



# PRAESIDIUM

Communication and Apologies:  
Organizational Tools for Facilitating  
Healing Pathways for Abuse Survivors



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ABOUT

## PRAESIDIUM

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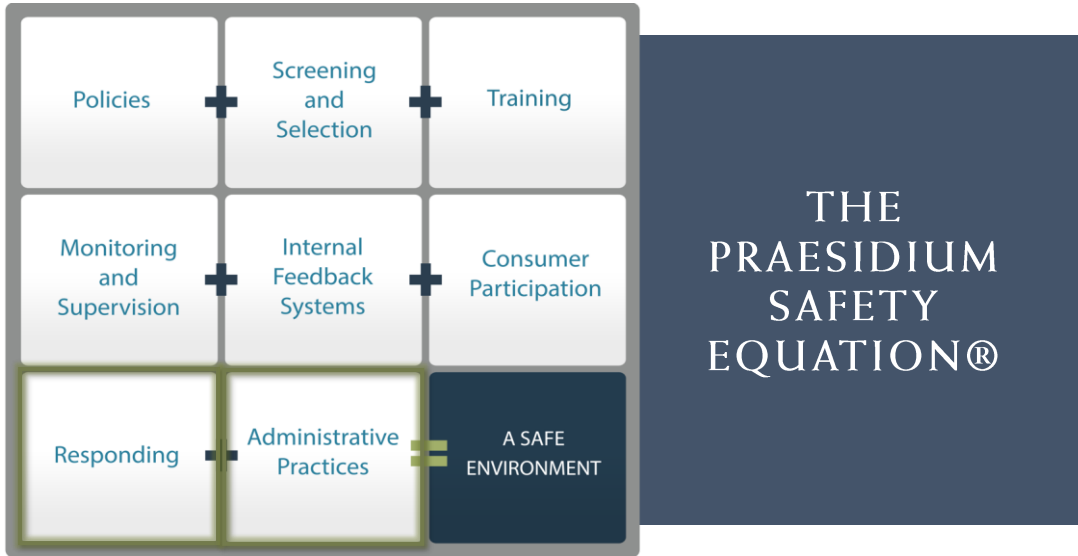
*Our mission is to help you protect those in your care from abuse and to help preserve trust in your organization.*

Praesidium is a **leading innovator** of scientifically-based solutions designed to transform the way organizations approach the prevention of sexual abuse. For **over 30 years**,

Praesidium's expertise, consulting, and solutions have helped **foster safer environments** for children, vulnerable adults, staff, volunteers, and all parties involved.



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## AGENDA



SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM



BENEFITS & OUTCOMES FROM APOLOGIES

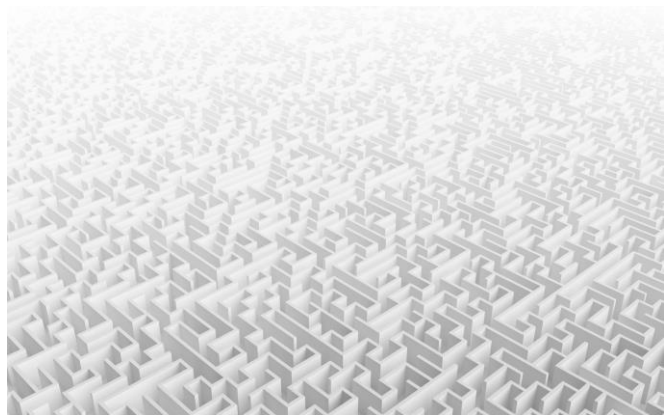
- For survivors
- For organizations



ASPECTS OF EFFECTIVE APOLOGIES



TIES TO PREVENTION



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## The Scope of the Problem





**90%**  
of the time, the perpetrator is **known** to the victim

**80%** 

of abuse does not get reported  
In some industries, reporting is even less frequent

**Sexual abuse remains a serious issue that affects millions of vulnerable individuals each year, sparing no generation or demographic.**

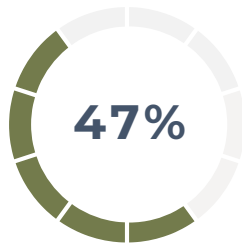
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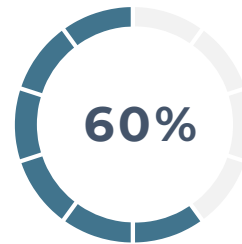
## RATES OF DISCLOSURE OF CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE



