



Troop 512

Parent's Guide

VERSION 1.0

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Be prepared – for life

1. WELCOME TO TROOP 512

Congratulations are certainly in order! You've made the decision to make Scouting part of your son's life, thereby giving him the chance to explore, discover and become who he is meant to be. You understand that boys today aren't fundamentally different than the boys of 100 years ago when Scouting was first founded. Your son and others like him are eager for the kind of unique, real-world experiences that Scouting offers.

You'll want to **Be Prepared – for all that Scouting has to offer**. Troop 512's *Parent's Guide* is intended to help parents new to Boy Scouting to understand how the program works. In this way, you may be better able to support your son in the troop so that he may gain the most from his Scouting experience.

This guide will facilitate your understanding of the Troop's operations and procedures. Troop 512 offers young men unique opportunities for achievement, leadership and service, instilling the timeless values of Scouting. We do this through:

- **Committing to a Scout-led Troop** – Scouts plan and lead meetings. We further develop their leadership skills by providing scholarships to annual National Youth Leadership Training.
- **Providing Experienced Guidance** – Our adult leaders mentor and ensure the safety of Scouts. Highly qualified, they are certified lifeguards, NRA range officers and one is a registered EMT. They have nearly 200 years of combined Scouting experience. On trips, we typically have an adult/Scout ratio of 1 to 2.5.
- **Supporting Advancement** – We set the stage for achievement by offering special advancement opportunities and by participating in Merit Badge College. Our adults are counselors for numerous merit badges. More Scouts achieve Eagle from Troop 512 than any other troop in the area.
- **Accommodating Individual Needs** – Adult and youth leaders oversee specific ranks as well as patrols in order to provide individual attention to every Scout.
- **An Adventure-Based Program** – We have a robust program. Last year we offered over 50 events, including 12 camping trips. Trip activities include

archery, bicycling, canoeing, fishing, hiking, kayaking, rifle shooting, skills competitions, whitewater rafting and ziplining.

- **Top-Notch Gear and Equipment** – With a healthy capital replacement fund, we have first-rate gear to facilitate our adventures. We own .22 rifles and related equipment, compound bows and other archery gear, and have our own trailer to haul gear in.

Most of our new members come to us from Cub Scouts. So it is important to note that Boy Scouts is not a continuation of the Cub Scout program, but a program with a major shift in emphasis. Specifically, Cub Scouts is a parent-led program, and Boy Scouts is a boy-led program. In Boy Scouts, the Scoutmaster is an “advisor” or “coach” who works with the youth leaders to help them plan and run the program.

Make no mistake, the Scouts run the Troop!



2. GETTING STARTED

Your son has decided to join Troop 512, now what?

THE BOY SCOUT HANDBOOK

He'll need a Handbook. He can't be a Scout without it. A quick look at the Handbook and he'll see right on page 16 "Your Adventure Begins" is full of promises – adventure, learning, challenge and responsibility. What an exciting book. The new Scout will take it home and devour it.

Some Scouts have never been camping. Some have never traveled very far. Our Troop outings will change all that. The Handbook will be a big help by teaching your son the skills he'll need on those outings.

Page 17 of the Handbook has the Joining Requirements. That's where he'll start with advancement. There are lots pages of information on how to advance. He will figure out ways to complete the requirements and get to the next rank. He will dream of earning First Class, Star, Life and Eagle. The Handbook shows just about everything the Scout needs to know to get it done. For outdoorsman, the Handbook is a terrific resource.

THE BOY SCOUT UNIFORM

Does he have a uniform? If your son was a Webelo he may already have the khaki shirt. We'll give him our 512 unit number to replace his pack number. If he earned the Arrow of Light make sure to get that sewn on his shirt. Troop 512 doesn't wear neckerchiefs nor are hats required. There's a section on uniforms later in this guide that explains what uniform items are needed, the two types of Scout uniforms and when each are worn.

YOUTH APPLICATION

You'll need to fill out a BSA Youth Application for your son. If he is already in Scouting, either as a Cub Scout crossing over into Troop 512 or a Boy Scout coming in from another troop, you'll indicate that your son is transferring from his old unit to our Troop. If your son is new to Scouting, you'll indicate that on the application form. New Scouts will need to pay the Troop's annual membership fee.

GEAR

He may need some gear. Don't go getting everything until you read that section of this guide. If you have any questions on the type or quality of gear needed, just ask one of our always helpful adult leaders.

PARTICIPATION

Your son needs to attend meetings and go on trips. This will hook him on the Scouting experience! Going to meetings every week can work, but be sure to get him in the habit. Not all meetings may be fun, but every trip is.

We understand that your son will not be able to make every meeting or every trip. That's okay. Maybe he's on a sports team or in the band, maybe he has family or church obligations. Conflicts and are bound to happen. After all, Scouting is a big commitment of time. A Scout who:

- attends weekly meetings,
- participates in a weekend camping trip every month,
- participates in day trips and other special events such as Merit Badge College, and
- attends a week long summer camp

can spend as much time in Scouting in a year as he spends in the classroom. So don't sweat it if he has to miss a Scout event. That's no reason to drop out. We have had a countless number of Scouts over the years who found a balance between Scouting and their other commitments. Some weren't able to attend Troop activities for an entire season. But they came back happy and excited to participate with their friends once again. We support this. We want our young men to have balanced and rewarding lives.

ADVANCEMENT

On page 17 of the Scout Handbook you'll find the Joining Requirements. We'll get your son on the path of advancement by guiding him through these requirements.

However, you'll need to complete the pamphlet exercises with him. Affixed to the Handbook, inside the front cover, is a blue pamphlet titled *How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide*. Read through that and discuss

the questions with him. When you have completed that task you can initial the box next to that requirement on page 17. Don't delay, we'll want your son to finish these requirements within his first month in the Troop.

You will learn more about advancement in a later section of this document.



3. UNIFORMS

Baden Powell, the founder of Scouting, said... *"The uniform makes for brotherhood, since when universally adopted it covers up all differences of class and country."*

Your son will need the official Boy Scouts of America uniform shirt, pants and belt, all which can be purchased at the Scout store or ordered online at scoutstuff.org. The shirt and pants come in cotton or nylon. Many prefer the nylon versions, as will be explained later, but since the nylon shirt and pants cost more, you may choose to spend less. In either cotton or nylon, the pants are convertible, with zip-off legs to turn into shorts, so they get year-round use. Buy the short-sleeve shirt for year round use; pair with a long-sleeved t-shirt for colder weather. A pair of uniform shorts are useful. When wearing shorts, he'll need Scout socks. The ball cap is nice, but not required by Troop 512. The Troop also doesn't require neckerchiefs.

