

BIG ROCK TOPIC PLANS

CHARTERED ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIPS

Time Available

7–10 minutes

Learning Objectives

1. Review the BSA chartered organization concept
2. Encourage increased unit interaction with chartered organizations
3. Increase unit service to chartered organizations

Suggested Presenter(s)

The presenter should be well versed in the chartered organization concept. An active chartered organization representative in the district, the district membership chair, or a commissioner experienced in new unit start-ups may be a good presenter due to familiarity and experience in this role.

Presentation Method

This information can be presented verbally or with slides. The presenter may incorporate audience participation by asking if they can name their chartered organization and how closely they interact. At the end of the presentation, spend the remaining time asking units to volunteer how they serve their chartered organizations, both as part of the chartered organization's goals and through service or projects on behalf of the chartered organization.

Presentation Content

- The foundation of BSA's unit structure is the chartered organization. Who are some of the chartered organizations in our local district?
- There is much more to sponsoring the unit than providing a place to meet.
 - The chartered organization has selected Scouting as a key to achieving its purpose and mission in the local community.
 - The chartered organization may be a church, civic group, school, or other such organization that works in conjunction with the BSA to provide an outreach program for youth.
 - The chartered organization is effectively a “franchisee” or “owner-operator” of the Scouting program.
- By receiving a charter from the Boy Scouts of America, the chartered organization agrees to do several things:
 - Conduct Scouting in accordance with its own policies and guidelines as well as those of the BSA.
 - Include Scouting as part of its overall program for youth and families.
 - Appoint a chartered organization representative who is a member of the organization and will represent it to the Scouting unit as a voting member of the district and council.
 - Select a unit committee of parents and members of the organization who will screen and select unit leaders who meet the organization's leadership standards as well as the BSA's standards.
 - Provide adequate and secure facilities for Scouting units to meet on a regular schedule with time and place reserved.
 - Encourage the units to participate in outdoor experiences.
- Building this relationship can be a richly rewarding opportunity for both the chartered organization and the Scouting unit, but it requires effort by both parties.
 - The unit encourages greater support from its chartered organization.
 - The unit can show its appreciation of the chartered organization's generous support through service and other events important to the chartered organization.
- Begin by working closely with your chartered organization representative.
 - Every BSA unit should ensure the chartered organization representative is kept current with unit events and future plans.
 - The chartered organization representative should be invited to committee meetings, and better yet, be an active part of the unit committee.
 - Encouraging open communication and seeking the advice of your chartered organization representative helps the unit become an integral part of the chartered organization.
 - What are some examples of ways your unit serves its chartered organization?
- It is also an opportunity for the chartered organization to use Scouting to further its goals.
 - For a religious institution, Scouting may be a part of its youth program.
 - A parent organization, such as a local PTA or home schooling organization, may use Scouting to serve educational aims with a high-quality, values-based program.
 - Local civic groups often serve as chartered organizations for Scouting units as part of their community service initiatives.
- Voice of the Scout data indicates that BSA chartered organizations believe strongly in the program, but they frequently reported wishing the units did more for their institutions.
- How might a Scouting unit show its gratitude through increased support of its chartered organization?
 - Assist the chartered organization as part of an annual service day that includes grounds and facilities maintenance.
 - Help with decorating for religious holidays or community events, such as Veterans Day or Fourth of July, in accordance with the chartered organization's interests.
 - Help at fundraising events with volunteer service, such as assisting with a pancake breakfast or chili dinner that benefits a chartered organization's initiative.
 - Participate in Scout Sunday and Scout Sabbath in uniform.
 - Participate in community parades, rallies, or special events in conjunction with the chartered organization.
 - Other special service opportunities and projects are good ways to show the unit's appreciation.
 - Close dialog with the chartered organization representative can identify which opportunities are appropriate for the unit to support and how.

- If the unit is not currently engaged in service back to its chartered organization a few times a year, it may be wise to sit down with your chartered organization representative and ask how your unit can more actively give back to the organization.
- Building a healthy relationship based on mutual support allows both organizations to maximize the benefits of Scouting in our communities.

BSA Reference Materials

- BSA Chartered Organization Agreement, No. 524-182
- The Chartered Organization, No. 32196
- The Chartered Organization Representative, No. 33118
- Training for the Chartered Organization Representative should be available through the local council.
- www.scouting.org/Media/Relationships/TrainingtheCOR.aspx

JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE

Time Available

7–10 minutes

Learning Objectives

1. Describe how Journey to Excellence helps improve unit performance.
2. Promote Journey to Excellence as a unit planning tool.
3. Encourage better Journey to Excellence outcomes through better-informed leaders.

Suggested Presenters

The presenter should be knowledgeable about Journey to Excellence as a unit improvement tool for all units—packs, troops, teams, and crews. A commissioner who helps train units on the JTE program or a unit leader who has effectively used JTE to improve unit performance can be excellent presenters.

Presentation Method

It is suggested that the information be presented verbally with handouts of the JTE scorecards appropriate to each unit. The audience can participate through questions or by the presenter describing how JTE improved the unit program in the previous year.

Presentation Content

- Journey to Excellence, commonly called JTE, began in January 2011 as a replacement to the Quality Unit Award.
 - JTE uses a predetermined, nationally established minimum level of expected unit performance.
 - A balanced approach and key performance indicators measure outcomes from our programs, not just process, with increased emphasis on the youth experience in the units.
 - This includes camping, advancement, retention, and increasing our market share of served youth.
 - How many units attending received Gold Level JTE awards last year? [Raise hands]
 - Our district earned a _____ level JTE award. [May elaborate briefly on what areas need improvement if not at Gold, especially those tied to unit performance.]
- JTE is designed to help your unit deploy a great program. Those who achieve the Gold level award are very likely high-performing units, because JTE assesses key elements of unit success such as:
 - Advancement—Since we know this is key to encouraging our youth members and retaining them
 - Camping—Since the outdoors is a critical learning environment for our members
 - Service projects—Which build citizenship and character as well as support our local communities
 - Training—Especially for adult leaders, so we can execute the program with excellence
 - Membership and recruiting—To build sustainable units and increase the share of youth we serve
 - Retention—To keep the youth we recruit and strengthen our units
- —Leadership—To ensure our units are well run with a broad base of volunteer support
- —Budget—To allow our units to offer the programs our youth want most
- These elements are weighted differently, depending on what matters most in your program. For example, advancement is weighted less for Venturing crews than it is for troops or packs.
- The goal is to see improvement in your unit over many years, with improvements each year in the key areas where your scores were not at the top level.
- Each year the forms are updated, and the minimum expectations at each level also increase, in line with expectations for continuous improvement.
- The JTE program forms are available on the scouting.org website.
 - Also available are worksheets that can help your unit easily calculate its scores.
 - Some of the data is provided by our local professional, based on what is entered in key Scouting tools such as Online Advancement. This is one of the reasons 100 percent use of Online Advancement is very important for all units.
 - The rest is provided by the unit based on your program plan.
- But JTE is more than just a scorecard for the award. It serves many functions in your unit. A forward-thinking unit leader might use it as:
 - A framework for planning your unit program calendar. The standards are based on the minimum expectations that successful units use to operate their programs, so the Gold level can be a good minimum goal for your unit.
 - A method for evaluating your unit and identifying how you can improve your program offering, leader training, recruiting and retention levels based on the targeted levels. Bronze is a minimum, and Gold is ideal.
 - An assessment of how you're doing compared with other units. It's an opportunity to share ideas with other units on the areas where you are doing well, and the areas where you would like to improve.
 - A guide to identifying areas where you might execute your unit program better. It works in conjunction with advice and counsel from your commissioner.
 - An early warning of potential problem areas where you might want added help. This is especially important in areas where your unit is not achieving a high score.
 - A benchmark for ideas and tips from other good units in your district
- With that in mind, the charter renewal process is a good opportunity to review the JTE form for the upcoming program year at a unit committee meeting.
 - Use it to help set goals for the program year ahead.
 - Mark those goals complete as you progress through the year.
 - At year end, your JTE form will be complete, and it will reflect the progress you made during the year.

