**Recruiting Guide**

**Webelos-to-Scout Transition**

**A Guide for Packs and Troops to Transition Webelos to Boy Scouts**

**Overview**

All youth should have the opportunity to benefit from Scouting.

The transition from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts is when we lose a large percentage of our membership. An effective Webelos to Scout Transition plan is essential for retaining our current Cub Scouts by moving them into a Boy Scout Troop.

To have an effective plan, we must address the following issues:

**Youth are tired of the Cub Scout program after five years. They do not have an understanding of the Boy Scout program and we need to ensure that they do.**

* Invite the Arrow of Light (formally Webelos II) den to attend at least one troop meeting and one campout during their 5th grade year.
* Have the Arrow of Light Dens between their 4th grade and 5th grade year take a ― "field trip" to camp for one day during summer camp to visit a local troop. Have someone from the troop give them a tour of camp.
* Conduct ― "Webelos Talks" within the Arrow of Light dens telling them about the fun and exciting things they get to do within the troop. Share the annual troop program plan of outdoor adventure including monthly campouts, canoe trips, backpacking trips, etc.
* Assign a Den Chief from a troop to each Arrow of Light den. The Den Chief ideally would serve as the ―Troop Guide" once this group moves up into the troop.
* Have monthly ―connecting activities" between the pack and troop. Ideas are available in this guidebook.

**Arrow of Light Leaders don’t know anything about the Boy Scout program and are not encouraging their boys to move on. They see it as an end to their volunteer involvement in Scouting. We need to change that misconception.**

* Talk to the Arrow of Light Leader early about the Boy Scout program. Invite them to be an Assistant Scoutmaster within the troop for the New Scout Patrol.
* Encourage the Arrow of Light Leader go through Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training and Outdoor Leader Skills while still in Cub Scouting. If there is resistance let it go for right now.
* Invite the Arrow of Light Leader and den to participate in troop campouts.
* Have leaders within the troop help the Arrow of Light leader teach the activity pins.
* Teach our parents and leaders that Scouting is a continuous program from Cub Scouts through Boy Scouts that will yield greatest benefit for youth if parents and youth persevere.

**More activities competing for time. It is true, but we need to show them why Scouting is worth the stress and how the time can be managed.**

* We do not compete with other youth programs. Our program serves all boys and young men ages 6 through 20 and all young women ages 14 (13 if they have completed 8th grade) through 20. Our youth should participate in soccer, baseball, basketball, swimming, Girl Scouts, 4-H, church youth groups, and similar activities as those activities support our mission of teaching youth to become participating citizens with respect for others and the environment.
* Build it and they will come." A well-planned program filled with outdoor adventure will attract youth. Communicate your troop’s annual program plan to the Arrow of Lights and their parents. Invite them to participate in activities. If they see the fun and adventure firsthand, they will pick our program over another.
* Talk to the parents about the ―Values of Scouting." Scouting teaches leadership, problem solving, communication, ethical decision-making, and more. Share the Harris Study ―*The Values of Men and Boys in America”* to show Scouting’s importance over sports and other youth activities.
* Be flexible in attendance requirements. Encourage youth to participate in other programs and know they are always welcome to attend when their other program is done for the year. Offer a "Saturday" van to troop campouts for those who have Friday night commitments.

**Boy Scouting is not seen as "cool" among their friends.**

* Camping, canoeing, rock climbing, rappelling, backpacking, swimming, and sports are cool. Communicate your well-planned annual program plan to the Arrow of Lights and their parents. Sell the program!
* Use peer to peer recruiting. If their friends are in the program and they know it, they are more likely to join.

**They are not asked.**

* Many times a Arrow of Light and his parents are simply not asked to join a troop. Studies show that a boy has to be asked six times to join before he feels invited.
* Have your New Scout Patrol "mentor" an Arrow of Light den. Encourage them to finish their activity pins, invite them to troop campouts, and personally invite them to join the Troop.
* Have last year’s crossovers personally call every member from this year's Arrow of Light den to invite them to join the troop. They will still know many of these boys.
* Ensure that the parents also know that they are welcome and that the current group of uniformed leaders is not exclusive but counts on their participation and support.

**Responsibilities**

**Arrow of Lights to Scout transition is everyone’s responsibility --** Arrow of Light Leaders, Cubmasters, Scoutmasters, Parents, Commissioners and the District Committee. All must work together to ensure that Arrow of Lights and their parents know all the great fun and adventure in store for them when they become Boy Scouts. Arrow of Light is not the end of Cub Scouts. The transition from Arrow of Light to Boy Scouts is a normal and expected part of the program. Following are specifically assigned responsibilities to ensure the transition is smooth and effective:

**District Arrow of Light Transition Chair**

* Appointed by the District Membership Chair with concurrence of District Chair.
* Contact all packs in early fall to update a list of all fifth-grade Arrow of Light Scouts.
* Coach Cubmasters and Arrow of Light den leaders in the transition process at roundtables, training courses, and through personal contact.
* Report to the District Membership Committee Chair, and keep the District Committee informed.
* Track and maintain records of Arrow of Light graduation by using a wall chart or other tool that lists the transition record of each pack.
* Work with Unit Commissioners to follow up on Arrow of Lights Scouts who have not joined a troop.
* Achieve District’s Transition Goal.

