



DISTRICT 5080

Youth Exchange

Crisis Management Plan

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Revised

2022.07.31

6.01 Crisis Management Procedures

1. Purpose

The Health, safety and security of our volunteers and program participants is our highest priority. Additionally, the privacy of all students, and any other persons involved, in any incident, injury, or crisis **MUST** be protected at all times. As such, this document has been developed to serve as an important procedural resource to assist South Central Rotary Youth Exchange (hereby referred to as SCRYE) member districts, volunteers and participants to respond effectively when a crisis occurs to minimize risk and help ensure the safety of all, to the greatest extent possible.

Procedures proposed in this Crisis Management Plan incorporate Rotary International's "Guidelines for Youth Exchange Emergencies", and are included in the section, [Guidelines for RYE Emergencies from RI](#).

11. Preparation and crisis prevention

a. **Development:**

The SCRYE crisis management plan includes a comprehensive assessment of the local risks, in collaboration with the following external agencies:

U.S. Department of State

<https://j1visa.state.gov/programs/>

Centers for Disease Control

<https://j1visa.state.gov/programs/>

Council on Standards for International Exchange Travel

<https://www.csiet.org/>

b. **Training Schedule:**

1. The SCRYE Crisis Management Team will meet annually to review the plan and perform a training exercise.
2. Each District Crisis Management Team will meet annually to review the plan, perform a training exercise and update its District contact list using the form attached as Appendix A.
3. SCRYE and their member Districts will meet as soon as reasonable, after any incident, for a debriefing and after-action review of the response.
4. District Rotarians and Volunteers working with youth will receive annual training.
5. Students will receive in-person training during inbound and outbound annual training.

c. Planned and Unplanned Simulations

For the purpose of testing for readiness in the event of a crisis, the District governor may initiate a planned or unplanned simulation of a crisis. The following guidelines will be followed during both a planned and unplanned simulation:

1. It will be clearly identified that the crisis is a simulation and there is no immediate risk to young people or volunteers.
2. A crisis simulation shall not be conducted during an active crisis or immediately following a resolved crisis.
3. A crisis simulation shall not be conducted during a scheduled conference, training event, planned group travel, or other event to avoid confusion.
4. The district governor will confirm when the crisis simulation has ended.
5. The Crisis Management Team will immediately conduct a debriefing session.

d. Host Club Preparedness

Clubs should form a Crisis Management Committee. You should identify people now that may be on your Crisis Management Committee should the need arise. Each Committee Member should be given a printed copy of the District Manual section on Crisis Management and all should be aware of the District Policies on Crisis Management. You may add persons on your Committee as the need arises (for example you may want the current host family as part of your Committee but will only assign them if an incident occurs and the family will be different depending on where the student is staying at the time). Suggested Club Crisis Management Team members are as follows: Club YEO in charge of designate, Club YE Committee, Club Counselor, Club President, and Host Parents. Some or all of the above may be appropriate for your Committee.

Although they are rare, unfortunate situations do occasionally arise during Youth Exchange activities. Preparation for any possibility is an essential part of a Youth Exchange program. How the exchange student's family and the media perceive that emergency was handled will have a direct impact on the program.

111. DISTRICT MANAGEMENT TEAM

The SCRYE Management Committee will serve as SCRYE's Crisis Management Team (CMT). The primary contact persons for the SCRYE CMT are the Executive Secretary, The Assistant Executive Secretary, and the President. The CMT for each member district will constitute the following members and include the outline responsibilities. In the event of a vacancy, temporary or leave of absence, or incapacitation of any member of the district CMT, the District Governor shall designate a trained replacement.

District 5080 RYE Crisis Management Team

The following people comprise the crisis management team for D5080:

- **D5080 RYE Crisis Management Officer (CMO) – The D5080 RYE Crisis Management Officer is the Youth Protection Officer of the country the incident occurred.** Unless otherwise noted, the CMO will be the point person for contact during the course of the crisis. All inquiries shall be directed to the CMO. Depending on the seriousness of the crisis, other individuals may be named to assist. Assists with overseeing the crisis response and serves as a consultant (when appropriate) or consults with local experts for guidance when necessary, monitors developments of the situation, and coordinates communication within the district and its clubs and with Rotary International. This person does not need to be an active member of a club to serve in this role.
- **D5080 District Governor:** If the DG is unable to be involved, they will assign someone from the DG line. Oversees all aspects of crisis response, convenes meetings, and delegates tasks as necessary. Represent the district and serves as the appointed spokesperson when answering media inquiries. Has ultimate decision-making authority when determining the level of a crisis (upon consultation with the CMT) and actions to take in response to a crisis according to the response protocols. A trained alternate should also be available in case the governor is impacted by the crisis or otherwise unable to perform their crisis management duties.
- **D5080 RYE Chair:** Serves as the main point-of-contact for students and families involved in Rotary Youth Exchange, coordinating communication with them. Responsible for ensuring all students are safe and accounted for in the event of a crisis. Responsible for reporting updates to all members of the CMT.
- **Mental Health Professionals:** Districts will identify a local male and female health professional or facility where these individuals would be available for response.

