



GUIDE TO SAFE SCOUTING

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

The BSA's Commitment to Safety

We want you to know that the safety of our youth, volunteers, staff, and employees is an important part of the Scouting experience. Youth develop traits of citizenship, character, fitness, and leadership during age-appropriate events when challenged to move beyond their normal comfort level, and discover their abilities. This is appropriate when risks are identified and mitigated.

The Scouting program, as contained in our handbooks and literature, integrates many safety features. However, no policy or procedure will replace the review and vigilance of trusted adults and leaders at the point of program execution.

Commit yourself to creating a safe and healthy environment by:

- Knowing and executing the BSA program as contained in our publications
- Planning tours, activities, and events with vigilance using the tools provided



Chief Scout Executive Michael Surbaugh

- Setting the example for safe behavior and equipment use during program
- Engaging and educating all participants in discussions about hazards and risks
- Reporting incidents in a timely manner

Thank you for being part of the Scouting movement and creating an exciting and safe experience for every participant.

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GUIDE TO SAFE SCOUTING



Get the Latest Information!

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.

Go to **www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**



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BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
SCOUTER CODE OF CONDUCT

On my honor I promise to do my best to comply with this Boy Scouts of America Scouter Code of Conduct while serving in my capacity as an adult leader:

1. I have or will complete my registration with the Boy Scouts of America, answering all questions truthfully and honestly.
2. I will do my best to live up to the Scout Oath and Scout Law, obey all laws, and hold others in Scouting accountable to those standards. I will exercise sound judgment and demonstrate good leadership and use the Scouting program for its intended purpose consistent with the mission of the Boy Scouts of America.
3. I will make the protection of youth a personal priority. I will complete and remain current with youth protection training requirements. I will be familiar with and follow:
   a. BSA youth protection policies and guidelines, including mandatory reporting: www.scouting.org/YouthProtection.aspx
   b. The Guide to Safe Scouting: www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx
   c. The Sweet Sixteen of BSA Safety: www.scouting.org//HealthandSafety/Resources/sweet16.aspx
4. When transporting Scouts I will obey all laws, comply with youth protection guidelines, and follow safe driving practices.
5. I will respect and abide by the Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America, BSA policies, and BSA-provided training, including but not limited to, those relating to:
   a. Unauthorized fundraising activities
   b. Advocacy on social and political issues, including prohibited use of the BSA uniform and brand
   c. Bullying, hazing, harassment, and unlawful discrimination of any kind

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6. I will not discuss or engage in any form of sexual conduct while engaged in Scouting activities. I will refer Scouts with questions regarding these topics to talk to their parents or spiritual advisor.
7. I confirm that I have fully disclosed and will disclose in the future any of the following:
   a. Any criminal suspicion, charges or convictions of a crime or offense involving abuse, violence, sexual misconduct, or any misconduct involving minors or juveniles
   b. Any investigation or court order involving domestic violence, child abuse, or similar matter
   c. Any criminal charges or convictions for offenses involving controlled substances, driving while intoxicated, firearms or dangerous weapons.
8. I will not possess, distribute, transport, consume, or use any of the following items prohibited by law or in violation of any Scouting rules, regulations and policies:
   a. Alcoholic beverages or controlled substances, including marijuana.
   b. Concealed or unconcealed firearms, fireworks, or explosives.
   c. Pornography or materials containing words or images inconsistent with Scouting values.
9. If I am taking prescription medications with the potential of impairing my functioning or judgment, I will not engage in activities which would put Scouts at risk, including driving or operating equipment.
10. I will take steps to prevent or report any violation of this code of conduct by others in connection with Scouting activities.

Preface

All participants in official Scouting activities should become familiar with the *Guide to Safe Scouting* and applicable program literature or manuals, and be aware of state or local government regulations that supersede Boy Scouts of America practices, policies, and guidelines. The *Guide to Safe Scouting* is an overview of Scouting policies and procedures gleaned from a variety of sources. For some items, the policy statements are complete. For others, unit leaders are expected to review the additional reference material cited prior to conducting such activities.

In situations not specifically covered in this guide, activity planners should evaluate the risk or potential risk of harm, and respond with action plans based on common sense, community standards, the Boy Scout motto, and safety policies and practices commonly prescribed for the activity by experienced providers and practitioners. Perhaps this quote by Sir Robert Baden-Powell from his 1914 book *Quick Training for War* is appropriate to include here:

"... The books lay down definite principles and examples which serve to guide the leaders when applying their common sense to the situation before them. No two situations are ever precisely the same, and it is therefore impossible to lay down exact rules that should guide in every case, but a man who carries precedents and principles in his head has no difficulty in applying their teaching in supreme moments of sudden emergency ..."

Versions of the Guide

In addition to this printed version, the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is available online at www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/gss.aspx.

To obtain additional printed copies of this book, contact your local Scout shop, or order online at www.scoutstuff.org.

Don't forget to check Scouting Safely information at www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety.aspx.

Guide to Safe Scouting Updates

March 2017

Updated throughout to remove references to tour and activity plan.

VIII. Sports and Activities

The entire chapter was updated and a Canyoneering section was added.

May 2017

IX. Insurance

Updated the Coverage for Non-Owned Boats Used in Scouting Activities and the Accident and Sickness Coverage sections.

Appendix

Updated the Motor Vehicle and Driver, Flying Plan, and Campout Safety checklists.

Contents

I. Youth Protection and Adult Leadership 1
Scouting's Barriers to Abuse 1
II. Aquatics Safety 5
Resource Material 5
Aquatics Leadership Training Programs 5
Responsibilities of Supervisory Personnel 5
Safe Swim Defense 6
BSA Aquatics Play Structure Policy 10
Classification of Swimming Ability 11
Distance Swimming in Open Water 11
Snorkeling in Open Water 12
BSA Scuba Policy 12
Safety Afloat 16
Tow Sports 20
III. Camping 21
Age Guidelines 21
Family Camping 22
Cub Scout Overnight Opportunities 22
Boy Scout/ Varsity Scout Camping 23
Venturing Camping 25
Trek Safely 25
Lightning Risk Reduction 25
Treated Drinking Water 27
IV. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs 29
V. Medical Information and First Aid 30
Personal Health and the Annual Health and Medical Record 30
Medication Use in Scouting 32
Immunizations 33
Protection Consideration for Blood and Bodily Fluids (Universal Precautions) 33
Local Council Membership/ Participation Guidelines Regarding Life-Threatening Communicable Diseases 34
First Aid and CPR Training 34
VI. Chemical Fuels and Equipment 35
Purpose 35
Definitions 35
Storing, Handling, and Using Chemical Fuels and Equipment 36
Why Is This Important? 36
VII. Shooting Sports 37
Cannons and Large-Bore Artillery 37
Knife and Tomahawk Throwing 37
VIII. Sports and Activities 38
Activity Planning and Risk Assessment 38
The Sweet 16 of BSA Safety 39
Caving 41
Canyoneering 41
Climbing and Rappelling 42
COPE Activities 43
Slacklining 44
Unauthorized and Restricted Activities 45
Knives 47
Parade Floats and Hayrides 47
Unit Fundraisers 48
Bicycle Safety 48
Skating Safety 49
Horsemanship Activities 50
IX. Insurance 51
Comprehensive General Liability Insurance 51
Automobile Liability Insurance 51
Chartered Organizations for Scouting Units 52
Accident and Sickness Coverage 52

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

Contents

Coverage for Non-Owned Boats Used in Scouting Activities 53
Unauthorized and Restricted Activities 53

X. Transportation 54
Automobiles, SUVs, and Vans 54
Campers, Trailers, and Trucks 55
Buses 56
Commercial Driver's License Compliance 56
For-Hire Motor Carriers of Passengers (Charter Buses) 57

XI. Winter Activities 58
Winter Camping Safety 58
Winter Sports Safety 59

XII. Animal and Insect Hazards 61
Hantavirus 61
Rabies Prevention 61
Lyme Disease 62
Mosquito Borne Illnesses 62

XIII. Incident Reporting 63
BSA Incident Reporting Policy 63
Incident Reviews 64

Appendix 65
Motor Vehicle and Driver Checklist 66
Meeting Place Inspection Checklist 67
Flying Plan Checklist 69
Unit Money-Earning Application 72
Incident Descriptions and Reporting Instructions 74
Incident Definitions 75
Incident Information Report 76
Service Project Planning Guidelines 78
Age Guidelines for Tool Use and Work at Elevations or Excavations 83
Campout Safety Checklist 86
Event Safety Checklist 87
Youth Protection/Membership Incident Information Form 91

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I. Youth Protection and Adult Leadership

Scouting's Barriers to Abuse

The BSA has adopted the following policies for the safety and well-being of its members. These policies primarily protect youth members; however, they also serve to protect adult leaders. Parents and youth using these safeguards outside the Scouting program further increase the safety of their youth. Scout leaders in positions of youth leadership and supervision outside the Scouting program will find these policies help protect youth in those situations as well.

Two-deep leadership on all outings required. A minimum of two registered adult leaders, or one registered leader and a participating Scout's parent, or another adult are required for all trips and outings. One of these adults must be 21 years of age or older.

- ***Patrol Activities***
  There are instances, such as patrol activities, when the presence of adult leaders is not required and adult leadership may be limited to patrol leadership training and guidance. With proper training, guidance, and approval by troop leaders, the patrol can conduct day hikes and service projects.
- ***Adult Supervision/Coed Activities***
  Male and female adult leaders must be present for all overnight coed Scouting trips and outings, even those including parent and child. Both male and female adult leaders must be 21 years of age or older, and one must be a registered member of the BSA.

One on-one contact between adults and youth members prohibited. In situations requiring a personal conference, such as a Scoutmaster's conference, the meeting is to be conducted with the knowledge and in view of other adults and/or youth.

Two-deep leadership and no one-on-one contact between adults and youth members include digital communication. Leaders may not have one-on-one private online communications or engage one-on-one in other digital activities (games, social media, etc.) with youth members. Leaders should copy a parent and another leader in digital and online communication, ensuring no one-on-one contact exists in text, social media, or other forms of online or digital communication.

Age-appropriate and separate accommodations for adults and Scouts required.

- ***Tenting***
  No adult may share a tent with a person of the opposite sex unless he or she is that adult's spouse. No youth may share a tent with an adult or a person of the opposite sex other than a family member or guardian. Assigning youth members more than two years apart in age to sleep in the same tent should be avoided unless the youth are relatives.

- ***Shower Facilities***
  Whenever possible, separate shower and latrine facilities should be provided for male/female adults and male/female youth. If separate facilities are not available, separate shower times should be scheduled and posted.

The buddy system should be used at all times. The buddy system is a safety measure for all Scouting activities. Buddies should know and be comfortable with each other. Self-selection with no more than two years age or significant differences in maturity should be strongly encouraged. When necessary, a buddy team may consist of three Scouts. No youth should be forced into or made to feel uncomfortable by a buddy assignment.

Privacy of youth respected. Adult leaders and youth must respect each other's privacy, especially in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers at camp. Adults may enter youth changing or showering areas only to the extent that health and safety requires. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.

Inappropriate use of smart phones, cameras, imaging, or digital devices prohibited. Although most Scouts and leaders use cameras and other imaging devices responsibly, it is easy to unintentionally or inadvertently invade the privacy of other individuals with those devices. The use of any device capable of recording or transmitting visual images in or near shower houses, restrooms, or other areas where privacy is expected is inappropriate.

No secret organizations. The BSA 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.

Youth leadership monitored by adult leaders. Adult leaders must monitor and guide the leadership techniques used by youth leaders and ensure BSA policies are followed.

Discipline must be constructive. Discipline used in Scouting must be constructive and reflect Scouting's values. Corporal punishment is never permitted. Disciplinary activities involving isolation, humiliation, or ridicule are prohibited. Examples of positive discipline include verbal praise and high fives.

Appropriate attire for all activities. Proper clothing for activities is required.

No hazing. Hazing and initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any Scouting activity.

No bullying. Verbal, physical, and cyberbullying are prohibited in Scouting.

Mandatory reporting of child abuse. All persons involved in Scouting must report to local authorities any good-faith suspicion or belief that any child is or has been physically or sexually abused, physically or emotionally neglected, exposed to any form of violence or threat, exposed to any form of sexual exploitation including the possession, manufacture, or distribution of child pornography, online solicitation, enticement, or showing of obscene material. This duty cannot be delegated to any other person.

Immediately notify the Scout executive of this report, or of any violation of the BSA's Youth Protection policies, so he or she may take appropriate action for the safety of our Scouts, make appropriate notifications, and follow up with investigating agencies.

State-by-state mandatory reporting information: www.childwelfare.gov.

All adult leaders and youth members have responsibility. Everyone is responsible for acting in accordance with the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. Physical violence, sexual activity, emotional abuse, spiritual abuse, unauthorized weapons, hazing, discrimination, harassment, initiation rites, bullying, cyberbullying, theft, verbal insults, drugs, alcohol, or pornography have no place in the Scouting program and may result in revocation of membership.

Units are responsible to enforce Youth Protection policies. Adult leaders in Scouting units are responsible for monitoring the behavior of youth members and other leaders and interceding when necessary. If youth members misbehave, their parents should be informed and asked for assistance.

Incidents requiring an immediate report to the Scout executive. The following must be reported to the council Scout executive for action immediately:

- Any threat or use of a weapon
- Any negative behavior associated with race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability
- Any reports to authorities where the BSA's Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse policy or your state's mandatory reporting of child abuse laws apply
- Any abuse of a child that meets state reporting mandates for bullying or harassment
- Any mention or threats of suicide

If someone is at immediate risk of harm, call 911.

If a Scout is bullied because of race, ethnicity, or disability, and local help is not working to solve the problem, contact the BSA's Member Care Contact Center at 972-580-2489 or send an email to youth.protection@scouting.org.

Link to the volunteer Youth Protection/Membership Incident Information Form: www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/680-676_WEB.pdf

Your Responsibility.

1. Stop the policy violation or abuse.
2. Protect the youth.
3. Separate alleged victim from alleged perpetrator.
4. Summon needed assistance (911, EMS, additional leaders, etc.).
5. Notify parents.
6. Notify the appropriate Scouting professional.

Chartered Organization Responsibility. The head of the chartered organization or chartered organization representative and their committee chair must approve the registration of the unit's adult leaders.

Link to the Local Council Locator: www.scouting.org/LocalCouncilLocator.aspx

Link to the Bullying Prevention Guide: www.scouting.org/filestore/training/pdf/BullyingPreventionGuide.pdf

II. Aquatics Safety

Resource Material

Aquatics Supervision, No. 34346, is the primary resource for aquatics at the unit level. Aquatics activities at district and council day and resident camps should follow appropriate National Camp Accreditation Program (NCAP) standards.

Aquatics Leadership Training Programs

Safe Swim Defense and **Safety Afloat** training programs are available online at my.scouting.org and may be offered locally by instructors approved by the council aquatics committee or other council authority.

Aquatics Supervision: Swimming and Water Rescue and **Aquatics Supervision: Paddle Craft Safety** cover skills needed for Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat policies at the unit level. These training courses are provided locally by qualified instructors who are authorized by the local council.

BSA Lifeguard provides professional-level training for lifeguards at unit or summer camp swimming activities and is provided locally by qualified instructors who are authorized by the local council.

BSA Aquatics Instructor prepares adults for leadership roles in year-round aquatics programs and is recommended for a least one member of the council aquatics committee. Those with BSA Aquatics Instructor training may serve as aquatics directors at Boy Scout or Cub Scout summer camps. The training is available at National Camping Schools.

Responsibilities of Supervisory Personnel

Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat govern BSA swimming and boating activities. Both specify that the activities are supervised by a mature and conscientious adult age 21 or older who:

- Understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of youth members in his or her care
- Is experienced in the particular activity
- Is confident in his or her ability to respond appropriately in an emergency
- Is trained and committed to the nine points of BSA Safety Afloat and/or the eight points of Safe Swim Defense.

Unit leadership that accompanies the unit on an outing handles the first and last bulleted points above. However, under appropriate circumstances, the unit leader may delegate responsibility to trained individuals within the unit

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or to on-site professionals for the second and third bulleted points above. For example, a Scout troop at a water park with trained lifeguards on duty need not assign separate unit personnel to perform water rescue. A Venturing crew on a whitewater excursion may rely on a licensed outfitter to provide the necessary equipment and trained guides.

Every possible contingency will not be covered with a hard-and-fast rule, and rules are poor substitutes for experience. Ultimately, each responsible adult leader must personally decide if he or she understands the risk factors associated with the activity and is sufficiently experienced and well-informed to make the rational decisions expected of a "qualified supervisor." The BSA training programs listed above help provide the skills, experience, and guidance for making such a determination.

Safe Swim Defense

BSA groups shall use Safe Swim Defense for all swimming activities. Adult leaders supervising a swimming activity must have completed Safe Swim Defense training within the previous two years. Safe Swim Defense standards apply at backyard, hotel, apartment, and public pools; at established waterfront swim areas such as beaches at state parks and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lakes; and at all temporary swimming areas such as a lake, river, or ocean. Safe Swim Defense does not apply to boating or water activities such as waterskiing or swamped boat drills that are covered by Safety Afloat guidelines. Safe Swim Defense applies to other nonswimming activities whenever participants enter water over knee deep or when submersion is likely, for example, when fording a stream, seining for bait, or constructing a bridge as a pioneering project. Snorkeling in open water requires each participant to have demonstrated knowledge and skills equivalent to those for Snorkeling BSA in addition to following Safe Swim Defense. Scuba activities must be conducted in accordance with the BSA Scuba policy found in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*. Because of concerns with hyperventilation, competitive underwater swimming events are not permitted in Scouting.

Safe Swim Defense training may be obtained from my.scouting.org, at council summer camps, and at other council and district training events. Additional information on various swimming venues is provided in the *Aquatics Supervision* guide available from local council service centers.

1. **Qualified Supervision**
   All swimming activity must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult age 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of those in his or her care, and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the eight points of BSA Safe Swim Defense. It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently trained in BSA Aquatics Supervision: Swimming and Water Rescue or BSA Lifeguard to assist in planning and conducting all swimming activities.

2. Personal Health Review

A complete health history is required of all participants as evidence of fitness for swimming activities. Forms for minors must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. Participants should be asked to relate any recent incidents of illness or injury just prior to the activity. Supervision and protection should be adjusted to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions. For significant health conditions, the adult supervisor should require an examination by a physician and consult with the parent, guardian, or caregiver for appropriate precautions.

3. Safe Area

All swimming areas must be carefully inspected and prepared for safety prior to each activity. Water depth, quality, temperature, movement, and clarity are important considerations. Hazards must be eliminated or isolated by conspicuous markings and discussed with participants.

Controlled Access: There must be safe areas for all participating ability groups to enter and leave the water. Swimming areas of appropriate depth must be defined for each ability group. The entire area must be within easy reach of designated rescue personnel. The area must be clear of boat traffic, surfing, or other nonswimming activities.

Bottom Conditions and Depth: The bottom must be clear of trees and debris. Abrupt changes in depth are not allowed in the nonswimmer area. Isolated underwater hazards should be marked with floats. Rescue personnel must be able to easily reach the bottom. Maximum recommended water depth in clear water is 12 feet. Maximum water depth in turbid water is 8 feet.

Visibility: Underwater swimming and diving are prohibited in turbid water. Turbid water exists when a swimmer treading water cannot see his feet. Swimming at night is allowed only in areas with water clarity and lighting sufficient for good visibility both above and below the surface.

Diving and Elevated Entry: Diving is permitted only into clear, unobstructed water from heights no greater than 40 inches. Water depth must be at least 7 feet. Bottom depth contours below diving boards and elevated surfaces require greater water depths and must conform to state regulations. Persons should not jump into water from heights greater than they are tall, and should jump only into water chest deep or greater with minimal risk from contact with the bottom. No elevated entry is permitted where the person must clear any obstacle, including land.

Water Temperature: Comfortable water temperature for swimming is near 80 degrees. Activity in water at 70 degrees or less should be of limited duration and closely monitored for negative effects of chilling.

Water Quality: Bodies of stagnant, foul water, areas with significant algae or foam, or areas polluted by livestock or waterfowl should be avoided. Comply with any signs posted by local health authorities. Swimming is not allowed in swimming pools with green, murky, or cloudy water.

Moving Water: Participants should be able to easily regain and maintain their footing in currents or waves. Areas with large waves, swiftly flowing currents, or moderate currents that flow toward the open sea or into areas of danger should be avoided.