**Troop Responsibilities**

* Troop Committee Chair appoints a Troop Membership Chair (position description follows) and reports name and contact information to the District Membership Chair.
* Troop Membership Chair with the advice and agreement of the Scoutmaster selects Scouts to serve as den chiefs for each Arrow of Lights den and Cub Scout den in Packs associated with your troop. Arrange for Den Chief training.
* Troop serves as a resource for overnight activities. The troop can be of service to provide equipment, leadership, and logistics for Arrow of Lights parent-son campouts.
* Troop Membership Chair conducts an orientation in the Bear Cub Scout dens to explain the changing role as boys become Arrow of Light Scouts, and then again as they become Boy Scouts. Explain how being a Arrow of Light Scout will help prepare them for Boy Scouting. Take some Eagle Scouts with you.
* Arrow of Light den/Scout troop campouts should show Arrow of Light Scouts and their parents what to expect when they move into the troop. The troop should cook and camp by patrol, and use skills in which the Arrow of Light Scouts can participate.
* Troop Membership Chair arranges for Arrow of Light dens to visit a troop meeting. This should be planned several weeks in advance.
* Troop Membership Chair provides each Arrow of Light Scout a copy of the troop’s activities for the upcoming year.
* Troop Membership Chair/Scoutmaster works with Arrow of Light den leaders to encourage them to plan to move into the troop with their Arrow of Light Scouts and to serve either as committee members or assistant Scoutmasters.
* Troop Membership Chair arranges to have a Scoutmaster conference for each Arrow of Light under the guidance of the Scoutmaster or the assistant designated by the Scoutmaster. This conference should cover the meaning of the Scout Oath and Scout Law, the advancement program, troop camping, the patrol method, summer camp, and personal equipment.
* Troop Membership Chair works with the Cubmaster in planning a meaningful crossover ceremony at the pack’s blue and gold banquet. Coordinate the ceremony and arrange for each Arrow of Light Scout to receive a troop neckerchief and *Boy Scout Handbook* along with his Arrow of Light Award. Members of the Order of the Arrow may assist in the ceremony.

**Unit Commissioner Responsibilities**

* Be a catalyst in developing good relationships between troop and pack leaders. Ensure that each troop develops an association with one or more packs and each pack develops an association with one or more troops.
* Ensure that assigned packs and troops have a copy of this plan, understand this plan, and establish a Arrow of Light to Scout transition program consistent with this plan.
* Promote communication by scheduling a meeting of key volunteers.
* Help coordinate Arrow of Light den visit to a troop meeting and other joint activities. Ensure every Arrow of Light den leader informs Arrow of Lights and parents of the opportunity to visit troop meetings and to participate in joint activities with a troop.
* Keep the pack and troop on schedule as plans develop for the crossover ceremony at the blue and gold banquet.
* Attend the crossover ceremony.
* Be sure new Scouts have completed a Boy Scout application, that they have a copy of the troop’s activities, and that they know when and where the troop meets.
* Work with the pack and troop in their charter renewal process to help ensure Arrow of Light Scouts are moved from pack rosters to troop rosters.
* Work with the District Arrow of Light Transition Chair to follow-up on boys who have not yet joined a troop.
* Make sure that every Arrow of Light Scout is invited to join a troop.
* Be sure Arrow of Light Scouts join a troop in time to prepare for Boy Scout summer camp.

**Pack Responsibilities**

* The Committee Chair and Cubmaster should ensure that Arrow of Light leaders are properly motivated and focused to ensure that Arrow of Lights are prepared to and do cross-over. The Committee Chair and Cubmaster will ensure that the pack has a Pack Membership Chair (position description follows) who will fulfill the pack responsibilities or guide and assist Arrow of Light leaders in fulfilling the responsibilities.
* Develop a working relationship with the leadership of a Boy Scout troop or troops in the community. Most troops should have either an assistant Scoutmaster or a committee member assigned to new Scouts. Your unit commissioner can help put you in contact with troop leaders.
* Compare calendars of troop and pack activities to coordinate the activities. Community events can be done together, and planning can help prevent conflicts in the use of equipment and facilities.
* Work with troop leaders to secure den chiefs for each Arrow of Light den and Cub Scout den.
* Work with troop leaders to plan and conduct Arrow of Light overnight activities.
* Work with troop leaders to plan visits to troop meetings.
* Invite the Scoutmaster and troop youth leaders to special pack activities. This will help create familiarity and a level of comfort for the Arrow of Light Scouts and their parents as they ease into the troop.
* Plan a meaningful crossover ceremony at the pack’s blue and gold banquet. Samples are provided in this plan. Have troop leadership be present to accept the Arrow of Light Scouts as they graduate to Boy Scouting. The local Order of the Arrow lodge can often be a valuable resource in conducting ceremonies.
* Arrow of Light leaders should be strongly encouraged to move into the troop with the boys, either as assistant Scoutmasters or troop committee members. This will give the new Scouts a familiar face at troop meetings and a connecting link to Boy Scouting.
* If a troop does not exist in your community, discuss with the head of the pack’s chartered organization, the District Membership Chair, and the District Executive the possibility of organizing a troop. A graduating Arrow of Light den can form the nucleus of a new troop.

**Arrow of Light Den Leader Responsibilities**

* Be enthusiastic about the coming cross-over of your Arrow of Lights to Boy Scouts!
* Speak to your Arrow of Lights and their parents about troop visits beginning in September. Discuss options such as: various troops and their different programs; crossing-over as a group or to different troops based on personal preference; troop location and impact upon participation; existing/historic pack/troop relationship and the fact that no youth is required to cross-over to a particular troop, rather youth should cross-over to the troop that is the best fit. It is very important that every Arrow of Light and parent know that completion of Arrow of Light is the not the end of Scouting, it is just the beginning and that the real adventure is to be found in Boy Scouts and later in Venturing.
* Ensure Arrow of Light parents have copies of the forms at the end of the Recruiting Guide (―Questions to Ask When Visiting Troops," ―Arrow of Light Troop Visit Checklist," ― Adult Troop Visit Checklist").
* Ensure that parents of Arrow of Light understand that they are welcome and encouraged to participate in the troop their son chooses.
* Ensure parents of Arrow of Light understand the differences between Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, particularly the different roles of parents.
* Plan for your transition to a leadership role in the Boy Scout Troop your son chooses to join.

