

Unpacking the CDSS Community Culture & Safety Toolkit

Session 3, November 11, 2025

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Incident reporting, code of conduct, confidentiality, safety teams, complaint procedure, non-violent communication, volunteer management, behavior policies, anonymous reporting, Google form, succession planning, legal concerns, community culture, feedback forms, action items.

SPEAKERS

Speaker 4, Matt Reyna, Whitney Rowlett, Speaker 5, Speaker 1, Speaker 2, Speaker 6, Speaker 3, Diane Silver



Whitney Rowlett 00:00

Well, good evening, everybody. Welcome to our third and final meeting for the culture and community culture toolkit. It is a delight to see everyone's faces again this evening. If you haven't already muted yourself, please go ahead and mute yourself just for a little bit, because we're going to do something a little bit different this evening, dealing with incident reporting, and I Yeah, everybody has that same, look on their face, unfortunately. And so I'm going to take a couple of minutes to show you within the toolkit where some of the resources are. We can take a look at a couple of them together, and then I have quite a few really good questions from within y'all and outside that we can talk about together, because I think that But before we get started, Matt Reyna, once again, he's this way for me. Our affiliate coordinator has a couple of words for everybody.



Matt Reyna 02:23

Hey, everyone. Whitney is nice enough to let me have this small little segment of time. And I'm I'm happy to have a captive audience. As Whitney said, I am the affiliate coordinator for CDSS, and I know some of you are affiliates Just a note for today, if you do happen to be one of our 501, c3, affiliates under our group exemption, there is a filing requirement with IRS. And that's there's also a filing requirement with CDSS. And so if your fiscal year happened in at the end of June. Those reports need to be coming in around now, so please do turn your attention to it if you haven't, if and if you don't, you'll be hearing from me. Thank you very much.



Whitney Rowlett 03:20

That was, that was very kind way of making your, making your, your very gentle threat known

Matt, better better to talk to Matt than the IRS, though, so and again, if you ever have questions or need, need help, we are here to help you with all sorts of it's to the best of our or at least, if we don't know the answer, we can find someone who does when it comes to 501, c3, management. So it's lovely to see all of you this evening, I'm going to go ahead and share my screen, and we're just going to quickly look at a couple of resources that I wanted to have an opportunity to chat with you all about and then an important piece of information here, where did everyone's pictures go? They're there. Okay, when I'm sharing my screen, I have I can't necessarily see everybody's hands, so if you have your hand up, and I don't see you if Matt or Sandy, if you could let me know, that would be awesome. So and Diane is here as well, and thank you for all of your insight. The last two meetings, Diane, you're in your thoughts and discussion have been absolutely fantastic and very helpful for everybody. So interestingly, when you come into the complaint procedure section of the toolkit, it gives you another guide to go to, and that is the how to respond to code of conduct reports by Valerie or and Mary Gardner. Frame shift. Consulting is a consulting firm that specializes in dei related complaints and adjudication. So you have to dig a little bit because they currently are not accepting any new clients, but all of their paperwork is still available on their site. So if you click on this, if I start clicking around, it'll open another window, and I don't want to get into that mess right now. But if you click on how to respond to code of conduct reports, and I'll go ahead and put this link in the chat for y'all later, it there's a whole block of documents that they have available for you, and one of them is do to due to this very long and very comprehensive document called How to Respond to code of conduct reports. And I had a chance to read through this earlier, and it is extremely well put together, and it covers all manner of stages of dealing with in what we would call an incident report. And I'm going to do this horrible roll scrolling down thing that's frustrating, but you can see their very overhead view of how to deal with Code of Conduct reports is here, and I highly recommend taking a look at this document when you have an opportunity like I said. I'll drop the link into the chat for you later. This goes into exhaustive detail in a non dance environment for just in general, how to look at a code of conduct report, how to do it, put one together. So there is a series of essentially steps that you need to think about when you're building out your system of reporting, and then how to deal with it afterwards. And it's under these bullet points up here on the top, whom to complain to. Meaning, who are you designating in order to take these complaints and listen to the person who's reporting, and I we'll call them reports instead of complaints, because complaints sounds very heavy. And there are multiple ways to do this, and I can show you a few other options. And I know a lot of you have also seen or put together safety teams to deal with these sorts of discussions. Safety teams can be from one to multiple people. Multiple people sometimes are helpful because it allows more than one viewpoint to be taken in the situation, you'll want to figure out who is doing the following up after a report is taken, how the complaints are handled, how long you want to take to deal with it. Highly important confidentiality. So when you're someone is bringing an issue to you, you need to do everything you can to make sure that that report remains confidential, because they could be bringing you something that's extremely sensitive, and I have a few options like I wanted to show you that I think are particularly good for confidentiality and building a safe environment for people to discuss things due process. How can the person who is has the complaint lodged against them? How can they respond? How is it documented, if there are legal concerns, what should you do? And that's tricky for us, to really, any of us to give any concrete guidance on because we're not lawyers. But I will tell you, almost every state has a resource available for pro bono lawyers, specifically for arts organizations. I work in Texas, we work with a group called Tala, and they have both accountants, CPAs that will work for free, and lawyers so and they will work for pro bono. And I always highly recommend if you can speak to a lawyer when you're coming to a legal concern, please do, because it's always better to talk to a pro, then you necessarily try to figure it out

