



# The Inaugural Praesidium Report

PRAESIDIUM

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# The Inaugural Praesidium Report

**W**ELCOME to the inaugural issue of The Praesidium Report®. The purpose of The Praesidium Report is to annually share with readers Praesidium's research findings, global experiences, and provide industry trends relevant to our mission:

"To help you protect those in your care from abuse and help you preserve trust in your organization."

Our hope is that you will find this report useful in your work and that you will share it with your colleagues who embrace your, and our, passion for keeping children and adults safe from abuse.



"To help protect those  
in your care from  
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organization."



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# Understanding the Praesidium Safety Equation®

OVER the past two decades, Praesidium has completed root cause analyses of thousands of cases of sexual abuse in a wide array of environments, including schools, universities, youth development programs, mentoring programs, churches, camps, nursing homes, foster care, health clubs, sports teams, hotels, hostels, cruise ships, and governing bodies of USA Olympics sports.

The beauty of root cause analysis is that it allows for the parsimonious clustering of

incidents and root causes so that, rather than each incident standing alone, root causes fall into “like” categories. Praesidium’s data from thousands of cases of sexual abuse in a wide array of environments showed that root causes of incidents fall into one or more of eight organizational operations which, taken together, comprise Praesidium’s Safety Equation®, shown below. Implementing best practice standards in each of the eight operations closes gaps, decreases risks, and creates safe environments.





### Policies

Policies define the bandwidth of acceptable behavior in an organization, and offenders often violate policies in their interactions with clients. When employees can identify policy violations, they are able to interrupt and report them.

### Screening and Selection

Offenders must have access to clients before they can offend, so organizations should do everything possible to avoid giving access to someone who should not be in a position of trust. Comprehensive screening and selection requires organizations to systematically discover and consider everything they can about applicants.

### Training

Offenders often act in predictable ways and effective training can provide employees and volunteers with the information they need to identify high-risk patterns of behavior and high-risk program characteristics.

### Monitoring and Supervision

When employees and volunteers are adequately supervised, potential offenders are less likely to act on their impulses because they face detection. And when clients receive adequate supervision, they too are less likely to engage in inappropriate interactions with others.

### Internal Feedback Systems

Information about program operations can identify high-risk programs or individuals; where increased monitoring, supervision and training or policy changes may be needed; or even whether a program should be allowed to continue.

### Consumer Participation

Educated consumers—both clients and interested others—can contribute to overall safety. But to do so, they must know the organization's policies and how to respond if they notice policy violations or interactions that make them uncomfortable.

### Responding

How an organization responds to suspicious or inappropriate interactions or policy violations, and to incidents or allegations of abuse, can dramatically affect the harm to the individual and damage to the organization. Once an organization learns of a concern or allegation about the treatment of a client, swift and determined action, including reports to authorities, must be taken to reduce any subsequent risk of harm.

### Administrative Practices

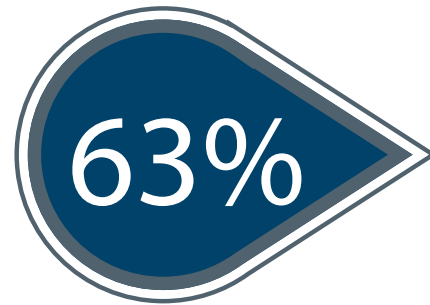
The board of directors ultimately owns the responsibility for establishing policies that ensure safety. To do this they must be well informed of the risks the organization embraces in each of its programs and the practices in place to ensure safety. Organization leadership must see to it that programs comply with policies and that drift from standards is quickly remedied.

