

DISTRICT 6000 YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

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Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

District 6000 strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, their spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people with whom they have contact and protect them from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and from discrimination of any legally protected class of persons including but not limited to sexual orientation.

Definitions

Club – Any Rotary club designated to be in District 6000 pursuant to the bylaws of Rotary International.

Volunteer – Any adult involved with Rotary youth activities who interacts directly with youth, whether that interaction is supervised or unsupervised.

Rotary volunteers include:

- Club and district youth program officers and committee members

- Rotary member and nonmember counselors

- Members and nonmembers and their spouses and partners who work with students during activities or outings or who transport students to events

- Youth Exchange host parents and other adult residents of the host home, including host siblings and other family members

Youth program participant – Anyone who participates in a Rotary youth program, regardless of age

Legal Entity and Liability Insurance

Rotary International District 6000 is a nonprofit corporation formed under the laws of the state of Iowa, United States and is valid at this time. District 6000 carries liability insurance with appropriate coverage and policy limits insuring the organization in case of third-party claims and lawsuits alleging negligence by the organization, its employees, or its volunteers.

Club Compliance

For all Rotary youth activities within District 6000 including those associated with Rotary Youth Exchange, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), and Interact, District 6000 requires that all participating Clubs comply with the Youth Protection Policy and all youth protection and Rotary Youth Exchange certification requirements.

All clubs that participate in Rotary Youth Exchange, RYLA, and Interact must provide the district with a copy of the following for review and approval:

- A signed compliance statement that the club is operating its program in accordance with District 6000 and Rotary International (RI) policies,

- Confirmation that volunteers will be prohibited from contact with program participants until a

written application, interview reference check, and criminal background check have been conducted and clearance for unsupervised contact with program participants has been issued. Of the items disclosed on background checks, only entries germane to performed duties will be grounds for elimination of the applicant,

All club materials that advertise District 6000 youth programs, including brochures, applications, policies, and websites shall be submitted to District 6000 prior to distribution. District 6000 will review the submitted information and report approval within a timely period, and Any club youth protection training materials

Volunteer Selection and Screening

RI and District 6000 will not tolerate any form of abuse or harassment or discrimination against legally protected classes of persons.

All Rotary member and nonmember volunteers who are interested in working with youth program participants must meet RI and District 6000 eligibility requirements. RI prohibits the membership and participation of any Rotarian or non-Rotary volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise been known to have engaged in sexual abuse or sexual harassment or other act that violates the accepted standard of behavior in the community.

District 6000 will maintain confidential records of individuals prohibited from contact with youth and make sure that these prohibitions are implemented consistently throughout the district from year to year.

People who are prohibited from working with youth also may not serve as district Interact chair, Interact club adviser, district RYLA chair, district Youth Exchange chair, district youth protection officer, or in any other locally appointed club or district role in which they might have contact with youth.

If a person is accused of sexual abuse or harassment and law enforcement's investigation is inconclusive, or if law enforcement declines to investigate, additional safeguards are necessary to protect any youth program participants with whom the accused might have future contact, as well as the accused. A person who has been cleared of charges may apply to continue as a youth program volunteer. Such reinstatement is not a right, and reinstatement to a former position is not guaranteed.

All Rotary member and nonmember Youth Exchange, RYLA, and Interact volunteers who have direct, unsupervised contact with program participants must:

- Complete a volunteer application form,

- Undergo a criminal background check subject to local laws and practices,

- Be interviewed, preferably in person,

- For Youth Exchange host families, the interview determines suitability. It should demonstrate:

 - Commitment to the safety and security of students

 - Appropriate motives for hosting a student consistent with Rotary's ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange,

 - Financial ability to provide adequate accommodations for the student, and

 - Ability to provide appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student's well-being

- Provide a list of personal references and their contact information that does not include family members or more than one Rotary member

Comply with RI and District 6000 guidelines for the Rotary district youth programs

Youth Exchange host families must also:

Undergo announced and unannounced home visits both before and during the placement: Home visits must be conducted during each year the family participates, even for repeat host families.

