

Scouting Ireland Code of Good Practice



Foreword

Scouting is a Movement of Young People, which helps them to achieve their full potential through a programme based on fun, friendship, challenge, and adventure.

Young People in Scouting are supported, encouraged and lead by adult volunteers, all of whom understand the responsibility and trust placed in them by parents and guardians.

The encouragement of self-awareness in its members, as individuals and as members of Groups, is fundamental to Scouting. A natural result of this should be that an environment is created where all our members, regardless of age, feel comfortable in expressing their concerns or criticisms and in having those concerns or criticisms dealt with in a clear and structured way.

Scouters, parents and professionals have developed this Code of Good Practice to support a wholesome environment where young people and adults can participate in their Scouting activities in a manner that is safe, secure and enjoyable for all.

Purpose statement

Scouting Ireland has an obligation to all its members to provide an environment within which Scouting activities can be enjoyed in a safe, nondiscriminatory and respectful manner.

The purpose of the Code of Good Practice is to provide a common understanding within the Association of the behaviours and practices expected of adults involved in Scouting and to inform parents of these behaviours and practices.

Objectives

- I. That every Scouter and adult member of Scouting Ireland can be made aware of their responsibilities towards children in their care
- II. That all Scouters and youth members be made aware of their responsibilities to each other
- III. That good behaviour will be encouraged through self-discipline, respect for others and for property, in accordance with the Scout Law
- IV. That best practice in leadership skills and behaviours is maintained and implemented in Scouting Ireland
- V. That all Scouting activities will be run safely and in accordance with the appropriate guidelines.

Commitment

When applying for membership of Scouting Ireland adults should declare that they have read, understood and will implement the Code of Good Practice.

Each Group Council, Scout County Board should at their respective Annual General Meeting discuss this Code of Good Practice, reaffirm their commitment to its implementation and will forward any concerns or suggestions to the National Management Committee.

All Committees or Teams proposing new policies, procedures or programme will confirm that these comply with this Code of Good Practice and the Association's Child Protection Policy.

The Code of Good Practice will be reviewed annually by the National Management Committee to ensure fitness for purpose and to take best practice into account as it emerges.

Foreword

This handbook is an official document of Scouting Ireland

SID 39/05



Glossary

Adult Member	For the purposes of this code, an 'adult member' is any member who is not a child, including Scouters, associated members, supporters and friends groups and honorary members.
The Association	Scouting Ireland.
Child	For the purposes of this code, a 'child' means anyone who is under 18 years of age. In Ireland, the Child Care Act (1991) and the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (2003) define a child as any person under the age of 18 years, excluding a person who is or who has been married.
Child Protection Officer	The Child Protection Officer (CPO) is the title given to the designated person in the Association appointed to respond to child protection concerns reported by volunteers, employees or young people or others.
Employees	Paid staff of Scouting Ireland or subsidiary companies of Scouting Ireland.
Scouter	A Scouter is a uniformed adult member who delivers the Youth Programme of Scouting Ireland or who holds an Appointment. All Scouters make the commitment to the Scout Promise.
Scout or Rover	A Scout is a uniformed youth member who receives the Youth Programme of Scouting Ireland. All Scouts make the commitment of the Scout Promise
Statutory Authorities	These are An Garda Síochána, Police Service of Northern Ireland, the TUSLA (Child and Family Agency) and the Health and Social Services Trusts (NI). They are obliged under the law to investigate and assess in child abuse cases.
Statutory Guidelines:	<p>Children First – National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011</p> <p>Code of Good Practice - Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector, 2nd Edition May 2003</p> <p>Our Duty to Care Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport, 2003</p> <p>NI: Co-operating to Safeguard Children, May 2003</p> <p>Standards for Protecting and Safeguarding Children in Sport, January 2003</p> <p>Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (2003)</p> <p>Safer Organisations: Safer Children, October 2002</p>
Volunteers	Unpaid voluntary workers in the Association

Contents

Foreword	1	
Glossary	2	
Code of Good Practice Purpose Statement	5	
· Aim of Scouting Ireland		
· Scout Method		
· Child Protection Policy Statement		
· Responsibilities within the Child Protection Policy		
· Equality Statement		
· Youth Participation		
Best Practice for Scouters	7	
· General Principles	7	
· Code of Behaviour	7	
· 7 points of Behavioural Awareness	8	
· Do's and Don'ts	9	
· Youth – Youth Relationships	10	
· Substance Abuse	10	
· Communications	11	
· Dealing with challenging and disruptive behaviour	12	
· Scouting Safely	13	
· Camping and overnight activities	14	
· Use of technology	15	
· Photographs and images	17	
APPENDICES		
Appendix 1	Recognising Child Abuse and Responding to Disclosure	19
·	Categories of child abuse	19
·	Reasonable grounds for concern	20
·	How to respond to disclosure	21
·	Other forms of unacceptable behaviour	22
Appendix 2	Reporting procedure overview	23
	Child Protection Reporting Procedure	24
	Reporting procedure where concern is raised or an allegation is made against a volunteer / staff member	25
·		
Appendix 3	Scouting Ireland Child Protection Record Form	28
Appendix 4	Recruitment and induction	29
Appendix 5	Bullying and How to Respond	31
Appendix 6	What Rights do Children Have?	35
Appendix 7	Scouting Ireland Accident/Incident Report Form	36
Appendix 8	Notice for Display in Scout Dens	37
Appendix 9	List of relevant web sites, publications and legislation	38

Scouting Ireland would like to acknowledge the contribution, support and guidance of all those involved in the compilation of this Code of Good Practice and its annual updates.

Sheehan and Co. Solicitors.

Citizens Advice Bureau Belfast.

Mary Tallon, Jan Perrin - South Western Area, Health Service Executive.

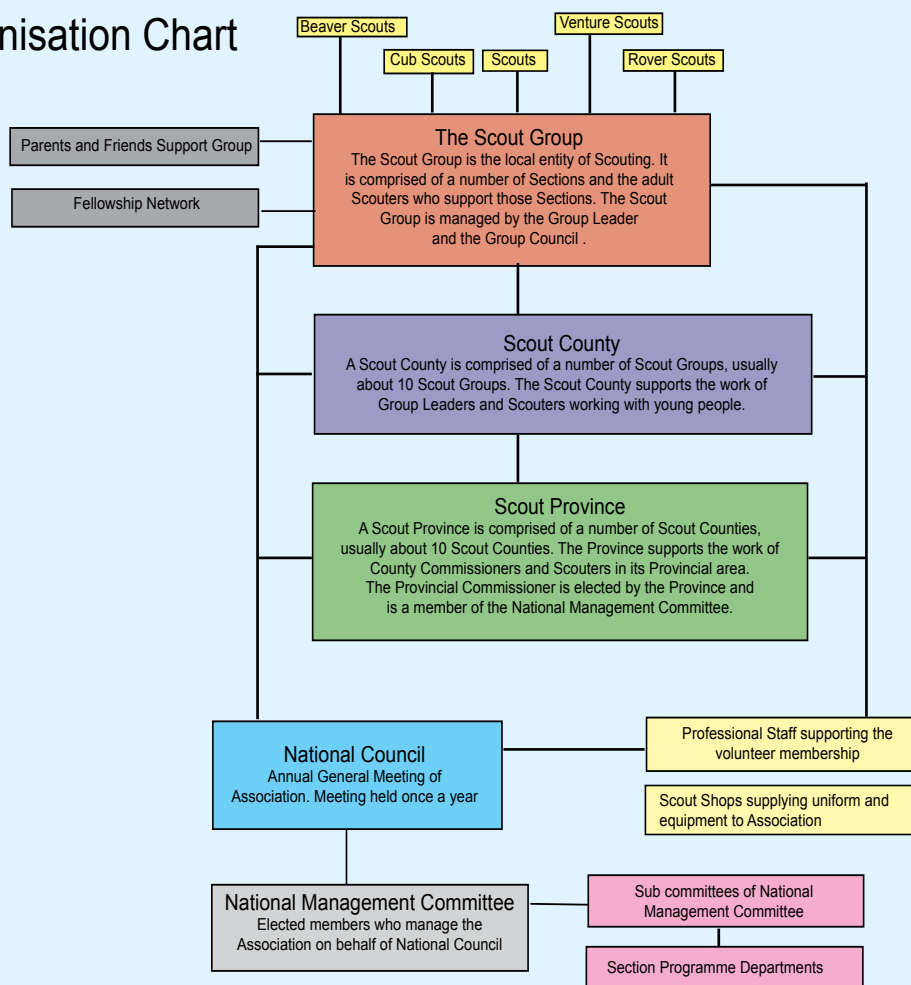
Design and layout
Colm Kavanagh, Support Officer.

This document is assigned the Scouting Ireland Policy Document Code SID 39/05.

Scouting Ireland wishes to acknowledge the support and assistance received from the Department of Education and Science - Youth Affairs Section under the National Development Plan 2003-2006. We would also like to acknowledge the support it received from the Irish Youth Foundation



Organisation Chart



Scouting Ireland Child Protection Statement

The welfare and safety of its youth members is the foremost priority of Scouting Ireland. Our Scouters should endeavour to ensure that children and young people are protected and kept safe from harm while taking part in the programmes of Scouting. In law a child is defined as someone under the age of 18 years, who is not or has never been married (Child Care Act 1991, Children Order 1995) . Scouting Ireland's Code of Good Practice and Child Protection Policy are designed to protect children and young people from neglect, physical, sexual and emotional harm or abuse.

Scouting Ireland provides its Scouters with information to help them understand the various categories of child abuse, what situations might constitute reasonable grounds for concern and advice on how to respond to disclosure. Other forms of unacceptable behaviour and the Child Protection Reporting Procedure are outlined in Appendices 1 and 2 of this document.

Scouting Ireland's Code of Good Practice is based on and consistent with the current child protection guidelines and legislation in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland. Scouting Ireland is committed to listening to children and young people and recognises that "each child has a right to express his or her opinion freely and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure" (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, see Appendix 6). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child should be respected in all aspects of Scouting.

Scouting Ireland has a procedure for screening adults who apply for membership of the Association and re-vetting every 3-5 years or as required. This procedure is subject to regular review to ensure compliance with best practice and statutory requirements . Scouting Ireland requires its adult members to attend specified training courses, which include child protection modules, relevant to the Appointment they wish to hold and to commit to future training as may be required.

Scouting Ireland provides training which it is hoped assists its adult members on familiarity with the recognition of child abuse, how to respond to disclosures made to them by a young person, and how to report such disclosures in accordance with the Association's procedures.

Information on Child Abuse, How to respond to a Disclosure and Scouting Ireland's Reporting Procedures are set out in Appendix 3

'The Aim of Scouting Ireland is to encourage the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development of young people so that they may achieve their full potential and as responsible citizens, to improve society.

Aim of Scouting Ireland



'The Aim of Scouting Ireland is to encourage the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development of young people so that they may achieve their full potential and as responsible citizens, to improve society.

The Scout Method

Scouting Ireland achieves its Aim through a system of progressive self-education, known as the "Scout Method", the principal elements of which are:

- Voluntary membership of a small group, guided by adults, that is increasingly self-governing in its successive age groups.
- Commitment to a code of living as expressed in the Scout Promise and the Scout Law, the meaning of which is expanded as the member grows towards maturity.
- The provision of a wide range of attractive, constructive and challenging activities, including opportunities for adventure and exploration both indoors and outdoors.
- The provision of opportunities for leadership and responsibility.
- Learning by doing.
- Encouragement of activity in small groups.
- An award scheme, that encourages participation in its full range of activities and provides recognition of individual and group achievements.

The Scout Method is used and the programme delivered on an age-appropriate basis. The programme age structure ensures the young members can achieve the challenges of the programme without placing themselves in a position that is beyond their abilities.

Scouters should ensure that the young members' age, abilities and potentials are measured against the event or activity, allowing the young member to operate in a safe and secure environment.



Responsibilities within the Child Protection Policy

All members of Scouting Ireland are responsible for the implementation of the Child Protection Policy, however there is a particular onus on adults to do so.



It is the responsibility of all such adults to ensure that:

- ☐ their behaviour is appropriate at all times;
- ☐ they observe the guidelines established for the safety and security of young people;
- ☐ they follow the reporting procedures as outlined in Appendix 2 following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse;
- ☐ they recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed and maintain a policy of transparency with the members of Scouting Ireland and their parents / guardians.