Weather: Participants should be moved from the water to a position of safety whenever lightning or thunder threatens. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash or thunder before leaving shelter. Take precautions to prevent sunburn, dehydration, and hypothermia.

Life Jacket Use: Swimming in clear water over 12 feet deep, in turbid water over 8 feet deep, or in flowing water may be allowed if all participants wear properly fitted, Coast Guard–approved life jackets and the supervisor determines that swimming with life jackets is safe under the circumstances.

4. **Response Personnel (Lifeguards)**
   Every swimming activity must be closely and continuously monitored by a trained rescue team on the alert for and ready to respond during emergencies. Professionally trained lifeguards satisfy this need when provided by a regulated facility or tour operator. When lifeguards are not provided by others, the adult supervisor must assign at least two rescue personnel, with additional numbers to maintain a ratio of one rescuer to every 10 participants. The supervisor must provide instruction and rescue equipment and assign areas of responsibility as outlined in *Aquatics Supervision*, No. 34346. The qualified supervisor, the designated response personnel, and the lookout work together as a safety team. An emergency action plan should be formulated and shared with participants as appropriate.

5. **Lookout**
   The lookout continuously monitors the conduct of the swim, identifies any departures from Safe Swim Defense guidelines, alerts rescue personnel as needed, and monitors the weather and environment. The lookout should have a clear view of the entire area but be close enough for easy verbal communication. The lookout must have a sound understanding of Safe Swim Defense but is not required to perform rescues. The adult supervisor may serve simultaneously as the lookout but must assign the task to someone else if engaged in activities that preclude focused observation.

6. Ability Groups

All youth and adult participants are designated as swimmers, beginners, or nonswimmers based on swimming ability confirmed by standardized BSA swim classification tests. Each group is assigned a specific swimming area with depths consistent with those abilities. The classification tests must be renewed annually, preferably at the beginning of the season even if the Scout has earned the Swimming merit badge.

Swimmers pass this test: Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth. Level off and swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.

Beginners pass this test: Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth, level off, and swim 25 feet on the surface. Stop, turn sharply, resume swimming, and return to the starting place.

Anyone who has not completed either the beginner or swimmer tests is classified as a nonswimmer.

The nonswimmer area should be no more than waist to chest deep and should be enclosed by physical boundaries such as the shore, a pier, or lines. The enclosed beginner area should contain water of standing depth and may extend to depths just over the head. The swimmer area may be up to 12 feet in depth in clear water and should be defined by floats or other markers.

7. Buddy System

Every participant is paired with another. Buddies stay together, monitor each other, and alert the safety team if either needs assistance or is missing.

Buddies check into and out of the area together. Buddies are normally in the same ability group and remain in their assigned area. If they are not of the same ability group, then they swim in the area assigned to the buddy with the lesser ability.

A buddy check reminds participants of their obligation to monitor their buddies and indicates how closely the buddies are keeping track of each other. Roughly every 10 minutes, or as needed to keep the buddies together, the lookout, or other person designated by the supervisor, gives an audible signal, such as a single whistle blast, and a call for "Buddies." Buddies are expected to raise each other's hand before completion of a slow, audible count to 10. Buddies who take longer to find each other should be reminded of their responsibility for the other's safety.

Once everyone has a buddy, a count is made by area and compared with the total number known to be in the water. After the count is confirmed, a signal is given to resume swimming.

8. Discipline

Rules are effective only when followed. All participants should know, understand, and respect the rules and procedures for safe swimming provided by Safe Swim Defense guidelines. Applicable rules should be discussed prior to the outing and reviewed for all participants at the water's edge just before the swimming activity begins. People are more likely to follow directions when they know the reasons for rules and procedures. Consistent, impartially applied rules supported by skill and good judgment provide steppingstones to a safe, enjoyable outing.

BSA Aquatics Play Structure Policy

The BSA's Aquatics Play Structure Policy applies to all play structures operated in Scouting whether inflatable, floatable, or fixed structures. It includes, but is not limited to, slides, swings, mats, logs, rockers, and climbing or bouncing devices.

Program Hazard Analysis. A program hazard analysis must be completed at least annually for each aquatics play structure device in use. The unique risks associated with the device and the operational procedures and practices to mitigate the risks must be documented. The participant's age and swimming ability, which are appropriate for use of the device, must also be documented. The program hazard analysis must be approved by the council (Aquatics Committee and Enterprise Risk Management Committee).

Location. Aquatics play structures, used individually or in a group, must be isolated from other water activities to safely manage risks. A dedicated catch pool or roped-off area of water is required for each activity. A separate check-in and a single route to the start of the activity are often needed.

Operating Procedures. The activity must be conducted in accordance with Safe Swim Defense principles, and swimming ability must be appropriate for the activity.

Lifeguards must be specific to the activity and not be shared with other water activities. Appropriate guard ratios must be maintained, which includes a sufficient number of guards to scan the entire activity area with lines of sight not blocked by structures. Supervision of participants entering and leaving the activity must occur. Lifeguards must be positioned to maintain proper lines of sight for the risks associated with each type of device. Lifeguards must be provided with appropriate personal safety and rescue equipment.

Installation/Construction. Installation, including any anchoring systems, must be in accordance with manufacturing specifications. Construction of any fixed structures, towers, and ramps must be professionally designed, approved, and inspected by engineers/architects. All installations and construction must meet any state regulations on aquatics play structures.

Participant Safety Equipment. Safety equipment (such as properly fitted life jackets and helmets) must be provided to participants as appropriate for the activity.

Safety Checks. A safety check of the structure/device must occur in accordance with manufacturer specifications or at least daily. A safety check of the participant safety and lifeguard safety and rescue equipment must occur daily.

Emergency Action Plans. As part of the program hazard analysis, emergency action plans specific to the activity must be developed and approved. Emergency action plans must be practiced on a regular basis.

Classification of Swimming Ability

The swimmer and beginner classification tests defined in Safe Swim Defense may be administered at the unit level following procedures specified in *Aquatics Supervision,* No. 34346.

Swim classification tests for multiunit district and council aquatics activities, such as day or resident camps, are generally conducted on-site by supervisory personnel for those activities. When swim tests are conducted off-site prior to the camp session, the camp aquatics director retains the right to review or retest any or all participants.

Distance Swimming in Open Water

The following policies apply when distance swimming is conducted outside the confines of a normal Safe Swim Defense area.

- The environment for an open-water swim must conform to Safe Swim Defense guidelines regarding hazards such as submerged trees, currents, and boat traffic, as well as water quality, depth, and clarity.
- Each individual swimmer, or at most a buddy pair, may be accompanied by a rowboat with two people onboard—one skilled in controlling the boat and the other trained in basic water rescue—equipped with a reaching device and flotation aid, continuously watching the swimmers.
- Alternatively, a closed circuit may be established where all swimmers are constantly in reach of safety personnel strategically positioned at fixed points on anchored boats, the shore, or piers. Each participant swims with a buddy, and the number and spacing of the swimmers in the water should not exceed the capacity of the watchers to easily count the swimmers as they move from one zone to another.
- Some competitive swimming events, such as triathlons, also cover long distances. Long-distance swimming races are not approved for Cub Scouts

or Boy Scouts, but Varsity Scouts and Venturers may participate in triathlon training and competitive events. All swimming activities conducted by Varsity Scout teams or Venturing crews must conform to Safe Swim Defense guidelines. Individual Varsity Scouts and Venturers may participate in outside triathlon events sanctioned by USA Triathlon.

Snorkeling in Open Water

All ability groups may use snorkeling equipment within confined areas when following all Safe Swim Defense policies, including visibility for underwater swimming.

Snorkeling is a swimming activity in which one must abide by Safe Swim Defense policies, but the following additions to Safe Swim Defense apply when snorkeling is conducted in open water. "Open water" denotes a temporary swimming area of flexible extent in a natural body of water that may or may not be close to shore.

Qualified Supervision: In addition to Safe Swim Defense training and the 21-year-old minimum age, the supervisor must be an experienced snorkeler. At a minimum, the supervisor must possess skills and knowledge matching the Snorkeling BSA Award and have experience with environments similar to those of the planned activity.

Participant Ability: All participants in open-water snorkeling must either complete Snorkeling BSA requirements or be a certified scuba diver.

Equipment: All snorkeling equipment must be properly fitted and in good repair. Use of individual flotation devices (inflatable snorkeling vests or life jackets) is required whenever there is a noticeable current or swells, when the bottom is not visible from the surface due to vegetation or limited visibility beyond 8 feet, or when the activity is greater than 50 yards from shore or craft. A dive flag is required in areas shared by boats. Local regulations specifying the size of the flag and how far snorkelers may be from it must be followed. Weight belts may not be worn unless the participant has scuba certification. Dive boats should be equipped with radios and first-aid kits, and should deploy safety lines.

Additional guidance on application of Safe Swim Defense principles to snorkeling may be found in *Aquatics Supervision*, No. 34346, and *Snorkeling Safety,* No. 19-176, at www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/19-176.pdf.

BSA Scuba Policy

The BSA scuba policy recognizes scuba industry standards and implements them by using outside agencies for training and certification.

Training and Supervision

Any person possessing, displaying, or using scuba (self-contained underwater breathing apparatus) in connection with any Scouting-related activity must be either currently certified by a recognized agency or enrolled in an instructional scuba program, such as Scuba BSA or Scuba Diving merit badge, which must be conducted by an insured recreational diving instructor in good standing with a recognized agency and approved by the council.

Recreational diving activities by BSA groups must be supervised by a responsible adult currently certified (renewed) as a divemaster, assistant instructor, or higher rating from a recognized agency. Dive environments, equipment, depths, procedures, supervision, and buddy assignments must be consistent with each individual's certification.

Because dives by recreational divers may be infrequent, the divemaster or instructor supervising a BSA scuba activity should screen participants prior to open-water activities and provide remedial instruction and practice as appropriate. Such remedial instruction and practice should be in accordance with the policies and standards of the divemaster's or instructor's agency for Scuba Review, Scuba Refresher, or similar program.

Diving using surface-supplied air systems is not authorized in connection with any BSA activity or facility except when done under contract by commercial divers.

Age-Appropriate Restrictions

Youth members in Cub Scouting, including Webelos Scouts, are not authorized to use scuba in any activity.

Boy Scouts may participate in the introductory Scuba BSA program and may obtain open-water certification as part of Scuba Diving merit badge.

Varsity and Venturing groups may participate in introductory and certification scuba programs conducted by recognized agencies appropriate to their age and current level of certification.

Standards of the recognized scuba agencies require students for open-water certification programs to be at least 15 years of age but allow special certification programs for younger students. Since all instruction for BSA scuba programs must be conducted by professionals certified by a recognized agency, additional agency-specific, age-related restrictions and protocols apply to students under 15 years of age.

Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, and Venturers may participate in recreational group dives as unit, district, or council activities, provided such dives are consistent with their certifications and under direct, on-site supervision of a responsible adult currently certified as a divemaster, assistant instructor, or higher rating from a recognized agency.

The divemaster or instructor supervising a recreational dive by a BSA group must implement the following policies for all divers under 15 years of age, as well as any additional junior diver restrictions and protocols adopted by that person's certifying agency:

- Depths are limited to 40 feet for divers under 12 years of age and to 60 feet for divers 12 to 14 years of age.
- Each diver under 15 years of age must have an adult buddy certified as an open-water diver who is either the junior diver's parent or an adult approved by the parent.
- Additional divemasters or instructors are present to maintain a ratio of one trained supervisor to four buddy pairs (eight divers) containing one to four divers under 15 years of age.

Medical Contraindications

Each scuba training agency recognized by the BSA requires a specific health history form prior to enrollment in a certification program. The BSA requires review and approval of the completed form by a physician even if the scuba agency itself does not require physician approval. Various risk factors identified on the forms may exclude a person from scuba training, either temporarily or permanently. Risk factors include, but are not limited to, ear and sinus problems, recent surgery, spontaneous pneumothorax, asthma or reactive airway disease (RAD), seizure disorders, diabetes, leukemia, sickle-cell disorder, pregnancy, panic disorders, and active psychosis.

The divemaster or instructor supervising a BSA recreational scuba activity must review the health information for each participant that is required annually of all BSA members and evaluate risk conditions using medical standards consistent with those used by his or her certifying agency. Additional tests or physician consultations may be required to confirm fitness for diving. Consultation with medical specialists knowledgeable about diving medicine also may be needed for participants taking psychotropic drugs for treatment of attention deficit disorder, depression, or other conditions.

Scuba diving is prohibited for the following conditions.

- Use of medication to control seizures or seizure occurrence within the past five years
- Use of insulin to control diabetes
- History of asthma or RAD unless resolution confirmed by methacholine testing (Persons who have been asymptomatic and medication free for the previous five years are exempt from the methacholine testing requirements.)

The scuba agencies recognized by the BSA may allow exceptions to general medical prohibitions based on individual diving fitness evaluations by a medical

specialist who is knowledgeable about diving medicine. Scouts, parents, dive supervisors, and physicians with questions or concerns about diving with specific medical conditions should consult the Recreational Scuba Training Council (RSTC) Guidelines for Recreational Scuba Diver's Physical Examination and the Divers Alert Network (DAN) at www.diversalertnetwork.org. DAN medical professionals are available for nonemergency consultation by telephone at 919-684-2948 during business hours or via email.

Council Programs

When scuba diving is taught in connection with any local council program, instructors should provide the training on a contract basis. Such instructors should have dive store or other commercial affiliation that provides liability insurance coverage. Direct employment of scuba instructors is not recommended.

Local council programs may not compress or sell air for scuba use, or sell, rent, or loan scuba equipment (scuba cylinders, regulators, gauges, dive computers, weights, or BCDs). All air and equipment for local council program use must be obtained from professional sources (dive stores, resorts, dive boats, etc.) affiliated with a scuba agency recognized by the BSA.

Scuba equipment may be used by certified summer camp aquatics program personnel for installation and maintenance of waterfront equipment, or for search and recovery operations. Search and recovery could include lost equipment, as well as rescue efforts.

Recognized Agencies

Recognized agencies are:

- PADI: Professional Association of Diving Instructors
- NAUI: National Association of Underwater Instructors
- SSI: Scuba Schools International
- IDEA: International Diving Educators Association
- PDIC: Professional Diving Instructors Corporation
- SDI: Scuba Diving International
- YMCA Scuba Program (discontinued in 2008, but certification cards are still recognized)
- NASDS: National Association of Scuba Diving Schools (merged with SSI, but certification cards are still recognized)

In addition to the agencies listed by name, any current member of the World Recreational Scuba Training Council (WRSTC), which includes all RSTC members, is also recognized.

Safety Afloat

BSA groups shall use Safety Afloat for all boating activities. Adult leaders supervising activities afloat must have completed Safety Afloat training within the previous two years. Cub Scout activities afloat are limited to council, district, pack, or den events that do not include moving water or float trips (expeditions). Safety Afloat standards apply to the use of canoes, kayaks, rowboats, rafts, floating tubes, sailboats, motorboats (including waterskiing), and other small craft, but do not apply to transportation on large commercial vessels such as ferries and cruise ships. Parasailing (being towed airborne behind a boat using a parachute), kite-surfing (using a wakeboard towed by a kite), and unit-level recreational use of personal watercraft (small sit-on-top motorboats propelled by water jets) are not authorized BSA activities.

Safety Afloat training may be obtained from My.Scouting.org, at council summer camps, and at other council and district training events. Additional guidance on appropriate skill levels and training resources is provided in the *Aquatics Supervision* guide available from council service centers.

1. **Qualified Supervision**
   All activity afloat must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult age 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of those in his or her care and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the nine points of BSA Safety Afloat. That supervisor must be skilled in the safe operation of the craft for the specific activity, knowledgeable in accident prevention, and prepared for emergency situations. If the adult with Safety Afloat training lacks the necessary boat operating and safety skills, then he or she may serve as the supervisor only if assisted by other adults, camp staff personnel, or professional tour guides who have the appropriate skills. Additional leadership is provided in ratios of one trained adult, staff member, or guide per 10 participants. For Cub Scouts, the leadership ratio is one trained adult, staff member, or guide per five participants. At least one leader must be trained in first aid including CPR. Any swimming done in conjunction with the activity afloat must be supervised in accordance with BSA Safe Swim Defense standards. It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently trained in BSA Aquatics Supervision: Paddle Craft Safety to assist in the planning and conduct of all activities afloat.

2. **Personal Health Review**
   A complete health history is required of all participants as evidence of fitness for boating activities. Forms for minors must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. Participants should be asked to relate any recent incidents of illness or injury just prior to the activity. Supervision and protection should be adjusted to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions. For significant health conditions, the adult supervisor should require an examination by a physician and consult with parent, guardian, or caregiver for appropriate precautions.

3. Swimming Ability

Operation of any boat on a float trip is limited to youth and adults who have completed the BSA swimmer classification test. Swimmers must complete the following test, which must be administered annually.

Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth. Level off and swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.

For activity afloat, those not classified as a swimmer are limited to multiperson craft during outings or float trips on calm water with little likelihood of capsizing or falling overboard. They may operate a fixed-seat rowboat or pedal boat accompanied by a buddy who is a swimmer. They may paddle or ride in a canoe or other paddle craft with an adult swimmer skilled in that craft as a buddy. They may ride as part of a group on a motorboat or sailboat operated by a skilled adult.

4. Life Jackets

Properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard–approved life jackets must be worn by all persons engaged in boating activity (rowing, canoeing, sailing, boardsailing, motorboating, waterskiing, rafting, tubing, and kayaking). Type III life jackets are recommended for general recreational use.

For vessels over 20 feet in length, life jackets need not be worn when participants are below deck or on deck when the qualified supervisor aboard the vessel determines that it is prudent to abide by less-restrictive state and federal regulations concerning the use and storage of life jackets, for example, when a cruising vessel with safety rails is at anchor. All participants not classified as swimmers must wear a life jacket when on deck underway.

Life jackets need not be worn when an activity falls under Safe Swim Defense guidelines—for example, when an inflated raft is used in a pool or when snorkeling from an anchored craft.

5. Buddy System

All participants in an activity afloat are paired as buddies who are always aware of each other's situation and prepared to sound an alarm and lend assistance immediately when needed. When several craft are used on a float trip, each boat on the water should have a "buddy boat." All buddy pairs must be accounted for at regular intervals during the activity and checked off the water by the qualified supervisor at the conclusion of the activity. Buddies either ride in the same boat or stay near each other in single-person craft.

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

6. Skill Proficiency

Everyone in an activity afloat must have sufficient knowledge and skill to participate safely. Passengers should know how their movement affects boat stability and have a basic understanding of self-rescue. Boat operators must meet government requirements, be able to maintain control of their craft, know how changes in the environment influence that control, and undertake activities only that are within their personal and group capabilities.

Content of training exercises should be appropriate for the age, size, and experience of the participants, and should cover basic skills on calm water of limited extent before proceeding to advanced skills involving current, waves, high winds, or extended distance. At a minimum, instructors for canoes and kayaks should be able to demonstrate the handling and rescue skills required for BSA Aquatics Supervision: Paddle Craft Safety. All instructors must have at least one assistant who can recognize and respond appropriately if the instructor's safety is compromised.

Anyone engaged in recreational boating using human-powered craft on flatwater ponds or controlled lake areas free of conflicting activities should be instructed in basic safety procedures prior to launch, and allowed to proceed after they have demonstrated the ability to control the boat adequately to return to shore at will.

For recreational sailing, at least one person aboard should be able to demonstrate basic sailing proficiency (tacking, reaching, and running) sufficient to return the boat to the launch point. Extended cruising on a large sailboat requires either a professional captain or an adult with sufficient experience to qualify as a bareboat skipper.

Motorboats may be operated by youth, subject to state requirements, only when accompanied in the boat by an experienced leader or camp staff member who meets state requirements for motorboat operation. Extended cruising on a large power boat requires either a professional captain or an adult with similar qualifications.

Before a unit using human-powered craft controlled by youth embarks on a float trip or excursion that covers an extended distance or lasts longer than four hours, each participant should either receive a minimum of three hours training and supervised practice or demonstrate proficiency in maneuvering the craft effectively over a 100-yard course and recovering from a capsize.

Self-guided unit trips on Class III whitewater may only be done after all participants have received American Canoe Association or equivalent training for the class of water and type of craft involved. Unit trips on whitewater sections of rivers rated Class IV are only allowed in rafts with a professionally trained guide in each raft. Trips above Class IV are not allowed.