yourselves, talking through like the levels of severity of infractions, and I have a couple of great examples from that. And then pathways for improvement. And then the trickier one, pathways for removal. So if you need to ask someone to leave, what, what do you need to do to get to that place? What I wanted to quickly chat about first, before we got into everything else was talking about, how you take a report from somebody, how do you get yourself into a place where. You can listen to what they're saying, and it's very much in a way, and I would love if anybody else has any advice to add on this. Please raise your hand. I can now see everybody, and we'd be happy to hear your your thoughts on this as well. But the comfort of the person who's giving you the information is the most important thing. You need to make sure that you are making them feel respected, that they're being heard and that you're giving them your attention, and that you are taking their concerns seriously. So you want to usually have them in a quiet place if there are other people that are listening in while they give their report, make sure that person is comfortable with it, because you're there are occasionally issues where the complaint could be about the person that would be normally taking the complaint. So it's always a good idea to have multiple people available, and I have some great examples of the way that that is shown to people who your safety team is. Let them take their time. What you're gathering is their point of view. And when you later talk to the person that they're having an issue with, you want to take their time to let them give you their point of view as well, of course, two key things which I made a mistake early on in my experiences dealing with with complaint procedures, it's very important To ask them what they would like to see happen. What sort of resolution are they looking for? Because that's a key piece of information. If it's just I don't want to have to dance in the same line as my ex boyfriend, that's a relatively easy solve, right? You can, we can talk about that. If it's I want this person removed, that's going to be a larger discussion, right? So it's always good to have an idea about what that person wants to what ideally would make them happy. You may not be able to give it to them completely, but it's good to know. And the other thing is to avoid discussing potential outcomes while you're still in the information gathering phase, which means that while you are listening to what someone is saying, in order to make sure you're not circumventing your own due process, don't say, Oh, well, we'll definitely get make sure that they don't come back, unless it's a safety like, A hands off, like absolute safety issue, like if someone's assaulted, you know, the obvious, like absolute no goes that's different, but for interpersonal relationships, or, you know, someone is swinging in a way that I don't like and I don't feel comfortable speaking to them, you know, don't jump Right to the conclusion during the information gathering stage, which seems sometimes counter intuitive, because we all want to offer comfort, but we need to make sure that we're engaging this in a fair environment. So that's some of my that's some of the things that I have learned while learning to do this. I did want to show you, I hate Adobe opening things up without asking me go away. So Diane, this is your organization. I believe old farmers ball. Am I correct? Diane, yes, correct, perfect. So I want to show Diane's summary of complaint policies. Because I love this, because, and if you have 10 seconds to talk about this, the level of complaints that she has, they have listed out for old farmers ball is very good. And so this helps you, as someone taking information in sort of figure out where are we on the danger scale. Diane, do you would you mind talking for a minute or so about these different levels? Because I love them, sure.

D

Diane Silver 14:13

I mean, I think they're pretty self explanatory. We just divided it up into kind of low, medium and high level where, you know, low level complaints are basically bad dance etiquette. You know, there's we there. These are based on the behavior, dance behavior and etiquette guidelines, which we talked about in the previous session, session two of this webinar series. You know this idea that, you know, these are, these are the behaviors that we encourage in our community. So if you have really robust behavior guidelines, you know that guide things like, you know, don't dip people without permission, don't grab their hands. You know, if somebody is just not comfortable with the way someone's dancing, it's a relatively. Very easy fix to approach that person and to say, you know, hey, we wanted to offer some dance tips, you know. Or to say, somebody you know came to us that they were uncomfortable with, you know, with the way they felt dancing. And we wanted to give you some feedback and offer you some suggestions, you know. And you can, you can keep it hopefully, very non threatening for the person who's receiving that feedback. High Level complaints are ones where it feels like there's personal harm, there's destruction of property, like it's pretty obvious that this is a serious, serious thing, and probably warrants at least immediate, immediate, temporary suspension, if not permanent suspension, while the complaint is investigated. So things like stalking and sexual harassment and threats of violence, you know, those are pretty obvious. And then the middle ground is where there's all this sort of gray area, and you have to treat it on a case by case basis. And you know, there's some there's some judgment involved, and that's where the very careful information gathering is really critical. I agree with you 100% Whitney, what you said about like, don't make any promises while you're listening carefully and documenting everything that is being said. You know you want you know a lot of I'm so sorry this happened to you. I'm so sorry you feel this way. I really understand. I'm here to help as much as I can all those kinds of things that express sympathy and an understanding, while at the same time not promising anything, because you need to go to the person who you know is kind of Ben accused and hear their side of the story before you make any decisions about what's going to happen. So that's kind of the the big picture overview. The low is pretty obvious, the high is pretty obvious, and the middle ground is where you have to judge a lot Absolutely.