Note:

All adult residents of the host home must meet all selection and screening guidelines. This includes adult children of the host family and other members of the extended family or household staff who are full-time or part-time residents of the home.

Youth Exchange students must be appointed a Rotary Counselor who meets the criteria for all volunteers.

The Rotary Counselor must not hold a role of authority over the student's Youth Exchange program participation (example, a member of a student's host family, school principal, club president, or district or club Youth Exchange officer).

The Rotary Counselor must be able to respond to any problems or concerns that may arise, including instances of discrimination or physical, sexual, or psychological abuse or harassment.

Participant Selection and Screening

All students who are interested in the district Youth Exchange program must meet district guidelines and:

Complete a written application

Be interviewed by the sending club and/or district, and

Attend and participate in all club and district orientation and training sessions

All parents or legal guardians of Youth Exchange participants must also be interviewed at the club or district level to determine the student's suitability to participate in the program.

Training

District 6000 and its clubs will provide youth protection training and information on youth programs. District 6000 youth program officers will conduct the training session.

District 6000 Youth Exchange program must provide youth protection training and information to all students and volunteers.

The youth program chairs will conduct the training sessions. The district will:

Adapt Rotary's Youth Protection Guide to reflect district guidelines, information on local customs and culture, and legal requirements

Develop a schedule that specifies who will be trained, how often, and in what formats

Conduct specialized training for those involved in youth programs including:

the District governor,

District Youth Exchange officer and committee members,

Club Youth Exchange officer and committee members ,

Rotary Counselors,

Other Rotary members and nonmembers who participate in Youth Exchange activities, such as local tours or district events,

Host families, and

Students both outbound and inbound.

Maintain records of participation

Responding to Allegations

District 6000 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment or discrimination seriously and will handle them in accordance with the district's Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines.

District 6000 will cooperate with all law enforcement agencies, child protective services, and legal investigations.

District 6000 shall appoint a youth protection officer to advise it and the District 6000 clubs on abuse and harassment prevention and to help manage risks and any crises that affect the safety of youth. The youth protection officer should have professional experience in counseling, social work, law, law enforcement, or child development, and may or may not be a Rotary member.

District 6000 should develop a crisis management plan as outlined in Rotary's Youth Protection Guide.

Travel by Youth Exchange Inbound Students

Youth travel outside of the community must comply with RI and District 6000 youth protection policies.

For all youth travel sponsored by District 6000 or its clubs, before departure, the host district must:

- Obtain written permission from the parents or legal guardians of all youth program participants
- Give parents or legal guardians details about the travel, including locations, accommodations, itineraries, and the organizer's contact information

- Recommended but not required: when traveling more than 150 miles, or 240 kilometers, from the home residence or out of the home country, verify that program participants have adequate insurance, including benefits for medical service, emergency medical evacuation, repatriation of remains, and legal liability in amounts satisfactory to the club or district that is organizing the activity or event, with coverage from the participants' departure until their return

In addition, for Youth Exchange travel outside of students' host communities or that is not customarily a part of the exchange program, either with their host families or to attend Rotary events, the host district shall receive authorization from the sending district in advance

District Youth Exchange Administration

The District 6000 Youth Exchange program, in collaboration with participating clubs, must:

- Confirm that all inbound students have at least the minimum insurance that is required by the Rotary Code of Policies. Because the host District 6000 must be able to arrange immediate and emergency medical attention when it is needed, it must be satisfied that the student's coverage is adequate.

- Store participant and volunteer records at the District 6000 Youth Exchange chair's office for seven years after participation, in accordance with all applicable privacy laws.

