

# DEFUSING HOSTILITY AND VIOLENCE IN CHILDREN AND ADULTS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### TRAINING OUTLINE AND AGENDA

During this workshop workers will have the opportunity to examine a variety of issues related to workplace safety with the goal of increasing confidence in their ability to maintain personal safety in the workplace. Staff contributors to violence will be explored, as well as the variety of motives prompting dangerous behavior from clients. As a result of the workshop workers will be able to make concrete plans to act pro-actively to reduce the risk of violence before incidents occur. Participants will also learn a variety of specific responses to violent behavior to minimize risks and avoid danger in situations where dangerous behavior occurs.

- I. Acknowledging, accepting and minimizing risks
  - Review seven risks
  - Share workplace experiences
  - Review the role of supervision in safety
- II. Ingredients of an approach to problem solving in crisis situations
- III. Distinguishing between “self defense” and “professional responses”
  - Group discussion
- IV. Legal definitions of “dangerous” behavior
  - Review of specifications for various assault categories
- V. Defining the purpose of our relationships with clients
  - Exercise completion and discussion
- VI. De-mystifying violence and understanding it’s origins and purposes
  - Presentation and discussion
  - Participants review personal and case histories
- VII. Developing primary, back-up and crisis interventions plans
  - Participants practice developing individual and group plans
- VIII. The role of professional attributes in safety
  - Motivation exercise
  - Review of research about attitudes and safety
- IX. Preparing for dangerous behavior
  - Presentation regarding the importance of “systematic responses”
  - Individual “attire” checklist followed by group presentation and discussion
  - Mobility and safety
  - Developing an observation strategy
    - Presentation and discussion
- X. Addressing environmental issues and safety
  - Group exercise
  - Review field safety tips

- XI. Developing a plan for self-control in crisis
    - Research review: fight and flight responses
    - Conducting a self-assessment
    - Regaining self-control: construct an individual plan
    - Restoring balance: construct an individual plan
  - XII. Assessing motives for anger and violence
    - Review types and ranges of anger
  - XIII. A stress and crisis intervention model
    - Presentation and group discussion
  - XIV. A communication model
    - Presentation, group discussion, role play
  - XV. Specific interventions to de-escalate dangerous clients
    - Role-play as time permits:
      - Fearful clients
      - Frustrated clients
      - Manipulative clients
      - Intimidating clients
  - XVI. Trusting ones "messengers" of intuition
    - Review "The Gift of Fear" (Gavin DeBecker)
  - XVII. Responding to threats of violence
    - In the office
    - Phone, letter, or third party threats
- Summary and closing thoughts

## **TARGET AUDIENCE**

This class is appropriate for anyone in a professional setting who is at some risk for encountering violent behavior.

## **OUTCOME OBJECTIVES FOR PARTICIPANTS**

As a result of this training participants will have the opportunity to learn to:

- List 7 specific risks encountered in work settings with troubled or disturbed clients
- Outline the components of a basic approach to workplace safety
- Name the specific constitutional rights of clients who may present a danger in the workplace
- Define legal descriptions of three levels of violent assault
- List specific client needs met by violent behavior
- Be able to complete primary and back-up plans for specific clients and/or populations to intervene proactively before dangerous behavior occurs
- List three professional attributes that maximize safety in the workplace
- Complete a checklist assessing danger presented by attire
- Outline an observation strategy to promote safety

- Describe specific environmental impediments to safety and make plans to remediate them
- Develop an individual plan to maintain self-control in a crisis
- List four types of anger or describe which are more likely to present a safety hazard
- Demonstrate ability to construct assertive responses to withdrawn, passive, and aggressive client communications
- Identify four motives for assault
- Demonstrate an ability to “match” verbal and nonverbal responses to identified motives for assault
- List specific intuitive feelings that indicate the possibility of danger
- Outline specific steps to take if clients threaten safety in the office, on the phone, by letter, or through a third party.

### **WAYS SUPERVISORS CAN SUPPORT THE TRANSFER OF LEARNING FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE JOB**

Ask participants to come to training with **specific** safety concerns and/or with examples of situations they have encountered when they felt their safety was threatened.

### **WAYS SUPERVISORS CAN SUPPORT THE TRANSFER OF LEARNING AFTER TRAINING**

Review some of the exercises done in class and ask how they were helpful in increasing confidence in preventing or responding to specific situations of danger.

Ask participants if there are specific practices that can be implemented at work that will promote safety, based on insights gained during the training.