

The Boy Scouts of America takes great pride in the quality of our adult leadership. Kids have special needs, and as leaders we need to recognize and assist with them.

Youth protection

The BSA has adopted the following policies to provide additional security for our members. These policies are primarily for the protection of our youth members; however, they also serve to protect our adult leaders from false accusations of abuse.

- **Two-deep leadership.** Two registered adult leaders or one registered leader and a parent of a participant, or other adult, one of whom must be 21 years of age or older, are required on all trips and outings. The chartered organization is responsible for ensuring that sufficient leadership is provided for all activities.
- **No one-on-one contact.** One-on-one contact between adults and youth members is not permitted. In situations that require personal conferences, such as a Scoutmaster's conference, the meeting is to be conducted in view of other adults and youths.
- **Respect of privacy.** Adult leaders must respect the privacy of youth members in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers at camp, and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.
- **Separate accommodations.** When camping, no youth is permitted to sleep in the tent of an adult other than his own parent or guardian. Councils are strongly encouraged to have separate shower and latrine facilities for females. When separate facilities are not available, separate times for male and female use should be scheduled and posted for showers.
- **Proper preparation for high-adventure activities.** Activities with elements of risk should never be undertaken without proper preparation, equipment, clothing, supervision, and safety measures.
- **No secret organizations.** The Boy Scouts of America does not recognize any secret organizations as part of its program. All aspects of the Scouting program are open to observation by parents and leaders.
- **Appropriate attire.** Proper clothing for activities is required. For example, skinny-dipping is not appropriate as part of Scouting.
- **Constructive discipline.** Discipline used in Scouting should be constructive and reflect Scouting's values. Corporal punishment is never permitted.
- **Hazing prohibited.** Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any Scouting activity.
- **Junior leader training and supervision.** Adult leaders must monitor and guide the leadership techniques used by junior leaders and ensure that BSA policies are followed.
- **Member responsibilities.** All members of the Boy Scouts of America are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in the Scout Oath and Law. Physical violence, hazing, bullying, theft, verbal insults, drugs, and

alcohol have no place in the Scouting program and may result in the revocation of a Scout's membership in the unit.

- **Unit responsibilities.** The head of the chartered organization or chartered organization representative and the local council must approve the registration of the unit's adult leader. Adult leaders of Scouting units are responsible for monitoring the behavior of youth members and interceding when necessary. Parents of youth members who misbehave should be informed and asked for assistance in dealing with it.

Bullying

How can Scout leaders and parents assist the victims of bullying?

Take victims of bullying seriously.

If a Scout gathers the courage to talk to you about being bullied, be aware that he might be very upset even though he may not show it on the outside. He needs to know that you take the problem seriously and will take action.

Talk with the Scout where others cannot hear the conversation (i.e., a location appropriate for a Scoutmaster's conference), and let him know that it is not his fault that he was bullied. Remember Youth Protection policies in holding this conversation, and remain in sight of another adult or trusted youth at all times.

Note: Avoid arranging a mediation session between the victims and those who bullied them to work things out. Because bullying situations generally involve an imbalance of power, victims are likely to continue to feel intimidated if forced to confront those who bullied them, and mediation will not work. It also sends a message to victims that they were equally at fault.

If the bullying was reported to happen during a Scouting activity, interview bystanders as well as those accused of bullying to gather information about what happened.

Help victims of bullying communicate with others and seek additional help.

If the victim has not told his parents and is telling you as a trusted adult instead, encourage him to talk to his parents and offer to speak to his parents with him if they want you to.

Be aware that young people may not be comfortable letting their parents know that they have been bullied because they do not want to disappoint them by appearing to be unable to handle the situation on their own. They may also believe their parents think that bullying will toughen them up and will not take it seriously or be sympathetic. In some cases, the parenting style of the Scout's parents could be seen as bullying as well.

If a young person confides in you, and you believe that he is in danger from others or is contemplating hurting himself or others, take immediate steps to get him help, in accordance with Youth Protection policies.

Help victims of bullying develop some strategies to cope with bullying situations that may come up in the future, but emphasize that it is not their fault that they are being bullied, even if these strategies don't work.

Use the buddy system whenever possible to steer clear of bullying. Walk with a friend or group whenever or wherever you feel you are likely to be bullied. Tell trusted adults that you believe more adult supervision is needed in these situations or locations.

If you are bullied with insults, try not to take what is said to you personally. Remind yourself that you are not doing anything wrong—it is those bullying you who are at fault. Then:

Ignore the person bullying you and walk away, or
Stand up for yourself with words like, “Hey! Cut that out!” or “I’m tired of this and I want you to stop it,” and then walk away, or
Without attacking back verbally with insults or threats, try making a joke, such as “Thanks for the feedback.” or “That was pretty funny. Got any more?” or “Thanks for noticing.” or “You guys finished? I’ve got things to do.” Then walk away.

If you are danger of physical assault, take a deep breath and try to stay calm. Showing fear makes those who bully bolder. Then

Call for help, get away as fast as possible, and tell an adult.
Don't make threats or fight. This just reinforces the person bullying you and increases the chances that you will get hurt or get in trouble.
Then tell an adult and ask them to help.

Hyperactive kids

Many Scouts demonstrate the hyperactivity, impulsivity, and/or inattention that are characteristic of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. The aims and methods of the Scouting program make it an outstanding opportunity for those with AD/HD characteristics to develop and enhance the skills that can lead to success in school, in relationships with others, and in life.

Through the implementation of relatively simple and straightforward accommodations, leaders can adapt to the strengths and weaknesses of Scouts with AD/HD. Examples of accommodations for Scouts with AD/HD are grouped below according to areas of difficulty.

Impulsivity:

- Ignore minor inappropriate behavior; don't let yourself get drawn into an argument.
- Increase immediacy of rewards and consequences.
- Supervise closely during transition times.
- Provide structure.
- Avoid lecturing or public criticism. Give feedback privately.
- Attend to positive behavior with sincere compliments that are not followed by remarks such as "Why can't you always behave this way."
- Avoid yelling. The louder you yell, the more you will be tuned out.

Inattention:

- Give clear, concise instructions while making eye contact.
- Avoid multiple-step directions.
- Break up task into workable and obtainable steps.
- Use a private signal to cue Scout to stay on task.
- Allow extra time when needed.
- Assist Scout in setting short-term goals.

Motor Activity:

- Provide opportunities for purposeful movement (such as having him help with demonstrations, hand out materials or move furniture, etc.).
- Allow Scout to stand while working.
- Teach self-monitoring (stop – look – listen).
- State the behavior that you want very specifically.
- Avoid activities that require long periods of sitting and listening.
- Anticipate dangerous situations.

Disorganization:

- Help prioritize activities.
- Place expectations/directions on chart.
- Be willing to repeat expectations and directions.
- Model what organization looks like.
- Pair with a buddy.