- Provide each Youth Exchange student with a list of local services and related contact information, such as rape and suicide crisis hotlines, alcohol and drug awareness programs, relevant law enforcement agencies, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer services, etc., including names and contact information of the following persons:

 - For inbound students: host Rotary Counselor, host club president, host district Youth

Exchange chair, host district governor, and at least two nonmember resource people (one male and one female) who are not related to each other and do not have close ties to the host families or the Rotary Counselor and who can help the students with any problems

For outbound students: sending Rotary Counselor, sending club president, sending district Youth Exchange chair, sending district governor.

Complete an annual survey reporting on program activity for RI

Provide a 24 hour emergency contact phone number to students

Report all incidents (including abuse or harassment allegations, accidents, crimes, early returns, and death) that involve Youth Exchange students to RI staff and District 6000 District Governor (youthprotection@rotary.org) within 72 hours of learning of the incident in accordance with all applicable privacy laws.

Prohibit any unauthorized exchange activity, such as sending a student on exchange outside of the Rotary Youth Exchange program or outside of the district certification structure

Develop contingency hosting plans that list prescreened families. Establish a criteria and procedures for removing a student from the host family. Arrange for temporary contingent housing in advance.

Ensure that all hosting is voluntary. Parents of outbound students and club members must not be required to host inbound students as a condition of sending students on an exchange.

Have long-term program participants stay with multiple host families, if possible. It is recommended that they be placed with three host families during their exchange. If circumstances prevent multiple host family placements, the sending and the host district must agree and must inform the student's parent or legal guardian in advance. At least one backup host family must be available.

Request a monthly report from each inbound and outbound program participant that includes information on their current hosts, feelings, concerns, ideas, and suggestions. The district Youth Exchange committee can review the reports and assist program participants as needed.

Resources

Rotary International Youth Protection
youthprotection@rotary.org
1-866-976-8279

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Developed for youth serving organizations

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children – Protecting children and bringing perpetrators to justice

Nonprofit Risk Management Center – General risk management information for nonprofits, including resources for volunteer-based, youth-serving organizations

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN) – The largest anti-sexual violence organization in the United States, providing a 24 hour national sexual assault phone hotline and private online chat.

Pathways to Safety International – Provides services to Americans who travel overseas and empowers those who have experienced interpersonal and gender-based violence abroad.

DISTRICT 6000 ABUSE AND HARASSMENT ALLEGATION REPORTING GUIDELINES

Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth: The district strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, their spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people with whom they have contact and protect them from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and from discrimination of any legally protected class of persons including but not limited to sexual orientation.

No tolerance for any abuse or harassment: Rotary International and its districts are committed to protecting the safety and security of all youth program participants and will not tolerate abuse or harassment or discrimination. All allegations will be taken seriously and must be handled within the following guidelines.

The safety and well-being of program participants must always be top priority.

Definitions

Emotional, psychological, verbal abuse, or discrimination – The use of fear, humiliation, or verbal assault to control the behavior of another. Examples including rejecting the person, preventing them from developing normal social relationships, and making derogatory statements about their race, religion, abilities, intellect, tastes, personal appearance, or national origin or sexual orientation.

Physical abuse – Physical contact intended to cause pain, injury, or other physical suffering or harm.

Neglect – Failure to provide the food, shelter, or medical care that is necessary to well-being.

Sexual abuse – Engaging in or arranging explicit sexual acts. This includes pressuring someone to perform a sexual act alone, or sexually engaging directly with another person of any age or gender through force or coercion, or with anyone who is unable to give consent. Any sexual activity between a legal adult and a minor or youth program participant, or any non consensual sexual activity between peers, is considered sexual abuse. Sexual abuse can also include offenses that don't include touching, such as voyeurism, indecent exposure, stalking, electronic harassment, or showing a young person sexual or pornographic material.

