

ROUNDTABLE BIG ROCKS

EFFECTIVE ADVANCEMENT

Time Available

7–8 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand advancement as one of the eight methods of Scouting.
- Describe the progression of advancement through the program.
- Identify resources to guide effective and appropriate advancement practices.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The district advancement chair or a member of the advancement committee should present this topic. Alternately, a highly engaged unit advancement coordinator can present. Any presenter must be very familiar with advancement policies and procedures.

Presentation Method

A short presentation is ideal for this Big Rock. Because the audience will most likely include Scouters from all program levels, the presentation should focus on the broad goals of advancement. Questions can be addressed after the meeting or in program-specific breakouts.

BSA Reference Materials

- Advancement Resources, www.scouting.org/advancement
- *Guide to Advancement* (current year), No. 33088

Presentation Content

- 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.
- The aims of Scouting are character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness.
- Advancement is one of the eight methods of Boy Scouting used by Scout leaders to successfully fulfill the mission and aims of the BSA.
- What is advancement? Advancement is the manner in which boys move from rank to rank within the Scouting program. This is achieved through a series of age-appropriate, surmountable hurdles. The experiential learning through this process leads to personal growth and helps deliver the mission and aims of Scouting.
- Advancement is tailored to the youths' capabilities as they move up through the program.
 - In Cub Scouts, the motto is “Do your best.” Cub Scouts try new things, learn, and grow. Advancement recognizes them for trying and exploring as they learn.
 - In Boy Scouts, the Scouts do requirements exactly as written—no more, no less. They are expected to perform

a specified task or meet a specified objective, and are recognized for successfully doing so.

—In Venturing, the Scouts have more flexibility, and can even design their own recognition requirements within the program parameters.

- In all programs, the best advancement happens naturally as the outcome of an exciting and active Scouting program that engages the youth in a variety of fun learning and growth opportunities.
- Recognition for this growth is also a key part of advancement. Upon completing the requirements, the Scout receives an award representing his efforts and what he has achieved. These awards should be presented promptly not only to recognize his achievement but also to encourage him onward in his Scouting experiences.
- The BSA provides a series of policies and guidelines to run an effective advancement program in every unit. These provide a fair and appropriate standard for all Scouts in the program. Following these policies is an important part of operating a successful and high-quality program.
- The current *Guide to Advancement* is the definitive resource for BSA advancement policy. It is available in print from Scout shops or as a free PDF.
- Advancement resources are available at www.scouting.org/advancement. These include links to the *Guide to Advancement*, educational materials, and various forms.
- Advancement education resources are available online and can be offered in local councils and districts.
- A few other important notes:
 - Remember, no unauthorized changes are allowed to the advancement requirements. Scouts are expected to meet the requirements—no more and no less—in order to earn their awards. Of course, Scouts are always encouraged to continue exploring and learning about topics that are most interesting to them as part of their continuing experience.
 - For Scouts with special needs, Section 10 of the *Guide to Advancement* provides information on specific policies and procedures the local council uses to support their success in the program.
 - Questions about advancement should be directed to the district or council advancement committee. After contacting these resources, if additional assistance is needed, any Scouter or family can email advancement.team@scouting.org.

FAQs

Scouters often have a number of questions about advancement policies and best practices. It is highly recommended that the presenter provide the contact information for the district advancement chair and council advancement committee. All Scouters should be referred to the *Guide to Advancement* and the local district and council contacts for support with advancement-related questions.

PREVENTING LEADER BURNOUT

Time Available

7–8 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Define burnout.
- Recognize burnout and its causes.
- Prevent burnout.
- Share information on recovering from burnout.

Suggested Presenter(s)

A tenured Scouter, preferably one who is perceived as very active within the district or council, should present this topic. Another choice is a good delegator who shares the work with others.

Presentation Method

A brief discussion is an ideal presentation. Slides or handouts may not be necessary, but can be provided following the presentation to help units take the information back to other leaders.

BSA Reference Materials

- Leader and committee handbooks with tabs on the pages noting support roles that use other unit leadership to help share the tasks

Presentation Content

- Many expressions have been cleverly coined for volunteer burnout.
 - Fried/toasted/crackers/zoned out/zombified...
 - It ceases to be funny when burnout causes volunteers to stop doing what they are passionate about.
- What is burnout?
 - Burnout is a reaction to unrelieved, consistent, draining, sapping clusters of emotional and/or physical exhaustion.
 - It is a psychological descriptive for the experience of long-term exhaustion and diminished interest.
- Key causes of burnout (ask the audience to supply ideas)
 - Taking on too many responsibilities without receiving enough help from others
 - Unclear or overly demanding expectations
 - Feeling a lack of empowerment/control over one's work
 - Lack of recognition or rewards for good work
 - Lack of close, supportive relationships and/or adequate resources
 - Doing work that is monotonous or unchallenging
 - Working in a chaotic or high-pressure environment
 - Lack of personal time for relaxing and socializing
 - Being expected to be too many things to too many people

Personality traits that can contribute to burnout

- Perfectionist tendencies
- Pessimistic views of self and the world
- Need to be in control; reluctance to delegate
- High-achieving, type A personality

- Signs of burnout

- Signs can be subtle at first, but they worsen as time goes on.
- Paying attention to the early warning signs can prevent burnout and the loss of good volunteers.

- Physical signs and symptoms of burnout

- Feeling tired and drained most of the time
- Lowered immunity; feeling sick a lot
- Frequent headaches, back pain, muscle aches
- Change in appetite or sleeping habits

- Emotional signs and symptoms of burnout

- Decreased satisfaction and sense of accomplishment
- Loss of motivation
- Increasingly cynical and negative outlook
- Feeling powerless or ineffective
- Overreacting to frustrations (conflict)
- Detachment; feeling alone
- Sense of failure or self-doubt
- Feelings of guilt

- Behavioral signs and symptoms of burnout

- Procrastinating, taking longer to get things done
- Loss of focus
- Apathy
- Skipping meetings/activities
- Taking frustrations out on others
- Withdrawing from responsibilities

- Preventing burnout

- Clear position descriptions enable leaders to gauge their level of involvement.
- Training clarifies expectations; prepares one for the position with program ideas and activities; and gives an understanding of available resources and how to use them.
- Active, effective, shared leadership lessens the burden and provides support and understanding.
- Meaningful responsibilities help provide satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment.
- Fun, interesting quality program helps prevent boredom.

- Effective communication keeps everyone in the loop and informed; allows for expression of ideas and concerns; empowers leaders; and provides support to leaders.
- Recognitions help give leaders a sense of accomplishment and makes them feel appreciated.
- Recovering from burnout
 - Slow down, take time off.
 - Get support: resist urges toward isolation.
 - Acknowledge losses: idealism, role identity from position, sense of community.
 - Reevaluate goals and objectives: what is truly enjoyed versus what was not enjoyable and created a sense of burden.
 - Make changes: take a break, or find a new role with new challenges.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Time Available

7–8 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand community service as a core part of the Scouting program.
- See opportunities for Scouts to engage in community service.
- Understand how community service ties into the Messengers of Peace program.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The district Scouting for Food chair, the Order of the Arrow chapter advisor, and Scouters who volunteer for other community service organizations make ideal presenters. A chartered organization representative can discuss the benefits of Scout service projects to the chartered organization.

Presentation Method

The presentation should include a discussion of the first two learning objectives and also offer unit leaders the chance review materials for the third. Unit leaders should be encouraged to email a list of their favorite service projects to a designated source to be compiled and distributed to the units via the district website or the unit commissioners.

BSA Reference Materials

- Journey to Excellence, www.scouting.org/awards/journeytoexcellence/council_tips.aspx
- Conservation Good Turn, www.scouting.org/boyscouts/resources/conservationgoodturn.aspx
- Messengers of Peace, www.scouting.org/Home/International/messengersofpeace/ServiceProjectIdeas.aspx

Presentation Content

- Why do community service?
 - The Scout Oath, Scout Law, and Scout slogan include commitments to community service:
 - “On my honor, I will do my best ... to help other people at all times”
 - “A Scout is ... helpful, friendly, courteous, kind ...”
 - “Do a Good Turn Daily”
 - Journey to Excellence scorecards require service projects by all Scouting units.
 - Advancement requires community service.
- Who should do community service?
 - All Scouts of all ages.
 - Adult Scout leaders and parents: They set a good example for the Scouts to follow.
 - Siblings: Some will become Scouts, and everyone should be taught this valuable ethic of helping others.

When should Scouts do community service?

- At all times (Scout Oath)
- Daily (Scout slogan)
- Any day that ends with a Y
- NOT just when a Scout needs service hours for advancement

- What is community service?

—It is a donated service or activity (in other words, with nothing in return) performed by someone or a group of people (it's not just giving money) for the benefit of the public or its institutions (usually not for personal benefit).

—However, other than an Eagle Scout service project, it can benefit someone directly, such as raking leaves for an elderly person or the family of a deployed soldier.

—Other than an Eagle Scout service project, it can also benefit a BSA camp.

—A unit fundraising event, such as a carwash or bagging groceries at a store, is not community service because the Scouts are getting paid.

- What kinds of community service can we do?

—Journey to Excellence requires at least one annual service project to benefit each unit's chartered organization, but why stop at one per year? Ask the chartered organization what your unit can do for it. The organization's needs might change from year to year.

—If your district has a districtwide service project, like Scouting for Food, each unit should participate to the best of its ability.

—Other possibilities are endless, and limited only by your imagination.

—Some suggestions can be found on the National Council Web page for the Conservation Good Turn Award.

—Other suggestions can be found on the Messengers of Peace Web page.

- Must Scouts and units record their service projects? Why?

—The *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook* requires the Scout to keep a log of the hours donated to the project by all helpers.

—Rank advancement requires service hours, so the Scout needs to record his hours.

—Journey to Excellence requires units to record projects and hours on the JTE website in order to get credit for the projects for their JTE score.

—The BSA collects service project hours to demonstrate the value that Scouting provides to the nation. These hours are reported to the states and to Congress.

—The BSA and local councils receive grants and foundation donations based on the amount of community service provided by Scouts.

