

SCOUTS CANADA STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

SECTION 7000 – DUTY OF CARE

7000 - CODE OF CONDUCT:

Statement of Policy

The primary responsibility of all volunteers and staff in the Scouting movement is the well-being and development of youth. As a Scouts Canada volunteer or staff, you are required to abide by the organization's policies and procedures and to ensure your conduct is in keeping with the organization's Mission and Principles.

This Code of Conduct applies to all Scouts Canada volunteers and staff, regardless of location, and in accepting an appointment; you undertake to discharge your duties and to regulate your conduct in line with the requirements of this Code. The Code is designed for your guidance and protection, although a breach may result in disciplinary action (including dismissal in some instances) and, in some cases, may lead to criminal prosecution.

MISSION AND PRINCIPLES

MISSION:

The mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals, and play a constructive role in society.

PRINCIPLES:

Scouting is based on three broad principles which represent its fundamental beliefs.

Duty to God: This is defined as “adherence to spiritual principles, loyalty to the religion that expresses them and acceptance of the duties resulting therefrom.”

Duty to Others: This is defined as “loyalty to one's country in harmony with the promotion of local, national and international peace, understanding and cooperation,” and “participation in the development of society, with recognition and respect for the dignity of one's fellow-being and for the integrity of the natural world.”

Duty to Self: This is defined as “responsibility for the development of oneself”. This is in harmony with the educational purpose of the Scout Movement whose aim is to assist young people in the full development of their potentials.

Scouts Canada Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to all Scouts Canada volunteers including youth in positions of responsibility (Activity Leaders, Scouters-in-Training and Youth Commissioners) and employees regardless of location. When you accept an

appointment, you agree to carry out your duties and act according to the requirements of this Code.

This Code of Conduct also applies to parents and guardians who wish to participate in their child's overnight Scouting activities and to resource people recruited to assist with a specific Scouting activity. Additional requirements may apply and are detailed in Scouts Canada's Volunteer Screening Policy found at <http://www.scouts.ca/cys/SC-CYS-VolunteerScreeningPolicy-eng.pdf>

As a volunteer or employee of Scouts Canada, or as a parent or resource person attending Scouts Canada activities, you are expected to agree to each of these statements:

1. I will ensure the safety, health and well-being of all Scouts Canada members, especially children and youth.

- I will follow all legal and Scouts Canada health and safety requirements.
- I will follow all screening guidelines and will immediately tell my Commissioner or Scouts Canada employee if any of the guidelines have been broken or ignored.
- I will avoid any unnecessary risk to the safety, health and well-being of myself and others.
- I will do risk and hazard reviews before, during and after all Scouting activities.

2. I will ensure that my personal conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standards and follows Scouts Canada's Mission and Principles.

- I will treat all people fairly and with respect and dignity.
- I will follow the drug and alcohol policy for all Scouting-related activities.
- I will not swear or use inappropriate language in front of youth.
- I will always ask a youth member for permission before I touch them; I will only touch them on the hands, arms, shoulders or head and will always do it where others can see us. The only exception is in the case of a medical or safety emergency.
- I will respect everyone's right to personal privacy. For co-ed sections, I will make best efforts to have separate sleeping accommodations and washing facilities that are also different from adult ones.
- I will not smoke in front of youth.
- I will never be alone with a youth member except in an emergency. I will ensure that any private conversations that I have with a youth member will take place where we can be seen by others.
- I will not use my role in Scouting to have contact with youth members outside of Scouting.
- I will follow the Scouts Canada guidelines for connecting with youth participants using technology and social media.
- I will use positive discipline that includes setting fair rules, listening, problem-solving, encouraging and being a good example. I will not use harmful methods such as hitting, name-calling, yelling, put-downs or rejection.

3. I will avoid involvement in any criminal activities, activities that do not respect human rights or activities that risk the reputation of Scouts Canada.

