

Scenario: Facilitator Guidance Notes



Purpose

This guidance document explains how to use the STOP, THINK, GO – REPORT scenario cards with a patrol. It covers why the activity matters, what you need, how to run a session, and how to interpret the leader notes in each scenario card.

Read these notes before your first session. They are designed to be used alongside the scenario card resource.

A further resource pack will be made available later in this year (2026), covering common scenarios that may arise during your time at WSJ 2027 in Poland.

Why this activity matters

Young people in Scouting are regularly in situations where something unexpected happens. The weather changes, someone gets hurt, a peer says something that doesn't feel right, or a situation at camp develops in a way that wasn't planned. In those moments, the quality of their response depends not on rules they've read, but on instincts they've practised.

We've developed a simple framework: STOP, THINK, GO – REPORT, that gives young people a simple, memorable mental script for exactly those moments. But like any skill, it only works if it's rehearsed in conditions that feel real.

The aims of this scenario and the simple framework are for the young people to build four core skills, shown in the table below.

Awareness	Noticing when something has changed or gone wrong before it escalates.
Understanding	Thinking clearly about risk, consequences and options even under pressure.
Communication	Talking to the right person at the right time, and knowing that asking for help is a positive action.
Judgment	Choosing what to do next and being empowered to act, not freeze.

As a leader, you cannot be everywhere at once. This activity is your way of extending your reach, giving young people the confidence, clarity and permission to act safely when you are not right next to them.

Important: Incidents are unexpected and emotionally charged, which is exactly why young people may freeze because they do not know what to do. This activity gives them a practised response so that when something real happens, they already know what to do. It also sends a clear message: you trust them, and you expect them to use that trust responsibly.

Each scenario card is a facilitated discussion tool, not a quiz, test, or lecture. Your role is to create the conditions for young people to think through a situation together, using the simple framework and reach their own conclusions with your guidance.

STOP Make yourself safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop stage is about pausing before reacting. The most important message here is: don't rush, don't panic, make yourself safe first. • For young people, this can be hard; the instinct is to act or to look for an adult immediately. Validate this instinct, then ask: 'But what if no adult was right next to you, what would you do?'
THINK Do I feel comfortable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think is where the group does the analytical work, what might go wrong, how serious it is, and what the options are. • Encourage them to think about the consequences of different choices, not just the obvious first action. This is often the richest part of the discussion. Give it time.
GO Carry on, change, or stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go is the decision point: Carry on, Change, Stop, or Keep checking. • Remind the group that 'stop and ask for help' is always a valid GO option, not a failure. • Ask the group to agree on what they would actually do. Not just list options. What is the best course of action, given what they know?
REPORT Tell a leader/record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report is often the stage young people undervalue. Reinforce that reporting is a positive action — it is how situations are resolved and how learning improves safety for everyone. • Make sure they understand that there are two reporting routes leaders must follow: the Purple Card (for emergencies) and the Yellow Card (for Safeguarding).

Before the session

Step 1: Choose and read the scenario card yourself first

- Select a couple of scenarios relevant to your unit and team-building activities.

- Read the full scenario card before the session, not just the scenario description.
- Pay particular attention to the facilitator notes.
- Identify any elements that need to be adapted for your unit: age, setting, or recent events.

Step 2: Brief the patrol

- Gather the patrol in a format that feels like a conversation, not a lesson.
- Introduce the activity briefly: 'We're going to work through a situation together using an approach called *STOP, THINK, GO – REPORT*, which guides you through how to deal with an emerging situation. There are no right or wrong answers; we're here to think, not to be tested.'
- Remind them of the four stages if needed — the flowcharts can be used to help.
- Set expectations: everyone contributes, all views are valid, and what's said in the group stays in the group.

During the session

Step 3: Read the scenario aloud

- Read the Scenario description clearly and at a measured pace.
- Pause after reading it. Give the group 30 seconds of quiet thinking time before opening the discussion.
- You can ask a young person to read it aloud instead; this works well to build ownership.
- **Tip:** Don't rush this. The pause after reading is where thinking begins.

Step 4: Work through each stage in order

- Move through the sequence, don't skip stages.
- For each stage, read the prompt questions one at a time. You don't need to ask all of them; use judgment.
- Let the group answer before you respond. Silence is OK. Count to five before prompting further.
- Use follow-up questions to deepen thinking:
 - *Why do you think that?*
 - *What might go wrong with that idea?*
 - *Is there anyone else who sees it differently?*
- **Tip:** The prompts are starting points, not a script. If the group takes the discussion in a useful and unexpected direction, follow it.

