



Rotary District 6440 Youth Protection Policy

Introduction

Rotary Clubs place great emphasis on their work with people in the community, including children, young adults and other vulnerable individuals through Rotary's many programs. This volunteer effort is vital to the quality of life in our communities and to the good reputation of Rotary and Rotarians. For this outstanding work to continue, it is critical that our Rotary Clubs protect the interests of everyone involved with these programs, and create and maintain a safe and respectful environment for all participants in Rotary programs or activities. Attention to these considerations will minimize the risk of liability should a participant in a Rotary program or activity become a victim of abuse or harassment.

Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

District 6440 is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and any other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of all youth in our programs, and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.

Rotarians and volunteers should strive to always:

- Treat children, young people and other vulnerable individuals with respect.
- Provide a model of good and appropriate behavior.
- Respect all people's right to privacy.
- Be aware that behavior can be misinterpreted even when well-intentioned.
- Challenge unacceptable behavior.
- Operate within guidelines as outlined by Rotary International and District 6440.

2. Definitions

Volunteer: Any adult person age 18 and older, and involved with Rotary Youth Exchange or other Rotary sponsored youth activities, who has direct and continued interactions with students, either supervised or unsupervised. This includes, but is not limited to, club and district Youth Exchange officers and committee members, Rotarian counselors, Rotarians and non-Rotarians, their spouses and partners who host students for any Rotary-sponsored event or activity, and other adult residents of the host home, either on a full or part-time basis, including any overnight activity. Event chaperones who will have more than minimal casual contact with the students are also included in this category.

Participants: Youth involved with Rotary Youth Exchange or other Rotary sponsored programs designed for young adults, regardless of whether they are of the age of majority or attend high school.

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse refers to engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a student, or forcing or encouraging a student to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts, alone or with another person of any age of the same sex or the opposite sex.

Additional examples of sexual abuse could include, but are not limited to:

- Non-touching offenses
- Indecent exposure



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- Exposing a student to sexual or pornographic material

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment refers to sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is a technique used by sexual predators to desensitize or “groom” their victims.

Examples of sexual harassment could include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual advances
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one’s sex life, and comments about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or drawings
- Any inappropriate physical contact, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments

3. Incorporation of District Youth Exchange Program and Liability Insurance

Rotary District 6440 Youth Exchange program is incorporated as Rotary District 6440, Incorporated, also doing business as Rotary 6440 Youth Exchange Program and is incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois.

The Rotary District 6440 Youth Exchange program will carry adequate general liability insurance.

4. Volunteer Selection and Screening

The following screening steps must be completed prior to participation in Youth Exchange or youth program activities. (An example of the *Youth Volunteer Affidavit* form can be found in *Appendix A*.) District 6440 will maintain all records of criminal background checks, waivers, and screening for adults working with minors for a minimum time period of five years.

All volunteers interested in participating in the District 6440 Youth Exchange or a youth related program must:

- Complete a *Youth Volunteer Affidavit* form and authorize the district to conduct a criminal background check (subject to local laws and practices). Host family exceptions are noted in the following section.
- Undergo personal interviews and reference checks. The District Governor will interview and complete reference checks on the District Youth Exchange Committee Chair and chairs for other youth related programs. The District Youth Exchange Committee Chair will interview and complete reference checks on all volunteers asked to serve on the District Youth Exchange Committee. The chairs of the other programs must examine their respective committee members. Each Club must conduct screening of each volunteer at the local level including personal interviews and reference checks by a trained club member.
- Meet RI and district eligibility requirements for working with students. RI requires that any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment be prohibited from working with youth in a



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Rotary context. If an individual is accused of sexual abuse or harassment, and the investigation into the claim is inconclusive, then, for the safety of youth participants and the protection of the accused, additional safeguards must be put in place to assure the protection of any youth with whom the individual may have future contact. A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated to participate in youth programs. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his or her former position.

