UNBC UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Community-Based Research Safety Guide

UNBC Off-Campus Safety Committee

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About this Guide

This safety guide is designed for students, staff, research associates, faculty, and community partners conducting fieldwork in communities. This guide should be used to supplement teaching materials in research methodology courses, as well as a part of an orientation for any researchers conducting fieldwork in communities. This guide has also compiled a list of readings about safety in the field across various disciplines.

It is important to note, however, that safety is not something that only applies once someone is in the field. Researchers should start to address safety issues in the research design of the project. Attention to safety must then become part of the daily routine of research tasks that are carried out in communities. In the spirit of continuous improvement for this safety guide and for the safety of all researchers who choose to conduct community-based research in BC, in other provinces, or in other countries, we encourage any researchers to conduct a debriefing after the fieldwork has been done and forward any lessons or nuances that may be added to this guide to the UNBC Off-campus Safety Committee.

This guide also contains sample checklists for planning, monitoring, and reviewing safe community-based research practices. These checklists are only to be used and reviewed by researchers and their supervisors in order to provide guidance about the types of safety issues that need to be considered.

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1. Before the Field – Planning for Safety and Completion of the Field Risk Assessment Plan

All researchers should incorporate field safety training and orientation sessions into the planning and design of their research. It is important to keep in mind that the safety and well-being of the research team is a top priority at all times. If a researcher ever feels uncomfortable or unsafe, they are to stop their activity immediately and change the circumstances of their work environment in order to eliminate any safety concerns. Any safety concerns then need to be reported immediately to the supervisor. It is also important to keep in mind that fieldwork safety is about the safety and well-being of the researcher AND the participant.

1.1 Identifying Potential Hazards

Prior to fieldwork, the research team should work with any community partners to identify or understand any potential hazards that may exist throughout the community. These can include weather, terrain, distance, people, animals, and access to various types of communications or emergency assistance. Events, such as accidents, community conflicts, alcohol licensed events, natural disasters, etc., should also be considered. The research team should also identify high crime areas that may produce a higher degree of risk for the researcher. They may wish to review the risks associated with the research topic (i.e. domestic violence, drug and alcohol addictions in the workplace, any highly controversial issues in the community, etc.), the targeted participants (i.e. ex-offenders, people experiencing psychosis, etc.), and the overall context that will be examined. These hazards must be listed in the Field Risk Assessment Plan (FRASP) which can be found on the Office of Research and Innovation website.

If possible, a community visit prior to fieldwork can be beneficial to assess hazards. It may not always be possible to conduct community visits to remote sites prior to fieldwork. Other methods to assess potential hazards may include talking to community partners, people who have conducted research in that community, or people who have conducted similar research in other communities.

1.2 Specific Site Safety Protocols

Researchers will need to determine if there are any safety protocols for visiting various sites, such as industry production facilities, worker camps, construction sites, prisons, health facilities, etc. This should be part of the work done to assess potential hazards prior to visiting the site. Researchers may be required to simply sign in and out. They may be required to be driven into and out of the site. They may also be required to be accompanied by a site representative during their visit. Any protocols should be obtained and understood before the fieldwork.

1.3 Complete Appropriate Training

Once the research team has identified potential hazards that may be associated with the work, it is important to ensure that the research team has completed any appropriate training to reduce or mitigate any concerns. This may include first aid, working alone, addressing violence in the workplace, and others. It may be equally important to review and understand the context and history of the community that you are visiting in order to enhance communication and address conflicts and concerns that may arise. In this case, researchers may want to obtain newspaper articles, reports, or studies on the area, or speak with local community members prior to conducting the research.

There are several options for first aid training:

- Lifesavers First Aid training – Basic to Advanced first aid training
- Emergency First Aid – St. John Ambulance- a one-day course in class. Focus is on scene management, CPR, head and spinal injuries, and wound management. Basic First Aid (Occupational First Aid Level 1) Equivalent
- Wilderness First Aid – OVERhang offers courses in Wilderness First Aid

1.4 Establishing Communication Protocols Before Fieldwork

At the beginning of any project, it is important that all members of the research understand the roles and responsibilities of all team members. While the composition of each research team will vary, it may generally consist of lead researchers or supervising faculty members, research managers, and field research assistants at UNBC, as well as formal community partners. Prior to leaving for the field, all researchers should have a contact list containing mobile numbers for all members of the research team, the supervisor, UNBC security, and any local emergency contacts. The contact list should also contain numbers for the field accommodation. A work schedule and a copy of the FRASP should be left with a supervisor and / or security that contains the anticipated date and time to return to the university.

The research team should also know the types of communication infrastructure that are in place both in the community that they are visiting and along the route of travel. While there may be cell phone service in the community, it may not be available in outlying rural areas. Local government officials and community partners should be able to inform the research team about cell phone service in the area. It may be necessary to carry a satellite phone or other satellite communication device (e.g. SPOT or InReach). The research team should also understand the availability of Internet service. Hotels may advertise that they have high speed Internet service, but you should always be prepared to have a back-up plan for Internet-based communications in case their Internet service is not available. Most service providers (i.e. Telus, Bell, etc.) have

mobile internet devices. The research team may also identify sites in the community where they can access Internet communications if needed (i.e. public library, community centre, local government office, etc.).

It is also important that the research team plan and establish a general communication protocol before going into the field, and record this in the FRASP. These communication protocols may vary and be influenced by the context of the research and the research team (i.e. community forums versus house visits; working in teams vs. working alone). The protocols should reflect both emergency and non-emergency situations. For example, on a non-emergency basis, the research team may establish a time to check-in daily with their supervisor to provide an update on the fieldwork and to discuss any concerns. On an emergency basis, the research team should address any potential dangers and secure the safety of the research team and any participants. If necessary, this may require alerting local emergency contacts (i.e. RCMP, Mental Health, First Responder / Ambulance, Fire Department, etc.). It is important that the research team be prepared to contact the supervisor immediately.

Finally, before going into a community, the researcher should understand that they have a right to refuse any work that may make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe. They should also understand that if, for any reason, they become uncomfortable or feel unsafe during the fieldwork, they have the option to disengage from that situation.

1.5 Maps and Directions

When booking logistics, it is always important to obtain detailed information about the directions and meeting location. This is particularly important in rural areas where there may be few road signs. It is not uncommon to receive directions that do not involve road signs, but a range of landmarks such as trees, houses, fences, bridges, cattle guards, hills, creeks, etc. Whenever travelling in more rural and remote areas, it is always important to remember to carry a good road map and, if possible, a GPS. Before leaving for the field, it is important that any field researchers know how to use any supportive tools and equipment to guide their navigation.

1.6 Weather and Automobile Safety

Normal weather conditions and extreme events can have significant impacts on safety in the field. Field team members must be trained to be appropriately dressed and prepared for variable weather conditions, to adjust appropriately to as the weather changes, and to terminate fieldwork when necessary.

The field team must also be equipped with an appropriate vehicle for the location and the time of the year (see Section 6 on vehicle maintenance of the Field Procedures and Safety Manual: https://www2.unbc.ca/safety/field-safety). If travelling in winter (Oct. 1 to March 31), vehicles must be equipped with winter tires. Legally, M+S (mud and snow tires) are adequate, but should only be used if travel in winter conditions is infrequent. If travelling in an area where snow, ice

and slush is expected, it is highly recommended that vehicles be equipped with mountain/snowflake tires. If a research team is travelling through mountain passes or high snowfall areas, tire chains may also be recommended. The vehicle should also contain a first aid kit and a travel survival kit.

