



District Assembly 2024

District Protection Presentation

Aim of the Presentation

- **To provide an initial basic introduction to the need for, basis of and resources available for the protection of youth and vulnerable persons involved in District programs.**

Key takeaways from the presentation

- **The need for protection**
- **Outline of D9510 protection program**
- **The basis for protecting vulnerable persons**
- **The role of the District and Club Protection Officers**
- **What to do in case of an incident**



The Need for Youth Protection

First, it is a Rotary International requirement

*Rotary International 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 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.*



Second, the evidence from society/community.

Third, we need to remember that just one case of abuse can lead to:

- a young life blighted by shame and guilt
- a Rotary youth program compromised and with diminished integrity

DISTRICT 9510



**YOUTH
PROTECTION
POLICY**

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The basis of Youth(vulnerable persons) protection

The vast majority of abuse cases occur when the abuser is alone with their victim for a period of time which could enable grooming or abuse to occur. See Policy Sect 4.1

With that central fact in mind there are three key factors which need to be kept in mind



The Basis of Youth (and Vulnerable Persons) Protection

1. Design of programs
2. The rule of one and two
3. Fullest checking possible of all/any who might need to be alone with participants



THE HEART OF PROTECTION

For the members of the club and for the vast majority of situations club members will face there is a simple rule which will ensure that all care is taken. I call it the 'RULE OF ONE AND TWO'. That is

IF ONLY ONE YOUTH PARTICIPANT IS PRESENT, THERE MUST BE TWO OR MORE RESPONSIBLE ADULTS/ROTARIANS PRESENT

and

IF ONLY ONE RESPONSIBLE ADULT/ROTARIAN IS PRESENT, THERE MUST BE TWO OR MORE YOUTH PARTICIPANTS PRESENT

That is, there is no one-to-one contact.

If Rotarians bear this simple and easily understood principle in mind there is minimal chance of grooming, misunderstanding or misbehaviour.

Staffing and management of Rotary Youth Programs

All Rotary Youth Programs are staffed by two categories of worker:

1. Rotary Youth Volunteer, and
2. Responsible Adult

And finally a practical staffing question which often comes up at Club level where members of a Club are or may be involved in delivering a Rotary Youth Program –

Who requires a Working with Children Check (WWCC)?



Duties of District Protection Officer

RI policy requires all Districts have a DPO.

1. The **DPO's** primary duty is the **protection of youth** and **vulnerable adults participating in Rotary programs** throughout the District. They are to achieve this by--
 - expediting/running **training** for those involved in programs for youth or vulnerable adults
 - **giving advice** when requested or needed to Rotarians involved in **youth** and **vulnerable adult** programs.
2. The **DPO receives all the applications** from **district** committees and clubs for **Rotarians and others to be classified as YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS**
3. The **DPO** is the person to whom **all incidents of alleged or suspected incidents of abuse** or **severe harassment** or **bullying** must be reported, and who is responsible for investigating and followup.



Club Youth Protection Obligations

Clubs that participate in any Youth Program or interact with youth on any basis shall:

- **Appoint a Youth Protection Officer – (arms length)**
- **Ensure any Rotary Youth Volunteers are screened**
- **Complete and return the annual Club Declaration**
- **Ensure Clubs who participate in the YEP are “Certified”**
- **Assign one meeting per year for information and training.**



Duties of Club Youth Protection Officer

1. Ensure club members particularly those involved in youth programs understand their responsibilities.
2. Ensure that all people (Rotarians and others) involved in youth programs are suitable people for the tasks they are given and as such are assessed as RESPONSIBLE ADULTS.
3. Ensure that a Club wishing to run a stand-alone youth program fills in a YP8 Form and submits it to the District Protection Officer.
4. Ensure that the correct process is followed in the event that a club needs to appoint a YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER.
5. Unless the club has a separate Risk Management Officer and Insurance Officer, the Club Protection Officer shall also ensure that:
 - a. those in the Club responsible submit a Risk Management Form to the District Insurance Officer for any youth or other function the club runs.
 - b. the Annual Insurance and Youth Protection Declaration is completed and submitted each April.

See Appendix 1 of D9510 Youth Protection Policy for details



What to do in the event of an allegation?

Should a Rotarian or Club receive a complaint or an allegation of abuse or harassment, they should seek guidance from the Club Protection Officer or the District Protection Officer. They should, however, **make sure in the first instance that the situation is contained and the abused person is safe.**

If you receive a report or claim of abuse or harassment it will be unexpected and perhaps a surprise. It is important to adhere to some basic principles:

1. **Listen attentively** and stay calm
2. Assure privacy but not confidentiality
3. Get information, but don't interrogate the participant
4. Be nonjudgmental and reassuring
5. Be understanding

As soon as possible, get in touch with someone who can deal with the situation (CPO, DPO, Program Director, Club President)

Some suggested reading and a final word!

Let me encourage you to read the following sections of the Master Protection Policy which you will find under Governance Information on the first page of the District web site.

- 1. The definitions**
- 2. Sections 4.3, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 7, 8, 14,15,16 and 19**

And finally, let me remind you that your very best strategy in matters of protection is to simply ring me on 0401671850. If I don't know the answer to your query then it is my job find out and let you know.