

# Personal Safety Program Rovers

## Acknowledgments:

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## Program ideas developed by:

- Ross Hunter, ABC Adult Training and Development
- Duncan McGregor, Rover,
- Jordan Woodyatt, Rover,
- Evan Poole, Rover,
- Tony Littlewood, Rover,
- Jeremy Peick, Rover

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## Personal Safety for Rovers

The following program ideas have been developed to support Crew Leaders, Rover Advisors, and Rover Crews discuss issues relevant to *Personal Safety* for young adults.

A forum of Rovers discussed a range of issues relevant to the personal safety of young adults, and from this four (4) themes became evident.

1. Equity in Crew Membership
2. Legal Rights and Responsibilities
3. Communication and Relationships
4. Self Abuse

It is suggested that all four themes be explored throughout the year and utilised as a springboard for further identification of other personal safety issues which meet the needs of the Crew membership.

While the programs follow a particular format, these can be changed as required by the Crew. It is, however, important that the basic concepts are developed. These occur as *messages* at the beginning of each program.

It is recognised that the availability of resources will vary from area to area. However most localities will have access to the services required.

Issues to be discussed will create the opportunity to view current practices within the Crew and some participants may feel uncomfortable in expressing views or accepting the views of others. Therefore a supportive, open attitude from participants is to be encouraged to enable maximum benefit and growth from the program.

We are confident that our *Personal Safety* program will be effective because of the commitment and dedication of Scouting Members.

Thank you for the role you are about to play in helping to provide all Members of Scouts Australia, Queensland Branch Inc with a safe and supportive learning, working and personal environment.

*Debbie Thomson*

Debbie Thomson  
Personal Safety Training Officer

## Equity in Crew Membership

### Messages:

To achieve equity in Crew Membership, tolerance of difference and diversity, and the ability to cater for these, must exist.

Differences may be evident in beliefs, attitudes, experiences, opportunities, skills and background.

It is important to recognise that a range of circumstances will influence the development of diversity but gender, culture, socio-economic have particular influence.

Catering for difference and diversity may require utilising additional or special resources to ensure that no exclusionary practices occur.

### Session Aim:

The forum will provide opportunity for:

- Individuals to express and have opinions heard in relation to equity issues within the Crew
- the Crew to review practices which encourage difference and diversity

### Activity:

Discussion or debate

### Time:

90 minutes

### Resources:

Nil

### Process:

It is important for ground rules of the debate/discussion to be established.

- All members must have the opportunity to speak if they wish
- All members need to acknowledge that the environment should be supportive and friendly to encourage everyone to participate
- All speakers have the right to be heard and for their opinion to be respected
- Reasonable and rational behaviour is expected of all those in attendance

Appoint a chairperson or activity facilitator to monitor the progress of the activity. This person or the Rover Adviser may also act as a devil's advocate to encourage further thought, as opposed to provoking a hostile environment.

**Topics for Discussion:**

- **Does the Crew currently provide an atmosphere where all members are encouraged to express personal opinion?** Do certain members appear to control program ideas or direction of the Crew? What mechanisms can be put in place to ensure that all members are heard? Are Scouts Owns held by the Crew or are they subject to peer pressure not to be held?
- **Is Crew membership inclusive or exclusive?** Does the Crew actively encourage membership from the cross section of the community? Are there any barriers to the inclusion of certain groups? eg gender bias, socio-economic circumstance, values and beliefs of the Crew. Are there any biases in screening prospective members?
- **Is discrimination of any sort evident within Crew practices?** Note: This is an opportunity to discuss issues such as the reasonable and fair treatment of Squires, or not providing an environment where all members are encouraged to express, or valued for their views.
- **Does the Crew actively offer its members the opportunity to grow physically, intellectually, spiritually, and socially?** Is the Crew program balanced?
- **Do Crew activities cater for those who are challenged with disability, financial resources, time or other needs which may require special consideration?** Is the program delivered in an equitable way? How? Why not?

Conclude the activity by ensuring that appropriate debriefing occurs. Do not allow members to leave the activity feeling aggrieved or upset. Summarise the debate/discussion in terms of any changes be made within the Crew to accommodate the full participation of all members, including their views.

