

Discipline and Behavioral Issues - Troop 714

While the best way to deal with problems is to try to prevent them, some problems, such as Scout behavior or disciplinary problems, can't be avoided. As adults, we need to respond because, with few exceptions, problem behavior should not be ignored. Ignoring problem behavior may send a signal that we accept it! Specific procedures for positively dealing with these issues are in the Troop 714 ASM Handbook on page 6. See the last link on the Troop Info page on the troop web site (<http://www.troop714.org>).

The "Three Simple Rules" apply at all times:

1. No unkind words;
2. No unkind touches;
3. Hands off other people's stuff.

Normal behavioral issues should be handled by the Patrol Leader/Troop Guide, with resort to Senior Patrol Leader. If not resolved at this level, they can escalate to the adult level (ASM or SM/CC). **Safety issues should automatically escalate to the adult level.**

- Showing Scout Spirit is a requirement for rank advancement and should not be an automatic check-off by the patrol ASM, especially when issues such as this are outstanding.
- Conflict resolution is a skill we teach as part of Youth Leadership Training. We need to help them learn/practice this.

Consequences

1. Hazing, bullying, threats to physical/mental safety require incident report to district and council. We may have no choice in handling, including dismissal from Scouting.
2. Most issues can be handled with counseling and attempted reconciliation between parties. The Scoutmaster and Committee Chair will be involved if a satisfactory resolution is not obtained.
3. Repeated, severe, willful, or flagrant violations will require a conference with Scoutmaster, Committee Chair and parents.
4. In specific cases, a parent may be required to attend every activity and/or meeting in order for the Scout to attend;
5. In severe or repeated cases, suspension from the troop for a period will be required; previous practice has been from several weeks to several months depending on details of event. The Scout must demonstrate understanding of why he was suspended and agreement to not repeat behavior to be readmitted to troop activities after suspension.

Adult communication is important; ASMs and other adults need to talk to each other if there are issues among the Scouts. Many times the same issue occurs multiple times involving the same Scout but different adults. Make sure that SM/CC know what is going on so we can coordinate responses and integrate multiple events to properly gauge the depth of the issue.

As a general reminder, all adults should be aware of the Council statement on the next page concerning Georgia legal requirements for reporting by volunteers of any incidents involving potential abuse of a child.

Georgia's Mandated Reporter Law Includes All Volunteer Leaders

The Georgia mandated reporting law was recently expanded to include all volunteers working for child serving organizations. The law states, "Having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused shall report or cause reports of that abuse to be made." This report must happen within 24 hours.

BSA reporting requirements are consistent with this statutory responsibility. For additional information, including both Georgia and BSA reporting procedures, see the following Atlanta Area Council web site link: <http://www.atlantabsa.org/youth-protection/report-an-issue/59752>