Membership for TROOPS



YOUR GUIDE TO GROWING YOUR TROOP MEMBERSHIP BY BECOMING MORE

VISIBLE INVITING FUN!









A MESSAGE FROM OUR COUNCIL KEY THREE

Dear Scouter:

You and the other leaders and parents in your troop are the ones who make Scouting happen, day in and day out.

There was a time when the only challenge was how we could deliver the promise of Scouting to a manageable number of youth! We just focused on the life changing programs, and recruiting took care of itself.

Today, the world is different, and for a variety of reasons we must all challenge ourselves to go out and find those youth and families.

Ultimately, whether we serve a growing or a declining number of children will be dependent on two things: do we have a positive and visible brand in the community; and, do we have a trigger for the joining decision (a written invitation delivered to parents by excited children who want to be Scouts.)

This playbook is designed to help you, and for us to support you, to do those two specific things. What will your unit do to be as visible in the community as you can be? What will you do to ensure that school fliers or other kinds of written invitations for fun and adventure with friends will be delivered to kids and their parents?

There is a solution for every challenge – and what better reward comes with a solution than helping a child to reach their fullest potential? This is what Scouting, and leaders like you, have been proven time and time again to do for our communities and Nation.

Thank you for your thoughtful leadership!



Bill Brody Council President



David Cousins Council Commissioner



John Andrews Scout Executive



INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAYBOOK

This Playbook is intended to help your troop plan a year of activities which will grow your membership. Each section will provide information on how to implement the concepts of **VISIBLE**, **INVITING** and **FUN**. Several sections have room for your troop to brainstorm ideas and begin planning to grow. Please take the time to use these pages.

Also included is a form to order the resources needed for your recruitment efforts.

These resources are available electronically at www.northernstar.org/2019-recruiting-resources.

MOVING FORWARD IN 2019 - WHAT'S NEW/WHAT'S DIFFERENT

In 2019, we will be working with all of our Scouting units to ensure that Scouting in all of our communities is more **VISIBLE**, more **INVITING** and more **FUN**!

- Over the summer and fall of 2018, we met with several focus groups to determine how Scouting
 was viewed in the communities and what barriers existed. What we found out from those who knew
 about Scouting was: they had a very positive response. Unfortunately for many, they didn't know that
 Scouting was all around them. Therefore, we know that we need to be more VISIBLE.
- All units have the ability to, and are asked to, recruit youth members throughout the year, and recruiting new youth in addition to Webelos Transition.
- We also learned that families are looking for **FUN**, and that we need to do a better job communicating with parents exactly the **FUN** that takes place in Scouting, and that the Scouts BSA program has trained leaders and an organized plan of activities for families.





BE VISIBLE- TO ALL

Believe it or not, one of the most common questions we get is "Where is Scouting today?" The key to showcasing Scouting and growing excitement to be a Scout or to support Scouting is to be as visible as you possibly can. Here are a few ways to be more visible:

LOCAL NEWSPAPER

• Troops should work with local newspapers to get pictures, stories and recruitment information printed. Find samples at www.northernstar.org/2019-recruiting-resources.

MIDDLE SCHOOL OPEN HOUSES/MEET THE TEACHER EVENT

• Troops must have a table at these events. Best success is achieved with troop displays and activities. Parents should be able to register their youth at these events. See the open house recruitment form on page 15.

INFLATABLE ARCHERY RANGES

• Northern Star Scouting has a number of inflatable, safe, foam-tipped archery ranges available for use at events. Talk to your Program Relations Executive about availability.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS

• Send a press release to your local school to be included in the school's newsletter. Highlight local youth and recognize adult leaders. Find sample messages at www.northernstar.org/2019-recruiting-resources.

PARTICIPATE IN YOUR LOCAL FESTIVAL, PARADE OR COUNTY FAIR

- Invite everyone to your next troop meeting
- Have a booth where other youth can try their hand at Scouts BSA activities

SOCIAL MEDIA

• Have all members of your troop utilize social networks such as Facebook and Nextdoor to provide messages and information that will resonate with parents. Make sure that your recruitment information is included. Find social media resources at www.northernstar.org/2019-recruiting-resources.

NIGHT TO UNITE (FORMERLY KNOWN AS NATIONAL NIGHT OUT)

• Have a presence and an activity in your neighborhood

ADOPT A SCHOOL

 Support your local school with community service projects on an on-going basis. More information on page 10.

WHAT ACTIVITIES COULD WE DO TO BE VISIBLE TO FAMILIES WHO WANT TO TRY SCOUTS BSA?



