

Youth Protection Policy

‘Adopting sensible procedures and following guidelines protect both program participants and volunteers and enables programs to accomplish their missions and objectives.’

Rotary 
District 5040

Adopted by Board of D5040 Inc. March 2020
Updated: December 2020

DISTRICT 5040

YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

1. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

District 5040 strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and youth they meet and protect them from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.¹

2. Definitions

- **Youth** – a person under the age of 19 years
- **Volunteer** — any adult involved with Rotary activities that interacts directly with youth whether supervised or unsupervised. For a more detailed list for Youth Exchange, refer to the Rotary Youth Exchange Handbook.²
- **Youth Program Participant** — anyone who participates in a Rotary youth program, whether child or adult
- **YEO – Youth Exchange Officer** (club designate) is responsible for oversight of the youth program at the club level and works closely with the District Youth Exchange committee
- **RYLA – Rotary Youth Leadership Award** is Rotary's leadership training and personal development program for young people ages 14 to 30 years of age. This document compliments the comprehensive RYLA Handbook³ for all RYLA participants.
- **INTERACT** is a service club for ages 12 – 18 sponsored by a Rotary Club. Interact gives young people the opportunity to participate in fun, meaningful service projects while developing leadership skills and meeting new friends. This document compliments the comprehensive Interact Handbook⁴ to sponsor and oversee an Interact Club.
- **Rotary Youth Exchange (YEX)** is a Rotary International student exchange program for students in secondary school. Since 1929, Rotary International has sent young people around the globe to experience new cultures. Currently, about 9000 students are sponsored by Rotary Clubs every year. This document compliments the comprehensive Youth Exchange Handbook⁵ to sponsor and oversee a District and Club Exchange Program.

3. Incorporation and Liability Insurance

Rotary District 5040 is a legal entity known as Rotary International District 5040 Inc. This entity was incorporated under the Canada Corporations Act on April 10 2007.

District 5040 clubs carry liability insurance⁶ renewed annually, with appropriate coverage and policy limits. This policy protects the clubs from third-party claims and lawsuits alleging negligence by the organization, its employees, or its volunteers. It is important to not take an insurance policy at face value. A clear understanding of the liability policy expectations are in order for all organizational chairs, whether at a Club or District level.

¹ <https://my.rotary.org/document/rotary-youth-protection-guides>

² <https://www.rotary.org/en/our-programs/youth-exchanges/details>

³ <https://www.rotary.org/en/our-programs/rotary-youth-leadership-awards/details>

⁴ <https://www.rotary.org/en/get-involved/interact-clubs/details>

⁵ <https://www.rotary.org/en/our-programs/youth-exchanges/details>

⁶ APPENDIX A – Porter McMillan – 2018/2019 Certificate of Insurance coverage

4. District and Club Responsibilities

District 5040 will monitor all participating clubs and ensure that they comply with the YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY and Rotary Youth Exchange certification requirement.⁷ Clubs are responsible for following the Youth Protection Policy and all RI and District manuals related to youth in all club activities.

5. Volunteer Selection and Screening

- All Rotarian and non-Rotarian volunteers working with youth program participants must meet RI and district eligibility requirements
- Undergo a background check (CRC)⁸
- Non-Rotarian volunteers must be registered with their sponsor club in the Clubrunner database to allow certification documents to be registered
- Non-Rotarian volunteers must complete a Volunteer Information Form⁹
- If volunteers are involved in transporting youth, an Abstract may be in order¹⁰
- If volunteers are involved in transporting youth they must complete the District 5040 Volunteer Drivers Agreement & Protocol¹⁴

Rotary International prohibits the membership and participation of any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise been found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment.

If a person is accused of sexual abuse or harassment and the law enforcement investigation is inconclusive, or if law enforcement declines to investigate, additional safeguards are necessary to protect any youth program participants with whom the accused may have future contact, as well as the accused. A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated as a youth program volunteer. Reinstatement is not a right, and reinstatement to his or her former position is not guaranteed.

