

What Rotary clubs and Rotarians need to know about working with youth.

Rotary club responsibilities for working with youth: every club that has volunteers participating in a Rotary managed youth program (interact, RYLA, or any club specific youth program) must comply with Rotary International guidelines.

- RI has a zero-tolerance policy against abuse and harassment.
- Every club president should have a copy and review the RI youth protection guide (<https://my.rotary.org/document/rotary-youth-protection-guide>)
- The president of a club and every Rotarian in the club who works with youth must be youth protection certified.
- Require every Rotarian and non-Rotarian volunteer who works with youth to be youth protection certified.
- Youth protection certification requirements and procedure are found on the district 5150 website: <https://rotary5150.org/page/youth-protection-certification>.
- To begin the youth protection certification process or to complete the online training, reach out to Janette Rabin or Matteo Rizzo. **Contact information for Youth Protection can be found at the bottom of the [District Youth Protection page](#).**
- Report any sexual harassment or abuse allegation immediately to the district youth protection officer. Rotary International also requires notification within 72 hours. ***Refer to pages 35 – 37 of the RI Youth Protection Guide*** for further instruction on handling these allegations.

Clubs should have a written policy for working with youth that includes:

- Confirmation of volunteer's youth protection certification ([contact district youth protection team members](#)).
- Procedures to avoid allegations of abuse or harassment (*see examples below*)
- Obtain consent from parents for the following:
 - permission for use of photographs or video of minors
 - permission for transportation of minors to or from an event when the parent is unable to.
 - When traveling 150 miles or more from a participant's home residence, parents or legal guardians of each minor must provide travel insurance.

Youth Protections Examples

EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

- Respectful language, tone, and attitude towards others
- Respectful of personal, physical, and emotional boundaries
- Engaging with youth in a manner that would be seen by a reasonable observer as maintaining reasonable boundaries
- Keeping interactions with individuals and groups open to observation by others
- Communications with youth (including electronic) that are transparent and accountable

EXAMPLES OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

- Disrespectful language
- Humiliating or intimidating youth
- Inappropriate touching (e.g., massaging, stroking, caressing, roughhousing, tickling)
- Confiding or sharing overly personal information with a minor
- Electronic communication with that is personal and not directly tied to a Rotary sponsored activity involving minors
- Communication that is sexual or flirtatious in nature, including comments on appearance or dress
- The taking of photographs for personal gratification

Excerpt from the Rotary International webpage on youth protection

Rotary's approach to [preventing abuse](#)

The safety and well-being of young people and youth program participants are Rotary's highest priority. Our comprehensive approach to youth protection includes:

- No tolerance for abuse or harassment of young people
- Policies that prevent misconduct and outline how to respond to grooming behaviors and abuse that involve youth and other program participants
- Mandatory youth protection training for governors-elect
- A dedicated and trained staff that uses a trauma-informed approach when receiving and responding to reports of sexual abuse or harassment
- A certification process that requires Rotary districts involved in Rotary Youth Exchange to have:
 - Student, family, and volunteer training in abuse prevention
 - Volunteer screening that includes an application, criminal background check, and reference checks
 - A process for reporting allegations of abuse and harassment to Rotary and local law enforcement
 - District-specific youth protection policies
 - On-site evaluations (audits) that are conducted by Rotary staff members

Youth protection resources for members

Rotary provides comprehensive resources for clubs and districts that participate in youth programs so they can confidently implement our youth protection policies and act to prevent abuse and harassment:

- [Rotary Youth Protection Guide](#)
- [Protecting Youth Program Participants](#) (online course)
- [Electronic and Online Safety Considerations](#)
- [Developing a Crisis Management Plan](#)
- [Rotary Code of Policies, section 2.120.](#)

Please note that all underlined text are hypertext links to the document or webpage referenced. Press on the CTRL key and click on the desired link.