**Arrow of Light Den Chief Responsibilities**

The Arrow of Light Den Chief is a current Boy Scout who gives leadership to a Arrow of Light den in the pack with which the troop is affiliated. The den chief has the following duties and responsibilities:

* Know the purposes of Cub Scouting and helps the Arrow of Light den achieve those purposes.
* Serves as an activities assistant for the Arrow of Light den.
* Set an example for the Arrow of Light with proper attitude and proper uniforming.
* Be a friend to the Arrow of Light den.
* Help the Arrow of Light den leader lead the weekly den meeting and help the den participate in the monthly pack meeting.
* Meet regularly with the Arrow of Light den leader to review meeting plan.
* Help Arrow of Light earn activity pins by assisting the activity badge counselor(s).
* Teach the denner and assistant denner leadership skills.
* Attend den chief training.
* Help plan and carry out den outdoor activities including joining programs/meetings with the troop, campouts, field trips, and district camporees.
* Work with Scoutmaster and Cubmaster to plan a crossover ceremony for the den.
* Attend all den meetings and pack meetings.

**Troop Membership Chair Responsibilities**

**Position Concept -** Membership is a shared concern of all adult leaders. However, the Troop Committee Chair must appoint a qualified individual to serve as the Troop Membership Chair who has the responsibility of coordinating these efforts.

**Responsibilities**

* Work with current Scouts to assist them in meeting the ―Invite a Friend" requirement for First Class Rank. (This is easily accomplished through coordination with a ―My Best Friend is a Scout" recruiting effort)
* Schedule spring and fall recruiting events for your troop using suggestions found in the Boy Scout Year-Round Recruiting Guide. The spring recruitment is especially effective for fifth graders and as follow-up for any Arrow of Lights that did not crossover to the Troop in February.
* Work with the Arrow of Light dens in your affiliated pack to ensure a high percentage successfully progress to Scouting. Assist the parents of the Arrow of Lights in finding an appropriate leadership role in the troop.
* Recruit and train high quality Den Chiefs for Arrow of Light dens affiliated with your troop.
* Attend most committee meetings for both the pack and the troop and act as the liaison for the two groups, passing information along so that everybody stays "in the loop." Beginning in November or December, invite the Arrow of Light Den Leaders to attend the Troop Committee meetings. Attend some of the Arrow of Light Den meetings to answer questions of youth and parents, take an Eagle Scout or two with you.
* When planning joint troop/pack activities, take care that the Boy Scouts do not feel like they
are babysitting. Keep them in an instructional role.
* Consider recruiting Arrow of Lights crossover ―Ceremonial Teams

**Pack Membership Chair Responsibilities**

**Position Concept -** Membership is a concern of all adult leaders. However, the Pack Committee Chair must appoint a qualified individual to serve as the Pack Membership and Re-registration Chair who has the responsibility of coordinating these efforts.

**Responsibilities**

* Prepare re-registration papers and an annual report to the chartered organization. Secure signatures and registration fees for the coming year.
* Ask the chartered organization representative to submit a charter application and annual report to the chartered organization for approval.
* Help the Cubmaster and chartered organization representative plan and conduct the formal charter presentation.
* Conduct an annual census of boys in the chartered organization for systematic recruitment. Work with pack committee members to promote recruitment plans.
* Visit new families in their homes. Review with them the Bobcat requirements and "Parent Guide" in their son's handbook. Emphasize the part that the family plays in their son's advancement. Stress parent/guardian participation at all pack functions and see that new families are introduced and feel welcome at pack meetings.
* Work with the Cubmaster and pack committee to develop and carry out a plan for year-round membership growth.
* Work with the Cubmaster and pack committee to see that
* eligible Tiger Cubs transition into a Wolf den at the appropriate time.
* eligible Wolf Cub Scouts or 9-year-old Cub Scouts transition into a Bear den at the appropriate time.
* Eligible Bear Cub Scouts or 10-year-old Cub Scouts transition into a Arrow of Lights den at the appropriate time.
* Arrow of Light Scouts and parents or guardians have a smooth transition into a Boy Scout troop.
* Work with the Cubmaster in following up on former pack members who are now Boy Scouts and potential den chiefs.
* Follow up on Cub Scout dropouts to help return them to full, active membership.

**Timeline**

The time-line should be modified to accommodate the Arrow of Light dens that complete all requirements and are prepared to cross-over to Boy Scouts, some as early as December. The Troop Membership Chair and Pack Membership Chair are responsible to ensure that Scoutmasters, Cubmasters, and Arrow of Light Leaders are informed of and follow the timeline.

**August**

* Get names, addresses, and telephone numbers of Arrow of Lights and parents from the packs from which your troop recruits. Plan a joint Boy Scout Troop/Arrow of Light Den camping trip for October.
* Select a Den Chief for each Arrow of Light Den.

 **Other “connecting” activities:** Boy Scouts assist with Pack School Nights, organizing games for the incoming boys while their parents sign registration forms.

 Scoutmaster attends Pack Committee meeting to explain how the Den Chief program works and find out how many dens are interested in securing a Den Chief. This gives the Scoutmaster adequate time to recruit Den Chiefs and send them to Den Chief training.