In law a child is defined as someone under the age of 18 years, who is not or has never been married (Child Care Act 1991, Children Order 1995)

Equality Statement SID 103/13

Scouting Ireland respects and values the diversity of its members and of society. It is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, on grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, political opinion, disability, age, race or ethnic origin, and membership of the traveller community. Scouting Ireland is committed to treating all members in an equitable and fair manner. Members with disabilities should be involved in Scouting activities in an integrated way, thus allowing them to participate to their potential alongside others. Refer to Special Needs Booklet this can be accessed on our website www.scouts.ie

Youth Participation

Scouting Ireland promotes the concept of meaningful youth participation in the programme and life of the Association at all levels. For further information, please see our Youth Programme policy SID 14/03

The partnership of the Scouter and youth member is a key success factor in the implementation of meaningful youth participation. The Scouter brings to the partnership much experience, which is matched by the youth members' enthusiasm, resulting in a more balanced overall partnership.

Youth members are encouraged to participate in the running of the Association at all levels - Section, Group, County, Provincial and National. Scouting Ireland recognises that it is not sufficient just to let youth members express their opinions but that they are encouraged to participate fully in decision-making and in the running of the Association.

Scouting Ireland recognises that young people need support to get fully involved and to contribute to the running of the Association; they require help to cope with what may be perceived as awesome structures and procedures. Scouting Ireland envisages that this will result in its youth members not only contributing to the Association, its Aim and principles but also in their development and training for effective and constructive participation in society.



Best practice for Scouters

Central to the Scouting method is the notion that young people naturally form groups and from within these groups emerges a leader for the group. So why do we have adult Scouters?

Adult Scouters are involved to support young people to take responsibility appropriate to their age in the running of the Section. It is the Scouter's responsibility to guide and help them to take up these responsibilities. This can be a challenging and fulfilling role providing a wonderful opportunity to positively contribute to the overall development of the young person.

Involvement in Scouting as a Scouter, should be part of a broader healthy adult lifestyle that balances commitments to one's personal/family/work life, and Scouting. Such a lifestyle should include social engagement with adults of one's own age so that Scouting does not dominate your life. (see Whole Health Booklet)

As an adult Scouter some behavioural limits are different from those outside of Scouting e.g. some language that is acceptable in a workplace would not be acceptable within a group of young people. Appropriate behaviour between adults and young people is determined by society and as a Scouter one must be seen to act appropriately at all times.

Scouting enjoys widespread respect in the community because of its positive contribution to the lives of young people. It is important that this respect is maintained by exercising the correct personal behaviour that society expects of adults working with young people.

General Principles

By their behaviour Scouters should ensure that at all times they:

- ☐ Are capable of fulfilling their responsibilities to provide a safe secure environment for the young people in their care
- ☐ Do provide a safe and secure environment for young people to enjoy and benefit from Scouting

Scouters should be familiar with the various forms of child abuse, and know how to respond to a disclosure made to them. Scouters have a duty to bring any child protection concerns to the attention of the Association's Child Protection Officer and should be aware of the Association's Reporting Procedures [Information on recognising child abuse and its various forms is set out in Appendix 1; Scouting Ireland's Reporting Procedure is set out in Appendix 2].

Adults by their example should be a positive influence on the behaviour of young people in respecting themselves, other Scouters, parents and youth members and the property of themselves and others.

Youth members should treat their Scouters with dignity and respect, recognising the time and input that is being contributed to their personal development. Please refer to National Youth Programme Committee guidelines. Scout Groups should consider drawing up a Code of for their Programme Sections in conjunction with the youth members of those Sections.

A Code of Behaviour

Actions such as comforting a distressed child should be guided by the needs of the child. Scouters need to be aware that particular actions if taken out of context could be negatively interpreted and may allow unfounded accusations of impropriety to be raised against a Scouter

Scouters need to be aware of the dangers of a too casual and unthinking familiarity with the young people in their charge and ensure that their attitudes and actions will at all times:

- ☐ Never lead to a betrayal of the trust of young people, parents and fellow Scouters.
- ☐ Never impart inappropriate knowledge or interact with a child in a manner that is unwanted and will result in hurt to the child.
- ☐ Never seek to control and create dependence in a child.
- ☐ Respect the personal and sexual boundaries of others.
- ☐ Do not engage in sexually provocative games, talk or actions
- ☐ Do not engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- ☐ Never make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun.



7 points of behavioural awareness

1. Act in an open and visible manner

When working with young members, Scouters should ensure that an open environment exists. If a situation arises where a certain amount of privacy is required (eg.: a disciplinary issue or treatment of an injury) always try to have someone with you or make sure that others are within vision and, preferably, within earshot. However sincere the intentions, a Scouter should not be a 'one - man-band' and run a meeting/activity on his or her own. It is imperative that there is another adult present, in itself to comply with the Association's rules for the safety of the young members, as well as for the security of being less likely to be accused of doing something improper.



2. Sometimes it's better not to join in

There is, and always has been, the situation where Scouters join in games 'to make up the numbers' or to greater encourage participation or to add to the novelty of the game or activity. While everyone is having fun and no harm is done, there is a certain element of risk associated with such an activity. All it takes is for a young person to be hurt, or suggest that they had been inappropriately touched for the 'fun' to be taken as 'serious'. Scouters should not engage in horseplay with youth members. So, the simple advice is – organise, supervise or monitor and enjoy watching the fun!

3. Be positive in your conversation

The way you speak to young people about themselves or others can create a positive and supportive atmosphere. Improper comment, suggestion or inappropriate humour can result in creating hurt and confusion in a child. Avoid making suggestive or salacious remarks in the presence of young people. Keeping your conversation at the appropriate level for the age of the child will help avoid causing hurt and misinterpretation of your intentions and will provide a positive example to the child.



4. Mixed gender Sections must have mixed gender leadership

It is good practice to have mixed leadership to be able to cope with emergencies, accidents or arguments, so that no accusations of impropriety can be levelled at any Scouter when dealing with the opposite gender. In some situations young people will feel more comfortable having the support of a Scouter of the same gender.

5. Be alert to your own emotional feelings and the feelings of others

Young people can sometimes 'hero - worship' a Scouter or develop a 'crush' on a Scouter. The situation needs to be handled sensitively without causing a feeling of rejection. Use the support of other Scouters to deal with such situations, as this will help to avoid any perception of encouragement on your part. Our emotions can fluctuate due to trauma, stress, bereavement and many other causes. If support is required talk things through with another trusted adult. Avoid involving young people in your emotional problems.

6. Consider the situation

This may be the most important point of all: consider each situation. While your intentions may be based on the most innocent and altruistic of motive: If in doubt about how your actions might be interpreted then adopt a safer course of action.

7. Protect your good name

While your good work as a Scouter may have earned you respect this will provide little defence in the event of any allegation of improper conduct being made against you. It is therefore important that your motives are understood to be guided by the needs of the child and that your actions are open and positive.

Some Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- ☐ Ensure that the minimum ratios of Scouter's to Scouts is always present at all activities; subject to requirements set out in SID77/11 whereby youth led activities (without the full time presence of Scouters) are permissible. Ratios may vary depending on the age of the group, the level of ability and the nature of the activity. Scouters should refer to and observe the relevant programme guidelines. Additional trained instructors will be necessary for some activities but must not be included in Scouter to Scout ratios.
- ☐ Be aware of what is appropriate physical contact and engage in this contact only
- ☐ Respect the personal and sexual boundaries of others
- ☐ Discuss any uncertainties with the Child Protection Officer, Group Leader or another adult member
- ☐ Remember that Scouting is a hobby and maintain proper balances between your personal and work commitments and Scouting activities.

DON'T:

- ☐ Spend time alone with a young person if it can be avoided, especially in sensitive circumstances
- ☐ Give car lifts on your own to youth members, unless it is unavoidable.
- ☐ Make jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of young people, even in fun
- ☐ Become over involved with one particular young person
- ☐ Tolerate favouritism, exclusion or harsh disciplinary regimes

Communications with young people

When speaking with young people a Scouter should maintain the conversation at the appropriate level for the age of the young member. This provides a positive experience to the young person and helps avoid causing misinterpretation of your intentions.

Scouters should speak respectfully of others Scouts and Scouters and not involve young people in conversations that are critical of others.

Adult – Youth Relationships

A Scouter holds a position of trust. Consequently Scouters have responsibilities in respect of their relationships with and behaviour towards youth members of all ages. In addition, these responsibilities extend towards parents, the Scout Group, and the Association.

It is a criminal offence in both the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland for anyone to engage in, or attempt to engage in, sexual activity with anyone under the legal age of consent. The legal age of consent to sexual activity in the Republic of Ireland is 17 years (Criminal Law (Sexual Offences Act) 2006). In Northern Ireland the legal age of consent is 16 years (Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008).

Because of the position of trust and authority that they hold, it is inappropriate for a Scouter to form, or seek to form, a personal relationship with a youth member who is over the legal age of consent. Where two people, one age 18 plus and one aged 17 (i.e. over the age of consent) are already in a relationship, they must both be aware that their conduct must at all times reflect their responsibilities as members of Scouting Ireland. Scouters should be aware that if they break this trust their suitability to work in the Association may be called into question. (See rules 25-28 of Scouting Ireland's Rules of Association).

A person between the ages of 18 years and 26 years may be simultaneously registered as both a youth member and as a Scouter. In such a circumstance, as the individual is regarded as an adult in law, their conduct should at all times reflect the responsibilities and behaviour expected of a Scouter.

Minimum ratios of Scouter's to Scouts - refer to Camping and Adventures in the Out of Doors Guidelines SID 77/11a

Section	Young Members	Scouters
Beaver Scouts	4 -16 each additional 4	3 1
Cub Scouts (island of Ireland)	4-16 each additional 4	3 1
Cub Scouts Abroad (British Isles & Main land Europe)	4 -16 each additional 6	3 1
Scouts (island of Ireland except Patrol camps)	4-16 each additional 8	2 1
Scouts - Abroad (British Isles & Main land Europe)	4-16 each additional 8	3 1
Venture Scouts (except approved camps)	4-16 each additional 16	2 1
Venture Scouts - Abroad (British Isles & Main land Europe)	4-16 each additional 16	2 1
Rover Scouts (except approved camps)	4+	0
Rover Scouts (partaking in Service/partnerships abroad)	4+	1

Youth - Youth Relationships

The emotional, social and spiritual development of young people are key elements in the Aim of the Association. It is important that Scouters are aware of the responsibility they have, within their role, of helping young people who are developing relationships. The key Scouting principle that Scouters should emphasise when talking about relationships is respect for others and for oneself.

In adolescence, young people become increasingly aware of their own bodies and their sexuality, and emotional attachments can begin. It is important for Scouters to help some young people to understand the nature of public and private behaviour, and the need to respect other people's privacy and personal space.

When giving advice Scouters must uphold the law - sexual intercourse under the age of consent is illegal. For the purposes of criminal law the age of consent to sexual activity in the Republic of Ireland is 17 years of age, and in Northern Ireland, is it is 16 years of age. The law on consent to sexual activity applies to young people as well as to adults.

Friendships form an important part of scouting for young people and it would not be uncommon that these friendships develop into more personal relationships. There may be occasions however when Scouters will need to advise and explain to young people that how they conduct personal relationships in scout settings may be inappropriate. Should a difficulty persist in this regard parents may need to be informed and their support enlisted.

Substance Abuse

The use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco should be actively discouraged as being incompatible with a healthy approach to Scouting activity. The 'Healthy Living' promotional material available from Health authorities and other agencies should be used to continually reinforce the positive benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Receptions and celebrations should be organised in a manner that is suitable for the age group concerned. At adult events where alcohol is available it should be consumed in a manner that shows respect for self and for others. The laws governing the purchase and consumption of alcohol and tobacco should be observed and the example of Scouters doing so provides positive role models for the young members. Use of alcohol or tobacco by youth members is not to be tolerated.

Scouters should not smoke in front of youth members.

Scout - Work Life Balance - 1. Family, 2. Job, 3. Scouts

Scouting is a fantastic way of life, but a Scouter's responsibility is firstly to his/her family. Scouting can become very consuming and the time commitment can grow rapidly. Scouters need to take care that Scouting doesn't negatively impact on their family or employment. Sometimes this will happen without Scouters noticing, and it may be of help if Group Council routinely includes Scout-Work-Life balance on the agenda. It's absolutely appropriate that a Scouter would help out in another section for a very short period of time e.g. 3-4 weeks. The Group Leader should be mindful of the impact that double / triple jobbing in Scouts can have on his/her own work-life balance and whole health or that of any other Scouter.

Communications

In our social interaction with others the words we use to express ourselves and the way we express those words in both tone and emphasis lets others sense our sincerity and respect for them and their views. When speaking with young people a Scouter should maintain the conversation at the appropriate level for the age of the young member. This provides a positive experience to the young person and helps avoid causing misinterpretation of your intentions.

