

# IMPACT:Ability Staff Survey Year 2 Summary Report Spring 2014

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## BACKGROUND

The staff survey results are an important tool for analyzing the impact of policy changes, enhanced trainings and other interventions spearheaded by the APLT. This survey was first implemented in the Spring of 2012. This report summarizes the findings from the first follow-up administration of the survey that took place Spring 2014. The report includes both quantitative and qualitative findings that describe the knowledge, opinions and perspectives of Triangle staff (N=79). A full table of 2014 quantitative results is available as a handout. The qualitative analysis results and highlights of the quantitative analysis are provided below. These findings may be helpful for informing future APLT activities.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This round of surveying reveals some positive impacts made by the abuse prevention initiatives that are underway at Triangle as well as identifies several areas where further progress is needed. Compared to the 2012 survey results, we found improvements in the following areas:

➤ **Responding to observations of abusive treatment**

There was a statically significant increase in the number of participants who chose 'nothing keeps be from getting involved' if they observed abusive treatment by a co-worker or care provider. (**P=0.01**)

**95%** of staff that have been at Triangle for at least 2 years (N=40) *have seen changes in the ways staff are expected to interact with participants* – and **100%** of those that have seen changes *like them!*

➤ **Perceived access to resources needed to respond to abuse**

Between 2012 and 2014, there was a marginally significant increase (**P=0.10**) in the number of respondents who agreed with the statement, "Triangle provides all information and resources needed to respond to abuse."

➤ **More consistency in 2014 responses.**

In 2012, the responses to the qualitative questions on the survey were very diverse revealing some level of confusion as to the most appropriate way to respond to a variety of abuse-related situations. More consistency was found among the 2014 responses.

➤ **Staff who would become involved in abuse-related scenarios.**

The percent of staff who would intervene at all, report at all and/or do both increased for two abuse-related scenarios.

➤ **Staff understanding of policies and expectations.**

Responses included more detail around specific policies and steps to be taken in responding to observations or reports of alleged abuse. While not all participants clearly laid out each policy or reporting steps, it was clear that many answers came directly from Triangle's newly established policies and trainings.

The following findings *suggest areas for improvement*:

➤ **Fewer improvements found for non-management staff compared to management staff**

For several areas, we found that managers improved more in key areas compared to other staff. Improvements for non-management staff are critical to achieve since they often interact with clients on a day-to-day basis

➤ **Program/Residential Services Staff Support**

Staff from departments *other than* program/residential services were *significantly more likely to respond that “nothing keeps me from getting involved if I observe abusive treatment by co-worker or care provider.” P= 0.08* for program/residential vs. other departments. This may be concerning since program and residential staff are more likely to be confronted with challenging scenarios in reporting abuse, but the findings are probably reflective of that daily reality, too.

**RESULTS<sup>1</sup>**

**Question 9 (N=11)**

*If a respondent answered “Yes” to the question, “In the last 5 years, has a Triangle participant ever made a report of abuse to you or someone you directly supervise that you didn’t believe was true?” they were asked to answer question 9.*

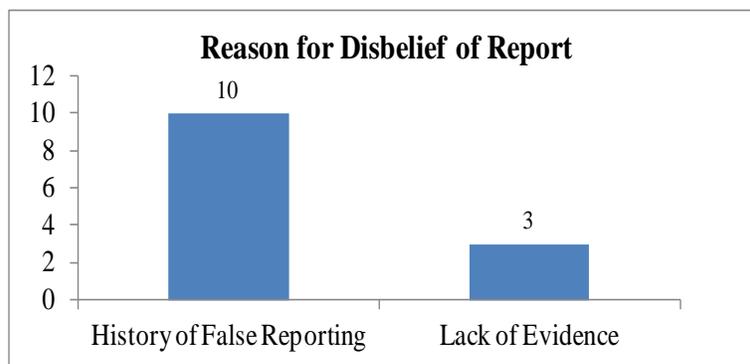
*In 2-3 sentences, what made it hard for you to believe the report of abuse was true? Please be as specific as you can.*

**35%** of respondents (N=77) *have received an abuse report* in the past 5 years

**57%** of respondents (N=76) are *‘very confident’ they could act on abuse disclosures*

**22%** of respondents (N=27) noted they *received abuse disclosure information from IMPACT:Ability* related activities

For most respondents who found it hard to believe an abuse report to be true, this was due to *a history of false reporting* (73%).



<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted qualitative results are not mutually exclusive.



**Question 14 (N=67)**

Scenario: You are walking down the hallway and you see a staff member talking loudly to a participant. You hear her say, "I'm going to break your face if you don't get back to work."

