



TRAINING FOR PERSONS IN CHARGE OF EVENT SAFETY

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**WHO IS JANE
KÄRNÄ?**

- Master of Arts 2020 – University of Helsinki
- Fresher 2020 – University of Vaasa
- Community coordinator – University of the Arts Student Union
- Actively involved in organisations and HYY for a long time
- Participated in creating HYY's event principles and training for persons in charge of event safety
- Has been in charge of event safety in events including the Fresher Adventure, the Opening Carnival, the anniversary of a faculty organisation and the after-afterparty of the SYL95 anniversary

WHAT ABOUT
YOU?



TRAINING OBJECTIVES

- Clarifying what the person in charge of event safety is and what their duties include
- Providing resources for how you can ensure safety both before and during events
- Discussing concrete situations that persons in charge of event safety may encounter while serving in their position as well as ways to resolve them
- Assuaging any possible nervousness related to acting as the person in charge of event safety

STARTING POINTS FOR THE TRAINING

- Organising live events is possible again!
- Some time has passed since the previous live events – you may have forgotten some useful good practices, or they may not have been transmitted to the new generation of people involved in your organisation
- Safety is important in all events, but the number of potential problems in live events is many times greater than in remote ones
- It is important that safety and related practices are once again a part of live events right from the start
- Event safety is linked to the organisation's operations and operating culture in general – ensuring safety in events only does not solve everything
- Confidentiality




STRUCTURE OF THE TRAINING

- Before the event
- During the event
- After the event



TO BEGIN WITH

- The person in charge of event safety does not need to be superhuman
 - The person in charge of event safety cannot influence everything or do everything alone
 - You can only do your best
 - It is always ok to call for help (police, guards, ambulance)
 - Sometimes, the situations you encounter may be hard on you and weigh on your mind – do not hesitate to seek help if you feel the need for it
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BEFORE THE EVENT



**BEFORE THE
EVENT**



- Event safety principles & Principles of safer space
- Event planning
- Selecting the persons in charge of safety
- Communication

BEFORE THE EVENT – GENERAL ISSUES

- Ensuring safety already begins before the event
- Integrated into event planning and preparations
- It is important to take safety into account in all events – the way in which this is done depends on the contents of the event
- Unlikely – likely, small impact – large impact
- Anticipation may help avoid the realisation of many risks as well as problems in the event in general
- Event safety principles, principles of safer space, ground rules...



ON SAFETY PRINCIPLES

- Meant as shared guiding principles and instructions on how all participants together can create a safe space
 - It is good to have shared, written principles that you can lean on
 - In general, the contents should suit the community using them and the community should be involved in making them
 - Suited to the purpose (live or remote event, what kind of event)
 - You can also have a shorter and longer version or a concise sentence that links to the principles in full
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HYY'S PRINCIPLES OF SAFER SPACE

1/2

The Student Union of the University of Helsinki (HYY) is a diverse, feminist community, and one of its values is equality. With our principles of safer space, we aim to create practices that help everyone promote a safer and more equal environment. These principles apply to HYY's operation and events.

HYY'S PRINCIPLES OF SAFER SPACE

1/2

- Treat other people in a civil, respectful manner and appreciate their work contributions. Do not, for instance, make inappropriate or dismissive comments about other people or launch personal attacks on them.
- When giving feedback, focus on giving constructive feedback and be prepared to engage in a dialogue.
- We all have various assumptions and prejudices about other people. Try to identify the assumptions you make and to take the diversity of people into account. Respect the self-defined identities of other people and face them with an open mind, as you cannot know another person's background, experiences or situation in life, nor can you define their identity for them.
- There is no room for violence, harassment, racism or discriminatory behaviour or language in HYY.
- Respect the bodily and mental integrity of other people as well as the boundaries they have set for themselves. No means no – do not harass anyone verbally, by touching them or by staring at them.
- In discussions, ensure that everyone gets heard and is able to participate. In a good discussion, everyone gets the chance to speak, gets heard and can choose to only listen if they prefer. Do not speak over other people and try to use the kind of language that is understandable to everyone.