—Tracking your progress enables your unit to plan for success by building on your strengths and improving your weaknesses until you are consistently achieving the Gold award level.

- Open the floor for a few questions if time permits.

BSA Reference Materials

- BSA Journey to Excellence website: www.scouting.org/Awards/JourneyToExcellence.aspx
- Journey to Excellence Scorecards for pack, troop, team, and crew for each participant's unit

REVERENCE AND RELIGIOUS EMBLEMS

Time Available

7–10 minutes

Learning Objectives

1. Recognize that religious organizations serve as chartered organizations for more Scouting units than any other organizations.
2. Understand the role of the religious emblems coordinator.
3. Know the website for information regarding the religious emblems for different faiths.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The district religious emblems coordinator (a member of the council religious relationship committee, troop chaplain, or a Scouter who is a member of the clergy) is an ideal presenter. The presenter should be well versed in the faith-based opportunities for families, the religious emblem program, and connection to faith based chartered organizations.

Presentation Method

The presenter should display the religious emblems a Scout can earn. If possible, examples of the religious emblems should also be displayed. Ask questions to stimulate discussion about religious emblems. Address the BSA faith-based opportunities for families and religious chartered organizations.

Presentation Content

- **Ask:** “Which of the following chartered organizations worked with the most traditional Scouting units in 2011?”
 - a. Civic
 - b. Religious
 - c. Educational

—**Answer:** (B) Religious (69.39%); Civic (22.74%); Educational (7.87%)
- BSA is a faith-based organization—Duty to God and the Declaration of Religious Principle
 - Tiger Cub Handbook Elective 8—Your Religious Leaders
 - Cub Scout Core Value—Faith (having inner strength and confidence based on our trust in God)
 - Wolf Handbook Achievement 11: Duty to God
 - Bear Handbook Achievement
 - 1: Ways We Worship; achievement
 - 2: Emblems of Faith
 - Webelos Badge Requirement 8: Your Religious Duties
 - Scout Oath
 - Scout Law—12th point is “Reverent.”
- Religious awards are sanctioned by the BSA and allowed to be worn on the uniform but are not Scouting awards.
- Religious awards are earned and confirmed by religious leaders.

- Religious awards are age-appropriate.
 - Youth can earn the first-level emblem as a Tiger Cub or Cub Scout.
 - Webelos can earn the second-level emblem.
 - Boy Scouts can earn the first- and second-level religious emblems for Boy Scouts.
 - Older Boy Scouts, Venturers, Varsity Scouts, and Sea Scouts can earn the second level emblem.
- Benefits of earning religious awards:
 - Character development is one of the three purposes of the Boy Scouts of America.
 - Strengthens family ties through family involvement
 - Strengthens Scout’s religious ties through guided exploration and learning
 - Opportunities for leadership positions (chaplain aide) in troops
 - May lead to a faith-based career—pastor, priest, rabbi, imam, counselor, etc.—or service to the religious institution in non-ordained roles
- The council and district religious emblems coordinators are adult leader positions; they encourage all youth to earn the emblem of their faith.
- Display slide/poster of youth religious awards, youth religious emblem square knot, and adult religious emblem square knot.
- **Ask:** “What do these square knots represent and who can wear them?”

—**Answer:** Youth wear youth religious emblem square knots to prevent loss or damage to their award.
- A silver knot on a purple background is worn by youth, and a purple knot on a silver background is worn by adults.
- If a Scout earns more than one religious emblem, he only wears one square knot with the appropriate device(s); (Cub Scout, Webelos Scout, Boy Scout, and Venturing).
- Display websites for a variety of religious organizations.

BSA Reference Materials

- P.R.A.Y. Publishing: www.praypub.org
- National Catholic Committee on Scouting: www.nccs-bsa.org/
- National Jewish Committee on Scouting: www.jewishscouting.org
- The National Islamic Committee on Scouting: www.islamicscouting.org/
- BSA Religious Awards: www.scouting.org/Awards/ReligiousAwards.aspx
- Guide to Awards and Insignia: No. 614937
- Religious emblems coordinator: www.praypub.org/REC/

YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

Time Available

7–10 minutes

Learning Objectives

1. Complete a task similar to a Scout with special needs.
2. Understand that Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts with special needs can earn the appropriate advancement ranks.
3. Receive a list of BSA resources for working with Cub Scouts with special needs.

Suggested Presenters

The presenter should be a special education teacher who is also a Scouter, a Scout leader who currently has or has had special needs Scout(s) in the unit, a member of the council/district advancement committee, or the parent of a special needs Scout who can provide objective experience.

Presentation Method

This session is presented as a demonstration of a Scouter with a physical need in a den/patrol setting completing a task and discussion of advancement for special needs Cub Scouts.

Materials Needed

- The following Baden-Powell quote should be displayed for all Scouters to see: “The wonderful thing about such boys is their cheeriness and their eagerness to do as much in Scouting as they possibly can. They do not want more special tests and treatment than is absolutely necessary.”

Presentation Content

- Since its founding, BSA has fully supported members with physical, mental, and emotional special needs.
- **Ask:** “Which one of the founders of the Boy Scouts of America was physically disabled?”
 - a. Daniel Carter Beard
 - b. William D. Boyce
 - c. Ernest Thompson Seton
 - d. James E. West
 - e. None were physically disabled

—**Answer:** (d) James E. West contracted a disease as a child causing one of his legs to be shorter than the other. As a result, he limped the rest of his life. West is considered the architect of the BSA.

- Distribute the following to each table of Scouters: One strip of duct tape, approximately one half wide by four inches long, and one sheet of paper
 - Each table selects one Scouter to be the test subject. The selected Scouter tapes the thumb and index finger of their dominant hand together.
 - The den/patrol is told to copy the Scout Law on the paper.
 - Every member of the den/patrol must participate in completing the task.

—One Scouter writes: “A Scout is Trustworthy” and passes the paper to the Scouter next to her/him to continue.

—The process continues until “A Scout is Reverent” is written on the paper.

—When all tables have finished the assignment, ask the Scouters with the taped hands how it felt to complete their part of the task.

—Ask the other Scouters at the tables their reaction to having a Scout with a physical impairment in their group in completing the assigned task.

- “Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, and Venturers with disabilities and special needs participate in the same program as do their peers.” Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America.
- *The Guide to Advancement*, 2011, Boy Scouts of America, Section 10, identifies the procedures required. Many councils have established an advisory committee for youth with special needs.
- These policies exist to facilitate advancement of Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts and need to be addressed with local advancement experts to ensure they are followed correctly.
- Scouts with “severe and permanent mental or physical disabilities may work on ranks past the chronological age.”
 - Cub Scouts—Did the boy “do his best?”
 - Boy Scouts and Varsity Scout—Letter to council advancement committee requesting alternative requirements.
 - Eagle Scout—required merit badges—Merit badge requirements may not be modified or substituted. Use alternate badges once approved to do so.
 - Application for Alternate Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges—Submitted to the council advancement committee
- Scouts over 18, approved by the council executive board to register beyond the age of eligibility with a special needs code and may apply for the rank of Eagle Scout.

Working with Scouts with special needs, Scouters must be:

- Comfortable; not everyone in the unit may feel comfortable, and that is ok
- Enthusiastic
- Patient
- Understanding
- Flexible

Working with Scouts with special needs is rewarding and a learning opportunity.

