**Welcome Home Email:**[welcomehomegroup16@gmail.com](mailto:welcomehomegroup16@gmail.com)

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**Website:**[http://welcomehomeindianapa.weebly.com/](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.google.com/url?q%3Dhttp://welcomehomeindianapa.weebly.com/%26amp;sa%3DD%26amp;ust%3D1487287640633000%26amp;usg%3DAFQjCNFkJYjbc4T8RJNcnJE9zurxqjHhBA&sa=D&ust=1487287640666000&usg=AFQjCNEwY5yCRsNtG7Y4WVup-7FVgH99vw)

**Basic Intervention And De-Escalation Packet**

This packet is meant to be a guide on how to assist and comfort vulnerable individuals in times of need. Welcome Home requires that all participants are familiar with this training, because the organization believes that it is necessary to go beyond vocal support and make a community that is safe, comforting and helpful to all.  
  
 The **goal of this packet** is to guide participants through the basics of intervention, assessment, stabilization and problem solving, utilizing models established by the local Crisis Center and other advocacy organizations.  
  
 **We are not** asking anyone to be bodyguards, police, doctors or counselors. In the case of an emergency, **when you or someone else is in immediate danger or in need of hospitalization, call 911.**   
  
 **Important note:** For many vulnerable communities, calling the police is not an appropriate response. The police have often escalated or caused further harm or emotional strain for people of color, migrant workers/ undocumented people, people with disabilities and transgender people. Please keep in mind that not all communities are comfortable with a police response to harassment or discrimination. When in doubt, ask the vulnerable individual they are comfortable contacting police.

If the situation is beyond what you are capable of handling, but does not constitute an emergency, call the **Indiana** **Crisis Center at 877-333-2470**. You can ask to have them send someone out for help.

To ensure that all vulnerable individuals receive the same level of treatment, **Welcome Home requires participants to abide by our tenets:**

* **Inclusive and all-encompassing acceptance -**  We welcome all people across class lines, race, sexual/gender orientation, religion, citizen status, primary language, age and mental/physical ability.
* **Avoid evangelizing -** While we work with some religious organizations, participants in the network do not try to push religious, spiritual or personal agendas on vulnerable individuals.
* **Listening without judgment or blame -** Our network is receptive and hospitable to all vulnerable individuals. We avoid victim-blaming and trust people despite our own privilege and bias.
* **Explicit and interventional approach against bigotry -** We believe it is not enough to oppose discrimination, in that we must go further and take an active stand against bigotry in all its forms.
* **Actively, constantly learning about vulnerable individuals’ concerns -** The Welcome Home network cannot be effective or representative if we do not also listen to feedback from groups we serve.

This packet is split into two sections:

1. **Safe-Space Intervention And De-Escalation** for helping individuals who come to safe spaces or seek resources/assistance.
2. **Bystander Intervention** for how to actively respond to discrimination, harassment or any kind of bigotry.

**Safe-Space Intervention and De-Escalation**

The **goal** of this intervention should be to **stabilize the individual in a safe environment, offer them material assistance and help them navigate resources**. These guidelines are modeled after Indiana Crisis Center’s basic training.

* **The first thing you want to do when responding to a vulnerable individual is get them to a safe, quiet, private space, with as few people in the room as possible.** This may be difficult for businesses, so you might have to designate a private space or find a way to separate the individual by their request. Be sure to ask if the space they are in is okay.   
    
  **Note:** Welcome Home requires that all participants have a transgender-inclusive bathroom policy. Meaning, individuals are permitted to use bathrooms/spaces that coincide with their gender identity.

**Assessment**

The first step involves evaluating the immediate situation. This is where you gather information from the individual while being receptive and responsive.

