



Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy

Introduction

1. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

District 7120 is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and any other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.

2. Definitions

Volunteer: Any adult 18 years old or older involved with Rotary Youth Services activities who has direct one on one interactions with students, either supervised or unsupervised. This includes, but is not limited to, club and district Youth Exchange officers and committee members, Rotarian counselors, Interact Advisors, RYLA counselors (Mom and Pops), trainers, Rotarians and non-Rotarians, their spouses and partners that host students for activities or outings or who might drive students to events or functions, host parents, and other adult residents of the host home (including siblings and other family members).

Student: Youth involved with any Rotary Youth Services Program, regardless of whether they are of the age of majority. Rotaract would be excluded because that program is for young adults.

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse refers to engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a student, or forcing or encouraging a student to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts, alone or with another person of any age of the same sex or the opposite sex.

Additional examples of sexual abuse could include, but are not limited to:

- Non-touching offenses
- Indecent exposure
- Exposing a student to sexual or pornographic material

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment refers to sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is a technique used by sexual predators to desensitize or “groom” their victims.

Examples of sexual harassment could include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual advances
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or drawings
- Sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact, such as brushing or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments



Youth Services: Rotary support of any Rotary International approved youth program including but not limited to: Youth Exchange, Interact, RYLA Youth Program, etc.

3. Incorporation of District Youth Exchange Program and Liability Insurance Rotary District 7120 Youth Exchange program is incorporated as part of the Rotary District 7170 Youth Exchange Program, Incorporated and is incorporated under the laws of the state/province/country of United State of America. The District 7120 is a member district of Empire State Youth Exchange, Inc. In addition, each district program is also required to carry adequate general liability insurance with coverage and limits appropriate for its geographic location.

4. Volunteer Selection and Screening

The following screening steps must be completed prior to participation in Youth Services activities. District 7120 will maintain all records of criminal background checks, waivers, and screening for adults working with minors in accordance with our retention policy.

All volunteers interested in participating in District 7120 Youth Services programs must:

- Complete a *Youth Volunteer Affidavit* form and authorize the district to conduct a criminal background check (subject to local laws and practices).
- Undergo personal interviews.
- Provide a list of references for the district to check.
- Meet RI and district eligibility requirements for working with students. RI requires that any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment be prohibited from working with youth in a Rotary context. If an individual is accused of sexual abuse or harassment, and the investigation into the claim is inconclusive, then, for the safety of youth participants and the protection of the accused, additional safeguards must be put in place to assure the protection of any youth with whom the individual may have future conduct. A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated to participate in youth programs. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his or her former position.
- Understand and comply with RI and district guidelines for the Youth Services programs.

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

- Host families must undergo a comprehensive interview that determines their suitability for hosting exchange students. This should include:
 - Demonstrated commitment to the safety and security of students
 - Motivation for hosting a student is consistent with Rotary ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange
 - Financial ability to provide adequate accommodations (room and board) for the student



- Aptitude for providing appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student's well being

Must meet all the requirements of the US Department of State, Rotary International, ESYE, Inc., & District 7120 Youth Exchange.

- Host families must complete a written application.
- Home visits must be conducted for each family and should include both announced and unannounced visits, both prior to and during the placement. Home visits must be conducted annually, even for repeat host families.
- All adult residents 18 years of age or older in the host home must meet the selection and screening guidelines. This includes adult children of the host family and other members of the extended family that reside in the home either on a full- or part-time basis.

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

- Counselors & officers must not be a member of the student's host families
- Counselors & officers must be trained in responding to any problems or concerns which may arise during the exchange, which may include instances of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment.

5. Youth Exchange Student Selection and Screening

All students interested in participating in the District 7120 Youth Exchange program must:

- Complete a written application and be interviewed for their suitability for participation in the Youth Exchange program.
- Attend and participate in all district orientation and training sessions.

All parents or legal guardians of students interested in participating in the District 7120 Youth Exchange program must:

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

6. Training

District 7120 will provide abuse and harassment prevention training to all Youth Services participants. The district chair or Vice-Chairs and / or the district student protection officer will conduct the training sessions.

- Training will be offered quarterly (as we have winter students that come at last minute, maybe as needed). All host families must be trained before hosting. Host families must be retrained yearly. Youth, Services Chairs, Club and all other Youth Counselors or Officers, Interact Advisors and
- Youth Exchange Officers, must be trained when they assume their positions and must be retrained as needed. Youth Exchange Officers and Counselors must pass the US Department of State test prior to assuming their positions.



- Conduct specialized training sessions for the following Youth Services program participants:
 - District Youth Exchange committee members
 - Club Youth Exchange committee members
 - Rotarian counselors & officers for all of the Youth Services
 - Other Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in Youth Services activities, such as local tours or district events
 - Host families
 - Students (outbound and inbound), Interact, RYLA.
 - Host Parents and legal guardians of students
- Records will be kept to ensure that all those required to be trained have participated.
- Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance.
- Evaluate and review this policy and accompanying procedures on a regular basis.

(Youth Exchange Only)

- All inbound Youth Exchange students maintain insurance in accordance with RI regulations and District 7120 Youth Exchange requirements.
- Provides each student with a list of local services in the district (rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.)
- Will complete a student data request form for all participating Youth Exchange students and return it to RI one month before the beginning of the exchange.
- Will maintain and provide to Youth Exchange students a “district hotline.”
- Will follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites and usage of the Rotary Marks.
- Will appoint an independent lawyer, therapist or counselor to represent any alleged victim in cases of sexual abuse and harassment.
- Will report all criminal allegations to RI within 72 hours.
- Will report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to RI within 72 hours.

7. Allegation Reporting Guidelines

District 7120 is committed to protecting the safety and wellbeing of Youth Services students and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled in accord with the *Youth Services Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines*, found in *Appendix B*.

