

ScoutWired Child Protection Policy

Definitions

Youth- any member under 18 years of age

Adult- any member 18 years or older

Disclosure: Is any time a person discloses information about a past or present case of Abuse (sexual, emotional or neglect), a compromised Mental Health, negative or concerning emotions or emotional state, talks about their sexuality, bereavement, or an intent to self-harm or commit suicide.

Abuse: Any time a person deliberately causes harm (be it Sexual, emotional, physical or deliberate neglect) to a minor or a person of whom they have care of.

Neglect: Is the act ignoring or improperly taking care of someone, cause physical, emotional or mental harm

Self-Harm: Any deliberate or measured action taken to inflict physical or mental damage to oneself

Purpose

This policy is to safeguard the welfare of all members by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.

Accordingly, ScoutWired is committed to:

- considering in all its activities the interests and wellbeing of young people
- respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of the young people with whom it is working
- taking all reasonably practicable steps to protect them from physical, sexual and emotional harm
- promoting the welfare of young people and their protection within a relationship of trust

General Conduct

1.0 All members must abide by the following Code of Behaviour

FOLLOW ScoutWired's child protection procedures.

DO treat everyone with dignity and respect.

DO set an example you would wish others to follow.

DO treat all young people equally show no favouritism.

DO respect other people's right to personal privacy.

DO respect others boundary's, don't put them in compromising situations.

DO allow other's people to talk about any concerns they may have.

DO encourage others to challenge any attitudes or behaviours they do not like.

DO avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour e.g. tantrums and crushes.

DO remember this code even at sensitive moments e.g. when responding to bullying, bereavement or abuse.

DO remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.

DO take any allegations or concerns of abuse, mental ill health or intent to self seriously and refer immediately.

DO NOT trivialize abuse or self-harm.

DO NOT form a relationship with a young person that is an abuse of trust.

DO NOT permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying.

DO NOT engage in inappropriate behaviour physical, verbal, sexual.

DO NOT make suggestive remarks or threats to a young person, even in fun.

DO NOT use inappropriate language – writing, phoning, email or internet.

DO NOT let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported.

1.1 Report any concerns about a young person's safety and wellbeing.

1. Immediately tell Exec.
2. Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or was told
3. Sign, date and pass your notes to Exec
4. Ensure that no situation arises which could cause any further concern

1.2 If you receive a complaint or allegation about anyone on the server including team members:

1. Immediately tell Exec
2. Write careful notes of what you witnessed, heard or was told
3. Sign, date and pass your notes to Exec
4. Try to ensure no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise

1.3 Antibullying and Discrimination

ScoutWired is committed to ensure that all children have the right to be safe on our services from all forms of racism, homophobia, sexism, bullying and other discrimination. To this end all activities should have in place rigorous antibullying and discrimination strategies. We have a zero tolerance for any activity that would place the wellbeing of youth on our services at risk of harm, be it physical, emotional or mental and will take any reasonable action to prevent or mitigate these.

1.4 Data Logging Policy

It is ScoutWired's Policy to log all communication on our network to ensure we provide Adequate protection to all young people and Adults on the network. If you suspect, there is a child protection issue you may request any section of logs from all communication services we offer. Our voice chats are not recorded, although two team members are always present, to ensure adequate moderation.

Two Deep

2.0 Adult members are responsible for ensuring that under no instance should a youth and adult member communicate one on one, except for

- Familial members

This includes but is not limited to

- Public Voice chats
- Team Voice chats
- Team's Meetings
- Private Messaging on any platform
- And any other instance where an adult member would be able to talk one on one with a youth member in a way that cannot be read by others on the team

2.1 Adult members should not engage in private messaging with any youth member and report any private message that they receive to the council either by Helpdesk or Discord Ticket.

In instances where an adult member self-reports in which an investigation will take place, with that member asked to stay off Scoutwired unless otherwise directed by the executive until the investigation has been concluded.

2.2 Any claim of breaching this policy will result in immediate action up to but not exclusively; the loss of access to all services, immediate loss of all roles and barring from services until such time as a review has been done by the exec. At this point their decision will be communicated to the council.

2.3 Unfounded claims- if any claim is found to be deliberately false or misleading then that member will be removed from all Scoutwired services. If the member in question is a team member it will result in their termination and separation from Scoutwired and banning from services.

Disclosures

There are three primary types of disclosures

- Child Abuse (physical, sexual, emotional or neglect)
- Emotional or mental ill health or sexuality
- Suicide or intent to do self-harm

2.0 Limited Confidentiality

At Scoutwired we have limited Confidentiality. As a team we have mandatory debriefs for all disclosures with another member of the team appointed by Exec, this may also include visiting a medical professional for some disclosures. The information in any disclosure is to remain confidential, with exception for de-briefs, questions from Scoutwired exec and any communication with other body's as exec deems necessary for the individual's safety.

2.1 General guidelines for responding to Disclosures

these are attached at the end of this document (see appendix 1), and formal training is to be completed for all team members to respond to these

2.2 Reporting Disclosures

If you are not a team member report it to team immediately either through a ticket or helpdesk (links below). For reporting disclosures is outlined in the flow charts attached in Appendix 2, and the guidelines and training provided by ScoutWired.

