Funder Safeguarding Collaborative

Safeguarding in the USA

How can philanthropy contribute to keeping people and communities safe?

What Is Funder Safeguarding Collaborative?

FSC was created to strengthen the ability of grant-making organisations to prevent abuse and exploitation across their grant-making and operations.

FSC was founded in 2021 by Comic Relief, Global Fund for Children, The National Lottery Community Fund, Oak Foundation, and Porticus, which came together with a shared commitment to creating a safer world. FSC believes that all funders can make a valuable contribution to keeping people safe and to preventing harm to the communities they serve.

From its origins as a small group of aligned funders, FSC has grown rapidly in its three years of existence and is now a diverse global network of foundations – with a growing US membership – that share an ambition to transform the role of funders in safeguarding by driving action that creates safer organisational cultures and practices to keep people safe from harm.

At the core of the collaborative is a firm belief that everyone has the right to be safe and a duty to take action to prevent harm and promote the wellbeing of others. Integral to FSC's approach is the belief that safeguarding measures must consider the social, economic, cultural, and legal context in which organisations are operating. FSC actively identifies and challenges the power imbalances and structural inequalities that too often get in the way of building safer organisations.

FSC aims to build a world where safety and wellbeing are at the heart of every organisation. Our work focuses on grant-making organisations, as we recognise the unique opportunity philanthropy has to promote and support safer practice.

Philanthropists invest billions every year towards effecting positive change. However, their impact is undermined when organisations they fund, whether through action or inaction, cause harm to people or communities. Without proactively ensuring safety, the ability of philanthropy to achieve positive impact is limited.

Recently, there has rightly been increasing attention on the power that funders hold and how to shift that power to grantees. Even as funders work to address the power imbalance, they can take simple actions to make the world safer. When funders emphasize safety and protection, organisations listen. When funders provide resources to improve practice, they make safety possible. Debates on power, equity, and participation are shifting traditional models of giving, and as funders explore new ways to engage with the communities they support, safeguarding has never been more important.

Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable populations is a paramount concern for organisations and funders across the United States. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of safeguarding practices, driven by increased awareness of abuse and exploitation by organisations and institutions, changes in legal requirements, and shifting societal norms.

A Note on Terminology

For this paper, FSC uses the term "safeguarding" to describe the measures aimed at preventing and responding to all forms of harm, abuse, and exploitation to all individuals who come into contact with funders and the organisations they support. While this term is used globally, we recognize that within the US this terminology is not commonly understood. At FSC, we are committed to having conversations amongst our members and with others in the funder and nonprofit sectors to identify terminology that is better suited to a US context.

This paper provides a brief overview of the current legal and regulatory framework surrounding safeguarding in the United States. It identifies relevant actors, examines the perspectives of US organisations and funders, and explores the role of FSC in supporting and enhancing safeguarding efforts across the philanthropic ecosystem.[1]

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1 FSC would like to thank Choose Love, FADICA, GHR Foundation, Just Beginnings, NEO, Phillips Foundation, and Porticus for providing valuable perspectives on their achievements, hurdles, requirements, and deficiencies within the regulatory framework aimed at supporting safeguarding efforts.

What's happening today?

US Legal and Regulatory Framework

The legal and regulatory framework for safeguarding in the United States is multifaceted and complex, including laws at the federal, state, and local levels that incorporate specific, yet varying requirements related to safeguarding. These include child protection, abuse prevention, victim support, protections for individuals with disabilities, etc. In recent years, there has been growing attention given to child abuse prevention, but other aspects of safeguarding have not yet received the same level of focus or investment in the US.

At the federal level, laws such as the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and the Violence Against Women Act provide guidelines and funding mechanisms to address child abuse and neglect and other crimes or discrimination. These laws emphasise collaboration amongst agencies, the promotion of evidence-based practices, and the provision of services to victims. Additionally, federal funding agreements often include safeguarding-related requirements for organisations receiving grants or contracts. These requirements may encompass background checks for staff and volunteers, training on recognising and reporting abuse, the establishment of clear policies and procedures, and mechanisms for incident reporting and oversight. Organisations must comply with applicable laws and adhere to these requirements in order to remain eligible for federal funding.

