

CUB SCOUTING'S BSA FAMILY PROGRAM

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INTRODUCTION

Families are the basis of our society. In the family, children learn about love, values, and social interactions while they prepare for today's world. The family is vital to the future of our community and our nation.

Cub Scouting's BSA Family Program is a series of activities designed to help strengthen all families—whether it is a two-parent, single-parent, or nontraditional family. All family members are encouraged to participate and may earn the BSA Family Award.

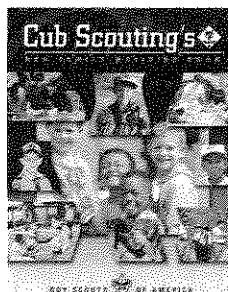
The purposes of Cub Scouting's BSA Family Program are

- To strengthen families
- To encourage family involvement in Scouting

The BSA has a great interest in the strength of the family. Scouting's aim is to develop its youth into participating citizens of good character who are physically, spiritually, and mentally fit. The organization recognizes that it is the responsibility of parents and family to teach their children; however, Scouting is an available resource that can help families accomplish worthy goals while building and strengthening relationships among family members.

In much the same way as Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts use their handbooks to earn their badges and awards, the family can use *Cub Scouting's BSA Family Activity Book* to earn the BSA Family Award. A Cub Scouting family may choose to participate in this program on its own, or the pack may choose to introduce the program to families through an orientation.

CUB SCOUTING'S BSA FAMILY ACTIVITY BOOK



Cub Scouting's BSA Family Activity Book (No. 33012) is the primary resource for the program. It is full of suggested activities to enhance the children's personal development and enrich and strengthen the family.

The Family Activity Book is divided into five categories (see below) that include several topics of interest to families. Each topic contains suggested activities for a family to do together. These activities could include going on field trips, telling stories, doing arts and crafts projects, playing games, participating in family discussions, or making lists, charts, and scrapbooks.

Most of the ideas in the *Family Activity Book* will be useful during a family meeting or gathering. Parents will also find ways to incorporate them into daily life and to meet their own family's needs and interests.

Included with most topics are some suggested books for adults and children to read together. Adults and children may take turns reading aloud. Many wonderful books are available to help explain or illustrate any topic the family explores.

THE BSA FAMILY AWARD



The BSA Family Award includes a certificate for the family and patches and pins for the family members. A family earns the BSA Family Award certificate by completing 10 activities within 12 months (see page 30-2).

The patch is for all members of the family who participate in the activities to earn the award. For Scouting members, the patch is worn in the temporary patch position on the Cub Scout uniform.

Instead of the patches, family members who participate in earning the award may choose to receive pins, which are for civilian wear. In succeeding years, pins could be placed on the patches, and each year that families earn the award, they could get a new pin and family certificate.

Ideally, the awards will be presented to the family at a pack meeting.

A family must complete 10 activities within 12 months. The family chooses one activity in two topics in each of the following categories:

1. Learning Through Fun and Adventure
2. Strengthening Family Relationships
3. Developing Character
4. Teaching Responsibility
5. Handling Difficult Situations

A Family Progress Record is included in the *Family Activity Book*.

Family members may earn the BSA Family Award several times. A family may choose the same or different activities as it works on the award for another 12 months.

Packs are encouraged to include the cost of BSA Family Program recognition items in their annual budgets. Packs may consider charging a fee to each participating Cub Scout and family member to cover the cost of the awards. Packs should have a clear policy in place to determine whether the pack or the boy's family will be responsible for the cost of awards that are earned more than once, as well as awards earned by parents and siblings.

PACK FAMILY PROGRAM CHAIR

If the pack committee decides to use the Family Program, the pack committee chair could name a pack family program chair. This person would

- Become familiar with the program and serve as a resource.
- Promote it within the pack.

- Conduct orientation meetings.
- Support participating families.
- Encourage families to earn the BSA Family Award.
- Recognize those families participating in the program.

THE ORIENTATION MEETING

The pack family program chair (and/or any other pack leaders) could conduct an orientation, either annually or as needed, to introduce parents to Cub Scouting's BSA Family Program.

During the orientation,

- Introduce the purposes of the BSA Family Program.
- Go over the requirements for the BSA Family Award.
- Present the contents of the *Family Activity Book*
- Discuss how the pack will recognize and support the program.

This orientation could be held as a stand-alone event, before or after a pack meeting, in conjunction with a pack leaders' meeting, or whatever best fits the needs of your pack as to day, time, and length. An incentive to encourage parents to participate in these meetings might be to arrange for child care during the meetings; consult a local Boy Scout troop, Girl Scout troop, or your chartered organization.

MORE RESOURCES

For complete information and activity ideas, read *Cub Scouting's BSA Family Activity Book* (No. 33012). For topics that could be used in a family discussion or meeting, refer to Scouting magazine, which is sent to registered Scouting leaders. This magazine has a regular feature titled "Family Talk" that offers discussion topics and ongoing support for BSA families.