- Media Officer: Districts will direct all media inquiries to an individual who will work directly with the District governor and SCRYE. **In accordance with the Rotary International Code of Policies, only the District governor, or his/her designated representative, has the authority to communicate with the media.** Additional instructions for media inquiries is discussed later in this plan.
- Additional CMT, as assigned.

In the absence of the CMO, the D5080 RYE Chair shall be responsible for leading the Crisis Management Team. In the absence of both then a team member will be appointed in charge.

Each member district may appoint additional persons to its CMT and assign duties and responsibilities to such persons (the “Additional CMT”). Attorneys, school administrators, physicians and other trained professionals should be on standby, if not members of the district CMT or the Additional CMT.

District Crisis Team Members will endeavor to remain accessible in the event of an emergency. If members will be away and not accessible (checking phone messages and email), they will notify the CMO of their absence and/or appoint a temporary replacement.

All persons should recognize and appreciate that timely, accurate and concise information is critical to effectively manage a crisis. Please keep this in mind when providing information relating to the crisis.

A crisis involving a group may not necessarily involve the death of a student; a group crisis could involve a transportation accident, food poisoning, building fire, and many other possibilities. Even if there are no serious injuries or illnesses the crisis may exist because of public perception, especially when involving the Inbound student’s home embassy and the press. If in doubt, notify the CMO and the D5080 RYE Chair.

1V. Task Assignment by the D5080 RYE CMO

When a tragic event occurs, things need to be done quickly. To avoid duplication and confusion the CMO will ask for assistance from the Club, the District Crisis Management Team and anyone else needed to accomplish the needed tasks. The District Team and the Club Team will work together to come up with solutions.

Speaking to the Media. The DG or designate will be the spokesperson for the media. Please refer the media to the CMO or designate and inform the CMO or designate of the media inquiry with contact information.

Notifying Affected People. The following people need to be informed and the CMO will ask for assistance as needed to inform everyone:

- Natural Parents/Legal Guardians (In case of death, obtain clear instructions concerning burial, cremation or return of the body. Also ask about memorial service. Consideration must be given to the religion of the deceased.)
- Host family, club counselor, and District Youth Exchange Chair.
- Host District Governor and the Governor of the sponsoring district
- Host Rotary club, for assistance and guidance (if the accident occurs away from the host area, you might want to contact a local Rotary club for assistance and guidance)
- Insurance company (remember to follow up)
- Embassy Officer – to obtain his/her advice

Reporting. The CMO with the help of the Club Crisis Management Team will write a report of the incident for submission to the District Governor.

V. Initial Response

Following these tips to ensure a measured and effective approach to handling a crisis situation.

Safety First. Take action to protect the student, family or whoever needs protecting. You may need to call an ambulance, fire department, and police or remove the student from a home or situation when in danger.

Take a Few Minutes. Once the initial situation is stabilized, take a few minutes to make a plan of action. Think about what you need to do BEFORE doing something without a plan. Follow the steps with this document.

Doing something without a plan may later cause you problems. You may need to activate your Club Crisis Management Team. MAKE NOTES of the time, date, and student involved and regarding what happened. In your notes answer the questions of who, what, where, when, how etc. The few minutes you take now will help everyone from this point forward. Call for help from the CMO to assist you in your plan.

Contact the District RYE Crisis Management Officer (CMO) or a member of the District Youth Exchange Crisis Management Team if you cannot contact the CMO for assistance. Provide details of the incident. The CMO now takes over management of the crisis. More people will need to be notified and more action will need to be taken. The CMO will assist the Club with advice of what needs to be done next and who will be doing these tasks. By conducting things in this fashion there will be an organized approach and this should eliminate duplication and confusion.

Do not speak to the media other than to advise them that an incident has occurred and is under investigation. Provide the media the name and contact information of the CMO or whoever is handling the crisis from the District Crisis Management Team. Advise the person handling the crisis from the District Team of how to contact the media person making the inquiry. They will be contacted back. It is imperative that there be only ONE person talking to the media. **The DG will be the media person or will appoint someone to the task.**

The Club needs to work with the District Crisis Management Team to make sure that payment for expenses incurred are paid up front. We do not want a tragic situation to become worse and cause further anguish to the student's family over financing what needs to be done in a crisis. The matters need to be taken care of and sorting out of payments will be done later by the insurance company and parents etc. The CMO should approve the expenses to be incurred. The District RYE Committee will back the Club providing the CMO is involved in the decision to incur the expense.

V1. Crisis Situations & Response Protocols

Level 1 (Minor Injury/Accident) -- Initial Response

The emergency (or perceived emergency) does not currently present a significant health or safety risk and does not appear to require medical intervention and involves only one or two people. If more than two people are affected by a minor injury/accident, follow the response protocol for Level II.

