

PROGRAM PLANNING

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PROGRAM PLANNING

Program planning should be an important concern of all den and pack leaders. Successful program planning involves good leadership and exciting program activities. The adult leaders furnish the leadership, and the resources—such as *Cub Scout Program Helps*, the *Webelos Leader Guide*, the *Cub Scout Leader How-To Book*, and *Scouting* and *Boys' Life* magazines—furnish the program ideas.

In planning a Cub Scout program or activity, remember:
KISMIF—Keep It Simple. Make It Fun!

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A high-quality program should

- Be fun and exciting for the boys
- Achieve the purposes of Cub Scouting

To make sure that all den and pack leaders are familiar with the purposes of Cub Scouting, review them periodically at your pack leaders' meetings (see page 2-1). With these purposes as a foundation, you should be able to plan and conduct a meaningful program of activities—providing that you also remember to make the activities fun for the boys.

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

Presenting a program that fits the purposes of Cub Scouting could affect an individual boy by

- Encouraging him to play by the rules; the boy learns sportsmanship.
- Teaching him to take turns; the boy learns respectful relationships.
- Helping him make something useful; the boy learns personal achievement.

Leaders should remember that their prime objective is to deliver high-quality Cub Scouting to each boy. A well-rounded, year-long program could contain activities that meet the needs and desires of each boy—the sports-minded boy, the outdoorsman, the arts enthusiast, or the avid reader.

Planning provides direction for the program, a sense of satisfaction for those participating, and a feeling of accomplishment in seeing boys grow in knowledge, skills, and expanded interests. Planning also helps make the best use of the time and resources available.

Refer to the Centennial Quality Unit Award Commitment, No. 14-190, to help you plan a quality program for your pack.

Ten Elements of Planning

When planning the Cub Scouting program, include the following 10 elements:

1. **Objective.** Program activities should meet the purposes of Cub Scouting and provide opportunities for physical, spiritual, mental/emotional, and social growth.
2. **Theme.** The monthly theme gives a focal point to the activities and provides continuity from meeting to meeting.
3. **Fun.** Cub Scouting must be fun, not only for the boys, but for the whole family. If the program is fun, boys will continue to attend.
4. **Variety.** A variety of activities is used to achieve the purposes of Cub Scouting. Include games, crafts, skits, songs, stunts, ceremonies, trips, and outdoor activities for a well-rounded program.
5. **Action.** Activities that require action and participation help boys enjoy the experience. Boys need to *do* and not just watch.
6. **Boy Appeal.** Plan activities that are appropriate for Cub Scout-age boys, such as those that include action, noise, hammering, sawing, playacting, experimenting, mystery, and excitement.
7. **Family Appeal.** Cub Scouting is a family program, with families working and playing together. Activities should help strengthen and enrich families.
8. **Achievement.** Boys need recognition so that they will feel a sense of achievement while they are having fun.
9. **Resources.** Make good use of all people, facilities, materials, and equipment available. Use the talents and skills of leaders, families, boys, and neighborhood friends.
10. **Flexibility.** Have a backup plan for unexpected changes or surprises. Be prepared to change the program for special circumstances that affect the local community or area.

USING THE MONTHLY THEMES

The secret of good planning for Cub Scout activities is the wise use of monthly themes. A theme is simply an emphasis around which den and pack leaders may plan activities for the Tiger Cub, Wolf, and Bear den members to do at den and pack meetings.

The theme simplifies the planning of den and pack meetings by

- giving the dens a focus around which activities and projects during the month can be planned,
- bringing dens together at the pack meeting with activities related to a single theme.

The monthly theme adds to the fun and adventure by providing a different kind of experience for each month of the year. Themes help steer boys toward new interests and hobbies that they might not otherwise discover for themselves.

The theme is a framework on which den activities are built. Once the theme is selected, the den leadership team uses that theme to plan the den meetings for the month. The actual activities can vary from den to den. There should be plenty of room for the den leadership team to maneuver within the theme plan.

The theme provides opportunities for friendly competition among dens. Boys and their families are eager to see how other dens have developed the theme. Den loyalty and spirit are strengthened as a result.

Note that Webelos dens don't use the pack's monthly theme. Instead, Webelos Scouts work on different activity badge areas each month.

Selecting a Theme

Packs aren't obligated to use the recommended themes although there are many benefits to using them. These themes are selected and planned to appeal to boys and to offer opportunities for you to achieve the purposes of Cub Scouting. They are the subjects that will have the most program support material.

- *Cub Scout Program Helps* suggests 12 monthly themes suitable for Tiger Cubs and Wolf and Bear Cub Scouts and provides age-appropriate program ideas for these themes.
- *Boys' Life* magazine features program ideas each month on the recommended theme.
- Monthly roundtable meetings provide program ideas on each theme.

The Cub Scout program is flexible, and if another theme better suits your locale, your pack might want to use a theme

other than the recommended one. When selecting the theme for the month, remember that the theme should

- have strong appeal for Cub Scout-age boys,
- be a broad enough subject that a variety of activities can be planned with few limitations,
- instill the deep, more lasting values of Cub Scouting.

