

'Young People First' Policy

It is the policy of The Scout Association to safeguard the welfare of all Members by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.

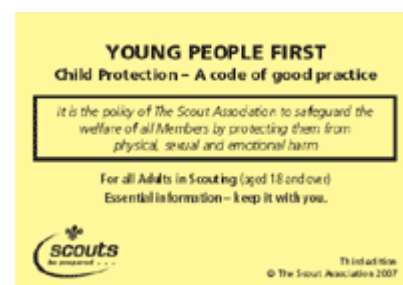
The Scout Association is committed to:

- taking into account in all its considerations and activities the interests and well-being of young people;
- respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of the young people with whom it is working
- taking all reasonable practicable steps to protect them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and
- promoting the welfare of young people and their protection within a relationship of trust.

All adults aged eighteen or over, no matter what their role or involvement within Scouting, are responsible for putting this policy into practice at all times

The Scout Association's Child Protection policy is known as the 'Young People First' policy. It's often referred to as the "yellow card" policy because of the pocket sized reminder card all adults involved with Scouting are asked to keep and carry with them.

The 'Young People First' policy is held up as an example of best practice and praised by the child protection agencies. The Scout Association also enjoys the confidence and trust of thousands of parents who each week place their children in our care.



YOUNG PEOPLE FIRST

Child Protection – A code of good practice

It is the policy of The Scout Association to safeguard the welfare of all Members by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm

For all Adults in Scouting (aged 18 and over)

Essential information – keep it with you.

Third edition

© The Scout Association 2007

If you have a concern about a young person's safety and well being:

1. Immediately tell your Group Scout Leader or District Commissioner
2. Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or were told
3. Sign, date and pass your notes to your District Commissioner
4. Ensure that no Scouting situation arises which could cause any further concern

If you receive a complaint or allegation about any adult or about yourself:

1. Immediately tell your Group Scout Leader or District Commissioner
2. Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or were told
3. Sign, date and pass your notes to your District Commissioner
4. Try to ensure no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise

Note: Any Adult in Scouting has the right to report any concerns, or suspicions about another Member in confidence and free from harassment.

You must refer; you must not investigate.

*If in any doubt about policy or procedure please contact the Scout Information Centre on
0845 300 1818*

www.scouts.org.uk/childprotection

Responsibilities of Adults

As an adult in Scouting you have a responsibility to ensure that young people are protected from harm. It is the responsibility of each adult in Scouting to ensure that:

- their behaviour is appropriate at all times
- they observe the rules established for the safety and security of young people
- they follow the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse
- they recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed; and
- in every respect, the relationships they form with young people on their care are appropriate

All Adults in Scouting, including Members of the Scout Network who wish to work with young people, must accept and understand this policy. They must also agree to put the Association's policy on child protection into practice.

Meeting your responsibilities

To give positive guidance the 'Young people First' (yellow card) sets out a code of behaviour. It is essential that all adults in Scouting follow this code. The 'do's and don'ts' can help you ensure that:

- the welfare of the young people for whom you have a duty of care is safeguarded
- you avoid compromising situations or opportunities for misunderstandings or allegations

Every Adult should have a copy of the code of good practice 'Young People First' (yellow card). The yellow card is designed for you to keep - carry it.

Check that:

- you have your own copy
- all other adults involved in the work of your Section/Group also have a copy
- you have a copy (A3) of the Yellow Card displayed in you HQ or meeting place
- parents / carers are made aware of the 'Young People First' Policy

Code of behaviour

DO put this code into practice at all times

DO treat everyone with dignity and respect

DO set an example you would wish others to follow

DO treat all young people equally - show no favouritism

DO plan activities that involve more than one other person being present, or at least are within sight and hearing of others

DO follow recommended adult/young people ratios for meetings and activities

DO respect a young person's right to personal privacy

DO avoid unacceptable situations within a relationship of trust e.g. a sexual relationship with a youth Member over the age of consent

DO have separate sleeping accommodation for young people, adults and Young Leaders working with a younger Section

DO allow young people to talk about any concerns they may have

DO encourage others to challenge any attitudes or behaviours they do not like

DO avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour e.g. tantrums and crushes

DO follow the Association's 'no alcohol' guidance when young people are in your care

DO make everyone aware of the Association's child protection procedures - young people, parents/carers, Young Leaders and other helpers

DO remember this code even at sensitive moments e.g. when responding to bullying, bereavement or abuse

DO keep other Leaders informed of where you are and what you are doing

DO remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned

DO take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately

DO NOT trivialise abuse

DO NOT form a relationship with a young person that is an abuse of trust

DO NOT permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying

DO NOT engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact, physical, verbal, sexual

DO NOT play physical contact games with young people

DO NOT make suggestive remarks or threats to a young person, even in fun

DO NOT use inappropriate language, writing, phoning, email or internet

DO NOT let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported

DO NOT just rely on your good name to protect you

What happens if...?

If you suspect abuse, a young person confides in you, or a complaint is made about any adult or about yourself, it is your duty to report the concern.

If a young person tells you about abuse by someone else:

1. Allow the young person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said
2. Offer immediate understanding and reassurance, while passing no judgement
3. Advise that you will try to offer support but that you must pass the information on
4. Immediately tell your Group Scout Leader or District Commissioner
5. Write careful notes of what was said; use actual words wherever possible
6. Sign, date and pass your notes to your District Commissioner
7. Ensure that no Scouting situation arises which could cause any further concern

Note: In an emergency (young person at imminent risk of significant harm) contact police or social service/work department directly. Then, inform your District Commissioner of the action you have taken.