BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Webelos to Boy Scout Transition (Bridging the Divide)

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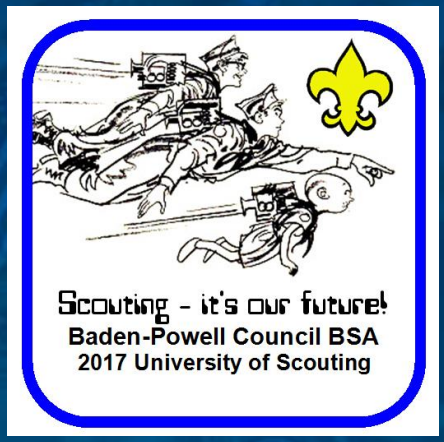

Why Should Cubs Become Scouts?

- Lifelong Benefits of **5** or more years of scouting:
  - Graduate from high school (91% vs 87%)
  - Graduate from college (35% vs 19%)
  - Earn higher annual household incomes ($80,000 vs $61,000)
  - Value family relationships highly (81% vs 72%)
  - Have lifelong friendships (89% vs 74%)
  - Attend religious services (87% vs 77%)
  - Believe helping others should come before one's own self interest (92% vs 83%)

*Ref: “What Will Your Son's Future Hold” (BSA Brochure No. 02-1086)

Cub Scouts <> Boy Scouts

- Cub Scouts:
  - **Adult** Planned, **Adult** Led
  - Purpose is to prepare youth for boy scouts
  - Grouped in dens (all same age / grade)
- Boy Scouts:
  - **Youth** Led, Adult **Guided**
  - Purpose is to prepare youth for adulthood
  - Grouped in patrols (could be mixed age)

Meeting Comparison

CUB SCOUTS:

- Preparation of materials
- Gathering
- Opening
- Talk time
- Activities (crafts, games, etc.)
- Closing
- Review / plan for next meeting

BOY SCOUTS:

- Preopening
- Opening
- Skills instruction
- Patrol meetings
- Interpatrol activity
- Camp out planning
- Announcements
- Closing

Who Plans the Meetings?

CUB SCOUTS:

- Den leaders

BOY SCOUTS:

- Patrol leader conference (PLC):
  - Senior Patrol Leader (SPL)
  - Patrol Leaders (PL)
  - Scoutmaster (advising)

For a trained leader, quality of meetings will be consistent.

SPL and PL's serve for ~6 month, so meeting quality will vary as boys learn to lead

Tom's Observations of the Poor Footing of the Crossover Bridge

- Did not pick a troop that fit scout and family
- Parent commitment / involvement
- Not prepared for summer camp
- Not prepared for youth led program
- No follow up
- Expense

The Importance of the Right Troop

- In my opinion, not picking a troop that fit the scout and his family is the most likely reason a transitioning scout will drop out
- No two troops are the same, each offers something different, with its own personality
- Do not pick a troop just because it has the same unit number as the Pack, or because it has the same Charter Organization - CHOOSE THE TROOP THAT IS RIGHT FOR YOU!!!!!

Choosing the Right Troop

- Visit multiple troops (troop meetings **and** a camp out):
  - Are troop activities the kind you would enjoy (ask for calendar of upcoming events, ask about activities over the past two years)?
  - How do the scouts interact with each other?
  - How do older scouts interact with younger scouts?
  - Are older scouts active in troop (indicates exciting and well rounded troop)?
  - Is the troop youth led?
  - Are you comfortable with adult leaders? Are they trained?
  - What do the parents say (are any at the meeting)?
- The decision is not final: You can change troops at any time, for any reason!!!!

Parent Commitment and Involvement

If the parents are committed and involved in the troop, it is more likely the scout will stay involved

•**Commitment**: Make sure parents know the lifelong benefits of scouting:

- see page 3
- “Values of Scouts: A Study of Ethics and Character”, by Harris Interactive, May 2005, BSA 02-882 for more details)

•**Involvement:** Youth run, adult guided – parents are still critical:

- Assistant scoutmasters
- Committee members
- Fund raising
- Two-deep leadership on campouts and summer camp

Not Prepared for Summer Camp

Even cubs that have done two Pack camp outs a year for 5 years are unlikely to have been tenting for more than two nights, or been away from a parent for a week:

- Attend Cub Scout resident camp at least once (longer duration, often without parents)
- Attend a camp out or two with your chosen troop before summer camp

Not Prepared for Youth Led Program

Used to learning from adults, playing with other youth:

- Use Den Chiefs – get the Webelos listening to and learning from other youth
- Make sure the Webelos (and their parents) know the purpose of a youth led troop and that the scouts will make mistakes as they learn to lead
- Give leadership opportunities within the den to the Webelos so have some experience leading (and to learn empathy)
- Have troop leaders help cubs with Arrow of Light requirements

No Follow Up

- As outlined above, there are many opportunities to fall off the bridge when crossing over to a troop, or to get lost shortly thereafter.
- Parents and youth are unlikely to have gone through this before, whereas the Pack and Troop leaders probably have. It is up to them to follow up with each new scout and see how they are doing, and to suggest remedial action if something is amiss.
- Boy Scouts is the world's best youth program, but just be cause we know it does not mean a new scout recognizes it immediately. Follow up is critical.

Expense

- For a year-round activity, cub scouting is relatively inexpensive.
- Boy scouting tends to be more expensive due to the cost of summer camp and necessary personal camping equipment.
- Costs can be offset via:
  - Use of troop equipment
  - Fund raising
  - Pack money transferred to Troop for Crossing Over Cubs

Resources / References

- "Webelos to Scout Transition" BSA Pamphlet No. 18-086
- BSA "Cubmaster's Disappearing Packet"
- "Crossing Over", by N.H. Francis, *Scouting*, March-April 2015, pg. 28 – 33
- Baden-Powell Council, University of Scouting, 2008 CD-ROM:
  - (WEBELOS2SCOUT-handout.pdf)
  - "Webelos to Boy Scout Transition" Class (Webelos-ScoutTransition.pps)
- Baden-Powell Council, University of Scouting, 2015 CD-ROM:
  - "Webelos to Boy Scout Transition" Class (webelos2scout2011.pps)
  - "Webelos to Scout Transition: A Parent's Guide" (webelos to scout transitio.pdf)
  - Webelos to Scout Transition Plan, (webelos_to_scout.pdf)
- *"Retention: Six reasons Scouts drop out and how you can prevent it", *Bryan on Scouting* (blog), June 1, 2011

Shameless Promotion

- Attend Roundtable – all my best ideas were stolen from someone else

- Have you attended Woodbadge?
  - N3-368-17
    - 1st Weekend: August 18th – 20th
    - 2nd Weekend: September 8th – 10th

Thank You!!!

QUESTIONS?