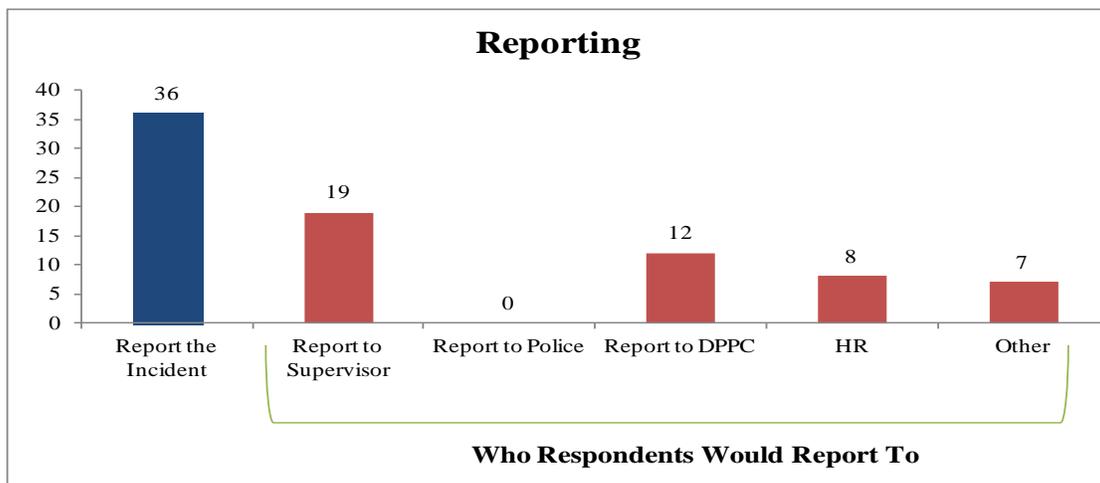
In 2-3 sentences, describe what you would do in that situation and why. Please be as specific as you can.

**Response Category**

- Most respondents (81%) would **intervene** in the above described scenario.

From that 81%, examples of intervention include:

- Talking to the participant or staff person to **determine what is happening** (33/54; 61%).
    - "I would speak with the participant to see how he or she felt about it and if it was a pattern."
    - "I would try and have a conversation with the staff member to uncover why it was said."
  - Talking to and **educating the staff person about appropriate behavior** (23/54; 43%)
    - "I would talk to the staff member in private, let her/him know this is not an appropriate way to talk to a participant."
    - "I would advise the co-worker that we can not joke like that here."
  - Two respondents would have the staff member **apologize** to the participant.
- 54% of respondents would **report** the incident to a range of people and places (respondents may have noted reporting to more than one person/place).



Note: "Other" category includes: call abuse hotline, report to Human Rights Officer and report to Triangle.

- 37% would **intervene and report**
  - "I would immediately step in and check in with the participant. I would then direct the participant to another staff and then confront the staff. I would inform the staff that joking or not they are being abusive. I would then inform my supervisor and/or the Human Resource Director of the situation."

57% of respondents (N=79) reported that **"nothing keeps me from getting involved** if I observed abusive treatment by a co-worker or care provider"



- Two respondents would **observe** the reactions and then determine how to respond:
  - “I would wait to see their reactions would ask myself what kind of relationship they have”

### Labeling of Behavior

- 16% specifically labeled this behavior as **inappropriate** (or a synonym like unacceptable)
- 12% specifically labeled this behavior **abusive**

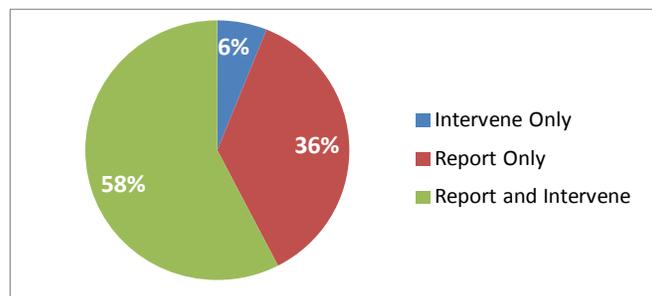
#### Question 15 (N=65)

*Scenario: You work in or are visiting a Triangle residence. There are eight women living in the house but you notice that a neighbor who lives near the residence is paying attention to just one. He invites her over a lot and says he’ll give her a dollar if she sits on his lap.*

In 2-3 sentences, describe what you would do in that situation and why. Please be as specific as you can.

### Response Category

Most respondents would **report and intervene** in the above described scenario<sup>2</sup>.