7. Planning

Proper planning is necessary to ensure a safe, enjoyable exercise afloat. All plans should include a scheduled itinerary, notification of appropriate parties, communication arrangements, contingencies in case of foul weather or equipment failure, and emergency response options.

Preparation. Any boating activity requires access to the proper equipment and transportation of gear and participants to the site. Determine what state and local regulations are applicable. Get permission to use or cross private property. Determine whether personal resources will be used or whether outfitters will supply equipment, food, and shuttle services. Lists of group and personal equipment and supplies must be compiled and checked. Even short trips require selecting a route, checking water levels, and determining alternative pull-out locations. Changes in water level, especially on moving water, may pose significant, variable safety concerns. Obtain current charts and information about the waterway and consult those who have traveled the route recently.

Float Plan. Complete the preparation by writing a detailed itinerary, or float plan, noting put-in and pull-out locations and waypoints, along with the approximate time the group should arrive at each. Travel time should be estimated generously.

Notification. File the float plan with parents, the local council office if traveling on running water, and local authorities if appropriate. Assign a member of the unit committee to alert authorities if prearranged check-ins are overdue. Make sure everyone is promptly notified when the trip is concluded.

Weather. Check the weather forecast just before setting out, and keep an alert weather eye. Anticipate changes and bring all craft ashore when rough weather threatens. Wait at least 30 minutes before resuming activities after the last incidence of thunder or lightning.

Contingencies. Planning must identify possible emergencies and other circumstances that could force a change of plans. Develop alternative plans for each situation. Identify local emergency resources such as EMS systems, sheriff's departments, or ranger stations. Check your primary communication system, and identify backups, such as the nearest residence to a campsite. Cell phones and radios may lose coverage, run out of power, or suffer water damage.

8. Equipment

All craft must be suitable for the activity, be seaworthy, and float if capsized. All craft and equipment must meet regulatory standards, be properly sized, and be in good repair. Spares, repair materials, and emergency gear must be carried as appropriate. Life jackets and paddles must be sized to the participants. Properly designed and fitted helmets must be worn when running rapids rated Class II and above. Emergency equipment such as throw bags, signal devices, flashlights, heat sources, first-aid kits, radios,

and maps must be ready for use. Spare equipment, repair materials, extra food and water, and dry clothes should be appropriate for the activity. All gear should be stowed to prevent loss and water damage. For float trips with multiple craft, the number of craft should be sufficient to carry the party if a boat is disabled, and critical supplies should be divided among the craft.

9. **Discipline**
   Rules are effective only when followed. All participants should know, understand, and respect the rules and procedures for safe boating activities provided by Safety Afloat guidelines. Applicable rules should be discussed prior to the outing and reviewed for all participants near the boarding area just before the activity afloat begins. People are more likely to follow directions when they know the reasons for rules and procedures. Consistent, impartially applied rules supported by skill and good judgment provide steppingstones to a safe, enjoyable outing.

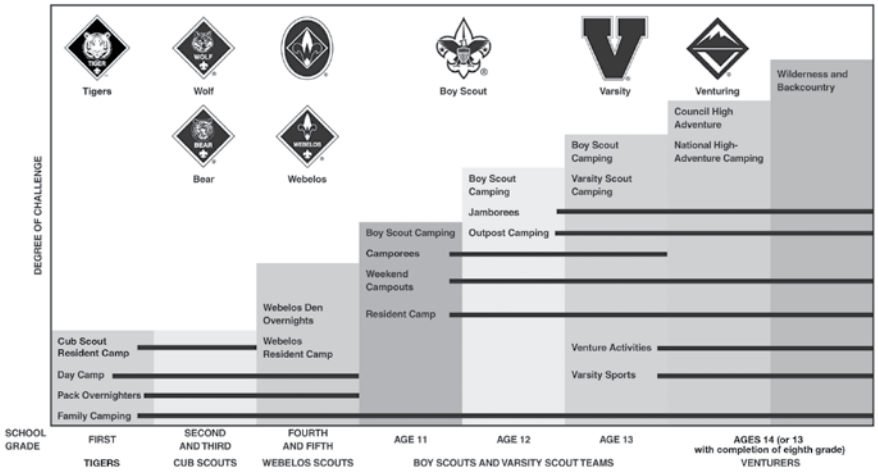
Tow Sports

All participants in towed activity afloat (waterskiing, wakeboarding, kneeboarding, tubing, etc.) must have successfully completed the BSA swimmer classification test and must wear a life jacket with an impact rating consistent with the activity. Supervision must include both a skilled boat driver currently trained in Safety Afloat and a separate observer. Participants should observe the Water-Skiers Safety Code and the Boat Drivers Safety Code found in *Aquatics Supervision*, No. 34346. Use only floats specifically designed for towing that provide secure handholds for each rider.

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

III. Camping

Scouting's Camping Program—Ever-Increasing Challenge Out-of-Doors



Age Guidelines

The Boy Scouts of America has established the following guidelines for its members' participation in camping activities:

- Overnight camping by Tiger, Wolf, and Bear Cub Scout dens as dens is not approved, and certificates of liability insurance will not be provided by the Boy Scouts of America.
- Tigers, with their adult partner, may participate in boy-parent excursions, day camps, pack overnighters, council-organized family camping, or resident camping.
- Tiger, Wolf, and Bear Cub Scouts, and Webelos Scouts may participate in a resident overnight camping program operating under BSA National Camping School–trained leadership and managed by the council.
- A Webelos Scout may participate in overnight den camping when supervised by an adult. In most cases, the Webelos Scout will be under the supervision of his parent or guardian. It is essential that each Webelos Scout be under the supervision of a parent-approved adult. Joint Webelos den/troop campouts including the parents of the Webelos Scouts are encouraged to strengthen ties between the pack and troop. Den leaders, pack leaders, and parents are expected to accompany the boys on approved trips.

- All Scouts registered in Boy Scout troops are eligible to participate in troop or patrol overnight campouts, camporees, and resident camps.
- Boy Scouts and Varsity Scouts 12 through 17 are eligible to participate in national jamborees. Boy Scouts and Varsity Scouts 13 through 17 are also eligible to participate in world jamborees and high-adventure programs.
- All youth registered in Venturing are eligible to participate in crew, district, council, and national Venturing activities as well as national high-adventure programs and world jamborees.

If a well-meaning leader brings along a child who does not meet these age guidelines, disservice is done to the unit because of distractions often caused by younger children. A disservice is also done to the child, who is not trained to participate in such an activity and who, as a nonmember of the group, may be ignored by the older campers.

Family Camping

Family camping is an outdoor experience, other than resident camping, that involves Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, or Venturing program elements in overnight settings with two or more family members, including at least one BSA member of that family. Parents are responsible for the supervision of their children, and Youth Protection policies apply.

Recreational Family Camping

Recreational family camping occurs when Scouting families camp as a family unit outside of an organized program. It is a nonstructured camping experience, but is conducted within a Scouting framework on local council-owned or -managed property. Local councils may have family camping grounds available for rent at reasonable rates. Other resources may include equipment, information, and training.

References: *Resident Camping for Cub Scouting,* No. 13-33814, and *Cub Scout Outdoor Program Guidelines,* No. 510-631

Cub Scout Overnight Opportunities

Cub Scouts may experience overnight activities in venues other than accredited resident camping. There are two categories of Cub Scout overnighters.

Council-Organized Family Camp

Council-organized family camps are overnight events involving more than one pack. The local council provides all of the elements of the outdoor experience, such as staffing, food service, housing, and program. These are often referred to as parent/pal or adventure weekends. Council-organized family camps should be

conducted by trained leaders at sites approved by the local council. Each youth member will be under the supervision of a parent or legal guardian.

In special circumstances, a Cub Scout whose parent or legal guardian is not able to attend an overnight camping trip may participate under the supervision of another registered adult member of the BSA who is a parent of a Cub Scout who is also attending. The unit leader and a parent or legal guardian must agree to the arrangement, and all Youth Protection policies apply. At no time may another adult accept responsibility for more than one additional "non-family member" youth.

Overnight activities involving more than one pack must be approved by the council. Council-organized family camps must be conducted in accordance with established standards.

Pack Overnighters

These are pack-organized overnight events involving more than one family from a single pack, focused on age-appropriate Cub Scout activities and conducted at council-approved locations (councils use Pack Overnighter Site Approval Form, No. 13-508). If nonmembers (siblings) participate, the event must be structured accordingly to accommodate them. BSA health and safety and Youth Protection policies apply. In most cases, each youth member will be under the supervision of a parent or guardian. In all cases, each youth participant is responsible to a specific adult.

At least one adult on a pack overnighter must have completed Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation (BALOO, No. 34162) to properly understand the importance of program intent, Youth Protection policies, health and safety, site selection, age-appropriate activities, and sufficient adult participation.

Reference: *Cub Scout Outdoor Program Guidelines,* No. 510-631

Boy Scout/Varsity Scout Camping

What are typical Scout outdoor activities? For younger Scouts, less-rugged activities are more appropriate as they begin to acquire outdoor knowledge and skills. These may include:

Day Hikes—Reasonably short hikes (three to 10 miles) in terrain without a lot of elevation gain or loss.

Patrol Activities—A Boy Scout patrol or Varsity Scout squad may participate in patrol activities with the permission of its Scoutmaster or Coach and parents/guardians. Appropriate adult leadership must be present for all overnight Scouting activities.

Weekend Overnights—Troops/teams that plan and carry out outings once a month attract and retain boys at a much higher level than those that have fewer outings during the year.

Camporees—Councils and districts plan camporees and other outings during the year that give Scouts an opportunity to test their knowledge and skills in competitive events with other troops and patrols.

Summer Camp—Summer camp is what many Scouts enjoy most. Camp programs provide numerous opportunities for Scouts to earn merit badges along their advancement trail. Resident Scout camping includes at least five nights and six days of fun outdoor activities.

Jamborees—Every four years, the Boy Scouts of America hosts a national Scout jamboree. More than 40,000 Scouts and leaders from across the country participate in this 10-day event filled with the most popular and highest-quality outdoor activities Scouts enjoy. To participate, a Scout must be at least 12 years of age by July 1 of the jamboree year and be a First Class Scout.

Council High Adventure—A high-adventure experience includes at least five nights and six days of trekking in wilderness and other rugged, remote locations. Trekking may include backpacking, canoeing, mountain biking, horse packing, mountain climbing, ski touring, rafting, kayaking, or a host of other outdoor adventures. Participants must be at least 13 years old by September 1 of the year of participation or a registered Venturer.

National High Adventure—The BSA operates unique and exciting national high-adventure bases and programs. With two locations in the Florida Keys, the Florida National High Adventure Sea Base offers a variety of aquatics and boating programs. The Northern Tier National High Adventure Program, based in northern Minnesota with two satellite bases in Canada, provides a variety of canoe treks and programs. Philmont Scout Ranch, located in the mountains of New Mexico, provides excellent backpacking treks. The newest national high-adventure base, the Summit Bechtel Reserve in West Virginia, provides activities such as whitewater rafting, BMX, skateboarding, mountain biking, zip lines, canopy tours, challenge courses, climbing, and shooting sports. Age requirements for these programs vary, but most programs are rugged and designed for older Scouts.

Unit High Adventure—The highest level of challenge for a troop or team is to plan and carry out its own high-adventure experience. These activities for more experienced Scouts are planned and implemented by youth members with coaching from their adult leaders.

Venturing Camping

Venturing camping can include high-adventure activities, such as scuba diving, water skiing, rock climbing/rappelling, caving, horseback riding, and more, but can also include many avocation/hobby interests. Venturing members can participate in the national Scout jamboree.

Venturing camping should not be just an extension of a Boy Scout resident camp. Venturers need a more teenage-oriented experience. Having Venturers involved in this planning process is a must.

Important differences in outdoor programs for Venturers include:

- Venturing outdoor activities must include experiences beyond those available to younger youth.
- Consideration of coed involvement.
- Venturers should have a voice in choosing and planning activities.
- Venturing outdoor programs should be patterned after types of activities that appeal to adults and teenagers.
- The camp experience should not be overly structured, and should allow Venturers the opportunity to choose activities.

Trek Safely

Trek Safely is designed to help Scouting groups be fully prepared for a backcountry trek. It will help each youth member and adult leader recognize situations that could develop in which the group will have to adjust its schedule or route, or even make camp for the night because of weather circumstances or an injured or ill crew member. Crews that address possible scenarios in advance are less likely to be surprised on the trail. Contingency planning is critical to the success of every trip.

For additional information, go to www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/430-125.pdf.

Reference: Trek Safely flier, No. 430-125

Lightning Risk Reduction

In many parts of the country, Scouting activities in the outdoors will be at risk to thunderstorms and lightning strike potential. In a thunderstorm, there is no risk-free location outside.

First, to be prepared for your outdoor adventure, it is important to know the weather patterns of the area. Weather patterns on the Florida coast differ greatly from the mountains of New Mexico and the lakes of Minnesota or the rivers of West Virginia. In addition to patterns, monitor current weather forecasts and conditions of the area you plan to visit to modify your plans if needed.

The National Weather Service recommends that when the ***"Thunder Roars, Go Indoors! The only completely safe action is to get inside a safe building or vehicle."*** When a safe building or vehicle is nearby, the best risk-reduction technique is to get to it as soon as possible. Move quickly when you:

- First hear thunder,
- See lightning, or
- Observe dark, threatening clouds developing overhead.

Stay inside until 30 minutes after you last hear the last rumble of thunder before resuming outdoor activities.

Shelter—two forms:

- **Safe Building**—one that is fully enclosed with a roof, walls, and floor, and has plumbing or wiring. Examples of safe buildings include a home, school, church, hotel, office building, or shopping center.
- **Safe Vehicle**—any fully enclosed, metal-topped vehicle such as a hard-topped car, minivan, bus, truck, etc. If you drive into a thunderstorm, slow down and use extra caution. If possible, pull off the road into a safe area. Do NOT leave the vehicle during a thunderstorm.

Risk Reduction (when no safe building or vehicle is nearby):

- If camping, hiking, etc., far from a safe vehicle or building, avoid open fields, the top of a hill, or a ridge top.
- Spread your group out 100 feet from each other if possible.
- Stay away from tall, isolated trees; flag poles; totem poles; or other tall objects. If you are in a forest, stay near a lower stand of trees.
- If you are camping in an open area, set up camp in a valley, ravine, or other low area, but avoid flood-prone areas. Remember, a tent offers NO protection from lighting.
- Stay away from water, wet items (such as ropes), and metal objects (such as fences and poles). Water and metal are excellent conductors of electricity.
- If boating and you cannot get back to land to a safe building or vehicle: On a small boat, drop anchor and get as low as possible. Large boats with cabins, especially those with lightning protection systems properly installed, or metal marine vessels offer a safer but not risk-free environment. Remember to stay inside the cabin and away from any metal surfaces.

If lightning strikes, be prepared to administer CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) so that you can tend to lightning victims quickly (they do not hold an electrical charge). Take anyone who is a victim of a lightning strike or near-strike to the nearest medical facility as soon as possible, even if the person appears to be unharmed.

For additional information on lightning and weather services, visit www.noaa.gov.

Treated Drinking Water

A constant supply of treated drinking water is essential. Serious illness can result from drinking untreated water. Protect your health, and don't take a chance on using water of uncertain quality. Thermos jugs, plastic water containers, and canteens are all satisfactory for carrying water. Be sure water is dispensed into each person's own drinking cup.

Safe Drinking Water

When possible, begin your trip with water from home or use approved portable water sources provided by the land manager. When these options are not available, streams, rivers, lakes, springs, and snow may provide a source of water, but they must always be treated by one of the following methods. All water of uncertain treatment should be treated before use.

Boiling

The surest means of making your drinking water safe is to heat it to a rolling boil—when bubbles a half inch in diameter rise from the bottom of the pot. While this is a simple method, it does require time and fuel.

Chemical Treatment

Chemical treatment consists of iodine or chlorine tablets that kill waterborne bacteria and viruses. These are simple, lightweight, and easy to pack. However, not all protozoa are eliminated by chemical treatment, and a waiting period is required for effective disinfection of drinking water. Micropur is a new product available for water purification.

In all cases, verify that the chosen method of chemical treatment meets EPA standards.

Liquid chlorine should be used only in an emergency.

1. Filter the water to remove as many solids as possible.
2. Bring the water to a rolling boil for a full minute.
3. Let it cool at least 30 minutes.
4. Add eight drops of liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of cool water. (Use common household bleach; 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite should be the only active ingredient, and there should not be any added soap or fragrances.) Water must be cool, or chlorine will dissipate and be rendered useless.
5. Let the water stand 30 minutes.

6. If it smells of chlorine, you can use it. If it does not smell of chlorine, add eight more drops of bleach and let it stand another 30 minutes. Smell it again. You can use it if it smells of chlorine. If it doesn't, discard it and find another water source.
7. The only accepted measurement of chlorine (or water treatment agents) is the drop. A drop is specifically measurable. Other measures such as "capful" or "scant teaspoon" are not uniformly measurable and should not be used.

Filters

Portable filters are handheld pumps that force untreated water through a filtering medium that traps bacteria and protozoa. Many include a purifying stage that will also treat viruses. While very effective, filters must be maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions, and they are difficult to use with groups because of the time required to operate.

In addition to having a bad odor or taste, water from questionable sources may be contaminated by microorganisms, such as Giardia, that can cause a variety of diseases.

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

IV. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs

An important way adult leaders can model healthy living is by following the policies on alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Leaders should support the attitude that they, as well as youths, are better off without tobacco in any form and may not allow the use of tobacco products at any BSA activity involving youth participants. This includes the use of electronic cigarettes, personal vaporizers, or electronic nicotine delivery systems that simulate tobacco smoking.

All Scouting functions, meetings, and activities should be conducted on a smoke-free basis, with smoking areas located away from all participants.

Reference: *Troop Leader Guidebook, Volume 1,* No. 33009

As outlined in the Scouter Code of Conduct, Scouting activities are not a place to possess, distribute, transport, consume, or use any of the following items prohibited by law or in violation of any Scouting rules, regulations, and policies: alcoholic beverages or controlled substances, including marijuana.

In addition, the Code of Conduct specifies that if you are taking prescription medications with the potential of impairing any functioning or judgment, you will not engage in activities that would put Scouts at risk, including driving or operating equipment.

Reference: Scouter Code of Conduct

V. Medical Information and First Aid

Personal Health and the Annual Health and Medical Record



Find the current Annual Health and Medical Record by using this QR code or by visiting www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/ahmr.aspx.

The Scouting adventure, camping trips, high-adventure excursions, and having fun are important to everyone in Scouting—and so are your safety and well-being. Completing the Annual Health and Medical Record is the first step in making sure you have a great Scouting experience. **So what do you need?**

All Scouting Events

All participants in all Scouting activities complete Part A and Part B. Give the completed forms to your unit leader. This applies to all activities, day camps, local tours, and weekend camping trips less than 72 hours. Update at least annually.

Part A is an informed consent, release agreement, and authorization that needs to be signed by every participant (or a parent and/or legal guardian for all youth under 18).

Part B is general information and a health history.

Going to Camp?

A pre-participation physical is needed for resident, tour, or trek camps or for a Scouting event of more than 72 hours, such as Wood Badge and NYLT. The exam needs to be completed by a certified and licensed physician (MD, DO), nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. If your camp has provided you with any supplemental risk information, or if your plans include attending one of the four national high-adventure bases, share the venue's risk advisory with your medical provider when you are having your physical exam.

Part C is your pre-participation physical certification.

Planning a High-Adventure Trip?

Each of the four national high-adventure bases has provided a supplemental risk advisory that explains in greater detail some of the risks inherent in that program. All high-adventure participants **must** read and share this information with their medical providers during their pre-participation physicals. Additional

information regarding high-adventure activities may be obtained directly from the venue or your local council.

Prescription Medication

Taking prescription medication is the responsibility of the individual taking the medication and/or that individual's parent or guardian. A leader, after obtaining all the necessary information, can agree to accept the responsibility of making sure a youth takes the necessary medication at the appropriate time, but the BSA does not mandate or necessarily encourage the leader to do so. Standards and policies regarding administration of medication may be in place at BSA camps. If state laws are more limiting than camp policies, they must be followed. The AHMR also allows for a parent or guardian to authorize the administration of nonprescription medication to a youth by a camp health officer or unit leader, including any noted exceptions.

