



ONTARIO HORTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

OHA YOUTH PROGRAM STANDARDS

Keeping Ontario Beautiful

INTRODUCTION

These Youth Program Standards represent the necessary foundation for a viable youth/vulnerable persons program. They are meant to reduce the risk of harm to everybody involved and ensure that the environment of the program is safe and thus allowing it to be fun and educational.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

Youth Leader

- Acts in accordance with the Youth Leader Code of Conduct and Youth Program Standards.
- Signs the Youth Leader Code of Conduct at the start of each year. Provides the original signed copy to the Society President and a copy to the OHA Youth Leader Coordinator by mail or scanned and sent by e-mail.
- Obtains a Vulnerable Sector Police Records Check for a volunteer working with youth every year. Provides the original copy to the Society President to verify and the file number to the OHA Youth Leader Coordinator by email yearly.
- Leads and plans the activities for the youth program in the horticultural society.
- All volunteers working with youth and vulnerable individuals must have a yearly Vulnerable Sector Police Records Checks

Society President

- Ensures Society Youth Leaders run the youth program in accordance with the Youth Program Standards.
- Ensures Society Youth Leaders have completed a Vulnerable Sector Police Records Check with the local police department but does NOT keep a copy only records the file number, the original stays with the owner to be kept for minimum 1 year.
- Files the youth club activities with the OHA Society Annual Information Report each year.
- Permanently suspends a Youth Leader who is not in compliance with the Youth Leader Standards, the Code of Conduct or who has a hit on their Vulnerable Sector Police Records Check.
- Suspends the Society Youth Program if it is not in compliance with these standards.

OHA Youth Leader Coordinator

- Youth Leader maintains file number and date of Vulnerable Sector Police Records Checks.
- Collects signed copies of Youth Leader Code of Conduct
- Monitors Youth Leaders and programs to make sure they have filed their documentation.
- Contacts Youth Leaders and Society Presidents who have not complied with these requirements.
- Informs the OHA President of non-compliance by Youth Leaders or Societies.

OHA President

- Monitors the compliance of Societies and Youth Leaders to program standards using the Annual Society Information Reports and Youth Leader Report.
- Revokes the recognition of a Society's Youth Program if it does not meet standards.

PROGRAM STANDARDS

General Program Standards

- Youth Programming must have a connection with plants, gardening, farming, biology, flowers, floral design, plant related crafts, creative writing or art.
- Youth programming does not include activities such as overnight camps, adventure sports or swimming.
- Meetings take place at scheduled start and end times at a location accessible by all participating youth members and their parents.

Types of Programs

There are 3 types of Youth Program activities OHA Youth Leaders participate in.

1. Programs led by OHA Youth Leaders where parents are not present.
2. Programs led by OHA Youth Leaders where parents are present ("Parented")
3. Programs led by a teacher in a school.

If a Youth Leader is invited to participate in a program led by another recognized youth organization they do so as outside volunteers for that youth organization and have no direct responsibility for youth in that program.

Standards for each program apply below:

Programs Led By OHA Youth Leaders Where Parents Are Not Present

The “two deep” rule must be observed by the Youth Leader. When parents are not present, a minimum of 2 Youth Leaders are required to run a program.

Examples of This Type of Program:

- Craft meeting
- Youth flower Show
- The judging of a youth's garden by a judge who is a Youth Leader accompanied by another Youth Leader.
- Work at a community garden as part of a youth program where parents are not present requires a minimum of 2 youth leaders.

Programs Led By OHA Youth Leaders Where Parents/Guardians Are Present

The “two deep” rule must be observed by the Youth Leader. 2 adults must be present at all times during meetings, a parent/guardian may be 2nd adult.

While parents/guardians are present, they are not to lead activities. The Youth Leader is always primary leader.

Examples of This Type of Program:

- Craft meeting where parents are present
- The judging of a youth's garden by a judge where the parent is also present

Programs Led By A Teacher In A School

- The school and teacher are in charge of the activity.
- The teacher(s) is responsible for the students participating in the program.
- The Youth Leader is present as a volunteer.
- **The “two deep” rule must be observed by the Youth Leader where the Youth Leader must remain in the presence of the Teacher when working with students.**

Examples of This Type of Program:

- Planting seeds in pots in a classroom
- Working on garden at a school

POLICIES

Youth Leader

A Youth Leader must:

- Act in accordance with Youth Leader Code of Conduct and the program standards
- Have obtained and filed a Vulnerable Sector Police Records Check EVERY year with their Society President and the OHA Youth Leader Coordinator. Only file numbers and dates are recorded information.
- The Youth Leader shall be responsible to maintain their original Police Check document.
- Have the approval of the Society President to be a Youth Leader
- Have read, signed and filed their Youth Leader Code of Conduct with the Society President and the OHA Youth Leader Coordinator
- Be a member in good standing of their horticultural society
- Attained the minimum age of 18 years

Youth Member

Youth participants must be:

- A minimum of 6 years old (turning 6 years old by December 31st).
- Be younger than 18 years old.
- Must have written permission signed by parent/guardian.
- Older than 18-year-old Vulnerable person as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Legislation is allowed as Youth Member

The Two Deep Rule

A youth leader will not be alone with a youth member or student. They must always be in the presence of another Youth Leader or a teacher. The exception to this is where the youth leader is also a youth member's parent, grand-parent or Guardian.

Allergies

The OHA Youth Program will provide a healthy environment that minimizes the risk of exposure to allergens such as: peanuts, latex, etc.

- Members and volunteers are strongly encouraged to reduce their risk of exposure (Note: latex materials include balloons, medical gloves, clothing, etc.)
- Allergies should be noted on membership lists to ensure notification of any allergies is documented and known to event coordinators/volunteers in advance.

DEFINITIONS

Youth Leader: A member of a horticultural society who is recognized by the society as a volunteer leader of youth programs.

Youth Member: A member of horticultural society who meets the requirements of being a youth member and participates in youth programs or has a parent/Guardian who is a society member.

Student: A student who participates in activities in a school setting only under the charge of their teacher.

SAMPLE REQUEST - Vulnerable Sector Police Records Check

Date:

To Whom It May Concern:

To lead activities working with youth/vulnerable persons as a Youth Leader for the _____ Horticultural Society, the adult named below is required to work with vulnerable persons, i.e. children, who are at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by persons in a position of authority or trust relative to them.

_____ Horticultural Society is requesting a Vulnerable Sector Check for the Youth Leader below:

Youth Leader Full Name: _____

Youth Leader Mailing Address: _____

Date of Birth: (day/month/year): _____

_____ Horticultural Society is an all-volunteer, non-profit community organization. We would appreciate the reduction or waiving of fees that would apply to organizations such as ours.