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Whitney Rowlett 17:06

Thank you for that. Diane, so great example of something that was brought together by a community to sort of think about, you know, levels of infraction. Excuse me. Have another couple of maybe I could move this. Wow. You ever have like, 600 thing, like the biggest possible screen, and then it's still not enough screen for all of this stuff that you have open on your monitor that is currently where I'm at. This is another I just dropped into the chat. The link to frame shift, and it should have brought you right to the Code of Conduct section. This is a checklist for how to take a code of conduct report. And I really like this as well. Kind of goes through where to go, the information that you need to get. Is there any other people involved, you know, make sure that they know where to go and how to do it. Post like how to follow, when you're going to follow up, and from whom? So I did want to also, because this is very focused on the victim side, which is important because there have been, unfortunately, multiple instances where the victims were not listened to and not heard. But it's equally important, when you're talking to the person that they're having a complaint about, to bring it that unless, unless they sexually you know they're on that serious thing, you should still treat them as you know, politely and kindly as possible, but I don't know how many of you have. My mom, who is a social worker, will used to tell us to can you rephrase what you're saying in an in a non accusatory manner? Right? So like use therapy talk to discuss things with people, and I found that this way, and I believe that Brian Brienne actually talks about non violent communication tactics, and that's kind of what I'm coming into with this, which is when you're talking to somebody, there's four parts to when you're speaking to them about something that's difficult, you make a non judgmental observation about what's happening, how that makes you feel personally, what a personal need is, and then make a request of them, right? So there's a huge difference when you're having a discussion about something difficult, between saying, You hurt me and when you when we were in the swing, I heard it hurt me a little bit, or it was a little it. Uncomfortable for me. You know, the way you were holding me was made me, made me feel uncomfortable. Because now it's I felt uncomfortable instead of you did something to me. So when you did this, I felt that. So it's a small change, but it helps to stage down any aggression, because and it gets people to where they're not necessarily going to come back in a very aggressive manner, which is what you don't want. Yes, think Diane is right, I statements rather than when. Then you statements. So you want to try to keep it as non accusatory as possible. So then you would express a personal need after it. When, when we were in the swing, I felt like you were standing a little too close to me. I need to have a little bit of space between us. Would you? Would you back? Let me back up? Would you open the frame a little bit the next time, right, which is a lot easier to say yes to. Then you pulled me too close and you hurt me. Quit it, right? So, you know, it's, it's a kind of a switch in how you talk to people, but I found it to be a very great de escalation technique. Would anyone like to add to that? Because I am not maybe explaining it as well as I could. You don't have to, but I love hearing everyone's thoughts on it. So Brienne, yes. Brienne, I think I lost you. Oh, no. Oh, Diane, would you like to chat while I find Oh, there's Brian where are you?

D

Diane Silver 21:59

If Brianne is here, she should go, Yeah, I was just gonna say, I It's been a long time since I've actually looked at the OFB procedures that we wrote so but I believe that in the OFB document, in the long, the long, complete version, not just the summary, I think there's a section that has, like, some sample dialog, like some example dialogs for the user that that conveys what you what you're talking about. Just now, of like, you know, when we were swinging together, I felt a little bit uncomfortable. It helps me, if I have a little more space? Could you put your hand here instead of here, like that sort of thing. And so I would just say, if you dig into the document, there's, there's, I think there's some good examples in there.

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Whitney Rowlett 22:51

Thank you. There are as well in the the frame shift book also has some really great scripts for things. I'm the kind of person that enjoys having a script going into a difficult conversation. So having a couple of those available can be really, really helpful. Brian, were you able to get unmuted?

