



Youth Protection FAQ's For Clubs

Why is Youth Protection important to Rotary?

In addition to the most important answer that all Rotarians have an obligation to protect our youth, lack of attention to Youth Protection has damaged the reputation and finances of many old and venerable organizations and their members. Enforcement of Rotary's Youth Protection policies protect our youth, brand, clubs and members and must be a priority for all Rotarians. Financially, you risk losing the coverage of Rotary International's insurance if you do not follow the policies.

Are all members of my club required to be Youth Protection trained and screened?

While training is recommended for all Rotarians, it is required for those involved in youth programs and in contact with youth as part of a Rotary activity. The amount of training and screening required is based on the type and amount of contact with youth.

What are the levels of Youth Protection training & screening?

The details of required training & screening are defined on the District Youth Protection Webpage at www.njrotary.org/youthprotection. In summary:

Youth Counselor Advanced Certification is required for those Rotarians or volunteers who will have: a) direct, unsupervised contact with youth; b) direct authority over a youth program; or c) perform overnight supervision. If a Rotarian or volunteer will have any contact with youth that is not in a supervised group environment, they must have Advanced Certification. There are no exceptions to this rule. Level 1 certification requires training, application, background check and interview. Instructions are on the [Youth Protection Webpage](#) under Youth Program Training & Screening.

Youth Group Leader Basic Certification is required for those Rotarians or volunteers who have regular or significant contact with youth but only in a supervised group environment. Basic Certification requires training and application. Instructions are on the [Youth Protection Webpage](#) under Youth Program Training & Screening.

Meet and Greet Training is required for those Rotarians or volunteers who have incidental or infrequent contact with youth and only in a supervised group environment. Meet and Greet Training requires reading and adhering to the guidelines provided in District 7475 Youth Protection Guidelines in a Group Environment, which is available on the [Youth Protection Webpage](#).

Does Youth Protection training require attending in-person classes?

All Youth Protection testing is done online and can be done when convenient to the individual. Background checks are completed online. Interviews are typically done virtually using Zoom or similar program and every effort is made to make it convenient for the individual. All Youth Protection study material is available online or can be downloaded.

What is defined as contact?

Contact is in-person or virtual, *including a video meeting, telephone call, email, text message or chat room*. Any form of direct, unsupervised contact requires Advanced Certification. It is best practice to avoid such contact, including in the virtual online space. For more information regarding virtual contact read the document Rotary Electronic and Online Safety Considerations document available on the [Youth Protection Webpage](#).

What is a supervised group event?

Supervised means that there are Advanced or Basic certified Rotarians, certified volunteers or parents of the youth attendees in attendance and supervising the event.

Group means three or more people and at least two of them must be adults, including at least one with Basic Certification. Best practice is to minimize individual contact with youth and require a two-adult deep approach, with a minimum of two adults present at all times. It is recommended to have at least one certified adult for every ten young people.

My club is currently involved in the Rotary Youth Exchange program, and we are hosting foreign students. What is required?

Your club is required to have some Rotarians with Advanced Certification approved by the Eastern States Student Exchange (ESSEX) and the US Department of State (DOS). All Rotarians or volunteers in direct, unsupervised contact with such students for any reason must have Advanced Certification. You should have Rotarians with Advanced Certification of the same gender as the students you are hosting. All Youth Exchange counsellors must have Advanced Certification.

My club is currently involved in local youth activities (excluding Youth Exchange) where there is direct, unsupervised contact with youth by a Rotarian or volunteer. What is required?

Your club is required to have some Rotarians with Advanced Certification. All Rotarians or volunteers in direct, unsupervised contact with such students must have Advanced Certification. It is recommended that you have Rotarians with Advanced Certification of the same gender as the students you are working with.

My club has an Interact program. What is required?

To participate as an Interact sponsor, your club must have at least one Rotarian with Basic Certification. It is highly recommended that you have at least one female and one male Rotarian with Basic Certification. If your Interact Advisor is a school employee and certified by the school system in which the Interact club operates, they do not require additional certification. All Interact activities must be conducted in a supervised group environment. All requirements regarding direct, unsupervised contact and supervised group events apply.

My club conducts a scholarship program for local schools. Are there Youth Protection requirements?

Scholarship programs with youth recipients is a youth program and is subject to youth protection requirements. If your club interviews or meets with young people as part of your scholarship program those interviews or meetings are to be conducted in a supervised group environment. At least one Rotarian with Basic Certification is required. All other members participating must have completed Meet and Greet training.

My club manages a youth exchange program outside of Rotary. Do we need to comply with Rotary International guidelines?

Rotary International policy states that no individual Rotarian, club, or district shall undertake an alternative program structure to send minors abroad that circumvents Rotary International Youth Protection policies, the Rotary International Youth Exchange policy, or the immigration and travel policies of any nation or government.

What is the Eastern States Student Exchange (ESSEX)?

The Eastern States Student Exchange (ESSEX) is a consortium of Rotary districts that organizes Rotary Youth Exchange programs. ESSEX supports long-term and short-term exchanges in 16 states in the eastern United States, Bermuda and Quebec, Canada. ESSEX serves as a resource for outbound and inbound students, host families and hundreds of volunteers at the district and club level.

District 7475 is a member of ESSEX, and we rely on them to help manage our Youth Exchange programs. No club or district Youth Exchange program is to be run without ESSEX approval and involvement.