

# CUB SCOUTING: PURPOSES, METHODS, AND IDEALS

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## INTRODUCTION TO CUB SCOUTING

**W**elcome to Cub Scouting! You are one of more than half a million adult leaders working with more than 2 million Cub Scouts in the United States today.

Boys join Cub Scouting for excitement, to be with friends, and to have fun. But “having fun” includes more than just actually having a good time. It also means feeling accepted by a group regardless of race, class, religion, culture, or any other elements. *Fun* also means boys discovering that they can perform challenging tasks.

When Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell founded Scouting, he drew on his military experience. He recognized that boys would want to become Scouts because they are “keen for adventure and outdoor sports...they want to have fun and learn how to live outdoors.” He realized that Scouting was a game with a purpose—a game in which the purpose of Scouting manifests itself today in the ideals and values found in the Cub Scout Promise, the Law of the Pack, the Scout Oath and Law, the Scout motto, and the Scout slogan.

Cub Scouting is a character-building organization that embraces the values of citizenship, compassion, cooperation, courage, faith, health and fitness, honesty, perseverance, posi-

tive attitude, resourcefulness, respect, and responsibility (see “Cub Scouting’s 12 Core Values,” page 4-2). It is expected that boys in Scouting will not only have fun and experience adventure but will also accept Scouting’s value system. High-quality leadership is the key to youth acquiring and internalizing the ideals and values of the Boy Scouts of America.

Adults become Cub Scout leaders for a variety of reasons. Many join the Scouting movement when their sons become old enough to join a pack. Some were Scouts or members of similar youth organizations during their own youth. Others are recruited into taking a leadership position. Yet others think it is the right thing to do. Regardless of why adults join Scouting, new volunteers become confident and proficient through training, and through support from other adult Scouters. More than ever before, youth need to develop positive relationships with caring, concerned, and compassionate adults.

## THE PURPOSES OF CUB SCOUTING

Since 1930, the BSA has helped younger boys through Cub Scouting, which is a year-round family-oriented part of the BSA program designed for boys who are in first through fifth

grades (or are 7, 8, 9, and 10 years of age). Parents, leaders, and organizations work together to achieve the 10 purposes of Cub Scouting.

### The Purposes of Cub Scouting

1. Character Development
2. Spiritual Growth
3. Good Citizenship
4. Sportsmanship and Fitness
5. Family Understanding
6. Respectful Relationships
7. Personal Achievement
8. Friendly Service
9. Fun and Adventure
10. Preparation for Boy Scouts

All the activities leaders plan and boys enjoy should relate to one or more of these purposes. These purposes help us achieve the overall aims of the BSA of character development, citizenship training, and personal fitness.

## THE METHODS OF CUB SCOUTING

Cub Scouting uses eight specific methods to achieve Scouting's aims of helping boys build character, learn the responsibilities of citizenship, and develop personal fitness. These methods are incorporated into all aspects of the program. Through these methods, Cub Scouting happens in the lives of boys and their families.

### The Methods of Cub Scouting

1. Living the Ideals
2. Belonging to a Den
3. Using Advancement
4. Involving Family and Home
5. Participating in Activities
6. Serving Home and Neighborhood
7. Wearing The Uniform
8. Making Character Connections

#### 1. Living the Ideals

Practices such as the Cub Scout Promise, the Law of the Pack, the Cub Scout sign, handshake, motto, and salute help establish and reinforce shared values and ideals of Cub Scouting.

#### 2. Belonging to a Den

Boys need and want to belong to a group. The den is the place where belonging is created through practicing skills, exploring interests, learning values, and forming friendships. In the den, boys are given opportunities to work with others, to do their best, and to have fun.

#### 3. Using Advancement

Positive recognition is important for boys and their families. The advancement plan provides fun and challenging experiences, by helping boys gain self-motivation and a sense of personal achievement, while strengthening family relationships.

#### 4. Involving Family and Home

Family involvement is an essential part of Cub Scouting. Parents, guardians, siblings, and other family members provide leadership, support, and resources. Active family participation ensures that boys have a successful experience in Cub Scouting.

#### 5. Participating in Activities

Boys participate in a variety of den and pack activities, such as games, projects, skits, songs, outdoor activities, and service experiences. Cub Scout activity programs provide opportunities for growth in character development, citizenship training, and physical fitness.

#### 6. Serving Neighborhood and Community

Boys are connected to their neighborhoods and communities through their activities and service. In turn, this network of resources supports the growth and development of the boys.

#### 7. Wearing the Uniform

Scout uniforms help build pride, loyalty, and self-respect. Wearing the uniform encourages a neat appearance, a sense of belonging, and a shared identity for both the boys and the leaders.