S

Speaker 1 23:14

Oh, great, yes, we got you there. You are struggling with my mic. I was just gonna say, I think you did a really clear job of explaining a little bit of those statements. And I was just going to reiterate with NBC, it's this really classic method of communication. The framing will be focusing on the the feelings that are arising, rather than judgments of the other person. So with your swing example, like Diane was saying, Hey, I felt really uncomfortable when you were standing so close to me. Are you willing to, like, give me a little bit more space? It just makes people have less of a guard up. They don't hear that as such criticism and I did something wrong, because what NBC teaches is that none of us are ever doing something wrong. We're only trying to get a need met. So maybe that person was standing a little closer because they were looking for more intention, or they're trying to hear you better, or they just felt really comfortable. And it's this idea that all of us are only trying to get a need met, and with that, none of us are ever like doing something quote, unquote wrong, but we can still figure out how to negotiate with each other. And so even though this is what you want, and this makes me uncomfortable, how can we find that middle ground? And I think when you approach conflict in that manner, it's a lot more successful than going to somebody and wagging your finger at them and saying. Hey, you did this thing wrong, and this person's upset about it.

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Whitney Rowlett 25:05

Thank you. I appreciate that. And move my notes over here. Melania brought up a good point, and this is worth a conversation if something yeah is happening in a dance like in an action that is absolutely okay to be like, hey, now, can we not, you know, please stop that. That's that's absolutely fine. The non violent, you know, non violent communication is when the is in the after part, when we're having, when there is to have that discussion open up. And my, that's been my interpretation of it, Brian and Diane and my, I'm that's like my, my take on it. So please, you know, someone has an opposite. I'd love to hear it.

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Speaker 1 25:50

No, absolutely. That's what. That's what we're talking about too. Is when you're trying to navigate this afterwards with the offending party, not necessarily, like speaking up for your needs in the moment, amazing.

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Whitney Rowlett 26:03

Thank you, Katy, can I'm this is an excellent comment. What do you feel comfortable talking or would you are you? Are you cool with me reading it? Because this is really interesting. Katy Brown, so if you can't, I

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26:20

can hear you.

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Whitney Rowlett 26:22

Yeah, would you like to tell us a little bit

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Speaker 2 26:26

about Sure? I was a high school teacher for 25 years, and we learned a lot of this stuff as part of our job. So what also with different trainings that I've taken? I went to the Belfast putting on the dance this past spring, along with working with some other organizers of dances that have been held for many years. And what I was taught is that when addressing a problematic person at the dance, to just explain that the policy has been developed by the organization, and it applies to everyone at the dance, and that just keep referring back to the policy, and even before you talk to the person, even highlight the parts in your policy that relate to the specific incident that occurred, and never say I or we, because that it's it makes it more charged interesting.

W

Whitney Rowlett 27:30

Thank you for that. That brings up the the policy should be findable and visible.

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Speaker 2 27:38

We have QR codes to the policy and the action plan on a poster right at the dance, and then a paper version of all the materials in a binder to refer to in case something happens. Amazing.

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Whitney Rowlett 27:53

I like that. And then last week, Matt brought up, I believe Never underestimate the power of the bathroom stall. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. It's another excellent place to put information. And I want to share something that bida does, that I think is really important, because it's worthwhile discussing that there are times when people may be uncomfortable verbally telling you when something is wrong. So bida has a Google form that they have produced, and it's on their website invisible. So and I believe they also have a QR code available if people want to do a report at that time. So this allows people an opportunity to give a report about something, and you can kind of see the code of questions that they have available allows for people to report things in such a way that if they're not comfortable talking, they can still be heard. I can tell you from personal experience, I have had things happen to me that I was never able to talk to I was only able to communicate by writing it down because it was, it was too hard for me to talk about. So I think that this is a great idea to have a especially if there's a way they can do it anonymously. I mean, that makes it difficult, necessarily, to follow up. But for some people, it's still a good option. And so this is a pretty comprehensive form, like has the anonymous issue down here as well, if you want to stay anonymous completely, or if you want to be anonymous to the person that you are complaining about, for example, I think this is a really, really great option to give people. This is VITAS safety, um, safety page that's on their their site that tells you who their safety team is, what. To do what some example situations are, and this is easily findable on their web page, which is, you know, part of, you know, when you're doing any sort of compliance, making people not have to hunt to find the thing that they need for an emergency, essentially, is part of that so and that goes for things like ADA compliance as well, that you shouldn't have to dig around to find the information like I've been told before. You