We dress in uniform for every meeting and other events where noted. Why does Troop 512 emphasize uniforms? Uniforms are considered an important "Method of Scouting" and is fundamental to achieving our aims of Character Development, Citizenship Training and Personal Fitness. The uniform makes Troop 512 visible as a force for good and creates a positive youth image in the community. Boy Scouting is an action program, and wearing the uniform is an action that shows each Scout's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting. The uniform gives the Scout identity in a world brotherhood of youth who believe in the same ideals. The uniform is practical attire for Boy Scout activities and provides a way for Boy Scouts to wear the badges that show what they have accomplished.

What is a Class A Uniform? It's the official Uniform Shirt, official scout pants or shorts and belt, and if wearing shorts, must include Scout socks.

What is a Class B Uniform? Class A pants or shorts, with a Scout t-shirt instead of the Uniform Shirt. If you don't have a Scout tee, a white t-shirt can be substituted. (Good hand-me-down Scout tees are in the troop uniform bank, just ask!)

Our tradition is to switch over to Class B uniforms for meetings after the June Court of Honor. However, the Class A uniform is important at summer camp. It is worn when traveling to and from summer camp and is worn for flag ceremonies and at dinner.

The uniform almost always includes hiking boots or hiking shoes. Brightly colored sneakers detract from the uniform look that we are seeking.

If you are having any kind of problem acquiring proper uniform parts for your scout, we can and want to help. Please do your part and encourage your Scout to always arrive looking sharp in the proper "Uniform of the Day".

Note: Scout socks always sell out at the Scout shop as summer camp approaches so stock up early. They can also be ordered from www.scoutstuff.org. The yarns used in the ankle socks provide superior moisture management.

4. GEAR GUIDE

After buying an expensive¹ uniform, you'll need to go cheap on the rest of the stuff your son needs, and you can. Here's a description of gear that he will need. Let's start with what he'll need right away and then we'll get to the gear he may eventually need or want.

Get these soon:

Footwear – Sneakers won't do. Your son needs some good winter boots if he doesn't already have them. They should be insulated and waterproof. In warm weather, hiking shoes or boots are required since they offer more support, protection and comfort over long distances than sneakers. Some are even waterproof. Get these if you can afford them – wet feet make for a miserable Scout.

Eating Gear – He'll need some tableware and utensils. You don't want to dig through your cupboards before every trip, so get something that's dedicated to camping. Avoid the metal mess kits sold in sporting goods departments. Instead, look for cheap tableware at Target or Walmart. The stuff should be made of light, but indestructible plastic. At a minimum, he'll need a deep bowl, mug and large spoon. He may also like a plate and fork. If you're lucky you'll find a mesh bag to keep them in.

Tip: Label all his gear and clothing with a permanent marker. He will 'misplace' his things. Often.

Tent – The boys will be partnering, so every boy doesn't need a tent. Before buying, see if his partner has one to use. It needs to be a smaller tent that the boys can put up easily in the dark. Look for a 2-3 man tent that sets up with only a couple of poles. The smaller tents are warmer in winter as well. You'll find cheap tents at Walmart, Sears, K-Mart, Dick's and Modell's, or look now on e-bay. You should be able to find one on sale for a reasonable price.

Sleeping Pad – He will need a compact sleeping pad. I'm not talking about big inflatable mattresses. These pads are an inch or two in thickness and can be rolled up and strapped to a pack. They are essential not only for comfort but for

¹ This assumes you're buying new clothes. The Troop does have a collection of hand-me-downs we can loan you for free. We won't have all you need, but we may have an item or two.

insulation from the cold ground. Look for pads made of *closed* cell foam, since they will not soak up water. Try the stores mentioned. If it doesn't come with a strap you might get one - or use an old belt.

Water Bottle – They're going to have to carry their own water. You can find water bottles anywhere these days. Many Scouts prefer wide mouth bottles for easy filling that are see-through. The ones made by Nalgene or Camelbak are camping staples. You can find these for less than \$10. Get bottles that are quart-sized or liter-sized.

Tip: Go cheaper and lighter by recycling plastic drink bottles. Long distance backpackers do this. My preference is the large Powerade bottle. It's a masterpiece of packaging design. It's gripable, sturdy and easy to drink from - and costs only \$3 with a tasty beverage inside.

These are the things your son might want to get later:

Layers of Clothing – To stay warm, he'll need to dress in layers. The layer next to the skin is the base layer. Forget the old cotton long johns. They don't work when they get wet - wet cotton is cold and dries slowly, cooling the body, which under really adverse conditions can lead to hypothermia. The best outdoor clothing is made of performance or technical fabrics like wool, nylon, acrylic (fleece) or any of the "polys", such as polyester. These materials wick moisture away from the body and dry quickly, thereby keeping you cooler in summer and warmer in winter. All the big brands like The North Face or Under Armour make clothing of these materials, but they're too expensive for Scouts. The Boy Scout catalog sells TrekTek t-shirts at a good price, but you'll find something similar at half the price at Target or Kohls. Look for polyester knit by brands like Champion or Starter.

The same goes for socks – avoid cotton. Scout socks are made of synthetics, so they're what you want, especially since I find them among the best out there.

Tip: To keep feet as dry as possible, it's best to wear a thin liner sock that wicks moisture away to the thicker outer sock. This is also the best way to prevent blisters.

Fleece makes a good mid-layer, but is not windproof. Expensive fleece jackets may have a wind-blocking layer. But go cheap and add an inexpensive windbreaker to his gear instead.

Good outerwear, appropriate for the season, is the final layer. When the outer layer is not insulated, it's called a shell. Rain gear is referred to as a hard shell. In recent years softshell jackets have become very popular. They're made out of a tight, synthetic knit to provide warm, wind protection and water resistance. They often stretch as well, making them more comfortable for physical activity.

Look hard and you'll find good outerwear in local stores at a good price. One online source to investigate is www.columbia.com. The popular outdoorwear company has a kid's outlet where you'll find some good values. www.campmor.com also has kid's clothing bargains available online.

Rain Gear – The best raingear is waterproof, windproof *and* breathable, which would mean something made of Gore-Tex or a similar type of material. But that's expensive. For Scouts, a light, waterproof nylon or polyester jacket is fine. (Plastic ponchos and jackets are too fragile to rely on, so don't bother.) You might find some matching pants to really keep your son dry. Good common sense will keep him even dryer.

