



## Expanding Existing Frameworks for Defining Your Safe Environment

Presented by  
**PRAESIDIUM**  
 In partnership with FADICA



1

### ABOUT **PRAESIDIUM**

*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.



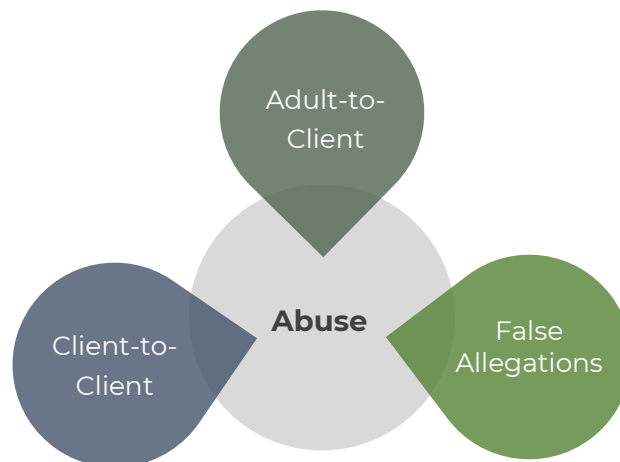
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## Types of Abuse

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

3

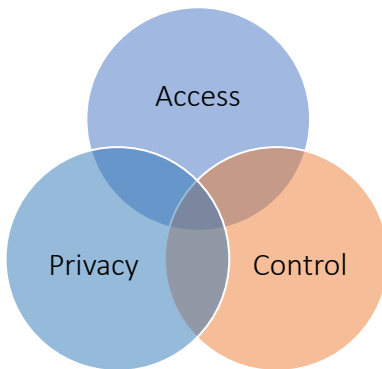
## Important Risks to Safeguard Against



4

# How Abuse Happens

## Adult-to-Client



## Client-to-Client

- ✓ Opportunity
- ✓ Location
- ✓ Activity
- ✓ Lack of Monitoring
- ✓ Poor Planning

5

## Boundaries

- What are boundaries?
- Types of boundaries:
  - Physical
  - Emotional
  - Behavioral
- Why are they helpful?
  - Ensure safety
  - Ensure fair and equal treatment
  - Help set expectations and model behavior for others



6

## Power Differential and Vulnerability

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- Individuals/clients depend on organizations and their representatives for basic needs and support
- Power derives from a helping relationship and/or the helping person's role/identity
- The client's history or circumstances may make them vulnerable: experienced past abuse or trauma, unhoused, mental health, poverty, addiction and recovery
- Helping person may be unaware of their own needs/boundaries
- An environment is conducive to abuse when:
  - Access, privacy, control
  - Lack of policies that promote healthy boundaries
  - Lack of supervision and support
  - Lack of communication about expectations
  - Lack of channels to report concerns

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7

## Boundary-Crossing Behavior & Warning Signs

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|---|--|
| ✓ Prefers time and friendships with youth more than adults      | ✓ Has "favorite" or preferred clients  |
| ✓ Gives special gifts to clients, especially without permission | ✓ Uses inappropriate language or jokes   |
| ✓ Engages in too much physical contact with clients             | ✓ Behaves as a peer with clients rather than a supervising adult or helping professional               |
| ✓ Bends the rules for certain clients                           | ✓ Uses social networking sites and text messages to contact clients privately or away from programming |
| ✓ Ignores policies about interacting with clients               | ✓ Breaches the client's confidentiality  |
| ✓ Excessive self-disclosure of personal or intimate information | ✓ Meets with clients at non-standard times or locations  |
| ✓ Seeking to spend time alone with a particular client          | ✓ Overidentifies with the client   |
| ✓ Is overprotective of a client                                 | ✓ Being excessively available to a client  |

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8

## Balanced Relationships

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It is important to maintain balance in helping relationships with clients by recognizing boundaries in others and be aware of power differentials.

Balanced relationships are:

- Focused on fulfilling the needs of the client rather than on reciprocity (consumer-focused)
- Limited to the time period during which the client is receiving services (time-limited)
- Limited to locations and spaces of the organization or approved by the organization (location-limited)
- The objective of the helping relationship is to provide same services and support to all clients; not favorite
- Boundaries should be upheld to ensure the role of the helping professional in the client's life is clear and to encourage self-care

