

EXPERT-DEVELOPED RESOURCES FOR THOSE WORKING WITH VULNERABLE POPULATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

Leading Catholic Philanthropic Network's Safeguarding Initiative Provides Free Guides & Resources to Support the Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults

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*Dr. Maria (Mona) Robinson of
the Raskob Foundation for
Catholic Activities*

Catholic philanthropic peer network, [FADICA](#), announces the public launch of the [Funder Safeguarding Initiative](#) resource hub after more than 5 years of network action and research. The hub provides free online resources that support sustainable safeguarding best practices to protect children and vulnerable people within non-profit and faith-based organizations.

In 2020, the 50+ funders of FADICA – Catholic Philanthropy Network created a proactive initiative to help member funders and their grantee partners prioritize abuse prevention, in response to the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church globally, and the prevalence of sexual abuse in society. United by the Catholic social tradition and its commitment to the sacredness of human life and

dignity, FADICA developed world-class capacity building resources in partnership with safeguarding experts at Praesidium, an organization specializing in helping institutions prevent sexual abuse. Following a five-year pilot program limited to FADICA members and their grantees, the online resources are now publicly available at no cost to funders, nonprofits, faith-based ministries, and trustees of both foundations and nonprofits.

Since the Catholic Church strengthened safeguarding procedures over 20 years ago, allegations of abuse have declined significantly according to data collected by the Center for Applied Research at Georgetown University and included in the U.S. Catholic bishops' latest annual report on child and youth protection. While evidence indicates that the safeguarding procedures have had a positive impact, the report warns of the dangers of complacency, which “can be dangerous and open the door to bad actors.”

The term “safeguarding” refers to measures and interventions that protect people from abuse, harm, exploitation or violence. From a funder’s perspective, “safeguarding can be a shared value between funder and grantee,” said FADICA member Dr. Maria (Mona) Robinson of the Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities, “and by normalizing this conversation and tackling this issue together as a community, we can contribute to overall culture change.”

The CDC reports that at least one in four girls and one in 20 boys experience child sexual abuse in the U.S. On a global scale, one in six adults age 60 and older experience some form of abuse in a community setting, according to the World Health Organization. The impact of abuse expands beyond individuals to the organizations associated with them, potentially threatening an organization’s mission, reputation, productivity, insurability, and financial stability.

“Keeping people safe from abuse and harm requires a sustained and collaborative effort,” said Alexia Kelley, CEO and President of FADICA. “Our network recognized that funders can advance safeguarding by being aware of the reality of abuse, and connecting their own team and grantee partners with resources to sustain safe environments. This is especially critical for ministries and nonprofits that may not be able to access safeguarding training and resources if they fall outside of a Catholic diocese or for any nonprofit that does not have adequate funding and staff capacity.”

Since training and resources for abuse prevention can be costly for nonprofits already struggling with rising costs and increased demand for services, Kelley added that FADICA “is pleased to expand access to these resources to all funders and nonprofits beyond our network.”

To help funders and nonprofits prioritize safeguarding practices, the Funder Safeguarding Initiative online resource hub provides effective and timely video-based training experiences for the various stages of safeguarding program development, including topics to help organizations develop policy, standardize protocol, destigmatize reporting, and provide support and advocacy for victims of abuse. The resource hub also includes a 5-part video-based training module on Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, which is available in English and Spanish. A toolkit designed specifically for funders with tips and guidelines for partnering with grantees to support safe environments is available for download.

“Our board and staff have a responsibility to protect the God-given dignity of children and vulnerable adults,” shared Sister Sally Duffy, SC, board chair for the Alliance to End Human Trafficking. “The resources and training through FADICA’s Funder’s Safeguarding Initiative helped us develop a code of conduct and formalize a policy for child and adult protection. I highly recommend this training. Every organization that interacts with persons needs collective training in safeguarding for shared accountability.”

Through the Funder Safeguarding Initiative resource hub, FADICA reaffirms its commitment to prioritizing safeguarding as a core part of philanthropy. Funders can be a critical part of the solution to safe environments for all, particularly by providing resources and funding to their

nonprofit partners for safeguarding capacity and best practices.

About FADICA – Catholic Philanthropy Network

FADICA is the leading philanthropic peer network serving as a catalyst for a vital Catholic Church, Catholic ministries, and the common good. We promote the growth and effectiveness of Catholic philanthropy inspired by the joy of the Gospel and the Catholic social tradition. FADICA supports its members through education, exchange, fellowship and faith, research, joint funding opportunities, and interaction with Catholic leadership. Learn more about FADICA at <https://www.fadica.org/> and the Funder Safeguarding Initiative at <https://safeguarding.fadica.org>

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