

ABUSE AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY, DISTRICT 6650

1. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

District 6650 is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, host families, and any other volunteers to safeguard, to the best of their ability, the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.

2. Definitions

Volunteer: Any adult involved with Rotary Youth Exchange activities who has direct interactions with students, either supervised or unsupervised. This includes, but is not limited to, club and district Youth Exchange officers and committee members, Rotarian counselors, Rotarians and non-Rotarians, their spouses and partners that host students for activities or outings or who might drive students to events or functions, host parents, and other adult residents of the host home (including siblings and other family members).

Student: Youth involved with Rotary Youth Exchange, regardless of whether they are of the age of majority.

Abuse: Treatment of someone in a manner that a reasonable person would consider harmful. This may include verbal abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, child abuse, sexual abuse, or contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor: Inducing, aiding, or encouraging a youth to violate any federal or state law, municipal or count ordinance, or court order.

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse refers to engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a student, or forcing or encouraging a student to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts, alone or with another person of any age of the same sex or the opposite sex. Additional examples of sexual abuse could include, but are not limited to: non-touching offenses; indecent exposure; exposing a student to sexual or pornographic material.

Harassment: Any act, comment, or display that, to a reasonable person, belittles, demeans, or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment, or any act of intimidation or threat. It includes conduct, gestures, display or distribution of material, jokes or communication with which the actor intends to harass, annoy, or alarm another person by reference to race, color, national origin, ethnic origin, age, sex, gender, physical characteristics, sexual orientation, marital status, or physical or mental disability.

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment refers to sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is a technique used by sexual predators to desensitize or "groom" their victims. Examples of sexual harassment could include, but are not limited to: sexual advances; sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or drawings; sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact, such as brushing or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments.

Minor: Anyone under 18 years of age.

3. Incorporation of District Youth Exchange Program and Liability Insurance

The Rotary District 6650 Youth Exchange program is incorporated as Rotary District 6650 Youth Exchange Program, Inc. and is incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio. The Rotary District 6650 Youth Exchange Program is covered by the United States Rotary International Club and District General Liability Insurance Policy.

4. Volunteer Selection and Screening

District 6650 will maintain all records of criminal background checks, waivers, and screening for adults working with minors, for a minimum period of three (3) years.

All volunteers interested in participating in the District 6650 Youth Exchange program must:

- A. Complete a *Volunteer Application – Background Check and Waiver* at District 6650's Youth Exchange website.
- B. Meet RI and district eligibility requirements for working with students. RI requires that any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment be prohibited from working with youth in a Rotary context. If an individual is accused of sexual abuse or harassment, and the investigation into the claim is inconclusive, then, for the safety of youth participants and the protection of the accused, additional safeguards must be put in place to assure the protection of any youth with whom the individual may have future contact. A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated to participate in youth programs. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his or her former position.
- C. Understand and comply with RI and district guidelines for the Youth Exchange program.

Host families must meet the following selection and screening requirements, in addition to those listed above.

- A. Host families must undergo a comprehensive interview that determines their suitability for hosting exchange students. This should include:
- B. Demonstrated commitment to the safety and security of students.
- C. Motivation for hosting a student is consistent with Rotary ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange.
- D. Financial ability to provide adequate accommodations (room and board) for the student.
- E. Aptitude for providing appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student's well-being.
- F. Host families must complete an online application at District 6650's Rotary Youth Exchange website.
- G. Home visits must be conducted for each family and should include both announced and unannounced visits, both prior to and during the placement. Home visits must be conducted annually, even for repeat host families.
- H. All adults, 18 years of age or older, who are residents of the host home must meet the selection and screening guidelines.
- I. This includes adult children of the host family and other members of the extended family that reside in the home either on a full- or part-time basis.

Rotarian counselors must meet the criteria for *All Volunteers*, as well as the following:

- A. Counselors must not be a member of the student's host family.

- B. Counselors should not be close friends or relatives to other volunteers involved with a particular student (i.e., school principal, host family, etc.).
- C. Counselors must be trained in responding to any problems or concerns which may arise during the exchange, which may include instances of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment.

5. **Student Selection and Screening**

All students interested in participating in the District 6650 Youth Exchange Program must:

- A. Complete a *Long-Term Application* found online at District 6650's Youth Exchange website.
- B. Attend and participate in all district orientation and training sessions.

All parents or legal guardians of students interested in participating in the District 6650 Youth Exchange program must:

- Be interviewed to determine the student's suitability for participation in the Youth Exchange program.

6. **Training**

District 6650 will provide abuse and harassment prevention training to all Youth Exchange program participants. The Youth Exchange Chair will conduct the training sessions.

