



It starts with Scouts.

Tout commence
avec les Scouts.

**Scouts Canada
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February 19, 2012

Scouts Canada – Child and Youth Safety

Dear Scouters, Parents and Friends,

As I wrote to advise you earlier this week, the CBC's *Fifth Estate* followed up its December 8th profile with another hour-long segment on Scouts Canada and a number of specific instances of abuse that occurred in past decades. It ran Friday night and those of you who watched will agree that it was quite challenging.

While I knew my interview would be difficult, I welcomed the opportunity to express personally our sincere apologies to any Scouts who may have been harmed in the past, to emphasize our determination to confront these issues head on and to explain the steps that we have already taken towards doing so. Of course, I also took the occasion to underscore the measures we have and continue to put in place in support of child and youth safety.

In the same spirit, I want to underscore that at all times and in all public comments we have been frank and truthful with you and with the wider public. Until the work of KPMG began, we had no reason to believe that any historic example of abuse had not been shared with authorities. We now know otherwise and we have been equally forthcoming in acknowledging that fact. More importantly, we have acted by forwarding any such examples to the police. I'd also like to emphasize that the KPMG review and release of records to the police are proactive steps that Scouts Canada has taken to ensure that no stone is left unturned. We have been known throughout our history as a leaders in child and youth safety, and I am determined that we will sustain this leadership role the future.

Allow me to reinforce a few additional points with you.

First and foremost, I want to assure all parents that there is no greater priority for Scouts Canada than the protection of children and youth in our care. We have rigorous procedures and policies that help us create the most secure environment possible for our youth members, and you'll find them on our website at scouts.ca/ca/youth-protection. We've always been known for continuously enhancing our safety procedures, and that's why we have appointed an esteemed third party panel of experts to identify ways that we can maintain our edge in the future. When their work is complete, we will release their recommendations in full and act swiftly.



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We are thoroughly committed to creating the conditions for genuine healing and complete transparency. KPMG is in the process of conducting a comprehensive independent review of all our records with an eye to ensuring that all relevant information with respect to child and youth protection has been shared with appropriate police authorities. When the review is completed, the results will be made public. In the meantime, as noted above, we are taking action. If KPMG identifies a record with gaps, incomplete information or question marks of any kind, it is brought to our attention and we promptly forward the file to police for their review. I would hasten to add that nothing to date has indicated any oversights, problems or unaddressed questions with respect to current volunteer leaders.

Scouts Canada is an organization built on values of service to community and to one another. In helping to shape young people into strong, independent citizens, we have done – and continue to do – tremendous good right across this country. I urge you to share with your friends, your family and your neighbours the pride we all feel in this movement. And I urge you to honour our upcoming Scout-Guide Week by sharing your countless positive stories about Scouting and, of course, by ensuring youth protection policies at the local level are rigorously maintained.

Yours in Scouting,

Steve Kent
Chief Commissioner and
Chair of the Board of Governors
SCOUTS CANADA

PS - I would also like to ask Section Leaders and Group Commissioners to please forward this letter to your local members – youth, parents and volunteers. It may lead to some duplication, but I want to make sure that our message is received by all.