

SVdP Indy Safeguarding Training

April 2023





Opening Prayer

- Lord, we ask for the grace to have a Vincentian heart.
- We give you our gifts and talents, our dreams and visions so that we may carry the mission of St. Vincent to the poor.
- We ask for the grace to have hands that work for justice, so that we may show your love to all those suffering from prejudice and inequality
- We ask for the grace to have hearts of love and compassion, so that we may bring mercy to the broken hearts of the poor. Amen



House-keeping

- Safeguarding is a sensitive topic
 - Please step away for a moment if needed
- We will stop at strategic points for questions
- Any examples should be anonymous.
 - Any name used in our examples are fictional, although some examples have happened within Vincentian work



Disclaimer

- While we can learn about the warning signs and how to react when we encounter boundary violations and/or disclosures of abuse, we should not be intentionally “scoping out” signs of abuse during a home visit or in other interactions with those we serve
- However, when we have credible fears that there may be abuse or neglect, we must act



Agenda

1. What is Safeguarding?
2. Why does SVdP Need a Safeguarding Policy?
3. Policy Scope
4. Policy Fundamentals
5. Requirements for all Vincentians
6. Specific Requirements
7. Communication, Monitoring and Compliance
8. Next Steps



Influencing Documents

- Archdiocese of Indianapolis – *Safe Environment Guidelines*
- National Council of the United States SVdP – *National Safeguarding Policy*
- National Adult Protective Services Association – *Adult Protective Services Recommended Minimum Program Standards*
- Indiana FSSA – *2021 Resource Guide*



What is Safeguarding?

- Safeguarding is the act of protecting vulnerable people from harm
- Safeguarding protects the rights of all people whom we serve at SVdP facilities and in the community
- Safeguarding minimizes the potential risk for vulnerable persons of all ages as it relates to physical, psychological, sexual, and emotional abuse, injury, neglect and exploitation, where SVdP is engaged in the provision of service



Those We Serve

- The scope of those we serve include:
 - Homebound
 - Disabled
 - Elderly
 - Those in poverty, including the “working poor”
 - Those without homes or shelter
 - New arrivals to Indiana
- Many of our volunteers are also vulnerable
- The ages of those we serve range from the newborn to the elderly
- Locations include both the greater Indianapolis area as well as central and southern Indiana



Why Does SVdP Need This Policy?

- The International and National Society are committed to protecting the rights of all people, and to ensuring that vulnerable persons of all ages are protected from physical, psychological, sexual, and emotional abuse, injury, neglect and exploitation
- This policy recommends minimum guidelines and standards for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable people served by SVdP entities or personnel



Policy Scope

- This Safeguarding Policy:
 - Covers all of the 58 Conferences in the Council
 - Protects both vulnerable children and adults
 - Includes SVdP employees and volunteers
 - Applies to vendors and on-site visitors
 - Includes mandatory training and reporting
 - Includes regular monitoring of related activities
 - Includes ID badges or other specific identification
 - May include background checks
 - Includes specific policies for Home Visits
- This policy is effective February 1, 2023, with modifications from April 11, 2023



Who Is Affected by This Policy?

- This Policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors at all SVdP facilities in the Indianapolis Council
- It also applies to all Conference members, both active and associate
- It also applies to all public facing, community engagement roles, including but not limited to, Home Visitors and donation collection services at residences and locations in the community

How Do We Ensure Safeguarding?

Empathy

- listen and understand our neighbors and work together to support those in need

Simplicity and Humility

- treat each other and those we assist as equals in fraternal relationship

Justice

- respect people's convictions and beliefs and help them to regain and retain their autonomy and human dignity

Actions

- Exercise appropriate judgement, boundaries and reporting

Questions or Comments?