At the state and local levels, laws and regulations related to safeguarding can vary significantly from one jurisdiction to another. For example, each state has its own child protection laws, reporting requirements, standards for childcare facilities, and regulations governing foster care and adoption. While some states have comprehensive safeguarding measures in place, others may have gaps or inconsistencies in their legal framework. Furthermore, safeguarding measures often differ from state to state, posing challenges for organisations operating across multiple jurisdictions and for the funders supporting them.

In conclusion, the US regulatory framework does not provide a clear basis or incentive for organisations to implement good safeguarding. The inconsistencies and gaps highlight the need for a comprehensive approach to safeguarding that encompasses all vulnerable populations and addresses a wider range of risks and vulnerabilities.

Key Actors

The landscape of actors that are engaged with or could contribute to efforts to strengthen safeguarding is multifaceted. Given the inconsistencies in the regulatory framework, an opportunity exists to leverage existing networks and opportunities with actors that intersect in some way with the work of nonprofits, for improving safeguarding.

Nonprofit ratings and benchmarking

Although many more nonprofit ratings platforms exist, there are two key sites (see more information on these and others in Appendix) used by individual and organizational funders to get an overview of whether nonprofits meet certain due diligence criteria. These are:

- Charity Navigator
- GuideStar

Neither of those sites currently considers safeguarding as part of the criteria covered. There may be opportunities for FSC to engage with these bodies to incorporate safeguarding into their rating systems.

Accrediting bodies

The requirement for nonprofit accreditation (and the type of accreditation required) varies amongst funders. While some funders may prefer or require nonprofit organisations to be accredited, it is not a universal mandate. Nonprofit accreditation is typically conducted by independent accrediting bodies that assess an organisation's governance, financial practices, and programmatic impact.

Accreditation may provide donors with a level of assurance that the nonprofit adheres to certain standards of accountability and transparency (depending on the accreditation or accrediting body).

It may also be seen as a signal of the organisation's commitment to high standards of performance and ethical conduct. However, many donors also consider other factors, such as the nonprofit's mission, its track record, and the specific outcomes of its programs.

There may be potential opportunities for FSC to engage with accrediting bodies.

Insurance Carriers

Insurance carriers often require nonprofit organisations to implement safeguarding practices as a condition for providing coverage, especially in areas related to child abuse and molestation. Carriers recognise, more and more, the importance of safeguarding in reducing the likelihood of claims and associated liabilities.

As a result of recent changes in several states where the statute of limitations has been expanded or lifted, opportunities for survivors to disclose abuse have been expanded. This has led to a significant increase in claims, creating challenges and opportunities for organisations. Organizations face additional challenges as the financial risk increases with the potential for additional non-recent cases to require settlement. Insurers may be reluctant to issue new liability coverage without higher costs and stricter limits, negatively impacting organizations. There is an opportunity if the increased risks that insurers face motivates them to enforce tighter safeguarding requirements for the organizations they insure, leading to improved practice.

A number of insurance carriers now provide comprehensive resources to insureds, including discounted services like background checks and training. Safeguarding requirements vary from each insurance carrier to the next, but requirements are generally quite comprehensive and come closest to what we understand as safeguarding standards from other geographical settings.

Key challenges faced by funders in implementing safeguarding

FSC members have highlighted several challenges and gaps in implementing safeguarding within their organisations and the organisations they fund.

These challenges can also be taken as opportunities to increase funder contributions to safeguarding. As a leading advocate for safeguarding efforts in the philanthropic sector, FSC can play a critical role in addressing the needs and challenges faced by organisations and funders in the United States.

CHALLENGE

Lack of common language and understanding

In our meetings with funders, the emphasis on the need for a common language related to safeguarding practices and terminology was highlighted. The term "safeguarding" is not commonly used by or familiar to most in the US. Many organisations, funders, grantees, etc., may not fully understand the scope (or sometimes importance) of safeguarding efforts beyond mandatory child abuse or neglect reporting, for example.

This lack of a common language and understanding, can serve as a barrier to grantee organisations (grantees may see unfamiliar language in an application and walk away), lead to misconceptions and gaps in safeguarding practices, and generally create challenges in implementing a cohesive and streamlined safeguarding strategy.

