



# SCOUTS AUSTRALIA

VICTORIAN BRANCH

## CHILD PROTECTION & PROTECTION FROM HARM POLICY

### DUTY OF CARE & SAFE PRACTICE

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#### **DEFINITION**

The Association has a Duty of Care to all members of the Movement and their parents/guardians to provide a safe environment that protects members to the best of its ability from physical or emotional harm.

The Association shall ensure when recruiting and managing leaders and other persons in control of, or in contact with, young people that this duty is exercised.

All leaders are accountable to exercise this duty on behalf of the Association at all times.

#### **AUTHORISED PERSON IN CHARGE**

The authorised person in charge of an activity shall exercise the Duty of Care on behalf of the Association and parents or guardians.

Leaders planning an activity, for which they do not have the prescribed qualifications to enable them to exercise the responsibilities of the authorised person in charge, shall obtain an appropriately qualified person to conduct the activity. That person shall conduct the activity to the requirements of the Association and shall be the authorised person in charge of the activity.

#### **ROLE OF BRANCH**

The Branch shall be responsible for promulgating rules for the conduct of activities, which give effect to and are consistent with the policies of The Scout Association of Australia.

#### **RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

The Association recognises that children, because of their vulnerability, need special care and protection, and it has an educational and recreational program which respects their rights, and takes full account of their best interests. The Scouting program provides guidance appropriate to the child's evolving capacities and recognises their right to express an opinion, and to have it taken into account.

#### **RESPECT FOR OTHERS**

Scouting encourages respect for others, and the dignity of individuals. Adults in Scouting provide an environment where young people feel safe and secure, and free from personal and verbal harassment/abuse. The Association takes a positive attitude towards encouraging youth members to be able to recognise situations which may lead to abuse; to be able to assert the right to resist the abuser; and to report abuse with confidence.

#### **INITIATIONS AND SECRET CEREMONIES**

The Association uses a number of approved ceremonies in its program. These ceremonies are described in the Association's official Ceremonies Handbook. All forms of initiation of members and the use of secret ceremonies are prohibited.

#### **PERSONAL STANDARDS**

The association encourages respect for other people, expects its members to demonstrate high personal standards, and to refrain from swearing and using profane, indecent, rude, insulting or abusive language at Scouting meeting and activities.

## **PRIVACY**

Leaders, adult members and supporters must respect everyone's right to personal privacy at all times, and must take special care where sleeping, changing of clothing, bathing and ablutions are associated with any Scouting activity.

Adults in Scouting should ensure that at least two adults are in attendance whilst supervising and/or accompanying youth members, whenever possible. Leaders and other adults normally do not share tents or sleeping accommodation with youth members.

## **HEALTH CARE**

Adult Leaders, in meeting their Duty of Care, are required to ensure the health care needs of youth members are managed in order to control risk and minimise harm.

- Where youth members have short or long term health care requirements which may impact on their involvement in Scouting activities, Adult Leaders are expected to meet their Duty of Care by undertaking a health care planning process.
- Negotiation of a health care plan for youth members will respect the personal safety, dignity and right to confidentiality of youth members and caregivers and reflect the informed consent of all participants.
- Adult Leaders are obliged to render first aid and emergency assistance to youth members consistent with their level of training. In every instance, first aid/emergency assistance is a strategy to support the health and safety of young people while awaiting professional medical assistance.
- Legal guardians and their medical practitioners should be encouraged to minimise the medication/treatment required during Scouting activities.
- Adult Leaders are obliged to enable youth members to receive ongoing medical care during Scouting activities. Adult Leaders are not obliged to provide ongoing invasive medical care. Nor are Leaders required to provide or maintain health-related equipment. This is the responsibility of legal guardians, possibly in collaboration with community agencies. In every case, responsibilities for the provision of ongoing health care should be clearly documented.
- Youth members should be encouraged to take responsibility, commensurate with their age and stage of development, for administering their own medication/treatment in non-emergency situations.

## **SMOKING**

The Association expects leaders and other adult members and supporters to set a positive example by not smoking in the presence of youth members. Smoking by youth members under the legal age is prohibited on all Association property, and at all Association activities.

## **ALCOHOL**

The Association regulates the consumption of alcohol at Association activities and on its property, through Branch Rules. Adults in Scouting are dedicated to the welfare of young people and will comply with Branch rules for the consumption of alcohol.

## **DRUGS**

The Association accepts the opportunity to guide young people towards the development of an informed and responsible attitude to legally available and illegal drugs, through the example and guidance of the adults who accept leadership roles in the Movement.

Scouting is aware of peer pressure, which is a primary influence on young people, and prohibits the presence and illegal use of drugs at all Scouting meetings and activities, and on all Association property.

### **SEXUAL HYGIENE**

The Association's training program is based on the progressive development of members through childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Healthy sexual attitudes and sexual hygiene are important aspects of personal development, and in this context they form part of the Association's role. The Association recognises that training in these matters is primarily a family responsibility, but there are occasions on which advice and guidance from leaders is of benefit to individual members.

### **SAFE PRACTICE**

The Branch prescribes the following procedures for the safe conduct of activities for each Section:

- Procedures for approval to conduct the activity
- Appointment of the authorised person in charge
- Information for, and approval from, parent/guardian. The information must include leadership attendance, sleeping and transport arrangements.
- Emergency arrangements including first aid.
- Transport to and from the activity.

Reference document: Refer: Scouts Australia – Policies and Rules 2008  
Section P2.9.3, P2.9.4, P7 & R12