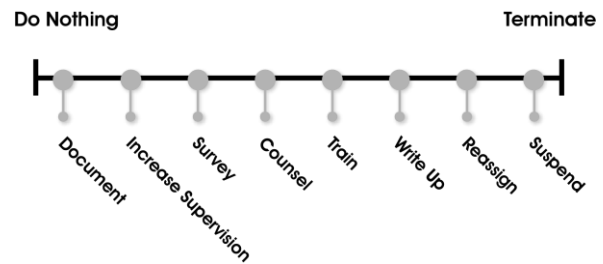
### Five Step Approach to Interrupting Suspicious or Inappropriate Behavior



*Don't wait until you witness an act of abuse – report low-level concerns and policy violations*

4

## Continuum of Responses: Red-Flags or Policy Violations



5

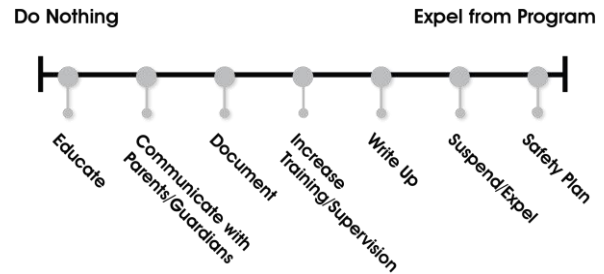
## Responding to Client-to-Client Sexualized Behaviors

- ✓ Address problems immediately with the client and inform your supervisor
- ✓ Document areas of concern
- ✓ Communicate with parents/guardians immediately (when applicable)
- ✓ Discuss issues with staff
- ✓ Follow mandated reporting requirements



6

## Continuum of Responses: Client-to-Client Sexualized Behaviors



7

## Responding to Suspicions or Allegations of Abuse



INTERRUPT THE  
BEHAVIORS IF  
WITNESSED.



FOLLOW MANDATED  
REPORTING  
REQUIREMENTS.



FOLLOW  
DOCUMENTATION  
REQUIREMENTS.

8

# How to Respond to Disclosures of Abuse or Neglect



Remember: It is never your responsibility to probe or investigate.  
Always report the allegation up to your supervisor.  
Follow mandated reporting requirements.



## What is Mandated Reporting?



- ✓ An obligation to report abuse imposed by federal or state law
- ✓ It is considered part of a public health response against child maltreatment
- ✓ Laws vary depending on the jurisdiction, creating a wide range of differences in several aspects
- ✓ Most laws cover existing situations or situations where harm has already happened
- ✓ The reporter should not conduct their own investigation
- ✓ Most mandated reporting laws included in child protection legislation but may also appear in criminal or social services legislation

## Dimensions Covered

- ✓ The types of abuse that must be reported:
  - Physical, emotional/psychological, sexual, and neglect
- ✓ The degree or severity of the harm:
  - “Significant” or “serious”
- ✓ Who must report:
  - All citizens
  - Specific occupations or selected groups
- ✓ Timeframes



## Dimensions Covered



- ✓ State of mind:
  - “belief on reasonable grounds”, “reasonable suspicion”, “aware of”
- ✓ Where to report:
  - Hotlines, governmental entity, civil authorities
    - United States:
   
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/state/?CWIGFunctionsaction=statestatutes:main.getResults>
- ✓ Information that must be provided:
  - Names, dates, description, etc.

## Other Important Considerations

- ✓ Confidentiality
- ✓ Anonymity
- ✓ Penalties for failure to report
- ✓ Immunity or protection for good-faith reporting
- ✓ Privileges and other exemptions
  - Attorney-client, Clergy-penitent, Doctor-patient
- ✓ Images of child sexual abuse material (formerly known as child pornography)

## International Experiences

- ✓ Level of enforcement and compliance
- ✓ Third party vs. victim report
- ✓ Trust in civil authorities
- ✓ Country's political state or situation
- ✓ Statutes of Limitation
- ✓ Response time



---

15

## Recommendations

- ✓ Learn the requirements specific to your jurisdiction
- ✓ Educate those who work with you and make the information easily accessible
- ✓ Create relationships with civil authorities and entities you trust
- ✓ Consult with your legal counsel
- ✓ Even if not required, consider reporting to the civil authorities

