

## Introduction

The Environmental Scan is provided by the Boy Scouts of America to assist councils in:

- ♣ Developing local council strategic plans
- ♣ Creating marketing tools
- ♣ Recruiting volunteers
- ♣ Improving fundraising effectiveness

This Environmental Scan provides the most up-to-date data available at the time of publication from government agencies and other sources. Please note that data for various topics often do not cover identical time periods. Sources of information are provided throughout the publication and in the final section. The bullet points beneath the charts provide insights and additional information to enhance understanding of the issues. Bullet points identified with the BSA symbol ♣ indicate information that is specific to the Boy Scouts of America.

The Environmental Scan is divided into 11 main sections ranging from changes in household structure to trends among chartered organizations. For online viewing and navigation, use the interactive table of contents and the Back to Table of Contents button at the top of each page.

## Trends Affecting the Boy Scouts of America

The Boy Scouts of America is facing new opportunities and new challenges in its second century.

### 1. Youth Population Trends

- The number of children under age 18 in the U.S. is expected to grow from 72.4 million in 2000 to 101.6 million in 2050—an increase of 40 percent. Children of Hispanic origin are expected to represent the largest percentage of the child population (38.8%), followed by children of white/Caucasian origin (38.0%).

- Nationally, the total Cub Scout-age population is expected to grow 2.6 percent over the next five years. However, this growth is not equally distributed across the regions. The Cub Scout-age population is expected to increase in the Southern (3.9%) and Western (4.2%) Regions. In contrast, the Cub Scout-age population is projected to remain the same in the Central Region, and decrease slightly (1.0%) in the Northeast Region.

### Implications and Recommendations for the BSA

- ♣ Messages should be targeted separately to youth by showing the fun and exciting adventures and to their parents by explaining the benefits of Scouting.
- ♣ Councils should appeal to the growing teen population by presenting the opportunities for activities and adventure in the Venturing program.

### 2. Increasing Diversity in the Population

- The population of the United States exceeds 300 million and the ethnic population exceeds 100 million.
- The Asian population is the fastest growing population, and, at nearly 15 million, accounts for 5 percent of the U.S. population.
- The Hispanic/Latino population is the largest ethnic population in the U.S., with a population of more than 50 million.
- The black/African American population in the U.S. is nearly 40 million.
- More than 12 percent of the U.S. population was not born in the United States.



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### Implications and Recommendations for the BSA

- ♣ Efforts should be made to introduce Scouting to emerging markets that are not familiar with the benefits of Scouting. Awareness of Scouting and its mission and values tends to be lower among recent immigrants and minority populations. To reach them, councils should make a concerted effort to raise awareness of Scouting by being visible in the community, partnering with community organizations, securing community leaders as spokespeople, and communicating the long-term benefits and values of Scouting.
- ♣ Councils should continue to be aware of the ethnic and cultural diversity in their communities and understand the needs of youths and their families in those segments. *Strategic Plan Research* (210-1058) and *Successful Recruiting* (210-1066) provide councils with information about these populations and their needs.
- ♣ Councils should incorporate the cultures in their communities into their Scouting events.
- ♣ The volunteers and employees of the councils should reflect the diversity in the council area.

### 3. The Millennial Generation

- The Millennial generation is the most diverse population in American history. Millennials are the first generation to grow up with the ability to communicate quickly with people of other nations and cultures via technology such as the Internet.
- Millennials embrace diversity, yet they possess high levels of pride in their own culture. For example, the majority of African American and Hispanic Millennials say they would like to participate in more activities that celebrate their culture and heritage.
- Four out of 10 Millennials grew up in single-parent households.

### Implications and Recommendations for the BSA

- ♣ As a result of declines in BSA membership over the past decades, many parents of Cub Scout-age youth were not involved in Scouting and are not familiar with the benefits of Scouting. Councils need to clearly communicate how Scouting will help their children.

