

## SAFE SPACE MONITORING TOOL + SAFE SPACE GUIDELINES



### Summary

The *Safe Space Monitoring Tool* aims to capture the level of safety of the program environment from an external point of view. Used in conjunction with *the Safe Space Guidelines* the tools aim to optimise the safety level of a program.



### Keywords

Structured  
Observation  
Auditing  
Monitoring  
Evaluation tool  
Cross sectional data (snapshot)  
Longitudinal data (trend analysis if completed over longer period of time)  
Quantitative data (frequency data)



### Staff/Volunteer Use



+

### Participant Use



### Resources

1 x facilitator  
AND  
Paper questionnaires  
OR  
Computer and internet access (if using online version)  
Online survey account (for example [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com); free trial, AUS\$19.95 per month or approx. AUS\$200 per annum).



### Individual Activity



### Time

Set up: N/A  
Implementation: Variable  
Analysis: 1-2 hours (depending on number of participants)



### Frequency of use

Periodically (e.g. monthly)











## How to Use This Tool

The idea behind the *Safe Space Monitoring Tool* is to capture the level of safety of the environment from an external point of view. This survey is to be completed by the program facilitator/coordinator and volunteers/peer supporters.

The *Safe Space Participant Survey Tool* aims to obtain information about the level of safety perceived from participants' point of view.

The *Safe Space Guidelines* aim to assist program coordinators in developing and maintaining a physically and psychologically safe environment for all participants. To facilitate improvement in selected program areas the guidelines are clustered into the following eight dimensions that have been identified to contribute to creating and maintaining a safe space for young people: physically safe environment, psychological and emotional safety/refuge, boundary management, ethical practice, behaviour management processes, nature of participants, staff and volunteers.

The sections of the *Safe Space Guidelines* are colour coded in the same way as in the *Safe Space Monitoring Tool*:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|    | 1. PHYSICALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT               |
|    | 2. PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL SAFETY/REFUGE |
|   | 3. BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT                       |
|  | 4. ETHICAL PRACTICE                          |
|  | 5. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PROCESSES            |
|  | 6. PARTICIPANTS                              |
|  | 7. STAFF/VOLUNTEERS                          |
|  | 8. SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS                  |

Generally, if the answers 'Always' or 'Most of the time' are selected in the *Safe Space Monitoring Tool* and *Safe Space Participant Survey*, this will indicate a positive and safe environment is currently being maintained within the program. (However, it may be that in certain situations selecting 'Occasionally' or 'Never' does not necessarily imply that any action is required in order to change something. For example, staff and/or volunteers may not be observed to constantly enforce positive group norms and rules as participants are contributing to uphold these by themselves.)

Based on the obtained results from the *Safe Space Monitoring Tool* and/or the *Safe Space Participant Survey* the program coordinator then has to make a decision whether they need to be acted upon.

After the survey has been administered to participants, the frequency of responses for each item are counted and summarised. A majority of negative answers will more likely indicate the lack of an important factor that contributes to creating a safe space and that action to improve the situation is required. However, it is important to be aware of that if negative answers are reported by single participants only, this may still implicate that action is required.

If program areas are identified as areas that need improvement in the *Safe Space Monitoring Tool*, the last column cross-references to the relevant sections of the *Safe Space Guidelines* for possible resolution strategies.



### Suggested Uses

The *Safe Space Monitoring Tool* and the *Safe Space Guidelines* are structured paper-based surveys which are to be completed by the program facilitator/coordinator and volunteers/peer supporters. The *Safe Space Participant Survey* is a paper-based survey intended to be completed by participants.



### Complementary Tools

The *Safe Space Monitoring Tool* and *Safe Space Guidelines* provide data from the perspective of the program facilitator and volunteers. To compare if external observations of the space accurately reflect the situation as it is perceived by those accessing the services, the tool can be used in combination with the *Safe Space Participant Survey* to collect data from participants.



