

Kingdom of Caid¹

Guidelines for the Protection of Youths

Questions and Answers

How does Caid prevent child abuse at SCA events or gatherings?

The Kingdom of Caid has adopted a number of policies aimed at eliminating opportunities for abuse within the kingdom or its branch groups. These policies focus on leadership selection and on placing barriers to abuse within our activities.

Leadership

The Kingdom takes great pride in the quality of our warranted Youth Activity officers and Youth Marshals. Being a supervisor for youth activities or any youth martial activity in Caid is a privilege, not a right. The quality of both youth activities and youth martial activities, and the safety of our youth members, call for high-quality adult supervision. We work closely with our members to help recruit the best possible leaders for their youth activities and youth martial activities. The SCA has implemented a background check policy for the benefit of our membership and the organization. The background checks are performed by a properly licensed vendor selected by Corporate, for all persons in leadership and supervisory roles that may require contact with otherwise unchaperoned minors. Officials who are required to have background checks include, but are not limited to, youth activities officers at all levels, adults acting as youth marshals for any martial activity, persons organizing/in charge of youth activities for events. To provide flexibility, it is recommended that seneschals and territorial constables obtain background checks as well.

While no current screening techniques exist that can identify every potential child molester, we can reduce the risk of accepting a child molester by learning all we can about an applicant for a warranted youth activities leadership position-his or her experience with children, why he or she wants to be a SCA youth activities leader, and what discipline techniques her or she would use.

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Barriers to Abuse within the SCA

The Kingdom of Caid has adopted the following policies to provide additional security for our members. These policies are primarily for the protection of our youth members; however, they also serve to protect our adult leaders from false accusations of abuse.

- **Two-deep leadership:** Two adults (at or above the age of legal majority in the state, province, or country in which the activity occurs), unrelated to one another by blood, marriage, or relationship, must be present. This policy does not relieve parents or guardians of their primary responsibility for the welfare and behavior of their children. *Parents or guardians who bring minors to an event (as defined in Corpora) must ensure their children's activities are compliant with SCA Governing documents, Laws, Policies, and site rules – to include those requiring minors 12 and under to be within sight/sound of responsible parents/guardians.* This policy is not subject to variance nor does it permit pre-existing non-conforming activities. Individuals in charge of events are required to enforce this policy. If an activity begins with compliance, but the number of un-related adults present drops below two, the activity will cease at once and not resume until compliance is re-established. Persons in charge of events are required to report to their branch superior when non-compliance has been discovered.
- **No one-on-one contact:** One-on-one contact between youth activity leaders and un-related youths attending events or gatherings is not permitted. A youth activity leader should not accompany an individual child to the bathroom. Groups of children may be escorted to the facility building by the leader. In situations that require private conversations, the meeting is to be conducted in view of others.
- **Respect of privacy:** Youth activity leaders must respect the privacy of youth members in situations such as trips to the restrooms, and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require. Parents are ultimately responsible for seeing to the physical needs of their children. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.
- **No secret organizations:** Caid does not recognize any secret organizations as part of its youth activities. All aspects of SCA youth activities and youth martial activities are open to observation by parents and guardians.
- **Appropriate attire:** Proper clothing for activities is required. For example, skinny-dipping is not appropriate as part of SCA youth activities; proper personal protective equipment is required for any youth martial activity.
- **Constructive discipline:** Discipline used in Caid should be constructive and reflect SCA values of honor and chivalry. Corporal punishment is never permitted. In Caid, warranted Youth Officers or other adults supervising youth activities, or any youth martial activity have no authority to discipline or restrain children other than their own, unless the children are in immediate danger of hurting themselves or others.
- **Bullying & Hazing prohibited:** Bullying is intentional aggressive behavior. Bullying behavior can include teasing, insulting someone (particularly about their weight or height, race, sexuality, religion or other personal traits), shoving, hitting, excluding someone, or gossiping about someone. It can take the form of

physical or verbal harassment and involves an imbalance of power (a group of children can gang up on a victim or someone who is physically bigger or more aggressive can intimidate someone else, for instance). Bullying behavior is frequently repeated unless there is intervention. Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any SCA youth activity or ceremony.

What is child abuse?

Generally speaking, *child abuse* is injury of a child by an adult or older child that might not be intentional, but is not accidental. It is usually classified as physical abuse, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse. Harm caused by withholding life's necessities – food, water, clothing, shelter, medical care, education-is called *neglect*.

How can I tell if a child has been abused?