Sexual harassment – Sexual advances, requests for sexual acts, or verbal or physical conduct of an explicit or implicit sexual nature that is unwanted or directed at someone who is unwilling or unable to consent. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is used by sexual predators to desensitize someone or accustom them to inappropriate behavior. Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Sexual epithets or jokes, written or spoken references to sexual conduct, gossip about someone's sex life, or comments about a person's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Giving private or secret gifts, including those of a sexual nature
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Display of sexually suggestive objects or images
- Sexual leering or whistling
- Inappropriate physical contact, such as intentionally brushing against a person
- Obscene language or gestures, suggestive or insulting comments

Grooming – Establishing an emotional connection with someone to lower their inhibitions and gain their trust with the intent to be sexually abusive.

Consent – An informed, knowing, and voluntary permission for something to happen, including sexual activity.

Receiving a Report of Abuse or Harassment - Any adult to whom a program participant reports abuse or harassment must:

Listen attentively and stay calm – Acknowledge that it takes courage to report abuse or harassment. Be supportive, but remain neutral; do not express shock, horror, or disbelief.

Assure privacy but not confidentiality – Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse or harassment to make it stop and to prevent it from happening to others. Privacy of the young person will be maintained. Confidentiality, especially from those who are mandatory reporters, cannot be guaranteed. The reporting chain shall be pre-defined within the club crisis management team and filed with the district.

Get information, but don't interrogate the participant – Ask questions that establish facts: who what, when, where, and how. Reassure the young person that they did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking why questions, which may be interpreted as questioning the young person's motives, implying they are at fault, or suggesting that you don't believe them. Remember that your responsibility is to report this information to the proper authorities.

Be nonjudgmental and understanding – A person who has experienced trauma might find it difficult to talk about the details of their experience. Encourage them to report as much as they can or as they feel comfortable discussing. Try to minimize any need for them to explain their experience again.

Document of allegation – Take confidential notes that include details such as dates and locations they reference as soon after the report as you can. Try to use the young person's exact words.

Responding to an allegation – The following steps must be taken immediately after alleged abuse or harassment is reported. Some of them may be performed by any program volunteer. Others, as specified, should be performed by a district officer.

Protect the young person – Ensure the safety and security of the young person by removing them from the situation immediately and preventing all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. Reassure the young person that this is for their safety and is not a punishment.

Take immediate action to safeguard the young person's health and well-being, and get them medical or psychological care, if necessary. If both the person who reported the problem and the person who is accused are young people, provide support to both of them.

Report the allegations to appropriate authorities – Immediately report all cases of abuse or harassment first to the district governor and RI for investigation and then to club and district leaders with due respect for the privacy of the individuals involved. The investigation of alleged abuse or harassment must be left entirely to law enforcement agencies. All investigations must be conducted by authorities that are not affiliated with Rotary.

In most situations, the first Rotary contact is the Rotary program chair who will be the liaison to and seek guidance from the appropriate agencies. If the allegation involves this individual,

the district governor or district youth protection officer should be the main Rotary contact. The district will cooperate with police and legal investigations. The district has researched local, state or provincial, and national laws related to youth protection, including reporting allegations, and notes the following legal requirements of which all volunteers must be aware:

Remove the accused person from contact with youth – The district will remove the alleged offender from all contact with Rotary youth program participants until the matter is resolved.

Follow district-established criteria and procedures for removing a Rotary Youth Exchange student from a host family if the student makes an allegation against a host family member. Move the student to another host family that was screened in advance.

Avoid gossip and blame – Do not tell anyone about the allegation other than those who know. Take care to protect the rights of everyone who is involved during the investigation.

The district maintains the privacy (as distinct from confidentiality) of any person who has been accused by enforcing youth protection procedures:

Follow up and implement safeguards – All Rotary member and nonmember volunteers who know about an allegation must make sure that RI is informed of it within 72 hours. A district officer will provide ongoing status reports to RI.

The district will also make sure that the parents or legal guardians of the participants (whether they are accused or making the accusation) have been notified. The district will refer all involved young persons to an independent, non-Rotary counselor who can provide them professional emotional support.