shouldn't have to disclose your disability in order to get disability services from an anonymous website. So it should be findable easily, and it is. So I'm going to go ahead and I'll put the bid link into the chat as well. In case everybody would like to take a look at their thing. And I think that they're a really great resource as well. Andrew Good, good question here, wondering how the I statements idea applies when one as an organizer and acting as an intermediary. And I think that Katy spoke to that, and Maureen did as well. Yeah, that if there's a community policy, reference it. And we've talked about that making those community policies in our earlier meetings. This is why you have one where it's easily visible, because if something goes wrong, you can be like, behold this poster that you have been staring at for the last, you know, three weeks or what have you. So Excellent. Any any comments or questions before I go ahead and pull something from last week that I think is worth discussing, and I wanted to bring that to everyone. Shea, that's excellent, yeah, can I please have your hand here instead of here? That's a great way of describing it. This is very helpful, everyone. Thank you for this. So Maureen, last week, towards the end of the session, you asked a really great question, and I think that this is worth a discussion. Has anyone ever asked a long time volunteer to step down? Normally, we don't have job descriptions or performance reviews, and volunteer management is another wonderful and sometimes fraught, sort of part of being an organizer. And I would love to hear you all's thoughts on that, because I can open it by telling you that I have done that, and I did it once well and once incredibly poorly. And in my own defense, I was 25 and I was very secure in the fact that I absolutely knew how to do everything at that stage in my right life, and I was absolutely wrong at this point. So I would love everyone's thoughts on that, because my inclination at this point in my life is to come at the volunteer issue kind of the same way as one would for a reported incident. So, you know, use those same non violent communication tactics to bring up something that has happened. You know, this is how it has made someone else feel, or other people feel, this is what we're trying to do. Can you make this adjustment for us? And if that's not possible, then you get into the more difficult question of, you know, no, thank you for all of your years of service. But unfortunately, this is you know, this behavior is something or you know, that the organization as a whole cannot support. So I would love if anyone has any thoughts for good wording for that sort of situation. I would love to hear them, because that's a tricky, tricky situation. Or I can tell you how I messed it up. That's an excellent point. Katy. Give the volunteers stated time period for making the changes, so like a performance improvement plan, almost. Thanks. Diane, anyone else have thoughts, why don't you go ahead, Diane, and then we'll

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Diane Silver 34:31

I think that if it's possible, it can be framed as like succession planning and the idea of passing the torch that you know that having young leadership is really healthy for the organization, like you are fabulous, and we would love for you to continue to be president of the board forever, or the booker forever, or, you know, whatever role that they're filling. Yes, but we recognize we have to look at the big picture of the organization, and it's important to have new blood, and it's important, you know, we really value making space for new new dancers, young dancers, blah, blah. And so we wanted to talk with you about maybe shifting into a different role, so that somebody else could step up and learn to do the job that you've been doing, and so it so that it doesn't feel as much like you're doing a bad job. You're being fired. But it's in the larger interest of the organization, and also, if possible, trying to find some other role for them to fill, so that they're not being asked to leave the board, or they're not being asked to leave, you know, whatever. But you've been the booker for 10 years, and we want to allow somebody else that opportunity, you know, but you're emeritus now, you know, we need your wisdom. We need your advice, creating some kind of advisory role for them so that they're not being sidelined. You know, so honoring honoring them, not just in words, but but with some action, and at the same time, moving them to some different role. Amazing.

W

Whitney Rowlett 36:20

So Melania and Greg had similar thoughts. Thank you guys for sharing down there. I'm looking I'm reading Ken's thing. Interesting, Ken can do you want to speak to that for a moment, because I'm curious about how that's Ben, yeah, well,

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Speaker 3 36:41

it's that's how the Friday night dancers, as we've incorporated, began. I understand it's because there were a group of volunteers who had a lock on the dance, and they were doing it their way, and didn't want to do it another way, and so they created another organization, and they said from the beginning, we're not going to have that, you know, you're, you're in for a limited time, and then you have to go somewhere else, you know, you can come back in after a period, but, you know, so that is, that is what we're dealing with. And I think that's, that's where Milena is common about term limits, comes from, so she's on our board too, and so that has been useful, but the main thing we're dealing with now with with behavior reports, is what we do after the reports and after the the warnings and the bans are we've been notoriously worried about being sued, and so we haven't put names in the minutes, and we didn't even have a list of people who are warned or banned. And so it's just kind of like, you know, there there was somebody dancing after the pandemic, and somebody said, you know, we banned that person several years ago. Nobody on the board knew, you know. So there's just like, there's, there's a lot of lost information and a lack of follow through, once you know the behavior conversation has been carried out, and that often the behavior conversation, we have no records of what happened. So that's that's what we're in the we need to get a database and records and stop being so worried about suing.

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Whitney Rowlett 38:20

Does anyone else here work with protected health? Oh, go ahead, Matt.

M

Matt Reyna 38:26

I was just gonna say that this is a, like, a perfect, perfect area for something like that by the Google Form to come in. Because yes, of course, your dancers or the public could fill out that form, but even people from your board, people from your organization, could be filling that out, and that way, all that information is kept and it's pertinent information, even if it's sort of that anonymous Tip, you still are recording, you know, bits of information that may aggregate to something in the future.

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Speaker 3 39:07

Yeah, we have, in the past three years, I guess, we've had a Google form about people's feedback about the dance in general, and people have used that form to address specific problems with problem dancers. So yeah, we do have a system in place, somewhat of a system in place now, needs to be a bit improved, but that's, that's why, why we're here.

