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THE CUB SCOUT LEADER'S ROLE

Child abuse is an increasingly serious, widespread problem in society, affecting every ethnic group, socioeconomic level, and geographic area. The significance of this problem is revealed by the nearly 3 million cases of child abuse reported each year in the United States. The Boy Scouts of America has developed Youth Protection training to prepare its leadership to help children who have been, or are being, abused.

The training program includes information for parents as well as the video *It Happened to Me*. Materials are for use in pack and den meetings to show Cub Scouts—with their parents—what they should do to prevent sexual abuse from happening to them. In addition, the BSA has adopted a comprehensive set of policies and procedures to help ensure that Scouting continues to be safe for all participants. **Criminal background checks are required for all new leaders, and the adult application form requires that the applicant provide a Social Security number.**

As Cub Scout leader, you can help make the world safer for children in at least three ways:

1. **Increase your knowledge about child abuse** so that you will be in a better position to help protect the children in your life—your own sons and daughters, and children in your neighborhood, church, and community.

2. **Help others learn the steps that help them to protect themselves.** You can have a direct effect on the members of your pack and den by helping them learn ways to protect themselves.
3. **Implement the Youth Protection policies and procedures of the BSA within your unit.** By implementing these safety policies, you will help the Scouting program continue to be a safe environment for children.

The Boy Scouts of America will not tolerate any form of child abuse in its program and will take all necessary steps to remove any offenders from membership in the BSA.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Definitions of what constitutes child abuse vary, and state laws give the specific definition of child abuse for that state. (State definitions also establish the ages of children covered—generally those younger than 18 years of age.) A common definition of child abuse might be “the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child that can cause injury or psychological damage.”

