

District 7430 Youth Protection Policy- August 2020

1. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

DISTRICT 7430 is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and any other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.

2. Definitions

Volunteer: Any adult involved with Rotary Youth activities who has direct interactions with students. This includes, but is not limited to, club and district Youth officers and committee members, Rotarian counselors, Rotarians and non-Rotarians, their spouses and partners that engage students for activities or outings or who might drive students to events or functions, host parents, and other adult residents of the host home (including siblings and other family members). In general, background checks need not be conducted for adults who will have only casual or occasional group (not one-on-one) interactions with Youth students. This may include, for example, Rotarians present at a club meeting attended by Youth students.

Student: Youth involved with Rotary Youth Programs (Interact/RYLA-Camp Neidig/Youth Exchange/Other Rotary Club Youth Activities), regardless of whether they are of the age of majority.

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse refers to engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a student, or forcing or encouraging a student to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts, alone or with another person of any age of the same sex or the opposite sex.

Additional examples of sexual abuse could include, but are not limited to:

- Non-touching offenses
- Indecent exposure
- Exposing a student to sexual or pornographic material

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment refers to sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is a technique used by sexual predators to desensitize or "groom" their victims.

Examples of sexual harassment could include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual advances
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or drawings
- Sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact, such as brushing or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments

3. Volunteer Application Process

DISTRICT 7430 has a volunteer application process consisting of the following steps which must be completed prior to participation in District 7430 Youth Programs (Interact/RYLA-Camp Neidig/Other Rotary Club Youth Activities... noting that D-7430 Youth Exchange has its own "expanded policy statement").

All volunteers interested in participating in a DISTRICT 7430 Youth programs must:

- Complete the Youth Program Volunteer application including 3 references, complete the PA background checks and complete the ESSEX/OneSource background check as well as complete DISTRICT 7430 directed Youth Protection training.
- Meet RI and district eligibility requirements for working with students. RI requires that any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment be prohibited from working with youth in a Rotary context. If an individual is accused of sexual abuse or harassment, and the investigation into the claim is inconclusive, then, for the safety of youth participants and the protection of the accused, additional safeguards must be put in place to assure the protection of any youth with whom the individual may have future conduct. A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated to participate in youth programs. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his or her former position.
- Understand and comply with RI and district guidelines for the Youth programs.

Volunteers must undergo a screening that determines their suitability for working with Youth. This should include:

- Demonstrated commitment to the safety and security of students
- Motivation volunteering is consistent with Rotary ideals.
- Aptitude for providing appropriate supervision that ensures the student's well-being.

4. Core Elements of Youth Protection

The following are the core elements that have been adopted by participating DISTRICT 7430 and its Rotary Clubs to provide security for youth; in addition, they serve to protect Rotarians from situations in which they are vulnerable to allegations of abuse or harassment.

1. Two-deep leadership. Two Rotarian adult leaders or one Rotarian leader, a teacher or a parent-both of whom are 21 years of age or older-are required on all activities, trips and/or outings. If the activity is co-educational, leaders of both sexes must be present. The participating organization is responsible for ensuring that sufficient leadership is provided for all activities.
2. No one-on-one contact. One-on-one contact between adults and participants is not permitted unless :

The adult (over 18 yrs of age) is a Volunteer participant in the Rotary Youth program, such as a District Committee member, a Club coordinator or counselor where the adult has submitted an extended Volunteer application and has been vetted extensively, including three separate references, and has undergone an extended national criminal background check,

Youth Program Volunteers - shall resubmit full volunteer applications every three years but criminal background shall be conducted annually.

3. Respect of privacy. Adult leaders must respect the privacy of participants in situations such as changing into swimsuits or taking showers at activities and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require. They must also protect their own privacy in similar situations.
4. Separate accommodations. When attending overnight events, no youth is permitted to share a room with an adult other than their parents or guardians.
5. Proper preparation for high-adventure activities. Activities with elements of risk should never be undertaken without proper preparation, equipment, supervision, and safety measures.
6. No secret organizations. There are no secret organizations recognized in Rotary. All aspects of Rotarian programs are open to observation by parents and leaders.
7. Constructive discipline. Discipline should be constructive and reflect the program's underlying values.
8. Corporal punishment is never permitted.

9. Hazing is prohibited. Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any Rotary activity.
10. Youth leader training and supervision. Adult leaders must monitor and guide the leadership techniques used by youth leaders.

Adherence to these policies not only enhances the protection of participants but also ensures the values of Rotary are preserved. It helps to protect volunteer adult leaders from situations that are deemed at risk by creating barriers to abuse.