- Understand and comply with RI and District guidelines for the Youth Exchange program.

Host families must meet the following selection and screening requirements, in addition to those listed above.

- Host families must undergo a comprehensive verbal interview that determines their suitability for hosting exchange students. This should include:
 - Demonstrated commitment to the safety and security of students.
 - Motivation for hosting a student is consistent with Rotary ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange.
 - Financial ability to provide adequate accommodations (room and board) for the student.
 - Aptitude for providing appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student's well being.
- Host families must complete a written application with written verified references.
- Home visits must be conducted for each family and should include monthly announced and unannounced visits, both at application and during the placement. In-home interview visits must be conducted annually, even for repeat host families. A log of all visits must be maintained and sent for filing to the District Program Coordinator at the conclusion of the student's stay with each host family.
- Criminal background checks should be completed on any overnight host family that has volunteered in advance for a Rotary-sponsored or Rotarian-guided activity. A criminal background check is not required for a student overnight activity authorized by their current host family that is requested by the student and is not related to a Rotary-sponsored or Rotarian-guided activity.
- When there are two (2) or more students who will be lodged in the same residence related to an overnight activity that is Rotary-sponsored or Rotarian-guided, a criminal background check is not required on that overnight host family, although it remains recommended.

Rotarian Youth Exchange Officers and Counselors must meet the criteria for *All Volunteers*, as well as the following:

- YEO's and Counselors must not be a member of the student's host family. However, a YEO may serve as a short-term host when problems encountered with the assigned host family require removal of the student from their house. A student in such an emergency situation may reside with the YEO up to one week to allow time to facilitate a resolution to the problem and arrange a new host family. Clubs must strive to always provide a volunteer protector and buffer between the host family and the student.



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- YEO's and Counselors must attend annual training in responding to any problems or concerns which may arise during the exchange, which may include instances of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment.
- Counselors should not be close friends or relatives of the YEO to prevent cover-ups of abuse by either person.

The District Youth Protection Officer (YPO) must meet the criteria for *All Volunteers*, as well as the following:

- The YPO must not be a YEO, Counselor or host family, nor have any responsibility for a youth program within any Club within the District.
- The YPO does not have to be a Rotarian.
- The YPO may serve as a member of the District Youth Exchange Committee, acting as abuse policy trainer and District-wide contact for all youth abuse incidents.
- The YPO will be appointed by the District Governor on an annual basis with concurrence for approval or rejection by the District Youth Exchange Committee Chair.
- The YPO can be a shared position with partner Districts in Youth Exchange.

5. Student Selection and Screening

All students interested in participating in a District 6440 Youth Exchange or youth related program must:

- Complete a written application and be interviewed for their suitability for participation in the youth related program.
- Attend and participate in all district orientation and training sessions for that program.

All parents or legal guardians of students interested in participating in the District 6440 Youth Exchange or other youth related programs must:

- Be interviewed to determine the student's suitability for participation in the related program.

Clubs interested in participating in a District 6440 Youth Exchange or youth related program must meet the following guidelines:

A- Long-term Youth Exchange Program:

- Clubs should use the District Preliminary Outbound Student Application to screen Outbound candidates. This will allow the district to institute the full application process with qualified candidates only.
- The District will not accept Outbound Student applicants for August departure if the student cannot attend the winter and spring training sessions, and also will not accept Outbound Student applicants for January departure if the student cannot attend the fall training session, so that all candidates will attend vital orientation sessions.

B- Short-term Exchange Program

- STEP – Outbound students on an exchange for 3-6 months will attend school in their host country. The application and interview process will be similar to the long-term program as developed and directed by the District Short-term Committee. Participants and their



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parents must attend orientation seminar (s) as scheduled and provided/directed by that committee prior to any exchange departure.