**September**

* Mail a letter of introduction from the Boy Scout troop to Arrow of Lights to introduce them to the troop.
* Pack distributes ―Questions To Ask When Visiting Troops," Arrow of Light Troop Visit Checklist," and Adult Troop Visit Checklist" to parents and guardians of Arrow of Lights. Forms are at the end of this Recruiting Guide.
* Put Arrow of Lights on the mailing list to receive the troop newsletter.
* Continue planning the joint camping trip for October.

 **Other “connecting” activities:** Boy Scouts assist with Pack School Nights, organizing games for the incoming boys while their parents sign registration forms.

**October**

* Conduct the joint camping trip with Arrow of Light den.
* Arrow of Light leaders go through Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training and Outdoor Leader Skills.
* Send invitations to Arrow of Lights to visit troop.
* Discuss with Arrow of Lights leaders fund raising opportunities in which Arrow of Light may participate with the Troop to have funds for camp next summer.
* Encourage Arrow of Light leaders to begin discussing Boy Scout summer camp with Arrow of Lights and parents. Troops should provide printed material for Arrow of Light leaders to distribute.

 **Other “connecting” activities:** Boy Scout Troop should plan a Arrow of Light campout and invite the first and second year Webelos. Troop could teach skills needed for a variety of Webelos activity pins, particularly ones that need to be done outside. Troop conducts a campfire with skits & songs.

**November**

* Attend a Arrow of Light den meeting to teach the Arrow of Lights how the Boy Scout troop works.
* Have Den Chiefs attend Den Chief training.

 **Other “connecting” activities:** Boy Scouts attends the pack meeting to show camp video/pictures and "talk up" summer camp to the Arrow of Lights. The troop gives the Arrow of Light families the dates the troop will be attending Summer Camp along with the annual troop program plan. The Scoutmaster should prepare a list of basic Scouting equipment that the brand-new Boy Scouts will be needing, like flashlights, pocketknives, mess kits, sleeping bags, backpacks, etc., so that these items can be Christmas gifts. Help the parents by giving tips on best prices, best brands, and best sources – remember the Scoutshop is the source for official BSA clothing and equipment.

**December**

* Set a date for Arrow of Lights and their parents to visit a Boy Scout Troop meeting in January if they have not already visited. .
* Send a small holiday gift to each Arrow of Light.

 **Other “connecting” activities:** Troop Membership Chair or Arrow of Light-To-Scout liaison should attend Pack Committee meeting to introduce themselves to Arrow of Light Leaders. From now until February crossover, the Arrow of Light-To-Scout liaison should work closely with the Den Leaders to assure that all boys will be earning the Arrow of Light and to get Boy Scout applications completed. This person should attend a Den Meeting in January to explain troop operations, answer questions, and establish a good relationship with all Arrow of Light parents.

**January**

* All Arrow of Lights and their parents attend a Boy Scout troop meeting.
* Plan a crossover ceremony for the Blue and Gold Banquet in February.
* Attend a meeting for Webelos to introduce them to Boy Scouting.
* Accommodate those Packs and Arrow of Light that wish to cross-over early with an appropriate ceremony.

 **Other “connecting” activities:** Have some Boy Scouts from the troop attend the Pinewood Derby and act as announcers, interviewing winners and "calling" the races. Encourage interaction between the Boy Scouts and all the Cub Scouts.

**February**

* Hold the crossover ceremony at the Blue and Gold Banquet.
* Depending on troop policy/preference: form a new Scout patrol for the new Scouts; or complete assignment of new Scouts to existing patrols with specific mentors to help with the transition to Boy Scouts.
* Get new Scouts actively involved with the troop through troop activities.
* Recruit parents of new Scouts to become assistant Scoutmasters or troop committee members.
* Conduct a summer camp orientation for the boys and parents to encourage attendance.

 **Other “connecting” activities:** Scoutmaster and several Boy Scouts attend the Pack's Blue and Gold Banquet to welcome the Arrow of Lights into their new troop. Form an honor guard for the flag ceremony using a mix of graduating Arrow of Lights and Boy Scouts for the honor guard. The Boy Scouts should change out the Arrow of Lights' shoulder loops and give them their new neckerchiefs, handbooks, etc. Don't forget those Arrow of Light Leaders, they need new green loops too!

**March**

* Plan a troop activity for new Scouts to get them involved with their new troop.
* Start training new Scouts for camping; don’t forget proper equipment, first aid, and survival skills. Conduct a Scoutcraft competition with prizes. Do a campout tailored to new Scouts needs and to accommodate weather. Don’t scare them off by making it difficult or a ―Boot camp type environment.
* Follow-up with the family by phone, email, and letter of every boy that did not crossover into your troop from the packs where your troop recruits. Assure them it is not too late, describe the fun events scheduled, and invite them again.

 **Other “connecting” activities:** Troop and pack committees should coordinate a service project activities so boys can work as teams and parents of new Scouts can get to know the other parents. Plan a pizza lunch for the whole crowd after the work is done.

**April**

* Ensure all new Scouts are planning to attend summer camp. Provide additional briefings and summer camp materials for new Scouts and parents as necessary.
* Ensure new Scouts are working on requirements for Scout and Tenderfoot.
* Attend a meeting of Bear Cub Scouts to introduce them to Boy Scouting.
* Attend a meeting of Webelos and pick a date with Den Leader for a field trip to summer camp one day during the week you are at camp.
* Sponsor a troop activity for the new Scouts. Camping is why they are there.