Each child reacts to abuse differently. In *physical abuse*, injuries to the child might be evident, but with any kind of abuse, children often give only behavioral clues. You should be alert to changes in the child's behavior. Any abrupt change in behavior that is maintained for a week or longer is a sign that the child is experiencing stress that could stem from a variety of causes-including child abuse. If you notice this kind of change in behavior, you should consider seeking help for the child. Some of the specific signs for each kind of abuse are listed below:

Physical Abuse

A child who has been physically abused might exhibit suspicious injuries. These injuries are different from those normally associated with childhood "wear and tear."

Burns. Burns that might indicate a child has been abused include cigarette or cigar burns on the soles of the feet, the palms of the hands, the back, or the genital areas. Other burns associated with abuse are *friction* or *tether burns* on the wrists, ankles, or around the neck caused by ropes used to tie the child. *Wet burns* on the hands and feet that appear to be glove-like or sock-like are caused by forcing the child to bathe in water that is too hot. *Dry burns* leave distinctive marks in the shape of the instrument used to inflict them. Commonly, in child abuse cases, these include electric irons, radiator grates, and stove burners.

Bruises. Bruises of different colors, indicating infliction at different times and in different stages of healing, often indicate abuse. This is particularly true if the bruises are on the abdomen, back, or face. Bruises, like burns, also might have distinctive shapes indicating the weapon used to inflict them.

Lacerations and abrasions. Children often have scraped knees, shins, palms, or elbows-predictable injuries. When children have lacerations and abrasions in soft tissue areas, such as on the abdomen, back, backs of arms and legs, or external genitalia, it is a strong

indicator of physical abuse. Human bite marks especially when they are recurrent and appear to be adult-sized, are also strongly indicative of abuse.

Fractures. Unexplained fractures are cause for concern. A child with multiple fractures is almost certain to be a victim of abuse. Other signs include swollen or tender limbs and spiral fractures caused by jerking of the arms.

Children who have been physically abused also are likely to show signs of childhood stress. Childhood stress can result from any upsetting situation in the child's environment such as family disruption, death of a pet, or even a move to a new neighborhood. It can also be a result of child abuse. If a child abruptly changes his behavior for more than a few days in a manner that you feel is inappropriate, you might want to ask the child if something is wrong or if you can help. Do not immediately jump to the conclusion that the child has been abused.

Bullying

Bullying can cause a victim to feel upset, afraid, ashamed, embarrassed, and anxious about going to events. It can involve children of any age, including younger elementary grade-schoolers and even kindergarteners

Emotional Abuse

The indicators of emotional abuse are hard to detect. Some visible signs are lagging physical development and habit disorders such as thumb sucking or rocking.

Neglect

As with emotional abuse, the signs of neglect are usually very subtle and hard to detect. A neglected child might show up at SCA meetings inappropriately dressed, lacking in personal hygiene, and consistently hungry.

Sexual Abuse

Perhaps the best evidence that a child has been sexually abused is that the abuse is witnessed--if not by you, then by another individual. Another excellent indication is that the child says that they have been abused. Again, oftentimes this information may not come from the child himself but from another source.

Physical evidence of sexual abuse, if present at all, tends to be temporary. These signs include difficulty in walking; torn, stained, or bloody underwear; pain or itching in the genital area; bruises or bleeding of the external genitalia; and sexually transmitted diseases.

The *behavioral signs* of sexual abuse are likely to be more conspicuous and present longer. Specific behaviors related to child sexual abuse are an age-inappropriate understanding of sex; reluctance to be left alone with a particular person; persistent and inappropriate sex play with peers or toys; prostitution; wearing lots of clothing, especially to bed; drawings of genitalia; fear of touch; abuse of animals; masturbation in public; nightmares or night terrors; apprehension when the subject of sexual abuse is brought up; and cross-dressing.

The presence of any of these behaviors indicates a possibility that sexual abuse has occurred. They are not, in and of themselves, conclusive evidence that the child has been abused.

What should I do if I notice any of these signs?

First, you should not jump to any conclusions. The signs of child abuse are often ambiguous; they can mean something other than child abuse. Consider stating your observations to the child's parents. For example, you could say, "For the past three months, Johann has been very disruptive at meetings/practices. He is very aggressive with the other youths and uses foul language. This behavior is very unlike him. I hope that everything is okay." You should **not** make any accusations to the parents that the child is being abused. Even if you file a report with the Kingdom Seneschal or the authorities because you suspect child abuse, you should not make accusations or state your suspicions to others who are not responsible for determining if abuse is occurring.