District 6650 will:

- A. Adapt the *Abuse and Harassment Prevention Training Manual* to include relevant information on specific district guidelines, local customs, cultural issues, and legal requirements.
- B. Conduct annual specialized training sessions for the following Youth Exchange program participants: District Governor; District Youth Exchange committee members; Club Youth Exchange committee members; Rotarian counselors; Other Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in Youth Exchange activities, such as local tours or district events; Host families; Students (outbound and inbound); Parents and legal guardians of students.
- C. Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance.

7. **Allegation Reporting Guidelines**

District 6650 is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of Youth Exchange students and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled in accord with the *Youth Exchange Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines*, found in *Appendix A*.

8. **Investigation Guidelines**

District 6650 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will investigate each allegation thoroughly. The district will cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective services, and legal investigations, and will only conduct its own independent investigations such that it does not interfere with other investigations.

9. Other District 6650 Responsibilities

District 6650:

- A. Have procedures for reporting, investigating, and proper handling of non-criminal offenses or historic cases that law enforcement will not investigate.
- B. Require that all inbound Youth Exchange students maintain insurance that meets the requirements of Rotary International.
- C. Provides each student with a list of local services in the district (rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.).
- D. Will complete a student data request form for all participating Youth Exchange students and return it to RI one month before the beginning of the exchange.
- E. Will follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange websites and usage of the Rotary Marks.
- F. Will appoint an independent lawyer, therapist, or counselor to represent any alleged victim in cases of sexual abuse and harassment.
- G. Will report all criminal allegations to RI and the Department of State within 72 hours.
- H. Will report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to RI and the Department of State within 72 hours.
- I. Evaluate and review this policy and accompanying procedures on a regular basis.

10. Club Compliance

District 6650 will monitor and ensure that all participating clubs within the district comply with RI guidelines for abuse and harassment prevention.

Participating clubs must agree to:

- A. Complete and return a signed compliance statement that the club is operating their program in accordance with District 6650 and RI policy.
- B. Conduct criminal background checks and reference checks for all volunteers involved with the program, including, but not limited to adult full-time residents of host home, counselor, club chair, and all Rotarians and their spouses or partners with direct unsupervised contact. All volunteers must complete the *Volunteer Application – Background Check and Waiver* at <https://6650yep.volunteerportal.net>.
- C. Develop a comprehensive system for host family selection and screening that includes announced and unannounced home visits and interviews both prior to and during the placement.
- D. Conduct follow-up evaluations of both students and host families.
- E. Follow the *Youth Exchange Abuse and Harassment Reporting Guidelines* found in Appendix A. Report appropriate cases of abuse or harassment to the law enforcement authorities immediately and then to the club and district leadership for investigation.
- F. Prohibit direct placement of students outside of the District 6650 Youth Exchange program structure.
- G. Ensure that all hosting is voluntary. Parents of outbound students and club members must not be required to host students.
- H. Provide each student with a comprehensive local services list.
- I. Ensure that the host counselor for each student is not a member of the student's host family.

- J. Ensure that the host counselor is prepared to respond to any problems or concerns that may arise during the exchange, including the prevention of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse or harassment.
- K. Provide mandatory training on sexual abuse and harassment prevention for host families, outbound students, inbound students, and their parents or legal guardians.
- L. Provide the names and contact information of the District Youth Protection Committee to contact for assistance with any issues or problems to all Youth Exchange students.
- M. Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange websites and usage of the Rotary Marks.
- N. Report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to the district immediately.
- O. Conduct interviews of all outbound applicants and applicants' parents or legal guardians.

Adopted this 3rd day of September, 2014.

District 6650 Rotary Youth Exchange Program, Inc. Bill Wood and Aletha Carver, Youth Exchange Co-Chairs

APPENDIX A

YOUTH EXCHANGE ABUSE AND HARASSMENT ALLEGATION REPORTING GUIDELINES

Introduction

The most powerful force in the promotion of international understanding and peace is exposure to different cultures. Youth Exchange provides thousands of young people with the opportunity to meet people from other lands and to experience their cultures. A Youth Exchange student will spend a year, or perhaps just an extended period of time, living with a host family in a country other than their own. Rotarians, their families, and non-Rotarian volunteers are expected to use their best efforts to safeguard the welfare of and prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment of every student with whom they come into contact. Rotary International is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of Youth Exchange students and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled within the following guidelines. **The safety and well-being of students should always be the first priority.**

Definitions

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse refers to engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a student, or forcing or encouraging a student to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts alone or with another person of any age, of the same sex or the opposite sex. Additional examples of sexual abuse could include, but are not limited to: Non-touching offenses; Indecent exposure; Exposing a child to sexual or pornographic material.

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment refers to sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is a technique used by sexual predators to desensitize or “groom” their victims. Examples of sexual harassment could include, but are not limited to: Sexual advances; Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one’s sex life, and comments about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess; Verbal abuse of a sexual nature; Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or drawings; Sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact such as brushing or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments.