# Analysis of Scores on Praesidium's Online Self Assessment Tool

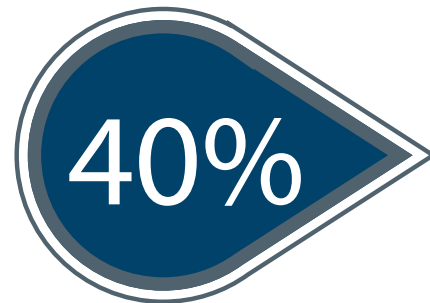
Using the best practice standards in each of the eight operations included in The Praesidium Safety Equation, Praesidium built *Know Your Score!™ (KYS!)*. *Know Your Score!* is the only comprehensive, online self-assessment program of its kind that allows an organization to systematically determine the extent to which it has in place best practice standards in each of the eight operations included in Praesidium's Safety Equation®.

**F**IGURE ONE shows the total number of *KYS!* points available and the number and percentage of points earned in each operation based on the results of 2,640 completed assessments representing 2,140 organizations. Some operations are worth more points than others. For example, the Monitoring and Supervision operation is worth 275 points while the Consumer Participation operation is worth far fewer at 65 points.

Taken collectively, the participating organizations scored the highest percentage of points earned in the Screening and Selection operation (63%) and the lowest in Consumer Participation (40%). They have the greatest opportunity to earn more points in the Monitoring and Supervision Operation (275 points) and in Policies (124). Organizations can use these findings to identify where best to close gaps, earn more points, and increase their overall scores.



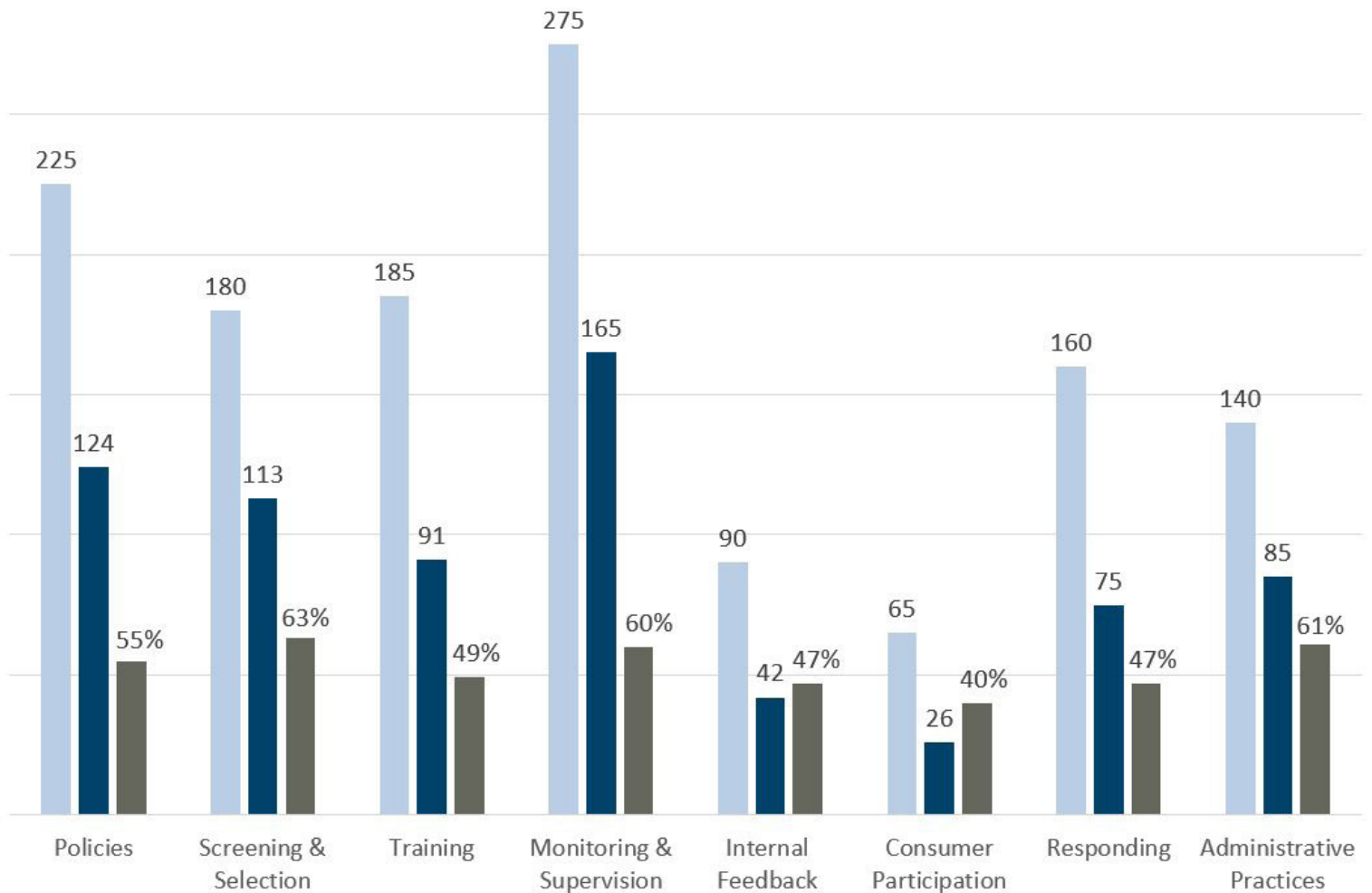
Highest percentage of points earned in the Screening and Selection operation.



