

The Scout Association of Jamaica Youth Protection Policy “Safe Scouting”

• CHILD PROTECTION KEY PRINCIPLES:

Principle 1- All adults in Scouting are to report Child Abuse

All adults in Scouting have a responsibility to report all forms of Child abuse observed to the appropriate authority as is required by law according to the Child Care and Protection Act (CCPA) (CDA 2004).

Principle 2- Response and care of the report

Any Adult in Scouting, who has observed an abuse or a child reports to the adult of an abuse, will respond to the report quickly and responsibly. Records of the report should be kept in a secured location for the period of investigation and three (3) years thereafter. (Reporting form **Appendix A**)

Principle 3- All reports regarding Child Abuse will be attended to without delay and treated strictly in accordance with the CCPA (CDA 2004).

To ensure confidence and confidentiality, any adult in Scouting should make the greatest effort in reporting to the relevant authorities. These reports should be made based on the principles and policies of the Child Care and Protection Act (2004)

Principle 4- Reports and disclosures should be immediately reported to the National Headquarters and not be left to an investigation by the District.

The Scout Association of Jamaica Child Protection Policy provides a specific outline for the treatment of situations of Child Abuse within the Association and steps to prevent and eliminate such abuse where they may exist.

All Districts and members should endeavour to:

- Establish a Child Safe environment
- Screen all Adult members
- Report as is mandated
- Respond to disclosure
- Suspend and terminate membership where violation is found
- Train adults and communicate policy effectively

- Share information with CDA and other relevant agencies
- Assist victims and their family in the recovery process as is within reason.
- Engage youth at all levels in the training and information process.
- Educate all Youth members on their rights to a safe scouting environment and ways to protect themselves from harm.

All members of The Scout Association of Jamaica are required to adopt and comply with the standards set by the Child Protection policy document of The Scout Association of Jamaica.

Principle 6- Recruiting and Training

Adults recruited into Scout Jamaica should be thoroughly vetted to ensure they are of good moral standing in their community and in the country. The role of the recruited adult must be clearly stated and the responsibility for the children or young people in Scouting must be agreed to. An application form must be completed after which there should be a detailed interview of the applicant. It is strongly recommended that background checks are done and the applicant signs a declaration form. All adults working with children in Scout Jamaica or handling information about children in Scout Jamaica should be trained adequately, appropriately and timely to deal with disclosures, reporting and suspicions. Youth Protection will be incorporated into all levels of training; both adult training and youth training.

Principle 7- Meetings, camps and outings

Adult leaders have the responsibility to prepare for Scouting activities in such ways as to ensure the safety of all Youth participants.

The following are the minimum criteria for a Scouting activity:

- i. Two or more adults in attendance at least one should be a trained leader from SAJ
- ii. The ratio of Youth to Adult is 12:1
- iii. Risk assessment is done and signed off by the adult in charge
- iv. Activities are given a grade 1-5 based on the level of risk and challenge, where grade 5 is high intensity and should only be engaged by Senior Scouts. Grades 1 and 2 are OK for Cub Scouts. Grades 3 and 4 are ok for Junior Scouts. (List of activities in **Appendix B**)

- v. During co-ed activities, separate arrangement should be made for sleeping, changing and showering
- vi. In the instance of a co-ed troop, a female leader of at least 21 years should be present
- vii. All parties; police, fire, hospitals should be contacted in advance
- viii. Transportation for events should be organized so that the appropriate checks on vehicle documents and driver documents are made. Also, the seating capacity is not exceeded during any trip
- ix. Appropriate forms completed by parents
- x. Records for participants are kept in a safe and confidential location.

OBJECTIVES AND CONTEXT

The objectives of the policy are:

- Protect all youth members who participate in a Scout activity.
- Ensure that all reports of Child Abuse or suspected Child Abuse are dealt with in a timely, consistent, confidential, and sympathetic manner
- Provide a clear framework for the recruitment, training and management of Adults concerning Child Protection.
- Prevent Adults placing themselves at risk, and to educate Youth members about their rights to safety and ways they can help protect themselves.

This policy provides an overarching Child Protection direction for all Scouting Districts in The Scout Association of Jamaica and represents the minimum standard required. Districts are encouraged to develop their own detailed Child Protection policy frameworks which reflect the requirements of their own Local Association.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Scout Association of Jamaica (the Association) has the responsibility to care for Youth members of the Association and to establish a safe environment and protect them from harm. The Association has an additional legal responsibility to protect Youth members from Child Abuse based on the Child Care and Protection Act of 2004(CDA 2004). All adult members are accountable in fulfilling the specific responsibility on behalf of the Association at all times. Districts are to ensure this consideration is paramount when recruiting and managing Adults.

Scout Jamaica is committed to ensuring the existence of an environment of ZERO TOLERANCE towards bullying, neglect and emotional, physical, psychological or sexual abuse of any kind. Recognising that abuse takes many forms and can be perpetuated in many ways, Scout Jamaica requires all Adults and Youth members to be aware of Child Abuse as outlined in this policy and comply with the requirements of this policy at all times. The absolute safety and wellbeing of the child is always to be considered.

