

CHILD-SAFE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES

Taken and adapted from:

Final Report: The role of organizational culture in child sexual abuse in institutional contexts

What cultural characteristics contribute to lack of child safety in organizations?

1. Cultures that do not support the open discussion of matters related to sex and child sexual abuse
2. Cultures that inhibit and undermine children's self-expression
3. Senior management cultures
4. Cultures that intensify the negative impact of power differentials
5. Cultures that intensify the negative impact of informal group dynamics
6. Cultures that undermine faithful compliance to good governance mechanisms designed to inhibit the perpetration, speed up detection, and enhance the response to child sexual abuse

What creates a child safe culture?

1. Stakeholders and leaders of child/family service organizations introduce and provide organization-wide cultural content that is antithetical to the types of cultural content that facilitates child sexual abuse in institutional contexts.
 - a. Organization leadership sets the example in engaging in safety culture behavior; socialize its members to embrace safety culture; create policies and practices (*such as mandatory training on child safe cultures*) that operationalize safety culture behaviors.
2. Stakeholders and leaders of child/family service organizations need to ensure that written, high-level policies and procedures, including efforts to articulate the underlying assumptions, values and beliefs, and norms that support adherence to such policies, are translated into effective implementation plans and become standard practice within the organizational context.
 - a. Literature on child safe organizations focuses on leader behavior and staff training as mechanisms for implementing child safe guidelines and practices.
 - b. Literature highlights the necessity of going beyond high-level policies and emphasizes the importance of using symbolic means to create a child safe culture.
3. Organizations that exhibit the characteristics of high-reliability organizations are robust and can stand up to severely adverse events, such as child sexual abuse. Characteristics of high reliability organizations include:
 1. High reliability organizations are sensitive to operations.
 2. High reliability organizations are reluctant to accept "simple" explanations for problems.
 3. High reliability organizations have a preoccupation with failure.

4. High reliability organizations defer to expertise.
5. High reliability organizations are resilient.

Organizations need the trainings necessary to become high reliability organizations.

4. Extensive involvement of lower-level staff is imperative in forming policies and procedures to prevent the perpetration, speed up the detection, and enhance the response to child sexual abuse. Lower-level staff need to be involved in the persistent scrutiny of instances where risks relating to child sexual abuse emerge, with the goal of continuous process improvement in preventing, detecting, and responding to abuse.

How to attain a child safe culture

The most effective means to create and attain a child safe culture is to provide annual mandatory training to leaders and lower-level staff in the prevention, detection, and response to and reporting of child sexual abuse. Training at the organization level related to reducing risk and creating a high reliability organization, including writing effective policies and procedures related to child sexual abuse handling is paramount to attaining a child safe culture

The role of child safety training in organizations

Training needs to consist of identifying and reporting child abuse, how to interact with child victims of sexual abuse, assessing risk and addressing risk reduction, writing and implementing effective policies and procedures, and interacting with law enforcement. Training needs to happen at a comprehensive organizational level.

Examples of child safe and organizational trainings:

The Child Abuse Prevention Center (Sacramento, CA)

The CAP Center provides training and technical assistance to build capacity within the field of child and family services, as well as to the community. Through interactive workshops, participants will improve their knowledge and skills to achieve positive outcomes for children and families.

Philosophy for training and technical assistance is based on three core principles:

1. **Competency-Based Training.** Training and technical assistance is geared toward building the knowledge, skills and behaviors that are needed to provide quality family support services.
2. **Tailored Curricula.** Training and technical assistance are tailored to each organization. After an initial consultation, we will work with each organization to determine the training needs, participants' level of knowledge and the key outcomes the organization hopes to achieve. Customized trainings are available for a fee.
3. **Long Term Access.** The CAP Center strives to build long-term partnerships by making our staff, resources, and materials available on an ongoing basis. We encourage a continued dialogue with our partners so that we may grow together.

ChildSave (San Antonio, TX)

Included in *Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse* online training:

- Interviews and information from law enforcement, Department of Family and Protective Services staff, prosecution, and testimonials.
- Online training course with: computer, tablet, and smartphone accessibility
- Personalized user support
- Optional onsite setups
- Secure individual registration
- Online graded and completion reports from the ChildSafe Education Coordinator
- Printable certificate of completion
- Downloadable handouts

Other educational material and resources that are available on ChildSafe's website page under "Learn & Empower," include:

- What to Say and Do if You Suspect Child Abuse
- Protecting Your Children
- Know the 10 Signs of Child Abuse

Darkness to Light/Stewards of Children (Beau Biden Foundation)

The only nationally available program scientifically proven to increase knowledge, improve attitudes and change child-protective behaviors. Appropriate for any adult, this training will teach you how to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.

Stewards of Children® uses real people and real stories to show you how to protect children. The framework of the training is built off the foundation of *The 5 Steps to Protecting Children*™. You'll meet survivors who lived through child sexual abuse, experienced its immediate and long-term effects, and ultimately were able to find healing. You'll meet experts who work with children and families and who confront abuse on a daily basis. Many of these survivors and experts are also parents themselves.

Stewards of Children® is available in English and Spanish and is available online.

Praesidium (Arlington, TX)

Praesidium's Safety Equation® identifies eight organizational operations that provide opportunities to decrease the risk of abuse by employees, volunteers, or other program participants. Using current research and root-cause analyses of thousands of cases of abuse across a diverse range of organizations, Praesidium has identified best practices in each operation and created products and services that help organizations implement these practices.

Praesidium is marketed specifically toward diverse organizations including church and faith-based entities.

They provide a comprehensive programming model focusing on 8 components to create a safe environment:

Policies

Screening and Selection

Training

Monitoring and Supervision

Consumer Participation

Responding

Administrative Policies

Resources:

ChildSave: Identify and Stop Child Abuse. Retrieved from:

<http://www.childsafe-sa.org/childsave-online-training-for-educators-and-schools/>

Palmer, D. (2016) The role of organizational culture in child sexual abuse in institutional contexts. Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Sydney.

Praesidium Corporate Brochure. Retrieved from:

<https://website.praesidiuminc.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Click-Here-for-Corporate-Brochure.pdf>

Darkness to Light Stewards of Children: Prevention training featuring real people and real stories about protecting children from sexual abuse. Retrieved from:

<https://www.d2l.org/education/stewards-of-children/>

The Child Abuse Prevention Center Training Overview. Retrieved from:

<http://www.thecapcenter.org/what/training>