



SWE Youth Protection Policy **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

1. What is SWE’s Youth Protection Policy?

SWE’s Youth Protection Policy and supporting Bullying Prevention Guide explain requirements and expectations for interacting with youth at SWE-sponsored events and activities across multiple event types and situations.

“Youth” are defined as participants under the age of 18 years.

2. Why does SWE need a Youth Protection Policy?

SWE members annually deliver thousands of hours of STEM outreach to youth throughout the world in support of the organization’s mission. Any time that members interact with youth as “SWE Advocates,” it opens the organization to the rewards along with the risks that something could happen that puts the youth, member, or organization in an unfavorable or harmful position.

SWE is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all attendees at SWE-sponsored youth-focused events, programs, and activities. Ensuring the safety of youth participants at SWE-sponsored events is the most important responsibility of SWE staff and event volunteers.

3. Who created SWE’s Youth Protection Policy?

The Youth Protection Policy Task Force was chartered in December 2020 to provide youth protection policy recommendations for events and activities that involve direct interface with minors. Task Force Members included Jill Murfin, Inga Urbina, Mary Isaac, Mary Zeis, and Valerie Bland.

Their work included benchmarking other social non-profit youth-serving organizations, particularly those who advocate for STEM, girls, or both. Based on this input, the task force created the SWE Youth Protection Policy and supporting Bullying Prevention Guide. The Policy was approved by SWE’s Board of Directors in September 2021 and a revision was approved in January 2026.

4. Who needs to abide by SWE’s Youth Protection Policy?

All volunteers interacting with youth at a SWE-sponsored event or activity must review and act in accordance with this policy, complete required training every three years, and acknowledge agreement with the policy.



This includes both SWE members and non-SWE members who volunteer with youth at SWE-sponsored events. This includes all events or activities whether they are on-site or virtual.

Others required to take the training:

- Members of SWE's Precollege Working Group, whether or not they are personally doing outreach.
- SWENext Club Counselors, who are SWE members interacting with SWENext Club members.
- SWE Headquarters Staff who interact with youth.

5. What is a SWE-sponsored event or activity?

A SWE-sponsored event or activity is one where the SWE name is used to advertise the event (e.g., in marketing, social media, registration, etc.) and/or where the SWE name is used at the event (e.g., on banners, posters, sponsor lists, tablecloths, etc.). It also includes events run by others where volunteers are identified as SWE members.

For example, you may have already taken youth protection training for FIRST or Girl Scouts. However, if you are being identified as a SWE member or participating as a SWE group at a FIRST or Girl Scout event, you also need to take SWE's Youth Protection Policy training.

6. Where can I find the "SWE Youth Protection: Standards for Interacting with Youth" training course?

The course is in SWE's Advance Learning Center (ALC): [SWE Youth Protection: Standards for Interacting with Youth](#)

Instructions:

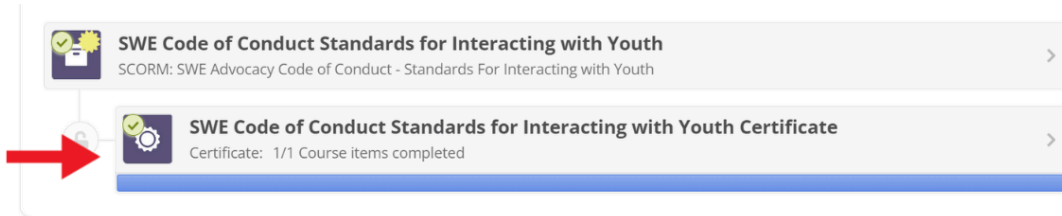
- 1) Visit the [SWE member portal](#) to login using your SWE username and password. If you are not a member, select "Not a member" to create an account.
- 2) After logging in, visit advancelearning.swe.org. In the search box in the upper right-hand corner, search "Youth Protection."
- 4) Select the course: "SWE Youth Protection: Standards for Interacting with Youth."
- 5) Click the course link, then "Launch Content." The course will open in a new window.
- 6) Complete the course and knowledge check with a 100% to receive a certificate.
- 7) Follow the instructions below to download your Certificate of Completion. Send your certificate to the event organizer to verify completion of the Youth Protection training.

