

## **YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

**Approved and Adopted on January 13, 2007  
Revised June 2008**

### **STATEMENT OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH**

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.

Rocky Mountain Rotary Youth Exchange (RMRYE) 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.

### **RMRYE INCORPORATION AND LIABILITY INSURANCE**

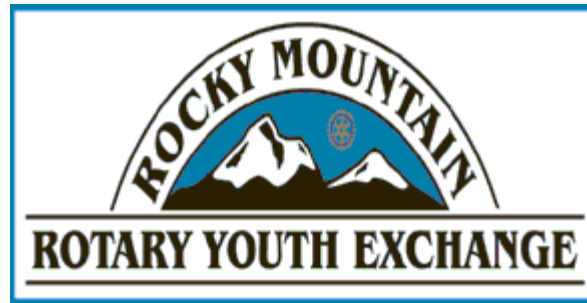
Rocky Mountain Rotary Youth Exchange is an incorporated not-for-profit entity in the State of Colorado and operates under the general authority of District 5450 of Rotary International. General liability insurance is provided through U.S. Rotary Club and District General Liability Insurance Program.

### **ROCKY MOUNTAIN ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE COMMITMENT TO YOUTH**

These policies and procedures apply to all adult participants in the youth exchange program (long-term and short-term) who have unsupervised contact with one or more youth exchange students. These policies also apply to all adults over the age of 18 who reside in the home of a host family.

#### **Rocky Mountain Rotary Youth Exchange will:**

1. Adopt and adhere to Rotary International's zero-tolerance policy against abuse and harassment.
2. Take any allegations or reports of abuse or harassment seriously and do everything in our power to ensure that young people involved in the Rotary Youth Exchange Program are protected from abuse, harassment and neglect.
3. Ensure that the Rocky Mountain Rotary Youth Exchange program is provided to young people in a safe and caring environment.
4. Prevent contact with known persons who are either prohibited by law from working with children, or who are considered by RMRYE to be inappropriate persons for working with children.
5. Report any allegations of abuse in compliance with state law and facilitate the timely reporting of incidents where children are at risk or harm.
6. Ensure the prompt notification of allegations of abuse, harassment or neglect of children where allegations involve Rotarians or persons involved with RMRYE.
7. Appoint a Youth Protection Officer (YPO). The YPO will assist the Chairman of RMRYE in ensuring that complaints are dealt with according to applicable law and the interests of the affected person are protected to the extent possible.



8. Work with Clubs to inform all Rotarians of their obligation under this policy and to ensure that appropriate training is made available.
9. Establish a screening process to assure the suitability of any person wishing to work with District youth exchange students.
10. Send copies of all minutes of meetings to the District Governor of District 5450 for his or her review and information.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Sexual abuse:** Sexual abuse refers to forcing or encouraging a student to engage in sexual acts with another person of any age, of the same sex or the opposite sex as defined in applicable state law.

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 is deliberate or repeated behavior of a sexual nature that is unwelcome, unasked for or rebuked. It refers to sexual advances, requests for favors or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. The definition of sexual harassment includes conduct directed by men towards women, men toward men, women towards men, and women towards women.

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

- Sexual advances;
- Sexual jokes, written or verbal references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, prowess, or sexual orientation;
- 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.

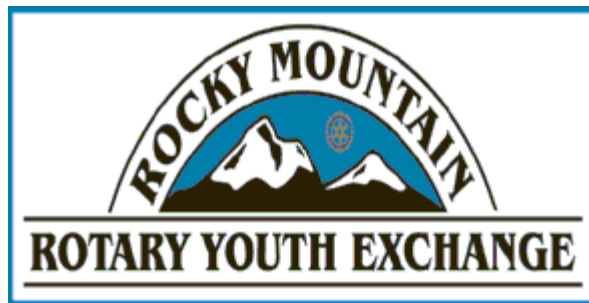
**Student:** Youth involved with RMRYE, regardless of whether they are of the age of majority.

**Volunteer:** Any adult, 18 and over involved with RMRYE activities, who has direct interaction with students. This includes, but is not limited to, district committee members, club youth exchange officers, club counselors, chaperones or host families.

### **VOLUNTEER SCREENING**

All volunteers (except those with only casual or occasional interactions with Youth Exchange students), who have one-on-one unsupervised student interaction or contact may be required to:

- ❖ Complete the RMRYE Volunteer application and authorize the RMRYE to conduct appropriate background checks. This form must be returned to the YPO for review
- ❖ Be subject to personal interviews;
- ❖ Provide a list of references for RMRYE to check.
- ❖ Meet Rotary International and RMRYE eligibility for working with students.



