

## **NOVEMBER – CROSSOVER FOR ADULTS**

### **Music Full then Under**

LEE: It's time for the November ScoutCast. I'm Lee Shaw, the Scout Executive of the W.D. Boyce Council, and I'm here with *Bryan on Scouting* blogger, Bryan Wendell.

BRYAN: Hey, Lee! This month's episode stems from a tweet we received if we could have an episode not on youth who cross over from Cub Scouts to Scouts BSA but on adults who cross over from Cub Scouts to Scouts BSA.

LEE: And we agreed that would make for an interesting discussion.

### **Music Fades**

LEE: So, we invited Steve Bowen back to the show. You may remember Steve from the November 2014 show about the development of merit badges. As well as being on the Merit Badge Task Force and other national committees, Steve has served as both a Cubmaster and Scoutmaster, so we look to him for guidance on this topic. Welcome to ScoutCast, Steve.

STEVE: Thank you very much; glad to be here.

LEE: So, Steve, what are some potential issues with leaders who are crossing over from Cub leaders to the older Scout program?

STEVE: There are a few because the programs are similar but different. Before we start, I'd like to have everybody jot down this website: <https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/planning/>. We'll repeat this one a little bit later in our discussion, but it is a really neat site that will have all kinds of answers that maybe go even beyond this podcast on program features, training courses, frequently asked questions; it's the bible for new Cub Scout folks that are adults who are moving over into the older Scout BSA program. So, back to what are some of the issues? Let's talk about the positives. The Scout program provides very similar activities as Cub Scouts, but with more pizzazz. The program still provides fun and opportunity to learn and try new things. The program provides service to others and teaches that concept. Those are the similarities. But dissimilar is that in Scouts BSA - it's a youth-led program. The leaders are there to advise only, to ensure safety, but the youth run the program. It's not like in Cub Scouts the den leader or the Webelos leader provides all the answers and all the information to the parents. It's actually up to the youth to take the messages home and to get the information to the parents. If a Scout has questions first turns to their Youth Patrol Leader, and if it can't answer the question they'll go to their Senior Patrol Leader, and the Senior Patrol Leader is the one who will go to the Scoutmaster, so it's a completely different process. The Unit Leader relies on other leaders to solve problems such as the Troop Committee Chair, the Troop Committee, the charter partner representative, their Unit Commissioner, and so the steps for problem-solving for adults handled through adults, through youth is handled through youth. The differences are that the youth run this program.

BRYAN: So, who should a leader turn to for help with addressing those issues and questions they might have and just kind of getting them comfortable with this new environment after having been used to Cub Scouting?

STEVE: It would first start with the unit leaders, the adults themselves, and if that needs to go further or there are other questions that are outside of the knowledge of the unit leader; the unit commissioner. Each unit has a person who is there to give the unit support, to find out answers to questions that maybe the unit leaders don't know, to maybe make suggestions and help the unit run smoother. Adults also have resources available to them such as on the website that we just mentioned that will answer a number of questions. There's the Leader's Handbook; a special book just for leaders. Or even the Scouts BSA Handbook itself is full of answers that adults may find quite educational.

LEE: Tell me, what are some potential issues with parents who are crossing over from Cub leaders to Scout leaders?

STEVE: The biggest single factor that is occurring and parents need to accept it and realize it is that their youth, their boys and the girls, are growing up, and so part of this process of growing up means that the youth are going to be expected to take on different roles in their lives and in this program, and so parents are gonna have to allow this to occur, maybe step back just a bit. We use the term "helicopter parents" because the parents are concerned about their children and they want the best for them, but the Scouting program helps to build responsibility. So probably the biggest concern or hurdle the parents will have to cross will be sort of letting the kids make some mistakes, learn from their mistakes, and allow the youth to grow up through this normal process that comes from going from Cub Scouts to Scouts BSA. This does not mean that their children are going to be put at risk and ignored or whatever, because that's what their leaders are there for. But because of the hierarchy and the organization of the Scouts BSA troops with a Patrol Leader and a Senior Patrol Leader and

then the adult, there's plenty of safety nets built in there so that things don't happen that aren't supposed to happen.

**BRYAN:** So, Steve, how do you address parents who aren't ready to step back in this more youth-led environment, how do you kind of call the helicopters off if you've got a parent in your Scouts BSA troop that just isn't quite ready to cut that cord?

