



**SCOUTS**<sup>®</sup>  
South Africa

# Child Protection Policy

Revision Date: October 2013

“There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.”

Nelson Mandela - Patron SCOUTS South Africa

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## **Preamble**

Safeguarding the welfare of children and young people ought not to be seen by members of SCOUTS South Africa as an optional and additional activity, but should become an integral part of the policy and practices of us all.

Child protection is the responsibility of each and every leader, adult and in effect of every individual member. For the purpose of this document adult leader will be defined as any adult who has access to the youth through activities of SCOUTS South Africa. That being said, every person has the responsibility to respect children and young people, to be aware of the potential for abuse, to be able to recognise it and take appropriate action.

Dealing with child abuse is rarely straightforward and situations are often not clear-cut. That is why SCOUTS South Africa has developed this child protection policy to be integrated in its practices.

This policy strives to protect children and young people, but also those who work with them and are delegated responsibility for them. It should act as a guide in helping members create a safe environment for children and young people, act appropriately and correctly if action is required and protect themselves against allegations of improper behaviour.

## **Revision Approval**

This revision of the Child Protection Policy was approved for publication at the SSA Executive Committee Meeting held on 18 November 2013 by the committee comprising:

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## **1. SSA Child Protection Objective**

It is the policy and practice of SCOUTS South Africa to uphold a child protection objective and hence to safeguard the welfare of all members by protecting them from physical, sexual, verbal or emotional harm, or the neglect that allows such harm to occur.

Accordingly, SCOUTS South Africa is committed to:

- recognising the culture, gender and religious diversity of South Africa's youth;
- taking into account in all its considerations and activities the interests and well-being of young people;
- respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of the young people with whom it is working;
- taking all reasonable practical steps to protect them from physical, sexual and neglect and emotional abuse; and
- ensuring the welfare of young people and their protection within a relationship of trust; in accordance with, and within the principles of South African Law and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

## **2. Aims**

The aims of the SSA Child Protection Policy are to:

- provide clear guidelines to prevent harm;
- provide clear guidelines to follow in the event of an accusation or suspicion of abuse; and
- ensure that this policy is accessible and can realistically be implemented.

## **3. Framework**

Our primary aim is to ensure that our youth members are protected from harm.

SCOUTS South Africa also helps its adult members to protect the young people in their care.

SCOUTS South Africa also subscribes to the South African legislature concerning children, being The Children's Act and all its Amendments. Our policy complies with the legislations and directives as described therein.

SCOUTS South Africa operates within a social context. We operate in collaboration with other organisations and institutions that aid in preventing abuse, but also in reporting and handling abuse and allegations of abuse.

The Children's Act 38 of 2005 and amendments of 2008 require that any child abuse or reasonable suspicion of child abuse must be reported. Failure to do so can lead to prosecution of the person failing to report.

A person reporting child abuse under the Children's Act may report to one of three structures:

- South African Police Services
- The Department of Social Development
- A designated child protection organisation – such as Child Welfare or Childline.

Their first responsibility is to secure the safety of the child and therefore may refer to other services in order to provide for this.

If the asserted or suspected offence is a sexual offence against a child, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 requires an immediate report to the police.

Report abuse: [childprotect@saps.org.za](mailto:childprotect@saps.org.za), Crime stop: 08600 10111, FCS HQ: 012 393 2363/2 or 012 393 23 59 or FCS National cell numbers: 082809 21 12 or 082 850 9674 or at your local police station. The Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Unit (FCS) of the South African Police Service may then involve other agencies, such as social services and other child protection organisations such as Rape Wise or Childline. You are also entitled, but not required to report the matter to Childline who will assist in following up with the police investigation.

If the offence relates to child pornography, the Films and Publications Act 65 of 1996 requires a report to the police.

SCOUTS South Africa will not conduct investigations, but will co-operate with the proper authorities. SSA will provide necessary support to members and the community.

The section entitled *Procedures* sets out the procedures to be followed in the event of abuse being reported.

The Child Protection Policy applies throughout all SCOUTS South Africa activities and all Scouting events such as meetings, camps, outings, training courses, SANJAMB, and events such as the National Senior Scout Adventure. It also applies to South African Scouts travelling internationally, and to international Scouts – and/or third parties – visiting and partaking in Scouting Activities or Programmes in South Africa.

Concerning child protection measures when appointing staff and volunteers we refer to the Protocols and Procedures in this policy.

To ensure a thorough and objective process the investigations into abuse are conducted by relevant third party authorities and the reporting procedure is supervised by a National Child Protection Coordinator (NCPC). This position is held by the Chief Commissioner. This post can be held for the duration of her/his term as Chief Commissioner.