- Are there awards for community service? While Scouts do not do community service just for awards, it is nice when they are recognized for performing service.
 - Rank awards recognize the service component along with other requirements.
 - Hornaday awards are available to units, Scouts, and adults.
 - The Conservation Good Turn Award is available to Scouts and adults.
 - The Hometown U.S.A. Award is available for Scouts who complete a conservation project.
 - The World Conservation Award is available to Scouts.
- The Messengers of Peace award is a World Scout Committee service award that's available to Scouts and adults for conducting a service project in the spirit of world peace and the worldwide Scouting brotherhood.
 - Enter the project on the JTE service hours Web page.
 - Select Messengers of Peace from the service partner dropdown menu to get a certificate.
 - Use the certificate to acquire the award rings that go around the World Crest. Rings are available from Scout shops.
- Ask unit leaders to share service project ideas.
 - Allow a couple of minutes for verbal suggestions.
 - Ask all the leaders to submit ideas to a designated person who will compile the ideas and distribute them to the units for future reference.
- Answer any questions, and invite leaders to talk with the district committee after the roundtable for more detailed discussions.

LEVERAGING BSA LITERATURE FOR A BETTER PROGRAM

Time Available

7–8 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Review the available handbooks and manuals developed by the BSA.
- Understand the importance of delivering the Scouting program as designed.
- Recognize that there is a great deal of variety available in the program, but also certain minimum standards that ensure all Scouts have a great experience.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The presenters should be veteran leaders who have seen the value of learning and implementing the program according to the available BSA literature and perhaps leaders who have struggled because they did not do so. Unit commissioners who have guided both types of units can also be good presenters for this topic.

Presentation Method

Much of the presentation can be in the form of questions designed to make unit leaders think of times they have struggled because they haven't been given (or perhaps may not have followed) the appropriate manuals to complete a task properly. Then the presenters can discuss how the manuals and handbooks written by the BSA can help leaders properly deliver the Scouting program. The presenters should have copies of all the handbooks and manuals listed below, which could be borrowed from the local Scout shop or council office to use as props.

BSA Reference Materials

- *Cub Scout Leader Book*, No. 33221
- *Cub Scout Leader How-To Book*, No. 33832
- *Troop Committee Guidebook*, No. 34505
- *Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009
- *Patrol Leader Handbook*, No. 32502
- *Senior Patrol Leader Handbook*, No. 32501
- *Venturing Advisor Guide*, No. 34655
- *Venturing Crew Officers' Orientation* (video), No. AV-0322CD
- *Guide to Advancement*, No. 33088
- *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 34416
- Youth handbooks (There are handbooks for every level in the Scouting program.)

Presentation Content

- Ask the following questions (perhaps by asking for a show of hands):
 - How many of you want simple, clear instructions before starting a complex assignment or assembling a complicated project?

—Does the process go as well as it could go when you don't read the manual carefully or you skip steps?

—Is it easier to follow the instructions or try to figure it out on your own?

—Have any of you seen a policy that people thought was unnecessary, but you had specific experience and knew why it was needed?

- Scouting may appear simple, but the delivery of the program can be complex. Ask the following questions (again a show of hands might suffice for answers):

—How many of you were instantly prepared for all of your Scouting roles the minute you agreed to do them?

—How many of you felt overwhelmed at the thought of being a new den leader or a new committee chair, or have seen a youth leader struggle?

—How many of you wondered where to get the information needed to perform the role well?

—How many of you know there is a manual or handbook for every adult Scouting position and many youth Scouting positions?

—How many of you felt you were better prepared to deliver a quality Scouting program **after** reading the manual or handbook for a new position?

- Not following the leadership handbook or manual can sometimes create problems for a unit. Ask the following questions:

—How many of you have sons or daughters who have complained that Scouting in their unit was boring or disorganized and wanted to quit?

—How many of you thought that one big reason was because the den leader, Scoutmaster, senior patrol leader, etc., didn't know what they were doing or didn't do it well?

—How many of you have been tasked with correcting situations that developed because a previous leader did not deliver the Scouting program well or ignored what was supposed to be done, either intentionally or not?

—How much more effort was required to correct an off-track program than it would have taken to deliver the program as it was intended?

—Have you encountered difficulties created by a leader who didn't do some things quite right because they followed what their predecessor did ("We've always done it this way in my unit")?

- To help provide consistent, safe, and effective programs, Scouting has developed a robust series of handbooks and manuals. They contain standards for performing each adult Scouting role easily, effectively, and in accordance with the requirements of the BSA.

—There is a manual for every leadership role. The ones for unit leaders are listed above. You cannot perform your role effectively unless you read those applicable to your position(s) and couple your reading with position-specific training.

- There is also a handbook for every rank in Cub Scouts, plus one for Boy Scouts, and several for Venturing. Those handbooks promise your Scouts that they will receive a Scouting program as described in their handbooks. Please read their handbooks so you know what **they** have been promised that **you** will deliver to them.
- When leaders don't deliver what youth handbooks promise the Scouts, we can lose those youth from Scouting—because they either quit entirely or don't participate actively in the unit.
- Boy Scouting and Venturing are supposed to be youth-led, adult-enabled programs. Just as there are handbooks for adult leaders, there are handbooks for the youth leaders.
 - Youth leaders may be less able to lead others than you are because they are young and are still learning these skills.
 - There is a handbook for the senior patrol leader and one for the patrol leaders. They tell the boys how to perform their roles.
 - Venturing officers (the equivalents of the senior patrol leader and patrol leaders) have an interactive training program instead of printed leadership handbooks.
 - Your troop or crew will run more smoothly if you, as adult leaders, insist that your key youth leaders read their leadership handbooks, discuss questions with you, and implement the program as stated in the handbooks.
 - Of course, if **you** also read those handbooks, you will be better prepared to answer their questions and guide them as they learn to be better leaders.

In addition to the handbooks and manuals for adult and youth Scouting positions and youth ranks, the BSA has developed special manuals for essential aspects of Scouting. Two of these are the *Guide to Advancement* and the *Guide to Safe Scouting*.

- The *Guide to Advancement* has been developed to ensure fairness and consistency in delivering the advancement component of Scouting. It will answer almost every question you have about properly implementing advancement.
- The *Guide to Safe Scouting* has been developed to help you manage risks while your unit is engaged in the many available Scouting activities. The *Guide to Safe Scouting* also discusses certain activities that cannot be conducted as Scouting activities for the safety of your unit's adults and youth.

The program manuals provide the basic structures that help all leaders in Scouting. Once those basic structures are in place, there is tremendous latitude to plan and develop programs that will keep the interest of your youth and offer them a great Scouting program. It is a balance of following the program and providing new and exciting adventures based on what the youth want.

Invite leaders to talk with the district committee after the roundtable for more detailed discussions.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Time Available

7–8 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand why parents or guardians bring their boys to Scouting.
- List the requirements for parents or guardians to participate in Scouting.
- Encourage adult participation in Scouting.
- Continue developing parents' or guardians' positive attitudes toward Scouting.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The district membership chair, the unit committee chair, or an active parent should present this topic.

Presentation Method

For the Big Rock, a brief discussion by the presenter is recommended. Provide a table with the reference resources and be available to answer questions.

BSA Reference Materials

- *Youth Protection* (DVD), No. 100-023
- *100 Years of Scouting* (DVD), No. 36105
- *Baden-Powell: The Two Lives of a Hero*, No. 34366
- *Communicating Well* (DVD), No. AV-02DVD20
- Membership Inventory, www.scouting.org/media/forms.aspx
- *This Is Scouting* (DVD), No. 36118
- Membership applications, No. 524-046 (youth) and No. 524-501 (adult)

Presentation Content

- Increasing volunteerism is a key factor in successful units. Many hands make light work. Having many volunteers—each with a single, well-defined role—helps avoid burnout and bring families together in the Scouting program.
- Engaging parents (or guardians and other family members) in the program can happen in many ways, but the key is unit leadership that seeks out opportunities to invite people to assist in the Scouting experience.
- Policy considerations:
 - All parents or guardians should take Youth Protection training, even if they are not volunteering. Youth Protection training provides relevant information for families and alerts families to critical BSA safety policies.
 - Any parent who accepts a registered leader role should also commit to completing the full training for that position.
- Making the ask—getting a parent engaged to help the unit:
 - Parents or guardians bring their youth to Scouting for a large number of reasons. It is important to identify these reasons for each family so the needs of the youth can be met. But that reason can also be an opportunity to invite adults to support the program directly with time and talents.
 - Scouting will be a social and community experience for many families. Leverage their interests and skills to support the unit.
 - For the volunteer who is not able to take on a registered leader assignment, there are other tasks such as organizing the blue and gold banquet or assisting with a specific troop event.
 - The first volunteer experience is extremely important. A good volunteer experience is likely to leave the door open to help with future needs when asked.
- Tips for success:
 - Ensure the roles are meaningful to the parent. People will not feel needed if there does not appear to be anything meaningful for them to do.
 - Supplying a mentor can make a real difference in the success a volunteer enjoys.
 - Holding too many positions is a prescription for disaster. The rule of “one volunteer, one job” should always be adhered to even if there are many things that need doing. Asking too much can turn a great volunteer into a poor performer.
- Say thank you and ask for feedback.
 - Be sure to thank a volunteer for any task they do! Thanking them publicly is even better.
 - It is very important to have a real discussion with volunteers concerning satisfaction with their role. The root causes of concerns and overall happiness need to be identified just as in the work world.
 - Volunteers are too precious to waste. Before negativity overwhelms the person, redirection can help refresh the energy and desire to serve. It is a lot easier to find a better fit than to find and train a new volunteer.
- Close with a reference to materials on increasing volunteerism and how to contact the district membership committee for specific support in increasing volunteerism at the unit level.

ROLE OF THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE IN UNIT SUPPORT

Time Available

7 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the role of the district committees.
- See how each committee supports a specific function in helping units succeed.
- Recognize that committees can be established by the district chair to provide for special needs, specific events, and unit support.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The district chair or an assistant district chair should present this topic. A committee chair can also be very effective in explaining how the relationship between the district and the unit works.

Presentation Method

The best approach to this discussion is to have opening remarks from the designated presenters. The objective is to build understanding about the services the district committees provide to units. Follow-up about questions or specific needs can occur after the meeting.