#### 8. Making Character Connections

Throughout the program, leaders learn to identify and utilize character lessons in activities, so that boys can learn to know, commit, and practice the twelve core values of Cub Scouting. Character Connections are included in all the methods of Cub Scouting.

# CUB SCOUTING IDEALS

The Cub Scout Promise, the Law of the Pack, and the Cub Scout motto are ideals that are related to everything a Cub Scout does. These ideals are not tests to be passed in order to qualify for induction; they are principles that boys learn and incorporate into their everyday lives.

Take advantage of every opportunity to mention how an activity or service project in which the boys are involved embodies or shows an aspect of the Cub Scout Promise, the Law of the Pack, or the Cub Scout motto. Help them see that living the ideals of Cub Scouting is a good way to live.

## The Cub Scout Promise

I,     [name]    , promise to do my best  
To do my duty to God and my country,  
To help other people, and  
To obey the Law of the Pack.

This promise helps Cub Scouts develop a sense of spiritual awareness, loyalty, unselfishness, self-discipline, and service to others.

As a leader, your obligation to a boy joining Cub Scouting is to lay a firm foundation for the promise he will make each time he recites the Cub Scout Promise. This Promise, with the words changed slightly, will follow him into Boy Scouting and Venturing, and perhaps into a leadership role.

As you talk with a boy who has chosen to join Cub Scouting, you have an opportunity to provide a good influence when his young mind is eager to learn. And later, as you work with him in den and pack meetings, you will have a chance to reinforce his understanding of the Cub Scout Promise. You will have many opportunities to remind him to “do his duty,” “do his best,” and “help other people.” Explain the words in simple language that he will understand.

**I promise**—A promise is keeping your word. It’s not right to make a promise and then not do your best to keep it.

**To do my best**—Your best is not the same as someone else’s best. Try to better your own record, rather than merely trying to do better than someone else. It makes you feel good to do your best.

**To do my duty to God**—This phrase means to remember to thank God for good friends, good health, and all the things he provides for us. We should also thank him for our family and all others who love us and help us. Going to worship services is another way of doing our duty to God. We should respect other people’s religious beliefs even if they are different from our own.

**And my country**—Duty to country starts with being a good citizen. This means caring about the people in our communities and helping those in need. Good citizenship also means obeying the law and using our country’s resources carefully.

We show love for our country by respecting and saluting the U.S. flag and standing at attention when our national anthem, “The Star-Spangled Banner,” is played.

**To help other people**—This phrase means helping at home by doing things like taking out the garbage or making your bed without grumbling. It can also include offering to be friends with a new student in school, making holiday cards for older people, or raking leaves or clearing snow for a neighbor. It can mean providing games for children living in shelters or collecting food for people who don’t have enough to eat. Helping others is not always an easy thing to do. We must think about other people instead of ourselves—even when it might be inconvenient. It means treating other people as we would want them to treat us.

**And to obey the Law of the Pack**—*Obey* means to do what you’re supposed to do, and to do what parents and other adults ask you to do. When you obey the law, you do what the law says. A Cub Scout should follow the laws of the land, the rules in his school, the rules in his home, and the rules in his den and pack.

## The Law of the Pack

The Cub Scout follows Akela.  
The Cub Scout helps the pack go.  
The pack helps the Cub Scout grow.  
The Cub Scout gives goodwill.

**The Cub Scout follows Akela**—In Cub Scouting, *Akela* (pronounced Ah-KAY-la) means “good leader.” To a Cub Scout, Akela is a parent, teacher, religious leader, or Cub Scout leader. Akela is anyone who has shown ability and willingness to be a good leader for Cub Scouts to follow. (See “The Story of Akela and Mowgli” in the *Wolf Cub Scout Book*.)

One must first learn to be a good follower in order to be a good leader. The key word in this phrase of the Law of the Pack is *follows*. When following, a Cub Scout should choose a good leader to emulate.

**The Cub Scout helps the pack go**—Cub Scouts help the pack go by being loyal members, attending all meetings, following the leaders, and making the pack better because they belong. It means doing one’s share. By helping the pack, Cub Scouts have more fun and feel satisfied. The key word in this phrase is *helps*.

**The pack helps the Cub Scout grow**—Cub Scouting helps boys grow into better people. They learn how to do new things and to reach out to others. The key word in this phrase is *grow*.

**The Cub Scout gives goodwill**—It’s a good feeling for a boy to do what he is expected to do. It’s an even better feeling when he does more than he is expected to do. Help boys

look for ways to make other people happy. The small things are just as important as the big ones. Anything that makes life a little easier or more pleasant for someone else is goodwill. The key word in this phrase is *gives*.

### The Cub Scout Motto

Do Your Best.

Doing your best is one of the most important things for the Cub Scout to learn. Boys often become so interested in winning that they fail to see the importance of doing the best they can at everything. One boy's best might be quite different from another boy's best. Help the boys see that no one can find fault with them if they always do their best.

## CUB SCOUTING BASICS

### The Cub Scout Sign



Cub Scout sign

The Cub Scout sign is made with the right arm held high and straight up above the shoulder, with the index and middle fingers forming a V.

The other fingers are held with the thumb.

The two extended fingers stand for the parts of the Cub Scout Promise, "to help other people" and "to obey." They also stand for the two alert ears of a wolf. This is the sign of Cub Scouts all over the world.

The Cub Scout sign should be given when repeating the Cub Scout Promise or Law of the Pack. It is also used in the Living Circle and other ceremonies.

Use the sign to get the boys' attention or to encourage boys to be quiet in meetings. When you raise the sign, boys should become quiet and make the sign themselves. Reinforce this use of the sign by complimenting the first Cub Scout who reacts by making the sign when you do.

### The Cub Scout Salute

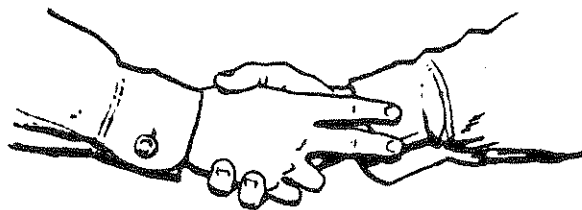


Cub Scout salute

The salute is made by joining the index and middle fingers of the right hand (holding the other fingers with the thumb) and touching them to the cap visor or forehead. The hand is held the same as for the Cub Scout sign, except the two fingers are together.

The Cub Scout salute is used to salute the flag when in uniform and to show respect to den and pack leaders. It can be used when greeting other Cub Scouts.

### The Cub Scout Handshake



Cub Scout handshake

The handshake is done by putting the index and middle fingers of the right hand against the other person's wrist when shaking hands.

Cub Scouts and Cub Scout leaders use this handshake everywhere in the United States. The handshake signifies that those who use it help others and obey the Law of the Pack.

### The Living Circle

The Living Circle is an important Cub Scout ceremony that may be used occasionally as an opening or closing for a den or pack meeting. It reminds the boy of the friendships he is making and links him with all other Cub Scouts.



Living Circle



Left-hand thumb grip

To form a Living Circle, Cub Scouts (and leaders) face inward in a close circle. With the right hand, each person gives the Cub Scout sign. They turn slightly to the right and extend left hands into the circle. Each thumb in the circle is pointed to the right, and each person grasps the thumb of the person on his left, making a complete Living Circle handclasp. The Promise, Law of the Pack, or motto can then be repeated.

The Living Circle also can be used by moving all of the left hands up and down in a pumping motion while the Cub Scouts say, “A-ke-la! We-e-e-ll do-o-o ou-r-r best,” snapping into a circle of individual salutes at the word *best*.

## Webelos

Webelos (pronounced WEE-buh-lows) is a word that has two meanings for Cub Scouts:

- Webelos Scouts are the older boys in the pack who are members of a Webelos den, where they start preparing to become Boy Scouts.
- Webelos is also the name of the badge of rank a Webelos Scout can earn.

Webelos means “We’ll Be Loyal Scouts” because the word is formed by using the first letters of the words in that phrase. It reminds Cub Scouts that they will someday be Boy Scouts.

## The Blue and Gold Colors

Blue and gold are the Cub Scout colors. They have special meaning, which you and the boys should understand and which will help boys see beyond the fun of Cub Scouting to its ultimate goals:

- The blue stands for truth and spirituality, steadfast loyalty, and the sky above.
- The gold stands for warm sunlight, good cheer, and happiness.

## CUB SCOUTING: WHAT IT’S ALL ABOUT

### Cub Scouting Is for Boys

Cub Scouting is for boys, and each boy is different. Cub Scouts come in all sizes, shapes, and colors and from a variety of backgrounds. There are no “average” boys. Cub Scouting is easily adaptable to a boy with a physical, mental, or emotional limitation, just as it is adaptable to boys who come from low-income, urban, or rural areas. There is little doubt that Cub Scouting can be one of the most valuable aids to the physical and mental development of a youngster with special needs.

### Cub Scouting Is for Families

The family is an important influence on our nation’s youth. There are many different types of family structures in today’s world. Scouting is a support to all types of families as well as to organizations to which families belong. We believe in involving families in the training of youth, and we are sensitive to the needs of present-day families. Cub Scouting provides opportunities for family members to work and play together, to have fun together, and to get to know each other a little better.