The district governor will appoint a committee to coordinate an independent review to ensure that district youth protection policies were followed, confirm that youth safety was treated as the highest priority, and determine whether any changes to district procedures are needed. This is not responsible for determining the validity of any allegations. That can be done only by youth protection agency personnel or trained law enforcement professionals.

When the district is notified of the outcome of any investigation by law enforcement, whether criminal or not, it will contact everyone involved in the incident. The district will document all allegations and accusations, as well as the final outcome and the actions taken to resolve the situation. Patterns of inappropriate behavior must be identified and addressed.

ALLEGATION INCIDENT REPORT

This report is to be completed by the Youth Protection Officer upon receipt of a reported incident of abuse or harassment of any person participating in District 6000 youth programs.

Name of person completing this report: _____

His/her contact information: _____

Person reporting incident: _____

His/her contact information: _____

Name of person/s who were allegedly subject to abuse or harassment: _____

Their contact information: _____

Their parents/guardians: _____

Parents/guardians contact information: _____

Identity of person/s accused of misconduct: _____

Their contact information: _____

Their parent/guardians: _____

Parents/guardians contact information: _____

Identification of all witnesses to incident:

Name

Contact Information

For each witness, including the victim and alleged perpetrator, append separate statements of their observations concerning the alleged incident. Note: If there is any indication of criminal misconduct, then all subsequent interviews should be conducted by law enforcement personnel.

Actions/s Taken

Law enforcement contacted: yes/no

Parents/Guardians of victim contacted: yes/no

Parents/Guardians of alleged perpetrator contacted: yes/no

District Governor contracted: yes/no

District Youth Protection Officer contacted: yes/no

Describe any remedial action taken (e.g., separation of affected parties, expulsion of a participant, referral to law enforcement, etc.)

Date this report was completed: _____

Confidentiality: To the extent possible and as permitted by law, the investigation of any incident should be conducted in a manner that protects the confidentiality of those involved and the facts and circumstances surrounding the reported incident. All persons interviewed or advised of the investigation should be cautioned to maintain this confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

This report will be filed in a confidential file at the district office.

DISTRICT 6000 YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth: District 6000 strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, their spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people with whom they have contact and protect them from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and from discrimination of any legally protected class of persons including but not limited to sexual orientation.

The information you provide may be given to an agency that this Rotary district has hired to conduct background checks. In other cases, applicants may be asked to obtain their own background checks for review by district officials.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State / Province: _____ Postal code: _____

How long have you lived at this address? _____

If less than five years, list previous residences:

Primary phone number: _____ Secondary phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Government Identification number: _____
(e.g. social security number, social insurance number, driver's license number, or national ID number)

Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY) _____

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Have you ever been charged with, been convicted of, or pleaded guilty in any crime? Y N

Have you ever been subject to any court order (including an order from a civil, family, or criminal court) that involved sexual, physical, or verbal abuse, including but not limited to domestic violence or civil harassment injunctions or protective orders? Y N

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND TRAINING

(Attach additional sheets if necessary)

Have you held a Rotary youth program position in the past? Y N

If yes, indicate club name and year joined: _____

What about the position interests you? _____

What qualifications, preparation, and training do you have that is relevant to this position?

HISTORY OF VOLUNTEERING WITH YOUTH THROUGH ROTARY

(Attach additional sheets if necessary)

Have you held a Rotary youth program position in the past? Y N

If yes, indicate below:

District: _____ Role: _____ Years: _____

Contact person's name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Club: _____ Role: _____ Years: _____

Contact Person's name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Events: _____ Role: _____ Years: _____

Contact person's name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

HISTORY OF VOLUNTEERING WITH YOUTH THROUGH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

(For the past five years, attach additional sheets if necessary)

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State / Province: _____ Postal code: _____

Position: _____ Dates of service: _____

Contact person's name, phone number, email address: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State / Province: _____ Postal code: _____