Basic travel survival kit:

- food such as energy bars
- Water
- Blanket
- Extra clothing and winter boots
- Small shovel, scraper and snow brush
- First aid kit with seatbelt cutter
- Wind-up flashlight
- Road maps

In addition, each vehicle should have the following:

- Sand, salt or cat litter
- Antifreeze and windshield washer fluid
- Tow rope
- Jumper cables
- Fire extinguisher
- Warning light or road flares.

Prior to departure, researchers are responsible to inspect their vehicle to ensure it is in good driving condition.

It is important to understand the availability of automotive and emergency services along the route to and from your destination and the destination itself.

1.7 Accommodations

Accommodation can vary in terms of quality and safety. Sometimes there are circumstances where field team members will feel unsafe in particular accommodations. This can come from a variety of reasons (i.e. rowdy tenants, questionable behaviours, etc.). Anytime this is the case, researchers should be prepared to look for alternative accommodations. However, working with community partners can help the research team to assess and determine suitable accommodations for the research team.

1.8 Meeting Spaces

Researchers should work with community partners or contacts to obtain advice about safe meeting spaces in the community. It is important to consider the impact that it may have on both the confidentiality and potential safety of participants. This is particularly important when discussing sensitive topics (i.e. abuse, relationships, etc.), as the confidentiality surrounding those discussions can have implications for those

participants outside of the research setting. Some good meeting locations may include public meeting rooms at the library, recreation centre, or town hall. However, the meeting space must also be safe for the research team (e.g. selection of spaces that have multiple exits).

The meeting space should be safely accessible for researchers and participants. In this respect, researchers should pursue meeting spaces that have well-lit entrances and parking lots. During the winter months, the researchers should check to ensure that entrance ways and overhangs are clear of snow and ice, and that there are no slippery surfaces inside. The research team should also be aware of emergency exits throughout the building.

1.9 Health Coverage for Travel Within, and Outside of, Canada

All students, staff, and faculty travelling outside of British Columbia should ensure that they have adequate health coverage for any accidents or health care needs that may be incurred during their travels. Some people may draw upon extended health benefits and coverage provided through their parents or spouses who work outside of the university. Others may be employed by the university, but have different types of health coverage for their travel depending upon their term or contract. Students that receive coverage through plans under NUGSS and the NBCGSS also have different benefits and procedures that must be followed.

What is important to understand is that health benefit plans, policies, and procedures are very complex. It is very important to carefully read and understand the coverage that you have to support your travel within and / or outside of Canada. For example, some plans may only provide coverage for 60 days per trip. It is not uncommon, however, for students, staff, or faculty to spend extended periods of time (i.e. during summer months or during sabbatical) outside BC or Canada. Some plans may not provide coverage for people travelling to areas that are already at war. Travel insurance plans may also have a diverse range of processes to access that coverage. For example, plans may require the claimant to contact the insurance provider before any CT scans, MRIs, or related tests are conducted. Additional, or changes to, transportation plans may also need to be approved beforehand. BEFORE leaving campus, researchers should know the claim procedures and requirements for proof of claims. Finally, researchers should make sure they have a travel card with all the contact information for the insurer on hand. Below are some links to travel coverage and benefits for various undergraduate students, graduate students, staff, and faculty at UNBC.

UNBC Benefits at a Glance for CUPE and exempt employees:
https://www.unbc.ca/sites/default/files/sections/human-resources/unbc-baag-cupe-3799-regular-exempt-regular-employeesev2_0.pdf

UNBC Benefits at a Glance for Academic Services and Affiliate Regular employees:
https://www.unbc.ca/sites/default/files/sections/human-resources/unbc-baag-cupe-

academic-services-employeesev2_0.pdf

UNBC Benefits at a Glace for term employees (6 to 12 months): https://www2.unbc.ca/sites/default/files/sections/human-resources/unbcbaagpdf71136-12mo.pdf

UNBC Benefits at a Glace for Faculty Association employees: https://www.unbc.ca/sites/default/files/sections/human-resources/unbc-baag-cupe-faculty-association-employeesev3_0.pdf

NUGSS travel emergency benefits: https://studentcare.ca/rte/en/UniversityofNorthernBCUndergraduateStudentsNUGSS_Travel_TravelCoverage

Northern BC Graduate Student Society travel benefits: http://www.nbcgss.ca/services/

2. During Fieldwork

Investing time to plan for a safe fieldwork experience goes a long way to ensure the safety of the research team. That planning, however, will only pay dividends if the research team remains committed to implement that planning throughout the fieldwork. This can be difficult when there are competing time pressures, changing schedules, and new tasks that often unfold during the fieldwork.

2.1 Check-in with the RCMP

When a researcher / research team first arrive in a non-Indigenous community, it is important to first check in with the local RCMP office. This is important to ensure they know who you are, the purpose of your visit, and the length of time that you expect to be in the area. They may also explain to the research team the best way to get in touch with police and other rescue services both during and after business hours. It also helps the local police to reassure residents who have concerns about strangers walking around town making observations and writing down information. Always remember to check out with the RCMP when leaving the community.

If a researcher / research team is visiting an Indigenous community, it is important to first check in with the Band office before undertaking any work. Of course, such visits should be arranged in advance given the principles advocated through the Tri-Council Policy Statement for the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans for any research with Indigenous people (see Chapter 9: https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique_tcps2-eptc2_2022.html).

2.2 Check-in with Project Supervisor

An important aspect of fieldwork safety is to develop a routine system for checking in with the project supervisor. In some cases, these check-ins are done before and after

the field team arrives at their study site or returns to campus. In other cases, routine check-ins are done on a nightly basis. This can help the project manager to monitor the stress levels of team members and to respond to any emerging concerns. Fieldwork can be intensive and require long periods of time in the community. Issues of burnout and exhaustion need to be monitored. Monitoring the health of the field team should involve monitoring any anxieties that may evolve, as well as eating and sleeping habits. Furthermore, while research team members may appear to fit well together prior to fieldwork, living and working in the field for long periods of time, differences in personalities, different work ethics, or different working styles can produce conflict within the research team. Conflict resolution tools should also be put in place well in advance of the fieldwork season, and all research team members should have a clear understanding of how these conflict resolution tools will work. Routine check-ins during fieldwork also enables the research team to be responsive and flexible to emerging needs in the community. For example, a sudden event (e.g.a resident death or industry accident) may require adjustments in the design or timing of data collection activities.

If multiple researchers are working together in a community, they should develop a plan to check in with each other throughout the day. This may include touching base with each other during lunch or dinner, and/or at the end of the day. This will allow the researchers to discuss and share any safety concerns (e.g.. icy areas, conflicts, sensitive issues in the community).

2.3 Communication Options

Researchers who conduct fieldwork in larger communities should carry cell phones and other devices for logistical and safety reasons. Some smaller, and perhaps more remote, communities may not have cell phone networks and may also only have dial-up Internet. It is also important to keep in mind that long highway distances, including through mountain pass areas, will not have cell phone coverage. If the researcher / research team will be out of cell phone range for extended periods of time, then it will be important to have a satellite phone (see Section 3.1 on contact procedures in the Field Procedures and Safety Manual). Alternatively, the research team may consider acquiring SPOT or InReach devices if satellite phones are inaccessible. New iWatch devices also include new panic features that individual can tap for S.O.S. Individuals may tap the panic feature, call for help (even if you are in another country), and record their surroundings. It also includes a fall detection feature. All team members must be trained to properly use these communication devices.

2.4 Conducting Interviews, Focus Groups, Surveys, and Other Techniques

2.4.1 Assessing Community Hazards

When a researcher or research team arrives in a community, it is important for them to become familiar with the layout of the community and to assess any potential hazards not identified while planning the research. This is especially important to provide a proper orientation for new researchers.

Supervisors or project leads may accompany their staff or student researchers to introduce them to community partners and key contacts throughout the community. This is important to enable new researchers to get to know people in the community and to develop a rapport with people who can provide advice that can enhance the safety of researchers and participants throughout the project.