- I will report to authorities (see www.scouts.ca/ca/canadian-child-protection-agencies for provincial listing) any form of illegal activities against children and youth that I become aware of.
- I will notify Scouts Canada if I face any new criminal charges during my time as a volunteer or employee.
- I will not in any way behave sexually with children or youth. This includes sexual jokes, language, names, touching, pornography, and exploitation.
- I will not use technology or social media to encourage youth to disrespect or exploit others.
- I will not abuse or exploit children or youth in any way, and will immediately report to authorities (see www.scouts.ca/ca/canadian-child-protection-agencies for provincial listing) and my Commissioner or Scouts Canada employee if I see anyone else doing it.

4. I will not participate in any form of bullying, harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, neglect, intimidation or exploitation.

- I will follow the requirements of Scouts Canada's Child and Youth Protection, Diversity and Bullying/Harassment policies. If I see anyone not following these requirements or hear of an incident, I will report it as required in the Complaint Procedure. (<http://www.scouts.ca/bpp/en/policies/Complaint-Form.pdf>)
- I will never engage in any exploitative, abusive or corrupt relationships, acting always as a kind and judicious parent and/or volunteer.

The Code of Conduct must be read, reviewed and signed electronically or in hard copy prior to the beginning of each Scouting year.

KEY RELATED DOCUMENTS

Bullying/Harassment Policy

Child Protection Policy

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Screening Policy

Complaint Procedure

**Approved by the BOG (May 2012)*

Revised July 15, 2012

Revised May 2014

7001 – Bullying/Harassment Policy

Statement of Policy

Bullying/harassment are forms of abuse.

Bullying/harassment breaks down the positive and protective environment we seek to develop, and, at its worst, is physically, emotionally, or sexually harmful. It is contrary to our objective of individual growth and development.

Bullying/harassment in any form are unacceptable.

Definition of Bullying and Harassment

Bullying has traditionally been defined by three elements: aggression (the intent to harm), a power differential, and repetition

The power that those who bully hold over others can arise from their individual characteristics, such as superior size, strength, or age; and from knowledge of others' vulnerabilities. The power in bullying can also arise from a position in a social group, either in terms of generally high social status, by membership in a group of peers who support bullying, or through systemic power (e.g., class, race, mainstream culture). The perspective of bullying as a relationship problem highlights that problems arise from complex interpersonal dynamics rather than simply from an individual's problem with aggression or with being unable to defend him or herself. Within a bullying relationship, children and youth who bully are learning how to use power and aggression to control and distress another and children and youth who are repeatedly victimized become trapped in abusive relationships that are increasingly difficult to escape.

Bullying takes different forms at different ages and the label applied to bullying also changes with developmental stage and relationship context. The term harassment is more often applied to teenagers and adults for repeated aggression from a position of power. When children enter adolescence, new forms of aggression combined with power emerge. As children develop cognitive and social skills, they become more aware of others' vulnerabilities and differences and of their own power relative to others. Bullying becomes diversified into more sophisticated forms of verbal, social, electronic, sexually and racially-based aggression. In sexual harassment, the power derives from targeting another's sexuality, sexual orientation, or some other physical or psychological vulnerability related to sexuality. Racism and sexism are also forms of aggression exerted from a position of power entrenched in socio-political foundations.

Challenges in Identifying Bullying

Bullying can be considered on a continuum from mild forms of aggression to behaviors that deeply violate an individual's sense of well-being and belonging.

Repetition is an element of the definition that has recently been disputed by researchers. Children and youth consider an isolated act of bullying as such. With repeated bullying, however, the power differential between the individual who bullies and the victimized individual increases, leaving victimized individuals increasingly powerless to defend themselves. An understanding of the following will enable Scouters to identify bullying.

