Red Flag Meetings

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BACKGROUND

Once an organization has begun regularly doing Community Meetings, then a similar format becomes available to use in any emergency or rising level of concern, before an event has occurred as a form of prevention or after an event has already happened as a form of debriefing in service of social learning. Formerly called “Emergency Community Meetings”, the symbol of the “red flag” which can connote either a warning or an indication of an infraction, seemed to convey more of what our team wanted to convey to each other.

WHAT IS IT?

A Red Flag Meeting is a team meeting called to respond to any critical incident or concern. Some examples include AWOLs (absent without leave), a rise in physical holds, an incident of aggression, an injury to a client or staff member, a complaint from a client, family members of staff member – basically to any circumstance that arises that the entire community must respond to as a group.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

The purpose is to respond to a problem before it becomes a bigger problem with a collective voice, to learn as much as possible as a mechanism of social learning, and to formulate a plan that will prevent the problem from escalating or spreading.

Red Flag meetings are called by anyone in the community to discuss an issue facing the community – and we mean anyone. Red Flag Meetings are truly becoming embedded in the culture when a child in a treatment setting can call effectively call one, or when people who are perceived as having little formal power call one to discuss a problem.