HYY'S PRINCIPLES OF SAFER SPACE

2 / 2

- Deal with delicate subjects respectfully and use content warnings if needed. Content warnings refer to a note stating that the subject under discussion includes material that may shock or offend some people.
- Recognise your own privileges. Privileges refer to advantages that individuals have by virtue of belonging to certain social groups. Privileges may be related to characteristics including gender, sexual orientation, skin colour, class, language, health status and religion.
- If you violate the principles of safer space or if someone points out that you have done so, apologise. Everyone makes mistakes. Be understanding towards mistakes made by others, too, and try to resolve the matter between the involved parties, if possible.
- Take action against any discrimination you witness or offer your support to the people who encounter discrimination. In problem situations, you can also contact the persons in charge of event safety and/or HYY's harassment contact persons.

HYY'S EVENT PRINCIPLES

- Care about the people around you. Care about how they are doing, how they feel and how your words and actions affect them.
- HYY's events have zero tolerance for all kinds of harassment, racism, bullying and discrimination.
- Respect other people's bodily and mental integrity. No means no; do not harass anyone verbally, by touching them or by staring at them.
- If you see or experience inappropriate behaviour, you have the right to take action against it or report the incident to the persons in charge of safety at the event. If you wish, you may also contact HYY's harassment contact persons after the event.
- Contribute to a positive atmosphere with your own actions.

HYY'S EVENT PRINCIPLES (MAY DAY)

You can participate in the discussions and activities of HYY's May Day events without fear of inappropriate treatment or harassment. Safe spaces are created in the interaction between people, and each one of us is responsible for this.

These principles are in place in HYY's May Day events:

- Be open towards one another and listen to one another.
- Avoid making assumptions of other people.
- Respect one another and the diversity of the community.
- Provide everyone with space and the opportunity to participate in the discussions.
- Do not bother, insult or harass anyone.
- Use the kind of language that everyone can understand.
- Avoid slang terms and jargon.

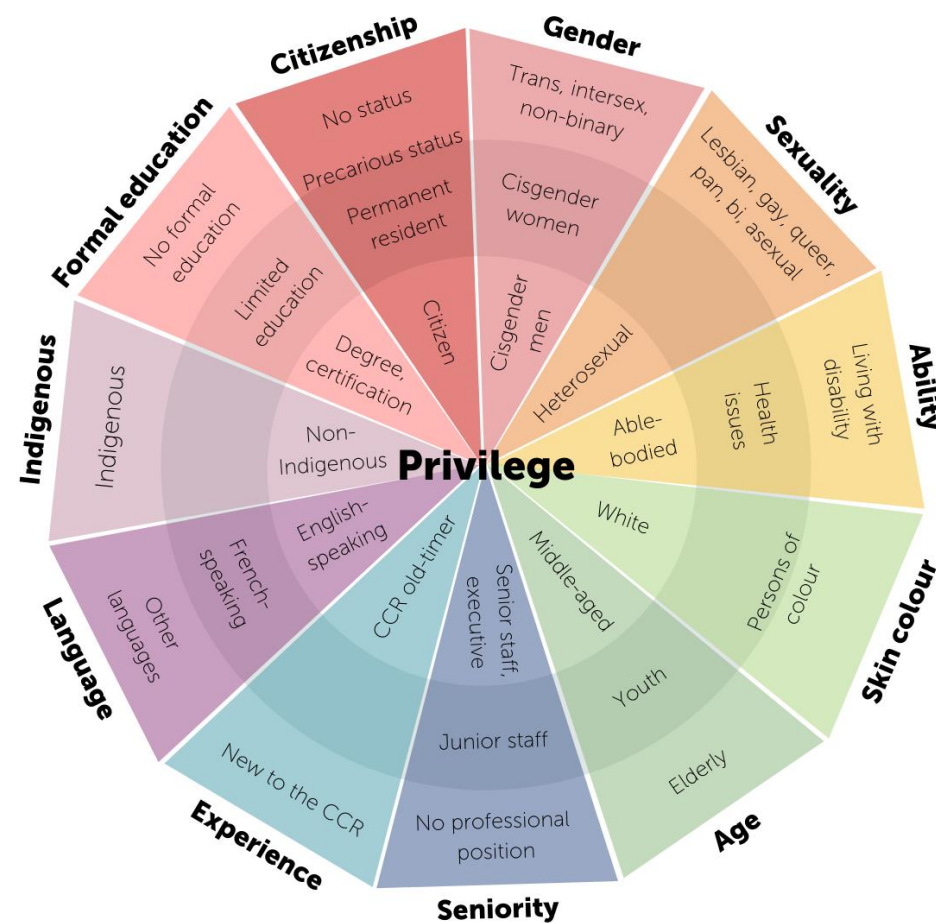
If you experience or witness the above principles being broken or some other kind of harassment, please contact one of our harassment contact persons: xx