 **Other “connecting” activities:** Troop invites Webelos (4th graders) to district Camporee or other district event. They can join with the recently crossed-over boys to learn basic Scoutcraft, which will meet Webelos/Arrow of Light requirements for the Arrow of Light and Tenderfoot requirements for new Boy Scouts. If the District Camporee isn't conducive to this, the troop could put on its own campout to teach these skills to the younger boys. Invite any boys who still have not crossed over and use this event as an "Invite a Friend" activity. Be sure to let the younger boys help cook and help tend the campfire.

**May**

* Work closely with new Scouts and parents during their transition to the Boy Scout troop, ensuring their needs are met and that their move has been natural and fun.
* Work on rank advancement with new Scouts. Ensure new Scouts are well on the way to Tenderfoot before camp.

 **Other “connecting” activities:** Troop organizes a Arrow of Light activity pin fair, setting up booths for several Arrow of Light Activity pins. These booths would be manned by Boy Scouts and both pack and troop leaders who would teach the skills.

**June/July**

* Make sure all new Scouts attend summer camp with the troop.
* New Arrow of Light take a field trip to summer camp for one day the week you are at camp. Someone from the troop gives them a guided tour of camp.
* Troop offers Boy Scouts to assist Arrow of Light leaders at Arrow of Light camp, for example the evening when there is cooking in the campsite.

**Unit Visits Program Plans & Ideas**

Program ideas for when the Arrow of Light Den visits a Troop meeting.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Description** | **Run By** | **Time** |
| **Pre-Opening**10 Minutes | Hand out copies of your troop’s annual program plan, introduce Arrow of Light to troop members, exchange e-mail addresses, highlight past troop activities. | SeniorPatrolLeader,Den Chief | 6:55-7:05 |
| **Opening**5 Minutes | Pledge of Allegiance, Scout Oath, Scout Law | SeniorPatrolLeader | 7:05-7:10 |
| **Skills Instruction** 25 Minutes | Skills instruction round-robin. 1. Let the boys try lighting a cotton ball on fire using a hot spark kit. 2. Allow the boys to set up a tent. 3. Have boys build a stretcher and have a stretcher relay by first putting a splint on the "victims‖ leg. | Select Boys within the Troop | 7:10-7:35 |
| **Patrol Meetings** 15 Minutes | Show summer camp promotion video to Arrow of Lights. Talk about what the Arrow of Lights can expect from Summer Camp. | SeniorPatrolLeader,Den Chief | 7:35-7:50 |
| **Inter-Patrol****Activity**10 Minutes | Select a game out of "*Troop Program Resources.”* | SeniorPatrolLeader | 7:50-8:00 |
| **Closing**5 Minutes | SPL thanks Arrow of Lights for attending meeting, leads closing Flag Ceremony. | SeniorPatrolLeader | 8:00-8:05 |
| **After the meeting** | Scoutmaster thanks Arrow of Lights forattending. | Scoutmaster |  |

**Program ideas for when the Troop visits a Den meeting.**

* Help the Arrow of Lights Den Leader teach requirements of the activity pin for the month.
* Teach such things as the Totin Chip and Arrow of Light skills for advancement.
* Bring a *Power Point* slide show or pictures of the fun and adventure your troop does throughout the year (5 minutes max).
* Show the Summer Camp promotion video.

**Program ideas for joint Arrow of Light Den/Troop Campout**

Athletics Theme in troop program features

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Time** | **Activity** | **Run By** |
| **Friday** evening | Load gear at meeting location, leave for campsite. Plan only light meal en route. (Make sure Arrow of Lights and parents have enough gear). | Senior Patrol Leader |
|  | Arrive at campsite; unload equipment, set up patrol sites. Stow gear and set up camp. (Have Troop Guide and Assistant Scoutmaster help Arrow of Lights and their parents set up their patrol site.) | Patrol Leader, Senior Patrol Leader |
| **Saturday**6:30 a.m. | Cooks and assistants arise and prepare breakfast. (Cooks should be working on First and Second Class requirements). The older boy patrol also makes breakfast for Arrow of Lights and their parents. | Cooks & assistants |
| 7:00 a.m. | Everyone else rises. Take care of personal hygiene, air tents, and hang out sleeping bags. |  |
| 7:30 a.m. | Breakfast |  |
| 8:00 a.m. | Clean up | Cooks |
|  | Patrols set up gear for morning activities, clean up patrol site |  |
| 8:30–11:30 a.m. | Conduct athletic skills events (See page 27-28 in *Troop Program Features Volume # 1*).1. Frisbee Golf
2. Obstacle Course
3. Volleyball
4. Softball
5. Bicycle Race
6. Patrol Dash
7. Bike Relay
8. Erect a Tent
9. Kim’s Game
 | SPL |
| 11:30 a.m. | Sack Lunch |  |
| Noon | Continue Events |  |
| 4:30 p.m. | Start Dinner preparation | Cooks |
| 5:30 p.m. | Meal |  |
| 6:00 p.m. | Clean up | Cooks |
| 8:00 p.m. | Campfire | SPL |
| 9:00 p.m. | Cracker barrel |  |
| 10:00 p.m. | Lights out |  |
| **Sunday**6:30 a.m. | Cooks and assistants arise and prepare breakfast. (Cooks should be working on First and Second Class requirements). | Cooks |
| 7:00 a.m. | Everyone else rises. Take care of personal hygiene, air tents, and hang out sleeping bags. |  |
| 7:30 a.m. | Breakfast |  |
| 8:00 a.m. | Clean up | Cooks |
| 8:30 a.m. | Worship service |  |
| 9:30 a.m. | Break camp |  |
| Equipment needed | Cameras, pens, troop camping equipment, athletic gear needed for events |  |

**Sample Letter of Introduction from Boy Scout Troop to Arrow of Lights**

From the Senior Patrol Leader - To be mailed in September

*(Name)*

*(Address)*

*(City, State, Zip Code)*

*(Date)*

Dear :

My name is and I am the Senior Patrol Leader for Troop \_\_\_\_\_. Soon you will cross-over the Cub Scout program into the Boy Scout program. This is an exciting time, many fun adventures are ahead.

