

Abuse Prevention, Reporting & Response Procedures for Team Managers

Version #	Approved	Change Description
1	8/29/2026	
1.1	8/30/2026	Updated one-on-one supervision requirements in Sections 5 & 14

1. Purpose and Commitment to Zero Tolerance

Challenge Me, Inc. ("CMI") is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for every participant in CMI-sponsored Destination Imagination activities.

CMI maintains **zero tolerance for abuse, neglect, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment, grooming, or other conduct that threatens the physical or emotional safety of a participant.**

CMI recognizes that while no policy can completely eliminate the possibility of abuse, misconduct, accidental injury, or false allegations, appropriate safeguards can significantly reduce risk to participants and to the adults who work with them. This principle is consistent with the safety framework established by Massachusetts Destination Imagination ("MADI").

These procedures establish clear expectations for Team Managers, provide guidance for appropriate interactions with participants, and ensure that concerns regarding participant safety are promptly reported and addressed.

2. Scope and Definitions

For purposes of this policy: **Child or Minor** means any individual under 18 years of age.

Participant means any individual participating as a team member in a CMI-sponsored Destination Imagination program or activity, **regardless of age**. CMI recognizes that some participants, including high school seniors and participants eligible under applicable Destination Imagination rules, may be 18 years of age or older.

The protections and standards for appropriate Team Manager/Participant relationships established by this policy apply to **all participants regardless of age**. In particular, a romantic, sexual, or sexually exploitative relationship or interaction between a Team Manager and a participant whom they manage is prohibited, **even when the participant is 18 years of age or older**.

Nothing in this policy is intended to characterize a participant age 18 or older as a child or minor for purposes of Massachusetts law. Statutory child-abuse reporting requirements apply according to applicable law; CMI's organizational standards of conduct may provide protections beyond those minimum legal requirements.

Team Manager means an adult age 18 or older who has registered with CMI to manage or co-manage a Destination Imagination team. This is consistent with MADI's requirement that all Team Managers be at least 18 years old.

This policy applies specifically to **CMI Team Managers** because of their regular and direct interaction with participants.

Team Managers are responsible for reviewing and complying with this policy; maintaining appropriate adult/participant boundaries; providing reasonable supervision during team activities; completing CMI's required safety training; promptly reporting suspected abuse, neglect, grooming, or other serious safety concerns; and cooperating with CMI and appropriate authorities following a reported concern.

3. Prohibited Abuse and Misconduct

CMI prohibits abuse, exploitation, harassment, grooming, and other harmful or inappropriate conduct involving participants.

Consistent with MADI's policy, child abuse may include non-accidental injury, sexual activity or exploitation, or neglectful or harmful treatment that threatens a child's health, welfare, or safety. MADI recognizes physical, emotional, sexual, and neglectful forms of abuse.

Physical abuse includes deliberately causing bodily harm or pain, including hitting, striking, shaking, pushing, inappropriate restraint, or using physical activity or deprivation as punishment.

Emotional abuse includes verbal or nonverbal conduct that seriously humiliates, intimidates, degrades, threatens, or emotionally harms a participant.

Neglect includes failing to provide reasonable supervision or care when that responsibility has been assumed by a Team Manager, thereby placing a child or other participant requiring such supervision at unreasonable risk of harm.

Sexual abuse or exploitation includes any sexual contact or activity involving an adult and a minor; sexualized touching; exposing a minor to pornography or sexually explicit material; requesting or distributing sexual images; or other sexual exploitation.

In addition, **CMI strictly prohibits romantic or sexual relationships, sexual contact, sexualized communications, or other sexually inappropriate conduct between a Team Manager and any participant they manage, regardless of the participant's age.** A participant reaching age 18 does not alter the professional and supervisory boundaries required of a Team Manager.

CMI also recognizes that inappropriate, harmful, or abusive conduct can occur **between participants**. Team Managers should intervene appropriately when they observe bullying, violence, sexual misconduct, hazing, harassment, or other behavior that threatens a participant's safety.