1. Immediately alert the on-site or responsible health, safety, or medical personnel to assess the injury/accident
2. Have a qualified/trained volunteer administer first aid to the injured person(s) and safely transport them to the designated area of refuge if needed
3. Continue to monitor the affected person(s) and contact emergency medical assistance if necessary (escalate to Level II)
4. Contact the parent/guardian within 24 hours of the injury/accident

5. Report the injury/accident to the CMO and Rotary International within 72 hours of the injury/accident

Level 2 (Serious Injury/Accident) -- Initial Response

The emergency (or perceived emergency) may present a significant health or safety risk and requires medical intervention for one or more person or more than two people are affected by a minor injury/accident

1. Immediately alert the on-site or responsible health, safety, or medical personnel to assess the injury/accident
2. Immediately contact emergency medical services
3. Have a qualified/trained volunteer administer first aid to the injured person(s) and safely transport them to the designated area of refuge if needed
4. Ensure that other youth program participants are being supervised while attending to the needs of the injured person(s)
5. As soon as emergency medical services arrive, contact the parent/guardian, and CMO who will contact the DG and YEC Chair.
6. If the person(s) are required to be transported to a hospital or emergency medical facility, designate an adult volunteer to accompany them and other adult volunteers to supervise remaining youth program participants
7. Contact the designated person responsible for insurance-related questions or claims to determine what steps may be required to report to insurance provider(s)
8. Determine if there will or may be any media coverage and activate your media crisis response protocols
9. Report the injury/accident to the District Youth Protection Officer and Rotary International within 72 hours of the injury/accident.
10. Report the injury/accident to SCRYE within 72 hours of the injury/accident.

Level 3 (Critical Injury/Accident) -- Initial Response

The emergency (or perceived emergency) presents a significant or critical health or safety risk and requires immediate medical intervention or life-saving procedure.

1. Immediately alert the on-site or responsible health, safety, or medical personnel to assess the injury/accident
2. Immediately contact emergency medical services
3. Have a qualified/trained volunteer administer first aid to the injured person(s) and safely transport them to the designated area of refuge if needed
4. Ensure that other youth program participants are being supervised while attending to the needs of the injured person(s)
5. As soon emergency medical services arrive, contact the parent/guardian and the CMO who will contact the DG and the YEC Chair.
6. Designate an adult volunteer to accompany the person(s) to a hospital or emergency medical facility and designate other adult volunteers to supervise remaining youth program participants
7. Contact the designated person responsible for insurance-related questions or claims to determine what steps may be required to report to insurance provider(s)
8. Determine if there will or may be any media coverage and activate your media crisis response protocols
9. Report the injury/accident to the CMO, District Youth Protection Officer, and Rotary International within 72 hours of the injury/accident.
10. Report the injury/accident to SCRYE within 72 hours of the injury/accident.

Level 1 Physical Health Emergency Initial Response – Monitor

The CMO (Youth Protection Officer) should be notified in all levels of the Physical Health Emergency Situations, including Infectious Diseases, Mental Health Emergencies, Natural Disasters, Political and Civil Unrest, Crime or Violence, Terrorist Threat or Attack, Missing Persons and Death. The CMO will notify the DG and the YEC Chair.

The emergency (or perceived emergency) does not currently directly impact students or volunteers, and is perceived to be a contained/isolated situation

1. Distribute or communicate information to volunteers, students and their parents, and RI related to how the emergency is impacting/has impacted nearby cities, countries, etc., to create awareness and educate stakeholders on how to protect themselves, and to assure them that the situation is being monitored by your crisis management team.
2. Continue to monitor developments, including any alerts and updates issued by federal, state and local government agencies for further guidance.

Level 2 Physical Health Emergency Initial Response – Plan

The situation does not yet directly impact students or volunteers but has developed or progressed/spread to other areas and is no longer isolated or contained

1. Activate crisis team to monitor developments, prepare for and plan for next level of severity
2. Prepare formal communication to individuals who express concerns about the developments, as well as a proactive, informational communication to all stakeholders (volunteers, students and parents)
3. Identify the criteria that would require activities, such as in-person gatherings or travel to be postponed or cancelled
4. Identify the criteria that would require program participants to self-isolate, quarantine, seek medical treatment, or be repatriated
5. Develop a specific plan based on the criteria identified should the emergency spread to or directly impact your region, including students and volunteers, and communicate this plan to all. The plan should include specific dates that actions will be taken if the situation does not improve or worsens
6. Contact the designated person responsible for insurance-related questions or claims to determine what steps may be required to report to insurance provider(s) and to access any resources the carrier may have available
7. Notify the CMO who will notify the DG and YEC chair that a Level 11 Plan has been activated.

