



BSA SAFETY MOMENT

FAMILY CAMPING

SUMMARY

There are two appropriate camping experiences for Cub Scouts: family camping, organized by the council, and pack overnights. Family camping, along with resident camping, is another timeless outdoor experience that involves Cub Scouting, Scouts BSA, or Venturing program elements in an overnight setting. It requires that two or more family members attend, including at least one BSA member, to count as family camping. Youth Protection policies still apply, but of course parents are responsible for the supervision of their children.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The best camping experience comes from a well-planned event. Selection of the camping site is the most critical decision to be made. Scout leaders should personally visit the selected area to confirm that the site meets the unit's needs.

Some of the questions to be asked and answered:

- Is there easy access to the site?
- Are there cleared areas for tents?
- Is there a flat area for a campfire?
- Are there indications that wild animals frequent the area?
- Will the camping site be outside of a flood-prone area?

Sites for Cub Scouts should not be primitive as these Scouts are just starting their camping experiences. The focus should be on camping experiences—not survival. Cub Scouting family camping can be experienced in overnight activities in venues other than accredited resident camps, but all Cub Scout camping sites need to be council approved.

Once the site is selected, the group should determine the equipment that the group will need. The equipment for summer camping is different from the equipment needed for a late fall camping event.

Communicating these needs to the families is important for a safe camping experience. Communication should include confirmation that each family is able to pack the necessary equipment. If specific equipment is not available, such as day packs to carry gear, the group should determine if they can obtain the necessary equipment for everyone or whether they should change the camping event.

Family camping can be a fun learning experience as long as it is well planned and kept safe.

RESOURCES

- *Guide to Safe Scouting:* www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/