Risk Factors

Scouting activities can be physically and mentally demanding. Listed below are some of the risk factors that have been known to become issues during outdoor adventures.

- Exessive body weight (obesity)
- Cardiac or cardiovascular disease
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Diabetes mellitus
- Seizures
- Asthma
- Sleep apnea
- Allergies or anaphylaxsis
- Musculoskeletal injuries
- Psychological and emotional difficulties

More in-depth information about risk factors can be found by using this QR code or by visiting www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/risk_factors.aspx.

Questions?

Q. Why does the BSA require all participants to have an Annual Health and Medical Record?

A. The AHMR serves many purposes. Completing a health history promotes health awareness, collects necessary data, and provides medical professionals critical information needed to treat a patient in the event of an illness or injury. It also provides emergency contact information.

Poor health and/or lack of awareness of risk factors have led to disabling injuries, illnesses, and even fatalities. Because we care about our participants' health and safety, the Boy Scouts of America has produced and required the use of standardized health and medical information since at least the 1930s.

The medical record is used to prepare for high-adventure activities and increased physical activity. In some cases, it is used to review participants' readiness for gatherings like the national Scout jamboree and other specialized activities.

Because many states regulate the camping industry, this Annual Health and Medical Record also serves as a tool that enables councils to operate day and resident camps and adhere to state and BSA requirements. The Boy Scouts of America Annual Health and Medical Record provides a standardized mechanism that can be used by members in all 50 states.

For answers to more questions, use this QR code or visit the FAQ page at www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/Resources/MedicalFormFAQs.aspx.

Download a free QR reader for your smartphone at scan.mobi.

Medication Use in Scouting

With an increasing number of youth taking prescription medication, leaders need some basic tools and guidance to help them *Be Prepared* to support Scouts in the safe use of their medication. The BSA understands that a leader, regardless of how diligent he or she may be, may not know or understand every health-related issue of the youth members in his or her unit. Remember that the taking of prescription medication is the responsibility of the individual taking the medication or that individual's parent or guardian.

Good planning, preparedness, and having some knowledge about handling a youth member's medication is essential in keeping youth safe and healthy. The Medication Use in Scouting guidance is one of those tools, along with the individual's Annual Health and Medical Record.

This tool is primarily used for outings when medication is or may be needed when a parent or guardian is not present. We encourage you to review the guidance periodically—it has eight basic elements:

- Annual Health and Medical Record
- Plan
- Supervision of medication administration
- Labeling
- Storage
- Emergency medication
- Nonprescription (OTC) medications
- Accountability

References: www.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/SAFE_USE_OF_MEDICATION_IN_SCOUTING.pdf and www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/Guidelines_Policies.aspx

Immunizations

The Boy Scouts of America encourages all members of the Scouting community to use available vaccines to fully protect themselves from infectious diseases that are dangerous for children and adults living in the United States. Participants who are not immunized are subject to identification so that they may be located in case of a necessity for isolation or quarantine as required by local public health official directives. Based on risk, a valid (within last 10 years) tetanus immunization is required to participate. State or local requirements for resident camping may be more restrictive.

Protection Consideration for Blood and Bodily Fluids (Universal Precautions)

Treat all blood and bodily fluids as if they were contaminated with blood-borne viruses (i.e., HIV, hepatitis). Do not use bare hands to stop bleeding; always use a protective barrier, and always wash exposed skin areas for at least 15 seconds with soap and water immediately after treating a victim. Consequently, the following personal protective equipment should be included in all first-aid kits and used when rendering first aid:

- Non-latex gloves to be used when stopping bleeding or dressing wounds
- A mouth barrier device for rendering rescue breathing or CPR
- Plastic goggles or eye protection to prevent a victim's blood from getting into a rescuer's eyes in the event of serious bleeding
- Antiseptic for use in cleaning exposed skin areas, particularly if there is no soap and water available

Clean any blood and bodily fluid spills with an appropriate disinfecting solution, such as 10 parts water to one part bleach.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations for blood-borne pathogens (29 CFR Section 1910.1030) apply to health-care professionals employed by local councils to staff camp health facilities or to fulfill health officer or lifeguard functions at BSA camps. In addition, all designated responders, identified in the local council's medical emergency response plan, are affected by the regulations. Visit www.osha.gov.

Local Council Membership/Participation Guidelines Regarding Life-Threatening Communicable Diseases

The BSA policy regarding communicable diseases (acute or chronic) is as follows:

Local Scouting units and their chartered organizations traditionally determine their own membership and participation, absent any legal constraints. Accordingly, units and chartered organizations allow youth or adult members who have, or are suspected of having, a communicable disease to continue to participate in Scouting activities.

The chartered organization and/or a local Scouting unit may request local council assistance if needed, absent any legal restraints. (See Local Council Guidelines Regarding Communicable Disease, No. 680-453, for the steps in that process.)

First Aid and CPR Training

First aid is the first help given to someone who has had an accident or other health emergency. If more attention is needed, first-aid treatment helps keep an injured or ill person as safe as possible until medical personnel arrive. Wilderness first aid (WFA) is the assessment of and treatment given to an ill or injured person in a remote environment when a physician and/or rapid transport are not readily available.

First aid and WFA are important to participants in BSA programs. The BSA strongly recommends that participants avail themselves of CPR with automatic external defibrillator (AED) training, along with first-aid and wilderness first-aid training. For certain program participation, there may be requirements for first aid, wilderness first aid, and CPR/AED. There are no unit-centric requirements at this time.

First aid, WFA, CPR/AED may be taught by instructors currently trained by a nationally certified provider such as the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, Emergency Care and Safety Institute, or American Safety and Health Institute. Cub Scouts can even be taught this valuable skill in a family-type setting. Online-only courses are not accepted if a certification is required. The BSA will accept nationally recognized blended courses—such as from the American Heart Association, American Red Cross, Emergency Care and Safety Institute—where competency can be demonstrated to an instructor.

Further information and advancement in first aid may include wilderness first responder (WFR) and wilderness emergency medical technician (WEMT).

For more information, see the *Boy Scout Handbook* and the *First Aid* merit badge pamphlet.

VI. Chemical Fuels and Equipment

Purpose

This policy directs Boy Scouts of America members how to safely store, handle, and use chemical fuels and equipment. Safety and environmental awareness concerns have persuaded many campers to move away from traditional outdoor campfires in favor of chemical-fueled equipment used for cooking, heating, and lighting. Be aware that chemical fuels and equipment create very different hazards than traditional wood, charcoal, and other solid fuels; this policy defines how to address those hazards.

Before any chemical fuels or chemical-fueled equipment is used, an adult knowledgeable about chemical fuels and equipment, including regulatory requirements, should resolve any hazards not specifically addressed within this policy.

Definitions

Chemical fuels—Liquid, gaseous, or gelled fuels.

Approved chemical-fueled equipment—Commercially manufactured equipment, including stoves, grills, burners, heaters, and lanterns that are designed to be used with chemical fuels.

Prohibited chemical-fueled equipment—Equipment that is handcrafted, homemade, modified, or installed beyond the manufacturer's stated design limitations or use. Examples include alcohol-burning "can" stoves, smudge pots, improperly installed heaters, and propane burners with their regulators removed.

Recommended chemical fuels—White gas (Coleman fuel); kerosene; liquefied petroleum gas fuels, including propane, butane, and isobutane; vegetable oil fuels; biodiesel fuel; and commercially prepared gelled-alcohol fuel in original containers.

Chemical fuels not recommended—Unleaded gasoline; liquid alcohol fuels, including isopropyl alcohol, denatured ethyl alcohol, and ethanol; and other flammable chemicals that are not in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for chemical-fueled equipment.

Storing, Handling, and Using Chemical Fuels and Equipment

An adult knowledgeable about chemical fuels and equipment should always supervise youths involved in the storage, handling, and use of chemical fuels and equipment.

Operate and maintain chemical-fueled equipment according to the manufacturer's instructions and in facilities or areas only where and when permitted.

Using liquid fuels for starting any type of fire—including lighting damp wood, charcoal, and ceremonial campfires or displays—is prohibited.

No flames in tents. This includes burning any solid, liquid, gel, or gas fuel—including tents or teepees that feature or support stoves or fires; and any chemical-fueled equipment or catalytic heaters.

Store chemical fuels in their original containers or in containers designed for immediate use. Securely store any spare fuel away from sources of ignition, buildings, and tents.

During transport and storage, properly secure chemical fuel containers in an upright, vertical position.

Why Is This Important?

In a review of reported burn incidents, some trends were observed. These trends are inconsistent with the Policy on the Storage, Handling, and Use of Chemical Fuels and Equipment. Please don't put participants at risk by doing similar activities.

Examples of serious and even fatal burns have been the result of the following: using diesel, kerosene, white gas, gasoline, alcohol, or charcoal lighter fluid as accelerants to start fires; use of black powder, pyrodex, or mixed chemicals as fire starters or displays; adding chemicals or alcohol-based products to fires for display purposes; using chemicals such as acetone in ceremonies; and creating or using homemade devices. All of these examples should not be a part of the Scouting program.

VII. Shooting Sports

Boy Scouts of America adheres to its longstanding policy of teaching its youth and adult members the safe, responsible, intelligent handling, care, and use of firearms, air rifles, BB guns, and archery equipment in planned, carefully managed, and supervised programs.

Except for law enforcement officers required to carry firearms within their jurisdiction, firearms shall not be brought on camping, hiking, backpacking, or other Scouting activities except those specifically planned for target shooting under the supervision of a currently certified BSA national shooting sports director or National Rifle Association firearms instructor.

All shooting sports activities held during a council resident camp will follow the current NCAP standards. All shooting sports activities held outside of a council's resident camp will follow the program as outlined in the *BSA National Shooting Sports Manual*, No. 430-938, which can be downloaded at www.scouting.org/OutdoorProgram/ShootingSports.aspx.

The *BSA National Shooting Sports Manual* includes all of the information you will need pertaining to appropriate guns used at each level of Scouting, the required range supervision, and training that Scouts need to safely participate in the shooting sports program.

References: *National Camp Standards,* No. 430-056, and *BSA National Shooting Sports Manual,* No. 430-938

Cannons and Large-Bore Artillery

Units are not authorized, under any circumstances, to use a cannon or any other large-bore artillery device.

Knife and Tomahawk Throwing

These are age-appropriate activities for Boy Scouts and Venturers following the Sweet 16 of BSA Safety.

Reference: *BSA National Shooting Sports Manual,* No. 430-938

VIII. Sports and Activities

Activity Planning and Risk Assessment

No organization, including the Boy Scouts of America, can anticipate every possible activity that could be conducted as part of a unit, district, or council event. As such, it is neither the intent nor the desire of the BSA to provide specific guidance on subjects that are not core to the program or part of our literature.

For those activities that support the values of the Boy Scouts of America, there are several tools available for participants that will help them plan for a fun and safe tour, activity, or event. Good planning and preparedness prior to executing the activity is key to success. This guide is one of those tools. Other such resources are the Program Hazard Analysis, safety checklists, and the PAUSE card.

As you use these tools, reflect on the words of Robert Baden-Powell: *Be Prepared … the meaning of the motto is that a Scout must prepare himself by previous thinking out and practicing how to act on any accident or emergency so that he is never taken by surprise.*

Program Hazard Analysis

This tool is primarily used for program areas within camps or high-adventure bases. It covers specific risks to the program areas. This tool has a defined way of assessing probability and severity of risks. This tool assesses risks initially, as if there are no protective measures in place, then looks at the risks again with protective measures.

Reference: www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/680-009.pdf

Safety Checklists

These tools are used to inspect a vehicle or a meeting place when you have small events or campouts. Checklists are a "body of knowledge" for running Scouting activities safely. Like an airline pilot who uses a checklist before takeoff, these tools help to make sure critical things are in place in order to conduct a safe Scouting activity. Many safety-related program materials include checklists; Sweet 16 of BSA Safety, Safe Swim Defense, Safety Afloat, and Climb on Safely are examples.

Reference: www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/Guidelines_Policies.aspx

Safety PAUSE

The Safety PAUSE process stresses the importance of a last-minute safety check in the field. By encouraging each Scout or adult leader to pause and reflect on the tasks at hand just before beginning, you have an opportunity to take necessary precautions to prevent any present or potential hazards.

Reference: www.scouting.org/filestore/healthsafety/pdf/680-046.pdf

The Sweet 16 of BSA Safety

These 16 safety points, which embody good judgment and common sense, are applicable to all activities:

1. **Qualified Supervision.** Every BSA activity should be supervised by a conscientious adult who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of the children and youth in his or her care. The supervisor should be sufficiently trained, experienced, and skilled in the activity to be confident of his or her ability to lead and teach the necessary skills and to respond effectively in the event of an emergency. Field knowledge of all applicable BSA standards and a commitment to implement and follow BSA policy and procedures are essential parts of the supervisor's qualifications.

2. **Physical Fitness.** For youth participants in any potentially strenuous activity, the supervisor should receive a complete health history from a health-care professional, parent, or guardian. Adult participants and youth involved in higher-risk activities (e.g., scuba diving) may have to undergo professional evaluation in addition to completing the health history. The supervisor should adjust all supervision, discipline, and protection to anticipate potential risks associated with individual health conditions. Neither youth nor adults should participate in activities for which they are unfit. To do so would place both the individual and others at risk.

3. **Buddy System.** The long history of the "buddy system" in Scouting has shown that it is always best to have at least one other person with you and aware at all times of your circumstances and what you are doing in any outdoor or strenuous activity.

4. **Safe Area or Course.** A key part of the supervisors' responsibility is to know the area or course for the activity and to determine that it is well-suited and free of hazards.

5. **Equipment Selection and Maintenance.** Most activity requires some specialized equipment. The equipment should be selected to suit the participants and the activity and to include appropriate safety and program features. The supervisor should also check equipment to determine whether it is in good condition for the activity and make sure it is kept properly maintained while in use.

6. **Personal Safety Equipment.** The supervisor must assure that every participant has and uses the appropriate personal safety equipment. For example, activity afloat requires that each participant properly wear a life jacket; bikers, horseback riders, and whitewater kayakers need helmets for certain activities; skaters need protective gear; and all need to be dressed for warmth and utility as the circumstances require.

7. **Safety Procedures and Policies.** For most activities, common-sense procedures and standards can greatly reduce any risk. These should be known and appreciated by all participants, and the supervisor must assure compliance.

8. **Skill Level Limits.** Every activity has a minimum skill level, and the supervisor must identify and recognize this level and be sure that participants are not put at risk by attempting any activity beyond their abilities. A good example of skill levels in Scouting is the swim test, which defines conditions for safe swimming on the basis of individual ability.

9. **Weather Check.** The risks of many outdoor activities vary substantially with weather conditions. Potential weather hazards and the appropriate responses should be understood and anticipated.

10. **Planning.** Safe activity follows a plan that has been conscientiously developed by the experienced supervisor or other competent source. Good planning minimizes risks and also anticipates contingencies that may require an emergency response or a change of plan.

11. **Communications.** The supervisor needs to be able to communicate effectively with participants as needed during the activity. Emergency communications also need to be considered in advance for any foreseeable contingencies.

12. **Plans and Notices.** Council office registration, government or landowner authorization, and any similar formalities are the supervisor's responsibility when such are required. Appropriate notification should be directed to parents, enforcement authorities, landowners, and others as needed, before and after the activity.

13. **First-Aid Resources.** The supervisor should determine what first-aid supplies to include among the activity equipment. The level of first-aid training and skill appropriate for the activity should also be considered. An extended trek over remote terrain obviously may require more first-aid resources and capabilities than an afternoon activity in a local community. Whatever is determined to be needed should be available.

14. **Applicable Laws.** BSA safety policies generally parallel or go beyond legal mandates, but the supervisor should confirm and assure compliance with all applicable regulations or statutes.

15. **CPR Resource.** Any strenuous activity or remote trek could present a cardiac emergency. Aquatic programs may involve cardiopulmonary emergencies. BSA strongly recommends that a person (preferably an adult) trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) be part of the leadership for any BSA program. This person should be available for strenuous outdoor activity.

16. **Discipline.** No supervisor is effective if he or she cannot control the activity and individual participants. Youth must respect their leaders and follow their directions.

Reference: The Sweet 16 of BSA Safety,
www.scouting.org/healthandsafety/sweet16.aspx

Caving

Caving is a specialized activity requiring advanced planning and technical skills. Scouting units participating in caving must follow the guidelines set forth in Cave Safely Cave Softly (www.scouting.org/outdoorprogram/COPE.aspx).

Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts are encouraged to visit commercially operated caves and lava tubes. For commercial operations, leaders should follow the guidelines set by the operators and reference Cave Safely Cave Softly for more information. Non-commercial "easy caves" with no access control, such as those in parks where people of all abilities are allowed uncontrolled access, may also be suitable for Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts.

Boy Scout–age youth are generally mature enough to enter "easy wild caves," which means easily accessible, non-technical/non-vertical caves. A "wild cave" is anything that is not commercially operated with a professional tour guide.

Older Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Sea Scouts, and Venturers should be ready to explore more technical wild caves.

Canyoneering

Canyoneering is a specialized activity requiring advanced planning and technical skills. Scouting units participating in canyoneering must follow the guidelines set forth in Canyoneering Safely (www.scouting.org/outdoorprogram/COPE.aspx).

The American Canyoneering Association has developed a rating system for canyons that can be found at www.canyoneeringusa.com/utah/introduction/understanding-canyon-ratings/.

Cub Scouts may hike ACA-rated Class 1 canyons with age-appropriate bouldering over obstacles or other steep faces without going more than a few feet off the ground with trained adult spotters. Cub Scouts may not participate in canyoneering activities in ACA Class 2 or higher canyons.

Webelos Scouts may hike in ACA-rated Class 1 and Class 2 canyons with age-appropriate bouldering over obstacles or other steep faces without going more than a few feet off the ground with trained spotters. Webelos Scouts may not participate in canyoneering activities in ACA Class 3 or higher canyons.

Boy Scouts may participate in canyoneering activities in ACA-rated Class 1 and Class 2 canyons with age-appropriate bouldering obstacles and trained spotters. They may also participate in canyoneering activities in ACA-rated Class 3 technical canyons. All bouldering moves should have appropriate spotters. Boy Scouts may not participate in canyoneering activities in ACA-rated Class C canyons.

Older Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Sea Scouts, and Venturers may participate in canyoneering activities in ACA-rated Class 1 and Class 2 canyons with age-

appropriate bouldering obstacles with trained spotters. They may also participate in canyoneering activities in ACA Class 3 and Class C canyons. All bouldering moves should have appropriate spotters.

Participation in canyoneering activities in ACA-rated Class 4 canyons is not allowed for any BSA units.

Climbing and Rappelling

The requirements applicable to climbing and rappelling listed in *National Camp Standards,* No. 430-056, apply to district and council activities.

- Climbing activities in which the participant's feet are more than 6 feet off the ground must be top-rope belayed.
- All rappelling activities must be properly belayed (see NCAP standard PS-206).

Climb On Safely (see www.scouting.org/outdoorprogram/COPE) applies to climbing activities operated by a unit.

- BSA units conducting their own climbing activities must follow the requirements set forth in Climb On Safely.
- Leaders who supervise unit climbing activities must have current Climb On Safely training (available at My.Scouting.org).

Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts can do the following:

- Participate in bouldering (climbing on boulders or bouldering walls) no higher than the climber's shoulder height with adults (or camp staff with adult supervision) who are trained to provide spotting for bouldering activities.
- Participate in closely controlled climbing activities with trained adult belayers, close adult supervision, and age-appropriate routes, instruction, and equipment.

In addition, Webelos Scouts can:

- Rappel with a trained adult belayer and backup.

In addition, Boy Scouts can:

- Belay with supervision and a backup.
- Participate in natural rock climbing programs.

In addition, older Boy Scouts (age 13 and older), Varsity Scouts, and Venturers may participate in lead climbing, sport climbing, snow and ice climbing, and clean aid climbing, subject to the following:

- All participants must be at least 13 years old.
- Qualified instructors must have training from a nationally recognized organization that trains climbing instructors in the appropriate special

activity. **Note:** BSA National Camping School does not train climbing directors and instructors in lead climbing, snow and ice climbing, or clean aid climbing.

- Lead climbing without a top-rope belay is prohibited as part of a council or district activity; however, if participants are on a top-rope belay, simulated lead climbing, sport climbing, snow and ice climbing, and clean aid climbing are allowed.
- Units may conduct activities involving lead climbing with adult supervision and qualified instructors.