* Ask open-ended questions about why the individual is there and what they might need. Ex: “Can you tell me what’s going on?” or “What can I help you with today?”
* Allow the individual to guide the conversation, but do not press them on details so as not to revictimize. They need to feel safe so that they can articulate what they might need. Be accepting and responsive without judgement or blame.
* Pay attention to nonverbal cues and take mental notes of information that can be helpful in problem solving in later steps.
* Again, evaluate the need to call an ambulance or professional crisis intervention. If the individual is in need of hospitalization, is in immediate danger, or is a danger to themselves or others, Call 911 or Indiana Crisis Center at  **877-333-2470.**

**Stabilization**

The next step is to help the individual relax and figure out what resources they have and what they might need to alleviate the current situation.

* Ask some open-ended questions to see what they might need immediately, such as:
  + “Is there anyone you trust to talk about this?”
  + “What do you usually do when things like this happen?”
  + “How do you like to relax?”
  + “Can I offer you anything to help you?”
* You can also help distract the individual from the stressful situation by offering them material things, but be sure to ask. Common examples are: offering a coffee or tea, petting dogs or cats, watching a show or reading a book, or just being someone to talk to.
* See if the individual has access to a telephone and phone numbers they might need. If not, offer them a phone to use if necessary.
* Ask if there is any social support that would help comfort the individual. This may include (but is not limited to): family, friends, partners, roommates, community members from a religious organization or neighbors.
* Try to see if the person has access to, or is in need of, an advocate, therapist or peer specialist (Don’t pry or ask for specifics on mental health. We have to respect individuals’ medical privacy).
* If the person is in need of transportation, text or call Welcome Home at (724) 427-5503, or email [WelcomeHomeGroup16@gmail.com](mailto:WelcomeHomeGroup16@gmail.com) .

**Problem Solving and Resolution**

The final step is to take all the information you gathered and then help the individual navigate which resources they need to resolve their situation. Each situation will be different, but using the steps above will help you both figure out what exactly needs to be done next.

* Crisis workers, shelters and therapists are best equipped to help individuals who have undergone abuse or who are at the risk of self-harm or suicide. However, there are other issues where professional organizations might be better equipped to handle situations. Remember, we are not crisis experts or health professionals.   
    
    
   **The following is a list of resources in Indiana County (see attached documents for a comprehensive list):**  
  + **Alice Paul House** 724-349-4444 or 1-800-435-7249
  + **Indiana County Community Action Program** (ICCAP) (for fuel, food, weatherizing, housing, etc. A general resource) 724-465-2657 or 724-463-7440
  + **Pathways Homeless Shelter** 724-248-9555
  + **Medical Assistance Transportation Programs** 724-801-8857
  + **Aging Services** 724-349-4500
  + **Community Guidance Center** (largest mental health provider; peer support services; a range of levels of care) 724-465-0369
  + **The Open Door Drug and Alcohol** 724-465-2605
  + **Champion Comprehensive Evolution** (therapist who offers virtual services in Pa., specializing in rural LGBTQIA individuals. Accepts limited insurance) 724-812-1101 or [www.drkdferrari.com](http://www.drkdferrari.com)
  + **ACLU** for civil rights violation reporting and legal help.   
    Complaint form :<https://www.aclupa.org/our-work/legal/fileacomplaint/>

Pa. ACLU contact, Jamie Pauls, Email: [Jpauls@aclupa.org](mailto:Jpauls@aclupa.org)   
Phone: 717-236-6827 X210

**\*See attached for comprehensive list of resources\***

**Bystander Intervention**

This section is a **practical guide for individuals to take direct action against discriminatory or offensive behavior or action.** (See references below for a comprehensive understanding.)

**Definition:**

**Bystander Intervention -** is broadly defined here as “action taken by ‘ordinary’ people in response to incidents of...” bigotry. (Nelson et al., 2011) Essentially, it is taking an active, interventional approach against instances of harassment, discrimination, abuse or the like.

**Goal:**

**To empower people to actively intervene in discriminatory incidents and to create a visible, vocal community that rejects bigotry in all its forms.** In their research, authors Nelson et al. found that an active response against bigotry by everyday citizens can prime communities to be more inclusive as a whole.