## 4. The Rights of the Child

As mentioned above, the SCOUTS South Africa Child Protection policy takes into account and adheres to the children's rights as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>1</sup> and the South African Legislation summarised in the Children's Act 38 of 2005 and all its Amendments up to this present day. The Children's Act includes the rights of all children in our country as stated in the Bill of Rights in South Africa's Constitution.

In summary the rights and responsibility of the child are:

- I have the right not to be hurt.
- I have the right to be protected from physical, sexual and emotional harm.
- I have the right to speak and to be taken seriously, and I have the responsibility to tell the truth.
- I have the right to be treated equally no matter my race, gender, language or religion, and I have the responsibility to treat others equally.
- I have the right to privacy, and the responsibility to respect the privacy of others.
- I have the right to be protected from cigarettes, alcohol and drugs, and I should not use substances that will harm me.
- I have the right to proper care and the responsibility to be the best person that I can be.

A more detailed description of these rights can be found in Annexed ***Guidelines: The Rights of the Child***.

## 5. Incident procedure

All allegations or suspicions of abuse - no matter how insignificant they might seem to be or when they occur - must be referred to the Regional Commissioner. The case must be cc-ed to the Chief Commissioner of SCOUTS South Africa immediately and directly on receipt of the reported case. Nothing must be withheld or filtered. At all times the young person's welfare should be paramount.

Swift reporting will enable the correct authorities to give advice and take appropriate action.

The Regional Commissioner must follow the procedure below. These procedures must be followed to fulfil our legal as well as our moral responsibilities.

SSA encourages its members to report abuse to Childline, which specialises in dealing with children in distress. Childline will assist with the procedure as well as reporting the case to the Police.

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<sup>1</sup> CRC in addendum

**Procedure:**

<b>Steps to be taken by the Volunteer on Suspicion or Claim of Abuse of a Youth Member</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsible Person</b>
<p><b>1. Prepare a written report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Write down notes straight after / during the conversation (dates, times, facts, observations, verbatim speech)</li> <li>b) Record young person's (victim) name, address and contact number</li> <li>c) Record name, address and contact numbers of the young person's (alleged victim) parent(s) / legal guardian(s)</li> </ul>	<b>In 12 hrs of receiving report</b>	<b>Volunteer to whom report is made</b>
<p><b>2. Reported to Regional Commissioner with copy to SSA CC)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Inform the Regional Commissioner and copy the District Commissioner in the notification of the allegation</li> <li>b) Report to Childline or the Police in the event of alleged or suspect sexual Abuse</li> <li>c) Follow-up with Childline or the Police to ensure action after the case was reported to the Police or the police</li> </ul>	<b>In 24 hrs of receiving report</b>	<p><b>Volunteer to whom report is made</b></p> <p><b>Regional Commissioner</b></p>
<p><b>3. Reported to SSA NCPC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Monitor and follow up with the Regional Commissioner and relevant authorities</li> <li>b) Inform SSA CEO</li> </ul>	<b>In 48 hrs of receiving report</b>	<b>Chief Commissioner</b>

## **5.1. Roles of key individuals**

Person the child discloses to:

- Listen sympathetically;
- Write report, using the child's own words as far as possible;
- Contact Regional Commissioner and cc the Chief Commissioner of SCOUTS South Africa, the National Child Protection Coordinator, immediately;
- Must NOT investigate – must REFER;
- Contact Childline or the Police in the event of alleged or suspected sexual abuse;
- Must ensure the child is aware that by reporting the case they will not be expelled from or discriminated against in any way by SSA, even if threats of that kind were made by the suspected perpetrator.

### **5.1.1. Regional Commissioner:**

- Report to SCOUTS South Africa's Chief Commissioner at National Office in their role as the National Child Protection Coordinator;
- The Regional Commissioner will discuss the allegations/report with the person reporting the alleged abuse and Childline;
- The Regional Commissioner will ensure that all legal obligations in respect of reporting the matter to Childline or the police have been complied with.
- Suspension of the suspected perpetrator is at the discretion of the Regional Commissioner. Suspension is appropriate for allegations of offences denoted as "class C" in the Grievance and Disciplinary procedures and can be applicable to all other suspected cases of abuse as listed above;
- If reasonable grounds exist of suspected child abuse, the allegation must be reported to the appropriate external authorities (Childline or Police) for further investigation.