Level 3 - Physical Health Emergency Initial Response – Act

The emergency directly affects your district/region, students and volunteers

1. Implement actions steps identify in Level II to prevent risk to students or volunteers (e.g. cancelling activities, events, or travel)
2. Communicate emergency and contingency procedures to students, volunteers and parents
3. Communicate emergency and contingency procedures to all relevant local, national, or international government or health agencies as necessary to coordinate repatriation or safe travel
4. Contact the designated person responsible for insurance-related questions or claims to determine what steps may be required to report to insurance provider(s) and to access any resources the carrier may have available
5. Issue refunds or notice of cancellation for all pre-paid or registered events, trips, or other program-related costs
6. Notify RI within 72 hours of any emergency medical treatment, hospitalization, or repatriation of program participants related to a health emergency
7. Continue to monitor and adapt procedures as situation develops

Level 111 – Act includes the following:

a. Infectious Diseases

1. Obtain from local health authorities and the Centers for Disease Control, if appropriate, recommendations with respect to any infectious disease outbreak that affects students within the district and monitor updates and alerts for further guidance and directives.
2. Ensure student safety and inquire how the infectious disease outbreak has affected the student and/or host family. Set up periodic check-ins with the student and host family until the spread of disease has been controlled. Have substitute host families available if the student must move because of how the disease has affected the current host family.

3. Communicate with SCRYE and RI concerning the infectious disease outbreak and its recommended or mandated actions.
4. Implement action steps commensurate with the situation, which may include quarantine, suspension of or cancellation of in-person events and return of students to their own country if safe and possible to do so.
5. Immediately report the status of each student in the district to the sponsor host country contact and natural parents.
6. Monitor updates and alerts issued by federal, state, provincial and local authorities for further guidance and directives.
7. Maintain constant communication with all affected family members (host and natural), students, host club leaders and sponsor contacts.

b. Mental Health Emergencies

If a student shows symptoms of emotional distress, depression, anxiety, or other mental health issues the insurance provider will be contacted and a visit to a local health facility will be scheduled. The CMO will work with the student, host family and others as appropriate to determine a course of action. These recommendations could range from counselling up to a return to the student's home country.

1. If a student threatens or attempts suicide the local law enforcement agency should be called to escort the student to a medical facility for evaluation. If law enforcement does not consider that lawful restraint of the student, or arrest, is warranted then arrangements will be made through CISI BOLDUC Insurance and the family for the student's safe return home once he or she is stable.
2. If a student threatens or attempts to harm other people or property the local law enforcement agency should be called to escort the student to a medical facility for evaluation. IF law enforcement does not consider that lawful restraint of the student, or arrest, is warranted then arrangements will be made through the insurance provider and the family for the student's safe return home once he or she is stable.

c. Natural Disasters

1. Make immediate arrangements to relocate any student, including ordered evacuations, as required and as soon as it is safe to do so.
2. Ensure that all students are accounted for and safe. Set up daily check ins until the crisis is over and report daily to the CMO who will report to the District governor, the YEC Chair and SCRYE.
3. Report the status of each student to the sponsor country contact and natural parents.
4. Maintain constant communication with all volunteers and students affected.
5. Monitor updates and alerts issued by federal, state, provincial and local authorities for further guidance and directives.

d. Political and civil Unrest

1. Maintain awareness of the situation and environment.
2. Make immediate arrangements to relocate any student, including ordered evacuations, as required as soon as it is safe to do so.
3. Ensure that all students are accounted for and safe. Set up daily check-ins until the crisis is over and report daily to the CMO who will maintain contact with the DG, the YEC Chair and SCRYE.
4. Report the status of each student to the sponsor country contact and natural parents.
5. Maintain constant communication with all volunteers and students affected.
6. Monitor updates and alerts issued by federal, state, provincial and local authorities for further guidance and directives.

e. Crime or Violence

1. Ensure that all students are accounted for and safe. Set up daily check-ins until the crisis is over and report daily to the CMO who will maintain contact with the DG, the YEC Chair and SCRYE.
2. Report the status of each student to the sponsor country contact and natural parents.
3. Work with law enforcement authorities and follow their directions regarding the incident.
4. Notify the designated insurance provider and arrange medical treatment if required.

f. Terrorist Threat or Attack

1. Make immediate arrangements to relocate any student, including ordered evacuations, as required and as soon as it is safe to do so.
2. Ensure that all students are accounted for and safe. Set up daily check ins until the crisis is over and report daily to the CMO who will maintain contact with the DG and SCRYE.
3. Report the status of each student to the sponsor country contact and natural parents.
4. Maintain constant communication with all volunteers and students affected.
5. Monitor updates and alerts issued by federal, state, provincial and local authorities for further guidance and directives.

g. Missing Persons

1. Obtain as many details of the incident as possible and available.
2. Contact the CMT immediately.
3. Work with law enforcement authorities and follow their directions regarding the incident.

h. Death

1. Contact the CMT immediately.
2. Contact the student's natural parents/legal guardians. Obtain clear instructions (ideally written) concerning return of the body. Confirm any religious requirements.
3. Work with local law enforcement authorities for any police reports or special requirements.
4. Work with the local hospital and mortuary for transferring the body. Confirm whether an autopsy is required and obtain the death certificate.
5. Notify the designated insurance provider for assistance and guidance.
6. Contact a local mortuary who is licensed to prepare deceased individuals for international transport. Obtain a copy of all certifications and licenses.
7. Make transportation arrangements and identify a Rotarian(s) to escort the individual home. Obtain and share details of any home country memorial service or other funeral and burial plans.
8. Schedule a local memorial service.