Scouters should speak respectfully of others Scouts and Scouters and not involve young people in conversations that are critical of others.

A positive relationship between Scouters and parents/guardians should be nurtured and maintained through open communication in both directions. Ongoing good communication with parents develops a better understanding by parents of the positive benefits of Scouting for their child and of what is expected of both their child and themselves to improve their experience of Scouting. Ensuring that parents feel comfortable to talk with Scouters will provide the opportunity to get a better insight into the young person as well as allowing parents to openly voice any concerns or queries that they may have.

Communications with parents

The communication process with parents begins at the start of the young person's journey with the Scout Group, and it is fostered and built upon as that young person progresses. When a young person joins a group their parents should be made aware of how the group operates and what they can expect in terms of communication from the group in relation to their child and to group activities. They should also be made aware of policies and procedures that operate in the group (e.g. anti-bullying policy, procedures for dealing with disruptive / challenging behaviour) as well as Scouting Ireland's policy and procedures in relation to child protection.



The relationship with parents needs continuous attention. The following pointers are helpful:

- ☐ Scouters should appreciate the trust which parents place in them.
- ☐ Listen carefully to what parents say about their children.
- ☐ If parents are expressing a concern, don't be defensive, try to understand it from the parents' perspective and seek to establish a common ground.
- ☐ Inform parents of any accidents and how they happened. Parents are understanding and accept scrapes and bumps occur.
- ☐ Should a difficult issue or misunderstanding arise with a parent always use calm, respectful, and supportive language when communicating with them to avoid the situation becoming confrontational. Small issues can easily turn into a stand-off situation and, when this occurs, it is the young person who is caught in the middle and who loses out.
- ☐ Introduce parents to the Code of Good Practice and the Child Protection Policy statement, as set out on page 5.
- ☐ Provide a fact sheet and hold an open night/induction meeting to brief parents of new members as soon as they join the Programme Section. Don't assume that when a Cub Scout moves to the Scout Troop the parents know what happens in the Scout Troop.
- ☐ Ensure that anything you distribute to parents in writing is accurate and clearly stated. Be accurate on times, dates and location and avoid the use of Scouting jargon.
- ☐ For notes, requests and explanations of Scout activities, use a form of reproduction that is easy to read.
- ☐ Consent form must be on official Scouting Ireland Consent Forms which are downloadable on www.scouts.ie
- ☐ Send your communication to the parents far enough in advance so that they can consider it and act, if you expect a response.
- ☐ Keep a copy of written communications.
- ☐ Share good news of activities in the Section and Group through an annual general meeting, a Section parents meeting, an annual report etc.

A positive relationship between Scouters and parents/guardians should be nurtured and maintained through open communication in both directions. Ongoing good communication with parents develops a better understanding by parents of the positive benefits of Scouting for their child and of what is expected of both their child and themselves to improve their experience of Scouting. Ensuring that parents feel comfortable to talk with Scouters will provide the opportunity to get a better insight into the young person as well as allowing parents to openly voice any concerns or queries that they may have (See also the sections on Bullying and Dealing with Challenging and Disruptive Behaviour for further advice on communication with parents)



Dealing with Challenging / Disruptive Behaviour

Refer to sample Charter on Guidance Sheet 3 also Conflict Resolution Policy SID19/04 & Guidelines 19A/12

Creation of a positive environment through discipline

Young people in Scouting need to learn to become responsible for themselves and to accept themselves and others. Discipline should always be positive in focus, providing the structure that allows young people to learn to set their own goals and strive for them.

Where possible the main form of discipline should be through praise for:

- a. effort; and
- b. social skills as well as traditional Scout skills

Youth members must be helped to understand the responsibilities and implications of the freedom to make choices and decisions.

Expectations of behaviour should be positively stated, agreed and communicated clearly to all involved in any activity.

Sanctions

Sanctions are an important element in maintaining discipline. However, Scouters should have a clear understanding of where and when particular sanctions are appropriate.

Sanctions should be used in a corrective way designed to help young people improve now and in the future. Where possible Scouters should always endeavour to make good use of the Court of Honour, Patrol Leaders' Council, Watch Leaders' Council or Venture Executive Committee in the application of sanctions. A Code of Conduct devised in conjunction with the youth members and one which they themselves have agreed to, can be a particularly effective device. A copy to parents can be helpful.

Sanctions should not be used to retaliate or to make the Scouter feel better.

Sanctions should be fair, and in the case of persistent offences should be progressively applied. The following steps are suggested:

- ☐ Jointly with youth members and adults draw up and agree a Code of Conduct
- ☐ Warning or sanction (e.g. temporary exclusion from the activity) if the Code of Conduct is broken
- ☐ An interview if the Code is broken again. Youth members can request a parent or another member to be present. Record the date, those in attendance and outcome of the interview.
- ☐ Longer term exclusion for continued breaking of the Code and involvement of parents /guardians

Sanctions should:

- ☐ Be used sparingly
- ☐ Be administered in a consistent way
- ☐ Never use any form of corporal punishment or physical force
- ☐ Not expose a young person to embarrassment or disparagement by use of negative remarks about the young person or his / her family

Refer to Sample Anti - bullying Charter - Guidance Sheet 3



The safety of each member of Scouting is paramount, the importance of this fact is enshrined in the Article 9 of the Constitution of Scouting Ireland, which states;
 "Scouting Ireland recognises the safety and welfare of its members and leaders as a foremost priority"

Scouting Safely

Scouters must ensure:

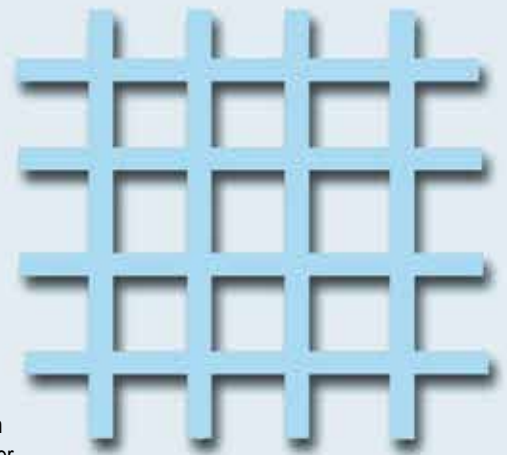
- ☐ The activity being planned, or undertaken is suitable for the age, experience and ability of the member(s) concerned.
- ☐ That activities are lead by suitable persons with the necessary skills and abilities.
- ☐ That the policies and guidelines of Scouting Ireland for all activities are followed.
- ☐ That youth members leading activities are competent and are supported in doing so.

Risk Management

The management of risk and safety must be a priority of all Scouters engaged in Scouting activities. Risks assessments should be carried out prior to activities in order to eliminate (or reduce to an acceptable level) the potential risks to all members.

The assessment of risk involves a number of steps in the planning of an activity some of which include:

- ☐ Looking for hazards,
- ☐ Determining the level of risk involved
- ☐ Deciding who might be harmed and how,
- ☐ Putting in place measures that can minimise any identified risk,
- ☐ Reviewing and risk assessment on a continuing basis throughout the activity.



Accidents/Incidents:

All Scouters are expected to have knowledge of First Aid and ideally should hold a suitable qualification in First Aid. Should an accident/incident occur, all the facts, contact details of all concerned and medical/other intervention (if such was necessary) must be accurately recorded and forwarded to National Office as soon as possible.

Scouters should make contact with their Group Leader, Commissioner, Provincial Support Officer or with the staff at National Office if there is any doubt, or advice needed on the procedures that are to be followed in reporting accidents or incidents. (See Appendix 8)

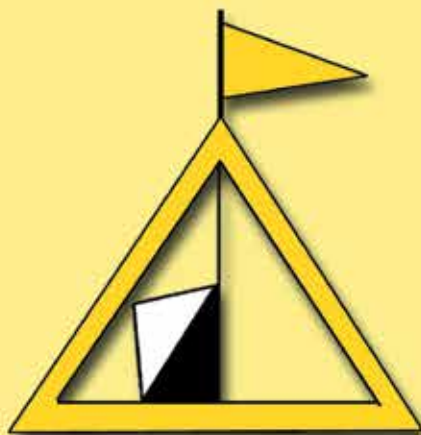
Scouters should refer to the relevant policies and guidelines, in force, for more comprehensive information on safety and risk management for programme activities.

Transport

As a general rule, the responsibility for getting children to and from scout activities lies with parents /guardians. However, at times the group may take responsibility for organising transport to events or activities (e.g. a county challenge). It is always preferable that a reputable bus company be engaged on these occasions.

See Guidance Sheet 1 at the back of this document for further guidelines on transport. Since 31st October 2011 it is a legal requirement that all buses involved in the organised transport of children be fitted with appropriate safety belts. Also see www.rsa.ie

Camps and overnight activities



On camps and overnight activities all Scouters must ensure that:

- ☐ Scouts and Scouters are separately and suitably accommodated
- ☐ Appropriate sleeping and washing arrangements are in operation to protect personal and gender boundaries
- ☐ There are always an adequate number of Scouters, adults and/or trained instructors (as may be necessary) present. Scouters should observe the relevant programme guidelines in this regard. (refer to SID 77/11a)
- ☐ The personal gear of Scouts is adequate for the programme activity.
- ☐ The food is adequate for the programme and dietary requirements of the participants.
- ☐ Relevant medical information relating to Scouts should be requested from parents/guardians using the appropriate forms.
- ☐ Written parental consent is obtained
- ☐ All adults are aware that they can submit a voluntary medical form to the Scouter in charge

Campfire singing is an intrinsic and enjoyable part of any Scout Camp. The content and performance of songs sung by Scouters and young people on any Scout activity should be in keeping with the values and ethos of Scouting.

Scouters should observe the Association's Policy and Procedures on Camping and the Out of Doors.

Exchange visits / Home Hospitality

When participating in exchange visits / home hospitality, be it national or international, Scouters should take special care to vet the suitability of the programme, arrangements, host group, host families and host leaders (i.e. anyone with access to or authority or association with young people). Scouters should be familiar with the child protection reporting procedures of Scouting Ireland and those of the partner association. The appropriate programme guidelines should be adhered to and further advice, guidelines and checklists are available on request from National Office. Scouters must obtain written parental consent prior to departure.

Medications

Parents/guardians have primary responsibility for the medical needs of their children.

All youth members under the age of 18 years must have an Activities Consent Form completed for them by their parents / guardians who should be made aware of why the medical information requested on the form is needed, and of the importance of giving full and accurate medical details on their children.

Most sections will have young people who either take medication on a long-term basis (e.g. children with epilepsy or cystic fibrosis) or have to take it for a defined period of time (e.g. a course of antibiotics). Young people who have severe asthma may need daily inhalers but may also need additional dose in the event of an attack.

Guidance Sheet 2, at the back of this document, sets out guidance around handling and administering medications. These procedures should ideally be developed in partnership with parents and they should take account of the comfort level of Scouters in taking on such a role as well as the level of training or expertise required for more complex interventions (e.g. administering an adrenaline injection).

Continuing advances in technology, e.g. mobile phones, email, Internet, has broadened the means and speed by which people can communicate and share information. These technologies have also brought the need to ensure that they are used for their positive benefits and to minimise the potential harm that they can cause.

Use of technology

Sensible use of mobile phones

A mobile phone can be a great communication method and potentially a safety tool for everyone, including children.

Children should be advised to save and not reply to any scary messages or offensive pictures and to always tell an adult (e.g. parent, teacher, Scouter) immediately. If messages are stored, it is usually possible to trace the culprit so that they can be quickly identified.

However, Scouters need to be aware of the potential difficulties associated with communicating with a young person via the young person's personal mobile phone. There is always a potential for phone calls or text messages to be misinterpreted by the young person or by their parents.

Scouters are advised that other methods of communication are available. Communications about scouting arrangements can be made through a parent's mobile phone. Alternatively, groups can explore using a Group Text service (e.g. Tacu Text for Parents).

Young people should not be contacted directly on their mobile phones unless specifically agreed by their parent/guardian.

Mobile phones can be used by some people to bully others by sending threatening and unpleasant text messages, and picture messages, either directly to their victims or to spread malicious rumours. This is not harmless and should be treated in the same manner as any other form of bullying.

Scouters should advise children of the need to use mobile phones with care, not to be tempted to use their phone to bully others and not to allow others to use their mobile phone.

Mobile phones can be a safety tool particularly when on outdoor activities such as hill walking. However it can happen in the event of an emergency that the mobile phone may not work due to bad reception so the reliance on a phone should never replace the skill competencies required for specific activities.

