



Trumansburg Safe Spot FAQ

1. Are the safe spots only available to children?

Programs like this are traditionally aimed at youth, but we also want it known that anyone, regardless of age, should feel they can utilize these locations should they ever feel unsafe in their environment or be in urgent need of assistance.

2. Will you be presenting the program to all TCSD classes? How will you know if a child is seeking help getting away from a parent that does not have custody of such child?

We have planned on distributing flyers to the entire school district so teachers have something they can put in student folders. From the inception of this project, the TCSD superintendent has been involved in the conversation and has even directed me to various school personnel to help shape the guidelines of the program. If the school wants me to speak to more groups, I would not say no, but that was never part of the original informational campaign. Regarding the custody question, participants (businesses) are told in their guideline/training packet that if anything of that level is brought to their attention, they are to contact the police immediately. Participants are instructed to approach people using the safe spot and, in fewer words, ask if they're in need of assistance. If a child says they just got away from someone who they shouldn't be with, that would trigger an instant police call.

3. Who will handle oversight and reporting?

Businesses will provide reports of how many people utilized their safe spot during the month and present that data to our monthly chamber board meeting. This program was also developed through guidance from Trumansburg PD so they are very aware of the program's inception and will be checking in on participating locations as part of our increased focus on community policing/walking main street.

4. Can those who utilize a safe spot maintain their anonymity?

It will be confidential in that the participants will not be asking for a name of whom they're helping unless the person offers it up. They may ask the person/people if they'd like to have someone called, but we're not asking for identifications. As of now, the idea is to report how many people used the safe space, their general age range, and what was provided for them.

5. To what extent are businesses liable for the people who use the safe spots?

If there is any threat of violence in the area or the person expresses they're fleeing violence or threats or if they're injured in anyway, that would trigger a call to the police/EMS. Participants are encouraged to default to that move if there are any of these things present, or even if they feel there is a threat of it. In terms of liability, I asked specific questions about that to attorneys, one who works specifically representing youth, and I was told the participants would not have to be worried about liability, especially based on the guidelines and what we make clear is within the scope of what they can offer to a person. We're confident business staff won't try to go beyond what they're told because they know they can't be playing doctor or therapist with people within their business. While we can't anticipate every scenario, we believe we have created a blue print that offers support like a glass of water, a phone call, a pamphlet of information for county services (like Advocacy Center), or a request for a police welfare check. Considering the police, village, and school district are supporting the program, I think we can assume if someone were to get hurt in the presence of a participating business, there will be a swift response and a full debrief. We'll constantly review reports and make necessary changes to improve the program.

6. Are there any neighboring communities that have a similar program?

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7. How will the public become aware of this program?

I mentioned there will be materials distributed through the school. There was a previous article in the Tompkins Weekly about the project and I have published the informational slide deck I presented to the board on Facebook. Those latter two examples were more about introducing the concept. The final documents will be finalized then they will be made public once they've been distributed to the participants. The Village website can host them as will other social media outlets. We also plan to leave paper info sheets at Village Hall and the participating businesses.