



Best Practices in Recruiting

Youth and Adults in
Boy Scouts of America

Owl Patrol, Wood Badge C3-178-16

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Importance of Recruitment

- Applies to all levels of scouting: Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity and Venturing
- All units need to continually recruit in order to stay viable
- Part of Journey to Excellence requirements
 - Cubs, Troops and Crews will get credit toward their Journey to Excellence goals by signing up a new member.
 - More credit is given by increasing membership by 5% or 10%.



Challenges of Youth Recruitment

- ◉ Many competing activities for youth
- ◉ Must maintain strong program to keep youth/scouts interest
- ◉ Lack of knowledge about scouting program
- ◉ Possible past problems with previous scout group – overcome negative image

Cub Scout Youth Recruitment Best Practices

◉ Recruitment Nights

- After intro, separate potential new scouts from parents
 - ◉ Easier to give info to parents
 - ◉ More fun for potential new scouts
 - ◉ Have new scouts work with few adults and some Boy Scouts from Troop (if possible)
 - ◉ Using Boy Scouts bolsters teamwork & Cub Scouts start to see Boy Scouts as role models

Cub Scout Youth Recruitment Best Practices *(continued)*

- **Open Houses**
- **Slideshow or photos** of all the fun things you do is great way to sell your unit
- **Cub Scout display table** advertising scouts & how to join at end-of-year School Picnic (or other key event at school)
- **Summer events with pack** - Invite potential new scouts before they are offered all of the new activities when school starts.
- **Peer-to-Peer Invitation**
 - Benefits youth by having friend in Pack & better retention rate for Pack

Boy Scout/Venturing Youth Recruitment Best Practices

- **Open House** at Troop or Crew

- Invite scouts & parents to see what Troop/Crew is all about
- Include games, information, photos/slideshow of past scout events & trips, gear demo, food/snacks, Q&A
 - *SLIDESHOW OR DVD DEMO*



Boy Scout/Venturing Youth Recruitment Best Practices *(continued)*

- **Involve Boy Scouts** as much as possible to “sell” Boy Scouting
 - May be more credible to youth
 - Illustrates that boys lead Troop in Boy Scouts
 - Let them talk about their scout experiences & trips (pre-plan what to cover; avoid negative details)

- **Work with Cub Scout Pack throughout year**
 - Boy Scouts develop their leadership skills (e.g. Den Chiefs)
 - Builds bridge to Troop from Pack for boys, more comfortable for young scouts, easier to recruit them

Boy Scout/Venturing Youth Recruitment Best Practices *(continued)*



- **Attend Pack Blue & Gold Banquet/Bridging Ceremony** to receive new scouts
 - Scoutmaster can explain/promote the Troop to all potential scouts & parents
 - *TROOP RECRUITMENT/PROMO DEMO*

- **Peer-to-Peer Invitation**
 - Benefits youth by having friend in Troop
 - Part of new Boy Scout requirements
 - 1st Class Req. #10, talk with non Boy Scout or talk to an inactive Boy Scout. Have a conversation.
 - Scouts earn recruitment patch

Adult Recruitment Best Practices

- **Make the ask**

- Many adults say they don't get involved because they were never "asked"

- **Start with small tasks, don't overwhelm**

- Examples:
 - Food committee if need snacks brought to meetings; don't need to be trained leader to organize this
 - Helping with one-time event such as pizza party, Blue & Gold, Pine Wood Derby
 - Boy Scouts: Ask parent to be on board of review for advancements, drive for an outing, help with flag ceremony, collect forms, etc.

Adult Recruitment (cont)



- Once **adults see how easy it is**, they will be more comfortable and more likely to step into a leadership position
- **Watch for parents who hang out** at meetings or campouts; they may want to get more involved, but don't feel comfortable yet
 - *PARENT RECRUITMENT DEMONSTRATION*
- **Encourage parents to share their talent**
 - Use **Talent Inventory Survey** to find out what they are good at and what they would be interested in sharing/helping with in scouts
 - <http://bsaseabase.org/filestore/CubScoutMeetingGuide/PDF/Appendix/34362.pdf>

Adult Recruitment *(continued)*

- **Utilize your pack or troop yearly plan** to create a signup sheet for activities they may be interested in and then follow up based on Talent Inventory.
 - Helps reduce time spent sorting and organizing surveys
 - Examples: Pinewood Derby, conservation projects, camp outs, etc.
- Parents may become a **Merit Badge Counselor**
 - Helps scouts finish partials or adds variety to what is offered in your Troop or Council
 - *ADULT/PARENT RECRUITMENT DEMONSTRATION*

Adult Recruitment (cont)



- **Emotional appeal** - Scout Timeline Speech
 - Most effective when nobody stepping up to fill needed positions
 - Don't want to use this appeal repeatedly as it loses its emphasis after seen once
 - Must use proportionate timeline for full effect
 - Using scouts to hold up timeline adds to effect as they disappear or have to sit down
 - *TIMELINE SPEECH DEMONSTRATION*



Recruitment Summary

Cub Scout Youth

- Use or create special events to invite boys to join your Pack
- Separate scouts & parents when need to get important info to parents & fun for boys
- Use scouts to recruit/invite their friends to join

Boy Scout Youth

- Work with Cub Scouts throughout year
- Host Open House annually
- Attend Blue & Gold & use as recruiting opportunity
- Use Boy Scouts to recruit & sell program

Adult Recruitment Summary

- Make the “ask” for help
- Start with small tasks so you don’t overwhelm potential volunteers
- Watch for parents who show any interest
- Encourage parents to share their unique talents
- Appeal to their emotions; want to spend precious time with their kids