If a Scouter gives his or her mobile as the contact phone when on activity then ensure that the facility to keep the phone constantly charged is available and that the phone is maintained in credit.

Phones and other Devices

In today's world of mobile technology a vast array of devices are now readily available to young people and adults. Increasingly, these devices are 'connected' to the on-line world. There are many different devices available and they fall into a number of key categories - phones, cameras, portable tablets and gaming devices and television sets. All of these devices have similar technology so they have the capability to interact with on-line communities and social media.

It is important therefore to understand that a person (young and adult) in today's world has the capability to be connected to the internet at any time and through a vast array of devices - some they will own and others are freely available in shops, hotels and public places. Internet and constant connectivity is now part of our social fabric and every present.

Overview of some of the devices currently available:-

Digital Cameras - while most digital cameras are self-contained, all images remain on the camera disk, increasingly new models have the potential to be connected to the internet so images can be directly uploaded to social media.



Mobile Phones - mobile phones are in effect no longer a phone but rather a portable computer. They have full functionality to connect to the internet. Service providers provide extensive payment rates to facilitate this. A mobile 'smart' phone can do, in the main, anything that can be done on a desktop computer.

Portable media players - these devices look like phones and do everything a phone can do but do not have a phone call function. However, once connected to a wifi internet connection they can function like a phone and again have full connectivity to the internet.

Tablets - these devices are larger versions of portable media devices.

Gaming devices - (Xbox, Playstation) all of these devices now have the capability to connect to the internet. Primarily for the purpose of on-line gaming (playing games with people you may or may not know). Newer versions of these consoles allow you to connect directly to the internet.

Television sets - television sets are now capable of directly connecting with the internet.



Child Protection Guidelines from a large phone provider

Phones and other devices should be used safely and responsibly

Respect Others.

Pictures can be very powerful and stir up strong emotions. Camera phone users should respect the private lives of others and not to take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy.

Scouters and scouts should not send or post pictures that are obscene, indecent or menacing and should be sensitive about other people's gender, colour, religion or personal background.

Children should be advised to avoid sending or posting a picture or video of themselves to others they don't know very well. Apart from not being sure what that person will do with it, a picture may contain something that could help them trace or find out more about the child. Clues in the picture may be in the background – number or front of a house, a street name, school uniform and these snippets of information may help those who want to harm children.

Camera phones can be used to make children safer. Older children, for example using a taxi, can send a picture of the car's registration to a friend before they begin the trip, or can simply use the phone to show parents where they are.

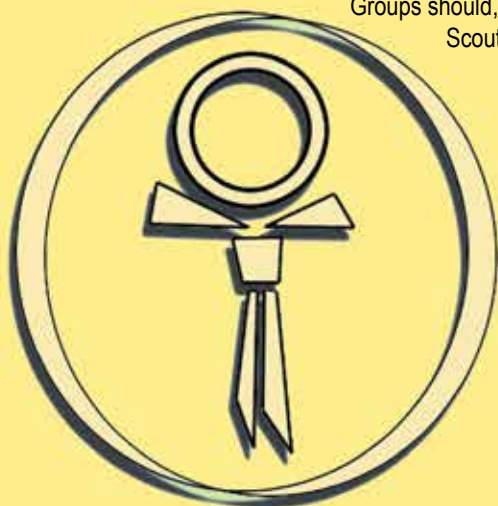
(Source: O2 Child Protection)

Phones on activities

Groups should, with parents and young people, develop a policy on the use of mobile phones during Scout activities. This policy should be communicated to all parents and youth members.

The policy could include:

- ☐ The Group should decide if phone are suitable at a given activity
- ☐ Confirmation that when on activities that the Scouter is the prime point of communication and is to be contacted if there is an emergency or change of previously agreed arrangements
- ☐ That the usage of mobile phones including text messaging or playing games cannot be allowed to be a distraction from a safe awareness of the environment.
- ☐ That the usage of mobile phones including text messaging or playing games cannot be allowed to interfere with full participation in the activity.
- ☐ When on camps, overnight activities that there is a stated preferred time period when parents may make contact if they wish. Parents should be advised that contact outside of this time may not be possible due to the nature of the activities.



Use of Email and Social Networking Sites

Email and social networking sites have enormous benefits but can also be used for harmful or abusive purposes.

It is advised that Scouters do not email youth members as individuals when disseminating information in relation to events but do so as part of a disclosed list, having received prior permission to disclose in group email. Disclosed lists should be used for sending group information via a designated, registered and vetted Scouter. Group emails should give recipients the opportunity to have their contact details removed from the list by including a statement such as: "If you wish to be removed from this email list please contact the administrator".

Scouters should not contact young people through chatrooms or social networking sites and they should not give young people access to their personal social network account/page/ blog.

If a Scout Group or County is setting up a social network or site it must be in accordance with Scouting Ireland Social Networking Guidelines SID 39D/11, attached Guidance Sheet 4

Photographs and images of children

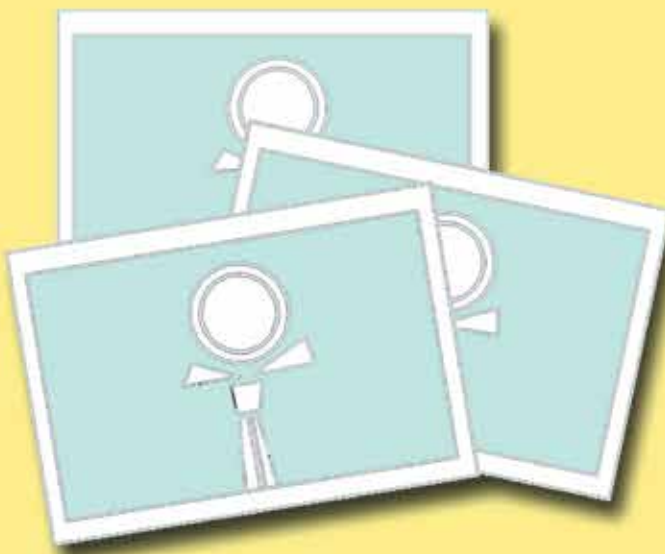
Guidelines in relation to the use of images of Scouts on web sites and publications are outlined below. Scouters should be aware of them and apply them as and when necessary. Where possible try to use illustrations when promoting an activity and avoid using the first name and surname of individuals in the photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention directed at Scouts appearing in photographs.

On occasions, national or local newspapers may request that the names of young people accompany photographs to be published. Such requests should only be granted at the discretion of, and with the permission of, the Group Leaders. In such circumstances the Group Leader should ensure that no other identifier apart from the name(s) and the Group is printed, and that all other guidelines as set out below are followed.

Rules to guide use of photography:

- ☐ If the Scout is named, avoid using their photograph.
- ☐ If a photograph is used, avoid naming the Scout.
- ☐ Ask for the Scout's permission to use their image.
- ☐ Ask also parental/guardian permission to use the Scout's image.
- ☐ Parents must also seek Scouters permission for use of Scout images containing young people
- ☐ Only use images of Scouts in appropriate dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.
- ☐ The content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child.
- ☐ Where photographs are to be used on a Scout website the permission of parents guardians should be specifically requested. Avoid using names of young members when posting photographs on a website.
- ☐ The inappropriate use of images should be reported to the Child Protection Officer.

Amateur photographers and film or video operators (including members, non-members and parents/guardians) wishing to record an event or activity should seek accreditation from the Scouter-in-charge. The Scouter-in-charge should also provide them with a clear brief on what is considered appropriate image content and the behaviour expected of them while taking images, and following their production.



"When assessing the potential risk in the use of images, the most important factor is the potential for inappropriate use of images of [Scouts]"

(Child Protection in Sport Unit, 2001).

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity the Scouter-in-charge should ensure they are clear about Scouting Ireland's expectations of them in relation to child protection. Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an activity should seek accreditation from the Scouter-in-charge by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. The Scouter should then:

- ☐ Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- ☐ Issue the photographer with identification which should be worn at all times.
- ☐ Keep a record of accreditations.
- ☐ Inform Scouts and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at the activity and check that they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- ☐ Not allow unsupervised access to Scouts or one-to-one photo sessions.
- ☐ Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the activity or at a Scout's home.

Anyone concerned about any photography taking place should discuss his or her concerns with the Scouter in charge or the Child Protection Officer.



Recognising child abuse and responding to disclosure

All Scouting experiences and contexts must be guided by what is best for young people. It is not always easy to acknowledge that child abuse may take place in youth organisations or within families. It is important that Scouters, professional workers and other approved adults within Scouting Ireland are aware of the possibility that abuse may take place within and outside the Association. Scouters must be familiar with and implement the Code of Good Practice.

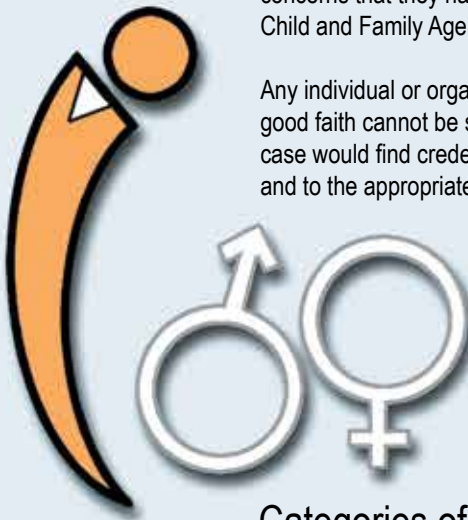
It is essential that Scouters, professionals and other approved adults are aware that mechanisms exist to address Child Protection concerns.

Every adult in the organisation of Scouting Ireland has a duty to convey any child protection concerns that they have to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) who in turn will report to the TUSLA Child and Family Agency or Social Services Trust if appropriate.

Any individual or organisation, in the Republic of Ireland, reporting child protection concerns in good faith cannot be sued in a civil action. In the case of Northern Ireland it is unlikely that a civil case would find credence in the courts provided the report of child abuse was made in good faith and to the appropriate authorities.

Scouters must promote an environment that encourages young people to convey their concerns. All necessary measures to protect youth members from unnecessary risk should be taken.

The safety and welfare of the Scout must always be the paramount consideration for Scouters.



Categories of child abuse

Child Abuse can be categorised into 4 types:

1. Neglect
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Physical Abuse
4. Sexual Abuse

(Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2011)

A child may be subjected to more than one form of abuse at any given time.

NEGLECT is normally defined in terms of an omission, where a child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of:

- ☐ Food
- ☐ Clothing
- ☐ Warmth
- ☐ Hygiene and developmental care
- ☐ Intellectual stimulation
- ☐ Supervision and safety
- ☐ Attachment to and affection from adults
- ☐ Medical care.

Whether the harm caused is 'significant' is determined by the child's development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar age.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE occurs when an individual suffers harm as a result of being intimidated, being exposed to constant degradation or verbal attacks or when their needs for affection, approval, consistency and security go un-met.

Examples of emotional abuse are as follows:

- ☐ Inappropriate "initiation" practices.
- ☐ Inappropriate "rite of passage" e.g. from Scouts to Venture Scouts.
- ☐ Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility, or blaming.
- ☐ Exposure to domestic violence and /or overexposure via media and technology
- ☐ Unsupported, unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of a child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control him/herself in a certain way.

PHYSICAL ABUSE is any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child, or injury that results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child.

Examples of physical abuse are as follows:

- ☐ Shaking
- ☐ Use of excessive force in handling
- ☐ Hitting, kicking and slapping
- ☐ Burning or scalding
- ☐ Deliberate poisoning
- ☐ Suffocation
- ☐ Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child
- ☐ Observation of violent behaviour

Risks assessments should be carried out prior to activities in order to eliminate or minimise the potential risks to children.

SEXUAL ABUSE occurs when a child is used by another person for his/her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others. Every child has a basic right to be cared for and protected at all times.

Scouters should also be alert to the possibility that abuse can take place in a context of peers or that it may be organised.

PEER ABUSE occurs in cases where the alleged abuser is also a child. It occurs when they engage in any form of sexual activity with another individual that they have power over by virtue of age, emotional maturity, gender, physical strength, intellect, and where the victim in this situation suffers a sexual exploitation and betrayal of trust. Physical and emotional abuse can also occur in a peer context. In these situations the Child Protection procedures should be adhered to for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

ORGANISED ABUSE occurs when a person moves into an area/institution and systematically entraps children for abusive purposes or when two or more adults conspire to similarly abuse children using inducements.

Reckless endangerment

- ☐ Creating a substantial risk of serious physical injury to another person.
- ☐ Exhibiting a culpable disregard of foreseeable consequences to others.
- ☐ Making actual or imminent danger to the rights or safety of others, even though not
- ☐ intentionally causing a resulting harm.

