

DISTRICT 9510



YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

Rotary
DISTRICT 9510



Table of Contents

TOPIC	PAGE
1 Introduction	3
2 Definitions	4
3 Purpose	6
4 Scope	6
5 Guiding Principles	6
6 General District and Club Responsibilities	7
7 Screening and Suitability Checks	7
(1.) Youth Program Volunteer	7
(2.) Procedures for becoming a Youth Program Volunteer	8
(3.) Responsible Adult	8
8 Driving Youth Program Participants	10
9 Rotary Assisting Another Organisation	10
10 Reporting Abuse	10
11 Risk Management	11
12 Rotary Youth Exchange – Unique Risks	11
13 Short Rotary Youth Programs	11
14 Club Youth Protection Officers	11
15 The District Protection Committee	12
16 Abuse in Young People and Recognising it	12
17 Reporting Abuse	13
(1.) Important Principles	13
(2.) Additional Government Requirements	13
(3.) Mandatory Reporting Requirements for Participants under 18 Years	13
18 Communication	14
19 Images of Young People	14
20 Records	15
21 Privacy and Confidentiality	15
Appendix 1 – Club Youth Protection Officer Duties	16
Appendix 2 – Duties of the District 9510 Protection Committee	21
Appendix 3 – Allegation Reporting Guidelines	21
Appendix 4 – Mandatory Reporting Guidelines	24
Appendix 5 – Important Facts – Youth Worker Assessments	26
Appendix 6 – Rotary Youth Volunteer Information & Declaration Form	27
Appendix 7 – Frequently Asked Questions	30

Document Control

Title	District 9510 Youth Protection Policy
Version Number	Version 2
Owner	District 9510 Youth Protection Committee
Approver	District 9510 Leadership Board
Date Approved	21st November 2021
Review Date	12-months from approval

The Youth Protection Policy

Rotary International's Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners and other volunteers must safeguard the children they come in to contact with and protect them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

This document gives a complete general coverage of District 9510 youth protection requirements. Specific information and procedures relating to various Rotary youth programs can be found in the Youth Exchange manual and the manual for Short Rotary Programs.

1. Introduction

Our Aim

- 1) Rotary District 9510 strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all young people who participate in Rotary activities.
- 2) Rotary District 9510 agree to abide by the **Rotary International Statement of Conduct For Working with Youth** as it applies to Rotarians, Rotaractors, spouses and others working with youth in Rotary Youth programs.
- 3) This statement requires all young people involved in Rotary Youth Programs to be given the same protection outlined in this manual whether they are under or over 18 years of age. In compliance with this statement:
 - Any District committee or Club, by the act of instigating and running a Rotary Youth Program, is confirming that they agree to abide by this policy and the associated procedures.
 - By agreeing to assist in the instigation or running of a Rotary Youth Program, all persons agree to abide by whatever is the more stringent of the Rotary and Government regulations and procedures outlined in this policy.
 - Where a Government requirement outlined in this policy is optional, all persons participating in the instigation or running of a Rotary Youth Program must treat the option as a requirement.
 - This policy and attached appendices give a complete general coverage of the District's youth protection requirements. Specific youth programs may have a program manual, which have additional requirements.

Our Approach

Rotary District 9510 appreciates it is not possible to protect our students against every eventuality. Statistics show the vast majority of abuses cases occur when the abuser is alone with their victim for a period of time which could enable grooming or abuse to occur.

With that in mind our approach to keeping young people in our youth programs safe is fourfold.

- 1) We will plan all our youth programs so the absolute minimum of people needs to be or will have the opportunity to be alone with a young person in any of our youth programs.
- 2) By contacting the District Youth Protection Chair, specialists will be appointed to carry out in depth interviews on the relatively small number that are required to be alone with young people as well as their referees. This will ensure they are screened as thoroughly as possible.
- 3) We will widely promote to all our young program participants and our program carers the requirement that in no circumstance is anyone who has not had a full screening ever to be alone with one of our young people. It will be explained to the young people that this is one of the most effective ways we have of keeping them safe.
- 4) We will not fully screen people who do not need to be alone with our young people because this then gives them the authority to be alone with them. The more people who are able to be alone with our young people the more risk posed to them. Conversely the more people we have to fully screen the less thoroughly it can be done.

2. Definitions

Abuse	Abuse means sexual abuse, or deliberate physical or emotional actions, which are sufficient to cause a significant negative impact on a young person's ongoing wellbeing.
Adult Leader	In the context of this policy, an adult is a person over 18 years of age of sufficient maturity, training and experience to look after and guide young people participating in Rotary youth programs.
Child	A young person participating in a Rotary youth program under the age of 18 years.
Club Youth Protection Officer	A Rotary or Rotaract Club member appointed for the purpose of helping the Board of an individual club keep young people in its care safe. Refer Appendix 1
DG	District Governor
District	Refers to Rotary Districts 9510
DIO	District Insurance Officer
DPO	District Protection Officer is the chair of the District Protection Committee, a body set up to handle any cases of abuse in the district and to help district youth committees and Rotary clubs keep young people in their care safe. Refer to Appendix 2
Mandatory Reporting	Mandatory reporting legislation generally contains lists of occupations that are mandated to report cases of <u>suspected</u> child abuse and neglect. Obligation relates to persons under age of 18 and for the period of the program. Refer Appendix 4
Neglect	Neglect is the failure to provide for the essential needs (such as but not limited to food, water, shelter, a safe environment and emotional support) of a young person so they can maintain their wellbeing and achieve their potential.

Reasonable Suspicion	If your own observations lead you to believe abuse or neglect is (or has) occurred; if a young person discloses that they have been abused; if a relative or close friend tells you of the abuse, then the reasonable suspicion threshold has been reached.
Responsible Adult	Any adult who, in a family or group situation for a short period of time, is responsible for caring for a child/youth/students in a Rotary context as assessed against the assessment criteria in Section 7 (3).
RI	Rotary International
Rotary Environments	For the purposes of this Policy, “Rotary Environment” means any physical or virtual place including online environments and other locations used by Rotary Youth programs (including, without limitation, locations used for camps, excursions, training programs, competitions and other events).
Rotary Youth Program (RYP)	Any youth event or program arranged and run by a club or district committee where the participants are under 25 years of age.
RYE	Rotary Youth Exchange
Screening	Screening is the complete process of referee checks, an interview and the attainment of a State/Territory Working with Children check.
Spouse	Wife, husband or partner of a volunteer assisting in a Rotary youth program.
Volunteer	An adult involved in Rotary Youth Programs who has direct interaction, either supervised or unsupervised, with young people in a Rotary Youth Program.
WWC	The terminology used for a working with children criminal and suitability history check in SA, Vic, NT and NSW
Young person	Defined as a participant in a Rotary youth program who is aged 0 to 25 years.
Youth	Defined as a participant in a Rotary youth program. who is aged between 12 and 25 years.
Youth Program Participant	Any young person who is participating in a Rotary Youth Program, also referred to in this document as a child, youth, student or young person.
Youth Program Volunteer	Rotarians, volunteers, spouses, honorary members, Rotaractors, friends who have been assessed and approved against the screening criteria in section 7 (1).

3. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- reduce the chances of abuse of young people occurring within all Rotary programs in any environment.
- develop and maintain an organisational culture of child and youth safety.
- ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible situations where the abuse of youth program participants could occur and for establishing controls and procedures to prevent such abuse and/or recognise such abuse if it occurs.
- provide guidance on action that should be taken where a person suspects any abuse of a young person within any Rotary program in any environment.
- provide a clear statement to Rotarians, Rotaractors, spouses and others working in Rotary Youth Programs forbidding any abuse and provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.
- outline the two required levels of volunteer assessment and when each is required.

4. Scope

This Policy applies to all Rotarians, Rotaractors, spouses, and others working in Rotary Youth Programs.

5. Guiding Principles

1) This Policy is based on the following principles:

- District 9510 has a zero tolerance for the abuse of young people.
- The best interests of the child and young person are paramount.
- Youth protection is a responsibility shared by all involved with young people in Rotary youth programs.
- All young people in our Rotary Youth Programs have a right to feel safe and be safe, and have rights to protection from abuse.
- The District will consider the opinions of young people and use their opinions in developing youth protection policies and procedures.

2) The District will take into account the diversity of all young people in our programs, including (but not limited to); the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people; young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; young people with disabilities; young people who are vulnerable - and they shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate these differences.

3) Everyone covered by the Policy must comply with Rotary's Code of Conduct, which sets stringent standards for everyone involved.

6. General District and Club Responsibilities

- 1) When planning youth programs, District and Club committees must take into account the fact that sexual abuse very rarely occurs when others are present. It happens when the abuser is alone with a young person for a period of time long enough for grooming and abuse to occur. As a result Rotary Committees will:
 - plan youth programs, whenever it is possible, so that **no** adult working or assisting in a youth program will be alone with a young person long enough for grooming or abuse to occur; and
 - very thoroughly check those who will be allowed to be alone with a young person (ie for the length of time that grooming or abuse could occur). The people who will be approved to be alone with a young person will be limited to a small number.
- 2) For insurance purposes, it is a requirement that all Clubs complete and return the Club **Insurance & Compliance Declaration** to their DIO by 30 March each year.
- 3) All Rotary clubs will have a Club Youth Protection Officer, whose duties involve ensuring the Club maintains its child and youth protection procedures. They must also ensure the completion of all required protection documentation. **(See role description in Appendix 1.)**
- 4) The District will have a District Protection Committee to help ensure that all Rotarians and those who assist Rotary clubs and District committees keep the young people in their youth programs safe. Should abuse occur, the District Protection Committee would handle the situation as stipulated. **(See details in Appendix 2.)**
- 5) The District will have a **Crisis Management Plan** and **Committee**, organized by the District Governor and District Protection Committee and set up to investigate and manage any crisis occurring in a Rotary program or project run by Rotarians in the District. The crisis could involve a young person (people) or an adult (adults). **(See more details in Appendix 2.)**

7. Screening and Suitability Checks

The suitability of all Rotarians/volunteers assisting in RYPs will be carefully assessed in accordance with their roles.

(1.) Youth Program Volunteer

Those participants with the following roles are defined as needing screening to become **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS**. Such situations include any adult volunteer:

- **who could be alone with a young person for a period of time that could allow grooming or abuse to occur.**
- driving a young person alone in a private vehicle for a period of time that could allow grooming or abuse to occur. **(See 8 (2) for more specific guidance.)**
- who supervises young people in overnight accommodation in a youth program where they may be alone with a young person for a period of time that could allow grooming or abuse to occur (ie home billeting or accommodation in youth programs (eg RYLA, Youth Exchange etc).
- who is the Chair of a District Youth Committee or a stand-alone club program, even though they may not have direct contact alone with young people (RI requirement).
- who is responsible for storing documents which contain young people's personal information such as medical records, even though they may not have direct contact alone with young people, are to be assessed as a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER**. (Required by most State and Territory Governments).

(2.) Procedure for becoming a Youth Program Volunteer

Volunteers required to be classified as **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS** are required to undergo the following steps before working in any capacity where they may be alone with a young person for a period of time when grooming or abuse could occur:

- complete a Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration form (**See Appendix 5**) – to be renewed every five years. This is the same time as the WWC Check renewal in SA, Vic and NSW. In NT the WWC Check (not the form) must be renewed every 2 years.
- undertake a comprehensive interview.
- provide three referees.
- hold a current Working with Children Check issued by the relevant State or Territory authority.

Only after an authorised Rotarian experienced in interviewing procedure has carefully carried out or checked all of the above and found the candidate to be a suitable person to work where they may be alone with a young person as prescribed, can they be allowed to work as a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER**.

(3.) Responsible Adult

- 1) All other members/volunteers assisting in a RYP may be classified as **RESPONSIBLE ADULTS**.
- 2) A **RESPONSIBLE ADULT** is any adult who, in a family or group situation for a short period of time, is responsible for caring for a young person.
- 3) The adult shall be in a position to offer the young person guidance, assistance or an educational, cultural or recreational experience.
- 4) The person responsible for the youth/student (parent/legal guardian) needs to be satisfied, in the same way a conscientious parent would be satisfied, that this adult is suitable for their own young son or daughter to stay or associate with for a short period of time when of same age in similar circumstances.
- 5) This adult will not necessarily be required to have a Working with Children check or be formally reference checked because the experience or contact is such that there is virtually no opportunity for misconduct to occur.
- 6) Wherever possible, it should be planned to have two or more **RESPONSIBLE ADULTS** together with a young person at any one time or more than one young person present.

N.B. It should be noted that South Australian, Victorian, Northern Territory and New South Wales law requires some **RESPONSIBLE ADULTS** to have a WWC check. They remain **RESPONSIBLE ADULTS** not **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS** as they are working in an organised Rotary youth program while supervised. That is they are working with another adult or in a group situation and are never alone with a young person for a period of time such time that might allow grooming or abuse to occur.

EXAMPLE

Rotarian Bill is approached by his friend Rotarian Tom to join a team of other Rotarians, some male and some female, to take a group of students on day hikes in a very pretty area of the Flinders Ranges. All the Rotarians are experienced bushwalkers with a passion for and experience in guiding and managing young people. There are 16 young people, boys and girls, aged between 15 and 20 years. They will be hiking for 5 days. The young people will be camping overnight in tents (kids love camping). Tom explains he and his wife Jill will be looking after and camping with the young people. The rest of the Rotarians have been invited to stay on Harry's brother's sheep station in the homestead. (Rotarian Harry in my club is the organiser of the trip.) Like many old homesteads it has many rooms a carryover from the days before mechanisation when many more people were required to run a property. It is only about a 12-minute drive from where the students camp.

You and the others will meet us about 9:00 am in the mornings after breakfast and start hiking. We will return about 4:30pm and light a campfire (the weather will be getting chilly) and have an evening meal. We will split into smaller groups to eat and discuss what has been seen and learnt during the day. About 8:30pm you and the other six will leave and return to the homestead. I will bring out my guitar and we will sing with the young people around the campfire - that is always popular. Around 10:00pm we will get them into their tents and settled down.

Bill is very interested as he has a passion for helping young people himself, is experienced in mentoring and enjoys hiking. Bill understands that if an adult could be alone with a young person in a Rotary program for a period of time, such time as could allow grooming and abuse to occur they must be a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER**. He is a Responsible Adult with a WWC check but is not a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER**. He has never needed to be, so he asks the following questions:

'How are we travelling, in four-wheel drives?' 'Yes, we will be split up in 5 vehicles.' Great, no one-on-one there.

'Will the hikers be in groups?' 'Yes there will be about 5 young people with 3 Rotarians, a group situation.' So, no problem.