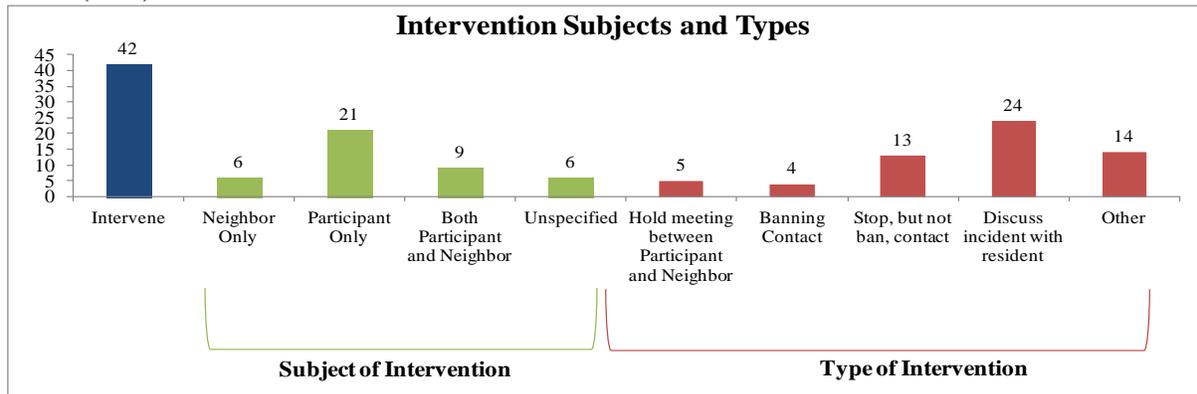
- **More likely to:**
  - **Intervene at all** – Managers (both senior and non-senior); career services and residential services; staff who started working at Triangle, *before* April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012
    - More likely to intervene **with neighbor only** – Manager; in program services or residential services; staff who started working at Triangle, *before* April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012
    - More likely to intervene **with participant only** – career services; staff who started working *on or after* April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012
  - **Report at all**– Non-managers; career services and program services; staff who started working *on or after* April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012

### Intervention

- 65% of respondents would **intervene**
- Of the 42 respondents who noted they would intervene, the *subject of their intervention* varied, however the majority would interview with the participant only (50%).

<sup>2</sup> Data is mutually exclusive.

- The most frequently mentioned *intervention type* was discussing the incident with the participant (57%).

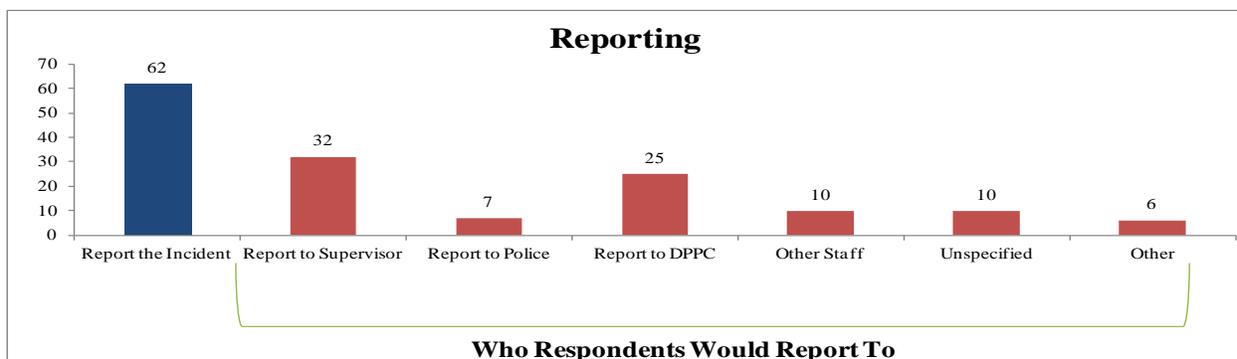


Examples of the intervention types include:

- Discussing the incident with the participant:
  - “I would talk to the one woman that the neighbor is being inappropriate with and ask her if she is alright and ask if she needs help. I would then notify the staff members of the residence and the DPPC of my observation.”
  - “The residences have the right to have relationships so I would question the resident only if she liked the neighbor, liked going over to his house, and did she feel safe there. If the answer to all 3 is yes, I would do nothing. If the answer to any of those is no I would address it with the house manager.”
- Stopping, but not banning, contact between the neighbor and participant:
  - “I would ask the neighbor to leave. I would speak to the participant and see what she understands about the situation, and depending on the response I would go from there.”
  - “Ask the neighbor to leave, call the police if the neighbor does not leave and follow the abuse reporting procedure checklist.”

