

Is Scouting Safe?

Over the past year, leaders have been showing a growing commitment to provide each member a safe and enjoyable Scouting experience. In support of efforts in the field, we conducted a study to establish baseline data on scouting accident and injury trends so that we can make informed decisions about activity precautions or the need for higher safety standards. This column highlights the findings. The first question we asked ourselves was, "Is Scouting a safe program for members?"

Statistics Canada, Health Division, told us that 11 out of every 1,000 males aged 5-19 are hospitalized for at least one night a year. When we compared similar information taken from Scouting accident forms, we found our members are hospitalized at a rate of only one per thousand a year. Given that we run active programs and heavily use the outdoors, Scouting falls far below the average rate for daily living risk to males in this age group.

Having established this, let's look at the main kinds of accidents and injuries that do happen to Scouting members. Our study identified the types of injuries that happened during the course of a normal Scouting year, excluding summer camps (Chart A). It also recorded the types of activities associated with the injuries (Chart B). When we examine the two sets of information, we begin to see some relationships...

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