4. Grooming Behaviors

Grooming is prohibited. Grooming refers to a pattern of behavior through which an individual builds inappropriate trust, access, secrecy or emotional dependence, or gradually erodes appropriate boundaries with a participant in a manner that may facilitate abuse, exploitation, or an inappropriate relationship.

Potential grooming behaviors may include:

- Seeking unnecessary or excessive private time with a particular participant;
- Singling out a participant for unusual gifts, favors, privileges, rides, or attention;
- Establishing secret or concealed communications;
- Encouraging a participant to keep inappropriate secrets from parents, guardians, or other responsible adults;

- Gradually testing or increasing inappropriate physical contact;
- Making sexualized jokes or comments;
- Discussing inappropriate romantic or sexual subjects;
- Attempting to create an unusually dependent emotional relationship;
- Isolating a participant from peers or other adults; or
- Deliberately circumventing established supervision, communication, or safety practices.

Individual behaviors may have innocent explanations. Team Managers should therefore be attentive to **patterns of behavior and boundary violations** rather than attempting to diagnose another person's intentions.

5. Guidelines for Team Manager/Participant Interactions

CMI expects Team Managers to maintain appropriate, respectful, and age-appropriate relationships with participants.

One-on-One Interaction and Supervision

Whenever reasonably possible, CMI encourages the presence of at least two adults during team meetings and activities. CMI recognizes, however, that many Destination Imagination teams have only one Team Manager, or that a co-manager or other adult may not be available for every meeting. A Team Manager may supervise and conduct a meeting with their team without another adult present.

At no time, however, should a Team Manager be alone with a single participant. If circumstances would leave one Team Manager and one participant alone, for example, when other team members have not yet arrived or after other participants have been picked up, the Team Manager should take reasonable steps to ensure another adult is present or that the participant remains in an open, observable location where other adults are present or readily available.

Team Managers should conduct activities in areas reasonably appropriate for the activity being performed and avoid unnecessary private or isolated interactions with individual participants. When team meetings are held in a private residence, parents/guardians should be aware of the meeting location and scheduled start and end times.

Emergency situations in which a participant's immediate safety requires one-on-one assistance are permitted.

Physical Contact

Physical contact with participants must be appropriate, nonsexual, and respectful of the participant's comfort and personal boundaries.

Generally appropriate contact may include high-fives, fist bumps, handshakes, or brief congratulatory or comforting contact when welcomed by the participant.

Inappropriate physical contact includes sexual or romantic contact, touching intimate areas, unwanted affection, inappropriate restraint, deliberately painful contact, or other touching that is sexualized, secretive, coercive, or reasonably likely to make a participant uncomfortable.

A participant's refusal of physical affection or contact must always be respected.

Verbal Interactions

Team Managers must communicate respectfully with participants and may not make sexual or sexually suggestive comments or jokes; humiliate, threaten, degrade, or intimidate a participant; encourage inappropriate secrecy; discuss inappropriate adult sexual or romantic matters; or encourage an inappropriate emotional, romantic, or sexual relationship.

Electronic Communications

Communications with participants should be related to legitimate Destination Imagination activities and conducted transparently.

Whenever practical, communications with minor participants should include a parent/guardian or another appropriate adult, or occur through a team communication channel accessible to other responsible adults.

Team Managers should not use disappearing messages, secret accounts, or other methods intended to conceal inappropriate communications with a participant.

6. Required Safety Training

All CMI Team Managers are required to complete the **Massachusetts Mandated Reporter Training** provided through the Massachusetts Office of the Child Advocate's online training platform. This training provides an overview of recognizing and responding to suspected child abuse and neglect and the definitions, requirements, and protections associated with mandated reporting in Massachusetts.

Team Managers must complete the training before beginning their Team Manager responsibilities and annually thereafter for each year in which they serve as a CMI Team Manager.