Selecting Theme Activities

Here are some guidelines for selecting activities and projects related to the monthly theme:

- Each activity should have a definite objective in harmony with the purposes and policies of Cub Scouting.
- Each activity should contribute to developing and maintaining strong home and family relationships.
- Each activity should be simple and within the abilities and interests of Cub Scouts and their families.
- Activities should be planned for the pack and usually should not involve more than one pack. (See Chapter 29, "Den and Pack Activities.") (Note that the Cubmaster and pack committee, together with Cub Scout families, are responsible for activities that involve the entire pack.)

See Chapter 19, "The Tiger Cub Program," and Chapter 20, "The Wolf and Bear Programs," for specific information on using the monthly theme in den meetings.

PROGRAM PLANNING STEPS

The pack committee is responsible for ensuring that the pack operates a quality, year-round program. The quality of the program will depend largely on the pack committee supporting the Cubmaster and the den leaders as needed.

Cub Scout program planning involves three main steps:

1. Conducting an annual pack program planning conference
2. Conducting monthly pack leaders' planning meetings
3. Conducting monthly den chief planning meetings

1—Annual Pack Program Planning Conference

What? The annual pack program planning conference is a meeting of all pack leaders designed to establish the year's program. The planning is based on 12 monthly themes, the Webelos activity badges, and the special pack activities, which are all tailored to the pack's needs.

Who? The pack committee chair and Cubmaster are jointly responsible for seeing that this meeting occurs. The pack committee chair conducts the meeting. All den and pack leaders, den chiefs, and interested parents or guardians attend. The unit commissioner also should be invited.

When? The conference is usually held in July or August for planning of the program year that begins in September.

Why? Advance preparation ensures a well-rounded program of fun, variety, action, and purpose. A program planned 12 months in advance allows leaders to look ahead to future activities and gather ideas and resources.

Preparing for the Conference

Certain steps should be taken before the conference. If leaders gather pertinent information from the boys in their dens and from leaders of a nearby troop, then they can come to the conference well-prepared to plan the program year. The following steps can be helpful:

1. Each Tiger Cub den leader, Wolf and Bear den leader, and Webelos den leader determines the likes and dislikes of the den. What events did boys enjoy the most during the previous year? What would they like to do during the coming year?
2. The Webelos den leaders meet with an assistant Scoutmaster, assistant Webelos den leaders, and others to lay out an annual plan for the Webelos dens. This plan should include joint Webelos den-troop activities as well as Webelos overnight campouts, day hikes, or other troop-den activities.
3. The Wolf and Bear den leaders meet with the den chiefs, assistant den leaders, and parents or guardians to outline an annual plan for the Wolf and Bear den programs.
4. If Tiger Cub dens were formed during the summer, the Tiger Cub den leaders and adult partners outline an annual plan for the Tiger Cub den. This plan should reflect a program of shared leadership, which was scheduled at the parent orientation or den adults' meeting.
5. Tiger Cub, Wolf, and Bear den leaders are provided with a copy of *Cub Scout Program Helps* for review before the conference. Webelos den leaders are given the *Webelos Leader Guide*.
6. All leaders should review the requirements for the National Summertime Pack Award (see page 32-4) and the Centennial Quality Unit Award (see page 32-4).
The pack should incorporate into their annual plan the necessary elements for earning both of these awards.
7. All leaders should become thoroughly familiar with the program planning aids available and the suggestions they offer on the recommended themes and activity badges.
8. Ask your unit commissioner or district executive for a copy of the district and council calendar for the coming year so that dates can be included in the pack's calendar.

How to Conduct the Conference

1. Provide each leader with a copy of the Cub Scout Leader Program Notebook (No. 26-001). Post the Pack Program Planning Chart (No. 26-004B) on the wall or use the one from the insert section of *Cub Scout Program Helps*.
2. Briefly review the purposes of Cub Scouting so they will be on the minds of leaders as planning is done.
3. Evaluate past themes, Webelos activity badge areas, and special activities. Discuss strong and weak points. Decide which activities, if any, will be repeated during the coming year.
4. Review the recommended monthly themes and Webelos activity badges found in *Cub Scout Program Helps* and the *Webelos Leader Guide*. Decide on the themes and activity badges to be used for the next 12 months. Remember that program resources and support are available on the recommended themes through the current Cub Scout literature and monthly roundtable meetings.
5. List the selected themes and activity badges on the Pack Program Planning Chart. List three or four ideas under each theme and activity badge to help leaders develop den meeting programs.
6. Plan special activities as needed throughout the year to meet requirements for the National Summertime Pack Award and the Centennial Quality Unit Award.
7. Share the load. Appoint special committees as needed for each monthly theme and special event to manage program, decorations, physical arrangements, food, and other required tasks. See *Cub Scout Program Helps* for suggested special committee responsibilities for each monthly theme. The committee chairs may be members of the pack committee or qualified parents or other adults. Try to assign every parent or guardian to at least one special committee.