'The campfire discussions?' 'Everyone sitting around together.' That's ok

'How will the discussion groups over dinner be organised?' 'Three or four groups with a mixture of younger and older students and adults.' Ok again

'As you and Jill will be looking after the students at night are you **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS**?' 'Yes, we both are', Tom replies. Good

'Are there any other reserve **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS** in the group?'

'Yes, Harry and Wendy. Harry as the organiser of this program in our Club was required to be a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER** even though he does not expect to be alone with a young person.'

'Wendy was recently a Youth Exchange host mum. The rest of the Rotarians are Responsible Adults and have WWC checks and they and the young people all understand the rule we strictly enforce, "they must never be alone with one of the young people". This means there are two **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS** who could step into your and Jill's roles if anything happens to either of you. Good. 'If there was a problem with the kids, how would you contact them?' 'There is mobile phone coverage in the area so assistance could come very quickly.' Good.

Bill is very happy with the arrangement and agrees to join the hike.

8. Driving Youth Program Participants

These guidelines refer to the conveyance of young people by private transport. They are provided to help Rotary Clubs and Club members understand their responsibilities when driving young people involved in Rotary programs. The guidelines are given to help protect both the young person and the driver.

Common sense must be used in all circumstances:

- The driver must have a current license and have held a full license to drive a motor vehicle for a minimum of one year (no P or L Plate Drivers).
- The vehicle used must be registered and carry comprehensive third party insurance.
- For short journeys eg from a student's home to a Rotary meeting or in and around the local area the driver must be a **RESPONSIBLE ADULT**, approved by the young person's parents or guardians.
- Wherever possible a second adult should be in the car.
- For somewhat longer journeys (up to two hours) the driver must be a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER** or alternatively there must be at least two **RESPONSIBLE ADULTS** in the vehicle, one being of the same gender as the young person(s). Where practical the young person is to travel in the backseat with the adults in the front seats.
- For journeys longer than two hours the driver must be a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER** or alternatively there must be several young people in the vehicle along with two **RESPONSIBLE ADULTS** - one being of the same gender as the young people. If there are boys and girls in the car, one adult must be a male and one female.
- In an emergency, any driver approved by the young person's parents, host parents guardian or their deputy may drive the student wherever necessary or they may be driven by ambulance.
- If a Youth participant chooses to drive to and from a Rotary Youth Program it is regarded to be outside the program.

9. Rotary Assisting another Organisation

- 1) Where Rotary is assisting in a youth program, which is under the control of another organisation (such as a school, RYDA or NYSF), the protection requirements set out in this document still apply, together with any additional requirement the other organisation may require.
- 2) Should a Rotary Youth Committee or Club officially promote, select, and sponsor students for a program which is run by another organisation (such as the National Youth Science Forum) it is their responsibility to ensure that the organisation has appropriate screening and protection procedures in place.

10. Reporting Abuse

- 1) Should any Rotarian know, or have a reasonable suspicion, that a child has been abused, harassed, mistreated or neglected in a Rotary program, it is their obligation under Rotary requirements - whether required to do so by State or Territory legislation or not - to notify the appropriate State or Territory authorities. It is not a requirement to have proof or evidence, as that is the role of the relevant State authorities to investigate.
- 2) **Note:** (RI requirement) Any other person assisting in a Rotary Youth Program who has similar suspicions is required to report in accordance with the laws of the appropriate State or Territory.

11. Risk Management

A Rotary Club and or a Rotary District program must have carried out a risk assessment of all its programs, including and not limited to:

- ensuring that a youth program is appropriately covered by Rotary Insurance (and the District Insurance Officer is notified of the program and given a copy of the risk assessment).looking at the possible severity, consequences and frequencies of each risk.
- implementing strategies to reduce risk to an acceptable level (**refer to District Risk Management templates.**)

12. Rotary Youth Exchange – Unique Risks

- 1) Rotary Youth Exchange students are to be admired. At an early age they have shown the maturity to leave their family and friends to travel and study in another country where they know no-one. They are exposed to a new culture and in most instances a new language. They require our help and understanding.
- 2) RYE is administered for Clubs by the District Youth Exchange Committee.
- 3) RYE being long-term and residential in nature, presents many more opportunities for abuse to occur. As a result, the District Committee has put in place additional protection requirements.
- 4) The **RYE Manual** details these requirements.
- 5) Notwithstanding the contents of this policy, Rotary International **Certification** requirements shall be observed and implemented in respect of the operation of both Long term and Short term Youth Exchange Programs.

13. Short Rotary Youth Programs

- 1) These are Rotary youth programs up to two weeks in duration and cover almost all of the youth programs run in District 9510, with the exception of Youth Exchange.
- 2) It is an RI requirement that we offer young people in the short youth programs the same level of protection as is required for Youth Exchange students.
- 3) Because the programs are of a much shorter duration, protecting students in these programs is much less complex than the procedures required to protect exchange students.
- 4) The specific steps required to protect young people in these programs is set down in the **Short Rotary Youth Programs Manual**.

14. Club Youth Protection Officers

RI policy requires all clubs to appoint a Youth Protection Officer.

- 1) In many clubs the Youth Protection Officer is also the Insurance Officer and/or Risk Management Officer.
- 2) The Club Youth Protection Officer in District 9510 is strictly an administration position, standing at arm's length from those organising and administering Club-run youth programs and Youth Exchange. The Officer ensures that Club organisers comply with the requirement designed to keep young people in their care safe.
- 3) Such officers must not have direct one-on-one interaction with the student.
- 4) Should the circumstance arise where a student makes a personal approach to the Club Youth Protection Officer, the student is to be directed to someone they trust in the Club or District. The Officer should explain their role is administrative and they are not qualified to be involved in one-on-one contact with a young person.
- 5) *A Volunteer Information and Declaration Form* is not required by the Club Youth Protection Officer, however, a WWC check would be appropriate.
- 6) The full role, functions and responsibilities of the Club Youth Protection Officer are clearly outlined. (**See Appendix 1**)

15. The District Protection Committee

RI requires that all Districts have a District Youth Protection Officer with overall responsibility for protecting young people from all forms of abuse when they are participating in Rotary youth programs, organised and run by our District Youth Committees and Clubs.

- In District 9510 this officer is also responsible for another RI requirement, namely the protection from abuse of all aged or infirm people assisted by Rotarians in our District.
- To reflect this officer's broader role, they are titled the District Protection Officer (the word 'Youth' is dropped).
- The District Protection Officer is the chair of a committee titled the District Protection Committee.
- This committee consists of a number of District leaders including the District Governor.
- In addition to its protection role, the committee is responsible for the support of any person abused or accused, and the investigating of any instances of abuse occurring in the District.
- The committee is also responsible for either the updating of all manuals relating to youth protection or checking the revision of youth manuals updated by others.
- The committee is also responsible for Crisis Management.
- For a detailed list of the Committee's duties and for information about the composition of the committee - **please refer to Appendix 2.**

16. Abuse and Recognising it in Young People

- 1) The abuse of a young person comprises, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Any act of a sexual nature committed against them or the sexual grooming of them.
 - The infliction on a young person of physical violence, serious emotional harm, psychological harm or serious neglect.
- 2) The following changes in a young person's behaviour are often an indication of abuse occurring:
 - becoming withdrawn.
 - keeping to themselves.
 - a decrease in communication.
 - unusual mood swings.
 - aggressive, violent or sullen behaviour.
 - becoming sad and unhappy.
 - changes in appetite.