6. Training

- District 5040 and member clubs should provide youth-protection training and information.
- District 5040 and member clubs should conduct training for those involved in Youth Exchange and other Rotary recognized youth programs and activities.
- District 5040 will ensure that all clubs are trained on/aware of Youth Protection Policy.

7. Allegation Handling and Follow-Through

District 5040 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will handle them in accordance with the Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines¹¹.

The district will cooperate with all law enforcement agencies, child protective services, and legal investigations and will not interfere with official investigations when conducting its own independent review.

District 5040 may appoint a youth protection officer or district review committee to evaluate and review files, policies, and allegations regularly.

Any crisis prior, during or after events/travel will be handled by the District Crisis Management Team. Clubs must contact the Crisis Management Team before taking any action regarding unforeseen events.

⁷ <https://www.rotary.org/en/our-programs/youth-exchanges/details>

⁸ <https://justice.gov.bc.ca/eCRC/>

⁹ APPENDIX B Volunteer Information Form

¹⁰ <https://www.icbc.com/driver-licensing/getting-licensed/Pages/Your-driving-record.aspx>

¹¹ Rotary Code of Policies 13 October 2018

8. Travel by Youth¹²

Youth travel outside of the local community must comply with youth protection policies and follow the Extraordinary Youth Travel Protocol¹³. For all youth travel sponsored by District 5040 or its clubs, the following will be done before departure:

- Obtain written permission from the parents or legal guardians of program participants
- Give parents and legal guardians details about the travel, including locations, accommodations, itineraries, and the organizer's contact information
- When traveling more than 200 kilometers, from the residence, verify that program participants have adequate insurance, including benefits for medical services, emergency medical evacuation, repatriation of remains, and legal liability

When travel is by vehicle, all volunteers must follow the District 5040 Volunteers Driver's Protocol & Agreement¹⁴.

9. Standards and Guidelines for Electronic Communication & Virtual Activities¹⁵

All Youth Programs; District and Club, should follow the Standards and Guidelines for Electronic Communication & Virtual Activities¹⁵ when using on-line communication tools. Program leaders must be aware of communicating with youth and parents/guardians, using social media and leading in a virtual environment.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL'S STATEMENT OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH

Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they encounter and protect them from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2006

¹² Source: Rotary Code of Policies 13 October 2018 - 2.100.4.

¹³ APPENDIX H - Extraordinary Youth Group Travel Protocol

¹⁴ APPENDIX I – Volunteer's Drivers Protocol & Agreement

¹⁵ APPENDIX J – Standards & Guidelines for Electronic Communication & Virtual Activities

APPENDIX A**SUMMARY OF ROTARY DISTRICT COVERAGES**

\$5,000,000 Commercial General Liability
\$2,000,000 Abuse Liability
\$2,000,000 Directors & Officers Liability
\$500,000 Cyber Liability
\$100,000 Miscellaneous Property
\$30,000 Crime Coverage (Theft of Monies)
\$75,000 Accidental Death & Dismemberment Coverage
\$10,000 Accident Medical Reimbursement Coverage

For further details regarding the district insurance please contact:

Wilson M Beck Insurance Services
3-550 Lorne Street
Kamloops, BC, V2C 1W3
236-425-1770

Contact Details:

We have created a dedicated email address for our Rotary clients

Email: Rotary@wmbec

APPENDIX B

NON-ROTARIAN VOLUNTEER FORM

District 5040 strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses and partners, and volunteers must safeguard those they meet and protect them from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. This form is Part 1 of applying for a CRC (Part 2).

PERSONAL INFORMATION

(Personal information will not be shared - used only for verification purposes.)

Full Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Postal code _____

Volunteer for the Rotary Club of _____

Volunteer for the Rotaract Club of _____

Volunteer for District 5040 Program _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Position applied for _____

Background Check Applied for on (dd/mm/yyyy) _____

- **Please keep original copy for Rotary/Rotaract Club or District Youth Program**
- **Email a copy to: District Compliance Chair**
ron.davis2@shaw.ca

**ROTARY THANKS YOU FOR BEING WILLING TO VOLUNTEER
 AND MAKE OUR ROTARY PROGRAMS POSSIBLE!**

APPENDIX C

Emergency Response Guidelines

The details of the Emergency Response are dependent on the location or facility and the type of activity. When using facilities for specialized activities, you will need to contact them to obtain information on their emergency response planning. You will develop your plan taking this information into consideration. Knowledge and understanding of restrictions of activities based on the governing Rotary insurance policy should be adhered to by the organizing and supervising adult Rotarians.

