

## **Step Up Women's Organization Crisis Communications Plan**



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## INTRODUCTION

## **Purpose**

A crisis is an event that disrupts the normal flow of Step Up Women's Organization and can cause potential damage to the organization. These may range from natural disasters, malevolence, rumors, injuries, misdeeds and/or accidents. By creating a crisis communication plan, we will prepare for any crisis that occurs by having a strategy for the type of crisis that takes place.

## **Objective**

We strongly believe in Step Up's work and message to provide quality resources to girls and young women so they can have their "unique vision of success." By developing this plan, we hope to benefit the company through crisis situations and ourselves academically so our focus can stay on helping young women. We want to inform our mentors, mentees, faculty, staff, stakeholders and the general public when a crisis occurs within our organization. The actions we take for a crisis will depend on the type of crisis that occurs. Our priority is to make sure our audiences know what problems arise from our crisis and how we effectively mitigate them while communicating with the appropriate channels. We want to ensure the trust and security of our employees to thrive as a business and a community.

## **Goals**

Understand the types of crises Step Up might face as a non-profit organization.

Learn how to properly mitigate a crisis with correct communication channels.

Effectively communicate with the right audiences depending on the type of crisis.

Create guidelines to evaluate how effective the crisis communication plan was.

## **TERMINOLOGY**

**Accidents:** Organization is responsible for crisis but did not have intentions to cause it and has no control of event.

**Crisis:** Unplanned situations that cause a disruption in the organization and might cause threats or fears.

**Crisis Management:** The action of preparing your business or company for threats that range from natural disasters, accidents, negative press, rumors, misdeeds and/or malevolence.

**Key Messages:** Are the leading points of information your audiences should know, remember and understand.

**Natural Disasters:** Are negative hazards caused in the environment and nature that affect groups of people. These disasters range from; fires, heatwaves, earthquakes, flooding, tsunamis, mudslides, hurricanes, droughts and/or avalanches.

**Malevolence:** When individuals or groups of people use drastic methods to express outrage or try to gain from, a business or company. The intent is to destroy, harm a reputation or discontinue the company.

**Mentees:** Young girls and women who are enrolled in Step Up to participate in their after-school mentoring programs, events and workshops.

**Mentors:** Are female counselors who guide mentees in Step Up programs.

**Misdeeds:** When decisions taken by the company or individuals in the company cause negative outcomes to stakeholders and/or secondary audiences.

**Rumors:** Information that is untrue or mixed with some truth, told to individuals or groups of people. Rumors circulate into the public and causes damage to a company's reputation and trust of their audiences.

**Stakeholders: People** with an interest in an organization or business who decide to support or fund them. Stakeholders can support your company with resources, attention, donations and/or volunteer. These groups of people can be affected by an organization's actions or can affect the organization itself.

## CRISIS TASK FORCE

### Primary Spokesperson

Delores Druilhet Morton

CEO

- Morton will be the main spokesperson to avoid confusion and will be the familiar face for the public.
- Email: [delores@suwn.org](mailto:delores@suwn.org)
- Phone Number: N/A

### Regional Spokespeople (Board of Directors)

When the CEO isn't embedded into a city and a crisis happens in a regional area, these will be the spokesperson for specific regions. Regional spokespeople will be paired with CEO Delores Druilhet Morton when possible.

#### Eastern Region Board Spokesperson

Maggie Stockdale

- Vice president, enterprise accounts, Media Math (Chair)
- Email: N/A
- Phone number: N/A

#### Midwestern Region Board Spokesperson

Maria Salcedo

- Senior vice president merchandising, Ulta Beauty (Chair)
- Email: N/A
- Phone number: N/A

#### Southern Region Board Spokesperson

- April Carr
- Senior director of sales technology innovation platforms, PepsiCo Foods North America  
(Chair)
- Email: N/A
- Phone number: N/A

### **Western Region Board Spokesperson**

Rachel Begun

- MS, RDN, founder and CEO, Food and Nutrition Solutions, LLC (Chair)
- Email: N/A
- Phone Number: N/A

### **Fielding Media Calls/Internal Communication**

Alissa Cruz

Executive Director, Communications

- Alissa oversees fielding media calls and helps with internal communications
- Email: [alissa@suwn.org](mailto:alissa@suwn.org)
- Phone Number: (310) 880 - 9049

### **Social Media Monitoring and Posting**

Human Marketing

- Digital marketing agency primarily handles content, strategies and postings.
- Email: N/A
- Phone Number: (949) 416-2043
- Address: 100 Progress #220 Irvine, CA 92618

Alissa Cruz

- Collaborates with Human Marketing to pitch and share ideas
- Email: [alissa@suwn.org](mailto:alissa@suwn.org)
- Phone Number: (310) 880 – 9049

**Additional: Operations**

Vivianne Bohorques

VP of Title/VP of Strategy and Operations

- Oversees notifying any officials, public health, evacuation centers, etc.
- Email: [vivianne@suwn.org](mailto:vivianne@suwn.org)
- Phone Number: N/A

## LOCATION OF COMMAND CENTER

### In-person center

- Downtown LA office
- 510 South Hewitt Street #111 Los Angeles, CA 90013

### Online center

- Step Up website
- [suwn.org](http://suwn.org)
- Will serve as a place to find important information during a crisis for audience members.
- Social media sites
  - o Instagram: @stepupwomensnetwork
  - o TikTok: @stepupwomensnetwork
  - o YouTube: Step Up
  - o LinkedIn: Step Up

### Materials for In-Person Centers

- Go bag:
  - o Water, non-perishable food supplies, flashlight, emergency blanket(s), pocket tissues, emergency cash
- Medical kits
  - o Bandages, gauze, clotting sponge, scissors, N95 masks, hand sanitizer, gloves
- Updated documents of funds
- Record of who has passwords to finances
- Physical copies of mentees emergency contacts & local emergency contacts
- Physical copies of medical consent form

## **IMPORTANT CONTACTS**

### **Emergency Contact:**

Downtown Los Angeles Police: (213) 486-6606

Downtown Los Angeles Fire Department: (213) 978-3800

Los Angeles Public Health Department: (213) 240-8040

Evacuation Centers: [emergency.lacity.org/la-responds/emergency-shelters](https://emergency.lacity.org/la-responds/emergency-shelters)

