

Anti-Child Abuse

Because some positions within Girl Scouts of Greater South Texas have direct contact with children, Girl Scouts of Greater South Texas supports and maintains environments that are free of child abuse and neglect. All 50 states have passed some form of mandatory child abuse and neglect reporting law in order to qualify for funding under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). CAPTA mandates "minimum definitions" for child abuse and sexual abuse. Child abuse or neglect is any recent act or failure to act:

...resulting in imminent risk of serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation of a child by a parent or caretaker who is responsible for the child's welfare (the definition of 'child' may vary from state to state, but is usually a person under the age of 18).

Sexual abuse is defined as:

...employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of such conduct; or rape, and in cases of caretaker or inter-familial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children.

Sexual abuse may also include sexual touching and bodily contact, exhibitionism, voyeurism, and/or involvement of children in pornographic material.

All states require certain professionals and institutions to report suspected child abuse. Failure to report suspected child abuse can result in criminal and/or civil liability. All states require the report to be made to some type of law enforcement authority or child protection agency. Reporting to a parent or relative will not satisfy the reporter's legal duty under the statutes. All complaints of child abuse or neglect of a girl member will be forwarded to the chief executive office and chief operating officer for immediate resolution. Girl Scouts of Greater South Texas will not just terminate but also prosecute in the event that an employee or volunteer is found guilty of abuse.

In accordance with these statutes, Girl Scouts of Greater South Texas will neither condone nor tolerate:

- infliction of physically abusive behavior or bodily injury upon girl members
- physical neglect of girl members, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to Girl Scout activities
- emotional maltreatment of girl members, including verbal abuse and/or verbal attacks
- Also for the purpose of preventing abuse, adults are not allowed to be alone with girls.

Girl Scouts of Greater South Texas reserves the right to refuse membership, and to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with the organization any employee or volunteer who is found guilty of child abuse or neglect or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect. Local (more stringent) prevailing statutes may supersede Girl Scout policies.

By signing below I _____ acknowledge that I have read and understand the Anti-Child Abuse procedure for the Girl Scouts of Greater South Texas.

Printed Name

Position & Troop #

Signature

Date