

## **District 7150**

### **Student Protection Information**

#### **SEXUAL, PHYSICAL OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

#### **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

#### ***STATEMENT OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH***

Rotary International 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 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.

As a Rotary Youth Exchange Student, your welfare is extremely important to us. We have prepared this document for your safety. Please read it carefully. This information may help you better understand what sexual abuse and harassment are and help you protect yourself by preventing potential abusive situations before they happen. In the unlikely event that you are subjected to sexual abuse or harassment, this document will help you understand what you can do about it. Please share this information with your parents so that they also know that we are committed to your safety and protection.

#### **STUDENT PROCEDURES**

If you are sexually, physically or emotionally abused or harassed or are accused of sexually, physically or emotionally abusing or harassing another person, you should follow this procedure:

1. Report the situation immediately to the person with whom you feel most comfortable.
  - The local host Rotary Club Youth Exchange Counselor, the District Student Protection Officer, the District Youth Exchange Chair, any member of the District Youth Exchange Committee, or the District Governor.
  - If you are not comfortable talking to a local person, contact a trusted Rotarian at home.
  - Your call will be received in a sensitive and confidential manner. Each of the above individuals has been trained to deal with this type of situation.
2. If appropriate action is not taken when you report the situation, report it again and continue reporting it until someone takes you seriously. Make sure that it is understood that you are serious.
3. When you are uncomfortable with someone else's behavior, and you think it is sexual in nature, please trust your judgment and report it to someone else.

## ALLEGATION REPORTING GUIDELINES

If you report an allegation of abuse or harassment, these are the guidelines the Rotarians will follow.

1. When receiving the report from you, they will:
  - Listen attentively and stay calm. They will acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse. They will listen and be encouraging.
  - Protect you. They will first ensure your safety and well-being. They will remove you from the situation immediately and from all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. They will reassure you that this is for your own safety and that it is not a punishment.
  - Get the facts, but not interrogate. They will ask you questions that establish what was done and who did it. They will reassure you that you did the right thing in telling.
  - Be non-judgmental and reassure you. They will not be critical of anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. They will assure you that the situation was not your fault and that it was brave and mature to report what happened.
  - Assure privacy but not confidentiality. They will explain that they will have to tell someone about the abuse or harassment to make it stop and to ensure that it doesn't happen to other students.
  - Record. They will make a written report of their conversation with you as soon after talking with you as they can. They will include the date and the time that they talked with you. They will use your words and will record only what you told them.
2. They will report this information as soon as possible to the hosting Club Youth Exchange Counselor, the District Student Protection Officer, the District Youth Exchange Chair or the District Governor providing none are the accused individual. This person will immediately notify the appropriate Law Enforcement Authorities in cases of abuse.
3. They will avoid gossip and blame. They will not tell anyone about the report other than those required by the guidelines. Care must be taken to protect the rights of both you as the victim and the alleged offender during any investigation.
4. They will not challenge the alleged offender. The adult to whom you report will not contact the alleged offender because the investigation must be left entirely to law enforcement authorities in cases of abuse. In cases of non-criminal harassment, the District Student Protection Officer and the District Governor, who are responsible for the investigation, will contact the alleged offender after you have been moved to a safe environment.
5. They will follow-up. After appropriately reporting the allegations, Rotarians will follow up to make sure steps have been taken to address the situation.

## DEFINITIONS

**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 opposite sex. This includes but is not limited to:

Non-touching offenses (such as verbal intimidation, or other indirect suggestions with which you are uncomfortable).

Indecent exposure (unwelcome revealing of sexual body parts such as breasts or genitals).

Exposing a student to sexual or pornographic material.

Sexual assault.

**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. It is a technique used by sexual predators to desensitize or to groom their victims. Examples include, but are not limited to:

Sexual advances; sexually negative words or phrases used to insult someone, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, comments about one'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.

**Emotional Abuse:** Refers to persistent lack of love and affection including being frequently shouted at, taunting, over protection and/or constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to conform to higher expectations.

Note: More detailed information and procedures will be provided at your orientation upon arrival and to the Rotarians responsible for students and the Youth Exchange Program. They are available upon request from interested parties.

**Physical Abuse:** Refers to physical hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting, burning, etc. It can also include requiring excessive training which exceeds the young person's body capacity to endure.