---

16





# Responding to Historical Allegations

17

- Adult victim reports abuse by a past employee/program participant
- Adult victim reports abuse by a current employee
- Adult victim or third-party reports multiple allegations



## Common Types of Historical Allegations

18

## Why Respond to Historical Allegations

- ✓ Identify possible victims
- ✓ Provide support services to victim-survivors
- ✓ Protect organizational reputation
- ✓ Ensure no additional looming incidents
- ✓ Identify whether there are reporting obligations
- ✓ Easier to defend the known vs the unknown

## Goals for Responding to Historical Allegations



Determine:  
Did the  
incident occur?



Determine:  
How to handle  
current  
employees

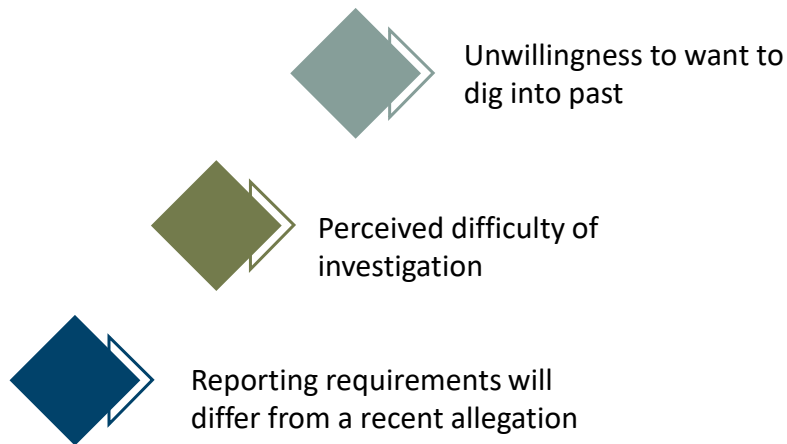


Identify and  
assist possible  
victim-survivors



Use lessons  
learned to inform  
prevention needs

## Challenges in Responding to Historical Allegations



## Four Steps for Responding to an Incident



## Steps to Take in Responding



## Root-Cause Analysis



## How to Conduct a Root-Cause Analysis

25



## How to Conduct a Root-Cause Analysis

- ✓ Adult to Client
- ✓ Client to Client
- ✓ False Allegation

**Identify the Who, What, Where,  
and When?**

26

02

Collect  
Data

## How to Conduct a Root-Cause Analysis

- ✓ Review the Incident
- ✓ Review Documentation
- ✓ Interview Key Individuals
- ✓ Review Policies
- ✓ Review Training Curriculum



27

03

Perform  
The  
Analysis

## How to Conduct a Root-Cause Analysis

- ✓ Asking Why?
- ✓ **What are the system-wide causes that allowed the incident to occur? (i.e., Safety Equation)**
  - ✓ Use the 5 Why's Technique
  - ✓ Determine Root Causes vs. Symptoms

***\*\*If most of these causes are staff failures, there is a good chance you're not digging deep enough***



28

## 04 Identify Corrective Action

### ▷ How to Conduct a Root-Cause Analysis

- ✓ What operation in Praesidium's Safety Equation was found to be deficient?
- ✓ What best practice standards can be put in place to prevent a reoccurrence?
- ✓ What are the resources needed to implement the best practice standard?
- ✓ How are we going to implement and ensure compliance?

## Praesidium Safety Equation®

Policies	+	Screening & Selection	+	Training
Monitoring & Supervision	+	Internal Feedback Systems	+	Consumer Participation
Responding	+	Administrative Practices	=	A SAFE ENVIRONMENT



## KEEP IN TOUCH

---

Laura Hardin Aceves, LMSW  
Senior Risk Consultant  
LHardin@PraesidiumInc.com  
Praesidium

Adriana Dominguez, JD  
Senior Risk Consultant  
ADominguez@PraesidiumInc.com  
Praesidium

Colleen Crawford  
Program Manager, Child and Vulnerable Adult  
Safeguarding Initiative  
CCrawford@fadica.org  
FADICA