After completing the knowledge check with 100%, you can download your certificate in two ways to share it with your event organizer to verify your completion:

Certificate Download Option 1:

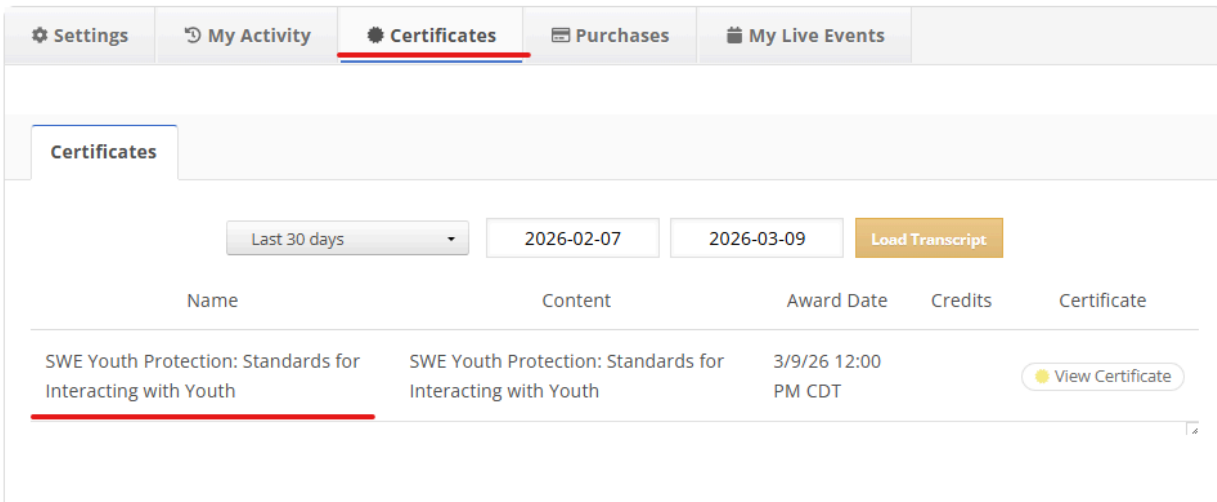


- a. Return to the [course page](#) to download your Certificate of Completion
- b. Scroll down and click on the course Certificate
- c. Below the certificate image, click “Print Certificate.”



Certificate Download Option 2:

- a. From the Advance Learning Center home page select “My Activity”
- b. Select “Certificates”
- c. Select “View Certificate”



7. As an event organizer, how will I know that my volunteers completed the course?

The event organizer should ask all volunteers to follow the instructions above and download their Certificates of Completion as a PDF document and send it to the event organizer prior to



the event.

8. What should I do if I have questions about SWE's Youth Protection Policy?

All youth protection questions should be sent to youthprotection@swe.org.

9: What if a problem comes up at an event I attended? What should I do?

This is called out in detail in SWE's [Youth Protection Policy document](#), section V.

Below is a synopsis of that information:

“When volunteers or staff observe inappropriate behavior, suspected abuse, or possible violations of this policy, they must immediately report their observations to an event lead or SWE staff and, where appropriate or required by law, to local law enforcement. Reports may be made:

- *Verbally or in writing to an event lead*
- *Verbally or in writing to SWE staff*
- *By written communication to youthprotection@swe.org*

All reports of inappropriate behavior, policy violations, or abuse will be taken seriously. Where appropriate or required by law, the event leader or SWE staff will notify local law enforcement. Event leads and volunteers will fully cooperate with any investigation by local law enforcement.”

10. Does this policy apply to youth-facing outreach activities outside the U.S.?

Yes. Although regulations intended to protect minors may vary globally, SWE's policy and procedures were written to accommodate such variations. U.S. laws regarding minors tend to be defined more than most and SWE affiliates should consider this policy the “gold standard” if no other regulations apply in a particular country.