

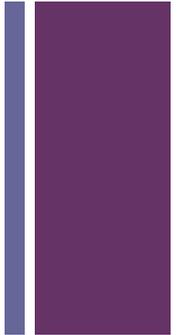
Parent Phone Call Lab - WRMC

Paul Dreyer

November 1, 2017

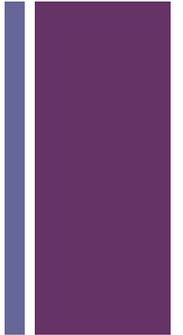


Our Schedule



- Foundational concepts
- Practice scenarios with coaching
- Debrief
- Next Steps

+ Defining Success



- Seek partnership
- Represent your organization well
- Communicate clearly
- Gain some resolution or closure
- Minimize emotional impact on you/your staff
- Do Good. Well.

+ Understanding the Players

Parents...

- Care deeply
- Have a lot of emotion

You...

- Have ownership & passion
- May also have a lot of emotion
- Are invested in your students' success

+ Understanding the Players

Parents...

- Are on-sighting parenthood

Will

- ~~May~~ not hear everything you are saying
- Perspective may be distorted by more pressing concerns

You...

- May be new to all or part of the situation
- May be tired from long hours of work
- Perspective may be distorted by other things happening in your program

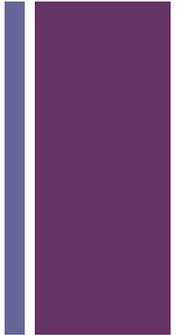
+ Understanding the Players

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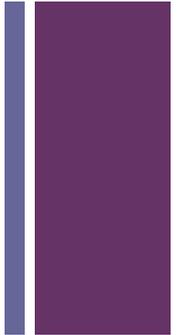
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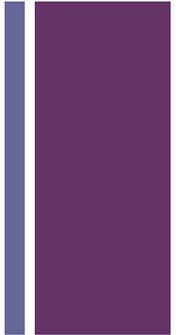


+ Before the Call



- Write a script
- Be aware of your timing
- Promptness matters
- Have a plan for voicemail
- Get a coach

+ During the Call



Do	Avoid
If true, tell them their child is not injured	Promises you can't deliver
State the problem and the decision	Lying
Know your policies regarding expulsions and refunds	Giving your personal phone number
Maintain a consistent point of contact	Field staff talk to parents

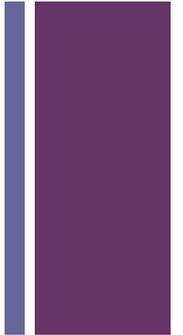
+ During the Call

Listen

Empathize

Ask Questions

Follow Up (make a plan)



+ During the Call

Potential helpful phrases

- “She may not have accomplished all she was hoping, but she did accomplish...”
- “He was respected by his peers for...”
- “One thing we learned is sometimes the best learning comes from the consequences of unpleasant experiences.”
- “I understand that it is hard to...”
- “What I need from you right now is to...”

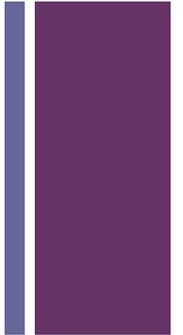
+ During the Call

If things become challenging...

- L.E.A.F.
- Avoid baited hooks
- Allow for silence (breathing is good)
- Be thoughtful about saying, “I’m sorry.”



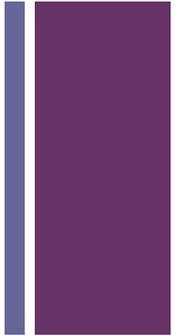
Ending Calls



- Review important information and ask them to paraphrase
- Clarify the outcome and next steps
- End with structure – schedule and try to be responsible for the next call



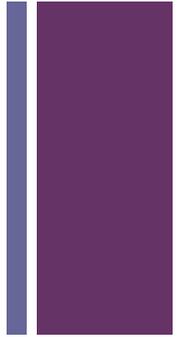
After the Call



- In the case of divorced or split parents, consider calling both parties
- Document promptly
- Anticipate a follow-up call
- Debrief with your coach



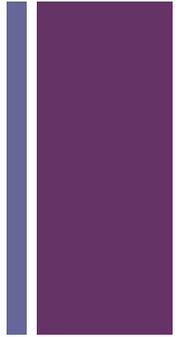
Coping Strategies and Emotional Armor



- Debrief calls and incidents
- Practice regularly
- Pass the call up if you are not succeeding or are losing your mind