## Reporting

The majority of respondents mentioned that they would report, although who they would report to varied. Sometimes they mentioned reporting to multiple parties. Respondents mentioned that they would report to their supervisor and/or DPPC most frequently.



Note: “Other” category includes: participant’s therapist, abuse hotline, authorities & Human Right’s Officer

**Question 17a. (N=12)**

If you want to add anything else about your experience with sexuality education or what you think should be done about educating participants about sexuality please write it here.

- 3 noted that they needed more training to be able to discuss this with participants
  - *“I am new to this field and I think this is very important and would value any guidance and education on educating participants in this area!”*
- 2 comments suggested guardians/caregivers should be more informed/involved
- 2 comments were around creating clear policies and the’ right balance’
  - *“It’s a challenging undertaking getting the right balance between educating people in a way they can understand, supporting people to have healthy intimate relationships and preventing them from being abused or taken advantage of in some way, especially while in our care.”*
- 2 felt that the staff who work most closely with the participants should be involved (either directly talking to participant or creating trainings)
  - *“We should get feedback from the staff who have known the participants for a while to get an idea of how to address this topic with them. Some will like one-on-one others may open up when the whole group is talking about it.”*
- 1 suggestion/comment on each of the following:
  - Professional trainers should facilitate these workshops
  - Information about the dangers of sharing sexually explicit information online should be included in the workshop
  - Being comfortable talking to participants about their sexuality

**100%** of respondents who are familiar with trained participants (N=48) think Triangle **participants benefit from sexuality education**

**Question 19 (N=57)**

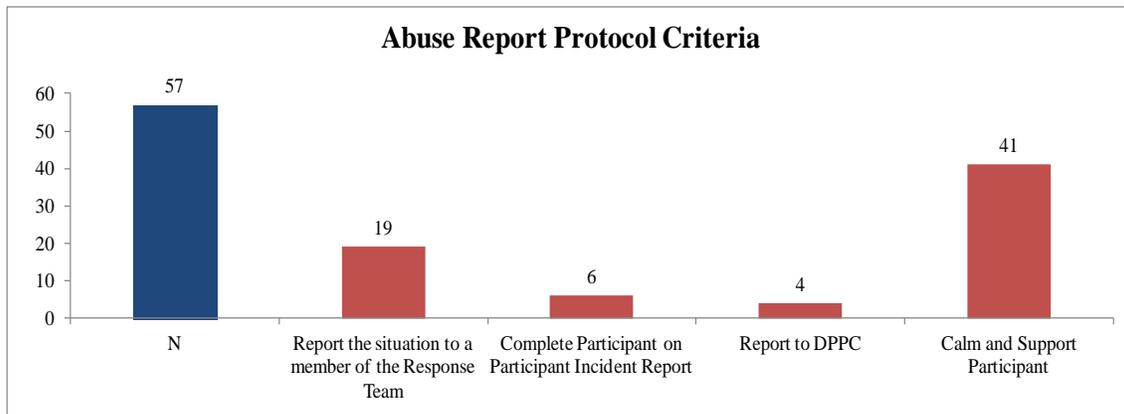
*Scenario: You are supervising a group of Triangle participants. You see one participant threatening to physically hurt another. The participant who was threatened comes to you for help.*

In 2 to 3 sentences, describe how you would respond. Please be as specific as you can.