- ❖ Understand and comply with Rotary International and RMRYE guidelines for the Youth Exchange program.

The YPO or their assigns will maintain all records of criminal background checks, waivers, and screening for adults working with students for a minimum of 3 years or as directed by RI. The YPO shall keep these records in a secure, confidential file.

### **Host Family Screening Requirements**

Host families shall undergo a comprehensive 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.
- ❖ Completion of written application and a personal interview.
- ❖ Home visits may be conducted for all host families, including repeat host families, prior to students arrival.
- ❖ Impromptu visits, both prior to and during the placement, are also recommended.
- ❖ All individuals over the age of 18 who reside in the home of the host family, must meet the selection and screening guidelines, and will be subjected to an appropriate background check assuring they:
  1. Have not admitted to, been convicted of or otherwise found to have engaged in an offense which resulted in harm to an individual, including assault or sexual assault or sexual battery.
  2. Have not been convicted of any offense which, in the opinion of the YPO, suggests an unacceptable risk of harm to a person in the care of that individual.
  3. Are not subject to a court order or decree prohibiting a person from being in contact with any other individual.
  4. Have no other person living in or frequenting their residence that has been convicted of or treated for sexually inappropriate conduct.

In the event the YPO determines that an individual/volunteer is not acceptable based on the outcome of the background investigation, the YPO shall notify the Club representative that the applicant is not acceptable, but details of the reason behind the rejection will not be disclosed to the Club in order to ensure the privacy of the applicant.

### **Counselor Screening**

In addition to the above volunteer screening requirements:

- ❖ Counselors must **not** be a member of the student's host family.
- ❖ Counselors shall be trained 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 be the same sex as the exchange student.

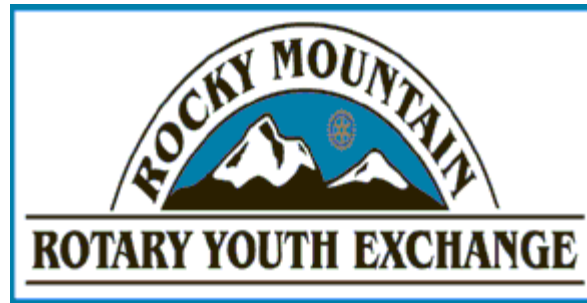
### **RMRYE OUTBOUND STUDENT SELECTION AND SCREENING**

All students interested in participating in the RMRYE Program shall:

- ❖ Complete a written application and be interviewed for their suitability for participation in the Youth Exchange program.
- ❖ Attend and participate in all district orientation and training sessions.

All parents or legal guardians of students interested in participating in the RMRYE program must:

- ❖ Be interviewed to help determine the student's suitability for participation in the Youth Exchange program.
- ❖ At least one parent or legal guardian shall attend and participate in outbound district orientation.



### TRAINING

All volunteers who participate in this program shall participate in at least one training session in which these policies and procedures are explained and discussed. Training shall be provided under the direction of the RMRYE Chairman and/or using training materials provided by RMRYE and Rotary International. Written copies of this document will be distributed to all Clubs and District officials involved with Youth Exchange on an annual basis.

RMRYE will:

- ❖ Develop and provide standardized training materials on Rotary International's youth protection policy, specific district guidelines, local customs, cultural issues, and legal requirements for Club use and as part of District training responsibilities.
- ❖ Develop a calendar for training and define the frequency of training required for each volunteer position, including descriptions of who is to participate, when training should occur, and how training will be conducted.
- ❖ Conduct specialized training sessions for the following Youth Exchange program participants.
  - District Governor and District Governor-Elect
  - District Youth Exchange committee members
  - Club Youth Exchange committee members or other designated club representatives
  - Students (inbound and outbound)
  - Parents and legal guardians of students
  - Other Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in Youth Exchange activities, such as tours or other district events.
- ❖ Establish guidelines to ensure that all those required to be trained have undergone such training every three years.
- ❖ Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance.