All adults must report conduct that does not comply with the standards of this policy. Adults MUST report immediately to the local authority any disclosure, allegation or suspicion of abuse of children in accordance with this policy and with the Child Care and Protection Act (CDA 2004). Children are to be encouraged to report any conduct that does not comply with the policy and are to be regularly reminded or informed through the Scout programme of their rights to a Safe Scouting experience.

Allegations of abuse must be responded to with the utmost sensitivity and confidentiality. The welfare of children involved in Scouting is very important. Districts are to terminate the membership of any Adult where allegation of abuse has been proven through a court of law. Membership is to be suspended and reviewed during the legal procedures of a court hearing. Districts should terminate the application process of any adult who is found during investigation to have been convicted as a child abuser or sex offender.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all members of The Scout Association of Jamaica; Adult helpers and supporters of the programme; paid staff, other employees and consultants/contractors, as well as Youth members who may participate in Scout activities from time to time. This includes anyone who may have access to the records of youth members of the Association.

POLICY DEFINITIONS

- **Adult** means a person 18 years or older who is a Leader, Rover Scout, Adult helper, office personnel.
- **Age of consent** means that age when a young person is considered old enough old enough to make a decision regarding sexual activity.
- **Child (Children or Young Person)** means a person under the age of 18.
- **Child Abuse** means an act or omission that endangers a child's physical or emotional health, well-being or development and can occur as a single incident or multiple incidents over time.
- **Child Protection** encompasses the legislation, the statutory authority responsible for Child Protection, and all measures taken to minimize the risk of Child Abuse to Young People.
- **Code of Conduct** means the document in The Scout Association of Jamaica's Policy, Organisation and Rules Code of Conduct that outlines appropriate conduct by all persons involved in Scouting.
- **Disclosure** means when a young person tells someone that he or she feels unsafe or has been harmed. A disclosure can be made by adults including parents, or any other person in contact with the Child, where that person reveals that they believe a Child has been harmed or is likely to be harmed.
- **Scout Activity** means any activity conducted by the Association and includes, but is not limited to, camps, hikes, other outdoor activities, events and meetings.
- **Scout Jamaica** means The Scout Association of Jamaica.
- **Two Deep.** When Adults are supervising a Scout activity with youth members, at least two adults should be present. One of these adults must be a trained leader in Scout Jamaica.
- **Volunteer** means unpaid member delivering or assisting with the delivery of the Scout Programme and/or supporting Scouting operations in any way.
- **Youth member** means a person under the age of 18 (for this policy).
- **Zero Tolerance,** for the purpose of this policy, means that Scout Jamaica does not accept or condone, under any circumstance, any form of Child Abuse, and will take whatever action in its power to prevent and mitigate harm to children.

DEFINITIONS AND FORMS OF ABUSE

- **Bullying** is a form of violence where a person is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions as injury or discomfort by one person or a group of people. Bullying often describes a form of harassment perpetuated by an abuser being in a physical or social superior power position.
- **Emotional Abuse** means the continual failure of adults who take care of young people to show their child love and affection, or when they threaten, taunt or shout at young people causing them to lose confidence and self-esteem, and to become nervous or withdrawn. when adults constantly threatening, angry, sarcastic or critical they can make children and young people feel unloved and unlovable
- **Grooming** means the process by which an individual manipulates those around them to provide opportunities to abuse and reduce the likelihood of being reported or discovered.
- **Neglect** occurs when care-giving adults fail to meet their child's essential needs, such as adequate food, warmth and medical care. Leaving children or young people who are too young to look after themselves alone or without proper supervision is considered neglect.
- **Physical abuse** occurs when adults deliberately inflict injuries on a young person, or knowingly do not prevent them from being physically abused. It includes hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning or biting. Giving a child or young person poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs or alcohol, and attempting to suffocate or drown a child or young person is considered physical abuse.
- **Sexual Abuse** is a form of mistreatment that includes contacts or interactions between a child and an adult when the child is being used for sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or another person when the perpetrator or another person is in a position of power or control over the victim.

Appendix A

Form for the reporting of an incident of abuse

Date of report:

Location of incident:

Date of incident:

Name of person reporting: (optional)

Address:.....(optional)

Age of person reporting:

Telephone: (optional)

Staff/Volunteer: YES [] NO []

Member: YES [] NO []

Parent's Name (if under 16):

Description of
incident:.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

(Attach additional paper if necessary.)

Appendix B

List and Grade of Activity

Activity	Grade	Minimum Age
1-night sleep over	1	7
2-5-nights camp	2	8
>5 nights camp	3	11
Hike and sleepover	3	11
Hike and sleepover multiple nights	4	14
Nature walks (hikes <3 miles	1	7
6-10-mile hikes	3	11
Hikes more than 10 miles day trip	3	11
Water activities (swimming only)	2	8
Water activities (boats, kayaks, ships)	3	11
Water activities (diving, scuba, snorkelling)	5	16
Water activities (skiing)	5	16
Climbing (rock < 1000ft)	3	11
Climbing (rock > 1000ft)	4	14
Cooking (should always be supervised)	1	7
Camp fires (should always be supervised)	1	7