Duffle Bag – When going on a trip, your son should pack no more than will be needed. There is simply not enough room in vehicles for them to take a lot of gear. His gear, not including the tent or sleeping bag, should all fit into a decent sized duffle. When he gets older you may want to buy him a backpack.

Tip: It will save a lot of packing time every month if he stores his camping equipment in the bag between trips.

Day Pack – A Day Pack is essential when hiking. It's what he'll carry all the things he may need during the day, like food, water, a jacket and the rest of the *10 Essentials* of hiking:

1. Water – a hydration pack or refillable water bottle
2. Shelter – in most cases a rain jacket will suffice, but a mylar emergency blanket will be carried by some Scouts
3. Insulation – a jacket appropriate for the season
4. Food – energy bars or other snacks
5. Firestarter – waterproof matches and/or flint & steel
6. Light – flashlight or headlamp
7. Map and compass – a compass with a clear baseplate is best
8. Knife – if must be a folding knife and should lock in the open position

9. First aid kit – personal size
10. Hat and sunglasses – essential in the summer

Other useful items for the day pack:

- Scout Handbook – to get sign-offs on a trip
- Insect repellent – during season
- Sunscreen – during season
- Toilet paper – it's useful for other reasons than the obvious
- Signaling device – such as a loud whistle
- Rope – handy for a clothesline and other uses
- Duct tape – a small amount goes a long way
- Extra socks – always good to have a dry pair

The same type of pack he uses for school can be used for camping. However, a true hiking day pack will have adjustments for load control and stability. Prices will vary substantially. It shouldn't be too big. For information on choosing the right daypack click [here](#).

A Better Sleeping Bag – This is one you're going to want to think about, because if your son is cold at night he's going to be miserable. Take a look at the temperature rating on your son's bag. Many that are sold in local stores are intended only to be comfortable down to freezing. For Boy Scouts your son should have a sleeping bag rated to 15 or 20 degrees. If he doesn't he can get by using two bags, putting one inside the other, or using one like a bedspread on top. Stores also sell sleeping bag liners to extend a bag's temperature range. Liners also help to keep the bag clean inside.

If you're going to get a good sleeping bag you should think about comfort, weight and packability. The comfort will be assured by a reputable manufacturer's accurate temperature rating. But even then it depends on whether a person is a warm or a cold sleeper. Our observation is that most young boys are warm sleepers.

Tip: The boys should put on dry clothing and socks before going to sleep and wear a knit cap to stay even warmer.

Weight and packability are important because your son is going to have to carry the bag along with the rest of his gear. Find the best combination of the three

criteria for the price you're willing to pay. Some Scouts will have bags rated to zero, but they'll cost more, weigh more and be bulkier.

You may be able to find a good bag locally. You'll probably get better quality and definitely a better deal from a couple of our go-to online retailers: www.campmor.com and www.sierratradingpost.com. You'll get long life from a good bag – one of the adults in the troop has a sleeping bag that is still performing well after 30 years – so this is where eventually you'll want to spend a lot.

Tip: Dry out the bag after EVERY use before storing to extend its life – even normal perspiration can add a lot of moisture to a bag over a weekend. Also, it should be stored loosely, not stuffed or rolled as this will eventually compact the insulation, reducing its ability to keep your son warm.

Other Useful Camp Gear:

Compass – He will need a compass. Buy one made by Silva or Suunto that's good for orienteering. It should have a see-through base plate for use with maps.

Flint & Steel – Your son is probably going to want flint and steel for fire starting. Some stores will sell something called "Swedish FireSteel". That's what you want. Get the red Scout model.

Head Lamp – Your son has a flashlight, but does he have a head lamp? They're more convenient. Prices can vary a lot depending on the intensity of the light output.

Knife – All the boys should have a foldable, locking pocket knife by now. If not, get one soon.

Watch – Since cell phones aren't allowed on trips (pending a change in policy), your son will need something with which to tell the time. A watch that can be clipped onto a pack or belt loop will come in handy.

Keep in mind that the boys will be hard on their gear and will outgrow much of it. So start inexpensively. Take advantage of sales and season-ending discounts. You can always replace this gear with better gear when they get older and can take better care of it.

5. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CUB SCOUTS AND BOY SCOUTS

This goes way beyond blue vs. khaki.

The difference between Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts encompasses critical categories like unit structure, leadership, parental involvement, advancement and camping.

Both programs are built on Scouting's time-tested values. Both programs use the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

Beyond that, though, you'll find more differences than similarities — for good reason. You wouldn't teach a third-grader the same way you'd teach a ninth-grader. That same logic tells us your approach to Cub Scouting and Boy Scouting shouldn't be the same.

So, gathered from several Scout leaders in the know, here's a rundown of the ways in which Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts differ².

UNIT STRUCTURE

Cub Scouts: Boys are in dens, which are part of a pack. Their den is made up of other boys of the same Cub Scout rank. Dens usually meet weekly or biweekly; packs meet monthly.

Boy Scouts: Boys are in patrols, which are part of a troop. Some troops prefer mixed-age patrols (in which an 11-year-old and a 17-year-old could be in the same patrol), while Troop 512 prefers to keep boys of similar ages together. Troops meet weekly. Patrol meetings are part of the weekly troop meeting, typically, though patrols are welcome to meet on their own.

LEADERSHIP

It's pretty simple: Cub Scouting is led by adults; Boy Scouting is led by the boys.

Cub Scouts: Adults plan and conduct the meetings and promote advancement, teamwork, fun and character-building.

² Adapted from *Byron on Scouting*, blog posted on November 20, 2014 by Bryan Wendell.

Boy Scouts: The boys plan and conduct meetings and outings. Adults step in when asked for help and model good behavior. We're striving for boy-led in Boy Scouting. It's not always as organized or successful as if adults were running things, but the boys learn from their mistakes.

Leadership roles: Adults hold all of the leadership positions in Cub Scouts, while boys occupy most of the Boy Scout roles.

The Scoutmasters, unlike a Cubmaster, is a mentor who stands on the sidelines. The way to think of Scoutmaster is as 'chief adult guide' and the Assistant Scoutmasters as 'adult guides,'.

Because of this, things might get hectic in Boy Scouting, but that's the point. We may see Scouts struggling a bit, or not doing a job as well as we know that we could do it, but we resist the temptation to do it for them. A little help is always welcome. But we let the successes be theirs as much as possible, as well as the learning that comes from those temporary setbacks.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are a critical part of both Cub Scouting and Boy Scouting. Here's a comparison:

Cub Scouts: The parents are expected to assist the pack with planning or helping with at least one activity or event annually. They may also take a leadership role in the pack or den. Parents are usually required to accompany their son on overnight campouts.