BSA Reference Materials

District Operations Handbook, No. 34739

Presentation Content

- The role of the district committee is to serve and support unit needs.
 - This begins by identifying the wants and needs of units.
 - Some are standard committees, such as camping and advancement, while others may be unique to each district.
 - Committees should be staffed by volunteers from various units, both large and small, and from all program aspects.
- Individual committees should hold regularly scheduled meetings and report at district committee meetings to ensure service is being rendered to units.
 - Committee membership is a great introductory role for newer but excellent and enthusiastic Scouting volunteers.
 - It provides an opportunity for seasoned Scouters to mentor newer volunteers.
 - It provides important roles for Scouters who have served well at the unit level but are ready for new opportunities.
- Functioning district committees are a critical means of ensuring good program delivery at the unit level.
 - Committee members can provide great assistance where units are struggling for lack of experience and have special needs that the district can support.
 - Unit commissioners can be very helpful in identifying needs and in asking the right district committee to provide assistance.
 - Questions asked by the units provide an opportunity to better realize the experience and needs the unit volunteers may have. Questions can be “ice breakers” to developing great relationships.
- Developing an ongoing dialogue between district committee members, units, and commissioners can do wonders in developing a successful Scouting program.
- Committee members should be present at unit program events such as camporees, recognition dinners, and other activities, as well as regular participants at roundtables and other meetings where they can support the needs of units.
- The presenter should close by briefly describing the committees in the district and provide a handout with contact information for each.

ROLE OF THE UNIT COMMISSIONER

Time Available

7 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Realize that a commissioner is not just another Scouting position.
- Understand the basics of commissioner service.
- Recognize that the commissioner is the link between the unit and the district and council.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The district commissioner, assistant district commissioner, or unit commissioner should present this topic.

Presentation Method

The presenter should display the commissioner patches (unit, assistant district, district, assistant council, council, assistant roundtable, Cub Scout roundtable, and Boy Scout roundtable).

Ask questions to stimulate discussion of the role of commissioner service and answer questions that unit leaders have.

BSA Reference Materials

- *Administration of Commissioner Service*, No. 34501
- *Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service*, No. 33621
- *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews*, No. 33618
- *Unit Performance Guide*, No. 522-025
- Commissioner Responsibility Cards, No. 34265

Presentation Content

- What is the title of a volunteer who ...
 - has the wreath of service as part of their position patch?
 - is the liaison between the unit and the district and council?
 - is a friend of the unit?
 - makes regular visits to the unit?
 - supports unit on-time charter renewal and connects the unit with resources throughout the year?

If you answered unit commissioner, you are correct!

- Do you know your unit commissioner?
- When was the last time your unit commissioner visited your unit?
- The commissioner position is probably the least understood resource in Scouting.
- Besides the unit leader, the commissioner has the potential to have the greatest impact on the youth in the unit.

- The founders of the BSA noticed inconsistencies between early troops.
 - Daniel Carter Beard was appointed the first national commissioner to establish uniformity among troops.
 - In the 1940s, neighborhood commissioners were created.
 - In the 1960s, neighborhood commissioners were renamed unit commissioners.
 - The goal has been the same: to ensure units have the resources to provide a great Scouting experience to the youth.
- The role of the unit commissioner is to be a friend of the unit, to say, “I care. I am here to help. What can I do for you?”
- Ideally, each commissioner will support no more than three units. The responsibility of unit commissioners is to see that they present the best Scouting program to the youth in their units.
- Ask “How have unit commissioners helped your unit?” This is accomplished by:
 - Being a friend to the unit.
 - Representing to the unit the ideals, principles, and policies of the BSA.
 - Assisting the unit when problems arise.
 - Sharing knowledge with the unit leaders based on past experiences and expertise from other units.
 - Counseling the unit in problem solving.
- But in the end, it’s not really about the units we have; it’s about the youth they impact.

TRAINED LEADERS—WHY AND HOW

Time Available

7–8 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the need for all adult Scouters to be fully trained for their positions.
- Understand the need for ongoing and supplemental training.
- Identify available training resources.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The district Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Venturing training chairs are ideal presenters for this topic. These trainers will be well versed in the basic training required for unit leaders at all levels of the Scouting program, as well as supplemental training opportunities and special training needed for specific activities.

Presentation Method

The presenters should describe the types of required position-specific training and distribute the What Makes a Trained Leader? handout. The presenters should also discuss the need for certain supplemental training, such as Safety Afloat. Finally, they should note that supplemental training is required for all Scouting position knots and mention when and where that training is available.

BSA Reference Materials

- What Makes a Trained Leader? Handout, www.scouting.org/filestore/training/pdf/What_makes_a_trained_leader.pdf
- Adult training Web page, www.scouting.org/training/adult.aspx
- eLearning Web page, <https://myscouting.scouting.org/Pages/eLearning.aspx>
- Unit Training Tracking Report, <https://myscouting.scouting.org/pages/UnitTrainingTrackingReport.aspx>
- CubCast and ScoutCast Web page, www.scouting.org/Scoutcast.aspx

Presentation Content

- Ask the following questions:
 - Training for Scout leaders is optional: true or false?
 - If you were trained years ago, you're always trained: true or false?

Both are false. Some level of training is required for every leader position. And training should be refreshed periodically to keep current with changes in the Scouting program, as leaders change positions, and before undertaking certain activities. Importantly, Youth Protection training is required every two years.
- To make training more accessible, the BSA recognizes multiple options for training:
 - Group training: in person, face-to-face
 - Individual coaching: one-on-one training
 - Online and/or self-study: study guides or online; self-paced

- Why is adult leader training important?
 - Ask if other volunteer organizations to which they belong require training. Most do.
 - Ask if they would entrust their children to untrained sports coaches, untrained teachers, or untrained religious leaders. Parents should not be expected to entrust their Scouts to untrained Scouters either.
 - Scouting requires a lot of knowledge to deliver the program well. Some of that knowledge is related to proper and efficient operation of the den, pack, troop, or crew; some is about safe Scouting; some is related to advancement; and some provides specific skills needed for special activities. None of this knowledge is difficult to attain, and training provides a solid foundation for each leader.
 - BSA programs change from time to time. A leader trained in an older version will not be trained to properly deliver the new program unless he or she updates training periodically and learns about the latest changes.
 - All unit Journey to Excellence scorecards have a line item for which leader training is required to achieve Silver or Gold status.
- Required adult training consists of several levels:
 - Joining course: Youth Protection (available online on the eLearning Web page)
 - Orientation courses: Fast Start and This Is Scouting (both available online on the eLearning Web page)
 - Position-specific courses: All Cub Scout position-specific training is available on the eLearning Web page, as well as in person with the district training team. Boy Scout and Venturing position-specific training is available in person with the district training team.
 - Briefly review the What Makes a Trained Leader? handout so everyone knows the basic training required for their position.
- Supplemental and specialty training is available for special activities that pose a higher than normal risk of injury to Scouts.
 - Online training available on the eLearning Web page includes:
 - Safe Swim Defense (refresher required every two years)
 - Safety Afloat (refresher required every two years)
 - Climb On Safely
 - Trek Safely (refresher required every two years)
 - Physical Wellness (refresher required every two years)
 - Weather Hazards (refresher required every two years)
 - In-person outdoor training is required for certain leaders:
 - Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills (required for Scoutmasters and assistant Scoutmasters)
 - Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation (BALOO)—At least one BALOO-trained leader must be on every pack overnight camping trip other than council-sponsored summer camps.

- Outdoor Leader Skills for Webelos Leaders (OWL) is highly recommended for new Webelos leaders so they will have the skills to complete many of the Webelos activity badges.
- Advanced training includes:
 - Wood Badge (for all adult leaders)
 - Powder Horn (for adults in Boy Scouts and Venturing and Scouts over age 13 to help the unit plan and conduct a quality high-adventure program in the unit)
 - Seabadge (for Sea Scout leaders)
 - Philmont or Florida Sea Base training conferences (offerings for everyone)
- Other types of supplemental training include:
 - Roundtables: The training in this Big Rock topic is a form of supplemental training.
 - University of Scouting: If your council does not conduct a University of Scouting, check whether a nearby council does, and consider attending that one.
 - CubCast and ScoutCast podcasts of important topics for Cub Scout and Boy Scout leaders are available online at the website listed above. Most are about 15 minutes long. New podcasts are added monthly, so check back frequently.
- Training awards are available and should be presented to recognize leaders who have made the commitment to be trained and offer a good program to Scouts. These recognize:
 - Being fully trained for the position
 - Attending roundtables, a University of Scouting, and other supplemental training while working on any of those awards
 - The Scouter's Key has the same basic and supplemental training requirements for Cubmasters, Scoutmasters, crew Advisors, district committee members, and commissioners.
 - All of them acknowledge that a leader cannot provide truly excellent service to youth unless he or she is fully trained.
- Tools exist to help track every leader's training status.
 - Unit committee chairs are required to ensure that the unit's registered leaders are fully trained, either directly or via a designated unit training coordinator. Unit commissioners should ensure that the unit committee chair or designee has up-to-date training records for all registered leaders.
 - Registered committee chairs should be able to review the training status for all leaders in the unit (at least for the online eLearning training) by logging onto the training tracking Web page at <https://myscouting.scouting.org/pages/UnitTrainingTrackingReport.aspx>.
 - Many commercially available software packages such as ScoutTrack and TroopMaster have training tracking modules that can be used to track training for courses that are not part of the BSA eLearning website.
- Indicate when and where the next in-person training will be available in your district, and indicate where leaders can get more information about training (district or council websites, etc.)
- Answer any questions, and invite leaders to talk with the district training committee after the roundtable for more detailed discussions.

BIG ROCK TEMPLATE

Time Available

7-10 minutes

Learning Objectives

Suggested Presenter(s)

Presentation Method

BSA Reference Materials

Presentation Content

BOY SCOUT INTEREST TOPICS

TROOP ANNUAL PLANS AND BUDGETS

Time Available

~20 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the characteristics of a boy-run troop.
- See the importance of the patrol leaders' council in planning and budgeting troop activities.
- Recognize the unit committee's role in planning and budgeting

Suggested Presenter(s)

One or two Scouters who are knowledgeable about and involved in boy-run troops would be good presenters. It will be helpful if more than one Scouter presents this session and they are from different generations: Traditionalists (1928-1945); Baby Boomers (1946-1964); Gen X (1965-1980); and Millennials (after 1980). This will prevent any generation gaps.

Presentation Method

This presentation involves a seminar-type discussion where the presenters facilitate the discussion of boy-run troop planning and budgeting.