8. Identify activity badge counselors. These might include pack family members or leaders in attendance, plus other adults with skills that relate to activity badges.
9. List the pertinent information on the Pack Program Planning Chart:
 - Pack overnights
 - Any special activities
 - Names of key resource people
 - Dates of pack meetings
 - Dates of pack leaders' meetings
 - District and council activities and training events
 - Joint pack-troop activities
 - Pack overnights
 - Webelos den-troop activities
 - Webelos overnight campouts or day hikes
 - Uniform inspections (at least four times during the year)
10. Leaders can note information on activities and dates in their copies of the Cub Scout Leader Program Notebook.

OCTOBER 2006						
Day	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sunday						
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						

ONCE UPON A TIME

Use the monthly theme to help Cub Scouts earn credit in achievements and objectives. See "Get Ready! It's the 'Your Program Helps!' found in each issue of *Scouting* magazine.

MEETINGS	DATE	LOCATION
POUNTABLE	_____	_____
PACK LEADERS	_____	_____
DEN LEADERS	_____	_____
DEN CHIEFS	_____	_____
PACK	_____	_____
TRAINING COURSE	_____	_____

11. Assign dens on a rotating basis for setup, cleanup, opening and closing ceremonies, refreshments, etc., for the pack meetings.
12. Build enthusiasm and interest among leaders and families. Enthusiasm is essential. Without it, the program might fail. Everyone must be supportive of the themes and activities selected for the pack.
13. After program plans have been outlined for the next 12 months, identify dens with leadership vacancies and make plans to select leadership to fill these positions.

14. Make plans to recruit new Cub Scouts.
15. Thank everyone for their help. Enjoy a period of fellowship and refreshments.

End Result

The annual pack program planning conference is important because it

- builds interest among leaders through anticipation of programs to come,
- creates pride and ownership in the plans because everyone attending helps plan and develop the program,
- results in a 12-month program plan and provides leadership to implement the plan,
- ensures a quality, well-balanced, fun-filled program for the boys.

2—Monthly Pack Leaders' Planning Meeting

What? At the monthly pack leaders' planning meeting, leaders will

- finalize plans for the current month's pack meeting,
- plan the details of the next den and pack meetings, and
- plan in detail one of the themes already established at the annual pack program planning conference.

Who? All adult den and pack leaders attend this planning meeting; den chiefs do not attend. The pack committee chair leads it. The unit commissioner may also be invited to attend periodically.

When? This meeting should be held about one to two weeks before the current month's pack meeting and at least five weeks before the next month's pack meeting.

Where? The meeting may be held in a private home or at the chartered organization's meeting place. The atmosphere should be informal and friendly.

How? There are five parts to a pack leaders' planning meeting that will help leaders discuss the needed information.

Parts of a Pack Leaders' Meeting

1. Evaluating the previous month
2. Finalizing the current month
3. Planning ahead
4. Unit Leadership Enhancements
5. Social time and fellowship

Part 1: Evaluating the Previous Month

- The pack committee chair calls the meeting to order.
- The Cubmaster reviews the previous month's den and pack meeting activities and asks for comments and suggestions. This evaluation will help with planning for the upcoming month.

Part 2: Finalizing the Current Month

- The Cubmaster confirms assignments for the current month's pack meeting.
- Special committees report on plans for the current month's pack meeting or special event.
- Den leaders turn in den advancement reports to the person responsible for obtaining awards for the next pack meeting.
- Den leaders turn over den dues to the pack treasurer and receive a receipt.

Part 3: Planning Ahead

- The pack committee chair leads a general discussion about the upcoming month's den and pack meetings.
- The Cubmaster comments on next month's theme and activity badges and confirms assignments concerning den participation in next month's pack meeting.
- Special committees report on plans for the upcoming pack meeting or special events for the upcoming month.
- Den leaders report on their den meeting plans for the upcoming month.
- Activity badge counselors report on projects planned for next month's activity badges.
- The pack committee chair reports on pack needs, problems, and progress.
- The pack committee completes plans such as organization of new dens, pack-troop relations, financial matters, improving family participation, etc.

Part 4: Unit Leadership Enhancements

As part of the regular new business items at one or more monthly pack leaders' meetings, include one of the Unit Leadership Enhancement topics. See Chapter 28, "Unit Leader Enhancements," for detailed information on these short, informative training sessions for pack leaders.

Part 5: Social Time and Fellowship

At the end of the pack leaders' meeting, allow time for leaders to enjoy refreshments and fellowship. (Anyone who needs to leave, however, should feel free to do so.)