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Whitney Rowlett 39:29

We tend to treat it as, almost as, I don't know anyone else has had to work with protected health information, but we kind of treat it in the same way as that it's, it's archived, like we have those reports in a drive that is secured so not everybody can get to it, not everybody it's, it's a very restricted environment, so the documentation is not readily available to everybody, but it does exist so that we have a record of. You know, not only the reports, but us, then also what was done about it, so that, you know, we know that, like you said, making sure that we're able to follow up on it. And it allows us to, allows us to, you know, make sure that we did what we said we were going to do as well.

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Speaker 4 40:17

You have that available in some way that can be quickly accessed by organizers at a particular event, because that's also something that Ken and I and other members of our Board have talked about. You know, if somebody has is coming to the dance, and I'm a new member of the board, I think maybe they've had a ban or some, some sort of the issue raised, but I'm not sure, like I need to be able to quickly access that information. And I think we sort of struggled to think about, how do we organize this so it's secure and private and easily accessible, right?

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Whitney Rowlett 40:57

My recommendation always would be so a an encrypted or a password, like a protected Google Sheet or something that you can get to on your phone, Google Drive, SharePoint, all of those have options for more secure document management. And I'm a huge fan of color coding things. So like, having a sheet which has, you know, the top of it, that's that's essentially readable on your phone. Like, so when you build the sheet, like, think about how it would look on on a device instead of on a desktop, so that you can scroll through it quickly and find people's names. That's what I would do. And make sure that it's restricted on who has access to it. I'd be love to hear other people's thoughts on that, because the keeping it access like device act locked feels like safer than having a paper list somewhere that someone could get a hold of. But I'm open to anybody else's suggestions for that, but it could just be that I love spreadsheets. So yes, Katy,

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Speaker 3 42:05

I have a question here. I mean, that that sounds great for people who are in the first part of this process, where they they they're in the warning stage, or we've gotten reports we're investigating, or where they've been warned, and they're an improvement, but people who have been banned, I mean, I feel like an organization is, you know, that shouldn't be private. That's that's something that the Board should know and people should know. And we are one of several dance organizations in the greater DC area, and so we're trying to set a policy where we inform the other, you know, Contra in English and square dancers in the area. Hey, this person had these behavior manifested. These behaviors did not improve, and has been, you know, banned from the Friday night dance for, I think, four months and and just letting you know. And here's a picture of the person.

W

Whitney Rowlett 43:01

I think that that's, I think that that's fair, and I think that that when they've moved to an outright ban, I think that that's a different environment than when you're in the the documentation and the the mediation stage, because that that's also, that's just helpful to know, especially if they're banned for something particularly egregious, you know, like this, you know that you should be able to let other people know. I think there's a, I don't know. I think that there feels like there's a, there's a point of severity where, you know, things change, you know. So I'd love to hear thoughts about, like, how to get that out as well. Like, if I like, you know, picture, matter of factness, so, but that's a, that's a good question. Yeah, Brian has a good point in there. Interesting. Okay, real quick. Well, I'm going to scroll up here because then Brian. Is it Brian or Brian? Because I'm going to just say it 100 different ways until we, you tell me to stop about the legalities of it. I did really quick before we we get too far into that. Last week, you had asked about, is there anything in the toolkit for toeing the line. Like, if somebody is brand new and they're not quite over the line yet, like, where in the toolkit can you find that information to deal with that? I would highly recommend bida has a really great all of the resources I showed you tonight, old farmers, ball, Vita and then the the larger frame shift has good information in there about how to deal with people who are right on that line, especially old farmers and the beta safety requirements. And I'll make sure that those are linked. So Ella Pat Matt is one of my things that I pulled up to I was going to show you. Um, if you was going to show everybody that your your beautiful, your beautiful reporting system, um, would you mind telling us a little bit about your incident report form? Ella, do you feel comfortable talking?

S

Speaker 5 45:15

Yeah, of course. So essentially, we, we copied ours from Vita for full transparency. We really liked how they did it, and so we adapted it to fit the needs of our community in terms of voice and language that we used. But once a form is submitted, any incidents we have, our safety committee will meet once a month to go over them, or more frequently, as needed, and from there, what we're working on now in our stage, like stage two of this process, because it's a newer development for us all has been, how do we log who has been banned and what actions have been taken? And so we have a it's kept under Google lock and key, and it's only accessible to members of the board and our safety committee, but we are compiling our list of anybody who's been banned or asked to be to leave the dance, adding a list, a short list of like these are the reasons why this is when the ban is lifted, if it is going to be lifted, and we want to make sure that we have a paper copy accessible to our door managers, including photos of these individuals. And it's just for we have a really broad age range of dancers who attend, and so we're trying to make sure that in this process of being safe, we're also being fair. So there's a lot of other things going on in the background that I'm not at liberty to talk about at this exact moment in time while we're ironing out those details, but it's been useful, because we have such a connected Safety Committee to the community in and of itself, that we're able to even do this process that way.

