

Utah TNG Sponsor Orientation



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So you want to be a sponsor?

Or

How to help introduce new people to the community and events, without totally fucking it up, getting everyone outed, destroying your own reputation, and causing all life on earth to cease as we know it.

Why do sponsors exist?



This shit ain't new

- People have needed to be introduced into already established BDSM communities for as long as pervs came out of their caves and gathered.
- Most every area in the US has slightly different approaches for how new people are introduced and oriented into their existing communities.
- In the state of Utah the various BDSM community groups have developed a slightly more codified approach to achieve this.
- This system of sponsorship is maintained for many reasons. The most important of which is safety.
 - The most influential majority of the state is socially conservative and highly religious. This leads to a negative and biased view of our lifestyle.
 - The state of Utah has laws which oppose, or at best do not favor, those involved in many BDSM activities.
 - This results in justified concerns of possible danger for those involved in the community, for their: social, economic, emotional, and even physical well being.

What does it mean to be a sponsor?



What does it mean to be a sponsor?

- Trust is a fundamental concept in a kink community. The trust we have in other people effects:
 - If we choose to interact with or play with them.
 - Whether we allow them into our venues or play spaces.
 - Our comfort level with letting them witness our play or knowing our identities.
- Sponsors vouch for a new person to the community
 - Someone who is new doesn't have a reputation upon which to generate much trust.
 - As a sponsor you put your reputation on the line for a new person. Their actions and behavior will reflect back onto you.

Sponsoring Criteria

Just like with TSA, there's rules that may not make sense, but they're there for a reason.



Sponsoring Criteria

- Sponsorship criteria differs between groups, play spaces, and venues.
 - Groups, venues, and play spaces each have different expectations.
 - Sponsoring to a Utah TNG party at The Clubhouse, might involve different guidelines than an event at The Clubhouse run by The Path or The Salt Lake City Girls of Leather for example.
 - Criteria for who can sponsor can differ between groups, venues, and play spaces.
 - For some groups, once you've attended one event, you can sponsor other people.
 - Other groups have more specific requirements. Some prefer to inform people when they're allowed to be sponsors.
- Before you agree to sponsor someone, make sure you understand if you're allowed to be a sponsor for that event.
 - If you haven't met the criteria to sponsor for an event, the person you're sponsoring could be turned away at the door.
 - Event organizers will know what the criteria are for sponsorship.

Sponsorship doesn't cross over

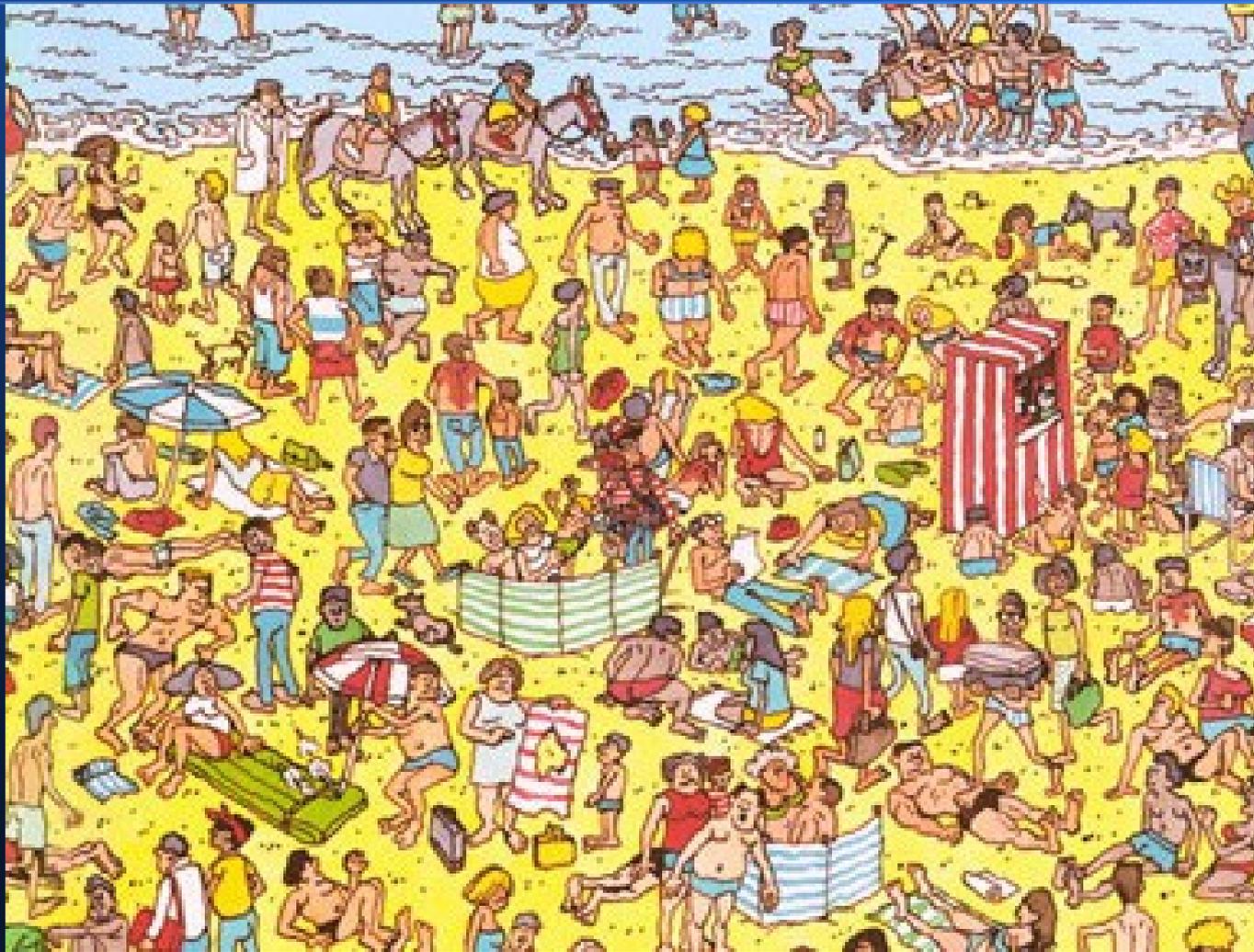
- The approval to sponsor doesn't overlap between groups, venues, or play spaces.
 - Qualifications to sponsor at one, doesn't mean you can sponsor to the others automatically.