References: *Climb On Safely,* No. 430-099, and *Belay On,* No. 430-500

COPE Activities

Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience (COPE) activities are defined as low or high challenge course activities, including but not limited to those listed in Chapter 20: Low-Course Activities or Chapter 21: High-Course Activities in *Belay On,* No. 430-500 (see www.scouting.org/outdoorprogram). They are to be used only in conjunction with council or district activities that meet the current NCAP standards.

Units may participate in age-appropriate initiative games. These are group challenge activities that do not involve constructed facilities, such as Blind Square, Couples Tag, Hoops Around the Circle, and Traffic Jam. See Chapter 3: Warm-Ups and Initiative Games in *Belay On.* Units shall not construct low- or high-course elements, including zip lines.

Individual participation is based on the judgment of the COPE director or Level II instructor for facilities operated by districts and councils, and jointly by the facility operator/owner and unit leader for commercial facilities. Cub Scout units may not participate in COPE, zip line, canopy tour, or aerial adventure park activities unless those activities are specifically designed for Cub Scout-age youth participation, such as climbing facilities or obstacle courses. Refer to the age-appropriate guidelines chart in the *Guide to Safe Scouting.*

Zip Lines, Canopy Tours, and Aerial Adventure Parks

Commercial adventure facilities are becoming more popular as activity destinations for BSA units. There also has been an increase in incidents, some of them serious. For this reason, special care should be taken before participating in these activities.

Members of Boy Scout troops, Varsity Scout teams, Sea Scout ships, and Venturing crews may conduct unit outings involving zip line, canopy tour, and aerial adventure park activities when such facilities are operated according to Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) or American Society

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Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

for Testing and Materials (ASTM) operating standards. Unit leaders shall verify current compliance to these standards with facility operators/owners prior to scheduling the activity. Councils with COPE or climbing programs have access to the ACCT standards, and the local council COPE and climbing committee can assist unit leaders in evaluating such facilities. Councils that do not have COPE or climbing programs should contact their COPE and climbing area advocate for this information.

Unit leaders shall verify that the operators of commercial facilities will comply with the following BSA NCAP standards from PS-206.C:

8. Measures are in place to provide for the safety of everyone at the program site, including observers. Everyone must be belayed or anchored when within 8 feet of an edge where a fall of more than 6 feet could occur.
9. A consistent process is used by all COPE and climbing staff to ensure that clothing, head protection, environment, connections, and knots are double-checked in any belayed events for staff members and participants.

Use of COPE Activities and Initiative Games in Training and Other Events

Use of low or high COPE activities in council or district training or other programs shall comply with NCAP standards.

Many training programs, such as Wood Badge, NYLT, and unit leader training, have adopted initiative games in their curriculum to strengthen group experiences. This can be a valuable addition to the training curriculum or activity when handled properly. Course and activity directors should make certain that the following important concerns are addressed:

- **Proper supervision.** Participants should be properly supervised during an activity to make sure they are following safety procedures throughout the activity. Activity areas/facilities should be monitored or disabled when not in use so that participants do not utilize them on their own without proper supervision.
- **Discipline.** Leaders should determine that participants have sufficient maturity and self-control to participate in the activities that are planned.
- **Trained instructors.** All activity instructors/leaders must be properly trained to operate whatever initiative games they use in a safe and effective manner. The council COPE and climbing committee is an excellent resource to assist with obtaining proper training to operate the activities safely and effectively.

Slacklining

Slacklining is an adventure program growing in popularity. As with any activity involving height and motion, there is risk involved. Before units, districts,

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or councils decide to promote or host slacklining activities and other adventure sports, they should evaluate the activities to identify and mitigate risks.

Staff members for these types of events are responsible for learning proper setup, operational guidelines, and safety techniques. Equipment used for these activities must be designed for the adventure sport industry and will be exposed to extreme forces. Therefore, it should not be used for other purposes. Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations.

Fall precautions should include spotters or crash pads. Stepping off the line safely is recommended when a participant feels he or she is about to fall. Trees used for anchors should be protected from damage and be at least 8 inches in diameter. The line should never be more than 3 feet high. Never allow more than one participant on the line at a time. Acrobatics (any time your head is lower than your torso) are prohibited.

Unauthorized and Restricted Activities

The following activities have been declared unauthorized and restricted by the Boy Scouts of America:

1. All-terrain vehicles (ATVs or UTVs) are banned from program use. The exception is council-approved ATV programs. They are not approved for unit use. ATVs are defined as motorized recreational cycles with three or four large, soft tires, designed for off-road use on a variety of terrains.
2. Boxing, karate, and related martial arts—except judo, aikido, and Tai Chi—are not authorized activities.
3. Chainsaws and mechanical log splitters may be authorized for use only by trained individuals over the age of 18, using proper protective gear in accordance with local laws.
4. Exploration of abandoned mines is an unauthorized activity.
5. Varsity football teams and interscholastic or club football competition and activities are unauthorized activities.
6. Fireworks secured, used, or displayed in conjunction with program and activities is unauthorized except where the fireworks display is conducted under the auspices of a certified or licensed fireworks control expert.
7. The selling of fireworks as a fund-raising or money-earning activity by any group acting for or on behalf of members, units, or districts may not be authorized by councils.
8. Flying in hang gliders, ultralights, experimental aircraft, or hot-air balloons (nontethered); parachuting; and flying in aircraft as part of a search and rescue mission are unauthorized activities. Tethered hot-air balloon flights are authorized, and a flying plan must be completed.

9. Motorized go-carts and motorbike activities are unauthorized for Cub Scout and Boy Scout programs. Go-carting conducted at a commercial facility that provides equipment and supervision of cart operation is authorized with parental consent for any youth participant. Participating in motorized speed events (racing), including motorcycles, boats, drag racing, demolition derbies, and related events are not authorized activities for any program level.

10. Participation in amateur or professional rodeo events and council or district sponsorship of rodeos are not authorized. This includes mechanized bulls and similar devices.

11. Pointing any type of firearm or simulated firearm at any individual is unauthorized. This prohibition includes archery tag. Scout units may plan or participate in paintball, laser tag or similar events where participants shoot at targets that are neither living nor human representations. Units may participate in formally organized historical reenactment events, where firearms are used and intentionally aimed over the heads of the reenactment participants. The use of paintball guns, laser guns, or similar devices may be utilized in target shooting events following the Sweet 16 of BSA Safety.

12. Hunting is not an authorized Cub Scout or Boy Scout activity, although hunting safety is part of the program curriculum.

    (The purpose of this policy is to restrict chartered packs, troops, and teams from conducting hunting trips. However, this policy does not restrict Venturing crews from conducting hunting trips or special adult hunting expeditions provided that adequate safety procedures are followed and that all participants have obtained necessary permits and/or licenses from either state or federal agencies. While hunter safety education might not be required prior to obtaining a hunting license, successful completion of the respective state voluntary program is required before participating in the activity.)

13. Motorized personal watercraft (PWC), such as Jet-Skis®, are not authorized for use in Scouting aquatics, and their use should not be permitted in or near BSA program areas. The exception is council-approved PWC programs. They are not approved for unit use.

14. Except for law enforcement officers required to carry firearms within their jurisdiction, firearms shall not be brought on camping, hiking, backpacking, or other Scouting activities except those specifically planned for target shooting under the supervision of a currently certified BSA national shooting sports director or National Rifle Association firearms instructor.

15. Parasailing, or any activity in which a person is carried aloft by a parachute, parasail, kite, or other device towed by a motorboat, including a tube, or by any other means, is unauthorized.

16. All activities related to bungee cord jumping (sometimes called shock cord jumping) are unauthorized.

17. Technical tree-climbing with ropes or harnesses is not authorized as an activity.
18. Water chugging and related activities are not authorized for any program level.
19. Bubbleball, Knockerball™, zorbing, Battle Ball™, bubble soccer or football, and similar orb activities where participants run into one other or roll around on land or water have been reviewed and are now unauthorized, except for supervised bubble soccer programs operated by councils with an approved pilot.

Knives

A sharp pocketknife with a can opener on it is an invaluable backcountry tool. Keep it clean, sharp, and handy. The BSA believes choosing the right equipment for the job at hand is the best answer to the question of what specific knife should be used. We are aware that many councils or camps may have limits on the type or style of knife that should be used. The BSA neither encourages nor bans fixed-blade knives nor do we set a limit on blade length. Since its inception, Boy Scouting has relied heavily on an outdoor program to achieve its objectives. This program meets more of the purposes of Scouting than any other single feature. We believe we have a duty to instill in our members, youth and adult, the knowledge of how to use, handle, and store legally owned knives with the highest concern for safety and responsibility.

Remember—knives are not allowed on school premises, nor can they be taken aboard commercial aircraft.

References: *Boy Scout Handbook, Fieldbook, Bear Handbook,* and *Wolf Handbook*

Parade Floats and Hayrides

The BSA's prohibition on the transportation of passengers in the backs of trucks or on trailers may be tempered for parade floats or hayrides, provided that the following points are strictly followed to prevent injuries:

1. Transportation to and from the parade or hayride site is not allowed on the truck or trailer.
2. Those persons riding, whether seated or standing, must be able to hold on to something stationary.
3. Legs should not hang over the side.
4. Flashing lights must illuminate a vehicle used for a hayride after dark, or the vehicle must be followed by a vehicle with flashing lights.

Unit Fundraisers

Include these safety considerations when planning a unit fundraiser:

1. Money-earning projects should be suited to the ages and abilities of youth participants.
2. Proper adult supervision should be provided.
3. Youth should engage in money-earning projects only in neighborhoods that are safe and familiar and should use the buddy system.
4. Leaders must train youth members to never enter the home of a stranger and to know whom to contact in case of an emergency.
5. Youth participants should be familiar with safe pedestrian practices and participate during daylight hours only.
6. Compliance requirements:
    a. Check local statutes regarding solicitation rules and permits.
    b. A Unit Money-Earning Application must be obtained from the local council service center.

Bicycle Safety

Bicycle riding is fun, healthy and a great way to be independent. But it is important to remember that a bicycle is not a toy; it's a vehicle! Be cool—follow these basic safety tips when you ride.

- **Sweet 16 of BSA Safety.** As with all Scouting activities, these principles should be applied in your cycling event.
- **Wear a properly fitted helmet.** Protect your brain; save your life! Bicycle helmets can reduce head injuries by 85 percent, according to the NHTSA.
- **Adjust your bicycle to fit.** Make sure you can stand over the top tube of your bicycle.
- **Assure bicycle readiness.** Make sure all parts are secure and working well. Assure that tires are fully inflated and brakes are working properly.
- **See and be seen.** Wear clothing that makes you more visible, such as bright neon or fluorescent colors. Wear reflective clothing or tape. **Avoid riding at night.**
- **Watch for and avoid road hazards.** Stay alert at all times. Be on the lookout for hazards, such as potholes, broken glass, gravel, puddles, leaves, animals, or anything that could cause you to crash. If you are riding with friends and you are in the lead, call out and point to the hazard to alert the riders behind you.

- **Follow the rules of the road.** Check and obey all local traffic laws. Always ride on the right side of the road in the same direction as other vehicles. Go with the flow—not against it! Yield to traffic and watch for parked cars.

For more information on bicycle safety, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) website at www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

Skating Safety

Skating, which includes ice skating, skateboarding, roller-skating, and in-line skating (rollerblading), is fun and healthy. But it is important to remember the safety concerns, primarily risks of falls and collisions, while participating in any of these skating activities. These safety tips emphasize prevention, and are meant to cover all BSA skating programs.

- **Sweet 16 of BSA Safety.** As with all Scouting activities, these principles should be applied in your skating event.
- **Always skate within your ability.** If you don't know how to skate, seek instruction. If you haven't skated in awhile, take it slow and easy. Don't try to skate too fast or do fancy tricks. Know how to stop safely.
- **Skate at a safe and comfortable speed.** Avoid dangerous pranks.
- **Watch where you skate!** When skating indoors, keep in mind that others have varying abilities of expertise. Skating into people can cause serious injury.
- **Racing, hockey, or similar activities** are to be held only in areas free of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and hazardous objects. No skating activity is authorized on streets that have not been blocked off to traffic.
- **Skate on a smooth surface or terrain.** A skating center is best because the surface is well maintained. When you skate outdoors, check the surface. Any small rock, pothole, or crack could cause you to lose your balance and fall. Iced surfaces should be rigid and completely frozen.
- **Do not skate at night.** Others can't see you and you can't see obstacles or other skaters.
- **Wear full protective gear (helmets, knee and elbow pads, and wrist protectors) when skating outdoors.** The gear is optional when skating indoors at a skating center as risk of injury is reduced when the skating surface is smooth and well maintained, and discipline is enforced. Protect your brain; save your life! Helmets can reduce head injuries by 85 percent, according to the NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration). Visit their website at www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

- **Wear properly fitting equipment and assure equipment readiness.** Make sure all parts are secure and working well. Before permitting equipment to be used in a BSA activity, the supervisor should determine that all skates and/or skateboards are well maintained and in good repair, consistent with the manufacturer's recommendation. Actual maintenance and repair are the responsibility of the owner.
- **See and be seen.** Wear clothing that makes you more visible, such as bright neon or fluorescent colors. Wear reflective clothing or tape. **Avoid skating at night.**
- **Watch for and avoid road hazards. Stay alert at all times.** Be on the lookout for hazards, such as potholes, broken glass, gravel, puddles, leaves, animals or anything that could cause you to crash. If you are skating with friends and you are in the lead, call out and point to the hazard to alert the skaters behind you.
- **Follow the rules of the road. Check and obey all local traffic laws.** Yield to traffic and watch for parked cars. NEVER "hitch a ride" on any vehicle.

For more information, go to www.safekids.org/safetytips.

Horsemanship Activities

Horsemanship activities in Scouting include merit badge activities, arena rides, multi-day trips (including treks and cavalcades), and Cub Scouting familiarization rides.

Each sponsoring council should take care to design age- and activity-appropriate procedures and guidelines for each particular equine activity. **Policies and procedures should include routine horse care, participant guidelines, staff policies, and emergency plans.**

Requirements must also be met if the horseback riding program is provided by or at an off-site facility. The council must enter a contractual agreement as outlined in the resident camp standards.

For more information, see the following websites:

- www.acacamps.org/staff-professionals/events-professional-development/recorded-webinar/risk-management-essentials-camp-horseback-riding
- www.cha-ahse.org
- www.acacamps.org/resource-library/accreditation-standards/horseback-riding-instructor-certifications

IX. Insurance

Consider the possibility that an accident could occur involving your unit. Take proper steps in advance, not only to eliminate potential hazards, but to fully protect yourself and others responsible for the outing. An adequate emergency fund will cover minor emergencies. A review of Scouting Safety Begins With Leadership, No. 19-201, will prepare you for the potential hazards faced during outdoor activities.

Comprehensive General Liability Insurance

This coverage provides primary general liability coverage for registered volunteer Scouters with respect to claims arising out of an official Scouting activity, which is defined in the insurance policy as consistent with the values, Charter and Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, the operations manuals, and applicable literature of the Boy Scouts of America. This coverage responds to allegations of negligent actions by third parties that result in personal injury or property damage claims that are made and provides protection for Scouting units and chartered organizations.

The BSA general liability insurance program provides volunteers additional excess coverage for automobiles above a local council's automobile liability policy or a volunteer's watercraft liability policy. The owner's vehicle or watercraft liability insurance is primary. The excess insurance, whether it is the local council auto or BSA general liability, is available only while the vehicle or watercraft is in the actual use of a Scouting unit and being used for a Scouting purpose.

The insurance provided to unregistered Scouting volunteers through the general liability insurance program is excess over any other insurance the volunteer might have to his or her benefit, usually a homeowners, personal liability, vehicle, or watercraft policy.

The general liability policy *does not* provide indemnification or defense coverage to those individuals who commit intentional and/or criminal acts. The Boy Scouts of America does not have an insurance policy that provides defense for situations involving allegations of intentional and/or criminal acts.

Automobile Liability Insurance

All vehicles whether owned or non-owned MUST be covered by a liability insurance policy. The amount of this coverage must meet or exceed the insurance requirement of the state in which the vehicle is licensed. (It is recommended, however, that coverage limits are at least $100,000 combined single limit.) Any vehicle carrying 10 or more passengers should have limits of $1,000,000 single limit. All vehicles used in travel outside the United States must carry a liability insurance policy that complies with or exceeds the requirements of that country.

Effective September 1, 2015, the use of 15-passenger vans manufactured before 2005 was no longer allowed in connection with Scouting programs and activities. Any 2005 or later 15-passenger vans may be used if equipped with Electronic Stability Control and seat belts for all passengers as well as the driver. This applies to all vehicles, regardless of ownership.

Chartered Organizations for Scouting Units

The general liability policy provides primary liability insurance coverage for all chartered organizations on file with the BSA for liability arising out of their chartering a traditional Scouting unit. Automobile and watercraft liability coverage is provided on a secondary or excess basis. All vehicles used in Scouting activities must be covered by automobile liability insurance with limits that meet or exceed the requirements of the state in which the vehicle is licensed. All watercraft used in Scouting must be insured by the owner for liability exposures. The amount of coverage is determined by the size and usage of the boat; $1 million is recommended.

Chartered organizations do not need a certificate of insurance. The chartered organization endorsement is a part of the insurance policy contract and is enforceable under the policy contract.

Accident and Sickness Coverage

(Optional coverage for council or units)

Accident and sickness insurance (also known as accident and health insurance) coverage for Scouts and Scouters furnishes medical reimbursement in case of death, accident, or sickness within the policy amounts. Information regarding unit accident coverage is available through the local council. The coverage provided has maximum limits it pays and a maximum benefit period, usually 52 weeks from the date of the incident.

Coverage is excess of all other insurance or health care plans in force. This policy is excess to any and all other available sources of medical insurance or other health care benefits.

All registered youth and seasonal staff are eligible, as well as registered leaders and volunteer leaders.

The coverage provided has maximum limits it pays, and a maximum benefit period, usually 52 weeks from the date of the incident. The plans do not "take care of everything." Claims should be filed with the accident and sickness carrier as soon as possible along with any other source of medical insurance or other health care benefits.

Scouts and guests who are being encouraged to become registered Scouts and volunteers are automatically insured while in attendance at a scheduled activity. Other guests are not covered. Each council also will be able to elect to cover family members of registered Scouts while these family members are in attendance at BSA-sponsored events. This is optional coverage.

Accident and sickness plans and insurance companies have specific procedures for processing claims. Volunteers need to check with their local council to verify which plan/policy their council provides or is available.

Coverage for Non-Owned Boats Used in Scouting Activities

Only general liability insurance coverage is available; no hull damage insurance is provided.

Owners (chartered organizations or others) **must** carry their own liability coverage. Boats under 26 feet and donated for use in Scouting activities need to have at least $300,000 in coverage. Boats 26 feet and over should have $500,000 in coverage. Risk Management will provide certificates of insurance up to $2 million. The BSA's coverage is excess of the liability coverage ($300,000 or $500,000) carried by the owner.

The following are examples of watercraft/boats that need not be insured by the chartered organization and others if they are to be used in an official Scouting activity: canoes, kayaks, rafts, catamarans, and sailboats (under 26 feet). However, if these watercraft are to be used for non-Scouting activities, the chartered organization or others should provide liability insurance as there is no liability coverage for chartering organizations or others for non-Scouting activities.

Watercraft owned by local councils, chartered organizations, and others should be licensed by the U.S. Coast Guard, and the operator should be licensed if required.

Unauthorized and Restricted Activities

The Boy Scouts of America's general liability policy provides coverage for a bodily injury or property damage claim that is made and arises out of an official Scouting activity. The *Guide to Safe Scouting* contains a listing of unauthorized and restricted activities. Unauthorized activities are not considered official Scouting activities.

Volunteers (registered and unregistered), units, chartered organizations, and local councils are jeopardizing insurance coverage for themselves and their organization by engaging in unauthorized activities.

Please do not put yourself at risk.

X. Transportation

Established public carriers—trains, buses, and commercial airlines—are the safest and most comfortable way for groups to travel. Chartered buses usually are the most economical transportation for groups of 20 or more. It may be necessary for small groups to travel in private automobiles, SUVs, and vans; however, the use of chartered equipment from established rail, bus, and airline companies is strongly recommended. The advantages are many. These companies have excellent safety records because of their periodic inspections and approved health and safety procedures.

