CQL

Safety

Safety is basic to people's lives and should be a priority concern for the organization. When people feel safe, they are able to think about and work for other outcomes that are important to them. Personal safety is something we tend to take for granted until we experience an unsafe situation or are hurt in some way. Organizations can never guarantee that people will be completely safe and free from harm, but they can have processes in place to help minimize the risk while still protecting people's right to experience a full and satisfying life.

Quality in Practice

- Actively consider the things that make most of us feel safe. Gather information from a broad and diverse group of people to understand safety issues as fully as possible. Use this information to build safety awareness and precautions, policies and procedures.
- Gather and analyze data on the safety issues that have occurred within the organization in the past. Focus your energies on understanding and alleviating these problems.
- Ask people what they are most afraid of in terms of their own safety. Work with people individually to address the areas they find most potentially threatening.
- Remember to consider personal safety, not just environmental safety. Support people to engage in personal safety classes, learn martial arts, carry cell phones, or wear call devices.
- Consider safety issues everywhere – in homes, places of work, recreation and leisure, during transportation.
- Work to find a reasonable balance between supporting people to be safe while still enjoying all that life has to offer.
- Research safety guidelines from a variety of sources and follow all that apply to the situation.
- Develop emergency plans that cover a host of different situations including fire, weather emergencies, community disasters, or other community-specific issues (such as hurricanes or earthquakes).

- Partner with the local community when determining the kinds of emergencies to plan for and follow their recommendations.
- Use the resources that are available through your local police and fire departments and the local Red Cross agency. They have already spent a lot of time, energy and resources in thinking through these issues and can be an invaluable resource.
- Use the enhanced 911 system, if your community has it. Make sure that pertinent information is continually updated in this system for each of the people you support.
- Support people to understand emergency situations by:
  - ❑ talking about emergency situations
  - ❑ conducting emergency preparedness or evacuation drills
  - ❑ visiting police and fire stations
  - ❑ asking police or fire personnel to come to the people you support in their homes or places of work to assist in developing and reviewing emergency plans
- Use the tools that are available to assist in case of emergency – fire extinguishers, security systems, safety glasses, seat belts (in cars and on wheelchairs), smoke detectors (visual and auditory), sprinkler systems, etc.
- Assure that buildings are accessible for the people who are going to use them. Consider ramps, railings, lighting, automatic door and cabinets, roll in showers, grab bars, etc.