Consider all possibilities. There is more than one reason for bad behaviour.

- 3) The Rotary program leader or host parent, if observing any of these symptoms, should try to tactfully get to the bottom of the problem. If they cannot help and the behaviour continues, contact should be made with the District Protection Officer who will probably organise professional assistance.

17. Reporting Abuse

(1.) Important Principles

Some of the important principles outlined in the RI policy – *Abuse and Harassment Reporting Guidelines* follow. **(See Appendix 3).**

- 1) Whether a young person is under or over the age of 18, it is a requirement to adhere to all aspects of the policy.

- 2) The District requires that all Rotarians and volunteers make an immediate report to the Police, if an accusation of sexual abuse or harassment is made to them.
- 3) The method of responding to a young person making an accusation of sexual abuse or harassment is clearly outlined.
- 4) The District Protection Officer or the District Governor must be promptly advised of the allegations. RI and our insurers AON must be notified within 72 hours of the allegation occurring by way of a Rotary Youth Protection Incident Report emailed to youthprotection@rotary.org.

(2.) Additional Government Requirements

The following additional State and Territory requirements, which the RI policy does not cover in Appendix 3 are also to be adhered to or followed. They are listed below:

- 1) If anyone believes a young person in a Rotary Youth Program is in immediate risk of danger or abuse, telephone the Emergency 000 number.
- 2) If a Rotarian or volunteer in a Rotary Youth Program, on reasonable grounds, forms a belief that a young person is in need of protection or they are concerned about the young person's safety, health or well-being, they must report the matter to the Police or the relevant Child Protection Authority in their State or Territory.
- 3) District 9510 will support anyone making a report in good faith in accordance with the youth protection procedures.
- 4) No one can direct another person not to report an abuse or neglect incident and a number of States and Territories have protection for people making a report in good faith.
- 5) Should any adult supervising in a Rotary Youth Program or a Rotarian observing a happening in a Rotary Youth Program have concerns relating to the safety, health or well-being of a young person in the program, it is strongly recommended they seek advice from the District Protection Officer on how best to handle the situation.
- 6) District 9510 in conjunction with other Australian Rotary Districts has in place molestation cover. Should any claims be made against the District or an individual within the District in relation to a sexual abuse incident, the District Protection Officer will assist our insurers as requested in processing such a claim with them.

(3.) Mandatory Reporting Requirements for Participants under 18 Years (children)

State or Territory Governments in the areas in which District 9510 operates have certain legislated Mandatory Reporting Requirements which imposes obligation upon volunteers of Youth Programs with participants under 18 years of age to report cases of suspected child abuse and neglect.

- 1) Mandatory reporting legislation generally contains lists of particular occupations that are mandated to report cases of suspected child abuse and neglect including volunteers.
- 2) Some States or Territories will issue fines to people for failing to report reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect of a young person under 18 (child).

See Appendix 4 for the full *Mandatory Reporting Guidelines*.

18. Communication

Open and frank communication between Rotary leaders and participants in Rotary youth programs is an essential element needed to keep young people safe. It is important the points below are observed and followed:

- 1) District youth committees and clubs running stand-alone youth programs have an obligation to actively communicate with their program participants advising them to be aware of potential abuse and the actions they can take to help keep themselves safe.
- 2) The participants also need to be encouraged to report any inappropriate behaviour directed towards themselves or to others to a leader with whom they feel comfortable. It should be explained that no matter what the circumstances, they will never be blamed or in any way

disadvantaged by reporting any incident which happened to them or which makes them or others feel uncomfortable or fearful.

- 3) If an instance of abuse should occur in any of our District Rotary Youth Programs, the District Governor is the only person who should either make a statement to the media about the incident, or choose whether to appoint another responsible person to make these statements.. The DG will take advice from the District Protection Officer, the Rotary Zone Advisor and others as appropriate before any comments are made. Well-intentioned but inappropriate or unapproved comments by individual members to the media have the potential to reflect badly on all the Clubs in the District.
- 4) It is very important any comment to the media does not infringe the rights of any young person, nor should it jeopardize the natural justice due to the accused person. It is especially important that it does not, in any way, jeopardise investigation by the relevant authorities.
- 5) Rotary International has produced a very clear communication strategy and statement that needs to be followed by all parties involved when responding to an allegation of harassment, abuse or neglect by a young person claiming to be a victim.
- 6) In accordance with RI instructions, this communication and instruction statement has been varied as needed to reflect requirements specific to District 9510.
- 7) Before a Rotary Youth Program commences it must be made very clear to all participants the guidelines and rules of behaviour required of them in the program. It should also be pointed out that non-compliance will result in their being dismissed from the program.
- 8) **See Appendix 3 for the full *ABUSE AND HARASSMENT REPORTING GUIDELINES*.**

19. Images of Young People

When taking images of young people in our youth programs the following guidelines must be complied with:

- 1) The young person's parent/guardian must consent in writing to the use of any image of that young person being used for publicity or other purposes. Alternatively, if the young person has sufficient maturity to be able to appreciate the ramifications of the use of their image, they can decide for themselves (ie a mature 16-17-year-old can give their consent).
- 2) Further understanding of informed consent is available at this New South Wales resource <https://www.acyp.nsw.gov.au/participation-resources/consent>.
- 3) Consent should always state the purpose for which it is agreed the images will be used (eg to record and document the program and/or for future promotion of the program).
- 4) The images must not be embarrassing to the young person, their parents or friends, (ie no sexualised poses, embarrassing facial expressions or suggestion of illegal activity).
- 5) A young person of any age, irrespective of parental/guardian consent, can request not to be photographed and their wish must be adhered to.
- 6) Care should be taken not to embarrass a young person in a group environment if they are not permitted to be photographed or videoed (ie children under guardianship care).
- 7) Images should not be taken in inappropriate locations (eg showers, toilet, change rooms or bedrooms).
- 8) If a young person requests their image be removed from the web or from social media or they request their image not be reproduced in a re-run of printed material, their wish must be adhered to.

20. Records

- 1) During the Rotary year it is very important the various people involved in RYPs comply with their duty to complete, submit and/or store compliance forms, as set down in the respective program manual(s).
- 2) Copies of all Information and Declaration Forms (signed by the President or District Chair) must be electronically transferred to the District for secure document storage, with a copy sent to the District Protection Officer (noting that District has a process for storing the documents in perpetuity as there is no statute of limitations for child protection offences).
- 3) All of the other required forms must be sent to the District for secure storage, or stored in accordance with the instructions on the bottom of the forms.
- 4) This policy and all Youth Program Manuals are to be reviewed annually or more frequently if needed by the District Protection Committee and endorsed by the District Management Committee. Documents are to be labelled with the date of the last revision and their review number.

21. Privacy and Confidentiality

- 1) The Rotary District will collect, use, disclosed and hold personal information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*
- 2) There are two guiding principles in respect to a young person's privacy:
 - The Rotary District will operate on the 'best interests principle'. All Rotarians, Rotaractors, volunteers, spouses, and those working in Rotary Youth Programs will do what they believe to be in the best interest of the young person. This principle supersedes all others.
 - The Rotary District will respect a young person's confidentiality, except in situations where it conflicts with the 'best interest' principle.
- 3) Where an accusation is made, there are obligations on the person to whom the accusation was made and also on those told of the accusations. All must, as far as is reasonably possible, keep confidential all information relating to both the accused and the accuser in accordance with the *ABUSE AND HARASSMENT ALLEGATION & REPORTING GUIDELINES*. **(See Appendix 3)**

Appendix 1

Club Youth Protection Officer Duties

The Club Youth Protection Officer role is like that of an auditor. His/her role is not to be directly involved in Club youth programs or with program participants, but to oversee those people running the programs and ensure they are complying with the rules in place to protect our young people. It is important a responsible Rotarian with some knowledge of Rotary youth programs, and who is comfortable in supervising others, fulfils this role. It is common (but not required) that the Club Youth Protection Officer is also the Club Insurance and Club Risk Management Officer.