BSA Reference Materials

- *Guide to Working With Scouts With Special Needs and Disabilities*; No. 510-071, 2013 Printing. (Contains list of resource organizations)
- *Guide to Working With Scouts With Disabilities*; BSA; No. 33056

- Guide to Advancement, 2011; No. 33088
- *Scouting With Youth With Disabilities*, Manual BSA; No. 34059
www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Leaders.aspx
- Application for Alternate Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges;
No.512-730
- Disabilities Awareness Merit Badge Pamphlet; No. 35883
- Eagle Scout rank—Candidate With Disabilities:
www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-730.pdf

RETENTION

Time Available

7–10 minutes

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the importance of retention in unit growth and program quality.
2. Review the importance of retention in unit evaluations, including Journey to Excellence.
3. Learn about tools and strategies to improve retention in the unit.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The district membership chair is an ideal presenter for this topic since it directly relates to recruitment efforts and growth in youth served. An experienced Scoutmaster who has improved retention in the unit can be an alternate presenter.

Presentation Method

An enthusiastic verbal presentation with lively Q&A will create an ideal opportunity for this topic. The presenter should engage directly with the audience on both the introductory questions and the scenarios to make retention a key theme with the Scouters in attendance.

Presentation Content

- **Ask:** “What is the one thing the Scouting program can’t live without?”
—The answer is “Scouts!”
- **Ask:** “How do we get Scouts?”
—Most will say, “We recruit them.” That is half correct.
—The other half is we KEEP our Scouts.
—Every Scout kept in the program is one more youth served.
- If we retain more Scouts, we grow our programs.
—We have more resources available—youth members and adult members, i.e., potential leaders.
—We serve more youth in our communities.
—When we have more resources and serve more youth, we can deliver excellent programs with a little dedication, effort and good planning.
- Retention is a key area of Journey to Excellence for units and districts—because it is how we grow Scouting.
- So how do we keep youth in Scouting? We start by knowing why they leave, then working to solve those issues. *Scouting* magazine included a great article on this in June 2011. Let’s talk about some of the issues and ideas it suggested.
- **Issue:** Sports and other activities conflict with participation. (Ask for one or two brief ideas to solve this.)
—**Solution:** Be accommodating. Scouting can flex around our youth and their schedules. They can miss a few meetings and still join right back into the program.
—**Solution:** Make sure the unit communicates with all families about what is happening so missed activities can be “made up” and Cub Scouts are aware of upcoming events.
- **Issue:** Boring program. (Ask for one or two brief ideas to solve this.)
—**Solution:** Revitalize. Ask the youth what they want to do, then let them plan the unit activity calendar. In Cub Scouting, JTE expects for youth input in designing the pack calendar. In troops, the patrol leaders’ council should be recommending the annual program plan. In Venturing, the youth lead 100 percent of the program, and adults are there to advise.
—**Solution:** Plan new events. Not every event needs to be the same. Let patrols do their own campouts one month. Let the Cub Scouts do a video game lock-in weekend if they are really excited about games.
- **Issue:** Low parent commitment. (Ask for one or two brief ideas to solve this.)
—**Solution:** Get parents engaged from day one. Get to know every family personally. Ask what they want from Scouting for their child. Work with them to identify how the unit will help them achieve their goals. Then ask them to help meet those goals by supporting their children.
- **Issue:** Cub Scout isn’t fitting in. (Ask for one or two brief ideas to solve this.)
—**Solution:** Find out what the Cub Scout wants from his experience. Is he shy? Is he having trouble making friends in the unit? Is the unit not the best fit for him? Is the program not interesting to him? Every Cub Scout is unique, and sometimes we need to listen carefully to identify how we can support that youth. It might mean connecting him to a good group of friends, starting him on awards that are interesting to him, or even finding a different unit that better matches what that Cub Scout wants. Our goal is to keep every youth in Scouting, and that requires us to be flexible.

Seven tips to keep Cub Scouts excited and engaged:

- Be active and keep things moving. Kids don’t want to sit and listen to a long lecture.
- Use outings and events to increase excitement, even for Boy Scouts.
- Keep “outing” in Scouting—the outdoors is exciting, and Cub Scouts want to explore.
- Communicate regularly with families so they know what is happening, and follow up personally right away if a Scout misses a couple of meetings.
- Program year-round to keep families and Cub Scouts engaged.
- Stay organized with schedules and information easily accessible to all families.
- Use the program levels—older Scouts want more adventure, so give it to them.

The goal is to retain our Cub Scouts. For every Cub Scout we lose, that is one more boy we have to recruit just to maintain our membership base. For every Cub Scout we retain, that new boy grows Scouting, expands our reach, and adds to our program.

BSA Reference Materials

- Re-TEN-tion booklet, www.scouting.org/filestore/membership/pdf/Re-TEN-tion_final.pdf
- Cub Scout Retention, www.trcscouting.org/Resources/Retention/

RECRUITING

Time available

7–10 minutes

Learning Objectives

1. Focus on different methods of recruiting whether for youth or adults.
2. Set up a plan for recruiting.
3. Measure success at the end of the recruiting cycle.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The presenter should be well versed in actually carrying out successful recruitment programs. An active unit head of recruiting, the district membership chair, or a commissioner experienced in successful recruiting may be a good presenter due to familiarity and experience in this role.

Presentation Method

Information can be presented verbally or with slides. The presenter may incorporate audience participation by using the following opportunities for 1 to 2 minutes of input:

- Before presenting the duties of a recruiter, whether youth or adult, ask the audience if they are able to name them.
- At the end of the presentation, spend any remaining time asking one or two unit leaders to explain how their recruiting efforts were or were not successful.

Presentation Content

- Recruiting is the life blood of our units.
- Units that don't recruit aren't going to last for long, whereas units that recruit well will not only grow, but benefit from more resources and Cub Scouts to create exciting and diverse program options. What are some tips or ideas to help improve recruiting?

Recruiting works best when it is youth- or friend-driven.

- Establish a reward system for Cub Scouts who bring their friends to visit the unit at a meeting or who attend an activity and then join the unit. Membership growth is the objective.
- The reward can be a “recruiter patch” or recognition at a court of honor or other event.
- The youth who is recruited should be introduced to the unit and made to feel welcome.
- The parents of the recruited youth should also receive a special invitation from the unit leader to join the unit by formally applying for BSA membership.
- Youth Protection training should be suggested to the parents, whether they join or not. They can go to: www.myscouting.org and take the course whether or not they are members.
- If they are members, they need to log in using their IDs to get proper credit for taking the YPT course.

Fall and spring recruitment campaigns

- Plan a time-specific campaign for a focused effort to recruit additional unit members.
- Develop incentives for Cub Scouts to assist in the effort.

- Be creative—school lists are good, but go where the Cub Scouts are: PTA, youth sports leagues, school ice cream nights, and local church youth groups are all great places to connect with Scout-age families, especially for Cub Scouts.
- Establish a recruitment spreadsheet of the target youth. Review it continually. Identify a reason for each family that does not join.
- Give special recognition to Cub Scouts who join the unit during this time period. New Cub Scouts who are by themselves can sometimes have the hardest time identifying with the Scouting environment. Each new member should have a Scout assigned to them for at least the first few months to make certain the new member attends, gets a uniform and handbook, and starts along the advancement trail. Don't leave this to chance!
- At the end of the drive, honor the new Cub Scouts and top recruiters.

Unit Webelos recruiting

- Webelos recruiting is critical—it keeps our current members in the program!
- Year-round recruiting is ideal even though Webelos recruiting often ties into crossover time. Use this time to get as many Webelos Scouts into troops as possible!
- Boy Scout units should have an active program to identify Webelos II leaders before the start of the second year of Webelos Scouts. Call the Cubmaster to confirm the right leaders, how many Webelos Scouts they have, and introduce your unit.
- Develop a relationship with the Webelos II leader. This involves really getting to know these leaders beyond an introduction phone call. Meet on a one on one basis outside the meeting environment to learn about the leader and Webelos families.
- Host the Webelos II patrol at a “normal” Scout meeting. Special “pony shows” for Webelos Scouts are easily identified and often considered as negative in Scout unit selection.
- Make sure programs are interesting, youth-driven and appropriate for Webelos audiences.
- Include dedicated time to talk to parents about the troop and answer questions—don't be rushed.
- Invite the Webelos patrol and parents to visit a unit activity and possibly to spend a night with the unit. Have the Webelos Scouts camp with the Scouts and participate in the activities. They should be treated as a “new boy patrol” would be treated and watched over by the troop guides or other carefully selected youth leaders of the troop.
- Send a thank you note to the leader and families, thanking them for participating with the Scout unit.
- Have a special means of welcoming graduating Webelos Scouts and their parents who are entering the troop. This is a time of change for the boys and parents. Help make the transition easy with troop guides, dedicated assistant Scoutmasters for new Scouts, and other resources.
- Communicate frequently and often to ease the transition and engage the youth right away.