- Summer Exchange- District student applicants are given an opportunity to be on a reciprocal exchange in another country for 3 to 4 weeks during the summer. The same application and interview process applies. District Short-term Committee personnel will provide training and orientation for any student and their parents prior to the departure of any student on an exchange regardless of the length of the exchange.

6. Training

District 6440 will provide abuse and harassment prevention training to all Youth Exchange program participants. The District Youth Exchange Program Chair or District Youth Protection Officer will be responsible to schedule and assure that training sessions are conducted.

District 6440 will:

- Adapt the *RI Abuse and Harassment Prevention Training Manual* to include relevant information on specific district guidelines, local customs, cultural issues, and legal requirements.
- A calendar for training is supplied annually to each club officer and student. YEO's and Counselors must attend the fall and winter seminars.
- Each host family must receive host family training before their hosting period begins. Training will be conducted by the respective District Committee personnel.
- Conduct specialized training sessions by the district Youth Protection Officer for the following Youth Exchange program participants:
 - District Governor
 - District Youth Exchange committee members
 - Club President and President-elects (at PETS training)
 - Rotarian YEO's and Counselors
 - Other Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in Youth Exchange activities, such as local tours or district events by the club YEO
 - Host families
 - Students (outbound and inbound)
 - Parents and legal guardians of students
 - Events chaperones
- Establish guidelines to ensure that at least one club member has been trained in the policy prior to arrival of an inbound student.
- Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance.
- The District Youth Protection Officer will assume youth abuse and harassment training responsibilities, conduct background checks on all Volunteers, store information as required and provide youth participants with the information necessary to make informed decisions.

7. Allegation Reporting Guidelines

District 6440 is committed to protecting the safety and well being of Youth Exchange students and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled in accord with the *Youth Exchange Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines*, found in *Appendix B*.



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8. Investigation Guidelines

District 6440 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will investigate each allegation thoroughly. The district will cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective services, and legal investigations, and will only conduct its own independent investigations such that it does not interfere with other investigations. Persons making allegations **MUST** inform the District YPO, YE Chair or District Governor as well as law enforcement authorities, if appropriate.

District 6440 will establish an internal investigation committee to review all reports of abuse. The committee will be comprised of the District Governor, Youth Exchange Program Chair, District Youth Protection Officer, one Rotarian from the involved Club and one additional non-Rotarian (both of which should be selected by the District Governor). No person involved in the allegation should serve on the committee and a substitute should be identified. In the essence of providing an unbiased and fair review, the genders of the committee should include at least one member of the opposite sex.

The District 6440 Youth Protection Officer should attempt to include local law enforcement personnel to train District leadership on local investigation and criminal prosecution procedures.

9. Other District 6440 Responsibilities

District 6440:

- Non-criminal offenses will be investigated by the District Youth Protection Officer. The District Youth Protection Officer will develop and maintain procedures for reporting, investigating, and proper handling of historic cases that law enforcement will not investigate.
- Requires that all inbound Youth Exchange students maintain health insurance. Long-term students are covered through CSRYE.
- The District Youth Protection Officer will develop and maintain a list of local services in the District (rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.) and provide each student with the list annually at the September training seminar.
- Will complete a student data request form for all participating Youth Exchange students and return it to RI one month before the beginning of the exchange.
- The District Youth Protection Officer will maintain a landline telephone number that will be used and identified only as the District 6440 Youth Protection Services Hotline. The number will be provided to all inbound and outbound Youth Exchange students. This hotline will be available to receive calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week and will be forwarded to another member of the YPO committee when the YPO goes out of town or becomes otherwise unavailable.
- Will follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites and usage of the Rotary marks.
- Will appoint and pay for an independent therapist or counselor to assist the student unless otherwise provided by insurance.
- The District Governor will report all criminal allegations, accidents, crimes, early returns, and death to RI within 72 hours of notification when allegations or incidents are reported to the District Governor.