End Result

Holding regular, well-planned monthly pack leaders' meetings

- Saves leaders time. Instead of extra phoning, meeting at the last minute, and struggling to sort out details, one meeting a month takes care of many needed details at one time.
- Encourages teamwork and is an efficient way to pool talent. When all leaders are brought together regularly, abilities and talents can be exchanged in a way that could not otherwise be achieved.
- Provides in-service training with new ideas for all leaders. Time is available for leaders to share problems and learn new techniques.
- Makes the pack strong and healthy by involving the leaders in the plans and using their help to implement the program.

3—Monthly Den Chief Planning Meeting

What? Monthly planning meetings are held for den chiefs and their den leaders and assistant den leaders to share information on den and pack plans, make assignments, and coach the den chief in skills.

Who? This meeting is conducted by the assistant Cubmaster for the Wolf, Bear, and Webelos den leaders, assistant den leaders, and den chiefs.

When? The meeting should be held just before the start of a new month, after the pack leaders' meeting.

Where? The meeting is held usually at the chartered organization's meeting place or at the home of the assistant Cubmaster or one of the den leaders.

Information to Be Covered

- Make plans for next month's den meetings and pack meeting. Ask the den chiefs for ideas.

- Give assignments to the den chiefs so that they will feel like an important part of the den leadership team.
- Hand out copies of the Cub Scout Den Meeting Program or Webelos Den Meeting Program worksheet (see pages 34-14 and 34-15) for each meeting so that den chiefs will know what is happening and are reminded of their responsibilities.
- Coach den chiefs in skills and activities.
- Answer any questions.

During this meeting, den leaders and assistant den leaders have an opportunity to meet with their den chiefs to plan the weekly den meetings. To be effective, den chiefs need to be informed. They should know what is expected of them and how they can help the den leader. Give them an opportunity to ask questions and discuss problems. Include some fun and refreshments. Don't expect den chiefs to succeed without adult help. For more information on a den chief's responsibilities, see Chapter 23, "Leadership."

In addition to this monthly meeting, the den leader and assistant den leader should meet with den chiefs after each den meeting to confirm assignments for the next week's meeting and provide help as needed.

End Result

Regular planning meetings held by the assistant Cubmaster, with the den leaders, assistant den leaders, and den chiefs, will result in the following:

- Well-informed and involved junior leaders
- Den chiefs trained in leading activities
- Stronger, more effective den leadership teams

THE PACK MEETING

The pack meeting provides an opportunity for boys to have recognition, attention, and applause. It provides a purpose for their den meetings. The boys and leaders know that each month there will be a grand climax for all they are doing in the den. The pack meeting builds interest throughout the month and gives boys a definite target and deadline. It gives them a larger experience beyond their own den.

The pack meeting is one of the best opportunities to interest and involve families. A well-attended pack meeting shows families that they belong to a successful organization. It helps build active and enthusiastic family involvement, which is vital to the success of Cub Scouting.

A well-planned pack meeting is important because it can

- give den members an objective to work toward and a place to acknowledge their work.
- build enthusiasm with boys and families as they meet together in one pack.
- provide the best means of developing family participation and cooperation.
- help boys feel that they belong to something larger than their own dens.
- provide a regular opportunity for advancement ceremonies and other recognitions.

Who Is Responsible?

The Cubmaster is responsible for leading the pack meeting, and he or she plans and conducts it with the help of other leaders. All dens share the responsibility by doing their assigned parts.

The den leader, assistant den leader, and den chief are in charge of the dens during pack meetings. The den leader acts as host or hostess for den families.

The Cubmaster's challenge is to conduct a brisk, fast-moving meeting that will hold the interest of both boys and family members. The secret to a good pack meeting is careful planning, which includes a balance of seriousness and fun, the involvement of many people, and a lively pace. When it's over, the families should feel good about attending the meeting. The meeting should be fun for everyone involved.

Who Attends Pack Meetings?

Cub Scouting is a family program and pack meetings are for families—boys, parents or guardians, brothers, sisters, and other family members—as well as all den and pack leaders and den chiefs. The unit commissioner should be invited to attend. When pack meetings include Webelos graduation ceremonies, the Scoutmaster and troop junior leaders should be invited to attend and take part in the ceremonies. The Cubmaster and pack committee are responsible for inviting other special guests to pack meetings.

Den leaders are responsible for seeing that den families know about the pack meeting and encouraging them to attend. Some packs send out a monthly newsletter with an announcement about the pack meeting activities, along with other information.