When an emergency occurs, if possible, assign someone to take notes of actions during the emergency. As soon as possible afterwards, each person involved should make their own notes about their actions.

MISSING PERSON

A missing person refers to a participant who is unaccounted for. It is important to constantly monitor the group and to pay special attention whenever there is a change in the activity. Early recognition of an unaccounted-for participant can often result in preventing the incident from becoming more serious. The following are some general guidelines to assist with managing this type of situation:

- Determine the time and place where the person(s) was last seen.
- Check the facility and surroundings, focusing on areas where the person is most likely to be.
- Check areas that may pose a hazard (on the street, waterfront/pools, rock cuts, etc.).
- Assign someone to remain with the group. Assign as many available adults to assist with checking high likelihood areas.
- Establish a firm timeframe to report back to rest of group (no more than 20 mins).
- Establish a timeframe for follow-up with parents.
- Contact authorities if your efforts to locate the missing person(s) have not been successful – in an urban environment this should be no longer than 30 minutes. In remote environments this should be no more than one hour.
- In an urban environment, immediately attract the attention of people in the area – bystanders can assist by being on the lookout for suspicious activity.

EVACUATION

An evacuation refers to having to quickly remove the group from an unexpected and potentially dangerous situation. This may relate to exiting a building, relocating a campsite or leaving a public area. Each situation is going to be different, so it is important to consider the following guidelines before having to manage this type of situation:

- Consider reasons you may need to evacuate – fire, severe weather (note degrees of weather), severe injury, and wide-spread illness.
- Define a meeting place to go to outside of the danger area – inform the group of this location.
- Determine a means of transportation if leaving the site.
- If possible, conduct a buddy check-in and head count before leaving the site.
- Upon arrival at evacuation site conduct a buddy check-in and headcount.
- Determine an all-clear signal or system for communicating when it is safe to return to the site.
- Reassure participants and attend to their needs.
- Monitor the situation for changing or threatening conditions.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The adult has the responsibility to facilitate the alerting and safe evacuation and sheltering of persons with disabilities during an emergency. These individuals may require assistance. This information must be included on your emergency response plan. Never separate a disabled person from their service animal or assistive device.

INTRUDER

An intruder refers to a person believed to have the intention of harming or through his/her actions could harm supervisors or participants. This could be a random situation or a result of a pre-existing relationship with a group member or nearby member of the public. The following are some general guidelines to assist with managing this type of situation:

- Lockdown area/facility/room – lock and barricade doors, keep the group out of sight and from making any noise
- If possible, without alerting the intruder, communicate with others in other activity areas of the potential threat
- Note identifying features and threatening actions of an intruder
- Contact the police and report the situation
- Conduct a headcount
- Be prepared to remain in a lockdown situation for a substantial period.

TRAUMATIC/MEDICAL EMERGENCY

A traumatic or medical emergency is a situation where a participant or supervisor requires immediate medical attention from trained professionals. This situation could develop from a traumatic accident (vehicle crash) or an acute medical condition (appendicitis) – these are emergencies that require urgent medical care. First aid may assist in stabilizing the patient, but they ultimately need to be in an emergency equipped hospital. The following are some general guidelines to assist with managing this type of situation:

- Assign someone to look after the patient (preferably someone with first aid training)
- Manage the safety of the group
- Contact EMS and explain the situation
- If possible, send a group to meet the emergency response crew responding and lead them to the patient
- Assist the first responders as directed
- Take care of the needs of the group
- If possible, send an adult representative with the patient
- Ask for assistance from EMS in contacting parents/guardians
- Notify the District Youth Protection Officer¹³
- Determine the best course of action for the group

PARENT/GUARDIAN DOES NOT ARRIVE TO PICK UP

The following are some general guidelines to assist with managing this type of situation:

- Call parent/guardian and ask permission to have child go with another parent/guardian
- If no answer, arrange for her to travel with a screened volunteer. Leave a message for parents at all contact numbers
- If possible, continue calling during travel
- Set up a policy in advance so that parents/guardians know what will happen if they are late (late fee donation to if more than 15 minutes late, clearly explain your guidelines to parents)

APPENDIX D

PROCEDURES TO COMMUNICATE WITH PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS

All communication regarding a serious incident where youth are involved in the capacity of being a participant of a Rotary District 5040 event or program will be done through the Crisis Management Committee of District 5040 under the direction of the district governor and with support of the event/program District Chair.

APPENDIX E

INCIDENT REPORTING

The responsible adult should document all incidents, whether minor or serious, that occurs during a Rotary sanctioned activity. An incident is an out of the ordinary occurrence, such as an illness, injury, discipline problem, conflict, frightening situation or any unusual or unexpected occurrence during a Rotary activity/event. A minor incident is unlikely to have future repercussions. A serious incident is one that involves any of the following:

- Assistance from authorities (fire, police, ambulance, etc.)
- Participants who are emotionally and/or psychologically distressed
- Widespread illness of many participants (e.g. at a large event/camp)
- A stay in a hospital
- Life-threatening illness
- Has future negligence and/or criminal repercussions
- Has future health care repercussions
- Poses a serious or significant negative impact on Rotary or have future insurance implications
- Interest from the media

A summary of the incident should be documented and reported to the District Youth Protection Officer and the District Crisis Management Team.

The information contained in incident reports is confidential and, for privacy reasons, should be sent to the appropriate personnel by the reporting Rotarian adult. It should not be shared with any other persons.

NOTES:

The purpose of an Incident Report is to ensure Rotary has details of the incident should questions arise. It is a tool to protect and support both the Rotarians and Rotary.

Incidents are confidential and are only discussed with:

- Parent/guardian of the youth participant for whom the incident is reported.
 - Those who are involved in its resolution or the care of the participant.
- Rotarians and other adult volunteers have a legal responsibility to notify their local child protection agency (intake worker) or the police if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child needs protection. Reporting to authorities the adults to whom the allegation is reported, who suspect abuse or who observe an abusive situation must take the following steps to report to the authorities:
- Do not attempt to verify or investigate the situation.
 - Write down facts as presented and/or observed.
 - Report immediately to the local child protection agency or police.
 - Keep the name of the youth and the accused in confidence as well as the nature and details of the allegation.
 - Consult your District Youth Protection Officer if you are in any doubt about how to proceed.

Do not conduct any investigation to substantiate the allegations. Responsibility for conducting the investigation lies with the child protection authorities and the police. These agencies have the legal authority to act and the training to handle very sensitive and sometimes volatile situations.

APPENDIX F

HARRASSMENT INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

Instructions: Complete the following report leaving no field blank. If a question does not apply to this situation, please enter "NA."
 Incident reports should be emailed to RI (email: youthprotection@rotary.org). After submitting the report, please continue to update staff as further information develops.

REPORTER INFORMATION			
Reporter's Name:		Title/Role:	
District:		Telephone(s):	
Date & time of report:		Email:	

ALLEGED VICTIM INFORMATION			
Last Name:		First Name:	
Date of Birth:		Citizenship:	
<i>If incident occurred during a Rotary Youth Exchange, please provide the program details listed below:</i>			
Host District:		Host Club:	
Sponsor District:		Sponsor Club:	
Host Family Name & Address:		Host Family Phone:	

ALLEGED OFFENDER INFORMATION			
Last Name:		First Name:	
Relationship to the youth named above:		Title/Role (if applicable:	
Club name (if Rotarian):			
Other Parties Involved: (contact information)			

SUMMARY

Date and time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
<i>Please provide details of the incident:</i>	

ACTION TAKEN

<i>Provide details on the action taken after the incident was reported to you/your organization:</i>
Is the youth currently in a safe place?
Has the alleged offender been removed from youth programs while the investigation is performed?
Please list all individuals or organizations that have been informed of the alleged incident to date? <i>(Example: districts, clubs, youth participant’s legal guardians, district governor, youth protection officer, etc.)</i>
Has the alleged incident been reported to local law enforcement? If not, why?
Is local law enforcement investigating the allegation, or have any official charges been filed? If so, please describe:
Have any support services been offered to the youth? If so, please describe the service/provider:
Please continue to update RI staff on any new developments in this matter, including any media inquiries you may receive by emailing; youthprotection@rotary.org
Information provided on this form may be private and should only be shared on a need-to-know basis. Store and transport securely.