Lowest percentage of points earned in Consumer Participation operation.

**Figure 1:**

How many points were available and the number and percentage of points earned in each operation?



Number of  
Points  
Possible

Number of  
Points  
Earned

Percentage  
of Points  
Earned

### Praesidium Tip

Note: The lowest scoring operation is Consumer Participation (40%). Educate the clients you serve on self-protection skills and how how to protect themselves from abuse.



## Analysis of Praesidium's Helpline Use

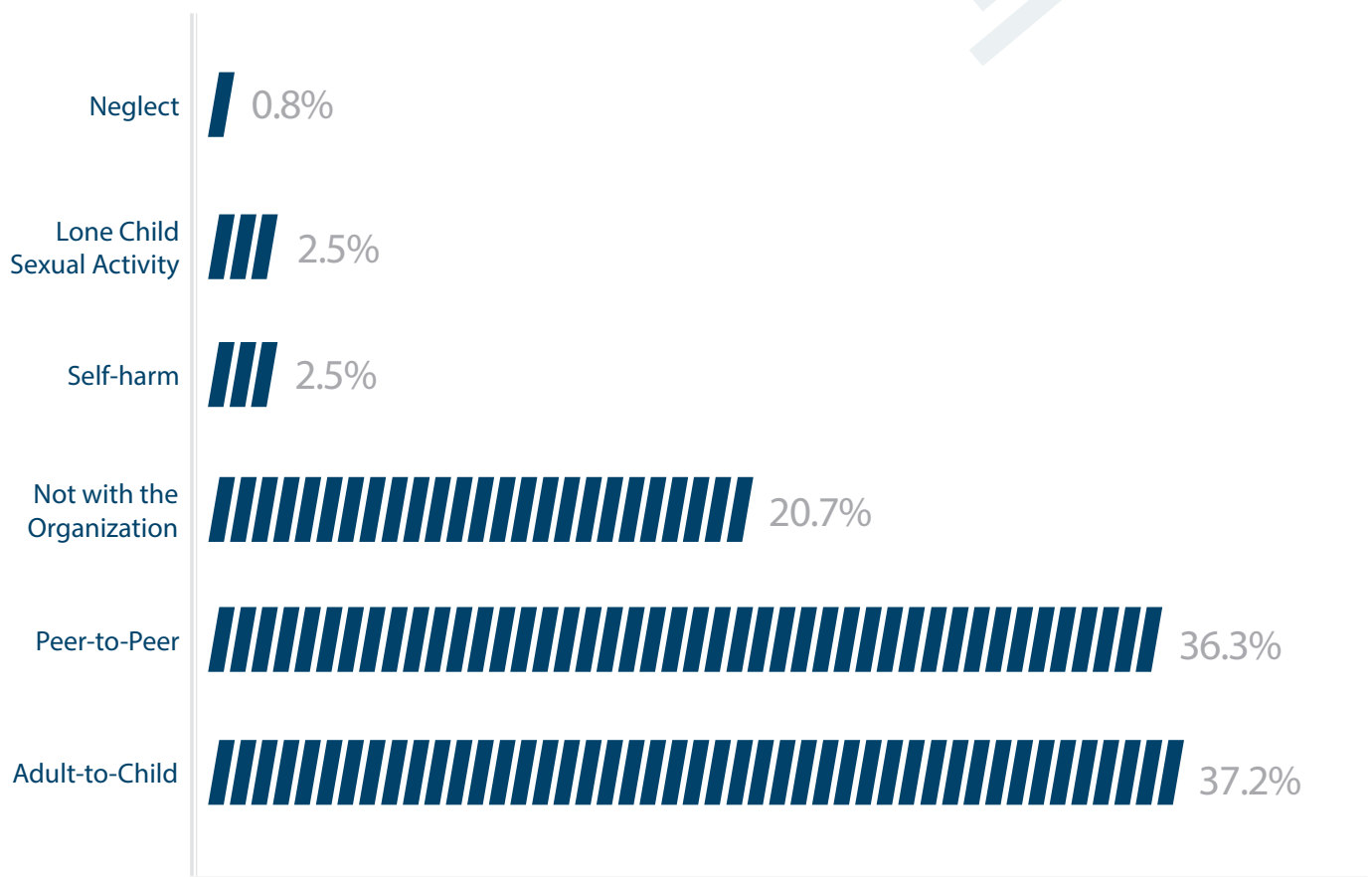
Praesidium offers a Helpline call service where authorized users from a range of organizations may call to ask questions about situations they find troubling or that they aren't quite sure how to handle. For example, recent calls included a day care supervisor who was concerned about a child who constantly masturbated; an experienced church volunteer who became agitated when he was told he would now have to complete a criminal background check; and in a third case, a mother who reported that she knew one of the program coaches was a child molester.