What should I do if I suspect that a child is being abused?

If you suspect or hear that a child **at an SCA event or gathering** is being abused, you must contact the Kingdom Seneschal. They have already established contacts with the child protective services and law enforcement agencies in your area. They will be able to tell you what you should do. They will also tell you that they must contact the appropriate authorities and report your suspicions to them. If you suspect that a child who **is not at an SCA event or gathering** is being abused, you should contact your local child abuse hot line. Generally the telephone number to report child abuse is listed in the white pages under "child abuse."

What if I am not sure that the child is being abused?

The law requires only that you have a reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused. People are often concerned about being sued for reporting child abuse. You are not required to know for certain that a child has been abused. All that the law requires is that you have a reasonable suspicion and are reporting in "good faith." When these requirements are met, all states provide immunity from liability for child abuse reporters. Once a report has been made, the appropriate agency will investigate and determine if abuse can be substantiated. Unless you make a report, the child might remain in grave danger.

How can I tell if a person is a child molester?

Child molesters, individuals who sexually abuse children, do not fit the common stereotypes that we hold, i.e., strangers, dirty old men, mentally disabled, etc. There is no test or other screening mechanism that will identify a child molester prior to committing an offense. Child molesters come from all walks of life, all social and ethnic groups, and all occupational categories. Child molesters might have positions of prominence in their communities. The vast majority of molesters are known by the children they victimize and might have a position of authority over children, such as a teacher, clergy member, youth group worker, or police officer.

How can we protect our children from child molesters?

Child molesters often try to gain access to children through legitimate means such as becoming involved in youth activities. They use this access to identify children who they perceive to be vulnerable to sexual abuse. To protect our children, we must establish and maintain open lines of communication so that they feel free to report any inappropriate or worrisome contact with adults or older children. Parents must educate their children to enable them to understand what abuse is and that they have the right to resist any offensive contact.

How can parents help protect their children?

Parents participate in the protection of their children in a variety of ways. We have already mentioned the need for open lines of communication so that children are encouraged to bring any troubles to their parents for advice and counsel. Parents should help their children know, understand and practice the "three Rs" of Youth Protection. In addition, parents need to be involved in their children's SCA youth activities. In Caid, minor children below the age of 5 years should not be left unsupervised by the parent or responsible adult at SCA functions, even at planned youth activities. Minors under 12 years old should be in eyesight/earshot of the parent, designated adult or teenager (as determined by the parent). This "sight & sound" policy does not include the use of electronic means of communication, i.e. cell phones, walkie-talkies, or FRS radios. Youths in this age range should not be allowed to wander freely at official events and should be checked on periodically by their parent/responsible adult to ensure their safety and suitable behavior.

What are the "three Rs" of Youth Protection?

The "three Rs" of Youth Protection convey a simple message that the SCA wants its youth members and their parents/guardians to learn:

- **Recognize** situations that place them at risk of being molested, how child molesters operate, and that anyone could be a molester.
- **Resist** unwanted and inappropriate attention. Resistance will stop most attempts at molestation.

- **Report** attempted or actual molestation to a parent or other trusted adult. This prevents further abuse of them and helps to protect other children. Let the youth know they will not be blamed for what occurred.

Why do most child victims of sexual abuse keep the abuse secret?

A victim of child sexual abuse is under a great deal of pressure to keep the abuse secret. In many cases of child molestation, the molester has threatened to harm the child or a member of the child's family. The molester might have told the child that he would not be believed even if the child did tell. Another common situation is that the molester will tell the child that if the child tells about the abuse, he will get into trouble. The clear message is given to the child that if another person finds out, something bad will happen to the child. This pressure to maintain silence can often be successfully overcome by establishing open communication between children and adults through a proper educational program for children.

What should I do if a child tells me that he has been sexually abused?

How an adult responds to a child when he tries to disclose abuse can influence the outcome of the child's victimization. By maintaining an apparent calm, the adult can help reassure the child that every thing is going to be okay. By not criticizing the child, we counteract any statements the molester made to the victim about the child getting into trouble.

Reassure the child that you are concerned about what happened to them and that you would like to get them some help. Allegations by a youth concerning abuse at an SCA event or gathering must be reported to the Kingdom Seneschal. Since these reports are required, the child should be told that you have to tell the proper authorities but that you will not tell anyone else. It is important that you not tell anyone other than the Kingdom Seneschal or the child protective services agency about allegations of abuse-if the allegations cannot be substantiated, you could be sued for defamation of character.

