



Resources for Child Safety

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CHILD SAFETY SELF-ASSESSMENT

This is a general guide and does not constitute legal advice. As each section is reviewed, check off what is currently in place. Not everything may be applicable to your institution and it may not be feasible to implement every item on this self-assessment for a variety of reasons but it will give you a starting point of where to begin strengthening your child safety policies and procedures.

PHYSICAL SPACES

- All spaces (offices, classrooms, meeting rooms, etc) where an adult might meet with a minor have windows or other forms of visibility into the room.
- In rooms with windows to the outside, at least one unlocks, opens, and may be used in an evacuation plan.
- There is an evacuation plan posted in every room.
- Rooms with windows on second+ story floors have a portable escape ladder.
- Easy access to fire extinguishers and first aid kits.
- Entrance doors to multi-stall bathrooms cannot be locked from the inside.
- There is a list of safety rules posted in every room.
- Designated area for staff and other adults to keep bags, purses, or other personal items away from children.

STAFFING PROCEDURES

- All staff pass a background check annually or every two years.
- All youth interacting staff answer [standard interview questions](#) to assess for child safety in addition to role specific questions.
- A minimum of 3 references are checked and indicate no reason for concern in working with or around youth for all staff.
- Social media and internet presence is [checked](#) in the hiring process of all staff.
- Drivers license or other form of ID is verified for all staff.
- Any youth facing or interacting volunteers receive the same or similar standard of screening.
- Staff have an auditable business phone, line, email, and/or application to communicate with minors.

TRAINING

- Staff and volunteers, including synagogue clergy, receive similar or the same training on child safety.
- Training topics include mandatory reporting, responding to disclosures, impacts of sexual abuse, grooming, appropriate boundaries, emergency situations, and ensuring physical safety.
- Refresher training for staff and volunteers is required annually.
- Children and parents receive training and information on safety policies and procedures annually.
 - Ex: In addition to fire drills, children should also be informed that staff may not lock doors or obstruct windows when they meet 1:1 with them.





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POLICIES

- There is a policy for any window obstructions like curtains or blinds to be up or removed at all times when an adult meets with a minor.
- There is a policy for all doors to remain unlocked and partially open whenever an adult meets 1:1 with a minor.
- Electronic communication policy detailing how staff may communicate with minors and what topics are appropriate to communicate about using electronic platforms, websites, applications, or other mediums.
- Paired staffing policy detailing that staff should always have another adult present or within eyesight and that they may not be alone with a minor in an unobservable and uninterruptible manner.
- Clear consequences that are enforced when policies are violated.
- A clearly defined anti-harassment policy that applies to staff, volunteers, vendors, congregants, and other adults that interact with the organization who may work with or be around youth.
 - An environment where harassment occurs is one where harassment is being modeled for children and one where there is likely to be a culture of victim shaming. Strong harassment policies that are enforced create environments where adults and kids will feel more comfortable coming forward.
- Physical safety procedures.
- Emergency preparedness plans.
- Dual relationship form for staff and volunteers to complete and have on file if they are close to an unrelated minor or the minor's family.
- Transportation procedures and guidelines. With the exception of dual relationships and regular job duties, staff and volunteers should not transport or offer to transport unrelated minors to and from the organization or programs offered by the organization.
- Selection procedures which include clear selection criteria for admission to programs, scholarship acceptance, or other special considerations and the use of 2-3 people responsible for finalizing selections.
- Boundary policies; staff and volunteers should not be allowed to engage in horseplay or other forms of unnecessary, non sexual touch with minors.
- Clear reporting procedures specifying that staff and volunteers do not need permission to report to external authorities.
- Clear youth disciplinary procedures that involve developmentally appropriate consequences and a clear progression of consequences for staff and volunteers to follow when needed.
- Guidance on risk of interactions between youth.
- Clear and age appropriate staffing ratios that follow local guidelines.
- Policy in place regarding the membership or employment of **alleged** offenders.
- Policies are publicly published and easily accessible for staff, client base, and general public.

OTHER

- Anonymous reporting system that children, teachers, parents, or community members can use.
- System in place that tracks staff, volunteers, and children in attendance at youth oriented events and programs.
- Congregation membership forms ask if applicants are registered sex offenders.
 - Check local laws first.
- There is a specific, qualified staff member responsible for ensuring compliance with safety policies/procedures.
- There is a specific, qualified staff member responsible for responding to reports, concerns, allegations, and complaints.