Participating Clubs will:

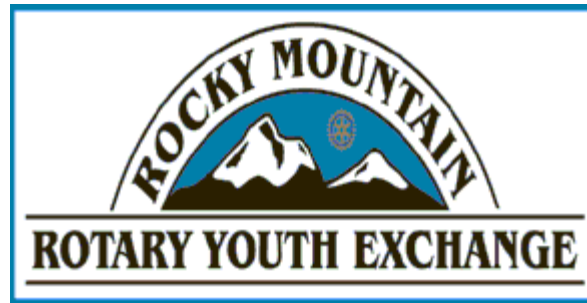
- ❖ Be responsible for disseminating standardized district training information to:
  - Rotarian counselors
  - Host families
- ❖ Establish guidelines to ensure that all those required to be trained have undergone such training every three years.
- ❖ Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance.

### ALLEGATION REPORTING PROCEDURES

**Students:** If you are sexually, physically or emotionally abused, or are accused of sexually, physically or emotionally assaulting or abusing another person, you must follow this procedure:

1. Report the situation to your **host** Club Rotary Youth Exchange Officer (YEO) immediately.
2. Report the situation to the **host** District RYE Chairperson if you feel you cannot tell your local YEO.
3. If you cannot report the situation to either your local YEO or the host District Chairperson, report the situation to any member of the host District Rotary Committee who you feel comfortable reporting it to, or to your Sponsoring RMRYE Country Contact, District Chairman or the Youth Protection Officer

**Parents:** (Host or Natural): If your son/daughter notifies you that they have been assaulted, abused, or are accused of assaulting or abusing another person, or if, after talking with your son/daughter you feel that they have been assaulted, abused, or are accused of assaulting or abusing another person, you must follow this procedure in compliance with the RMRYE Crisis Management Plan:



1. As soon as possible report the situation to the D5450 RYE Committee member who is responsible for your son/daughter's country (Country Contact).
2. If you are not able to contact the RMRYE Country Contact, or do not feel comfortable contacting the Country Contact, then contact either the appropriate Chair or the District Youth Protection Officer.

### **Rocky Mountain Rotary Youth Exchange Crisis Management Team (CMT)**

**District Chair (All incidents)**

**Inbound Chair (Incidents involving inbound students)**

**Outbound Chair (Incidents involving outbound students)**

**Short-Term Chair (Incidents involving summer or STEP students)**

**RMRYE Youth Protection Officer (YPO) (All incidents)**

**Country Contact/YEO (As deemed necessary)**

**District Governor Representative (typically District YPO)**

**Designated Responsible Officer/CSIET/Visa/RI Representative (All incidents for reporting purposes)**

The appropriate Chair (Inbound, Outbound or Short Term) shall be responsible for leading the Crisis Management Team and shall be the primary coordinator of efforts and main contact person. The CMT leader shall be referred to as Chair for the purposes of this policy.

All persons should recognize and appreciate that timely, accurate and concise information is critical to effectively manage the situation. Please keep this in mind when providing information relating to any allegations.

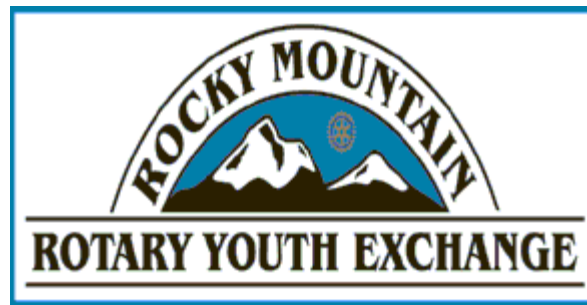
Crisis Management Team Members are expected to respond **immediately** upon notification. . Any District announcements conveyed to the press or to the District at large shall be handled by the District Governors rep or District YPO. Clubs and individual Rotarians should refrain from publicly discussing the incident until it is resolved.

Crisis Management Team Members will endeavor to remain accessible in the event of an emergency. If members will be away and not accessible (checking phone messages and e-mail), they will notify the Chair of their absence.

### **INVESTIGATION BY DISTRICT**

The procedure that RMRYE will follow upon report of an abuse or harassment incident is:

1. The RMRYE Chair will be notified **IMMEDIATELY**. The District Chair is responsible for ensuring that such complaints are dealt with according to applicable law and the interests of the affected person are protected to the extent possible. The District Chair or appropriate representative will report all criminal allegations and serious incidents to Rotary International within 72 hours of notification. The Designated Responsible Officer shall be responsible for notifying the U.S. Department of State of any alleged abuse incidents. The District Governor is the ultimate authority on all district matters and will be notified that there is an incident under investigation and be kept informed of continuing developments.
2. The CMT Chair will then take action to assure the safety of the student. In the case of an outbound student, this will include immediate communications with the host District RYE Chairperson, and/or with the host Rotary Club.
3. For inbound student situations, an independent and thorough investigation will be made into any claims of abuse or harassment. The Youth Protection Officer (YPO) shall be notified of any complaint of abuse or harassment received. Once an independent legal and/or criminal investigation by appropriate agencies is complete, the YPO will summarize and develop recommendations and necessary action to be taken.