### 4. Changing Families

- In nearly one-half of all married-couple families, both husband and wife work.
- Since 2005, the percent of children who live with a stay-at-home parent remained about the same—around 23 percent of married mothers and 0.8 percent of married fathers stay at home with children under 15 years old.
- About 33 percent of all households with children are headed by single parents.
- Nearly four percent of households today are multigenerational.

### Implications and Recommendations for the BSA

- ♣ National outcomes studies such as *Eagle Scouts: Merit Beyond the Badge*; *The Values of Americans*; *A Year in the Life of a Cub Scout ... Boy Scout ... Venturer*; *Summer Camp Outcomes Study*; and *Volunteer Outcomes Study* should be used when families are being introduced to the benefits of Scouting. Most study materials are available in both English and Spanish to meet the council's marketing needs.
- ♣ Councils should communicate the importance and value of positive adult role models in Scouting and the ways Scouting benefits the entire family.
- ♣ Councils need to be sensitive to parents' time constraints when scheduling and developing programs and offering training.
- ♣ Units and councils can provide volunteer opportunities to grandparents and other family members.
- ♣ Units should welcome single-parent families and recognize the time constraints and challenges these parents face.



- ♣ Units should present a variety of volunteer opportunities and time commitments, so that all parents can select a volunteer role that meets their scheduling needs.
- ♣ Units should offer joining opportunities throughout the year to meet different schedule needs.

## 5. Population Centers Are Shifting

- Along with ethnic population growth, U.S. populations are shifting from the northeast and central states to the southern and western states. This trend will have a great impact on future social, political, economic, educational, and employment trends in the United States.
- After the 2010 Census, eight states in the South and West gained seats in the House of Representatives, while eight of the 10 states that lost seats were in the North and Midwest.
- More than one-half of Americans—about 158 million—are suburbanites. Rural residents now make up 16 percent of the total population.
- In 2010, nearly one-half of the 40 million foreign-born population lived in four states: California, Texas, New York, and Florida.

### Implications and Recommendations for the BSA

- ♣ Opportunities and challenges exist for increasing membership and expanding the market share of youth served. Developing new units in the Southern and Western Regions, while increasing market share in the Northeast and Central Regions, is essential in order to address the youth population growth trends.

## 6. Changing Education Trends

- The number of students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools is expected to increase seven percent from 2011 to 2021.

- In the 2010–2011 school year, 49.2 million students were enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools, with 47.7 million students in traditional public schools and 1.8 million in charter public schools.
- The number of charter schools has more than tripled from 1,524 in 1999 to 5,274 in 2010.
- One-third of charter schools are identified as high-poverty schools, where more than 75 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.
- In the United States, graduation rates continue to improve and dropout rates continue to decline. These trends apply to males, females, African Americans, Asians, Hispanics/Latinos, and Caucasians.
- More than 40 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds were enrolled in a degree-granting institution in 2012.
- For a public four-year college, the average total of tuition, fees, and room and board charges in the 2013–2014 school year is \$18,391.
- In 2010–2011, 85 percent of first-time, full-time undergraduate students at a four-year public institution received financial aid.

### Implications and Recommendations for the BSA

- ♣ Councils should continue to build and enhance relationships with school administrators and boards while seeking new venues for recruiting youth and being visible in the communities. The *Values of Americans* study (210-849) provides information about how Scouting helps youth improve and build interest in academic areas.
- ♣ Councils should continue developing and enhancing recruiting efforts for youth in private and charter schools as well as homeschooled youth.
- ♣ Councils should meet the needs of youth by providing programs rich with education and career development tools and promoting the benefits of Learning for Life and Exploring.



- ♣ When addressing parents, councils should highlight the educational opportunities available through earning merit badges, the scholarships available through Scouting, and the value of the Eagle rank on college applications.
- ♣ The new research study, *Eagle Scouts: Merit Beyond the Badge*, can be used to underscore the long-term benefits of the Eagle Scout Award.

## 7. Growth of Technology and the Information Age

- Seventy percent of Americans have home broadband Internet access.
- More than one-half of American adults own smart phones.
- Overall, nine of 10 teens have cell phones; 37 percent of all teens have smart phones.
- The next generation of Cub Scout parents (Millennials ages 18 to 29) spend nearly one and a half hours a day on social networking activities.

