

NEWSLETTER



This quarterly newsletter is designed to provide timely and relevant information surrounding safety within Scouting - supporting leaders, volunteers, and families in creating the safest possible environment for our young people. As Chief Safeguarding Officer with the Cascade Pacific Council and as a former counselor and educator (with nearly a decade of experience), I am committed to ensuring that every Scout feels protected, supported, and able to thrive. Please know that I am always available as a resource to unit leaders, volunteers, and parents. Whether you need guidance, have questions, or simply want to connect about ways to strengthen safety in your unit, I'm here to help.

- Emily Whittle-Perkins Council Safeguarding Officer - CPC

THE COURAGE TO HEAL

We are proud to highlight the inspiring work of Caitlyn K. - an Eagle Scout and current Venturing Scout - whose passion for safeguarding youth has led her to create an incredible project called *Courage to Heal*.

As part of her Passion Project, Caitlyn developed a website dedicated to supporting Scouts who may be struggling with personal challenges. Her project offers a space for education, encouragement, and resources on topics that too often go unspoken, reminding youth that healing is possible and that no one has to face difficult experiences alone.

The Courage to Heal site reflects Caitlyn's commitment to living the Scout Oath and Law—demonstrating bravery, kindness, and service to others. Through her project, she is fostering resilience and creating awareness around mental and emotional well-being within Scouting.

We are grateful for Scouts like Caitlyn, who remind us that safeguarding is not only about protecting youth physically, but also about creating communities of care where everyone feels seen, safe, and supported. Her work is an example of what it means to lead with both courage and compassion.

You can visit Caitlyn's website and learn more about *Courage to Heal* at <https://sites.google.com/view/couragetoheal/home>



PRACTICAL SKILL: WHAT TO DO IF THERE'S A SCOUT IN CRISIS?



It can feel overwhelming to discover that a Scout is struggling with thoughts of suicide. But you don't need to be a mental health professional to make a difference. Here are three clear steps you can take:



RECOGNIZE & LISTEN

Warning signs may include withdrawal, hopeless statements ("It doesn't matter anymore"), giving away belongings, or sudden mood changes

If a Scout shares that they are thinking of suicide—believe them. Stay calm, listen without judgment, and let them know you care

Never promise secrecy to a youth



ENSURE SAFETY

Do not leave the Scout alone if they are in immediate danger (i.e. active suicide ideation)

If you believe the risk is urgent, call 911 right away

Notify the Scout's parent promptly



REPORT & CONNECT

If you are concerned for the safety of the Scout (i.e. suspected abuse, neglect - emotional, physical, sexual) please contact your local Child Protective Services.

After reporting, notify your District Executive or their designee. Then, fill out an incident report and send it Emily Whittle-Perkins, Council Safeguarding Officer at

emily.whittleperkins@scouting.org

You don't need to have all the answers. Your role is to recognize, respond, and report – and then follow up with care. For questions, concerns, or support, please contact Emily Whittle-Perkins with the contact information below