

District 5190 Youth Exchange Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy

October 30, 2009

1. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

District 5190 is committed to creating and maintaining a safe 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 involved with Rotary Youth Exchange activities who has regular direct interactions, either supervised or unsupervised, with students. Volunteers include, amongst others: any adult who is in a one-on-one situation with a student; club and district Youth Exchange officers and committee members; Rotarian counselors; Rotarians and non-Rotarians and their spouses and partners who host students for activities or outings, or who might drive students to events or functions in a one-on-one situation; and host parents and other adult residents of the host home, including siblings and other family members over the age of 18.

Student. Any individual who is participating in a Rotary Youth Exchange, regardless of whether he or she is of legal age of majority.

Sexual abuse. Engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a young person or forcing or encouraging a young person to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts alone or with another person of any age, of the same or opposite sex. This includes non-touching offenses, such as indecent exposure or showing a young person sexual or pornographic material.

Sexual harassment. 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 used by sexual predators to desensitize or groom their victims.

Some examples of sexual harassment include:

- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or spoken references to sexual conduct, talking about one's sex life in the presence of a young person, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Display of 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

3. Incorporation of District Youth Exchange Program and Liability Insurance

Rotary District 5190 Youth Exchange program is incorporated as the Cal-Vada Youth Exchange Program, Incorporated, under the laws of the state of Nevada.

Liability insurance for the Youth Exchange Program is provided by Rotary International, Evanston, Illinois.

4. Volunteer Selection and Screening

District 5190 will maintain all records of criminal background checks, waivers, and screening for adults working with minors for a period of five (5) years.

All volunteers interested in participating in the District 5190 Youth Exchange program must meet the following requirements:

- Complete the 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 policy prohibits any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise been found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment 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, additional safeguards must be put in place to ensure the protection of any youth with whom the individual may have future contact as well as for the protection of the accused. 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 Exchange program.

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. Host families must:
 - Show a commitment to the safety and security of students
 - Have a motivation for hosting a student consistent with Rotary ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange
 - Be able to provide adequate accommodations (room and board) for the student
 - Be able to provide appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student's well-being
- Host families must complete a written application.
- Home visits must be conducted for each family and should include announced and unannounced visits, both before and during the placement. Home visits must be conducted annually, even for repeat host families.
- All adult residents of 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 who are permanent or part-time residents in the home.

Rotarian counselors must meet the criteria for all volunteers, as well as the following:

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

5. Student Selection and Screening

All students interested in participating in the District 5190 Youth Exchange program must meet these requirements

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

At least one parent or legal guardian of students interested in participating in the District 5190 Youth Exchange program must be interviewed to determine the student's suitability for participation in the program.

6. Training

District 5190 will provide abuse and harassment prevention training to all Youth Exchange program participants. Members of the District RYE Committee, as approved by the District RYE Chair will conduct the training sessions.

Specifically, District 5190 will:

- Adapt, as needed, the *Abuse and Harassment Prevention Training Manual and Leader's Guide* to incorporate specific district guidelines, information on local customs and cultural issues, and legal requirements
- Develop a training calendar that defines the participants, frequency of training required for each volunteer position, and training methods to be used
- Conduct specialized training sessions for the following Youth Exchange program participants:
 - District governor
 - District Youth Exchange committee members
 - Club Youth Exchange committee members
 - Rotarian counselors
 - Other Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in Youth Exchange activities, such as local tours or district events
 - Host families
 - Students (outbound and inbound)
 - Parents and legal guardians of students
- Establish guidelines to ensure that all participants have received the requisite training
- Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance
- Have the district youth protection officer coordinate youth protection training responsibilities.

7. Allegation Reporting Guidelines

District 5190 is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of Youth Exchange students and will not tolerate abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and will be handled in accordance with the Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines.

8. Follow-through and Review Guidelines

District 5190 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will ensure that each allegation is investigated appropriately. The district will cooperate with all law enforcement agencies, child protective services, and legal investigations and will not interfere with other investigations when conducting its own independent reviews.

9. Other District 5190 Responsibilities

- Recommend that all inbound Youth Exchange students maintain insurance as required by RI.
- Provide each student with a list of local services in the district (rape and suicide crisis hot lines, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, relevant law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.).
- Complete a student data request form for all participating Youth Exchange students and return it to RI within one month after the exchange begins.
- Provide a 24-hour emergency contact phone number to Youth Exchange students.
- Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites.
- Report all criminal allegations to RI within 72 hours.
- Report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to RI within 72 hours.
- Evaluate and review this policy and accompanying procedures regularly.
- Appoint a district youth protection officer.
- Require a monthly report from each inbound and outbound student in the district that includes information on current hosts, feelings, concerns, ideas, and suggestions. The district Youth Exchange chair, or his designee, can then review the reports and assist students as needed.

10. Club Compliance

District 5190 will monitor all participating clubs within the district and ensure that they comply with RI guidelines for abuse and harassment prevention. Participating clubs must agree to carry out the following:

- Provide a list of services in the area (rape and suicide crisis hotlines, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, relevant law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.)
- All volunteers must complete and sign the Youth Volunteer Affidavit.
- Develop a comprehensive system for host family selection and screening that includes announced and unannounced home visits and interviews both before and during the placement.
- Follow the Sexual Abuse and Harassment Reporting Guidelines.
- Prohibit direct placement of students outside of the District 5190 Youth Exchange program structure.
- Develop contingency hosting plans that include prescreened, 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, including information for dentists, doctors, places of worship, counselors, suicide and rape crisis hotlines, etc.
- 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.
- Ensure host families, outbound students, inbound students, and their parents or legal guardians receive mandatory training on sexual abuse and harassment prevention from the district.
- Provide the names and contact information of at least two people — one male and one female who do not have close ties to the host families or club counselor — who can help the students with any issues or problems.
- Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites.
- Report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, deaths) involving Youth Exchange students to the district immediately.
- Conduct interviews of all applicants and applicants' parents or legal guardians.

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Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2002

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