Reasonable grounds for Concern

It is important that Scouters are alert to the possible signs of abuse, or indicators, which constitute reasonable grounds for concern. Examples of these include:

- ☐ Disclosures by the child in question or someone else.
- ☐ Age inappropriate sexual play or knowledge.
- ☐ Injuries or patterns of injuries that lack an adequate explanation.
- ☐ Consistent indication over time of neglect, for example failure to gain weight appropriate to age,
- ☐ withdrawal or behaviour out of character.

(Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2011 - for a more comprehensive list of examples of signs and symptoms please refer to Children First pp 70-74)

Possible indicators of inappropriate behaviour by Scouters or other adults: (grooming)

- ☐ Paying an unusual amount of attention to children and providing them with presents, money or 'favours';
- ☐ Seeking out vulnerable children;
- ☐ Seeking opportunities to spend significant amounts of time alone with a single child or a small group of children on a regular basis;
- ☐ Encouraging secretiveness about their activities and time spent with children;
- ☐ Taking a child/children into his/her own home;

- ☐ Being vague about previous employment and or hobbies/clubs
- ☐ Having an unusual amount of physical contact with a child or children;
- ☐ Touching children in an inappropriate manner;
- ☐ Talking to children in an inappropriate manner;
- ☐ Avoiding close supervision and management of work. (Safer Organisations Safer Children, 2002 -

Appendix 6)

How to respond to a disclosure

In the event that a young person discloses a child protection concern to a Scouter or to another young person:

DO:

- ☐ React calmly and listen carefully (see note below)
- ☐ Reassure that it is right to tell
- ☐ Try to record the exact words expressed and the demeanour of the individual
- ☐ Ask questions only for the purpose of clarification
- ☐ Be mindful to differentiate between the person and the behaviour - they may be close to the young person e.g. Family.
- ☐ Sign and date the record
- ☐ Pass the information to the Child Protection Office (CPO) of Scouting Ireland.

When talking to young people

- ☐ Explain what may happen next to the child – age appropriately
- ☐ Let the young person talk at their own pace and in their own words
- ☐ Listen actively without asking leading questions
- ☐ Accept what the young person has to say
- ☐ False disclosures are rare
- ☐ Be open minded and do not judge
- ☐ If needed reassure the young person that your feelings towards him/her have not been adversely affected by the disclosure.
- ☐ Agree measures to protect the young person
- ☐ Maintain appropriate need to know confidentiality
- ☐ Continue to offer a supportive relationship with the young person, normal activities etc.

Note:

It is not necessary to write as a child speaks - more important to listen carefully, avoid interruptions and record immediately afterwards. Detail the context in which the disclosure arose, who was there and what type of questions were asked.

If a member fears that a young person might be in immediate danger they should directly contact An Garda Síochána or the PSNI, as a matter of urgency. And following this, report to the CPO or the out of hours Child Protection phone service (01) 5547840 (ROI) or (028) 95680080 (NI)

DON'T:

- ☐ Promise to keep the information a secret
- ☐ Ask leading questions or seek intimate details beyond those volunteered
- ☐ Express any judgmental opinion on the alleged abuser
- ☐ Investigate

When a child protection concern arises it is important that everyone follow closely the agreed reporting procedure as outlined in the 'Reporting Procedure for an allegation / disclosure of child abuse' contained in this document.

Confidentiality

Anyone with a child protection concern should remember that the safety of the child is paramount, and that the alleged abuser is innocent until proven otherwise. They should treat the information confidentially and share only with those people that need to know. Information should be stored in a safe and secure location.

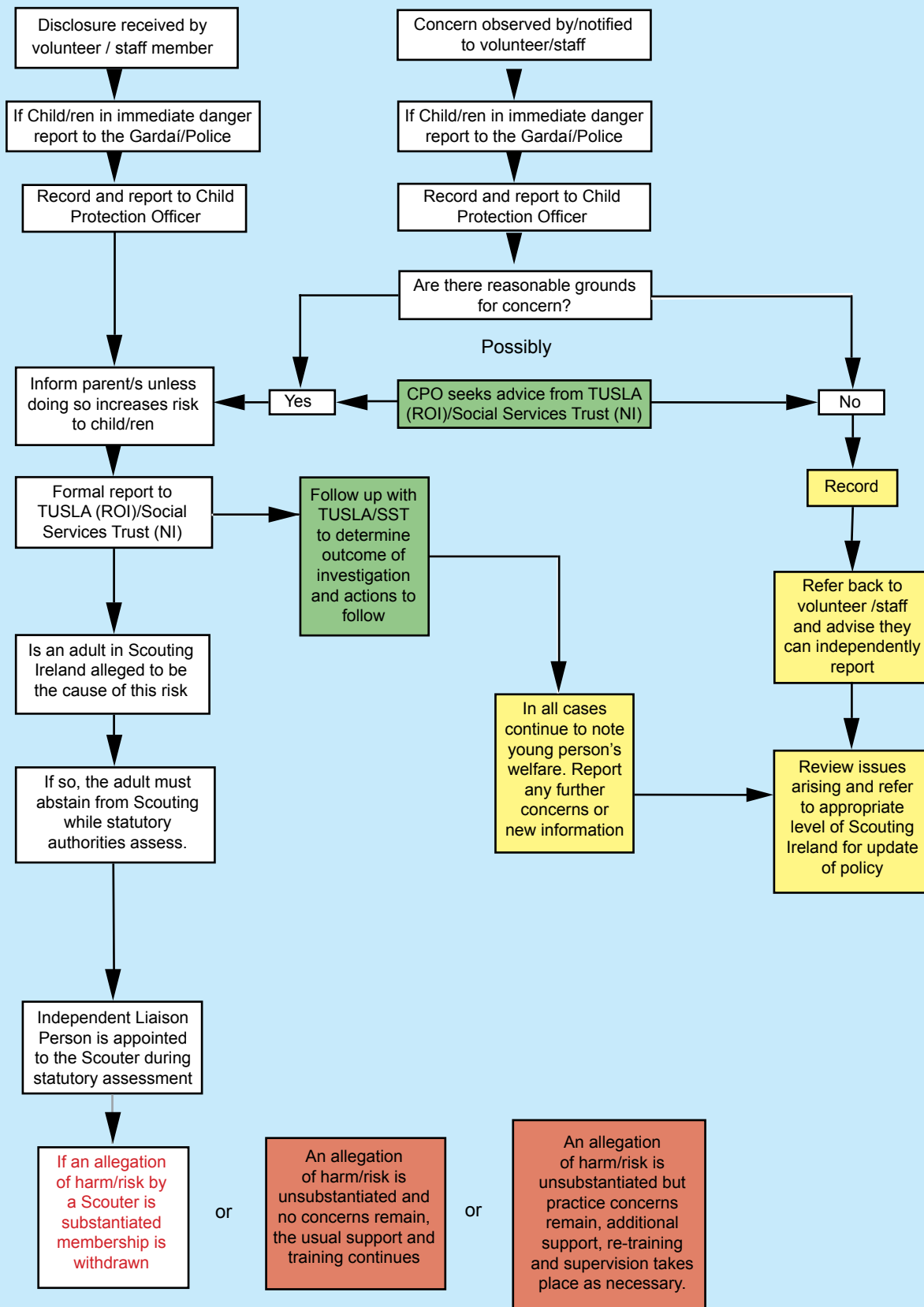
Other forms of unacceptable behaviour

Other forms of unacceptable behaviour for which Scouters should be on the alert for that may be harmful to or undermine the confidence of young people, include:

VERBAL ABUSE can include name-calling, sarcasm and criticism, making reference to some physical characteristic, destructive criticism, derogatory remarks and gestures. This is the least recognised form of harm done to young people, yet the long-term psychological effects may be traumatic to the individual.

BULLYING behaviour can be defined as repeated aggression, be it verbal, psychological, or physical that is conducted by an individual or group against others. Examples of bullying include: Teasing, Taunting, Threatening, Shouting, Hitting, Extortion. see page 30

Reporting Procedure Overview



SID 40/05

[illegible]

The designated individual should also be responsible for keeping the parents/guardians updated on the progress of the procedure in Scouting Ireland.

The onus is on everyone involved with Scouting Ireland to report child protection concerns or suspicions relating to any adult involved in Scouting activities to the Child Protection Officer (CPO). This may be done verbally or in writing. A completed Internal Reporting Form (reproduced at the end of this Appendix) should follow.

Discussing any such concerns with the CPO is not regarded as making an accusation against another person.

If a concern is raised or an allegation/disclosure of child abuse is made against any member of Scouting Ireland who is over 18 years of age they will be expected to abstain, with a presumption of innocence, from participation in all Scouting activities.

Any member of Scouting Ireland, who receives or knows of an allegation of child abuse against an adult member/employee, should report this to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) without delay. The CPO will inform the Child Protection Management Team (CPMT) of allegations or concerns against an adult member / employee.

Where an allegation is made or a concern is raised against an adult member or employee*

Any allegation, suspicion, or concern of child abuse against an adult member /employee that gives rise to reasonable grounds for concern will be reported to TUSLA Child and Family Agency or Social Services Trust. (NI)

If a member fears that a young person might be in immediate danger they should directly contact An Garda Síochána or the PSNI as a matter of urgency, following this, report to the CPO.

* Where a child protection concern relates to an employee it should be reported to the National Secretary. In such an instance the National Secretary undertakes the role of the CPO as outlined in this reporting procedure.

Where an allegation is made or a concern is raised in relation to Peer Abuse.

Peer abuse is where both the alleged perpetrator and victim of the abuse are children (i.e. under 18yrs). In a situation where child abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, the child protection procedures should be adhered to for both the victim and the alleged abuser; that is, it should be considered a child care and protection issue for both children (Children First 2011: National Guidance for the Welfare and Protection of Children).

If an allegation, suspicion, or concern of peer abuse is made against a youth member who is a child that gives rise to reasonable grounds for concern, this should be reported to the Child Protection Officer. The matter will be referred to the TUSLA Child and Family Agency/ Social Services Trust(NI), who will deal with it as a child care and protection issue for both children.



What to do if an allegation of abuse is made against you:

Adults in Scouting may feel vulnerable to accusations of abuse. If an allegation is made, the adult should:

- ☐ Stay calm.
- ☐ Co-operate with the investigation.
- ☐ Abstain from Scouting activities, under the presumption of innocence, while the allegation is being investigated. (see below)
- ☐ Seek advice from, where appropriate, your Group Leader, Commissioner, National Office or a professional organisation, family or friends.
- ☐ Keep clear records of any meetings attended, discussions or correspondence about the allegations.
- ☐ Not discuss the allegation with the person who has made the allegation.

Where an allegation is made against an adult member (where the child is a member of Scouting Ireland) National Office will provide details to the adult on accessing Scouting Ireland's Group Legal Protection Insurance.

Information on appropriate counselling services should be made available from National Office if requested by either or both parties.

Recommendations for improvement in practices and procedures

Whether a formal report to the statutory authority is made or not the Chief Commissioner - Adult Resources may make recommendations to the appropriate level of the Association to address any issues identified in the report. Such recommendations could address:

- ☐ Shortcomings in training.
- ☐ Interpretations of Policies and Procedures.
- ☐ Practices not in line with the Code of Good Practice.
- ☐ Updating of the Code of Good Practice.
- ☐ Suitability of the adult in a leadership role.

What is understood by "Abstaining from Scouting Activities"?

If an allegation of abuse is made against you, it is essential that you agree to abstain from all Scouting Activities. This allows space for all parties to reflect while facts are established, and while any investigations by the authorities take place.

Scouting Ireland looks at 'Scouting Activities' under three headings;

- Access** You must not have access to youth members of any programme section. The protection of children is our policy and is law. Please understand that Scouting Ireland are obliged follow the same procedures, even if you feel that allegations against you are unfounded.
- Authority** You must not pursue any appointment or position, or any role with authority or apparent authority at any level of Scouting Ireland. This includes membership of Group Council, quartermaster, den maintenance, fund-raising or similar roles. Young members are encouraged to respect all adult members. They are entitled to expect that adults against whom allegations have been made be not in a position to make decisions on their behalf.
- Association** You should refrain from 'dropping by' during or after scouting activities. Young people trust their Scouters and associate such trust with people they see associating with their Scouters. In addition, those who have made allegations are entitled to expect equal treatment from Scouting Ireland without any hint of bias.

Those with families, partners or close friends in scouting should discuss their particular difficulties with their Designated Liaison Officer. Scouting Ireland encourages all adult members to have a social circle that is wider than Scouting Ireland.