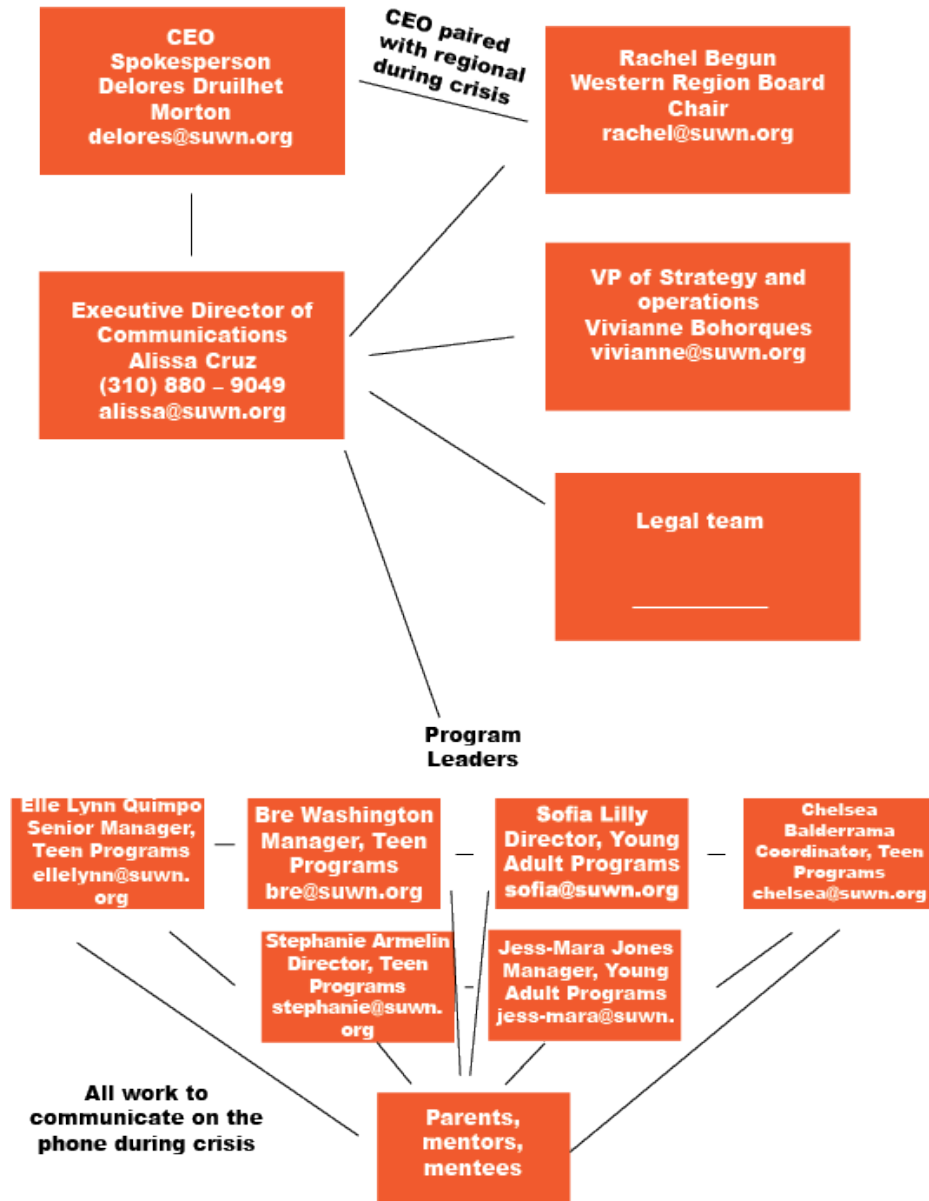
Los Angeles Red Cross: (310) 445-9900

KTLA: (323) 460-5500

LA Times: (213) 880-4265

Dance Magazine: [csims@dancemedia.com](mailto:csims@dancemedia.com)

## PHONE TREE



## **STEP UP'S SOCIAL MEDIA EMPLOYEE POLICY**

These guidelines apply to Step Up employees for all forms of social media including, but not limited to: blogs, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and/or other social media sites and tools. These rules also apply to any comments you may leave on other blogs or Facebook pages, edits to wikis, responses to tweets, postings on message boards/forums, opinions on online polls or any product/services you might author.

When you are participating in social networking, you are representing both yourself personally and Step Up. It is not our intention to restrict your ability to have an online presence or to mandate what you can and cannot say. We believe social networking is a very valuable tool and continue to advocate the responsible involvement of all Step Up employees in this space. While we encourage this online collaboration, we would like you to avoid the misuse of this communication medium.

## KEY STAKEHOLDERS

### Board Members

People in Step Up who determine company policies, where resources go, make decisions and evaluate company performance.

### Sponsors/Investors

A business or company that will support Step Up through events, individuals or donations in hopes of gaining brand awareness.

Companies that sponsor Step Up:

- JC Penny
- Benefit Cosmetics
- Foot Locker, Inc.
- Forever 21
- NBCUniversal

### Step Up Young Girls and Women (Mentees)

Young girls and women who are in predominantly underfunded communities. These girls are mostly people of color who are first-generation students. In Step Up to receive networking opportunities, help with college/high school, mentorship and guidance.

Young high school girls around 14-18

Young women going through womanhood around 18-23

### Employees

People who currently work under Step Up at the offices, at after school programs, are mentors and/or have leadership positions.

### High Schools

High schools offer Step Up as an after-school program.

## OUTLINE (TABLE) OF POSSIBLE CRISES

**\*The highlighted ones, are discussed in this crisis plan**

Accidents:	Malevolence:	Misdeeds:	Natural Disasters:	Rumors:
<p>Bus Accident</p> <p>Celebrity Injury</p> <p>Falling off a stage during in-person events</p>	<p>Gun violence</p> <p>Kidnapping employees</p> <p>Social media hacking</p>	<p>An employee or member of Step Up stealing funds from the company</p> <p>Releasing information</p>	<p>Fire</p> <p>Earthquakes</p> <p>Mudslides</p> <p>Heatwaves</p>	<p>Investor's personal crisis</p> <p>Inappropriate behavior between employee and young girls</p> <p>Possible layoffs</p>

## **TYPES OF CRISES: KEY MESSAGES AND RESPONSE STRATEGIES**

In this section, we outline five categories of crises under Step Up. This includes examples and a short description of the crisis for each category. Although some of these crises may not happen, we have outlined key messages that can be used for various channels and the types of response strategies for each.

These are guidelines to get a crisis communication plan started and may be tweaked depending on the specific crisis Step Up faces. To figure out how to communicate with different response strategies, we have included templates found in the “Appendix” section.

Our types of crises include:

- Accidents
- Malevolence
- Misdeeds
- Natural Disasters
- Rumors

## **ACCIDENTS**

### **Bus Accident**

- If the girls were on a field trip and the bus had a bad accident.