BSA Reference Materials

- The Patrol Leaders' Council, www.scouting.org/boyscouts/patrolleader/s6.aspx
- Patrol Leader, www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/PatrolLeader.aspx
- Bryan On Scouting, <http://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2010/02/25/ask-the-expert-is-it-a-violation-of-bsa-policy-to-have-closed-meetings>
- Fiscal Policies and Procedures for BSA Units: Frequently Asked Questions, www.scouting.org/filestore/financeimpact/pdf/Fiscal_Policies_and_Procedures_for_BSA_Units.pdf
- Planning Your Troop's Annual Program Budget, www.scouting.org/filestore/boyscouts/pdf/510-275.pdf
- Troop Annual Program Planning Conference Guide, www.scouting.org/licensing/sitecore/content/home/boyscouts/programplanning.aspx

Non-BSA Resources and Materials

- "What Do Scouts Decide?" <http://www.scoutmastercg.com/what-do-scouts-decide/>
- "The Patrol Leaders' Council and Planning," <http://www.scoutmastercg.com/the-patrol-leaders-council-and-planning/>
- "The Patrol Leaders' Council—John Thurman," <http://scoutmastercg.com/the-court-of-honor/>
- "Lessons and Suggestions on Boy-Run Troops," <http://bsaroundtable.org/boyrun troop.html>

Presentation Content

Introduce the session with this quote: "The patrol system is not one method in which Scouting for boys can be carried on. It is the only method." —Lord Baden-Powell, Scouting's founder

Use the following questions to start a discussion on best practices for annual plans from the patrol leaders' council, troop budgeting, and building on the plans through youth leadership.

- What are the characteristics of a boy-run troop?
- How does one tell if a troop is boy-run?
- What are the advantages in having a boy-run troop?
- How does a boy-run troop select its programs and plan an annual calendar?
- What are the responsibilities of the unit committee in approving and supporting the chosen program? Use "Fiscal Policies and Procedures for BSA Units: Frequently Asked Questions" to address financial and budget roles.
- Answer any other questions proposed by Scouters.

Depending on the experience and practices of local units, a follow-up roundtable might include a dedicated discussion about how different units manage the youth presenting the programs they select, as well as best practices for mentoring patrols in planning and running the monthly programs.

EAGLE SCOUT SERVICE PROJECTS

Time Available

~20 minutes; more if using a longer format roundtable agenda

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand that the purpose of an Eagle Scout service project is to demonstrate leadership through community service.
- Explain the steps of a successful project.
- Discuss resources to assist Scouts with their projects, notably the Eagle Scout service project coach.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The district advancement chair and/or the district Eagle Scout board of review chair should present this program. Having a well-spoken Eagle Scout candidate (who has completed the Eagle Scout board of review) enhances the experience, providing a youth perspective. It is critical that any presenter be well versed in the appropriate advancement policies and able to provide accurate answers to questions.

Presentation Method

Presentation is by discussion with time left for questions from the audience.

BSA Reference Materials

- *Boy Scout Handbook*, No. 34554
- *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*, No. 512-927
- *Guide to Advancement*, No. 33088
- The Eagle Scout Service Project Coach education module, www.scouting.org/scoutsources/BoyScouts/GuideforMeritBadgeCounselors/Resources/advancement_presentations.aspx

Community Resources and Materials

- Lists of public entities that may be able to assist with project suggestions. These would include park departments, chartered organizations, schools, retirement centers, Army Corps of Engineers project offices, Nature Conservancy, etc.
- Businesses that may be willing to provide supplies or support, with notes of preferred procedures to approach them.

Presentation Content

- Eagle Scout service projects must use the *Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook*, as specified in the requirement.
- The workbook also provides a great deal of information about finding, planning, and conducting a successful project.
- One of the key evaluation points for the project is to demonstrate leadership skills.
 - The Scout must develop a project idea he can execute.
 - The objective is to develop and execute a project that is achievable, not to create a launch vehicle for lunar orbiting.

—Keep it simple! It must require service and support from others whom the Scout leads.

—Briefly review “Choosing a Project” in the workbook.

- A project idea is developed and then approved by the Scoutmaster, unit committee, and the benefiting organization.

- Projects are then reviewed by a district or council representative for final go-ahead.

—Throughout the review process, the answer to a proposal is not “no,” but rather “how can this be made to work.”

—The project must be manageable by Scouts without significant adult intervention. Support it—yes. Do it—no.

—Enthusiasm for the project can be destroyed if the project is started prematurely and then the candidate has to deal with rejection by the Eagle Scout board of review chair. It must be emphasized that the Scout is not to begin preparation for doing the project before receiving all the required signatures.

- After approvals have been given, the Scout may work up a more detailed project description and plan, including resources needed.

- An Eagle Scout service project coach may also be utilized and is highly encouraged. Coaches provide guidance and information to support the Scout in his efforts.

- Carrying out the project requires support from the unit, both adult and youth. The Scout may also use friends and family to assist in his project.

- The Scout should ask for and coordinate unit support of his project.

—The Scoutmaster needs to coordinate with the Scout about the troop resources needed to make the project a success.

—The senior patrol leader needs to promote the project with the Scouts.

—The Eagle Scout candidate needs to ask the members of the troop to help with his project.

—Dates selected for the project need to avoid as many conflicts as possible.

—If the project is to be done outside, alternative dates should be selected in case of bad weather and broadcast to the unit.

- The project days need to begin on time. This is where all the prior planning comes together so the team assembled can carry out the project.

—A log is signed by all the Scouts who help with the project.

—Pictures of the project need to be taken.

—The log should show the number of hours it took to complete the project.

—If certain loose ends can't be completed during the scheduled time, then a plan must be in place to complete the effort.

—Leaving a project partially completed is not acceptable. It sets a bad example for the Scouts involved and others who may be aware the Scouts did not stay the course and finish what was started.

- At completion, before all disperse, be sure to thank all volunteers who helped.
- Notice of pickup time and place are very important and not to be treated lightly.
- Completion of the physical part of the project is not the end. The Scout must next work up the report.
 - The Scout writes up a summary of the project from start to finish, using the workbook format.
 - The beneficiary signs off the project as completed.
 - The workbook is then presented to the Scoutmaster to sign.
 - Once approved by the Scoutmaster, the completed workbook, including the Eagle Scout Rank Application, is submitted to the Eagle Scout board of review per the local council practices and a date is set for the board of review to meet.

ORDER OF THE ARROW

Time Available

~20 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Review the purposes of the Order of the Arrow.
- Discuss how OA membership is useful to the unit and to older Scouts as a retention tool.
- Understand how Order of the Arrow members should support their own unit.
- Recognize how Order of the Arrow allows boys to grow through additional service and leadership opportunities.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The adult Order of the Arrow chapter advisor and the chapter officers (youth leaders) should present this topic. A couple of unit leaders whose units have benefited from active Order of the Arrow members or support from the chapter would be excellent additional presenters.

Presentation Method

Begin with a discussion by the chapter advisor about the purposes of the Order of the Arrow. Then have the youth chapter officers give a discussion about the leadership benefits and enjoyment they receive as chapter officers. Follow these with testimonials from unit leaders who have benefited from Order of the Arrow members. Leave time for questions about OA and how to use it as a retention and service program element.

BSA Reference Materials

- National Order of the Arrow website, www.oa-bsa.org/
- *Chapter Operations Guide*, available at www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/publications
- Service ideas, www.oa-bsa.org/pages/content/service-ideas
- *Order of the Arrow Handbook*, No. 34996
- Chiefly Thoughts (inspirational messages from former national OA chiefs and vice chiefs), www.oa-bsa.org/pages/category/category/chiefly-thoughts

Presentation Content

- **Purposes of the Order of the Arrow.** As Scouting's National Honor Society, the purposes of the Order of the Arrow are to:
 - Recognize those who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Scout Law in their daily lives and through that recognition cause others to conduct themselves in a way that warrants similar recognition.
 - Promote camping, responsible outdoor adventure, and environmental stewardship in every Scout's experience, in the unit, year-round, and in summer camp.
 - Develop leaders with the willingness, character, spirit, and ability to advance the activities of their units, the Brotherhood, Scouting, and ultimately our nation.

—Crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others.

This recognition provides encouragement for others to live these ideals as well.

- **Eligibility.** The Order of the Arrow membership requirements are the following:
 - Be a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America.
 - After registration with a troop or team, have experienced 15 days and nights of Boy Scout camping during the two-year period prior to the election.
 - Youth must be under the age of 21, hold the First Class rank or higher, and (following approval by the Scoutmaster or Varsity Scout Coach) be elected by the youth members of their troop or team.
 - Adults (age 21 or older) who are registered in the BSA and meet the camping requirements may be selected following nomination to the lodge adult selection committee. Adult selection is based on the ability to perform the necessary functions to help the Order fulfill its purpose.
- **Allowat Sakima's words from the pre-Ordeal ceremony** (emphasis added):
 - “Friends, **the ones who chose you need you.** Who among you now is ready? Who will go upon this journey?”
 - “You have been ‘called out’ by the members of your troop to lead and **serve them.** It is a considerable honor, one that you dare not take lightly. They see your devotion to the ideals of brotherhood, cheerfulness, and service is heartfelt and true. They see strength in your character and leadership that they can admire. They trust you. **So they chose you to lead them.** When you stepped forward to become a member of the Order on the night of your Ordeal, it obligated you to a life of cheerful service.”
 - “Membership in our Order is given, not only for what you have done, but **for what you are expected to do in the future,** for your journey is just beginning.”
- **The older boy dilemma.** Troops need their older boys to stay active and provide leadership to the younger boys. Yet the older boys also have more homework, harder classes, possibly a part-time job, and other extracurricular activities. They may feel like they have “been there, done that” in terms of unit activities that the younger boys need.
- **Are older boys as active as before?** Ask unit leaders to be honest about whether the average older boy is more—or less—active than the younger boys in the unit.
 - Many older boys are less active than they used to be, or than the younger ones, for the reasons mentioned above.
 - Yet their unit needs them and their individual and collective experience if the unit is truly going to be boy led.
 - The OA can, if properly harnessed by the adult leaders, provide the older boys true leadership experiences for the unit that will allow them to feel needed and allow them to have experiences that the younger boys won't be having.

- **OA and older Scouts.** Because OA usually targets older Scouts, some Scoutmasters worry that OA diverts the attention of the stronger youth leaders in their troop. The OA leadership believes otherwise, as noted on the National OA website:
 - From the philosophical side, the OA exists as a **part** of the Boy Scout program of the BSA. We ask each member to “**return in service to your unit,**” and we attempt to focus strongly on how OA members can serve and support **their own troop.**
 - Also, part of our purpose is to recognize outstanding Scouts so they can cause others “to conduct themselves in such manner as to warrant recognition.”
 - The **primary obligation** of an OA member is back to **his troop or team that elected him.** This is stated throughout the OA’s literature, especially on page 31 of the handbook.
 - Done right, the OA can be a powerful membership retention device and program enhancement technique for older boys. As a member, you can make membership much more meaningful for the boys who are elected, and you can better ensure that the OA election in your unit is not just a popularity contest but rather is a real honor and recognition of following the Oath and Law. You can use the principles of the OA to encourage and gently correct, when necessary, your older boys. You can also suggest and arrange, when you see an older boy beginning to “outgrow” the basic troop program, that the boy become more active in OA to benefit his unit.
 - **OA youth unit representative as a leadership position.** Scouts may use the Order of the Arrow troop/team representative position to meet the leadership position requirements for the Star Scout, Life Scout, and Eagle Scout ranks.
 - In many troops, the youth OA unit representative doesn’t seem to have a robust set of duties. That may make the position seem unimportant.
 - Nothing could be further from the truth if the senior patrol leader and the Scoutmaster explain the OA representative’s duties and actively monitor his performance for his unit.
 - **Duties of the youth unit OA representative** from the *OA Chapter Operations Guide*:
 - Make at least one high-adventure presentation to the unit annually. Also, promote weekend and summer camp attendance.
 - Coordinate the Ordeal induction process for newly elected candidates.
 - Participate in unit members’ paths to Brotherhood.
 - Lead community service projects for the unit.
 - Inform unit members of OA meetings and events.
 - Help keep updated OA membership of unit.
 - Communicate lodge membership dues process (and encourage all members to be current in their dues).
 - Serve as a liaison between the chapter and the unit.
 - **Types of unit and community service by OA members.** The national OA website lists many ways in which OA members can give leadership to their units and the community.
 - There are 25 types of unit service on the list.
 - There are 34 types of community service on the list—things that a unit can do to benefit the community and which Arrowmen can lead for the unit.
 - **Council and district service by OA members.** There are also at least 34 ways in which Arrowmen can assist the council or district. These are ideal for older boys who need something “more” from Scouting than another summer camp or merit badge.
 - What OA member doesn’t remember the ceremonial team from his or her Ordeal and/or Brotherhood induction? Those boys and young men 21 years or younger made a lasting impression on each OA member.
 - Ceremonial teams constantly need new members to replace those who have left for college. These teams can be excellent opportunities for older boys to really spread their wings and help their fellow OA members at the same time.
 - Some chapters or lodges have OA dance teams that perform Indian dances in elaborate regalia. The boys in these dance teams rarely fail to impress their peers, and can leave a Cub Scout pack completely speechless at a blue and gold banquet.
 - Every conclave needs someone to assign and/or lead service project crews. An older boy, working with an adult mentor, can fill that role and in the process become someone whom other boys look up to the way they look up to camp staff members.
- Once the presenters have discussed the above ways in which the official Order of the Arrow materials promote unit service by Arrowmen, have the youth chapter officers give personal testimonials about how they have grown as Scouts through their OA membership and their service to both their units and the chapter.
- Once the youth chapter officers have spoken, ask unit leaders to give testimonials about the ways the OA has benefited their units.

BSA PROGRAM AWARDS

Time Available

~20 minutes; more if using a longer format roundtable agenda

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Review the diverse awards Boy Scouts can earn.
- Provide ideas for enhanced unit programming through these awards.
- Find resources for award requirements.

Suggested Presenter(s)

A member of the district advancement committee involved in these awards or an experienced unit leader whose unit actively promotes earning some of these awards should present this topic. The presenter should review the resource materials and be able to answer questions about the awards. The council or district religious emblems coordinator should also present if available.

Presentation Method

Conduct a brief discussion about the awards that entails more than reading the Awards Boy Scouts Can Earn handout to the attendees. A forum discussion would be ideal in which unit leaders are asked which of these awards their units have worked on and provide comments about the awards. Discuss ways these awards might fit into existing unit program plans, or encourage Scouts to go above and beyond existing plans.

BSA Reference Materials

- Awards Boy Scouts Can Earn handout, included after this Boy Scout interest topic; the handout has a brief description of the awards and Web links to the requirements

Community Resources and Materials

- Local churches known to offer religious emblems to Scouts (contact your council or district religious emblems coordinator)
- National Park Service website for nearby national parks that offer hiking trails, www.nps.gov/findapark/index.htm
- Local and neighboring council websites that may have information on nearby historic trails

Presentation Content

- The purpose of this interest topic is to acquaint unit leaders with a number of awards that their Scouts can earn beyond advancement requirements. Some of the awards can become the basis for a troop or patrol activity, which may help the patrol leaders' council plan new and interesting outings. Some of the awards supplement or enable Scouts to earn merit badges. Here are some examples:
 - The National Outdoor Badges can give units some goals to accomplish, such as number of nights camping.
 - The National Honor Patrol Award strengthens the patrol method by requiring Scouts to meet the requirements as a **patrol** rather than as individuals or the troop as a whole.

—Historic trail hikes can qualify for the Hiking merit badge if they are long enough, or serve as a shorter hike that prepares younger Scouts for a 10-mile hike if they have never hiked that far.

—The Presidential Active Lifestyle Award supplements the Tenderfoot physical fitness requirement and the Personal Fitness merit badge.

—The citizenship awards supplement the citizenship merit badges by delving into specific topics.

- Descriptions of several awards are included in the following handout, grouped by the following broad categories. The presenter can give a high-level overview of the awards but must not just read the handout.

—Outdoors and Personal Fitness

—Water Sports and Water Safety

—Citizenship and Religious Emblems

—Environmental

—International Scouting Awards

—Miscellaneous

- Before the presentation, consult the local council website for additional locally available awards that should be discussed or added to the handout for completeness and to promote these local awards.

—If the local council or one nearby has one or more historic trails, the presenter can describe the purpose of the trails, where they are, how long they are, and whether the trail length would qualify for the Hiking merit badge, and ask the unit leaders what tips they may have for others who have not hiked the trails.

—Some councils have a winter outdoor camping award called the Zero Hero or a similar themed name for camping outside overnight when the temperature falls below zero degrees.

—Some councils have special awards for community service. These awards may be based on the number of hours of service in a year or cumulative service, or may recognize a certain amount of food collected for Scouting for Food, etc.

- Trek Safety training is highly recommended for all units before going on any hikes. It is required before taking hikes in areas away from readily available medical care. It is available online as part of the My Scouting training. At least one adult who has taken Trek Safety should be on each hike.
- Safe Swim Defense and/or other aquatics training is required before units engage in water sports on their own or at locations without adequate numbers of trained lifeguards.
 - Quickly review the elements of Safe Swim Defense with the leaders if time permits.

- Religious emblems are not always well understood. The BSA statements on religious principles strongly encourage all Scouts to earn one or more religious emblems for his faith. A separate Big Rock Topic on religious emblems (in the 2013–2014 *Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*) discusses the role of the unit leader in promoting religious emblems for all faiths equally and provides additional resources to enable unit leaders to do so. If the local council or the local district does not have a strong tradition of promoting and earning religious emblems, then a separate roundtable presentation may be advisable.

FAQs

Question: Why are these awards helpful to unit programs?

Answer: Units are always in need of new suggestions for activities to keep their Scouts' interest levels high. These awards offer some good ideas to start exploring an activity, or to take an activity above and beyond the advancement requirements.

Question: Is there an “expert” who can provide additional information on religious emblems?

Answer: Consult the district or council religious emblems coordinator, who can help connect Scout families to the programs provided by that Scout's faith practices. For example, the PRAY website (praypub.org) has useful information, FAQs, etc., on a number of religious emblems, as does the National Catholic Committee on Scouting (www.nccs-bsa.org), the National Jewish Committee on Scouting (www.jewishscouting.org) and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (www.lds.org). Please consult the resource aligned to the individual Scout's preferred practices.

Question: What if our council doesn't offer some of the awards mentioned? For instance, what if our council doesn't have any historic trails?

Answer: Consult neighboring councils. They might have an historic trail nearby. Or create one for your council.

Community service is a Scout's duty, but sometimes an additional award might spur a Scout to do service when he doesn't need additional service hours for his next rank. Some councils have developed community service awards that your council could adapt or modify and use for this purpose. Search available resources online, in your council, and through community interest groups, and consult other experts who may be available to assist Scouting.

HANDOUT: AWARDS BOY SCOUTS CAN EARN

Ideas for troops that are looking for theme ideas or awards that may represent challenges aligned to the youth program interests. Many of these awards can be the focus of monthly outings and/or a unit meeting.

Outdoors and Personal Fitness

NATIONAL OUTDOOR AWARDS (FORMERLY NATIONAL CAMPING AWARD)

Do your Scouts enjoy camping under the stars, rafting a whitewater river, or hitting the trail afoot, on a bike, or even on a horse? Can they pitch a tent, find their way, and bandage an ankle using only materials in their packs? Can they do any of these in rain, snow, sleet, or heat? If so, the National Outdoor Awards are for them.

www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/Youth/Awards/NOA.aspx

PAUL BUNYAN WOODSMAN AWARD

This award is meant for a Boy Scout who has earned his Totin' Chip, can demonstrate advanced woodsman skills by teaching Totin' Chip skills to other Scouts, and completes a woodsman work project. Not for uniform wear.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/paulbunyun.aspx

ZERO HERO AWARD

Some councils that experience very cold winter weather may have a special award for camping outdoors when the temperature is zero degrees Fahrenheit or colder. Check with the local council for requirements.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AWARD

"Emergency preparedness" means being ready for all kinds of emergencies. It means a Scout is ready and able to help in times of trouble to save lives and property and to help a community or even a nation get back to normal after a disaster occurs. To encourage Scouts of all ages to be prepared for emergencies, the BSA has approved an Emergency Preparedness Award program for members of all ages.

www.scouting.org/Media/Publications/EmergencyPreparedness.aspx

SCOUTSTRONG PRESIDENTIAL ACTIVE LIFESTYLE CHALLENGE AWARD

This challenge is for everyone associated with the Boy Scouts of America, including Scouts, Venturers, parents, volunteers, council staff, board members, friends of Scouting, and BSA alumni. To earn the SCOUTStrong PALA Challenge Award, meet an activity goal of 30 minutes a day for adults and 60 minutes a day for Scouts under 18 for at least five days a week, for six out of eight weeks. An award can be earned in less than two months.

www.scouting.org/SCOUTStrongPALA.aspx

HISTORIC TRAILS AWARD

Love of America and devotion to our country depend upon a thorough appreciation of the ideals, principles, and traditions that have made our country strong. Historic Trails Award requirements emphasize cooperation between historic societies and Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Venturing units.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/historictrails.aspx