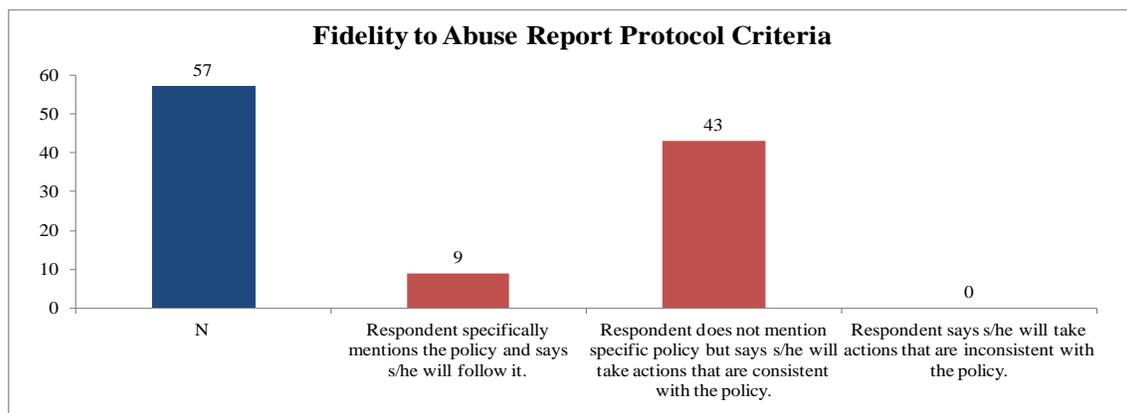
**Adherence to Protocol**

Responses were coded in relation to how they fit with the abuse report protocol criteria. A relatively small amount of respondents noted the three main criteria. However, many respondents intervened, supported, and calmed the participant (72%), which was one of the steps in the Abuse Report Checklist.





Based upon the responses above, respondents were coded as to whether they followed the policy. The majority of respondents followed at least one aspect of the policy, although most did not mention the policy by name.



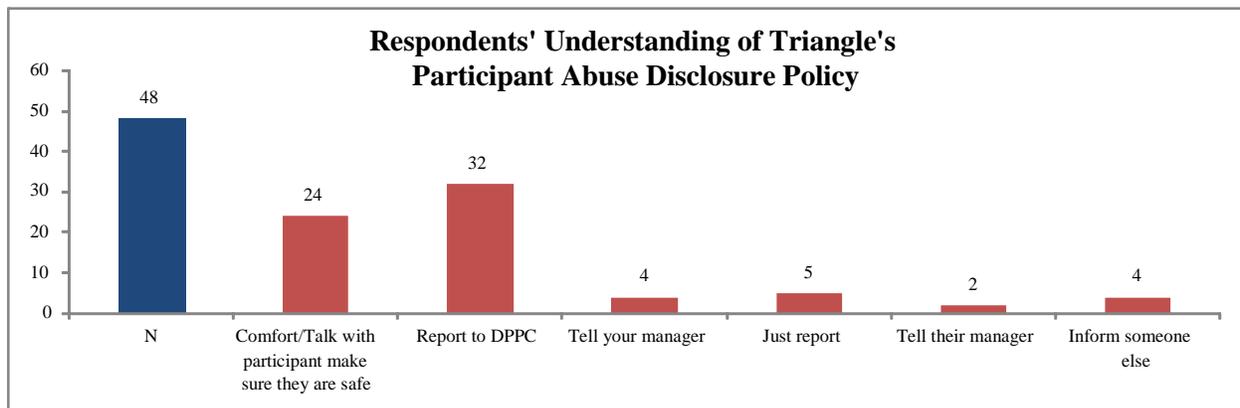
**Examples of Responses** (\*Note - *The response ‘supervisor’ was codes as part of response team*)

- Report to the Response Team
  - *“I would thank them for coming to me and disclosing the information and let them know I am here to help and they will be safe with whatever they disclose to me. I will also explain that what they say will stay with me, but I will have to call DPPC and let a supervisor know of the incident.”*
  
- Calm and support the participant
  - *“I would thank the client for asking me to help them. I would bring the participant to an area they feel safe. I would immediately address the situation with the aggressor and set up an emergency meeting.”*

**Question 21 (N=48)**

Please briefly describe Triangle’s policy for what to do when a participant makes and abuse report.

- The majority of respondents (92%) mentioned **the abuse disclosure checklist** and/or **actions consistent with the checklist**.
  - “Support the participant and listen. Inform them that I need to call the DPPC and then see if they want to inform anyone else. Depending on who the alleged abuser is, we may need to inform a supervisor, HR, or house manager as well.”
  - 10 of those 44 (23%), however, **also mentioned actions that appear inconsistent with checklist** (e.g. “Report to program manager”; “report to DPPC if participant is willing to”; “ask participant if we can inform their parent or guardian”; “if serious report to DPPC but if lesser report to Meg”; “contact upper management”)
- 3 respondents **only mentioned things inconsistent with policy** (i.e. “I have to report to supervisor and evaluate situation”; “report to abuse team”; “report to supervisor”)
- Of **those mentioning things inconsistent with policy**:
  - Most were **non-managers** (8) that had **been there less than a year** (6) – although there were some senior managers (2) and those that had been there over ten years (3) in this group, too
  - They were evenly spread among residential, administrative services business and career services.
- The majority **of participants noted that it was Triangle’s policy to report to DPPC**. They also often mentioned that they should comfort and/or talk with participant to make sure they were safe.