BE INVITING- TO YOUTH

Being visible is a great start, but the next step is to be inviting. Most youth and adults are hesitant to join without being asked or feel like they needed to be in Cub Scouts to join Scouts BSA. They need to feel welcomed and learn that Scouting is a safe place where they will have fun and make friends. Many families may be unaware or confused on how or where to join. Here are a few ways to be more inviting:



PEER TO PEER RECRUITING

• Existing Scouts BSA units create invitations at a troop meeting prior to the event and hand deliver them to their friends and classmates the week before the recruiting event. A special incentive is available this year - a free pocket knife for the recruiter and the new recruit (see flier on page 16).

PARENT TO PARENT RECRUITING

• Parents help promote Scouting to their child's social circle through talking to their friend's parents and handing out fliers in their neighborhood, religious education class, sport teams, etc. Materials will be widely provided by the council and will be supported by social media and networks (videos, etc.).

SCHOOL OPEN HOUSES AND MEET THE TEACHER

• All troops must have a table at these events not just to showcase what Scouts BSA has to offer, but also allow families to register right then and there.

"BRING A FRIEND" ACTIVITIES

- Which of your activities could your Scouts invite their friends to? All of them! What a great way for other youth members to get a firsthand look at Scouts BSA! This could be a day hike, a fun activity or a simple cookout with games.
- Set up a few sample activities and let all youth try. Registered Scouts will get credit in their handbook. Mention to guests that if they were a registered Scout, they would also be earning badges or advancements during these activities!

PARTICIPATE IN YOUR PLACE OF WORSHIP

• Your troop can have Scouts helping at local places of worship. This supports community service, Duty to God and doing a Good Turn Daily. Have a booth or a table set up and allow people to meet the Scouts and their leaders. Invite them to join your troop. Recruitment materials are available for places of worship.

WHAT ACTIVITIES COULD WE DO TO INVITE OTHER FAMILIES TO TRY SCOUTS BSA?



BE INVITING- TO ADULTS

RECRUITING MORE ADULTS

Most troops could use more adult leaders. Here are some best practices for achieving this. There are also some things to steer clear of:



BEST PRACTICES

- Identify simple areas where you need help: popcorn sales pickup, camping coordinator, arranging transportation, fundraising or FOS coordinator, community service projects, etc. Not all help needs to be a registered volunteer.
- Identify areas which will need a registered leader for now or for the future. Do you need members of the committee, assistant Scoutmasters, or a Scoutmaster?
- Identify parents with interest, talents, and experience for these needs.
- Meet with them in person, invite them to be an adult leader, and provide them with an outline of what is expected. Provide them with information on the training and support available.
- Make targeted asks. If Jill is the best candidate for Scoutmaster, have the current Scoutmaster and another volunteer go ask Jill personally. This shows the importance of the role and lets Jill know that she is the best candidate for this position
- ASK! This may sound like a no-brainer, but if you don't ask someone to step up and help, they aren't going to volunteer. Ask individuals to help.

WHICH POSITIONS DO YOU NEED TO PLAN TO FILL?

LIST PARENTS WHO SHOULD BE INVITED TO BE LEADERS IN YOUR TROOP

STEER CLEAR

- Don't make a general announcement at a meeting that the troop needs help if interested, call the Scoutmaster. For instance, "So I'm stepping down as Scoutmaster and we really need a replacement. If anyone is interested, please come talk to me after the meeting."
- Don't place a paragraph on your website, Facebook, or newsletter as an ad for help. You want the best candidate possible for the position in your troop. Placing an ad opens up these positions of importance to anyone, which then diminishes the perceived importance.



MAKE IT FUN- FOR ALL

GAUGING FAMILY INTEREST

Part of what makes a successful Scouting program is engaging families by asking them what activities they wish to see the troop offer, and use that information to provide an inclusive and fun program for the whole family. Use the supplied template below in order to find out what families are looking for in your program!



FAMILY INTEREST INFORMATION

PARENTS NAME_____

PHONE #_____ EMAIL_____

SCOUT'S NAME GRADE

THINGS OUR FAMILY ENJOYS DOING

THINGS OUR FAMILY WANTS TO TRY OR ARE INTERESTED IN

CAMPS OUR TROOP IS PLANNING TO ATTEND

Every Scout deserves the opportunity to go to camp. List some potential camps below that you plan to go to.



RESOURCES AVAILABLE (BE CREATIVE)

FLIERS

• Fliers can be printed with your troop joining night information. Contact your membership chair or Program Relations Executive for fliers.

SCOUTS BSA WELCOME BOOKLETS

• Booklets covering basic breakdowns of structure, events and promotions of Scouts for new families.