At the beginning of any visit, the research team should also drive around the community to identify all the locations of their interviews or meetings. This will help the research team to clarify directions provided by participants, to avoid getting lost, and to assess any hazards. For example, checking directions in more remote areas can be particularly important as some rural road networks and house numbers may not be clearly marked. Researchers who conduct door-to-door surveys should be aware of hazards associated with the environment (e.g properties or spaces with thick bushes or high solid fences can provide places for people to hide) and associated with building design (e.g. hiding spaces associated with long corridors, dark or poorly-lit parking garages). Lastly, researchers should understand the natural hazards that may exist in a community, as well as any designated evacuation plans, evacuation centres, and routes for a community. For example, coastal communities may have tsunami evacuation routes. Industry work camps in remote areas may have evacuation plans and protocols during forest fire season.

2.4.2 Dress for Community Work

Dress needs for community-based research will depend on the research method and target audience. Professional dress code may be appropriate for conducting interviews or focus groups with local leaders, business or industry leaders, service providers, or residents in a community. However, if researchers are engaged in extensive community or door-to-door survey work, additional safety precautions should be considered. Each researcher should be equipped with an identification badge that may include information about community partners. Researchers should also be equipped with visibility safety vests if they are working outside of daylight hours. Researchers should also be dressed appropriately for local weather conditions. This may include the need for thermal layers, appropriate gloves, rain gear, head lamps, waterproof footwear, or ice cleats. Students and researchers should also avoid wearing jewelry or carrying valuable electronics (i.e. cameras, laptops, iPhones, iPads, etc.) that may make them a target for crime. Researchers should also make sure that they do not carry any significant amounts of cash that can also make them a target.

2.4.3 Proximity

There may be times when the research project involves multiple researchers working in a community. The research team members should generally be working in close proximity to one another so that they can routinely touch base and can come to one another's aid should that be required. This is especially important when conducting household surveys. If individuals are working alone, they should always have exit strategies for getting out of particular circumstances or settings. We generally

recommend that if individuals are doing interview work in isolated settings that they work in teams. Team cell phones, handheld radio transceivers, and other communication / locator devices may also be carried in case of emergency. Students should have local police and other emergency numbers, supervisor, and other field colleague numbers on hand.

2.4.4 Vehicle Supports

Researchers may wish to use a vehicle to support community fieldwork. It is preferable that more than one researcher have keys to access the vehicle if needed. If the research team does not have access to a university or rented vehicle, and if a personal vehicle is used, it is important to ensure that the vehicle insurance will allow other researchers (i.e. including others who have less than 10 years driving experience) to use the vehicle.

If a personal vehicle is used, the ownership and control of the vehicle can have implications for other members of the research team – particularly in communities that have limited or no public transportation. It is important that the owner of the vehicle understands that at all times they are responsible for the transportation needs of the research team. If this is questionable, then alternative transportation needs will have to be considered.

The vehicle should always be parked within close-proximity to where the research team is working (e.g., on a central location of a street, or within a few minutes walk). The use of vehicles to support survey work is particularly important during the winter months in order to provide a space where the researchers can warm up. It is always preferable to park the vehicle facing out, in a space where it will not be blocked in,to facilitate a quick exit if needed.

2.4.5 Comfort Levels with Different Types of Participants

Researchers should be prepared to conduct interviews with people from a range of backgrounds and experiences. In some research settings, researchers may be asked to interview vulnerable residents, such as those living in poverty, those who have experienced or witnessed violence, people with addictions, etc. Researchers should have appropriate training to conduct interviews with vulnerable people or groups.

2.4.6 Location of Interviews

When conducting in-person interviews, it is important to arrange a meeting location that is both safe for the researcher and for the participant. The meeting location should also be quiet enough to conduct the interview. In many cases, researchers will be able to meet participants in their office location or a neutral location (e.g. a meeting room at a public library, community centre, community college). The meeting space should also be accessible to accommodate the needs of older residents or anyone with a disability (i.e. stairs). The researcher should visit the meeting location ahead of the meeting to

ensure that the entrance is clear of snow and ice.

For interviews or surveys conducted in people's homes, avoid parking in the driveway. This reserves the use of the driveway for the residents, prevents the researcher from being blocked in, and will allow them to make a quick exit if needed.

2.4.7 Visibility

Researchers should also strive to maintain visibility by conducting research during daylight hours as much as possible. This may not always be possible as researchers accommodate the needs of participants. If research is being conducted after daylight hours, researchers should strive as much as possible to conduct the meeting in a public setting. This also may not be possible either due to the limited availability of public meeting spaces in smaller communities or due to the sensitive nature of some research topics. If the researcher decides to conduct an interview in the participant's home, they may request to have another researcher accompany them. Depending upon the needs of the research, there may also be alternate ways by which the data can be collected (e.g.. phone interview, Skype/Zoom interview, dropping off a questionnaire with an enclosed return address envelope).

2.4.8 Loose Animals

Researchers should avoid entering fenced areas and must not approach places with loose dogs. If researchers enter a house and the dog appears to be unsafe, the researcher should request that the dog be secured before the interview or survey is completed.

2.4.9 Assessing Hazards in the Home

It is not always possible to assess the hazards of an interview environment (i.e. if a researcher is conducting a household survey). One approach is to call the participant just before the interview to assess any hazards (e.g. shouting, odd statements and behaviours) (see Craig *et al.* 2000). Upon entering a home, do a quick scan of the home in order to enhance awareness of space. This should not be so obvious as to make the research participant feel uncomfortable. The scan should allow the researcher to identify any exit points, to assess who is in the house, to listen to determine if there are any noises coming from other rooms, and to determine if there is anything nearby that could be used as a weapon. The researcher should strive to meet with the participant close to an exit.

2.4.10 Conducting the Interview Safely

The project lead or supervisor should work with their team members to ensure that they are prepared with exit strategies in case of any arising concerns. For example, if a researcher feels that their safety is at risk, even if they are only part way through the interview process, they may simply thank the other individual for their information and

state that the interview is completed.

During the interview process, researchers should not divulge any personal information that may place them at future risk (e.g. personal address information, phone numbers). At times, researchers may be tempted to share personal experiences with research participants in order to develop a rapport with participants. This should not be done if there is potential to place the researcher at risk.

2.4.11 Responding to Risks to Participants

When interviews or surveys are conducted in communities, there is a risk that telephone or in-person impersonators may attempt to use this as an opportunity to contact residents in the community and obtain their personal information, and, therefore, potentially put residents' safety and security at risk. Telephone or in-person impersonators may attempt to call residents regardless of the method chosen for the survey (i.e. mail, Internet, phone, etc.). There are a number of steps that the research team can take to reduce such risks. First, the research team may use local media (e.g. newspaper or radio) to promote not only the research methodology, but also the research team members and their contact information. Local promotional materials should clearly indicate how the research is being administered and provide contact information for the research team, the UNBC Office of Research and Innovation, and community partners where any concerns may be addressed. Researchers working in the community should be equipped with identification badges that include their photo, as well as contact information for the research team and community partners. Above all, maintaining visibility within the community can help residents to get to know the research team and enable them to quickly contact researchers if there are any questionable behaviours connected to the research work. If there are concerns about an impersonator, it is critical that the research team act quickly to use all forms of communication and media available to alert residents to such an issue. To alleviate resident concerns, researchers should ensure that there are alternative ways for residents to participate in the research (e,g, return completed surveys by mail to UNBC or to drop-off boxes at community partner locations, through on-line surveys).