References: *Cub Scout Leader Book, Troop Leader Guidebook, Volume 1, Troop Committee Guidebook,* and *Exploring Reference Book*

Automobiles, SUVs, and Vans

It is essential that adequate, safe, and responsible transportation be used for all Scouting activities. Because most accidents occur within a short distance from home, safety precautions are necessary, even on short trips.

Effective September 1, 2015, the use of 15-passenger vans manufactured before 2005 will no longer be allowed in connection with Scouting programs and activities. Any 2005 or later 15-passenger vans may be used if equipped with Electronic Stability Control and seat belts for all passengers including the driver. This applies to all vehicles, regardless of ownership.

General guidelines are as follows:

1. Seat belts are required for all occupants.
2. All drivers must have a valid driver's license that has not been suspended or revoked for any reason. If the vehicle to be used is designed to carry more than 15 people, including the driver (more than 10 people, including the driver, in California), the driver must have a commercial driver's license (CDL).
3. The drivers must be currently licensed and at least 18 years of age. **Scouting youth (under age 18) are not insured under the Boy Scouts of America commercial general liability policy.**
4. Trucks may not be used for transporting passengers except in the cab.

5. All vehicles must be covered by automobile liability insurance with limits that meet or exceed requirements of the state in which the vehicle is licensed. It is recommended, however, that coverage limits are at least $100,000 combined single limit. Any vehicle designed to carry 10 or more passengers should have limits of $1,000,000.
6. Obey all laws, including the speed limit.
7. Driving time is limited to a maximum of 10 hours in one 24-hour period regardless of the number of drivers available. Driving time must be interrupted by frequent rest, food, and/or recreation stops. The intention is to include sleep and thorough rest breaks while traveling long distances. Don't drive while drowsy. Stop for rest and stretch breaks as needed. Fatigue is a major cause of highway accident fatalities.
8. Drivers must refrain from using hand-held cell phones while driving. Text messaging while driving is prohibited. Hands-free units are acceptable, but must be used sparingly while driving.

The commercial general liability policy is excess over any insurance, including local council owned, non-owned, hired, or leased automobile liability insurance, which may be available to a volunteer for loss arising from ownership, maintenance, or use of a motor vehicle while engaged in an official Scouting activity.

Campers, Trailers, and Trucks

Trucks are designed and constructed to transport materials and equipment, not people. Under no circumstances are passengers to be carried in the bed of or towed behind a pickup truck. Trailers must never be used for carrying passengers.

Use caution in towing trailers or campers, as a vehicle's performance, steering, and braking abilities will be altered. Consider these safety tips:

1. Get the correct trailer for the vehicle and the correct hitch for the trailer. Distribute and anchor the load.
2. Allow extra time to brake. Changing lanes while braking can jackknife the trailer.
3. Add safety equipment as dictated by common sense and state laws (mirrors, lights, safety chains, brakes for heavy trailers, etc.).
4. Park in designated areas.

Buses

A driver of a bus or any vehicle designed to carry more than 15 people (including driver; more than 10 people, including the driver, in California) is required to have a commercial driver's license. A person shall not drive a commercial motor vehicle unless he/she is qualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle. Possession of a license, however, does not mean that a person is capable of driving a bus safely. It is essential that unit leaders and volunteers be thoroughly familiar with the bus or vehicle they will be driving, including knowing the location of emergency exits and fire extinguishers and how to operate them. A driver must be prepared to handle and brake a full bus, which weighs significantly more than an empty bus. Other safety tips are:

1. Regular and thorough maintenance program
2. No more passengers than there are seating locations
3. Luggage and equipment fastened securely to prevent being thrown around in case of sudden stop
4. Emergency exits clear of people or things
5. Pretrip inspection of critical systems (signals, fuel, tires, windshield wipers, horn, etc.)

The safety rules for automobiles apply to bus travel, with the exception of seat belts. In special cases, chartered buses may travel more than nine hours a day. On certain occasions, night travel by public carrier bus is appropriate—it should be considered permissible when conditions are such that rest and sleep for passengers are possible with a reasonable degree of comfort. However, night travel on buses should not be planned for two successive nights.

Commercial Driver's License Compliance

Most Scouting drivers fall into a category of nonbusiness PMCPs. Nonbusiness private motor carrier of passengers (PMCPs) provide private, interstate transportation that is not in the furtherance of a commercial enterprise. However, nonbusiness PMCPs are required to have a current commercial motor vehicle driver's license.

A private motor carrier of passengers does not offer transportation services for hire, but (a) transports passengers in interstate (some state regulations apply to intrastate) commerce; and (b) uses a vehicle designed to carry more than 15 passengers, which includes the driver, or a vehicle that has a gross vehicular weight greater than 10,000 pounds.

Two such examples that would be considered a PMCP are:

- Scouting units that use vehicles designed to carry more than 15 passengers, such as buses. The driver, in this case, is often a volunteer driver of a "Scout

bus" that is owned or leased. This category is referred to as nonbusiness private motor carrier of passengers and is probably the most frequent Scouting usage subject to the requirements of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.

- Councils that operate camps and include transportation fees in their program are subject to the rule when using buses or other vehicles designed to carry more than 15 passengers or that have a gross vehicular weight of more than 10,000 pounds.

All vehicle operators who are required to have a commercial driver's license are subject to drug and alcohol testing. There are no exemptions within the nonbusiness private motor carrier of passengers category, which includes Scouting volunteer drivers. Local councils should establish guidelines for volunteer drivers based on the requirements of the state where they are located.

The U.S. Department of Transportation number is required if you are an interstate PMCP, regardless of business or nonbusiness state. To obtain a USDOT number, complete the form found at www.safer.fmcsa.dot.gov.

For-Hire Motor Carriers of Passengers (Charter Buses)

There are licensing and insurance requirements for for-hire motor carrier of passengers operating commercial motor vehicles in interstate commerce. These requirements are outlined by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), part of the U.S. Department of Transportation. The insurance guidelines established a minimum level of financial responsibility. For vehicles designed or used to transport 16 or more passengers (including the driver), $5 million of insurance is required. For vehicles designed or used to transport nine to 15 passengers (including the driver), $1.5 million of insurance is required.

The FMCSA provides information about carriers online. The system is called SAFER and is part of the Motor Carrier Analysis and Information Resources. SAFER combines current and historical carrier-based safety performance information to measure the relative (peer-to-peer) safety fitness of interstate commercial motor carriers and intrastate commercial motor carriers that transport hazardous materials. This information includes federal and state data on crashes, roadside inspections, on-site compliance review results, and enforcement history. To check the records of a for-hire motor carrier of passengers, go to: www.safersys.org/companysnapshot.aspx.

XI. Winter Activities

Winter Camping Safety

There is magic to camping in winter. It is one of the most challenging of outdoor adventures. The Boy Scouts of America operates the National Cold-Weather Camping Development Center at Northern Tier through the Okpik program. Visit www.ntier.org for comprehensive winter camping preparation information. Special considerations for winter camping are:

1. **Qualified Supervision.** It is vital that a leader be an experienced winter camper with strong character and common sense.
2. **Equipment.** Be completely outfitted for cold weather. Equipment should be checked to ensure good condition for the activity and proper maintenance while in use. Scouts should be adequately clothed, and blankets should be a suitable quality and weight.

   TIP: Use alkaline batteries in flashlights, as standard batteries deteriorate quickly in cold weather.

   TIP: Encourage youths to wear brightly colored clothing so they are more visible during severe weather.
3. **Physical Fitness.** Scouts should be suitably fit for the activity. Periodic rests while building snow caves and engaging in other strenuous cold-weather activities will help prevent accidents and overheating.

   TIP: Pulling a load over snow on a sled or toboggan is generally easier than carrying a backpack.
4. **Buddy System.** Having Scouts paired aids in monitoring each other's physical condition and observation of surroundings and circumstances.
5. **Planning.** Safe activities follow a plan that has been conscientiously developed. In winter, plan to cover no more than 5 miles per day on snowshoes or 10 to 12 miles on cross-country skis. Allow ample time to make it to camp at the end of the day.

   TIP: Always bring a bit more food, water, and clothing than what you think you'll need.
6. **Safe Area.** Leaders should determine whether an area for winter camping is well-suited and free of hazards.

   TIP: Always test the thickness of ice before venturing any distance from shore. The ice should be at least 3 inches thick for a small group.

   TIP: Look for dead branches hanging in the trees overhead.

TIP: Avoid ridge tops and open areas where wind can blow down tents or create drifts.

7. **Weather Check.** Weather conditions, potential hazards, and the appropriate responses should be understood and anticipated. Go to My.Scouting.org training for Hazardous Weather training.

8. **Burning.** Never use flames in tents, teepees, or snow shelters. This includes burning any solid, liquid, gel, or gas fuel; using features of tents or teepees that support stoves or fires; and use of chemical-fueled equipment and catalytic heaters.

9. **Discipline.** Rules are effective only when followed. All participants should know, understand, and respect the rules and procedures for a safe winter camping experience. Applicable rules should be discussed prior to the outing and reviewed for all participants when leaving for the winter campout.

Winter Sports Safety

Beyond camping, a number of cold-weather activities present challenges to the Scout and leader, such as cross-country skiing, ice skating, sledding, snowmobiling, ice fishing, and snowshoeing. Essential ingredients for fun include skill training and an awareness of the hazards unique to these activities. Snow conditions, hazardous terrain, special clothing needs, and emergency survival are important issues for a safe and successful experience.

Be sure your winter outdoor activities always follow these guidelines:

1. All winter activities must be supervised by mature and conscientious adults (at least one of whom must be age 21 or older) who understand and knowingly accept responsibility for the well-being and safety of the youth in their care, who are experienced and qualified in the particular skills and equipment involved in the activity, and who are committed to compliance with the seven points of BSA Winter Sports Safety. Direct supervision should be maintained at all times by two or more adults when Scouts are in the field. The appropriate number of supervisors will increase depending on the number of participants, the type of activity, and environmental conditions.

2. Winter sports activities embody intrinsic hazards that vary from sport to sport. Participants should be aware of the potential hazards of any winter sport before engaging in it. Leaders should emphasize preventing accidents through adherence to safety measures and proper technique.

3. Appropriate personal protective equipment is required for all activities. This includes the recommended use of helmets for all participants engaged in winter sports, such as sledding and riding other sliding devices. The use of helmets is required for the following activities: downhill skiing, snowboarding and operating snowmobiles (requires full face helmets).

4. Winter sports activities often place greater demands on a participant's cardiopulmonary system, and people with underlying medical conditions (especially if the heart or lungs are involved) should not participate without medical consultation and direction. For participants without underlying medical conditions, the annual health history and physical examination by a licensed health-care practitioner every year is sufficient. The adult leader should be familiar with the physical circumstances of each youth participant and make appropriate adjustments to the activity or provide protection as warranted by individual health or physical conditions. Adults participating in strenuous outdoor winter activity should have an annual physical examination. It is recommended that the medical assessment be performed by a licensed health-care practitioner knowledgeable of the sport and the particular physical demands the activity will place on the individual.
5. For winter sports such as skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, etc., that utilize specialized equipment, it is essential that all equipment fit and function properly.
6. When youth are engaging in downhill activities such as sledding or tobogganing, minimize the likelihood of collision with immobile obstacles. Use only designated areas where rocks, tree stumps, and other potential obstacles have been identified and marked, cleared away, shielded, or buffered in some way.
7. All participants should know, understand, and respect the rules and procedures for safe winter activity. The applicable rules should be presented and learned before the outing, and all participants should review them just before the activity begins. When Scouts know and understand the reasons for the rules, they will observe them. When fairly and impartially applied, rules do not interfere with fun. Rules for safety, plus common sense and good judgment, keep the fun from being interrupted by tragedy.

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

XII. Animal and Insect Hazards

Hantavirus

Hantavirus is a deadly virus that was first recognized as a unique health hazard in 1993. There are four different strains of hantavirus, and cases have been reported in 30 different states. The virus is most active when the temperature is between 45 and 72 degrees.

Hantavirus is spread through the urine and feces of infected rodents. It is an airborne virus. A person is infected by breathing in particles released into the air when infected rodents, their nests, or their droppings are disturbed. This can happen when a person is handling rodents, disturbing rodent nests or burrows, cleaning buildings where rodents have made a home, or working outdoors. The virus will die quickly when exposed to sunlight.

Symptoms of hantavirus include fever, chills, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, and a dry, nonproductive cough. If you suspect that someone has been infected, consult a physician immediately.

Rabies Prevention

Rabies has become increasingly prevalent in the United States in recent years, with more than 7,000 animals, most of which are wild, found to have the disease each year, according to statistics released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This viral infection is often found in bats, foxes, raccoons, and skunks. Rabies can be transmitted by warm-blooded animals, including domestic dogs and cats.

Although rabies in humans is rare in the United States, the CDC reports that more than 22,000 people in this country require vaccination each year after being exposed to rabid or potentially rabid animals. States with the highest number of reported cases include New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, New Mexico, Texas, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Maryland, and parts of northern California.

Scout leaders can help prevent possible exposure to rabies by reminding Scouts to steer clear of wild animals and domestic animals that they don't know. If someone is scratched or bitten by a potentially rabid animal, Scout leaders should:

- Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water.
- Call a doctor or a hospital emergency room.
- Get a description of the animal.
- Notify the local animal control office, police department, or board of health.

Lyme Disease

Ticks can be a problem in wooded areas and campsites, and they can be carriers of Lyme disease. The disease is transmitted when a blood-sucking tick attaches itself to and feeds on its victim. Ticks frequently imbed themselves in hair or around the belt line or ankles; they are visible, crablike insects.

A red ringlike rash might appear around the bite. A victim might feel lethargic and have flulike symptoms, fever, a sore throat, and muscle aches. Anyone experiencing these symptoms in the days and weeks following a trek adventure, especially activities in areas where ticks are known to carry Lyme disease, should be checked by a physician.

Mosquito Borne Illnesses

Diseases transmitted by mosquitoes that are or could be encountered in the United States include dengue, West Nile fever, St. Louis encephalitis, La Crosse encephalitis, and Eastern equine encephalitis. Others, such as those caused by the Chikungunya and Zika viruses, have not been shown to be acquired in the continental United States, but potentially could be. Specifically for the Zika virus, those who are pregnant or plan on becoming pregnant (including potential fathers) need to discuss those plans with their physician prior to travel.

Generally, there are no immunizations available for these diseases; therefore, prevention of mosquito bites is the best way to assure protection and to prevent spread of disease. The CDC has produced a great summary on mosquito bite prevention for the United States, which can be found at www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/pdfs/fs_mosquito_bite_prevention_us.pdf. An infographic for travel outside the continental United States is also available at www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/pdfs/fs_mosquito_bite_prevention_travelers.pdf.

The following additional resources may be helpful:

- www.cdc.gov/features/stopmosquitoes
- www.cdc.gov/malaria/toolkit/DEET.pdf
- www.epa.gov/insect-repellents
- www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Insect-Repellents.aspx

We encourage you to stay up to date for changes as public health officials are monitoring these and other mosquito-borne illnesses on a daily basis and are continually making new and significant recommendations.

XIII. Incident Reporting

This chapter provides volunteers and professional staff guidance on documenting and reporting incidents, injuries, and illnesses that occur during Scouting activities.

BSA Incident Reporting Policy

The Boy Scouts of America provides a program for young people that builds character, trains them in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and develops personal fitness. A key responsibility that we all share is providing an effective program that meets the needs of young people and provides the proper health and safety of everyone concerned.

It is important that we sustain the safe operation of our programs and promote continuous improvement through organizational learning. Timely and complete incident reports support analysis that is critical to identifying needed improvement of the programs offered by the Boy Scouts of America.

What Is an Incident?

Loosely defined, an incident is any unplanned event that results in harm to an individual, property, or the environment.

Why Report an Incident?

The information reported from incidents is valuable in preventing the reoccurrence of similar incidents. Reporting incidents promptly is also critical so we can respond to incidents in an appropriate manner, and it helps us properly manage any potential claims.

How Do I Report an Incident?

Reporting requirements are based on the severity of the incident. Please see the Incident Descriptions and Reporting Instructions page in the appendix.

Report Writing Tips

It is imperative that you fill out any incident reports as thoroughly as possible. This will help bring clarity to the situation and avoid unnecessary calls or emails for additional information. Photographs of the site, facilities, vehicles, or equipment can add value to the report. The following examples demonstrate a good, better, and best approach to incident reporting. Remember to include only pertinent facts about the incident. Do not assign blame or include personal opinions or recommendations.

Good: At summer camp, a Scout was playing a game and fell, twisting his ankle. He was sent off camp for more help.

Better: This August, a Scout was playing tetherball at summer camp, when he fell and broke his ankle. He was sent to the ER and was released.

Best: On August 6, 2012, a Scout was playing a game of tetherball at a Beaver Dam Summer Camp event, when he fell and twisted his left ankle. The Scout was initially treated by other Scouts and the health lodge, but further treatment was needed. The Scout was diagnosed with a high ankle fracture, was treated in an ER, and released later in the day with a restriction to stay off the ankle until he sees his personal physician.

Incident Reviews

One of the benefits of incident reports is that they can be used to help prevent similar occurrences. While rare, serious and even fatal incidents have impacted the Scouting family.

The BSA has begun posting a series of review sheets based on incidents that have actually occurred. These reviews can be downloaded at www.scouting.org/Home/HealthandSafety/incident_report.aspx along with a how-to sheet to help you discuss what can be learned from the incidents and how you can execute the Scouting program safely as designed.

A Scout Is Trustworthy: Be Sure to Report

Remember: ANY incident that requires the intervention of medical personnel, involves emergency responders, or results in a response beyond Scout-rendered first aid must be reported.

Appendix

Motor Vehicle and Driver Checklist 66

Meeting Place Inspection Checklist 67

Flying Plan Checklist 69

Unit Money-Earning Application 72

Incident Descriptions and Reporting Instructions 74

Incident Definitions 75

Incident Information Report 76

Service Project Planning Guidelines 78

Age Guidelines for Tool Use and Work at Elevations or Excavations 83

Campout Safety Checklist 86

Event Safety Checklist 87

Youth Protection/Membership Incident Information Form 91

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

Motor Vehicle and Driver Checklist

Parents transporting their own children to and from Scouting activities typically take care to do so safely. They expect the same care to be used during group transportation including using private or unit-owned vehicles. This checklist is designed to help you manage the risks associated with that transportation. The basic safety checklist is particularly fitting in those states that do not require periodic auto safety inspections. Information on insurance and drivers is appropriate for all states.

Date _____ Unit _____ Activity (if specific) _____

Owner's name / Driver's License Expiration _____ / _____

Cell phone (____) _____ Make/model of vehicle _____ Model year _____

Color _____ Tag no. _____ Registration Current? _____

Other drivers of same vehicle driver's license expiration:

_____ / _____

Driver(s) has reviewed the Transportation section of the *Guide to Safe Scouting,* the Risk Zone Driver's Pledge, the Risk Zone Transporting Scouts Safely, and the BSA Driver's Pledge at http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/Resources/driverspledge.aspx ? Y/N_____

Basic Safety Check (required)	***OK***	***Not OK***		***OK***	***Not OK***
1. Safety belts for every passenger?			*13. Tail lights, brake lights, turn signals?*		
2. Safety belts operational?			*14. Exhaust system?*		
3. Tire tread, sidewalls and pressure?			*15. Trailer system if used (hitch, lights, chain, etc.)*		
4. Tires less than six years old?			*16. Insurance meets BSA minimums*		
5. Spare tire and jack present?			***Additional Safety Check (optional)***		
6. Brakes? Emergency brake?			*1. Triangle reflectors and flares?*		
7. Windshield wipers operate (good blades)?			*2. First-aid kit and fire extinguisher?*		
8. Fluid levels (washer fluid, oil, leaks)?			*3. Flashlight, emergency contact list?*		
9. Defroster operational?			*4. Emergency water, food, blankets?*		
10. Horn operational?			*5. Emergency repair items, cell phone? (gloves, tools, jumper cables, fluids)*		
11. Mirrors: Rear view			*6. Weather emergency equipment? (shovel, chains, sand, etc.)*		
Side view			*7. Emergency procedures*		
12. Headlights: Low beam			*8. BSA Incident Report Forms*		
High beam					

It is essential that adequate, safe, and responsible transportation be used for all Scouting activities. Any "Not OK" item checked in the Basic Safety Check section should be cause to not use that vehicle for transporting Scouts.

