



# [Event name] Event Safety Guide

[DATE]

## Revision History

| Date  | Update           | By:   |
|-------|------------------|-------|
| [add] | Document Created | [add] |

**\*TRIGGER WARNING\*** – THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS MENTIONS OF ASSAULT, HARASSMENT, TRANSPHOBIA, HOMOPHOBIA, CULTURAL INSENSITIVITY AND RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS. IF YOU CONTINUE, PLEASE PRACTICE SELF-CARE AND TALK TO SOMEONE IF YOU NEED SUPPORT. [CLICK HERE](#) TO CONTACT SAMARITANS FOR ANONYMOUS HELP.

## INTRODUCTION

### What is GAME ON: Event Safety?

After too many gaming events, there have been heartbreaking [stories](#) of harassment, unprofessionalism and even assault. Through internal conversations, we realised just how many of our nDreamers have come to feel as though this is simply a part of attending events, and to that we say, 'no more'.

With GAME ON, we are committing to doing more to ensure that everyone can attend events with the security of knowing what we will do to protect them. By collaborating with numerous charities and professionals, and event organisers, we are developing a long-term goal to educate on unacceptable behaviour, keep our friends and colleagues safe, and remove toxicity within our industry.

This is the first safety plan we have created of this kind, and we look forward to receiving feedback from event organisers on how to improve this resource for future events. You can get in touch by contacting us at [game.on@ndreams.com](mailto:game.on@ndreams.com).

### What is this document?

Separate from what a standard risk assessment does, this document is to share with you what we are doing to ensure that you can attend **[Your Event Name]** without safety concerns. This will consider some of the more human-related risks that come from attending events, be they accidental or intentional.

This plan will address:

- Unprofessional behaviour.
- Sexual harassment - assault, drink spiking and unwanted attention/flirtation are some examples, but the list is large.
- Racial aggressions, including microaggressions .
- Neurodiversity and Disability not being accommodated.
- Homophobic and transphobic comments or actions.
- Cultural insensitivity.

### How to use this document

This document has been split into the following sections –

1. Introduction
2. Advice for any events
3. Advice for our specific event
4. Key info
5. Definitions.

The advice for all events section will remain a consistent reminder for all events, and then Section 3 will be more specific to the current event. The one pager has accessible info to use during the event.

We have also added a page at the end to thank the many people that have come together to collaborate on this document, and we look forward to developing this plan with them more!

Please take the time to read this entire document in full. Once you have read and understand, you can then save the 'Key Info' page (which we will share as a separate document too) onto your phone so you can check out the most crucial information quickly in case of an emergency.

We want to help build a culture that stops this behaviour before it happens, so that one day people don't have to use this variety of safety measures. We'd also like to add that whilst we have added safety measures that you can carry out yourself, it is **never** your fault or responsibility should something happen to you.

## ADVICE FOR ALL EVENTS

### IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO YOU

#### Ask for help

Ask the person next to you (if there is one) or someone in a position of authority (e.g., a bartender or a security guard) to intervene.

Say something

Speak up and call the harasser out, if you feel able to. Only use this approach as a last resort, to protect against violence – your safety comes first.

Record it

If you feel safe, consider taking a picture or filming what's happening – or ask a bystander to do it.

#### Report it

If something does happen to you at an event, then please find [add – the people in your events team assigned responsibility for events safety, including how to easily identify them] as soon as possible and we will take steps to help support you. If you'd like to report an incident after the event, please contact [add – contact details for a team member equipped and trained to responsibly receive incident reports and escalate accordingly.]

If a crime has been committed, you may wish to call the police.

#### Remember - your emotions are valid

After an incident, you may minimize how serious or bad the situation was as a way of trying to cope with what has happened. Please remind yourself that it was not your fault that this happened, it was not okay that it happened, and whatever you are feeling right now is completely valid.

## IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO SOMEONE ELSE

### How do I know if someone is being harassed?

1. **Cues** – do they look upset? Are they trying to turn away from the person? Are they showing visible signs of discomfort (crossing arms, shrinking inwards). If you struggle with recognizing social cues, ask someone nearby – "does that person look like they are upset, or in distress?"
2. **Listen** – if it's not too loud, try to hear the conversation, to bring context.
3. **Look** – is the potential harasser leaning in too close? Are they touching the person unnecessarily?
4. **Ask** – it's better to have checked and be wrong than ignore it and allow harassment to continue.

### How can I intervene?

#### Use the **5 D's of Bystander Intervention**:

The '5 D's' were developed by [Right to Be](#) (previously known as Hollaback), to provide an easy to remember guide for those who witness street harassment.

