**Rotary Club of Auburn, Inc.**

**Youth Protection Protocols and Guidelines for Youth Services Volunteers**

# **Updated April 19,2023**

**General Information for Rotarians to Consider When Working with Youth in Our Community**

Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people with whom they come into contact and protect them from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse. In order to help protect our youth, the Rotary Club of Auburn, Inc. has adopted these protocols and established the role of Youth Protection Officer (YPO), for whom duties and responsibilities are defined within this document.

**This document supplements the District 5190 Youth Protection Policy document update 29 March 2023 as contained on the District 5190 website at:** [Home Page | District 5190](https://district5190.org/)

**Physical Interactions**

It is important for both adults and young people to understand the boundaries of appropriate behavior and know how to tell others when their own personal boundaries, or those set by these Youth Protection Protocols, have been crossed. Please note the following guidelines.

* Always get consent by asking the other person if it is okay to engage in any type of physical contact, especially with a child — even to engage in a hug.
* Remember that consent can be withdrawn at any time. Children should feel comfortable saying no.
* Understanding what kinds of physical contact are acceptable can foster a positive and safe environment that protects both young people and adults.

**Acceptable physical interactions (if culturally appropriate and with consent)**

* Hugging from the side
* Patting on the shoulder or back
* Shaking hands
* Small gestures of approval, such as a hand gesture or clapping of hands

**Unacceptable physical interactions (with or without consent)**

* Hugging with full body contact
* Kissing on the lips
* Showing physical expressions of affection in an isolated location
* Sitting on someone's lap
* Wrestling
* Carrying someone on your back or shoulders
* Tickling
* Massages
* Offering any form of physical affection that is unwanted
* Touching the bottom, waist, chest, or genital areas
* Making sexual contact of any kind

**Verbal Interactions**

Keeping verbal interactions between adults and youth appropriate is just as important as maintaining appropriate physical boundaries.

**Acceptable verbal interactions**

* Positive reinforcement
* Jokes in general
* Encouragement
* Praise

## **Unacceptable verbal interactions**

* Calling someone names
* Adults discussing sexual encounters or their personal problems with youth participants
* Adults asking youth to keep secrets of any kind
* Cursing
* Discriminatory or sexual jokes
* Shaming or belittling someone
* Harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate youths
* Making negative remarks about a participant or their family, culture, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or background
* Commenting on or complimenting a person's body or body development

**Electronic and Online Interactions**

Communicating with participants by text message, email, social media, or personal phone presents new challenges to keeping participants safe. Many youth-serving organizations prohibit private texting or online conversations between adults and youth. They require the adult to copy another volunteer on any such communications.

## **Guidelines for electronic communication with a participant**

* Copy or include another volunteer or the participant's parent or guardian
* Communicate with multiple participants in a closed group, or use a website or social media page that is not visible to the public
* Counselors, advisers, and host parents involved in Rotary's youth exchange programs are normally allowed to exchange "one on one" messages with a participant without supervision

## **What to avoid in electronic communication with a participant**

* Harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, derogatory, or humiliating comments
* Sexual conversations or images
* Private messages between a volunteer and a youth without prior approval (except as noted above)
* Posting pictures of youth participants on social media sites without parental consent
* Posting inappropriate comments on picture

**The following protocols apply specifically to Auburn Rotary Club volunteers working with youth in our community.**

In general, all adult volunteers must:

1. complete and submit a volunteer application
2. take a youth protection training course available online and provide proof via a copy of the email Certificate generated by District 5190, and
3. avoid "one on one" contact with youth whenever possible.

Special requirements apply to RYE volunteers and Boy Scout/Cub Scout Charter Representatives.

Please note that these club protocols supplement and do not supersede or replace any District or RI rules.

# **Rotary Youth Exchange --Both Short and Long Term Programs**

## **Level of Interaction and potential interaction with Youth**

Volunteers working with exchange students have significant interaction with youth both in group settings and individually. These volunteers have the highest level of interaction and are required to follow guidance on training and background checks as mandated by Rotary District 5190.

**Volunteers working on these programs must do the following:**

Fill out and submit to the Youth Protection Officer the Club's Youth Volunteer Application.

Comply with all District 5190 requirements as stated in the RYE Youth Protection policy cited below:

4 - D5190 RYE Youth Protection Policy-3 (district5190.org)

Current requirements include:

* special training courses
* reference checks
* LiveScan background checks

**Interact Club**

## **Level of Interaction and potential interaction with youth**

Interaction with youth in the Interact Club is infrequent unless the volunteer regularly attends Interact Club meetings. Rotary volunteer interaction is typically with the Teacher Advisor o,r if with a student, the Teacher Advisor is normally present. The Teacher Advisor to the Interact Club is the primary liaison and has direct interaction and supervisorial responsibility.