It is strongly recommended the Rotarian taking up the role of a Club Protection Officer attends a youth training session at least annually. They should also do an e-training course by registering on My Rotary website and follow the steps below:

<https://learn.rotary.org/members/learn/catalog?ctl0=se-youth>

1. Log in
2. 'Rotary Learning Centre'
- 3 'Getting Started with the Learning Centre'
- 4 'Protecting Youth Program Participants'

The requirements of the Protection Officer will vary from club to club. In Clubs which host an exchange student or have a stand-alone Club youth program, the Protection Officer will need to oversee appreciably more than in Clubs which do not. That officer must read and ensure the club adheres to the requirements as set out in the Club Youth Exchange Manual or the Short Rotary Youth Programs Manual.

It is the Protection Officer's duty in all clubs to ensure that whenever a young person involved in a Rotary program comes to the Club or a Club event, they are treated respectfully and there is adherence to all the rules that apply to them. This is whether it is a RYLA student coming to a meeting once to report on their experiences, or a youth exchange student who will be with the club for 12 months.

It is also the responsibility of the Club Youth Protection Officer to ensure the following duties are done and done in a timely manner:

1. Club members particularly those involved in youth programs are required to understand their responsibilities.
2. The people involved in youth programs should all be suitable people for the tasks they are given and as such are assessed as **RESPONSIBLE ADULTS**.
3. Care must be taken in planning any youth program to ensure that the number of Rotarians or persons assisting the Rotary Club who could be alone with a young person for a period of time, being such time that might allow grooming or abuse to occur is kept to the absolute minimum. Those people must be assessed as **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS**.
4. Any applicant for a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER** position must follow the correct procedure commencing by filling in a Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Form. This is to be followed by a thorough interview and referee checks (see below re suitable interviewers). Finally, the applicant must obtain a Working with Children Check.
5. The person interviewing the candidate and the candidate's referees must be a person experienced in interviewing techniques. This person who, looking beyond what is actually said, is likely to be able to pick up any small, tell-tale signs which might throw doubt on the applicant's suitability. If there is no such person in the Club, they should see that a suitable interviewer is recruited from another Club; this can be done with the assistance of the District Protection Committee.

6. Any Rotary club that runs a stand-alone youth program (not a program run by a District Committee) must adhere to RI requirements. The requirement states that in addition to anyone who might be alone with a young person for a period of time, being such time that might allow grooming or abuse to occur, the person responsible for organising the program in the club must also be a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER**.
7. It is State or Territory Government requirement that anyone holding private personal information (such as a youth exchange student's medical records) should also be classified as a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER**.
8. Where a club (not a District Youth Committee) runs a stand-alone youth program the Club Youth Protection Officer shall be responsible for sending to the Chair of the District Internet Committee for the secure central district electronic storage of the Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Forms and any other required forms. These forms must at the same time be sent to the District Protection Officer. The Club Youth Protection Officer is also responsible for posting the names and expiry dates of those **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS** on the District website through the District Internet Chair.
9. Where a Club wishes to be involved in youth exchange, the Club must fill out an application form to be certified by the District Youth Exchange Committee to host or sponsor a student, a D9510 RYEP Club Certification – Inbound, or D9510 RYEP Club Certification – Outbound. Form.
10. Where a Club wishes to run a stand-alone youth program they must fill in a YP8 Form and submit it to the District Protection Officer.

Unless the club has a separate Risk Management Officer and Insurance Officer, the Club Protection Officer shall also ensure that:

1. those in the Club responsible submit a Risk Management Form to the District Insurance Officer for any youth or other function the club runs.
2. the Annual Insurance and Youth Protection Declaration is completed and submitted each April.

Endorsement

Youth Protection Officer Name _____

Youth Protection Officer Signature _____

Date _____

Endorsed by President _____

Date _____

Appendix 2

Duties of the District 9510 Protection Committee Incorporating Crisis Management, Document Review and Youth Exchange Scholarship Selection Committees

1. The Composition of the Committee

- 1.1. The chair shall be a Rotarian with a wide-ranging knowledge of various Rotary Youth Programs and an understanding of protection requirements for both Rotary and Government.
- 1.2. The chair shall be the District Protection Officer.
- 1.3. Other committee members will be the District Governor, the District Governor Elect, the District Governor Nominee and, if available, the immediate past District Governor, and the District Chair of Youth Programs.
- 1.4. The chairs of the more comprehensive youth programs especially Youth Exchange and RYLA and RYPEN should also be on the committee.
- 1.5. Any other Rotarians whose expertise is felt will be an asset to the committee can be recruited.
- 1.6. The committee is to work in collaboration with the District Insurance Officer and the District Risk Management Officer.

2. Protection Committee

- 2.1. To investigate any cases or suspected cases of abuse or harassment (sexual, physical or emotional) against all vulnerable people which may occur in Rotary programs or clubs, unless the Police are currently investigating the matter. Vulnerable people in a Rotary context are young people up to the age of 25 (unless the program is such that RI deems the young person an adult as in New Generations Service Exchange). Vulnerable people are also the aged and infirm involved in Rotary programs or Rotary assistance.
- 2.2. To provide support for victims of harassment or abuse in Rotary clubs or programs in accordance with RI guidelines which include:
 - assistance from Rotary as needed or requested by the victim.
 - if requested, provision of independent non-Rotary counselling at Rotary's expense.
 - if requested, provision of independent non-Rotary legal assistance at Rotary's expense.
 - assisting victims and our insurers with any claims a victim may have through Rotary's molestation Insurance.
- 2.3. Obtaining and maintaining a list of Rotarians in the District skilled in interviewing techniques, who are prepared to assist in screening **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER** candidates. They would conduct probing, in-depth conversations with the candidates and their nominated referees, looking beyond the intended replies for any small tell-tale signs that could indicate the candidate may not be a suitable person to be alone with young people in Rotary youth programs. This list of names would be available to Program Chairs in District committees and Clubs who are running youth programs.
- 2.4. To train, coordinate the training and ensure the compliance of all Rotarians, particularly those Rotarians and others involved in vulnerable people programs. The training is to be in accordance with Rotary policies, as submitted and approved by RI for protecting vulnerable people in Rotary programs, including:
 - *District 9510 Youth Protection Policy.*
 - *Rotary Australia Youth Protection Policy Summary.*
 - *District 9510 Youth Exchange Committee Guide 05/2020*
 - *District 9510 YEP Club Guide to Sponsoring or Hosting a long-term exchange student*
 - *District 9510 YEP Long-term Inbound Guide*
 - *District 9510 YEP Long-term Outbound Guide*

- *Rotary District 9510 Guide to Protecting Youth involved in Short Rotary Programs (June 2020).*
- *The Guide to Protecting the Elderly and Infirm when being assisted by Rotary” (June 2020).*
- *The RI Rotary Youth Protection Guide.*

2.5 This training is to be in compliance, where applicable, with the manuals with emphasis to be placed on ensuring when planning youth and vulnerable people programs that those responsible ensure that programs are organised so as few people as possible will be alone with a young, aged or infirm person for a period of time, being such time as could allow grooming or abuse to occur.

