

GIANT LIST OF WAYS TO INVITE YOUTH TO JOIN SCOUTING

The following ideas are things that leaders and Scouts can do to invite youth to join scouting. Some ideas may seem obvious but they are easy to do and are great conversation pieces while creating awareness of Cub Scouting in your community.

1. Cub Scouts and Leaders “Sport” your uniform often

Materials needed: Your uniform!

Timing: Whenever possible... be creative!

Steps: Wearing the uniform is like a walking billboard, and can grab the attention of youth and adults. The uniform also serves as a conversation piece. Scouts and leaders should wear their uniforms to school, church, the grocery store, library, sporting events, any place you can think of! The uniform (or Scout attire) is a great way to show the presence of Cub Scouts in your community and spread excitement. Be sure that every member of your pack wears their uniform to school on the day of your Sign-up Night and to school the days of your pack meetings and den meetings. Remember that the uniform is not complete without the person inside. Be knowledgeable about what all of the patches mean and share the excitement of Scouting.

2. Encourage Cub Scouts to talk about Scout with their friends

Materials needed: Experiences and stories that show they enjoy Scouting.

Timing: As often as they can!

Steps: Word of mouth is one of the most powerful and lasting forms of advertising. Kids talking to others about the fun they have is a great way to spread excitement among youth. Use the recruiter patch or another incentive program that rewards your Scouts if they bring a friend to join Cub Scouting.

3. Adults should do this too (Word of Mouth)

Materials needed: Voice, conversation skills and excitement of Scouting.

Timing: As often as possible.

Steps: Cub Scout families consistently see the value of Scouting in their own lives and by this they are our best salespeople. Share Scouting’s benefits and excitement with other parents. Most families are looking for programs filled with excitement and opportunities for leadership development and positive values. Most families are involved in lots of activities including sports and church. Use these forums to interact with parents and share Cub Scout stories.

4. “Show and Tell”

Materials needed: Photographs, awards, uniform, pinewood derby car and other exciting visuals.

Timing: Before the pack’s Sign-up Night and anytime during the school year.

Steps: Encourage youth to use Cub Scouting as a part of their Show and Tell opportunities at school. Peer to peer recruitment is very successful and this is a great forum for Scouts to share their stories and the excitement of Cub Scouting. Be sure that they are prepared with a story or exciting information. If possible, provide stickers or other handouts for the scouts to distribute at the conclusion of his presentation.

5. Develop a Pack Information Sheet

Materials needed: Paper, pen or computer, key information on your pack. Example flyers are available on our Council website.

Timing: Have sheet prepared to give (email, fax or send) to any interested family at any time (in addition to your Sign-up Night).

Steps to Deliver: This is your chance to brag about your pack. Include items such as time, date and location of pack meetings, list of upcoming events, Den Leaders and Committee Members' names and phone numbers, and other exciting details about why you are involved, including pictures. Provide your sponsoring organization a copy of the sheet so that they can answer any questions they might receive regarding your pack. Make sure that your pack committee and parents have copies of the sheet to distribute as well.

6. Sign-up Night Information Flyer

Materials needed: Work with your District Executive to order Council provided flyers, or create your own. Be sure to include the date, time, and location of your meeting and contact name and phone number.

Timing/Steps: Plan your Sign-up Night within the first few weeks of the school year. Meet with facilities contact early to get your meeting booked. Order your flyers online or through your District Executive at your District's Membership Kick-off. Before your Sign-up Night, deliver flyers to the school (or schools) and any other outlets including churches and neighboring schools that do not host packs, seven to ten days prior to the meetings. A second flyer should be distributed the day of the event, just as a friendly reminder! (The second flyer should be a different color and design, so teachers and administrator do not think it is a duplication of the first flyer.)

Tip: If you are delivering the flyers to schools, offer to pre-stack groups of flyers for the individual teacher's boxes. This will save time for the office staff and help to ensure their delivery.

7. Personalized Invitation or Letter (Direct mail approach)

Materials: List of all first through fifth grad youth, envelopes, stamps and Cub Scout stationary or cards. Work with the school officials, PTA, church or sports teams to secure list of names and address.

Timing: Should be mailed or delivered seven to ten days prior to Sign-up Night.

Steps: Youth love to receive their own mail. Personalize a letter or card including a description of Cub Scouting, date, time and location of Sign-up Night and contact name and information. If addresses are unavailable, or postage is too costly, seek permission to deliver the personalized invitations to the classrooms. Make sure that cards or letters are individually addressed to each youth.