### **5.1.2. National Child Protection Coordinator:**

- Monitor the protocols and processes followed and advise the Regional Commissioner/CEO of SCOUTS South Africa;
- Keep records;
- Ensure that the National Schools Channel Coordinator liaise with the Department of Education in collaboration with the CEO of SCOUTS South Africa in cases involving in-school Scouting.

## **6. Responsibilities of adults within the Child Protection Policy**

All adults within Scouting are responsible for the operation of the SSA Child Protection Policy. It is the responsibility of adults to ensure that:

- their behaviour is appropriate at all times;
- they observe the rules established for the safety and security of young people;
- they follow the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse;
- they recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed; and



- in every respect, the relationships they form with the young people under their care are appropriate.

## 7. What constitutes abuse?

- **Physical abuse**  
Any physical hurt or injury, which is inflicted deliberately, or is the result of deliberate neglect.
- **Emotional abuse**  
The negative effect on the emotional development of the child caused by emotional ill treatment and/or emotional neglect. This class of abuse includes abuse via electronic and social media.
- **Verbal abuse**  
Excessive shouting or swearing at or in front of children, threats, attacks on a child's self-esteem, teasing, insults or racial taunts.
- **Sexual abuse**  
Involving or exposing a child to any sexual activity or pornographic material, even with the child's consent and/or request. This includes exposure and involvement via electronic or social media.
- **Neglect**  
Neglect occurs when care-giving adults fail to meet the child's/youth's essential needs and withhold life necessities from a child/youth.

A detailed description of each of these abuses is described in the annexed **Guidelines: What constitutes abuse.**

## 8. Protocols

As a youth Movement we have the responsibility to ensure that adults and enthusiastic volunteers have the tools and knowledge to put into practice this policy. Children and young people will trust and look up to the adults in charge. Therefore this child protection policy needs to be made accessible to all children, young people and their parents in order for them to be informed and our adult members need to receive the adequate training to comprehend their roles, boundaries and take their child protection responsibilities seriously.

### 8.1. Recruitment

All Adults wishing to become members must undergo appropriate screening by completing in full the application form for adult membership. This form should include disclosure of any criminal conviction or allegation of offences relating to The Children's Act 38 of 2005, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 or involving children in South Africa or another country.

In accordance with The Children's Act 38 of 2005 all people working with children need to be vetted against the National Child Protection Register. Adults joining the Movement

should consent and give full cooperation to SCOUTS South Africa to submit an application on their behalf or should provide SCOUTS South Africa with such documentation.

All appointments are in line with the South African labour laws and SCOUTS South Africa's Volunteer Adults Resource Policy subsection Admissions and the SCOUTS South Africa Organisational Rules subsection Warrants. All appointments are subject to a probationary period.

## **8.2. Training Adults**

Child protection and this Child Protection Policy should be included in all levels of adult and youth leader-training courses.

Child protection material should be provided to all adult leaders within SCOUTS South Africa.

Child protection training and refresher courses should be provided to leaders who have already completed training as adult leaders.

### **8.2.1. Yellow Card**

SSA National Office will produce Yellow cards as part of the retail section which gives guidelines to adults to prevent opportunities for abuse or allegations of abuse.

## **8.3. Training Cubs and Scouts**

Appropriate child protection training should be provided as part of the Cub and Scout advancement programme and in Patrol Leader training including PLTU.

### **8.3.1. Green Card:**

SSA National Office will produce Green cards as part of the retail section which gives the rights and responsibilities of the child.

## **9. Anti - peer victimisation/bullying**

### **9.1. Peer victimisation/bullying**

SCOUTS South Africa treats bullying as a separate form of abuse and considers this to be between peers, so between members under the age of 18 years old.

Bullying is a deliberate act of aggression or manipulation by one or more people against another person or people. It is a form of violence where a person is exposed, either once off or repeatedly and over time, to negative actions and/or verbal abuse and describes a form of harassment perpetrated by an abuser being in a physical or social superior power position. SCOUTS South Africa considers bullying from an adult to a youth immediately as a form of abuse.

The annexed **Guidelines: Peer victimisation and bullying** deals with the types of bullying as well as the procedures to address it.

## **10. Abuse through mobile and digital technology**

The usage of electronic communication in South Africa has doubled over the last few years. Social networking has become an intricate part of children's lives in South Africa. Parents, SSA offices, Commissioners, Scouters and members are using social media and the internet as an effective communication tool. There are many benefits of social media and mobile technology and the usage thereof, however the dangers need to be acknowledged and prevented.