Pack Meeting Place

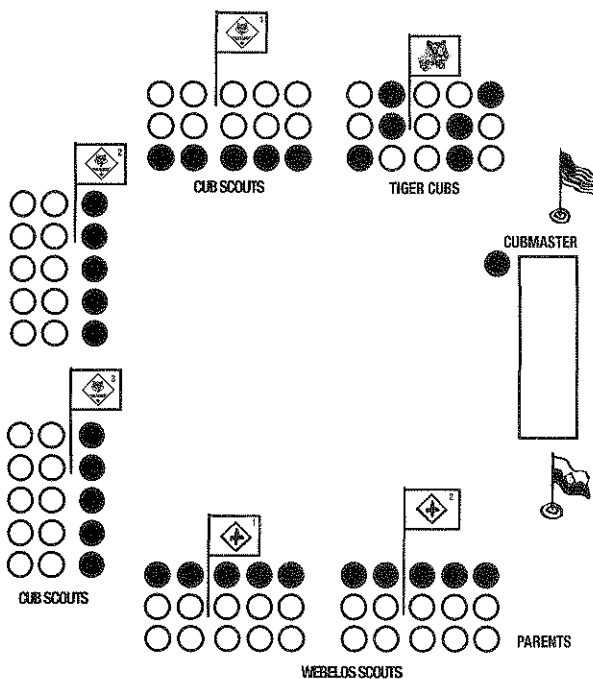
Pack meetings are usually held at the chartered organization's facility or a place provided by the organization. The pack committee should work with the chartered organization

to find a suitable meeting place. Some school districts are glad to help Cub Scout packs, and the facilities that schools offer are usually adequate. Also check with community or recreational facilities in your area.

Because families attend pack meetings, the room should be large, with movable chairs if possible. There should be space for exhibits of den projects and a place where boys can perform den skits and stunts.

Pack meetings are generally held in the same place and at the same time each month, except when they involve outdoor activities. Blue and gold banquets may also require a different meeting place or date.

The meeting place should be free of hazards. The pack committee should use the Meeting Place Inspection Checklist to ensure meeting room safety (see page 34-43).



Most packs arrange chairs in a semicircle or open square (see illustration). Each den has its own section of chairs for boys and their family members. Tiger Cubs sit with their adult partners. Family members of Wolf, Bear, and Webelos Scouts are seated behind their boys.

It's a good idea to have den number signs posted to mark each den section so that den families will sit together as they arrive. As the den members arrive, the den flags can then be used to mark the sections. This helps develop den spirit and gives den families a chance to become better acquainted. Pack committee members may sit with the den of their Cub Scout.

Den Exhibits

Each den should have a table on which to display items boys made during the month. Den exhibits should be located

where people will walk by them naturally and view each display. It's disappointing if no one pays attention to a boy's efforts. There should be enough space around each of the tables for demonstrations of the exhibits, and each table should be identified with a den number.

The den leader does not take full responsibility for collecting the exhibit, getting it to the pack meeting, and setting it up. Each family can be asked to see that their boy brings his own items. The den chief or denner can help set up the exhibit.

Arrange the projects on exhibit tables in an orderly fashion, with each item separated from the others and labeled with the boy's name. Items can include theme projects, activity badge projects, and advancement projects. Den leaders will also want to display den advancement charts and den doodles.

Pack Meeting Date and Time

Pack meetings are held once a month—near the end of the month, as they are a culmination of the month's den meetings. A regularly scheduled pack meeting day (such as the fourth Tuesday or Thursday) will result in better attendance.

Pack meetings should not be scheduled on the same night as the roundtable, other meetings, or community activities.

Most packs schedule pack meetings for the early evening because this is usually a time that the entire family can attend. The meeting should be fairly short so that the boys can get home and to bed at their usual times. Most pack meetings last no more than an hour and a half.

All pack families should be informed about the regular pack meeting date and reminded periodically so that they will be able to attend.

If, by chance, many boys in the pack are involved in other activities, such as sports, that conflict with the regular pack meeting day at certain times of the year, make every effort to adjust meeting times or dates to meet their needs. It is better to give boys the opportunity to do both rather than require them to make a choice. If necessary, set the meeting time 30 minutes later than usual and encourage boys to come, even if they need to wear sports uniforms to a couple of pack meetings.

Pack Meeting Planning Tips

There are no hard-and-fast rules for planning and conducting pack meetings. Each meeting must be planned individually, keeping in mind the business items that need to be covered, which ceremonies are to be held, and what is necessary for balance in the way of games, songs, and other fun.

A written plan is important. Use the Pack Meeting Planning Sheet (see page 34-37) when developing the written plan at the pack leaders' meeting. Provide each person on the program with a written agenda, showing what happens when, how much time is available, and who is responsible for each item.

One of the most important things to remember when planning pack meetings is to make good use of all available resources. Use *Cub Scout Program Helps*, the *Webelos Leader Guide*, and other Cub Scouting literature. Monthly roundtable meetings will also provide ideas for pack meetings that relate to the monthly theme.

ELEMENTS OF A GOOD PACK MEETING

- The meeting lasts no longer than an hour and a half.
- It includes the 10 elements of planning found on page 24-2.
- It is conducted by the Cubmaster, with responsibilities delegated to other leaders.
- A welcoming committee is on hand to greet people as they arrive.
- A good seating arrangement is provided.
- Den exhibits and displays are in full view.
- All equipment and materials are on hand before the meeting begins.
- Tiger Cubs, Wolf and Bear Cub Scouts, Webelos Scouts, and leaders are dressed in clean, neat uniforms with proper insignia.
- A detailed, well-planned, written program is conducted without delays. Copies of the agenda are handed out to all people on the program.
- The meeting is orderly; it opens and closes on time.
- The meeting is planned such that it serves as a climax to den preparation and includes every den participating in some way.
- Impressive recognition, advancement, and graduation ceremonies are included.
- Advancement awards are presented to parents or guardians, adult partners, or other family members who in turn present them to the boys.
- Families are involved in the meeting's activities, such as games, songs, and stunts.
- Announcements and speeches are not excessively long.
- The meeting place is safe, clean, and large enough.

