

Introducing the Personal Safety Awareness Videos

By Matthew Rusten

Did you know that the Scout and Star rank requirements called the “Cyber Chip” have been replaced with an updated training program called “Personal Safety Awareness” videos? These online videos strengthen the Barriers to Abuse beyond what was covered in the Cyber Chip and include the most up-to-date guidance to protect every Scout. The Personal Safety Awareness videos cover Scouts BSA policies, warning signs to look for in Scouting scenarios and how to address them, and discuss a wide variety of dangerous and uncomfortable situations young people may encounter in their everyday lives.

The updated measures to inform Scouts about social dangers use BSA’s partnership with the Barbara Sinatra Children’s Center and informational videos from NetSmartz.org. These partners help BSA deliver top-of-the-line training resources to give every Scout the tools and knowledge they need to protect themselves and others from abuse.

The Scout rank requirement now features four modules covering digital safety, bullying, abuse, and Scouts BSA Youth Protection policies. Each module has between four and eleven topics and takes about an hour total to click through. Scouts can take breaks between modules and topics to take a stretch, ask questions, or talk with a trusted adult.

The Star rank requirement, intended for older Scouts, features four new videos covering sexting, grooming, familial sexual abuse, and helping someone who is a victim of abuse. Watching all four videos takes about twenty minutes and can be paused at any time.

While the topics covered in the Personal Safety Awareness Videos can be uncomfortable for both youth and adults, they are a vital part of protecting Scouts from abuse. Every example included in a video is there because youth have previously been hurt in that way. As Scouts grow older and become more independent, they will come across uncomfortable scenarios. These videos are vital to prevent future harm from happening under the supervision of Scouts BSA and further prepare each Scout to face any conflicts they may come across outside of Scouting’s protection.

If you have any questions or concerns about the new Personal Safety Awareness videos, please contact scoutsbsacommittee@scouting.org.