## Implications and Recommendations for the BSA

- ♣ When addressing parents and youth, highlight the activities and fun merit badges that use state-of-the-art technology as one benefit of Scouting.
- ♣ Councils should use social networks (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.) to communicate with parents and volunteers and to announce activities and highlight the benefits of Scouting.

## 8. Youth Activities and Interests

- More than one-half of students in grades 1 through 12 do not participate in any after-school club or activity.
- About 10 percent of youth ages 6 to 12 and nine percent of youth ages 13 to 17 participated in an organized athletic activity in 2012.

- In a typical day, more than one-half of boys in elementary school spend one hour or more on homework and more than one-third of boys in middle and high school spend two hours or more doing homework.

## Implications and Recommendations for the BSA

- ♣ Councils can appeal to youth by highlighting the opportunities for fun and adventure that Scouting provides that cannot be matched by other organizations.
- ♣ Marketing efforts should emphasize the new activities and new friendships that Scouting provides.
- ♣ Councils should communicate the benefits of participating in after-school activities to parents of elementary- and middle-school-age youth.
- ♣ Councils can appeal to parents by highlighting the academic, career, and lifelong benefits Scouting provides.

## 9. Healthy Living

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day for children and adolescents.
- Nationwide, nearly one-half of high school students participate in the recommended amount of physical activity five days in an average week; however, one in seven do not participate in the recommended amount even one day in the average week.
- The percentage of boys 6 to 11 years old who are overweight has more than doubled since 1980.
- The percentage of boys 12 to 19 years old who are overweight increased more than four percentage points from 2000 to 2008. The percent of girls 12 to 19 years old increased two percentage points in the same time period.
- Nearly one-half of teens report they experience stress at a level of 6 or higher on a scale of 1 to 10.



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### Implications and Recommendations for the BSA

- ♣ Councils should emphasize the benefits of the physical activities available to Scouts, especially through unit camping on weekends, summer resident camps and day camps, the activity and merit badges, and the advancement programs.
- ♣ Councils can utilize camps for weekend challenge events like *Survivor* and *Amazing Race*, etc.
- ♣ Councils should encourage youth, volunteers, and employees to take the SCOUTStrong™ PALA challenge.
- ♣ Councils can build upon the SCOUTStrong™ initiative through district and council events like fun runs, field days, aquatic events, and nature hikes.

### 10. Attitudes Toward Giving to and Volunteering for Charitable Organizations

- Over the last five years, Americans have become more selective in their giving to charitable organizations. They give their time and money to nonprofits that match their beliefs.
- Half of Americans now believe that giving one's time to charitable organizations is more important than giving money. This is especially true among young adults (ages 18 to 34).
- Americans say the reasons they do not volunteer are that they have not been asked, or that they do not know how to get involved.

### Implications and Recommendations for the BSA

- ♣ Councils need to emphasize how Scouting's mission and Scouting programs benefit families and communities.
- ♣ Councils should highlight their service projects to potential donors, volunteers, and other funding sources to show how Scouting benefits the community.
- ♣ Councils and units can ask adults in chartered organizations to volunteer and invest financially in the program.

- ♣ Councils should be more proactive in providing information about volunteer opportunities and asking people to volunteer.
- ♣ Councils should provide more opportunities for Scouts to volunteer in their community. This would build character in the Scouts and increase awareness of Scouting's impact on the community.

### 11. Chartered Organization Trends

- Many of the larger faith-based institutions are experiencing flat to slightly decreasing membership trends.
- The faith-based organizations that have had growth in membership in the past few years are the Catholic Church and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- Membership in civic organizations has been declining during the past decade.

### Implications and Recommendations for the BSA

- ♣ Councils should continue to recruit new traditional faith-based and civic chartered organizations and to grow membership in the existing units.
- ♣ Because of limited access to public schools and declining membership in civic organizations, councils need to foster relationships with nontraditional organizations that have goals and values similar to those of the BSA.