More detailed can be read in the annexed ***Guideline: Abuse through mobile and technology.***

## **11. Responsibilities**

The following individuals carry a responsibility for Child protection of our members. Each role is described in appendices with the same name:

- National Child Protection Coordinator
- Regional Commissioners
- CEO
- Staff, Adult Volunteers and Adult leaders
- Parents
- Youths under the age of 18 years old

## **12. References**

- Previous South African Scout Association Child Protection Policy (2004)
- Boy Scouts of America Youth Protection Training Manual
- Child Protection Toolkit: joint project of the WSB – European Regional Office and the Europe Region WAGGGS
- Children's Act no 34 of 2005 as amended
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007

## **Appendix: Child Protection Framework**

Each week thousands of children take part in South African Scouting activities. Their participation varies from games at the meetings to activities in the villages involving other community members, camps, fundraising activities, service projects, patrol activities, - the list is endless. While most enjoy them in safety, a small number of members are at Risk of abuse or harm. United Nation studies suggest that the majority of the world's population once were or continuously are facing violent situations. In most cases violence is afflicted on the young person by a person of confidence.

SCOUTS South Africa has a very varied membership. We have a broad age group of people with their own religion, socio-economic backgrounds, cultures, characters and experiences. Some members will fit in naturally; others might be shy and less confident. It's important that every one finds their space within our Movement and feels accepted, safe and comfortable. In order for this to be achieved SCOUTS South Africa strives to create the best conditions and environments possible for a young person and child to develop and thrive and for an adult to support them in doing so.

Our primary aim is to ensure that our young members are protected from harm. Children and young people have equal status with adults as being members of the Scouting Movement. That being said, children and young people are the most vulnerable as they do not have the same understanding, experience and tools as adults to identify what is right or wrong and to act or react accordingly. This means that special attention is given to ensure that their freedom and rights are secured and respected. Therefore this policy not only includes a chapter on peer to peer victimisation and peer pressure, but also gives special attention to instructing and supporting the adults who have the responsibility of care for the children and young members.

That being said, the policy covers the protection of children and young people but simultaneously also acknowledges the rights of our adult members and provides procedures to protect adults themselves against allegations of improper behaviour.

The United Nations identified a set of minimum standards in protecting children and young people's rights listed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UN considers children to be in the age range 0 to 18 years old. The SCOUTS South Africa Child Protection Policy acknowledges and underlines these minimum standards as described in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## **Guideline: What constitutes abuse?**

The problem of child abuse has become one of the most significant social problems in South Africa. Adults within the Movement need to be vigilant that essentially child abuse occurs when the behaviour of someone in a position of greater power than the child/youth causes harm. Abuse can occur in during physical activities within Scouting but also online and via telecommunication. All bullying from adult to child/youth under 18 years old will automatically be considered abuse. When abuse is observed, proper protocol and procedures as outlined in this policy must be observed and followed. Different procedures apply for bullying between minors.

By definition child abuse is harm to a child which occurs immediately or through accumulated affects over a period of time. SCOUTS South Africa defined the following forms of child abuse as:

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is when adults/peers deliberately inflict bodily harm, physical pain and or injuries on a youth or, knowingly, do not prevent them from being physically abused. This includes hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning.

Giving a child/youth poisonous and/or illegal substances or age inappropriate substances can be considered physical abuse. This includes alcohol, cigarettes, medication and drugs. However, it excludes section 0 medication provided the situation requires the giving thereof to a child/youth to provide physical relief from pain and it also excludes prescription medication provided to the Scouter by the parent or guardian to issue to the child/youth as in loco parentis.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual Abuse is any sexual activity between a child/youth and an adult or between children/youths where there is an unequal distribution of power such as when one/the perpetrator is significantly older or larger than the other/victim.

Sexual Abuse also includes involving or exposing a child to any sexual activity, with or without the usage of modern technology such as the internet, or mobile phones, to any situation where the child is used for the sexual stimulation and gratification of the perpetrator and/or exposing the child/youth to pornographic material.

SCOUTS South Africa operates within the framework of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 with regards to Sexual Abuse.

However, when it comes to the clause concerning the legal age for sexual consent, SCOUTS South Africa makes it clear that within the organisation and the Movement's activities as

a whole, we do not condone sexual engagement between/with people younger than 18 years old.