V11. Crisis Resolution

a. De-escalating a Crisis and Declaring a Crisis Resolved

The District Governor, in collaboration with the CMO, shall be responsible for de-escalating a crisis (moving a crisis from a higher level to a lower level) and declaring a crisis resolved according to the following:

- Deescalating a crisis: a crisis level will be moved from a higher level to a lower level, when appropriate, when the all steps in the response protocols have been followed, but there is still a need to maintain a level of crisis awareness or response, and that response is more appropriate to the protocols described by a lower level. The District Governor will communicate with the Core CMT in the event of a de-escalation of a crisis and activate the notification protocols as necessary.
- Declaring a crisis resolved: a crisis will be deemed resolved when all steps in the response protocols have been followed, there is no immediate risk to young people and volunteers, and there is no need to maintain a level of crisis awareness or response. The District Governor will communicate with the Core CMT in the event of a resolution of a crisis and activate the notification protocols as necessary.

b. Debriefing

Immediately following a resolved crisis, a crisis simulation, or a narrowly avoided crisis, the Core CMT shall conduct a debriefing. Members of the Additional CMT may also be included, as necessary. The purpose of the debriefing is to ensure the response protocols were followed, if there are any action steps needed as a result of a crisis resolution, including, but not limited to, making updates to the crisis management plan and conducting emergency training.

A copy of the debriefing questionnaire (Appendix B) shall be included with any formal records and the district governor shall be responsible for ensuring that any actions recommended as a result of the debriefing are implemented.

c. Updating the Crisis Management Plan and Emergency Training

It is important to review the crisis management plan regularly. The plan shall be updated as follows:

1. Annually prior to the start of the new Rotary year, by July 1st.
2. Following any changes to leadership or other youth protection policies.
3. As a result of recommendations from a debriefing following a resolved crisis, a crisis simulation, or a narrowly avoided crisis.
4. Emergency (unscheduled) trainings shall be conducted as follows:
 - Immediately following a resolved crisis when the results of a debriefing reveal a need to do so.
 - If a crisis or emergency that involves young people is narrowly avoided, especially when the results of a debriefing reveal that youth protection policies or response protocols were not followed.

Within one month after the crisis has passed, the District Crisis Management Team along with and others if needed will conference to critique the effectiveness of the District Crisis Management Plan and determine what went well and how improvements could be made for future crises. These proposed changes will be presented to the D5080 RYE Committee at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

V111. Other Important Considerations

a. Supporting Young People During a Crisis

Young people may require additional support, mental health counselling, or medical attention during or immediately following a crisis. It is important to check-in with young people who have experienced a crisis themselves as well as others who may have been present during an it-person emergency or who may also be indirectly impacted (friends, family, or others close to someone who experienced a crisis).

The following procedures should be followed during a crisis and immediately following a crisis:

- a. Assess the physical, mental, and emotional state of young people directly or indirectly impacted by a crisis.
- b. Be supportive yet also respect the young person's right to privacy or confidentiality if there is no reporting requirement.
- c. Schedule a follow-up with anyone directly or indirectly impacted by a crisis with an appropriate person (Club counselor, district Youth Protection Officer, Mental Health advisor, etc.)
- d. Offer additional support services as follows. Notify the designated insurance provider if any additional support services are required.

b. Administrative Protocols

Reporting: All required reporting (district-level, local, state/provincial, national, international and RI) shall be completed within the designate required timeframe.

Record-keeping: An official record of a crisis response, including the corresponding completed debriefing questionnaire, along with any other relevant materials (press/media releases, media coverage, insurance claim application forms, official letters, email correspondence, police reports, etc.) shall be filed along with other private and confidential reports, accessible to only those with a need to review the record.

c. Insurance and Expenses

Insurance: The district maintains liability insurance which can include coverage for bodily injury and/or property damage incurred in an emergency/crisis. Review the policy coverage/limits for additional information and policy guidelines. All insurance related questions or requests to submit a claim must be referred to the designated insurance provider. All exchange students will maintain an active policy during their exchange.