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- The District Youth Exchange Chairs or other youth related program chairs will report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving their program students to the YPO and the Governor within 48 hours of notification when incidents are reported to the Chair. The Chair also has the responsibility to inform any respective multi-district group.
- Evaluate and review this policy and accompanying procedures on a regular basis, but at least annually. The District Youth Protection Officer will be assigned this task.
- Require a monthly report from each inbound and outbound student in the district that includes information on current hosts, feelings, concerns, ideas, and suggestions. The district Youth Exchange chair, inbound or outbound coordinators can then review the reports and assist students as needed.

10. Club Compliance

District 6440's Youth Exchange Chair and Youth Protection Officer will monitor and ensure that all participating clubs within the district comply with RI guidelines for abuse and harassment prevention. All clubs that wish to apply to the district for certification must provide the district with a copy of the following for review and approval:

- Copies of all materials produced in the club to promote and support the Youth Exchange program, including, but not limited to, promotional materials and brochures, applications, policies, Web site links, etc.
- List of services in area (rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services)
- Club member attendance at District-provided abuse and harassment prevention training program
- Participating clubs must agree to:
 - a. Complete and return a signed compliance statement that the club is operating their program in accordance with District 6440 and RI policy.
 - b. Submit criminal background check (as provided through the *Youth Volunteer Affidavit*) for all volunteers to the Youth Protection Officer prior to allowing a participant to have contact with the volunteer.
 - c. Conduct reference checks for all volunteers involved with the program, including, but not limited to adult full-time residents of host home, counselor, club chair, and all Rotarians and their spouses or partners with direct unsupervised contact. All volunteers must complete and sign the *Youth Volunteer Affidavit* as found in *Appendix A*.
 - d. Develop a comprehensive system for host family selection and screening that includes announced and unannounced home visits and interviews both prior to and during the placement.
 - e. YEO's must submit quarterly reports to the Inbound Coordinator to follow-up on evaluations of both students and host families.
 - f. Follow the *Youth Exchange Abuse and Harassment Reporting Guidelines* found in *Appendix B*. Report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment to the assigned District leadership immediately for investigation and then to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.



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- g. Prohibit direct placement of exchange students outside of the CSRYE, STEP or Summer Exchange, and District 6440 Youth Exchange program structure (e.g. club to club exchanges).
- h. No short-term exchange will be made without the prior written approval of the corresponding District YEO responsible for such exchanges.
- i. Set procedures for removal of a student from the host family and identify back-up temporary housing available in advance.
- j. Develop contingency plans for hosting that include pre-screened and available back-up families.
- k. Ensure that all hosting is voluntary. Parents of long-term outbound students and club members must not be required to host students. However, parents of a student participating in a reciprocal Summer Exchange will required to be a host family as a provision of that program.
- l. Ensure that long-term exchange students have at least two and not more than four successive host families to cover the eleven month long-term period.
- m. Provide each student with a comprehensive local services list.
- n. Ensure that the host YEO or Counselor for each student is not a member of the student's host family.
- o. Ensure that the host YEO and Counselor is trained in responding to any problems or concerns that may arise during the exchange, including the prevention of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse or harassment.
- p. Require attendance at district mandatory training seminars on sexual abuse and harassment prevention for host families, outbound students, inbound students, and their parents or legal guardians.
- q. Provide the names and contact information of at least three people to contact for assistance with any issues or problems to all Youth Exchange students. These people must include both males and females, not related to each other, and individuals independent of the host family and club counselor. Recommended that contact information for the District Youth Exchange Chair, Inbound Coordinator and Youth Protection Officer be provided as part of this information.
- r. Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites and usage of the Rotary Marks.
- s. Report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to the respective district Youth Exchange Chair immediately.
- t. Conduct interviews of all applicants and applicants' parents or legal guardians.
- u. Club Youth Exchange committee members should be trained on the policy guidelines by the club YEO.

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Appendix A

Youth Volunteer Affidavit

This form must be completed by all adults, age 18 or older, who are identified as a "Volunteer" under the Rotary District 6440 Youth Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy, including all adults living within a host family household.