- The distress of the victimized individual may be the only indicator of a bullying situation. An outsider cannot always determine whether an act is aggressive; however, if a victimized child experiences it as distressing, then it needs to be addressed. To further complicate matters, the person who is victimized may mask his or her distress to save face; this is especially true in adolescence. Scouters must use judgment as to what kinds of behaviour are interpersonally hurtful and unacceptable.
- It may not be possible to know what the intentions are of a person who is bullying, but the Scouter should consider whether there is an intent to harm or cause distress, or a callous disregard for the distress of the victimized individual. Aggression in bullying needs to be differentiated from rough-and-tumble play and friendly, mutually fun teasing in which there is no intent to harm.
- Some children and youth are both aggressive and victimized by their peers. These children have been called “provocative victims” or “bully-victims”. They experience a wide range of problems in their relationships and require intensive support to move beyond their involvement in bullying and victimization.

Means and Forms of Bullying

Bullying can be carried out in several ways, some of which are face-to-face and others which are indirect. Children, youth and adults who bully/harass do so in a variety of ways. Bullying and harassment can take many forms, all of which reflect the power differential inherent in bullying.

All leaders handbooks contain details on the following types of bullying; Physical, Verbal, Social, Electronic or Cyber bullying, Racial bullying/harassment, Religious bullying/harassment, Sexual bullying/harassment and Disability bullying/harassment.

Statement of Contextual Parameters

This bullying and harassment policy pertains and applies to *ALL* members of the Scouting community, and *ALL* the different forms of relationships within our community: including relationships between adult professionals, volunteers, parents; as well as between children and youth of all ages. It is recognized that adults and older youth are role models, and that children and youth learn powerful lessons through observation of the behaviours of adults. Children and youth learn what is and what is not acceptable in relationships through observing the ways Scouters relate to each other, how

Scouters relate to other children and youth in their section, and how Scouters relate to them.

Because cyber bullying affects relationships and the social climate within the Scouting community, cyber bullying is covered by the same policy as other forms of bullying and harassment.

Procedures and Processes to Resolve Bullying and Harassment Problems

Prevention

1. All Scouters should be educated about bullying and bullying prevention. Basic information about bullying can be found in the **Leader Handbooks**. It is critical that all Scouters be aware that bullying behaviour is common among children and youth but hidden from adults.
2. Scouters must be vigilantly observant regarding the way youth in their *groups* relate to one another.
3. In establishing expectations about appropriate and respectful behaviour for each scouting group, Scouters must define bullying and harassment in developmentally appropriate terms and communicate that everyone has the right to be safe and has the responsibility to treat others with respect. The Scouter should send a clear expectation that bullying/harassment will not be accepted in any scouting activity or online.
4. Sometimes, children and youth need guidance in how to handle teasing and bullying and what the difference is. Leaders may need to lead a discussion on this topic. Do You Feel Targeted? (adolescences) and How to Handle a Bully (children) are two topics in a handout format can be found on the PREVnet website.
5. Parents should be aware of the Scouts Bullying and Harassment Policy.
6. Scouters must communicate to all members that they expect children and youth who are victimized to come forward and report the problem to them. As well, Scouters must communicate that peers who observe bullying and harassment should respectfully stand up against the bullying and/or report the problem to them.

Roles, Responsibilities, and Reporting

The response must address the needs of;

- 1) the child/youth who has been victimized,
 - 2) each child/youth who has seen bullying/harassing and
 - 3) the Scouts in the affected peer group.
- a) Group Commissioner needs to be informed of the situation.