It is also recommended that researchers have some basic form of first-aid training in order to monitor the well-being of participants throughout any meetings. If needed, researchers should be ready to respond to any conditions or sudden health risks experienced by participants. This may include paying attention to the participant's speech, their breathing, the size of their pupils, any sweats, etc. This should also include ensuring that the research team either has a cell phone on hand or is aware of where the closest landline is located.

2.4.12 Assessing the Ability of the Participant to Participate

It is important for the researcher to determine the ability of the potential participant to participate in the research in a safe and consensual manner. This may involve checking for signs of impairment due to drugs or alcohol. Signs can include evidence of

alcohol containers or drug paraphernalia, impaired behaviour, abnormally dilated or constricted pupils.

Some drugs can cause sudden aggression or induce delusions or psychosis. If the researcher determines that the participant is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they should discontinue the interview. The researcher should always be prepared with a plan to exit such circumstances. This may involve offering to leave a drop-off survey with the person to complete and return by mail or to a drop-off location in the community. It may also involve making arrangements to return to visit the potential participant on another day. It is important to keep in mind, however, that seizures, low light conditions, eye examinations / eye drops, and some types of prescribed medications can also dilate or constrict pupils.

2.4.13 Responding to Conflict / Distressed People

Common behaviours of people in distress include anxiety, fear, defensiveness, threats of aggression, avoidance, and flight. If someone becomes angry, it is important to not take their comments personally. Often people just want to be heard. You can acknowledge the other person's feelings and attempt to understand the source of their anger. A person's anger often comes from their perception that they are being deprived of something or that something is being taken away. They may believe what they know or feel is true.

Others may have a low tolerance for frustration or have unreasonable expectations. Anger or emotional distress can come from life experiences (e.g. impacts from residential schools, exposure to or witnessing physical or emotional abuse, discrimination or oppression, exclusion, chronic poverty). Even brain injuries, caused by car or industry accidents, drugs, or alcohol abuse, can change one's neurological function.

Under such circumstances, you should always be aware of your space. Try to imagine the context of that person in order to anticipate any key triggers. Explore ways to de-escalate the situation. It is important to show empathy. Don't judge the person. You should model calmness. Show that you are listening by paraphrasing back what they are saying. For example, one might rephrase, "so what made you angry is that I didn't do this….so how can I take steps to respond to your concerns". Ask open-ended questions that can encourage them to talk. Avoid using accusatory language (i.e. why didn't you….). You may also attempt to reframe the event (e.g.by stating "I can see that it is very important for you for this to be done.). It is important that you find a respectful way out of conflict for that person. Don't ask for too much too fast and promote compromise. Be clear and concise and acknowledge their concerns.

Be cautious with eye contact. Intense eye contact can escalate conflict, and eye contact can mean different things in different cultures. Be aware of your physical stance and the tone and pitch of your voice, as well as your use of language.

There may be situations that require the researcher to disengage. This may be the appropriate course of action if the participant becomes upset, is intoxicated or influenced by a substance, is hostile or disrespectful. Once you have made the decision to disengage, you will need to state your intentions to the other individual. State why you are disengaging and also state your intention to return to resolve the problem. It is important that you act immediately. For example, you may simply state that you must talk to your supervisor about the situation and that you will attempt to contact them again.

Remember that effective communication takes practice. Remain calm. Be respectful during any negotiations or conflict. State your position and your understanding of their position. See if they can understand your position, but do not interrupt them. Furthermore, reward any concessions that they make to resolve the situation. Always leave room to save face.

If individuals are working alone, they should always have exit strategies for getting out of dangerous or uncomfortable situations. One recommended approach is to explain that the researcher must make a call to cancel their next appointment [see Paterson et al. 1999; Sharp and Kremer 2006]. In this case, the researcher can contact their supervisor or field team leader to provide a code word or phrase that will indicate that they are concerned for their safety and for the police to be contacted and sent to their meeting location. If the researcher's safety has been compromised, they should report the incident to the police immediately. As a part of the team's field kit, the researcher should have an incident report form to record the details about what happened, when and where it happened, who it happened with (including a description of what they look like and what they were wearing), any descriptions of their vehicle (if applicable), any witnesses to the event, etc. These details should be recorded as soon as possible. The incident report should be e-mailed or faxed immediately or provided to the supervisor as soon as they return from the field. The researcher should also contact the supervisor or project lead as soon as possible to report and discuss the incident. If the researcher is shaken and needs to take some time, arrangements should be made to rebook any immediate appointments. Any type of safety incident can be upsetting to all members of the research team. It can invoke fear or thoughts of "what would I do if that happened to me?" If an incident occurs in the field, arrangements should also be made to discuss the incident with the rest of the field team.

2.4.14 Gender, Age, and Conflict

Sometimes, younger researchers and / or female researchers can feel intimidated by others during a conflict situation. For example, it can be intimidating for a young woman to communicate with an older, taller, larger, and angrier individual than themselves. They may be told that they are too young to know better. These tactics may not be based on facts, but rather an attempt by someone to control a situation. Women may also feel that their safety may be compromised by physical advances or questions about

their personal relationships or lives (see Arendell 1997). If researchers are sitting down on a couch with someone, they may purposefully place their bag between them to provide some separation space between them. At the same time, it is important to understand that the safety of male researchers can also be at-risk during fieldwork. In resource towns, there are many households where men work in industry while their female partners take care of the home. As such, researchers are more likely to encounter the female partner during interview or survey work. Under these circumstances, the male researcher can be at-risk if the male partner feels the researcher's interaction with his female partner is a threat to their relationship. Some cultures may also find this inappropriate (see Craig *et al.* 2000). Having women interview men on topics (i.e. those associated with relationships) can also result in conflict or hostility between the researcher and the participant. One approach to reduce any tensions may be to simply suggest moving on from such a "complicated" topic and to address more general issues.

Faculty should work with their staff and students to prepare them for situations of power and conflict. It is important to normalize anxiety and fears; they are natural. They should be reminded that encountering conflict does not necessarily mean that they are bad researchers. Regardless of age or gender, all of the previous lessons and advice apply when working through conflict and negotiations. It will never be easy, but researchers can gain more confidence through practice and experience.

2.4.15 Reporting Violence / Crimes / Risk Behaviours

When working in the community, researchers may encounter or witness violence, criminal activity, risky behaviours, or mental instability. Who do you report to? The police may not always be the best choice as this can result in more emotional stress for the individual. When dealing with someone who has a mental illness, for example, it may be more appropriate to contact a community organization providing mental health services or the local health authority who may provide outreach services. In other cases, it may be more appropriate to contact the nearest office of the Ministry of Children and Family Development or a women's resource centre. In fact, if you suspect that a child is being abused, you have a legal obligation to report the incident. Once you have made the decision to report an incident to an appropriate agency or local support group, you should make sure that the report is as factual as possible. It should not be based on conjecture as this may cause others to dismiss your concerns. Once you state what you saw, you can leave it up to the professional agency to forward the call or take appropriate action.

2.4.16 Offering Support to Those in Need

When researchers conduct household surveys, focus groups, or interviews, they may encounter individuals who are experiencing stress. As a part of good field preparation, researchers should have compiled a list of available supports that can be offered if needed. Examples of such supports may include counseling, a women's resource centre, food banks, shelters, public health nurses, and emergency services.

2.5 Group Techniques

2.5.1 Arranging Safe Participation

Some communities may have limited public transportation. Transportation for some participants may need to be provided to and from the venue. If feasible, researchers should travel in pairs when providing this transportation support in order to enhance the safety of the research team. In some cases, communities can be located in mountainous environments where the weather can change quickly. Researchers should monitor weather forecasts prior to group events. If poor weather conditions impact safe travel, researchers should be prepared to contact all participants to postpone the event. If a full-day group session is organized, the research team should also monitor emerging weather conditions throughout the day to determine if a session needs to be wrapped up early to facilitate safe travel. Researchers should also monitor accident reports and highway conditions issued through government transportation authorities and weather or media websites. Researchers should also be mindful of the distance that participants may need to travel before and after events, particularly during long, cold winter months. This understanding should influence the scheduling of group sessions.