Boy Scouts: The parents are expected to assist the troop by supporting the boys and participating in those tasks that the boys cannot do. This may include: transportation to an activity, shopping for a trip, assisting with fundraisers (finances and organization) and helping with special events. It is expected that each family take an active role in the troop. Unlike Cub Scouts, parents aren't required to camp with their sons. Nor are parents required to stay for the duration of a Boy Scout meeting.

ADVANCEMENT

Cub Scouts progress through the ranks to earn the Arrow of Light. Boy Scouts progress through the ranks to earn the Eagle Scout Award.

Cub Scouts: Cub Scouts rely on their den leaders, den chiefs and parents to plan and assist with all advancement activities. Achievements/books are signed by either the den leader or parent. Ranks are based *only* on age or grade. Even if a boy did not earn the rank for his age, he moves to the next one as his den moves. The levels are: Tiger, Bobcat, Wolf, Bear, Webelos and Arrow of Light.

Boy Scouts: Parents can guide, but advancement is planned and assisted by youth and adult leaders in the troop. Unlike in Cub Scouts, advancement is individual, not by patrol. A Scout works at his own pace, meaning a 13-year-old in the Dragon Patrol might be a Life Scout while a 15-year-old in the Dragon Patrol is still a Star Scout. A Scout cannot advance to the next level until all activities are completed in the lower rank. The ranks are Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle. (Eagle Palms may also be earned after Eagle.)

CAMPING

Cub Scouts: Limited to Scout and parent weekend or day trips. May have some camping in tents or cabins. Summer camp is limited to two or three nights, usually. Campouts usually have a very structured schedule.

Boy Scouts: Monthly or bimonthly camping trips as well as additional outdoor day activities. Much of the program involves activities that can only be done in the outdoors (nature, ecology, pioneering, orienteering, conservation). Also available to the Scout is at least a week of camping each summer. Not every minute of the campout is scheduled. Free time is important. Boys normally get a couple of hours each day of free time to hang with friends, work on advancement, play sports or do nothing at all.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

Where do Scouts go with a problem or question?

Cub Scouts: They'll ask their parent, den leader or Cubmaster.

Boy Scouts: They'll follow the "chain of command." Boy Scouts are taught to go to their patrol leader, then their senior patrol leader and finally the adults. Where safety or health is an issue, though, Boy Scouts may go straight to the adult.

6. AIMS AND METHODS OF SCOUTING

The Scouting program has three specific objectives, commonly referred to as the "Aims of Scouting." They are character development, citizenship training and personal fitness.

The methods by which the aims are achieved are listed below in random order to emphasize the equal importance of each.

IDEALS

The ideals of Boy Scouting are spelled out in the Scout Oath, the Scout Law, the Scout motto and the Scout slogan. The Boy Scout measures himself against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and, as he reaches for them, he has some control over what and who he becomes.

Each Troop meeting includes the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance, the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. Scouts learn early on that it is important to not just recite the words in the Oath and Law, but to use them as guides in their daily lives. Each rank advancement level includes an item related to 'Scout Spirit' which can include how your son has applied the Oath and Law in his interactions with other Scouts, the adult leaders and others.

PATROLS

The patrol method gives Boy Scouts an experience in group living and participating citizenship. It places responsibility on young shoulders and teaches boys how to accept it. The patrol method allows Scouts to interact in small groups where they can easily relate to each other. These small groups determine troop activities through their elected representatives.

Your son has been placed in a patrol with other boys his age. Boys crossing over from Webelos are placed in a new Scout patrol, and are assigned a Troop Guide who serves as their Patrol Leader for the first few months they are in the Troop. This helps the new boys learn about the program and to understand what a Patrol Leader does before having to take that role on themselves. Patrols work together to plan and cook meals at most campouts, compete together at some outings, and generally work together for service projects and fundraisers.

Unlike Cub Scouts, there is no adult leader assigned directly to each Patrol, but the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters work closely with them.

OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

Boy Scouting is designed to take place outdoors. It is in the outdoor setting that Scouts share responsibilities and learn to live with one another. It is here that the skills and activities practiced at troop meetings come alive with purpose. Being close to nature helps Scouts gain an appreciation for God's handiwork and humankind's place in it. The outdoors is the laboratory for Scouts to learn ecology and practice conservation of nature's resources.

ADVANCEMENT

Boy Scouting provides a series of surmountable obstacles and steps in overcoming them through the advancement method. The Scout plans his advancement and progresses at his own pace as he meets each challenge. The Scout is rewarded for each achievement, which helps him gain self-confidence. The steps in the advancement system help a Scout grow in self-reliance and in the ability to help others.

PERSONAL GROWTH

As Boy Scouts plan their activities and progress toward their goals, they experience personal growth. The Good Turn concept is a major part of the personal growth method of Boy Scouting. Scouts grow as they participate in community service projects and do Good Turns for others. Probably no device is so successful in developing a basis for personal growth as the daily Good Turn.

The religious emblems program also is a large part of the personal growth method. Frequent personal conferences with his Scoutmaster help each Scout to determine his growth toward Scouting's aims.

Personal growth is also emphasized through community service and service projects in advancement through the ranks. A key part of becoming an Eagle Scout is the planning and implementation of a community service project. These efforts help reinforce the ideals of Scouting, and provide opportunities for the boys to grow. They also learn about the importance of setting goals and establishing plans to meet them.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND DISCIPLINE

The Boy Scouts of America is a values-based youth development organization that helps young people learn positive attributes of character, citizenship and personal fitness. All members of the Troop are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

Physical violence, hazing, bullying, theft, verbal insults, and drugs and alcohol have no place in the Scouting program and may result in the revocation of a Scout's membership in the Troop, in accordance with our discipline policy.

Adult leaders of Scouting units are responsible for monitoring the behavior of youth members and interceding when necessary. There is discipline and accountability in Scouting but Scoutmasters are not disciplinarians. We are volunteers in Scouting and our job is to mentor and train youth to lead themselves.

When there is a question of accountability – a Scout who is not doing what he is expected to do – our adult leaders will speak to them and encourage them to rise to the occasion. If they don't, it is not up to the Scoutmaster nor the Troop to discipline or punish the Scout.

If it's a behavioral problem he's referred to his parents for discipline and punishment.

If a Scout is not performing his leadership duties his fellow Scouts will want to elect a new leader.

We don't deal in negative reinforcement.

