



# BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

## CAPITOL AREA COUNCIL

August 18, 2023

RE: Netflix documentary on past abuse involving members of Scouting

Despite efforts to inform the documentarians, the film mischaracterizes the Boy Scouts of America's policies, actions, and intentions. Rather than challenge these inaccuracies, our focus remains on supporting survivors. The BSA is deeply sorry for the pain endured by survivors of abuse, and for the lifelong impact it has had on them and their loved ones. We are committed to supporting survivors' healing process and honor the right of survivors to tell their story.

Nothing is more important than the safety of youth in our programs - it is the Capitol Area Council's top priority. Please know, **Scouting is safer than ever before**. In fact, over many years, the BSA has developed some of the strongest youth protection policies found in any youth-serving organization, which are informed by respected experts in the fields of child safety, law enforcement, and child psychology.

Safety is not a static issue for the BSA - we are always looking for ways to improve our youth protection programs. Currently, the BSA's multi-layered safeguards include the following measures, all of which act as barriers to abuse:

- Extensive, mandatory youth protection training for all volunteers and employees.
- Mandatory background checks for all leaders.
- Relationship with the Barbara Sinatra Children's Center Foundation to educate and empower youth through the new "Protect Yourself Rules" videos to educate children to understand and recognize abuse while empowering them to get help any time they are made to feel uncomfortable.
- A leadership policy that requires at least two youth-protection trained adults be present with youth at all times during Scouting activities and bans one-on-one situations where adults would have any interaction alone with children – either in person, online, or via phone or text.
- A BSA team dedicated to addressing concerns raised about any individual in Scouting.
- A thorough screening process for new adult leaders and staff including criminal background checks.
- The prompt mandatory reporting of any allegation or suspicion of abuse to law enforcement.
- The Scouts First Helpline: 844-SCOUTS1 (844-726-8871), a dedicated 24-hour helpline to receive reports of known or suspected abuse or behavior that might put a youth at risk.

For more information about how we keep kids safe in Scouting today, please visit [Scouting.org/YouthSafety](https://Scouting.org/YouthSafety).