When researchers use group techniques, such as focus groups or roundtables, there are a number of special ethical concerns that can have safety implications for participants attending the event. First, assurance of confidentiality is not possible within a group setting. Researchers may request that all participants refrain from discussing thoughts shared during the event outside the group setting, but there is no guarantee that all participants will abide with these protocols. Exposure of certain viewpoints or experiences outside of group settings, however, can have consequences for participants. It is important that the research team clearly discuss these ethical concerns and implications at the beginning of the group session. To address such issues, researchers may carefully consider the grouping of participants in particular group settings. If the topic concerns a particularly sensitive issue, researchers may also consider the use of virtual group techniques, such as on-line focus groups, discussion boards, or blogs, to encourage open and honest discussions and to respect the anonymity and privacy of participants. Researchers may also need to work with community partners to understand any potential conflicts between certain individuals or groups that can affect the safety of the participants and the research team.

2.5.2 Food and Drinks

Food is often offered to research participants, particularly during group meetings. It is important to consider the dietary needs of participants. There may be a need to provide, for example, gluten free products or options for participants with Diabetes, Crohn’s disease, allergies, or other health conditions.

2.6 Alternative Research Techniques

In community-based research, researchers use a wide range of alternative techniques and tools. The use of these tools, however, can have important implications for the safety of the research team and for research participants. When using photovoice or video, for example, researchers need to be aware of the risks that may emerge from taking photographs or recording video (see Wang and Redwood-Jones 2001). Some images can further stigmatize individuals, reveal embarrassing or risky behaviours, or place individuals in a negative light to others. Once placed on the Internet, images can also be used in unintended ways that can cause further stress or damage to the people in the image (see Clark et al. 2010). An acknowledgement and release form must be signed by all people who appear in the photograph or video before any images are used. This is especially important as photos or images may include people who are not part of the research. For researchers or participants who are taking photos or using video, they may be confronted with threats or aggressive behavior for taking unauthorized pictures. When using photovoice, training needs to be provided about safety issues and respecting the rights and privacy of others (see Wang and Redwood-Jones 2001; Wang et al. 2000).

2.7 Supports for the Research Team

2.7.1 Emotional Well-Being

Field team safety is also impacted by the stress that can be incurred through interviews, focus group, and survey work. Depending on the research topic, participants may share stories about difficult times in their lives. This can have a stressful and emotional impact on the research team member. Researchers may feel helpless and guilty, for example, about interviewing homeless participants, people with disabilities, people with chronic or terminal illnesses, people who have experienced violence or grief, etc. (see Bahn and Weatherhill 2012; Mathee*et al.* 2010). Proper training should prepare researchers to cope with, and respond to, difficult stories. As a part of proper preparation, researchers should also ensure that they have an up-to-date list of local counselling and other community support that may help participants cope with their own stresses. Researchers should also be aware of counselling support services that may be available to them through the UNBC Wellness Centre to help them cope with the stress of fieldwork.

UNBC Wellness Centre
(Room 5-196)
Phone Number: 250 960 6369
Hours: 9am-4pm, Monday-Friday
Offers counseling for all students as well as access to First Nations Counseling Services

Researchers may discuss any stresses or concerns during their check-ins with their project lead or supervisor. The research team should also ensure that adequate down time is incorporated into fieldwork in order to avoid burnout. This is particularly important as routine engagement or burnout can make researchers less alert to potential risks and can affect their ability to handle difficult situations (see Bahn and Weatherhill 2012; Craig *et al.* 2000).

2.7.2 Field Logs

Field logs are a common tool in social science research to record information that will help to track, evaluate, and interpret information collected in communities. They can also serve as a tool to track emerging issues and responses to safety concerns in the field.

3. After the Fieldwork

After researchers return from the field, there should be a debriefing session to discuss any safety concerns that may have emerged during fieldwork, and to discuss how responding to such circumstances can be improved in the future. This may involve adopting changes to fieldwork planning, policies, or procedures for conducting community-based research. The supervisor will also need to determine if there is a need to follow-up with community partners, the RCMP, WorkSafe BC, ICBC, or other institutions concerning any safety issues from the fieldwork.

Researchers may also have a range of emotions after returning from the field. They may feel exhausted. If they have been engaged in any conflict, there may be other physical or emotional impacts. They may feel guilty or helpless about being unable to assist vulnerable residents that they may have interviewed. Over time, researchers can also become attached to many community partners and research participants. It can be upsetting for some researchers to learn about the migration, illness, or death of participants. It is important for researchers to discuss these issues with their supervisors or project leads. If necessary, the supervisor should determine if the researcher should be referred to any additional counseling or medical support. A follow-up meeting with the researcher to monitor or address any outstanding issues may also be considered.

4. Conducting Research in International Communities

Faculty and students at UNBC conduct research in countries all over the world. While the social, economic, and political stability of these places varies, risks can emerge in any context. In this section, we review the preparation that all researchers should take before leaving Canada, as well as the types of risks and safety concerns that can emerge while conducting research internationally.

4.1 Prior to Leaving

The researcher should undertake special precautions to assess any risks that may be involved in conducting research in international communities. Researchers should work with international community partners to understand any inherent risks with conducting research in the community. This may include obtaining information about road conditions, maps, local conflicts, key emergency contacts, cultural norms and expectations, the compatibility of the banking system, the extent of communication infrastructure, etc. This should also involve working with community partners to map out dangerous routes that may exist in international communities. It should also involve understanding potential hazards associated with a particular country (e.g. landmines, diseases, violence, corruption). Researchers should review and sign a waiver form with their supervisor to ensure that they understand the inherent risks that may be involved.

Communication is always an important aspect of safety in any community-based research setting. In an international research setting, it is particularly important for researchers to ensure that they have undertaken adequate language training or have adequate language support in place to support all forms of communication.

As with any research project that takes place off-campus, a Field Risk Assessment and Safety Plan (FRASP) must be prepared, submitted to the Dean, and a copy sent to the UNBC Safety Office. The plan will include an itinerary and contact information for the researcher, and a plan for regular check-in. The itinerary and contact information for the researcher may also be left with a trusted local contact in the international community. This may also include a listing of allergies, as well as any medications that the researcher must take. The FRASP must include actions taken if the researcher does not check-in as planned.

There are a number of documents and logistical arrangements that researchers must ensure are in place before travelling abroad. Researchers should make sure that they have photocopied any important documents (especially your passport page) and have

carefully stored these copies in three separate places (i.e. inside their luggage, with another colleague, their supervisor, etc.).

A Canadian passport is valid for up to 10 years. Renewing a passport abroad can be complicated, so it is better to ensure that your passport does not expire while you are away. Many countries will require that your passport is valid for at least six months following your scheduled date of return to Canada before they will issue a visa (if required). Passport applications can be obtained at most post offices, postal outlets, and travel agencies or you can visit www.passport.gc.ca. You must have a valid passport to apply for a student visa for any extended stays. It can take several weeks to apply for a passport by mail. Major cities can have a walk-in service with a turnaround time of five business days. In some cases, you can obtain a quick turnaround time through your local MP office.

If you plan to drive while you are away, you will need to apply for an international driver's license. Depending upon the length of your stay, some countries may require you to obtain a local or international driver's license. For more information, please visit BCAA.

