

Youth Protection And Safety



The Boy Scouts of America considers the safety of its youth members to be of utmost importance. To this end, Scouting has established policies for youth protection and safety. These policies are available online from BSA in the [Guide To Safe Scouting](#). The [Youth Protection policies](#) are an important part of safe Scouting, and all Scout leaders are expected to adhere to both safety and youth protection policies.



The heart of the youth protection program is this set of guidelines for leaders to follow:

1. **Two-deep Leadership.** Two registered adult leaders, or one registered leader and a parent of a participant, one of whom must be 21 years of age or older, are required on all trips and outings.
2. **No one-on-one contact.** One-on-one contact between adults and youth members is not permitted. In situations that require personal conferences, such as Scoutmaster's conference, the meeting is to be conducted in view of other adults and youths.
3. **Respect of privacy.** Adult leaders must respect the privacy of youth members in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers at camp, and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.
4. **Separate accommodations.** When camping, no youth is permitted to sleep in the tent of an adult other than his own parent or guardian. Councils are strongly encouraged to have separate shower and latrine facilities for females. When separate facilities are not available, separate times for male and female use should be scheduled and posted for showers.
5. **No secret organizations.** The Boy Scouts of America does not recognize any secret organizations as part of its program. All aspects of the Scouting program are open to observation by parents and leaders.
6. **Proper preparation for high-adventure activities.** Activities with elements of risk should never be undertaken without proper preparation, equipment, clothing, supervision, and safety measures.
7. **Appropriate attire.** Proper clothing for activities is required. For example, skinny-dipping is not appropriate as part of Scouting.
8. **Constructive discipline.** Discipline used in Scouting should be constructive and reflect Scouting's values. Corporal punishment is never permitted.
9. **Hazing prohibited.** Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any Scouting activity.
10. **Junior leader training and supervision.** Adult leaders must monitor and guide the leadership techniques used by junior leaders and ensure that BSA policies are followed.

In addition to setting the above policies, Scouting takes these steps to insure the safety of youth

members:

- **Background checks.** Personal references are provided by applicants and checked by unit leaders. A criminal background check is performed on all applicants for adult volunteer positions. Also, BSA maintains a list of former leaders who have been deemed ineligible for Scouting leadership positions.
- **Adult training.** Youth Protection Training is an essential part of the basic leader training provided to Scouting volunteers. It is conducted annually or more often at the local level (i.e., in Durham County), and is also available as an [online course](#). You will need a user ID and password to sign in. You can create an account on this site.
- **Youth education.** Scouting has age-appropriate educational materials for youth members. "How to Protect Your Children from Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide" is a tear-out booklet bound in with BSA youth books. It is designed for parents or guardians and young people to use together. The BSA has bilingual, age-appropriate videos for all youth age groups to address the problems of sexual abuse. "It Happened to Me" should be used annually by Cub Scout packs or dens, but only for Cub Scouts accompanied by a parent or other adult family member. The video for Boy Scouts, "A Time to Tell", introduces the **three R's** of Youth Protection (**R**ecognize, **R**esist, and **R**eport), and should be viewed by troops annually. "Personal Safety Awareness" is the video for Venturing-age young people.