Your safety is the first priority of all of us involved in the Empire State Youth Exchange Program. We hope the following information will help you keep yourself safe.

The **Exchange Student's Bill of Rights** should reassure you about trusting your own feelings. You know what feels right and wrong to you, and your Bill of Rights supports your right to protect yourself.

Your **Personal Safety Code** will help you know how to conduct yourself safely under certain circumstances.

Our Districts make the following commitment to our Youth Exchange Students:

- We are committed to ensuring the safety of every student.
- We will take any allegations or reports of abuse of any kind seriously.
- Students should continue reporting their concerns until someone listens seriously.
- Physical force of any kind is never an appropriate form of discipline
- No student will be sent home because of an allegation of abuse, unless they wish it or their safety is in question.

In addition, please learn the **Three "R's" of Youth Protection**

- a. **Recognize** that anyone could be a YE Student molester and be aware of situations that could lead to abuse.
- b. **Resist** advances made by molesters to avoid being abused.
- c. **Report** any situation where you feel uncomfortable to host parents or other trusted adults.

**ROTARY  
INTERNATIONAL**

**Empire State  
Youth Exchange, Inc.  
Districts 7120, 7150 & 7170**

**YOUTH EXCHANGE STUDENT PROTECTION POLICY  
MISSION STATEMENT**

**Rotary International Districts 7120, 7150 & 7170 Youth Exchange Program** is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all our Youth Exchange Students, both inbound and outbound.

We do this by:

Recognizing that all young people have the right to freedom from harassment & abuse.

Ensuring that all our staff and volunteers are carefully selected and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children in their care.

Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of harassment and/or abuse, and by providing adults and young people with the opportunity to voice any concern they may have.

Appointing a District 7150 Exchange Student Protection Officer who will act as the main point of contact for parents, children, host families and outside agencies.

Ensuring that access to confidential information is restricted.

Reviewing the effectiveness of our Exchange Student Protection Policy and activities periodically.

**Our Exchange Student Protection Officer** for District 7150 is:

Name: Pam Fallesen

Address: 2507 Country Lane, Baldwinsville, NY 13027

Telephone Numbers

Home 315-635-7181

Cell: 315-380-5036

E-mail: [lizardmom67@hotmail.com](mailto:lizardmom67@hotmail.com)

**ROTARY  
INTERNATIONAL**

**Empire State  
Youth Exchange, Inc.  
Districts 7120, 7150 & 7170**

**PERSONAL SAFETY CODE**

- If you have a problem or are worried about something, always tell someone you trust about it, such as your host parent, host club counselor or host club chairperson. Don't suffer in silence!
- Always pack your own suitcase and never carry items abroad for others.
- When you go out, plan what you would do and where you would go if you got lost or had a problem - a shop, restaurant, police station or library.
- Before you leave your home, make sure that you have your Emergency Contact form, supplied to you by your Host Club Chairperson.
- Always tell someone where you are going and when you will be home. Be sure to call your host parents if your plans change while you are away from home.
- If you are out at night in a city, stay in places with streetlights. Wherever you are, make sure that you don't get separated from your friends.
- If you need to use a public toilet, go with a friend.
- If you do get lost or separated, follow your plan - or go to a shop or place where you will be seen by lots of people to ask directions.
- If someone you don't know talks to you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, walk away.
- Keep your host family's address and telephone number with you at all times.
- Always keep enough money with you to make a phone call.
- Always arrange for someone to pick you up; don't go home alone.
- Make sure you know who is coming to pick you up. Never get into a car with someone you don't know.
- If you are on a bus or train, and someone makes you feel uncomfortable, move to a seat near the driver.
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly.
- Be sensitive to local codes and customs.
- Think things through carefully before you act and do not take unnecessary risks.

