

PERSONAL SAFETY AWARENESS FOR VENTURING (BCS-127)

I. INTRODUCTION

As a Venturing Commissioner, all crew leaders need to have basic knowledge about abuse of adolescents and the Youth Protection policies of the Boy Scouts of America. Due to the coeducational membership of Venturing, youth protection takes on added dimensions.

In response to increasing awareness about sexual abuse in society as a whole, and concerns about the potential of sexual predators using the Boy Scout program to locate victims, BSA developed the Youth Protection program in the late 1980s in conjunction with input from leading law enforcement and psychiatric experts on the subject. In 2003, criminal background checks were required for all new leaders. Leaders who had registered before 2003 were required to undergo background checks in 2008.^[1]

This training highlights four different, yet concurrent, areas of adolescent development. The areas are:

1 Movement toward independence.

Adolescence can be a specifically turbulent as well as a dynamic period of one's life. It has been identified as a period in which young people develop abstract thinking abilities, become more aware of their sexuality, develop a clearer sense of psychological identity, and increase their independence from parents.

2 Future interests and mental ability.

Typically to retain only information which is relevant for a particular purpose.

3 Social relationships.

Peer Pressure refers to the influence exerted by a peer group in encouraging a person to change his or her attitudes, values, or behavior in order to conform to group norms. Social groups affected include *membership groups*, when the individual is "formally" a member

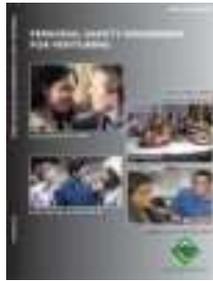
4 Morals, values, and self-direction.

Morality means a code of conduct or belief. The ability to put one's life in order. Adolescents who were uninvolved in groups were more likely to endorse self-interest and materialistic values.

II. RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

A. Training for Adult Venturing Leaders

1. AV-03DVD14
2. Publication #25-02



B. Personal Safety Awareness for Venturing

1. AV-09DVD33
2. Publication #46-506



III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ABUSE

Child Abuse is harm to a person under the age of 18 that occurs immediately or through accumulated effects over a period of time

A. When the harm is caused by withholding life's necessities from a child, it is classified as NEGLECT.

1a. The ability to provide such necessities as food, clothing, education, and medical care, but failing to do so, is the factor separating neglect from the effects of poverty.

B. Three additional kinds of abuse

1 Emotional Abuse

When a youth is constantly told that he or she is no good or never will be.

Denigrating name-calling is a form of emotional abuse. These physical signs are subtle and it is difficult to substantiate emotional abuse. It can come from adults and peers as well

2 Physical Abuse

This is bodily injury of the youth by the parent, caretaker, or peer. Indicators of physical abuse include unexplained, unusual, or repeated injuries.

3 Sexual Abuse

Any sexual activity between a child and an adult. Between children where there is an unusual distribution of power such as when one is significantly older or larger.

Indicators include pain in the genital area, sexually transmitted diseases, and difficulty in walking or sitting down.

There is specific behavior that is associated as inappropriate sex play, sleep disturbances, wearing lots of clothing, and fear of being alone with a particular person.

Other indicators would be stress for any number of other events in a Child's life.

Family disruption, loss of a pet, school related problems, withdrawal, substance abuse, running away, and depression.

IV. TYPES OF SAFETY AWARENESS

1. Acquaintance Rape

- a. Misconceptions
- b. Perpetrator is known to the Victim
- c. The risk of acquaintance or “date” rape is greater when behavioral boundaries are not clearly established.
- d. “No, I am sorry, this is not what I want to do.” Once one person makes that statement, the other person should not attempt to persuade or force the first person to have sex.

2. Peer Sexual Harassment

By definition, sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct that either creates

- a.. A hostile environment or is presented as a demand in exchange for getting something in the workplace or school. It is illegal both in workplaces and in schools.
- b.. Sexual harassment may occur between peers, or it may be a misuse of power, such as by an employer to an employee or a stronger individual harassing a weaker one.

1. When Teasing Crosses The Line.

- 1a. Visual (Ogling, staring, posters or pictures, magazines, and fliers)
- 1b. Verbal (,Repeated requests for dates, questions about personal life, lewd comments or jokes, and whistling)
- 1c. Threats (,Quid pro quo demands (if you sleep with me, I’ll give you that promotion), loss of job, selection process)
- 1d. Force (Rape or physical assault)

3. Internet Safety and Pornography

- 1 New challenges are presented with the ever growing technology and well being of internet users.
- 2 Internet challenges and risk, keep personal information to a minimum. Allow only people you know to have access to your Web pages. Review messages from others before allowing them to be posted on your blog. Block anyone who seems threatening.

4. Suicide and Depression

The intentional killing of one's self, and the metaphorical sense of "willful destruction of one's self-interest

A. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for American Teenagers (Accidents & Homicide first 2)

B Depression is a term that can refer to a wide variety of abnormal variations in an individual's mood.

1. Recognizing the symptoms

A person suffering a major depressive episode usually exhibits a very low mood that pervades all aspects of life and an inability to experience pleasure in activities that formerly were enjoyed. Depressed people may be preoccupied with, or ruminate over, thoughts and feelings of worthlessness, inappropriate guilt or

regret, helplessness, hopelessness, and self-hatred.^[3] Other symptoms include poor concentration and memory (especially in those with melancholic or psychotic features),^[4] withdrawal from social situations and activities, reduced sex drive, and thoughts of death or suicide

V. COMMISSIONER DUTIES

A. Annual Safety Awareness visit

The annual Commissioner Service Plan Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service #33621 – “Providing Unit Service”)

B. Chartered Organization training

C. District / Council Training

D. Where to get help

Suicide intervention or **suicide crisis intervention** is direct effort to stop or prevent persons attempting or contemplating suicide from killing themselves. Current medical advice concerning people who are attempting or seriously considering suicide is that they should immediately go or be taken to the nearest emergency room, or emergency services should be called immediately by them or anyone aware of the problem.