



Policies and Procedures

Policies and Procedures are an essential backbone of your prevention strategy, providing an overarching written structure that demonstrates your commitment to the safety and well-being of children and youth entrusted to your care.

STEP 1: Assessing Your Current Policies

- Enforce the standards for behavior and interactions of staff and youth as dictated by your Code of Conduct.
- Build and maintain the type of environment described in your Safe Environment policies that ensures the safety of children at the site.
- Screen all staff and volunteers at hire and ensure ongoing training and supervision.
- Prompt your staff to continuously honor their duties and responsibilities as mandated reporters under Massachusetts abuse reporting laws.
- Define in detail the internal communication and reporting policies and procedures of your organization.

STEP 2: Ongoing Implementation

- All policies and procedures are provided by leadership and acknowledged by all staff.
- Enforce the Code of Conduct and address any breaches accordingly.
- Conduct all pre-employment and volunteer screening and hiring procedures and periodically repeat criminal background checks.
- Train staff at least annually on how to recognize, respond, and report concerning behaviors in adults and signs of abuse in children.
- Adhere to your monitoring behavior and reporting protocols and address any issues when they occur.

STEP 3: Continuous Communication and Improvement

- Communicate your policies and protocols to all stakeholders, including parents.
- Form community partnerships with local organizations to improve your child abuse prevention plans at your YSO.
- Ensure staff adhere to internal and external communication protocols when there is a suspected case of abuse.
- Conduct an annual review and update of your policies, including Code of Conduct, Screening and Hiring, Reporting, Safe Environments, and Training.
- Run a comprehensive assessment of your child abuse prevention plan every three years and include interviews with all stakeholders.