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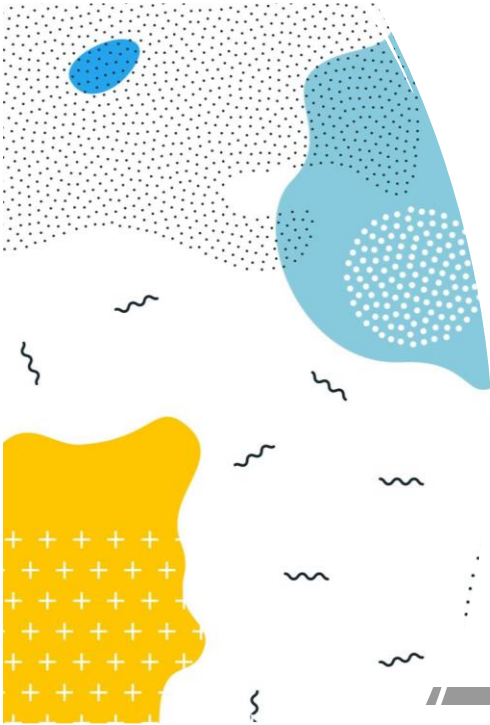
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9



## Safeguarding Frameworks

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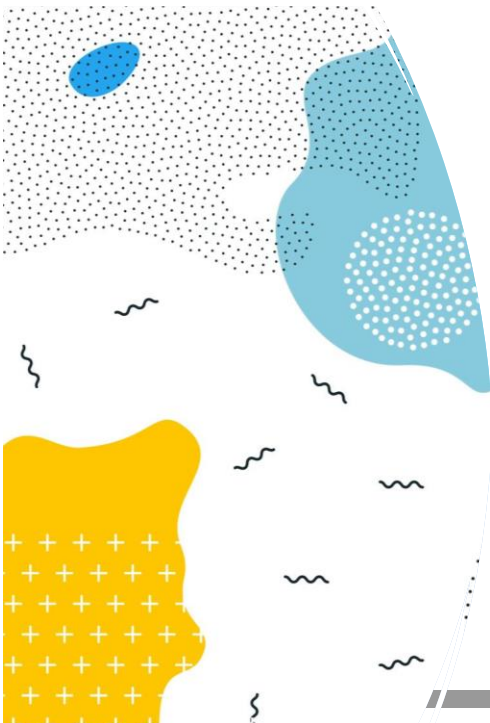


11

## Opportunities for Reflection <sup>(1)</sup>

- What positions/roles within your organization directly interact with children or vulnerable adults?
- Do certain positions come with power (institutional, financial, etc.) that can be leveraged over vulnerable persons or within/over a community?
- How frequent are your interactions with children or vulnerable adults?
- Do you educate and prepare staff and beneficiaries of service for 1:1 interaction? How do you manage potential risks?

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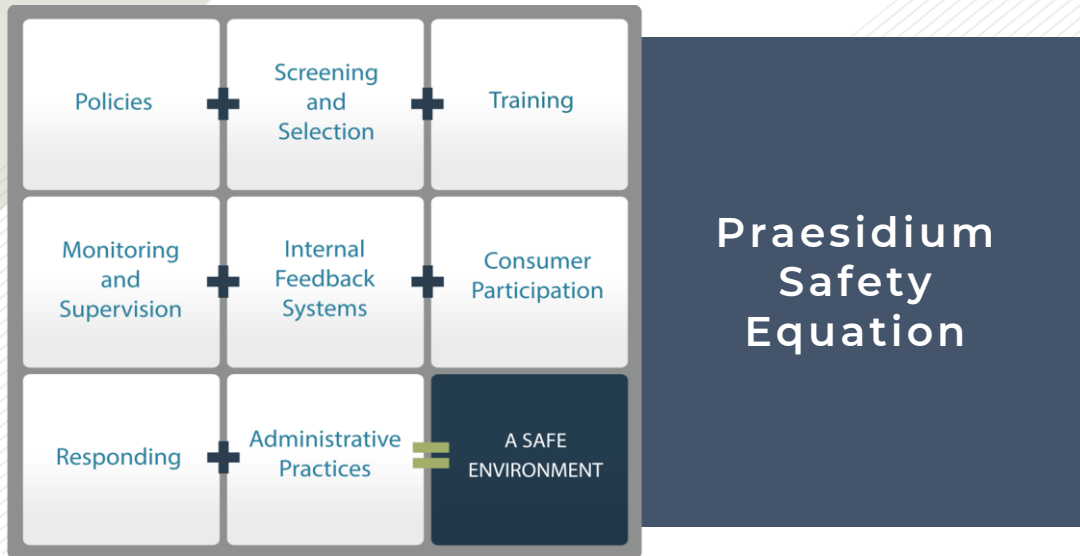


12

## Opportunities for Reflection <sup>(2)</sup>

- If you are not a direct-service provider, where might interactions with children or vulnerable adults still occur, albeit infrequently?
  - Site visits, fundraisers, conference or networking events, community service opportunities, immersion experiences?
- Are your staff members knowledgeable about how to make a report or raise concerns? Have your clients/beneficiaries of service and their relevant caregivers been given this information?
- How does a written safeguarding policy enhance communication and trust within your institution/organization, within your community, or within the funder/partner relationship?

