

Rotary Youth Protection Policy Summary – District 9510

Rotary District 9510 strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability Rotarians, spouses and partners and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

This Australian Youth Protection Policy Summary applies to those Rotarians, Rotaractors and non-Rotarians caring for young people who participate in Rotary Youth Programs. All adult leaders will recognize and make all reasonable efforts to accommodate youth program participants from diverse backgrounds including (but not limited to) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, other ethnic groups, those with disabilities and young people from the LGBTIQ communities. This summary is in accordance with rules and procedures set out in the Rotary International Youth Protection Guide and the expectations of our insurers. It also complies with legislative requirements common to the Australian States and Territory covered by District 9510. To participate in a Rotary youth program all participants must adhere to these requirements.

Glossary

Adult Leader	An adult over the age of 18 of sufficient maturity, training and experience to look after and guide youth program participants
Alone	In the context of this Summary 'alone' means an Adult Leader being alone with a Youth Program Participant for a period of time, such time that grooming or abuse may occur.
Child	A young person in a Rotary youth program under the age of 18 years.
RI	Rotary International
RYE	Rotary Youth Exchange
RYP	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
YPP	Any individual who is participating in a Rotary Youth Program regardless of whether he or she is of legal age of majority, also referred to in this document as child, youth, student or young person.
DIO	District Insurance Officer
DYPO	District Youth Protection Officer
WWC	The terminology used for a criminal history check. This national check effectively identifies all sexual predators who have previously been caught or suspected. (Many offenders have not been caught so will not be identified.)

1. Screening and Suitability Checks

All Rotarians will bear in mind paedophiles often appear as respectable, conscientious, hardworking people; many however are skillful at infiltrating organisations involved with young people.

- 1.1. The suitability of **all volunteers** in RYPs will be carefully **assessed in accordance with their roles** as set out in the following points.
- 1.2. Statistics tell us the **vast majority of sexual abuse cases** occur when a young victim is **alone** for a period of time with their perpetrator. As a result of this fact three key planks of District 9510 protection policy are:
 - 1.2.1. We plan our youth programs so **only those adult leaders and others that are required to be alone with our young people.**
 - 1.2.2. We train our youth program participants and our adult leaders to understand young people are very safe in groups and must **not be alone** with an unauthorised adult

Screening and Suitability Checks continued

- 1.2.3. We use only **experts in interviewing techniques** from a group selected by the District to interview those people who may be alone and their referees.
- 1.3. The small group of volunteers that require thorough checking by our nominated experts is each classified as a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER**. They are any **adult volunteer who ---**
- 1.3.1. **COULD BE ALONE WITH A YOUNG PERSON FOR A PERIOD OF TIME BEING SUCH TIME THAT MIGHT ALLOW GROOMING OR ABUSE TO OCCUR.**
- 1.3.2. may be driving a young person in a private vehicle for a period of time (See Heading 4 for specific guidance)
- 1.3.3. is a **Chair of a District** or a **standalone Club Youth Program** (a RI requirement)
- 1.3.4. in a youth program **stores personal information** about youth program participants e.g. **medical records** (a state government requirement)
- 1.4. The thorough checking of these **people involves their ---**
- 1.4.1. completing of an **Information and Declaration Form**
- 1.4.2. obtaining a **WWC** check
- 1.4.3. being **interviewed** by one of our **experts**
- 1.4.4. providing the names of **three referees** who will also be **interviewed by the same expert**
- 1.5. Only after the **expert** has carefully carried out the interviews, checked all of the above and **found the Candidate** to be a **suitable** person can they be defined as a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER** and allowed to work **alone** with a young person
- 1.6. All other members/volunteers assisting in a Rotary Youth Program are to be classified as **RESPONSIBLE ADULTS**. A **RESPONSIBLE ADULT** is an **adult in the following situations who**
- 1.6.1. in a **family or group situation** for a **short period of time** is responsible **for caring for a young Rotary applicant or participant** or is **assisting in a Rotary Youth Program**
- 1.6.2. is in a position to give or assist in giving a young person **guidance, assistance** or an **educational, cultural or recreational experience**
- 1.6.3. is responsible for the youth/student (e.g. a parent, legal guardian, program chair, adult leader) and is **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 THE SAME AGE IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES**
- 1.6.4. **may not** be required to have a **WWC check** as a **RESPONSIBLE ADULT** and does **not need** an **interview or reference checks**

It should be noted that state law changes in District 9510 make it a requirement that those **RESPONSIBLE ADULTS** working directly in Rotary youth programs also now require a **WWC** check

- 1.7. Whenever possible **two RESPONSIBLE ADULTS** should **be together with a young person** at any one time **unless more than one young person is present**.