#### **Key Messages:**

- Step Up honors the opportunities we can provide for young girls through our field trips and networking opportunities.
- On one of our trips, one of Step Up bus's got into an accident and caused some injuries to Step Up girls.
- We apologize for the inconvenience, and we always want to make sure Step Up mentees safety and well-being are our top priority.
- We have taken different means of transportation to take Step Up girls back to the initial meeting spot through an alternative bus.
- Right now, we are working to take safety precautions to prevent this from happening in the future.
- We thank you for your cooperation and letting us care for your young girls in a situation like this.

#### **Response Strategies:**

- Media statement
- Communicate via dark website for updates on the incident.
- Contact families or guardians with phone scripts dark website.
- Internal Memo
- Social media

## Celebrity Injury

- If a celebrity fell off the stage or fell in general and got badly injured

Key message:

- We are grateful to get opportunities to work with celebrities like [name]
- This was an unfortunate accident.
- We are looking into safety precautions to prevent this from happening in the future.
- We hope they have a speedy recovery
- What we can do to make them feel better at this time.

Response strategies:

- Fill out incident report(s)
- Phone script
- Media template
- Internal email

## **MALEVOLENCE**

### **Gun Violence**

- If there was an active shooter on campus

#### Key Message:

- This is a child and parents' worst fear can happen on campus.
- We do our best to make sure girls feel empowered and safe in our programs.
- Nothing could've prepared us for this, but we did our best to keep them safe.
- We are working to make these girls feel safe to return to the programs and are working directly with the schools on safety precautions and scheduling active shooter training.
- We ask that you respect the privacy of these girls and their families.
- Where they can support those affected

#### Response Strategies:

- Phone script
- Media Statements
- Media briefing
- Social media
- Dark website: Update with information as soon as you get it. Refer parents to website for updates. Will tell parents where they can pick up their children and the address of the hospital for casualties. (Call personally if a student was a casualty.) Use it for the coming days for information on resources for students/families.

## **MISDEEDS**

### **An employee or member of Step Up stealing funds from the company**

- If an employee was secretly stealing money from fundraisers and donations for their personal gains.

#### Key Message:

- Step Up holds strong values of giving young women and girls the ability to interact with professionals through mentorships and afterschool programs to develop their careers.
- This afternoon, we discovered a breach of funds being stolen by one of our employees.
- It pains us to know trust has been broken between one of our employees and Step Up.
- The money we receive never goes towards personal use and always helps the organization continue to support our young girls and women.
- The Step Up employee is fired and they are not welcomed to work for us ever again.
- For the future, we will check and monitor our funds closely to make sure the money we receive goes towards our necessities.

#### Response Strategies:

- Emails (Sent to sponsors/investors of Step Up)
- Fact sheet about where all the funding goes when Step Up receives donations (available for public view)
- Immediately sharing necessary information without revealing too much while more details come out
- Internal Memo
- Media statement template

## **NATURAL DISASTER**

### **Natural Disaster(s)**

- Earthquake or fire during the after-school program:

#### Key Messages:

- We do our best to make sure girls feel empowered and safe in our programs.
- This is a horrible and scary thing that we have to deal with living in California.
- We are working to make these girls feel safe to return to the programs and are working directly with the schools on safety precautions and scheduling natural disaster drills.
- We ask that you respect the privacy of these girls and their families.
- Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers
- Where they can support those affected

#### Response Strategies:

- Send phone script to parent(s) or guardian(s)
- Send email(s)
- Media statement
- Social media
- Dark website

## RUMORS

### Investor that is having their own PR crisis: Rumors

- An investor with Step Up is having their own crisis and Step Up is starting to receive attention for their affiliation with them. The investor has racist speech toward people of color. Audiences believe that Step Up follows the same ideals as their sponsors.

#### Key Message:

- Under Step Up we thrive under communities of women from all different backgrounds and only strive to empower young women through our resources.
- It has come to our attention that one of our sponsors has recently faced backlash from saying hate speech towards people of color.
- Step Up does not tolerate racism, prejudice, hate speech or discrimination towards sexual orientations, people of color, race, religion, background and age.
- We have decided to remove our sponsor from our list because their hate speech does not align with our values
- We want to be surrounded by others who believe in the values of empowerment, success and resources to uplift our young girls.

#### Response Strategies:

- A statement through social media platforms
- Drop the company from working with Step Up
- Email statement to employees: Reviewing social media policies and stating the crisis

### **Inappropriate behavior between employees and young girls: Rumors**

- If there are uncomfortable interactions between a young girl in the Step Up program and an employee taking advantage of young girls.

#### **Key Message Example:**

- Step Up stays committed to offering young girls and women resources and a safe environment to elevate them into a professional career.
- We have recently found rumors of inappropriate behavior between one of our Step Up employees and a young girl in our after-school program.
- We sincerely apologize to the victim and the victim's family for putting their child in a situation where they feel unsafe.
- To ensure security between our Step Up girls and our staff, we will have Step Up girls fill out weekly wellness forms regarding safety, mental health and evaluate our staff.
- Thank you for staying patient and choosing Step Up to push young girls into successful careers.

#### **Response Strategies:**

- Emails (To high school superiors and young girls attending)
- Fact sheet explaining Step Up's procedure for safety between minors and Step Up employees
- Internal memo template describing new procedures to Step Up employees
- Phone scripts (will be sent towards parents) describing what happened and how we will make sure it won't happen again.
- Put employee on temporary leave until more information arises

- Resources for the students and any possible victims(s)

### **DARK WEBSITE**

- i. Being a small team, when there is a crisis, anything to reduce the number of phone calls your organization receives can make a difference. A dark website is a website used during a crisis to provide the public and media with updates and resources.
- ii. Suggested links:
  - a. During a natural disaster or active shooting, telling parents to look on the dark website link to: Updates about where the students evacuated to, what hospital injured students will be at, what roads are blocked off, etc.
  - b. During a bus accident: updates on students' safety, if they are all okay, if any are injured, where students can be picked up, what hospital injured students will be at, etc.
  - c. Misdeeds: Updates about the type of misdeed needs to be included and the severity of it needs to be measured. Include a quick statement about how this will affect Step Up employees and the mentees in the program
  - d. Rumors: If the rumors were getting lots of media attention, then a statement about the situation is needed.
- iii. Activation for:
  - a. Accidents: Once there are major injuries
  - b. Malevolence: As soon as possible to prevent phone jams
  - c. Misdeeds: As soon as there is backlash
  - d. Natural Disasters: When there is damage to property or injuries towards people
  - e. Rumors: When it starts circulating on social media platforms

## **ACTIVATION CRITERIA**

### **Plan Activator**

#### **CEO**

- The CEO will be the one to activate the plan for all five categories of the plan. She will get help from, Alissa Cruz, to understand the severity of the crisis and how

### **Circumstances for Accidents**

- Bus Accident: As soon as information is given the phone script should be implemented. If there are any injuries or deaths, then a statement and email should be released within the next day or two days.
- Celebrity Injury: Once there is information about injury/if celebrity speaks out about it.