BSA Reference Materials

- The following articles can be accessed by logging in to www.myscouting.org and calling up articles relating to recruiting. The list will change as new items are posted.
 - www.scouting.org/bsayouthprotection/bsa_communications/mandatory_youth_protection_training.aspx
 - www.scouting.org/filestore/mission/xls/2012jte_pack_ss.xls
 - www.scouting.org/filestore/membership/doc/membership_plan_council_013.doc

CHARTER RENEWAL

Time available

7–10 minutes

Learning Objectives

1. Focus on effective handling of charter renewal.
2. Set up a plan to accomplish charter renewal on time.
3. Review the completed charter renewal after approval by council registrar.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The presenter should be well versed in carrying out successful charter renewals. An active unit leader in charge of charter renewal and the district charter renewal commissioner experienced in successful charter renewals may be good presenters due to familiarity and experience in this role.

Presentation Method

Information can be presented verbally. The presenter may incorporate audience participation by using the following opportunity for 1 to 2 minutes of input: Before presenting the duties of a unit charter renewal volunteer, ask the audience if they are able to name the steps in online charter renewal.

Presentation Content

The charter renewal, the most important part of the commissioner's role, occurs annually to renew the unit's membership in BSA through its chartered organization. This process also renews the memberships of the families in that unit. A timely charter renewal is an important part of ensuring a healthy Scouting program for the unit. Following is a sample outline of how a unit might plan ahead for charter renewal to create a smoother, easier charter renewal process. Doing so avoids the last-minute rush and difficulties that may come from limited time.

The following is a five-month countdown plan which can be easily implemented to avoid dropped units as a result of inadequate charter renewal efforts. The charter renewal process, month by month:

- **Month 5**—Unit commissioner obtains a copy of unit charter listing and begins unit inventory.
- **Month 4**—Unit inventories are completed by unit commissioner.
- **Month 4**—Ensure any leaders not current on Youth Protection training take the course and have an up-to-date card.
- **Month 3**—All new adult and youth applications are completed, approved by chartered organization representative, and turned in to council office registrar by the 15th of the month to ensure they are on the roster ahead of charter renewal.
- **Month 3**—Units identify leader responsible for online charter renewal.
- **Month 3**—Units review what leader changes will be needed at charter renewal. This should include ensuring that all registered leaders are trained and the unit meets minimum training requirements for key leaders.
- **Month 3**—Unit commissioner provides information as to charter renewal fees and insurance costs.
- **Month 3**—Units start collecting charter renewal fees.
- **Month 2**—All units to have charter renewal codes

(passwords) no later than first week of Month 2 (55 days prior to final due date for charter renewal acceptance.)

- **Month 2**—By the 15th of the month, units begin online charter renewal.

(After the initial access by unit online charter renewal person, the council registrar cannot change the unit listing until the process is complete. It is critical that the online application process is not drawn out.)

- **Month 2**—Units collect any remaining charter renewal fees.
- **Month 2**—Online charter renewal is completed and all fees are collected by month end.
- **Month 2**—New youth and adult applications are included with paper output signed by unit leader.
- **Month 1**—Commissioners begin review of completed charter renewals along with fee and insurance charge.
- **Month 1**—Defective charter renewals returned to unit for correction.

(Unit charter renewal person signs off on system when charter renewal is complete.)

- **Month 1**—Commissioners turn in completed and corrected charter renewals to council registrar by the 15th of the month. (It is not proper for a district executive ever to handle a unit charter renewal application.)
- **Month 1**—15th to 28th: Unit commissioners work with units to correct any outstanding defects not caught during initial review and return charter renewal to council registrar.
- Following successful completion of the charter renewal process, the process is not quite done:
 - The commissioner receives updated charter renewal outcomes from council office.
 - A formal presentation of the charter is made to the chartered organization. This is an important part of the relationship with the chartered organization.
 - Membership cards are distributed to youth and adult members.

BSA Reference Materials

- The following article is an example of what can be accessed by logging in to www.myscouting.org and calling up articles relating to the charter renewal process. The list will change as new items are posted.
- http://www.scouting.org/Commissioners/Internet_Rechartering.aspx

DEN CHIEFS

Time Available

7–10 minutes

Learning Objectives

1. Describe how the den chief program is beneficial for both packs and troops.
2. Promote use of the den chief program.
3. Provide participants with more information to follow up and implement the program within their local units.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The presenter should be familiar with both the Boy Scout and Cub Scout programs—ideally, someone whose pack and troop have a long-established relationship with one another. Suggested presenters include an assistant Scoutmaster who works closely with new Scout patrols in their troop or has experience working with Webelos leaders from local packs. A Cubmaster or Webelos leader, one who is familiar with the Boy Scout program and has worked with a den chief, may also be a good presenter.

Presentation Method

It is suggested that the information be presented verbally with handouts of speaking points and links to additional resources. The audience can participate through questions or a brief description of how the den chief program has worked in the past for a couple of units.

Presentation Content

- What is a den chief?
 - A den chief is a member of a troop or a crew who works to help deliver the Cub Scout program for the boys in a den. (**Note:** Males and females in a Venturing crew can be den chiefs as well, but for simplicity, we most often refer to the den chief as a Boy Scout active in a troop.)
 - While serving as den chief, this Scout will work under the direction and guidance of the den leader and Cubmaster.
- How is a den chief selected?
 - Typically, a Cubmaster or den leader will contact a local troop or crew and ask for a den chief. The Scoutmaster and senior patrol leader should work together to identify a good candidate for this position.
- What's the best way to select the right person for this role?
 - An experienced Scout, first class or higher.
 - Ideally not related to the den leader or to the boys in the den
 - Good at working with younger Scouts; has energy and excitement
 - Responsible
 - Demonstrates good Scout spirit
 - Able to demonstrate and teach Scoutcraft skills, games, and activities
 - Familiar with Cub Scout program and terminology, or willing to learn
 - Sets a good example by wearing the uniform
- Benefits for the Scout:
 - Position of responsibility that can be used for advancement
 - Allows youth to gain leadership skills outside of same-age peers. Working with boys half their age and parents twice their age is much different from working with similarly aged patrol or crew members.
 - Scouts can reinforce their own skills by teaching them to others.
- Benefits for the troop:
 - Develops a strong relationship between the pack and troop
 - When a Cub is ready to cross over, they will want to join the boy who helped them learn to set up a tent, or helped them make smores on their first campout.
 - When families cross over, seeing the disorganization associated with a boy-led troop can sometimes be shocking. If the parents have worked with an experienced, prepared, responsible den chief, they will be more willing to trust their 10- or 11-year-old son to a boy-led troop.
 - Remember—The first goal is to get them to become Boy Scouts. The second is to get them to choose your troop.
- Benefits for the pack or den:
 - Cub Scouts often respond better to older kids than they do to their own parents. That gangly 14-year-old Scout looks like a superhero to an 8-year-old.
 - In some cases, the Boy Scout has more experience in practical Scouting skills than Cub parents or den leaders.
 - Younger boys get to hear about events that they can look forward to as Boy Scouts. Hearing a Boy Scout tell his experience on a 50-mile trek, a canoe trip, or some other exciting activity may be that spark that keeps a kid active in Scouting.
 - If certain Scouts have special needs or disabilities, sometimes the den chief can provide extra attention to that one boy who needs an extra hand, allowing the den leader to focus on the larger group
- Where to place den chiefs:
 - Ideally, the Webelos dens should be the first priority for den chiefs. One of the primary purposes of the Webelos program is to get the boys ready for transition into the Boy Scouting program.
 - However, there is no reason that a den chief cannot be assigned to work with any of the dens, from Tiger Cub up through Webelos Scout.
- Responsibilities of a den chief:
 - Knows and helps Cub Scouts achieve the purposes of Cub Scouting
 - Serves as the activities assistant at den meetings
 - Sets a good example through attitude and uniform wear
 - Is a friend to the boys in the den
 - Helps lead weekly den meetings and supports pack meetings
 - Knows the importance of the monthly theme and pack meeting plans and meets with the den leader to prepare to assist