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13

## Decision Points

- ✓ Scope of the Safeguarding 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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14

## Existing Items to Reference or Incorporate into Safeguarding Policy

Employee Manual or Handbook	Company mission statement	Code of Conduct	Antidiscrimination and antiharassment policies
Human Resources hiring checklist	Grievance procedure	Whistleblower protections	Progressive disciplinary processes
Governance charter	Performance evaluations	Monitoring checklists	Incident report process

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15

### Professional Courtesy and Zero Tolerance

We treat all of persons receiving services equally and with compassion, understanding and respect. We never distinguish among persons supported based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability or veteran status.

The organization does not tolerate harassment. Workplace harassment is behavior based on race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, or sex. To be considered harassment, the behavior must be workplace conduct that is unwelcome, discriminatory and conduct that no reasonable employee should have to endure. An employee or employee witness must reasonably believe that they have no choice but to endure the workplace harassment, in order to keep their jobs.

An employee who believes that he or she has been the recipient of or witnessed workplace harassment or has questions regarding another employee's behavior, must immediately report the facts of the incident to the immediate supervisor. If the supervisor's behavior is in question, the employee must immediately report the incident directly to the Director. An employee may also report the facts of an incident to the Director of Human Resources. All reports will be treated confidentially.

All [Company name] employees are also expected to support an inclusive workplace by adhering to the following conduct standards:

- Treat others with dignity and respect at all times.
- Address and report inappropriate behavior and comments that are discriminatory, harassing, abusive, offensive or unwelcome.
- Foster teamwork and employee participation, encouraging the representation of different employee perspectives.
- Seek out insights from employees with different experiences, perspectives and backgrounds.
- Avoid slang or idioms that might not translate across cultures.
- Support flexible work arrangements for co-workers with different needs, abilities and/or obligations.
- Confront the decisions or behaviors of others that are based on conscious or unconscious biases.
- Be open-minded and listen when given constructive feedback regarding others' perception of your conduct.

[Company name] will not tolerate discrimination, harassment or any behavior or language that is abusive, offensive or unwelcome.

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16



# Behavioral Expectations & Interactions with Vulnerable Individuals

- ✓ Physical affection
- ✓ Verbal interactions
- ✓ Electronic communications and social media
- ✓ Managing one-on-one situations
- ✓ Contact outside of program activities
- ✓ Gift giving and receiving



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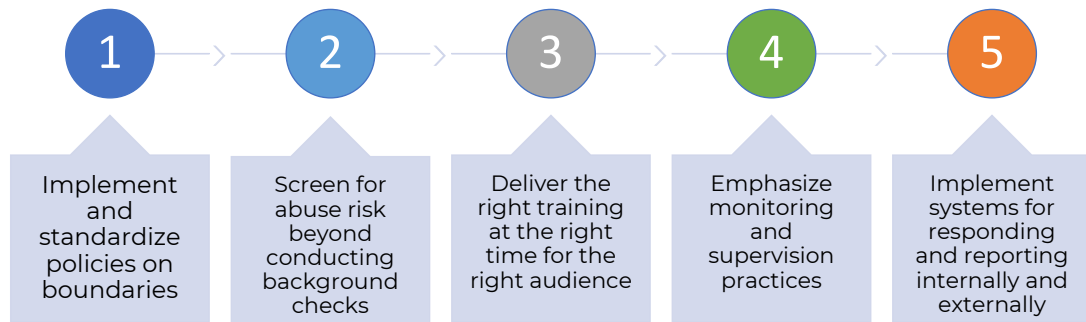
17

Opportunities for  
Expansion:  
A Look at Praesidium's  
Sample Policies &  
Procedures

18

## IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN

Minimum Expectations  
Designed to Mitigate Risk and Prevent Abuse



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19

## Continuum of Commitment



Denies an abuse incident could happen  
Hopes past success will prevent future abuse or exploitation  
Has few standardized procedures  
High tolerance for "drift"  
Safety protocols dependent on individuals  
Responses tend to be punitive

Focus on reacting to abuse rather than preventing it  
Uses state and licensing regulations as standards of care  
Minimizes red-flag behaviors  
Treats incidents as staff failure not systems failure

Client protection is a designated responsibility  
Board is fully trained and informed  
Policies clearly define appropriate boundaries and how to manage high-risk activities  
Protocols focus on prevention  
Training is scheduled frequently, presents relevant content, is impactful, and offered "just in time"  
Seeks external validation

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20



## STAY IN TOUCH

**Laura Hardin Aceves, LMSW**  
Senior Risk Consultant  
[LHardin@praesidiuminc.com](mailto:LHardin@praesidiuminc.com)

**Colleen Crawford**  
Program Manager, Child and  
Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding  
Initiative  
[ccrawford@fadica.org](mailto:ccrawford@fadica.org)

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