OPPORTUNITY

Developing a common language around safeguarding

Across the US, within States and communities, and within individual organisations, words and phrases can have different meanings. This is frequently the case in the fields of safeguarding and child protection. Such differences can have both practical and legal ramifications. By bringing together funders, nonprofits, and other stakeholders, FSC can facilitate collaborative discussions to define key terminology and principles, share best practices, and address challenges in defining safeguarding across the United States.

CHALLENGE

Lack of incentives to implement safeguarding

For funders, especially those who are not funding grantees working directly with children for whom there are some legal protections, there can be a reluctance to be enforcing safeguarding measures. This could be a perception that safeguarding is ancillary to their mission and not their responsibility. Funders may feel they just want to limit their engagement to supporting the mission of the grantees but not be involved in working out the details of operations where safeguarding is essential.

While some funders have requirements or expectations regarding safeguarding, there is often a disconnect in incentivising grantees to prioritise these efforts. Grantees may not be aware of the importance of safeguarding, they may prioritise programmatic outcomes in a restrictive funding environment, or they may be forced to choose financial sustainability over investing in safeguarding measures, especially if they do not perceive a direct benefit or incentive for prioritising safeguarding.

OPPORTUNITY

Incentivising safeguarding

In a 2021 study on Funder Approaches to Safeguarding, FSC identified both challenges to good safeguarding but also positive funder practices that enhanced their safeguarding practice. Positive practices such as dialogue-based safeguarding assessment were found to lead to an increase in trust and transparency with grantees, a powerful incentive to funders committed to trust-based philanthropy and value alignment.

For those less swayed by arguments around trust and values, there is a compelling argument to be made that funders who support efforts of grantees to implement safeguarding are protecting their organization from potential reputation and public relations risks and is some cases, liability (see annex).

This challenge also highlights the need for funders to explore innovative approaches to incentivise and reward grantees for integrating safeguarding into their organisational culture and operations. By providing incentives such as additional funding, recognition, or capacity-building opportunities for organisations that demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding, funders can encourage a stronger emphasis on safeguarding practices throughout the nonprofit sector.

CHALLENGE

Limits of a regulation-based approach

Racial justice efforts have highlighted to funders the harm that institutions and systems have caused to predominantly Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) communities throughout history. Safeguarding, or elements of it, are often equated with mandated reporting requirements, an ill-equipped child protection system that harms more than it helps, and a culture of punishing families living in poverty, again disproportionately affecting BIPOC individuals and communities.

In seeking to develop or harmonise efforts around safeguarding, care and attention must be placed on not replicating harmful systems based on what funders understand as good safeguarding.

OPPORTUNITY

Engaging key national and local actors to strengthen safeguarding in the US

No single organisation or entity can address safeguarding within philanthropy in isolation. For FSC, this means we will continue to network and seek collaboration with influential actors in the philanthropic ecosystem and beyond. This allows FSC to tap into broader perspectives and insights from diverse sectors, including the nonprofit sector, academia, government agencies, advocacy groups, and service providers. This interdisciplinary approach fosters innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability in safeguarding efforts.

These partnerships can amplify efforts to integrate safeguarding into existing networks, guidance, and tools and ensure a comprehensive approach to safeguarding vulnerable populations. By collaborating with these and other organisations, FSC can leverage their expertise, networks, and resources to advance safeguarding initiatives. This collaboration could involve joint initiatives, co-hosted events, and development of shared resources aimed at promoting best practices and raising awareness about safeguarding challenges and solutions.

CHALLENGE

Limited opportunities for training and capacity building

Organisations require support in training staff and volunteers on recognising and responding to abuse, implementing best practices, and establishing effective safeguarding policies and procedures. Capacity-building initiatives tailored to the needs of different organisations and staff levels are essential to ensure that all stakeholders are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to safeguard vulnerable populations. However, funders themselves have limited capacity to provide trainings, and resources and staff time can sometimes also be limited. Actors providing such capacity-building support are few, and they almost exclusively focus on sexual abuse prevention or tailor their work towards children.

OPPORTUNITY

Building organizational capacity

An organisation can expend significant resources trying to contract or hire people with the right skills to implement effective safeguarding. FSC and its members can explore opportunities to collaborate with US actors to build capacity to support grantee partners to develop and implement safeguarding in their organisations. This analysis only scratches the surface in terms of identifying actors who do safeguarding-adjacent work.

FSC has already created communities of practice for safeguarding professionals in five countries in Asia and three countries in Africa. It is worth exploring whether similar efforts would bring value in the US.