N.B.: This is one of the best ways we can protect our students as we know that grooming and abuse very rarely occurs when others are present.

The training is to be implemented and coordinated in any practical way but in particular:

- at District Assemblies, District Conferences, PETS and specialised training.
- through Protection Committee members talking to clubs and District committees.
- by strongly encouraging those involved in our youth programs to visit the Rotary.org e-learning centre and by completing the RI Child Protection e-Training course
<https://learn.rotary.org/members/learn/catalog?ct10=sw-youth>

1. Log in

2 'Rotary Learning Centre'

3 'Getting Started with the Learning Centre'

4 'Protecting Youth Program Participants'

- by disseminating information about youth protection on the District web site, in the DG's Newsletter.
- by ensuring the Youth Exchange Committee carries out two sets of training as required by RI to all club Youth Exchange counsellors, all host families and all Youth Exchange students both inbound and outbound.
- by ensuring the District Youth Exchange Committee certifies all Clubs involved in Youth Exchange.
- members of the Youth Protection Committee will assist the Youth Exchange Committee by training separately both inbound and outbound youth exchange students and parents and counsellors at the Youth Exchange Briefing Day.
- by ensuring other youth committees train their members as required by RI in "The Rotary District 9510 "Guide to Protecting Youth Involved in Short Rotary Programs", and the "Guide to Protecting the Elderly and Infirm when being assisted by Rotary."
- through Area Governors talking to clubs or club presidents within their groups.

Ensuring compliance with the RI and state requirements designed to look after the vulnerable in our programs as set out in the manuals listed in 2.4 above, in particular:

- seeing that all Clubs have a Club Youth Protection Officer.
- ensuring the Youth Exchange Committee has appointed a competent Compliance Officer.
- checking the District Youth Exchange Committee Chair, the Chairs of Short Rotary youth programs and the Program Chairs of Clubs with Club stand-alone youth programs and those looking after the aged and infirm have completed, when needed, all the required compliance forms.
- checking that the *Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Forms* have been completed, processed and approved qualifying the applicant as a **ROTARY PROGRAM VOLUNTEER.**
- checking the Chairs have electronically transferred copies of all of the above forms to the Chair of the District Protection Committee.
- also checking the Chairs have simultaneously electronically transferred copies of the forms to the chair of the District Internet Committee for secure storage on the District website.

- establishing that the Chairs have also requested the Chair of the District Internet Committee add the names and expiry dates of any newly approved **ROTARY PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS** to the list on the district website available for all Rotarians to see.
- checking that any **ROTARY PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS** who need to maintain their qualification reapply shortly before their WWC check and Information and Declaration Form expires five years after their date of issue (two years in NT).

3. ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE DUTIES

Crisis Management

The District Youth Protection Committee will approach the incoming DG to ensure they have reviewed the team of experts on the “Crisis Management Advisory Team”. If the incoming DG feels the current experts are suitable and they are happy to remain on the team, they should then reappoint them sourcing and appointing new members as necessary a minimum of one month before the end of the Rotary year so the year commences with a full team in accordance with the District 9510 Crisis Management Policy

District Review Committee

This committee must review annually the information the District vulnerable persons committees have in their manuals, brochures and web sites. Specifically check to see the information reflects the latest RI, District 9510 and State or Territory child and youth protection requirements as applicable.

This committee is to ensure the policies on the district web site is kept current with applicable RI, District 9510 requirements, and State and Territory vulnerable person protection requirements.

Youth Exchange Scholarship Trustee

Act as trustees for the Youth Exchange Scholarship Fund. The DG, DGE, and Trust Founder David Binks are to conduct interviews of the parents (or guardians) of students applying for scholarship funds in accordance with the guidelines.

Funds available are to be allocated as and if needed to enable applicants deemed worthy who without assistance would be unable or unlikely to go on exchange. **(See guideline notes held by the District Internet Committee).**

Appendix 3

Rotary International Abuse and Allegation Reporting Guidelines Adapted for District 9510 Usage

District 9510 is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of all youth program participants and will not tolerate abuse or harassment. Any allegation of abuse or harassment must be treated seriously. All allegations must be handled according to local laws and RI policy. All allegations must be handled within the following guidelines.

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

DEFINITIONS

Emotional or verbal abuse — The use of fear, humiliation, or verbal assaults to control the behaviour of another. Examples include rejecting the person, preventing him or her from developing normal social relationships, and making derogatory statements about his or her race, religion, ability, intellect, tastes or personal appearance.

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 implicit or explicit sexual acts, whether they are performed alone or 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 is considered sexual abuse. Sexual abuse can also include non-touching offenses, such as voyeuristic behaviour, indecent exposure, or showing a young person sexual or pornographic material.

Sexual harassment — Sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is unwanted or directed at someone unwilling or unable to provide consent. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is used by sexual predators to desensitize or groom their victims. Examples of sexual harassment include:

Sexual epithets or jokes, written or spoken references to sexual conduct, gossip about one's sex life, and comments about a person's sexual activity, deficiencies, prowess or orientation.

Verbal abuse of a sexual nature.

Display of sexually suggestive objects or images.

Sexual leering or whistling.

Inappropriate physical contact, such as brushing against a person.

Obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments.

RECEIVING AN ALLEGATION REPORT

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 encouraging, 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 ensure that it doesn't happen to others.
- *Get the facts, but don't interrogate.* Ask questions that establish facts: who, what, when, where, and how. Reassure the young person that he or she did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking "why" questions, which may be interpreted as questioning the young person's motives. Remember that your responsibility is to report this information to the proper authorities.

- *Be nonjudgmental and reassure.* Avoid criticizing anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It's especially important not to blame or criticize the young person. Emphasize that it was not his or her fault, and that it was brave and mature to come to you.
- *Document the allegation.* Record the conversation, including the date and time, as soon after the report as you can. Try to record the young person's exact words.

ALLEGATION RESPONSE

The following steps must be taken immediately after alleged abuse or harassment is reported. Some of them may be performed by the person to whom the allegation has been made (Allegation Recipient), while others should be performed by a District officer, as specified.

1. Protect the young person

Ensure the safety and well-being 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 his or her safety and is not a punishment.

If rape is suspected or alleged, use your best endeavours to persuade the young person to go with you to the police for an interview and medical examination (it is important the medical examination is done promptly so DNA evidence is preserved. Advise the young person not to shower.)

The allegation recipient, or if they need assistance, the youth program Chair or the Club president should take immediate action to ensure the young person's health and well-being, and get them medical or psychological care, if necessary.

2. Report the allegations to appropriate authorities

The allegation recipient must immediately report all cases of abuse or harassment firstly to the police for investigation and then directly to the District Protection Officer or the District Governor or alternatively do this through either the Club president or the youth program Chair as appropriate.

Interrogations related to allegations of abuse or harassment must be left by the District entirely to law enforcement or Government child protection agencies. No Rotary investigation can be carried out until these authorities have completed their investigation or have decided not to do so.

In most situations, the first Rotary follow up action is by the District Protection Officer, who is responsible for seeking advice from and interacting with the police or the appropriate state or territory Child Protection agencies.

District 9510 will fully cooperate with any police or child protection agency investigation requests.