**Question 23 (N=28)**

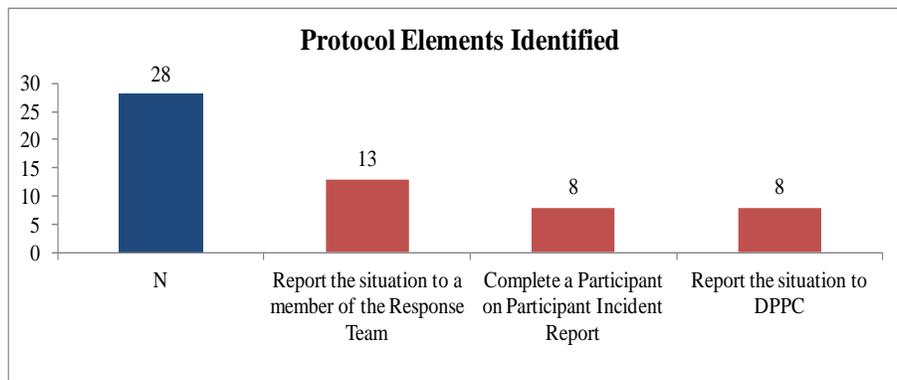
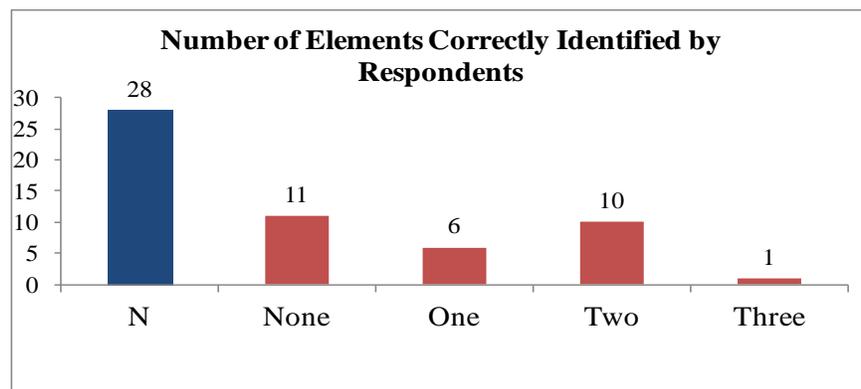
Please briefly describe Triangle’s policy for situations in which a participant reports that another participant has abused them

**Adherence to Protocol**

Responses were coded in relation to how they fit with the participant on participant abuse protocol criteria. Note this question had a lower response rate than other questions.

91% of respondents (N=67) are *aware of participant abuse reporting policy*

The majority of respondents identified at least one element of the abuse policy (61%). The element most often noted was to **report the situation to a member of the Response Team** (46%).



**Examples of Responses**

- Report to the Response Team
  - *“Talk with Participant. Tell them you need to report to keep them safe. Contact a APLT team member. Contact DPPC if needed.”*
  - *“Find a member of the APLT that can fill out the report and take next steps”*
- Complete a Participant on Participant Report
  - *“Meet with participants and complete participant on participant abuse report form.”*

67% of respondents (N=61) are *aware of participant on participant abuse reporting policy*



- “Ensure the person is safe. Complete the Abusive or Inappropriate Touch/Inappropriate Interaction Report. Report the situation to a member of the Response Team. Follow up as the situation warrants. Maintain confidentiality.”

**Question 25 (N=29)**

Please briefly describe Triangle’s policy for protecting employees who report abuse from retaliation or negative consequences.

**Adherence to Protocol**

Responses were coded in relation to how they fit with the whistleblower policy criteria. Note that this question had a lower response rate than other questions.

- The majority of the respondents (76%) **cited items consistent with the policy and/or mentioned the policy directly.**
- Just over half of the respondents (52%) **mentioned the policy directly.**
- **No one said anything inconsistent** with the policy.
- However, 24% either said they **didn’t know the policy** (2) or responded with **items that were not clear or relevant** (5) ( e.g.”Every report is taken seriously”; “HR”; “Isolate and calm situation, be respectful, assure person of safety, report, follow-up”[describes reporting policy but not whistleblower policy]). All but one of these respondents had been at Triangle for one year or less.
- Two people mentioned that, **regardless of the whistleblower policy, reporting would be a stressful:**
  - “The whistleblower policy - you aren't allowed to be punished for making a report, or lose your job. But there is still stress from everyone knowing what happened.”
  - “You're not allowed to be punished for making a report. Still, people might be uncomfortable knowing that other staff are aware of them turning someone in. This might steer them away from reporting something borderline like talking down to someone, but I think everyone would report physical abuse.”

