



Official Internet Guidelines

Set forth by the Heart of America Council, BSA Website Task Force

Article I

Member/Youth Protection

- ▶ Last names, last initials or any identifying information about youth members shall not be published on the web without parent's signed approval. Names and information about any adult shall be published only with the written approval of that individual;
- ▶ Pictures of youth may appear on the web as long as no name or other personal information is associated with the picture;
- ▶ Under no circumstances shall the address, personal phone number or email address of any youth be published on the Internet;
- ▶ Phone numbers of adult leaders may only be published with written permission;
- ▶ Email addresses may be published, with the permission of the holder, if worthwhile benefit to the program would be achieved.

Be prepared by being aware, let's keep our kids safe!

Article II

Commercialism on the Web

- ▶ The National Council's policy on commercialism states ***"A site cannot contain any advertisements or commercial endorsements what-so-ever"***.
- ▶ This means that in no way may a unit, district or council page be involved in any type of relationship of commercial nature nor may units, districts or councils give endorsement to any business, corporation, commercial agency or individual, unless duly authorized by the National Executive Board.
- ▶ The Scouting logo may not be used on any product; flier or advertisement in any way as to resemble that the Boy Scouts of America or any of its entities is sponsoring said commercial product or company.

- ▶ No Commercial logos, commercial links or links outside of the Heart of America Council, BSA are allowed on any Heart of America Council, BSA approved web pages.
- ▶ It is further suggested that a site should not use a provider like GEO Cities or AOL, because they WILL target advertisements to your page. Remember a site is not free if the provider uses your page for advertising their product or services. Units should seek community support from their local neighbor/area provider, if possible.

Article III

Linking to other sites

- ▶ The ability to use a hypertext link to connect your site to other sites is what makes it the “web”. You have no control over who places links to your web page. A person in any country can place a link right to your unit’s front door for anyone who reads his page. You could do the same, pointing electronically, anywhere. On the other hand, your placement of links “downstream” could cause you embarrassment – since you never know what files you may be linked to from that point on. The National Council’s concern is that your scout unit’s web page may be just 2 clicks away from an inappropriate website or Adult XXX rated material.
- ▶ The Heart of America Council, BSA guidelines state that your unit website will not link to any sites other than the Heart of America Council, BSA site and the BSA National website.
- ▶ Although we have a “no links” policy for unit website's, we understand the importance of links to outside sites dedicated entirely to scouting and other helpful information. These types of links to scouting related sites may not have a hot or direct link on the Heart of America Council, BSA site. You can, however, add the URL (address) to your page, as a site to visit for good information.
- ▶ The Heart of America Council, BSA guidelines on how to place a THANK YOU to your internet provider for donated web space is that it should be done in such a manner that it is still effective without the use of their company logo or endorsing their business.

Article IV

Political Concerns

- ▶ The Boy Scouts of America shall not, through it’s governing body or through any of its officers, the chartered councils, or members, involve the Scouting movement in any questions of a political nature. However, this shall not be interpreted to prevent the teaching of the ideals of patriotism and good citizenship, as required to fulfill the Boy Scouts of America purpose. This policy shall also not limit the freedom of thought or action of any official or member as an individual.
- ▶ Basically this means leave our political opinion out of the mix, let’s teach our children about the facts of our government. Make your political stands out of the

Scouting arena, whether at a scouting function or in the web pages. No political stands will be tolerated on the Heart of America Council, BSA website.

Article V

Liability

- ▶ The website task force, like other Council committees, provides general oversight of this program. Members operating Internet sites are responsible for their content. The Council shall not be held liable for the contents of any website whether or not such website has obtained Council approved status.

Helpful Hints

- ▶ Be careful and monitor how you use sarcasm or humor on your page, because your message may not be received in the spirit it was meant.
- ▶ Check your spelling. A misspelled word can change the mood of the message.
- ▶ Keep paragraphs short and succinct. Focus on one subject per message area. Separate subjects by lines or spaces. Just make sure the themes do not run together and confuse the view and convey incorrect information.
- ▶ Make sure calendars have correct information. If you're not sure.....Don't post. It is better to have no information and keep looking for it, than the wrong information and miss the event.

A good motto for scouting web design is –
KISMIF (keep it simple make it fun)

Thanks for your support,

Heart of America Council, BSA
Website Task Force