3. Remove the accused person from all contact with youth

District 9510 will remove the alleged offender from all contact with Rotary youth program participants until the matter is resolved.

If the allegation is against a host family member, then the established criteria and procedures is to remove the Rotary Youth Exchange student from the host family. If appropriate, the student will be moved to temporary housing that has been screened in advance.

4. Avoid gossip and blame

Don't tell anyone about the allegation other than those who need to know. Be careful to protect the rights of both the victim and the accused during the investigation.

District 9510 will maintain the privacy (as distinct from confidentiality) of any accused person by enforcing the following procedures:

The District Governor or their delegate must:

- contact all Rotarians and others who they are aware may know facts pertaining to the allegation and personally, by phone or by email, advise them they should not discuss the matter with anyone who does not need to know.
- advise those people who have any information or images on their computer or phone relating to the accusation that it should be carefully examined and if there is a possibility it could be evidence, it should be secured and retained. If it is of no use as evidence it must be deleted.

- advise the alleged victim and the person to whom the allegation was first made of the people they can or should talk to about the allegation and instruct them not to discuss the matter with anyone else.

5. Follow through

The District Protection Officer or the District Governor must inform RI of the allegation within 72 hours submitting a Rotary Youth Protection Incident Report Form and then provide ongoing status reports.

District 9510 will ensure that the program participant's parents or legal guardians have been notified and offer the young person an independent, non-Rotarian counsellor to represent his or her interests.

If law enforcement agencies will not investigate, or if their investigation is inconclusive, the District Governor will have the District Protection Committee coordinate an independent review to ensure that District youth protection policies were followed. They must also confirm that youth safety had been of the highest priority. Then, if needed, they will determine any necessary modifications to District procedures. Any review should be carried out with the guidance and input of our insurers. This review may not determine the validity of any allegations as this may only be able to be done by a Government agency or the police.

If law enforcement has found the allegations to be noncriminal and does not investigate, the District Governor is responsible for organising an investigation. The District Governor or the District Protection Officer as part of the District investigation should contact the alleged offender. To assist the Rotary investigation appropriate professionals outside of Rotary could be employed to assist.

District 9510 will document all accusations of inappropriate behaviour and the actions taken to resolve the situation, so that patterns of inappropriate behaviour are identified and addressed.

Following the interview and investigation, the Protection Committee must decide if the alleged offender:

- should be exonerated and fully reinstated to all Rotary duties
- should be allowed to remain in Rotary but be prevented from any involvement with youth
- is not a suitable person to be a Rotarian?

The president of the accused's Rotary Club should be informed by the District Governor/Protection Committee of the decision and the reasons for it. The president of the accused's Rotary club should then be asked to implement the committee's findings.

Appendix 4

Mandatory Reporting Guidelines

Mandatory Reporting – The obligation to report suspicion of child abuse or neglect. It applies to a person under 18 years of age and for the period of the program.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Part 1—Reporting of suspicion that child or young person may be at risk

30—Application of Part

(3) This Part applies to the following persons:

- (a) prescribed health practitioners;
- (b) police officers;
- (c) community corrections officers under the *Correctional Services Act 1982*;
- (d) social workers;
- (e) ministers of religion;
- (f) employees of, or volunteers in, an organisation formed for religious or spiritual purposes;
- (g) teachers employed as such in a school (within the meaning of the *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011*) or a pre-school or kindergarten;
- (h) employees of, or volunteers in, an organisation that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children and young people, being a person who—
 - (i) provides such services directly to children and young people; or
 - (ii) holds a management position in the organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children and young people;
 - (iii) any other person of a class prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this subsection.

These persons have an obligation to report their suspicion of child abuse. They are referred to as mandatory reporters. The report should be made to Child Abuse Report Line (CARL). The identity of any person making a report to the Department for Child Protection via CARL is protected.

REASONABLE SUSPICION

A suspicion is a state of mind. It is different from knowledge or belief. It requires more than a guess but does not need to be sufficient to form a belief as to the existence of an event or circumstance. There needs to be a factual basis for the suspicion.

The suspicion must be 'reasonable'. Whether a suspicion is reasonable will depend on various factors, including the surrounding circumstances and the plausibility of the information available to the mandatory reporter.

A mandatory reporter should consider the following:

- Was the information obtained in the course of his or her employment (noting that employment is broadly defined in the Act)?
- On the information available, does the reporter have a suspicion that something might happen or might have happened?
- If the reporter has a suspicion that something might happen or might have happened, is it reasonable to rely upon the information which causes him or her to have the suspicion?

The mandated reporter must form the reasonable suspicion alone. The suspicion does not need to be accepted and discussed with staff members, managers, or parents/carers. Whilst the mandatory reporter might like to talk through the circumstances with another person, ultimately it is the mandatory reporter who needs to be satisfied that they hold a suspicion.

REPORTING

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

If you are concerned about a child and have a reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected, phone the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) 131 478 (South Australia)

The report line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

VICTORIA

Telephone numbers to make a report during business hours (8.45am -5.00pm), Monday to Friday, are listed below:

- North Division intake: 1300 664 977
- South Division intake: 1300 655 795
- East Division intake: 1300 360 391
- West Division intake - metropolitan: 1300 664 977
- West Division intake - rural and regional: 1800 075 599

After Hours : Child Protection Emergency Service: 13 12 78

NSW

There are two ways mandatory reporters can make a child protection report:

By eReport through the ChildStory Reporter website.

By calling the Child Protection Helpline on 132 111.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

You can report suspected child abuse to:
the child abuse hotline on 1800 700 250

Appendix 5

Important Facts Pertaining to Youth Worker Assessments

Working with Children Check

The Working with Children Check plays a critical part in any youth protection policy because they deny known offenders access to the program.

For some offenders who have no criminal record and diligently avoid being caught by law enforcement agencies, background checks may dissuade them from volunteering in a Youth Program.

In other instances sexual abusers, knowing they have not been caught, will welcome the opportunity of getting a WWC check. They see it as an entry ticket enabling them to work with our young people.

Many youth-serving organizations require a criminal background check for all adult volunteers who work with youth, even in programs that don't involve unsupervised access to youth.

Reference Checks

Reference Checks - Simply requesting references or asking set questions is not sufficient. A sexual predator obviously will only select referees who they know will say complimentary things about them. A person skilled in interviewing techniques must interview the candidate and then contact each reference by phone or in person, and involve them in an in-depth discussion looking for any unintended comments which might indicate the candidate is unsuitable to work alone with young people.

Record the date of the interview and the interviewer's assessment of their suitability. Keep this information with the volunteer's Information and Declaration Form.

Appendix 6

Rotary Youth Volunteer Information & Declaration Form

- 1) This Form is mandatory for **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS**.
- 2) **RESPONSIBLE ADULTS** are exempt.
- 3) To ensure currency, this document can be down loaded from the District 9510 website. Please click on www.rotary9510.org/sitepage/governance-information or contact the District Governance coordinator.

NOTE: This form (including the referee check summary) must be retained securely by the Club/District youth program for two years **and be** sent to the District for permanent secure electronic retention (noting there is no statute of limitations on Child Abuse matters).