## EXCHANGE STUDENT'S BILL OF RIGHTS

When feeling threatened, you have the right to:

- Trust your instincts or feelings
- Expect privacy
- Say no to unwanted touching or affection
- Say no to an adult's inappropriate demands or requests
- Withhold information that could jeopardize your safety
- Refuse gifts
- Be rude or unhelpful if the situation warrants
- Run, scream, and make a scene
- Physically fight off unwanted advances
- Ask for help
- Report any situation in which you feel threatened to your Host Club Counselor

*(Directions to Students: Cut out the large section below with the solid lined border. Then make two folds on the other lines, folding along the long horizontal line first and along the short vertical line second. This will give you a wallet or pocket-sized card to carry with you.)*

<p style="text-align: center;">Rotary Youth Exchange</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Student Protection Information Card</b></p> <p>Rotary International is committed to protecting the safety and well being of Youth Exchange Students and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled within the guidelines provided herein. The safety and well being of students is always the first priority.</p>	<p><b>District 7150 Student Protection Officer</b> Pam Fallesen - Tel: (H) 315-635-7181, (C) 315-380-5036</p> <p><b>District 7150 Youth Exchange Chairperson</b> Phyllis Danks-Tel: (C) 315-256-2152</p> <p><b>District 7150 District Governor</b> Randy Wilson: (C) 315-790-1326</p> <p><b>State Dept Designated Officer</b> Tom Carafa -Tel: (H) 315-431-6620; 315-439-7919 (c)</p> <p><b>US Dept of State Help Line-1- 866-283-9090</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Student Procedures</b></p> <p><b>If you are sexually, physically or emotionally abused or harassed or are accused of sexually, physically or emotionally abusing or harassing another person you should follow the following procedures:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Report the situation immediately to the person you feel most comfortable with.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contact your Host Rotary Club Counselor, The District 7150 Student Protection Officer, &amp; the YE Chairperson or any member of the District YE committee or the District governor</li><li>• If you are not comfortable with talking to a local Rotarian, contact a Rotarian at home</li><li>• Your call will be received in a sensitive and confidential manner. Each of the above individuals has been trained to deal with these situations appropriately in accordance with local and RI policies</li></ul></li><li>2. If appropriate action is not taken when you report the situation, report it to someone else until you are taken seriously. Make sure they know you are serious</li><li>3. When you are uncomfortable with someone else's behavior, and you think it is abusive in nature, please trust your judgement and report it to someone else.</li></ol>	

**ROTARY,  
INTERNATIONAL**

**District 7150  
Central New York State, USA  
Youth Exchange Committee**

**EXCHANGE STUDENT'S BILL OF RIGHTS**

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- Say no to unwanted touching or affection
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- Withhold information that could jeopardize your safety
- Refuse gifts
- Be rude or unhelpful if the situation warrants
- Run, scream, and make a scene
- Physically fight off unwanted advances
- Ask for help
- Report any situation in which you feel threatened to your Host Club Counselor immediately.



# **District 7150 Youth Exchange Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy**

## **District 7150 Youth Exchange Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy**

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### **1. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth**

District 7150 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 involved with Rotary Youth Exchange activities who has direct interactions, either supervised or unsupervised, with students. Volunteers include, among others: 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; and host parents and other adult residents of the host home, including siblings and other family members.

**Student.** Any individual who is participating in a Rotary Youth Exchange, regardless of whether he or she is of legal age of majority or whether in the Long Term or STEP program.

**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 gender. This includes nontouching 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**

Each district Youth Exchange program is required to incorporate or establish itself as a similar formal legal entity (Ltd., etc.). Rotary District 7150 Youth Exchange, Inc. is a New York not-for-profit corporation and operates under the laws of the State of New York. The Program is covered by RI's blanket liability policy.

### **4. Volunteer Selection and Screening**

District 7150 will maintain in perpetuity all records of criminal background checks, waivers, and screening for adults working with minors.

*All volunteers* interested in participating in the District 7150 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 with the Chair of the District's Youth Exchange Program, or his/her representative, upon the applicant's request to serve on the Youth Exchange Committee.
- 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 demonstrate:
  - Commitment to the safety and security of students
  - Motivation for hosting a student consistent with Rotary ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange
  - Financial ability to provide adequate accommodations (room and board) for the student
  - Ability to provide appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student's well-being
- Host families must complete a written application (on-line through the District's YE website).
- 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 or close friends of the Host Family or otherwise be in a supervisory position vis-à-vis the student at school.
- 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 7150 Youth Exchange program must meet these requirements

- Complete a written application (on-line through the District's YE website) and be interviewed (at both the Club level and the District level) to determine suitability for participation in the program.
- Attend and participate meaningfully in all district orientation and training sessions.