Sponsorship Specifics

- Ensure that the new person has a basic comprehension about the rules, etiquette, and protocols for the event. Including all of the following:
 - What they're likely to see or experience. Including underlining the importance of confidentiality about what takes place both during and after the event.
 - What happens at the party stays at the party
 - Explanations about the structure of how the party operates and who is involved.
 - Dungeon Monitors: who they are, how to find them, what they do and don't do.
 - Socializing: where, when, and how it is appropriate or not.
 - Etiquette regarding play and play spaces
 - Rules and etiquette about watching others
 - How to agree to, refuse, or negotiate play
 - The importance and role of consent throughout the event.
 - Yes and only yes means yes.
 - Enthusiastic and fully informed consent is required.

Getting Oriented



Getting Oriented

- Some events hold orientations to help ensure the attendees understand what is expected of them.
 - Make sure you understand when, where, and how that orientation is to be completed.
 - Some events require the sponsor to attend the orientation with the new person.
 - Always clarify with the event organizer if you aren't sure whether there is an orientation, and who needs to attend it.
- If an event doesn't provide an orientation, it is the responsibility of the sponsor to make sure the new person is aware of all rules and expectations.
- Even if an event provides an orientation, reviewing the rules and expectations before or after the orientation is helpful to reinforce and help the new person understand them all.

Who should you sponsor?



Who should you sponsor?

Outlining clear criteria for who is “worthy” or “prepared” for sponsorship is a complex and difficult conversation. Providing advice is about the best that can be done:

- Treat the venue as you would your own home, because often it is someone's home.
 - Would you feel safe inviting this person to your home alone with you?
 - Would this person respect your home, property, and the rules in your house?
 - Is there a chance this person might endanger your anonymity either explicitly or implicitly after learning about what goes on in your home or where it's located?

Sponsoring someone else is a choice. No one ever has to sponsor anyone else. Take all the time needed to make that choice. If you're unsure, ask probing questions of the other person to either ease or confirm any concerns you might have about that person.

Who shouldn't you sponsor?

YOU CAN TRUST ME



Who shouldn't you sponsor?

Being a sponsor is a decision of intuition, a “gut” call. Being nice and helping others into the community is a worthy pursuit, but not at the cost of your own personal comfort, or an increased likelihood of danger to the community.

- If you're experiencing any of the following, don't sponsor that person:
 - You're just not comfortable around someone, for whatever reason.
 - They're pressuring or attempting to manipulate you into sponsoring them.
 - They've shown or are showing an inability to respect consent, personal boundaries, or privacy.
 - Concern their actions might reflect back negatively on you.

If someone asks you to sponsor them, and you're unwilling, inform them why. Communicate tactfully and maturely, but avoiding the subject or being unclear as to your discomfort or concerns benefits no one.

