

4-H Canada and Commit to Kids Volunteer Training

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is 4-H Canada working with provinces to undertake a new volunteer training program?

First and foremost, the priority is to ensure that all children and youth who participate in 4-H programming across Canada are safe and protected from harm. This is everyone's number one risk management priority.

It's important to also be managing risk as staff members, volunteers and council members of 4-H Canada, by putting measures in place to increase the safety of our organizations, our brand and the individuals who represent it.

Provincial associations have asked for tools to support volunteer training and risk management. This was identified through the Resource and Tools Task Force, a process all provincial supervisors and the National Resource Network took part in.

A program or tool everyone consistently uses across the country will help with:

- accuracy of information
- up-to-date legislation, industry standards and guidelines related to child protection

We want to ensure that all volunteer leaders have access to training that is easy to use, affordable and an effective use of time.

2. Why is 4-H Canada recommending Commit to Kids training as the tool to adopt? What was the process?

In spring 2017 all provincial associations began discussing several possible tools. Collectively, a set of criteria was developed to help assess options and determine the best tool or set of tools to meet our organization's needs.

We researched four tool options: Respect in Sport, High Five, Commit to Kids, and custom-building our own modules.

In fall 2017 provincial supervisors voted for their top two preferred options to explore further. Those two options were: 1) Commit to Kids, and 2) custom-building our own modules. In February 2018, both options were discussed. 4-H Canada's research on custom-building a set of modules proved that option to be unrealistic in terms of cost and the time it would take to develop.

It was collectively decided that we would do two things:

1. move forward with Commit to Kids online training as the tool to adopt



2. develop additional courses over time on key topics that are not covered in the Commit to Kids content

Based on the criteria and discussions, Commit to Kids training is considered the best option to cover information related to our top priority as an organization, protecting our children and youth from abuse and harm, the most extreme form of which is sexual abuse.

3. Are there other national youth organizations using this tool?

Yes. Many other organizations are using the Commit to Kids tools, online training and resources as part of their employee and volunteer training. These organizations include:

- Canadian Armed Forces – Canadian Cadets Organization
- Gymnastics Canada - all clubs in Canada accessing the online training
- Coaching Association of Canada
- The City of Winnipeg: Recreation, Aquatics and Libraries
- viaSport
- Post-secondary students from various child-serving faculties across Canada
- Numerous children’s aid societies, child and family services divisions, youth centres
- Numerous daycares, children’s camps
- Various sports clubs across Canada

4. Commit to Kids training focuses a lot on the topic of sexual abuse. How will we address all the other topics that are important for volunteer leaders and staff to know and understand?

It’s true, this topic is the highest priority, but it’s not the only topic we want to address with volunteers.

Commit to Kids training addresses the most vital priority that a volunteer-based youth organization is at risk of exposing our members to – namely, sexual abuse. It also covers duty to report and child abuse disclosure.

Additional information will be shared on that topic and others through online courses that 4-H Canada will develop over time.

5. What other topics have been identified for additional courses?

- Child abuse and neglect – duty to report, signs of abuse - physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect
- Youth mental health and suicide – how do I support youth experiencing mental health issues? What is my role and what resources do I have?
- Risk management and emergency procedures – safety and incident reporting, issues management, risks to our 4-H Brand and organization, importance, insurance, etc.
- Working with youth – child and youth development, ages and stages, general tips



6. Is Commit to Kids training the only training required for volunteer leaders across Canada?

A checklist will be developed and shared on 4-H LEARNS as part of the launch of this training, with step-by-step instructions for volunteers. First, volunteers will be directed to their provincial websites for screening and training specific to their province. The remaining steps will cover Commit to Kids (and other eLearning courses as they are launched) and links to the Code of Conduct, Inclusion Statement and 4-H Canada New Volunteer Leader Guide.

7. As new courses get developed and added, will volunteer leaders have to go back and do the Commit to Kids training over again?

No. They will only be required to complete what is available at the time they complete their training. They will be required to update their Commit to Kids certification by taking a refresher course every few years.

8. Is there a “refresher course” for those who have already completed the initial training? How often will this need to be completed?

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection is in the process of developing a 1-hour refresher course, which will be available to 4-H Canada within a year. The standard timeframe for volunteer screening to be renewed is every 2 to 3 years. Currently, this timeframe varies from province to province within 4-H (from 2 to 5 years). Moving forward, 4-H Canada would recommend the industry standard to be implemented by all provinces.

9. Some of the volunteer leaders in our provinces do not have access to the internet and in some cases, they cannot be contacted through email. How do we make sure they receive this training?

This is a challenge for sure. With any training, we need to be able to reach our audience and engage participants. While online training will reach the greatest number of volunteers and be accessible to most, there are always exceptions, and we encourage you to be creative and make accommodations where necessary. Here are some suggestions for helping your volunteer leaders complete the training:

- Facilitated, in-person options exist for this training for those who cannot easily access the online version. Some provinces are looking into this option to include in leader training events they organize regionally each year. Contact your province if you would like to take part in an in-person training.
- Most public libraries have computers with internet that are accessible and free of charge.



10. Is there a cost to complete the training?

There is normally a cost to complete this training. However, 4-H Canada, in partnership with each provincial 4-H association, has arranged for this training to be free in 2018–2019, for all 4-H leaders, volunteers and professionals.

11. How long does the Commit to Kids training take to complete?

The online training takes about 2.5 hours to complete. It is broken down into 8 modules (but the module on Policies and Procedures is optional). You can take a break between modules and it will keep track of what you have already viewed.

12. Is there certification as part of this training?

Yes. In order to receive a certificate, individuals must pass the final knowledge validation test in the module with a score of 80% or above. The certificate can be printed by the user, and provinces should request to receive a copy of the certificate before approving the volunteer leader.

13. I have already taken the Commit to Kids training as a gymnastics coach. Do I need to take it again?

No, you don't. If you can demonstrate proof of completion within the last 2 years, you will not have to take the training again, until it is time for you to take the refresher course. Please provide your province with your certificate of completion.

For more information on Commit to Kids and the Canadian Centre for Child Protection visit commit2kids.ca and protectchildren.ca

If you have any further questions or would like more information contact Erin Smith, Program Director at esmith@4-h-canada.ca

