The Scout Programs of Adventure Scouts USA value safety more highly than anything else. We have created Scout Programs in which safety comes first, and we have developed programs such as Scout Buddies and Youth Protection to keep our Scouts safe. We appreciate that our youth-aged Scouts are younger, smaller, and more vulnerable than other members of society and we have taken precautions on their behalf.

However, all the precautions in the world may fail if the Scouts do not do their part. We appreciate that children are not fully responsible for their own safety, however when Scouts work with their Team Counselors and Counselors by obeying the rules, keeping them safe becomes easier.

Youth like to have FUN and sometimes that involves pulling pranks. Youth generally listen with only one ear and roll their eyes when they are told again and again to be careful. Most adults can relate to being that way when they were young. The simplest lapse in judgment however can turn tragic. Below are three instances in which poor judgment cost someone their life:

Thinking it would be funny, two freshman students in a university dorm tore some paper off a bulletin board and set fire to it. They intended to put it out, but the fire rapidly caught three sofas on fire and soon the entire north wing of the dorm was ablaze. Three students, all 19 years of age, perished in the fire and several other students were treated for smoke inhalation. The students who set the fire received a sentence of five years in prison.

A mother hoping to win a popular new video game console for her children took part in a water drinking contest sponsored by a local radio station. Perhaps unaware of the consequences of drinking enormous amounts of water, the radio station did not think anything would happen. The woman won the contest, only to die of water poisoning hours later.

Three young people made it a habit to go around and steal stop signs, thinking it would be funny. It proved to be a tragedy however when a car carrying two teenagers went through an intersection missing a stop sign which the young people stole. The two teenagers were killed in a crash with another vehicle, and the young people received a sentence of 15 years in prison.

These are just a few examples of the way being thoughtless can turn from “no big deal” into a tragedy. We urge parents to also be careful. Taking an extra moment to make sure you check and recheck that no one is behind you when you are backing your car out can help prevent a tragedy. Enforcing seatbelt rules and asking your kids to check in via phone are not unreasonable requests, whatever they may seem to youth. We ask our Scouts and their parents to always act with caution and forethought. Choosing to be careful may well save a life.