5. Training

DISTRICT 7430 will provide for student protection training to all Youth program participants. Responsibility for assuring that appropriate training is conducted at all levels is assigned to the DISTRICT 7430 Student Protection Officer.

DISTRICT 7430:

- Adopts the RI Student Protection Training Manual to include relevant information on specific district guidelines, local customs, cultural issues, and legal requirements.
- Will use Youth Protection training and define the frequency of training required for each volunteer position, including descriptions of who is to participate, when training should occur, and how training will be conducted.
- Conducts specialized training sessions for the following Youth program participants:
 - District governor
 - District Youth Programs, committee members
 - Club Youth Programs' committee members
 - Rotarian Volunteers
 - Other Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in Youth Program activities, such as local tours or district events
 - Establish guidelines to ensure that all those required to be trained have participated.
 - Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance.
 - Assure that volunteers have been trained within the prior three years.

6. Reporting Guidelines Information

- Listen attentively and stay calm. Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse. It is appropriate to listen and be encouraging. Do not express shock, horror, or disbelief.
- Assure privacy but not confidentiality. Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse/harassment to make it stop and to ensure that it doesn't happen to others.

- Get the facts, but don't interrogate. Ask questions that establish what was done and who did it. Reassure the young person that he or she did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking "why" questions. Remember your responsibility is to present the story to the proper authorities.
- Be non-judgmental and reassure the youth participant. Do not be critical of anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It is especially important not to blame or criticize the young person. Assure the young person that the situation was not his or her fault and that he or she was brave and mature to come to you.
- Record. Keep a written record of the conversation as soon after the report as you can, including the date and time of the conversation. Use the young person's words, and record only what has been told to you.
- Contact youth protection officers and contact legal authorities when abuse is alleged. Rotarians and other adults involved in youth programs are not trained professionals with expertise in determining the seriousness or legal implications of an allegation; therefore, they should not decide whether an allegation constitutes abuse or harassment unless the decision is made in close consultation with youth protection service agencies, law enforcement, or a district youth protection officer trained in handling allegations of abuse or harassment toward young people.
- Report to Rotary contact. Inform your Rotary contact — either the District Youth Protection Officer, District Youth Programs Chair, or District Governor — who then will then contact the appropriate authorities and file an Incident Report RI within 72 hours.

7. Allegation Reporting Guidelines

DISTRICT 7430 and its Rotary Clubs are committed to protecting the safety and well-being of Youth students and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled in accord with the Student Protection Allegation Reporting Guidelines,

8. Investigation Guidelines

DISTRICT 7430 take all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will investigate each allegation thoroughly. The districts will cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective services, and legal investigations, and will only conduct their own independent investigations such that it does not interfere with other investigations.

9. Other DISTRICT 7430 Responsibilities

- Has procedures for reporting, investigating, and proper handling of non-criminal offenses or historic cases that law enforcement will not investigate.
- Retains Youth protection documentation for a period of ten years
- Provides each student with a list of local services in the district (rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.)
- Will provide students access to the DISTRICT 7430 Student Protection Hotline and/or maintain and provide to Youth Program students a “district hotline.”
- May appoint an independent lawyer, therapist or counselor to represent any alleged victim in cases of sexual abuse or harassment.
- Will report all allegations of harassment and/or abuse to DISTRICT 7430 Student Protection Officer and to RI within 24 hours.
- Will report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes and/or death) involving Youth Program students to the DISTRICT 7430 Student Protection Officer and to RI within 72 hours.
- All cases of harassment verified by the Student Protection Officer will be reported to RI.
- Evaluate and review this policy and accompanying procedures on a regular basis.

10. Club Compliance

All clubs that wish to participate in Youth Programs must provide the district with a copy of the following for review and approval:

- Copies of all materials produced in the club to promote and support the Youth program, including, but not limited to, promotional materials and brochures, applications, policies, Web site links, etc.
- List of services in the area (rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services).

Participating clubs must agree to:

- Complete and return a signed compliance statement that the club is operating their program in accordance with the DISTRICT 7430 and RI policy.
- Its volunteers completing and signing the Volunteer Application. In general, background checks need not be conducted for adults who will have only casual or occasional group interactions with Youth.
- Follow the Youth Protection Reporting Guidelines

- Report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment to the appropriate authorities immediately, then to the District Student Protection Officer and the leadership of the district and the club for investigation.
- Prepare and forward to the district all required documentation.
- Provide each student with the following contacts whom they may contact in case of emergency:
 - Rotarian Counselor
 - Club President
 - District Chair
 - District Governor

- Ensure that Youth Program Volunteers are trained in responding to any problems or concerns that may arise during the , including the prevention of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse or harassment.
- Obtain parents or legal guardians' consent for Youth Program participation on DISTRICT 7430 Rotary Youth program activities.