- Receives training from the den leader (or Cubmaster or ac) and attends Den Chief training
- Encourages Cub Scouts to become Webelos Scouts when they are eligible
- Encourages Webelos Scouts to join a Boy Scout troop upon graduation
- Lives by the Scout Oath and Scout Law
- Shows Scout spirit
- Training resources help make this role easier for the den chief and the den leader
 - Online Den Chief training
 - Den Chief Handbook
 - Many councils offer Den Chief training sessions in person.
 - Awards
 - Den Chief Service Award—Requires service for one year, in addition to several training- and performance-related requirements

- Potential concerns and drawbacks
 - Finding a good candidate for this position can be difficult. If nobody is available and enthusiastic about filling this position, no Scout should be placed in the role. A bad selection as den chief is worse than no den chief at all.
 - This Scout will have a significant time commitment for this role, either in addition to their normal troop meeting time, or, if the pack and troop meet on the same night, this may take the Scout out of regular troop meetings.
 - Some den leaders may not know how to utilize a den chief as part of their program. The den leader needs to understand the program just as well as the den chief does.

BSA Reference Materials

- Den chief requirements and responsibilities: www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Leaders/About/ThePack/csdcf.aspx
- Den chief online training: www.scouting.org/Training/Youth/DenChefTraining.aspx
- Den Chief Handbook: No. 33211
- Dates of upcoming council-sponsored den chief training sessions, or contact information for the trainer if no dates are set.

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

Time Available

7–10 minutes

Learning Objectives

- Review the basic scope of the district.
- Address district successes and highlights that demonstrate the hard work of units.
- Share goals for continued improvement and encourage units to do their part in working toward achieving these goals.

Suggested Presenter(s)

The presenter can be the district commissioner, district chair, or another district level leader. Ideally, the presenter is a fun, engaging, and enthusiastic person who connects well with audiences to motivate and encourage dedication to Scouting. The local district executive can help provide much of the statistical data noted below, but the presentation is best delivered by a volunteer leader.

Presentation Method

It is suggested that the information be presented through an interactive conversation with slides or pictures related to the content. Since this is a highlights presentation, it is important to relate the data to the audience throughout the time allotted.

Presentation Content

This Big Rock presentation is intended to be a highlight overview of the district by the numbers. The outline below includes common metrics available to most districts. Additional bullets can be added to reflect local data points as available. The goal is to show the scale and impact of Scouting in the district, thank the units for supporting the Scouting program, and encourage them to commit to growing Scouting in the district even further.

- Our district is one of (No.) districts in (name) council.
- We serve (No.) Cub Scout packs with (No.) youth, (No.) Boy Scout troops with (No.) youth, (No.) Varsity teams with (No.) youth, and (No.) Venturing crews with (No.) youth.
- This represents a total of (No.) units and (No.) youth, supported by (No.) registered adult volunteers.
- Our market penetration is (percent) percent of our total available youth audience, so we have plenty of additional opportunity to recruit and serve more youth.
- In order to operate the district, we have (No.) members of the district committee, including standing committees for (name committees). (Introduce chairs and key contacts for camping, membership, and advancement if available.)
- We also have a commissioner staff of (No.). This includes (No.) unit commissioners to serve our (No.) units, for a ratio of (No.).
- Our district earned (level) Journey to Excellence recognition last year, which reflects (summarize the areas that earned points). Our goals for improvement this year include (summarize areas to improve).

—Among our Cub Scout packs, (No.) earned Gold JTE recognition, (No.) Silver, and (No.) Bronze.

—Among our Boy Scout troops, (No.) earned Gold JTE recognition, (No.) Silver, and (No.) Bronze.

—Among our Venturing crews, (No.) earned Gold JTE recognition, (No.) Silver, and (No.) Bronze.

—Among our Varsity teams, (No.) earned Gold JTE recognition, (No.) Silver, and (No.) Bronze.

- Our district also made notable contributions to covering the cost of providing Scouting in our local community. Last year we sold \$ (amount) in popcorn, plus an additional (summarize other fundraising amounts). Our Friends of Scouting campaign raised \$ (amount) to help support Scouting in our community.
- Those efforts support a program that generates results. One way to measure those results is in how many of our youth advance and continue to move through our program.
 - (No.) Cub Scouts advanced in rank last year, representing (percent) percent of our Cub Scout members.
 - We crossed (No.) Webelos Scouts into troops last year, and this year we have an estimated (No.) second-year Webelos Scouts eligible to become Boy Scouts.
 - Among our Boy Scout troops, (percent) percent of members advanced at least one rank last year.
- We also awarded (No.) Eagle Scout Awards in the prior year. Some of the projects completed included (highlight projects). In total, these projects represented more than (No.) hours of service just from our Eagle Scout Awards. (Include other service hours or events if available.)
- Varsity awards included (summarize awards).
- Our Venturing crews awarded (No.) Ranger Awards and (No.) Quartermaster Awards, as well as (summarize other awards).
- Among our adult leadership, we awarded (No.) District Awards of Merit, (No.) Silver Beaver Awards, and (reference other notable awards of this caliber).
- We also hosted a number of key events for our units. This included (summarize events) for our Cub Scout units and (summarize events) for our Boy Scout- to Venturer-aged units. (Include district-sponsored day camp, summer camp, camporees, and other such events.)
- All of these programs are an excellent resource for the (No.) total youth we serve in our district, but there is always room for more. Last year we recruited (No.) new Cub Scouts and (No.) new Boy Scouts. Our recruiting goal this year is (summarize goal).

What makes our district great, and what fuels all of these accomplishments in service of our youth, are your units. We want to take this moment to say thank you, to ask you to continue delivering great programs, to keep bringing more youth into Scouting, and to continue having a great time with this program. Thank you!

BSA Reference Materials

- District membership statistics
- District advancement statistics
- District JTE statistics

BIG ROCK TEMPLATE

Time Available

7-10 minutes

Learning Objectives

Suggested Presenter(s)

Presentation Method

BSA Reference Materials

Presentation Content

CUB SCOUT INTEREST TOPIC PLANS

BSA'S PROGRESSIVE PROGRAM: CHOOSING AGE-APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES (AUGUST)

Suggested discussion questions:

1. What does it mean to provide age-appropriate activities for our Scouting youth?
2. What are some criteria for assessing whether an activity is age-appropriate?

Some ideas to be covered and included in the discussions:

- The group-based activity matches the training and experience of participants.
- The group has the ability to successfully complete the activity.
- The activity complies with the policies and procedures in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 34416C.
- The activity supports or is in harmony with Scouting values.
- The activity adds to the life experiences, knowledge, or ability of each participant.
- The unit or group receives training appropriate to the activity.

3. What are specific program-related criteria to consider?

Some ideas to be covered and included in the discussion:

Cub Scouting:

- The activity is parent/youth- or family-oriented.
- The activity is conducted with adult supervision.
- Cub Scouts are asked to do their best.
- The activity is discovery-based.

Boy Scouting:

- Activities are led by youth and approved and supervised by adults.
- Activities are patrol- or troop-oriented.
- Activities meet standards and advancement requirements.
- Activities are experience-based.