UNBC recommends that all researchers obtain third party health care insurance for the duration of their fieldwork abroad. Reasonable rates can be found through travel agencies or insurance companies. If you are in a serious accident or become seriously ill, the Medical Services Plan will not cover the costs of a family member to travel to assist you and may be insufficient to cover medical expenses in some locations. If you are eligible for coverage while temporarily absent from B.C., MSP will help pay for unexpected medical services provided the services are medically required, rendered by a licensed physician and normally insured by MSP. Reimbursement for physician services will be made in Canadian funds and payment will not exceed the amount payable had the same services been performed in B.C. Any excess cost is the responsibility of the beneficiary. MSP does not provide any coverage for treatment provided by a health care practitioner outside the province (e.g. physician assistants, nurse practitioners, chiropractors or physical therapists).

When purchasing 3rd party medical insurance, make sure that you ask questions about the extended medical coverage (e.g. evacuation in a medical emergency, what is the deductible, extent of coverage).

Some countries may also require a medical examination certificate before issuing a visa for extended stays, which can be arranged with your doctor. A full medical examination can usually be done and processed within two weeks. These exams may not be covered by your BC Health Care Insurance plan if you have had a similar exam in the recent past. You may also check with the Public Health Unit for advice on any immunization shots that you will need to have before you travel to your destination. Make sure you allocate enough time before your departure to have immunizations done as some may require a series of shots over multiple visits. Remember to ask for an

international vaccination certificate to maintain a record of all of your shots. In case of illness, and to support ongoing care that may be required, it is a good idea to have your medical records with you. If you wear contact lenses or glasses, take an extra pair with you. Make sure you have an adequate supply of your prescription(s) for the duration of the time that you will be away “plus” to cover any unanticipated extended stays.

You may also wish to purchase travel insurance, travel cancellation insurance, and liability insurance for any accompanying personal items or equipment. Rates may vary

depending upon the time that you will be away. You may also wish to find out if your personal items are covered by your homeowner's policy while you are away.

Researchers may also wish to arrange for a relative or friend to have power of attorney while they are away. Having someone with power of attorney can make it easier for a researcher to have their financial matters maintained while they are away. A power of attorney can be arranged through your bank. If preferred, a formal power of attorney may be arranged through a notary or lawyer in order to enable someone to take care of student loans and other issues. You should provide a copy of your formal power of attorney to your supervisor or program chair. Accidents can happen in any research context. It is important to ensure that you have a will and that it is in good order. In the event of a tragedy, the Canadian embassy will contact your family and help to make the required arrangements.

Researchers are responsible for ensuring that they have adequate funds set aside to cover all the expenses associated with the fieldwork. As a part of this responsibility, they should ensure that they have emergency funds set aside before leaving to cover any unforeseen expenses. If you do not have a credit card, you may consider applying for one or make arrangements to have signing authority on a parent's or spouse's card. A credit card is useful for making travel arrangements or in emergency situations.

4.2 In the Field

When researchers arrive in an international destination, the first thing they should do is to register with the Canadian Embassy or Consulate. Some countries that do not have an official embassy or consulate may have an honorary consulate. While researchers may connect with these honorary consulates, they should make sure that they also secure on-line registration with the closest embassy or consulate. Where no Canadian embassy or consulate exists, researchers may connect with a Commonwealth embassy (British); but this should in no way replace the need to register with the closest Canadian embassy or consulate.

People can experience a range of emotions when adapting to a foreign culture, from excitement and interest to frustration about different cultural norms, as well as depression and fear of the unknown. Things that may take minutes at home (e.g. telephone call, transportation, logistics) may take longer in other settings. Avoid being judgmental; instead, understand why the processes may be different. Always be respectful and patient.

Some researchers may visit politically unstable countries. They may also be exploring topics that may be perceived to threaten certain organizations or political movements. Under these circumstances, researchers should understand that their actions may be monitored (see Peritore 1990). Their phones may be tapped, they may be followed, their participants may be interrogated, and their notes may be confiscated. Of course, this has implications not just for the safety of the researcher, but also for the safety of participants as well (see Kovats-Bernat 2002). As a result, researchers should use

caution to probe participants for too much information that may place them in danger. Some strategies that have been adopted include the use of pay phones to contact participants, as well as the use of abbreviations, shorthand, and encrypted notes that do not include names, dates, or places (see Peritore 1990).

As with any research setting, it will be important for researchers to assess meeting places for any potential dangers. This includes understanding who is in the room, office, house, or building, as well as the presence of any potential weapons. It will also be important to try to assess the meeting space to identify exits in case of emergency.

As noted earlier, complications can arise when conducting fieldwork in communities. There may be circumstances when a researcher or student refuses to leave or decides to leave the project early. The circumstances of these decisions should be carefully reviewed as they can put the researcher and perhaps the research team at greater risk. Every effort should be made to resolve any issues in the field and ensure that the research team works together unless there is a pending safety risk in the community. If the researcher or student leaves, they must sign a waiver form stating that they understand the risks associated with their departure and that UNBC is no longer responsible for their safety.

Travelling abroad can provide people with a sense of adventure. At times, this can lead to risky or inappropriate behaviours. Researchers should be mindful at all times that if they are involved in any illegal activity, UNBC will not assume any responsibility for their actions. Under the legal system of the country that researchers are visiting, they will receive the same treatment and will need to abide by the same laws as any other citizens of that country. The Canadian government will only ensure that Canadian citizens are not discriminated against.

4.3 After the Field

After researchers return from the field, they should have a debriefing meeting with the project lead or supervisor. This can help researchers to talk about any culture shock that they may be experiencing. It also provides an important opportunity to review and discuss any safety issues that emerged during the field and to use those discussions as an opportunity for growth and development.

You should monitor your health very carefully after you return from an international destination. If you notice any unusual symptoms, you should see your doctor immediately. When you visit your doctor, make sure they know that you have recently returned from an international destination and review the vaccinations that you received before your departure. If any illnesses arise due to your international visit, you should notify your supervisor or project lead immediately in order to ensure the safety of the entire research team that may have been away.

5. Using Social Media in Field Research

Social media is increasingly being used to support community-based research activities. Such examples may include Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, LinkedIn, Airbnb, SharePoint, Snapchat, Facetime, and more. Such social media tools can be used through a variety of mechanisms from laptops to smart devices (i.e. android phones, iPhones, Apple iWatch devices, etc.). With social media being a relatively new research tool, few institutions have developed ethical guidelines and safety procedures to guide their use in community settings. In fact, the Tri-Council Policy Statement for the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans has no statement or section about the ethical use of social media in research. However, the Panel on Research Ethics has provided some guidance on applying the TCPS 2 to research using social media platforms (see: https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/reb-cer_social-sociaux.html). This guidance currently focuses upon whether an REB review is required for research that uses social media platforms (SM platforms). According to the Government of Canada's Panel on Research Ethics, "REB review is required in all human research using SM platforms, with one exception – when participants have no reasonable expectation of privacy, and the information is in the public domain" (Panel on Research Ethics 2023: https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/reb-cer_social-sociaux.html). However, the Panel's policies and guidance related to privacy, confidentiality, and consent with SM platforms are under development and are anticipated to be released in the near future. The purpose of this section is to draw upon IT expertise and other available ethical guidelines for SM platforms to explore the safety and security issues that researchers must consider when using social media and other technology tools.

The degree of risk associated with using social media depends upon the research topic and the information posted by researchers and participants. People may post comments about several sensitive topics, such as political and social views, financial problems, physical and mental health issues, and potential criminal activity (Panel on Research Ethics 2023). Digital literacy can vary tremendously from one person to the next, including the capacity of people to manage their privacy settings and understand that their posts may be used for other purposes. As the Panel on Research Ethics (2023) argues, even if information is within a public domain, people may still have a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Debates about informed consent with research drawing upon SM platforms are ongoing. Townsend and Wallace (2016) note that researchers have obtained data for hundreds of SM users without consent, sometimes by relying on SM platform statements that user information may be used by third parties. They argue, however, that many SM users have not read such terms. Other issues, such as the right to withdraw by deleting posts, become difficult for researchers to track. It can also be difficult to verify the age of online users, and, where necessary, authenticate parental consent (Berman et al. 2018).