ROTARY YOUTH VOLUNTEER INFORMATION & DECLARATION FORM

This Form is mandatory for **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS**

RESPONSIBLE ADULTS are exempt

(Refer definitions in Rotary District 9510 Youth Protection Policy)

Personal Details

Name		DOB / /	Email
Phone	Work	Home	Mobile
Address			Period at this address (years)
Occupation			Employer

Program involvement

Which Youth programs will you be involved with, and what will your role or roles be?
Past involvement with youth

Personal References (Only one referee may be a Rotarian and none may be family members)

1	Name	Email	
	Phone	Work	Home Mobile
2	Name	Email	
	Phone	Work	Home Mobile
3	Name	Email	
	Phone	Work	Home Mobile

WWC and Criminal History

Working with Children Card / Certificate Number		Expiry Date	
Have you ever been charged with or been found guilty of charges involving sexual, physical, or verbal abuse, including but not limited to domestic violence or intervention orders. If yes, please explain. Also indicate date(s) of incident(s) and the Country and State in which each occurred (attach a separate sheet, if needed). Charges that resulted in a diversion should be recorded, as should the final outcome of any intervention order applications that might have been made against you.			Yes () No ()

<p><i>I certify the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All statements and information given on this form are true and correct. I have contacted my referees and all are happy for *Rotary to contact them I give my full permission for any of the referees listed above to be contacted by *Rotary to confirm my suitability as a YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER. I agree to abide unreservedly by *Rotary's decision as to my suitability as a YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER in *Rotary Youth Programs. I acknowledge that (copies of) this form and the results of *Rotary's enquires will be held by the manager of any program for which I volunteer and by the District. <p>*For these purposes Rotary means the Rotary Club or District Youth Committee for which this form is submitted and any other Club or District Committee that conducts a Youth Program for which I volunteer either now or in the future.</p> <p>I have read and understood the above declaration and sign this form voluntarily.</p>			
Applicant	Name	Signature	Date
Rotary Witness	Name	Signature	Date

ENDORISING A YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER

Procedure to be initiated by a Youth Program Chair or Club President (The Initiator)

1. The Initiator has the applicant obtain a WWC Check and fill out this form
2. The Initiator signs the form confirming they have sighted the WWC and emails the form to the District Protection Officer
3. The DPO will engage an expert to conduct applicant and Referee interviews, emailing them the form
4. If the applicant proves suitable, the expert will sign the form and email it to the initiator and the DPO
5. The DPO sends the form to the internet committee for secure storage and advised them to add the new Youth Program Volunteer's name and date of the WWC check to the visible District website list.

Record of Interviews contact by Authorised Interviewing Officer

Name Candidate		Contact Date
Contacted	Phone Number _____ / In person _____	

Name Referee 1		Contact Date
Contacted	Phone Number _____ / In person _____	

Name Referee 2		Contact Date
Contacted	Phone Number _____ / In person _____	

Name Referee 3		Contact Date
Contacted	Phone Number _____ / In person _____	

Overall Comments	
-------------------------	--

I, the interviewer,
Print Name

verify that I have interviewed and their 3 referees
Applicant's Name

and I find the applicant suitable to be a Youth Program Volunteer.

Signed Date...../...../.....

Phone Email

Name	Position
Youth Program Chair/Club President	
Signed	Sighted applicant's WWC Check dated / /
Phone _____	Email _____

NOTE: This form must be retained securely by the Club/District Youth Program for two years **and** sent to the District Youth Protection Officer, **Helen Charles** for permanent secure electronic retention (noting there is no statute of limitations on Child Abuse matters).

Appendix 7

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

‘Is everyone working in a Rotary youth program required to complete an Information & Declaration Form?’

‘The answer is NO, this should definitely NOT happen.

Only those adult **Volunteers** participating in a youth program who are defined as **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS** are required to provide a Volunteer Information and Declaration. This applies only to those members who may be alone with a young person for a period of time, such time as could allow grooming or abuse to occur.

Many clubs will not have any **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS**. In most Clubs the members might be deemed **RESPONSIBLE ADULTS** (as defined).

Anyone has the right not to sign the Volunteer Declaration if they so wish, understanding that they are then excluded from participating as a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER** in a Rotary Youth Program, but may still participate as a **RESPONSIBLE ADULT**.

‘What is the difference between a WWC and the Declaration Form?’

The WWC is a check required by State governments to ascertain if a person is eligible to work with children in a group situation. It is also one of a number of the checks required by an Information & Declaration Form applicant.

‘When is screening with a Volunteer Information and Declaration Form necessary?’

Generally, screening applies to the few adult persons where circumstances may require that they be alone with a young person for a period of time, such time as could allow grooming or abuse to occur. Adults in a group situation in a Rotary youth program are not required to provide a Volunteer Declaration but may need a WWC. Refer **7. Screening and Suitability Checks**

What positions or situations would require a WWC check but not require a Volunteer Information and Declaration Form?’

Unless circumstances specifically define a person as a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER**, the following should obtain a WWC Check:

- Club Youth Protection Officer
- Person responsible for Youth Programs in a Club
- Person working more than seven days in a year with Youth (Child Safety Act)

‘Which people may need to complete the Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Form?’

Youth Exchange Counsellors, host parents (Rotarians and non-Rotarians), their spouses and partners along with other adult residents if living in of the host home, eg adult siblings and grandparents and possibly a few other adults working in Rotary youth programs who may be alone with a young person for a period of time such time as could allow grooming or abuse to occur.

‘Who is exempt from needing to complete the Volunteer Information and Declaration form?’

RESPONSIBLE ADULTS are exempt.

A **RESPONSIBLE ADULT** is any adult who, in a family or group situation for a short period of time, is responsible for caring for a youth/student. This person shall be in a position to offer the youth/student assistance or an educational, cultural, or recreational experience.

'How often do I need to complete Volunteer Information and Declaration Form?'

Every five years as long as you continue to work alone with young people in Rotary youth programs for the defined period of time. This is at the same time as their WWC Check is renewed in SA, Vic and NSW. In NT, the WWC Check (not the form) must be renewed every two years.

'My Rotary Club is having a BBQ at the local hardware store; do all members at the BBQ need to have completed a Volunteer Information and Declaration Form?'

The answer is NO. Members will not need to have signed a Volunteer Declaration as they will not be alone with a young person for the defined period of time.

'My Rotary Club is hosting two Youth Exchange students and they are coming to our meeting to present their story, one is being brought by car driven by their host mum, the other also by car but driven by a Rotarian who is not a host. Is this okay?'

The one being brought by the host mum is okay; as she is a host she will be a **Youth PROGRAM VOLUNTEER**. Assuming the second driver is not a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER** and the journey is not frequent **and only for a short time, that Rotarian can be classed to be a RESPONSIBLE ADULT**. It is however recommended that the Rotarian includes a third person (with one of them being the same sex as the exchange student) in the car if practical.

'My Rotary Club is involved in a student mentoring program at the local secondary college, should all mentors have completed the Volunteer Information and Declaration Form?'

If program is under the control of another organisation (the school), the mentor must firstly abide by the school requirements. If there is any question about other people not being around and able to hear what is being said, then the person needs to be assessed as a **ROTARY YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER**. If there are other participants around from a Rotary perspective, the mentor needs to be a **RESPONSIBLE ADULT**.

Additional Resource: if you undertake this learning module you will receive a "Protecting Youth Program Participants" completion certificate

<https://learn.rotary.org/members/learn/catalog?ct10=se-youth>

[1. Log in](#)

[2. 'Rotary Learning Centre'](#)

[3 'Getting Started with the Learning Centre'](#)

[4 'Protecting Youth Program Participants'](#)