District 6440 is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and any other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.

PERSONAL INFORMATION – Please print clearly

FULL LEGAL NAME: _____
Last First Middle

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Sex: M F

Home Phone: (____) _____ Email: _____

Business Phone: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Social Security Number: _____

Rotary Position applied for: _____

I am a member of the Rotary club of _____ Year joined: _____

Have you held a Youth Program position in the past? Yes No If yes, what position, program, and when?

PERSONAL REFERENCES (not relatives and not more than one former or current Rotarian)

1. Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Telephone: _____
Relationship: _____

2. Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Telephone: _____
Relationship: _____

3. Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Telephone: _____
Relationship: _____

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Appendix A

QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

What qualifications and/or training do you have relevant to Rotary Youth Programs or this position? Please describe in full.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

1. Have you ever been convicted of or plead guilty to any crime(s)? Yes No
2. Have you ever been subject to any court order involving any sexual, physical or verbal abuse including but not limited to any domestic violence or civil harassment injunction or protective order? Yes No

If yes, describe in full. Also indicate date(s) of crime(s) and in which country and state each took place. (Attach a separate sheet if needed)

WAIVER/CONSENT/RELEASE

I certify that all of the statements in this affidavit, and in any attachments hereto, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I also certify that I have not withheld any information that would affect this affidavit unfavorably, if disclosed. I understand that any omission of facts or misrepresentation will result in my elimination from consideration for any volunteer position with the District 6440 Youth program or its affiliates.

I hereby give my permission for District 6440 to investigate, verify and obtain information given in this affidavit, including searches of law enforcement and published records (including driving records and criminal background checks), contact with former employers and reference interviews. I understand that this information will be used, in part, to determine my eligibility for a volunteer position with the District 6440 Youth program. I also understand that as long as I remain a volunteer here, the criminal history records check may be repeated at any time. I understand that I will have an opportunity to review the criminal history and that there is a procedure available for clarification, if I dispute the record as received.

I specifically acknowledge that the District 6440 Youth program or its affiliates will inquire about, and I authorize them to verify, my prior employment, experience, personal references, background, including criminal background checks which may contain arrest and conviction data. I waive any right to assert that such an investigation or request constitutes an invasion of my privacy. I recognize that such inquiries are in the interest of all persons involved the District 6440 Youth program, and I fully consent to such investigations.

IN CONSIDERATION of my acceptance and participation in a Rotary Youth program, I, to the full extent permitted by law, hereby release and agree to save, hold harmless and indemnify, all members, officers, directors, committee members and employees of the participating Rotary Clubs and Districts, and of Rotary International ("Indemnitees"), from any or all liability for any loss, property damage, personal injury or death, including any such liability which may arise out of the negligence of any of the Indemnitees, which may be suffered or claimed by me as a result of an investigation of my background in connection with this affidavit.

I further agree to conform to the rules, regulations, guidelines and policies of Rotary International, the District 6440 Youth program and its affiliates, and understand that my service can be modified or terminated, with or without notice or cause, at any time, at the option of either the District 6440 Youth program or its affiliates, or at my option. I understand

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and agree that the District 6440 Youth program or its affiliates may, in their sole discretion, decline to accept my application for volunteer services with or without cause.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE AFFIDAVIT, WAIVER, CONSENT AND RELEASE, AND THAT I SIGN THIS FORM VOLUNTARILY.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please Print Name: _____

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Allegation Reporting Guidelines

Appendix B

Introduction

The most powerful force in the promotion of international understanding and peace is exposure to different cultures. Youth Exchange provides thousands of young people with the opportunity to meet people from other lands and to experience their cultures.

A Youth Exchange student will spend a year, or perhaps just an extended period of time, living with a host family in a country other than their own. Rotarians, their families, and non-Rotarian volunteers are expected to use their best efforts to safeguard the welfare of and prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse or harassment of every student with whom they come into contact.