Policy Fundamentals

- The SVdP Indianapolis Archdiocesan Council will require certain individuals to:
 - Sign our Code of Conduct
 - Receive training on a Safeguarding Policy
 - Undergo a background check
 - Obtain SVdP photo ID
- The SVdP Indianapolis Archdiocesan Council is instituting the office of Compliance Coordinator and an Investigative Review Team
- Indiana is a “Mandatory Reporting State” which means if you **suspect** abuse, neglect, exploitation or endangerment of any person then **you** must report this to State or local officials
- Such reports must be reviewed with the Compliance Coordinator



Some Caveats

- This is a “living” Policy
 - We will improve it over time
- Though this is a change for some, it is very similar to similar policies at the Archdiocese, schools or any other organization that works with vulnerable populations
- Whenever possible we will share with other Councils and adapt better ideas



Definitions

The Policy includes definitions for the following terms (see the Handout):

- Child/Minor
- Child Abuse
- Endangered Adult
- Fiduciary Relationship
- Grooming Behavior
- Professional Relationship
- Reason to Believe
- Sexual Abuse
- Sexual Exploitation
- Sexual Harassment
- Sexual/Boundary Violations
- Sexual Misconduct
- Vulnerable Adult



Who is a Child in Indiana?

- Indiana defines a **child** as someone who is under 18 years of age
 - A child *under 16 years* of age cannot consent to any sexual act
 - A child should never be contacted via social media, email, or phone
 - A child should never be offered alcohol, controlled substances or pornographic material
- Topics or vocabulary that would not be discussed or used comfortably in the presence of parents should not be discussed or used with a child
- Any one-on-one counseling, tutoring, training, or other assistance or service with a child must be conducted in an open room setting without closed doors, except for a door with a window, and only if readily observable by others who may be in the room or in the hallway outside the room



Who is Considered an Endangered Adult?

(Indiana FSSA 2021
Resource Guide)

- An **endangered adult** is defined as an individual who is:
 - At least 18 years old
 - Incapacitated by any of the following:
 - > Mental illness
 - > Developmental/Intellectual disability
 - > Dementia
 - > Habitual drunkenness
 - > Excessive drug use
 - > Other physical or mental incapacity preventing the person from managing or directing the management of his or her property or providing or directing the provision of self care
- and
 - Harmed or threatened with harm as a result of any of the following:
 - > Battery
 - > Neglect
 - > Exploitation of the individual's personal services or property



Rights and Responsibilities

- Every person “has the right
 - To bodily integrity and the means necessary for the proper development of life,
 - To be respected, [and]
 - To choose for themselves the kind of life which appeals to them”
 - *Pacem in Terris*, 11-15
- There is a corresponding responsibility to protect these rights in our actions, language, and observations
 - We can live this responsibility through appropriate behaviors and bystander intervention



Reasonableness Test for Reporting

- **Reason to Believe:** A person is said to have “reason to believe” an accusation when evidence that, if presented to individuals of similar background and training, would cause those individuals to believe it is more likely than not that the person had been abused.



Physical Abuse

- **Intentional use of physical force** that can result in physical harm such as illness, pain, injury, functional impairment, distress, or death
- Signs you may see:
 - Bruises, welts, lacerations, broken bones, rope marks
 - Injuries that don't match the given explanation
 - Broken glasses, other physical signs of being restrained
 - Overdosing/underdosing medications



Sexual Abuse

- **Involves forced and/or unwanted sexual interaction** of any kind including making remarks of a sexual nature, showing sexual images, any unwanted sexual touching, sexual assault, and rape
- Signs you may see:
 - Pain or itching in the genital area
 - Fear of certain people or places
 - Sexual behavior, knowledge, or interest inappropriate for the child's age



Emotional (or Psychological) Abuse

- **Verbal or nonverbal behaviors that harm self-worth or emotional well-being and/or inflict anguish, mental pain, fear, or distress.**
- Signs you may see:
 - Low self-esteem and confidence.
 - Social withdrawal, depression, anxiety.
 - Preoccupation with pleasing others, desperately seeking attention.
 - Avoidance of certain people or situations.
 - Isolated from family/friends.



Neglect

- **Inattention to and failure to meet a dependent's basic physical and emotional needs** including food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and supervision
- Signs you may see:
 - Dehydration, malnutrition, poor personal hygiene
 - Unattended/untreated health problems.
 - Hazardous, unsafe, unsanitary, and/or unclean living conditions



Neglect and Poverty

- **Poverty is a risk factor for neglect, but poverty does not equate to neglect**
- The presence of poverty alone does not mean a child is unsafe, unloved, or that a parent lacks the capacity to care for his or her child
- Poverty can make it more challenging for parents to meet certain of their children's needs
- It is our role to address gaps in care due to poverty