Is it Abuse or is it Harassment?

Whether the alleged conduct amounts to sexual abuse or sexual harassment is not to be determined by the adult to whom allegations are made. After ensuring the safety of the student, all allegations should be immediately reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities. In some countries, this reporting is required by law.

Allegation Reporting Guidelines

For use by all adults to whom a student reports an incident of abuse or harassment

Any adult to whom a student reports an incident of sexual abuse or harassment is responsible for following these *Allegation Reporting Guidelines*.

1. Report from Student

- A. **Listen attentively and stay calm.** Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse. It is appropriate to listen and be encouraging. Do not express shock, horror, or disbelief.
- B. **Assure privacy but not confidentiality.** Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse/harassment to make it stop and to ensure that it doesn't happen to other students.
- C. **Get the facts, but don't interrogate.** Ask the student questions that establish what was done and who did it. Reassure the student that she/he did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking "why" questions. Remember, your responsibility is to present the student's story to the proper authorities.
- D. **Be non-judgmental and reassure the student.** Do not be critical of anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It is especially important not to blame or criticize the student. Assure the student that the situation was not their fault and that they were brave and mature to come to you.
- E. **Record.** Keep a written record of the conversation with the student as soon after the report as you can, including the date and time of the conversation. Use the student's words, and record only what has been told to you.

2. Protect the Student

Ensure the safety and well-being of the student. Remove the student from the situation immediately and all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. Give reassurance that this is for the student's own safety and is not a punishment.

3. Report to Appropriate Law Enforcement Authorities

Immediately report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment to the appropriate law enforcement authorities first and then to the club and district leadership for investigation. In most situations, the first Rotary contact is the Rotarian counselor who has responsibility for seeking the advice of and interacting with appropriate agencies. If the allegation involves the conduct of the Rotarian counselor, the District Youth Exchange Chair should be contacted. All allegations must be reported to RI and the Department of State within 72 hours; the person responsible for doing so is the District Youth Exchange Chair.

District 6650 will cooperate with police or legal investigations.

4. Avoid Gossip and Blame

Do not tell anyone about the report other than those required by the guidelines. Care must be taken to protect the rights of both the victim and the accused during the investigation.

5. Do Not Challenge the Alleged Offender

The adult to whom the student reports must not contact the alleged offender. In cases of abuse, interrogation must be left entirely to law enforcement authorities. *In cases of non-criminal harassment, the District Youth Exchange Chair and District Governor are responsible for investigating and will be in contact with the alleged offender after the student has been moved to a safe environment.*

6. Follow Up

After reporting allegations to the Rotarian counselor or District Youth Exchange Chair, follow up to make sure steps are being taken to address the situation. Specifically, District 6650 will conduct an independent and thorough investigation into any claims of sexual abuse or harassment. Any adult against whom an

allegation of sexual abuse or harassment is made will be removed from all contact with youth until the matter is resolved.

Post Report Procedures

For Use by Rotarian Counselors and District Youth Exchange Chairs

The student's Rotarian counselor and the District Youth Exchange Chair are responsible for ensuring that the following steps are taken immediately following an abuse allegation is reported.

1. The adult to whom the student reports the abuse should follow the *Allegation Reporting Guidelines*.
2. Confirm that the student has been removed from the situation immediately and all contact with alleged abuser or harasser.
3. Contact appropriate law enforcement agency immediately (if not already done). If law enforcement agencies will not investigate, the club or District Youth Exchange Chair should coordinate an independent investigation into the allegations.
4. Ensure the student receives immediate support services.
5. Offer the student an independent, non-Rotarian counselor to represent the interests of the student. Ask social services or law enforcement to recommend someone who is not a Rotarian or in any way involved with the Youth Exchange program.
6. Contact the student's parents or legal guardian. If away from home, provide the student with the option of either staying in the country or returning home.
7. Remove alleged abuser or harasser from all contact with the specific student and other youth while investigations are conducted.
8. Cooperate with the police or legal investigation.
9. The student's Rotarian Counselor should inform the District Youth Exchange Chair, the District Governor, and the Department of State about the allegation. Either the District Governor or the District Youth Exchange Chair must inform Rotary International of the allegation within 72 hours and provide follow-up reports of steps taken, the outcome of all investigations, and resulting actions.

Post Allegation Report Guidelines

Responding to the Needs of the Student

There will need to be a cohesive and managed team approach to supporting the student after an allegation report. The student is likely to feel embarrassed, confused, and may become withdrawn and appear to be avoiding members of the host family or club. After a report of harassment or abuse, students may or may not want to remain on their exchange. If they do, they may or may not want to continue their relationship with their hosting Rotary club depending on the circumstances. In some cases, a student may wish to remain in the country but change to a different host club. It may be difficult for club members and host families to understand how the student is feeling, but it would be helpful for the student to know that the club remains a support for them. Club members and host families may experience ambiguity toward their roles and may feel unclear regarding their boundaries. However, they need to do whatever is necessary to reassure the student of their support at all times.