Expenses: The district maintains an emergency crisis management fund in the event there are expenses incurred that require immediate payment to provide for the safety and well-being of youth and volunteers, including expenses that may be later reimbursed by a liability insurance provider and those that may not be reimbursed. To the extent possible, all expenses must be approved in advance by the district governor and all receipts must be submitted for reimbursement and record-keeping.

d. Media Crisis Guidelines (for DG, or designated spokesperson)

In the event of a media inquiry, request for comment, interview, or other details related to a crisis, the designated media spokesperson shall be the district governor, unless otherwise noted. All volunteers should be instructed as part of their crisis training to not respond to or otherwise comment on a crisis situation and rather refer all inquiries to the designated spokesperson. All volunteers should refrain from commenting on or otherwise sharing published content involving a crisis and refer the content to the designated spokesperson. Any person providing communication to the media must have experience and knowledge of the Youth Exchange Program and Rotary's Media Guidelines.

An effective media crisis plan is based, first and foremost, on the principles of truth, transparency, and sincerity. Nothing in a multi-district or district media crisis plan should compromise, or appear to compromise, these key principles.

When Reporters Call

When a Rotary district that is sponsoring an exchange student from another country or participating in a Rotary youth program has a student encountering an emergency, district leadership must work with local authorities, SCRYE, and relatives to resolve the situation. The news media may get wind of the crisis, and SCRYE, the hosting district, and the hosting club could suddenly be bombarded with interview requests. The resulting news coverage generates more attention and raises sensitive issues within the community. This scenario is familiar to many clubs and districts worldwide.

When this happens, Rotary clubs normally have well established procedures for dealing with crisis. They cooperate with outside authorities and show compassion for the individuals and families involved; however, handling news media can be a challenge. The following guidelines aim to show how clubs, member districts, and SCRYE can work with the media to get timely and accurate information out to the public during a crisis situation and prevent misunderstandings and misinformation that can jeopardize Rotary's reputation.

If a Crisis Develops

Each District shall develop a vetted crisis management team to report to SCRYE. The team shall consist of qualified volunteers and members involved with student protection in their profession (attorneys, school administration, media professional, etc). **The DG, or designate, will act as the spokesperson.** The Rotary spokesperson should be someone who is on top of the issue, communicates well, and is comfortable interacting with the media.

The team will:

- Gather all the facts.
- Provide timely briefings to all Rotary stakeholders.
- Instruct all club and district members to refer press inquiries to the spokesperson.
- Prepare a statement that accurately states the facts, expresses Rotary's position, and conveys the appropriate tone (sympathy, apology, or commitment). Update as needed.
- Develop key messages to help the spokesperson convey Rotary's position consistently and accurately.
- Contact SCRYE and the RI Public Relations Division (847-866-3245 or 847-866-3237) immediately if you think the issue could spread beyond the local press and attract the attention of regional, national, or international media.

When the Media Contacts You

Advise the media that you are not allowed to make any comment and refer them to the CMO.

The DG, or spokesperson designate, will:

- Respond to all media calls promptly. Ignoring media can contribute to unnecessary speculation. A media interview is a good opportunity to convey the facts and Rotary's position to the public.
- Take time to confirm or update facts or review the club's position as needed and will call the reporter back promptly.
- Be honest and truthful. Do not report unsure information. Do not cover up or make excuses.
- As a spokesperson, you represent SCRYE and Rotary. When you speak, you are Rotary. Avoid personal observations or speculations.
- Monitor the media's coverage of the issue for accuracy and tone. If Rotary is misrepresented, let the media know via a call or a letter to the editor but do not be defensive or discourteous.

The DG, or spokesperson designate will:

- Maintain a proper attitude during interviews
- Accept the fact that a reporter's job is to ask difficult questions. Remain pleasant and be as accommodating as possible.

- Organize your thoughts and speak in short, simple sentences. Think of each as a headline, supported by facts and examples. Headline: “The safety of our Youth Exchange participants is our top priority.” Support: “Every student completes a detailed orientation program; background checks are required for all adults in the program, etc.”
- Strengthen our main message with a personal story. “As a parent of a student who has gone on an exchange, I know what it is like to worry about a child thousands of miles away.”
- If the situation involves a police investigation or other formal proceeding, emphasize that Rotary is cooperating fully.
- Control your voice tone and body language to avoid coming across as defensive.
- Always thank the reporter for his or her time and offer to be available for follow-up questions.

Mistakes to Avoid

- Avoid “off the record” comments. If you don’t want something reported, don’t say it.
- Avoid rumors, speculation and personal opinions. Stick to the facts.
- Avoid Rotary jargon and acronyms (DG, SCRYE, RYE) that the general public will not understand.
- Avoid repeating the negative portion of a question. If the question is: “Did your club fail to adequately protect the student?” consider the answer such as: “The safety of the exchange students is our highest priority.”
- Avoid the term “no comment” because it can carry a negative connotation. When possible, explain why you can’t answer a particular question (“Sorry, I don’t have that information”) or say why you cannot comment (“Because an official investigation is in progress”). Then bridge back to an important point or key message.

