



Scouting Abuse: Analysis of Victims' Experiences, Part I

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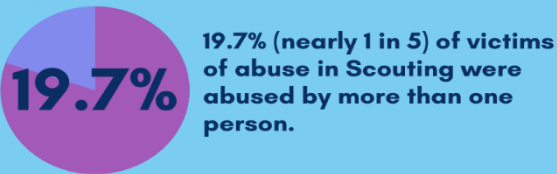
Analysis of Victims of Abuse in Scouting

SEXUAL ABUSE IN SCOUTING

What did victims experience?



Almost **two thirds** (63.9%) of abusers remained in Scouting after victims told Scouting of the abuse.



94%

of child sexual abuse cases reported were done by leaders who had one-on-one contact with a child.

Yet the BSA *insists* it prohibits one-on-one interactions between children & adults.

CHILDUSA

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12:

The average age boy scouts were sexually abused within the organization.



CHILDUSA

6%

of abuse involved at least two BSA scout leaders or another adult.



2.4%

of BSA scout leaders who sexually abused boy scouts were also teachers and clergy.



96%

of abuse was done by Boy Scout leaders.



Introduction

This is the first report on results from an analysis of the data collected through the Abused-In-Scouting questionnaire, which elicited data about demographics, abuse experiences, and circumstances surrounding abuse from 1,576 claimants against the Boy Scouts of America for allegations of sexual abuse as minors while in Scouts. This research examined responses from those victims who have come forward and are seeking reparations for the damages done to them. This study was conducted independently of the Abused-In-Scouting group. CHILD USA received no funding or monetary compensation for this study.

On average, participants were involved in scouting for 4.2 years, with a range of under one year to 33 years. 98.7% of this sample were male and averaged 58.6 years old (with a range of 18 to 94 years). The results make clear that for thousands of children enrolled in Scouting over the years, Scouts has provided a space for perpetrators to abuse them, in many cases repeatedly, and with little accountability.

Results

Main Findings

It is our main finding that Scouts provided an unsafe environment for children. While the goals of nature exploration and survival skill development are admirable, the structure of Scouting was insufficient at ensuring the safety of children. **78.7% of the abused Scouts in this survey were assaulted at a Scout camp, meeting, or activity.** By taking children into nature with only few adults, no oversight, and no child defensible spaces, Scouts exposes children to scenarios which make them situationally weak and vulnerable to abuse from perpetrators.

Scouts is mistaken in their belief that teaching a child to build a fire or earn a badge is equivalent to situational strength. In everyday life, children are often *physically* weak compared to adults. Instead, children rely on safe adults, buildings, and other factors for *situational* strength, and thus security. In Scouts, children are taken away from safe communities of adults, put in communal spaces like showers and church basements, and brought across state lines far away from their homes. Situational disempowerment seems routine in Scouting, and it creates repeated instances in which children are susceptible to abuse.

The data reveal that **Scouts who are abused are abused multiple times, disproportionately by adults, threatened by their abusers, and unsupported if they disclose abuse. They are raped and assaulted: penetrated, masturbated, and fellated, in the woods, at Scout meetings, and in schools, churches, and cars.**

Key Statistics

- **82.0% of victims were abused by an adult leader in Scouting.**
 - Only 3.8% were abused by youths in Scouting
- **19.7% (about 1 in 5) were abused by more than one person.**
- **71.2% (nearly 3 in 4) were abused multiple times.**
- **35.0% report that somebody else knew about the abuse at the time of the abuse.**

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- 20.2% (about **1 in 5**) told Scouting (or someone told Scouting on their behalf) at the time of the abuse
- **63.9% of the abusers remained in Scouting after Scouting was informed.¹**
- **Over 3 in 4 (78.7%) of the victims were abused at Scout camps, meetings, or other activities.**
- **45.5% of victims know the abuser abused others.**
- **On average, abuse victims disclosed their experience in Scouting after a 29-year delay.**
 - The average age of disclosure was 42 years old
 - The average age of first abuse was 11.5 years old

Additional Findings

To Whom Abuse Occurs:

- **86.5% of participants were Boy Scouts at the time of the sexual abuse.**

Role of Abuser in Scouting:

- **Adult in Scouting: 82.0% (76.5% leader in unit; 5.5% leader not in unit)**
- **Youth in Scouting: 3.8% (3.6% youth in unit; 0.2% not in unit)**

Takeaway: while youth typically commit about one-third of all sexual abuse, in Scouting, only 3.8% of abuse was committed by youth.

Single or Multiple Perpetrators:

- **19.7% were abused by more than one person**

Abuse in Different States:

- **12.2% were abused in more than one state.**

Location of Abuse:

- **51.5% at or in connection with a Scout camp**
- 12.9% at or in connection with a Scout meeting
- 14.3% at or in connection with other Scouting activity
- 21.3% other location (schools, churches, cars, homes, etc.)
- 34.6% of sample (588 cases) at multiple locations

Revictimization:

¹ This number is based on a small portion of abusers who were both revealed by their victim and whose status was known by the victim after the report (official or unofficial) of abuse was made. Thus, this number is an estimation of how many abusers remain, based on victim experiences of telling and waiting for action.

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- **71.2% were abused multiple times.**

Disclosure of Abuse:

- 20.2% told (or someone told for them) Scouting at the time of the abuse
- **35.0% report that somebody else knew about the abuse** at the time of the abuse
- **45.5% know the abuser did similar things or abused others**

What Happens When Abuse is Known by Others:

- **For those who alerted Scouting *and* who knew whether or not their abuser remained in Scouting after the victim left, 63.9% of the abusers remained in Scouting after Scouting was informed.**
- **For those who alerted anyone in general and who knew whether or not their abuser remained in Scouting after the victim left, 66.9% of the abusers remained despite someone knowing.**

Forms of Abuse:

- **77.5% of victims in this sample were abused with contact to bare skin**
- 74.9% of victims were fondled or groped
- Other specific acts included oral sex, masturbation, and penetration:
 - 50.3% of the abuse involved oral sex
 - 51.1% of the abuse involved masturbation
 - 33.4% of the abuse involved penetration

Methods of control:

- Abusers threatened or implied **threats to 52.4%** of the victims, gave **gifts to 45.2%** of the victims, and, in **62.6% of cases, gained trust with the family** of the victims.

Consequences of Abuse:

- **99.7% of victims** feel the abuse has caused **long-term adverse effects** in their lives:
 - 59.4% suffer with alcohol or substance abuse
 - 76.5% have trouble with intimate relationships
 - 44.9% have trouble with employment
 - 39.6% say the abuse negatively impacted their education
 - 20.0% say the abuse negatively impacted their physical health
 - 61.1% say the abuse caused or causes them post-traumatic stress reactions
 - **87.2% say the abuse negatively impacted their psychological or emotional health**
 - 54.5% sought mental health treatment or counseling at some point in their life