Venturing/Varsity Scouting

- Activities are led by youth and supported by adults.
- Youth participants develop and plan activities and set and meet their own challenges.

4. Why have these guidelines been developed?

Some ideas to be covered and included in the discussion:

- To provide national consistency for BSA youth programs and activities
- To match the degree of difficulty of activities to the age and rank of participants, thereby helping to avoid accidents and injuries
- To help retain youth membership in BSA programs by offering activities with a progression of challenge, duration, and intensity
- To help strike a balance among parent, leader, and youth expectations
- To provide some protection for unit leaders by establishing parameters for programs and activities

Resources:

- www.scouting.org/BoyScouts/Age-AppropriateGuidelines.aspx

Guide to Safe Scouting

- BALOO's BUGLE: October 2008 Cub Scout Roundtable Issue
- <http://usscouts.org/ab/ab2.cgi> (Activity Database; variety of ideas for various program areas)
- BALOO and OWL Training Syllabus;
- www.bsauniforms.org/

ADVANCEMENT: ROLE OF FAMILY AND LEADERS (SEPTEMBER)

Introduction: When parents sign their son's application to join Cub Scouting, they are also agreeing to help with advancement for their son. There is a reason that the No. 1 indicator for success in Journey to Excellence is advancement. A good program that supports advancement for boys also provides the basis for retention and a number of measurable outcomes for the pack.

Instructions for presenter: Start with the opening questions and allow participants to share. Show the various resources and how they can best be used by unit leaders.

Presentation outline:

- **Opening question:** What do we mean by advancement?
—Response should include information on activities and also stress that it is more than signing off on achievements. It is “not what the boy does to the wood, but what the wood does for the boy.”
- **Follow-up question:** How is it measured?
—Response may include use of the books, signing of activities, and presentation of badges/patches. Repeat that advancement is a method used by the BSA to accomplish its mission: “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.”

- **Follow-up question:** How does your annual plan support advancement?

—Responses may include planning activities that will support achievements or elective completion for boys, such as those found in Cub Scout day camp and resident camp activities, as well as pack outings.

Some ideas to be covered and included in this discussion:

- Show the JTE scorecard—the first item is advancement.
- Show the district advancement reporting paperwork and discuss Online Advancement for the unit.
- Show the *Guide to Advancement* as a resource for Cub Scout advancement chairs.
- Highlight the parent responsibilities as found in the *Cub Scout Leader Book*, Chapter 5: Family Involvement.

Resources:

- Journey to Excellence
- *Cub Scout Leader Book*; Unit Leadership Enhancement
- *Cub Scout Leader Book*, page 71
- *Guide to Advancement* found online at www.scouting.org/GuideToAdvancement.aspx

WHY UNIFORMING? (OCTOBER)

Suggested discussion questions:

1. Why is a Scout uniform worn? Why is it important?

- Scouts and adults alike should take pride in belonging to this program and wear the uniform correctly.

Some ideas to be covered and included in the discussion:

- Gives a Scout visibility
 - Creates a level of identity within both the unit and the community
 - Promotes equality while showing individual achievement
2. What are some of the differences in the various Scouting programs' uniforms?

Some ideas to be covered and included in the discussion:

- Vary in color and detail to identify the different membership divisions of Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing
- Field uniform and activity uniform (Scouting-related T-shirt and Scout pants) are often referred to as "Class A" and "Class B" uniforms, though that terminology is not used in any official BSA publications and is not correct. It would be better to call them field and activity uniforms, following BSA terminology. Troops and packs are free to create their own activity shirts.

3. What is the official uniform for youth and adults?

Some ideas to be covered and included in the discussion:

- Official Scout uniform consists of shirt, pants, belt, and socks.
- A neckerchief and hat are optional.
- Units may have different uniform expectations, such as requiring that Scouts are consistently uniformed for meetings and outings. The Scout uniform is not a mandatory part of Scouting, and a Scout should not be prohibited from participating just because he does not have a uniform (or a complete uniform).

4. What are the correct positions for insignia and awards?

Some ideas to be covered and included in the discussion:

- Refer to the insignia guide or uniform inspection sheets.
- Encourage units to supply parents/leaders with these resources to avoid incorrect insignia placement.

5. What are some ideas for those awards, patches, etc., not worn on the uniform?

Some ideas to be covered and included in the discussion:

- Every badge, patch, and pin has some memory of a fun time had with other boys.
 - Take pride in awards and achievements earned, and display them where other boys can see them.
 - Suggestions: framed shadow boxes, blankets, vests
6. Where can BSA literature, uniforms, and other program materials be purchased? How can families save money on the cost of uniforms and equipment?
- A Cub Scout pack may provide assistance to families.
 - A uniform exchange, uniform bank, or fundraisers may enable to boys to earn their uniforms.
 - Some packs award boys rank-specific uniform components (hat and neckerchief) and/or the program books that the Cub Scout needs each year. Parents should inquire as to what the pack provides, or ways boys can earn necessary items, before purchasing the items themselves.

Resources:

- Uniform Inspection Sheet, www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34283.pdf
- *Guide to Awards and Insignia*, www.scouting.org/Media/InsigniaGuide.aspx
- <http://bsauniforms.org/>

USING RESOURCES: BSA LITERATURE (NOVEMBER)

BSA purportedly has more resource information available than any other entity except the U.S. government, but where do you find it all? Remember—it's not enough to do your best; you also have to know what to do.

Some of your best resources may be other Cub Scout leaders in your pack and your district roundtables.

Suggested discussion questions, and information to be covered and included in the discussion:

I'm new to Cub Scouts. What information is available on how to get started and fulfill my role?

New leader brochures designed to provide an at-a-glance orientation for new Cub Scout leaders may be found at www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Leaders/NewLeaderResource.aspx. Your specific four-page booklet will help you carry out your responsibilities as a new den leader, Cubmaster, or committee member, and it can also help you get your den or pack up and running. Be sure to review it before your first meeting.

Fast Start training is designed to help new leaders understand the fundamentals of their specific roles and give insight into the various leadership roles of the people they will be working with. Leaders will learn their responsibilities and how to keep things organized, fun, and exciting, along with information about other resources available to help them in their new position. This training is offered online or on a DVD. The estimated time to complete the training is 45 minutes. Go to www.myscouting.org, click on e-Learning under "Training," then click on the Cub Scout tab. Take the Fast Start course for your Cub Scout position as soon as you take the position!

Basic training is next on your list. These two courses (see below) can be taken online, or they can be taken in person at a council or district training session. To take the courses online, follow the sequence in Fast Start as described above. To find out about taking the courses in person, check with your council service center.

Part one of Basic training, "This Is Scouting," provides an overview of the BSA including history, values, programs, Youth Protection, community involvement, and training. The module consists of six video sections, each followed by a brief quiz. Estimated time to complete: 50 minutes.

Part two, "Cub Scout Leader Position-Specific Training," will give new leaders the knowledge and skills needed to be successful. This segment opens with an introduction to Scouting and the Cub Scout pack, then presents information on how Cub Scouts have fun in the pack and den. Last, this course focuses on specific training for Cubmasters, den leaders, pack committee members, and pack trainers.

Are there any printed materials I can read to help me be a better Cub Scout leader?

The following (except *Scouting* magazine) are available at your local Scout shop or can be ordered online:

- *Den and Pack Meeting Resource Guide* is designed to help you prepare for your den and pack meetings and to provide you with the tools necessary to advance your boys along the Cub Scout advancement trail while having fun. It starts with an overview of Cub Scouting and information on using the *Den and Pack Meeting Resource Guide*, then swings into detailed den meeting plans for all levels of the program as well as detailed pack meeting plans.

