



# You Tell The Story: Group Scenario Exercises

## *A Facilitator's Guide for In-Person Trainings*

Are your staff in the mindset that something not just *could* happen, but *will* happen at your organization?

The You Tell Your Story (YTS) group training exercise was designed to create a mindset shift in participants—moving the discussion from theoretical knowledge of what *someone* should do *if* an incident occurs, to a practical imagining of what *we* will do *when* something happens on our watch.

The scenarios are based on real-world incidents that Redwoods has investigated, and may include details that are hard for some of your staff to hear. Give permission for people to step away if needed, and encourage them to seek help.

Below are step-by-step instructions on how to implement these scenarios at your next staff training:

### 1. Distribute the Scenario Cards

Distribute one card per participant—or more if you have a small group. (It's okay to have some people sit out and listen if there are more staff than cards.)

### 2. Read the Scenario Together

Ask participants to read the cards, one at a time—starting with the earliest time stamp. (The cards are also numbered to make this easy.) Encourage them to pause between cards, and reflect on what is happening.

### 3. Debrief as a Group

Take a moment of silence after the scenario has been read to let people gather their thoughts. Then ask the group to raise their hand if their card was an inflection point—a moment that different actions could have led to a different outcome. Start the discussion there.

Once your staff have reflected in the inflection points, we have also compiled some additional sample discussion questions. These questions are intended as a starting point to promote discussion. Please feel free to add your own. (We have included a different set of questions for leadership/board members at the end of this document.) The purpose here is to encourage each participant to put themselves in the scenario they are reading—and to begin imagining how they could influence its outcome.

- How did this story make you feel?
- If you were one of the responding staff, how would you feel about the outcome?
- Could this happen at our organization? Why/Why not?
- Did you recognize the scenario as something you have faced at our organization?
- How will this change your behavior the next time you are at work? What will you do differently?

- Would you raise a concern if you saw similar behaviors at our organization? Who would you speak to?
- What resources, tools or skills would have helped prevent this incident from happening?

#### 4. Leadership/board-level exercises (Optional)

Everybody at your organization has a critical role to play in preventing scenarios like those presented on these cards. Exactly what that role is, however, will vary.

In addition to using these cards with frontline staff, we highly recommend a separate session with senior leadership and/or board members. When doing so, we recommend focusing less on the specifics of a rescue/response, and more on your organization's overall culture of safety. You can use some of the questions below as a starting point:

- How is this resonating with you?
- As a CEO/board member, how would you define your culture of safety?
- Would your staff respond differently?
  - If so, how do you know?
  - If not, what needs to change?
- What barriers are preventing staff from being successful in their roles?
- Knowing staff are showing up differently, with their own emotional and mental challenges, what resources need to be allocated, and where, to ensure staff success?
- What are your next steps going to be following this discussion? (See below for ideas.)

#### Recommended next steps for leadership

Our *You Tell The Story* scenario cards cover several different scenarios—from aquatics to abuse. Each set was designed to encourage reflection. But they were also designed to inspire action. Below are some examples of actions we have heard about from CEOs and other organizational leaders, which they took as an immediate next step after participating in these exercises.

- Send a personal email to all frontline staff, and ask for a response – recommitting to your safety protocols, code of conduct etc.
- Commit to visiting each pool or childcare center within the next week to see for yourself how safety practices are being followed
- Attend the next in-service training to speak on the importance of safety
- Review your hiring protocols to ensure that background checks are being thoroughly completed—including at least one family reference
- Align with director-level staff (childcare directors, aquatics directors etc.) to discuss expectations, provide support, and work through any barriers or challenges preventing execution.
- Repeat these safety messages often, and be specific about asking director- or branch-level leadership to take the same messages back to their teams.