### **Circumstances for Malevolence**

- Active shooter: As soon as possible. As soon as information is given the phone script should be implemented. Even if there are no injuries or deaths then a statement and email should be released within the next day. Include a media briefing if there are injuries or deaths.

### **Circumstances for Misdeeds**

- Employee stealing funds from company: Once there is talk across multiple regions of Step Up.
  - o If the media gains start to bring attention to it and start questioning Step Up for their ethics.

### **Circumstances for Natural Disasters**

- Earthquakes & Fires: As soon as information is given the phone call should happen. If there are any casualties the media statement & email should be released in the next day or so. If no injuries or deaths just an email.

#### **Circumstances for Rumors**

- Step Up values speculation from investor affiliation: Once there is attention on social media platforms.
- Inappropriate behavior between employee and Step Up mentee: Once speculation starts to circulate between Step Up girls and women.

## PROCEDURES: ACCIDENTS

### Bus Accident

- Internally
  - Filling out an incident form
  - Reporting to Vivianne Bohorques of HR.
  - Safety of girls comes first
  - Once you get contact with mentor ask them:
    - Is it still going on?
    - Where are/will they evacuate to?
    - Is anyone hurt?
    - What hospital will injured people be at?
- Externally
  - Consult the legal team before making a statement. Respecting privacy of minors.  
Draft it and then would be looked over
  - Media communications (Alissa Cruz)
  - Spokesperson (CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton)
  - Media statements (Regional spokesperson with CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton)
  - Social media monitoring (Human Marketing)
  - Calling and reaching out to parents during a crisis emergency (Program department)
- Tools
  - Intranet, phone script, email, social media, news release, dark website
- Stakeholders receiving key messages
  - Employees: Intranet and email

- Investors/sponsors: Email
- Board Members: Intranet and email
- High Schools: Email
- Tips
  - When writing statements feel free to change the tone or the voice closer to something of the brand's.

### **Celebrity Injury**

- Internally
  - Filling out an incident form
  - Reporting to Vivianne Bohorques of HR.
- Externally
  - Working with the legal team before making a statement.
  - Spokesperson (CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton)
  - Media statements (Regional spokesperson with CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton)
  - Social media monitoring (Human Marketing)
- Tools
  - Intranet, phone script, email, social media, news release
- Stakeholders receiving key messages
  - Employees: Intranet and email
  - Investors/sponsors: Email
  - Board Members: Intranet and email
  - High Schools: Email

- Questions stakeholders may ask:
  - Are they okay? /How are they feeling?
  - Did they go to the hospital?
  - How will they feel about working with Step Up in the future?
  - Do they blame Step Up for the situation?
  - How could this affect funding?
- Tips
  - To prevent any negativity coming to the page from a celebrity blaming Step Up, be extra kind to them, continue asking for updates, send flowers and a card.
  - In a situation where someone falls off the stage, it can feel pretty embarrassing. To respect celebrities' privacy don't make an announcement unless there is already press on it or if celebrity is talking to media.
  - When writing statements feel free to change the tone or the voice closer to something of the brand's.

## **PROCEDURES: MALEVOLENCE**

### **Gun Violence**

- Internally
  - Filing an incident report.
  - Reporting to Vivianne Bohorques of HR.
  - Safety of girls comes first
  - Once you get contact with mentor ask them:
    - Is it still going on?
    - Where are/will they evacuate to?
    - Is anyone hurt?
    - What hospital will injured people be at?
    - Is there anything else we can do to help?
- Externally
  - Consult the legal team before making a statement. Respecting privacy of minors.  
Draft it and then would be looked over
  - Media communications (Alissa Cruz)
  - Spokesperson (CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton)
  - Media statements (Regional spokesperson with CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton)
  - Social media monitoring (Human Marketing)
  - Calling and reaching out to parents during a crisis emergency (Program department)
- Tools
  - Email, phone calls, social media, news release, media briefings, dark website

- Stakeholders receiving key messages
  - Employees: Intranet and email
  - Investors/sponsors: Email
  - Board Members: Intranet and email
  - High Schools: Email
  - Questions stakeholders may ask:
    - Is everyone okay?
    - What happened?
    - How will this affect funding?
    - What is being done to make these girls feel safe enough to come back?
    - Is there anything we can do to help?
- Tips
  - When using these templates, feel free to use your brand's own style of voice.
  - Remember to be very careful of the words used and empathize with families for the templates.

## **PROCEDURES: MISDEEDS**

### **Step Up employee stealing funds**

- Internally
  - Filing a report and reporting to necessary department (Alissa Cruz)
  - Staff-wide media policy (CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton)
- Externally
  - Fielding media calls (Alissa Cruz)
  - Media interaction (Spokesperson: Dolores Druilhet Morton along with regional spokesperson)
  - Social media monitoring (Human Marketing)
  - Fact Sheet (Alissa Cruz)
- Tools
  - Emails, news release, intranet, Instagram and Twitter
- Stakeholders receiving key messages
  - Employees: Intranet and email
  - Investors/sponsors: Email
  - Board Members: Intranet and email
  - High Schools: Email
  - Questions stakeholders may ask:
    - Is everyone okay?
    - What happened?
    - How will this affect funding?
    - What is being done to make these girls feel safe enough to come back?

- Is there anything we can do to help?
- 
- Tips
  - When communicating with stakeholders, make sure to not give too much details if information is still in the process of verification.
  - Fill in any information in the templates based on the person who will release the templates and who is the spokesperson for it.
  - When reaching out to investors, do not tell them the specific amount of money stolen by employee.
  - Do not release employee names externally to follow legal procedures.

## **PROCEDURES: NATURAL DISASTERS**

### **Fires or Earthquakes**

- Internally:
  - Filing an incident report.
  - Reporting to Vivianne Bohorques of HR.
  - Safety of girls comes first
  - Once you get contact with mentor ask them:
    - Is it still going on?
    - Where are/will they evacuate to?
    - Is anyone hurt?
    - What hospital will injured people be at?
- Externally
  - Consult the legal team before making a statement. Respecting privacy of minors.  
Draft it and then would be looked over
  - Media communications (Alissa Cruz)
  - Spokesperson (CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton)
  - Media statements (Regional spokesperson with CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton)
  - Social media monitoring (Human Marketing)
  - Calling and reaching out to parents during a crisis emergency (Program department)
- Tools
  - Intranet, email, phone calls, social media, news release, dark website
- Stakeholders receiving key messages

- Employees: Intranet and email
- Investors/sponsors: Email
- Board Members: Intranet and email
- High Schools: Email
- Questions stakeholders may ask:
  - Is everyone okay?
  - What happened?
  - How will this affect funding?
  - What is being done to make these girls feel safe enough to come back?
  - Is there anything we can do to help?
- Tips
  - When writing statements feel free to change the tone or the voice closer to something of the brand's.
  - Remember to be careful of the words used and empathize with families for the templates.