There is no doubt that this will be a difficult time for you. Your Designated Liaison Person will help you to maintain contact with Scouting Ireland and help you understand what is happening.

Scouting Ireland accepts the 'paramountcy principle' i.e. that the best interests of the child are the primary concern. We also understand that the term 'child protection' includes a duty to support our adult members.

Guidance on nominating an independent link person for a Scouter against whom an allegation is made

Our Code of Good Practice priorities the safety and welfare of children, promotes best practice to all and advises Scouters how to avoid putting themselves at risk of an allegation of improper conduct. Such allegations can have a negative and isolating impact and can be compounded by Scouting's necessary policy that the Scouter abstains while statutory bodies investigate to reduce further risk to youth members and adults.

The appointment of an independent Scouting Link Person during this process can be a key factor in satisfactory resolution and can play a vital role in supporting the accused adult throughout this process. (Appointment by mutual agreement with the said Link Person and the CEO)

A link person must be:

- Independent of the situation, ideally outside the Scouter's own Group.
- Experienced in remaining objective, neutral, non-judgemental and keeping confidentiality
- A good listener, open minded, friendly, approachable and practice good people skills
- Aware of the informal nature of the role & the possible time commitment
- Accepting of the principles, procedures and boundaries set out herewith for the role
- Appointed within a few days or maximum a week of the Scouter abstaining

Link persons with valuable experience/expertise might be:

- From a pre-trained panel in agreement with the Scouter abstaining
- Other adults with detailed experience of Child Protection and Codes of Good Practice.

When appointed, a link person must:

- If not already acquainted, be introduced to the Scouter by the Chief Commissioner Adult Resources or his/her representative
- Keep regular contact and provide a listening ear to the Scouter involved – e.g. twice per week for first month, once a week for second month, alternate weeks thereafter.
- Provide practical information on coping – what legal / counselling assistance can be obtained
- Communication with Scout National Office as per Terms of Ref. to reduce isolation of Scouter
- Maintain confidentiality but set out initially that only a medical professional can ensure this.
- After 2 months review whether the support is still appropriate. If support is not accepted initially, repeat the offer or ask if professional counselling might be considered.

A link person is strongly advised not to:

- Advocate for a Scouter in relation to the allegation - always remain neutral
- Be involved in the allegation, any investigation of it or any legal proceedings
- Be involved in any process of suspension should this occur
- Be liaising with more than one Scouter at a time

EAP - Employee Assistance Programme

The EAP is a confidential support service designed to support eligible staff and members resolve personal or work related concerns, through telephone support, specialist information and telephone and face to face counselling.

The EAP is provided by EAP Consultants, who are an independent company, and is available through a designated 24/7 Freephone help line, with access to support covering a wide range of issues.

(ROI) 1800 201 346 (NI) 0808 234 5183

Eap is completely confidential and voluntary, and Scouting Ireland recommends anyone requiring support to use this worthwhile services. Invoicing is by PIN only.

Our standard contract includes Group Leaders, Commissioners, Child Protection Trainers, National Management Committee and Staff. It can be temporarily extended to some/all of a particular Group in case of an incident. Please ask your PSO/GSF/CPO.

You will need your member number from the database to verify the call

Scouting Ireland Child Protection Internal Reporting Form *



Date

Time

Name of person reporting

Group

County

Child's Name

Address

Age Child's Group

Name of person allegedly causing concern

Address

Relationship to child

Details of incident

Details of witnesses

Any Action Taken

Signature Date

* This form should be completed with as much detail as is known and returned marked 'confidential' to the Child Protection Officer. Scouting Ireland. Larch Hill, Dublin 16. Continue on a blank sheet where appropriate.

You may also contact the CPO for advice on (01) 4956300 or cpo@scouts.ie

Recruiting and selecting Scouters

Scouting Ireland is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that only suitable adults work with the young people in our Association. This includes a focused selection procedure, training, consistent management and support. Scouting Ireland will endeavour to support the essential work of volunteers and their ability to deal with young people in a fair and ethical manner.

Scouting Ireland strongly encourages Groups to adopt a proactive attitude and undertake systematic approach to adult recruitment. When recruiting adults, the role they are expected to undertake should be clearly defined with a job specification. Attitude and approach are an important factor in recruiting people; they can learn the skills and acquire the knowledge required for their role through formal and informal training. Some traits we might look for in our adults include:

- Ability to communicate and interact with young people.
- Interest in the development of young people
- Understanding acceptable boundaries with young people: conversations, smoking, drugs, alcohol etc.
- Ability to work with other adults as part of a team
- Good communication skills
- A commitment to ongoing personal development and training
- Open and positive approach and attitude
- A belief in Scouting, it's Aim, Method, Principles and Promise & Law

The first meeting with the Group Leader is vital in explaining exactly what is expected, the time commitment involved and outlining the formal and on the job training which is required. Introduce the Adults in Scouting Policy and Mutual Agreement and Review. At this stage the potential Scouter should also be made fully aware of our recruiting procedures. There are a number of options depending on the age of the applicant and whether they are currently a Youth Member; details can be found in SIF 01/04.

The current policy on recruitment of Adults in Scouting is:

- A potential Scouter must meet the Group Leader and then complete Adult Application, Reference and Vetting Forms.
- When satisfied the Group Leader signs these forms and returns immediately to National Office with references. It is vital to check both references fully before sending.
- While waiting for successful vetting the potential Scouter can attend adult meetings, should where possible attend Stage 1 & Stage 2 Training and may make an occasional visit to section meetings under the full supervision of a vetted Scouter. This is only to assist them in choosing the section they will work in and they should not be part of the programme.
- Under no circumstances may an Adult in Scouting attend an overnight without vetting and having completed Stage 1 (Welcome to Scouting Induction) and Stage 2 (Youth Welfare & Protection) training courses.

Please note that the above guidelines are based on the current legislation and our current training scheme and may be subject to change in the future. It is expected that full induction training up to and including Stage 2 will be mandatory in law at a future date.

Below are some relevant documents and policies, there are many more on <https://my.scouts.ie/resources/>

- Scouting Ireland – Rules SID 01/03 A
- Scouting Ireland – Constitution SID 01/03
- Code of Good Practice
- Adult Application Form SIF/01/04
- Adult Reference Form SIF 01/04A
- Garda Vetting Form and Guidelines for completing
- Access Northern Ireland Application Form
- Access Northern Ireland Address Continuation Sheet
- Access Northern Ireland ID Validation Form
- Guidelines for completing Access Northern Ireland Forms
- Adult promotional leaflet
- Adults in Scouting Policy SID 96/13
- Adult Resources - Mutual Agreement & Review booklet
- Policy on the involvement of Non-Member Adults SID 36/05

Induction Process for new Scouters

During Welcome to Scouting the applicant learns through the following sessions:

1. The Code of Good Practice, the History of Scouting, the Aims of Scouting
2. Visits to Section Programme meetings & introduction to the Quality Scouting Experience (QSE) system for development.
3. Responsibilities of Adults in Scouting, outline of structures and support available.
4. Applicant agrees a commitment to deliver quality programme, participate at Group and other levels and to train.
5. By this point reference checks by the Group Leader should be complete. The Mutual Agreement is completed and the applicant may be invited to train further.

Applicants who progress through the induction process, have completed vetting, and who undertake further mandatory training within a 6 month period are notified to their County Commissioner for approval of their appointments. Membership approval is then sent to the applicant.

Adult Training

If you take part in a sport, you train to improve your game. It is just the same with being a Scouter. Training helps you build on your own strengths as a person and to improve your understanding of the skills and information needed to put the Scout Method into action.

It is important that you train to fully understand your role in facilitating and mentoring young people on their personal journey through Scouting.

The Association, through its volunteer Training Team, provides appropriate training at all levels from local to national. Scouters are expected to undertake initial training through the Woodbadge Scheme, which consists of a number of stages. Additional training is recommended and available for specialist needs.

This Code and the area of Child Protection are included in the early stages of training and are intended to introduce you to the Code of Good Practice; give you opportunities to ask questions about its contents, understand appropriate conduct for Scouters and your particular responsibilities in responding to a child protection concern.

The first training stage is called "Welcome to Scouting" which is an induction into Scouting Ireland. At this induction you will be presented with your copy of the Code of Good Practice. If you need any clarification on this Code you should speak with your Group Leader, the Child Protection Trainers at your Stage 2 course or the Scouting Ireland Child Protection Officer.

Stage 2 of training is "Youth Welfare & Protection" which covers Child Centred Approach, Stages of Development, Engaging Young People and the Child Protection Awareness Programme. The programme provides information and training on the various forms of child abuse, the possible indicators of abuse, the method of dealing with child protection issues of which you may become aware and our reporting mechanisms. You should also become more aware of the appropriate ways for Scouters to behave when interacting with children.

Our training programme in the area of Child Protection is developed in co-operation with other agencies and voluntary organisations to ensure ongoing best practice.

Information and details on further training stages are available from the following: County / Provincial Training Co-ordinators, National Office and www.scouts.ie which includes the National Training calendar.

Bullying and how to respond

Bullying has no place in Scouting. Scouters should promote a positive anti-bullying ethos in their Programme Section and raise awareness, amongst other Scouters and youth members, that bullying must not be tolerated. By emphasising the Scout Law and Promise, Scouters should create an environment in which youth members are valued as individuals with rights and are encouraged and affirmed.

Bullying behaviour may take place in any setting. In the first instance, it is the responsibility of Scouters/ professionals to deal with bullying which may take place within the Association. Scouters should be aware of Scouts who become quiet, withdrawn or who wish to leave the Group. Scouters should maintain attendance sheets and note patterns of irregularity. Scouters need to be alert for signs of any physical, behavioural or any indirect signs that may indicate some of the above abuses. The more extreme forms of bullying behaviour would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse, and are reportable to the statutory authorities. Bullying incidents should be dealt with immediately and not tolerated under any circumstances.



What is Bullying?

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological, or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. Bullying is intentional and it includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, exclusion, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures), threatening, spreading rumours, hitting and extortion, by one or more persons against a target.

Bullying contains 7 key features;

- i An intention to be hurtful
 - ii The intention is carried out
 - iii. The behaviour harms the target
 - iv. The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power
 - v. There is often no justification for the action
 - vi. The behaviour repeats itself again and again
 - vii. The bully derives a sense of satisfaction from hurting the target
- (NYC1, 2006)

Developing anti-bullying charter and procedures

It is advised that local Scout Groups develop their own anti-bullying charter as well as procedures to be followed should a bullying incident occur.

The anti-bullying charter and procedures should be developed with age appropriate input from youth members. All youth members, Scouters and parents/guardians should be made aware of the charter.

Guidance Sheet 3 at the back of this document provides;

- A sample anti-bullying charter
- Practical steps to prevent and counter bullying
- Guidelines on dealing with parents in instances of bullying

The Effects of Bullying

The effects of bullying can last for some time and can significantly effect an individual's wellbeing, causing poor social development and depression. The outcomes of bullying can include:

- ☐ Physical injury, headaches, stomach aches.
- ☐ Stress symptoms such as sleep or eating disorders and panic attacks.
- ☐ Loss of confidence and self-esteem.
- ☐ Lowered academic achievement.
- ☐ Exclusion and isolation.
- ☐ Self - harm.
- ☐ Consideration of suicide.

“Given the atmosphere of fear and secrecy which surrounds bullying, and the fact that adult intervention is almost always necessary to stop it, it is crucial that the confidence placed in a [Scouter] by a [Scout] is reciprocated by an unequivocal response”. (NEHB, 2002)

It is important for Scouters to take a pro-active role in investigating whether bullying is occurring because many Scouts will not tell. However, a Scout may confide in anyone so everyone should be aware of how to handle such a confidence.

What can you do if a Scout tells you she/he is being bullied?