APPENDIX G

District 5040 Youth Incident Report

1. Program/Event _____
RYLA, Interact Project or Event, Interact Conference, YEX, STEP, Other

2. Date of Injury: _____ 3. Location: _____

4. Name: _____ 5. Phone: _____

6. Parent/Guardian: _____ 7. Contact: _____

8. Clinic/Hospital Visit: _____ 9. Method: _____

10. List Incident Information

11. Parent/Guardian Notified: _____

12. Staff Assistance: _____

13. _____
Program Chair Signature Date

14. _____
District Youth Chair Date

APPENDIX H

EXTRAORDINARY YOUTH GROUP TRAVEL PROTOCOL

(Excluding Youth Exchange Students)

TRAVEL

- Travel by Youth is restricted to North America.
- Travel must be to Rotary Districts approved as YEX Certified Districts
- All travel must be approved in writing by:
 - District Governor, District Youth Chair, Host Club President
- Where travel is by a District Interact Club, written approval by District Interact Chair is also needed
- Singular travel is not allowed under this protocol
- All travel documentation must be confirmed prior to travel (visa, travel insurance, vaccinations etc.)

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- All participants must provide appropriate signed waiver/release forms prior to travel
- All participants and parents/legal guardians must be informed on District's Policies regarding Youth Protection and Youth Group Travel Protocols

ROTARY CLUBS

- Ensure that District/Club Insurance Policy covers specific travel including but not limited to working while on trip
- Provide participants and parents/legal guardians with specific details about the program, location of event, travel itineraries, sleeping accommodations, and contact information for program organizers before departure
- Provide District Youth Chair and appropriate Youth Program District Chair (Interact) with a detailed summary of travel plans including contact information of organizers and chaperones
- Ensure all organizers and chaperones travelling with youth have completed appropriate screening procedures (CRC, Volunteer Application Form)
- Ensure that all volunteers are provided with a detailed job description and responsibility
- Supervision standards: ratio of 1:4
- Rotarian standards: ratio of 1:4
- Male/Female standards: minimum of one of each gender if group is mixed
- Have a Crisis Management Plan which includes:
 - Handling medical and other emergencies and providing for adult support
 - Procedures for communicating with parents/legal guardians
- Ensure accommodations are approved and appropriate

CHAPERONES

- Must complete appropriate screening procedures (CRC, Volunteer Application Form)
- Must be a minimum of 25 years of age
- Must be a Rotarian, participant parent or guardian, or a Rotary Youth Program alumni
- Must provide 24 Hour Supervision of all youth participants

INSURANCE

- Parents/legal guardians of each minor must provide travel insurance which includes such things as medical (when traveling outside home country), emergency medical evacuation, repatriation of remains, and legal liability, in the amounts satisfactory to the club or district organizing the activity or event with coverage from the time of the minor's departure from home until they return home
- Insurance must cover all High Risk Activities

YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

- Must be between the ages of 16 and 18 by the time of travel
- Must be a member of an active Interact Club
- Must hold membership of Interact Club in year of travel
- Must follow the YEX Four D's Rule: No Drinking, No Drugs, No Dating, No Driving

APPENDIX I

VOLUNTEER DRIVER’S PROTOCOL & AGREEMENT

Rotary District 5040 takes the safe transportation of youth in our programs and care very seriously. Rotary Clubs have a responsibility to ensure that all volunteer drivers follow best practices when transporting youth. This form must be completed for any travel over 100km. Program Committees may adjust kilometers (lower to 50km) if it best suits their program.