Researchers need to be aware that despite various privacy settings, there is considerable integration across various social media and websites. The goal of many

software and web designers is to make their programs easy to use. This provision of user-friendly programs, however, often impacts the safety and privacy of those users. Twitter, for example, provides users with an option to login using their Facebook account. In order to protect the privacy of the individual, however, it is important that users generate a separate Twitter account for login purposes. There are software programs available to help manage multiple Twitter accounts. Hootsuite, for example, can help researchers to manage multiple Twitter accounts – even by incorporating multiple Twitter accounts into one. Hootsuite also provides an option to login using a Facebook account. To protect the privacy of the information that is shared, however, it is important to create a separate Hootsuite account. Researchers and participants must realize that anything that is shared through Twitter is public – even if it is a private message. If someone searches for a specific identification, they will be able to read that private message.

With respect to e-mail, Outlook also provides a social integration option with Twitter and Facebook. If someone e-mails you after you have integrated these pages, it will automatically display your Facebook page. This would allow unwanted personal information to be shared. When in doubt, researchers and participants may not wish to share any information that they do not want to be public via e-mail.

There are a number of researchers and research participants who use drop-box / iCloud. With iCloud based in the United States, however, all the information is stored in the United States and is subject to the Patriot Act. Due to privacy concerns, UNBC researchers should not use iCloud; instead, researchers should use the OneDrive platform offered through the university. However, if something is deleted from OneDrive on one computer, it also disappears from other computers that have access to the same OneDrive account. The IT department provides guidance on best practices for data storage and management: https://unbc.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/87/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=4248.

Researchers and participants should also be cautious when sharing any information through SM platforms. Break and enters, for example, can occur after a researcher or participant post a period of time when they will be away. SM platforms, such as Facebook, also change their target and website layout. When their website design changes, security settings are reset. Linked-In tends to be more secure and also sends emails notifying users about changes to the security setting. Furthermore, while Facebook will allow a user to create separate pages, those pages are still linked back to the user. Facebook also does not allow users to create fictitious names in order to protect their identity. This can be important if researchers are using social media to explore more sensitive topics. Through Google, however, researchers and participants can create a fictitious identity for their g-mail account. By tracking different accounts created with different identities, it is also possible to track spam connections and see which companies or organizations are sharing your information. An important strategy when creating a fictitious account for users is to use create a common name (i.e. Smith) that is too common to look up. As always, it is important for participants to understand that what happens on social media stays on social media. Posts have been used

against individuals for years afterward (i.e. when seeking employment).

Researchers and participants need to be more aware of how easily their personal information can be accessed through social media. Blogs have been written about how to get data from Facebook by looking up, for example, anyone who has or had worked at Tim Horton's. Based on this identifying piece of information, it is possible to obtain access to other information about these individuals.

Researchers may also use on-line blogs to support their research, particularly to engage with people with limited mobility or those who live in remote locations. Word Press.com is one site that allows users to create a free account. While it takes time to learn the layout, it is structured and allows the researcher to create blog pages where people can post comments. Given its widespread use, it is also accompanied with help support. Again, while it provides an option to login using a Facebook account, it is important to create a separate account in order to avoid integration information from the two sites.

Some researchers are also using Zoom, and Teams to interact with research participants. These have both been vetted by the Privacy Impact Assessment and provide secure tools to support outreach research activities. If researchers are conducting interviews where privacy concerns around the content of the interview are present, secure settings through Zoom (i.e. organizing a waiting room, only allowing certain IP ranges, ensuring the camera and sound are off by default) may help. UNBC provides guidance to secure your zoom meetings: https://unbc.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/87/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=3508. However, there can still be risks for participants as applications such as OBS can be used by researchers or other participants to record Zoom or Team sessions without consent. Screen capture software is also available for PCs that will allow users to draw a window around the Skype window and capture sound and video. Researchers must consider security issues that can occur between applications. For example, Microsoft used to operate the MSN chat feature. When they purchased Skype, they merged the applications together. Anyone who had an MSN id for personal use and a Skype id for business use now had their accounts merged together.

Features, such as dispatch, have used GPS to track workers using their smartphone technology. This dispatch feature can enhance the safety of researchers, and have many applications in community-based research (e.g. observing the mobility of seniors, travel patterns, maintenance patterns). If a researcher is travelling to a remote area or conducting a door-to-to survey and fails to return to a specified location by a specified time, it is possible to use the dispatch feature to locate their last location. In preparation for fieldwork, it may also be possible for researchers to assess the number of ambulance or related emergency calls in a community in order to identify any areas that may pose a higher risk of safety to the research team. This is only possible, however, if a Google developer has collected and organized the information.

Researchers and participants, however, must also be aware of the potential safety

concerns that can arise from such technology. It is easy for an employer, researcher, etc. to become a “Google developer”. When someone logs in to the developer screen, they are able to see the locations of anyone who has their GPS tracker turned on. A developer can still track the location of someone even if they have their smartphone turned off. In order to stop the tracking, the smartphone user must turn the GPS tracking device off. It is also possible for a developer to create a custom map to be shared; but for any developer in ‘developer mode’, this can show more information than intended. It is also possible for one Google developer to access another Google developer’s information. In response, one may wish to create a custom map that contains only reference numbers and then keep a list of notes about those reference numbers somewhere else.

CUPE and Continuing Education at UNBC, as well as CNC, have offered courses on how to use social media. However, it is important to be aware that social media apps change all the time. Expectations of use can change from one app to the next. It is important to review these conditions. Some apps will clearly state that there is no privacy and they intend to use the information as they see fit.

6. Resources

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Appendix A: Sample Incident Report Form

Incident Report Form for Community-Based Research

General Information	
Name of researcher:	
Date:	
Workplace location:	
Witness information:	Name of first witness: Contact information: Name of second witness: Contact information:
The Incident	
Date of the incident:	
Time of the incident:	
Location of the incident:	
Type of incident:	□ Stroke, heart attack □ Allergic reaction □ Fall (i.e. on ice) □ Vehicle accident □ Threats or acts of violence □ Inappropriate behavior: please describe □ Other: please describe
Were there others involved in the incident?	□ Yes □ No
If yes, please list name and contact information	Name: Contact information: Name: Contact information:
Description of others involved:	□ Age □ Gender □ Hair colour □ Skin tone □ Clothing □ Tattoos / other markings □ Vehicle

Description of incident:	How it started: Description of what each person said / did: How the incident was resolved:
Was any medical attention required?	□ Yes: please explain: □ No
If applicable: police file #:	
Impacts of Incident	
How has the incident impacted those involved?	□ Injuries □ Missed work □ Emotional stress □ Impact on transportation □ Other: please explain:
Please present this form to your supervisor or employer to be kept on file.	

Appendix B: Sample Check-in Form

Check-in Form for Community-Based Fieldwork

The purpose of this form is to clearly outline check-in procedures to monitor the safety of researchers doing community-based research.

