

Youth Protection Troop Joining Requirements

from "How to Protect Your Children from Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide"

Section II - Information for Youth

The *Child's Bill of Rights* outlines some specific strategies your child can use to protect himself. You should discuss these and the "three R's" of Youth Protection with your child before completing the Youth Protection joining requirements. These could provide the information that your son needs to help him respond to the situations in the exercises.

Child's Bill of Rights

When feeling threatened, you have the right to

- Trust your instincts or feelings.
- Expect privacy.
- Say no to unwanted touching or affection.
- Say no to an adult's inappropriate demands and requests.
- Withhold information that could jeopardize your safety.
- Refuse gifts.
- Be rude or unhelpful if the situation warrants.
- Run, scream, and make a scene.
- Physically fight off unwanted advances.
- Ask for help.

It's important to remember that these are protective actions that will give your son the power to protect himself.

The Boy Scouts of America bases the Youth Protection strategies it teaches its members on the "three R's" of Youth Protection:

"Three R's" of Youth Protection

- **Recognize** that anyone could be a child molester and be aware of situations that could lead to abuse.
- **Resist** advances made by child molesters to avoid being abused.
- **Report** any molestation or attempted molestation to parents or other trusted adults.

The "three R's" of Youth Protection provide a useful tool for parents when they talk with their 11- to 14-year-old children about sexual abuse. Children of this age are less apt than younger children to respond to a list of child safety rules. They need to develop the problem-solving skills necessary to evaluate situations and come up with their own responses. Parents need to help their children develop these skills.

You can help your children develop their personal safety skills. Read the following material with your son. Use the "three R's" of Youth Protection and the Child's Bill of Rights as references.

Personal Protection Rules for Computer On-line Services

When you're on-line, you are in a public place, among thousands of people who are on-line at the same time. Be safe by following these personal protection rules and you will have fun:

- Keep on-line conversations with strangers to public places, not in e-mail.
- Do not give anyone on-line your real last name, phone numbers at home or school, your parents' workplaces, or the name or location of your school or home address unless you

have your parent's permission first. Never give your password to anyone but a parent or other adult in your family.

- If someone shows you e-mail with sayings that make you feel uncomfortable, trust your instincts. You are probably right to be wary. Do not respond. Tell a parent what happened.
- If somebody tells you to keep what's going on between the two of you secret, tell a parent.
- Be careful whom you talk to. Anyone who starts talking about subjects that make you feel uncomfortable is probably an adult posing as a kid.
- Pay attention if someone tells you things that don't fit together. One time an on-line friend will say he or she is 12, and another time will say he or she is 14. That is a warning that this person is lying and may be an adult posing as a kid.
- Unless you talk to a parent about it first, never talk to anybody by phone if you know that person only on-line. If someone asks you to call—even if it's collect or a toll-free, 800 number — that's a warning. That person can get your phone number this way, either from a phone bill or from caller ID.
- Never agree to meet someone you have met only on-line any place off-line, in the real world.
- Watch out if someone on-line starts talking about hacking, or breaking onto other people's or companies' computer systems; phreaking (the "ph" sounds like an "f"), the illegal use of long-distance services or cellular phones; or viruses, on-line programs that destroy or damage data when other people download these onto their computers.
- Promise your parent or an adult family member and yourself that you will honor any rules about how much time you are allowed to spend on-line and what you do and where you go while you are on-line.

1. Child Abuse and Being a Good Scout

When a boy joins the Scouting program, he assumes a duty to be faithful to the rules of Scouting as represented in the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout motto, and Scout slogan.

The rules of Scouting don't require a Scout to put himself in possibly dangerous situations—quite the contrary, we want Scouts to "be prepared" and to "do their best" to avoid these situations.

We hope that you will discuss these rules with your Scout and be sure that he understands that he should not risk his safety to follow the rules of Scouting.

The Scout Oath includes the phrase "To help other people at all times." The Scout Law says that "A Scout is helpful," and the Scout slogan is "Do a Good Turn Daily." There are many people who need help, and a Boy Scout should be willing to lend a hand when needed.

Sometimes people who really do not need help will ask for it in order to create an opportunity for abuse. Boy Scouts should be very familiar with the rules of safety so that they can recognize situations to be wary of. For example:

- It is one thing to stand on the sidewalk away from a car to give directions, and something else to get in the car with someone to show them the way. A Scout should never get into a car without his parent's permission.
- It may be okay for a Scout to help carry groceries to a person's house, but he should never enter the house unless he has permission from his parents.