Rotary International is committed to protecting the safety and well being of Youth Exchange students and students involved with other sponsored youth programs, and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled within the following guidelines. The safety and well-being of students should always be the first priority.

Definitions

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse refers to engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a student, or forcing or encouraging a student to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts alone or with another person of any age, of the same sex or the opposite sex.

Additional examples of sexual abuse could include, but are not limited to:

- Non-touching offenses
- Indecent exposure
- Exposing a child to sexual or pornographic material.

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment refers to sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is a technique used by sexual predators to desensitize or “groom” their victims.

Examples of sexual harassment could include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual advances
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one’s sex life, and comments about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures or drawings
- Sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact such as brushing or touching, obscene language or gestures and suggestive or insulting comments

Is it Abuse or is it Harassment?

Whether the alleged conduct amounts to sexual abuse or sexual harassment is not to be determined by the adult to whom allegations are made. After ensuring the safety of the student, all allegations should be immediately reported to or harassment seriously and will investigate each allegation thoroughly. The district will cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective services, and legal investigations, and will only conduct its own independent investigations such that it does not interfere with other investigations.

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Allegation Reporting Guidelines

For use by all adults to whom a student reports an incident of abuse or harassment

Any adult to whom a student reports an incident of sexual abuse or harassment is responsible for following these Allegation Reporting Guidelines.

1. Report from Student

- a. Listen attentively and stay calm. Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse. It is appropriate to listen and be encouraging. Do not express shock, horror or disbelief.
- b. Assure privacy but not confidentiality. Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse/harassment to make it stop and to ensure that it doesn't happen to other students.
- c. Get the facts, but don't interrogate. Ask the student questions that establish what was done and who did it. Reassure the student that s/he did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking 'why' questions. Remember your responsibility is to present the student's story to the proper authorities.
- d. Be non-judgmental and reassure the student. Do not be critical of anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It is especially important not to blame or criticize the student. Assure the student that the situation was not their fault and that they were brave and mature to come to you.
- e. Record. Keep a written record of the conversation with the student as soon after the report as you can, including the date and time of the conversation. Use the student's words, and record only what has been told to you.

2. Protect the Student

Ensure the safety and well-being of the student. Immediately remove the student from the situation and all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. Give reassurance that this is for the student's own safety and is not a punishment. Also, assure the student that they will not be returned home due to the reporting of an abuse allegation.

3. Report to Appropriate Law Enforcement Authorities

Immediately report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment to the district leadership first and then appropriate law enforcement authorities for investigation. In District 6440, the appropriate law enforcement office is the jurisdictional police authority. In most situations, the first Rotary contact should be the Club YEO who has responsibility for seeking the advice of and interacting with the District Chair and YPO who will determine the appropriate agencies to involve for investigation. If the allegation involves the conduct of the Club YEO or Rotarian counselor, the District Youth Exchange Chair or YPO should be contacted. All allegations must be reported to RI within 72 hours; the person responsible for doing so is the District Governor.

District 6440 will cooperate with any police or legal investigations. All adult volunteers participating in the program must be aware of the following requirements:

- a. All allegations of and/or suspected incidents of sexual abuse as reported to you as a volunteer should be communicated to the YPO and District Chair as soon as can be accomplished, whether or not the incident was or will be reported to local law enforcement authorities.

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- b. Any victim of a verified case of alleged physical or sexual abuse should immediately be encouraged to report the incident to local law enforcement authorities, in addition to reporting such incident to the YPO and District Chair.

4. Maintain Confidentiality

Do not discuss the incident with any others than those required by the guidelines. Care must be taken to protect the rights of both the victim and the accused during the investigation. District 6440 maintains the need for privacy (as distinct from confidentiality) of any accused person. The YPO and District Chair should maintain case confidentiality and not discuss any alleged and/or reported incidents or matters outside of District leadership and the President from the affected Club. District leadership should strive to maintain confidentiality and privacy for the individuals involved in any incident. The YPO will maintain and retain a file on each reported incident.