2. General Club and District Requirements

- 2.1. It is mandatory that at the correct time during the Rotary year the various people involved in RYPs who are responsible for **completing and submitting** the required **compliance forms**, as set down in the respective program's manual(s), do so.
- 2.2. A **YP 8 Form** outlining details of any youth program or activity must be completed and emailed to the District Protection Officer for approval a minimum of **3 weeks before the event** commences. Similarly a **Risk Assessment** of the event must be carried out and the appropriate form emailed to the District Insurance Officer a minimum of **2 weeks before the event** commences.

- 2.3. All the required **Forms** must be **securely stored** in accordance with the District Policy stated on the forms and made **available only to people who are required to see them**. Copies of all the forms so labelled must be sent to the **District Protection Officer** for **document retention** purposes.
- 2.4. For insurance purposes, it is a requirement that all **Clubs complete** and return the **Club Insurance & Compliance Declaration** to their DIO by **30th April** each year.
- 2.5. All Rotary clubs will have a **Youth Protection Officer** whose duties involve **managing the club's youth protection compliance** procedures including ensuring the completion of all required protection documentation.
- 2.6. This policy and **all youth program manuals** are to be **reviewed annually** or more frequently if needed. These updates will be done by the District Protection Committee in consultation with the appropriate youth committees. Documents are to be labelled with the date of last revision and their review number.

3. Requirements Relating to Young People

- 3.1. **Young people on applying** to participate in any RYP will be **briefed on the requirements, scope and rules** relating to that program. They will also be **assessed** to ensure they are **suitable candidates**.
- 3.2. Should young people entrusted to Rotary's care whilst participating in a Rotary Youth Program have a **problem, big or small**, we must do our utmost to give them the **confidence to seek our help** knowing we will:
 - 3.2.1. **listen sympathetically**
 - 3.2.2. **respond promptly, effectively** and with **compassion**
- 3.3. Young people in RYPs will be briefed on and **given a list of responsible people and organisations** in and outside Rotary they can approach if they have an abuse or harassment issue.
- 3.4. We will stress, should they **have a problem**, they are free to approach **whichever person** on the list **they feel most comfortable talking to**.
- 3.5. A condition of joining or remaining in a RYP is that **all participants agree** to follow the **rules and instructions** relating to that program.
- 3.6. At the conclusion of a Youth Program, participants will be given the **opportunity to offer comments** about the program by way of a debrief. All comments will be **seriously considered**.
- 3.7. **Images** of young people must **not be displayed or published** without the **consent** of the **young people** and if they are underage, their **parents or guardians'** permission must also be obtained.
- 3.8. Should a Rotarian know or have a reasonable suspicion that a **child has been abused, harassed, mistreated or neglected** it is their legal obligation to **notify all appropriate state or territory authorities**. It is not a requirement to have proof or evidence as it is the role of the state authorities to investigate.

4. Transporting Young People in Rotary Programs

- 4.1. The driver must have been **fully licensed** for a minimum of one year, the vehicle **registered** and it must also carry **comprehensive third party insurance**
- 4.2. **For short Journeys** from the student's home to Rotary or around the local area the **driver must be a RESPONSIBLE ADULT**. Wherever possible a second adult should be in the car
- 4.3. For longer journeys **up to 2 hours** there must be at least **two RESPONSIBLE ADULTS** in the car with the student being in the **backseat**. One of the adults must be the **same gender as the student**
- 4.4. For **longer Journeys** the driver **must be** a **YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEER** or **alternatively** there must be **several young people in the car** with **two RESPONSIBLE ADULTS** whose **genders match** those of the **young people**
- 4.5. In an **emergency** any driver **approved by the young person's current Guardians** or their deputy may **drive the student wherever necessary** or they may be driven by ambulance. **Common sense must always prevail**.

5. Requirements Relating to Allegations of Abuse

Young people who have been abused might be mentally traumatised and find it very difficult to talk of their experience. If they are to make a full disclosure, it is critical for those they may approach to treat them with care and compassion.