The Scout Law also states that a Scout is obedient—but a Scout does not have to obey an adult when that person tells him to do something that the Scout feels is wrong or that makes the Scout feel uncomfortable. In these situations, the Scout should talk with his parent about his concerns.

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2. Practicing the "Three R's" of Youth Protection

The following stories will help your son understand how to use the "three R's" of Youth Protection. These situations might be more detailed than you feel comfortable with; however, if children are going to learn about sexual abuse, they must be able to identify and discuss specific acts.

Jeff's Story

I am a 12-year-old boy in the sixth grade at my middle school. Every afternoon after school, I go to a recreation center until my mom gets home from work. One of the guys who works at the center has been spending a lot of time with me lately. He's really nice, and he told me that he would teach me how to wrestle. He said that wrestling would be a good sport for me because it has different weight classes and I'm so small I would be wrestling other kids my own size. I've got to admit that I like to wrestle. But there's something bothering me. This guy who's teaching me to wrestle wants me to come to the center on Sunday when no one else is there. He said that we would have the place to ourselves, and he could really teach me a lot. I'd like to, but I've been noticing that when he's teaching me, he holds me down and sometimes grabs me between the legs. He makes like it's a real funny joke, but I'm not so sure that I like it.

• **What is risky about this situation?**

- History of unwanted touching of private parts.
- Touching will probably become more serious if allowed to continue.
- Individual coaching on Sunday would put Jeff alone at the center with a possible molester.

• **How would you resist?**

- Tell the person to stop grabbing you and do not wrestle with him any longer.
- Make sure that you are not alone with him, and if he grabs you yell "Stop that!" loud enough so that everyone will hear.

• **How would you report this situation?**

- Tell the individual's supervisor and ask that someone else help you with wrestling.
- Ask your parents to file a report with the police. What he is doing is abuse and it is illegal.

Mario's Story

I am a 13-year-old boy with a problem – my 17-year-old uncle, Roy. Roy stays with me when my parents go out of town. The last time, he started to act really strange. He wouldn't let me out of his sight. Even when I took a shower, he insisted that I keep the bathroom door open. When I turned around, Roy was taking a picture of me in the shower. He told me there wasn't any film in the camera and that it was a joke. I don't think it was funny, though. On the last night he was there, he told me to come into his bedroom and watch TV with him—only it wasn't TV, it was sex stuff. He told me not to tell anyone because if I did he would be in trouble and so would I.

• **Does the fact that Roy is a member of Mario's family and only 17 years old mean that he could not be a possible child molester?**

- Remember that a child molester could be anyone. Most are family members or someone else the child knows.
- Many child molesters begin molesting others when they are teenagers.

• **Does the fact that Roy has not touched Mario mean that sexual abuse did not happen?**

- Roy violated Mario's privacy by taking a picture that Mario did not want taken -- this is one form of abuse.
- Showing Mario pornographic videos is a form of sexual abuse and is usually a forerunner of sexual contact.

• **Should Mario get into trouble if he tells on Roy?**

- Mario should not be blamed. He did nothing wrong.
- Anytime that sexual abuse occurs, the abuser is the one who is responsible.

Steven's Story

My name is Steven. I go to junior high school and make pretty good grades, so I'm not stupid. But the other day something happened that made me feel really dumb. A group of guys decided that they wanted to start a secret club. Only a few kids would be able to join their club. It was a fun thing, and the only way that you could join was to be asked by one of the members of the club. Well, one of my friends belonged and asked me to join. I was really flattered, and I really wanted to join. He told me that the club was meeting in one of the storage buildings on campus and that we could get high and have some fun — then he grabbed my crotch and laughed.

• **What do you suppose Steven's friend meant when he said, "We could get high and have some fun," and then grabbed Steven's crotch?**

- Secret clubs are often used by child molesters to gain access to unsuspecting boys.
- Using drugs and alcohol to lower resistance to sexual abuse also is quite common.

• **Suppose that Steven went to the club meeting and ended up being sexually molested by one of the other guys there. How do you think he would feel?**

- A lot of boys feel very embarrassed when they realize that they have been fooled. Often they are afraid that others will think that they are homosexual if they have been sexually abused by another guy.
- Embarrassment might cause Steven and other boys in his situation to not report their abuse.

I have reviewed this material with my son on _____

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian