



## **BOY SCOUT RECRUITING GUIDE**

Research shows that most boys do not join scouting because they were not aware they were ever invited to join. Frequently adults in uniform are stopped by parents to ask about scouting because they were unaware that scouting was available in the area. Unless you ask, you'll never know if a boy is interested in joining Boy Scouts. Enclosed in this guide are a number of techniques that can be used to invite boys and their families to join your troop. Some of these are ideas used successfully by other troops. Others are newer ideas that you may elect to try. Whichever techniques you use, the Sycamore District Membership Committee is interested in your feedback. Please drop us a note at [membership@sycamorebsa.com](mailto:membership@sycamorebsa.com) and let us know how these work for you. If you have suggestions for future versions of this guide, please let us know.

I.	BOY SCOUT RECRUITMENT .....	3
II.	Recruiting Youth New to Scouting.....	3
II.1.	Direct Mail Recruiting of New Scouts [March/April/May].....	3
II.2	School/Church Contact (Build a Relationship).....	4
II.3	Publish Information in School and/or Church Email, Newsletter or on Web Sites....	4
II.4	Distribute Information through the Welcome Wagon .....	4
II.5	Place Fliers/Displays with Real Estate Offices, Chamber of Commerce, Village/City Halls, & Libraries .....	5
II.6	Information Distribution at Parades .....	5
II.7	Promotion at Village/City/County Fair .....	5
II.8	Place Fliers in Businesses where Back to School Supplies are Purchased.....	5
II.9	Promotional Video.....	6
II.10	Service Projects .....	6
III	Recruiting Youth from Cub Scouts .....	6
III.1	Den Chiefs .....	6
III.3	Participating at Pack/Den Meetings .....	6
III.3	Outdoorsman Webelos Activity Pin.....	7
III.4	Support at District Activities .....	7
III.5	Webelos Campout .....	7

# **I. BOY SCOUT RECRUITMENT**

## **General Information**

The recruiting techniques described herein can be combined and used at the same time.

For all of the following recruiting techniques, always do the following:

- On all distributed information, include contact numbers.
- Take names and contact information from anyone you talk with.
- Make follow-up contact with those you speak to and personally invite them to visit a troop meeting.
- Have a dedicated adult position on the committee for recruiting new scouts and families. Part of the responsibility would be to help transition the new families into the troop once they join.
- In many of these activities if the recruiting is done by a current scout, they can earn the “Recruiter” strip to wear on their uniform.

## **II. Recruiting Youth New to Scouting**

Scouters often ask why we track so many “numbers”. One reason is that it gives us an unobtrusive way to examine how we are doing. One of the things we find from this type of feedback is that Boy Scouts do little recruiting outside of the scouting program. There are a lot of potential boy scouts in our communities that are only waiting to be invited to join scouting. The bulk of this guide will be addressing techniques to approach and get information out to recruiting youth who are not presently involved in scouting.

### **II.1. Direct Mail Recruiting of New Scouts [March/April/May]**

Spring is the ideal time to recruit new scouts for your troop, particularly those in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This would be a three month process starting in March. The first step is to get a copy of the school directories in your area that have the names and addresses of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade boys to which you will be sending invitations. Since this should be a troop effort, at a troop meeting you could have the scouts address the invitations. These invitations should be mailed in March to arrive at least two weeks in advance of the April troop meeting you are inviting them to attend and should include an invitation to the parents as well. At the troop meeting you should have a program planned that will help sell scouting to the potential scout and his family. In addition to having them view a troop meeting, have some of the older scouts (your Troop Guide) work with the boy on some joining requirements so that at the end of the evening you can let them know they have covered some portion of the New Scout requirements. A primary objective of the troop meeting is the third step in the process which is to get the boys interested enough that they are willing to attend your May campout as a visitor. This is where you can really sell them on scouting, simply by including them and making them feel a part of the troop.

{Sample Invitation}

Tired of being bored with nothing to do? Would you like to be having fun with a group of your friends? We can make that happen. We are the scouts of Boy Scout Troop {#} and we would like to invite you to attend one of our troop meetings to see what we are all about. You and a parent are invited to attend our troop meeting on {DATE} starting at {TIME} at the {MEETING PLACE}. If you have any questions our recruiting chairman can be reached at {PHONE/EMAIL}. We hope to see you there. If this date is not good for your family, please contact us to arrange an alternate date.

## **II.2 School/Church Contact (Build a Relationship)**

Most Troops will have a relationship with a particular school and/or church. Make sure to build and nurture the relationship with the key individuals. At a school it would be the principal, secretary, PTO chairman, etc. At a church it would be the clergy, office manager, head of the religious education program. Make sure to have regular contact with these people. One way to do this would be to deliver or email them a copy of your unit newsletter and calendar so they are aware of the activities your unit has planned. These people will have contact with new members of the community and be able to recommend scouting to the new families.

## **II.3 Publish Information in School and/or Church Email, Newsletter or on Web Sites**

A. Schools and Churches in the area will generally have a newsletter that they mail or otherwise distribute (perhaps by email). Many are willing to let scouts publicize their meeting dates and even include a calendar of activities.

B. Many schools and churches also have their own web sites. See if they will allow you to put a link on their web site to your troop site or the Sycamore District web site ([www.sycamorebsa.com](http://www.sycamorebsa.com)). In addition, they may be able to provide an email link that can be redirected to your membership person so you can be contacted by email.

## **II.4 Distribute Information through the Welcome Wagon**

Many communities have a group that functions as a “Welcome Wagon” that will make contact with new residents and provide them with information about the community. Provide a flier or similar material about your unit with contact information and provide copies to the “Welcome Wagon” in your area.

## **II.5 Place Fliers/Displays with Real Estate Offices, Chamber of Commerce, Village/City Halls, & Libraries**

Prepare a flier and/or display with information about your unit and a contact number to distribute at various community contact points. Some examples of good locations would include local real estate offices, the local Chamber of Commerce, Village or City Hall, Libraries, or other locations frequented by the public.

## **II.6 Information Distribution at Parades**

At local parades (for example: Memorial Day Parade, Christmas/Holiday Parade, or city event parade) distribute information about your unit with contact information. Attaching a sucker or other candy to a card with your pack information is a good way to get information into the hands of potential scouts. If your unit is not in the parade, you could still walk the parade route with a couple of scouts to help distribute the information. Make sure to be ready to take down contact information from anyone who may be interested and follow-up with a phone call to invite them to your next troop meeting.

## **II.7 Promotion at Village/City/County Fair**

Most communities have annual village or city fairs. See if your unit can set up a promotional display with contact information about your troop. Make sure you have a flier or post card available for people who are interested. If you can have someone in attendance at the booth, they should take contact information from anyone who shows interest. Someone should be assigned to follow-up with a phone call to invite them to your next troop meeting.

## **II.8 Place Fliers in Businesses where Back to School Supplies are Purchased**

An ideal time to recruit would be at the beginning of the school year. Check with the businesses in your area to see if they would be willing to either distribute your fliers to students buying school supplies or if you could get your unit information on the list of school supplies that the business provides. Business such as Office Max, Target, Walmart, or other stores that sell school supplies are good locations.

## **II.9 Promotional Video**

See if someone in your troop has the ability to create a video that can be used for promotional purposes. Generic videos are available from the Boy Scouts of America. If you have a tape, contact your local cable provider to see if you can get this on the public access channel. You could also make copies and mail them to prospective recruits and ask that they return the tape/disk by bringing it with them to visit your unit.

## **II.10 Service Projects**

For troop service projects, be sure to invite the members of the school and/or church you are associated with to assist. This is a good way to get individuals involved in a troop project and provide them with additional information about your troop. These projects should also be promoted with the local media to generate publicity for your unit. At the project, have a membership table set up to provide information.

# **III Recruiting Youth from Cub Scouts**

The time to start recruiting Cub Scouts into your unit is not in the winter of their last year, but in the spring of their first year in the pack. Another thing to keep in mind is that you are not only selling the Cub Scout about the value of joining Boy Scouts, but you must sell the parents.

## **III.1 Den Chiefs**

The use of Den Chiefs is a good way to help illustrate the fun of the Boy Scout program to the Cub Scouts. The right Den Chief will have the opportunity to tell the cubs about Boy Scout outings and the activities they will have an opportunity to be involved in when they join Boy Scouts. Remember that this is a formal position within the troop that is assigned by the Scoutmaster. As such, the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster should take the responsibility of working with the Den Leaders to ensure the Den Chiefs are providing the type of service needed by the den.

## **III.3 Participating at Pack/Den Meetings**

Packs will often need help in running a pack activity such as a Blue & Gold Banquet, Pinewood Derby, or family campout. Have regular contact with the pack to get a copy of their calendar and be able to suggest where your scouts may be of assistance.

At regular pack meetings, set up a display of your troop activities for the cubs to view as a gathering activity.

At den meetings, the Den Leader may need assistance in doing certain activities like basic first aid, knots, etc. Your unit could send scouts trained in this area to assist. It is important that they are trained and ready to instruct these activities.

### **III.3 Outdoorsman Webelos Activity Pin**

Put together a team of your scouts that would be available to come instruct the types of things needed for a Webelos Scout to earn his Outdoorsman Activity Pin and offer the service to the Webelos Den Leaders.

### **III.4 Support at District Activities**

Supporting district activities such as Tiger Time, New Scout Fun Day, Woods of Webelos, Day Camp, etc. will provide you with exposure and contact with the cub scouts in your area. By volunteering to work on an activity, you can get to know the parents, promote your unit, and promote scouting in general. Bring a display of your scouting activities to show the Cub Scouts what awaits them in Boy Scouts.

### **III.5 Webelos Campout**

A Webelos Campout is a campout conducted by your troop to which you invite Webelos and their parents to attend. This campout should be filled with activities that the Webelos Scouts will have fun with and encourage them to join Boy Scouts. Of equal importance at such a campout is the comfort of the parents. If you campout in tents in November with parents that may never have been camping before, you may lose that family to further scouting.