Estimated 1 in 3 survivors **never disclose**



Did not disclose until +5 years post-incident



Delay disclosure until adulthood

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## TYPES OF ABUSE REPORTS OR INCIDENTS



HISTORICAL INCIDENTS OF ABUSE



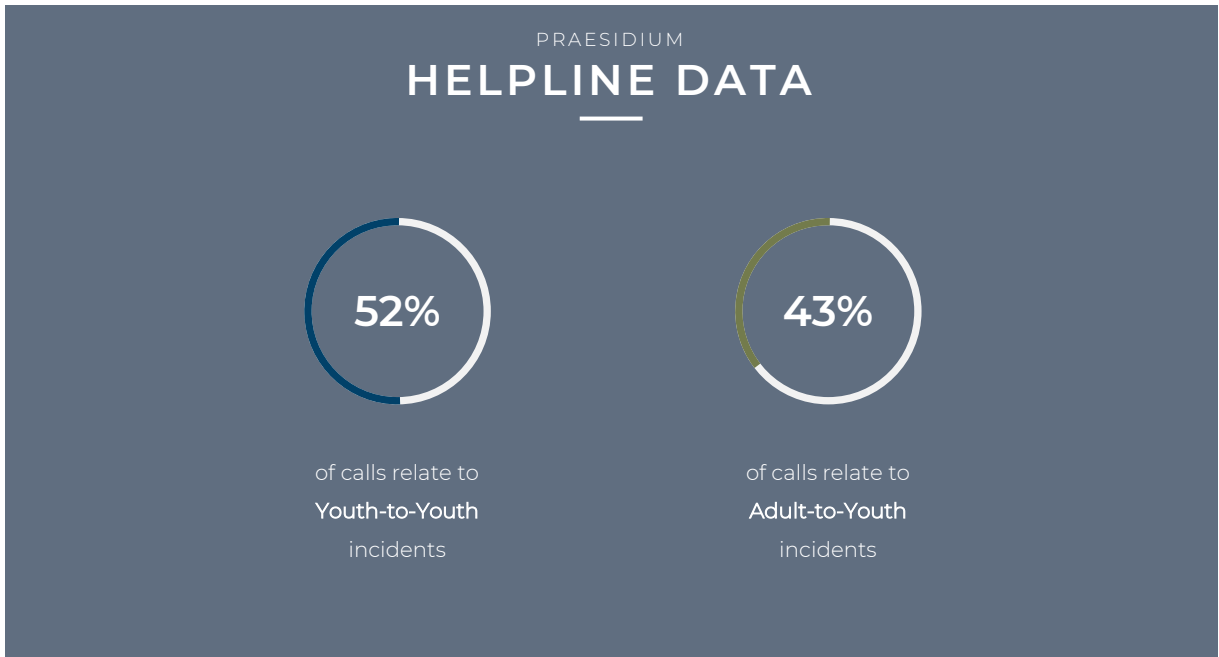
ADULT-TO-CONSUMER ABUSE



CONSUMER-TO-CONSUMER ABUSE

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## HISTORICAL APPROACHES

followed a “deny & defend” model

## WHILE CURRENT TRENDS

favor survivor-centered responses

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## BENEFITS AND OUTCOMES OF APOLOGIES

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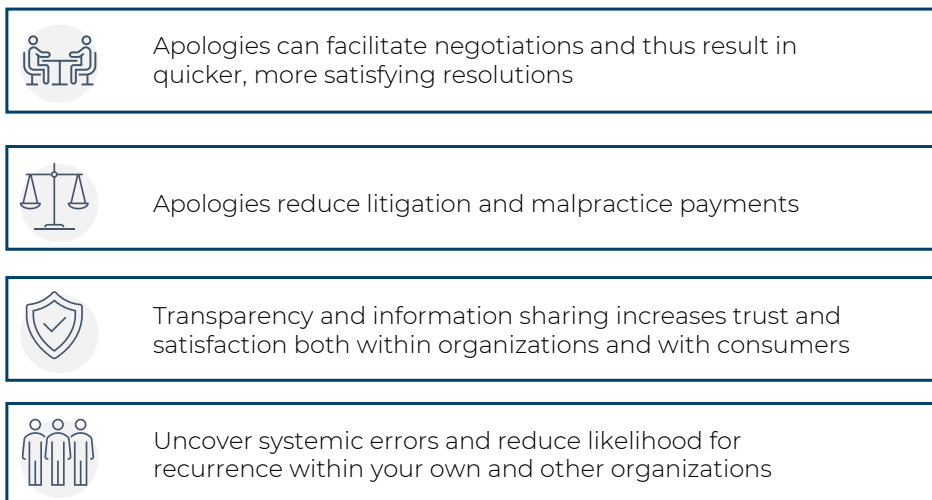
## IMPACT ON SURVIVORS