**F**IGURE 2 shows what types of helpline calls Praesidium received over the past year. The calls fall into six categories: alleged adult-to-child abuse (37.2%), peer-to-peer sexual activity or abuse (36.3%), not associated with the organization (20.7%), child self-harm (2.5%), child masturbation (2.5%) and reports of suspected neglect (0.8%). In addition to providing guidance to the caller, we inform the appropriate contact people in the organization, and, if we see recurring problems, help to develop solutions. For example, based on an increase in calls regarding peer-to-peer sexual activity and abuse we developed instructor-led and online training in how to prevent inappropriate peer-to-peer sexual activity.

**Figure 2:**

What types of helpline calls did Praesidium receive between September 2016 and August 2017?



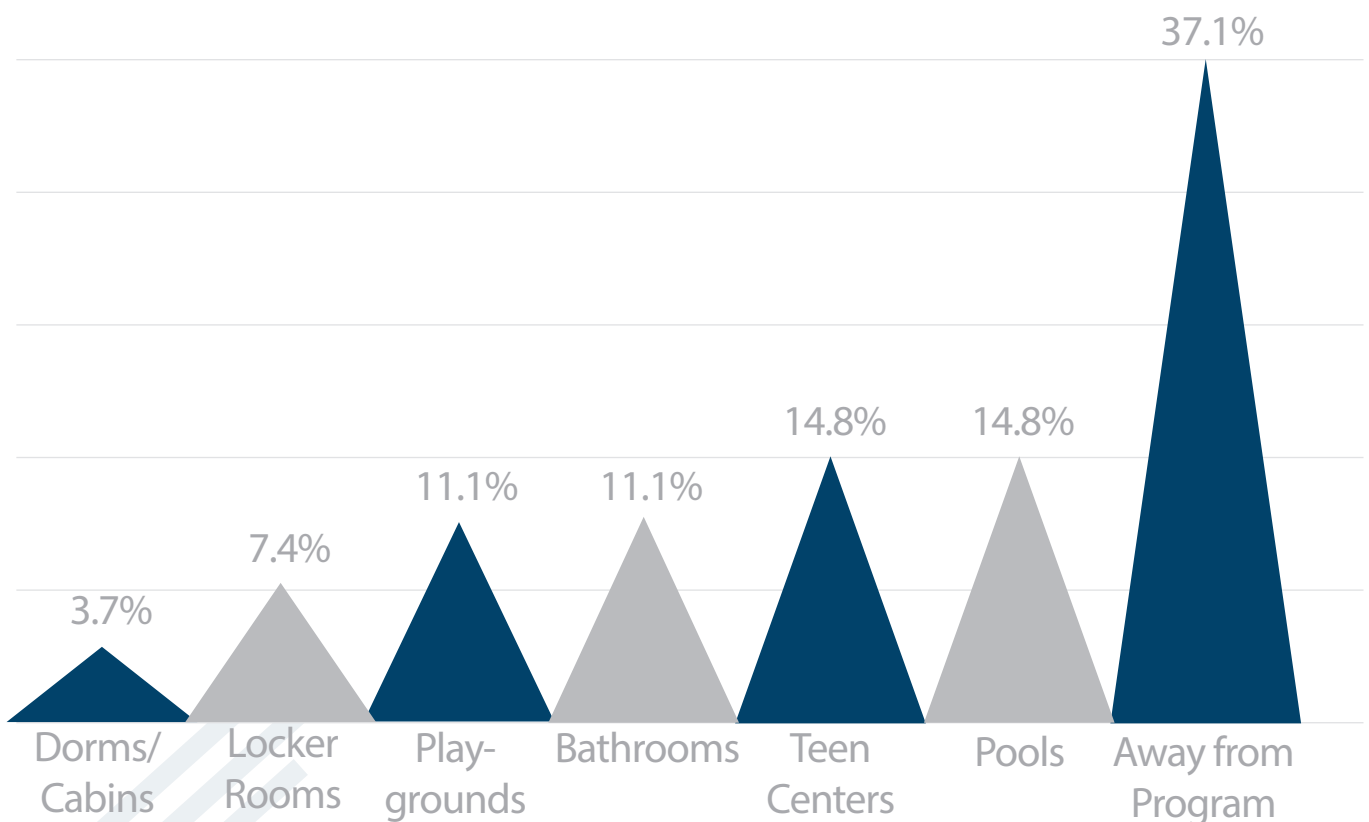
### Praesidium Tip

Peer-to-peer sexual activity and abuse is often overlooked and occurs differently than adult-to-client abuse. Be sure staff are trained on how to identify and prevent peer-to-peer sexual activity and abuse.

**F**IGURE 3 shows where in the organization incidents of adult-to-child abuse or suspicious adult interactions occurred. The highest risk situation involved contacts between youths and staff away from the organization. Bathrooms, pools, and locker rooms were high risk, in part because of supervision challenges and the presence of partial or full nudity. This kind of field data helps us develop incident-specific instructor-led and online training.

**Figure 3:**

Where do incidents of adult-to-child abuse or adult suspicious interactions occur?