<https://support.scoutwired.org/>

Or reacting in the quick support channel on Discord (clicking on the envelope)

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Appendix 1

When responding to Disclosures, follow the

- Listen to the child carefully, but do not press the child for details. It is not your role to investigate. Asking leading questions may in fact prejudice any subsequent investigations.
- Be clear that you believe the child. It is essential to understand that children rarely fabricate allegations of Child Abuse, and all disclosures of Child Abuse should be taken seriously.
- Reassure the child that what happened is not the child's fault. Children are never responsible for violence or sexual misbehavior inflicted on them by other people.
- Reassure the child that it is right to tell someone and that you are pleased that the child has shared this with you. Abusers may threaten a victim in an attempt to ensure silence.
- Acknowledge that it is hard to talk about these issues.
- Do not make promises that you cannot keep (e.g. confidentiality). Reassure the child that certain adults who can give protection need to know so that the Child Abuse can be stopped.
- Never say, "I don't believe it". Do not show emotions such as disgust, horror, disbelief or panic in front of the child. This risks making the child feel ashamed and helpless, adding to the Child Abuse inflicted by the abuser. If a child senses that you cannot cope with the information, the child will likely lose confidence in you and withdraw, thus enabling the abuser to continue the Child Abuse.
- Make notes of the conversation immediately while the facts are still fresh in your mind for reporting purposes. Make sure you IMMEDIATELY report this to the executive.
- Remember, the alleged abuser must not be approached.

For ill mental health, intent for self-harm or suicide you should additionally be

- Supportive and warm
- And keep them talking
- Be attentive and Listen
- Ask Open Questions
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Be Friendly
- Be Open Minded
- Respect their space
- Let them take their time
- Don't Make Promises
- Be Respectful
- Remain Positive
- Don't get personally involved
- Be Compassionate
- Let them talk, don't overwhelm them with advice
- Don't react Negatively and Remain Calm
- Remind them that they are not alone
- talk about what they would like others to know
- Talk them through any links you give them

- Don't be afraid of saying the wrong thing
- Remind them they are brave to talk about it
- Don't be afraid to repeat part of what they say, it lets them know that you were listening
- If in Doubt ask another team member for assistance, if you need to tap-out, then ask if anyone can take over for you.
- Help them tell you what's happening in their life and why (let them use their words)
- If you have high concern about them then you can express, it to them (do it in voice please)
- If they don't want to talk then don't force them, instead you can always send a supportive message (in a ticket, remember two deep!)
- REFER THEM TO Resources, and Support

Finally, where a child is accused of inflicting Child Abuse on another child, it may well be the child is also a Child Abuse victim. This is a very sensitive issue and must be handled by a person with professional qualifications. Report this to the executive for further actioning in need.

Appendix 2

Disclosure of Abuse

1. Don't Deny It has happened
2. Provide a safe environment, open a ticket or a voice chat (depending on the youth's preference) to both give them a safe space to talk and to avoid having other see it
3. re-assure the youth it wasn't their fault
4. Listen and Don't make assumptions
5. Don't Interrogate them or ask leading questions (there are only five important questions; What Happened, Where, When, Who and did you know them)
6. Remember not to promise action or confidentiality
7. Document it, provide as much detail as you can, direct quotes if you can
8. Be supportive, not judgmental (it's not their fault, give them praise and increase their self-worth)
9. Report it straight to the exec (follow-up reporting is then their job)
10. Debrief (Compulsory, with an appointed person by council with discussion, additional medical counselling should also be sought)

Disclosures of Emotions, Mental ill health and sexuality

1. Provide a safe environment, open a ticket or a voice chat (depending on the youths preference) to both give them a safe space to talk and to avoid having other see it
2. Listen and Don't make assumptions
3. Remember not to promise action or confidentiality
4. Document it, provide as much detail as you can, direct quotes if you can
5. Be supportive, not judgmental (give them praise and increase their self-worth, give advice but don't overwhelm them, choose your advice carefully, try to remain impartial)
6. If possible and appropriate guide them to other places they can get help (helplines ect)
7. Report it to the chat leader or council (follow-up reporting is then their job)

8. Debrief (Compulsory, with Chat Leader or an appointed person discussion)

Disclosures of Suicidal Thoughts

1. Provide a safe environment, open a ticket or a voice chat (depending on the youths preference) to both give them a safe space to talk and to avoid having other see it
2. Listen Actively, Don't make assumptions and Keep them talking. The best way to help them is to make them feel supported and keep talking (see topics slide for help)
3. Remember Not to promise action or confidentiality
4. Document it, provide as much detail as you can, direct quotes if you can
5. Be supportive, not judgmental (give them praise and increase their self-worth, give advice but don't overwhelm them, choose your advice carefully, try to remain impartial)
6. Immediately Report it straight to the exec (follow-up reporting is then their job)
7. Debrief (Compulsory, with an appointed person by council with discussion, additional medical counselling should also be sought)