

Field Safety In Street Vaccine Outreach

In-Field Safety

- **Pre-event huddle**
 - Safety code word/phrase to alert others
 - For example, “We need to go back to the office”
- **Buddy system**
 - Always travel in groups of 2
 - Maintain communication with the rest of the team via text
- **In-field huddle**
 - If the safety code is used, re-group.
 - Examples of reasons to re-group: weapons seen, violence, escalating behaviors
- **Post-event huddle**
 - Debrief each other about events that day
- **Be aware of your surroundings**
 - Situational awareness is key – trust your instinct
 - You might see something no one else has seen, communicating this helps keep everyone else safe
 - Assess the situation when you are entering
 - Look for dogs and any other indications of a pet, watch people's body language, walk up slowly
 - Start looking from the ground up, not waist up
 - Approach is key: If you walk up too fast, they might wonder why you walked up fast and not why you are there
 - Know the area, know who runs the block
 - Establish allies with people there to build rapport
 - This can help avoid causing problems that exist independent of the outreach
- **Know the difference between if someone is mad or threatening**
 - Is the behavior dangerous or merely disruptive?
 - 6-10 second window of listening and in that short conversation you can judge where the conversation is going
- **De-escalation techniques**
 - Give the person space
 - Do not rush the situation
 - Leave the situation if needed
- **Trust your team**
 - Establish these safety strategies beforehand
 - Building trust in your team means you can rely on each other when an incident occurs

Crisis Communications

- **Leadership must establish a method of communication**
 - Make this a priority and make it a protocol before an incident occurs
 - Establish and communicate what the minimum information needed is when reporting
 - For example, this could be, where/when the event occurred and who was involved
 - Establish the communication method that everyone should use when reporting
 - Text, phone call, email, etc.
- **When an event occurs, notify your supervisor/team lead as soon as it is safe to**
 - Err on the side of reporting
 - Follow the reporting guidelines your organization decides on
- **Supervisors/team lead**
 - Notify others on the team so they are aware of the incident within a reasonable timeframe
 - Your organization will establish this timeframe
 - Provide resources/training for those involved
- **Improve team communication = Improve safety practices**
 - For example, if there is a client that makes a CHW feel uncomfortable, communicating this with the group can help others be aware of this when in the area
- **Debriefing**
 - Make sure anyone that was/could be impacted by the event knows
 - Leadership should decide in advance what CHWs should do if they are dissatisfied with how the incident was handled