66% of respondents (N=64) are *aware of Triangle’s whistleblower policy*

32% of respondents (N=62) are *uncomfortable with the way Triangle expects them to handle abuse reports*

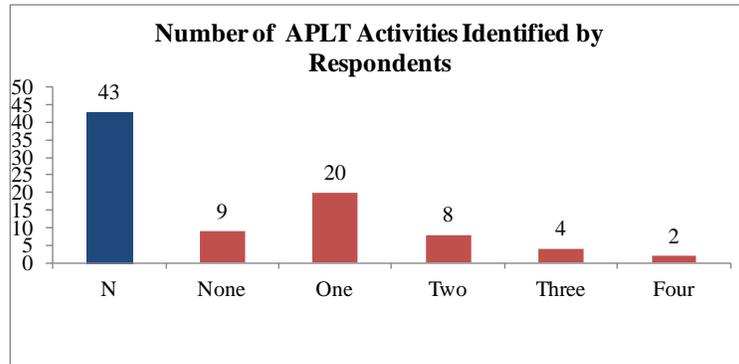
**Question 27 (N=43)**



In your own words, briefly tell us what Triangle’s Abuse Prevention Leadership Team does.

### Correctly Identify APLT Activities

Responses were coded in relation to how they fit with the APLT activities. The majority of respondents identified at least one activity performed by the APLT (79%).



Activities identified include:

- Trains staff about abuse – 60%
- Creates policy – 30%
- Address incidents involving participants/reviews cases – 21%
- Impacts organizational culture – 19%
- Other – 17%
  - Prevents abuse, generally (5)
  - Keeps Triangle positioned as a leader in abuse prevention (1)
  - Teaches self-advocacy (1)

**77%** of respondents (N=64) feel that *Triangle spends ‘Just the right amount of effort on abuse prevention’*

### Examples of Responses

- Trains staff about abuse
  - “Attempts to educate participants on how to report and educate staff on what to do when a participant does report.”
  - “Provides training and practice to address abuse prevention and reporting.”
- Creates policy
  - “Develops policies and procedures to make Triangle an abuse-free workplace and how to effectively handle reports of abuse.”
  - “Design, implement, and review organizational abuse prevention efforts.”
  - “Holds meetings to find better ways to train staff ad participants about abuse and write the best policy for Triangle regarding abuse prevention.”

**97%** agree that *Triangle provides all the information and resources needed to respond to abuse*

**Question 32 (N=10)**

What suggestions do you have for how Triangle can be more effective at preventing abuse?

- 7 had **training and education suggestions**:
  - More training in general (3)
  - Trainings for/about perpetrators (2) – 1 to help “perpetrators to cease abuse and/or potential perpetrators to refrain from abuse” and the other would be a checklist for staff for what to do with the person being accused, especially if it is a participant.
  - Suggestion that sessions should be less than four hours (1)
  - Suggestion that the trainings should happen before each staff person’s first day on job – during orientation (1)
- 3 had **other suggestions**:
  - Invest in high quality staff
  - Involve residential staff to find ways to address issues
  - Apply policies more consistently across departments

### Comparison of 2012 to 2014 Responses - Highlights

#### Respondents

**The group of respondents is significantly different** in that almost half of the 2014 respondents **have been at Triangle for less than a year** (48%) compared with 2012 when only 14% had been there for less than a year.

#### Overall Comparison of Quantitative Results

At first glance the results are strikingly similar between the two years with significant differences found for only 2 questions.

In 2014 significantly more respondents:

- Chose ‘nothing keeps be from getting involved if observed abusive treatment by a co-worker or care provider’ **P=0.01**
- Agreed with the statement “Triangle provides all information and resources needed to respond to abuse” **P=0.10**

#### Quantitative Results by Sub-Groups

Some trends apparent in the larger analysis made us delve a bit deeper where significant and borderline significant differences between 2012 to 2014 were identified when comparing “Program/Residential” vs. “Other departments” and “Managers” vs. “Non-managers.”

