

Roundtable Safety Moment

Are you safety aware? - Risk Assessments

Are you able to look at an event and decide if it is safe or not? Every event comes with risks. Looking at this great pinewood derby picture, it seems so fun and innocent. But even a Pinewood Derby has risks.



If something as simple as Pinewood Derby has risks, think about what a campout could involve. All leaders should look for risks and try to reduce them when possible. If a risk cannot be reduced, leaders must decide if the event should go ahead. Scouting America takes risks seriously and shares the following information.

The *Guide to Safe Scouting* tells us to look at risks for activities not already covered by the Scouting America program. So, how do you assess risks?

The BSA National Health and Safety Committee has developed the following tools to help assess risks in Scouting:

- The enterprise analysis tool (see link below) is primarily used to record, assess, and manage council-wide risks. The risks found using this tool should be serious enough to jeopardize council operations. This tool may cover various areas, including financial, legal, and liability risks.
- Program hazard analysis is used mainly for program areas within camps or high-adventure bases. It covers specific risks to the program areas. This tool has a defined method for assessing the probability and severity of risks.
- Safety checklists are used for small events or campouts. Checklists provide a body of knowledge for running Scouting activities safely. Like an airline pilot reviewing a

checklist before takeoff, these tools help to make sure critical safeguards are in place for a specific Scouting activity.

- The **Safety PAUSE** (Pause, Assess, Understand, Share, and Execute) process stresses the importance of a last-minute safety check in the field. By encouraging each Scout or adult leader to pause and reflect on the tasks at hand just before beginning, you have an opportunity to take necessary precautions to prevent any present or potential hazards. This is not a stand-alone tool. A formal risk assessment should be done first, such as a safety checklist or a program hazard analysis (PHA).

Scouting America is committed to providing a safe program for all youth, leaders, and staff. This requires each of us to be safety aware. The best thing we can do as volunteers is to use the tools provided like the S.A.F.E. checklist, to ensure we are providing the safest program possible.

RESOURCES

Guide to Safe Scouting	
Scouting Safely	
Program Hazard Analysis	

Event Safety Checklist	
Campout Safety Checklist	
Safety PAUSE	
Enterprise Risk Management Committee Guidebook	