1. **Listen ...**
Calmly and accept what is said. If possible there should be two Scouters present (but this should be informed by the needs of the child), if not leave the door open so passers-by can see the Scouter but not the Scout.
2. **Reassure....**
That help is available, action will be taken, the Scout was right to tell, it is not his or her fault and it could happen to anyone.
3. **Negotiate confidentiality ...**
Be clear you'll only tell people who need to know.
4. **Ensure the Scout's safety ...**
The Scouter must be aware that the safety of the youth member is paramount and this can be maintained through appropriate supervision. Liaise with the parents / guardians in relation to a solution and possible actions.
5. **Tell the Scout that you'll keep her/him informed ...** And how you intend to proceed.
6. **Take notes following the conversation...**
Keep on file as these notes will form the basis of the bullying report. Notes should include nature of incident, date, time, location, names of those involved, witnesses, relevant history and Scouter's response.
7. **Make an intervention ...** All actions should be guided by the needs of the child:

Inform the Section Leadership team of your concerns.
Decide who to consult with: Patrol Leader, Group Leader, County Officers, Child Protection Officer, parents, guardians.
Decide who to interview: witnesses, alleged bullies, and uninvolved scouts.
Find out: what, where, when, who, how, why? Act in a non-confrontational manner.
Resolve the problem: Make bullying the responsibility of the group – follow the 'No Blame' group approach further details may be obtained from National office by contacting CPO.
Alternatively, approach the target and bully (explain why their behaviour is wrong, how it makes the victim feel and request an apology); parents and bully (if sanctions linked to the behaviour are to be employed request the parents to reinforce these).
Keep the Group Leader informed and updated.
Referring on in difficult cases: if it remains unsolved at the Group level it should be referred to the County level if necessary.
8. **Make a record ...**
Of facts rather than opinions. Include details from the bullying report (i.e. nature of incident, date, time, location, names of those involved, witnesses, relevant history and Scouter's response), details recounted by others involved, any agreements made, an account of action taken and suggestions for follow up and monitoring.

It is advised that local Scout Groups develop their own anti-bullying charter with age appropriate input from youth members and that youth members and parents/guardians are aware of the charter.

Some helpful tips:

Agree and implement a charter to counteract bullying and be approachable to receive reports of bullying

Involve the Court of Honour, Patrol Leaders' Council, Watch Leaders' Council or Venturer Executive, Rover Crew in developing, implementing and monitoring the anti-bullying charter

Reinforce the principles of fair play

Develop positive leadership skills among youth members e.g. Lodge leaders, Sixers, Patrol Leaders, Watch Leaders, Venture Executive Officers. Rover Crew.

Ensure that roles and responsibilities are shared among as many youth members as possible

Allocate roles and responsibilities to match the physical and intellectual capabilities of the young members.

In circumstances of adult conflict please refer to Conflict Resolution Policy SID 19/04 & Guidelines 19A/12

See Guidance Sheet 3 that contains the Bullying Report Form.
The Whole Health Booklet has additional resources - (downloadable from our website www.scouts.ie)



What Rights do Children Have?

A substantial number of rights are contained in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. Significant rights as they relate to Youth Work are:

- ☐ Children have a right to a say in their education
- ☐ Protection of the environment in which children live
- ☐ Reasonable standards of living
- ☐ Protection from violence, abuse and exploitation
- ☐ Protection of children cared for away from home and for children with a disability
- ☐ Children being able to use their own language, enjoy their own culture and practice their own religion
- ☐ Reasonable standards of health and development
- ☐ Children suspected of a crime and children convicted of crimes shall be treated in a way that promotes their sense of dignity and worth and aims at reintegrating them into society

Children's rights may be summarised under the following headings:

Provision

Rights to minimum standards of health, education, social security, physical care, family life, play recreation, culture and leisure, and adequate standards of living;

Protection

Rights of children to be safe from discrimination, physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect, exploitation, substance abuse, injustice and conflict;

Participation

Rights of children to a name and identity, to be consulted and taken account of, to have access to information, to have freedom of speech and opinion, and to challenge decisions made on their behalf.

(From Code of Good Practice – Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector 2nd edition
May 2003 Para' 3.4)

Article 19 - United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child states:-

'Parties shall take all appropriate measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of a child.'



Copies of the Accident/Incident Report Form are in this pack or can be obtained from National Office or downloaded from Association website my.scouts.ie

36 Code of Good Practice

Child Protection Notice

The welfare and safety of its youth members is the foremost priority of Scouting Ireland, to this end the Association employs a Child Protection Officer to promote awareness of child protection issues and best practice.

Scouting Ireland's Child Protection Officer " is responsible for:-

- acting as a source of advice on child protection matters,
- co-ordinating action within the organisation, and
- liaising with TUSLA Child and Family Agency or Social Services Trust and the Garda Síochána or PSNI and other agencies about suspected or actual cases of child abuse"

(Our Duty to Care, Dept. of Health and Children, ROI).

The Child Protection Officer can be contacted at National Office

By telephone: 01 4956300

By post: Child Protection Officer, Scouting Ireland,
Larch Hill, Dublin 16

By email: cpo@scouts.ie

Out of Hours number (01) 5547840 ROI or (028) 95680080 (NI)

LOCAL GARDA / PSNI STATION:



List of appropriate web sites and relevant publications

Code of Good Practice: Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector (2003)
Department of Education and Science, ROI

Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011)
Department of Health and Children, ROI

Co-operating to Safeguard Children (2003)
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, NI

Safer Organisations, Safer Children (2002)
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, NI

Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport (2003)
Sports Council Northern Ireland and the Irish Sports Council

Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport (2003)
Child Protection in Sport Unit, England

Child Safety and Youth Exchange Programmes: Guidelines for Good Practice (2004)
An international collaboration available from Léargas

Child Protection Guidelines (2004)
National Youth Federation, ROI

Our Duty to Care: principles of good practice for the protection of children and young people (2000)
Volunteer Development Agency, NI

Useful websites

Scouting Ireland - www.scouts.ie
Scout Association UK – www.scoutbase.org.uk
World organisation of the Scout Movement – www.scout.org
Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children - www.ispcc.ie
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children - www.nspcc.org.uk
Barnardos - www.barnardos.ie

Legislation

ROI:

- Child Care Act (1991)
- Domestic Violence Act (1996)
- Non-fatal Offences Against the Person Act (1997)
- Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act (1998)
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act (1998)
- Sex Offenders Act (2001)
- Children Act (2001)
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act (2006)
- National Vetting Bureau Act (2012)

NI:

- Children (NI) Order (1995)
- Sex Offenders Act (1997)
- Family Homes and Domestic Violence (NI) Order (1998)
- Criminal justice (Children) NI Order (1998)
- Criminal Justice (NI) Order 1998
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (2003)
- Sexual Offences (NI) Order (2008)

International:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992) <http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm>

Notes

Notes

The material in this Guidance sheet has been adapted from 'Our Duty to Care' (Department of Health and Children, 2002) and from 'Lets Beat Bullying' (NYCI, 2006).

Bullying

Bullying is usually carried out secretly and in an atmosphere of fear. A youth member who is being bullied may be too afraid to tell anyone about it or may have difficulty communicating that they are being bullied for a variety of reasons. It is important then that Scouters should be aware of the signs that might indicate a scout is being bullied.

Potential Indicators of Bullying;

- Physical signs (unexplained bruises or scratches).
- Damage to personal belongings.
- Having money or personal belongings stolen.
- Frequent loss of subs or pocket money.
- Having few friends.
- Frequently the target of jokes.
- Cyber Bullying – receiving threatening/abusive texts, emails or comments on social networking sites.
- Hesitant of coming to meetings or taking part in activities.
- Fearful behaviour (fear of walking to meeting, taking a different route or asking to be driven).
- Unexplained changes in behaviour (stressed, withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed).

- Not eating.
- Anxiety (indicated by nail biting, fearfulness).
- Attempting suicide or hinting at suicide.

NB: There are other possible reasons for many of these indicators.

Preventing Bullying – A whole group approach;

An anti-bullying charter and the group's responses to bullying incidents should be agreed with young people, Scouters and parents. A range of possible responses are outlined below. A whole group approach is recommended. This means working with the bully and with the group of young people to help everyone understand the hurt that the behaviour causes. This makes the problem a 'shared concern' of the group. A whole group approach, where the behaviour and its consequences are discussed by everyone in the group, helps to avoid driving the problem underground or escalating it, as might occur by solely taking a 'punishment of the bully' approach. This is called the 'No blame approach' (see below).

Developing an anti-bullying Charter

An anti-bullying charter is a clear statement that bullying of any form is unacceptable in the group. The charter should be drawn up with the input of scouts and it should be framed in simple language.

Sample Charter

- The '.....' Section is a place where every member can feel secure.
- The '....' Section is a place where everyone is respected.
- We do not tolerate physical violence.
- We do not tolerate name calling or verbal abuse.
- We do not tolerate threatening behaviour.
- We do not tolerate nasty jokes, comments or rumours.
- We do not tolerate bullying by text or e-mail.
- We will take bullying seriously and will report any bullying we see to a Leader.
- Tackling bullying is the responsibility of everyone in our section.
- Every member of our section will be treated equally and fairly.
- Every member of our section will be supported and listened to.

Practical Steps to Prevent and Counter Bullying

- Use scouts as a resource in countering bullying and to foster a “permission to tell” culture in the group.
- Let scouts know who they should tell if they are being bullied themselves or if someone else is being bullied.
- Reassure scouts that they will be listened to and that an intervention will be made if they are being bullied.
- Teach scouts to co-operate, negotiate and help others, particularly new or different children.
- Include stories and role plays on how to deal with a bully in ordinary group activities.
- Never tell a scout to ignore the bullying or to take the law into their own hands by retaliating.
- Make every scout aware of how a bullying incident will be dealt with in the group.
Parents and guardians should also be made aware of this.
- Apply these procedures fairly and consistently.

The following strategies can be used to respond to an incident of bullying;

The No Blame Approach

This approach focuses on the feelings of the bullying target rather than on blame and punishment. It allows the group to think about the effect of bullying on the target and to come up with a solution to the bullying to prevent it from happening again.

- Talk to the target and allow them to express their feelings.
- Ask their permission to allow their feelings to be shared with the group and reassure that their name will not be revealed.
- Meet with everyone involved – perpetrators and bystanders.
- Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by everyone.
- Share the feelings of the target with the group without identifying the target.

- Ask them to express how they would feel if the bullying was happening to them.
- Ask them for suggestions as to how the bullying can be overcome and prevented from happening again – note all positive responses.
- Hand over responsibility to the group – give them a time frame to implement the solutions proposed and arrange a follow-up meeting.
- Follow up with the group and with target to ensure the plan has been implemented.
- Continue to monitor the situation through on-going dialogue with the whole group.

Additional strategies / interventions may be required depending on the seriousness of bullying incidence, the outcome achieved with the no-blame approach, the involvement of parents, or other particular circumstances that may arise.

Separate the Parties

If it is possible, the perpetrator might be removed to another section for a period while further action is taken. Separating the perpetrator and the target for a time allows for an opportunity to address the situation while ensuring the target is not at risk of continued bullying. This strategy might be used in the more serious incidents of bullying.

Denial of privileges (with the opportunity to redeem one's self)

Loss of privileges (e.g. withdrawal of permission to participate in a particular activity or trip) might be used to reinforce the message for the perpetrator that bullying is unacceptable behaviour and that it has consequences. The hope would also be that the perpetrator would, as a result of loss of privilege, understand the impact of their actions or behaviour on the target.

Support Peer Bystanders

Bystanders are those who are not directly involved in bullying behaviour but are aware that it is taking place. Bystanders may do nothing about the bullying out of fear that they themselves may become a target.

Although not directly involved in the behaviour, bystanders may intentionally or unintentionally condone the bullying by providing positive reinforcement to the perpetrator by passively observing the bullying, making encouraging gestures, or laughing.

Bystanders play a vital role in creating an anti-bullying environment, therefore everyone in the group should be encouraged to speak up if they observe bullying behaviour or are aware that it is taking place. Bystanders should also be encouraged to befriend the victim of bullying behaviour.

Parental Involvement

If a young person is being bullied their parents / guardians should be made aware of the situation.

Dealing with the parents of a target of bullying;

1. Invite the parents to meet to discuss what has happened based on the information available.
2. Assure the parents that you are pleased that they have taken the time to see you.
3. Allow the parents to express their feelings, uninterrupted.
4. Accept their feelings on the bullying, even if these feelings may seem excessive to you. Use calm supportive language.
5. State categorically that bullying is not acceptable and that you intend to act positively. Assure the parents that you will keep in touch to update them on progress.
6. Keep a record of any meetings and action taken in response to the issue.

(‘Let’s Beat Bullying’, NYCI, 2006)

Dealing with the parents of a perpetrator of bullying

Consideration needs to be given around informing the parents of a perpetrator of bullying as this may make the situation worse or result in excessive parental discipline for the perpetrator. If in doubt advice should be sought from colleagues or support staff.

1. Invite the parents to meet to discuss what has happened based on the information available.
2. Assure the parents that you are pleased that they have taken the time to see you.
3. Inform the parents in a clear objective manner about their child’s behaviour.
4. Ask the parents if they know of any reason for this alleged behaviour e.g. a recent bereavement or home circumstances.
5. Begin with a summary of the group’s anti-bullying policy and emphasise the parents agreement to it.
6. Seek the parents help in communicating the seriousness of the incident to their child and enlist their co-operation.
7. Where necessary, and based on the seriousness of the bullying behaviour, inform the parents of the consequences that the group considers appropriate (e.g. verbal warning, loss of privileges) and enlist their cooperation.
8. Keep a record of any meetings and action taken in response to the issue.

