

# Training to Teach Shooting Sports

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Boys love to shoot. You might remember that old movie, *The Christmas Story*. In the movie, the young boy wants a Red Ryder Daisy BB gun. The punch line of the movie was when someone said, “You’ll shoot your eye out, kid.” Most boys love to shoot BB guns or other firearms. The National Shooting Sports Program (NSSP) is an affiliate program of the Royal Rangers ministry that encourages safe shooting in BB gun, air rifle, smallbore rifle, black powder, trap, and archery.

Shooting sports is a great tool to get boys interested in the Royal Rangers program. Once the boys get into the Royal Rangers program, leaders have a chance to introduce them to the gospel of Jesus Christ and to give them the opportunity for salvation.

In order to safely teach the shooting sports, leaders need to be properly trained. Many of you have heard the Grainger Commercial that states, “Safety, Safety, Safety.” As Royal Rangers leaders, we would like you to hear another phrase, “Training, Training, and more Training in shooting sports.” You may be asking yourself, “How do I get the training I need to conduct safe firearm training for my outpost?” A great source for firearm training is the National Rifle Association (NRA), which was founded in 1871 to improve marksmanship and training in firearm sports. Today, the NRA is recognized as the premier training organization for the shooting sports. Their goals are to train individuals in basic firearm safety, use, and marksmanship.

The NRA offers a number of training courses for Royal Rangers leaders to increase their knowledge and to get certified as range safety officers (RSOs) or as firearms instructors. The NRA RSO class can be conducted in two ways—as a one-day classroom session or as an online course. The Royal Rangers national office encourages leaders that want to teach shooting sports to take the RSO courses. If you are properly trained and use that training to teach your boys, this allows you to run a safe shooting range, which reduces the risk of accidents. The NRA also offers basic rifle shooting courses and instructor courses in rifle, pistol, and shotgun.

If you want to attend a training, you can search for NRA courses in your area by going to their website at [NRAInstructors.org](https://www.nrainstructors.org) and entering your zip code in the locator tool. The NSSP has been offering RSO courses at the LEAD conferences and at regional conferences for several years. Check out the next event in your area to see if another RSO course is being offered.

Anthony Cannella, a NSSP field advisor, is a NRA Rifle Instructor and a Training Counselor. He is certified to train others to become RSOs, NRA Rifle Instructors, and NRA Shotgun Instructors. Anthony recommends reaching out to your local gun clubs for access and training. Anthony approached the Green Rifle and Pistol Club a few years back about using their facilities to teach the Royal Rangers shotgun and smallbore shooting merits. In return for free access to the facility for their camps and merit training, the Royal Rangers clean the club facility. As a result of that relationship, Anthony now runs a NSSP Shooting Sports Action Camp out of their

range. The club has stated that the Royal Rangers are the best-behaved group they have ever had at their facility and are a testament to the Royal Rangers program.

Check out our website at [theNSSP.org](http://theNSSP.org). You'll find tips on how to start a shooting sports program in your outpost and instructions on how to run postal matches. Then, your boys can compete in the National Postal Match Competitions each year. On our Facebook and Instagram accounts, you'll see pictures and videos of Royal Rangers across the country participating in the shooting sports.

Remember, we are all volunteers, but more importantly, we are godly men. The Bible verse that should be our creed is, "Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6, NKJV). The NSSP is a great tool to get boys involved in the shooting sports and engaged in the Royal Rangers program. As Anthony says, "Stay safe, be prayed up, and keep your aim forever straight."

Anthony Cannella & Darell Freeman



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