- *Cub Scout Leader Book*, No. 33221, is a comprehensive introduction to Cub Scouting, how it works with families, and how Scouting helps boys have fun and develop a sense of achievement while developing them into the best 11-year-olds they can be. It includes policies, procedures, position descriptions, and even chapters on managing boys and planning den and pack meetings and activities. This is a resource you'll use throughout your career as a Cub Scout leader.
 - *Cub Scout Leader How-To Book*, No. 33832, is close to 300 pages of ideas to add fun and pizzazz to your den and pack meetings and activities. It includes ways to celebrate and recognize achievements; crafts and games; outdoor activity ideas; and specifics on how to organize special pack activities. Another career-long helper!
 - *Scouting* magazine will be sent to you six times a year once you are a registered Cub Scout leader. It offers a mixture of information, instruction, and inspiration designed to strengthen readers' abilities to better perform their leadership roles and to assist them as parents in strengthening families. The website www.scoutingmagazine.org provides access to several years' worth of back issues, organized in a format that can be easily searched and scanned.
 - *Group Meeting Sparklers* contains fun additions to den and pack meetings.
 - *Cub Scout Songbook* has tuneful ways to get everyone involved.
 - *Staging Den and Pack Ceremonies* provides interesting openings, closings, and awards presentations.
 - *Academics and Sports Program* gives Cub Scouts extra recognition activities to earn.
 - *Guide to Safe Scouting* should be kept in mind for all den and pack meetings and activities (also available online).
3. Does Boy Scouts of America have other info for Cub Scout leaders on the website?
- Cub Scout Web info: www.scouting.org/CubScouts.aspx
 - Cubcasts for monthly discussions on topics of interest to Cub Scout leaders: www.scouting.org/Scoutcast/Cubcast.aspx
 - Cub Scout Resources:
 - www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Parents/Literature.aspx
 - Four different pack meeting plans for each month are available; each is based on the Cub Scouting's Core Values and extensions to *Supplemental Pack Meeting Themes*: www.scouting.org/CubScouts/Leaders/DenLeaderResources/DenandPackMeetingResourceGuide/PackMeetingPlans.aspx

CUB SCOUT ACADEMICS AND SPORTS PROGRAM (DECEMBER)

Suggested discussion questions:

1. What is the Academic and Sports program for Cub Scouts?
 - A program that gives Cub Scouts extra recognition activities they can earn
 - A program through which they can earn new skills, become better scholars, learn sportsmanship, and have fun
 - A program through which the boys can learn about a sport (choose from 28 different ones) or an academic subject (choose from 25 areas) that may be new to them
 - A method for addressing the third aim of Scouting: the development of physical, mental, and emotional fitness
 - A program for all Cub Scouts. It's not part of the normal requirements toward ranks, except where used to obtain various Webelos activity badges and Wolf Elective 20 (Sports).
2. What is earned as a result of completing the various activities?
 - Belt loops and pins
 - Discuss where and when these are to be worn (see No. 4 below).
 - Show examples of various sports and academic loops and pins.
3. What are the differences between and the requirements for earning the various belts and loops?

Some ideas to be covered and included in the discussion:

- Examples of worksheets available for showing the requirements (their use is optional)
 - The Shooting Sports belt loops and pins (Archery and BB Shooting) can only be earned under BSA range-trained supervision.
 - The BB Shooting loop and pin must be earned at a BSA facility range.
4. Where are the loops and pins worn on the uniform?
 - Some ideas to be covered and included in the discussion:
 - Belt loops for completing the three-belt-loop requirements in an academic subject or sport.

—Belt loops are worn on the Cub Scout belt.

—Pins are awarded to Scouts who continue participating in academic or sports areas and meet the specific requirements for each pin.

—Pins typically require completion of the corresponding belt loop requirements plus five or six more challenging requirements.

—The Academic and Sports letter can be used to display pins on a sweater, jacket, or patch vest. These Academics and Sports pins are NOT attached to the Cub Scout uniforms. The letter is simply a display device and is not earned. It can be acquired through the local Scout shop.

—At the discretion of the pack, pocket certificates, activity medals, trophies, and the participation emblem can be awarded to participating Scouts.

5. Can these awards be earned more than once?

- Yes, but encourage them to try different requirements to earn a pin instead. Packs should have a clear policy about who's responsible for the cost of awards that boys earn more than once.

Resources:

- www.scouting.org/CubScouts/CubScouts/UniformsAndAwards/sanda.aspx
- www.usscouts.org/advance/cubscout/a-sindex.asp
- *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 34416C
- www.boyscoutstrail.com/cub-scouts/acad-sports.asp
- <http://scoutermom.com/cub-scouts/academics-and-sports-program/>
- www.scoutingmagazine.org/issues/1003/d-advance.html (April/May 2010 issue)
- http://meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Cub_Scout_Academics_and_Sports_Program (pdf document available)
- BALOO'S BUGLE—various issues

WORLD FRIENDSHIP FUND (JANUARY)

Introduction:

February is a good time to ask pack families to donate to the World Friendship Fund of the Boy Scouts of America, which assists developing nations in providing Scouting to their youth. Leaders will benefit from an interchange around the topic of the World Friendship Fund. Encourage leaders to contact the local council service center to request informational brochures.

Presentation outline:

Opening question: What is the World Friendship Fund? Has anyone made a collection in their unit? (Allow time for responses and sharing.)

Share basic information about the World Friendship Fund:

History: The World Friendship Fund was developed during the last days of World War II. At that time, there was a great need to rebuild Scouting in the nations that had been wracked by war and were just emerging from the shadows of totalitarianism. Since the inception of the World Friendship Fund, American Scouts and leaders have voluntarily donated more than \$11 million to self-help activities for Scouts.

Continuing question: How do you use the World Friendship Fund in the den and pack program?

Suggestions may include conducting a collection at a pack event or creating a project to use in the collection (displays or a decorated hat or sock). Briefly discuss various fundraising options, such as recycling or adult/boy cake-bake auctions, and ways to keep boys involved.

Service project: Remind leaders that there may be service tie-ins, as unit participation in the World Friendship Fund offers a unique annual service project to benefit Scouts around the world.

Resources:

- Information may be found online at www.scouting.org/International/InformationSheets/22-329.aspx. Brochures, posters and labels are available through the local council service center. A DVD is also available to present.
- *The Cub Scout Leader Book* has additional information about the World Friendship Fund.
- As time is available, an introduction to Messengers of Peace, available online at www.scouting.org/messengersofpeace.aspx, would be a good additional topic.

DUTY TO GOD (FEBRUARY)

Suggested discussions questions and information to be covered and included in the discussion:

1. What does duty to God have to do with Cub Scouting?

- “The Boy Scouts of America maintains that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God and, therefore, recognizes the religious element in the training of the member, but it is absolutely nonsectarian in its attitude toward that religious training. Its policy is that the home and organization or group with which the member is connected shall give definite attention to religious life. Only persons willing to subscribe to these precepts from the Declaration of Religious Principle and to the Bylaws of the Boy Scouts of America shall be entitled to certificates of membership.” (Excerpt from the Declaration of Religious Principles, included in “Information for Parents” inside the front cover of the BSA youth application; also included in the adult application.)
- The Cub Scout Promise states: “I, (name), promise to do my best to do my duty to God and my country, to help other people and to obey the Law of the Pack.”

2. How does the Cub Scout program include duty to God?

- Boys must complete Duty to God requirements to earn their Wolf (Achievement No. 11), Bear (Achievements Nos. 1 and 2), and Webelos (Requirement No. 8) badges.
- Faith is the Cub Scout Core Value for April every year.

3. How else can duty to God be worked into the Cub Scout Program?

- Say grace before meals (nonsectarian).
- Have an opening prayer at pack meetings (nonsectarian).