(‘Let’s Beat Bullying’, NYCI, 2006)

Note: Careful on-going monitoring of the situation will be required whatever strategy is used.

Suspension or expulsion of the perpetrator

It should be made clear in an anti-bullying policy that, as a last resort only, suspension or expulsion may result for the perpetrator.

If all other efforts made to combat and prevent the perpetrator from bullying others have failed, suspension or expulsion may be the only way to secure the welfare and safety of the target. This should be communicated clearly to everyone – scouts, parents and Scouters.

*(See also Scouting Ireland’s Rules of Association)

In reading this leaflet you should also refer to Managing Medications - SIF 11a

When holding or administering medications for young people it is advised that;

- Procedures are agreed with parents around managing prescription medication for their child. These will by necessity depend on the comfort level and/or experience of the Scouters involved, and may vary from group to group. Key issues include:-
 - Clarity around the role of Scouters in relation to holding medications, administering medications, or supervising the self-administration of medications.
 - The agreed circumstances on children carrying and self-administering medication.
 - The necessity for prior written parental consent for any medicines to be given or self-administered.
- Scouters should never give non-prescribed medicine to a young person unless there is prior parental permission, which should be recorded. Aspirin or medicines containing 'Ibuprofen' or 'Paracetamol' must never be administered to someone under the age of 16 unless prescribed by a doctor.
- Parents be required to check with their General Practitioner if unsure as to whether their child can self-medicate.
- If a young person refuses to take their medicine Scouters should not force them to do so but should record the refusal and notify parents immediately. Procedures should be agreed in advance with parents for such a situation and these should be implemented.
- Appropriate arrangements should be made for the safe storage of medicines on camps/trips.

Parents should inform the Scouters in charge of their child about;

- The type of medication their child is taking.
- The amounts to be taken and at what intervals.
- If the young person is managing / self – administering, and the amounts of medication that they have with them.
- Any pre-administration requirements (e.g. the need to take food before the medication).
- Any known side effects of the medication.
- What might constitute an emergency in relation to the medication.
- What action to take in an emergency and who to contact.

When holding medicines Scouters should ensure that the medicines are provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacy and include the instructions for prescription. It is advisable that Scouters check the container to ensure that the details include;

- The name of the child.
- The name of the medicine.
- The dosage to be taken.
- The method of administration.
- The frequency of administration.
- Potential side effects (e.g. drowsiness, rash, headaches).
- The expiry date.

The management of medications on meetings, trips or camps should always form part of the risk assessment carried out by the group in advance of the activity.

These procedures should be reviewed and updated regularly, and before every away trip.

Guidance Sheet 4

Social Media

Introduction

This document is aimed at clarifying some of the issues surrounding the use of social networking websites within Scouting. While this document will not reference specific issues on individual social networking sites it will give an overview and best practice approach on how they should be used.

Social networking offers a world of possibilities to Scouting. Many young people in Scouting are already users of sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and as such, it can be a great avenue to encourage Scouting outside of the meeting nights and activities. However, it is essential to ensure that you keep both yourself and the youth members safe online and, as an adult in Scouting, you have a key role to play in actively promoting these safety guidelines.

A common sense approach

A common sense approach will be the basis of Scouting Ireland's Social Networking Guidelines. While social network profiles are easy to set up and use, it is important that you keep a professional distance online, just as you would in the 'offline' world. Think carefully about how any digital communication might appear to a third party. Compared with a conversation in the real world, technology increases the potential for messages to be taken out of context, misinterpreted and/or forwarded to others. The use of sarcasm and innuendo are not appropriate and it is essential to remember that you are in a position of trust. If you have a website or have set up a social networking site for your Scout Group, bare in mind that once you place something there, it is in the public domain, which means people can access it, change it and share it with others.

Managing Content

When setting up a Section or Group social networking account, we recommend that you:

- Monitor the site consistently (on a daily basis)
- Have at least two administrators, but preferably more.
- Provide an e-mail address for users to contact the administrator(s)

Having multiple trusted Administrators means that inappropriate posts (see below) are far more likely to be identified and removed quickly, and providing a contact e-mail address means that other users can let you know if they come across any inappropriate material.

It is also beneficial to post some information regarding your expectations of users, both adult and youth (for example, in Facebook you could post this as a 'Note').

When choosing a name for your social media account, please observe the following:

- Social media accounts, pages or events should not be prefixed with "Scouting Ireland" or "National" unless approved by The Communications Commissioner.
- Social media accounts can use "Scouting Ireland" at the end of the account name.

Guidance for Scouters

Scouters should take on board the following guidelines while using social networking sites:

- Remember you are in a position of trust as a Scouter.
- Remember that some sites have an age restriction for example; Facebook has a minimum age of 13 so be aware some members in your section may not be able to join.
- Conduct yourself in an appropriate way, as you would face to face - be aware of what you say and how you say it.
- Don't engage in one to one conversations with young people via chat facilities or instant messaging this is the same as going into a private room with a young person and closing the door.
- Do not provide personal details about young people on social networking sites (this includes full name, school name, e-mail address, date of birth etc).
- Always ensure you have parental permission to use any photos of young people and only use their first names on any caption. This can be obtained from the Scouting Ireland Activities Consent Form which is available online at <http://my.scouts.ie> (All groups should have a copy of this for each Scout and have it updated annually)
- Only use appropriate photos, the sort that you would be happy putting on a public notice board - remember that everyone can view them.
- If you are concerned about the way a young person is attempting to contact you, report it immediately to your Group Leader (or appropriate member of Scouting Ireland).
- If you sign yourself up to social networking sites you need to be aware that content is regularly updated.
- Don't use your personal social networking account to communicate with young people.
- Youth members should not be friends with your personal profile, however, while this statement makes sense it is not very practical in some cases and a common sense approach should be used:

1. Only have youth members on your personal profile that you would socialize with outside of Scouting.
 2. You should not add new youth members that come into your section to your personal profile, only to the 'Group' or 'Like Page'.
- Monitor places where interaction occurs including walls, discussion boards, comments on photos, tagging of pictures and 'Group' or 'Fan Pages'.
 - Only set up pages for events, activities or groups for which you are responsible.
 - ALL communications with Beaver Scouts or Cub Scouts should be done through their parents or guardians, not directly.
 - Other advice on best practices for code of behavior for Scouters can be found in the Code of Good Practice document.

What are inappropriate posts?

If a post (content) contains any of the following, the post(s) should be removed from the site immediately and the user should be blocked (if possible):

- Pornography or nudity
- Inappropriate language
- Graphic or gratuitous violence
- Sensitive or personal information
- Bullying, intimidation or harassment
- Hate speech, threats or attempts to incite violence
- Unlawful, misleading, malicious or discriminatory content
- SPAM or advertising for a product or service that is not directly related to Scouting

Also remember that posts must comply with the terms of use of whatever social networking website you are using.

Occasionally a young user may unthinkingly post something inappropriate (such as mild profanity or mildly inappropriate images). In cases such as these it is fair to give the user a warning, or simply remove the offending post. There would be no need to block or report the user unless the problem persists. If you find a post that presents you with serious cause for concern, take further action appropriate to the circumstances.

What if the post contains criticism of Scouting Ireland?

Scouting Ireland encourages and supports constructive criticism and debate amongst its members in online social networking websites. Discussions of this nature can help resolve issues for individuals, and can also provide excellent feedback to Scouting Ireland's management on areas where we need to improve.

However, we do ask that our members be mindful when posting criticism, and to be aware that online posts can be seen by any number of other users.

If a user has a genuine complaint, please advise them to follow correct procedures as per Scouting Ireland's Code of Good Practice. You should e-mail communications@scouts.ie if you have discovered content, either positive or negative, that you think Scouting Ireland should know about.

Safety for young people

Most children and young people assume they are safe when using the internet because they are in their own home. They will usually assume that the person they are chatting with is who they say they are and most of the time this is true. However, the only way to protect young people is to teach them to understand the online environment – including the risks it poses – so that they can learn to stay safe themselves. This is even more important now that the Internet is available on many mobile phones.

It's a good idea to share this basic advice with young people:

- Never give out personal information to online friends. This includes an instant messaging ID, e-mail address, mobile number, school name and any pictures of you, your family or friends.

- If something is published online, anyone can access it, change it or share it with others.
- Keep personal social network profiles private so only your approved friends can see your information. Only approve friends that you actually know.
- Use webcams with caution and only with family and friends who are already known in the real world, as images can be recorded, copied, changed and shared.
- Do not post inappropriate images of yourself online, which send out the wrong impression and make you vulnerable.
- Remember that online friends are just that and if they are not known to you in the real world, they may be lying about who they are, their age, gender etc...
- Children and young people should never meet up with a person they have met online unless they take a parent or trusted adult with them.
- Think before opening files from people you do not know in the real world. They may contain anything from a virus to an inappropriate image or video and should be deleted.
- Know how to block someone online and report them to owners / abuse department of the website
- If you feel uncomfortable. You should tell a parent or trusted adult about this as well.

Scouting Ireland Support

This policy is a self-enforcing policy. If you use social networking sites on behalf of Scouting Ireland without following these guidelines then Scouting Ireland may not be in a position to support you should a problem arise.

Additional Resources

<http://www.webwise.ie/>

A safety site used in Schools that has lots of information about how to use websites, the Internet and technology safely. This site is geared towards young people who are starting to experience these areas.

<http://www.facebook.com/safety>

Facebook's Safety Center. This area has lots of information about how to use Facebook safely and the tools they have to protect yourself online.

<http://www.bebo.com/Safety.jsp>

This is Bebo's safety area, it has a nice video that introduces some safety ideas and policies that make it easier for young people to get information rather than reading.

<http://twitter.com/about/security>

Twitter's security page with information on how to report problems or abuse on twitter.

Additional Contacts

If you have a concern about the health safety and well-being of a youth member please contact the Child Protection Officer in Scouting Ireland National Office on 01 4956300 or e-mail cpo@scouts.ie

When it is necessary to pre-plan that Scouters transport children to or from an activity / event, there are a number of issues that need to be considered. Scouters should be mindful that;

- Parental consent forms has been obtained and are with the Scouter in Charge - present for the duration of the activity.
- They have appropriate insurance cover. It is advised that Scouters check with their Insurance provider that their insurance policy is adequate.
- Vehicles used have appropriate child safety restraints and booster seats / cushions.
- They ensure that children and adult passengers wear a seat belt at all times.
- They ensure that children are restrained in the appropriate booster seat / cushion for their weight and height (see <http://www.rsa.ie/childsafetyincars/> for further information.)
- Appropriate adult / youth supervision ratio is maintained.
- They have a point of contact and mobile phone should they break down.
- Parents are informed of the place and time that children are to be collected.
- Arrangements are put in place for the possibility of 'Late Collections'. Scouters should have contact details for parents and parents should have contact details for drivers so that contact can be made in relation to emergencies or late collections.
- Scouters should be fully registered members and therefore have gone through the Reference checking and Garda/Access NI vetting process.
- Children should be made aware in advance of what adults they will be travelling with and should be comfortable about the arrangements. If a child exhibits or expresses discomfort with the transport plans then alternative arrangements should be discreetly made for that child. Where the person about whom the child expresses anxiety is not the parent/legal guardian, it would be appropriate to contact the parent/legal guardian seeking the alternative option for the child's transport home.
- Scouters making private arrangements with other parents to give car lifts to their child(ren) should also be mindful of their responsibilities in relation to the above issues.
- It is recommended that Scouters always have another Scouter/adult present if giving car lifts to children. Should an unplanned circumstance arise where this is not possible it is advisable that there be a minimum of two children present for the entire journey.
- Should an emergency situation arise where it is unavoidable that a Scouter must make a journey alone with a child, this should be recorded, and the child's parent and the Group Leader should be informed as soon as possible.
- Parents, who are not Scouters, may co-operate to organise transport for their children to and from activities or events. This would constitute a private arrangement between the parents and the responsibilities in relation to those arrangements lie with them.
- Scout groups that have their own mini bus should also ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover, that drivers have the appropriate license to drive the vehicle and have been through the reference checking and vetting processes, and that vehicles are fitted with appropriate safety restraints and are in a roadworthy condition. Drivers should ensure that seat belts or other safety restraints are worn by children and other passengers.
- Accidents/losses directly involving motor vehicles or aircraft are not covered by the Association's policies. When trailers are attached to a vehicle, they must fall under that vehicle's third party liability cover.