This will authorize the following to transport youth participating in events/programs of Rotary District 5040:

NAME _____ CONTACT CELL # _____

MEMBER/VOLUNTEER OF WHICH ROTARY CLUB _____

YOUTH EVENT OR PROGRAM _____ DATE _____

FROM _____ TO _____

Authorized by: _____ Date: _____

(Authorization must be by Rotary Club President or Committee Chair)

‘Trip Driver’ is defined as any person authorized by Rotary District 5040 who has agreed to be a driver for specific transportation while driving their own or another licensed vehicle.

All drivers must be:

- 25 years of age or older
- Hold a valid BC Driver’s License Class 5 or higher
- No license suspensions in the last 5 years
- No criminal code convictions

All drivers are advised that in order to ensure the automobile liability insurance coverage is not invalidated that the following are enforced:

- a. Use a licensed automobile which carries valid third-party liability insurance as required under legislation of British Columbia
- b. An incident report must be completed, with all available particulars, of any accident arising out of the use of an automobile during a trip.
- c. Where appropriate, the Rule of 2 should be in effect in cases of driving multiple youth of different genders.

Driving Contract

- I declare that I have a valid driver’s license and the vehicle is insured by valid automobile insurance as required by provincial law.
- That the vehicle is mechanically fit and that there are seatbelts in working condition for all passengers. Seat belts must be worn by everyone and remain fastened at all times the vehicle is in motion.
- I will not leave youth unattended in a vehicle.
- I will drive the speed limits and obey all other provincial traffic laws and be a safe and responsible driver.

- I will control behavior issues within my vehicle. I will share any issues with the coordinator of the group I am driving for.
- I will abide by any restrictions Rotary District 5040 puts in place. (How many passengers, speed etc.)
- I am not under the influence of any medications, drugs or alcohol that will affect and endanger the youth in my care.
- I will avoid distractions when I am behind the wheel (e.g. loud music, eating, drinking, using cell phone, texting, or engaging in distracting conversations with other passengers, etc.).
- I will take responsibility for any accidents that occur because of poor judgment on my part.
- I will never allow youth to drive in my place.

I understand that if I do not follow all of these guidelines my ability to drive for future Rotary Youth events will be jeopardized. Rotary District 5040 has the right and authority to take away my driving privileges at any time.

Your signature below means that you have read the preceding statements and guidelines, that you agree to them, that you will abide by them, and that if at any time you cannot agree to the preceding you will let Rotary District 5040 know and discontinue driving.

Signature _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX J

STANDARDS

FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES In District and Club Youth Programs

January 2021

Clubs of Rotary District 5040 Inc. have a responsibility to protect **youth participants** who are taking part in District and Club programs which take place virtually. The Standards for Electronic Communication and Virtual Activities are to be shared with all club members and volunteers who are active in youth programs. These Standards outline a set of mandatory requirements which must be met when Clubs participate in youth programs. Failure to follow these Standards may result in a Club being excluded from participating.

This list has been adapted from Rotary International's "Consideration for Virtual Exchanges" and the Canadian Centre for Child Protection guidelines for "Establishing Boundaries for Online Schooling". The RI Statement of Conduct for working with Youth always applies and concerns about communications or activities that fall outside of these guidelines should be reported immediately to the local/sponsor Rotary Club.

NOTE 1: District 5040 Youth Committee has a dedicated Zoom account which is available for all District and Club youth programs to utilize. It is recommended that all District and Club youth programs use this account, or have a dedicated Club account or program.

NOTE 2: Every Rotarian and volunteer with Youth Programs must have a valid CRC on file with RI District 5040 Inc.

NOTE 3: District 5040 Inc.'s Youth Exchange Program adheres to its own Policies and Procedures which take precedence over this document.