- We don't hold the threat of punishment over Scouts, that's not our job.
- We don't withhold advancement to teach them a lesson.
- The Scout Oath and Law are our rules of conduct.
- We don't deal in demerits and suspensions and probations.

Two tools we use are positive reinforcement and constructive discipline. We can inspire, encourage, inform, exhort and support our Scouts.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the Boy Scout program is the ability for the Scouts to develop and try out leadership skills. The Scouting program encourages Scouts to learn and practice leadership skills. Every Scout has the opportunity to participate in both shared and total leadership situations. Understanding the concepts of leadership helps a Scout accept the leadership role of others and guides him toward the citizenship aim of Scouting.

Many opportunities exist for Scouts, from being Patrol Leader and working with a group of 8-10 Scouts, to becoming Senior Patrol Leader where they are responsible for planning and running the entire Troop program. Leadership of peers is a difficult thing, and we provide training to help Scouts learn their responsibilities and apply what they've learned. There is also the week-long National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) camp available that provides Scouts the opportunity to further develop leadership ideas and skills. Every year the Troop provides financial support to Scouts interested in attending NYLT camp.



7. ADVANCEMENT

Advancement is a key part of the Scouting program. Troop 512 provides regular opportunities for Scouts to work on their rank advancement, both by participating in meetings, monthly trips and summer camp.

RANKS

The Boy Scout Advancement program is broken down into seven different ranks:

- Scout
- Tenderfoot
- Second Class
- First Class
- Star
- Life
- Eagle

The Scout rank is achieved by completing the Joining Requirements. The requirements are similar to what a Webelo would learn in earning his Arrow of Light. The next three ranks (Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class) are largely based on the learning and application of basic Scout skills (e.g. knots, lashings, first aid, camping) while the upper ranks (Star, Life and Eagle) are based on leadership, service and merit badges.

Tip: Get your son in the habit of going to meetings prepared to get a sign off on a rank requirement. In this way he'll quickly advance.

Requirements for the first three ranks can be worked on simultaneously, but the ranks must be earned in sequence.

Not all boys get to be Eagle Scouts (only 3-4% nationwide make it), but all have the opportunity to make it. The real key to advancement in the Boy Scout program is active participation at both meetings and outings.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Each Scout is responsible for working on their own advancement. Scouts must confer with one of the Troop's adult leaders to be tested for requirements achievement. To complete a rank requirement, your son will need to show

knowledge or demonstrate a skill to one of our adult leaders. Once complete, the adult leader will approve by checking the box and signing your son's Handbook on the line next to the requirement. Your son's first year or so in the Troop will be 'collecting check marks'. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters always make time after meetings to work with Scouts on sign offs. Sign offs can also take place on camping trips so your son should take his Handbook with him on trips.

THE SCOUTMASTER CONFERENCE AND BOARD OF REVIEW

Parents The final two requirements for all ranks are a Scoutmaster Conference and a Board of Review. The Scoutmaster Conference is a meeting between the Scout and Scoutmaster (or his proxy) to discuss the requirements, goals for further advancement and areas for growth or improvement. The Board of Review is an interview of the Scout by at least three Assistant Scoutmasters to see how the Scout is doing.

COURTS OF HONOR

Awards (merit badges and rank advancements) are presented at Courts of Honor, three a year, attended by parents and relatives of the Scouts.

Eagle Scout Courts of Honor are truly special occasions. Whether you know the Eagle Scout very well or not at all, as a member of the Troop please make an effort to attend. This is not only the culmination of the Eagle Scout's career in Scouting, it is also an opportunity to provide a real and tangible example to young Scouts that earning the rank of Eagle Scout is possible. It can also serve as motivation for those long term Life Scouts to get their own advancement in gear.

A typical Eagle Court of Honor usually runs 45 minutes. Most are followed with either light refreshments or a lunch/dinner, which is provided by the family. Each Eagle Court of Honor is unique and very personal to the Eagle Scout. Some are more serious and some are more humorous. They are always memorable events that leave a lasting impression on all who attend.

When invited to attend an Eagle Court of Honor there is no expectation of giving the Eagle Scout a gift. Usually if the Eagle Scout receives gifts they are from family members.

8. MERIT BADGE PROCEDURES

Merit badges are available in many areas of interest. Your son can learn about sports, crafts, science, trades, business and future careers as he earns merit badges – there are more than 130. Some merit badges are required for the Eagle rank while others are electives, based on your son's interests.

Merit badges can be a great experience for you and your son as you work together and as he explores his world. He may earn a merit badge at any time. Take advantage of this educational opportunity and learn along with him. Scouting works best when the whole family is involved.

Earning a merit badge begins when a Scout gets a signed merit badge application that verifies that he is registered and eligible to earn the badge. To finish, the Scout must complete all of the requirements to the satisfaction of a merit badge counselor. Once approved, his achievement will be entered into his advancement record by the Troop's Advancement Chair.

Here is what he will do:

PICK A SUBJECT

He will decide what merit badge he would like to work on. He'll need to talk to the Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair about his interest. Your son should review the requirements of the merit badge to determine if he will be able to complete them at his age and abilities. You may need to assist with this. Once he chooses, his Scoutmaster or Advancement Chair will give him a signed merit badge application (the 'Blue Card') and the name and contact information of a merit badge counselor. These individuals have special knowledge in their merit badge subjects.

Your son will fill out the rest of the Blue Card and turn it over to the merit badge counselor when he meets him.

USE THE SCOUT BUDDY SYSTEM

While all merit badge counselors have passed a background check and taken BSA's Youth Protection Training, you should make sure that your son meets with the counselor only in groups of two or more. This keeps everyone within the guidelines and makes sure it is a safe experience for all concerned. Ensure that in

each meeting with the merit badge counselor your son has another person with him. This person can be another Scout, a family member or a friend.

CONTACT THE MERIT BADGE COUNSELOR

Merit badge counselors come from all walks of life and have applied to be a counselor with the local scout council. Your Scoutmaster has a list of merit badge counselors in the area, many of whom are in Troop 512. Your son should call or email the counselor when he is ready to start the merit badge and set an appointment. The counselor may ask to meet him to explain what is expected and to start helping him complete the requirements. Your son should also discuss work that he already started or possibly completed. Oftentimes a counselor holds a merit badge class to work with a number of Scouts at the same time.

Additionally, the Troop participates in the Cradle of Liberty's annual Merit Badge College. Summer camp is another opportunity for your son to earn a number of merit badges. The more of these merit badge events he can attend, the more merit badges he can earn with less work from you. So watch for these opportunities, get him registered and help him get there.

BEGIN WORK ON THE MERIT BADGE

Unless otherwise specified, work for a requirement can be started at any time. Your son should ask his counselor to help him learn the things he needs to know or do.

Tip: Get the merit badge pamphlet. The Boy Scouts of America has prepared a booklet for each merit badge that offers pretty much everything a Scout needs to know to earn the badge. Troop 512 has a library of pamphlets so check with our librarian first before you buy one. Be aware that from time to time the requirements change and new books are published.

COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENTS

Your son is expected to meet the requirements as they are stated – no more and no less. He must do exactly what is stated in the requirements. If it says "show or demonstrate" that is what he must do. Just telling about it isn't enough. The same thing holds true for such words as "make," "list," "in the field" and "collect," "identify" and "label."

SHOW HIS STUFF

When he is ready, your son should call the counselor again to make an appointment. When he goes he should take along the things he made to meet the requirements. If they are too big to move, take pictures or have an adult tell in writing what he has done. In some cases, requirements have to be done in the presence of a counselor, so help your son prepare for those. When he is ready, call the counselor again to get the requirements passed off. The counselor will test him on each requirement to make sure he knows his stuff and has done or can do the things required.

Tip: Download a merit badge worksheet. One of the best Scouting resources on the web is at www.meritbadge.org. Here you'll find worksheets for each merit badge in downloadable formats. You'll also find links to information which will help to complete the requirements. Download and print out the merit badge worksheet so you and your Scout both understand the requirements. Have your son use the worksheet to show proof of work to his merit badge counselor.

When all requirements are met, the counselor will sign off on the Blue Card and detach his third of the card for his records, returning the remaining parts to your son. He must remember to take this with him. If he can't complete all the requirements at the time, the counselor will return all three parts of the card so that your son can complete the remaining requirements at a later date, possibly with a different counselor.

GET THE BADGE

Have your son return both remaining parts of the Blue Card to the Troop's Advancement Chair. The Chair will keep one portion and return the other part to your son. He should keep it as a backup record. The Advancement Chair will record your son's achievement in his advancement record.

To reiterate, the Blue Card separates into three sections. One is kept by the counselor, one is kept by the Troop and one is kept by the Scout. Always keep your son's copy in a safe place.

If your son borrowed a pamphlet from the Troop library he should return it. If he no longer wants to keep a pamphlet that you purchased then he may wish to donate it to our library so that other Scouts may benefit from it.

Your son will receive his merit badge emblem during a Court of Honor. Be sure to sew that on his merit badge sash so that he can show off all he has accomplished. Sashes are worn during ceremonial events.

CELEBRATE THE ACCOMPLISHMENT

After your son has earned the merit badge, find a way to celebrate with the family. Maybe a special meal, a good dessert or a homemade milkshake might be in order.

9. FUNDRAISING

Paying your own way is a fundamental principle of the Boy Scouts of America. Young men in Scouting are taught early on that if they want something in life, they need to earn it.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is an important part of a Scout's support of his Troop and Council. Through the fundraising efforts of the Scouts, Troop 512 is able to provide a quality program, including needed equipment for camping, travel opportunities, annual registration, subscriptions to *Boys Life*, and insurance coverage for every member of the Troop.

A portion of certain fundraising profits also goes to support the Cradle of Liberty Council. The Council provides professional Scouting services and awards, maintains and operates two Council camps, Musser Scout Reservation near Pennsburg and Resica Falls Scout Reservation near Marshall's Creek. Additionally, the Council develops and operates the training and service programs that make the Scouting experience more meaningful for the Scouts.

It is expected that each Scout will participate in the majority of fundraising activities to support his fair share of Troop operations. Scouts who do not participate in fundraisers, yet consistently participate in Troop activities, may be subject to an assessment of fees over and above the usual food and event registration fees to pay for program fees, equipment and Troop operations.

We have three major fundraisers a year.

POPCORN

The Popcorn fundraiser is our largest. It starts in mid-September and continues through October. Scouts can fill out their order sheets by selling to family and friends. We also ask that Scouts do site sales at locations the Troop sets up. We sell on Friday evenings and all day over the weekends. We may also organize door-to-door sales on evenings during the week. Scouts can show a lot of initiative, make big sales and win great prizes as a result. This fundraiser provides the biggest opportunity for Scouts to earn enough Scout Dollars to pay their way to summer camp.

POINSETTIAS

The Troop sells in poinsettias in a variety of colors in November. Scouts will take orders and then pick them up for delivery in December at the conclusion of the sale.

CAMP CARDS

Scouts sell these discount cards for several weeks beginning in March. Proceeds from the \$5 card are split between the Scout and Council. The card offers discounts to a number of local establishments and can be used throughout the year. It offers at least \$50 in value. Scouts who sell enough cards can enter weekly drawings to win cash and other prizes.

10. INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACCOUNTS

Through fundraising efforts, a Scout raises money not only for the Troop, but also for himself. A Scout receives financial credit rewards for participating in fundraising activities. The Scout's earnings, based on the amount he sold, are put into an Individual Scout Account (ISA) that the Troop maintains for him. ISAs are bookkeeping accounts, not separate bank accounts.

Scout Dollars, the amount of money in a Scout's ISA, can be used to pay Scouting expenses. Scouting expenses including annual membership fees, merit badge fees, Eagle Project expenses, special program fees, summer camp fees and uniform costs.

We have specific policies that the Troop Committee has approved for the administration of ISAs. You may request a copy of the ISA program document.

11. ANNUAL DUES

Each Scout (and adult leader) in Troop 512 must pay annual dues. Dues can be paid as a lump sum or as a transfer from an Individual Scout Account. The Troop Committee shall, from time to time, review and establish the amount of the annual dues. Dues must be current for a Scout to be considered an active member. Only active members can go on trips and receive advancement or recognition awards at a Court of Honor.

12. TROOP COMMUNICATIONS

We have a number of ways of keeping you and your son informed. Because the better informed you all are, the more likely we'll have your support and your son's participation.

NEWSLETTER

We have a great newsletter called *Whispers (in the wind)* that comes out on a weekly basis. Our Troop Secretary sends it out. It gives you all the information you need to know about what's going on in the Troop. It tells you what's happening now, what's coming up and gives you deadlines. We also use it to provide information about other Scouting events and opportunities that may interest your son.

We urge you to share the newsletter with him.

TEAMSNAPE

TeamSnap is used for trip sign ups. You'll find the schedule and description of trips on this website. You can access it at any time once you become a member. Please fill out a profile for your son by including important contact information.