Step 5: Manage the discussion

- Keep the focus on the steps. (e.g. *What does STOP mean here? What should they THINK about? What are the GO options?*)
- If the group gets stuck, use the prompt questions to redirect; don't give them the answer straight away.
- If one person dominates, use direct invitations: 'What do you think, [name]?''
- If the discussion becomes overly theoretical, bring it back: 'OK — so if this actually happened to you tomorrow, what would you do first?'
- **Tip:** Disagreement is productive. If the group disagrees about what to do, explore why rather than seeking consensus quickly.

If a real situation arises during the discussion

- Occasionally, a scenario will resonate with something a young person has experienced or is

experiencing. If a young person becomes distressed, discloses something personal, or says something that raises a safeguarding concern:

- **Pause the group activity.** Thank the group calmly and ask them to take a break.
- **Stay with the young person.** Follow the Yellow Card - Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Adults.
- The scenario activity can continue with the rest of the group later; the young person's welfare comes first.

What the facilitator's notes mean

Every section in each scenario card includes the facilitator's notes. These are written for you and are not intended to be read aloud to young people (unless you choose to share specific parts). Here is what each type of leader note is designed to do:

Facilitator notes in the STOP section

- These notes flag the most important 'first response' principles for this particular scenario, what to do and, crucially, what NOT to do in the opening moments.
- They often contain counter-intuitive guidance (e.g., 'do not confront', 'do not investigate', 'resist the urge to fix immediately') that young people, and leaders, might otherwise overlook under pressure.
- Use these notes to guide your facilitation if the group's first instinct is to jump to action without pausing.

Facilitator notes in the THINK section

- These notes provide the key analytical distinctions the facilitator should ensure are explored, for example, distinguishing between heat exhaustion and heat stroke, or between a rumour and confirmed information.
- They also flag where the group's thinking might go wrong (e.g., confirmation bias, false consensus) and offer a prompt to redirect.

Facilitator notes in the GO section

- These notes reinforce one or two of the most important decision principles from the GO options, often the ones young people are most likely to miss or undervalue.
- They may also contain practical tips for the facilitated discussion (e.g., 'ask the group to agree on what they would actually do, not just list options').
- Where a GO option requires physical action (e.g., calling 999, using an EpiPen, deploying a throw line), these notes may flag the practical skills or knowledge that underpin it.

Facilitator notes in the REPORT section

- These notes clarify the escalation pathway for this specific scenario. Who to tell, what to record, and what happens next.
- They often flag mandatory reporting requirements (particularly in safeguarding scenarios) and distinguish between what the on-site leader should do versus what should be escalated to the DC, HQ, or external agencies.
- They may also contain prompts for systemic learning. What this incident tells us about pre-event planning, risk assessment, or section culture.

Facilitator notes in the Debrief section

- The debrief questions at the end of each scenario card move the conversation from the hypothetical ('what would you do?') to the real ('what does this mean for us and how we operate?'). They are designed to generate reflection, not just recall.
- Use them selectively. One or two well-explored debrief questions are better than three rushed ones. The best debrief question for your group is usually the one that generates the most pause

before anyone answers.

A note on the differentiation guidance

You may wish to consider how to differentiate the scenarios for your patrol/unit, considering:

- **Agency and autonomy:** Older unit participants generally benefit from more space to lead their own thinking and decision-making, whereas younger unit participants often benefit from more structured scaffolding through the prompt questions.
- **Parental engagement:** for younger unit participants, you may wish to consider informing parents that you will be taking them through a scenario-based activity that may elicit emotions or concerns about the topics covered (such as allergic reactions, being lost, or stolen items). For older unit participants, you may wish to consider their views in decisions about contact and communication with parents.

These are guidelines, not rules. You know your young people best.

Tips for effective facilitation

Do

- Read the full scenario card, including all facilitator notes, before the session.
- Give the group thinking time. A pause is not a problem; it's where the thinking happens.
- Ask follow-up questions rather than giving answers: 'Why?' / 'What might go wrong with that?' / 'Is anyone thinking something different?'
- Use the framework stages in order. Don't skip to GO before the group has really thought.
- Acknowledge good thinking specifically and genuinely; this builds confidence and reinforces the behaviour.
- Follow up privately if anything emerges from the discussion that needs a welfare or safeguarding concern that may need reporting.

Avoid

- Turning it into a lecture, if you're talking more to the young people, something has gone wrong.
- Revealing the 'right answer' too early, the learning is in the process of working it out, not in the destination.
- Skipping the debrief, this is where the learning transfers from the scenario to real behaviour.
- Better to finish one scenario well than to rush two.