8. Investigation Guidelines

District 7120 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will investigate each allegation thoroughly. The district will cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective services, and legal investigations, and will only conduct its own independent investigations such that it does not interfere with other investigations.



9. Other District 7120 Responsibilities (Youth Exchange Only) District 7120:

- Has procedures for reporting, investigating, and proper handling of non- criminal offenses or historic cases that law enforcement will not investigate. See incident handling.

10. Club Compliance

District 7120 will monitor and ensure that all participating clubs within the district comply with RI guidelines for abuse and harassment prevention. All clubs that wish to apply to the district for certification must provide the district with a copy of the following for review and approval:

- Copies of all materials produced in the club to promote and support the Youth Services program, including, but not limited to, promotional materials and brochures, applications, policies, Web site links, Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- List of services in area (rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services)
- Club abuse and harassment prevention training program Participating clubs must agree to:
- Complete and return a signed compliance statement that the club is operating their program in accordance with District 7120 and RI policy.
- Conduct reference checks for all volunteers involved with the program, including, but not limited to adult full-time residents of host home, counselor, club chair, and all Rotarians and their spouses or partners with direct unsupervised contact. All volunteers must complete and sign the *Youth Volunteer Affidavit* found in *Appendix A*. Clubs will submit volunteer affidavits to the student protection officer who will do background checks.
- Follow the *Youth Services Abuse and Harassment Reporting Guidelines* found in *Appendix B*. Report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment to the appropriate law enforcement authorities immediately and then to the club and district leadership for investigation.

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- Develop a comprehensive system for host family selection and screening that includes announced and unannounced home visits and interviews both prior to and during the placement.
- Conduct follow-up evaluations of both students and host families.
- Prohibit direct placement of students outside of the District 7120 Youth Exchange program structure (e.g. “backdoor exchanges”).
- Set procedures for removal of a student from the host family (criteria for moving a student and back-up temporary housing available in advance).
- Develop contingency plans for hosting that include pre-screened and available back-up families
- Ensure that all hosting is voluntary. Parents of outbound students and club members must not be required to host students.
- Ensure that long-term exchange students have multiple host families.
- Provide each student with a comprehensive local services list.
- Ensure that the host counselor for each student is not a member of the student’s host family.



- Ensure that the host counselor is trained in responding to any problems or concerns that may arise during the exchange, including the prevention of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse or harassment.
- Provide mandatory training on sexual abuse and harassment prevention for host families, outbound students, inbound students, and their parents or legal guardians.
- Provide the names and contact information of at least three people to contact for assistance with any issues or problems to all Youth Exchange students. These people must include both males and females, not related to each other, and individuals independent of the host family and club counselor.
- Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites and usage of the Rotary Marks
- Report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to the district immediately.
- Conduct interviews of all applicants and applicants' parents or legal guardian

11. Incident Handling

Guidelines for Incident Reporting

For all allegations of abuse or neglect:

FIRST

What to do if your exchange student tells you of Harassment and/or Abuse

- Listen attentively & let him/her know it was right to tell you
- Assure him/her that they are not to blame
- Remain calm and make sure student feels safe
- Encourage student to share with you what happened and who was involved
- Make detailed notes including date & time
- Don't promise to keep secrets & explain the necessity of informing Protection Officer

SECOND

Contact the Student Protection Officer (SPO) who will

- Gather facts on allegation
- Contact appropriate authorities
- Contact the Youth Services Chairperson immediately
- Service as point of contact for all agencies involved
- Advocate for the victim to assure help is provided
- Act as link to the professional care agencies
- Document all details
- Serve as primary contact for student, parents, host family, Social Services, police, other authorities
- Act as link to professional caring agencies
- Offer student independent non-Rotarian counseling
- Remove abuser from all contact with victim and other students



THIRD

The SPO will contact the district chair who will:

- Notify Governor & keep him/her informed
- Notify Host Club Chair/Counselor/President
- Notify Country Officer (Youth Exchange)
- Determine who will contact students' parents & Sponsor Rotary District
- Notify Rotary International within 72 hours.
- Emphasize confidentiality of information and need to not speculate or comment
- Assure proper authorities are contacted
- Assure students' parents or legal guardian have been notified
- Provide student option of staying or going home once stabilized
- Remove abuser from all contact with victim and other students
- Cooperate with police involved in investigation

The following should be noted:

1. District 7120 has a zero-tolerance policy for abuse and harassment.
2. Any adult involved in A Rotary youth exchange program against whom an allegation is made will be removed from all contact with youth until the matter is resolved.
3. Any Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of or is otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment will be terminated from Rotary club membership.
4. Any non-Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of or is otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment will be prohibited from working with Rotary youth.

For all incidents involving accidents, early return, crimes, etc.: (Youth Exchange Only)

1. Notify the district chair immediately (or Vice-Chair if the chair is unavailable)
2. Students will meet with their counselor and /or the youth exchange chair and the district chair. It will be the responsibility of the district chair to determine if the infraction warrants removal from the program. Removal will be immediate in cases where:
 - a. violence has been threatened
 - b. the student has been expelled from school

If the incident does not warrant early return, the district chair will write an incident report that will include the problem, a plan for improvement and the consequences for failure to improve (early return home). The student and district chair will sign the document and receive copies. The district chair will keep copies on file until such time as the student returns home. Should the student fail to improve, the student will be sent home and items 3, 4 and 5 will be implemented.

3. The district chair will notify the Governor, Rotary International, the country officer, the host club counselor and youth exchange officer.
4. The club youth exchange officer will notify the host club president and the student's natural parents. The host club youth exchange chair will make plans for the immediate and direct route return of the student to the country of origin.
5. The country officer will notify the sponsor district contact.