TROOP WEBSITE

The Troop has a website that's maintained by our Scouts: www.troop512.net. Sometimes it's current, sometimes it's not depending on if a Scout is working as the Webmaster for a leadership term.

Use the member login to access our calendar, rosters, gear guide, list of merit badge counselors and newsletters. To login, the username is troop 512 and the password is whispers.

FACEBOOK

You'll also want to follow us on Facebook. Once you receive permission to join our private group, you'll gain access to even more information, including **live trip posts** from our many outings. You'll feel like you're there with us!

Troop 512 Springfield, DELCO, PA is our private group page while Troop 512 Springfield DELCO is our public Facebook page.

A lot of conversation between parents and adult leaders in the Troop takes place on Facebook. If you have a question it's a great place to get it answered.



13. TRIP PROCEDURES

Our monthly trips are a vital part of our program. Since there are a lot of moving parts in getting us ready, this will explain your part in trip preparation.

TRIP SIGN UP

We use an online service called TeamSnap for trip sign ups. This allows you to view our schedule for trips, read a description of each and sign up at any time.

Upon joining the Troop, you'll receive an invitation from us to join TeamSnap. We ask that you do so. You can then go to <https://go.teamsnap.com/login/signin> and build your son's profile. Please include contact information so that we can reach you.

When you receive a TeamSnap notice **please provide a response** (Yes, No or Maybe) to give us an idea of your son's participation. A 'No' is just as important to know as a 'Yes' is for trip planning purposes. Sign-up early so we can finalize plans well in advance of the trip. Sometimes we need to make and pay for reservations and this cost is based on the number of people attending.

Following our sign up procedures enables Scouts to attend the trip in accordance with Troop plans. Lack of adherence to our procedures places the burden of providing food and transportation to enable the Scout's participation in the trip solely on the Scout and parent. Please make every effort to avoid these situations.

PERMISSION SLIP

Scouts cannot participate in the Troop's outings unless permission is given by their parents or guardian. Trip permission slips are sent out with Whispers, our newsletter, one or two weeks prior to the trip. Please read and sign this form and have your son turn it in to his Patrol Leader by the date specific.

Be sure to list any medical or behavioral issues/concerns on the form. We need to know what to look for and how to assist your child. Information is used by adults on the trip (i.e. to ensure medications are taken) and kept confidential.

PAYMENT OF TRIP COSTS

Every trip has a cost. Oftentimes, the only cost is for food. This should be cash that your son gives to his Patrol Leader. In the same pre-trip meeting it will be given to the patrol members that will be responsible for buying groceries.

Sometimes there is an activity or program fee. If required, activity costs (such as for skiing, treetop adventure or whitewater rafting) will be noted in Whispers and on the permission slip. This fee can be paid by a check payable to 'Troop 512'. Again, your son will turn it in to his Patrol Leader.

Many of our trips are to locations in the region, an advantage of living in such a diverse region. However, we sometimes travel longer distances and these trips may have an additional cost, as explained below.

Payments are needed when specified, but no later than the Monday prior to the trip.

TRANSPORTATION SURCHARGE

Times can be tough. The Troop offers an active program yet high gasoline prices make it expensive for us to go on trips every month. The burden usually falls on a small number of adult leaders willing to drive. Yet it is not their responsibility to transport all of the Scouts to where they need to go.

It is also not fair to expect only a few to shoulder the entire cost of transportation for the Troop. In a typical year we may travel approximately 2000 miles. At a cost of \$ 0.56 per mile, this represents an expense of over \$1100 per driver, not including approximately \$50 in tolls. Traditionally, we've asked our parents to drive and in the past they have.

In the spring of 2014, the Troop Committee considered and debated and ultimately decided to establish a transportation surcharge policy. A maximum trip surcharge will be based on the distance of the trip as follows:

- \$5.00 up to 100 miles roundtrip
- \$10.00 up to 200 miles
- \$15.00 up to 275 miles
- \$20 for all trips greater than 275 miles roundtrip

The amount assessed will be noted on each individual trip permission slip. To alleviate this surcharge, parents may volunteer to drive.

We would like parents to commit to driving two legs of a trip per year. We may not need you to do this. Having a trailer means there's little burden on parents to drive. Still, we like to have backup drivers at the ready in case of illness, break down or other emergency. If needed, you'll need to provide us your drivers' license and vehicle insurance information to support our Tour Plan and insurance coverage.

PRE-TRIP MEETING ATTENDANCE

It is important for your son to attend the Troop meeting prior to a trip. This is when all the pre-trip preparation is completed. Patrols prepare menus, set up a duty roster, determine who will do the grocery shopping (a rotating assignment), assign tent partners and sort through their patrol boxes to make sure they have all the necessary gear and that it's clean. Our trips are not 'show and go' – Scouts have to work to get ready for a trip and so every Scout that plans to attend a trip must participate in the pre-trip meeting. He also needs to be there to turn in his money and permission slip.

PATROL FOOD

If your son is the Patrol's 'food buyer', you will need to go food shopping with him prior to the trip. Do not go FOR him – go WITH him. He is learning a valuable skill. He'll get the cash needed to shop from his Patrol Leader during the pre-trip meeting. Typically two patrol members will go shopping on a Thursday night so as to minimize the time needed to store the food. They'll need to shop smartly to stay within budget. Ice and a cooler will be needed to keep items cold during warmer months. Don't forget to take the food with you when it's time to depart for the trip.

GEAR

Scouts should pack their own gear. It is the only way for them to know what they have with them. You may supervise if you wish. He should not bring more than is needed. All of his gear should fit into a medium to large duffle bag, with the exception perhaps of his sleeping bag, sleeping pad and tent. His gear should be marked so we know whose it is when it inevitably shows up in the lost-and-found

pile. Stuff sacks and Ziploc bags are useful for keeping gear organized. We have seasonal what to bring lists on our website so your son knows what to pack.

Pay attention on what not to bring. Scouts cannot have a pocket knife until they've earned the BSA Totin' Chip. Prohibited items will be confiscated and returned to the Scout after the trip is over. In some cases we may need to discipline your son and notify you.

Tip: Scouts should have a flashlight or headlamp handy so it's available when we get to the campground, usually after dark. They should have a full water bottle as well since we may not know where to get water until the next morning.

TRIP DEPARTURE AND RETURN

Please arrive at the trip departure location no later than the time specified and early is possible. The trip permission slip will detail what your son will need to wear. Typically boots are worn at departure. On some occasions the Scouts will wear their uniforms or will need to have them packed in their gear. Usually uniforms aren't worn on camping trips.

