

Sustaining Scouting Units

Is The Unit Thriving or Just Surviving?

A strong unit does not happen by accident; it grows through intentional leadership and consistent support. When meetings feel chaotic, participation declines, or outdoor adventure is missing, the unit might need additional guidance.

 **Helpful Resources:** Visit [Marketing Tools](#), [Marketing and Membership Hub](#), [Recruitment](#), [Scouting America](#), and **Thriving Units' Resources** for promotional resources, recruitment and retention ideas, and customizable tools.

Meaningful Unit Meetings

Meaningful meetings are the heartbeat of a successful unit. When Scouts and families look forward to gatherings, they will stay engaged. Strong programming helps the unit grow and thrive.

The commissioner and district support team should mentor the adult leadership team to:

-  **Be Productive:** Align with clear goals, such as advancement, skills, and planning.
-  **Engage:** Energize youth with fun and variety in activities.
-  **Be Youth-Led:** Troops, crews, and ships empower Scouts to lead.
-  **Plan Fun Activities:** Games, challenges, or creative projects.
-  **Foster Advancement:** Activities that connect to rank requirements and skill-building.
-  **Encourage Family Involvement:** Small roles help adults feel included in the unit's journey.

Every unit meeting is a chance to build skills, friendships, and character.

Outdoor Adventures

The great outdoors is why many youths join Scouting. To sustain the unit, the commissioner and district support team should mentor the adult leadership team to:

- Include the Outing in Scouting early!
- Hold an outdoor activity each month or in most months.
- Join a district-sponsored or council-sponsored event.
- Team up with nearby units for joint outings.



Other Important Areas to Consider

The commissioner and district support team should mentor the adult leadership team to:

-  **Program Activities:** Use Scout skills, themed events, and goals.
-  **Advancement:** Support steady progress toward rank and skill development.
-  **Communication:** Use email, text, or apps such as Scoutbook to share information.
-  **Budgeting:** Track expenses and plan ahead for upcoming needs.
-  **Fundraising:** Start small fundraisers or popcorn sales.
-  **BeAScout Pin:** Keep the unit's online listing active and accurate for new families.
-  **Social Media:** Build awareness and showcase unit adventures for prospective families and the community. See [Social Media Guidelines](#).

Unit Renewal

On-time, accurate annual renewals are essential for a healthy, functioning unit. The commissioner and district support team should mentor the adult leadership team to complete unit and member renewals.

Checklist for Success

-  **Online Unit Renewal:** Units access online renewal through Organization Manager in my.scouting.org. Click [here](#) for step-by-step instructions.
-  **Member Renewal:** Member renewal is the responsibility of the unit, even when members renew themselves and their Scouts. Advance communication and training are invaluable. Click [here](#) for step-by-step instructions.
-  **BeAScout Pin:** Units should confirm at least annually that their pins are accurate and complete.

Every Scout registration is a commitment. Every renewal is a promise kept.

Sustaining the Unit for the Long-Term

 **The Formula: Consistent Communication + Mentorship + Recognition
= Growth + Success**

To support long-term unit success, the commissioner and district support team should mentor the adult leadership team to continue to:

- Guide new adult volunteers as they learn their roles.
- Recognize youth and adult achievements with timely recognition to build confidence and excitement.
- Carry out a recruitment and retention plan to sustain and grow the unit.
- Follow up with Scouts and families who attend a meeting or two and then stop coming, as well as those who sign up but never show up.
- Maintain a clear succession plan for long-term sustainability.

The goal is for a new unit to become independent and high-performing, delivering an excellent Scouting program.