

THE AIMS OF SCOUTING

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

A goal of the Boy Scouts of America is to help boys develop into honorable men. Scouting principles are incorporated into a boy's activities complementing family, school, community and religious values.

TEACHING LIFE SKILLS IN A **VALUE-BASED** ENVIRONMENT

Scouting is a value-based program with its own code of conduct. The Scout Oath and Law help instill the values of good conduct and honesty. A boy who spends one year in a Scout troop will learn lifetime skills. He will learn basic outdoor skills, first aid, citizenship training, leadership skills, self-reliance, and how to get along with others. Scouting will prepare him to live a more productive and fulfilling life.

Is Scouting educational? You bet it is. Scouts have many opportunities to learn leadership, responsibility, outdoor and social interaction skills. Each boy decides what he will learn and how quickly he will do it. As he progresses, the value of his achievements will be reinforced through recognition of his advancement through Scouting's ranks, positions of leadership in the troop, and accomplishments during outdoor adventures.

Character is what you do when no one is looking.

Character Development

Character encompasses a boy's personal qualities, values, and outlook. Scouting strives to help a boy grow in the following ways:

- He becomes confident but is not conceited.
- He is honest with himself and others.
- His personal appearance shows that he respects himself.
- He develops special skills and interests.
- He can take care of himself, especially in emergencies.
- He can be counted upon to do his best, even in difficult situations.
- He practices his religious beliefs.
- He respects other people regardless of their differences.

Participating in Citizenship

The Scouting program allows boys to practice good citizenship by living and working among others in a troop with rules based on the common good. Each Scout is further encouraged to do the following:

- Learn about and take pride in his national heritage.
- Develop an understanding of the social, economic, and governmental systems of which he is a part.
- Be of service to others.
- Have knowledge of and respect for cultures and social groups other than his own.
- Be aware of community organizations and their functions.
- Appreciate the environment and seek to protect it.

Physical and Mental Fitness

People get the most out of life when they are mentally and physically fit.
Scouting motivates each Scout to work toward these goals:

- Improve his general physical condition through exercise and participation in vigorous activity that includes outdoor adventures and sports.
- Eat properly, get enough sleep, and follow other habits for good health.
- Keep his weight within a healthy range.
- Reject experimenting with tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs, or with other activities that can be harmful to himself or others.
- Strive to be mentally alert.
- Use good judgment and make sound decisions.
- To be resourceful when solving problems.

SCOUT MOTTO: BE PREPARED

SCOUT SLOGAN: DO A GOOD TURN DAILY

SCOUT OATH: **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
REVERENT**

THE SCOUTING METHOD

The Boy Scouts of America program contains eight fundamental elements to satisfy a boys' desire for fun and adventure, and to achieve Scouting's aims of encouraging character development, citizenship, and mental and physical fitness. A Scout troop functions best when all eight elements are employed.

The Elements of Scouting

1. Ideals
2. Patrol method
3. Outdoors
4. Association with adults
5. Personal growth
6. Leadership development
7. Uniform
8. Advancement

Ideals

The ideals of the Boy Scouts of America are spelled out in the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout Motto and Scout Slogan. Boy Scouts and adult leaders who incorporate these ideals into their daily lives are said to have Scout spirit. Scout meetings and activities reinforce the ideals of Scouting guided by a Scoutmaster's Minute message and through new understandings the Scouts discover for themselves.

Patrol Method

Within the larger community of the troop, the patrol is a Scout's "family circle." Often made up of boys who are close in age and experience level, each patrol helps its members develop a sense of pride and identity. The boys themselves elect their patrol leader, divide up the jobs to be done, and share in the satisfaction of accepting and fulfilling group responsibilities.

Outdoors

Boys join Scouting for the challenge, the excitement, and the fun. Much of Scouting is designed to take place outdoors in settings where boys can find real adventure. Outdoor activities put the sizzle into Scouting. They keep boys coming back for more. A troop with a strong outdoor program is well on its way to finding success in all areas.

Association with Adults

Boys learn a great deal by watching how adults conduct themselves. Scout leaders can be positive role models for the members of their troops. Scoutmasters and adult leaders in the troop who is to listen to boys, encourage them, and take a sincere interest in them can make a profound difference in their lives.

Personal Growth

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

Leadership Development

Leadership is a skill that can be learned best by doing it. Every boy in a patrol and troop will find that he is filling leadership positions of increasing responsibility. Through leadership experiences, boys learn planning, organization, and decision-making. For many boys, accepting the role of patrol leader is the first real leadership opportunity they have ever had. Discovering that they can do the job will go a long way toward giving them the confidence and ability to be leaders in the future.

In Scouting, boys learn to be effective leaders . . . and to be good followers.

Uniform

Since 1910, the Boy Scout uniform has been a recognizable part of the American scene. Wearing the uniform helps boys develop a sense of belonging to their patrol and troop. It reinforces the fact that all members of the BSA are equal to one another. People seeing a boy in a Scout uniform expect someone of good character who is prepared to the best of his ability to help those around him. Likewise, Scoutmasters in full uniform set a good example for members of their troops and are also seen as community leaders fulfilling a very important role.

Advancement

The Boy Scouts of America believes that a boy should receive recognition for his achievements. The requirements for the ranks of Tenderfoot through First Class prepare boys to take full advantage of all that Scouting has to offer. Earning merit badges allows them to explore many fields, helps them round out their skills, and perhaps introduces them to subjects that will become lifelong interests and rewarding careers. In addition, advancement sets a pattern of setting positive goals and reaching them throughout life. Star, Life, and Eagle rank requirements focus on service to others and developing leadership skills.

Advancement is a natural outcome of participation in scouting. A boy whose Scouting experience incorporates the BSA ideals, the patrol method, the outdoors, association with adults, personal growth, leadership development, and the uniform will almost certainly find himself moving steadily along the advancement trail.