Highlight that the *Personal Safety Program* outlines an informal process to help resolve conflicts within the Crew utilising the four option models as shown in the Personal Safety Policy, pages 19 - 20. As it is an expectation of the Branch that all Rovers complete a Personal Safety Information Session, they should already be conversant with the process.

Appoint a chairperson or activity facilitator to monitor the progress of the activity. This person or the Rover Adviser may also act as a devil's advocate to encourage further thought, as opposed to provoking a hostile environment.

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## Legal Rights and Responsibilities

- Messages:** Adult Members have legal rights which impact on their personal environment. While it is necessary to be aware of legal rights we must accept our responsibility to protect the rights of others and ourselves.
- Session Aim:** To explore the legal rights and responsibilities, and the possible consequences where the infringement of law occurs.
- Activity:** Guest speaker eg solicitor, barrister, counselor, police officer
- Time:** 90 minutes
- Resources:** Necessary equipment for speaker eg OHP, whiteboard, video/tv
- Process:** When approaching a guest speaker ensure that they are able to address the issues and possible questions on the selected topic. It is also important that they are able to emphasise the rights, responsibilities and consequences during their presentation.

### Topics for presentation

- **A legal Will**  
In the event of death and the distribution of assets of estate, what can happen without a legal Will? How is the estate distributed? What claim can be made against the estate of a deceased person? Can a legal Will be contested? How? Is there any appeal process when there is no legal Will? Is it advisable to use a family member as executor or should a professional executor be appointed? Ask the speaker to emphasise the need to protect your wishes, the rights of your family/friends, and the responsibility to ensure this occurs within the context of a legal Will.

- **Relationships**

What is the definition of a defacto relationship? Are the legal rights and responsibilities of a defacto relationship the same as those of a marriage? What happens in the event of separation? Are same sex relationships considered to be a marriage or defacto relationship? How is custody of children and property settlement decided upon? What costs may be involved? What are the rights and responsibilities of a non-custodial parent?

- **Debt**

Discuss the borrowing process which may include credit cards, hire purchase, home loans, personal loans, etc. What legislation is available for the protection of consumers? What are the consequences of inability to meet obligations? What actions can a lender take to recover a debt? What cost is apportioned to the borrower in the event of default? Can personal assets be at risk should default occur? Ask your speaker to really emphasise the responsibilities of borrowing.

- **Conditions of employment**

What is unfair dismissal? What avenues of complaint are available to challenge an unfair dismissal? What are the rights and responsibilities of both the employer and the employee? What are the consequences for the employer if he/she does not follow the appropriate process for dismissal of a staff member? What is regarded as offensive or inappropriate behaviour in the workplace? What are the consequences for the employer if he/she allows for inappropriate behaviour to continue?



- **Hypotheticals**

Discuss a hypothetical that would require legal advice. eg A Rover is arrested for driving under the influence. It is best to stay with only one or two hypotheticals because they can be fairly involved. What are the rights of the Rover in the event of arrest? What penalties can be incurred? Can an offender be jailed? What are the possible consequences for the offender in terms of relationships, employment, and social status. Does a DUI offence preclude a person from running for public office? What offences can preclude a person from running for public office? What offences are noted permanently and considered to be a "police record"? What effect does this have on applying for Adult Membership in Scouts Australia? How does the sentencing process work and how much of the sentence does the convicted person have to serve? What conditions and privileges are available or denied while in custody?

At the conclusion of the presentation, re-emphasise what has been learnt about rights, responsibilities and consequences. Remind Rovers that they are also subject to internal disciplinary procedures should their behaviour be offensive or inappropriate, or they may face summary dismissal where their behaviour is regarded to be of a criminal nature, or they have brought the Association into disrepute. It is important for everyone to respect the rights and responsibilities of self and others.