- 5.1. **All adults** who Rotary recommends a young person may contact if abused will be **briefed and given the RI list of common sense responses** to follow should this happen.
- 5.2. The process following an allegation **shall be**:
 - 5.2.1. **Ensure the safety** of the young person
 - 5.2.2. **Listen attentively and sympathetically, stay calm** and when you have heard their story persuade them to **go promptly** with you **to the police** (so forensic evidence if available is not lost)
 - 5.2.3. **Notify** the District **Protection Officer** or the **District Governor**
 - 5.2.4. **Email a Rotary Youth Protection Incident Report to RI** youthprotection@rotary.org of any incident or allegation within **72 hours**.
 - 5.2.5. **Notify** insurer via **Aon**.
 - 5.2.6. **Do Not contact the accused**
 - 5.2.7. **Do Not** talk about or **tell others** about the incident
- 5.3. In all matters where the **police** are involved, **Rotary will allow them to investigate** and report.
- 5.4. Where the **police do not** wish to **investigate**, the **District Protection Committee** will conduct a **thorough investigation** using experts outside Rotary as necessary or as requested by the victim or the victim's legal guardians.

The full RI Abuse and Harassment Reporting Guidelines as adopted for District 9510 and summarized in the above clauses is available in the District 9510 Youth Protection Policy on the District website.

- 5.5. All Rotarians and those assisting in RYPs are to be **aware of behavioural and mood changes** among young people. Such changes might be the result of sexual abuse or harassment. If such changes are recognised, **investigation** of the possible cause should be **tactfully undertaken** calling upon outside professional assistance if needed.

6. Requirements Specific to Youth Exchange (YEP)

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 nobody. Assimilation to a new culture and in most instances a new or unfamiliar language requires our help and understanding.

- 6.1. RYE is a District program **administered for clubs** by the District Youth Exchange Committee.
- 6.2. The District Youth Exchange Committee is required to ensure all inbound and outbound students, inbound and outbound club counsellors, and all natural or host families involved **attend** and receive **comprehensive training**.
- 6.3. All Rotary Clubs wishing to be **involved** in either **sponsoring** or **hosting** an exchange student must **apply** to the District Youth Exchange Committee **for certification** to do so. This is done by signing and submitting the required forms declaring they are aware of and will abide by the requirements.
- 6.4. All RYE students must be given an **inbound and outbound counsellor** of the **same sex** to assist and guide them. This is a **critical role** requiring the appointment of an **experienced person**.
- 6.5. The club counsellor must **not be a host family member**.
- 6.6. All young people in RYE will **be given** and briefed on a **list** of simple, common-sense actions they can take **to keep themselves safe**.
- 6.7. It is important the **counsellors and the student** are in **regular communication** before and during their time overseas or time hosted in Australia.

- 6.8. **Specific rules** have been designed for the YE Program and it is very important these rules **are followed** by all involved.
- 6.9. RYE students are obliged to send **regular reports** to both their **host and sponsoring District Counsellors**. It is important club counsellors ensure this is done.
- 6.10. **Before a host family's appointment** is confirmed they will be **visited and briefed** in the family home by two members of the Rotary club who will ensure the family fully **understands their role** and responsibilities as host parents. The Rotarians will also ascertain that their **home is suitable**.
- 6.11. All **adult members** of the host family and the **club counsellor** must be **screened as YOUTH PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS**.
- 6.12. The club **youth exchange counsellor** will make occasional **unannounced or at-short-notice visits** to inbound exchange student's homes to check on their wellbeing.
- 6.13. The District **Youth Exchange Committee** is required by RI to have a **dedicated mobile phone** available 24 hours a day for emergency student contact.
- 6.14. The District Youth Exchange Committee is to ensure **all RYE students** have **travel insurance** in accordance with RCOP 46.060.10 **before they leave** their country of origin.

For More information refer to the following resources:

- Rotary International – Rotary Youth Protection Guide
- District 9510 Youth Protection Policy
- District 9510 Youth Exchange Manuals
- District 9510 Protecting Youth in Short Rotary Programs Manual
- Rotary National Insurance Committee
- Aon Risk Solutions
- RI Online training – Register on My Rotary – <https://learn.rotary.org/members/learn/course/422/ProtectingYouthProgramParticipants>

Document Control

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