The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 (the Sexual Offences Act) further entails (summary):

- The definition of rape applies to all forms of sexual penetration without consent, irrespective of gender. This means that the definition of rape now includes all forms of sexual penetration without consent and includes vaginal, oral or anal sex. If a suspect penetrated a victim with a stick for example, this would now also be deemed rape. Additionally this means that men and boys can also be victims of rape and women can be charged with rape too.
- The Sexual Offences Act repeals the law of indecent assault and replaces it with a new statutory offence of sexual assault, applicable to all forms of sexual violation without consent, thereby incorporating compelling rape and including certain acts of penetration or violation.
- The creation of new laws for adults by criminalizing the compelling or causing the witnessing of certain sexual conduct and certain parts of the human anatomy (penis, vagina, anus and breasts), the exposure or display of child pornography and the engaging of sexual services of an adult.
- The NSOAA includes new legislation dealing with the sexual violation of a corpse or animal and defining incest to include an adopted child. This means that it is a criminal offence to engage in sexual activities with people who are deceased and with animals (bestiality). Consensual sex between a parent and an adopted child is regarded as incest regardless of the child's age and is illegal.
- The protection of children and mentally handicapped persons from sexual exploitation and grooming, exposure to or display of pornography and the creation of child pornography. This means that a child under the age of 12 and somebody that is mentally disabled is legally not able to consent to intercourse.
- Criminalize any attempt, conspiracy or incitement to commit a sexual offence. This means that any person who forces a second party to commit a sexual offence will be charged with compelled rape.
- The trafficking of adults and children for sexual purposes is a crime.
- It is every adult's duty to report sexual offences committed against children and mentally disabled persons to the South African Police Service. Failure to report these crimes could lead to prosecution and a prison sentence of 5 years.
- All victims of rape are entitled to an HIV test and medication (Post Exposure Prophylaxis) to prevent the spread of HIV. (Needs to be taken within 72 hours of the rape). A victim of rape may make an application for the compulsory HIV testing of an alleged offender. The Investigating Officer will bring an application before a Magistrate. Once granted, the Magistrate will issue an HIV test order. The results of the suspects HIV test will be made available to the victim and medical doctor.
- The NSOAA also states that a person who is HIV positive and aware of their status, that does not inform their sexual partner, will be charged with rape. If the partner contracts HIV, the suspect will be charged with attempted murder.

- The NSOAA also provides the SAPS with new investigative tools when investigating sexual offences or other offences involving the HIV status of the perpetrator, it provides the courts with extra-territorial jurisdiction when hearing matters relating to sexual offences and provides for certain services to victims of sexual offences as to minimise or as far as possible, eliminate secondary trauma.
- Every convicted sexual offender's details are to be recorded in a central sexual offender's database. In accordance with SCOUTS South Africa's Child Protection Policy all adult members should be vetted against this database.

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is when adults taking care of children and youths continuously fail to show the child/youth respect, care and appropriate love and affection. It also includes threatening, taunting and shouting at youths. When ongoing threats, anger, sarcastic and degrading comments/behaviour occurs youths will feel unloved and unlovable, causing them to lose confidence and self-esteem, and to become fearful, nervous and withdrawn.

Even though we will mention cyber bullying, peer victimisation/bullying or initiation separately, it is hereby stated that this too represents emotional abuse.

### **Verbal abuse**

Verbal abuse includes excessive shouting or swearing at, or in front of, children/youths. It also includes threats, teasing, insults, racial taunts and any demeaning comments about the child/youth.

### **Neglect**

Neglect occurs when care-giving adults fail to meet the child's/youth's essential needs and withhold life necessities from a child/youth, for example food, warmth, education and medical care. However, we need to be clear and define that if care-giving adults are not financially/economically in the position to provide such necessities as food, clothing, education and medical care, this can be seen as the effects of poverty and not neglect.

Leaving children/youths that are too young to look after themselves alone or without proper supervision can also be construed as neglect.

## **Guideline: The rights of the Child**

In summary, all children that partake in SCOUTS South Africa and related Scouting activities, events and meetings have to be protected from harm and abuse<sup>2</sup>. All actions taken should be in the best interest of the child/youth. All members are to be treated equally no matter their race, gender, culture, language or religion. All members are to be accepted and respected for who they are and should be given the proper care. Due attention must be given to protect the child/youth against addictive and harmful substances such as cigarettes, alcohol and drugs.

Regardless whether the perpetrator is an adult or a fellow peer, it should be stated that members have the right to be protected from physical, sexual, verbal and emotional harm. They have the right to speak, to be heard and to be taken seriously without prejudice, knowing that with this right comes the responsibility of telling the truth. Members also have the right to privacy and therefore have the responsibility to respect the privacy of others.