## **PROCEDURES: RUMORS**

### **Backlash to Step Up from investor affiliation during their backlash**

- Internally
  - Release internal memo (CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton)
  - Writing emails to employees (Alissa Cruz)
  - Releasing emails to employees (Regional Spokesperson)
- Externally
  - Writing and releasing social media statements (Human Marketing)
- Tools
  - Email, intranet, social media platforms, zoom, and dark website.
- Stakeholders receiving key messages
  - Employees: Email, intranet, Zoom
  - Step Up young girls and women: Instagram, Twitter, Email, dark website
  - Board members: Intranet
- Tips
  - Do not make excuses for the affiliation with the investors
  - Drop them immediately if possible and communicate that information with your audience as soon as possible
  - For templates, follow along with the key messages and add a couple more sentences of detail if necessary

### **Inappropriate behavior between Step Up employee and mentee**

- Internally
  - Create and release internal memo (Alissa Cruz and Dolores Druilhet Morton)

- Approving new safety procedures (Chair Board Member)
- Going over new safety procedures (CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton and regional spokesperson)
- Externally
  - Creating and releasing emails (Alissa Cruz and regional spokesperson)
  - Creating and releasing fact sheet (Alissa Cruz)
  - Dark website section (Vivianne Bohorques)
  - Communicating phone scripts (Regional spokesperson)
  - Communication with high schools (CEO Dolores Druilhet Morton)
  - Social media statements, if necessary (Human Marketing)
- Tools
  - Email, intranet, dark website, phone calls, social media platforms
- Stakeholders receiving key messages
  - High schools: Email
  - Employees: Intranet and email
  - Board Members: Intranet and email
  - Step Up mentees: Voicemail, email and Instagram
- Tips
  - Do not release name of employee or Step Up girl until consent is given by both parties.
  - Employees must not speak to outside sources of the situation unless given prior consent.
  - Be empathic and apologize for all communications with stakeholders.

- Follow the templates closely as it follows a good structure to release to stakeholders.

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## **CRISIS RECOVERY**

### **CHECKLIST: ACCIDENTS**

#### **Bus Accident:**

- ☐ Providing resources
- ☐ Checking drivers' history in thorough background check
- ☐ Researching safest option for vehicles to transport girls
  - Is it a yellow bus, charter bus, none and carpooling instead?
- ☐ Creating go bags and medical kits for mentors to tailor specifically to this situation.
- ☐ Filing injury reports with medical teams
- ☐ Checking in with injured mentees and mentors

#### **Celebrity injury:**

- ☐ Checking in with celebrity on their health
- ☐ Making sure their medical bill is paid off if there were any injuries
- ☐ Speaking to their legal team for any public statements if any
- ☐ Creating a get better basket and stating deepest apologies
- ☐ Create a survey or indication of how well Step Up handled the situation
- ☐ Ask if celebrity would still be willing to work with Step Up

## **CHECKLIST: MALEVOLENCE**

### **Gun Violence:**

- ☐ Resources for those effected posted on dark website, social media, and email
- ☐ GoFundMe sharing on dark website, email, and social media.
- ☐ Contact the schools about their security steps to prevent active shootings.
  - Example: Security, automatic locking doors, prevention training, etc.
- ☐ Implement drills for all Step Up locations.
- ☐ Setting up remembrance gatherings for any deaths.
- ☐ Step Up mentors should save the local police department number in their phone.

## **CHECKLIST: MISDEEDS**

### **Step Up employee stealing funds**

- ☐ Sending emails to employees regarding updates.
- ☐ Asking employees how often information got to the media.
- ☐ Create surveys regarding employee satisfaction with new procedures.
- ☐ Employee signatures for new policies.
- ☐ Meeting with board members, public relations department and CEO.
- ☐ Monthly reminders to check finances.

## **CHECKLIST: NATURAL DISASTERS**

### **Post Disaster (Fire or Earthquakes) Checklist**

- ☐ Implement drills for all Step Up locations.
- ☐ Checking in on injured students.
  - ☐ Are they recovered, on their way to recovery, are they doing worse, were there more deaths?
- ☐ Resources for those effected posted on website, social media, and email.
- ☐ GoFundMe sharing on email and social media.
- ☐ Setting up remembrance gatherings for any deaths.
- ☐ Contact the school about fire and earthquake safety prevention:
  - ☐ Asking when the school had its last inspection and maintenance.
  - ☐ Ask about the fire safety guidelines the school uses and if they already have a disaster plan.
  - ☐ Ask if mentors could create and store a go bag specifically for the after-school program.

## **CHECKLIST: RUMORS**

### **Sponsor/Investor facing backlash and now is affecting Step Up**

- ☐ Evaluate crisis plan with board members and public relations department.
- ☐ Check with mental health of employees.
- ☐ Determine earlier plan to do research about sponsors/investors Step Up works with.
- ☐ Continue to keep sponsors/investors informed
- ☐ Give a social media update on the situation if necessary
- ☐ Analyze any media coverage and the tone they used

### **Inappropriate behavior between Step Up employee and mentee**

- ☐ Ask Step Up mentees if the weekly surveys are helping them.
- ☐ Evaluate crisis plan with board members and public relations department.
- ☐ Stay in touch with Step Up mentees and victims effected
- ☐ Preform an act of goodwill with appropriate resources for Step Up mentees
- ☐ Analyze parental response
- ☐ Revisit crisis plan for additional information if needed

## APPENDIX A: ACCIDENTS

### Bus Accident

#### *Phone Script Template*

Hello, I'm calling on behalf of Step Up to let you know there was a bus accident. [What happened exactly if known.] Your child is [safe or injured]. Students are at [place] where they can be picked up. I'm sorry, I know this information is scary to hear and you probably have a lot of questions. This is the information we know right now, and any updates will be posted on our website.

*Media Statement Template (With casualties)*

Contact Information

(Company Name/Individual)

(Phone Number)

(Email Address)

For Immediate Release

Natural Disaster at [school] during Step Up after school program

(City, State, Month Date) —At Step Up we strive to empower, protect, and support young girls. We love to provide opportunities for young girls through our field trips and networking.

