

Roundtable Hot Topic

Youth Protection

Scouting is safer than ever before. The BSA has adopted some of the strongest youth protection rules found in any youth serving organization. A safe program helps the BSA recruit and retain scouts and families. 2023 has brought additional youth protection updates and as adult leaders it is our responsibility to our youth and the leaders who serve them to know and understand those changes.

There are a lot of questions about youth protection and the updates effective September 1, 2023. Let's look at just a few:

Do Lions and Tiger Den meetings require two-deep leadership since adult partners are present? Yes. Adult partners are not always registered leaders in the unit, and all dens must have two registered leaders present at all times.

Does a Cub Scout parent or legal guardian have to be a registered leader to participate in a Cub Scout overnight program with their own child/ward? No. A parent or legal guardian can attend with their own child, however they cannot serve as part of the unit or den two deep leadership. In other words, they cannot be left in charge of other scouts unless it is their child/ward. Adults 18 and older attending a Cub Scout OVERNIGHT event/activity who are not the parent or legal guardian of a Scout in attendance must be registered in an adult fee required position. All adults must review the "How to Protect your Children from Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide" that can be found in the front of each Cub Scout Handbook.



Our Scouts BSA boy troop and our Scouts BSA girl troop are linked and would like to host a joint outing or activity. Do we have to provide adult leadership from each troop? Yes. Each troop is a separate unit, and therefore, each troop/unit must provide its own two-deep leadership, meeting the leadership requirements outlined in Scouting's Barriers to Abuse. Two registered adult leaders 21 years of age or over are required at all Scouting activities, including all meetings. For the girl troop, there must be at least one registered female adult leader 21 years of age or over registered with the troop and one must be present for any activity involving female youth or female program participants aged 18-21.

Can I put a 17-year-old youth and a 13-year-old youth in the same tent at summer camp?

No. BSA guidelines state that youth sharing tents must be no more than 2 years apart in age. Youth and adults must tent separately. Anyone 18 years of age or older is considered an adult at every program level.

If I suspect abuse, do I need to report it? Yes. All-registered leaders are considered mandatory reporters and are expected to report suspected abuse.

Can buddy pairs be co-ed in any of Scouting's programs? No. Buddy pairs may only be single gender, not coed and can only be made between youth members. Reminder, the buddy system must be used at all times. Adult program participants cannot buddy with youth members, even if they are registered in the same program.

The "72 hour rule" is still okay right? No. All adults 18 and older attending a Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scout or Exploring OVERNIGHT event/activity must be currently registered as an adult leader.

For the most up-to-date information always use the guide to safe scouting which is updated in to reflect the most recent changes.

<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/>

Additional Resources:

For more questions and answers: <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/yp-faqs/>

Youth Protection Training <https://www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/>

Scouting's Barriers to Abuse

<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/gss01/#:~:text=Youth%20sharing%20tents%20must%20be,Spouses%20may%20share%20tents.>

S.A.F.E. Checklist <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/safe/>