Sponsor Expectations

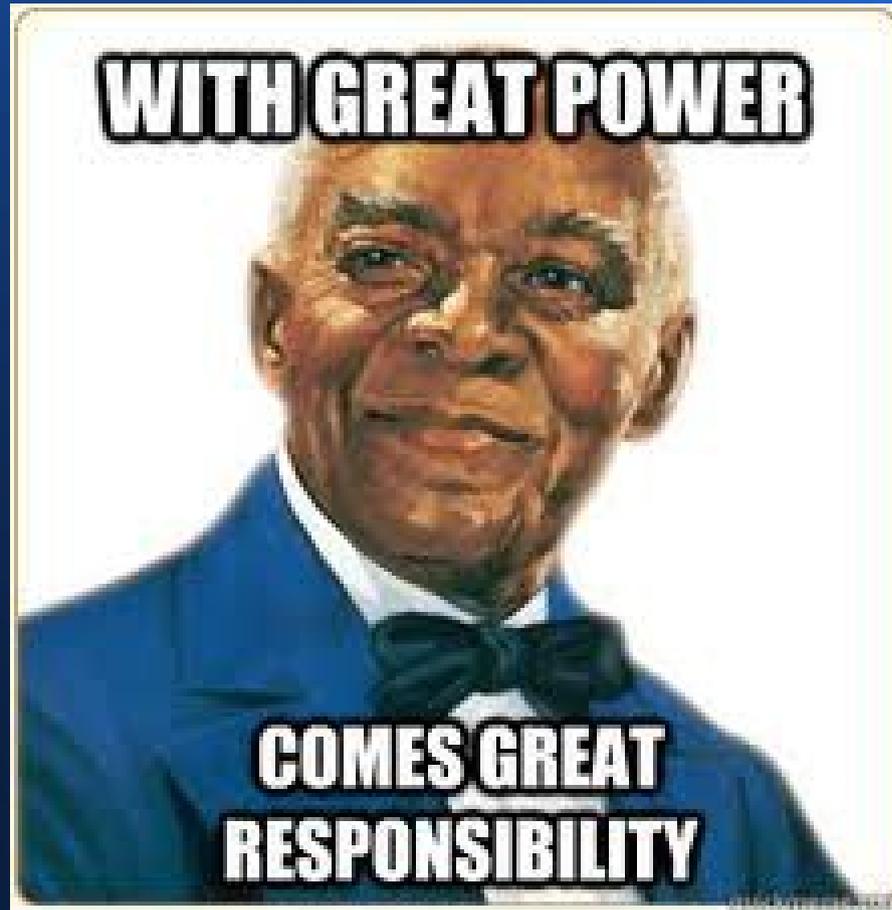


Sponsor Expectations

- A sponsor introduces, guides, gives advice, and support if needed to a new person their first time at an event. This is the extent of the obligation a sponsor has towards the person they're sponsoring.
- A sponsor is not:
 - An automatic play partner. Nor should someone being sponsored be viewed this way by the sponsor
 - A pimp. A sponsor can introduce the new person around, but this is not the obligation of the sponsor to be the “tour guide” or pimp for the evening.
 - Anything else that would be in “exchange” for being a sponsor.