Unfortunately, on [date] there was a bus accident and there were \_\_\_\_ deaths and \_\_\_\_ injuries. [Explain what happened if needed. Hydroplaned, crashed into something, mechanical issues etc.]

We apologize to those affected and send our condolences out to their families.

Right now, our focus is on making sure these girls feel safe to come to the program and working with the schools to prevent this from happening as best we can. We are working to create further background checks on drivers and researching safest vehicles for transportation.

We ask that the public respect these families' privacy and keep them in your thoughts and prayers. A GoFundMe for medical bills and funeral costs will be linked on our website, along with any other updates.

Thank you.

###

\*If no casualties no media statement necessary.



*Email Template (With Casualties)*

Dear Step Up community,

We strive to help these girls empower, protect, and support these young girls. Their safety and wellbeing is our top priority.

We love to provide opportunities for young girls through our field trips and networking.

Unfortunately, [today, yesterday, on date] there was a bus accident out of our control.

(Explain what happened if needed? Hydroplaned, crashed into something, mechanical issues etc.) Unfortunately, there were \_\_\_\_ deaths and \_\_\_\_ injuries.

Please keep these families in our prayers and wish those injured a quick recovery.

[Here you can suggest memorial events, where to send donations for medical bills, resources for grieving families].

Sincerely,

Step Up

*Social media:*

Instagram:

Image:

Text:

At Step Up we strive to empower, protect, and support young girls. We love to provide opportunities for young girls through our field trips and networking.

Unfortunately, on [date] there was a bus accident and there were \_\_\_\_ deaths and \_\_\_\_ injuries. [Explain what happened if needed. Hydroplaned, crashed into something, mechanical issues etc.]

We apologize to those affected and send our condolences out to their families.

Right now, our focus is on making sure these girls feel safe to come to the program and working with the schools to prevent this from happening as best we can. We are working to create further background checks on drivers and researching safest vehicles for transportation.

We ask that the public respect these families' privacy and keep them in your thoughts and prayers. A GoFundMe for medical bills and funeral costs, along with any other updates will be linked in our bio.

Thank you.

Twitter: Screenshot of media statement posted as an image

Facebook:

Same as media statement.

## **Celebrity Injury**

*Phone for celebrity's management team*

Hello, we wanted to let you know that [name] was injured during a Step Up class/event/meeting. We are getting medical attention now. Explain what happened and what they injured to the best of their ability. They are on their way to [hospital] right now.

*Phone for superior*

Hello, [name] was injured. Provide any info about if they filled out an incident report, if they need hospitalization, and what hospital they will go to.

Internal memo: Explain the situation and provide a scan of the incident report.

*Media template*

Contact Information

(Company Name/Individual)

(Phone Number)

(Email Address)

For Immediate Release

[Name of celebrity] injured at [school] during Step Up after school program

(City, State, Month Date) — One of the really special parts about Step Up is working with celebrities like [name] to empower these young girls and we are so grateful to work with [her/them/him].

Unfortunately, on [date] [they] fell off the stage and were injured. We apologize to [name] and hope they have a speedy recovery.

*Email template to parents/mentees/mentors*

One of the special parts about Step Up is working with celebrities like [name] to empower these young girls and we are so grateful to work with [her/them/him].

Unfortunately, on [date] [they] fell off the stage and were injured. We are working to prevent this from happening in the future. For now, please be aware of your surroundings and do not stand near the edge of the stage when possible.

If girls would like to send get well soon cards to [name] they can do so by sending to [address].

Thank you for your support.

With appreciation,

[Name]

## APPENDIX B: MALEVOLENCE

### Gun Violence

#### *Phone Script to Call Families Template*

Hello, I'm calling on behalf of Step Up to inform you there is an active shooter on campus at [school]. I'm sorry, we don't have much information at this time but once students are released, they will wait for you at [place]. (If information is available.) I'm sorry I know this is scary information to hear and you probably have questions, this is all the information we have for now but once we know more, we'll provide updates on our website to get information out in a timely manner.

*Internal Memo*

Dear Step Up team,

Unfortunately, on [date] there was an active shooter at [school]. The team tried their best to keep students safe but there were \_\_\_\_ deaths and \_\_\_\_ injuries.

Right now, we need to make sure these girls feel safe and supported coming to this program. We are working with the schools on what measures we can take to prevent this from happening in the future. We will email mentors once we receive more information.

Furthermore, all mentors must go through active shooter training this month and practice an active shooter drill with mentees. We also recommend all mentors look up their local police department and save the number.

Communicate with the girls that if they don't feel comfortable attending the program this week that it is okay but if they want to spend a class talking about what happened that is also okay.

If you'd like to attend or support those affected by this [insert any information about memorials, funerals, remembrances, any GoFundMe's, where to send meals for family members, where to send flowers etc.]

Thank you for your cooperation.

With appreciation,

[Name]

*Media Statement Template*

Contact Information

(Company Name/Individual)

(Phone Number)

(Email Address)

For Immediate Release

Active shooter at [school] during Step Up after school program

(City, State, Month Date) — At Step Up, we strive to empower, protect, and support young girls. Their safety and well-being are our top priority. Unfortunately, on [date] there was an active shooter at [school]. The team tried their best to keep students safe but there were \_\_\_\_ deaths and \_\_\_\_ injuries.

This is our worst fear when working at a school and something we never imagined would happen to us.

Right now, our focus is on making sure these girls feel safe to come to the program and working with the schools to prevent this from happening as best we can. Furthermore, we are setting up active shooter training mandatory for all mentors and an active shooter drill for all mentees.

We ask that the public respect these families' privacy and keep them in your thoughts and prayers. A GoFundMe for medical bills and funeral costs will be linked on our website, along with any other updates.

Thank you.

###

*Social Media Statement*

Instagram:

Image: Infographic about gun violence

Text: At Step Up, we strive to empower, protect, and support young girls. Unfortunately, on [date] there was an active shooter at [school]. The team tried their best to keep students safe but there were \_\_\_\_ deaths and \_\_\_\_ injuries.

This is our worst fear when working at a school and something we never imagined would happen to us.

Right now, our focus is on making sure these girls feel safe to come to the program and working with the schools to prevent this from happening as best we can. Furthermore, we are setting up active shooter training mandatory for all mentors and an active shooter drill for all mentees.

We ask that the public respect these families' privacy and keep them in your thoughts and prayers. A GoFundMe for medical bills and funeral costs, along with any other updates will be linked in our bio.

Thank you.