CHALLENGE

Lack of technical assistance and contextualized resources

Linked to capacity building, access to technical assistance, US-specific resources, and tools to assess and improve safeguarding practices is crucial. Not only does this help to make sure that best practices are applied, but it enables grantees to avoid spending scarce resources on reinventing the wheel.

OPPORTUNITY

Facilitating access to resources and networks

To address this challenge, a wealth of information on best practices can be made available to organisations. Examples of the sorts of information and guidance that would benefit many organisations include the best way to conduct background checks, develop policies, create incident reporting systems, and perform risk assessments. The CDC guidelines in development on preventing child sexual abuse (see Appendix) have the potential to be useful in this area as well and are something to watch for.

Knowledge sharing through networking is another avenue to explore. FSC currently facilitates networking opportunities, peer learning circles, and knowledge-sharing platforms where funders can exchange experiences, challenges, and best practices in safeguarding. This fosters collaboration and collective learning within the philanthropic community, enabling organisations to leverage each other's expertise and resources. Sharing actual experiences, both successes and failures, can be the most useful guidance for what works in safeguarding.

Conclusion

While the United States has elements of a legal and regulatory framework for safeguarding vulnerable populations, there are challenges and gaps in implementation across jurisdictions and in understanding amongst organisations and funders.

Incentives for nonprofit organisations to develop and implement good safeguarding come from the need to comply with grant requirements or insurance carriers, as opposed to national requirements or industry standards.

Philanthropic funders in the US have huge potential to bring about a focus on the need for good safeguarding by including this in their grant requirements for nonprofits applying for funding. Funders must however match their requirements with adequate resources, incentivising grantees beyond compliance.

Importantly, there is a need to first understand incentives for change and agree on language, definitions, and approaches to good safeguarding, and ground these with a justice and equity lens. FSC will continue to convene funders in the US to unpack these issues one by one. We hope you join us on this journey.

Appendices

1 Mapping of US Legal and Regulatory Safeguarding Framework

1.1 Federal Laws Related to Safeguarding

Though not solely related to safeguarding, the following federal laws serve as examples of those that aim to establish a framework for the protection and wellbeing of vulnerable populations in various contexts, ranging from education to foster care and beyond. States also have their own specific laws and regulations complementing and/or incorporating these federal provisions.

Americans with Disabilities Act (1990):

ADA outlines various safeguards for people with disabilities, whether in public, in the workplace, or when receiving services.

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (1974):

CAPTA provides federal funding to states for the prevention, assessment, investigation, prosecution, and treatment of child abuse and neglect. It mandates states to have procedures for reporting and investigating child abuse and neglect.

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA):

ICWA, enacted in 1978, addresses concerns about the removal of Native American children from their families and tribes. It establishes standards for jurisdiction over child custody proceedings involving Native American children, emphasizing the importance of cultural continuity.

Safe Sport Authorization Act (2017):

This recent legislation is particularly relevant in the context of national and Olympic sports organisations and addresses issues such as sexual abuse, harassment, and other forms of misconduct in amateur sports. It enacts strong safeguards for athletes and enhanced reporting requirements.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972:

Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in federally funded education programs. It addresses issues such as sexual harassment and assault, requiring educational institutions to take steps to prevent and respond to such incidents.

Victims of Child Abuse Act (1990):

This act authorises funding for programs and initiatives aimed at improving the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases. It supports Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs), which provide a coordinated and child-friendly approach to child abuse investigations.

Violence Against Women Act (1994):

VAWA provides various safeguarding-related protections for women victims of violence, such as protection orders, immigrant protections, and creating safe spaces on university campuses.

1.2 Safeguarding and Federal Grants/Funding

Safeguarding principles are somewhat intertwined with the considerations and requirements associated with federal funding, particularly in areas that involve the wellbeing and safety of individuals. While the term "safeguarding" is not explicitly used in federal regulations, the broader concepts align with efforts to protect vulnerable populations, prevent harm, and help ensure ethical conduct in the use of federal funds. Here's how safeguarding plays into various aspects of federal funding:

Protection of Vulnerable Populations:

Federal funding for programs or services involving children, youth, the elderly, or other vulnerable groups often includes provisions to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Compliance with Ethical Standards:

Safeguarding measures include adherence to specific ethical standards and the prevention of abuse, exploitation, and harm. Federal agencies emphasise ethical conduct and program integrity to ensure that organisations act responsibly and with integrity when utilising federal funds.