Using models developed by the Academy of Management Learning and Education, the Southern Poverty Law Center and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Welcome home has generated a pragmatic, **6-step strategy for Bystander Intervention**:

1. **Be Prepared, Be Vigilant**   
      
    It takes a lot of courage to pledge to actively and often publicly take a stance against bigotry, and some might be discouraged by the fact that change and progress is slow. However, silence and inaction can have an even greater damaging effect on progress. Find like-minded individuals and vulnerable communities, get to know the issues they face and ask them how you can take action.
2. **Explicitly Identify or Name the Behavior**   
     
    The next step is crucial while intervening because you don’t want to gloss over or ignore offensive behavior. Help people understand that discriminatory language and behavior is both unacceptable and offensive. Avoid labeling or using inflammatory language toward the offender. You are trying to start a dialogue, so you don’t want to put them on the defensive or at worst to escalate the situation.  
     
    This is also a good time to encourage dialogue. People don’t always understand everyone's beliefs, norms or culture. You can open with a personal narrative or start a conversation that helps them understand how their behavior is harmful.   
     
    Oftentimes, if you know the offending person, you can appeal to their better principles. For example, you could say: “I alway thought you were an inclusive person, but it upsets me to hear you say something that sounds so bigoted.”
3. **Interrupt The Behavior** Bystanders should protect the vulnerable individual from being harmed, harassed or subject to any form of abuse by directly responding to the offending person’s actions. This can come in many forms, and you’ll need to be creative. Here are some examples:  
   1. Loudly interrupt an offensive conversation or speech.
   2. Remove an offending person from a business or establishment. If you are a business owner/manager, tell them their behavior won't be tolerated in your establishment. If you are an individual, ask appropriate staff, personnel or worse-case security or law enforcement to remove the person.
   3. Create a distraction away from the offending behavior. Ex: Drop some books in between a vulnerable individual and the offending person.
   4. Stand/sit next to the aggrieved person and start a conversation with them, ignoring the offender and redirecting focus.

**4. Publicly And Explicitly Support Vulnerable Person**

Be vocal and deliberately state that you support vulnerable individuals. Make it clear to everyone that you do not condone bigotry. Seek out or call out for allies who will stand with you in support against discriminatory language or behavior.   
  
 However, sometimes it is necessary to prevent further harm or the escalation of an incident into violence. You need to assess the situation to find the appropriate response. For example:

a. If an offender is about to get violent, remind them that their actions have serious legal consequences.

b. Sometimes, using body language might be the appropriate course of action, but you need to ensure it is as non-threatening as possible. You could frown, gasp, look surprised or shake your head. Let them know someone is watching.

**5. Call For Help, Call For Action**

This is self explanatory. Once you understand the situation, you also know whether or not you are the best person to respond to it. If need be, call the Crisis Center, 911 or other appropriate resources that are attached with this packet.

**Important note:** For many vulnerable communities, calling the police is not an appropriate response. The police have often escalated or caused further harm or emotional strain for people of color, migrant workers/ undocumented people, people with disabilities and transgender people. Please keep in mind that not all communities are comfortable with a police response to harassment or discrimination. When in doubt, ask the vulnerable individual they are comfortable contacting police.   
  
 Additionally, once a discriminatory incident or behavior happens, you need to have a clear response from the community, municipal leaders, businesses, organizations or anyone else involved. One of the best ways to bring light to a problem is by having community figureheads publicly address it. Publicity can pressure others to take action against bigotry.

**6. Report The Incident**

It is also our duty to stand witness and report discriminatory behavior to the proper authorities. This is to ensure that these individuals have material and institutional support from the community. Such authorities could include (but are not limited to): business owners, organizational boards, the ACLU, college administrations, and Human Resources departments.

References

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3. Nelson, Jacqueline K., Kevin Dunn, and Yin Paradies. "Bystander Anti‐Racism: A Review of the Literature." *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* 11.1 (2011): 263-84. *ResearchGate*. Web. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227763172\_Bystander\_Anti-Racism\_A\_Review\_of\_the\_Literature>.
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