W

Whitney Rowlett 46:53

Thank you. That's really fascinating. Ken, did you have any any questions for Alice, since she's she's mid that process right now, like, I'm curious.

S

Speaker 3 47:03

Yeah, I have a feeling I'm going to go to their website and read all about their their policies and and then go. I actually will be in Philly this weekend, so come out to one of our dances. Awesome.

W

Whitney Rowlett 47:23

So this is very helpful. Y'all this is, this is tricky stuff to to kind of get into. And then this is a good question that Katy brought up, what if a band person is reformed or evolved? And Diane wrote a great response here about do you want to just repeat your response? Do you mind Diane, because, like, this has come up in my organization before, about people making changes and bringing them back. Yeah.

D

Diane Silver 47:54

And in a comment a little bit higher up, I mentioned that in the OFB guidelines, which is the ones that I'm the most familiar with. We ended up doing kind of a flow chart of what responses would be, you know. And so it was sort of like, you know, you there's the initial feedback to the person that you know that says, hey, just want, you know, very friendly, non threatening. Wanted to let you know that this was brought up. We just like to offer feedback, and then it completely depends on how they respond, you know, if they say, oh my god, like, I had no idea that that, that I was perceived this way. Thank you so much for telling me, like I'm so sorry. Like, if the person is willing to let me know who they are, I would love to talk with them directly. You know, thank you for telling me, you know, if it's just lots of remorse and good intentions, then you know. Then you say, great, you know. So glad that that you know you're open to the feedback, and they wouldn't be banned, they wouldn't be anything. They get another chance. And then you wait and see if the if they really follow through, especially like, does the behavior repeat in spite of what they say? Like, are the actions matching the words, you know? And so if the answer is yes, then yay. Problem solved. If the answer is no, then it sort of like goes back to step one again. So then there's another piece of feedback. Hey, we talked about this a couple weeks ago, but we've had another person come and mention kind of this same behavior. Now, three weeks ago, you said that you were, you know, thanks. You were so happy to be to learn about this. And you know, you were, you're going to be all aware of it. And yet this has happened again, you know? And so it becomes this sort of flow chart of of opportunities for them to improve, and at some point, then it moves to a new level of like, okay, you know, this is the fourth time that we've had to talk about this, and you keep saying, Thank you, thank you, and I'm going to improve. And yet this doesn't seem to be working. And so then you like, move to the next step, like, how can we help you? Make this improvement. How can we help you be more aware? And so I won't, I won't go into any more detail than that, but it's a whole, like I said, flow chart. On the other hand, if they are denied, you know, defensive and in denial from the beginning, like, what the hell you know, who are they to complain about the way to look. I have been dancing for 20 years, or 10 years, or however long. And you know, other people love when I do that. You know that the problem is is with them. It's not with me. You know, that's a completely different response. And so then the consequences would be different. And so let's so that's how we ended up with this flow chart of if A then B, but if B, you know If This Then That. So hopefully that will be helpful, if you go and dig into it.

W

Whitney Rowlett 50:50

Thank you. And I put the link to the old farmers ball, and it's in the bottom section under complaints and concerns. You guys can take a look in there. Y'all, this has been really helpful and some really good insight from everybody we have about a couple of minutes left. Does anyone have any other questions that we can answer?

S

Speaker 4 51:11

Another thing that's that's come up for us, that we've discussed, that I'd be interested in hearing other people's takes on, is, you know, so like Ken mentioned, we do have a form so people can submit concerns or complaints sometimes, as happened more than once, there are complaints submitted to the through the form, maybe from a new dancer or somebody who was visiting who had some sort of pretty negative experience at the dance, being touched inappropriately or harassed. But because they're new to the dance, they can't name who it was, and so we have a concern that there are dancers in our community who are likely alienating new or visiting dancers. We are receiving these complaints, but they're somewhat hard to act on because we don't know exactly who the perpetrators are. Maybe we on the board could guess who some of the people are. But of course, we don't want to operate just on guessing. And so anyway, I'd be interested to hear if there's other people, especially people who also have these kinds of forms, have thoughts on how to handle that issue.

W

Whitney Rowlett 52:17

I would love to open that up. Ella, have you had that come up in Pam mad not to call you out? No, you're fine.