Actions Speak Volumes

Dealing with the media during a crisis can be inconvenient and unpleasant but Rotary club & district leaders have a responsibility to convey the facts and protect Rotary’s image. If club & district leaders follow the principles of honesty, transparency, and sincerity, the media and the public will recognize and appreciate the effort. Just as important: If a club, or district, offers genuine promises and follows through to resolve whatever problems are at hand and if the club or district takes action and shows to the people involved that Rotary cares, it will minimize the negative impact of the crisis and protect Rotary’s positive image.

Media Assistance from Rotary International

The Rotary Public Relations and Media Relations staff are always available to consult with and assist your club, or district, from helping develop an initial position statement, to assisting with last minute media coaching.

APPENDIX A – CONTACT LIST AND CRISIS NOTIFICATION PROTOCOLS

This contact list should be updated annually or anytime a change is made in district leadership. This list should be distributed to everyone listed below and anyone who may need to contact those on this list in the event of an emergency (students, parents, host families, on-site medical personnel, etc)

Name	Role	Email Address	Telephone	Notifies
Joel Hastings	USA YPO	jrhastings64@gmail.com	(C) 509-552-1430 (W)509-758-1680	DG, CMT
John Ferguson	CA YPO	najj@shaw.ca	250-551-9571	DG, CMT
Steve Roberge	DG	stevenroberge25@gmail.com	208-755-3493	
Pat Carson	YEC Chair	patlesster@gmail.com	250-231-0067	DG, CMT
Diana Erickson	Inbound Coordinator	dkerickson52@gmail.com	509-386-0203	CMT
Maggie Lindsay-Tadey Outbound Coordinator		Maggie.rye5080@gmail.com	250-919-7369	CMT
John Fishburne Mental Health Consultant		john.fishburne.phd@gmail.com	509-888-0048	CMT



Insert your district logo here.
Use Rotary's Brand Center to create one.

APPENDIX B - DEBRIEFING QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1 – Crisis Overview

Crisis Type:

Crisis Level:

Brief description:

Date(s) occurred:

Section 2 – Crisis Response Check-list

- Yes No 1. Were the crisis type and level appropriately identified?
- Yes No 2. Was the crisis level appropriately escalated/deescalated?
- Yes No 3. Were the response protocols followed according to the crisis type/level?
- Yes No 4. Were the notification protocols followed appropriately?
- Yes No 5. Were the reporting requirements followed appropriately?
- Yes No 6. *If reporting required:* Was a report submitted to RI within 72 hours?
- Yes No 7. Was an insurance carrier notified?
- Yes No 8. Was the crisis resolved appropriately?

If any answer is marked "No" describe below for all instances:

Example: 1. At first we thought the crisis was only a Level 1, but after reviewing it again we determined it was actually a Level 2.

Section 3 – Crisis Management Plan Updates and Emergency Training

Yes No 1. Does the Crisis Management Plan need to be updated?

If yes, describe what updates are required and include details in Section 3:

Example: The crisis definitions for each type of crisis will be updated with more detail to make it easier to identify the type and level of each crisis.

Yes No 2. Is an emergency training required?

Section 5 – Acknowledgments

The underwritten acknowledge that they have participated in the crisis debriefing and agree to any follow-up actions described in Section 4.

Print name

Date

Print name

Date

Print name

Date

Print name

Date

Print name

Date

Print name

Date

Print name

Date

Print name

Date

Appendix C - Crisis Notification Matrix

Injury / Accident	LEVEL 1			LEVEL 2			LEVEL 3					
	Physical Health Emergencies	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	Physical Health Emergencies	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	Mental Health Emergencies	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
Department of State	Department of State	X	X	X	Department of State	X	X	X	Department of State	X	X	X
Rotary International	Rotary International	X	X	X	Rotary International	X	X	X	Rotary International	X	X	X
Child Protective Services	Child Protective Services				Child Protective Services				Child Protective Services			
SCRYE	SCRYE	X	X	X	SCRYE	X	X	X	SCRYE	X	X	X
District Crisis Mgmt Officer	District Crisis Mgmt Officer	X	X	X	District Crisis Mgmt Officer	X	X	X	District Crisis Mgmt Officer	X	X	X
District Youth Protection Officer	District Youth Protection Officer	X	X	X	District Youth Protection Officer	X	X	X	District Youth Protection Officer	X	X	X
Youth Services Protection Officer	Youth Services Protection Officer	X	X	X	Youth Services Protection Officer	X	X	X	Youth Services Protection Officer	X	X	X
District Governor	District Governor	X	X	X	District Governor	X	X	X	District Governor	X	X	X
Media Officer	Media Officer	X	X	X	Media Officer	X	X	X	Media Officer	X	X	X
Youth Services Chief of Staff	Youth Services Chief of Staff	X	X	X	Youth Services Chief of Staff	X	X	X	Youth Services Chief of Staff	X	X	X
Youth Exchange Officer	Youth Exchange Officer	X	X	X	Youth Exchange Officer	X	X	X	Youth Exchange Officer	X	X	X
Country Chair	Country Chair	X	X	X	Country Chair	X	X	X	Country Chair	X	X	X
Inbound Chair	Inbound Chair	X	X	X	Inbound Chair	X	X	X	Inbound Chair	X	X	X
Outbound Chair	Outbound Chair	X	X	X	Outbound Chair	X	X	X	Outbound Chair	X	X	X
Club YEO	Club YEO	X	X	X	Club YEO	X	X	X	Club YEO	X	X	X
Club Counselor	Club Counselor	X	X	X	Club Counselor	X	X	X	Club Counselor	X	X	X
Local Coordinator	Local Coordinator	X	X	X	Local Coordinator	X	X	X	Local Coordinator	X	X	X
Host Parents	Host Parents	X	X	X	Host Parents	X	X	X	Host Parents	X	X	X
Natural Parents	Natural Parents	X	X	X	Natural Parents	X	X	X	Natural Parents	X	X	X
Designated Insurance Contact	Designated Insurance Contact	X	X	X	Designated Insurance Contact	X	X	X	Designated Insurance Contact	X	X	X

