

In the News...

Boy Assaulted in Locker Room

June 2005 — A six-year-old boy was sexually assaulted by a stranger in the men's locker room while dressing after his swim class. When he met his mother in the lobby, he was crying and told her a man made him do something gross.

Child Molested by Peer on Playground

September 2005 — An eight-year-old girl was molested during free time on a YMCA playground. The victim reported that an older girl took her inside the playhouse and “put her mouth on her private parts.”

Youth Sports Director Acquitted

May 2006 — Following a prolonged investigation and front page media coverage, a jury acquitted a YMCA youth sports director of sexual molestation charges. In the brief trial, the accuser, a 13-year-old boy, changed his report three times and disclosed that he had made—and recanted—a similar complaint against a teacher a few months earlier. The sports director admitted to being in the shower alone with the youth but denied any misconduct.

Safety Tips



1. Locker rooms are one of the six most dangerous places in YMCAs for sexual misconduct to occur. Position lockers and use suspended mirrors to eliminate private spaces. Teach managers on duty and all employees to routinely make their presence known in locker rooms by singing, talking, or closing locker doors. Post a time sheet to keep track of how often locker rooms are monitored.
2. Child molesters use anonymity. Take away anonymity and you manage risk. Know who is in your YMCA at all times. Make sure members and guests of all ages sign in and out—no

exceptions! Train all employees to make eye contact and greet guests anytime they see them.

3. Even very young children can act out sexually against other children and you won't always know who may be at increased risk. Keep children in line-of-sight at all times. Remove playground obstructions, like storage sheds or playhouses, and instruct staff to circulate the playground area.
4. When all employees watch all of the children, some children can be overlooked. Assign staff to supervise specific children or a specific area of the playground and keep children segregated by age group. Don't allow employees to use playground time as a social break.
5. False allegations of abuse can devastate an employee and cripple a YMCA, and media coverage of an acquittal pales when compared with coverage of an accusation. You can't rely only on once-a-year training to keep safety in everyone's thoughts. Use frequent five-minute mini-trainings to remind employees of safe practices.
6. Make sure your policies prohibit employees from showering or undressing in the presence of children and youths, and take swift, consistent action against employees who violate your policies.



Do You Know?

1. What percentage of sex offenders have criminal backgrounds?

- a) 3 - 8 % c) 49 - 55 %
b) 24 - 27 % d) 81 - 84 %

2. Approximately how many registered sex offenders live in the United States?

- a) 60,000 c) 400,000
b) 125,000 d) 750,000

3. What percentage of sexual assaults are committed by minors?

- a) 15% c) 40%
b) 28% d) 75%

(answers at PraesidiumInc.com)

What's New... Check Backgrounds With Confidence!

Proper screening and selection of employees and volunteers is an essential component of keeping our YMCAs safe.

We recommend a comprehensive screening and selection process including: use of a standard application, conducting face-to-face interviews, and checking references. In addition, we recommend conducting federal, state and county criminal background checks and sex offender registry checks to help you screen out adults who should not be placed in positions of trust with minors.

Any violent crime or crime against a person should eliminate a candidate for positions with access to children. Mandatory background and sex offender registry checks reaffirm the message that our YMCAs take abuse prevention seriously.

Praesidium offers a full range of products and services to help you meet due diligence standards in deciding who has access to those you serve.

We now offer turnkey criminal background checking services at competitive prices. But, coupled with our 20 years of abuse prevention experience, **Praesidium offers a value unmatched in the industry.**

To learn more about background and registry check plans for your YMCA, just call 800.743.6354 or email info@PraesidiumInc.com today!

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P.O. Box 202002 Arlington, TX 76006
817.801.7773
www.PraesidiumInc.com

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