Communicating with youth and parents/guardians

- Use communication platforms authorized by sponsoring Rotary Clubs as opposed to personal accounts
- Keep communication transparent by including parents/guardians and/or other leaders on correspondence and replies
- Do not communicate with youth via private messaging or individual texts. Instead communicate via emails, social media groups or group chats with leaders and members included
- Maintain professionalism by communicating during appropriate times of the day
- Let parents and youth know that leaders/staff will not request passwords, financial or personal information in any communication. Immediately report any such activity
- If Youth is part of a District or planning committee, variances may be allowed

Using Social Media

- Whenever possible, create club pages or addresses to communicate (not personal Twitter, Facebook or email addresses). Messages to youth and families should come from these accounts and be youth appropriate and inclusive of members and families. These accounts should be communicated as the club channels to District 5040 Inc.
- Enable privacy settings on groups social media accounts to ensure discussions and planning details are kept private
- Some platforms, like Facebook, have age restrictions for creating an account. Review the platform policies before inviting youth to the group

Leading in a Virtual Environment

- Promote a safe, inclusive and fun environment by discussing expectations with youth about how the Code of Conduct applies
- Use a technology platform that allows for a secure passcode to ensure only invited participants can attend
- Supervision and Rule of Two:
 - Have two leaders/staff in the virtual meeting, or record the full meeting and share with other leaders/staff
 - One on one coaching or mentoring is not allowed
 - Ensure that meetings begin and end on time; this will mitigate the potential for leaders/staff being alone with youth
- Before sharing a video stream of your private space on a virtual ensure your background is professional and appropriate for youth

Verbal/written interactions

Below are some examples of appropriate and inappropriate interactions that you can use to illustrate productive behaviors and establish boundaries between adults and youth, as well as between youth participants themselves. Keeping verbal interactions between adults and youth appropriate is just as important as maintaining appropriate physical boundaries.

Acceptable verbal/writer interactions:

- Positive reinforcement
- Jokes in general
- Encouragement
- Praise

Unacceptable verbal/written interactions

- Calling someone names
- Adults discussing sexual encounters or their personal problems with youth participants
- Adults asking youth to keep secrets of any kind
- Cursing
- Discriminatory or sexual jokes
- Shaming or belittling someone
- Harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate youth

PLEASE COMPLETE FORM AND RETURN TO: District 5040 Youth Chair: lyndarocha@live.com

The Rotary Club of _____ has read and circulated the **Standards and Guidelines for Electronic Communication & Virtual Activities** to members who are actively participating in District and Club Youth Programs.

Club President/Youth Director: _____ Date: _____

Contact Email: _____

Contact Phone: _____

GUIDELINES

FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES

In District and Club Youth Programs

January 2021

NOTE: This is a supporting document that is to be shared with the Standards for Electronic Communication and Virtual Activities.

These guidelines outline what are appropriate electronic communications and virtual activities, so that youth, parents and guardians, program leaders and staff can engage in a safe, fun and inclusive environment. The Guidelines for Electronic Communication and Virtual Activities are to be shared with all club members and volunteers who are active in youth programs

This list has been adapted from Rotary International's "Consideration for Virtual Exchanges" and the Canadian Centre for Child Protection guidelines for "Establishing Boundaries for Online Schooling". The RI Statement of Conduct for working with Youth always applies and concerns about communications or activities that fall outside of these guidelines should be reported immediately to the local/sponsor Rotary Club.

Electronic/Online safety considerations

It is the responsibility of those who administer virtual activities to understand local laws related to data privacy and internet use involving minors, and to see that volunteers and program participants abide by them. If you are considering developing virtual exchanges or using technology to engage young people in other ways, we encourage you to consult with local youth-serving organizations and legal experts to confirm the standard level of care needed in your area to undertake these types of activities.

Rotary District 5040 Inc. has a comprehensive **Youth Protection Policy** that outlines appropriate standards specifically for electronic communication/social media usage between volunteers and youth, as well as between youth program participants themselves. The District Youth Protection Policy (and any consequences for violating it) should be communicated clearly to volunteers, youth, and their families, so that everyone is aware of the expectations.

Communication

To ensure communication is appropriate and transparent between volunteers (including peer mentors) and youth participant(s), consider requiring that all communications (e.g. email, text message, etc.) have a second adult copied, whether it be a vetted volunteer or the student's parent. This helps decrease the risk for misunderstandings or inappropriate interactions.

Outline specific times for when communication can be sent between volunteers and youth (e.g. during the day only). If communication occurs outside of the designated timeframe, that could serve as a warning that interactions between volunteers and/or participants should be monitored more closely.