*All parents or legal guardians of students* interested in participating in the District 7150 Youth Exchange program must be interviewed to determine the student's suitability for participation in the program.

## **6. Training**

District 7150 will provide abuse and harassment prevention training to all Youth Exchange program participants. The Chair of the Youth Exchange Program and/or the Student Protection Officer, or their designees, will conduct the training sessions, which may include on-line training through NAYEN.

Specifically, District 7150:

- Will adopt and adapt 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. In this regard, District 7150 will provide an annual written training manual in July of each year and require all participants to take and pass the on-line NAYEN seminar upon joining the District Committee, and annually thereafter.
- Conduct specialized training sessions for the following Youth Exchange program participants:
  - District governor. See above.
  - District Youth Exchange committee members. See above.
  - Club Youth Exchange committee members. See above.
  - Rotarian counselors. See above.
  - Other Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in Youth Exchange activities, such as local tours or district events. See above.
  - Host families. Host Families will be trained prior to hosting a student via an on-line tutorial and Host Family welcoming reception.
  - Students (outbound and inbound). Students will be trained at their respective Orientations.
  - Parents and legal guardians of Outbound students will be trained at a District sponsored Orientation.
- Establish guidelines to ensure that all participants have received the requisite training

- Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance
- Share District 7150 training content with other Districts in ESYE, Inc.

### **7. Allegation Reporting Guidelines**

District 7150 is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of Youth Exchange students and will not tolerate abuse or harassment in any form and of any nature, ever. 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 7150 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will ensure that each allegation is investigated thoroughly. 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 7150 Responsibilities**

- Establish procedures for reporting, investigating, and handling noncriminal offenses or historical cases that law enforcement chooses not to investigate.
- Recommend that all inbound Youth Exchange students maintain insurance at the following levels: as per RI guidelines.
- 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.).
- Provide each student with a list of Rotary emergency contacts, including: sending club counselor, host and sending club presidents, host and sending district governors, host and sending district chairs, and two non-Rotarian resource people (both male and female).
- Complete a student data request form for all participating Youth Exchange students and return it to RI one month before the exchange begins.
- Provide a 24-hour emergency contact phone number to Youth Exchange students.
- Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites.
- Appoint an independent lawyer, therapist, or counselor to represent any alleged victim in cases of sexual abuse and harassment.
- 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 Student 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 Outbound or Inbound Chair, as the case may be, can then review the reports and assist students as needed.
- Consider designating a mobile phone as a permanent district hotline. Assign a Rotarian in the district to be on-call for a given period and carry the phone 24 hours a day. The District Chair shall be such individual by default.

## **10. Club Compliance**

District 7150 will monitor all participating clubs within the district and ensure that they 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:

- All materials produced in the club to promote and support the Youth Exchange program, including promotional materials and brochures, applications, policies, Web site links, etc.
- 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.)
- Club abuse and harassment prevention training program materials

Participating clubs must agree to carry out the following:

- Complete and return a signed compliance statement that the club is operating its program in accordance with District 7150 and RI policies.
- Cooperate with the District to conduct criminal background checks and reference checks for all volunteers involved with the program, including, but not limited to, adult residents of host home, counselor, club chair, and all Rotarians and their spouses or partners with direct unsupervised contact with youth. 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.
- Conduct follow-up evaluations of both students and host families.
- Follow the Sexual Abuse and Harassment Reporting Guidelines.
- Prohibit direct placement of students outside of the District 7150 Youth Exchange program structure (so-called backdoor exchanges).

- Set procedures for removal of a student from the host family, including establishing criteria for moving a student and locating available back-up temporary housing in advance.
- 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.
- 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 - both males and females who are not related to each other and 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 prior to forwarding applications to the District.
- Prohibit volunteers from having contact with students until a background check has been conducted and clearance for unsupervised contact with students has been issued.

### **Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth**

Rotary International 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 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.

*Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2002*



# **District 7150 Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines and Emergency Situations**

Rotary International is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of all youth program participants and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled within the following guidelines. **The safety and well-being of young people must always be the first priority.**

## **Definitions**

**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 nontouching 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

## **Who should determine if it is abuse or harassment?**

Upon hearing allegations, adults should not determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual abuse or sexual harassment. Instead, after ensuring the safety of the student, the adult should immediately report all allegations as per this Policy and to appropriate child protection or law enforcement authorities in accordance with this Policy.