Financial Abuse

- **Illegal, unauthorized, or improper use of money, benefits, belongings, property, or assets for the benefit of someone other than individual**
- Signs you may see:
 - Unexplained disappearance of funds or possessions
 - Bills unpaid despite money being available
 - Given “allowances” without input
 - Sudden changes to legal/financial behaviors
- The annual loss by survivors of financial abuse is estimated to be at least \$36.5 billion



Caregiver Warning Signs

- Shows little concern for dependent
- Appears unable to recognize physical or emotional distress
- Blames dependent for problems
- Consistently belittles or berates the dependent
- Seems jealous of others receiving attention from the dependent
- Severely limits the dependent's contact with others
- Offers conflicting/unconvincing explanation for injuries



Elder Abuse

- **An intentional act or failure to act that causes or creates a risk of harm to an adult aged 60 or older**
- One in 10 people aged 60 and older, who live at home, experience abuse, including neglect and exploitation
- Females are targeted more for abuse



Abuse Against People with Disabilities

- Developmental disorders, intellectual disabilities, communication disorders, and behavioral disorders appear to contribute to very high levels of risk of abuse
- Dependency on a caregiver significantly increases their vulnerability
- Between 60-70% of adults with disabilities report that they have been survivors of abuse
- Women with disabilities reported significantly longer durations of abuse compared to women without disabilities



Domestic Violence

- **Pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship** that is used by one partner to gain and/or maintain power and control over another intimate partner
- More than 10 million adults experience domestic violence annually
- One in 15 children are exposed to intimate partner violence each year



Appropriate Physical Behaviors

- Offering handshakes, knuckle bumps, high fives, etc.
- Holding hands during prayer
 - Ask whether everyone is comfortable
- Staying in open areas of areas of the house, such as the kitchen or living room
- Allowing neighbors to lead the situation
 - If they want to hug, keep it short and appropriate
 - Don't hug if you don't want to – your boundaries should be respected as well



Physical Boundary Violations

- Any activity with a sexual connotation
- Sitting too closely with neighbor
- Stroking hair or shoulders
- Kissing, lap-sitting, bear hugging, long embracing
- Any resisted or unwanted contact
- Any affection in isolated areas
- Meeting alone or moving the meeting to an isolated area
- Transporting one person alone



Emotional Boundary Violations

- Making comments related to physique or body development
- Calling, emailing, texting for purposes other than ministry
- Taking any photographs without permission
- Providing children gifts or money without a caregiver's permission
- Ridiculing and/or questioning beliefs or life choices

Questions or Comments?





Requirements for Vincentians

- **Code of Conduct** SVdP Indianapolis has developed a Code of Conduct to be signed by all employees, contractors and certain public-facing volunteers (including Home Visitors).
- **Photo Identification** All employees, certain designated volunteers, and Home Visitors should have a photo ID that includes at least a first name, the Council name and the SVdP logo. These IDs will be issued free of charge to those who need one.
- **Training** All employees, regular volunteers and contractors who work at SVdP facilities in the Council region must have Safeguarding training.
- **Record Keeping** All training records will be recorded and maintained. Training must be refreshed annually for all employees and contractors, and at least every three (3) years for volunteers.



Background Checks

- A **Background Check** is a routine way for employers and non-profits to verify the status of employees and volunteers
- SVdP will conduct and pay for Background Checks for:
 - Employees
 - Contractors
 - Certain Key Volunteers
 - CLF Facilitators
 - Home Visitors
- A previous Background Check by another employer or organization within three years will meet SVdP's requirements with proof
- Contact Peter Zubler: pzubler@svdpindy.org



Roles and Requirements Matrix

| Role | Safeguarding Policy Awareness | Code of Conduct Signature | Training | Background Check | Photo ID |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Employee | Required | Required | Required | Required | Required |
| Contractor | Required | Required | Required | (from Contractor) | (from Contractor) |
| Key Volunteer¹ | Required | Required | Required | Required | Required |
| CLF Facilitator | Required | Required | Required | Required | Required |
| Mentor | Required | Required | Required | Required | Required |
| Home Visitor | Required | Required | Required | Required | Required |
| Lead Volunteer² | Required | Required | Required | Not Required | Required |
| Public-Facing Volunteer³ | Required | Required | Required | Required | Required |
| Frequent Volunteer⁴ | Required | Required | Optional | Not Required | Optional |
| Occasional Volunteer | Required | Optional | Optional | Not Required | Not Required |
| Conference Member⁵ | Required | Required | Optional | Not Required | Not Required |
| Vendor | Required | Not Required | Not Required | (from vendor) | Not Required |
| Visitor | Required | Not Required | Not Required | Not Required | Not Required |