Twitter: Posting a screen shot of media statement as an image to post

Facebook: Same as media statement

## APPENDIX C: MISDEEDS

### **An employee or member of Step Up stealing funds from the company**

*Email Statement Template: Towards Sponsor/Investor*

Dear (Insert investor/sponsor name of stolen donation),

We honor your support towards Step Up and believing in our values of giving our mentees the ability to connect with professionals through mentorships, experiences and afterschool programs to develop their careers. (Insert time of discovered funds stolen), we discovered funds being stolen by one of our employees. We apologize for the inconvenience and the money you are donating going towards personal desires. It saddens us to know trust has been broken between our Step Up employee and organization. As a result, Step Up immediately fired the employee, is not allowed to return and will be charged for embezzlement. For the future, we will closely monitor our funds to ensure the money we receive goes towards supporting our Step Up mentees and our organization. Thank you for staying patient with us during these tough times.

Sincerely,

(Insert CEO Name), Step Up

*Internal Memo*

To: Step Up Employees

From: CEO (Insert Name)

Date: (Insert Date)

Subject: Corporate Wrongdoing: Stealing Funds

Step Up values committed employees who respect the organization's values, property and assets. To enhance our company trust, we ask to always maintain and keep company policy memorable. Under this organization, we do not tolerate any stealing, theft or fraud.

Recently, a Step Up employee was reported to be stealing funds from our organization. Funds that we receive from our sponsors or investors, go directly to benefit multiple programs, field trips, mentorships and getting professionals to interact with our mentees. Due to the stealing, we are firing our Step Up employee from working in all regions of the country Step Up currently runs and will not be allowed to work for us again. We take stealing very seriously since our organization runs on donations to continue to keep us open.

Every allegation of fraud or embezzlement will be investigated thoroughly and you will be placed on temporary leave until we gather more information. Some cases will reach legal prosecution and will cause serious charges against you, leaving you with a bad record.

I expect all Step Up employees and our team to cooperate with our procedures.

Additionally, I expect employees to speak up if there is unusual behavior with our finance documents or with an employee.

Step Up employees are required to read additional rules, relating to finances in the employee handbook. Some of the new sections include; (Insert titles). Thank you for your cooperation and dedication to our organization.

(Insert Name)

(Insert company title)

*Fact Sheet Template*

(Title) Where Our Money Goes

At Step Up, we value the resources we give our mentees through mentorship, afterschool programs, networking opportunities and in-person experiences. We couldn't have done this without the donations from our (sponsors or investors).

(Title) Our Funds Go To:

(Enter percentage number) goes to our afterschool programs across (enter number of high schools) across the country

For our in-person workshops (enter percentage number) goes to transportation, meals and (include any other information)

Our sponsors also gift us (include what investors or sponsors give out) when going out to field trips

Improvements (Title on how Step Up's resources has helped)

(Enter percentage number) of mentees reported Step Up has helped them feel comfortable in speaking out their minds

(Enter percentage number) of mentees enjoyed the in-person workshops and experiences offers

(Include any other facts about Step Up girls and women)

*Media Statement Template*

Contact Information

(Company Name/Individual)

(Phone Number)

(Email Address)

For Immediate Release

Step Up is Facing Reports of an Employee Stealing Funds

(City, State, Month Date) — Step Up values trust, empowerment and enjoys providing resources for young girls and women to thrive in their future careers. On (insert date and time) we become aware of a Step Up employee stealing funds from donations for their personal use. We do not tolerate stealing under any circumstances and have fired our employee immediately.

While more information is developing, we are taking legal action to get a case sorted out for records. We plan to release financial information later in the year including (insert what will be released for financial honesty). We deeply apologize to any of our (sponsors/investors) the money was taken from and want to rebuild trust between our company and our investors.

(Include important additional information)

\

(Call to Action)

###

**Possible Stakeholder Questions:**

How much money was stolen from Step Up?

Who was the person who stole from Step Up?

How will this effect Step Up?

Will resources for young girls and women in the program have to be cutback?

Who else knew about this situation?

How long has this been going on for?

## APPENDIX D: NATURAL DISASTERS

### *Phone script to parent or guardian*

Hello, I am calling on behalf of Step Up to inform you there was a [natural disaster] at [school]. Your child is [safe or injured]. [Include hospital information if student is going to hospital.] I'm sorry, I know this information is scary to hear and you probably have a lot of questions. This is the information we know right now, and any updates will be posted on our website.

*Internal memo email: If causalities*

Dear Step Up community,

We strive to help these girls thrive. Their safety and well-being are our top priority.

Unfortunately, [today, yesterday, on date] there was a [natural disaster] out of our control.

The team tried their best to keep students safe but there were \_\_\_\_ deaths and \_\_\_\_ injuries.

Right now, we need to make sure these girls feel safe coming to this program. We are working with the schools on what precautionary measures we can take to better prepare for the future. We will email mentors once we receive more information. For now, can mentors email us if they have a go bag or not and if they need any extra supplies?

Please keep these families in our prayers and wish those injured a quick recovery. [Here you can suggest memorial events, where to send donations for medical bills, and resources for grieving families].

*Media Statement Template*

Contact Information

(Company Name/Individual)

(Phone Number)

(Email Address)

For Immediate Release

[Natural disaster] at [school] during Step Up after school program

(City, State, Month Date) — At Step Up, we strive to empower, protect, and support young girls. Unfortunately, on [date] there was an active shooter at [school]. The team tried their best to keep students safe but there were \_\_\_\_ deaths and \_\_\_\_ injuries.

Right now, our focus is on making sure these girls feel safe to come to the program and working with the schools to prevent this from happening as best we can.

Right now, we need to make sure these girls feel safe coming to this program. We are working with the schools on what precautionary measures we can take to better prepare for the future.

Furthermore, we are setting up natural disaster drills for all Step Up locations.

We ask that the public respect these families' privacy and keep them in your thoughts and prayers. A GoFundMe for medical bills and funeral costs will be linked on our website, along with any other updates.

Thank you.

*Media briefing: If an individual journalist*

- Research the kind of stories the writer and publication write. Who is their audience? Have they covered stories from our organization before? Have they covered other shootings? Do they have a political leaning?
- Ask if it will be in-person, recorded, on zoom, etc.
- Ask “what you are trying to achieve from this interview

*If multiple publications for a mass media briefing*

- What to say if you don’t like the question or are uncomfortable with it.
- How are the girls doing?
- What is Step Up doing to prevent something like this happening again?
- How do you plan to make these girls feel safe coming back to the programs?
- Information about what exactly happened.
- Answer questions as accurately as possible with lots of care and empathy. Respect family's privacy.

