



D6290 Youth Protection Guidance to Clubs 7-24-24

Youth Protection Training for Club Presidents, Youth Program Chairs and Volunteers

- Annually in August, D6290's Youth Protection Officer will send an email to all club presidents and youth program chairs highlighting the importance of youth protection, resources available on RI and the District's website, and a simplified checklist with easy-to-follow Youth Protection Guidelines.
- All adults working in youth programs (with the exception of Youth Exchange) are required annually take RI's online course **Protecting Youth Program Participants** and download the certificate of completion and submit it to the appropriate Youth Program Chair (e.g., STRIVE, Early Act, Interact, LLC, RLAC) who will maintain a record of all certificates for their program. This training should be taken *before* the adult volunteers begin working with youth or as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of club presidents, and the youth program chairs to verify that the training has been taken.
 - To access the training, sign in or create an account at <https://my.rotary.org>. Non-Rotarians can access the training once an account is created. Go to *Knowledge & Resources* tab, then *Youth Protection*. Under *Youth Protection Resources for Members*, you will find an online course **Protecting Youth Program Participants** which is above the video from RI's President.
- It is recommended that Youth Protection will be a topic covered at PETS and that all incoming club presidents be required to take RI's online course **Protecting Youth Program Participants**. The District Governor receives reports of all Rotarians who take a Learning Center course, so PE's completion of the course can be verified by the DG.

Club Youth Protection Chair

- It is recommended that all clubs create a Youth Protection Chair position.

Vetting of Adults Working with Youth

All adults working with youth should:

- Complete the *Youth Volunteer Affidavit* available on D6290s Youth Protection page.
- Be interviewed. The *RI Youth Protection Guidelines* document available on D6290s Youth Protection page has questions to ask volunteer candidates (see page 45).
- Annually, have a background check completed by the Michigan State Police or Ontario Provincial Police.
- This information should be maintained by the club.
- For adults participating in District events, this information should be maintained by the appropriate program chair (e.g., Life Leadership Chair).

STRIVE Mentor Meetings with Students

- Parents shall sign a form giving permission for their student to participate in STRIVE and communicate & meet with mentor.



Rotary

- STRIVE mentors may meet with students one-on-one if their parent has given their permission to do so. At school, they should meet in a room with the door open.
- Meetings between one adult and one student should not take place behind closed doors.
- If meeting outside of school, the meeting should take place at a public venue (e.g., coffee shop, restaurant or library).

Communication with Students

- Texting is safer than phone calls as it provides a digital record of conversations.
- Electronic communication (texting) between STRIVE mentors & students is allowed provided that the student's parent has given permission to do so.
- When the mentor or student is uncomfortable with the tenor of texts, another adult should be involved.
- There are apps, such as Remind, that students, parents and mentors could use that allows them to communicate.

Transporting Students

- Adults should not transport individual students. Follow Rule of Two – 2 adults with 1 minor, or 1 adult with 2 minors.
- The exception may be youth exchange where the Rotary counselor has had extensive youth protection training and a background check.
- If the distance traveled is over 150 miles, then the student participating in the Rotary event should have travel liability insurance.

Ground Rules to Review with Youth at the Beginning of Events

- Appropriate vs inappropriate physical interactions.
- Appropriate vs inappropriate verbal interactions.
- One-on-one interactions
- Electronic and online interactions
- Prohibited items (e.g., alcohol, vapes)

Duty to Report

- Reporting guidelines are posted on D6290's website. Go to <https://ridistrict6290.org/>, click *Youth Services* tab, then *Youth Protection. Reporting Guidelines* are listed on the left side of the page.
- In the US, local police department should be notified of an allegation of abuse or harassment. In Ontario, the Children's Aid Society should be notified.
- Youth Protection Officer and District Governor should be notified of incidents.
- DG or Youth Protection Officer should notify RI within 72 hours of the allegation.
- Allegations should be kept confidential.