

9. Explain the importance of the buddy system as it relates to your personal safety on outings and in your neighborhood. Describe what a bully is and how you should respond to one.

The buddy system is a way for Scouts to look after one another, especially during outdoor adventures. When your troop goes swimming, for example, each Scout will be assigned a buddy. You keep track of what your buddy is up to, and he knows at all times where you are and how you are doing. Now and then a Scout leader might call for a buddy check. That means you must immediately hold up the hand of your buddy. If anyone is missing, everyone will know it right away. The buddy system should always be used when a troop or patrol is hiking, camping, and participating in any aquatics activities. It's a way of sharing the good times and preventing the bad. You can use the buddy system when you go places in your community, as well, to help keep yourself and your buddies safe.

A bully is someone who wants to hurt another person. Bullying can be physical, verbal, emotional, social, behavioral, or any combination. Bullying can also take place just about anywhere: on the bus, at school, at soccer practice, even online, via the Internet. However, bullying can be stopped. Help put an end to the bullying by taking action first yourself.

- If ignoring the bully doesn't work, stand up for yourself with words. Rehearse what you want to say so that you will feel in control of your emotions when you confront the bully.
- Tell the bully how hurtful it feels to be bullied, and ask why you are the target. Ask the bully to stop.
- Sometimes, agreeing with the bully and having a ready response will work ("So what if I have a face full of zits. What's it to you?").
- Hang out with a couple of friends; try not to be alone.
- Tell an adult you trust, such as a parent, teacher, or coach.

8a. Participate in a school, community, or troop program on the dangers of using drugs, alcohol, and tobacco and other practices that could be harmful to your health. Discuss your participation in the program with your family.

Knowledge is the greatest weapon you can have for protecting yourself from the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco or of taking part in other practices that could be harmful to your health. The more you know the greater your ability to make wise decisions.

Many schools, communities, and Scout troops have programs that provide valuable information. You might also want to share with others some facts about the negative effects of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Teaching is one of the best ways to research and understand a subject. It also allows you to be of service to your school, community, or troop.

8b. Explain the three R's of personal safety and protection.

Be aware of the three R's to help ensure your personal safety and to help protect yourself.

- Recognize that anyone could be a child molester. Child molesters can be very skilled at influencing children, so be aware of situations that could lead to abuse.
- Resist advances made by child molesters to avoid being abused. Just say no, and don't be embarrassed to run away, scream, or cause a commotion.
- Report any molestation or attempted molestation to parents or other trusted adults. Anytime someone does something to you that your instincts tell you is wrong, or that makes you feel threatened or uncomfortable, tell someone you trust. It's OK to ask for help.

For more on this topic, see "Protecting Yourself From Sexual Abuse" in chapter 14.

12. Describe the three things you should avoid doing related to use of the Internet. Describe a cyberbully and how you should respond to one.

Whenever you go online: (1) Don't respond to inappropriate messages or Web sites. If you stumble across information or images that you don't understand, it's OK to talk about it with your parent or guardian; (2) Don't share information such as your address, telephone number, school name, or your parents' work address or telephone number, and never send any photos via the Internet unless you have permission; (3) Never agree to meet anyone who has contacted you online unless your parent or guardian goes with you.

Another hazard of the Internet is called the cyberbully. A cyberbully uses electronic communications such as the Internet to harass, threaten, and harm others. Some tactics that cyberbullies use include dissing (spreading damaging gossip about a person), harassment (repeatedly sending hateful messages), and impersonation (pretending to be someone else and posting damaging information to harm another's reputation).

If you feel you are the victim of a cyberbully, do not retaliate. Ask the cyberbully to stop. Do not make your message aggressive or emotional. Let the bully know that you will take other steps if the abuse does not stop. If that does not help, tell your parent or guardian right away. Cyberbullies can't be seen when they are online; this gives them a false sense of security. What they don't know is that they can be found out, caught, and even punished.

The best way to protect yourself is to be a good online citizen. Don't post information that could be used against you or other people. Stay away from sites that tolerate and encourage bullying. Be kind online.