Position: _____ Dates of service: _____

Contact person's name, phone number, email address: _____

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (for the past five years, attach additional sheets if necessary)

Current or most recent employer: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State / Province: _____ Postal code: _____

Position: _____ Dates of service: _____

Supervisor's name, phone number, email address: _____

Reason for leaving: _____

Previous employer: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State / Province: _____ Postal code: _____

Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Position: _____ Dates of employment: _____ Reason for leaving _____

Supervisor's name, phone number, email address: _____

PERSONAL REFERENCES (May not be relatives, no more than one may be a former or current Rotary member)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State / Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Relationship: _____ Years known: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State / Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Relationship: _____ Years known: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State / Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email address: _____

Relationship: _____ Years Known: _____

FOR DISTRICT USE ONLY:

References checked by _____ on _____

References checked by _____ on _____

References checked by _____ on _____

CONSENT

I certify that all the statements in this application and any attachments are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I have not withheld any information that would affect this application unfavorably. I understand that District 6000 will deny a volunteer position to anyone who has been convicted of a crime of violence, sexual abuse, or harassment, or any other crime of a sexual nature and may deny a volunteer position to anyone who has been charged with these crimes or whose name is on a known governmental sexual predator registry.

I give District 6000 permission to verify the information in this application, including by reviewing the public records that I have provided, which are duly certified, or by searching law enforcement and other published records (including driving records and criminal background checks) in addition to contacting my former employers and the references I provided. I understand that this information will be used in part to determine my eligibility for a volunteer position. I also understand that as long as I remain a volunteer, this information may be checked again at any time. I understand that I will have an opportunity to review my criminal history.

WAIVER

In consideration of my acceptance and participation in Rotary youth programs, I, to the full extent permitted by law, hereby release, defend, hold harmless, and indemnify participating Rotary clubs, Rotary districts, multidistrict organization, and committee members, agents, and employees, and Rotary International, its directors, officers, committee members, employees, agents, and representatives from any or all liability for any claim, loss, damages, liabilities, expenses, bodily injury, or death, including any such liability that may arise out of the negligence of any of the representatives or may be suffered or claimed by me as a result of an investigation of, action concerning, or communication of my background in connection with this application.

I further agree to conform to the rules, regulations, and policies of Rotary International, the District 6000 youth program, and its affiliates.

I hereby confirm, represent, and warrant that I have never been convicted of or charged with a violent crime, child abuse or neglect, child pornography, child abduction, kidnapping, rape, or other sexual offense, nor have I ever been ordered by a court to receive psychiatric or psychological treatment in connection therewith.

If any provision of this agreement is determined to be illegal or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect. By signing this application, I acknowledge that I have read this application and fully understand its contents.

Signature of applicant: _____

Printed name: _____ Date: _____

DISTRICT 6000 YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The purpose of interviewing applicants is to determine whether they have the skills they need to fulfill the role's requirements and whether they exhibit the characteristics of a potentially abusive person. It should also give them an understanding of the responsibilities of the role and your expectations. Rotary recommends that at least two people conduct separate in person interviews to obtain a well-rounded review of the applicant's ability to work productively with youth. Each interviewer should ask the same set of questions, though additional questions will naturally arise in conversation. This way, both sets of answers can be compared for consistency. Conducting interviews in person is important because it allows for more candid responses.

VOLUNTEER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Explain why you are interested in volunteering for (Youth Exchange, RYLA, Interact, etc.).

Why do you want to work with young people?

Why would you be a good youth programs volunteer?

Tell me about your hobbies and any volunteer work you do outside of Rotary.

Often we have to follow laws or policies that may seem unnecessary (for example, checking the references of an applicant who is well-known to our club and district). Tell me about the time when you had to follow a rule, even if it didn't seem reasonable. How did you react?

Tell me about a time when you thought it was necessary to break a rule.

Describe a situation that tested your patience. How did you handle it?

Give me an example of a situation where a young person tested your patience and frustrated you. How did you handle it?