1. **Distract** - Pretend to be a friend, ask for the time, cause a distraction, be creative.
2. **Delegate** - Find someone in a position of authority (e.g. venue or event staff) and ask them to intervene.
3. **Document** - Watch and witness, write down or film the harassment, provide the footage to the victim and never post it online or use it without their permission.
4. **Delay** - Comfort the harassed person after the incident and acknowledge that the behavior was wrong. Be a friend.
5. **Direct** - Speak up and call the harasser out, then turn your attention to the person being harassed. If the harasser responds, ignore them; don't escalate. Only use direct as a last resort to avoid violence. Your safety and that of the person being harassed come first.

### What now?

If the harassed person is comfortable doing so, please report the incident to [\[add – the people in your events team assigned responsibility for events safety, including how to easily identify them\]](#) or the police. You can talk to one of the contacts listed at the end of this document, and they will assist you and the harassed person. Check in on yourself as well, as this situation can be incredibly stressful not only for the victim, but for bystanders as well.

## KEEPING FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES ACCOUNTABLE

### What should I do when it's happening?

If a friend says something inappropriate you can call it out at the time, e.g.

"I don't think that's funny."

"You're being inappropriate right now."

You can also probe into why they are saying or doing something, to help show the error of their ways, e.g.

"What do you mean when you say X?"

"I don't understand the joke, can you explain it?"

"Why are you doing that?"

It is important, in the moment, not to give in to the easy action of smiling and nodding along, as this can be seen as validating their behaviour.

### **What can I do after?**

If you don't feel safe or comfortable calling them out in the moment, talk to them in private and explain why their behaviour is not appropriate.

You can also talk to the person who was harmed and tell them that you do not agree with your friends' behaviour. Show them that you are on their side. Ask them if they would have liked you to intervene, or if there is anything you can do for them now.

If a friend is being disrespectful, we are being a good friend by gently pointing out what they have done wrong and giving them an opportunity to reflect and change.

Consider your friends and your own behaviour. Ask yourself, "What kind of person am I becoming through the behaviours I'm participating in, or allowing to occur?"

## **ADVICE FOR [EVENT]**

### **BEFORE YOU ARRIVE**

If you have any questions, concerns or would like to request some assistance, please contact [\[ADD YOUR EVENT CONTACTS HERE\]](#)

[Read our code of conduct \[ADD LINK TO YOUR CODE OF CONDUCT HERE\]](#)

[remove/add the following as required]

### **TRAVEL**

[\[While travel logistics are the responsibility of the attendee, or the employer they are representing, as the event organizer you may wish to include notes on recommended safe, comfortable travel to the event.\]](#)

### **DURING THE EVENT**

- [When attending the expo or conference, please keep saved on your phone the 'Key Info' page in this document with quick tips and a contacts list.](#)
- [\[Include here your best practices for identification of individuals, e.g. is it a requirement for attendees to wear lanyards or name stickers/badges while on-site? This can make it easier to identify anyone responsible for wrongdoing.\]](#)

- [Clearly identify a specific location where people can go if they need help during the event, in confidence that there will always be someone there to assist them.]
- [If there are quieter zones designated to help those who struggle with crowds, describe where to find these and how to use them.]
- [Guidance to both general attendees and exhibitors on the behaviours expected of them when interacting with people during the event.]
- [Clear guidance on the process of escalation for both general attendees and exhibitors should they experience someone falling short of these expectations and making people feel unsafe.]
- [You may wish to designate a visible events safety team or presence at your event – if so, explain here the function it provides and how attendees can benefit from it.]

## OFFICIAL AFTER-PARTY/EVENING ACTIVITIES

[If your event includes an official after-party or gathering, which is hosted by you either on- or off-site, it is advisable to include separate and focused set of guidance focused on the provisions you are making to keep attendees safe, including]:

- Clear visual indicators (e.g. T-shirts, name badges) for those who are working on the event as an organiser/host, differentiating them from regular attendees. This helps to clarify where people can go for assistance should it be needed.
- Identification of a specific area or zone where attendees can go safe in the knowledge that someone will be there to assist them in an official capacity.
- Provision of drinks covers and best practice on their use.
- Implementation of 'Ask for Angela', or a similar system, whereby attendees can safely make a subtle request – e.g. asking at the bar if 'Angela' around – and be given the assistance they need.
- Unambiguous explanation of the conduct expected of attendees and the consequences of poor conduct.