As a troop we go camping once per month. This year we are planning to (*use this paragraph to briefly describe your annual program plan. Tell the Arrow of Lights what you are doing: canoeing, climbing and rappelling, backpacking, fishing, etc.)*

Our troop meets weekly (*time/date/location).* At these meetings, we have skills instruction time where we work on advancements. Our goal is that you would reach 1st class within a year of joining our troop. We also have time for your patrol to get together to plan for upcoming campouts and time for inter-patrol activities.

This summer, we are planning to attend *list name of camp here* on *date*. Activities at this camp include canoeing, rowing, swimming, nature programs, sports programs, .22 rifle shooting, archery shooting, and much more.

We are looking forward to having you as part of our troop. To aid in this transition, we would like to invite you, your parents, and your entire den to a campout on October (*date).* Our theme is Athletics and will play softball, volleyball, Frisbee golf, and have a bicycle race. Food and tents will be provided. All you will need to bring is personal gear (clothes, toiletries, sleeping bag/blankets) and your bicycle. We will be meeting at *location* at *time*. Please let your Arrow of Light Leader know by (*date)* if you are able to attend.

Sincerely,

*(Your Name)*

Senior Patrol Leader Troop \_\_\_\_\_

**Sample Letter of Introduction from Boy Scout Troop to Arrow of Light Parents**

From the Scoutmaster - To be mailed in September, separate and after the SPL is best

*(Name)*

*(Address)*

*(City, State, Zip Code)*

*(Date)*

Dear :

My name is and I am the Scoutmaster for Troop \_\_\_\_\_. In February, your son will be able to crossover into our troop. Much fun and adventure awaits him after he ―crosses the bridge" into our troop.

You should encourage your son to continue his Scouting journey for the following reasons:

* Scouting Builds Character – A Scout is ―Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent."
* Scouts are more likely than non-Scouts to value education, the environment and put the needs of others before themselves (According to a poll taken by Harris Interactive).
* Scouting teaches leadership skills, problem solving skills, communications skills, and team building skills.
* Scouting opens the door to possible lifelong career and hobby interests. With over 100 merit badges ranging over many different topics, many Scouts explore opportunities that they ordinarily would not have.
* Scouting teaches youth to ―Be Prepared". Whether it’s for emergencies (1st aid, emergency preparedness), life skills (personal management, family life, and communication), taking charge and leading others.
* Scouting builds confidence. Scouting puts youth in charge of situations and allows them to overcome obstacles and challenges.

Scouting accomplishes these things through a fun-filled program in an outdoor education classroom. We go camping as a troop once per month. This year we are planning to (*use this paragraph to briefly describe your annual program plan. Tell the Webelos what you are doing: canoeing, climbing and rappelling, backpacking, fishing, etc.)*

Our troop meets weekly (*time/date/location).* At these meetings, we have skills instruction time when we work on advancements. Our goal is that your son would reach 1st class within a year of joining our troop. We also have time for your son’s patrol to get together to plan for upcoming campouts and time for inter-patrol activities.

We hope you and your son will join us on this exciting adventure!

Sincerely

Scoutmaster, Troop \_\_\_\_\_\_

**Top Ten - Things to Look For in a Troop**

Suggested to be enclosed with Scoutmaster Letter

**Fun —** It’s got to be fun! Most of the activities within the troop have to be understood by the Scout as a fun, friendly, pleasurable, and rewarding experience. If a troop is too strict and regimented the Scout will lose interest.

**Program —** this is key to a well-run troop. The program has to be planned out by the troop committee with input from the Scouts. This should be done annually and tied to a budget. The program needs to include all the elements of Scouting, weekly troop meetings, monthly outings/events, weekend campouts, and yearly summer camps. The activities have to be new, exciting, and fresh to keep the Scouts interested.

**Adult Leadership —** All troops should have ―Trained‖ adult leadership. Trained leaders are crucial to any well-run troop. The training provides the leader with the knowledge to understand the aims and methods of the Scouting program. The training presents a wealth of advice and recourses to run a successful program. When you visit a troop, look for the trained patch on the leader’s uniform.

**Youth Leadership —** The Scouting program is designed to have the youth elected and appointed into leadership roles. A troop should have periodic elections to fill those positions. In addition, the troop should provide leadership training for those roles. The troop should conduct Junior Leadership Training (JLT) and/or send Scouts to council NYLT training. Look for the trained patch on the youth leader’s uniform.

**Boy-Run Troop —** the philosophy of Scouting is for the Scouts to run the troop. The adult leaders are there to provide guidance, counsel, and support. The weekly meetings, troop campouts, and troop activities should be planned and executed by the Scouts and junior leaders. The troop should encourage and strive to have its junior leaders run the troop. When observing a troop in action, see if the Scouts are running the program or the adults.

**Patrol Method —** A troop should divide its Scouts into patrols of not more than 8. These patrols act like a team within the troop. They elect a patrol leader and have periodic meetings either at the troop meetings or at a separate time and place. The troop provides competitive activities at meetings and outings for the patrols to work as a team. This allows them to demonstrate their Scouting skills and plan for camping events or district camp-o-rees. The troop should also have functioning monthly Patrol Leaders Council, which plans the troop activities.

