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# Risk Assessment

Risk management is a process for dealing with the possibility that some future event will cause harm. It provides strategies, techniques, and an approach to recognising and confronting any threat faced by an organisation in fulfilling its mission.

Risk management may be as uncomplicated as asking and answering two basic questions:

- What can go wrong?
- What will we do (both to prevent the harm from occurring and in the aftermath of an "incident")?



Risk management policies should include a focus on issues such as:

- Staff and volunteers: Are there clear recruitment practices, staff orientation and training materials in place?
- Policy and procedures: Does the organisation's policy and procedures limit opportunities for harm?
- Physical environment: does the physical environment place children at risk of harm?
- Organisational culture: Does the organisation foster a culture of openness and transparency?

**Developing a Risk Management Plan**

- *Conduct a risk audit.* The first step in managing risks is to identify them. Some are generic and inherent to the operation of virtually all organisations. Other risks are unique to your organisation. No matter how improbable a risk may seem, if you can envision it happening in your organisation, you should list it during the first stage of the risk management process.
- *Develop a risk management plan for your organisation.* The plan outlines the suggested strategy, or combination of strategies the agency will use to address its risks. Risk management plans should list the identified risk factors, the level of risk, and the strategies put in place to control the risk

<b>Risk factor</b>	<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>Control Measures</b>
Employing sex offender	Med	Effective recruitment and selection procedures.
Individual staff contact with children	High	Policy re: appropriate touching behaviour
...	...	...

- *Review and revise the plan as needed.* Most organisations are dynamic and must adapt - on an ongoing basis - to new client needs, funding constraints, and service delivery challenges. Risk management strategies should be revisited at least annually.

In developing your organisation's policy, consideration needs to be given to the following questions:

1. What are the sources of risks for your organisation?
2. What are the consequences of these risks?
3. How likely are they to occur?
4. What controls, such as policies, procedures and strategies are in place?
5. What controls, such as policies, procedures and strategies need to be developed?

A successful risk management plan requires the integration of risk management within all levels of your organisation. Operations staff and board members should assist in identifying risks and developing suitable intervention strategies.