Adults (or peer mentors) should not maintain private social media connections with a youth program participant and should only use social media to communicate to a closed page/group of several participants.

Sharing or re-sharing participant content:

Photos or personal information about a youth program participant should never be shared without the express permission and knowledge of their parent or legal guardian.

Stories about and images of youth program participants should not be shared or posted until they have completed their program or activity, and only with the participant's and their parents' consent.

Never tag a minor or share their username or handle online. This could threaten their safety by revealing their interests or the locations they visit often.

Educate everyone on how to exhibit appropriate behavior and to keep young people safe. When it comes to keeping students protected in a digital age, one of the most important things to do is to educate volunteers, students and their families about online threats and what they can do to keep themselves and others safe.

In addition to ensuring participants and volunteers are properly screened and trained, below are some key elements to incorporate into your conversations and/or training materials related specifically to online safety.

Understand common threats to online student safety:

- **Online grooming** – Predators (both adults and young people alike) will befriend young people online in order to take advantage of them. Once they've gained their trust, they may encourage students to engage in inappropriate behavior, including sharing inappropriate images and videos, or persuading them to meet in person.
- **Cyberbullying** – Bullying that happens online can be just as devastating to a young person (or worse) because the internet enables individuals to say or do things they wouldn't normally do face-to-face.
- **Reputational risks** – What is shared online can stay around indefinitely - even if it's a "temporary" post or message. Remind students that they should only post or share things online that they would be comfortable sharing with their family, teachers or a future employer.
- **Peer pressure** – Peers have an enormous influence on each other and can persuade each other to act in certain ways, or engage in behaviors, that can be harmful – including risky online games, sending inappropriate photos, or bullying.

Before students participate in any online activity, share these tips:

- **Avoid emotional posting.** Before engaging in any communication, students should make sure they are not upset or angry, and that they are prepared to make smart decisions about what they send, share or post - and with whom.
- **Be respectful of others.** Talk with students about the consequences of their actions, and to always treat others as they would want to be treated.
- **Remain as anonymous as possible.** Students should never share:
 - Their full name or even the names of their family members (including pets!)
 - Specific locations they are currently visiting /often visit (and be sure to turn off GPS apps or other mobile
 - Location settings that may already be built in)
 - Home or school address, or the addresses of any of your friends or family
- **Keep personal information private.** Ensure that privacy settings are activated on social media sites and/or mobile apps and remind students to only connect with people they know. They should also be careful when creating email addresses, screen names, social media handles, to ensure that any aliases they may be using do not include any personal information about them.
- **Think before sharing photos/images of themselves or others.** What students share may remain online forever, so remind students of the risks of sharing information or pictures of themselves or others – including the consequences of others using their photos without their consent.

- **Speak up!** Students should feel empowered and encouraged to report anything that makes them feel uncomfortable, for any reason, including the treatment of others online or receiving inappropriate messages or images from someone.

Volunteers and parents must be prepared to support students as they navigate online activities. It's essential that they:

- **Understand the warning signs of cyber abuse.** Monitor students and look out for “red flags” that could indicate a student is being bullied or abused, such as changes in their behavior or attitude (see Rotary’s Youth Protection Guide). Check in often to let them know you care about their emotional well-being.
- **Empower students.** Help students feel empowered to advocate for their own safety and feel comfortable making their personal boundaries known. Work with them to develop ways to deal with difficult situations and to speak up when they notice something wrong.
- **Invite students to be part of the conversation.** Students may know more about current threats to their safety than adults. They should be involved in discussions about how to keep themselves, and fellow participants, safe. And, by creating an open line of communication, students may feel more comfortable speaking up if something happens.
- **Engage students in productive, structured, and meaningful activities.** When students have a specific goal to focus on, or a cause to contribute to, they are less likely to engage in destructive or inappropriate behavior.

Thank you for the support you provide to Rotary’s young people, and for your efforts to help create safe, meaningful, and engaging experiences for our youth.

‘Rotary believes in developing the next generation of leaders. Our programs help younger leaders build leadership skills, expand education and learn the value of service.’