- **In 2014 managers showed significantly more**:
  - Confidence in acting upon abuse disclosure (for those who had experienced abuse disclosure comparing very confident vs. confident/somewhat confident/not confident at all) The percent of non-managers who strongly agreed that they are confident stayed about the same, while managers increased significantly from 29% in 2012 to 56% in 2014 (**P=0.11**; \*small n so included borderline significance).
  - Confidence they *could* take action on reported abuse (comparing very confident vs. confident/somewhat confident/not confident at all) **P=0.09** for managers vs. non-managers



- Strong agreement with the statement that “Triangle provides all the information and resources needed to respond to abuse” (strongly agree vs. agree/disagree/strongly disagree) **P=0.021** for managers vs. non-managers
- Likelihood of responding “nothing keeps me from getting involved if I observe abusive treatment by co-worker or care provider.” **P= 0.09** for managers vs. non-managers
- **In 2014 staff from program or residential services showed significantly more:**
  - Confidence in acting upon abuse disclosure (for those who had experienced abuse disclosure comparing very confident vs. confident/somewhat confident/not confident at all) **P = 0.13** for program/residential vs. other departments (\*small n so included borderline significance).
  - Confidence they *could* take action on reported abuse (comparing very confident vs. confident/somewhat confident/not confident at all) **P = 0.08** for program/residential vs. other departments.
  - Strong agreement with the statement that “Triangle provides all the information and resources needed to respond to abuse” (strongly agree vs. agree/disagree/strongly disagree) **P= 0.03** for program/residential vs. other departments.
- **In 2014 staff from departments other than program/residential services were:**

Significantly more likely to respond that “nothing keeps me from getting involved if I observe abusive treatment by co-worker or care provider.” **P= 0.08** for program/residential vs. other departments
- **17 staff completed the survey both times.** The small sample size makes it more challenging to find statistical significance, though a statistically significant difference was found for one question:
  - **In 2014** these staff members were significantly more like to respond “nothing keeps me from getting involved if I observe abusive treatment by co-worker or care provider.” **P=0.01**

### Differences in Qualitative Responses: 2012 vs. 2014

- **More consistency in 2014 responses.** In 2012, the responses to the qualitative questions on the survey were very diverse compared with the 2014 responses where more consistency was found.
- **Increases in the percent of staff who would intervene at all, report at all and/or do both for two select scenarios.**

Scenario 1: <i>You are walking down the hallway and you see a staff member talking loudly to a participant. You hear her say, “I’m going to break your face if you don’t get back to work.”</i>		
Action	% of Respondents who would Take Action During Year 1 (n=61)	% of Respondents who would Take Action During Year 2 (n=67)
Intervene at all	66%	81%
Report at all	52%	54%
Report and intervene	28%	37%

Scenario 2: *You work in or are visiting a Triangle residence. There are eight women living in the house but you notice that a neighbor who lives near the residence is paying attention to just one. He invites her over a lot and says he'll give her a dollar if she sits on his lap.*

Action	% of Respondents who would Take Action During Year 1 (n=62)	% of Respondents who would Take Action During Year 2 (n=65)
Intervene at all	58%	65%
Report at all	76%	95%
Report and intervene	40%	58%

- **Increased understanding of policies and expectations.** There was more detail around specific policies and steps to be taken. While not all participants clearly laid out each policy and the components, it was clear that many answers came directly from policies and trainings. This was strongly evident in the third scenario that was similar across both years.

Scenario 3: *You are supervising a group of Triangle participants. You see one participant threatening to physically hurt another. The participant who was threatened comes to you for help.*

2012 Quotes	2014 Quotes
<i>"I would ask the participant to come with me to talk to the director of Human Resources to find out what to do."</i>	<i>"First, I'd thank them for telling me. I'd ask if the participant if they wanted to talk somewhere quieter. I'd tell them they did the right thing by telling me, and that I have to report it to the DPPC but they can choose to be there or not when I make the report and they also get to decide who else knows."</i>
<i>"I would confront the perpetrator and explain why their behavior was threatening and what the consequences will be.(...) I will explain to the participant some methods he/she could use in the future when threatened and where to go for help and I would congratulate him/her for coming to me. I would recommend he/she participate in IMPACT:Ability."</i>	<i>"First I would ask them if they were alright, scared, felt the need to seek medical help etc. then I would try to be calming etc. I would congratulate them on coming to me to tell me. I would then go through the steps necessary (the protocol) when there is an allegation of abuse. I would explain why I needed to do this process to the participant. I would assure them they would be safe."</i>
<i>"I would talk to the participant threatening about how that is not acceptable then do a conflict resolution with the two of them."</i>	<i>"Calm and reassure the participant. See if they can explain the threat and how it makes them feel. Call DPPC and report it. Have Triangle's professional abuse counselors made aware of the situation with the participant's consent"</i>

**LIMITATIONS**

While there are some advantages to quantifying qualitative information, it creates some risks as well. Mostly there is the risk that the reader will inaccurately interpret the data as though the responses came from close-ended questions. It is important to remember, just because a respondent did not mention something does not mean they do not think it to be true. It is more appropriate to make decisions based on the trends and salient themes found in the qualitative responses as a whole.