NATIONALLY APPROVED HISTORIC TRAILS

The National Council website has a listing of approved historic trails by state.

www.scouting.org/Applications/trails.aspx

50-MILER AWARD

The primary objective of this program is to stimulate Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Venturer interest in the ideals of Scouting and to promote activity that will result in personal fitness, self-reliance, knowledge of wood lore, and a practical understanding of conservation. A total of 50 miles of hiking, biking, or paddling is required over five days, plus 10 hours of conservation work.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/50miler.aspx

Water Sports and Water Safety

SNORKELING BSA

The Snorkeling BSA requirements introduce Scouts and adult leaders to the special skills, equipment, and safety precautions associated with snorkeling; encourage the development of aquatics skills that promote fitness and recreation; and provide a foundation for those who later participate in more advanced underwater activity. The Snorkeling BSA patch is worn on the swim trunks, not on the Scout uniform.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/Snorkeling.aspx

SCUBA BSA

Although Scuba BSA is similar to introductory scuba experiences offered by various Recreational Scuba Training Council member organizations, those programs are not substitutes for Scuba BSA. All requirements must be completed as stated on the application form. The Scuba BSA patch is worn on the swim trunks.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/Scuba.aspx

KAYAKING BSA

Kayaking BSA provides an introduction to kayaking skills and safety procedures and serves as a program opportunity for Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Venturing units. Mastery of Kayaking BSA skills is a critical first step toward satisfying Safety Afloat guidelines for safe kayak excursions.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/Kayaking.aspx

BOARDSAILING BSA

This award was developed to introduce Scouts to basic boardsailing skills, equipment, and safety precautions; to encourage development of skills that promote fitness and safe aquatic recreation; and to lay a skill and knowledge foundation for those who will later participate in more advanced and demanding activities on the water. Boardsailing BSA is well suited as a program feature for older Scouts at summer camp. The patch is worn on the swim trunks.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/boardsailing.aspx

BSA LIFEGUARD

To qualify for BSA Lifeguard, the candidate must complete the BSA Lifeguard course under the direction of either a BSA Lifeguard Instructor or a BSA Aquatics Instructor. Training is valid for three years provided First Aid and CPR/AED training are kept current during that period.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/lifeguard.aspx

MILE SWIM BSA

The Mile Swim award is designed to encourage swimming skills and recognize Scouts who swim one mile or more. It can be earned only by Boy Scouts (not by Cub Scouts or adults). The patch is worn on the swim trunks.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/mileswim.aspx

Citizenship and Religious Emblems

CONGRESSIONAL AWARD

The Congressional Award is a public-private partnership created by Congress to promote and recognize achievement, initiative, and service in America's youth. The Congressional Award provides a unique opportunity for young people to set and achieve personally challenging goals that build character and foster community service, personal development, and citizenship.

www.congressionalaward.org/partners/bsa.php

JAMES M. STEWART GOOD CITIZENSHIP AWARD

The purpose of the James M. Stewart Good Citizenship Award is to introduce Scouts and leaders to the life of a great American: James Maitland Stewart—Oscar-winning actor, World War II pilot, and Air Force general. The Jimmy Stewart Museum offers the award to Boy Scouts and Scouters who exemplify the characteristics necessary to live the life of a good citizen. To earn the award, Scouts are required to complete the Jimmy Stewart Museum quiz, write an essay of not less than 500 words, and do a good citizenship project in their community in honor of James M. Stewart. Interested Scouts and Scouters should contact the Jimmy Stewart Museum to purchase a copy of the workbook for \$6, which includes shipping.

<http://jimmy.org/citizenship-award>

RELIGIOUS EMBLEMS

Religious emblems exist for boys of virtually all faiths. Units should assist youth and Scouting families in finding the award that matches their faith practices. All awards are administered through faith-based groups rather than by BSA directly.

Environmental

WORLD CONSERVATION AWARD

Scouts can earn this award by earning the following merit badges:

- Environmental Science merit badge
- Either Soil and Water Conservation OR Fish and Wildlife Management merit badge
- Citizenship in the World merit badge

Patches are available at local Scout shops.

CONSERVATION GOOD TURN AWARD

The Conservation Good Turn Award is an opportunity for Scouts of all ages to join with conservation or environmental organizations (federal, state, local, or private) to carry out conservation Good Turn projects in their home communities.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/conservationgoodturnaward.aspx

LEAVE NO TRACE AWARD

Instilling values in young people and preparing them to make ethical choices throughout their lifetimes is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America. The Leave No Trace principles and awards help reinforce that mission, and remind us to respect the rights of other users of the outdoors as well as future generations.

www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/Resources/LeaveNoTrace.aspx

HORNADAY AWARDS

Hornaday Awards are available for youth and adults in Scouting for significant conservation service. Only a small percentage of Scouts who become Eagle Scouts earn the Hornaday badge or a Hornaday medal. Hornaday awards include the unit certificate, several levels of awards for individual Boy Scouts, and two levels of awards for adults. The awards are named for the founder of the Bronx Zoo in New York City, who was also instrumental in the preservation of the American buffalo.

www.scouting.org/Awards/HornadayAwards/Awards.aspx

HOMETOWN U.S.A. AWARD

The Hometown U.S.A. Award is a joint program between Keep America Beautiful Inc. (KAB) and the Boy Scouts of America. The purposes of the award are to educate Boy Scouts about citizenship in relation to conservation and to involve them in community activities relating to environmental issues; offer a mechanism by which Scouts can develop positive attitudes toward their environment and community while being exposed to interesting career opportunities; and provide the opportunity to honor Boy Scouts for their significant contributions toward keeping America beautiful.

www.scouting.org/boyscouts/resources/keepamericabeautiful.aspx

BSA International Scouting Awards

INTERNATIONAL SPIRIT AWARD

For youth and adult leaders, the International Spirit Award is worn as a temporary patch centered on the right uniform pocket. The award seeks to broaden knowledge of international Scouting and increase appreciation and awareness of different cultures and countries. It can be earned by all Scouts and adults, with different requirements by age.

www.scouting.org/International/recognitions.aspx

INTERPRETER STRIPS

Scouts and adults may wear this strip if they show their knowledge of a foreign language or sign language for the hearing impaired.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/InterpreterStrip.aspx

MESSENGERS OF PEACE AWARD

In 1920, just two years after the most terrible war the world had ever known to that time, 8,000 Scouts from 34 countries came together for the first world jamboree. At the closing ceremony, Scouting founder Robert Baden-Powell called on participants to carry the spirit of the jamboree home “so that we may help to develop peace and happiness in the world and goodwill among all Scouts.” Today, Scouts in dozens of countries are working for peace by solving conflicts in their schools, building links between divided communities, teaching their peers about health and wellness, and repairing environmental damage. To recognize their efforts and to inspire more young men and women to help Scouting create a better world, the World Scout Committee launched the Messengers of Peace initiative in 2011, which the BSA joined in 2012. The award honors Scouts of all ages and adult leaders who perform a service project in the spirit of world peace.

www.scouting.org/messengersofpeace.aspx

Miscellaneous Awards

RECRUITER STRIP

Boy Scouts can earn a colorful recruiter strip simply by inviting a friend to join their troop. Ask for the recruiter strip at your council service center when you turn in the new membership application.

www.scouting.org/Awards_Central/recruiterstrip.aspx

NATIONAL HONOR PATROL AWARD

The patrol method is an essential method for implementing the aims of Boy Scouting. The award is designed to strengthen the patrol method by encouraging patrols to have identity and spirit, be active, do Good Turns and service projects, complete rank advancement, wear the uniform, be organized, participate with the troop, and grow. The requirements can be found in the Patrol Record Book.

www.scouting.org/filestore/boyscouts/pdf/512-021_WB.pdf

DUKE OF EDINBURGH’S AWARD

The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award was launched in the United Kingdom in 1956 by Prince Philip, the duke of Edinburgh (husband of Queen Elizabeth II). The award is a program of leisure-time activities available to all young people between the ages of 14 and 25. It provides a journey of personal discovery—an adventure challenging the whole individual, regardless of gender, color, creed, or ability. The program is designed to encourage personal discovery, self-reliance, commitment, responsibility, and service to the community. There are three separate attainment levels: Bronze, Silver, and Gold.

<http://www.royal.gov.uk/ThecurrentRoyalFamily/TheEarlofWessex/TheDukeofEdinburghsAward.aspx> and www.intaward.org

SCOUTS WITH ADD/ADHD

Time Available

~20 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand how the environment (indoor and outdoor) affects a Scout with ADHD.
- Discover how to work with Scouts with ADHD in their patrols and units.

Suggested Presenter(s)

A school psychologist or social worker who is knowledgeable in working with boys with ADD/ADHD would be a good presenter. One or more parents of Scouts with ADD/ADHD may assist in the presentation. Because this topic involves technical issues related to a medical condition, it is important that any presenter be either a professional in working with ADHD or a Scouter deeply knowledgeable about the subject due to direct personal experience, often by way of their own child having ADHD.

Presentation Method

This presentation involves a talk, PowerPoint presentation, and discussion.

BSA Reference Materials

- Scouts with Special Needs Web page, www.scouting.org/specialneeds.aspx
- Supporting Scouts With ADHD (PowerPoint presentation), www.scouting.org/filestore/ppt/ADHDTips.ppt
- “How to Help Scouts With ADHD Succeed—Without Hurting Anyone’s Feelings,” *Scouting* magazine, <http://scoutingmagazine.org/tag/adhd/>
- *Scouting for Youth With Disabilities Manual*, No. 34059, www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34059.pdf
- “How to work with Scouts who have ADD/ADHD,” Bryan On Scouting, <http://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2013/03/06/add-adhd/>
- Guide to Working With Scouts With Special Needs and DisABILITIES, www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/510-071.pdf

Presentation Content

The following material is designed to suggest talking points to be expanded upon by the presenter using the resources noted above or others available. Due to the potentially wide range of presenter experience and the unique needs of each Scout, the presenter should adapt and address the points as best suited to the audience.