Tip: If you have access to email address, email the invitation!

8. Cub Scout Stickers

Materials: Cub Scout recruitment stickers including time and date of Sign-up Night or other event. Stickers are available at the Council Service Center.

Timing: Use in the weeks and days prior to your Sign-up Night, pack meeting or other event.

Steps: Contact your District Executive or the Council Service Center to pick up recruitment stickers. Hand out the stickers at your school visits, school open house or any other opportunity where youth will be present.

9. Telephone Call to Families

Materials: Telephone, list of phone numbers and volunteers.

Timing: Two or three days prior to your Sign-up Night.

Steps: A telephone call to the parents of a potential Cub Scout is a very effective way to recruit new families. This personal contact works very well. Be prepared to answer questions they might have and share the specific benefits of Cub Scouting. Names and numbers may be obtained by using school, church or other organization directory, telephone book white pagers, or the internet. Be sure to be courteous and identify yourself and what association you might have with them. For example, "our sons are in the same class at school." Due to the high number of phone calls, be sure to split up the list among the leaders in your pack. Below is a sample telephone conversation script.

Sample Telephone Script: "Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling to invite you to our Cub Scout Sign-up Night this Thursday. My son _____ is in the same class as your son _____." *Share the following Cub Scout facts:*

1. Cub Scouting is a family program
2. Cub Scouts reinforces the values of "doing your best"
3. Educators call Cub Scouting the #1 extra curricular program in America today.
4. The program helps to reinforce the class curriculum
5. Cub Scouting is fun!

Close the call by saying, "We look forward to seeing you at the meeting. How many from your family do you think will attend?"

10. Display Cases and Bulletin Boards

Materials: Pack calendar with contact names and telephone numbers, photographs, awards, pinewood derby cars, ribbons and any other exciting visuals.

Timing: Promotion of Cub Scouting at the beginning of the school year is very important. This is the time of year when most families decide to join new activities. If possible the display should be maintained year-round and changed monthly.

Steps: Seek permission from the school, church, recreation center or other organization to use the display case. Have a person from your pack responsible for setting up the display and changing it once a month during the year. Each month should have a monthly theme with catch phrases to attract attention. The display items should go along with the monthly themes. The display should be fun and informative and create a sense of excitement about the Scouting program. If access to the display case all year round is not possible, using it in the beginning of the school year would be the best time.

11. Public Announcement

Materials: Use an announcement video from the BSA Brand Center, pre-record your own announcement or go in live.

Timing: The week of the Sign-up Night and throughout the year, especially the day of pack meetings.

Steps: Visit with the school regarding the playing of the video or allowing a leader to make a special announcement. Deliver the video in a timely manner with instructions and a thank you. Following is a sample announcement if you are not using a pre-recorded video.

Sample Announcement: "All youth are invited to bring their parents and come and learn about Cub Scout Pack # that meets right here at anyplace Church. If you like hiking, swimming, field trips, and having fun with your friends, Cub Scouting is for you! The meeting will start at 7:00 PM in the cafeteria, the place where you eat lunch. Hope to see you there."

12. School, Church, Community or Business Newsletters and Websites

Materials: Information or announcement regarding your Cub Scout Pack.

Timing: Anytime throughout the year, especially in the first month of school or a week or two prior to your Sign-up Night.

Steps: Speak with the person in charge of the newsletter to find out how and when to submit an article or announcement. If your school hosts their own website, post information there as well. Be sure to begin promoting your Sign-up Night two weeks prior to the date. Include information that will attract the readers' attention while also sharing logistical information regarding the pack.

13. School, Church and Civic Functions

Materials: Display table, pack picture board, Cub Scout and Adult Leader applications, sign-in sheets, copies of the pack's yearly program, pinewood derby cars, rockets, pack flag with ribbons earned, flyers with next Sign-up Night/pack meeting information, pack leadership roster.

Timing: Set-up display at all school open houses, Back-to-Sign-up Nights, curriculum nights, carnivals, Parent/Teacher conferences, and other church or civic events.

Steps: Secure permission from the school principal or church pastor prior to the event. Call early to secure the best, most visible location. Set-up the display 45 minutes to one hour prior to the event to ensure completion before the arrival of prospective families. Uniformed leaders and Scouts should staff displays. Leaders should be informed of Pack operations to be able to answer questions. Leaders should introduce themselves to prospective families as they arrive and should invite the families to join at that time, or sign-in to receive more information. Make follow-up calls with those families that signed in to personally invite them to your upcoming Sign-up Night or pack meeting. These events are great public exposure for your program.