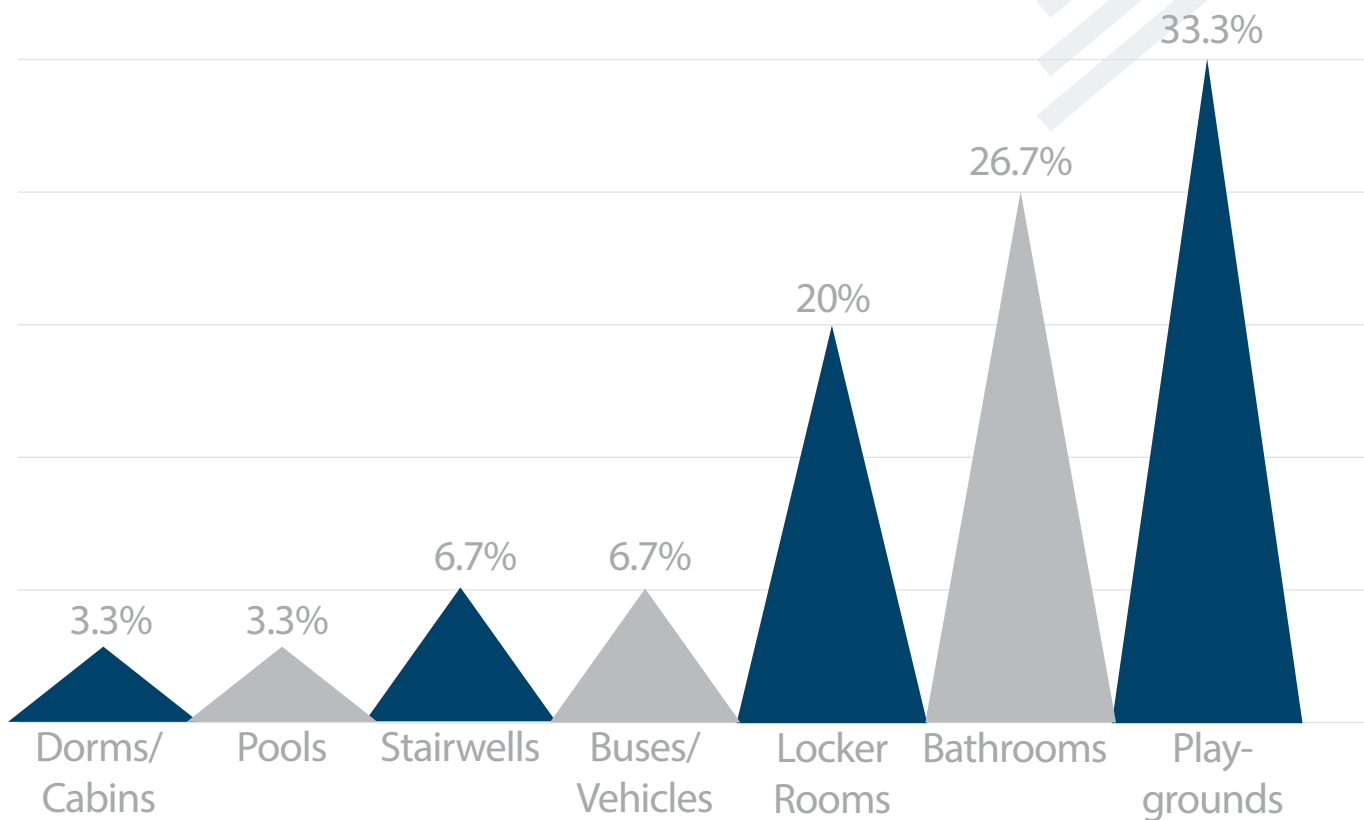
### Praesidium Tip

Abuse often occurs outside of program activities. Be sure your organization has a clear policy governing interactions between staff and youths outside of regularly scheduled program activities.

**F**IGURE 4 shows where incidents of sexual activity between peers occurs. As our data set grows, we will be doing a finer grain analysis. For example, we will be looking at gender and age distributions, again to keep an eye on potential solutions such as policy enhancements and training for employees, youths, and parents.

### Figure 4:

Where do incidents of peer-to-peer sexual activity occur?



### Praesidium Tip

Peer-to-peer sexual activity and abuse often occurs in locker rooms and bathrooms. Be sure to have a written procedure for staff to follow for how youths should be supervised during these high-risk activities.

# Trends in Abuse Prevention by Industry

In this section, we share our more memorable experiences in each industry, trends that we are seeing or hearing about, and some issues to think about in the future.

