The Building Blocks of Scouting

Scouting is based on life skills education, leadership development, citizenship, and values training. Its unique methods of program presentation are designed to help build youth with strong character who are physically fit and prepared to be good citizens.

Community Organizations and Scout Councils

Scouting teaches skills that help youth develop into quality citizens. Organizations that are interested in nurturing youth for the betterment of the community will find Scouting to be a positive form of community outreach.

The Boy Scouts of America grants charters to organizations such as churches, service clubs, and other community groups to operate Scouting groups. These organizations use the Scouting program for community outreach and to help them serve the needs of local youth. Scouting's time-tested, high-quality youth development program affords organizations higher visibility in the community and increased service to youth.

Chartered organizations partner with local Scout councils to provide the support necessary for troop operations. When an organization adopts Scouting as part of its youth and community outreach program, a committee is formed and leadership is selected to organize and operate the troop in conjunction with the organization's special needs and desires. Councils provide program materials and literature, outdoor camping facilities, leadership training and field support, assistance in recruiting members, liability insurance, record keeping, and supplies such as uniforms, insignia, and awards.

More than ever, young people need the guidance and mentoring that Scouting provides. Scouting's constructive educational program is a healthy alternative to the negative influences youth face.

Scouting's Values

Scouting is a values-based program with its own code of conduct. The Scout Oath and Law help instill the values of good conduct, respect for others, and honesty. Scouts learn skills that will last a lifetime, including basic outdoor skills, first aid, citizenship skills, leadership skills, and how to get along with others. For almost a century, Scouting has instilled in young men the values and knowledge that they will need to become leaders in their communities and country.

Scout Oath or Promise

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.

Scout Law

A Scout is ...
- trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly,
- courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful,
- thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.

Leadership

Boy Scouts is a boy-led, boy-run organization, but the boys must be trained to be leaders. One of the Scoutmaster's most important responsibilities is to provide the direction, coaching, and training that empowers the boy with the skills he will need to lead his troop.

Scouting's value to young people is clear, but the advantages of Scouting are not limited to boys. Adults also develop leadership and physical skills with every training experience.

Adult training begins with the Fast Start Orientation program, followed by Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills and the new Leader Specific Training. Further training can include Wood Badge for the 21st Century, which has evolved into the BSA's core leadership skills training course. It focuses on a person's ability to work with and lead groups of youth and adults.
The Outdoors

Scouting provides many opportunities for young men ages 11 through 17 to help plan and participate in rugged outdoor adventures. From day hikes to camporees and summer camp, the troop plans activities that match the interests and abilities of the Scouts. Older Scouts may participate in high-adventure programs such as rock climbing, rappelling, and whitewater rafting. Younger Scouts may attend summer camp and learn teamwork within their patrol and troop. Summer camp blends fun program with advancement requirements to reinforce skills learned throughout the year. In Scouting, fitness is fun with a purpose.

Outdoor Code

As an American, I will do my best to
Be clean in my outdoor manners,
Be careful with fire,
Be considerate in the outdoors, and
Be conservation-minded.

Advancement

The Boy Scouts of America provides recognition for Scout achievements. The advancement program allows Scouts to progress from rank to rank.

A fundamental purpose of advancement is the self-confidence a young man acquires from his participation in a troop.

Requirements serve as the basis for a Boy Scout's rank advancement. The four steps to advancement are learning, testing, reviewing, and recognition.

Many Scouts have been introduced to a lifelong hobby or rewarding career through the merit badge program. Merit badges help Scouts develop physical skills, social skills, and self-reliance.

Personal Growth

Scout-age boys experience dramatic physical and emotional growth. Scouting offers them opportunities to channel much of that change into productive endeavors and to find the answers to many of their questions. Through service projects and Good Turns, Scouts can discover their place in the community. Many Scouting activities allow boys to associate with others from different backgrounds. The religious emblems program offers pathways for Scouts to more deeply understand their duty to God. The troop provides each Scout with an arena in which to explore, to try out new ideas, and to embark on adventures that sometimes have no design other than to have a good time with good people.

The Patrol Method

Patrols are the building blocks of a Boy Scout troop. A patrol is a small group of boys who are similar in age, development, and interests. Working together as a team, patrol members share the responsibility for the patrol's success. They gain confidence by serving in positions of patrol leadership. All patrol members enjoy the friendship, sense of belonging, and achievements of the patrol and of each of its members.

The Order of the Arrow

The Order of the Arrow serves as Scouting's National Honor Society. More than 176,000 members strong, the Order recognizes Scouts and Scouters who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives. The OA can help strengthen troops by providing leadership training and opportunities for OA members and by assisting in summer camp promotion, camporees, Scout shows, and other activities.
Scouts With Special Needs

The basic premise of Scouting for youth with special needs is that every boy wants to participate fully and be respected like every other member of the troop. While there are, by necessity, troops exclusively composed of Scouts with disabilities, experience has shown that Scouting usually succeeds best when every boy is part of a patrol in a regular troop.