The training is available online at the Massachusetts Mandated Reporter Training platform:

<https://mandatedreportertraining.com/massachusetts/>

CMI requires this training as an organizational child-safety measure for Team Managers. Requiring completion of the training does not, by itself, determine whether an individual Team Manager is legally classified as a mandated reporter under Massachusetts law.

Team Managers must also review this CMI policy annually and acknowledge their agreement to comply with its requirements.

7. Team Manager Screening and Registration

CMI requires Team Managers to complete the applicable Team Manager registration process before serving in that capacity.

As part of CMI's participant-safety practices, CMI will utilize screening measures applicable to Team Managers and consistent with CMI's registration procedures, MADI requirements, applicable law, and insurance requirements.

MADI's Safety Policy requires Team Managers to complete its CORI acknowledgement process and provides for periodic CORI checks. **CMI Team Managers are expected to comply with applicable MADI screening requirements in addition to CMI's registration requirements.**

CMI may restrict or prohibit an individual from serving as a Team Manager when information obtained through registration, screening, MADl requirements, or other reliable information indicates that the individual's service would create an unacceptable risk to participants.

8. Reporting Suspected Abuse, Neglect, Grooming, or Misconduct

CMI's policy is to **report and appropriately escalate all reasonable suspicions, allegations, disclosures, or observations of possible child abuse or neglect.**

A Team Manager does not need proof that abuse occurred before raising or reporting a concern and should not attempt to conduct an independent investigation.

Immediate Danger

If a child or other participant appears to be in immediate danger or requires emergency medical assistance, **call 911 immediately.**

Take reasonable steps to protect the participant from further immediate harm without placing yourself or others in danger.

Do not confront the person accused of abuse or misconduct. This is also a central component of MADl's response procedure.

Reporting to DCF or Other Appropriate Authorities

Suspected abuse or neglect of a child should be reported to the **Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF)** or other appropriate governmental authority.

Massachusetts Child Abuse Emergency Line: 1-800-792-5200

Team Managers who are mandated reporters under Massachusetts law must comply with all applicable statutory reporting requirements.

Regardless of whether an individual Team Manager is legally classified as a mandated reporter, CMI expects Team Managers to promptly report reasonable suspicions, allegations, or disclosures of child abuse or neglect to DCF or another appropriate authority.

No CMI or MADl internal reporting process should be interpreted to prevent or unnecessarily delay an individual from contacting DCF, law enforcement, or emergency services.

Internal CMI Reporting

A participant-safety concern must also be reported as soon as reasonably possible to:

CMI Designated Safety Contact:

Name: Stephanie Barry

Phone: 617-930-6427

Email: andoverdikids@gmail.com (shared CMI mailbox), stephanie@barryfam.com (private)

If the designated individual is involved in the allegation or presents a conflict of interest, the concern should instead be reported to the **CMI Board President or another uninvolved CMI Board member.**

CMI leadership must not discourage or retaliate against anyone making a good-faith safety report.

When appropriate, CMI will coordinate with MADI and Destination Imagination regarding incidents involving CMI-sponsored activities. MADI's policy provides for notification of MADI leadership and Destination Imagination following qualifying incidents.

9. Responding to a Participant Who Discloses Abuse

If a participant discloses abuse or inappropriate conduct, a Team Manager should:

- Remain calm and listen;
- Take the participant seriously;
- Allow the participant to explain what happened in their own words;
- Avoid interrogation or extensive questioning;
- Ask only questions reasonably necessary to determine whether the participant is presently safe;
- Not confront the alleged offender;
- Not promise secrecy;
- Explain that information may need to be shared with people whose responsibility is to help keep participants safe;
- Document the participant's statements as accurately and objectively as possible; and
- Promptly make the appropriate reports.

Team Managers should **not investigate the allegation, determine whether the participant is telling the truth, or attempt to collect evidence.**

10. Response and Support for Victims

The participant's immediate safety and well-being are CMI's first priorities.