The Cubmaster should maintain a safe environment, both physically and emotionally, at the pack meeting. Consider safety issues, age-appropriateness, and positive place guidelines when planning songs, skits, stunts, applause, and ceremonies.

SEVEN PARTS OF A PACK MEETING

The Seven Parts of a Pack Meeting

1. Before the Meeting
2. Gathering
3. Opening
4. Program
5. Recognition
6. Closing
7. After the Meeting

1—Before the Meeting

The following items require attention before the pack meeting begins:

Room Arrangement

- Check to see that doors are unlocked, lights are working, restrooms are open, and ventilation is good.
- Prepare the room setup. Put the chairs in place, with the dens marked in sections.
- Properly display the U.S. and pack flags.
- Prepare an awards table for awards and recognitions. Set up and mark den tables for den exhibits and demonstrations.

Materials and Equipment

- Prepare badges, pins, and other awards for presentation.
- Be ready with the equipment and materials for the preopening activity.
- Set up equipment and props for ceremonies.
- Be prepared with equipment and prizes for games.
- Provide a written agenda for everyone who is on the program.

2—Gathering

As people usually don't arrive at meetings all at one time, it can take 15 to 20 minutes for a den to gather. At the pack meeting, this gathering time is planned with interesting things for boys and families to do. This is important not only from the standpoint of making good use of time, but it helps prevent confusion and noise. At this time, den leaders often meet briefly with their dens to cover last-minute details of their part in the pack meeting.

Greeters. Leaders or dens could welcome people as they arrive. Den leaders act as den hosts or hostesses in welcoming den families and making them feel at ease. They introduce new people and see that everyone knows where to sit. They encourage family members to browse the exhibits.

Den Exhibits. Tables are set up for den exhibits and demonstrations. They are usually marked with individual den numbers or names. As Tiger Cubs, Wolf and Bear Cub Scouts, and Webelos Scouts arrive at the pack meeting, they take their exhibits to the den chief, assistant den leader, or whoever is setting up the exhibit table.

Preopening Activity. A preopening game, stunt, or trick helps people feel welcome and keeps the boys occupied until the meeting begins. See *Cub Scout Program Helps*, the *Den Chief Handbook*, the *Cub Scout Leader How-To Book*, *Group Meeting Sparklers*, and *Boys' Life* magazine for ideas on preopening activities.

3—Opening

Opening Ceremony. The Cubmaster or other pack leader can lead the opening ceremony, or a den may be assigned this responsibility. It could include a patriotic song or the Pledge of Allegiance, or it could be a ceremony related to the monthly theme. A brief prayer may also be included; however, *be sensitive to the diverse religious beliefs that may be represented in your pack.* See *Cub Scout Program Helps* and *Cub Scout Ceremonies for Dens and Packs* for ideas. The monthly roundtable is also a resource for opening ceremonies.

Song. If a song isn't used in the opening, now is a good time for a Cub Scout song. Ask everyone to stand. Be sure that everyone knows the song; hand out copies of the words or display the words on a whiteboard or large piece of paper.

Welcome and Introductions. The Cubmaster introduces and recognizes visitors and makes them feel welcome. This would include new families, the head of the chartered organization, the unit commissioner, a Scoutmaster, or other visitors. Pack leaders can also be introduced at this time.

4—Program

Audience Participation Stunt. An icebreaker or stunt will help get the meeting into high gear. Involve the entire audience. The Cubmaster can lead this stunt, or the responsibility may be assigned to another leader or a parent or guardian.

Den Stunts and Skits. Stunts and skits are usually related to the monthly theme. Boys will have been preparing for this activity during the month, so families will have a hint of what's to come. All den contributions to the pack meeting should be pre-screened by the Cubmaster for appropriateness prior to the pack meeting.

Webelos Den Demonstrations. Each Webelos den demonstrates things they learned during the month for their activity badge area. Be sure that the demonstrations are conducted where everyone can see and hear.

Games. Games provide most of the action in pack meetings. Relay races between dens, parent-son competitions, or skill competitions make ideal activities for pack meetings. Boys usually enjoy games in which their family members participate. If desired, award simple homemade prizes to winners.

5—Recognition

Awards and recognitions that are presented in pack meetings are important. Each one represents a great amount of time and effort on the part of the boys, family, and leaders and should be presented in a special ceremony. The presentation should be worthy of the award and the work that went into it.