- Hold a “Scout’s Own” service at family camping events.
 - Plan and conduct an annual Scout-oriented religious observance during Scout week in February.
 - Recognize God’s work in the things that He made, such as animals, plants, and the beauty of the outdoors.
 - Participate in den or pack service projects that help other people.
- ### 4. Are there any Cub Scout awards or recognitions that have to do with duty to God?
- Religious emblems programs have been developed by numerous religious groups to encourage their Scouting members to grow stronger in their faith.
 - These emblems are available for the different levels of the Scouting program, with age-appropriate requirements. The BSA has approved of these programs and allows the emblems to be worn on the official uniform. The various religious groups administer the programs.
 - Check with your local council service center or contact the religious organization directly to obtain the curriculum booklets and to find out who teaches the program in your area.

Resources:

- Grace before meals available at www.boyscoutstrail.com/graces.asp
- Scout’s Own Services (samples available at <http://macscouter.com/scoutsown/>)
- *Duty to God Religious Emblems*: full-color brochure, available online at www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-879_WB.pdf

CUB SCOUT OUTDOOR PROGRAM (MARCH)

Introduction: Often, boys join Scouting because they want to go camping. Packs will want to ensure the opportunity is available for every boy in Cub Scouting. The lure of camping is a good introduction to the outdoor program of Cub Scouting.

Instructions for presenter:

- Start with the opening questions and allow participants to share.
- Show the various resources and how they can best be used by unit leaders.

Presentation outline:

Opening question: What outings does your den or pack provide for your Cub Scouts?

Responses may include den outings such as hikes, outings to locations such as parks or zoos or wildlife refuge. The pack activities should include an overnight pack campout.

Follow-up question: Does your pack annual plan include attendance at other outdoor activities? What are those?

Responses may include attendance at Cub Scout day camp or Cub Scout resident camp. These are district and council outdoor activities. Certain activities, such as shooting BB guns or bows and arrows, may happen at these organized outdoor activities. Other activities provided by councils may include Mom and Me, Dad and Lad, Webelos-Ree or visitation of a camporee.

Follow up question: Does your pack annual plan include outdoor activities for the pack? Responses should include the pack campout activity.

Highlight the organization of the overnight pack campout in *Cub Scout Leader Book*, page 153. Stress that a pack campout is held under the leadership of an adult that has completed Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation (BALOO) training as presented by the district or council.

Highlight the Scouting Camping Program—Ever Increasing Challenge chart and discuss the difference between appropriate activities for Tiger Cubs and those of Webelos.

Highlight the Outdoor Code and show where it is found in each handbook.

The Outdoor Code

As an American, I will do my best to

Be clean in my outdoor manners,

Be careful with fire,

Be considerate in the outdoors, and

Be conservation-minded.

Additional topics that can be stressed as time allows:

National Outdoor Program Award

National Summertime Pack Award

Cub Scouting Leave No Trace Awareness Award

Resources:

- *Cub Scout Leader Book*—Outdoor Activities, page 143
- *Cub Scout Leader Book*—Cub Scout Camping, page 150
- *Guide to Safe Scouting*: www.scouting.org/HealthandSafety/GSS/toc.aspx

LEADER RECOGNITION (APRIL)

Suggested discussion questions and information to be covered and included in the discussion:

1. Why is leader recognition important?
 - Everyone likes to feel appreciated.
 - Recognition, especially in front of the pack, makes people realize their contributions were noticed.
 - The leader's Cub Scout will be proud.
 - Recognition spurs everyone on to continue in their roles!
2. Who should get recognized and when?
 - Recognize all your den and pack leaders.
 - Thank all those who helped run a special event, e.g., the person who ran the pinewood derby, the chairman and cooks for the blue and gold dinner.
 - Recognize them on the spot when they earn it, or at the end of the Cub Scout year, whichever works best.
3. What does a Cub Scout leader need to do to earn an official BSA recognition award?
 - Recognition awards are available to Cub Scout leaders who complete training, tenure, and performance requirements.
 - All of the awards require the completion of Fast Start training, Basic Leader training for the position, Youth Protection training, and participation in roundtables or a pow wow or University of Scouting. Some require additional supplemental training.
 - The requirement for each award is service of one or two years in the appropriate position, and tenure used for one award may not be used for another.
 - Awards are available for Tiger Cub den leader, Cub Scout den leader, Webelos den leader, Cubmaster, pack trainer, Cub Scouter.

- Once the award is earned, the awardee or someone else in the pack can take the application to council for processing.
 - These awards are presented by the local council, and each award comes with a certificate and a square knot that can be worn over the left pocket on the leader's shirt.
4. Are there ways to recognize volunteers who don't earn an official award?
 - There is any number of very nice (but sometimes costly) awards that can be purchased from your local Scout shop or the online BSA catalogue.
 - Flowers and plants are always great, especially for females.
 - Official BSA certificates can be framed and presented as a memorable recognition.
 - Certificates can be custom-made on your own computer!
 - Crazy/gag awards are fun and inexpensive. For example:
 - A wooden plaque with a mounted light bulb and sign: "Thanks for your bright idea!"
 - Little bag of Hershey's kisses with a tag: "We love the help you gave us!"
 - Bag of Reese's Pieces with tag: "We all love you to pieces!"
 - Small ruler with tag: "You rule!"

Resources:

- Official Cub Scout leader recognition requirements for each leader position can be found at: www.bpcouncil.org/Advancement/Cub%20Scouts/Cub%20Scout%20Leader%20Recognition%20Awards
- Volunteer "thank you" ideas can be found at <http://pinterest.com/merroman/volunteer-thank-you-ideas/>

SAFE SCOUTING: THE RULES THAT KEEP YOUR SCOUTS SAFE (MAY)

Discussion leader should show the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 34416C, to the Cub Scout leaders.

- Ask who in the class is familiar with the guide and its contents.
 - Select several Cub Scout activities and discuss with the class how the guide addresses the safety issues of these activities.
 - Discuss why Scouting places such emphasis on safety.
 - We, as leaders, should model safe behaviors.
 - Review the reporting procedures in the event of an accident.
 - Discuss the BSA Annual Medical Form. The use of this form can help to assure that the boys are healthy enough to participate in Scouting activities.
 - Review the age-appropriate guidelines.
 - Review two-deep leadership requirements.
 - Youth protection begins with “You”!
 - Adult leaders must repeat the course every two years.
- Guide to Safe Scouting, No. 34416C
 - Safety Thoughts—scouting.org
 - Youth Protection training—www.scouting.org/Training/YouthProtection.aspx

Resources:

LOCAL DISTRICT AND COUNCIL ACTIVITIES: ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY YOUR DISTRICT OR COUNCIL (JUNE)

- In planning and carrying out these activities, the district and council leaders draw from a larger talent pool and can offer the boys experiences that perhaps they could not otherwise enjoy.
 - Invite your district or council activities chair or other appropriate person to visit your roundtable and discuss what activities are coming up that your Cub Scouts won't want to miss!
 - This should be done with enthusiasm to get the leaders excited about bringing their boys to participate.
 - Encourage all units to participate in these district and council activities in addition to their own activities.
- District and council activities give the youth an opportunity to make new friends and share the excitement of Scouting!
 - Discuss additional ideas inspired by the district or council representative's visit.

Resources:

- Access and show the district and council online calendars
- Disseminate calendar information via email

BOYS' LIFE: IN THE HOME OF EVERY BOY (JULY)

- Access and utilize www.boyslife.org.
- Show and demonstrate the use of the website.
- Discuss how we might use the content of *Boys' Life* magazine in a den or pack meeting.
- *Boys' Life* contains inspiring stories as well as fun and exciting activities including songs and skits.
- *Boys' Life* articles cover upcoming program themes.
- Mention the reading contests with the prizes that can be won. See boyslife.org/home/1053/enter-the-boys-life-reading-contest/
- Share true stories of how Scouts and others have benefited from having *Boys' Life* in their homes and units.
- How can we promote *Boys' Life* and get it in the homes of the boys?
- Explain the benefits of *Boys' Life* when first meeting with the parents of a new Cub Scout.
- New subscriptions as well as renewal subscriptions can be handled during the charter renewal process.
- Show the Journey to Excellence 100 percent *Boys' Life* Unit Gold Award and encourage its attainment.