This next question may be difficult, but it is important for us to ask. Have you ever abused or molested a child or adult?

Do you feel that you have ever positively affected a child's life? In what way, and how do you know?

Tell me about a time when you had to make a difficult decision. What did you do, and why did you make the decision you did?

Additional questions as needed:

When you interview applicants, pay attention to anything that could indicate potential problems. You might want to talk more with the applicant. These are some possible warning signs:

Any indication that the applicant wants to volunteer to fulfill their own needs, not to positively affect youth

Interests that were not on their application form

Excessive interest in working with young people (especially of certain age or gender)

Poor judgment in difficult situations

Signs that they have trouble staying calm in difficult situations

Signs that they may have trouble maintaining appropriate boundaries working with youth

Defensiveness or evasiveness when responding to a direct question about abusive behavior, if culturally appropriate

DISTRICT 6000 YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER REFERENCE QUESTIONS

Depending on the volunteer role and the requirements of the program, references need to be checked before a volunteer can work with youth. Ask at least three references about the applicant's suitability to work with youth in their role they have applied for. The references should not be family members of the applicant, and no more than one of them should be a current or past Rotary member.

Speak with references over the phone, virtually, or in person. Tell them about the role the applicant has applied for and emphasize the fact that they will be working with young people. Use the same set of questions for all references, and record their responses so you can compare them with the information from the applicant and check for inconsistencies or contradictions.

YOUTH PROGRAMS REFERENCE QUESTIONS

How long have you known the applicant, and how do you know them?

Have you observed the applicant working with youth? If so, what kinds of behavior did you observe? If not, give an example of a situation that might indicate how they would work with youth.

Can you give an example of the applicant's ability to relate to youth? If not, what qualities does the applicant have that would make them good at working with young people?

In what types of challenging situations have you observed the applicant dealing with youth? How did they react? If you haven't observed them in this type of situation, what other challenging situations have you observed them in, and how did they react?

Can you give me an example of a time when the applicant used good judgment?

Do you know of any reason the applicant should not work with the youth we serve?

Do you have any other comments or concerns about the applicant?

When you speak with references, pay attention to any responses that could indicate potential problems. You might want to talk more with the applicant. These are some possible warning signs:

The reference has known the applicant only for a short time, for example, less than six months

The reference has not had contact with the applicant for more than a year

The reference met the applicant only briefly

The reference says they know the applicant under different circumstances than the applicant said

The applicant preferred in the past to work with youth unsupervised

The applicant can be physically or emotionally abusive or is quick to anger

The applicant does not work well with adults

The applicant has difficulty taking direction

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN)

The largest anti-sexual violence organization in the United States, providing a 24-hour national sexual assault phone hot line and private online chat

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Publications about protecting children and bringing perpetrators to justice

Pathways to Safety International

Provides services to Americans who travel overseas and empowers those who have experienced interpersonal and gender-based violence abroad

Nonprofit Risk Management Center

General risk management information for nonprofits, including resources for volunteer-based youth serving organizations

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Abuse prevention resources developed for youth serving organizations

DISTRICT 6000 YOUTH PROGRAMS MEDIA CRISIS PROCEDURE

An effective media crisis plan is based, first and foremost, on the principles of truth, transparency, and sincerity. Nothing in your club or district media crisis plan should compromise, or appear to compromise, these key principles.

When Reporters Call

When a Rotary club that is sponsoring an exchange student from another country or participating in a Rotary youth program has a student encountering an emergency, club leadership works with authorities and relatives to resolve the situation. The news media may get wind of the crisis and the club is suddenly bombarded with interview requests. The resulting news coverage generates more attention and raises sensitive issues within the community. This scenario is familiar to many clubs and districts worldwide.