Boy Recognition. At most pack meetings there will be Bobcat, Tiger Cub, Wolf, Bear, and Webelos badges; Arrow Points and Tiger Track beads; Webelos activity badges; and compass points to be presented. At some pack meetings there may be new-family inductions, Arrow of Light Award presentations, transitions to the next program level, graduations into a Boy Scout troop, and other recognitions for boys and families.

It is important that the boy's family take part in the recognition ceremony. *Don't take for granted that family members will attend; alert them several days in advance.* A parent or guardian, adult partner, or other family member should be called forward with the boy and receives the recognition to then give to the boy.

Leader Recognition. Recognize leaders who have earned training awards or who have done something special for their den or the pack. This could include recognition of leaders who received religious emblems or community awards. This is also a chance to recognize family members who have made significant contributions to the pack. Recognitions could be certificates or informal homemade items that are appropriate for the occasion.

Attendance Award. Many packs give an attendance award to the den having the best family attendance at each pack meeting. Some use the parent attendance ribbon; others use a simple trophy such as a “Cubby” or other type of award (see page 5-3). This is an incentive for other dens to get their adult family members to attend the pack meeting.

6—Closing

Announcements. These should be brief, to the point, and written out, if possible; don’t give any long, drawn-out talks. Mention any special events or activities, the theme for the next month, and the date of the next pack meeting.

Closing Ceremony. A den can be assigned the responsibility of a closing ceremony, or the Cubmaster can give a Cubmaster’s Minute or other inspirational closing thought. Whatever type of closing is used, it should be short and meaningful.

7—After the Meeting

Refreshments. Many packs like to serve refreshments, which can be furnished by a special committee or brought by assigned dens.

Cleanup. It is important that sufficient help be recruited to put the meeting room back in order. Scouts always leave a place looking as good or better than they found it.

In Summary

The outline above describes a typical pack meeting, but don’t be afraid to vary from this pattern. Adapt your plans for the meeting as needed so that you cover what you want to. You’ll find that most things will fit into the seven-part pattern.

One of the best ways for a new Cubmaster to learn what to do and what not to do at a pack meeting is to attend another pack’s meeting and observe. Your unit commissioner or district executive can help make arrangements for visiting other packs.

THE PACK ADULTS’ MEETING

Cubmasters and other pack leaders welcome ways to guide families so their boys will get the best Cub Scouting has to offer. In most packs, an annual adults’ meeting is held, usually in the fall after a Rally Night for Cub Scouting, to discuss family responsibilities and the pack’s plans for the future. By this time, any new families will have received the basic information, and this meeting can be devoted to dealing with specific pack needs. This can be a meeting for adults only, or it can be incorporated as a part of the September or October pack meeting as a special adult part of the program.

The suggested agenda that follows is for a pack adults’ meeting held in conjunction with a regular pack meeting and can be tailored to fit your own pack’s needs. If a lot of business needs to be covered, it would be best to hold the adults’ meeting on a different night from the regular pack meeting.

The Cubmaster plans and conducts the adults’ meeting with the help of the pack trainer and pack committee. Other leaders may also be involved. The unit commissioner and chartered organization representative could also be invited.

Before the Meeting

- Set up tables and chairs as needed.
- Set up exhibits of den projects.
- Have all materials and equipment ready.

Gathering Period

- A welcoming committee greets the pack families as they arrive.
- Register attendance and distribute name tags.
- Hold a preopening activity or game.

Main Part of the Meeting

1. Opening (about 5 minutes)

- Lead the Pledge of Allegiance or another opening ceremony.
- Welcome everyone and make introductions.
- Lead a song.

If boys are attending, an assistant Cubmaster or other adults and den chiefs take the boys into another room or outdoors for planned games and activities.

2. Adults’ Meeting (about 30 minutes)

- If parents or guardians haven’t seen it during an earlier orientation or meeting, show the video *Cub Scout Orientation* (No. AV-01V012).
- Briefly review family responsibilities.
- Review the pack plans for the year (themes, special activities, and projects decided on at the annual pack planning conference).
- Discuss leadership needs.
 - Discuss plans for the selection of den and pack leaders, as needed, if there are still vacancies after the Rally Night for Cub Scouting.
 - Make adults aware of any leadership needed for special pack activities for the year.

- The chartered organization representative briefly discusses how the chartered organization will help the pack.
- Discuss other pack needs and ways that families can help (budget, dues, uniforms, equipment, etc.).
- Hold a question-and-answer session.

3. Joint Meeting (about 30 minutes)

The boys return and join the group. Spend the remaining time with regular pack meeting activities, such as advancement ceremonies, games, and skits.

4. Closing (3 to 5 minutes)

- Make announcements.
- Conduct a closing ceremony or give a brief inspirational closing thought.

5. After the Meeting

- Enjoy refreshments and fellowship.
- Clean up the meeting place.

EVALUATING THE DEN AND PACK PROGRAMS

Leading den or pack activities is rather like the tip of the iceberg—the smaller part that we can see. The larger part, beneath the surface, is not apparent to the casual observer, but without it the activity would collapse. This larger, invisible part is what happens before and after a den or pack activity.

