

# YOUNG PEOPLE FIRST

## Child Protection – A code of good practice

*It is the policy of The Scout Association to safeguard the welfare of all Members by protecting them from neglect and from physical, sexual and emotional harm.*

**For all adults in Scouting (aged 18 and over)**  
**Essential information – keep it with you.**



Fourth edition  
© The Scout Association 2010

### **What happens if...?**

If you suspect abuse, a young person confides in you, or a complaint is made about any adult or about yourself, it is your duty to report the concern.

#### **If a young person tells you about abuse by someone else:**

1. Allow the young person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said
2. Offer immediate understanding and reassurance, while passing no judgement
3. Advise that you will try to offer support but that you must pass the information on
4. Immediately tell your Group Scout Leader or District Commissioner
5. Write careful notes of what was said; use actual words wherever possible
6. Sign, date and pass your notes to your District Commissioner
7. Ensure that no Scouting situation arises which could cause any further concern

*Note: In an emergency (young person at imminent risk of significant harm) contact police or social service/work department direct. Inform your District Commissioner of the action you have taken.*

*Continued...*

#### **If you have a concern about a young person's safety and well being:**

1. Immediately tell your Group Scout Leader or District Commissioner
2. Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or was told
3. Sign, date and pass your notes to your District Commissioner
4. Ensure that no Scouting situation arises which could cause any further concern

#### **If you receive a complaint or allegation about any adult or about yourself:**

1. Immediately tell your Group Scout Leader or District Commissioner
2. Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or was told
3. Sign, date and pass your notes to your District Commissioner
4. Try to ensure no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise

*Note: Any adult in Scouting has the right to report any concerns, or suspicions about another Member in confidence and free from harassment.*

**You must refer; you must not investigate.**

*If in any doubt about policy or procedure please contact the Scout Information Centre on **0845 300 1818***

[www.scouts.org.uk/childprotection](http://www.scouts.org.uk/childprotection)

## Code of behaviour

- DO** put this code into practice at all times
  - DO** treat everyone with dignity and respect
  - DO** set an example you would wish others to follow
  - DO** treat all young people equally – show no favouritism
  - DO** plan activities that involve more than one other person being present, or at least are within sight and hearing of others
  - DO** follow the recommended adult/young people ratios for meetings and activities
  - DO** respect a young person's right to personal privacy
  - DO** avoid unacceptable situations within a relationship of trust e.g. a sexual relationship with a youth Member over the age of consent
  - DO** have separate sleeping accommodation for young people, adults and Young Leaders working with a younger section
  - DO** allow young people to talk about any concerns they may have
  - DO** encourage others to challenge any attitudes or behaviours they do not like
  - DO** avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour e.g. tantrums and crushes
  - DO** ensure a no alcohol policy when young people are in your care – adults and young people
  - DO** make everyone aware of the Association's child protection procedures – young people, parents/carers, Young Leaders and other helpers
  - DO** remember this code even at sensitive moments e.g. when responding to bullying, bereavement or abuse
  - DO** keep other leaders informed of where you are and what you are doing
  - DO** remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
  - DO** take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately
- 
- DO NOT** trivialise abuse
  - DO NOT** form a relationship with a young person that is an abuse of trust
  - DO NOT** permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying
  - DO NOT** engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact – physical, verbal, sexual
  - DO NOT** play physical contact games with young people
  - DO NOT** make suggestive remarks or threats to a young person, even in fun
  - DO NOT** use inappropriate language – writing, phoning, email or internet
  - DO NOT** let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported
  - DO NOT** just rely on your good name to protect you