**STEVE:** I wouldn't make them feel guilty about it. This is a natural process. We've all been parents and we've all crossed this threshold of realizing that our sons and daughters are kind of taking a step further in their development to be good citizens and adults down the road. So, encourage them to become involved in the troop committee. Give them a little job at first where they sort of are on the periphery and they're helping, but while they're helping do something – maybe it's organize transportation or help the person in charge of advance – they're sort of seeing out of the corner of their eye that their son or daughter is OK. Encourage them to be a part the troop committee, and they will be right in with the activities, but they will also be outside of the troop itself and not getting in the way of the development of the child. Training is another good thing. There are so many good training programs available through Scouting some are online, some are person-to-person, and they all provide the opportunity for the adult to build confidence in the program themselves.

**LEE:** Well, Steve, as you know, the Scouts' Motto is to Be Prepared, and so when would you start preparing the parents or the leaders for crossing over into the Scouts?

STEVE: That probably should begin in the Cub pack. For example, Webelo Scouts have some requirements to attend troop meetings and go on maybe a campout to watch how Scouts are performing. You get the parents of the Cub Scout age youth kind of involved and indoctrinated and trained into those early activities, and they begin to see that those Scouts BSA are nothing to be afraid of. They're having fun, they're learning, and they're just being good Scouts. Then I would take them to meetings. I would encourage the parents to go with the Webelo Scouts or other Scouts to a troop meeting and see how that meeting performs and what they do. Have the Scoutmaster and the Assistant Scoutmasters attend the pack meeting, that the parents are going to be with for their youth, so they can become familiar with them and feel comfortable with them. There are lots of different opportunities for people to get together six months to nine months ahead of the crossing over is a very good time to kind of start that. In addition, if you do that regularly in your pack, then the parents whose children are Wolf or Bears, they get a little early indoctrination and an introduction, and so it now becomes a more comfortable progression for them.

BRYAN: Steve, you mentioned training which, of course, is available at [My.Scouting.org](http://My.Scouting.org), but are there any other resources available to assist adults and parents as they cross over?

STEVE: If they register themselves they will get the *Scouting* Magazine, and the *Scouting* Magazine has good articles on both Cub Scout/Boy Scout activities and philosophies and whatnot. Certainly, the Adult Leader Handbooks, podcasts such as this, going to roundtables with your unit leader. Any of the things that an adult might go to or participate in that are for leaders if they can tag along, that's great. You don't want to overwhelm

them but there is a well-organized method of our program and they can pick up little bits all along the way.

LEE: Steve, you've given us a lot of great suggestions for both parents and leaders who are Crossover Adults into the Scouting program. Is there anything else about the Crossover Adult that we haven't discussed that you think should be shared with our listeners?

STEVE: I promised earlier I'd repeat the website for those who have just grabbed their pencil and paper, and this is really worth them visiting: [scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/planning](https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/planning). That particular site will have just all kinds of great information. A matter of fact, it lists all the 48 different programs that Scout troops their sons and daughters will be involved in. Give them a real comfortable idea of what's ahead and all the fun and challenging things that they can expect for their children.

LEE: Hey, this has been a really interesting discussion and I'm sure our listeners have some valuable information for their crossovers, so thank you so much for joining us on ScoutCast, Steve.

STEVE: My pleasure.

BRYAN: We'll be back with Reminders and Tips right after this brief Safety Moment.

**(Safety Moment – Holiday Trees Safety)**

BRYAN: OK, let's jump into those Reminders and Tips for November. First, let's talk membership inventory. By now, all your new youth and adult applications from your recruiting campaign should be submitted to the Council Service Center. And, don't forget, you can do that online now.

LEE: It's a good idea to compare the My.Scouting Tools records to your own to make sure there are no discrepancies and that all those new members of your Scouting family are properly registered.

BRYAN: Now onto the magazines. In the November/December of issue of *Scouting Magazine*, you can read about how the Greater St. Louis Area Council holds not only the nation's largest Scouting For Food Drive but also the first. It's a really interesting story.

LEE: Don't know what to get your Scouts this holiday season? Check out November's issue of *Boys' Life Magazine*, featuring a roundup of the latest and greatest toys and gear, from, from drones to yo-yos. And be sure to enter the annual *Boys' Life* toy giveaway at [Boyslife.org](http://Boyslife.org).

## **BEGIN MUSIC UNDER**

LEE: So that's it for the November ScoutCast Thanks to our guest, Steve Bowen, for joining us and hey, thank you for listening.

BRYAN: And while we're thanking people, thanks to listener who sent the idea for this episode to us from Twitter, and we want to hear from you if you've got ideas for episodes. We really do read your tweets and your emails, so don't be shy. Email us at [Scoutcast@scouting.org](mailto:Scoutcast@scouting.org) or you can tweet us

@BSAScoutcast. Your idea might become a future episode and we really do read those emails, Scouts' Honor! I'm Bryan Wendell.

LEE: I'm Lee Shaw. We look forward to hearing from you.

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