ANTICIPATION I

- Recognise your privileges
 - Keep diversity in mind when planning the event

Privilege Circle

Which factors add to or decrease your opportunities



ANTICIPATION II



- Utilise previous feedback and other information in your plans
- Theme and content selection
 - Does it include risks or something that would prevent someone from participating?
 - Does it require additional instructions for costumes, for instance?
- Event principles or principles of safer space
 - Does your organisation / premises have them in use?
 - If not, you could at least make a brief version comprised of a few sentences
- Select the persons in charge of event safety
 - Preferably more than one
 - Ensure that they understand their the role and provide them with instructions



ANTICIPATION III

- **General planning for the event**
 - Access control, decorations, etc.
- **Communication**
 - Inform participants of the event principles and persons in charge of safety
 - Use all communication related to the event to create a safe space
 - E.g. Facebook event, email to participants + in the event in speeches and printed on walls, etc.
- **Making participants commit to the principles**
 - As part of the sign-up form

ANTICIPATION IV



- Familiarise yourself with the venue
 - If possible, do this before the day of the event
 - If possible, assign a space as a quiet room
 - Minimise the risks related to the physical space
- Preparing for problem situations
 - Have phone numbers at the ready
 - Phone at the ready
 - Make sure that you know where the early fire suppression and first aid equipment are



ROLE OF THE PERSON IN CHARGE OF SAFETY I

- A person who monitors the event with safety in mind and takes action when needed. The participants can talk to them about problem situations and they help as best they can.
- NOT superhuman. Not a police officer, psychologist or doctor, and not the only person who takes action in problem situations
- All organisers should be aware of safety instructions and ready to act and help if needed
- It is a good idea to hold a short meeting before the event begins, for instance, to ensure that everyone is on the same page