**Meetings —** Weekly troop meetings are pretty much the norm in Scouting. The troop should have a calendar for the year with the dates established for regular meetings.

**Uniform —** the field uniform is an important part of Scouting and should be required in troop functions, like: ceremonies, religious activities, troop dinners, and district & council events. An activity uniform, which usually consists of a scouting T-shirt and Scout shorts or pants, is commonly used for troop/patrol meetings, day activities, and weeklong camps. Troops may define or require uniforms in different variations, but should have some defined requirements and periodic inspections.

**District & Council Involvement -** A troop should have representatives attending monthly district roundtable meetings. The district and council provide a wealth of experience and knowledge to help the troop run a great program. They are a wonderful resource for information on training, activities, advancement, planning, and ideas.

**Recruiting** - A troop needs to bring in new Scouts. New Scouts provide the older Scouts with opportunities to mentor and teach them what Scouting is all about. It helps them build leadership and charter. The best source for new Scouts is from the Cub Scouts Webelos program. A troop should have established a working relationship with local Cub Scout pack(s) to help bridge graduating Webelos to Boy Scouts.

**Questions To Ask When Visiting Troops**

**Webelos should ask:**

* Is the Troop active? Do they do things I would enjoy?
* What size is the Troop? What size of Troop would I like?
* Are there other boys my age in the Troop?
* Are any of my friends in or joining the Troop?
* Does the Troop go to a summer camp? Which one(s)? Is it important to me where they go?
* Should I / could I go to summer camp?
* Does the Troop participate in the Order of the Arrow? Why do they matter?
* How often does this Troop do outdoor activities (i.e. camping)?
* Will I have a say in decision making?
* Does the Troop have advanced programs for older Scouts?
* How often does the Troop meet?
* Do I have a good chance of advancing to Eagle with this Troop?
* Will I have fun?

**Parents should ask [Troops should tell parents if they don’t ask]:**

* What values/skills will my son learn?
* What are the other adult leaders like?
* Can I participate in leadership if I desire?
* Is this a ―boy run‖ Troop? Is that important?
* Where, when, and how often does the Troop meet? Is it convenient for transporting my son?
* What is the age ratio of the boys? Do the older Scouts help the younger Scouts?
* How much will it cost? Camping? Summer camp? Fundraisers?
* How often does the Troop camp? Do I have to camp with them?
* Does the Troop go to a summer camp? Which one(s)? Is it important to me where they go?
* Does the Troop participate in National Honor program, The Order of the Arrow? Can the Troop explain the importance of both programs?
* Is the Troop active? Do they do activities my son would enjoy?
* Will my son be encouraged/able to advance to Eagle in this Troop?
* Can moms participate? Go camping? Go to summer camp?
* Can this Troop provide a quality Scouting experience for my son and his friends?
* What is expected of the parents and family by the Troop?
* Will we have fun?

**Webelos Troop Visit Checklist**

Troop Number: Date of Visit:

Meeting Place: Time:

Scoutmaster's Name:

Senior Patrol Leader's Name:

**My Evaluation of this Troop:**

Are all the boys in uniform? Yes No

Was the meeting organized? Yes No

Is the meeting run by the boys? Yes No

Do they have boys of all ages? Yes No

Did I feel welcome? Yes No

Did their campouts sound like fun? Yes No

Do they have a calendar? Yes No

Do I already know boys in the troop? Yes No

Are there plenty of adult leaders involved? Yes No

Were the older Scouts helpful? Yes No

Did they answer my questions? Yes No

Do they have a program for new Scouts? Yes No

**Notes:**

Things I liked about this troop are:

Things I did not like about this troop are:

**Adult Troop Visit Checklist**

Troop Number: Date of Visit: JTE Unit: Yes / No

Sponsored by: How Long:

Scoutmaster's Name:

Meeting Place: Time:

Meeting Run by: Youth Adults Mixed

Was the meeting organized? Yes No

Does the troop produce a calendar of events: Yes No

Does the program schedule:

\_\_\_\_ change yearly

\_\_\_\_ remain similar with different summer camps

\_\_\_\_ remain similar from year to year

What special events does the troop participate in? (i.e. Scouting for Food, Scout Show)

**Leadership Corp:**

Does the troop have an active boy leadership corps? Yes No

How often do they meet?

How many boys in the leadership corps?

How is the boy leadership decided?

\_\_\_\_ Elected by boys.

\_\_\_\_ Appointed by adults

\_\_\_\_ Other:

How often does the troop hold elections?

**Uniforms:**

Were the Scouts in uniform? Yes No

Were the adults in uniform? Yes No

What are the uniform requirements of the troop?

How many uniforms will each boy need?

**Camping:**

How often does the troop camp?

What type of camping does the troop do? (check all that apply)

\_\_\_\_ Summer camp: \_\_\_\_ In Council \_\_\_\_ Out of Council

\_\_\_\_ Winter camp \_\_\_\_ Camporees \_\_\_\_ High Adventure

\_\_\_\_ Backpacking \_\_\_\_ Canoeing

Most popular camp is located:

Do all the boys get to go on all of the outings? Yes No

Do campouts have a theme, merit badge or rank requirement focus? Yes No

**Costs:**

What are the joining costs?

What are the local troop costs?

Are there additional costs to join the troop?

What fundraisers are available for the scouts?

How are fund raiser earnings used in the troop?

\_\_\_\_ Support the troop needs.

\_\_\_\_ Applied to reduce expenses of Scouts who participated.**Values of Men and Boys in America**

Louis Harris and Associates have conducted a number of scientific surveys commissioned by the National Council, Boy Scouts of America. The findings show how the Scouting program helps aid in positive youth development. Sharing this information with Arrow of Light parents will help them see the importance of keeping their children in the Scouting program.