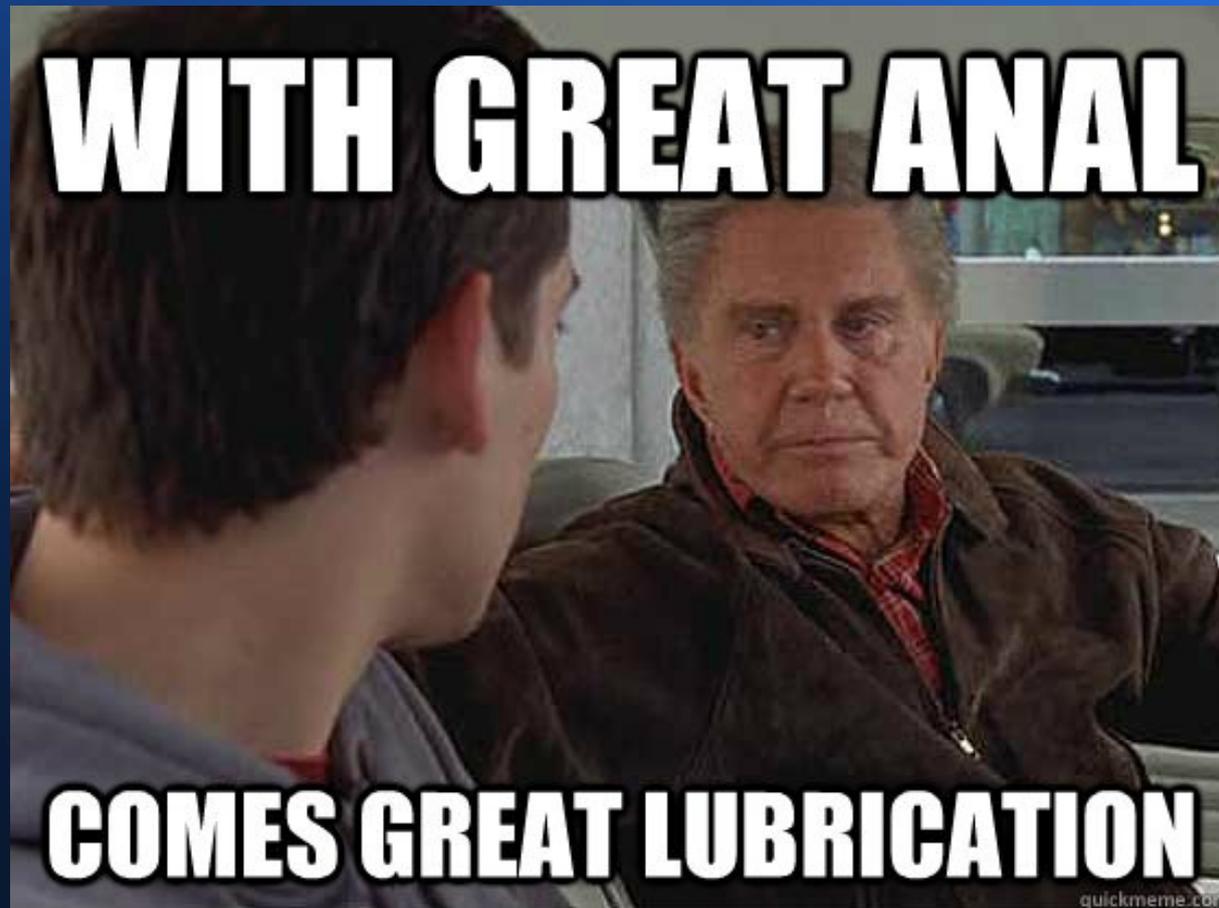
Sponsorship is altruistic, from the goodness of your kinky heart. If things like a ride or play are also a common interest, that is fine. They just need to be negotiated separate from the expectations of sponsorship.

Remember what Uncle Ben said



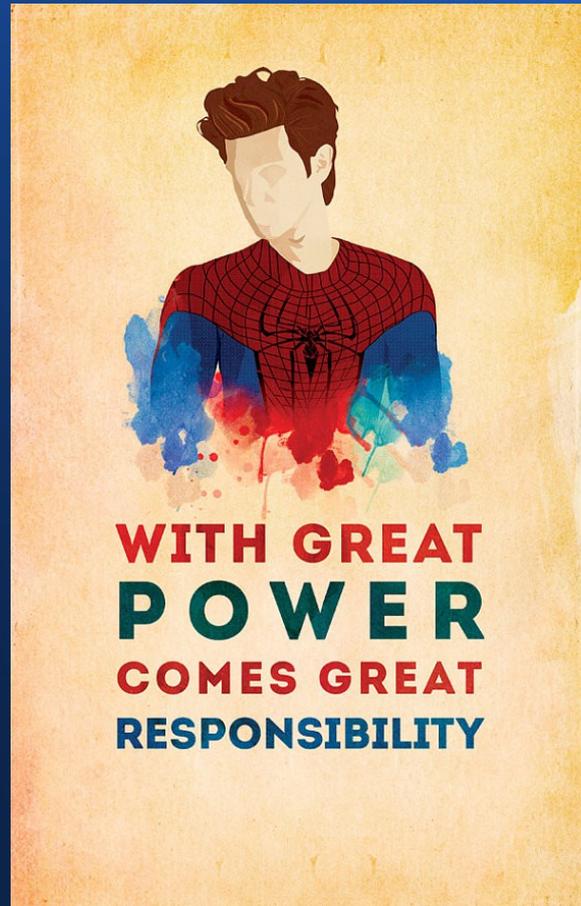
Not that Uncle Ben the other one.

Remember what Uncle Ben said



Not that saying, the one from before

Remember what Uncle Ben said



With great sponsoring, comes great responsibility

- We want for as many people as possible to be able to find their fulfillment in our kink community.
- We do not want that inclusion to come at the price of anyone's safety.
- Please be responsible with who and how you sponsor people.
- Please help those who enter our community have as safe, sane, and consensual an introduction as possible. Be an informed and responsible sponsor.

Remember what Uncle Ben said