It is vital that our members are made aware of their rights and that they are taught the three R's in child and youth protection, to Recognise, Resist and Report Abuse. Therefore adults should take responsibility to include informing their members on their rights in their activities and programme. Members of SCOUTS South Africa should be taught how to recognise situations that place him or her at risk of being harmed and abused. The child/youth needs to know how and why to Resist and they must be empowered to Report cases of children's rights violations in order to protect themselves and their peers from further abuse.

Furthermore it should be made clear to our child/youth members that when faced with a situation that s/he thinks is abusive/ dangerous, they have the right to:

- Trust her/his own feelings
- Expect privacy
- Withhold information that can place her/him in danger
- Refuse gifts
- Say no to unwanted touching or affection
- Say no to inappropriate demands and requests from adults/fellow peers
- Run, Scream and make a Scene
- Physically fight off unwanted advances
- Report it to an adult and ask and get help

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<sup>2</sup> See chapter What constitutes abuse



## **Guideline: Anti-peer victimisation/bullying**

SCOUTS South Africa treats bullying as a separate form of abuse and considers this to be between peers, so between members under the age of 18 years old.

Bullying is a deliberate act of aggression or manipulation by one or more people under against another person or people. It is a form of violence where a person is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions and/or verbal abuse and describes a form of harassment perpetrated by an abuser being in a physical or social superior power position. SCOUTS South Africa considers bullying from an adult to a child/youth immediately as a form of abuse.

The SCOUTS South Africa re-iterates its commitment to protecting children and youths from all forms of physical, mental and emotional violence caused by their peers. This can be through direct or indirect interaction, with or without the usage of modern technology such as the internet or mobile phones.

It is important to take note of the fact that both isolated or prolonged bullying can lead to depression, self-harming and in extreme situations violent retaliations and suicide by the victim. Bullying is therefore to be taken seriously by the adults responsible for the care of our child/youthful members.

Types of bullying:

- Psychological Bullying: This includes - but is not limited to - name calling "dissing", abusive language, threats of violence and spreading spiteful and/or malicious rumours.
- Physical Bullying: This includes - but is not limited to - pushing, slapping, punching or even assault with the intention of causing grievous bodily harm.
- Sexual Bullying: This includes - but is not limited to - sexually abusive language, picking on a child/youth with a different sexual orientation, touching of genitalia or breasts and/or threatening a person with sexual assault.
- Racial bullying: This includes - but is not limited to - calling of racial names, intolerance of other race groups and/or religions.
- Financial Bullying: This includes - but is not limited to - taking someone's lunch, theft of money or property, requesting protection money etc.
- Cyber Bullying: Cyber bullying, also referred to as online bullying includes – but is not limited to – using social network sites, mailing lists or cell phones to spread malicious rumours, threatening violence, sending or posting text and / or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person or creating false profiles of a person online.
- Isolation: This includes - but is not limited to - purposefully excluding, ostracising or isolating a child/youth/peer.

## **Procedure for addressing peer victimisation/bullying**

- Adults such as the Adult Leaders, being the Pack Scouters and Troop Scouters, should treat any report of bullying seriously.
- The Scouter should first listen to the child/youth and make such enquiries as may be necessary to clarify what has been happening.
- The child/youth should be assured that they have acted correctly in reporting the bullying.
- The Scouter should attempt to give advice on how to deal with any repeat incidents that may happen before the intimidation can be dealt with.
- The Scouter should convene a meeting with the victim, the perpetrator and their parents/guardians to discuss the once off and/or ongoing bullying and should decide together on appropriate action.
- The Scouter should make a written summary of the incident and the meeting and submit it to the Regional Commissioner who will keep it confidential and on record for five years.
- A follow up should be held with the two members a month later to ascertain whether the situation has been resolved.
- An Anti-Bullying activity should be run with each pack and/or troop.

## **Disciplinary measures when dealing with peer victimisation / bullying**

The disciplinary sanction to be applied for bullying, child/child or child/youth or youth/youth, will be undertaken in line with the SCOUTS South Africa Member Code of Conduct, the SSA Organisational Rules and Policies and in agreement with the Members involved, their parents and the Scouter.

In cases of serious intimidation and or/other forms of abuse the parents/guardian of both members are to be contacted and a report of abuse must be sent through to the Regional Commissioner and cc-ed to the SCOUTS South Africa Chief Commissioner at the National Office for further investigation and follow up as per the protocol and procedures for reporting abuse.

## **Guideline: Abuse through mobile and digital technology**

Many schools have an outright ban on cellular phones. We are not a formal educational institution and understand that children/youths would bring cell phones along to SSA, however we do not encourage it.