Appropriate Response for Addressing Issues Within the Rotary Club for Allegations Made Against Rotarians or Non-Rotarians

When addressing an allegation of abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of the students. Club members should not speculate, make editorial comments, or offer personal opinions that could potentially hinder any police or criminal investigations. Club members should be cautioned about speculating or commenting on the matter during the investigations. Comments made about alleged victims in support of alleged abusers do not support our statement of conduct or Rotary ideals. Comments made against an alleged abuser could lead to a slander or libel claim filed against Rotarians or clubs by the alleged abuser. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth Rotary International is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.

DISTRICT 6650 YOUTH PROTECTION COMMITTEE

The District Governor appoints a District Youth Prevention Committee to be responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this policy and for the investigation of complaints. The District's Youth Protection Committee is comprised of Rotarian and non-Rotarians.

The members of the Youth Protection Committee are:

Dan Fuline (Chair and Rotarian) is a member of the Canton Rotary Club and Chair of the Youth Protection Committee for our District. He is CEO of Community Services of Stark County, a mental health and social service agency. Prior to working at Community Services, he was the Branch Director of the Barberton Child Guidance Center and worked with youth and families along with administrative duties. Prior to Graduate School, he was a caseworker with Children Services Board in Youngstown for two years. Dan is a Licensed Independent Social Worker with Supervisor Rights, belongs to the Academy of Certified Social Workers, and holds a Diplomate in Clinical Social Work.

Email: danjfu@aol.com

Home: (330) 875-6692

Work: (330) 455-0374

Cell: (330) 806-4792

Tina Dillworth is a non-Rotarian member of the committee. She was a child abuse investigator for nine years for Columbiana County before heading into law enforcement. She has been a criminal investigator for the past 15 years with Columbiana County Prosecutor's Office working on violent crimes, including child deaths and sexual abuse of kids and adults.

Email: svalpacas@hotmail.com

Home: (330) 426-1134

Cell: (330) 831-2495

Susan Hays is a non-Rotarian member of the committee. An attorney by training, she has worked in the field of youth and families for over 30 years. She is a past Guardian Ad Litem for Stark County; member of the Ohio Taskforce that drafted rules for youthful sex offenders in Ohio to meet the Adam Walsh Act; has been a mediator for Ohio Legal Rights; and, has been a consultant in 72 of Ohio's 88 counties on services for youth in mental health, juvenile justice, child welfare and education.

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The three members of the committee bring a wealth of professional experience and commitment to youth in our state. Each of them is required, by law, to report to the appropriate authorities any and all suspected abuse and/or neglect of youth residing in Ohio.

District 6650 Sexual Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy has four purposes:

1. To protect the welfare of participants in District 6650 programs (Youth Exchange, Interact, and RYLA);
2. To provide a vehicle for participants to report and address complaints of abuse or harassment;
3. To protect Rotarians, volunteers, and staff within these programs;
4. To foster and promote the continued successful development and progress of these programs.

ALL allegations will be treated seriously and need to be reported to the Youth Protection Committee. If you feel that a violation has occurred, you may contact your local Club Counselor or contact one of us on the committee directly.

Exchange students need to understand the customs of the country.

1. **Own private space concept in USA versus other countries.** When this area is invaded, it can make the individual feel uncomfortable or create a false belief that more personal interest is being presented to them.
2. **Mode of dress.** Be aware of your mode of dress. You do not want to send the wrong message by your appearance.
3. **Internet safety.** Protect your identity on the Internet and be cautious of what you post on Facebook.
4. **Cell phone safety.** Do not take pictures on a cell phone which are personal in nature (i.e. no sexting).

Each student should have a list of rules they are to follow in their host family's home, including riding in cars, time for curfew, and contact information that they can give out regarding address, phone, etc. to new friends.

The age of consent in Ohio is 13. Anyone who is under 13 who has sex with an individual 4 years of age or older (by exact birthday) = RAPE, even if the youth/"victim" verbally consents.

Ages 13-15 (up until 16th birthday) is considered Unlawful Sexual Conduct with a minor. This is still a felony charge against the perpetrator if he or she is over 4 years older than the other person.

Consent is not possible by a youth under the age of 16. It is a felony crime with a possible prison sentence in Ohio and/or deportation.

BEST POLICY:

- ✓ Do NOT engage in a sexual relationship while in the USA. (It is against Youth Exchange policies and could result in arrest or early deportation.)
- ✓ Do NOT hang out with youth younger than you.