Tip: A little spending money is a good idea. Drivers often stop for gas or coffee and Scouts like to get snacks. Longer trips require that we stop for lunch on the way home so money is needed for that as well.

We typically return from trips on Sunday during the mid-afternoon. Scouts are expected to help load the trailer on departure nights and unload it at the end of the trip.

ON THE TRIP

While on the trip, your son will camp in his patrol and tent with patrol members. They'll function as a unit, preparing and cleaning up their own meals while on the trip. Youth and adult leaders will provide supervision. Each Scout will have specific duties for the trip, as assigned earlier and listed on the patrol's duty roster. Duties include head cook, assistant cook, food buyer, dishwasher (after learning proper sanitary procedures), water hauler and firewood collector. This work is usually done in pairs.

Sometimes patrols are combined, because of attendance, in order to have a full working unit. When this happens, similar age patrols are put together.

Scouts will sleep two to three in a tent. Tent partners are selected at the meeting prior to the trip. Tents are set up in a grouping for that patrol. Each patrol has a small canopy to cook under. Your son may want to take a folding camp chair since many campsites don't have picnic tables.

On one or two trips every year we do Troop cooking. On these trips adults will supervise Scouts who will cook for the entire Troop.

TRIP UPDATES

You can keep track of what your son is up to during trips by following us on Facebook. Adult leaders will post pictures and updates throughout the trip. Some will also post pictures after they return home.

Facebook posts may also announce the expected time of arrival back home.

14. SUMMER CAMP

It is not an exaggeration to say that summer camp will be a transformative experience for your son. He will spend one week away from his comfortable home and from everything he knows. He will try more new things during this one week than during any other single week in his young life. The week at summer camp will be an important growth experience for him and of great value to be there with his friends.

Summer camp offers something for every age group. For the newest Scouts there's the first year program that teaches essential Scout skills and offers a couple of merit badges for them to complete at camp. For the most experienced Scouts, summer camps offer fantastic adventures and other physical challenges. For everyone else, there's the wide variety of merit badges and camp activities to give them thrills.

Speaking of merit badges, here's an interesting sampling of what different camps offer: Chemistry, Cinematography, Electronics, Horsemanship, Indian Lore, Law, Nuclear Science, Oceanography, Robotics, SCUBA Diving, Sculpture, Space Exploration and Theater. How is your son going to be able to choose from so many great choices?

Of course there's the usual assortment of traditional camp activities: canoeing, kayaking, swimming, hiking, rock climbing, horseback riding, rifle and shotgun shooting, archery and campfire skits.

Summer camp is an essential part of the Scouting experience, especially for advancement and Scout retention. Simply Scouts who go to summer camp tend to stay in Scouting. We find it's of vital importance on the road to Eagle.

Summer camp, while our most expensive trip of the year, is a bargain. Scout Dollars and camperships can be used to defray the cost of camp. Remember, the price includes the memories of a lifetime!

Troop 512 has a separate *Parents Guide to Summer Camp* that you'll want to consult when the time comes.

15. YOUR ROLE

Scouting is unique. It is different from school, church, sports and other youth organizations. By supporting your son's participation in Scouting, you'll provide him an exceptional education with fun, character-building adventures. You'll give him the gift of a lifetime – a well-rounded and memorable childhood.

PROMOTING GROWTH

When it comes to the things Scouts do there are at least two things happening at once. There's the immediate practical goal (like getting a merit badge or going camping) and the much broader (and more important) goals of developing leadership, citizenship, and physical, spiritual and mental fitness.

For example; when a Scout goes camping he needs to find out what to bring, gather the gear and put it in his pack. It's perfectly understandable that a parent may feel they need to do some or all of this for him – after all that's part of being a supportive, responsible parent right?

But it's equally important for your son to become responsible for himself. If a new Scout packs his own pack he'll forget something and may be a little uncomfortable but he will learn more from forgetting than he will if you pack his bag for him. What he learns from that process is one step closer to that broader goal. Ultimately it will be very rewarding to see the growth and personal development in your son.

What we do in Scouting is almost never about the immediate, practical goal. Boys don't always understand this, but we want every Scout parent to.

SUPPORTING AND ENCOURAGING YOUR SCOUT

Step back, keep your eye on the broader goal and you'll see your Scout start to grow and figure things out for himself. You'll find that your job is not so much telling and doing as helping him discover answers and how things are done. Your job is not making things easier but helping him look past the initial frustrations of not knowing. Soon he'll learn to ask those questions of himself, he'll grow in confidence and ability, and surprise you as he does.

When Scouts get discouraged or frustrated, (and they will), that's when we need a supportive, responsible parent to step up and help them overcome the discouragement or frustration and keep on trying. Offer words of

encouragement when needed, a kick in the pants when called for. He'll need you to be a tough coach. During times when he doubts whether he wants to stay in the Troop, you can have a big influence on your son's continued participation. Again, keep the bigger picture in mind of what's best for him. To take advantage of all that Scouting offers, he'll need to be active by participating in meetings, trips and other outings, especially summer camp.

STEPPING BACK

As a parent, you're a primary role model for your child. Scouting provides a time-tested structure that helps bond parent/child development through group and individual activities, recognition and advancement. Your child needs your encouragement, guidance and participation along his or her Scouting path

In Boy Scouting as boys become young men, they learn more through experiences and group activities, developing subject knowledge and leadership skills. In this type of learning, your child may be less dependent on your direct involvement, but still require your support and approval. These experiences and group activities give the parent an ideal opportunity to observe and coach, providing reassurance and advice.

You'll learn to step back, be understanding and supportive. Look for teachable moments and help their Scouts figure out what to do next, not by supplying answers, but by asking questions.

WORKING WITH ADULT LEADERS IN THE TROOP

You can't just drop your son off without an instruction manual and expect us to know how your son works. Let us know of his personal issues (behavioral, emotional, medical, allergies) that your son has so that we can best know how to work with him, so we can ensure his safety and so we can help him to best enjoy himself while in our care. Provide us with your emergency contact information in case something happens or we need to consult with you.

VOLUNTEERING IN THE TROOP

Your support of the Troop is vital to our active program. We'll want you to support us financially or through your direct involvement in our program. As a parent volunteer, there are a variety of positions to fill:

- Assistant Scoutmaster

- Troop Committee member (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, member at large)
- Merit badge counselor
- Event coordinator

Each of these positions require varying levels of time. At times we may need to call on your help, perhaps to drive on a trip, oversee a fundraising station, host a patrol meeting or assist with setting up for our annual banquet. Volunteering helps strengthen the bond between parent and child.

