SAFETY FORUM 10/19/2024

11:00 What Has Been Done?

Panelists

- Great Britain GSO Ranjan B.
- Australia GSO Committee Member Geoff S.
- US/Canada GSO Madelaine P.
- Oregon Area 58 Committee Bonnie

Overarching Theme: What actions is AA taking to address issues of inclusion and safety in groups and AA functions?

1. Great Britain- Ranjan B

In 2000 developed basic framework describing acceptable behavior within groups. 2015 Personal conduct in some groups led to violence and disruptions in some groups that led to law information. 2019 a conference requested a renewal of the framework. "The more we talk about behavior, the more behavior needs talking about."

Framework is a GSO document intended to provide guidance, which is based on the Traditions to areas, districts, and groups. The guidance defines unacceptable behaviors and encourages individual groups to develop safety protocols.

GSO Framework
Areas Districts Intergroup
Groups Telephone Hotlines 12 Steppers Telephone Outreach Sponsorship Hospitals and Institutions

- Great Britain Safety Pamphlet: Violence and Personal Conduct
- Safeguarding and Personal Conduct V2 Revised
- AA Fellowship Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy GSB AA GB
- Whistleblowing Policy GSB AA GB
- The Rights of Staff, Volunteers and Trustees

2. Australia GSO Chair Geoff R.

Process and procedure for putting together safety guidance for AA.
2022 members attended a webinar giving information about non-profits being obligated to address safety and inclusion in fellowships. This led them to look at plans from other organizations and to check out their obligations with their legal team.

There was an initial risk assessment to identify problems and reporting issues. They have developed a living document that is simple, yet comprehensive that is intended to be instructional and informative to groups who then design their own safety procedures and process.

Their document is made for areas, districts and groups and contains descriptions/definitions of unacceptable behaviors: violence, derogatory language, bullying, harassment, discrimination, and predatory behavior. The document gives examples for possible safeguarding policies and indicates that groups and individuals are ultimately responsible for the culture in their group.

- Safeguarding Alcoholics Anonymous Policy
- SAFEGUARDING ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS CODE OF CONDUCT

- AA GUIDELINE FOR SAFETY AT MEETINGS GL-38
- AA CHILD SAFE GUIDELINE GL-34
- Incident Report Form

3. US/Canada GSO Madelaine P.

Concerns came to GSO attention via two extreme incidents, a group that had developed a culture of predation and the death of a female member by her partner who had 13th stepped her. The death of the woman really got GSO's attention as AA was sued but found not liable.

While GSO was declining responsibility the media attention and the surge of agenda topics made them very aware that a movement had started.

AAWS created safety Guidelines and a safety card as they were able to do so without undue procedure:

Safety Card for AA Groups:
https://www.aa.org/safety-card-aa-groups

Safety and AA Flyer:
https://www.aa.org/safety-and-aa-flyer

AA Safety Materials

The A.A. Member – Medications & Other Drugs (P-11)
A.A. For Alcoholics with Mental Health Issues – and Their Sponsors (P-87)
Problems Other than Alcohol (P-35)
Questions and Answers on Sponsorship
Understanding Anonymity (P-47)
Anonymity Card (F-20)
Anonymity Online and Digital Media (SMF-197)

4. Oregon Area 58 Safety and Inclusion Chair Bonnie

Safety and Inclusion Standing Committee started in May of 2023.

Their principles are:

- Unity
- Personal Responsibility
- Loving constructive conversations (language of the heart Bill W.)

They have workshops that are based on literature and the input of professionals and members with extensive experience. The workshops can be hosted by districts and delivered to district business meetings or assemblies. Groups may take the tools from the workshops to deal with issues in their own groups or to develop their own process and procedures.

Lowdown is that resources are available, but groups and individuals are responsible for their cultures and action has to happen at the group level. Question to ask ourselves and our meetings, "Who is being harmed by our actions and how?"

Guidelines to Protect Safety & Inclusion in A.A.
DIRECTRICES PARA PROTEGER LA SEGURIDAD Y LA INCLUSIÓN EN ALCOHÓLICOS ANÓNIMOS