- The presenter may begin by asking what Albert Einstein, the Wright Brothers, Thomas Edison, Whoopi Goldberg, and John F. Kennedy have in common. Each had attention deficit and learning disorders.
- ADHD creates certain challenges for the Scout, but also provides benefits and positive traits that can be leveraged when understood. A well-trained leader working with the Scouts and his parents can create a great program opportunity for the Scout and his peers.
- Here are some discussion points to touch on:
 - How the environment (indoors and outdoors) affects a boy with ADHD
 - How a Scout with ADHD affects the other members of his patrol
 - How the patrol affects the Scout with ADHD
 - Best methods for helping Scouts with ADHD advance
 - Working with parents of Scouts with ADHD
- Because working with Scouts with disabilities is a broad topic, encourage attendees to utilize other resources to learn and develop their capabilities. These include:
 - Local training available from the council, a University of Scouting event, or other venues
 - The council advancement committee for assistance with advancement support
 - Local Scouters who are professionals in related fields
- Following the presentation, answer questions posed by Scouters. Be sure to protect the privacy of Scouts in any stories or questions.

SUSTAINABILITY

Time Available

~20 minutes; more if using a longer format roundtable agenda

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Promote awareness of the new Sustainability merit badge and its place in encouraging conservation efforts in Scouting.
- Provide ideas for Sustainability merit badge counseling and how to draw on community resources.
- Encourage critical thinking in presenting the Sustainability merit badge.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The presenter should be an experienced merit badge counselor or adult trainer who is involved in conservation or sustainability through Scouting, volunteer, or job experience.

Presentation Method

This information can be presented verbally, with slides, and/or with visual aids. Start as the merit badge pamphlet does, by defining sustainability. The resources available will help drive an effective presentation.

After sharing examples of community programs that promote sustainability, encourage a group discussion of local resources that can be used to enrich a merit badge experience or troop presentation.

BSA Reference Materials

- *Sustainability* merit badge pamphlet, No. 35711
- Sustainability merit badge requirements, www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/MeritBadges/mb-SUST.aspx
- Green to Deep Green, www.scouting.org/sustainability
- Leave No Trace, <https://lnt.org/>
- Conservation and Service Web page, www.scouting.org/OutdoorProgram/ConservationAndService.aspx

Community Resources and Materials

Community resources may include but are not limited to:

- Curbside recycling or community centers that collect recyclables and household and hazardous waste
- Community gardens
- Urban planning
- Utilities with conservation programs
- Building materials stores or yards with conservation/efficiency displays
- Local employers with groups that focus on sustainable business practices or sustainable use of their products

Presentation Content

- Discuss the Sustainability merit badge
 - Introduced at the 2013 National Scout Jamboree
 - Eagle Scout alternative to Environmental Science merit badge

- Define sustainability. This alone is likely to spark discussion.
 - It is becoming an over- and misused word. Let's get on the same page.
 - From the merit badge pamphlet: Sustainability refers to “methods of harvesting or using resources in ways that do not squander or permanently damage them. A sustainable lifestyle or society meets today's needs without depleting (completely using up) natural resources for future generations.”
 - From the Green to Deep Green site linked to scouting.org: “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”
 - What about companies that produce goods using finite natural resources? Sustainability should at least encourage efficient and responsible production and use with consideration of other impacts and the discussion of alternatives when the supply runs out.
- Share what you found looking for local resources.
 - What do local governments, businesses, and nongovernmental organizations do to promote sustainability?
 - Do they have community or customer outreach programs?
 - How can troops pull in people who can share their work and give examples of work in sustainability?
- The merit badge emphasizes what Scouts and their families can do to make their lifestyles more sustainable. Give a few examples from the following on ways the merit badge requirements will drive awareness and action.
 - Requirement 1 calls for a family meeting where family members write down what they think sustainability means and the Scout takes notes
 - 2-Water-A. Develop and implement a plan that attempts to reduce your family's water usage.
 - 2-Food-A. Develop and implement a plan that attempts to reduce your household food waste.
 - 2-Energy-B. Develop and implement a plan that attempts to reduce consumption for one of your family's household utilities.
 - 2-Stuff-B. Plan a project that involves the participation of your family to identify the “stuff” your family no longer needs.
 - Requirement 4 calls for a Scout to have a discussion with his family about two of the following topics: plastic waste, electronic waste, food waste, species decline, world population, and climate change.
 - Requirement 5a calls for another family meeting where family members discuss what they have learned about being sustainable citizens.

Additional Discussion Topics

The words “sustainability” and “ecology” have become like the word “organic”—frequently overused and misused in marketing and other settings that attempt to persuade or influence decision-making. Ask the Scouters to watch for these words and think critically about whether the usage is really promoting broad, long-term conservation and sustainability goals or whether it is being used to sell you something or help you to feel less guilty about a personally gratifying selection that consumes more than is needed to do the job. For example, you’ll find “Eco-boost” being used to sell Ford’s 302 HP F-150s, “Ecologic” at Chevy, and “EcoDiesel” at Chrysler. How many of us “need” a pickup truck or a sports car?

While the Sustainability merit badge as designed provides a good focus on what the Scout and his family can do at home, there’s an opportunity to teach critical thinking with a focus on national and world policies. Consider:

- The percentage of people who deny the possibility of human-induced impacts on global climate and species diversity in the face of overwhelming evidence
- Marketing and subsidizing electric cars and buses as green alternatives while most electricity is made by burning coal
- National laws that require a set volume (not percentage) of ethanol to be included in our fuel supply in the presence of laws that prevent the import of cheaper and more ecologically produced (such as Brazilian sugar cane-based) ethanol, and where the usage of groundwater in the production of domestic corn-based ethanol is not sustainable
- Limited availability, acceptance, and participation in curbside recycling
- Limited acceptance of bottle bills to encourage recovery and recycling and other measures designed to give manufacturers and distributors of goods a stake in their sustainable (re)use.

This list could go on, and include local, state, national, and global observations of unsustainable practices, usually protecting an economic or political goal at the expense of long-term global well-being.

Sustainability is offered as an Eagle Scout merit badge alternative to Environmental Science. The Environmental Science merit badge teaches that conservation is a core value of Scouting, dating back to the merger of Seton’s and Beard’s groups to form the BSA. One of the requirements of the Environmental Science merit badge is to assemble a time line. A good discussion can be held around William Penn’s requirement in 1681 that for every five acres of land cleared for farming, one acre of woods needed to be maintained. How do we suppose 17th-century farmers in what was to become Pennsylvania felt about this, and can we compare their experience to modern debates, such as those regarding efficiency of cars, appliances, building materials, lighting, etc.?

Scouts whose path to the Eagle Scout rank includes Sustainability rather than Environmental Science could miss out on exposure to these ideas. Emphasize them in your general program, such as when teaching Leave No Trace prior to an outing.

TRAILER SAFETY

Time Available

~20 minutes; more if using a longer format roundtable agenda

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand that trailer safety is a key planning element for troops that use them.
- Realize basic steps that can increase safety.
- Encourage units to develop a thorough trailer safety program specific to their program plan.

Suggested Presenter(s)

A trailering expert is ideal. While a local Scouter can be an expert resource, consider also representatives from local trailer providers who can address a wide variety of safety and equipment discussions and be a further resource to units. This topic will require a well-established level of knowledge about trailers and towing in order to fully and accurately address the needs of the unit leaders attending.

Presentation Method

This presentation lends itself to a planned presentation followed by a Q&A session.

BSA Reference Materials

- *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 34416

Non-BSA Resources and Materials

- National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, www.nhtsa.gov/cars/problems/equipment/towing/towing.pdf

Community Resources and Materials

Local trailer sales and service companies can be excellent resources for this presentation, particularly those that have been supportive of Scouting or are familiar with Scout trailers and the program gear carried.

Presentation Content

- From the *Guide to Safe Scouting*:
 - Use caution in towing trailers or campers, as a vehicle's performance, steering, and braking abilities will be altered.
 - Get the correct trailer for the vehicle and the correct hitch for the trailer. Distribute and anchor the load.
 - Allow extra time to brake. Changing lanes while braking can jackknife the trailer.
 - Add safety equipment as dictated by common sense and state laws (mirrors, lights, safety chains, brakes for heavy trailers, etc.).
 - Park in designated areas.
- Poor maintenance can create real challenges on a troop outing. Trailers also represent potentially serious risks if not maintained properly.
 - For example, an axle and hub failure (tire disengaged from the trailer) due to improper maintenance can mean unloading the trailer and stowing gear into other vehicles to continue the trip while arranging for someone to come and get the trailer and take it for repairs.

—A tire blowout due to underinflated tires can rip the fender off a trailer and send the sheet metal flying into traffic, where it could hit a vehicle or cause accidents as drivers swerve to avoid it.

—If the tongue on a trailer carrying canoes snaps off and the trailer careens off the roadway, it may cause accidents.

Rather than detail extensive content in this guide, it is suggested that the following topics be addressed by the expert presenter. This allows the content to be tailored to the local units' interests and circumstances.

- Different types of trailers and towing requirements, based on what local units are using or considering purchasing
- Safety features on trailers and assistive devices, such as braking systems, that may be available
- Vehicle towing limits and how to evaluate the proper tow vehicle for a given trailer
- Proper driver training to tow trailers and recommended practice driving to become both comfortable and familiar with the trailer to be towed
- Proper loading of trailers—weight distribution, weight limits, preventing load shift, etc.
- Pre-travel trailer safety checklists—both tow vehicle and trailer (all units are strongly encouraged to develop and use a comprehensive checklist before every departure)
- Basic maintenance recommendations—both tow vehicle and trailer
- Driver safety recommendations such as reducing speed, thinking ahead, stopping often for rest, etc.

It may be a good exercise to share tips within the group for reducing weight and safely packing equipment in Scout trailers. Some examples:

- To reduce weight, carry only a limited amount of water for an emergency stop, and load water jugs on arrival at camp.
- Load backpacks and personal gear into other vehicles to reduce trailer weight. Trailers do not need to be full, and excess weight can be a danger.
- Fuel and fuel cylinders should be secured rather than loose in the trailer.
- Consider a designated packing plan for heavy or bulky items, such as chuckboxes, that helps balance the trailer when loaded for a "standard" outing.
- Troops may wish to load the trailer with only the gear needed from a storage location at their meeting site rather than carry a large amount of unused gear to events.
- Fire extinguishers and first-aid kits should be readily accessible at the trailer entry points, as well as in the tow vehicle, for emergencies. In an emergency, you may not have access to the trailer immediately, so duplicate safety gear is advisable.
- Ask for other tips and suggestions from the participants.

A sample trailer towing checklist may include but is not limited to the following pre-towing safety review items. The list should be adjusted to the features and needs of each specific trailer, and then printed and used before each trip departure.

