



## Youth Protection Guidelines in a Group Environment

This document provides guidelines for Rotarians, Rotaract members and other volunteers who have not taken Rotary International training or certification programs but may have limited contact only with youth in a Rotary group event, such as a club meeting, when certified supervision and/or parents are also present.

Even in a group and limited-contact environment, it is important for all members and volunteers to understand and adhere to the Rotary policies and basic requirements for working with youth. This is for protection of the youth, but also for your protection.

### I. Rotary International 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 Rotary members, their partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people with whom they come into contact and protect them from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.*

*All Rotarian and non-Rotarian volunteers interested in working with, participating in service projects with, or in any other way coming into contact in their capacity as a Rotarian with youth, must meet Rotary International and district eligibility requirements.*

### II. Rotary International Basic Requirements for Working with Youth

All Rotarians who will have direct, unsupervised contact in their capacity as a Rotarian with youth must meet Rotary International certification requirements, which can be found on our district website Youth Protection page at [www.njrotary.org/youthprotection](http://www.njrotary.org/youthprotection).

Those who have admitted to, have been convicted of, or are known to have engaged in sexual abuse or sexual harassment of a youth or program participant are ineligible for Rotary membership — even if these crimes were committed long ago. Any volunteer who admits to, is convicted of, or is otherwise known to have engaged in sexual abuse or sexual harassment or other act that violates the accepted standard of behavior in the community is prohibited from working with youths through Rotary.

### III. Guidelines for a Limited-Contact Group Environment

**Do not engage in verbal abuse:** Making jokes or using derogatory language about someone's age, ethnicity, race, color, abilities, religion, socioeconomic status, culture, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity is not acceptable.

**Do not discriminate:** Treating someone or a group of people unfairly or unequally based on certain characteristics like age, ethnicity, race, color, abilities, religion, socioeconomic status, culture, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity is not acceptable.

**Stay in groups:** Unsupervised contact could create an unsafe environment for youth or lead to speculation about the nature of a relationship.

**Establish and maintain boundaries:** Understand that physical contact, such as touching or hugging, may not be appropriate and youth may be reluctant to say no.

**Get consent:** Always ask for permission before you initiate any physical contact with a youth participant. Remember that consent can be revoked at any time and young people should feel that they can say no.

**Recognize and report bad behavior:** If you see an inappropriate interaction or behavior don't wait to address it. Approach the person and explain that what they did was inappropriate and report the behavior to one of the certified supervisors present.

If you have any questions regarding this document and the requirements, please contact our district Youth Protection Team at [youthprotection7475@njrotary.org](mailto:youthprotection7475@njrotary.org) prior to any Rotary event involving youth.