14. Teacher, Principal, Coach or Pastor Endorsements

Materials: A highly influential teacher, member of the PTA, principal, coach or pastor that has his/her finger on the pulse of the school, church, and community.

Timing: Teachers, principals, pastors and coaches should begin endorsing Cub Scouts during the first week of school. Statements of support are extremely helpful before, during and after your Sign-up Night.

Steps: It is important to educate administrators on the benefits of Cub Scouting to families, the school and community. Identify a teacher, principal, coach or pastor to make a statement of support whether that is through the newsletter, during an assembly or other public forum or at your Sign-up Night. If you do a personalized letter, use a quote from the individual or have the letter come from them. The endorsement from a trustworthy person is valuable to the success of new family recruitment. Past and present experience with Scouting adds credibility.

15. Yard Signs

Materials: Yard signs with information including Sign-up Night date, time, location, with a contact person and phone number and Cub Scout logo. Print on colorful material.

Timing: Post signs prior to the beginning of the school year and all year long.

Steps: Be sure to be aware of any regulations regarding yard signs. Identify a person in your pack that lives close to the school or on a high traffic area. Post as many signs as possible and at strategic locations within the community including intersections and yards. If a school, church, recreation center or other organization will allow it post signs there too. What if parents of every Scout or former Scout put up a yard sign to promote Sign-up Night in your community?

16. Special Event

Materials: Cub Scout posters, general information, flyers, stickers, sign-in sheets, and Cub Scout and leader applications.

Timing: If you are planning a special event that you will invite families to attend, invitations should be mailed and hung two weeks prior to the event. A personal follow up as the event nears will also remind the family of your event. Make sure that you start planning the event well before the chosen date so that you have plenty of time to ensure its success.

Steps: Secure a location and date for the special event. Make sure you have a dynamic agenda and activities. If you are inviting families to join, create and distribute the invitations.

Tip: Host your pinewood derby at the shopping mall and invite families from your school and neighborhood to participate. By hosting an event at a public place like a shopping mall, you will reach additional families. Other ideas include hosting a booth or activity at community fairs, festivals or other events.

17. Church, School or Business Marquee

Materials: Catchy information or message on marquee.

Timing: Throughout the year by especially to promote your Sign-up Night or other special event.

Steps: Identify a marquee in high traffic areas, school or other organizations. Speak with the person in charge of the marquee or sign to post your message. Be sure to be clear on the duration of your use and any other requirements. Due to limited space, message as clear as "Join Cub Scouts Here September 15, 7 PM" will catch people's attention. If a school has a scrolling sign in the lunchroom, messages may also be posted there.

18. BeaScout.org page updated

Materials: Computer, internet skills, internet provider

Timing: Year-round

Steps: make sure to keep your unit's beascout.org page updated. This is done through my.scouting.org by the cubmaster, committee chair, or chartered representative. You can also turn-on online applications and provide great information regarding your Cub Scout Pack including meeting time and location, leadership and fun activities your pack does.

19. Pack Website

Materials: Computer, internet skills, internet provider

Timing: Year-round

Steps: Build a pack website including pertinent information regarding your Cub Scout Pack including photographs, program calendar, how to join, and the benefits and excitement of Cub Scouting. Ask school, church and other community organizations to provide a link to your site and to publicize your address. Refer parents to the Pine Tree Council Website, www.pinetreebsa.org, for more information.

20. Announcements!

Where: in church, neighborhood, subdivision, company, city, school district, and recreation center newsletter

Material: Pertinent information regarding your Cub Scout Pack.

Timing: Promote your Sign-up Night at least a month to two weeks ahead and other pack activities in these newsletters.

Steps: Ask the appropriate person how to get an invitation/story/announcement in each publication. Determine when the deadline for each publication is. Create something that is interesting to read! Make people want to join Scouting! Be sure to thank the organization for its Support.

21. Scout talks at Sunday School, Classrooms and Lunchroom Visits

Materials: Scout uniform, copy of invitation flyer, stickers with Sign-up Night information, pinewood derby cars or other Scouting visuals.

Timing: The day before or the day of the Sign-up Night.

Steps: Work with the church or school to arrange these visits. If doing classroom visits, ask for a map so that you don't miss any classrooms. Arrive on time and check in at the office. Remember to be polite and let the teacher or pastor introduce you. Ask the teacher for input on where to stand. This time is precious so be sure to keep your speech simple, short, fun, positive, and to the point. When you are finished, give each youth the Sign-up Night sticker and then thank the teacher. When visits are complete, check out with the office. Be sure to thank the teachers and the school staff.