Youth Member Behavior Guidelines

The Society for Creative Anachronism is an international organization dedicated to researching and re-creating the arts and skills of pre-17th-century Europe. Our goal is to help our youth develop into honorable citizens of the SCA. Through fun, adventure, and challenge, we strive to help our youth become confident, resourceful, generous, and responsible persons who can be counted on to do their best even in difficult situations. We encourage them to develop special skills and knowledge related to the Middle Ages, to learn about their family heritage and the heritage of others, to develop their own persona, and to be of service to others. We also encourage our youth to respect themselves enough that they strive to be as physically and mentally fit as possible through healthful living and the development of good judgment and sound decision making skills.

The SCA has the expectation that all participants in SCA events and gatherings will relate to each other in accord with the principles embodied in the seven knightly virtues. All participants are expected to behave as ladies or gentlemen.

One of the developmental tasks of childhood is to learn appropriate behavior. Children are not born with an innate sense of propriety and they need guidance and direction. The example set by positive adult role models is a powerful tool for shaping behavior and a tool that is stressed in SCA youth activities.

Misbehavior by a single youth member at a SCA event or gathering may constitute a threat to the safety of the individual who misbehaves as well as to the safety of others involved in the activity. Such misbehavior constitutes an unreasonable burden on the local SCA branch and cannot be ignored.

Children exhibiting lewd, violent, or otherwise severely problematic behavior at organized activities should be returned to parents. Parents of youth members who misbehave should be informed and asked for assistance in dealing with it. The Event Steward and/or Branch Seneschal should be notified of the problem if such actions must be taken.

Member Responsibilities

All members of the SCA are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in the SCA Governing Documents, Kingdom Law, Officer Policies, or site rules. All participants are expected to behave as ladies or gentlemen.

Minors whose behaviors violate SCA Governing Documents, Kingdom Law, Officer Policies, or site rules will be escorted to their parent/guardian and issued a verbal warning for the first offense at an event. The matter will be reported to the Kingdom Seneschal.

On a second offense at a given event, the parent/guardian will be required to keep their minor(s) with them for the remainder of the gathering. A report will be tendered to the Kingdom and Society Seneschals.

For a third offense, the minor(s) and parents/guardians will be expelled from the event, and the matter will be reported to the Kingdom and the Society Seneschals.

Habitual offenders will be subject to review by Kingdom and Society level for possible sanctions.

Branch Responsibilities

Youth activities must be approved by the local group Seneschal and/or Event Steward and by the group's warranted Youth Officer. If the group has no warranted Youth Officer, the plan is submitted to the Kingdom Youth Officer for review and comment. The local group Seneschal must ensure that a background checked individual in charge of

youth activities is present at the event and is fully aware of all relevant policies and guidelines concerning minors and the running of activities.

Local Groups must ensure the “Two Deep Leadership” model of supervision is followed at all Youth Activities as outlined by the Society Seneschal policy.

Local Seneschals and Event Stewards should ensure adequate support is provided for youth activities.

Youth activities are to be located in plain sight, near the center of activity, with consideration given to minimizing noise, traffic and safety issues. Caution should be exercised when activities are hosted in a private room of an event facility. There, as at Collegium Caidis, the use of private rooms or classrooms is permissible for Youth Activities or Youth Track classes, provided the “Two Deep Leadership” model of supervision is followed. Youth activities or classes shall not be located in private camps at overnight events in Caid.

When activities with minors present are out of compliance with the two deep leadership rules, the official discovering the lapse will correct it immediately or terminate the activity. All lapses require a report of the incident to the official’s superior. Under emergency conditions it is expected that persons in charge will act to ensure safety first and compliance second.

Individuals who knowingly violate this policy will be banned from representing the SCA as an officer in the operations chain via administrative sanctions as described in Corpora Section X, and the Uniform Sanction Procedure.

It is expressly forbidden for any officer in the SCA to accept responsibility for minors other than their own children or for those for whom they are temporary guardians as recorded on the minor wavier.

The SCA Youth Officers or other adults supervising children’s activities have no authority to discipline or restrain children other than their own, unless the children are in immediate danger of hurting themselves or others. Youth Officers will not be held responsible for correcting the conduct of children attending activities. Likewise, as parents and children must follow rules attendant to participation in events, Youth Officers are not responsible for children who leave activities unsupervised.