## APPENDIX E: RUMORS

### **Investor that is having their own PR crisis: Rumors**

*Email Template: To Employees*

Dear Step Up employees,

Step Up continues to believe in empowering young women and girls into positive opportunities with mentors, professionals and employees like you. It has come to our attention (insert sponsor/investor name) has come under fire for spilling hate speech (insert misdeed). Due to our affiliation with (insert sponsor/company name) we are starting to receive attention on (insert social media) and audiences are believing we follow in the same beliefs. As a Step Up community, we do not condone any forms of hate speech, racism, prejudice and other forms of discrimination towards marginalized groups. (Insert sponsor/investor name) does not align with what we believe in as empowerment, positivity and community.

As a result, we are removing (insert sponsor/investor) as one of our investors and will not work with them in the future. We ask that you do not personally speak on the situation to the media or other news outlets without approval. As Step Up employees, please take time to review our social media policies in the Employee Handbook. Thank you for continuing to empower Step Up through our values and displaying true positivity every day.

Warm Regards,

Step Up

### *Social Media Statement*

Step Up continues to hold the values of empowerment, positivity, community and progress for young women and girls — especially women of color. Recently, it has come to our attention that one of our sponsors/investors (insert sponsor/investor) has faced backlash from stating hate speech towards (state which group of people have been discriminated). We do not tolerate racism, prejudice, hate speech or discrimination towards sexual orientations, people of color, race, religion, background and age. Step Up decided to remove (insert sponsor/investor) from our sponsor list because their hate speech does not align with the values Step Up upholds. We want to continue to be surrounded by other companies that promote empowerment and success through positivity. Thank you for continuing to believe in Step Up and giving us the opportunity to shine light on successful women in our industry.

For more information, click on the link (in our bio if the social media platform doesn't provide links in a post) below to our Step Up website.

**Rumors: Inappropriate behavior between employees and young girls**

*Email: To high school principal/vice principal/superintendent*

Dear (Enter high school principal/vice principal/superintendent) of (enter high school name),

Step Up appreciates the opportunity you give us to allow our program to provide young girls resources, mentorship, networking opportunities and a community to push them into successful careers. Unfortunately, we've found speculation of inappropriate behavior between one of our Step Up mentors and young girls in our program. We sincerely apologize for having our employees interfere with the safe learning experience (insert high school name) strives for every day. We also apologize for the possibility of putting one of your students in an uncomfortable situation.

To ensure security between Step Up staff and young girls, we will have Step Up girls fill out weekly wellness forms regarding safety, mental health and evaluations on our staff. Additionally, we are placing the Step Up employee on temporary leave until more information is available about the situation. Thank you for choosing Step Up as an afterschool program at (insert high school name). We hope we continue to be source for young girls to gain fundamental resources to elevate them in their professional careers.

Sincerely,

(Insert regional spokesperson)

Step Up

*Email: To young girls in Step Up*

Dear Step Up mentees,

Step Up enjoys creating a safe community of confident young girls and women through mentorship, resources and networking with professionals, to jump start future careers. Recently, we have found speculation of inappropriate behavior between a Step Up mentor and a young girl. We apologize for the possibility of putting a Step Up mentee in an uncomfortable situation in a community where they should feel safe and empowered. From now on, Step Up girls will be required to fill out weekly wellness forms regarding safety, mental health and evaluations on our staff. Additionally, the alleged Step Up employee involved, is put on temporary leave until Step Up receives more information. If you have more information you are comfortable sharing, please let (insert communications person) or (other program mentor) know.

For resources on sexual harassment, visit our website under (include dark website link).

We appreciate you as a Step Up mentee and enjoy your participation in our organization.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

(Primary Spokesperson)

Step Up

*Fact Sheet: Safety for our Step Up Mentees*

**Mission:**

Step Up strives to create a community of young girls and women who can feel empowered and ready to take on professional careers through our resources. We want all girls to experience proper mentorship, networking opportunities, sisterhood and experiences throughout the program. Most importantly, we create safe spaces for young girls and women to speak, interact and think without judgement or barriers — to create this, we have safety in mind.

(Include image/infographic here)

**Our Progress:**

Since (include year Step Up started as afterschool program) the amount of girls who have joined increase to (include percentage or number).

We have locations in (include locations Step Up now operates in) and are available in (include number of high schools)

**Safety Procedures:**

Before signing up for Step Up, girls must sign a (insert contract name) with parental signature approving their membership into the program.

For in-person field trips outside of school hours, Step Up girls must fill out a form under parental supervision and review all procedures with their guardian before signing it.

Step Up mentees must travel in at least duos and have a Step Up mentor around at all times.

Step Up mentees will not get contact information from professional women unless approval is given from their Step Up mentor.

(Include more facts about safety)

*Internal Memo*

To: Step Up Employees

From: (Insert Spokesperson)

Re: Step Up Updated Safety Procedures

Date: (Insert date)

Hello Step Up team. I'm writing to let you know of a recent rumor circulating in our afterschool programs for (insert high school name). As you may have heard, there has been speculation of inappropriate behavior between a Step Up employee and a Step Up mentee. Step Up does not condone this type of behavior on any grounds, and any employee who conducts inappropriate relationships or behavior with a Step Up mentee will be fired immediately.

Our responsibility as adults leading young girls and women, is to provide a mentor role where they can feel safe to speak up and step into womanhood. We want our mentees to always feel safe and comfortable, so we are implementing additional safety rules to Step Up.

These include wellness forms that will be handed out to Step Up mentees after any in-person meeting, mentorship and field trip. These will be reviewed by (insert appropriate reviewer) and any feedback will be referred to our (insert appropriate coordinator). By doing this, we will ensure an extra level of security and have weekly check-ins between our mentees. Additionally, (include any other measures that will be useful for Step Up).



The Step Up employee involved is being put on temporary leave until we gather more information. We thank you for staying patient and following our new guidelines for our organization.



*Phone Script for Parents/Guardians*

Hello, this is (Spokesperson name for region where rumor is located) and I am calling on behalf of Step Up, a non-profit organization giving resources and mentorship to young women for professional careers. I am calling to inform you of speculation of inappropriate behavior between a Step Up mentor and one of our Step Up girls. We sincerely apologize to the possible victim and the victim's family for putting their child in an uncomfortable situation. I understand that you are feeling worried about your daughter's safety attending our in-person afterschool programs and activities. To ensure security for our Step Up girls, we will have Step Up girls fill out weekly wellness forms regarding their safety, mental health and evaluate our staff. Additionally, we are placing the Step Up employee on temporary leave. Thank for staying patient while we get more information on the situation and choosing Step Up to push young girls into empowering careers. Have a good rest of your day! Bye.