- b) Section leaders should meet with the children/ youth in the group: to get more information if needed, convey the seriousness of the bullying incident, and/or to create a restorative response to the bullying problem so it doesn't happen again. This is best done in a small group format i.e. lodges, sixes, patrols with one leader to each group. A Sixers Council and Court of Honour could be used to help solve the problem and give support to victim and help the bully to change. Responses should use "relationship solutions", that is, they should be geared to enhancing children and youth's development of the ability to have healthy and respectful relationships.
- c) A meeting with the section leader, the child/youth who was victimized and his or her parent's needs to be held to assess what happened and create a plan to ensure safety and the building of healthy relationships. Leaders need to regularly check in with the victimized child or youth for a long enough time period to ensure that the bullying/harassment has stopped and to ensure the physical and psychological safety of the child.
- d) A meeting with the section leader, the child/youth who was bullying and his or her parents to assess the seriousness of the incident, and to select and enforce appropriate formative consequences. Those who bully need to be aware that there will be regular check-ins to ensure the bullying has stopped. These consequences have two simultaneous goals 1) to hold the child responsible for their bullying and harassing behaviour and 2) to educate the child who has bullied so that over time he or she develops greater understanding, insight, and motivation to refrain from the behaviour.
- e) The intensity of the response for all three audiences should be balanced with the severity of the problem defined by
- the severity of the aggressive behaviour,
 - how long the bullying/harassment has been going on,
 - how frequently it occurred,
 - how pervasive is the pattern of bullying involvement (in other words, does the child or youth have a history of repeated involvement in bullying or being victimized in other settings?)
- f) If all efforts made to prevent and constructively address bullying/harassment have failed, as a last resort, suspension or expulsion of the bully may be the only way to secure the welfare and safety of a person who is victimized and the positive functioning of the group.
- g) It is the Group Commissioners responsibility to make a decision if time limited suspensions or expulsions are warranted in consultation with the section leaders and parents of the child who bullied.
- h) A brief written report indicating dates and names of those involved in meetings should be presented to the Group Commissioner and a copy to the parents. These to be kept until the end of the scouting year.

This person who meets with the involved children/youth and their parents should be:

- Prepared for this role and sensitized to the issue of bullying and harassment
- Capable of assessing the degree of distress and potential risk for both the child or youth who was bullying and child or youth who was victimized.
- Knowledgeable about appropriate responses that take into account the child's or youth's unique characteristics, his or her family situation, the peer group dynamics, and available community supports beyond the Scouts setting.

**Approved by the BOG (May 2012)*

Revised July 15, 2012

7002 – Child Abuse Prevention Policy

Background

Scouts Canada has set as its mission “to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.”

This mission is operationalized through a variety of means that includes: the assistance of youth to establish a value system based upon spiritual, social and personal principles as expressed in the Promise and Law. These principles include: duty to God, duty to others and duty to self.

Consequently Scouts and their leaders have a collective responsibility to ensure the safety of children and youth involved in Scouting as well as responsibility to protect its members from bullying and all forms of child abuse, whether physical, sexual or emotional, and neglect. Additionally Scout leaders must be alert to inappropriate physical or sexual behaviour between Scouts.

Child abuse cannot and will not be tolerated in the Scouting movement but leaders must also be aware of signs of neglect by a parent or other caregiver. These signs however are often more difficult to determine. If one has suspicions of abuse or neglect it is required that these suspicion be reported to the appropriate authorities. When unsure if circumstances require a report, it is prudent to consult with local authorities.

Child protection is a provincial/territorial responsibility and as such is provided in various forms across the country and may be identified by different names but will be listed under “child protection services” in your community. An up to date list is available from Scouts Canada or your Council Executive Director or local police service.

Most provinces provide the service directly through employees of the public service but in Ontario and some parts of Manitoba the service is provided through private agencies. Additionally several provinces have divested protection responsibility to native agencies.

However legislation and definitions of child abuse are relatively standardized across the country. All include a definition of physical, sexual and emotional abuse as well as the risk thereof. Scout

leaders must be aware of the local definitions and contact information for child protection authorities and police.

Additionally the definition of a child is included in child protection legislation. Generally a child is defined as any person under the age of 19, 18 or 16 depending on the province.

It is imperative therefore that all adults in the Scouting movement are aware of, and adhere to provincial legislation and the following policies relating to the abuse of children.

Child Abuse Prevention Policy Statement

All complaints of physical or sexual abuse must be reported immediately to the child protection authorities and the police in your jurisdiction. Additionally all complaints of risk of physical, sexual or emotional abuse must be reported to the local child protection authorities. Failure to do so may result in suspension from the Scouting program and criminal charges under provincial child protection legislation. If the person is uncertain about circumstances, it is prudent to consult with local authorities.