Background Checks and Screening:

Some federal programs, especially those involving services for children or vulnerable populations, may have specific requirements related to background checks and screening for individuals working directly with beneficiaries (e.g., Head Start). This aligns with safeguarding efforts to prevent harm and ensure the suitability of individuals in certain roles.

Reporting Requirements for Incidents:

Safeguarding principles involve reporting and responding to incidents promptly. Federal funding agreements may include reporting requirements for incidents related to safety, misconduct, or other issues affecting beneficiaries.

Training and Capacity Building:

Safeguarding often involves training to build the capacity of organisations and individuals to recognise, prevent, and respond to safeguarding concerns. Federal programs may include training components to ensure that staff and partners are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills, but they are not uniform or consistent across the board.

Monitoring and Oversight:

Federal agencies conduct monitoring and oversight to ensure that organisations are meeting the terms and conditions of their funding agreements.

Integration into Program Design:

Federal programs are increasingly designed to integrate safeguarding considerations from the outset. This may involve assessing risks, implementing preventive measures, and incorporating safeguards into program design to mitigate potential harm.

Adherence to Applicable Laws:

Organisations receiving federal funds are generally required to adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws. This includes compliance with child protection laws, anti-discrimination laws, and other legal frameworks that contribute to safeguarding efforts.

1.3 State-level Laws and Regulations Related to Safeguarding

State-level laws, regulations, and policies on safeguarding and protection can vary significantly, reflecting the diversity of approaches and priorities across different jurisdictions. State laws related to nonprofit governance often cover a broad range of topics, including financial transparency, ethical conduct, and general oversight. However, specific laws directly addressing safeguarding within nonprofit governance and funding are not as prevalent. Instead, safeguarding issues – particularly child-protection-related issues – are often addressed through broader child welfare laws and regulations. Here's a general overview of what is found at the state level, highlighting potential differences, gaps, and common themes:

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Laws:

Most states have mandatory reporting laws that require certain professionals and individuals to report suspected child abuse or neglect to designated authorities. However, the specifics, such as who is a mandated reporter and what constitutes abuse or neglect, can vary.

Child Protective Services:

Each state has its own child protective services agency responsible for investigating reports of child abuse and neglect. Differences may exist in how these agencies are structured, their procedures, and the criteria used for intervention.

Licensing and Regulation of Childcare Facilities:

States typically regulate and license childcare facilities to ensure they meet safety and quality standards. There may be variations in licensing requirements, inspection processes, and the types of facilities covered.

Education Policies:

States often have policies related to child safety in educational settings, including protocols for addressing bullying and harassment and ensuring a safe learning environment. These policies can vary in their scope and implementation.

Domestic Violence Laws:

Some states integrate provisions related to domestic violence into their broader family and child welfare laws. These may include protective orders and support services for victims.

Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) and Multidisciplinary Teams:

States may establish Child Advocacy Centers or multidisciplinary teams to coordinate the response to child abuse cases. The structure and functions of these entities can differ across states.

Training Requirements for Professionals:

States often set training requirements for professionals working with children, such as teachers, healthcare providers, and social workers. The nature and extent of these requirements may vary.

Court Procedures and Laws:

Court procedures related to child protection, custody, and juvenile justice can differ. State laws may outline the rights of children and parents involved in legal proceedings.

Preventive Services and Family Support Programs:

Some states prioritise preventive services and family support programs to reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect. The availability and nature of these programs can vary.

1.4 Grant Funding (non-federal/-state)

While government sources of grant funding come with specific regulations and guidelines, non-federal grant funding in the United States does not generally have the same level of standardised regulations. The oversight and safeguarding mechanisms for non-federal grant funding can vary widely and are often influenced by the policies and requirements of the specific grantor organisations, foundations, or private entities providing the funding.

Here are some general considerations:

- Grantor policies and guidelines: Organisations providing grant funding typically have their own policies and guidelines. These may include requirements related to safeguarding, reporting, background checks, and other aspects of organisational conduct.
- State and local laws: Organisations receiving non-federal grant funding are still subject to relevant state and local laws. State laws may include specific requirements related to child protection, reporting, and other safeguards that organisations must adhere to.