### Cub Scouting Is Fun

Boys join Cub Scouting because they want to have fun. For boys, however, fun means a lot more than just having a good time. Fun is a boy’s code word for the satisfaction he gets from meeting challenges, having friends, feeling good, and feeling he is important to other people. While the boys are having fun and doing things they like to do, they also learn new things, discover and master new skills, gain self-confidence, and develop strong friendships. Cub Scouting is a positive place where friends and leaders accept and support a boy.

## Cub Scouting Has Ideals

Cub Scouting has ideals of spiritual and character growth, citizenship training, and personal fitness. The Cub Scout Promise is a pledge of duty to God and family. The Law of the Pack is a simple formula for good Cub Scouting and good citizenship. The Cub Scout motto, "Do Your Best," is a code of excellence. Symbols, such as the Cub Scout sign, Cub Scout salute, and the Living Circle, help boys feel a part of a distinct group and add to the appeal of belonging to a widely respected organization.

## Cub Scouting Provides Adventure

Cub Scouting helps fulfill a boy's desire for adventure and allows him to use his vivid imagination while taking part in skits, games, field trips, service projects, outdoor activities, and more. The use of a monthly theme lets a boy play the role of an astronaut, clown, explorer, scientist, or other exciting character. Boys find adventure in exploring the outdoors, learning about nature, and gaining a greater appreciation for our beautiful world.

## Cub Scouting Helps Boys Develop Interests and Skills

Cub Scouts learn many useful skills. They develop ability and dexterity, and they learn to use tools and to follow directions. Recognition and awards encourage them to learn about a variety of subjects, such as conservation, safety, physical fitness, community awareness, sports, and religious activities. These interests might become a hobby or even a career later in life.

## Cub Scouting Has an Advancement Plan

The advancement plan recognizes a boy's efforts and achievements. It provides fun for the boys, teaches them to do their best, and helps strengthen understanding as family members work with boys on advancement requirements. Badges are awarded to recognize advancement, and boys like to receive and wear these badges. The real benefit comes from the worthwhile things the boy learns while he is earning the badges, as his self-confidence and self-esteem grow.

## Cub Scouts Belong

Belonging is important to boys. They like to be accepted as part of a group. In Cub Scouting, boys belong to a small group called a *den* where they take part in interesting and meaningful activities with their friends. In the den they learn sportsmanship, good citizenship, and loyalty. They learn how to get along with others and how to do their best for themselves and their den. Cub Scouts also belong to a *pack*, which is a larger group made up of several dens.

## Cub Scouting Teaches Boys to Reach Out

Cub Scouting provides opportunities for boys to reach out into a wider community while maintaining a link with secure foundations such as the home, a religious organization, and a school. Cub Scouting helps boys become full members of their communities as they take part in service projects and other community-related activities. They get to know their community better and recognize the importance of good citizenship.

## Cub Scouting Teaches Duty to God and Country

The BSA believes that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God, and encourages both youth and adult leaders to be faithful in their religious duties.

The Scouting movement has long been known for service to others. Scouting believes that patriotism plays a significant role in preparing our nation's youth to become useful and participating citizens. A Cub Scout learns his duty to God, country, others, and self.

## Cub Scouting Provides a Year-Round Program

Cub Scout packs renew their charters every year, and members are registered for one year at a time. Boys are entitled to a full year of program fun and activities. Summer den and pack activities are informal and often held outdoors, and families are often asked to help with the leadership. Even though some families will be on vacation at various times during the summer, enough people will be around to enjoy and benefit from the activities. Boys have more free time during the summer, so it is a great time for Cub Scouting.

Districts and councils help support the year-round pack program by providing opportunities such as day camp and resident camp.

## Cub Scouting Helps Organizations

Cub Scouting is a resource program for community organizations. The Scouting program is available to organizations with similar interests and goals. They can use the program to further their outreach and help them achieve their objectives for young people in the community.

## Summary

Cub Scouting provides a framework with guidelines upon which we build. When we are satisfied that we have built a full and rich program that is varied and exciting for the boys, we have just begun. All of the activities will affect the growth and development of boys. We must remember that our ultimate objectives are *citizenship training, character development, and personal fitness.*

As a worldwide brotherhood, Scouting is unique. It is based on the principles of loving and serving God, of human dignity and the rights of individuals, and of recognizing the obligation of members to develop and use their potential. It is a movement dedicated to bringing out the best in people. Cub Scouting doesn't emphasize winning as an end result, but rather the far more demanding task of doing one's best.

When Scouting can help nurture courage and kindness and allow boys to play, to laugh, to develop their imaginations, and to express their feelings, then we will have helped them grow. We want boys to become useful and stable individuals who are aware of their own potential. Helping a boy to learn the value of his own worth is the greatest gift we can give him.

