

Youth Protection in Scouting

During the past few weeks, alleged youth protection incidents related to youth sports programs on college campuses have heightened awareness and concern for the protection of children.

Boy Scouts of America (BSA) places great importance on creating a safe and secure environment for its youth members. Scouting helps ensure such an environment through a wide range of youth protection and leadership selection policies, as well as providing parents, youth and leaders with many online and print resources for Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting and Venturing programs.

Some of the measures Scouting has in place to help protect its youth members from abuse include:

- Requiring all volunteers, leaders, and staff undergo a criminal background check as part of the application process
- Requiring references for all volunteer applicants
- Requiring that volunteer leader applications be reviewed and approved by the chartering organization (church, school, etc.)
- Creating barriers to abuse like two-deep leadership (two leaders always present with youth) and separate youth and adult shower facilities at camp
- Requiring youth protection training for all staff and registered volunteers
- Providing youth protection information in Scouting program materials and online training for youth members and their parents or guardians
- Teaching youth members to **Recognize, Resist, and Report** any inappropriate behaviors
- Requiring prompt reporting and swift action

Since youth protection is a responsibility of everyone in Scouting, Minsi Trails Council would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of the appropriate process to follow in instances where abuse or neglect of youth is suspected.

The Guide to Safe Scouting states:

“All persons involved in Scouting shall report to local authorities any good faith suspicion or belief that any child is, or has been physically or sexually abused, physically or emotionally neglected, exposed to any form of violence or threat, exposed to any form of sexual exploitation including the possession, manufacture, or distribution of child pornography, online solicitation, enticement, or showing of obscene material. **No person may abdicate this reporting responsibility to any other person.**”

“Notify your Scout Executive of this report, or any violation of BSA’s Youth Protection policies, so that he or she may take appropriate action for the safety of our Scouts, make appropriate notifications, and follow-up with investigating agencies.”

Additional information regarding youth protection may be obtained through the online youth protection training offered at MyScouting.org, via the Boy Scouts of America website located at www.scouting.org/bsayouthprotection in addition to being available on the minsitrails.com website. Specific questions or concerns related to youth protection in Minsi Trails Council may be directed to Scout Executive, Craig Poland, at 610-465-8554 or craig.poland@scouting.org.