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## IMPACT ON ORGANIZATIONS



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# QUESTIONS

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## ASPECTS OF EFFECTIVE APOLOGIES

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## NECESSARY ELEMENTS

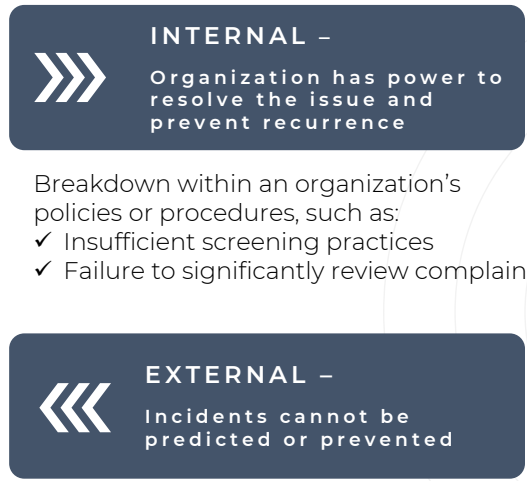


The effectiveness of the apology depends on how it is constructed and the context in which it is offered

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## LOCUS OF CONTROL



Placing blame on external forces or an employee acting outside the company's control

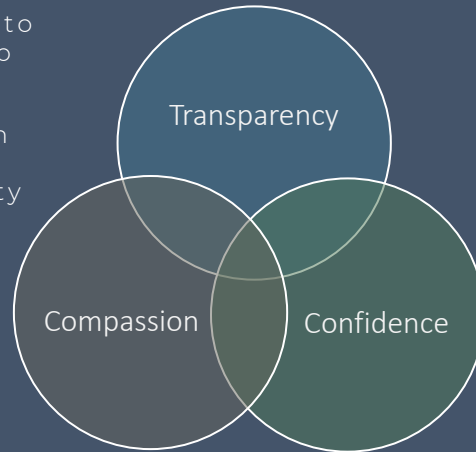
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## SET THE COMMUNICATION TONE

- ✓ The person apologizing needs to be trained on when and how to apologize
- ✓ Individuals can often tell when an apology only expresses sympathy but not responsibility



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## TIMING



- ✓ Share what you reasonably can, when you can
- ✓ Some measure of apology is preferred over no response at all, even if all information is not yet known
- ✓ Continue to provide updates and amended responses as fact-finding continues

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The apology is for the survivor, not for the organization's absolution

#### OFFER TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION -

- ✓ Later apologies following reflection on the survivor's point of view are particularly powerful
- ✓ Gives the survivor the opportunity to express their views and come to believe the other party understands
- ✓ Survivors feel more confident that the organizations understands a rule that was broken will do the right thing in the future

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A survivor's psychological state may complicate their ability to receive an apology

An effective, positive response should include resources for healing:

- Counseling services with a provider of the individual's choice
- Connections to community resources
- Educational information for consumers
- Additional training for employees to strengthen prevention efforts
- Legal services

## COMPENSATION

- ✓ a poor substitute for delayed recovery and/or insufficient apology
- ✓ signals the meaning and seriousness of the apology
- ✓ conveys the error will not likely be repeated

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## TIES TO PREVENTION

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## ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS – UNDERTAKING AN INTERNAL INVESTIGATION

Exploring what happened, why, and to what effect  
How you portray this information matters

Fewer malpractice claims are brought against physicians who spend more time with patients and engage in relationship-building exchanges such as discussing the process of the visit, asking questions, giving information, checking for understanding, using humor, and offering statements of approval, concern, and empathy

- ✓ Do you have the right policies in place?
- ✓ Were staff and volunteers properly screened?
- ✓ Were staff properly trained?
- ✓ Were there any gaps in monitoring and supervision procedures?
  - Monitoring of staff
  - Monitoring of consumers
  - Monitoring of facilities
- ✓ Were there any gaps in responding to policy violations or red flag behaviors?

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# QUESTIONS

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## DOWNLOAD THE PAPER

<http://praesidiuminc-20935854.hs-sites.com/en/praesidium-apology-whitepaper>

## STAY IN TOUCH

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