## Communication and Relationships

- Messages:** Effective communication and active listening skills are vital to the success of interpersonal relationships  
Many interpersonal conflicts can be resolved utilising basic conflict resolution skills as outlined in the *Personal Safety Program* policy, pages 19 -20
- Session Aim:** To explore the effect that appropriate communication skills, particularly assertiveness, has on interpersonal relationships. These skills can be applied to the range of personal, working, learning and social environments.
- Activity:** Guest speaker/facilitator in communications eg relationships counselor, conflict resolution mediator  
The expertise of the guest speaker is a priority as they may need to deal with issues that arise during the session and possess the skills to properly debrief participants in emotive situations. Ensure that the speaker is aware that the session should be interactive and all members encouraged to participate.
- Time:** 90 minutes
- Resources:** Equipment required by guest speaker eg audio visual aids  
Appropriate space and environment is most important
- Process:** During the planning of this session it is important to determine the anticipated outcomes. Unexpected outcomes may result from the session but the Crew needs to decide what they hope to achieve from the session. This should then be revisited at the conclusion of the session.
- Define relationships and the differences in maintaining the relationship eg Rover Adviser could also be the parent of the Crew Leader (maintenance of the parent/child relationship at home and the Scouting relationship at Rovers). Similarly a Crew Member could be a team leader in an employment situation where one or more Rovers are employed (respect for one another's role both within the Crew and at work including

support and respect when difficult decisions have to be made. Remember that the Crew Leader has a responsibility to act on behalf of the majority of the Crew and may be placed in a position of personal conflict in resolving some issues.

Define assertive communication. Activities need to be included that allow participants to practise assertive communication and compare to aggressive and passive behaviours. Expressing positive reinforcement and attitudes can also be incorporated and might include:

- What I admired about you in the past
- What I admire about you now
- What you did that I didn't like in the past
- What makes me feel uncomfortable about you now

Once established discuss the effect assertive communication can have on a relationship, and the importance of honest and open communication within relationships. Of course this does not mean we all have to agree on every issue but we need to develop respect for another person's opinion and their honesty.

Discuss how honest and open communication is also necessary when involved in issues such as terminating a relationship and setting guidelines for future interactions, particularly where both parties may be involved in the same social group or place of employment.

Role-plays may assist in developing a better understanding of effective communication skills. These might include:

- Discussing a difficult situation with parents
- Suggesting to a work superior that their current methods and practices may be inappropriate
- How to discuss with another Rover that their relationship with another Crew Member is affecting Crew life and may be regarded as inappropriate in some cases
- A relationship where the birth of a child has not created new priorities for one of the parents eg feeling a lack of support while the other partner continues to pursue personal interests without apparent regard of the other parent's needs

At the conclusion of the session, revisit the expected outcomes. Have they been achieved? If not why not? Were there other unexpected outcomes?

Discuss a commitment to using the skills developed or enhanced through this activity in the ongoing Crew program.

## Self Abuse

- Messages:** Those who self abuse usually have a very poor self image  
Support is available to those who exhibit self abusive behaviour
- Sessions Aim:** To explore the impact of self abusive behaviours such as gambling, and drug and alcohol use and addiction, on the community and on self  
To identify available local support services
- Activity:** Guest speaker eg GP, Counselor from Salvation Army, Lions, Drug Arm, AA, Lifeline etc. The speaker should have access to current statistics and data in relation to the issues of drug and alcohol abuse, and gambling. It may be necessary to use two speakers for the session.
- Time:** 90 minutes
- Resources:** Equipment for presenter eg audio visual
- Process:** General discussion about self-image. What is it? What affects it? How can it change? How important is it to have a positive self-image? What can a negative self image lead to?
- Lead into specific discussion about:
- What is addiction? (prescription and illegal drug usage)
  - When is a person deemed to be addicted?
  - How is addiction recognised?
  - What are the consequences of addiction to self and community? Include transmission of disease. Also discuss physical, intellectual, spiritual, and financial impacts.
  - What support is available in the local community to assist addicts? In the case of needle exchange who wears the financial cost?
  - What are the effects on employment and social interactions?
  - How should a Crew assist those for whom we are concerned?
  - What other avenues exist in addressing addiction? (volunteer counselors, training required, previous experience)
  - What treatment procedures are available? (methadone)
  - Legal consequences? (forfeiture of assets, jail, fines)

Is there any justifiable argument for use of substances?  
(use for pain relief)

Conclude with a possible plan of action for the Crew to undertake in terms of community service and self-abusive behaviours.