MEETING PLACE INSPECTION CHECKLIST
For Packs, Troops, Teams, and Crews

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Unit No. _____
Meeting night _____
Name of organization _____
_____
Location _____
_____
District _____

NOTE TO INSPECTORS: A responsibility of the unit's chartered organization is to provide adequate meeting facilities. Unit committee members should make the inspection. Findings should be shared with the head of the institution, and plans should be made to correct hazards if any are found.

THE BUILDING

Name _____ Address _____

Construction: frame ☐ brick ☐ metal ☐ other _____

Type of roofing: shake ☐ composition ☐ metal ☐ other _____

Type of heating plant: gas ☐ oil ☐ wood ☐ electric ☐ other _____

Meeting room location: basement ☐ ground ☐ above first floor ☐

Telephone location: _____ Accessible yes ☐ no ☐ Emergency numbers posted yes ☐ no ☐

THE ROOM

YES	NO		YES	NO	
_____	_____	Large enough?	_____	_____	Adequate lighting?
_____	_____	Well-heated? (between 62 and 70 degrees)	_____	_____	Hand-washing facility?
_____	_____	Well-ventilated?	_____	_____	Clean toilet facility?
_____	_____	Dry?	_____	_____	Sanitary drinking facility?
_____	_____	Clean?	_____	_____	Emergency flashlights on hand?
_____	_____	Windows in good condition?	_____	_____	First-aid kits on hand?
_____	_____	Floor in good condition?			

EXITS

YES	NO		YES	NO	
_____	_____	Two or more emergency exits available?	_____	_____	Exit signs installed?
_____	_____	Unlocked and easily accessible?	_____	_____	Exit signs lighted?
_____	_____	Sufficiently far apart?	_____	_____	All doors swing out?
_____	_____	Crash bar on doors?			

IF ROOM IS ABOVE FIRST FLOOR:

YES	NO		YES	NO	
_____	_____	Close to stairs (less than 100 feet)?	_____	_____	Carpet or treads secure?
_____	_____	Doors and stairs unobstructed, litter-free?	_____	_____	Stairway enclosed?
_____	_____	Stairs in good repair?	_____	_____	Enclosures fitted with fire doors?
_____	_____	Stair handrail provided?	_____	_____	Outside fire escape installed?
_____	_____	Stairway lighted?	_____	_____	Fire escape in good repair?
_____	_____	Stairs wide enough for two persons?	_____	_____	Fire escape used for fire drills?

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

FIRE PROTECTION

YES	NO		YES	NO	
_____	_____	Portable extinguisher available and properly located?	_____	_____	Heating system inspected within a year?
		Extinguisher is suitable for the following types of fires:	_____	_____	Walls, ceilings, floors protected from stoves or pipes overheating?
_____	_____	A. Ordinary combustibles	_____	_____	Open fireplaces protected by screens?
_____	_____	B. Flammable liquids	_____	_____	Electric wiring, switches, extension cords in good repair?
_____	_____	C. Electrical equipment			
_____	_____	Extinguisher ready for use? (should be tagged to show inspection within one year)	_____	_____	Accessible telephone in building?
_____	_____	Any hazard from rubbish or flammable material?	_____	_____	Fire department number posted?
_____	_____	Any hazard from oily rags or mops? (spontaneous combustion)	_____	_____	Location of nearest fire alarm known to all members?
_____	_____	Smoke alarm system installed and tested?	_____	_____	Alarm procedure taught to members?

FIRE DRILL

YES	NO		YES	NO	
_____	_____	Has the unit an organization plan for conducting fire drills?	_____	_____	Are members able to evacuate building if filled with smoke or if lights go out?
_____	_____	Is a fire plan posted on the unit bulletin board?	_____	_____	Do training drills include use of alternate exits?
_____	_____	Are fire evacuation drills practiced frequently?	_____	_____	Are members trained in home fire safety plan and exit drill?
_____	_____	Was a drill demonstrated or taught to members at inspection time?			

RECOMMENDATIONS

Write your detailed recommendations below (or on a separate sheet attached to this report). Please note any other conditions that are hazardous to health, personal safety, or fire safety.

_____

_____

_____

INSPECTORS' SIGNATURES _____ _____

_____ _____

Date of inspection _____ Unit leader in attendance _____
name

CHARTERED ORGANIZATION RECORD

Did the chartered organization representative participate in the inspection? Yes ☐ No ☐

Report reviewed by:

_____ _____ _____
Chartered organization representative | Head of organization | Unit committee

Action taken: _____

_____

_____

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

Flying Plan Checklist

The program of the BSA does not include any requirements to fly. However, we realize that some units—and Scouts working on the Aviation merit badge—may wish to experience flight. This checklist defines the requirements for a flight to be considered an official Scouting activity. The Flying Plan checklist is restrictive by design to manage the identified risks.

Tour Leader: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Unit No.: _____ City or town: _____ District: _____

Is planning ❑ Basic ❑ Advanced orientation Flight on: _____
❑ Tethered balloon Date

Authorized Flight Restrictions

Basic orientation flight. This flight will be within 25 nautical miles of the departure airport, with no stops before returning. The pilot must have at least a private pilot's certificate, at least 250 hours of total flight time, be current under FAR 61 to carry passengers, and have a current medical certificate under FAR 61. *Tigers, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Varsity Scouts are restricted to this type of flight.*

Advanced orientation flight. This flight will be within 50 nautical miles of the departure airport, and the plane may land at other locations before returning. The pilot must have at least a private pilot's certificate and 500 hours of total flight time. The pilot must be current under FAR 61 to carry passengers and have a current medical certificate under FAR 61. *Only Venturers and Venturing leaders may participate in advanced orientation flights.*

Tethered balloon flight. Flights will be conducted in an open area of at least 200 feet by 200 feet clear of obstructions, utility lines, fences, trees, etc. Permission to use the property has been secured. The maximum above ground limit (height) is 70 feet. The flight must occur between sunrise and sunset.

Name of the airport where the flight will originate and terminate: _____

Describe the area where tethered ballooning will occur: _____
Permission from the landowner to go tethered ballooning has been secured. ❑ Yes ❑ No

Total number of participating youth: _____ Total number of participating adults: _____

❑ A parent or guardian consent form for each youth participant is attached.
❑ All required aircraft, insurance, and pilot documentation is satisfied.

We certify that appropriate planning has been conducted using the Sweet 16 of BSA Safety, qualified trained supervision is in place, permissions are secured, health records have been reviewed, and adult leaders have read and are in possession of a current copy of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* and other appropriate resources.

_____ _____
Signature of committee chair or chartered organization representative Signature of adult leader

Units should keep this checklist on file following their chartered organization's retention plan. If any incident occurs, provide a copy of the plan and incident report to your council.

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Aircraft/Balloons to be used

Owner(s): _____ Date of last annual inspection: _____

Make and model: _____ Number: _____

Standard airworthiness certificate category (normal/utility/etc.): _____

Note: Only aircraft with standard airworthiness certificates may be used for orientation flights. Restricted, limited, light sport, and experimental category airworthiness certificates are not authorized.

Reproduce this page as needed for additional aircraft/pilots.

Insurance

All aircraft owners must have at least $1 million aircraft liability coverage, including passenger liability with sublimits of no less than $100,000. List all insurance policies that in combination satisfy the insurance requirement.

Insurance company: _____

Amount: $_____ Policy number: _____ Expiration date: _____

Insurance company: _____

Amount: $_____ Policy number: _____ Expiration date: _____

Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Young Eagle Flights (ages 8–17): For those EAA members who choose to insure at $100,000 per passenger seat, the EAA automatically provides an additional $1 million liability umbrella policy with sublimits of no less than $100,000. This coverage is in effect only while participating in Young Eagle Flights. The EAA's insurance telephone number is 800-236-4800, ext. 6106.

EAA member number: ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____. **We strongly recommend that all orientation flights be conducted in collaboration with local EAA chapter Young Eagle Flights.** To find a local chapter, visit *www.eaa.org/chapters/locator.*

Pilot-In-Command

Name: _____ Age: ____

Address: _____

_____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Type of pilot certificate: _____ (Attaching a copy of current pilot certificate is recommended. Balloon pilots must hold a commercial certification.)

Ratings: _____

Pilot medical certificate: ❑ First ❑ Second ❑ Third class (Attaching a copy of current medical certificate is recommended. Applicable to ALL flights.)

Medical valid until: _____ (date)

Limitations: _____

Pilot's total number of flight hours: _____ (250 hours minimum for basic orientation flights; 500 hours minimum for advanced orientation flights)

Balloon pilot's total number of flight hours: _____ (100 hours minimum)

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680-672
Rev. 3/2017

Notes and FAQs for Completing Flying Plan Checklist

Tour Leader

You are responsible for completing this checklist, obtaining parental consent for all participants, and gathering required insurance information and support material from the aircraft owner and pilot. Tour leaders are responsible for obtaining approval by unit leadership.

Pilot, Aircraft Owner, and Insurance Information

Attach additional copies of this information for each aircraft or balloon that will be used, each pilot-in-command, and applicable insurance information. Pilot information may include copies of the pilot's current certificate and medical certificate.

Parents/Guardians

A consent form, No. 680-673, for each youth or adult participant under 21 years of age must be completed by the youth's parent or guardian.

Chartered Organization Checklist

Review that all requested information (listed below) has been provided on the checklist. Sign off on affirmation.

___ Parent or guardian consent form for each youth participant attached

___ Verified each pilot's certificate and medical certificate

___ Verified total pilot hours required (250 hours for basic orientation flights; 500 hours for advanced orientation flights; 100 hours for tethered ballooning)

___ Aircraft or balloon insurance requirements satisfied

___ This checklist completed

Tethered balloon guidelines and FAQs can be found here.

FAQs

Q: Our pilot only has the new sport pilot rating. Can he be a pilot-in-command of the orientation flight?

A: No. Sport pilot certificates are not authorized.

Q: Our unit has been offered an orientation flight by the U.S. military, but not all the information required on the checklist can be obtained. May we still conduct the orientation?

A: Commissioned officers and warrant officers of any armed service may act as pilot-in-command of a military airplane or helicopter in which they are current as the aircraft commander for either a basic or advanced orientation flight. Only the aircraft portion identifying the aircraft as military and a parent or guardian consent form for each youth participant are required.

Q: Since we encourage Young Eagle Flights, can we utilize experimental aircraft?

A: No. Only aircraft with standard airworthiness certificates may be used on orientation flights.

Q: Is an aviation medical required?

A: Yes. For consistency, a valid medical is required, beyond BasicMed.

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680-672
Rev. 3/2017

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA DATE _____

Received in council service center _____
(Date)

(Local council stamp)

UNIT MONEY-EARNING APPLICATION

Applications are not required for council-coordinated money-earning projects such as popcorn sales or Scout show ticket sales.

Please submit this application to your council service center at least two weeks prior to committing to your money-earning project. Read the eight guidelines on the other side of this form. They will assist you in answering the questions below.

☐ Pack
☐ Troop
☐ Team
☐ Crew

No. _____ Chartered Organization _____

Community _____ District _____

Submits the following plans for its money-earning project and requests permission to carry them out.

What is your unit's money-earning plan? _____

_____

About how much does your unit expect to earn from this project? _____ How will this money be used? _____

_____

Does your chartered organization give full approval for this plan? _____

What are the proposed dates? _____

Are tickets or a product to be sold? Please specify. _____

_____

Will your members be in uniform while carrying out this project? (See items 3–6 on other side.) _____

_____

Have you checked with neighboring units to avoid any overlapping of territory while working? _____

Is your product or service in direct conflict with that offered by local merchants? _____

Are any contracts to be signed? _____ If so, by whom? _____

Give details. _____

Is your unit on the budget plan? _____ How much are the dues? _____

Does your unit participate in the council product sale? ☐ Yes ☐ No Family Friends of Scouting? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How much does your unit have in its treasury? _____

Signed _____
(Chartered Organization Representative)

Signed _____
(Unit Leader)

Signed _____
(Chairman, Unit Committee)

_____
(Address of Chairman)

FOR USE OF DISTRICT OR COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE: Telephone _____

Approved by _____ Date _____

Approved subject to the following conditions _____

_____

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The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

GUIDES TO UNIT MONEY-EARNING PROJECTS

A unit's money-earning methods should reflect Scouting's basic values. Whenever your unit is planning a money-earning project, this checklist can serve as your guide. If your answer is "Yes" to all the questions that follow, it is likely the project conforms to Scouting's standards and will be approved.

1. ***Do you really need a fundraising project?***

   There should be a real need for raising money based on your unit's program. Units should not engage in money-earning projects merely because someone has offered an attractive plan. Remember that individual youth members are expected to earn their own way. The need should be beyond normal budget items covered by dues.

2. ***If any contracts are to be signed, will they be signed by an individual, without reference to the Boy Scouts of America and without binding the local council, the Boy Scouts of America, or the chartered organization?***

   Before any person in your unit signs a contract, he/she must make sure the venture is legitimate and worthy. If a contract is signed, he/she is personally responsible. He/she may not sign on behalf of the local council or the Boy Scouts of America, nor may he/she bind the chartered organization without its written authorization. If you are not sure, check with your district executive for help.

3. ***Will your fundraiser prevent promoters from trading on the name and goodwill of the Boy Scouts of America?***

   Because of Scouting's good reputation, customers rarely question the quality or price of a product. The nationwide network of Scouting units must not become a beehive of commercial interest.

4. ***Will the fundraising activity uphold the good name of the BSA? Does it avoid games of chance, gambling, etc.?***

   Selling raffle tickets or other games of chance is a direct violation of the BSA Rules and Regulations, which forbid gambling. The product must not detract from the ideals and principles of the BSA.

5. ***If a commercial product is to be sold, will it be sold on its own merits and without reference to the needs of Scouting?***

   All commercial products must sell on their own merits, not the benefit received by the Boy Scouts. The principle of value received is critical in choosing what to sell.

6. ***If a commercial product is to be sold, will the fundraising activity comply with BSA policy on wearing the uniform?***

   The official uniform is intended to be worn primarily for use in connection with Scouting activities. However, council executive boards may approve use of the uniform for any fundraising activity. Typically, council popcorn sales or Scout show ticket sales are approved uniform fundraisers.

7. ***Will the fundraising project avoid soliciting money or gifts?***

   The BSA Rules and Regulations state, "Youth members shall not be permitted to serve as solicitors of money for their chartered organizations, for the local council, or in support of other organizations. Adult and youth members shall not be permitted to serve as solicitors of money in support of personal or unit participation in local, national, or international events."

   For example: Boy Scouts/Cub Scouts and leaders should not identify themselves as Boy Scouts/Cub Scouts or as a troop/pack participate in The Salvation Army's Christmas Bell Ringing program. This would be raising money for another organization. **At no time are units permitted to solicit contributions for unit programs.**

8. ***Does the fundraising activity avoid competition with other units, your chartered organization, your local council, and the United Way?***

   Check with your chartered organization representative and your district executive to make certain that your chartered organization and the council agree on the dates and type of fundraiser.

The local council is responsible for upholding the Charter and Bylaws and the Rules and Regulations of the BSA. To ensure compliance, all unit fundraisers MUST OBTAIN WRITTEN APPROVAL from the local council NO LESS THAN 14 DAYS before committing to the fundraising activity.

For additional details, please reference the *Product Sales and Policy Issues Manual* on www.scouting.org/financeimpact.

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Incident Descriptions and Reporting Instructions

INCIDENT TYPE	PERSONAL INJURY/ILLNESS	VEHICLE, PROPERTY, OR PROGRAM INCIDENT	REPORTING REQUIREMENTS
CATASTROPHIC	• Fatality or hospitalization for a life-threatening or critical condition • Allegation of suspected sexual abuse • Victimization of Scout	• Vehicle accident, theft, or damage with a greater than $1 million loss • Litigation anticipated • National publicity or media attention	**IMMEDIATELY** do the following: 1. Get help for injured parties (e.g., call 911). 2. Notify the council Scout executive. 3. Complete an Incident Information Report, No. 680-016. 4. Forward the incident report to your local council enterprise risk management contact. 5. Ask the council contact to enter the incident into the RiskConsole incident reporting system. The incident should be marked as catastrophic.
SERIOUS/ CRITICAL	• Hospitalization for less than a life-threatening or critical condition • Transport to the ER in an emergency vehicle • Allegation of suspected non-sexual child abuse • Communicable disease outbreak or mass foodborne illness	• Vehicle accident, theft, or damage with a $100,000 to $1 million loss • Building or camp shut down for more than a day • Bomb threat • Local publicity or media attention	**Within 24 hours,** do the following: 1. Get help for injured parties (e.g., call 911). 2. Notify the council Scout executive. 3. Complete an Incident Information Report, No. 680-016. 4. Forward the incident report to your local council enterprise risk management contact. 5. Ask the council contact to enter the incident into the RiskConsole incident reporting system.
MARGINAL	• First aid • Transport to the ER in a personal vehicle and released • Serious near miss • Emergency response initiated	• Vehicle accident, theft, or damage with a $100,000 loss or less • Program area closed down for safety concerns • Emergency response initiated	**In no later than five days,** do the following: 1. Attend to any injured parties. 2. Complete an Incident Information Report, No. 680-016. 3. Forward the incident report to your local council enterprise risk management contact. 4. Ask the council contact to enter the incident into the RiskConsole incident reporting system.
NEGLIGIBLE	• Near miss • Injury/illness not requiring first aid		**By the end of the unit recharter year,** do the following: 1. Complete a Near Miss Incident Information Report, No. 680-017. 2. Keep the report in your unit or forward to the enterprise risk management contact. 3. Evaluate near misses in your unit or council each year for any lessons learned and/or program enhancements.

NOTE: This matrix does not supersede reporting requirements for specific program activities (e.g., pilot programs or climbing near misses). Reporting required by law, BSA Youth Protection reporting requirements, or BSA employee death or multiple injury reporting requirements to OSHA.



The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

Incident Information Report

(Events or allegations of injury, illness, or property damage, including employment and issues with directors and officers)

Incident date:_____ Time: _____

Reporting date: _____ Time: _____

Council/BSA location: _____ ❑ Leader ❑ Parent ❑ Other: _____

Reporting person: _____

Location of incident:_____

Specific area where incident occurred:

_____

_____

Cause of incident:

_____

_____

_____

Program/event/adventure code:_____

Did the incident occur while transporting to/from an activity? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

Individuals Involved (Duplicate If Needed)

Name: _____
First Middle Last

Address:_____
City State Zip

Home phone:_____ Cell phone: _____ Work phone:_____

DOB: _____ Age:_____ Unit No.:_____ Council: _____

Scouting role: _____

Type of injury or property damage: _____ Injured body part: _____

Was medical treatment given at scene? ❑ Yes ❑ No Type: _____

Medical disposition (transported to hospital, etc.): _____

Return this completed form to your council's designated user for entry into RiskConsole via MyBSA Incident Entry.

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Incident Information Report

(Events or allegations of injury, illness, or property damage, including employment and issues with directors and officers)

Witnesses

Name: _____
First Middle Last

Address: _____
City State Zip

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Others

Name: _____
First Middle Last

Address: _____
City State Zip

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Property Damage (if applicable)

Property or vehicle make/model/year: _____

Color: _____ License plate No.: _____

Driver Contact Information (if applicable)

Name: _____
First Middle Last

Address: _____
City State Zip

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Passengers: _____ Contact information: _____

Additional information:

_____

_____

_____

Information gathered at scene by: _____

Contact information: _____

Return this completed form to your council's designated user for entry into RiskConsole via MyBSA Incident Entry.

Service Project Planning Guidelines

These guidelines can be utilized for all Scouting service projects, not just those for an Eagle Scout service project. The guidelines must not be construed to be additional requirements for an Eagle Scout service project, but they do represent elements that should appear on the Eagle Scout candidate's final project plan from the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*, No. 512-927. The next revision of the workbook will incorporate these guidelines.

Service Project Safety Planning Process

1. **Take the necessary steps.** Define the scope of the project, assess the skill levels of the participants, indicate supervision and discipline needed, identify the equipment and personnel needed (including first-aid kits), and plan for proper tool instruction.

2. **Review the site.** Make sure you know how to get there and have access, where to park, and what the access is for emergency vehicles. Include weather concerns and how to notify local emergency help. Identify overhead and underground utilities. Know which jurisdictional codes and ordinances will apply.

