10 pieces of advice for making a safe larp

This list contains suggestions on how you can make your larp feel safe and comfortable for your participants, both regarding practical, offgame needs and a safe environment for the game itself.
The list can be used as inspiration or direct check-list as needed. But bear in mind that it can be good to have more than one safety-mechanic in your game, since it gives your participants a possibility to take care of their own needs and choose the mechanics that work best for them.

Practical:

1. **Have a safety-person who only deals with safety.** Make sure to have one or more safety-persons who only deal with the players' offgame needs, during the event. If it is not possible to have a person who only deals with safety, the organizers can rotate the role of safety-person during the event.
   It can be beneficial to have an external safety-person, who is not good friends with organizers and/or participants.

2. **Offgame room** where the participants can take a break if they are tired or feeling overwhelmed by the game. If possible, it is a good idea to have the offgame room in another room than where the organizers are working from, but it can be a good place for the safety-person to have their base. In the offgame room you can have noice-canceling headphone, snacks and water.

3. **Toilets with a sink.** If your location has toilets with sinks, make at least one of them a gender-neutral toilet, since it helps people who use menstrual-cups.

4. **Plan for if something happens.** To create a safe base for your event it is good to have a plan for what to do if an assault happens. You can choose to share this plan with your participants, for example by making it available on your website, or you can just share it with your co-organizers and helpers. See Bifrosts *Guide on how to handle sexual assault*.

5. **Code of Conduct*.** An official CoC is your way of communicating to your participants how you expect them to behave towards each other, when they're at your event. It can contain both what you want them to do and what you want them not to do. A CoC can be about language, consumption of alcohol, sexual situations, inclusive behavior and much more.

About the game:

6. **Matching of expectations** before the larp. Be sure that you have communicated all the rules of the game and the organizers' expectations

in advance and/or make sure to go through them during pre-game workshops and briefings.

7. **Briefing/debriefing.** Create a frame around your larp with briefings before and after the game. You can use the briefings to tell your participants important information and after the game help you them get back into the real world. You can choose to have a voluntary, structured debrief where the participants have a chance to talk to each other and get out of their characters and the game.

8. **Establishing common stop-words and mechanics for escalation****. Mechanics for stopping the game and escalating or deescalating it gives the players opportunities to steer their play and shape situations to make them comfortable and safe. Such mechanics make for a feeling of control for the player.

9. **Establishing common meta-technics*****. Meta-technics make sure that the players have the same approach to situation that for example includes physical contact. This helps the game to feel safe and more transparent for the players.

10. **Workshop.** It is a good idea to have a workshop before the game where the players get to try out mechanics for stopping and escalating as well as meta-technics used in the game.

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Inspiration for Code of Conduct:
From Knutepunkt 2017 (reused at Knutpunkt 2018) can be found here here

Fælles på Forum from Forum 2017 can be found here

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Examples of stop-mechanics:
We recommend that you workshop all mechanics with your players.

Hand on the head: means that the person in question have gone off game and does not want to be interacted with.

Stop-word: a word that signals that the game should be stopped immediately. The reason can be that someone feels unsafe in the game or that someone is hurt.

Tap out: two taps on another player's arm which means that the 'tapper' wants to stop the scene.

Examples of mechanics for escalation:

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info@landsforeningenbifrost.dk
www.landsforeningenbifrost.dk   Side **2** af **3**

We recommend that you workshop all mechanics with your players.

Trafic-lights: With this tecnique players can communicate if they are comfortable with situations by only using one word and without going off game.
- Green: I feel fine and want to continue this scene. Feel free to escalate.
- Yellow: I feel fine about this scene, but do not escalate it.
- Red: I do not feel comfortable with this situation and would like to stop it.

The trafic-lights gives players a possibility to check in with each other by for example saying "Are you green or what, you idiot?".

This mechanic can be an easy way of avoiding an unsafe situation before a stop-word is needed. If somebody says "red" the other players can stop the scene, while remaining in game, and leave.

Words for escalation: a word that can be used if a player wants to signal that they would like to escalate a conflict. This word could be "damned" or "stink", for example "do you want to fight you stinky bastard?". The word has to be something that will not be used often in casual talk, as to avoid misunderstandings.

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Examples of meta-techniques:
We recommend that you workshop all mechanics with your players.

A classic mechanic for when players want to *fist-fight* is to have a system where all characters have a combat-level specifically for fist-fights. Before the fight the players share their levels, the one with the highest level will win, and the fight is performed as show-fight.

In *bigger brawls* you can have the rule that the largest group always wins.

Groping can be symbolised by caressing another players neck. This can feel intimidating without anyone being touched in intimate places.

Sex can be simulated by the *Ars Amandi-technique* where players solely touch each other's hands and arms. The technique can be combined with eye-contact and the players telling each other what their characters feel and think in the intimate situation. Guides on *Ars Amandi* can be found in the internet.