### Implementation Tips

- Having more than one facilitator complete the tool can help ensure all incidents of behaviour are recorded. However, implementation of the tool is recommended even if it this is not feasible.
- The *Safe Space Participant Tool* represents a more traditional form of evaluation. For programs who wish to use more alternative evaluation methods the items of the survey may be extracted and incorporated into other creative evaluation strategies.
- The *Safe Space Guidelines* may be used as a check list to improve a program's safety on a whole, or to target only specific program areas that have been identified with the *Safe Space Monitoring* and/or *Participant Survey Tool* to be lacking in particular components.
- While the surveys may be used individually it is recommended to administer both as this will assist in gaining a clearer picture of the situation, to substantiate the results, and to implement improvement strategies in a comprehensive manner.



### Links

[Safe Space Guidelines](#)

[Safe Space Monitoring Tool](#)

[Safe Space Participant Survey](#)

# SAFE SPACE MONITORING TOOL - STAFF

Group Indicators	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never	Action Needed Y/N	Relevant Sections of Safe Space Guidelines		
Environment has a positive vibe.						2.	6.	8.
High repeat attendance.						1.	2.	
Participants are inclusive of others when engaged in program activities.						2.	5.	
Participants show respect for each other.						2.	5.	
Participants show respect for staff/volunteers.						2.	5.	
Participants show respect for diversity and express non-judgmental attitudes.						2.	5.	
Volunteers adhere to their role descriptions and limitations (e.g. providing support without counseling).						3.	7.	
Relationships between participants and volunteers are within appropriate program boundaries.						3.	7.	
Any relationships between participants do not impact negatively on the group.						3.		
Staff/volunteers act as positive role models to uphold group norms and rules.						4.	5.	7.
Participants adhere to program rules/guidelines.						4.	5.	
Young people use positive conflict resolution strategies to resolve issues if they arise.						5.		
Peers actively promote positive group norms.						5.		
Individual Indicators	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never	Action Needed Y/N	Relevant Sections of Safe Space Guidelines		
Participants are open about their personal beliefs and identities.						4.	6.	
Participants disclose personal information appropriately to each other and to volunteers.						3.	4.	8.
Participants provide feedback on program services.						5.	8.	
Participants are observed to actively seek help and ask for peer support.						8.		
Physical Indicators	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never	Action Needed Y/N	Relevant Sections of Safe Space Guidelines		
Setting is secure and free from physical hazards.						1.	2.	

# SAFE SPACE PARTICIPANT SURVEY TOOL

- The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect some feedback from participants involved in the ..... about their perception of the program’s environment.
- Your answers are confidential and anonymous.
- Please read every item and then select the response that best describes the way how you feel about each statement.
- The comment box at the end allows you to make any kind of remarks, for example if you need to give more detailed information to explain your answer, or if a question is unclear, unfeasible, unrealistic, inappropriate, annoying or problematic to you in any way and why, so that we can improve the survey.

ITEMS	ALWAYS	MOST OF THE TIME	OCCASIONALLY	NEVER	COMMENTS
The program space has a positive vibe that makes me feel welcomed.					
I feel included in program activities by other participants.					
I feel respected by the other participants in the group.					
I feel that I can express my opinions and be who I am without being judged by others.					
I feel that I am able to disclose personal information to other peers and to the peer supporters.					
I feel that I am able provide feedback on program services freely.					
I feel that I am able to ask the peer supporters and program facilitator for help and support.					
I feel that all program staff are non-judgmental and make me feel welcomed and respected.					
I feel that the organisation and other staff members are supportive of the program.					
I am aware of the program guidelines/rules and norms.					
I actively contribute to promote the group norms.					
My relationship to the peer supporters stays within the program boundaries.					
I feel that the program setting is physically safe.					
I feel that I am able to access and leave the program facilities without fear of being harassed.					

1. PHYSICALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT (N/A for Online Programs)	YES	NO
The neighborhood of the program is safe for participants to access and leave the facilities at any time of the day without risk.		
Program develops and manages effective arrival and departure procedures and plans for safe travel to and from program.		
Program provides adequate security and surveillance to ensure building remains secure during and outside program hours.		
Appropriate measures are taken to protect individual's privacy. For example, program is sensitive to potential stigma associated with the target group and ensures that participants are not exposed to any discrimination or harassment e.g. from other groups using the same space.		
Program implements policies on maintaining physical safety within the program limits for all participants.		
2. PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL SAFETY/REFUGE	YES	NO
Program implements policies on maintaining psychological safety within the program limits for all participants, e.g. zero tolerance of harassment/bullying.		
Program practices ensure safe peer group interaction and prevents unsafe or confrontational peer interactions (e.g. harassment, bullying, violence) in order to maintain safety for other service users (e.g. moderation/monitoring of group discussions/online chat on the appropriateness of their content).		
3. BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT	YES	NO
Roles, responsibilities and expectations of staff/volunteers inside and outside the program are clearly communicated to all staff/volunteers/participants.		
Guidelines are in place on the management of emotional, physical and professional boundaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• between peers</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• between staff/volunteers</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• between peers and staff/volunteers.</li> </ul>		
Volunteers/peer supporters are clearly distinguished from their peers e.g. wearing shirts/badges in face to face programs, icons/colours/names in online spaces.		
Support is available to provide staff/volunteers with advice and assist them in difficult boundary management situations.		
Program provides training for staff/volunteers to assist in boundary management (e.g. recognising signs of boundary conflicts).		
4. ETHICAL PRACTICE	YES	NO
Duty of care policies exist and are enforced.		

Program establishes, maintains and communicates code of conduct to participants, staff, and their families.		
Program manager/facilitator is aware of, records, and informs staff of special health needs and ensures participants are aware of support services if needed.		
Confidentiality of personal data is assured.		
Program has guidelines and specified procedures in place that outline the management and secure storage of confidential information.		
Program provides clear instructions on managing confidential information for staff/volunteers.		
Program has standard procedures in place of how service users are informed about the program's confidentiality commitments (e.g. through signage, handouts, discussion).		
<b>5. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PROCESSES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Expectations of behaviour are communicated and reinforced e.g. through signage, handouts, discussion.		
Group rules/norms for behaviour are established and communicated. They include respect for others, being non judgmental and inclusive, constructive feedback etc.		
Program applies rewards and consequences for participant behaviour appropriately and consistently.		
At least one facilitator exists who represents an authoritative figure and participants respect.		
Program encourages participants to interact with one another in positive ways.		
<b>6. PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Program/virtual space is continuously monitored/moderated to ensure the space remains positive and safe.		
Participants comment they feel safe in the space.		
Participants report to feel comfortable talking about sensitive or embarrassing topics, experimenting with their image to elicit feedback from peers etc.		
Program culture allows participants to take initiative and explore their interests without judgment.		
Program encourages a youth participation approach that supports youth autonomy and increases youth empowerment.		
Constructive feedback from participants is actively sought.		
<b>7. STAFF/VOLUNTEERS</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Program provides appropriate training for all staff, facilitators, moderators, and/or volunteers.		
Opportunities for supervision and feedback are available at all levels.		
All staff/volunteers are selected based on stringent screening procedures.		
All staff who may come in contact with program participants, e.g. from other parts of the organisation, are non-judgmental and make participants feel welcome and respected.		

The management of the sponsoring organisation actively supports the implementation of a safe space approach.		
<b>8. PROGRAM STRATEGY</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Program has staff/volunteers that respect one another and represent role models of positive adult relationships.		
Program treats participants with respect and takes action to address participant issues/concerns.		
Program teaches participants to make responsible choices and encourages positive outcomes.		
Program is sensitive to the culture and language of participants and is modified as necessary.		
Program encourages former participants to contribute as volunteers or staff.		



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