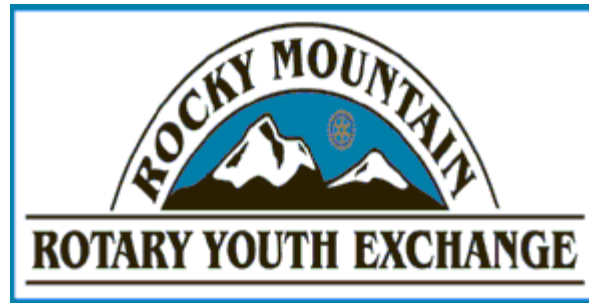


4. All communications shall be directed to the CMT Chair and distributed to the entire CMT in a timely manner.
5. At all times, the confidentiality of the student and any person against whom allegations are made will be respected in accordance with applicable law.
6. The student shall be offered immediate support services, including independent therapists, counselors or legal counsel. This shall apply to any/all students involved, including accused students.
7. Any adult involved in a Rotary youth program against whom an allegation of abuse or harassment is made will be removed from all contact with youth in a Rotary context until the matter is resolved.
8. Any allegation of abuse will be immediately reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency according to state law and to any applicable insurance carrier.
9. Pursuant to Rotary International policy, a Club must terminate the membership of any Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of or is otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse. A non-Rotarian who admits to, is convicted of, or is otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse must be prohibited from working with youth in a Rotary context. A Club may not grant membership to a person who is known to have engaged in sexual abuse, or illegal sexually oriented acts. Upon obtaining information that a Club has knowingly failed to terminate the membership of such a Rotarian, the RI Board will take steps to have the Rotarian's membership terminated, including action to terminate the Club's charter for failure to comply.
10. If an investigation into a claim of abuse or harassment 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 conduct.
11. No student will be sent home for reporting sexual abuse unless their personal safety requires it and the District Chairperson has approved the return. Students may be required to remain and be placed in a safe family, for the purpose of a continuing investigation and visa permitting.
12. All records, inclusive of but not limited to law enforcement reports, criminal histories, in-house investigation summaries and victim statements will be retained by the YPO in a secure, confidential file in accordance with state and federal guidelines.
13. Any decisions made by the CMT will be verified and conveyed to the RMRYE Committee and District representatives by the Chair of the CMT. All decisions are final and must be strictly followed.

#### **CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES**

Clubs wishing to participate in the RMRYE program shall be required to undergo the RMRYE process for compliance with these procedures. Upon request from RMRYE, all clubs that wish to apply to the District for certification must complete the RMRYE Youth Protection Policy Compliance Agreement and adhere to the requirements there-of.

**This policy shall be reviewed annually and made available via [www.rve5450.org](http://www.rve5450.org) on or before July 1 of each year.**



**ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CODE OF POLICIES  
ADOPTED NOVEMBER 2004**

**District Certification Program** – all clubs and district YE programs must comply with Rotary International sexual abuse and harassment prevention policies in order to be certified by RI.

Guidelines –

1. School attendance is mandatory
2. All adults involved in the program must complete and sign a Youth Volunteer Affidavit and agree to undergo a criminal background check and reference check.
3. Candidates and their parents must undergo a thorough application and interview at club and district level.
4. Hosting club must screen and select host families based on written application, criminal background check, personal interview, and home visits. It is required that exchangee have more than one host family. Parents of outbound students shall not be required to host incoming students.
5. Student must have Counselor which cannot be member of hosting family; and must be trained in the management of any problems or concerns, including prevention of physical, sexual and emotional abuse.
6. All parties involved in exchange, including hosting and receiving RCs and districts, host families and parents, must be fully informed prior to the exchangee being sent home. Those who have not complied will be permanently removed from involvement with youth.
7. Hosting and sending district must provide exchangees with a list of individuals to contact in case of problem or emergency. Must include name and contact information for counselor, host RC President, Host District Chair, hosting governor, sponsoring district chair, sponsoring governor, sponsoring club president and two non-Rotarian resource persons (one male and one female). Also include local resources for medical, dental and mental health care and law enforcement professionals.