**Volunteers working on these programs must do the following:**

* Fill out and submit District 5190's Youth Volunteer Application.
* Take the North America Youth Exchange Network (NAYEN) youth protection training course offered by District 5190.
* Minimize and avoid any "one on one" interaction with youth whenever possible.

# **Rotary Youth Leadership Awakening (RYLA) and Rotary Eighth Grade Leadership (REGL)**

## **Level of Interaction and potential interaction with youth**

There is minimal youth contact. The primary contact in the RYLA program is through the interview process. Students participating in the REGL program are selected by the school Principal and selected school representatives. The RYLA and REGL programs are primarily run by third parties (teachers) but their participation is funded by Rotary.

**Rotary Volunteers working on these programs must do the following:**

* Fill out and submit District 5190's Youth Volunteer Application.
* Please note that District 5190 may also require LiveScan background checks for RYLA and REGL volunteers.
* Take the North America Youth Exchange Network (NAYEN) youth protection training course offered by District 5190.
* Minimize and avoid any "one on one" interaction with youth whenever possible.

These protocols apply to our club's youth service volunteers. RYLA and REGL Counselors have more stringent requirements.

**Boy Scout/Cub Scout Programs**

## **Level of Interaction and potential interaction with youth**

Interaction with youth is minimal and infrequent. In almost all instances, a Scout Leader will be present.

**Volunteers working on these programs must do the following:**

The Club's Charter Representative must satisfy all applicable Boy Scout requirements.

(www.scouting.org/membership/charter.orgs\_resources.aspx)

Current Boy Scout requirements include:

* one or more youth protection training courses
* reference checks,
* an adult application
* LiveScan background checks. (coming soon)

All volunteers must minimize and avoid any "one on one" interaction with youth whenever possible.

**Scholarship Committee**

## **Level of Interaction and potential interaction with youth**

The level of interaction is typically low and happens only once or twice a year. Most interaction occurs during the interviewing process, when more than one adult volunteer is present. The current evaluation process is described below:

"The committee sends out the applications to the school counselors. They gather the applications from the students. The committee then evaluates the paper applications. There is no contact with the students to this point and it is a blind process. After the committee does their paper evaluation they decide which students they want to interview. Students are notified for interviews one of two ways, through the school counselor or by the committee chair. It has been done both ways, and as a mixture. The students are then interviewed by the committee in a group format and the committee chair notifies the winners, usually via telephone.”

**Volunteers working on these programs must do the following:**

* Fill out and submit District 5190's Youth Volunteer Application.
* Take the North America Youth Exchange Network (NAYEN) youth protection training course offered by District 5190.
* Minimize and avoid any "one on one" interaction with youth whenever possible.

**Warren Burns Music Program**

## **Level of Interaction and potential interaction with youth**

Most interaction occurs during the music contest, when more than one adult is present. Students normally attend the contest with a parent or the band director. The music contest chair also communicates with youth through email, texts, or phone calls before or after the contest.

**The chair of the music contest must do the following:**

* Fill out and submit District 5190's Youth Volunteer Application.
* Take the North America Youth Exchange Network (NAYEN) youth protection training course offered by District 5190.
* Minimize and avoid any "one on one" interaction with youth whenever possible.

Music contest judges are exempt from these rules if they do not communicate with any students.

**Roles and Responsibilities of Youth Protection Officer (YPO)**

The Youth Protection Officer or YPO, is selected by the Rotary Youth Services Director and approved by the District. The YPO is responsible for helping to implement the youth protection protocols. The YPO will typically serve a 2-year term.

**Specific responsibilities include:**

* Review the club's Youth Protection Protocols and the District's Youth Protection Guide.
* Help obtain and provide the District's Youth Protection Officer with completed Youth Program Volunteer Applications. Currently, the District will review and approve the completed Volunteer Applications, note any red flags, and conduct reference checks, but the club's YPO should assist the District Youth Protection Officer as needed with the youth volunteer application and review process.
* Help facilitate youth protection training of all youth services volunteers. Remind all volunteers to repeat training every 3 years.
* Help track compliance with all Youth Protection Protocols and report any non-compliance to the Youth Services Director.
* Help make sure all youth volunteers review and acknowledge the club's Youth Protection Protocols.
* Report any red flags relating to youth volunteer behavior to the Youth Services Director and discuss the appropriate response.
* Act as a liaison with District 5190 and the Youth Services Director on all Youth Protection matters.
* Periodically educate and remind the adult volunteers of the club's Youth Protection Protocols.
* Provide input regarding any proposed changes to the club's Youth Protection Protocols.