

Youth Protection Rules Apply to Digital Contact Too!



JUST A REMINDER: 'No One-On-One Contact' Applies to ALL Digital Contact Too, As Outlined In The BSA's Youth Protection Training Policies

The BSA's [Youth Protection guidelines](#) prohibit one-one-one contact between adults and youth members. That much you know.

But in a world where an increasing number of our communications are digital, how does that rule apply?

Youth Protection policies extend into cyberspace. There should be no one-on-one online or digital activities (games, social media, etc.) or electronic communications. **Leaders AND Scouts** must include or copy a parent or another leader in ALL online communications, ensuring no one-on-one contact exists in text, social media or other forms of online or digital communication. ([On average, we have to remind between 5 – 10 youth per week of this requirement.](#))

As a safety precaution to protect youth and leaders, we require all interactions (e.g., texting, email, instant messaging, etc.) to be copied to a parent or other registered leader. While we understand that this may present a challenge to some, we feel that safe interactions are of prime concern.

As a reminder, all leaders should be providing the [Cyber Chip program](#) to Scouting youth so that they may be better able to recognize, respond to and report inappropriate activity to the [CyberTipline](#) (1-800-THE-LOST (843-5678)) and local Scout executive. To help families and volunteers keep youth safe while online, the BSA introduced the Cyber Chip. [Units should also educate youth about the YPT rules that pertain to electronic communications and instruct them to always copy a parent or other registered leader on all electronic communications.](#)

We also recommend that Eagle Scout coaches who are selected by units become registered. By registering these key leaders in the growth of our Scouts, they would then be properly vetted through background checks and would be required to take Youth Protection training. What better way to ensure the safety of all our youth, than by asking all adults involved with the advancement of these Scouts to be a part of our safety programs?

The National Center For Missing and Exploited Children suggests that leaders and parents of Scouts check out the following NetSmartz website and tip sheet that provide helpful information on safe cell phone usage:

<http://www.netsmartz.org/CellPhones>

http://cdn.netsmartz.org/tipsheets/smartphone_safety.pdf

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