## **Allegation Reporting Guidelines**

Any adult to whom a Rotary youth program participant reports an allegation of sexual abuse or harassment must follow these reporting guidelines:

### **1. *Receive the report.***

- a. Listen attentively and stay calm.** Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse or harassment. Be encouraging; do not express shock, horror, or disbelief.
- b. Assure privacy but not confidentiality.** Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse/harassment in order to make it stop and ensure that it doesn't happen to others.
- c. Get the facts, but don't interrogate.** Ask questions that establish facts: who, what, when, where, and how. Reassure the young person that he or she did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking "why" questions, which may be interpreted as questioning the young person's motives. Remember that your responsibility is to present the story to the proper authorities.
- d. Be nonjudgmental and reassure.** Avoid criticizing anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It's especially important not to blame or criticize the young person. Emphasize that the situation was not his or her fault and that it was brave and mature to come to you.
- e. Document the allegation.** Make a written record of the conversation, including the date and time, as soon after the report as you can. Try to use the young person's words and record only what he or she told you.

### **2. *Protect the young person.***

Ensure the safety and well-being of the youth program participant by removing him or her from the situation immediately and preventing all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. Reassure the youth that this is being done for his or her safety and is not a punishment.

### **3. *Report the allegations to appropriate authorities - child protection or law enforcement.***

Immediately report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment - first to the appropriate law enforcement authorities for investigation and then to the club and district leadership for follow-through. In District 7150, the appropriate law enforcement office is the local police, County Sheriff or the New York State Police. In most situations, the first Rotary contact is the Youth Exchange Officer (YEO), who is responsible for seeking the advice of appropriate agencies and interacting with them. If the allegation involves the conduct of this Rotarian, the District Youth Exchange Chair or District Governor should be the first Rotary contact.

District 7150 will fully cooperate with police or legal investigations.

4. ***Avoid gossip and blame.***

Don't tell anyone about the report other than those required by the guidelines. Be careful to protect the rights of both the victim and the accused during the investigation.

District 7150 maintains the privacy (as distinct from confidentiality) of any accused person by enforcing the following procedures: **only the YEO, Program Chair, Student Protection Officer and District Governor shall be made privy to the allegation.** No others are on a "need to know" basis within the Rotary structure.

5. **Do not challenge the alleged offender.**

Don't contact the alleged offender. In cases of abuse, interrogation must be left entirely to law enforcement authorities. In cases of noncriminal harassment, the District Governor is responsible for follow-through and will contact the alleged offender after the young person has been moved to a safe environment. The District Governor may designate this task to the District's Student Protection Officer.

### **Follow-through Procedures**

Either the District's Youth Exchange Program Chair or Program and/or District Student Protection Officer must ensure that the following steps are taken immediately after an abuse allegation is reported.

1. Confirm that the youth program participant has been removed from the situation immediately and has no contact with the alleged abuser or harasser.
2. If law enforcement agencies will not investigate, the District's Student Protection Officer should coordinate an independent review of the allegations.
3. Ensure that the student receives immediate support services.
4. Offer the young person an independent, non-Rotarian counselor to represent his or her interests. Ask social services or law enforcement to recommend someone who is not a Rotarian or in any way involved with the youth program.
5. Contact the student's parents or legal guardian.  
  
If the student is away from home, the student and his or her parents should decide whether to stay in country or return home. If the student stays in country, written authorization from the student's parents or legal guardian is required. If the student and the student's parents choose for the student to return home, consult with police before making travel arrangements. If an investigation is pending, the police may not approve of the student leaving the country.
6. Remove alleged abuser or harasser from all contact with any other young participants in Rotary programs and activities while investigations are conducted.
7. Cooperate with the police or legal investigation.
8. Inform the District Governor of the allegation. Either the District Governor, District and/or Program Student Protection Officer, or District Youth Exchange Committee Chair

must inform RI of the allegation within 72 hours and provide follow-up reports of steps taken and the status of investigations.