Many mobile phones provide the opportunity for children/youths to access the internet and social media sites. Often this is positive, but in some cases it provides ample opportunity for – and is not limited to – cyber bullying and sexting. These acts are considered abuse and will be penalised according to the procedures outlined in the Child Protection Policy and as per the South African legislation thereon.

Cyber bullying, also referred to as online bullying includes – but is not limited to – using social network sites, mailing lists or cell phones to spread malicious rumours, threatening violence, sending or posting text and/or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person or creating false profiles of a person online.

In recent years “Sexting”, a new form of child abuse, incorporating both sexual and emotional abuse has seen many teenagers and their families harmed. Sexting is the act of sending sexually explicit images and/or text by electronic means. Often, those involved in sexting are teens under the age of 18 years old. Because of anti-child-pornography laws, sexting can be even more serious when the images are of children. Typical teen sexting involves a mobile phone with a built-in camera, but sending sexually explicit images with any electronic device - such as digital cameras, webcams and email accounts - is considered sexting. Images can range from semi-nude and fully nude to explicit sexual activity. As per the NSOAA, sexting can be considered a sexual offence because it is a crime to cause the witnessing of certain sexual conducts, certain parts of the human anatomy (penis, vagina, anus and breasts), to create, exposure or display child pornography.

Teens and adults that engage in cyber bullying and sexting will be penalised by SSA in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy and if the actions are illegal they will be reported and could carry legal consequences.

## **Appendix: Guidelines on Responsibilities**

### **National Child Protection Coordinator**

- The NCPC is legally responsible for the overall safety of the Members and staff within the Movement. Therefore they must implement stringent measures to strive to ensure that Members are safe and secure while active within Scouting;
- NCPC is responsible to take an active role in the development, implementation and training of/in SSA's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct;
- Develop, implement, support and evaluate a consistent Child Protection Policy with relevant procedures and/or guidelines to ensure the safety of Members, be it children, youths or adults, volunteers or staff members;
- Develop and implement a reporting protocol and procure guideline for any form of abuse that includes relevant stakeholders and agencies;
- Develop and implement functional Code of Conducts for members older and younger than 18;
- NCPC is responsible to ensure that electronically generated reports on the incidents of crime and violence are properly recorded, maintained and backed up, and that hard copies are made in accordance with this policy;

### **Regional Commissioners**

- The Regional Commissioners are responsible for the overall safety of the Members and staff within the Region. Therefore they must implement stringent measures to strive to ensure that Members are safe and secure while active within Scouting;
- The Regional Commissioners are responsible for taking an active role in the implementation and education in SSA's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct;
- Exhibit appropriate leadership towards the creation of safe, caring and child friendly programmes, meetings, activities and events;
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers who are allocated the responsibility for a Group, Pack or Troop are aware of the Child Protection Policy, understand the content of it and understand their rights and responsibilities;
- Report all criminal acts as provided by the law to local SAPS and the Chief Commissioner at the National Office of SCOUTS South Africa;
- Keep detailed records of behaviour infractions, disciplinary hearings, suspensions and recommended expulsions;
- Ensure that Adult Leaders are trained on prevention and support to prevent and manage crime, violence and bullying in their Group, Pack and/or Troop;
- NCPC/Regional Commissioners monitor and evaluate the execution and implementation of the Child Protection Policy as well as initiatives undertaken to educate members of its existence and their rights and responsibilities in this regard.

## **CEO SCOUTS South Africa**

- The CEO of SCOUTS South Africa has no responsibilities concerning investigating and following up on the case, but needs to be informed at all times if allegations of (suspected) abuse have been made.
- The CEO will be consulted if/when external authorities are informed and if communication with the media would be required.

## **Staff, Adult Volunteers and Adult leaders**

All Adult Leaders that are given the care of children and youths have the responsibility to assist in maintaining safe, caring and child friendly activities, meetings and events. To this end, their responsibilities in regard to the Child Protection Policy are as follows:

- All adults within Scouting are required to be knowledgeable on the SCOUTS South Africa Child Protection Policy and are responsible for the implementation thereof;
- All Adults must ensure that their behaviour is appropriate at all times while carrying out Scouting-related responsibilities and activities;
- All Adults and Adult Leaders must recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed and therefore ensure that – in every respect – the relationships they form with the young people under their care are appropriate;
- All Adults should demonstrate integrity and respect through attitudes, personal conduct and dress and thus serve as positive role models for children and youths under their care;
- Adults must adhere to the clear parameters for appropriate behaviour in their Group, Pack and/or Troop, which are in line with the SCOUTS South Africa Child Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct;
- Adults should empower children and youths under their care with the necessary skills to meet expected standards of behaviour;
- Adults must handle all situations of peer victimisation/bullying with the utmost integrity and care;
- Adults should maintain a Scouting environment that is conducive to learning and having fun with a purpose;
- All Adults must take disclosed and/or suspected cases of abuse seriously and act immediately;
- All Adults must follow the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse;
- All Adults that feel uncomfortable or notice that an underage member might be/is giving them inappropriate attention, i.e. infatuation, must handle it with the utmost integrity and care. When assumed/ realised they must report it directly to a fellow Adult Leader, who should be present when the Adult talks to the minor about the inappropriate behaviour/ situation. If the situation persists a report must be made to the Regional Commissioner and it should be dealt with in accordance with the Member Code of Conduct and Organisational Rules and Policies of SCOUTS South Africa.

## **Parents**

In order to enhance the protection of all children under the care of Scouters and other SCOUTS South Africa members the responsibility of parents with regards to this Child Protection Policy are as follows:

- Ensure that your child(ren)/youth(s) is/are at the meeting/activity/event on time and for the whole duration of the meeting/activity/event, unless there is a valid reason;
- Inform the Scouter if your child(ren)/youth(s) will be absent or expected to be absent or to be late;
- Ensure your child(ren)/youth(s) are well prepared and have the required materials/lunch/clothing as required per meeting/activity/event;
- Ensure that your child(ren)/youth(s) is/are not in possession of any dangerous weapons that will threaten or put the safety of others at risk;
- Ensure that your child(ren)/youth(s) is/are not under the influence or in the possession of any illegal substances such as for example drugs and/or alcohol;
- Ensure your child(ren)/youth(s) abide by the SSA Member Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy, which is available on [www.scouting.org.za](http://www.scouting.org.za) or from SSA Regional offices;
- Cooperate with SCOUTS South Africa in resolving inappropriate behaviour of members, child(ren)/youth(s);
- SCOUTS South Africa has a set Code of Conduct and Organisational Rules and Policies. Certain procedures concerning advancement levels should therefore be addressed in that context with the proper authorities and through the designated channels. Verbal abuse towards the Scouter will be considered a transgression of this child protection policy and will be dealt with according to the procedures outlined herein.

## **Children and youths under the age of 18 years old**

All members of SCOUTS South Africa younger than 18 years old have the responsibility to attend Scouting meetings, activities and other Scouting related events punctually, regularly and should be prepared at all times, and:

- Should abide by the Scout Law as defined in the Constitution;
- Should conduct themselves appropriately at all times as per the SCOUTS South Africa Code of Conduct and in line with this Child Protection Policy;
- Should be cognisant that they have rights and with those also responsibilities;
- Should show respect for authority and be supportive to Adult Leaders and peers;
- Should report incidents of bullying and any form of abuse or harassment immediately without fear of prejudice or expulsion from the Movement – no one will be asked to leave when they report abuse;
- Should report incidents of crime and violence or threats thereof immediately without fear of prejudice or expulsion from the Movement – no one will be asked to leave when they report crime;
- Should be honest about reporting cases of abuse and/or suspicion of abuse to avoid personal prosecution if proven by external partners such as SAPS and social services to be false reports;

- Should not use, not be in possession of, not bully to use and/ or deal in drugs, alcohol or illegal substances;
- Should not victimise and/or bully their peers and other children and youths they come in contact with.

## **Guideline: The proactive educational approach to child protection off - and online:**

1. A least one meeting a year should be dedicated to child protection.
2. A copy of the child protection policy should be used when talking to members about the topic.
3. Additional documentation or a copy can be made available to parents before the meeting occurs. SSA information cards are available online or can be ordered at your regional office.
4. PowerPoint presentations with the option for questions could be used to present and facilitate the material (video inserts).
5. Hand-outs could be made available to members after the session if possible/required.



## **Amendment Submission Contact Details**

While every attempt is made to ensure that the contents of this policy are correct and consistent at the time of publication, the changing nature of SSA and the communities that we serve is acknowledged, and as living documents this Policy should and will require correction and amendment from time to time.

Any proposals for amendment of the contents of this policy should be submitted in line with the process described in the standing Organisation Rules in effect at the time of submission of the proposed amendment.

The proposed amendments for this document should be submitted to:

SCOUTS South Africa

National Office

PO Box 374

Newlands

7725

[info@scouting.org.za](mailto:info@scouting.org.za)

Fax: 021 685 9050