**Overview of Scouting**

Founded in 1910, the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) provides the nation’s foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training, with the mission to “prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law” with the hope that each will be prepared to be a “responsible, participating citizen and leader who is guided by the Scout Oath and Law.” The Scout Oath emphasizes one’s duty first to God and one’s county, next to others, and finally to oneself. The Scout Law emphasizes the characteristics of trustworthiness, loyalty, helpfulness, friendliness, courtesy, kindness, obedientness, cheerfulness, thriftiness, bravery, cleanliness, and reverence.

The BSA’s programs seeks to fulfill six basic needs of young people in our society.

* **Mentoring** – scouting fosters positive relationships with adults, including not only parents but also community and religious leaders, who serve as role models.
* **Lifelong Learning** – scouting provides a structured setting where young people can learn new skills and develop positive habits.
* **Faith Traditions** – scouting emphasizes the duty to God and encourages young people in their spiritual journey through their family’s faith to serve as a moral compass in their lives.
* **Serving Others** – scouting encourages young people to recognize the needs of others and take action accordingly. This builds stronger citizens and stronger communities.
* **Healthy Living** – scouting teaches physical and mental fitness through its programs of physical activity, drug abuse awareness and prevention, lifesaving and first aid, and environmental conservation.
* **Building Character** – the scouting program is infused with charter-building activities that allow youth to apply abstract principals of values and responsibility to daily living situations.

A significant emphasis of scouting is participation in community service projects. The Good Turn concept is a major part of the personal growth method of scouting. Young people grow as they participate in community service projects and do Good Turns for others. Every rank in each type of BSA unit incorporates the requirement to perform service for their charter organization, other community organizations, and other community interests.

Since its inception, more than 130 million young men and women have participated in the BSA’s youth programs, and more than 35 million adult volunteers have helped carry out the BSA’s mission.

The BSA has adopted policies designed to protect youth from abuse, and it requires that all BSA units follow these policies. Those policies include various levels of screening of adult leaders, training of adult leaders in youth protection, education of youth and parents on the signs of abuse, an obligation of adult leaders to report signs of abuse to law enforcement and scouting authorities, prohibitions on one-on-one registered adult and youth contact, and requirements on use of the buddy system and around sleeping accommodations.

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Scouts BSA seeks growth in a scout’s personal qualities, values, and outlook; teaches the scout of his obligation to other people, his society, and his government; and develops the scout’s physical, mental, and emotional fitness. This is accomplished through a program that emphasizes vigorous outdoor activities, including camping, hiking, and swimming; peer group leadership (with the counsel of responsible adults, including a Scoutmaster) that promotes planning and develops leadership skills; and a system of progressive advancement that emphasizes learning by doing and culminates in scouting’s highest rank—Eagle.

Planned exclusively by its scouts, Troops typically schedule 12 monthly campouts or activities and 1-2, week-long summer camps each year. The older scouts have an opportunity to complete a 12-day trek at Philmont, the BSA national hiking base in New Mexico or a cruise at Sea Base, the BSA national ocean base in Florida.

Troops provide several opportunities for scouts to pay for their many activities, including its long-running aluminum can collection, recycling, and redemption program, popcorn and camp card sales, and other fundraising avenues decided upon by the units. Several scouts who actively participate in troop fundraising have paid for week-long summer camp and monthly activities. A portion of all money raised through the Troop is reserved to purchase and maintain its tents, cooking gear, trailer, and other equipment.

**Cub Scouting Overview**

The Cub Scout program is designed to introduce kids to new skills that will help them later in life in a atmosphere of fun. Like Scouts BSA, the Cub Scout program aims to build character, citizenship, personal fitness, and leadership, but the program is tailored to match the needs of young children at each age. While developing new skills and interests and practicing sportsmanship and good citizenship, Cub Scouts are taught that not everything is easy, but they can have fun while trying to “do your best.” The Cub Scout program emphasizes connection with and involvement of the scout’s family in all den and Pack activities. The focus is on the scout’s home and neighborhood with the goal of strengthening connections with local communities.

Packs conducts a year-long program for its scouts and families. Each year the pack holds 2 outdoor family campouts in the fall and spring with the local troop and one winter family “camp-in” at an area educational attraction (for example, Sedgwick County Zoo, Strataca, Cosmosphere, and Tanganyika). Packs can also participated in various council and district activities, including the Day of Awesomeness (between 5 and 15 families in 2022) and Webelos Wood (for older scouts to learn new skill and work to transfer to the troop in February). Summer activities include a model rocket launch in June and 3-day overnight and day camps in July that provide various programs including nature and science.

Packs can hold a traditional Pinewood Derby in February where scouts work with their parents to make model cars out of pine wood and race them on the track. The winners will go to the council race and compete with all the other packs in the district. The Pack is always doing something to teach its member at their grade level and have fun.