9. After the authorities have completed their investigation, the district must follow through to make sure the situation is being addressed. Specifically, District 7150 will conduct an independent and thorough review of any allegations of sexual abuse or harassment.

## **Post-allegation Report Considerations**

### **Responding to the needs of the youth program participant**

District 7150 will provide a team approach to supporting a young person after an allegation report. The youth program participant is likely to feel embarrassed or confused and may become withdrawn.

After a report of harassment or abuse, students may have mixed feelings about remaining on their exchange. If they do choose to stay, they may or may not want to continue their relationship with their hosting Rotary club. In some cases, a student may wish to remain in country but change to a different host club.

Although club members and host families may have trouble understanding how the student is feeling, the student would find it helpful to know that the club continues to be reassuring and supportive. Club members and host families may feel ambivalent about their roles and unclear about their boundaries. However, they need to do whatever is necessary to reassure the student of their support at all times.

### **Addressing issues within the club**

When addressing an allegation of abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of youth. Club members should not speculate or offer personal opinions that could potentially hinder any police or criminal investigations. Rotarians must not become involved in investigations. Making comments about alleged victims in support of alleged abusers violates both the Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth and Rotary ideals. Comments made against an alleged abuser could lead to a slander or libel claim filed against Rotarians or clubs by the alleged abuser.

#### **Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth**

Rotary International 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 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.

*Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2002*

# Emergency Situations

Emergency Situations can involve the abuse or harassment as outlined above. In those particular situations, the guidelines, above, will be followed.

Other emergency situations may involve events such as death, accidents, injuries, loss of documentation and bad news from home, just to mention a few. Emergency situations are those that cause distress to our exchange students such that they need adult help, assistance or supervision to cope with the news, event or situation.

Any Rotarian who believes that there is an emergency situation with an Exchange Student should immediately contact both the District Chair and the Program's Student Protection Officer. Each of these will be responsible for compliance with the following situations:

- **Safety and Medical help for involved student(s)**
  - Immediate response to scene or hospital –**Club YEO/Counselor and/or District Committee member and/or Host Family member**
  - Coordinate information on students with hospital and authorities - **Rotary Club YEO/Counselor and/or District Committee member and/or Host Family member**
  - Notify and coordinate information to
    1. District Chair will inform: **District Governor, District Inbound Chair**
    2. Rotary International: [youthexchange@rotary.org](mailto:youthexchange@rotary.org) - **District Chair**
  - Notify the Department of State: - **District Chair and/or ARO**
  - Notify and coordinate information to involved students country YE personnel – **Country Contact/ District InboundChair**
  
- **Isolation – Anonymity of students from media**

In case of crisis, ALL information to the news media will be handled by the **District Governor or, at his/her election, the District Chair**. ALL communications must be reviewed by the District Governor.
  
- **In case of death – Proper notification of families/next of kin**
  - Procedures established by law in area of jurisdiction must be followed – **District Chair**
  - Due to modern communication systems (i.e. Internet, cell phones etc.) the normal procedures may be circumvented by involved person without knowing the consequences of their actions
  - International notification may have to route through a State Department Officer.
  - Notify school districts of all program students for preparation of grief counseling for students and friends – **District Chair, District Inbound Chair, Club YEO**
  - Process of repatriation –seek out funeral homes with international capability - **District Chair and Student Protection Officer**
    - i. Create task lists involving all involved parties and resources - **District Chair**
  
- **Proper notification structure – District Chair**
  - Notification of involved host families
    - i. Assign this task to the **Inbound District Chair**.
    - ii. This may be the time to inform international partners of involved student country

- Notification of non-involved host families and students
    - i. The **District Chair** will reach out to each active Rotary Club hosting an Inbound Student
    - ii. This is the time to inform all other international partners
  - **Notification of outbound families and students**
    - If the incident occurs during the season of student outbound selection, your group to notify will include these students and families
    - Assign the task to **Club YEO** of current outbound students and families
  - **Notification of all other Rotary Partners and friends – District Chair**
    - Information by now will be released by authorities.
    - Public memorial services will be planned for students
      - i. Make plans for a private memorial service for inbound students and host families
    - Plan group counseling for all students and crisis team
- 8. Continuing professional care of involved students and families**
- Arrangements must be made for continuing care for involved students and families
  - Arrange at least one professional counseling session for each involved student and family