

TROOP MEETING GUIDE: A TIME TO TELL

Step-by-Step Guide for Using the Youth Protection Video, *A Time to Tell*, with your Boy Scout Troop

1. Obtain the video, *A Time to Tell*, from your local council service center and review it.
2. If after viewing the video, you decide that you would like support from individuals more informed about child abuse, such help is often available from your police department or child protective services agency.
3. Reserve a copy of the video for the date on which you plan to use it with your troop.
4. At least two weeks before showing the video to your troop, notify the parents about the scheduled meeting and urge their attendance. (The sample letter for parents may be used for this purpose.)
5. Before the troop meeting at which the video will be shown, review the leader's guide and become familiar with the issues to be emphasized in the discussion following the video's showing.
6. Conduct the meeting at which the video will be shown. (See the suggested agenda for this meeting.)

Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Parents

Child sexual abuse is so prevalent in American society that one in seven boys might be sexually abused before reaching adulthood; the percentage of sexually abused girls is even greater. To respond to this growing social problem, the Boy Scouts of America has developed comprehensive Youth protection training that addresses the problem of child abuse and at the same time helps Scouting continue to provide a safe environment and meet high standards of leadership for our youth members.

At our troop meeting on (day and date) at (time), we will show the video, *At Time to Tell*. This award-winning video was produced by the Boy Scouts of America to educate boys 11 years of age and older about child sexual abuse and the steps they should take to protect themselves from being sexually abused.

A Time to Tell is an important part of the BSA's Youth Protection training. Each Boy Scout troop is encouraged to show the video to its members once a year. The video presents common situations in which sexual abuse might occur. It emphasizes the BSA's "three Rs" of Youth Protection that instruct children to **recognize** that child molesters can be anyone and to be aware of situations in which the youth can be at increased risk of being abused, **resist** advances made by child molesters, and **report** to parents or another trusted adult any molestation or attempted molestation.

You are invited to attend the viewing of *A Time to Tell* with your son. Child abuse professionals unanimously agree that open communication between parents and children is

vital to prevent child abuse. Your viewing of this video will help to provide a common point of reference for subsequent discussions between you and your son on this topic.

I hope that you will be able to join us on (date).

Sincerely,

Scoutmaster

Suggested Agenda for Meeting

- I. Hold an opening ceremony
- II. Introduce the video, *A Time to Tell*. Refer to the leader's guide for points to use in the introduction.
- III. Show *A Time to Tell*.
- IV. Discussion: Refer to the leader's guide for points to use while discussing the video after it has been viewed.
- V. Hold a Scoutmaster's Minute. Use one of the following Scoutmaster's minutes from *Woods Wisdom*:
 - A. Be Prepared for Any Old Thing
 - B. Setting Standards
 - C. Your Decision
- VI. Close.

Leader's Guide

Introduction

The video, A Time to Tell, was produced by the Boy Scouts of America to inform boys 11 years of age and older about child sexual abuse and ways to prevent it. It is important that we all recognize that child sexual abuse is a serious problem in our society and that you are prepared to take appropriate steps if you or your friends are confronted by a person who attempts to put you in a situation where sexual abuse could occur.

Nobody expects that you are going to be sexually abused. However, just as we learn first aid skills to prepare ourselves in case we ever need to use them, we also need to learn about sexual abuse. As you watch this video, think about what you would do if you were the intended victim. Would you

- **Recognize** the situations that should be avoided to stop abuse from happening?
- Know how to **resist** the unwanted attention and touching by the child molester?
- Have the courage to **report** the incident to an adult (such as your parent) so that future molestations could be stopped and other children would be protected?

(Show the video, *A Time to Tell*.)

Discussions

*How do the three situations in this video demonstrate methods used by child molesters to place children at risk of being abused? Would you be able to **recognize** these methods if someone tried to use them on you?*

Scenario I. Gary's stepfather seeks to exploit normal physical affection and emotional loss.

- A. Gary's stepfather gradually moves to become physically closer to him.
1. He moves from the end of the couch to sit next to Gary.
 2. He places his arm over Gary's shoulder and hugs him.
- B. The stepfather uses Gary's sadness over the loss of his father to build trust level.
- C. The stepfather exploits Gary's natural curiosity about sex to expose him to a pornographic video in order to justify sexual advances

Scenario II. Jeff is given special attention by David, a longtime friend of the family.

- A. David takes Jeff to a video arcade and treats him to fun. (Note: Is there anything unusual about an adult hanging around with teenagers?)
- B. David pretends that he needs help so that he can get Jeff alone at his house.
- C. David uses a variety of excuses to break down Jeff's resistance to molestation.
1. Removing shirts
 2. Drying off with a towel, causing physical contact (Continue discussing the need to recognize strategies and situations used by the child molesters in the video to set the stage for sexual abuse.)
 3. David offers beer to Jeff. (Alcohol and drugs are often used to lower inhibitions.)
 4. David convinces Jeff to take a shower before he goes home.

Scenario III. Carlos would like to join a "club" of teenage boys led by Tony, an older teenager who encourages the boys to participate in sex games.

- A. Tony uses money to attract club members.
1. He drives a flashy car.
 2. He pays their admission to concerts and sporting events.
 3. He provides drugs and alcohol.
- B. Drugs and alcohol also serve the purpose of lowering the boys' resistance.
- C. Tony uses peer pressure to involve them in sexual activities.

*How do the boys in the video **resist** the molesters when they recognize what is happening?*

Scenario I. Gary yells "No! Stop! What are you doing?" and flees to the next-door neighbor.

Scenario II. Jeff stops David from getting in the shower with him, gets dressed in a hurry, and goes home.

Scenario III. Carlos leaves the party early, but not before he felt violated.

None of the situations required a physical fight. Child molesters will usually end their attempts at sexual abuse if there is even slight resistance.

Some boys can be involved in sexual activity before they realize what is really happening. They can still minimize their abuse by getting away from the abuser and telling someone.

When older youths or adults abuse younger children (through tricks or however it happens), the younger children should understand that the abuse was not their fault.

What happened when each of the intended victims reported the incident?

Scenario I. Gary's mother reported the abuse to the local child protective services and Gary received counseling from a social worker.

Scenario II. Jeff's father reported his longtime friend David to the police.

Scenario III. Carlos's father did not listen, but Carlos told his mother and she got the father to listen. They then went to the police.

Each boy sought help from his parents and each was helped appropriately. Reporting the incident of sexual abuse also stopped abuse from happening to others.

In some cases, the molester can be helped when victims report sexual abuse.

What rights do children have when confronted with possible sexual abuse?

Conclusion

This evening we have examined one of the problems that are unfortunately too common in today's society. For additional information, see the section on child abuse in the Boy Scout Handbook, pages 529-30.

*For parents, I want to call your attention to the BSA publication, *How to Protect Your children from Child abuse and Drug Abuse: A Parent's guide*, inserted in the front of each Boy Scout Handbook. This booklet has more information concerning child abuse plus exercises intended for you and your son.*

The Boy Scout motto is Be Prepared. By learning about child sexual abuse, you will be better prepared to prevent abuse from happening to you or know what to do if you become abused. Remember the "three Rs" of Youth Protection:

- **Recognize**
- **Resist, and**
- **Report.**