Role Definitions

1. Volunteers with organizational responsibility including Presidents and Treasurers
2. Volunteer who work leading a team of other volunteers
3. Volunteers in a capacity that faces those we serve on a regular basis, including stores, pantry intake and home delivery, as well as those with access to personal identifying information
4. Volunteer participating at least monthly
5. Includes both active and associate members



Communicating the Safeguarding Message

- SVdP ensures that a hard and/or electronic copy of the safeguarding policy is provided or made available in each office or headquarters within their jurisdiction and available to and acknowledged by employees, contractors, volunteers, and visitors
- Copies will be provided to the general public in hard copy or through email upon request
- All SVdP facilities in the Council region will have signage in an obvious location stating that this Safeguarding Policy exists and all employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors to the site agree to comply with the policy



Facility Signage

Safeguarding Policy

This facility is covered by the Safeguarding Policy of the Indianapolis Archdiocesan Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Employees, Contractors, Volunteers and Visitors are expected to:

1. Protect the rights of all people encountered at this facility
2. Ensure that all children and vulnerable persons of any age are protected from physical and mental violence, injury, abuse, and exploitation including sexual abuse
3. Report any suspected abuse or neglect to both local authorities as required by Indiana law and to the SVdP Victim Assistance Coordinator

A copy of the complete Safeguarding Policy is available online at www.svdindy.org or from the facility manager.

Questions or concerns should be directed to your supervisor, volunteer coordinator, or the facility manager.





Reporting Potential Abuse or Exploitation

Indiana is a mandatory reporting state!

- This means you must report suspect abuse, neglect or exploitation to state or local authorities
 - Reports are made using State Form 114
 - Reporting is protected by a state “Good Samaritan” law
- Reporting your concerns to SVdP is also required
- Contact the SVdP Compliance Coordinator Crystal Wiley cwiley@svdpindy.org 317-353-4388
 - There is a link on the SVdP website
 - Reporting is protected by an SVdP whistleblower policy



Reporting Potential Abuse or Exploitation 2

- Anyone who has reason to believe that a child is a survivor of abuse, neglect or endangerment must report immediately to:
 - The local Child Protective Services agency (Hotline: 800-800-5556), or
 - A local law enforcement agency
- Anyone who has reason to believe that an endangered adult is the survivor of battery, neglect, or exploitation must report immediately to:
 - The local Adult Protective Services agency (Hotline: 800-992-6978), or
 - A local law enforcement agency



Investigative Procedures

- Upon receipt of a report of an incident involving sexual misconduct, abuse, neglect or exploitation, the Compliance Coordinator will immediately take the following steps:
 - Gather appropriate information
 - Determine if further investigation is warranted and initiate a preliminary investigation if necessary
 - Insure the required report to Child Protective Services or Adult Protective Services and/or the appropriate law enforcement agencies has been filed in accordance with Indiana law
- Communicate the report internally to consider corrective actions



Investigative Review Team

- The Investigative Review Team will conduct internal investigations in order to manage the flow of information, gain access to potential sources of information, and analyze and document information concerning an allegation of misconduct
- The Compliance Coordinator convenes this group, which may consist of the Executive Director; outside legal counsel; volunteer director; managing director; and other professionals as needed
- **The Team's work does not replace or supersede any investigation by law enforcement or state agencies**



Training and Monitoring Compliance

- Training will be mandatory annually for all employees
 - Failing to complete training may result in disciplinary action
- Training will be required on a biannual basis for Key Volunteers and Home Visitors
- Compliance will be monitored via class records for in-person trainings and with completion tracking for on-line training
 - Compliance will be reviewed annually by the Archdiocesan Council

Questions or Comments?





Final Words

- Safeguarding is being implemented to protect those we serve, and those who serve them
- Safeguarding respects the rights of both children and vulnerable adults
- Safeguarding is the right thing to do



Closing Prayer

Father –

Strengthen us in our mission, that we may serve all those entrusted to us with generosity, with mercy, with gentleness, and with love.

In Your name we pray.

Amen