## Religious Industry Trends

The sexual abuse of minors continues to rank high on the reasons why churches go to court. Similarly, communities increasingly expect that all who have access to children and youths be properly screened, monitored, and supervised including clergy, employees, volunteers, contractors, and even older teens often serving, for example, as summer camp counselors. These changes have not always been easily accepted, particularly by long time members and families who are, at least annoyed, and sometimes offended.

As standards of care increase, insurance carriers are becoming more educated in assessing the extent to which an organization has in place policies and practices and how great a risk the organization may be. Churches without abuse prevention policies, screening, training, and crisis management protocols will likely find coverage more difficult to secure, more expensive, and more limited in scope.

Historically, churches often functioned autonomously, where one location managed safety one way and the neighboring location very differently. We are starting to see nationally more movement toward standardization of risk management practices across locations and that practices are no longer optional but rather strongly encouraged or even compulsory. An incident at any one of the related churches can adversely affect all the churches with both direct and indirect costs.

And finally, churches, much like most youth-serving agencies, are having to deal more often with incidents of sexual activity among minors, or even between very young children in child care. These cases can quickly become complicated to deal with and involve police, child protective services, the media, and attorneys.



## Youth Development Industry Trends

Many large-scale youth development organizations and governing bodies of sports are establishing system-wide abuse prevention requirements. These requirements include more stringent screening, training, and reporting practices, all designed to decrease the risk of abuse and to effectively manage incidents or allegations if they do occur.

Over the past year, we've recognized that many youth-serving organizations are expanding from mandated reporter training to including abuse prevention awareness. In January 2018, California (AB1207) is imposing new training requirements for all individuals working in a licensed child care facility. The new requirements include a focus on how to prevent abuse, protective factors, and how to promote the positive emotional health of children.

There has been an increased focus within youth development organizations on preventing youth-to-youth sexual activity. The Associated Press published a study in May 2017 about youth-to-youth sexual activity. This study found that, for each sexual abuse incident involving an adult, seven incidents of youth-to-youth sexual activity occur. These startling numbers provide a wake-up call. We have also seen an increase in the frequency

and cost of litigation for peer-to-peer activity. To help the care providers we serve, Praesidium has developed additional resources including both instructor-led and online training in methods for preventing peer-to-peer activity.


In 2016, through a series of investigative articles, The Indianapolis Star reported that over a 20-year period, 368 gymnasts had alleged sexual abuse or exploitation by coaches and other authority figures associated with USA Gymnastics. These findings, and a series of interviews with the alleged victims, resulted in Senator Diane Feinstein (D-CA) leading a group of several U.S. Senators in filing legislation entitled "Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse Act of 2017." The legislation will require reporting to law enforcement any suspected child abuse by any person under the jurisdiction of a national governing body. Offenses may be punishable by up to 3 years in prison. The U.S. Center for SafeSport was officially launched in March 2017. It is intended to be a stand-alone entity having exclusive authority to resolve reports of sexual misconduct and other conduct prohibited by the "SafeSport Code for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movement."

**"For each sexual abuse incident involving an adult, seven incidents of youth-to-youth sexual activity occur"**

## Education Industry Trends

Abuse prevention efforts in the world of education have been subject to a variety of external factors over the past year: coast-to-coast media attention; legislative efforts affecting who, when, and how to screen; shifting statutes of limitations; and insurance markets. These external influences are pushing K-12 schools, colleges, and universities to revisit their strategies to manage the risk of abuse in their programs.

K-12 schools continue to gain a better understanding of how to manage the development and nature of positive and safe adult-to-student relationships. Positive relationships with an educator may play an integral role in student advancement and lifelong success. Within independent and religious schools, these relationships may span beyond the educational setting and include local communities, family gatherings, and collegiate advancement opportunities. Yet ongoing allegations and incidents – across public, charter, independent, and religious schools – suggest that in-school and outside relationships are often a common thread. Incidents of sexual activity between students on campus, including sexual abuse, appear to be increasing in frequency and presenting extraordinary challenges. Activities that begin consensually can quickly morph to allegations of rape.