What happens before is *planning*, which includes deciding and checking on details such as the time, date, and place of an event or activity. It includes deciding what type of activity is suitable for the occasion and fits the need. It includes making all the necessary arrangements to cover all possibilities and emergencies.

What happens after a den or pack activity is *evaluation*: discussing the activity with other leaders and family members, thinking about it yourself, and deciding where the program was strong and where it was weak. Evaluation is an important step in planning future meetings and activities.

To make sure that your pack is meeting its program objectives, evaluate meetings and activities at a pack leaders' meeting every third or fourth month.

General Evaluation Principles

- Does the meeting or activity satisfy the boys who took part in it? Did they enjoy it?
- Does it include all 10 elements of planning mentioned above?
- Are we meeting each one of Cub Scouting's purposes?
- Does it help strengthen the den or pack?
- Does it help strengthen families?

Careful planning results in a good program, and thorough evaluation results in a better program.

Evaluating From the Boys' Point of View

- Do the boys have a good time at den meetings?
- Do all of them take part in the activities?
- Does each boy get to do something he enjoys?
- Do they all look forward to attending every meeting?
- Do they feel they are accomplishing something?
- Are they learning about things in which they are avidly interested?
- Is there continuity from one meeting to the next?
- Are they introduced to new ideas and interests?
- Are they given a chance to talk about their likes and dislikes? Do you listen?
- Do they have a real share in the planning?
- Are they free to make choices?
- Are they allowed to make suggestions?
- Are they given responsibility for doing things in the den and pack?
- Do all boys have a part in the monthly pack meeting?
- Does being in Cub Scouting help satisfy each boy's desire to be useful and helpful to others?
- Is the Cub Scout Promise a part of the boys' way of life? Do they know what it means and try to live by it?
- Are they encouraged to help at home?
- Do they gain a better idea of community organizations, activities, and facilities and their proper use?

Evaluating Program

- Are the Tiger Cubs, Wolf and Bear Cub Scouts, Webelos Scouts, and families all having fun?
- Are the purposes of Cub Scouting being realized in your pack?
- Do parents, guardians, and other family members take part in pack meetings, outings, and special activities?
- Does your pack have an effective Webelos-to-Scout transition plan?
- Does your pack carry out at least one service project for your chartered organization or community each year?
- Do the den meetings prepare each den for the monthly pack meeting?
- Does your pack earn the National Summertime Pack Award and/or the Centennial Quality Unit Award?
- Do all families in the pack receive *Boys' Life* magazine?
- Does your pack participate in your district or council day camp and/or resident camp?
- Does your pack conduct at least one organized pack overnighter?
- Do your dens earn the National Den Award?
- Does your pack have an annual program planning conference?
- Do you hold regular pack leaders' meetings?
- Do den leaders meet regularly with den chiefs?

Evaluating Leadership

- Does your pack have a pack trainer?
- Are all pack leaders trained in their positions?
- Do leaders participate in monthly roundtables?
- Are all leaders working toward recognition awards?
- Is your pack administered by the pack committee? Do leaders share all work?
- Is every Tiger Cub den working under the concept of shared leadership, with each adult partner taking a turn helping the den leader plan the Tiger Cub den program?
- Does every Wolf, Bear, and Webelos den have a den chief?
- Are Wolf, Bear, and Webelos den activities directed primarily by den leaders and den chiefs?
- Does your pack have an assistant Cubmaster? Assistant den leaders for all dens?

- Has at least one parent, guardian, or pack leader taken Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation (BALOO)?

Evaluating Advancement

- Does a high percentage of boys advance one rank each year?
- Are boys recognized promptly and properly for advancement?
- Do parents, adult partners, or other family members take an active part in and work on achievements with their boys?
- Do your Webelos dens have activity badge counselors?
- Do you hold impressive advancement and graduation ceremonies?

Evaluating Management

- Has at least one leader from every den completed Youth Protection Training.
- Does your pack have one or more Tiger Cub dens?
- Does your pack have one or more Wolf dens? Bear dens?
- Does your pack have one or more Webelos dens?
- Does your pack have impressive family induction ceremonies?
- Does your pack have an ongoing recruiting plan for maintaining or building membership?
- Does your pack have a Rally Night for Cub Scouting at least twice a year (spring and fall)?
- Does your pack have an ongoing plan for selection of adult leadership?
- Does your pack have a plan for training parents and guardians?
- Do all pack families receive *Boys' Life* magazine?
- Does a high percentage of boys who join in first or second grade remain and graduate into a Boy Scout troop?
- Does your pack use the pack budget plan?
- Do the boys and leaders wear their uniforms and insignia properly?
- Does the pack renew its charter on time?
- Are all Tiger Cubs, Wolf and Bear Cub Scouts, Webelos Scouts, and leaders registered?
- Do all of the dens meet weekly?
- Does the pack committee make an annual report to the chartered organization?