## EXTERNAL NETWORKING & ADJACENT EVENTS/MEETUPS

[While such out-of-venue gatherings may fall outside the jurisdiction of your event, acknowledging that a lot of attendees will make use of these opportunities and having some guidance for them is recommended – the below could be a starting point:]

- If you are meeting somewhere privately, consider travelling in twos! Avoid attending a private meeting alone, where possible, unless you have already met the person you're meeting and absolutely trust them.
- Always let someone know where you will be – you can set up a buddy system where you choose to check in at certain times with each other.
- Don't hesitate to reach out to [YOUR EVENT CONTACT] with any issues that occur around the event. While it may not be possible to take direct action, we can provide guidance and support.

## KEY INFO

[SUMMARISE HERE YOUR KEY POINTS OF CONTACT AT THE EVENT]

Content should include:

- Contacts
- Attendees
- Helplines
- Crucial actions on what to do
- Link and QR code to code of conduct

## HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

### \*TRIGGER WARNING\* WHAT IS...

#### **Cultural Insensitivity**

This is judging or being biased against someone without understanding their cultural background. This can lead to high levels of tension and can cause social exclusion. This can range from inaccurate assumptions about someone, to more serious forms of aggressive behaviour including hate speech.

Often, people can say something culturally insensitive without even realizing they are doing so. It's important that we all call out these behaviours if we feel safe to do so and explain why these comments are harmful.

#### **Racial microaggressions**

Racial microaggressions are a type of cultural insensitivity relating to race. Microaggression is a pattern of behaviour by an individual who is typically a part of a non-marginalised group.

These microaggressions are used to belittle, stereotype and bully an ethnic minority group. A common example would be to ask 'where are you really from?', making assumptions about someone's nationality or background purely based on their race.

Some more subtle examples are where people are purposefully left out, talked over or completely ignored. For those on the receiving end of this behaviour, these microaggressions can feel extremely isolating.

#### **Homophobia and Transphobia**

Homophobia is the term for those with negative attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people. Homophobia can range from cultural insensitivity to violence. According to [the 2022 House of Commons Hate Crime Statistics](#), 40% of those surveyed had experienced a hate crime due to being part of the LGBTQ+ community.

Transphobia is specifically the term for those with negative attitudes towards the transgender community. A person who is transgender identifies as a gender different to that of their sex/gender assigned at birth. A person whose gender identity matches that of their assigned gender at birth is Cisgender. Transgender people are more highly targeted for hate crimes (Hate Crime Statistics 2022).

Some examples of Homophobia and Transphobia are: using LGBTQ+ terms such as 'gay' to express a negative, refusing to use a person's pronouns and refusing access to important services and facilities, e.g., bathrooms. Homophobia and transphobia also include acts of physical violence: hate crimes.



## **Sexual Harassment and Assault**

This is any kind of unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that creates a hostile environment ([Victim Support](#)). Types of harassment include: verbal harassment (suggestive comments, name calling), sexual jokes, and sexual advances (leering, unwanted propositions).

Sexual harassment can escalate into violence and sexual assault. Sexual assault includes rape, unwanted touching (including if it's with clothes on) and kissing.

## **Neurodiversity**

Neurodiversity is the umbrella term for the many ways a brain can process information, and that there is no singular 'right' way of thinking.

Some forms of neurodiversity are autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Mental Health conditions and more. Whilst there can be significant day-to-day challenges for neurodiverse people, with the potential for these to be heightened in an event setting, neurodiverse people can thrive with the right accommodations.

When neurodiversity isn't accommodated for, it can cause a high amount of stress for people and limit their ability to cope.

## **Unprofessional Behaviour**

This is in the context of industry events with working professionals.

Unprofessional behaviour is when a person is acting in a way that is disrespectful, creates an uncomfortable work environment and violates the codes of conduct put in place to keep people safe.

Examples of unprofessional behaviour are:

- Sexual harassment/advances – a networking event is not a place to be asking for a date.
- Aggressive behaviour that creates hostility and disruption.
- Speaking over or ignoring people.
- Ignoring reasonable requests from events staff.
- Drinking alcohol to the point of incapacity at an industry event.
- Cultural insensitivity, racial microaggressions, homophobia and transphobia, sexual harassment/assault and disrespect to neurodiverse people are of course, extremely unprofessional behaviour.

## SOURCES AND COLLABORATORS

Multiple collaborators and online sources were used to create this document. Thank you so much to everyone who helped bring this event's safety plan to life.

**nDreams** – Tamsin O’Luanaigh, Sarah Hammond, Matt Suckley. Kane Davis for Branding and Design.

**nDreams Athena** – Marginalised Genders Employee Resource Group.

**UN Women UK - Safe Spaces Now**

**Tandem Events**

**Into Games**

**Limit Break**

**Out Making Games**

### **Online Sources**

[Right to Be](#) (Previously Hollaback)

[Women in Games](#)

[2022 House of Parliament Hate Crime Statistics](#)

[Victim Support](#)