Information relating to a current situation must be reported to the local child protection authorities. Information of an historical nature involving a former scout who is now an adult should be reported to police. Scouts Canada will ensure that each Scout leader is aware of local authorities and their contact information as well as the definition of a child as defined by the provincial legislation.

The recipient of the complaint must stop collecting information upon determining that there are reasonable and probable grounds to suspect abuse and turn the matter over to the appropriate authorities immediately.

Upon completing the report to authorities the person must then report to the Council Executive Director, as per the Compliance Procedure, who will contact the child protection authority and in cases of physical or sexual abuse, the police, to ensure the referral has been made. He/she must also report to the Scouts Canada Risk Manager and the Director of Communications.

The Council Executive Director, immediately, upon consultation with the child protection authorities and in cases of physical or sexual abuse, the police, will suspend the alleged abuser.

Child Protection Policy

Anyone with reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a child is being mistreated or is receiving inadequate care and supervision is required to report such suspicions to the local child protection authority. If there is uncertainty about information, it is prudent to consult with local child protection authorities.

7002.1 – Procedures

When any member or parent contacts a member of Scouts Canada with a complaint of abuse or neglect against a member, or if the police contact Scouts Canada to inform us of allegations or charges against a current member, the following steps should be taken immediately.

1. Advise the person that you are required to and will report the occurrence to the appropriate Child Protection Authority and in circumstances involving physical or sexual abuse, police as well as the Scouts Canada Council Executive Director. No judgment statement should be made about the alleged abuser, nor should you show alarm or anger.
2. Remove the child from any further danger if warranted.
3. Advise the person they will hear further directly from the child protection authority or police.
4. Advise the child or parent that all information will be kept confidential and will only be provided to those who require it for the protection of all involved.
5. Contact the child protection authority, and in circumstances involving physical or sexual abuse, police and your Council Executive Director immediately following the discussion.
6. As soon as possible, write a more detailed report of your discussion regarding alleged or suspected abuse or neglect (ie.who, what, when, where). Give your written statement to your Council Executive Director as soon as possible as per Compliance Procedure.

Do not investigate further; this is the duty of Child Protection Authorities or Police.

Tips for dealing with child abuse or child protection allegations

1. Listen, believe and reassure. Stay calm. Don't panic or overreact to the information. Listen compassionately and take what the person is saying seriously. Don't criticize or tell the person they misunderstood what happened.
2. Ensure that discussions with the child occur in a private setting, (using the "two leader rule").
3. It is critical to use open-ended questions. Do not lead. "Tell me what is happening" is a good open-ended question.
4. It is imperative that the child does most of the talking so as to avoid any leading by the adult in the collection of information.
5. When the disclosure has given reasonable and probable grounds to suspect child abuse, no further questions should be asked. Do not probe for any details. It is now time to make a child abuse referral to the child protection authorities and/or the police.
6. The details of the interview should be documented immediately upon its conclusion because recall and memories are most accurate at this time.

Child Protection Training Policy

Scouts Canada will make available to each Scout leader as part of orientation to scouting, information with regard to provincial/territorial legislation identifying child protection authorities and definitions of child abuse and neglect and will ensure through training, that leaders are aware of reporting requirements and procedures. In addition each Scout leader will be provided with information and best practices to prevent child abuse, bullying, exploitation, other mistreatment or violence from occurring while involved in Scouting programs.

Scouts Canada will collect from the provincial or territorial child protection authorities, information to be included in its orientation materials outlining the definition of a child, the definition of child abuse and a child in need of protection as well as contact information for the local child protection authorities and the police.

**Approved by BOG (May 2012)*

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7003– ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Scouts Canada's *Bylaw, Policies & Procedures*
- Scouts Canada's Help Line – helpcentre@scouts.ca
- Scouts Canada's web site - www.scouts.ca
- Scouts Canada's *How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide*
- Any Scout Office
- Provincial and local laws