BANNERS

• Banners are available for checkout at the Scout office.

POSTCARDS

• Available by request through the Program Relations Executive.

SCOUTS BSA INTEREST FORMS

• Form to use at a troop display booth or other promotional event to gather contact information on prospective members interested in joining. Once gathered, someone from the unit should call and personally invite them to the registration event.

A SCOUT IS REVERENT BULLETIN INSERTS

• Recruitment flier printed for places of worship. Request them through your Program Relations Executive.

INFLATABLE ARCHERY RANGES

• Northern Star Scouting has a number of inflatable, safe, foam-tipped archery ranges available for use at events. Talk to your Program Relations about availability.

CUSTOM MATERIALS

• If you would like custom or unique materials, request them through your Program Relations Executive.



RECRUIT A TROOP NEW MEMBER COORDINATOR

POSITION CONCEPT

• As a registered member of your unit committee, lead and promote youth recruitment programs in your troop to achieve annual membership growth, and be the person who takes the lead in inviting new families to join and in working to make new families feel welcome.

REPORTS TO

Troop Committee Chair

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Build on-going relationships with your local pack. Invite Webelos to troop activities and offer Arrow of Light dens to meet at the same time as the troop during the fall/winter.
- Develop your membership goal with your Program Relations Executive, and make plans to achieve it by June 30, 2019.
- Plan, organize, promote and execute recruitment throughout the year. This includes troop representation at school open houses, setting a troop recruitment date and continually inviting new members to all troop functions throughout the year.
- Monitor youth retention and develop strategies to improve retention.
- Review recruiting support materials and plans on the council website.
- Recruit other adult leaders/parents and/or youth leaders in the unit to support youth recruiting programs and events.
- Coordinate with the unit committee to ensure there is a reasonable amount in the annual budget to support your personal recruiting efforts.
- Ensure correct registration fees and troop support fees are collected.

TIME CONSIDERATIONS

- Attend regular troop and committee meetings as scheduled by the troop Committee Chair.
- Plan and attend troop recruitment events.
- Staff recruitment events and help with planning as needed.
- Communication and visits with local Cub Scout packs.

Ensure all new families feel invited and welcomed into the troop.



GROW YOUR TROOP

SCOUTS BSA RECRUITMENT: FALL AND SPRING TROOP OPEN HOUSE

The troop open house is a time to swing open your doors and roll out the red carpet to welcome guests. It provides a forum to show off Scouting activities and the troop's accomplishments. It is an effective tool to reach youth who have never tried Scouting. Hosting a troop open house is a five-step process that has been proven in troops throughout the nation. Each of the following steps is vital to the event's success:

- 1. Conduct a school rally in fifth and sixth grade classrooms or lunchroom. Capture the names of interested youth.
- 2. Have current Scouts invite potential members (Helps fulfill First Class Requirement). Another option is to mail the parents of interested youth a personal invitation to the troop open house.
- 3. Follow-up the invitation with a telephone call.
- 4. Host the troop open house for youth and their parents.
- 5. Organize a troop or district activity to involve new Scouts right away.

ANNUAL WEBELOS TRANSITION PROCESS

TROOP LEADER ACTION STEPS AND TIMELINE

By Dates		Assistant Scoutmaster/
August	Follow up with Webelos to attend Fall Camporee with	 Webelos Coordinator Responsibilities While new youth recruitment events need to happen, know that Webelos are the source of 90% of all new Scouts. They are the lifeblood of the future of your troop, and you must put extra work into cultivating the relationship. Invite the Arrow of Light Dens to have their meeting at the same time/location as the troop. Schedule a key leader meeting by October with the partner pack. Arrange for Webelos dens to visit troop meetings/outings. Assign a Scout who will provide a good example of Scouting to be the Webelos Den Chief Attend pack and/or pack committee meeting as often as possible during the year to keep the lines of communication open and become acquainted with the Webelos leaders and parents to join the troop with the Webelos as a new Patrol Adviser, Assistant Scoutmaster or committee member.
September	troop Invite Webelos to participate in troop activities: Court of Honor, hike, service project, etc. Plan Key Leader meeting with pack and invite Webelos and parents.	
October	Attend Key leader meeting. Plan and schedule dates for: orientation/camp promotion, troop meeting visit & pack graduation/tran sition.	
November	Invite Webelos and parents to orientation meeting. Webelos complete applications. Include summer camp promotion.	
November- February	Select troop activities for Webelos to attend. Coordi- nate with Webelos leaders and invite Webelos and parents to attend	
February- March	Troop attends the Pack crossover event. The youth transition paperwork is turned into the Scout Office no later than May 1	
April- May	New Scouts camp with the troop. Troop follows up with Webelos who haven't transitioned. Send youth Scouts BSA representation to Webelos Woods.	



