

RBCPC Lawsuit and subsequent actions

In 2010, the families of two teenage girls who were part of the church's youth music department filed a lawsuit against the church based on the actions of a part-time employee in that department in 2008. While I was not a part of the lawsuit, as the executive pastor I was the official representative of the church during those proceedings. I worked with the attorneys on both sides and all other stakeholders – the congregation, session, presbytery, insurance carriers, the media and staff of the church and our pre-school. I also sought to pastorally address the impact on the families, church members and the youth music department.

A search of various news articles will only tell you that a lawsuit was filed, and ultimately settled. It will not tell you that, rather than simply circle the wagons and look inward, the church benefitted from the careful, thorough, and direct response to these allegations, which I am proud to have led. Based on our investigation I led the church over several years of risk assessment and specific actions to proactively address the lessons we learned. The church worked through a detailed and sometimes difficult self-reflection process, developed new safety and minor interaction policies, implemented substantial additional background checks for staff and volunteers, and submitted to onsite evaluations. We hired a professional consultant in the immediate wake of the situation to work with staff, elders, and pastors. We also contracted with Praesidium, a nationally recognized organization with 25 years of experience working with churches and organizations in the area of child safety.

Taking what could have been a negative experience that could tear a church apart, we turned this into a learning process. The church was ultimately able to help the victims. No further concerns have arisen in the eight years since the lawsuit was filed as to the issues raised in that lawsuit. And I am most proud to say that in October 2013 the church received national recognition for its efforts and achieved some of the highest standards for safety and training among churches nationwide.

Because the work of Praesidium was substantial and effective, I am including a copy of their risk assessment and accreditation document. I highly recommend this organization and their process to any church and non-profit looking to improve on creating a safer environment.



I offer this summary with much appreciation for all who contributed to this work.



In 2013 Rancho Bernardo Community Presbyterian Church completed its staff training, facilities review, child protection policy and final site visit and review by Praesidium consultants.

The following information describes much of the process and steps taken to achieve full accreditation.

Praesidium Risk Assessment

Policies	93
Screening and Selection	77
Training	99
Monitoring and Supervision	55
Consumer Participation	98
Feedback Systems	78
Responding	68
Administrative Practices	99
Praesidium Safety Score	83

What's Your Score?

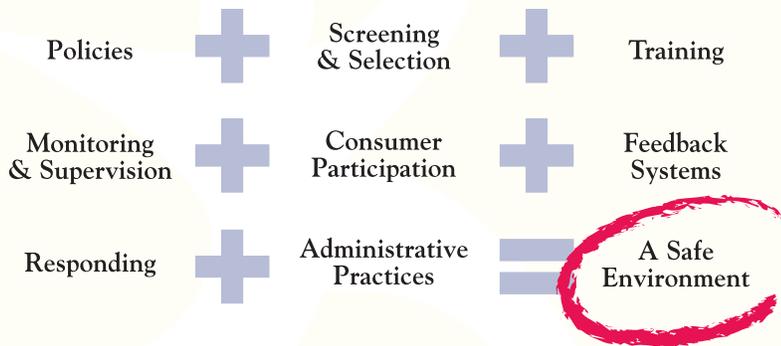
How safe are your programs?

Do you know where your organization may be most at risk? Have you done everything possible to prevent an incident of abuse? Do you know exactly how to reduce or eliminate your exposures? Are your programs insurable? A Praesidium Risk Assessment answers these questions for you... before it's too late.

An incident of abuse can cause a lifetime of pain and suffering for a child, a vulnerable adult, and a family, and irreparable damage to an organization's reputation, financial stability, and insurability. An average claim can exceed \$500,000 and plaintiff's attorneys prevail in two-thirds of cases.

Most incidents of abuse in organizations are preventable. Praesidium's Risk Assessment shows you how to keep those you serve and your organization safe.

Praesidium's Safety Equation™



Praesidium's Scientific Methodology

Praesidium derives the standards included in its Risk Assessment from exhaustive reviews of the scientific literature and from root cause analyses of more than 3,000 cases of abuse in organizations. It uses a conceptual mathematical model — Praesidium's Safety Equation™ — more than 800 best practice standards, and empirically-based data collection methods to assess the risk of abuse in an organization.

The Praesidium Risk Assessment Process

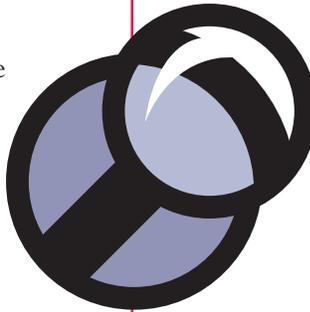


Praesidium partners with your organization to identify your unique circumstances, select the programs and locations to be included, and schedule dates for our Safety Specialists to be on-site.

Workplan Development

Site Selection

Scheduling and Preparation



Our proprietary review process uses a variety of data collection methods to scrutinize eight operations in your organization without interrupting your day-to-day activities.

Policy Review

Records Review

Management Systems Review

Employee and Volunteer Interviews

Standardized Questionnaires

Program and Practice Observations

Architectural Inspections

Training and Consultation

Exit Interviews



The Praesidium Report™ includes the Risk Assessment Score Card, detailed information about compliance with each standard, and specific recommendations for how to reduce or eliminate potential exposures.

The Praesidium Report



Risk Assessment Score Card

System-Wide Compliance Results

Recommendations and Solutions

Praesidium Accreditation

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Praesidium Safety Score	

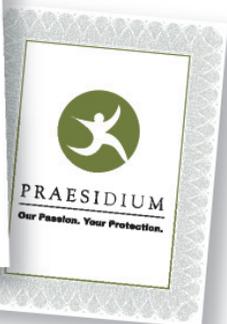
Compliance

Partial Compliance

Non-Compliance

Recommendation 3:

Complete a System-Wide Program Review
Company A has nobly grown in response to community demands but without a clear strategic plan. Any organization with a long and rich heritage may have programs with historic sentiment but with little relevance to current organizational goals, priorities, and fiscal resources. And, new programs have been added without adequate attention paid to their contribution to the mission, their centrality to the core competencies of Company A, budgetary requirements, and the risks they introduce.



Praesidium Accreditation

To become Praesidium Accredited for three years, organizations must be in compliance with all standards included in The Praesidium Report.™ This rigorous process publicly demonstrates to consumers and insurance underwriters the organization's commitment to safety and that it subscribes to the highest safety standards. Accredited organizations receive at no additional cost three unannounced compliance audits while their accreditation is in effect.

This important feature serves to keep organizations vigilant in their commitment to safety. Praesidium Accredited organizations receive framed accreditation awards for public display, a custom-designed crystal Praesidium logo, recognition in a professional publication, and a press release for consumers and the media.

“Edison is committed to creating the safest possible environments for our students. Praesidium's Risk Assessment was thorough and immensely informative and their expert staff were professional and passionate about their work. We learned specific, practical solutions to effectively reduce our risks.”

Jonathan Rosenberg, Deputy General Counsel
Edison Schools Inc.

“Praesidium's Risk Assessment was remarkable in its accuracy. It has been the most important risk management tool we have used. We KNOW our response to The Praesidium Report has made a difference in keeping children safe!”

Susan Strong, Assistant Vice President
YMCA of Greater Seattle

“The Praesidium Risk Assessment has enabled us to better protect the vulnerable adults and children we serve. Both the technology and the training were first rate, and the expert staff were professional and accommodating.”

William Baccaglini, Executive Director
The Foundling Hospital, New York City



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800.743.6354
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www.PraesidiumInc.com**