P

52:26

Could you repeat the question? I'm sorry,

W

Whitney Rowlett 52:30

she would. Melania, do you want to repeat it? Or I can summarize, if you want, go ahead and summarize. So if there are complaints being given through a Google feedback form that don't have a specific name attached to them from a newer dancer who doesn't know who someone is. Is there a way for that you guys can Is there anything actional that can be done on that? Is there a procedure in place?

S

Speaker 5 52:56

I see Melinda in the chat, we do ask that people include a description of that individual, and then, typically, when it's a newer dancer making a complaint, they recognize who the board members or the managers are. So we've created a culture where they'll usually come up and pull one of us aside as they're filling out the report, or we'll fill it out with them that way. We they point it out, and we know who it is. We can be like, Oh, perfect. That's John Doe, and we've seen it before, so we'll go ahead and then we let them go. From there, we try to avoid it happened for us recently. We try to avoid leaving a complaint without the person who has offended, because it it can get messy very quickly if there's no descriptors there,

S

Speaker 3 53:43

yeah, I am. The thing I hear there is you. You have created a culture where people know they can do this, interacting on that. And we, we announce all the time that there's a form where the board members, if you have anything, you know, every dance, but you know, the problem is nobody listens to announcements. And so we don't have time to get into this now, but you know something about creating, how you created that culture and got got a responsibility response your community to respond is us listening to I'm

W

Whitney Rowlett 54:20

gonna write that down, Ken, just so we can maybe discuss it later. Greg brought up a good question, how do we measure the successes of our behavior policies? That is an excellent question, and I have my thoughts, but I would love to hear everyone else's thoughts on that. First of all, did that answer your question earlier about not necessarily having enough information? Was that a good answer?

S

Speaker 4 54:49

Melania, yeah. I mean, it's a helpful start. I think that probably we'll continue to receive complaints after the dance through our feedback forms.

S

Speaker 3 54:59

Yeah. Our feedback form is not designed to be a behavior report form. It's, it is asking about our dance culture and if anything went wrong. But it's, it's not asking for descriptions. You know, there's, there's, it seems like we need to, like, we need that. Yeah, we need to have a dedicated form for that.

W

Whitney Rowlett 55:19

Yeah. Again, that Matt's bathroom. Go ahead. Sorry, Matt,

M

Matt Reyna 55:24

go ahead. Oh, you know, and this is actually on the same tip of the bathroom. Thing is Ken you're saying we make announcements. We raise our and wave our hands. We're the board or the safety team, whoever it is, we are the people that you need to know to make a report, I would say, Add, add a button onto that. Add some kind of visual indicator throughout the night, because people forget who raises their hands. But if they're going through a line and they see the yellow button that says, talk to me, then that can really help. I think in the moment,

W

Whitney Rowlett 56:02

I'm sweet, amazing and then Greg, really good question and that, I think that's one before we run out of time in thoughts on how to measure if your behavior policy is working. I mean, I would guess lower complaints is one way of measuring that. But then that may be a question that we can all sit with for a little while, because that's a very, very good question, and one I don't have an easy answer to, but I think it's, it's worth the time of trying to puzzle that out. Has anyone gone through that process with their own their own organizations, they'd be willing to share Margaret

S

Speaker 6 56:43

as a librarian, I would say that you create the policies so that you're more comfortable dealing with issues that come up. Having a code of conduct and having a procedure is the success is not whether or not you get any more complaints, because you're always going to have complaints. There's always going to be new people coming in, there's always going to be things that come up, and that's why you have your policies. So I would say the level the success is based on how successful you feel you are dealing with the issues that do come up. Sweet.

W

Whitney Rowlett 57:21

Thank you. Margaret, I love, I love hearing better strategies for things. So I really appreciate that reframe that's wonderful. So y'all we are, I believe, out of time, right on the dot, this has been a lovely conversation with everybody. We have barely scratched, I feel like scratched the surface of all the places that we can, you know, get into dig into things, and it tells Matt and I things that it would be helpful to have to have future discussions about, so that we have a forum for people to bring things to each Other to solve the problem, because, like, what my father taught me was somebody else may have already solved your problem. You just need to find them and ask them. So it's been a delight having an opportunity to chat with everybody here and thank you for all of your time and your your good questions and your really amazing. Like comments. This has been really lovely, and we will be announcing our next affiliate program soon. If you have an idea for an affiliate program, please email either Matt or I. We are open literally anything. We've had requests on how to use Canva, on how to set up square, on how to build codes of conduct, on all sorts of things, how to hire musicians, how to book halls, how to read insurance. So anything that might be helpful, send us an idea, and we'll do our very best to do it so and then Sandy and Susan are both on the board's online task group. They are also great people to talk to. If you have ideas, we would love to hear them. So thank you guys so very much for a wonderful three weeks together, and I can't wait to see you guys again. So thanks everyone. Bye.