* Boy Scouts with five or more years tenure are more likely than non-Scouts to:
* Assume a leadership role in clubs or school organizations.
* Put the needs of others before themselves.
* Make the most honest, not the easiest, decisions.
* Value education and the environment.
* Boy Scouts with five or more years tenure are more likely than non-Scouts to have greater future achievement:
* They are more likely to graduate High School – 98% vs. 83%.
* They are more likely to graduate College – 40% vs. 16%.
* They are more likely to earn annual household incomes of $50,000+ - 33% vs. 17%.
* The Boy Scout program teaches strong personal values and character. Parents cited the following reasons for wanting their sons in the program:
* To learn moral values – 94%.
* To learn self-reliance – 95%.
* To become involved in community service – 90%.
* The Boy Scout program gives a Scout a positive sense of self worth and usefulness.
* 50% of Scouts indicate setting personal goals of each meeting.
* 51% of Scouts note that they have to rely on themselves to accomplish goals at the meeting.
* 78% agree, ―Being a Scout makes me feel more confident in myself.
* The Boy Scout program provides/enhances a caring and nurturing relationship with parents, other adults, and peers. At a typical troop meeting:
* 58% are encouraged to do their best by a leader/adult.
* 48% receive verbal encouragement from other Scouts.
* 65% work together, receiving help from other Scouts.
* The Scouting program enhances a boy’s desire to learn. At a typical meeting:
* 41% of Scouts teach another Scout.
* 39% of Scouts learn from another Scout.
* 53% learn new things.
* Scouting is a productive/creative use of time. Boy Scouts agree that:
* Scouting has taught me skills I wouldn’t have learned anywhere else – 88%.
* Scouting will help me get a good job – 85%.
* Scouting will help me get into college – 83%.
* The Boy Scout program teaches social adeptness. During a typical troop meeting, Scouts:
* Learn to be a team player – 51%.
* Democratic decision making – 43%.
* Planning activities – 41%.
* Taking responsibility for needed supplies/equipment – 31%.

**Mission Statement of the Boy Scouts of America**

**Mission Statement:**

 The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

**Scout Oath**:

On my honor I will do my best

To do my duty to God and my country

and to obey the Scout Law;

To help other people at all times;

To keep myself physically strong,

mentally awake, and morally straight.

**Scout Law**

A Scout is:

Trustworthy

Loyal

Helpful

Friendly

Courteous

Kind

Obedient

Cheerful

Thrifty

Brave

Clean

Reverent

**Vision Statement**

 The Boy Scouts of America will prepare every eligible youth in America to become a responsible, participating citizen and leader who is guided by the Scout Oath and Law

**Aims and Methods of Scouting**

The Scouting program has three specific objectives, commonly referred to as the "Aims of Scouting." They are character development, citizenship training, and personal fitness.

The methods by which the aims are achieved are listed below in random order to emphasize the equal importance of each.

**Ideals -** The ideals of Boy Scouting are spelled out in the Scout Oath, the Scout Law, the Scout motto, and the Scout slogan. The Boy Scout measures himself against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and, as he reaches for them, he has some control over what and who he becomes.

**Patrols** - The patrol method gives Boy Scouts an experience in group living and participating citizenship. It places responsibility on young shoulders and teaches boys how to accept it. The patrol method allows Scouts to interact in small groups where they can easily relate to each other. These small groups determine troop activities through their elected representatives.

**Outdoor Programs** - Boy Scouting is designed to take place outdoors. It is in the outdoor setting that Scouts share responsibilities and learn to live with one another. It is here that the skills and activities practiced at troop meetings come alive with purpose. Being close to nature helps Boy Scouts gain an appreciation for God's handiwork and humankind's place in it. The outdoors is the laboratory for Boy Scouts to learn ecology and practice conservation of nature's resources.

**Advancement** - Boy Scouting provides a series of surmountable obstacles and steps in overcoming them through the advancement method. The Boy Scout plans his advancement and progresses at his own pace as he meets each challenge. The Boy Scout is rewarded for each achievement, which helps him gain self-confidence. The steps in the advancement system help a Boy Scout grow in self-reliance and in the ability to help others.

**Association with Adults -** Boys learn a great deal by watching how adults conduct themselves. Scout leaders can be positive role models for the members of their troops. In many cases a Scoutmaster who is willing to listen to boys, encourage them, and take a sincere interest in them can make a profound difference in their lives.

**Personal Growth -** As Boy Scouts plan their activities and progress toward their goals, they experience personal growth. The Good Turn concept is a major part of the personal growth method of Boy Scouting. Boys grow as they participate in community service projects and do Good Turns for others. Probably no device is so successful in developing a basis for personal growth as the daily Good Turn. The religious emblems program also is a large part of the personal growth method. Frequent personal conferences with his Scoutmaster help each Boy Scout to determine his growth toward Scouting's aims.

**Leadership Development -** The Boy Scout program encourages boys to learn and practice leadership skills. Every Boy Scout has the opportunity to participate in both shared and total leadership situations. Understanding the concepts of leadership helps a boy accept the leadership role of others and guides him toward the citizenship aim of Scouting.

**Uniform -** The uniform makes the Boy Scout troop visible as a force for good and creates a positive youth image in the community. Boy Scouting is an action program, and wearing the uniform is an action that shows each Boy Scout's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting. The uniform gives the Boy Scout identity in a world brotherhood of youth who believe in the same ideals. The uniform is practical attire for Boy Scout activities and provides a way for Boy Scouts to wear the badges that show what they have accomplished.