Sample Scout Talk Presentation:

"Hey everyone, I'm John Doe with Pack 123 and I'm here to invite all of you to become a Cub Scout! We're going to play a little game to help teach you what activities Cub Scouts do! This game requires no talking. Are you ready?"

Ok, raise your hand if you like to_____.

(Go swimming, Go Camping, Go Fishing, shoot bb-guns, learn about animals, shoot bows and arrows, rock climb etc.)

These are all things that Cub Scouts do! And we want each of you to become a Cub Scout! So, tonight at 7:00pm, right here in your school cafeteria you can sign up to be a Cub Scout! I'm going to give each of you a sticker and a flyer that has all the information on it. Once again, it's tonight at 7:00pm, right here in your school cafeteria. So, when you get home, show your parents this sticker and flyer and tell them that you want to be a Cub Scout!"

22. Business Window/ Counter Displays

Materials: Cub Scout poster or brochure with contact name and other pertinent information.

Timing: Year-round, but specifically the weeks prior to your Sign-up Night.

Steps: Ask local merchants to support Scouting in your area by placing a poster in their windows or placing brochures in their organizations. Work with them closely on how long they will allow the items to be placed and any other requirements they might have.

23. Principal, Pastor and Institutional Head Visits

Materials: Handouts on Aims & Methods of Scouting, a clear written statement of objectives on Chartered Partner support of the Cub Scouting program and a list of benefits and service provided through a support of program.

Timing: Chartered partners should be contacted to schedule a face-to-face meeting (three weeks minimum) prior to the pack's Sign-up Night.

Steps: Once your meeting has been scheduled, make sure your documents and other supporting materials are in order. Be able to deliver positive benefits that are assets for the institution. Secure date of in-school visit. Classroom presentations are your preferred method, and permitted, ask for permission to recruit by grad level. Be sure to have stickers for each youth's shirt and additional flyers to hand out. When finished with your presentation, remember to thank each teacher for their cooperation. Drop by the office; give them a thank you card and/or token of your appreciation.

24. News releases to Local Newspapers and Community Cable Stations

Materials: Creativity, and essential pack information

Timing: Timing is everything! It is essential to find out when the paper you are working with is printed and what the deadlines are. An article too soon will be forgotten and an article too late will not be published.

Steps: The first line of the release needs to be a catchy, clear statement. The information needs to be clear and concise. The article should have all pertinent information such as pack number such as pack number, meeting location, directions if needed, time and a contact name and number (with their permission). Make the release one page. A call to follow-up is always a good idea. The release can be used to promote your Sign-up Night or to feature a community service project, award, etc.

25. Halloween Candy

Materials: Scout uniform, labels with "Join Scouting!" and phone numbers of the Council or a member of your pack, markers, mini-chocolate bars, and large bowl.

Timing: October 31, afternoon through evening.

Steps: Purchase several bags of mini-chocolate bars; print out sheets of labels that say "Join Scouting" with phone numbers. Using markers, add a dash of color to the labels, carefully place labels on the candy bars, dress up in your Scouting uniform, and when trick-or-treaters come by, welcome them and give them a Scouting candy with a smile! Preparing the candy could be a fun den activity.

26. Follow-up Sign-up Night

Materials: Recruitment flyers with date, time, location with contact information and stickers.

Timing: Should be scheduled immediately following the conclusion of the first Sign-up Night.

Steps: Be sure to have all families that attend your first Sign-up Night sign-in. Prior to your second meeting follow-up with families that attended the original meeting by did not join. Inevitably there will be families that cannot attend your first scheduled Sign-up Night. Many families are not aware that they can join Scouting year-round, and think that if they missed the first meeting that they are out of luck. There may also be parents who attended the first Sign-up Night, but were indecisive about joining. With the knowledge that there is a good number of youth who still have the interest to join, it is important that a second Sign-up Night be scheduled. Make sure that the flyers are printed with all the pertinent information, and that the school receives and delivers the flyers. Be sure to have sign-in sheets at all meetings so that follow-up may be made with interested families.

Thanks for your efforts....

As Cub Scout leaders, you are very important to the success of the program. We applaud and thank you for taking an active interest in your community's youth.

Our Council, your District Executive, and your unit commissioner are here to support you and your Cub Scout Pack. They are available to assist you with all aspects of your pack including recruiting, training, program planning and fundraising.