- Tow vehicle tire pressures checked (includes spare tire)
- Trailer tire pressures checked (includes spare tire)
- Tow vehicle wheel lug nuts correctly torqued
- Trailer wheel lug nuts correctly torqued
- Hitch, coupler, draw bar, and draw bar pin secure
- Trailer brakes' breakaway switch cable secured to tow vehicle
- Safety chains properly crossed and secured to tow vehicle
- Wiring harness is correctly routed and connected to tow vehicle, and is long enough to allow turns but doesn't touch the ground
- All running lights, brake lights, turn signals, and hazard lights working properly
- Brakes on tow vehicle functioning normally
- Brakes on trailer functioning normally
- Trailer properly loaded and all items secured
- Load distributions correct in tow vehicle and trailer
- Trailer jack, tongue support, and any stabilizers raised and properly secured
- Doors closed and locked
- Side and rearview mirrors properly adjusted and permitting correct visibility

Additional program options may include allowing troops to bring their trailers for a "show and tell" session, or a gear swap for units to exchange unwanted or surplus gear to help units that may need that equipment.

TROOP ELECTIONS

Time Available

~20 minutes; more if using a longer format roundtable agenda

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of the Scouts electing qualified candidates.
- Discuss the skills Scouts need for various positions of responsibility.
- Help unit leaders develop procedures for fair elections in units.

Suggested Presenter(s)

An experienced Scoutmaster and a senior patrol leader should present this topic.

Presentation Method

A presentation or discussion of the suggested talking points outlined below can provide a good foundation for the roundtable. Time should be included for questions and open discussion among all participants.

BSA Reference Materials

- *Patrol Leader Handbook*, No. 32502
- *Senior Patrol Leader Handbook*, No. 32501
- *Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009
- *Troop Committee Guidebook*, No. 34505

Presentation Content

1. How often are elections held?
 - Some troops will have elections every six months on a regular schedule, often aligned to school or program events. Youth leaders play essential roles in Webelos recruiting events in the fall and at summer camp. Elections may also coincide with courts of honor or other unit events.
 - Some units use shorter or longer terms, based on their preferences.
 - Smaller units, rebuilding units, or units with large age gaps among the Scouts may choose to keep a senior patrol leader or those in other positions of responsibility for a longer time period until new youth leaders are ready to assume those responsibilities.
2. What is the ideal term for a senior patrol leader or patrol leader?
 - Term length depends on troop size. A small troop may have very few youth truly ready to serve as senior patrol leader if elections are held twice a year. At the same time, the leaders have to consider the risks of “senior patrol leader for life” scenarios that may detract from an older Scout’s enjoyment and opportunities to develop younger Scouts into new leaders. Larger troops typically have more youth ready and prepared to assume the senior youth leader roles, allowing for more variety as the boys try different leadership roles.
3. How should elections be conducted?
 - Elections vary from unit to unit. The Scoutmaster oversees elections of the youth leaders and then works with the senior patrol leader to approve the appointed youth leaders.
 - How these functions are best handled in a unit depends a great deal on communication between the Scoutmaster and senior patrol leader, reflection, and the Scoutmaster’s support of the senior patrol leader’s decisions.
4. What if a popular but poor selection is made for senior patrol leader?
 - This will happen from time to time. It becomes a learning experience for the Scouts as they can observe the importance of choosing qualified leaders, and not just popular leaders.
 - At the same time, if a Scout is elected, the adult leadership must work closely to help him grow and execute the responsibilities of his position to the best of his ability.
5. What requirements should the troop committee approve for a Scout to be included in the possible pool of boys for various leadership positions?
 - The troop committee should establish the guidelines for the Scoutmaster to use in holding elections. The use of these suggestions will indicate support of the troop committee for the process. Any guidelines must be fair to all Scouts and comply with BSA policies.
6. Is completion of local or national youth leadership training a requirement to hold a position of responsibility?
 - While definitely to be encouraged, participation in a specific course is hard to require because of timing considerations, as well as the cost of participating.
 - The troop committee should consider including youth leader training courses in the annual unit budget plan. The training will be beneficial to both the Scouts and the troop.
 - The troop should hold its own training courses for its youth leaders as well. The BSA provides a number of excellent resources that can be adapted to a unit’s specific needs, and leaders can check with other units to gain ideas that may meet these needs.
7. What previous leadership experience is needed?
 - A troop may prefer that a boy be a First Class Scout to be considered for more senior positions, such as senior patrol leader or assistant senior patrol leader. However, Scouts advance at their own pace, and an enthusiastic, qualified Scout may not match a predetermined set of criteria for a specific role.
 - Units may prefer instead to focus on the qualities of a good youth leader in each role, and describe the positions functionally in order to encourage the Scouts to vote for the candidates that best fulfill those needs.
 - Assigned positions, such as assistant senior patrol leaders, can be given specific tasks based on the unit’s unique needs. For example, they may be put in charge of the monthly program outing or work closely with the scribe or quartermaster.

8. How far down the leadership ladder are elections to be held?

- Elections are commonly held for the senior patrol leader and patrol leaders. After the election, the rest of the patrol leaders' council is appointed by the senior patrol leader with the advice and consent of the Scoutmaster.
- In a unit with strong youth leaders, the outgoing senior patrol leader may play a larger role in working closely with the Scoutmaster in the election process.
- The Scoutmaster should explain the nomination process and each position of responsibility. He should also assure the Scouts that it is OK to decline a nomination if they feel they are not quite ready for that role.

9. How can a Scoutmaster counsel a Scout who is not yet ready for a leadership position but wants to run?

- Scoutmaster conferences and side discussions throughout the year are important in developing the Scouts as youth leaders and in encouraging them to pursue roles that will help further develop their skills.
- Immediately after the election, the Scoutmaster and newly elected senior patrol leader discuss the selection of the assistant senior patrol leader, quartermaster, scribe, etc. Those youth are contacted as soon as possible by the senior patrol leader to see if they will accept the position.
- In selecting youth to fill appointed roles, it is important not only to match capable Scouts to roles but also to consider developing the next generation of youth leaders, which may require challenging a Scout with a position that he may not be fully capable of at the time but can grow into. The Scoutmaster's judgment will play an important part in the process. All youth leaders should have good support, training, and resources to help them execute their positions of responsibility successfully.

TO UNIFORM OR NOT TO UNIFORM; THAT IS THE QUESTION

Time Available

~20 minutes

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of wearing the Boy Scout uniform.
- Find resources to ensure members (youth and adults) wear the Boy Scout uniform correctly.
- Identify which items are worn on a Scout's uniform and which items can be worn on a Scouter's uniform.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The presenters should be two Scouters who are knowledgeable of Scout uniforms. One Scouter (presenter) wears the correct Scout uniform and the other (guest) wears a uniform that would not pass a uniform inspection. This could include but is not limited to the following uniform additions:

- One green shoulder loop and one blue shoulder loop.
- Several troop position patches (troop committee chair, troop committee, Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmaster) attached to a ribbon. The patches are folded so only one position patch shows and are held together with a rubber band. The ribbon is attached to the left shoulder.
- Merit badge sash.
- OA sash across the merit badge sash.
- Perfect attendance pin.
- Whistle attached to a lanyard.
- Name tag on left pocket flap.
- Brag vest.
- Rank patch (Boy Scout badge with Eagle Scout pin or other miniature metal pins)
- Other boy-related Scout patches, medals, or pins.
- Red jac-shirt or another jacket covering the uniform.

Presentation Method

This presentation involves a discussion and demonstration of correct uniforming. The intent of this session is to encourage Scouters and Scouts to wear their uniform according to the *Guide to Awards and Insignia*, and not to point out Scouters wearing an incorrect uniform or otherwise criticize.

BSA Reference Materials

- *Guide to Awards and Insignia*, No. 33066
- Uniform Inspection Sheet—Boy Scout/Varsity Scout, No. 34283
- Uniform Inspection Sheet—Scout Leader, No. 34048
- “Tuck Everlasting: Scout uniform shirts should always be tucked in, BSA says,” Bryan On Scouting, <http://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/?s=tuck+everlasting>

Presentation Content

Prior to the presentation, make the uniform inspection sheets available to the Scouters.

The presenter asks “Why uniforms?” Answers are noted and may be recorded on a poster or a flipchart.

Discuss the uniform as a method of Scouting. As one of the eight methods of Scouting, the uniform is described as follows: “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.”

Refer to “Tuck Everlasting: Scout uniform shirts should always be tucked in, BSA says” on the Bryan On Scouting blog.

During the discussion, the “guest” enters the room and interrupts by asking, “Is this the district's roundtable?” The presenter assures the guest it is and invites the guest to remove his or her coat and join the discussion. The guest removes his or her coat.

The presenter makes a comment about the guest's uniform being “rather unique.” The guest replies that he never really learned how to set up his uniform right but would sure like to learn if the Scouters at the roundtable could help. The presenter asks the roundtable attendees to make a list of the incorrect items on the guest's uniform (take about three to four minutes).

The presenter asks the guest, “Why are you wearing one green and one blue shoulder loop?” Answer: “Our troop wants Webelos to join our troop!”

The presenter notices the leadership patches and asks, “What position do you have in the troop?” The guest removes the rubber band and the ribbon of position patches unfolds. He states, “I'm a one-person troop!”

The presenter points out each item on the guest's uniform and asks the participants, “Is this item correct or incorrect?” If the item belongs on the uniform and is in its correct position, the presenter points out the next item. If the item is incorrect or misplaced, the presenter explains why. If possible, the incorrect item is removed.

The presenter asks the Scouters how many identified all the uniform concerns on the guest's uniform.

Answer questions regarding uniforming.

End this part of the session with this quote from Lord Baden-Powell: “Show me a poorly uniformed troop and I'll show you a poorly uniformed leader.”

However, that begs the question, “How do you build a well-uniformed troop?”

The uniform is encouraged but not required. Open the floor to discussion of how units have encouraged and successfully increased the proper wearing of the uniform.

Some suggestions may include:

- Adult leaders serve as role models by wearing the full uniform properly at all meetings and events.

- Older youth leaders and Scouts in positions of responsibility make the decision to wear their uniforms fully and properly.
- The patrol leaders' council presents a discussion on increasing uniform wear.
- Hold unit uniform inspections with recognition for Scouts with the best scores.
- Present a Scoutmaster's Minute describing pride in the uniform and encouraging its proper wear.
- Create unit customs for uniform wear, such as at meetings, while traveling, for a Scouts' Own service at outings, etc