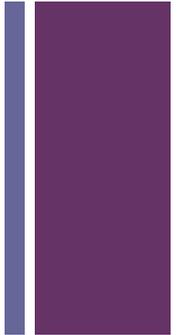
Coping Strategies and Emotional Armor



- Remind yourself...
 - Do good. Well.
 - They are just doing their job as a parent
 - This will end soon and these people are (likely) a small part of your life



Legal Considerations



- Confidentiality
- Parents of minors are entitled to information
- Avoid any appearance of coerced statements
- You are not charged with making an iron-clad legal case

+ Parent Styles

The BLAMER

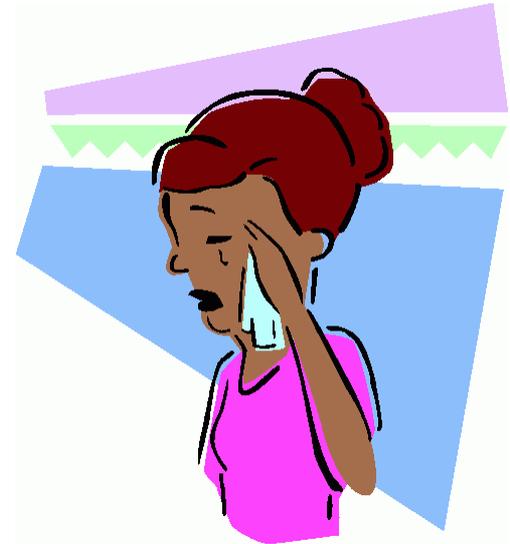
- “It’s your fault.”
- Response: stick to the facts



+ Parent Styles

The VICTIM

- “This is so hard for us. You must be able to help. Can you...”
- Response: empathy, but clarity



+ Parent Styles

The DENIER

- “That couldn’t have happened.”
- Response: stick to the facts—stay clear of an arguing trap.



+ Parent Styles

The DISENGAGED

- Emotionally not present, or not willing to engage with the situation
- Response: clarify next steps; ask the parent to repeat the situation and plan back to you.

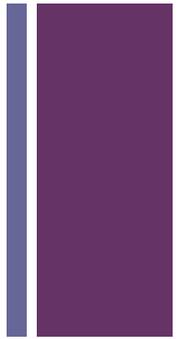


+ Time to PRACTICE!

(after you get instructions and take a break)

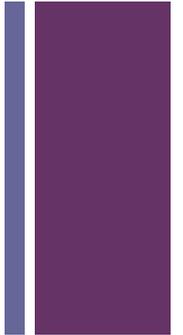
+ Practice Scenarios

- Work in teams (one caller, one observer/coach)
- Take a few minutes before each call to read the scenario and make a quick plan
- Both parents and callers have a prep sheet
- You will initiate some calls, and will receive some calls





Practice Scenarios

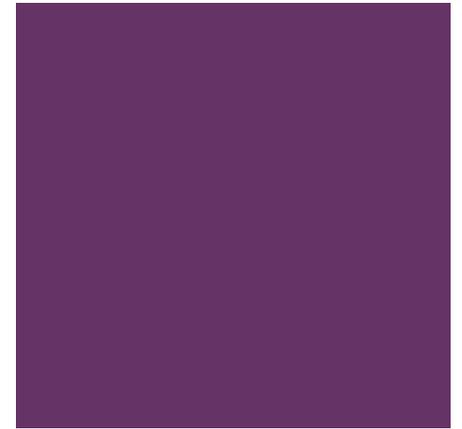


- Each call will be about 10 minutes, followed by 5-10 minutes of coaching from the parent
- Do a quick review of learning in your team after each call
- Goal is for everyone to make at least two calls

+ Practice Scenarios

- Scenarios always have glitches stemming from theoretical information.
- Roll with the punches for the sake of the learning!



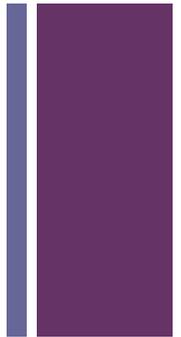


+ We will gather back together at 11:15

+ Okay,
how'd it go?



Looking Ahead



- Identify 2 characteristics of potential parents that are likely to hook you into angry or defensive communication. Write down a strategy for responding to each.
- Identify 3 pieces of information you want to have written down before making your next parent phone call about a behavioral incident. Do the same for a medical incident. Incorporate those lists into your next staff training.
- Identify 2 people who can serve as coaches for you in preparing for or debriefing parent phone calls. Contact those people in the next 6 months about being a resource for you in the future.





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Thank you, and good luck!

Paul Dreyer, M.A. Counseling

CEO, Avid4 Adventure

Instructor, NOLS Wilderness Medicine

Paul@Avid4.com

800-977-9873 ext 113