**ROLE OF THE
PERSON IN
CHARGE OF SAFETY
II**

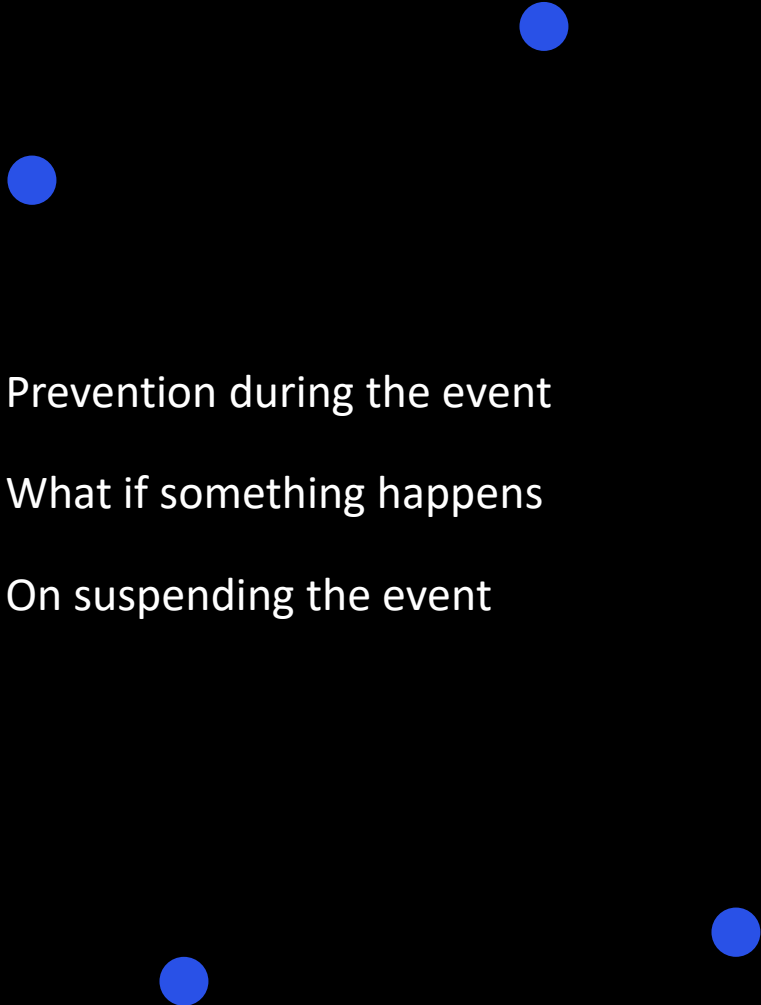
- Familiarises themselves with the relevant material in advance
 - Is familiar with and follows the event principles while also ensuring that others follow them, too
- Is committed to being present at the event and available for its duration
 - Has a phone with them
 - Clearly recognisable / People have been informed where they can be found
- Must be able to function throughout the event
 - Preferably completely sober
- Approachable
- Acts as calmly and neutrally as possible
- Processes information confidentially

DURING THE EVENT






DURING THE EVENT

- Prevention during the event
 - What if something happens
 - On suspending the event
- 





PREVENTION DURING THE EVENT

- Try to create an open and conversational atmosphere
 - How can you engage everyone and get them acquainted with one another?
 - Ensure that water is available
 - Monitor the condition of people
 - You can agree with the organisers that people who are too intoxicated will not be served more drinks
 - Take corrective measures if needed
 - Correct any flaws and faults made when planning the event as soon as possible
 - If the participants do something that could cause a dangerous situation, intervene early enough
 - If a discussion or something else seems to be escalating or creates an unsafe atmosphere, intervene early enough
- 



WHAT IF SOMETHING HAPPENS

- Chart the situation
 - Act as calmly as you can
 - Take action and deal with acute situations
 - If needed, call the guard or the emergency number
 - Delegate tasks
 - If the situation calls for it, suspend the event
 - Take care of any situations to their conclusion or make sure that someone else does so
- 
- 



**...THAT IS
DANGEROUS TO
SOMEONE'S
HEALTH**

- Seek help – do not remain or leave the victim alone
- Always call the emergency number first and clearly describe the condition of the victim
- Follow the given instructions. Do not allow the victim to leave alone and without instructions from the emergency response centre on how to treat and monitor the victim.
- Try to deal with the situation without an unnecessary audience
- If a similar situation could happen again, do your best to prevent it
- If the situation calls for it, suspend the party



**SOMEONE'S
BEHAVIOUR IS
DISTURBING
OTHERS**

- Remain as calm and neutral as possible
- Be aware that the person in question does not necessarily realise that they have done something wrong
- It is ok to intervene if something does not look ok to you or if someone is saying something offensive or otherwise inappropriate
- It is good practice to offer the person the opportunity to correct their behaviour or give them instructions on how to do so already at the same event
- It is important not to accuse the person and to base your comments on either your own or some other person's experience of the situation instead
 - 'I felt ___ when you did ___.' / 'Someone became distressed when you ___.'