3. **Determine suitable hours in which the service project will be performed.** For example, they could be daylight hours or from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., including short rest breaks every two hours, plus lunch with rest period for one hour. It is recommended that service projects do not exceed eight hours per day. Please keep in mind that youth attention spans may be a limitation.

4. **Establish a service project review process.** Monitor work and tool usage, and ensure a leadership review of the project at its conclusion.

Use this section as a checklist for providing details about your service project plans.

Hazard Analysis and Recognition

1. **List possible hazards,** for example, overhead or underground utilities; overgrowth of trees, bushes, and grasses; or the animals, bugs, and reptiles present in the area.

2. **Consider the weather.** What are the forecasted conditions during the time of the project?

3. **Monitor tool usage.** Identify supervision, who has access, the proper handling of tools, and power supplies, etc.

4. **Prepare for emergencies** (access, shelters, weather monitoring, communications).

Tools and Equipment

See Age Guidelines for Tool Use and Work at Elevations or Excavations, No. 680-028, for guidance.

1. List the type and number of hand and power tools necessary for the project and the skills required for their usage.

Tool	Quantity Needed

2. What skill level, training/certification, age, and physical conditions are necessary?

Tool	Age-Appropriate Certification Needed (Adult/Youth)	Training Needed/Completed (Y/N?)

3. List the personal protective equipment (PPE) needed (see Age Guidelines for Tool Use for guidance).

Tool	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Needed

4. Check the condition of all tools. Never use tools that are broken, needing repair, or missing safety features.

Tool	Condition—Acceptable?

5. Determine the clearances and barriers needed between users or for specific tools or equipment.

Tool/Work Area	Clearance/Barriers/Safety Circle

6. Where and how will tools be stored?

7. Review the proper use of tools.

Weather Considerations

1. Heat (heat index, periods of work, periods of rest, use of shade, water):

2. Cold stress (wind chill, periods of work, rest, water, heated area):

3. Weather forecasting information and evaluations:

4. List weather emergency procedures (for tornadoes, hurricanes, lightning, etc.) and training/awareness (first-aid kit, trained first-aid personnel). See the Hazardous Weather online training at My.Scouting.org.

Health/Sanitation Considerations

1. Health risks to participants (possible problems such as poison ivy, rodents, and mosquitoes):

Check the following:

____ Annual Health and Medical Record forms are available.

____ Participants with allergies or other health risks are identified.

____ Are medications/EpiPens® on hand?

____ Are parental permissions (for youth) secured?

2. Will snacks or foods be available? (List types, where they are positioned, etc.)

Type of Snacks/Foods (Note Allergies)	Where Food Will Be

3. Sanitation needs and provisions (restrooms, hand sanitizers):

4. Will you need sunscreen, insect repellent, etc.?

Assessment and Monitoring

- Who will provide supervision, monitoring of participants? _____
- What conditions will cause a Start, Stop, Continue process to occur?

What will define project success? Why?

If there are any accidents or injuries, complete a BSA Incident Information Report, No. 680-016. Submit it to the council service center as soon as possible. Immediately notify the council service center or Scout executive of any serious incidents requiring emergency or medical response. If there was a near miss, complete a BSA Near Miss Incident Information Report, No. 680-017, and submit it to the council service center.



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

680-027
2012 Printing

Age Guidelines for Tool Use and Work at Elevations or Excavations

Training and Supervision

The use of tools, by any youth or adult, requires training in the proper use of those tools before a project starts and continuous, qualified adult supervision and discipline during the project. Manufacturers' literature and age and skill restrictions shall supersede the recommendations on the chart below. If there is a conflict, leaders shall follow the most restrictive guidelines. The table below is not comprehensive; if in doubt, adults should be recruited for all tool use or job functions that might be dangerous.

Note on Personal Protective Equipment

Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) must be used at all times when using hand or power tools. Types of personal protective equipment include the following:

- Work gloves
- Safety glasses
- Safety helmets
- Earplugs or muffs
- Steel-toed shoes
- Protective aprons
- Safety face shields
- Other personal safety equipment as defined by OSHA standards

Hand Tools

Type of Tool	Youth Up to Age 14	Youth 14 Years and Older	Youth 16 Years and Older
Leaf/grass rake	■	■	■
Hoe	■	■	■
Shovel	■	■	■
Hand clipper (small)	■	■	■
Screwdrivers	■	■	■
Nail hammer	■	■	■
Handsaw	■	■	■
Trowel	■	■	■
Hose spray washer	■	■	■
Wood sanding block (handheld)	■	■	■
Wood chisel (Scouts with Totin' Chip)	■	■	■
Pocketknife (Scouts with Whittling Chip or Totin' Chip)	■	■	■
Pickaxe		■	■
Mattock		■	■
Posthole digger		■	■
Wheel cart (1-, 2-, or 4-wheeled)		■	■
Paint roller with extension pole		■	■

Note: Shaded areas indicate age-appropriate use.

Power Tools

Type of Tool	Youth Up to Age 14	Youth 14 Years and Older	Youth 16 Years and Older
Screwdriver (electric)		■	■
Handheld sander (small)		■	■
Cutting tools (e.g., Dremel®, small)		■	■
Paint sprayer (small, less than 50 psi)		■	■
Residential lawn mower (self-propelled, riding)			■
Commercial lawn mower (push, self-propelled, riding)			■
Line trimmer (electric, gas-powered)			■
Edger (electric, gas-powered)			■
Leaf/grass blower (electric, gas-powered)			■
Hedge trimmer (electric, gas-powered)			■
Belt sander (electric, cordless)			■
Pressure washer (>50 but <100 PSI)			■
Circular, reciprocating, jig, or radial saw			Age 18 and older
Band and scroll saws			Age 18 and older
Router/planer			Age 18 and older
Chain saws			Age 18 and older
Log splitters			Age 18 and older
Wood chippers			Age 18 and older

Note: Shaded areas indicate age-appropriate use.

Working at Heights and Elevations

Heights and elevations are measured from the bottom of the shoes or boots above the ground level or floor.

Elevation of Work	Youth Up to Age 14	Youth Age 14 or Older
Up to 4 feet	**Step stools***	
Above 4 feet	**Not permitted**	**A 6-foot ladder is permissible with the manufacturer's recommended practices.**
On scaffolds (above 4 feet)	**Not permitted**	**Age 18 or older**
Open platforms (above 4 feet) with proper fall protection**	**Not permitted**	**Age 18 or older**

Fall Protection Requirements According to OSHA Standards

29 CFR–Subpart M, 1926.500, 1926.501, 1926.502, and 1926.503

*Step stools, with one or two steps, are permissible for use by youth if the total height is 4 feet or less.

**Proper fall protection would require the use of full-body harnesses, helmets, and the ability to be anchored to a stable object. Refer to safety practices from the BSA's Project COPE and climbing national standards.

Note: Pioneering projects, such as monkey bridges, have a maximum height of 6 feet. Close supervision should be followed when Scouts are building or using pioneering projects.

Excavations

Youth or adults are not permitted to work in any excavation areas greater than 4 feet in depth, such as trenches for plumbing, digging wells, or building foundation work.

Youth can work on hiking and biking trails or other similar work where the depth of digging is not greater than 4 feet. Digging postholes for fences, gates, etc., is permissible if the depth is limited to 48 inches (4 feet) and the width is limited to 18 inches (1.5 feet).

It is critical to locate all underground utilities (e.g., water, gas, electric) at the site before any work begins. Most states have "call before you dig" call centers to assist with this effort.

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

680-028
2013 Printing

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

Campout Safety Checklist

Campout Description: _____

Campout Dates: _____ Campout Location: _____

Unit Single Point of Contact (not a participant in the campout)

Name: _____ Cell: _____ Email: _____

The following checklist provides guidance on safety issues that you may encounter at a Scouting campout. Along with the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, this tool will help you in having conversations with both Scouts and adult leaders on identifying risks that need to be mitigated or eliminated.

Documentation Needed

General (common for nearly all outings)

- ❑ *Guide to Safe Scouting*
- ❑ Permission slips
- ❑ Medical records
- ❑ Maps of campsite
- ❑ Maps to and from campsite
- ❑ Other _____

Specialized (less common)

- ❑ Float plan
- ❑ Flying Plan Checklist

Training

General (needed for nearly all programs)

- ❑ Youth Protection Training
- ❑ Hazardous weather
- ❑ First aid/CPR
- ❑ Drivers/Risk Zone
- ❑ Safe Swim Defense
- ❑ Safety Afloat
- ❑ BALOO

Program or Activity Specific (Boy Scouts and Venturers)

- ❑ Wilderness First Aid
- ❑ Climb On Safely
- ❑ Trek Safely
- ❑ NRA instructor
- ❑ Range safety officer
- ❑ Other _____

Planning (Has the following been confirmed?)

- ❑ Weather conditions
- ❑ Route conditions
- ❑ Drivers licensed
- ❑ Drivers insured
- ❑ BSA swim check
- ❑ Service project guidelines
- ❑ Other _____

Equipment (If the following equipment will be used, is it in good order/inspected?)

- ❑ Trailer
- ❑ Personal vehicles
- ❑ First aid kit
- ❑ Fire extinguisher
- ❑ Tools
- ❑ Road emergency kit
- ❑ Other _____

Emergency Planning (Are plans in place for the following?)

- ❑ Local police/fire/EMS
- ❑ Local hospital
- ❑ Lightning
- ❑ Severe weather
- ❑ Lost Scout
- ❑ Active shooter
- ❑ Other _____

Program (Have the following program areas been addressed?)

- ❑ Age-appropriate activities
- ❑ Adult supervision
- ❑ Safety equipment
- ❑ Hazards identified and discussed
- ❑ Other _____

680-057
2017 Printing

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

Event Safety Checklist

Boy Scouts of America

Event Name: _____ Event Date(s): _____

Event Location: _____ Event Organizer: _____

Event Health and Safety Officer: _____

The following checklist provides guidance on safety issues that you may encounter at a Scouting event. This is a tool, not a list of mandatory guidelines. The intent of the checklist is to create conversations among event organizers around risks and ways to mitigate or eliminate them.

Event Risks	Yes	No	N/A	Mitigation/Comments
Planning				
1. Has the event organizer contacted the event venue and met with venue owners in advance?				
2. Have the venue owners conveyed their requirements for the BSA to follow at the event?				
3. Will the event organizer or a designee be at the event? Has contact information been conveyed to the venue and vice versa?				
4. Has an event map been created that shows structures, important areas, and equipment (e.g., port-a-cans, tents, first-aid stations)?				
5. Has the health and safety officer reviewed and accepted the event plan and safety checklist?				
6. Has the *Guide to Safe Scouting* been reviewed for any applicable requirements for the event?				
7. Has communication been sent to event attendees outlining event logistics and safety requirements well in advance?				
8. Have trained or certified individuals been recruited to run program areas?				
9. Have the health and safety officer and event organizer walked the site prior to the event?				
10. Has a safety team been established to help plan and attend the event?				
11. Does the event team have a means to communicate at the event (e.g., cellphone list, radios)?				
12. Is a command center needed for the event?				
Setup/Teardown				
1. Has adequate time been set aside for event setup and teardown?				
2. Are proper safety equipment and tools available (e.g., ladders, barricade tape)?				
3. Will a safety talk prior to setup and teardown be conducted?				
4. Are tools and equipment in good condition?				
5. Will storage locations be needed and identified prior to the event?				

Event Safety Checklist

Boy Scouts of America

Event Risks	Yes	No	N/A	Mitigation/Comments
Safety				
1. Will a safety discussion for attendees be conducted before the event (e.g., emergency evacuations, rally points, first-aid stations, etc.)?				
2. Have slip, trip, and fall hazards been identified and mitigations established?				
3. Has personal protective equipment (PPE) or proper attire been evaluated and communicated (e.g., safety vest, gloves, etc.)?				
4. Have grassy areas been treated for pests, including ants?				
5. Do certain areas need to be barricaded off?				
6. Have high-risk areas undergone a program hazard analysis (e.g., shooting sports, climbing/COPE)?				
Fire				
1. Are fire extinguisher(s) present and in working order (should be field verified)?				
2. Has an emergency muster location been established and communicated? Where?				
3. Will any program areas generate heat or sparks (e.g., metal working, welding)? Have protective measures been identified?				
4. Will there be open-flame heating sources (e.g., fires, Sterno, etc.) at the event? Have protective measures been identified?				
5. Will there be propane at the event for any reason? (Note that some cities require a permit for use.)				
Medical				
1. Will water be readily available for all participants?				
2. Does the event health and safety officer have current CPR and first-aid certification (e.g., American Red Cross)?				
3. Is a first-aid kit present and adequately stocked (should be field verified)?				
4. Is an AED present and in working order (should be field verified)?				
5. Is a medical lodge or EMT needed?				
6. Has the closest emergency room or hospital been identified and informed about the event?				
Utilities/Equipment				
1. Have utilities needed for the event (power, water, etc.) been identified, discussed, and communicated to the venue owner?				
2. Can the event location handle all electrical loads of equipment (most breakers can handle 20 amps)?				
3. Will tents larger than 1,000 square feet be needed? (If yes, a permit from the city may be needed.)				
4. Has equipment requiring 15 amps or more been identified and placed on event map?				
5. Will compressed gases be needed at the event (e.g., helium, propane)? (Must be approved by the venue.)				
6. Are compressed gases stored properly and positioned away from participants?				

Event Safety Checklist

Boy Scouts of America

Event Risks	Yes	No	N/A	Mitigation/Comments
Hygiene and Sanitation				
1. Will portable toilets be needed (~1 per every 300 people)?				
2. Are handwashing facilities needed?				
3. Will janitorial staff be needed for the event?				
4. Has a trash disposal plan been established?				
Food				
1. Will outside catering be utilized? If so:				
a. Is the company licensed by the city/county?				
b. Is the company aware of and will it agree to follow all applicable city, state, and federal regulations?				
2. Will outside food serving lines be covered by a canopy or tent?				
3. Is food covered when not being served?				
4. Will food servers wear appropriate attire and gloves?				
5. Is serving equipment in good repair?				
6. Will cold food be kept < 40 degrees F?				
7. Will hot food be kept > 140 degrees F?				
Security/Traffic/Parking				
1. Have plans been discussed and established for possible security incidents (e.g., armed intruder, missing Scout, etc.)?				
2. Are check-in and check-out procedures needed for Scouts?				
3. Are security guards needed?				
4. Are uniformed police officers needed (may be required for traffic control in public streets or events with cash)?				
5. Have parking areas and road closures been established and communicated?				
6. Have rules been established to limit or eliminate vehicles in activity or camping areas?				
Severe Weather				
1. Has an internal emergency muster location (shelter-in-place) been established and placed on the event map?				
2. Has it been communicated that the event may be called off due to inclement weather?				
3. Have protocols been established on how to handle likely severe weather scenarios (e.g., lightning, rain, snow, etc.)?				
Miscellaneous				
1. Will there be live animals at the event? Have protective measures been identified?				
Other				

Event Safety Checklist

Boy Scouts of America

Risk Assessment Approval			
I am satisfied that the safeguards put in place will reduce the level of risk to an acceptable level and the task/action is permitted to proceed.			
Signatures	**Date**	**Signatures**	**Date**
Event Organizer		***Event Owner***	
Health and Safety Officer		***Venue Owner***	

Youth Protection/Membership

Incident Information Form

(Allegations of abuse, violations of BSA guidelines or policies, inappropriate behavior by a Scout/Scout leader/parent/other)

Please forward this Incident Information Form and supportive documentation to the Scout executive as soon as practical.

Submitting this form to the Scout executive does not eliminate/discharge your responsibility to immediately stop the behavior at issue and to protect the youth, nor your mandatory reporting of child abuse obligations imposed by state law or the BSA's mandatory reporting of child abuse policy.

Incident date: _____ Date incident reported to council: _____

Council/BSA location where incident occurred (if applicable): _____

Incident address: _____

City State Zip

Report type: ❑ Suspicion/allegation of abuse ❑ BSA policy or guideline violation(s)

❑ Other inappropriate behavior by a Scout/Scout leader/parent/other

Details of incident: What alleged victim/target/injured party said, what reporter observed/was told, similar or past incidents involving the victim(s)/target(s)/injured party (parties) or violator(s)/offenders(s), etc.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PERSON FILLING OUT THIS FORM: _____

Scouting position: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip:_____

Phone(s): Primary _____ Alternate _____

Email: _____

PERSON WHO REPORTED THIS INCIDENT: _____

Scouting position: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip:_____

Phone(s): Primary _____ Alternate _____

Email: _____

The supplemental information sheet can be used to identify other witnesses.

Alleged Victim/Target/Injured Party Information:

❑ Adult ❑ Youth ❑ Registered ❑ Other

_____ _____ _____
Council Unit Chartered organization

_____ _____ _____ _____
Name DOB Age Gender

If a youth, parent(s) information: _____
Name

Address: _____
City State Zip

Phone(s): _____ _____ Email: _____
Primary Alternate

Parent notified? ❑ Yes ❑ No if yes, by whom? _____ Date/Time _____

Alleged Policy Violator/Offender Information:

❑ Adult ❑ Youth ❑ Registered ❑ Other

_____ _____ _____
Council Unit Chartered organization

_____ _____ _____ _____
Name DOB Age Gender

If a youth, parent(s) information: _____
Name

Address: _____
City State Zip

Phone(s): _____ _____ Email: _____
Primary Alternate

Parent notified? ❑ Yes ❑ No if yes, by whom? _____ Date/Time _____

Reports:

Was this incident reported to law enforcement? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ I don't know

Name of law enforcement agency: _____

Date reported: _____ Approximate time reported: _____

If applicable, was appropriate children and family services/Child Protective Services agency notified?

❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ I don't know

Name of agency: _____

Date reported: _____ Approximate time reported: _____

Use the Supplemental Information sheet to include additional details.

The online version of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is updated quarterly.
Go to **http://www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx.**

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Supplemental Information

(To be used with the Incident Information Form)

❑ Alleged victim/target/injured party ❑ Alleged policy violator/offender ❑ Witness ❑ Adult ❑ Youth ❑ Registered ❑ Other

_____ _____ _____ _____
Name DOB Age Gender

If a youth, parent(s) information: _____
Name

Address: _____
City State Zip

Phone(s): _____ _____ Email: _____
Primary Alternate

❑ Alleged victim/target/injured party ❑ Alleged policy violator/offender ❑ Witness ❑ Adult ❑ Youth ❑ Registered ❑ Other

_____ _____ _____ _____
Name DOB Age Gender

If a youth, parent(s) information: _____
Name

Address: _____
City State Zip

Phone(s): _____ _____ Email: _____
Primary Alternate

❑ Alleged victim/target/injured party ❑ Alleged policy violator/offender ❑ Witness ❑ Adult ❑ Youth ❑ Registered ❑ Other

_____ _____ _____ _____
Name DOB Age Gender

If a youth, parent(s) information: _____
Name

Address: _____
City State Zip

Phone(s): _____ _____ Email: _____
Primary Alternate

❑ Alleged victim/target/injured party ❑ Alleged policy violator/offender ❑ Witness ❑ Adult ❑ Youth ❑ Registered ❑ Other

_____ _____ _____ _____
Name DOB Age Gender

If a youth, parent(s) information: _____
Name

Address: _____
City State Zip

Phone(s): _____ _____ Email: _____
Primary Alternate

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CONFIDENTIAL

Detailed narrative of incident:

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TRANSPORTING SCOUTS SAFELY

Don't Get Caught in the Risk Zone

Be aware of killer fatigue and distractions while you are driving! Mental and physical fatigue and distractions, such as texting and using your smartphone, are two of the leading causes of highway crashes and fatalities. Motor vehicle accidents are also the most costly, in lives and claims, in the BSA.

Drivers are generally poor judges of their own level of fatigue and their driving skills. They are unable to predict just how tired they actually are, and they think they can operate a vehicle while using their smartphones. These two things can amount to a deadly combination!

What Can You Do to Help?

The new Risk Zone campaign materials have been put together in a roundtable format for leaders, volunteers, and anyone else in Scouting.

The materials are in a PDF format on www.scouting.org/scoutingsafely. Go to the "Training" section. The Risk Zone materials include everything leaders need to print off, including presentation materials, posters, a quiz, the Driver's Pledge, and pocket-sized verification cards.

When one person avoids the Risk Zone, someone makes it home safely.

THE RISK ZONE™
VEHICLE

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®
RISK MANAGEMENT

Prepared. For Life.®



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