- Grant agreements: Grant agreements for non-federal funding will outline the terms and conditions of the grant. These agreements may include specific expectations and requirements related to child safeguarding, background checks, and other relevant measures.
- Industry standards: Some sectors, such as education, healthcare, and social services, may have industry-specific standards and best practices that organisations are expected to follow when receiving grant funding, regardless of the funding source.
- Nonprofit accreditation standards: Accrediting bodies for nonprofits, such as COA Accreditation, may establish standards related to governance, management, and program quality, including child protection measures.
- Community expectations: Grantors may be responsive to community expectations and concerns. Public and community pressure could potentially influence the policies and practices of grantor organisations.

1.5 US Case Law Related to Safeguarding and Grantees

Most cases involving a lapse or absence of safeguarding measures were specific to the nonprofit organisation (grantee) at fault, rather than the donor (grantor). However, precedent was set in 2019 when a $60 million settlement was reached in a class-action lawsuit filed in federal court in Hartford, Connecticut.

The lawsuit involved allegations of neglect, resulting in sexual abuse by the founder of Project Pierre Toussaint in Haiti, Douglas Perlitz.

The lawsuit named several defendants, including its funders Fairfield University, the Society of Jesus of New England, the Order of Malta, and Haiti Fund Inc, in addition to an individual philanthropist. These entities were accused of negligence in supervising Perlitz and failing to implement adequate safeguards to prevent the abuse of more than 130 boys at the school.

2   Identification and Analysis of Key Actors

The following information includes key bodies and organisations that are currently engaged in safeguarding, or that may have the potential to contribute to efforts to strengthen safeguarding within the grant-making/funding space.

2.1 Organisations/Companies Issuing Nonprofit Ratings

The top two sites used to help confirm that donations/grants are being used appropriately are Charity Navigator and GuideStar.

Charity Navigator

Charity Navigator provides ratings based on metrics such as program expenses, administrative expenses, fundraising efficiency, and the presence of key governance policies, but it does not explicitly assess safeguarding policies. The emphasis is generally on financial and governance aspects, though Charity Navigator will issue warnings for nonprofits if there are associated reports of wrongdoing or misconduct (reactive vs. proactive, however). See the organisation's Rating and Methodology Guide for more specific evaluation information.

GuideStar

GuideStar provides non-vetted information related to the transparency and financial health of nonprofit organisations, including an organisation's mission, programs, financial statements, leadership, and impact.

The information is typically provided by the nonprofit organisation itself or sourced from publicly available sources such as IRS filings. While GuideStar does not collect safeguarding policies of nonprofits as a standard part of its reporting, organisations may voluntarily provide such information. Donors and funders can award "seals" of varying levels to nonprofits, which in turn could boost the funding the nonprofit receives.

CharityWatch

CharityWatch evaluates charity financial reporting, including audited financial statements, tax forms, annual reports, state filings, and other documents. Each charity is then assigned an efficiency rating on an A+ to F scale.

2.2 Nonprofit Standard Setters, Accrediting Bodies, and Organisations

Accreditation may provide donors with a level of assurance that a nonprofit organization meets certain standards of accountability and transparency.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

In 2007, the CDC released **"Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations: Getting Started on Policies and Procedures."** An updated version, with resources and guidance, is scheduled to be released in 2024. Due to the scope, credibility, and reach of the CDC's work, there is potential for the new resource to be standard setting in the field.

Independent Sector

Independent Sector is leading and catalyzing the charitable community, partnering with government, business and individuals to advance the common good. This has included developed the Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practice: A Guide for Charities and Foundations. The Principles include multiple safeguarding adjacent standards. There is potential to expand on this in a future update.

Praesidium Accreditation

Praesidium Accreditation is focused on abuse prevention for all vulnerable populations. Its accreditation process allows organisations to "publicly demonstrate their commitment to abuse prevention" and is a relatively new area for the company.

Social Current / COA Accreditation

Social Current is an independent nonprofit organisation that, through its COA Accreditation service, accredits the full continuum of child welfare, behavioral health, and community-based social and human services, along with private organisations, public agencies, military family readiness programs, child and youth development programs, and adoption home study programs. In order to achieve accreditation, organisations must meet the relevant standards (e.g., for public, private, etc.), some of which relate to safeguarding (proper reporting and investigation procedures, accessibility, etc.).