When this happens, Rotary clubs normally have well established procedures for dealing with crisis. They cooperate with outside authorities and show compassion for the individuals and families involved; however, handling news media can be a challenge. The following guidelines aim to show how clubs and District 6000 can work with the media to get timely and accurate information out to the public during a crisis situation and prevent misunderstandings and misinformation that can jeopardize Rotary's reputation.

If a Crisis Develops

Each club shall develop a vetted crisis management team to be reported to the district. The team shall consist of qualified volunteers and members involved with student protection in their profession (attorneys, school administration, media professional, etc). A team member shall be designated as the spokesperson. The Rotary spokesperson should be someone who is on top of the issue, communicates well, and is comfortable interacting with the media.

The team will:

Gather all the facts.

Provide timely briefings to all Rotary stakeholders.

Instruct all club members to refer press inquiries to the spokesperson.

Prepare a statement that accurately states the facts, expresses Rotary's position,

and conveys the appropriate tone (sympathy, apology, or commitment). Update as needed.

Develop key messages to help the spokesperson convey Rotary's position consistently and accurately.

Contact the Rotary International Public Relations Division (847 866-3245 or 847 866-3237) immediately if you think the issue could spread beyond the local press and attract the attention of regional, national, or international media.

When the Media Contacts You

Respond to all media calls promptly. Ignoring media can contribute to unnecessary speculation. A media interview is a good opportunity to convey the facts and Rotary's position to the public.

If you need time to confirm or update facts or to review the club's position, tell the reporter you will call back promptly.

Be completely honest and truthful. Do not report unsure information. Do not cover up or make excuses.

As a spokesperson, you represent District 6000 and Rotary. When you speak, you are Rotary. Avoid personal observations or speculations.

Monitor the media's coverage of the issue for accuracy and tone. If Rotary is misrepresented, let the media know via a call or a letter to the editor but do not be defensive or discourteous.

Maintain the Proper Attitude During Interviews

Accept the fact that a reporter's job is to ask difficult questions. Remain pleasant and be as accommodating as possible.

Organize your thoughts and speak in short, simple sentences. Think of each as a headline, supported by facts and examples. Headline: "The safety of our Youth Exchange participants is our top priority." Support: "Every student completes a detailed orientation program; background checks are required for all adults in the program, etc."

Strengthen your main message with a personal story. "As a parent of a student who was on an exchange, I know what it's like to worry about a child thousands of miles away". If the situation involves a police investigation or other formal proceeding, emphasize

that Rotary is cooperating fully.

Control your voice tone and body language to avoid coming across as defensive, nervous, or hostile.

Always thank the reporter for his or her time and offer to be available for follow-up questions.

Mistakes to Avoid

Avoid “off the record” comments. If you don't want something reported, don't say it.

Avoid rumors, speculation and personal opinions. Stick to the facts.

Avoid Rotary jargon and acronyms (DG, RYLA, District 6000, RYE) that the general public will not understand.

Avoid repeating the negative portion of a question. If the question is: “Did your club fail to adequately protect the student?” consider an answer such as: “The safety of the exchange students is our highest priority.”

Avoid the term “no comment” because it can carry a negative connotation. When possible, explain why you can't answer a particular question (“Sorry, I don't have that information”) or say why you cannot comment (“Because an official investigation is in progress”). Then bridge back to an important point or key message.

Actions Speak Volumes

Dealing with the media during a crisis can be inconvenient and unpleasant, but Rotary club leaders have a responsibility to convey the facts and protect Rotary's image. If club leaders follow the principles of honesty, transparency, and sincerity, the media and the public will recognize and appreciate the effort. Just as important: If a club offers genuine promises and follows through to resolve whatever problems are at hand, and if the club takes action and shows to the people involved that Rotary cares, it will minimize the negative impact of the crisis and protect Rotary's positive image.

Media Assistance from Rotary International

The Rotary Public Relations and Media Relations staff are always available to consult with and assist your club, from helping develop an initial position statement to assisting with last minute media coaching. Contact: 847-866-3245 or 847-866-3237