

Fall 2015

THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



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Social Media Guidelines

There are now many districts around the country that create videos to post on social media and YouTube of roundtable sessions for unit leaders unable to attend in person. Electronic communication can be a valuable tool for that purpose, but its use must comply with the [BSA's social media guidelines](#).

The BSA does not ban the use of social media in the context of Scouting, and the National Council and many local councils engage in social media campaigns. The BSA focuses on safe and appropriate use of social media, including electronic roundtable methods. The BSA's social media guidelines have several goals, including:

- Ensuring that Scouting-related posts always present a positive image of Scouting as a whole, as well as the individual users and posters.
- Ensuring that youth protection principles are applied as rigorously online as in person.
- Safeguarding the privacy rights of the participants.

The first goal is achieved by creating, participating in, and posting YouTube videos, Facebook posts, etc., that abide by the host site's terms of use and the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Content must be appropriate for Scouting; the people involved must behave in a Scout-like manner; and they must be dressed appropriately in photos and videos depicting Scouts, Scouters, or Scouting activities. Doing otherwise may bring negative publicity to the participants and to Scouting as a whole. When in doubt about the propriety of a post or video, wait awhile before posting it so you can think about it, and consider seeking a second opinion.

The second goal is achieved when there is no nonpublic communication between adults and Scouts or between Scouts. In-person conversations with youth must occur in public; the same applies to electronic communications. The BSA social media guidelines provide specific guidance for email, Facebook, YouTube, instant messaging services, texting, and other communication methods.

The third goal is accomplished when no one is depicted verbally or visually without consent. Adults must agree to the use of their image or verbal statements before they can be posted online. A parent must consent in case of a youth under age 18. Additionally, captions or stories that include a minor should not contain the minor's full name or address. The BSA recommends using [this consent form](#).

Good roundtables promote great Scouting. Our youth deserve the best! So let's provide good roundtables.

Share your roundtable delivery experiences (and tips) by contacting Dan Maxfield at dbmaxi05@gmail.com.



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