5. Do Not Challenge the Alleged Offender

The adult to whom the student reports an incidence must not be allowed contact the alleged offender. In cases of abuse, interrogation must be left entirely to law enforcement authorities. In cases of non-criminal harassment, the District Youth Protection Officer is responsible for investigating, and will be in contact with the alleged offender after the student has been safeguarded from the alleged abuser.

6. Follow-Up

After reporting allegations to the Club YEO or counselor, or district Youth Exchange Chair or YPO, follow up to make sure steps are being taken to address the situation. Specifically, the Youth Protection Officer will conduct an independent and thorough investigation into any claims of sexual abuse or harassment after the student has been safeguarded from the alleged abuser. This does not mean removed from their host family or host club necessarily, just away from the source of abuse. Any adult against whom an allegation of sexual abuse or harassment is made will be removed from all contact with youth in the program until the matter is resolved. Avoid gossip and blame.

Post Report Procedures

For Use by Rotary Club YEO'S, Counselors, YPO, and District Youth Exchange Chairs...

The student's YEO or Rotarian counselor and the youth related program chair are responsible for ensuring that the following steps are taken immediately following an abuse allegation is reported.

1. The adult to whom the student reports the abuse should follow the Allegation Reporting Guidelines.
2. Confirm that the student has been removed from the situation immediately and all contact with alleged abuser or harasser.
3. Contact appropriate law enforcement agency immediately (if not already done). If law enforcement agencies will not investigate, the district Youth Exchange chair or YPO should coordinate an independent investigation into the allegations.
4. Ensure the student receives immediate support services.
5. Offer the student an independent, non-Rotarian counselor to represent the interests of the student. Ask social services or law enforcement to recommend someone who is not a Rotarian or in any way involved with the Youth Exchange or respective sponsored youth program.
6. Contact the student's parents or legal guardian. If away from home, provide the student with the option of either staying in country or returning home.

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7. Remove alleged abuser or harasser from all contact with the specific student and other youth in the RYE program while investigations are conducted.
8. Cooperate with the police or legal investigation.
9. The district Chair must notify the District Governor within 48 hours of an alleged abuse situation within the district. The district governor then must inform Rotary International of the allegation within 48 hours, and provide follow-up reports of steps taken, the outcome of all investigations, and resulting actions. The district Youth Exchange chair must inform the respective multi-district group of the same in the same time frame.

Post Allegation Report Guidelines

Responding to the Needs of the Student

There will need to be a cohesive and managed team approach to supporting the student after an allegation report. The student is likely to feel embarrassed, confused, and may become withdrawn and appear to be avoiding members of the host family or club. After a report of harassment or abuse, students may or may not want to remain on their exchange. If they do, they may or may not want to continue their relationship with their hosting Rotary club depending on the circumstances. In some cases, a student may wish to remain in country, but change to a different host club.

It may be difficult for club members and host families to understand how the student is feeling, but it would be helpful for the student to know that the club remains a support for them. Club members and host families may experience ambiguity toward their roles and may feel unclear regarding their boundaries. However they need to do whatever is necessary to reassure the student of their support at all times.

Appropriate Response for Addressing Issues within the Rotary Club for Allegations Made Against Rotarians or Non-Rotarians

When addressing an allegation of abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of the students. Club members should not speculate, attempt to cover up, make editorial comments, or offer personal opinions that could potentially hinder any police or criminal investigations. Club members should be cautioned about speculating or commenting on the matter during the investigations.

Comments made about alleged victims in support of alleged abusers do not support our statement of conduct or Rotary ideals. Comments made against an alleged abuser could lead to a slander or libel claim filed against Rotarians or clubs by the alleged abuser.

Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

Rotary International is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.

Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2002