When a participant may have been harmed, CMI and its Team Managers, as applicable, will obtain emergency assistance when necessary; take reasonable measures to prevent further immediate harm; make appropriate reports; cooperate with appropriate authorities; and protect the participant's privacy to the extent reasonably possible.

For a minor participant, a parent or guardian should be notified when appropriate, taking into account instructions from DCF or law enforcement and circumstances in which the parent or guardian may be implicated.

When appropriate, CMI will provide the participant or, for a minor, their parent or guardian with information regarding available support resources, which may include counseling or mental-health services, child advocacy centers, trauma-informed services, crisis resources, and victim-assistance programs.

11. Documentation and Confidentiality

A Team Manager who observes an incident or receives a disclosure should document the relevant facts as soon as reasonably possible, including the date, time, and location; individuals involved; what was observed or disclosed; the participant's own words when reasonably possible; immediate actions taken; and when and to whom reports were made.

This is consistent with MADI's policy, which requires prompt written documentation and provides a two-page **Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse** for recording the initial report and subsequent contacts.

Safety-related records will be maintained securely and information will be shared only with individuals or authorities who have a legitimate need for it.

12. Interim Protective Measures and Enforcement

CMI may take immediate protective action when an allegation or serious participant-safety concern involves a Team Manager.

Depending on the circumstances, CMI may require additional adult supervision; restrict the Team Manager's contact with participants; temporarily suspend the individual from Team Manager duties; reassign responsibilities; remove the individual from CMI-sponsored activities; or take other reasonable action necessary to protect participants.

Interim protective action does **not** constitute a determination that misconduct occurred.

Violations of this policy may result in corrective action, restriction, suspension, removal as a Team Manager, prohibition from future CMI activities, referral to MADI or Destination Imagination, and/or referral to appropriate governmental authorities.

Serious misconduct involving abuse, exploitation, grooming, prohibited sexual or romantic conduct with a participant, retaliation, deliberate concealment of suspected abuse, or deliberate failure to follow applicable reporting requirements may result in immediate removal.

CMI prohibits retaliation against anyone who makes a good-faith report or participates in a safety investigation.

13. Relationship to MADI Safety Requirements

CMI operates within Massachusetts Destination Imagination and intends these procedures to **supplement and align with MADI's Safety Policy**, not replace it.

Team Managers are expected to comply with applicable MADI safety and screening requirements as well as these CMI procedures. If a situation implicates both policies, CMI will coordinate with MADI as appropriate while ensuring that immediate safety and governmental reporting obligations are not delayed.

14. Acknowledgement and Agreement

I acknowledge that I have received or been provided access to the **Challenge Me, Inc. Abuse Prevention, Reporting & Response Procedures for Team Managers**.

I acknowledge that I:

- Have reviewed and understand these procedures;
- Understand CMI's zero-tolerance policy concerning abuse, neglect, exploitation, and grooming;
- Understand that CMI's standards for appropriate Team Manager/Participant relationships apply to **all participants regardless of age**;
- Understand that romantic or sexual relationships or interactions between a Team Manager and a participant they manage are prohibited, **including when the participant is age 18 or older**;
- Agree to maintain appropriate boundaries and follow CMI's guidelines for interactions with participants;

- Understand that while a Team Manager may conduct a team meeting without another adult present, a Team Manager should never be alone with a single participant except when necessary to respond to an emergency involving the participant's immediate safety;
- Agree to complete the Massachusetts Mandated Reporter Training required by CMI before beginning my Team Manager responsibilities and annually thereafter for each year in which I serve as a CMI Team Manager;
- Understand my responsibility to promptly report suspected child abuse or neglect;
- Understand that CMI's internal reporting procedure does not replace or delay applicable reporting to DCF, law enforcement, or other authorities;
- Agree to comply with applicable MADI safety and screening requirements; and
- Understand that failure to comply with these procedures may result in restriction or removal from my Team Manager role.

Team Manager Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____