ON SUSPENDING THE EVENT

- You should suspend the event if it is no longer under control and you feel like you are no longer able to appropriately ensure the safety of the participants
 - Drugging or drugs at the event
 - Something serious occurs (e.g. people in shock)
 - Threat of intensive conflict or escalation
- Other considerations
 - Make sure that the participants are in a condition in which it is safe to send them home
 - Is there a need to further process the feelings caused by the crisis situation?

AFTER THE EVENT

AFTER THE EVENT

- Aftercare
- Communication
- Processing the matter in the organisation afterwards



**AFTERCARE FOR
PEOPLE WHO HAVE
EXPERIENCED A
CRISIS**

- If you encounter a person or group that has experienced a sudden shocking event, act in the following way:
 - Do not leave anyone alone
 - Find a quiet spot where you can sit together
 - Give the person(s) in crisis some space to talk. Listen to them without interrupting.
 - Remain calm. Calm presence in itself often helps a lot
 - Accept any reactions (crying, silence, etc.)
 - Ask what kind of help those who have experienced the crisis wish to receive
 - Find out where you can get help
 - Do not remain alone with your own experience – talk about it with a reliable person
 - If the community needs more extensive aftercare / an event to process what has happened, ask for help from the university chaplains, for instance




**WHEN
SOMETHING HAS
HAPPENED**

- Concerning the potential victim
 - Absolute confidentiality! Do not disclose any information to outsiders
 - One person is in charge of keeping in contact
 - What does the victim wish to be done
 - Be empathetic and do not make them feel guilty
 - Direct them towards help if needed
 - You can provide support in other matters according to your own coping and skills
- Concerning the potential wrongdoer
 - If someone has, for instance, been thrown out of the event, it is important to contact them afterwards to ensure that they understand what happened and why
 - Agree on common ground rules for the future



COMMUNICATION

- Communication and contacts with outsiders
 - Decide on one person who is in charge of inquiries from the media, with other organisers directing all questions to this person
 - Press release that reports what has happened (only facts, no speculation or laying the blame)
 - Inform the participants of the event what has happened, too. This can be done in the FB event or by email, for instance. Including the contact details of parties such as the FSHS, the University chaplains and HYY's harassment contact persons is a good idea, too.



**PROCESSING THE
MATTER IN THE
ORGANISATION
AFTERWARDS**

- It is important that the organisers also have the opportunity to let things out and reflect on what has happened
 - If the experience was strong or traumatic, you can also seek professional help
- If something has gone wrong, it is important to process it
 - Could the situation have been prevented?
 - Could something have been done in another way?
 - How could you do better in the future?
- Documentation for successors
 - Instructions/will/tips for your successors on how to do better in the future / what went wrong
 - This allows the organisation to develop its activities

GROUP EXERCISE



GROUP EXERCISE

How do you intervene in the situation?

What do you do after the event?

How could the situation have been prevented?

You have 10 minutes

Write down your thoughts. We will discuss the exercise together at the end.

- A) A participant starts loudly singing a racist additional verse at an academic dinner party.
- B) Participant F actively seeks to be close to participant G, making constant physical contact. Participant G shows no favourable response.
- C) An extremely drunk participant has climbed on a table and fallen dangerously onto the stone floor.


COLLECTIVE DISCUSSION



BRIEF SUMMARY



SUMMARY

- Event safety is linked to the organisation's operating culture – event safety does not solve everything
 - Recognise and be aware of your privileges and take diversity into account in event planning
 - Anticipation pays off, but not everything can be prevented
 - Persons in charge of event safety do not need to be superhuman. You can only do your best – that is enough!
 - It is always ok to ask 'Are you alright?'
 - It is always ok to call for help (police, guards, ambulance) and ask for help
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QUESTIONS?





THANK YOU!