Check-in Procedures	
You will be contacted by:	
They will contact you by:	□ Phone_____ □ E-mail_____ □ In-person □ Other method: please specify:
They will contact you:	□ Each hour □ Each morning □ Each evening □ Once a week □ Other: please specify:
If they cannot reach you within 30 minutes of the pre-determined check-in time, they will contact:	□ RCMP □ Supervisor □ Program Chair □ Emergency contacts □ Other: please specify:
Contact information for the field researcher:	□ Name _____ □ Address _____ □ Home number _____ □ Work number _____ □ Cell number _____ □ E-mail _____
Contact information for the supervisor:	□ Name _____ □ Address _____ □ Home number _____ □ Work number _____ □ Cell number _____ □ E-mail _____

Emergency contact information:	□ Name _____ □ Address _____ □ Home number _____ □ Work number _____ □ Cell number _____ □ E-mail _____

Record of Check-Ins		
Date	Time	Comments / Issues

Appendix C: Sample Checklist for Planning Safe Community-Based Fieldwork

Checklist for Planning Safe Community-Based Fieldwork

The purpose of this form is to provide a sample checklist of items that community-based researchers may consider as a part of planning their fieldwork.

Checklist	
Have hazards and risks associated with community-based research been identified and discussed?	□ Yes □ No
Are you visiting any institutional or industrial sites?	□ Yes □ No
Have you confirmed if there are any safety protocols for visiting those sites?	□ Yes □ No
Has the appropriate safety gear been obtained?	□ Yes □ No
Have procedures for emergency evacuation been reviewed for off-campus work environments?	□ Yes □ No
Have communication and check-in protocols been reviewed?	□ Yes □ No
Have the researcher / supervisor reviewed the communication options that are available in the community?	□ Yes □ No
Have the researcher / supervisor reviewed the transportation options that are available in the community?	□ Yes □ No
Have the researcher / supervisor reviewed the accommodation options that are available in the community?	□ Yes □ No
Have procedures for violence in the workplace been reviewed?	□ Yes □ No
Are there clear procedures in place to report violence or safety concerns?	□ Yes □ No
Does the employer / supervisor have incident investigation report forms on file?	□ Yes □ No
Does the researcher / employee have incident report forms included in their field gear?	□ Yes □ No
Describe any environment where the researcher may be working alone (i.e. isolated area, in private homes, in a building after hours, etc.):	
Has the research team identified any dietary needs of participants that may be related to a participant's underlying health condition?	□ Yes □ No
Has the research team identified any transportation needs of participants?	□ Yes □ No
Is the research team is aware of any health conditions that may impact the participation of residents in the research?	□ Yes □ No
If travelling outside of BC, has the researcher reviewed the policies of their travel insurance coverage?	□ Yes □ No

Appendix D: Checklist for Monitoring the Implementation of Safe Community-Based Fieldwork

Checklist for Monitoring Safe Community-Based Fieldwork

The purpose of this form is to provide a sample checklist of items that community-based researchers may consider as a part of planning their fieldwork.

Checklist	
Has the researcher completed all check-ins after arriving in the community?	□ Yes □ No
Has the researcher confirmed the location of emergency services and supports in the community?	□ Yes □ No
Has the researcher confirmed that communication options work in the community (i.e. cell phone, wireless in hotel, access to Internet at public library)?	□ Yes □ No
Has the researcher confirmed that the transportation options are suitable for the work being conducted in the community?	□ Yes □ No
Has the researcher confirmed that the accommodation options are safe?	□ Yes □ No
Has the researcher confirmed the location of all meetings?	□ Yes □ No
Has the researcherconducted an on-site assessment of hazards and risks associated with the meeting locations? (i.e. emergency exits, ice, lighting, slippery surfaces, potholes, etc.)	□ Yes □ No
Has the researcher checked-in with appropriate community partners / contacts to discuss any potential hazards or risks (i.e. bears in area, flooding, loose animals, properties of concern, etc.)	□ Yes □ No
Have any new situations emerged where the researcher is working alone (i.e. isolated area, in private homes, in a building after hours, etc.):	
Did the researcher experience any conflicts while conducting research in the community? If yes, please explain:	□ Yes □ No
Did the researcher need to offer / refer any participants to any community supports? If yes, please explain:	□ Yes □ No
Has the researcher completed all necessary check-outs before leaving the community? (i.e. notifying supervisor, RCMP, community contact, etc.)	□ Yes □ No

Appendix E: Checklist for Reviewing Safety After Community-Based Fieldwork

Checklist for Reviewing Safety After Community-Based Fieldwork

The purpose of this form is to provide a sample checklist of items that community-based researchers may consider as a part of planning their fieldwork.

Checklist	
Has a debriefing meeting been held to discuss any safety concerns that may have emerged during the fieldwork?	□ Yes □ No
Have any adjustments been made to fieldwork planning, policies, or procedures for community-based research?	□ Yes □ No
If yes, are there any best practices that should be passed onto the field safety committee in the spirit of improving UNBC's community-based safety manual?	□ Yes □ No
Did the fieldwork negatively impact the researcher in any way? □ Physical impacts □ Emotional impacts □ Other: please explain:	□ Yes □ No
Is there a need to refer the researcher to any counseling or medical supports? If yes, please specify:	□ Yes □ No
Is there a need for the supervisor / researcher to follow-up with any community partners or members concerning safety issues? If yes, please specify:	□ Yes □ No
Is there a need for the supervisor / researcher to follow-up with WCB, ICBC, the RCMP, or any other institutions? If yes, please explain:	□ Yes □ No
Have the supervisor and the researcher determined a date to follow-up on any outstanding issues from the fieldwork? Date:	□ Yes □ No
Other comments:	

Appendix F: Checklist for Planning Safe International Community-Based Fieldwork

Checklist for Planning Safe International Community-Based Fieldwork

The purpose of this form is to provide a sample checklist of items that community-based researchers may consider as a part of planning their fieldwork.

Checklist	
Have all appropriate travel documents been obtained? Examples: passport, student VISA, letter of invitation, etc.	□ Yes □ No
Has the expiry date of the passport been checked?	□ Yes □ No
Has the researcher reviewed their travel / health insurance coverage and procedures? If yes, has any additional necessary health coverage been obtained?	□ Yes □ No □ Yes □ No
Has the researcher obtained all necessary immunizations?	□ Yes □ No
Has the researcher arranged to have a power of attorney? If yes, has a copy of the power of attorney been left with the supervisor?	□ Yes □ No □ Yes □ No
Does the researcher have an emergency fund set aside?	□ Yes □ No
Have hazards and risks associated with international community-based fieldwork been identified and discussed? Examples: landmines, political conflicts, diseases, cultural norms, etc.	□ Yes □ No
Has the researcher obtained all the necessary information about the international site? Examples: □ Maps □ Political environment (stable / unstable) □ Banking system (compatible / accessible) □ Language □ Cultural norms □ Embassy or consulate contacts □ Emergency contacts	□ Yes □ No
Have the researcher / supervisor reviewed the communication options that are available in the international location?	□ Yes □ No
Have the researcher / supervisor reviewed the transportation options that are available in the international location?	□ Yes □ No
Have the researcher / supervisor reviewed the accommodation options that are	□ Yes

available in the international location?	□ No
Have you determined if there are any safety protocols for visiting international sites?	□ Yes □ No
Has the appropriate safety gear been obtained?	□ Yes □ No
Have procedures for emergency evacuation from the international site been planned?	□ Yes □ No
Have communication and check-in protocols been reviewed?	□ Yes □ No
Have procedures for violence in the workplace been reviewed?	□ Yes □ No
Are there clear procedures in place to report violence or safety concerns in that international context?	□ Yes □ No
Does the researcher / employee have incident report forms included in their field gear?	□ Yes □ No
Describe any environment where the researcher may be working alone (i.e. isolated area, in private homes, in a building after hours, etc.):	
Has the research team identified any dietary needs of participants?	□ Yes □ No
Has the research team has identified any transportation needs of participants?	□ Yes □ No
Is the research team is aware of any health conditions that may impact the participation of residents in the research?	□ Yes □ No
Have copies of the researcher's itinerary and planned date of return been left with the supervisor?	□ Yes □ No