"Establishing a baseline level of the risk can be helpful to generate internal support for implementing best practices"

Higher education continues to push forward with the development of youth protection mechanisms as an industry standard. Many discovered early on that they were surprisingly unaware of exactly how many university-associated programs involve minors and how many minors are involved. Establishing a baseline level of the risk can be helpful to generate internal support for implementing best practices. However, many institutions struggle to maintain the momentum required to truly manage this risk.

### Social Services Industry Trends

Social service agencies continue to work toward balancing various industry changes while managing the abuse risk. These changes may source from legislative requirements or shifts in best practices and may require organizations to review how their existing abuse prevention operations can be strengthened. One important trend is a shift away from institutional services toward community-based services to allow for individuals to better integrate within their communities and develop core life skills.

This service method challenges organizations to maintain strong monitoring and supervision over programming, staff, and clients while operating at various locations outside of an institutional facility. Although some states require relative or kinship care homes to meet the same screening and training requirements as traditional foster homes, some states do not. Where screening and selection measures are less defined, formalized, or stringent, organizations must consider how to bolster other abuse prevention safeguards.

**"As population demographics change, an increasing number of adults will require help from others, often strangers, and may be targets for many types of abuse including financial, physical, sexual, and life-threatening neglect."**

### Miscellaneous Industry Trends: Home Health Care, Hospital Care, Services for Vulnerable Adults

Over the past few years Praesidium has received an increasing number of calls to help health care organizations such as hospitals, home health care, nursing homes, and assisted living. This was not surprising, as these settings allow access to, and privacy with, individuals whose condition may compromise their ability to self-protect or to accurately recall or describe if something untoward has happened. Many approved medical procedures require physical contact in private areas that otherwise would be off limits. A patient may misinterpret the event and falsely accuse a caregiver. As population demographics change, an increasing number of adults will require help from others, often strangers, and may be targets for many types of abuse including financial, physical, sexual, and life-threatening neglect. Finding competent and trustworthy staff presents another challenge especially considering the demands of the work. We are expanding our team of professionals to include expertise in this arena to help keep these at-risk populations safe.

# Keep Your Eyes on These Emerging Trends

Background checks are a vital part of the screening and selection process for all youth-serving organizations across all industries. The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), under the federal Department of Health and Human Services, recently reauthorized the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). Under the CCDBG, the new requirements include the following:



FBI fingerprint check using Next Generation Identification (the biometric identification system that has replaced the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification system)



**SEARCH** of the National Crime Information Center's National Sex Offender Registry



**SEARCH** of the following registries, repositories, or databases in the state where the child care staff member resides and each state where such staff member resided during the preceding 5 years:

- state criminal registry or repository (with the use of fingerprints being required in the state where the staff member resides, and optional in other states),
- state sex offender registry or repository, and
- state-based child abuse and neglect registry and database.



**CHILD** care providers who are licensed through their state agency, or who are registered or regulated by a state agency, regardless of whether they receive federal funding, must comply with this new background check requirement. However, many states have granted extensions for compliance, so we recommend that you check with the lead agency in your state to determine what currently applies to your organization.

### Statutes of Limitations

Many state governments continue to press toward longer statutes of limitations, increasing the time available to file civil suits against individuals and organizations that may have played a role in the abuse. Changes have ranged from dropping the limitations altogether to varying them by the age of the victim, or by when the victim recalled the abuse or became aware of adverse effects. As the statutes of limitations for child sexual abuse civil suits continue to lengthen or be eliminated entirely, the potential financial impact to youth-serving organizations and insurance carriers will increase. Because the statutes can be quite complicated, we recommend you consult with your counsel for an interpretation of the statutes that may be relevant for your particular circumstances.





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