2.3 Insurance Carriers

Insurance carriers often require organisations to implement safeguarding practices as a condition for providing coverage. Carriers increasingly recognise the importance of risk management in reducing the likelihood of claims and associated liabilities.

Background

Insurance carriers have evolved in their approach to safeguarding, most significantly as it relates to child abuse and molestation risk management. Carriers now provide comprehensive resources to insureds, including discounted services like background checks and training.

States have changed statutes of limitations in recent years, opening windows for survivors to disclose abuse. This has led to a significant increase in claims.

Safeguarding requirements

Some safeguarding practices that insurers may require:

- **Background Checks:** Insurers may mandate organisations to conduct thorough background checks on staff and volunteers who work with vulnerable populations, such as children.

- **Training Programs:** Insurance carriers may require organisations to implement training programs that educate staff and volunteers on recognising and preventing abuse, as well as appropriate reporting procedures.

- **Written Policies and Procedures:** Organisations may be asked to establish and enforce written policies and procedures specifically addressing the prevention of abuse. This could involve having clear guidelines on interactions with minors (e.g., no 1:1 contact), reporting mechanisms, and response protocols.

- **Monitoring and Oversight:** Insurers may expect organisations to have effective monitoring and oversight mechanisms in place to ensure compliance with safeguarding practices.

- **Incident Reporting Systems:** Carriers may require organisations to establish and maintain systems for promptly reporting any incidents of abuse and for ensuring that appropriate authorities are informed.

- **Risk Assessment:** Organisations might need to conduct regular risk assessments to identify potential areas of vulnerability and take proactive measures to address them.

- **Risk Management:** Insurance carriers may include questions related to risk management practices, including ADA compliance, for example, in their underwriting questionnaires. However, this is not universally applied across all types of insurance.

Additionally, there may be available benefits to nonprofits through their insurance carrier. For example, insureds of Beazley receive free access to Praesidium's training courses and other resources.

Insurance coverage as a condition of receiving grant funding

At all levels, from federal to private donors, the requirement for insurance coverage as a condition for receiving grant funding can vary depending on the grantor and the specific terms and conditions outlined in the grant agreement. Some grants may also stipulate that the recipient organisation must maintain certain types and levels of insurance coverage. Common types of insurance include general liability insurance, property insurance, and, in some cases, specialised coverage (e.g., sexual molestation insurance).

2.4 Organisations and Companies Providing Safeguarding Support

Praesidium, Inc.

Praesidium is a for-profit company that provides a variety of services (training, assessment, consultation, crisis response, screening, and accreditation) to help organisations protect vulnerable populations such as children, elderly people, and people with disabilities.

Redwoods Group

Redwoods is a commercial insurance carrier providing insurance to camps, YMCAs, JCCs, and boys and girls clubs. It offers free **training and education courses** through its **Redwoods Institute** and has a **resource library** covering a variety of topics.

The Lighthouse Risk and Readiness Consulting Group

Lighthouse offers various consulting services to support and strengthen organisations with safeguarding, including policy development, risk assessments/screening, crisis management planning, training/education, consultation and advisory services, and temporary leadership/management solutions.

Abuse Prevention Systems

Abuse Prevention Systems provides various services (background checks, training, crisis management, self-assessment, etc.) to child-serving organisations, including camps, schools, youth sports, foster care/adoption program, etc., and insurance professionals.

Sacred Spaces / Aleinu

Aleinu is a web platform powered by **Sacred Spaces** that provides Jewish youth-serving organisations with the education and practical tools they need to prevent child maltreatment and take responsible action should instances or suspicions of maltreatment emerge.

Funder Safeguarding Collaborative (FSC) supports grant-making organisations across the globe that want to ensure that their work and the work they fund keep people safe.

FSC provides funders with a unique community to learn and share about safeguarding practice and policy with their peers, along with practical and tailored assistance for funders to help them find the right solutions for their specific context. The collaborative also invests in member-led initiatives to help keep people safe and strengthen safeguarding globally.

Funder Safeguarding Collaborative

Safer grant-making. Higher impact.

fsc_info@fundersafeguardingcollaborative.org

www.fundersafeguardingcollaborative.org