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3		LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3		LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
Verbal/Physical/Sexual Abuse or Neglect				Political and Civil Unrest				Crime or Violence			
Department of State			X	Department of State		X		Department of State			X
Rotary International			X	Rotary International		X		Rotary International			X
Child Protective Services			X	Child Protective Services				Child Protective Services			
SCRVE			X	SCRVE		X		SCRVE			X
District Crisis Mgmt Officer			X	District Crisis Mgmt Officer		X		District Crisis Mgmt Officer			X
District Youth Protection Officer			X	District Youth Protection Officer		X		District Youth Protection Officer			X
Youth Services Protection Officer			X	Youth Services Protection Officer		X		Youth Services Protection Officer			X
District Governor			X	District Governor		X		District Governor			X
Media Officer			X	Media Officer		X		Media Officer			X
Youth Services Chief of Staff			X	Youth Services Chief of Staff		X		Youth Services Chief of Staff			X
Youth Exchange Officer			X	Youth Exchange Officer		X		Youth Exchange Officer			X
Country Chair			X	Country Chair		X		Country Chair			X
Inbound Chair			X	Inbound Chair		X		Inbound Chair			X
Outbound Chair			X	Outbound Chair		X		Outbound Chair			X
Club YEO			X	Club YEO		X		Club YEO			X
Club Counselor			X	Club Counselor		X		Club Counselor			X
Local Coordinator			X	Local Coordinator		X		Local Coordinator			X
Host Parents			X	Host Parents		X		Host Parents			X
Natural Parents			X	Natural Parents		X		Natural Parents			X
Designated Insurance Contact			X	Designated Insurance Contact		X		Designated Insurance Contact			X

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3		LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3		LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
Natural Disasters				Missing Person				Death			
Department of State	X			Department of State	X			Department of State	X		
Rotary International			X	Rotary International			X	Rotary International			X
Child Protective Services				Child Protective Services				Child Protective Services			
SCRVE			X	SCRVE			X	SCRVE			X
District Crisis Mgmt Officer			X	District Crisis Mgmt Officer			X	District Crisis Mgmt Officer			X
District Youth Protection Officer			X	District Youth Protection Officer			X	District Youth Protection Officer			X
Youth Services Protection Officer			X	Youth Services Protection Officer			X	Youth Services Protection Officer			X
District Governor			X	District Governor			X	District Governor			X
Media Officer			X	Media Officer			X	Media Officer			X
Youth Services Chief of Staff			X	Youth Services Chief of Staff			X	Youth Services Chief of Staff			X
Youth Exchange Officer			X	Youth Exchange Officer			X	Youth Exchange Officer			X
Country Chair			X	Country Chair			X	Country Chair			X
Inbound Chair			X	Inbound Chair			X	Inbound Chair			X
Outbound Chair			X	Outbound Chair			X	Outbound Chair			X
Club YEO			X	Club YEO			X	Club YEO			X
Club Counselor			X	Club Counselor			X	Club Counselor			X
Local Coordinator			X	Local Coordinator			X	Local Coordinator			X
Host Parents			X	Host Parents			X	Host Parents			X
Natural Parents			X	Natural Parents			X	Natural Parents			X
Designated Insurance Contact			X	Designated Insurance Contact			X	Designated Insurance Contact			X

Terrorist Threat or Attack	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
Department of State			X
Rotary International			X
Child Protective Services			X
SCRVE			X
District Crisis Mgmt Officer			X
District Youth Protection Officer			X
Youth Services Protection Officer			X
District Governor			X
Media Officer			X
Youth Services Chief of Staff			X
Youth Exchange Officer			X
Country Chair			X
Inbound Chair			X
Outbound Chair			X
Club YEO			X
Club Counselor			X
Local Coordinator			X
Host Parents			X
Natural Parents			X
Designated Insurance Contact			X