ADOPT-A-SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Adopt-a-School program is a way for troops to build relationships with local schools. Participating troops work with school administrations to offer volunteer services that help serve the school's needs.

By building relationships with local schools, troops can also strengthen their relationships within the community and build school pride, as well as Scout pride.

At the end of the first year when the Scouts have completed four required projects, they gain a true sense of membership and accomplishment which always enhances retention.

Here are a few potential project ideas to get you started:

- Grounds beautification
- Building improvements
- Giving tree coordination
- Teacher appreciation
- Helpers during festivals
- Book drive coordination
- Cleaning up after school events
- Green effort coordination
- Literacy program
- Food drive coordination





SECURE YOUR DATE!

Provided for you on the next few pages are steps to help you build your annual program-planning calendar. As you begin to set dates for your troop's campouts and activities, consider including some council-led weekends and events as well!



To make a reservation for your troop, visit camp.northernstar.org

FUNDRAISING

Council-sponsored sales will teach salesmanship, goal setting, adult interaction, public speaking, budgeting and more. Youth can "earn their own way" when it comes to going to camp or other Scouting activities. Fundraisers give your troop more money to spend on programming while reducing out-of-pocket expenses for parents.

No child is ever turned away due to a lack of money. All youth can participate in Scouting no matter what their family's financial situation might be.

YOUTH PROTECTION TRAINING

The #1 priority in Scouting is the safety of the youth we serve. All registered leaders in the BSA have a background check and take Youth Protection Training. Youth Protection Training is not just for registered leaders. The most effective method in keeping youth safe is for the parents and the youth themselves to take this FREE online training. Please take the time to offer this training at one of your meetings or direct parents to :

www.my.scouting.org



WHY CAMP!

Camping is a crucial part of the Scouting Experience. In addition to fun, camping builds confidence, teamwork, responsibility, citizenship and skills.

SUMMER RESIDENT CAMP

Scouts BSA and Venturers can participate in week-long programs at Many Point Scout Camp and Tomahawk Scout Reservation.

Scouts can earn:

- 55 possible Merit Badges
- BSA Lifeguard/First Class
 Rank Requirements
- Swimming Skills
- Aqua Trampoline
- Honor Patrol
- Leave No Trace
- Much, much more!

Activities Include:

- Sailing
- Canoeing
- Water Polo
- Horse Rides
- Iceberg
- Fire Tower
- Climbing/Bouldering
- Shooting Sports
- Nature Programs

- Disc Golf
- Fishing
- Snorkeling
- Archery
- ATVs
- Polar Bear Swim
- Tomahawk Throwing
 - Jet Skis (Many Point only)

WINTER CAMP

North Wind (Stearns Scout Camp) and Snow Base (Tomahawk Scout Reservation) winter camps run from January through February. All participants will have fun and stay warm!

Provided equipment includes a sleeping system of -22 to -30 degree-rated sleeping bags; socks and boots; mittens and shells; hats (one for day, one for sleeping); wool pants; wool shirts; water bottles and a lot more.

Activities include:

- Snowshoeing
- Skiing
- Shelter Building
- Outdoor Cooking
- Sleeping Out-doors
- Winter Games
- Winter Survival Instruction
- Dog Sledding
- Ice Fishing
- Much, more!

More information about Scouts BSA Camp Programs at camp.northernstar.org







12 STEPS TO BUILDING AN EXCITING ANNUAL PROGRAM PLAN

1. BRAINSTORM AND SURVEY YOUR YOUTH: Each patrol should put up two poster boards, one with every Scout's name down the left side, the other poster board with each parent's name down the left side. Gather around the boards – have each Scout provide at least two things that they want to do. Do the same with the parents. Be open-minded and accepting of all ideas! This process helps identify WHAT your Scouts want to do, and also which parents will be excited to help out on a particular activity.

2. REVIEW AND REFLECT ON THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR'S PROGRAM: Your Unit Commissioner has a discussion guide to help you structure this review and reflection. Meet with him or her in April, before you begin planning for the new school year.

3. SET A DATE TO PLAN: Begin early. We recommend starting in May. Set a date to meet with the Patrol Leaders Council and the Troop Committee.

4. CHECK MEETING DATES: Check with your chartered organization and school calendar to confirm availability for meetings and events.

5. SELECT MONTHLY THEMES: Choose from Troop Program Features and schedule them into your calendar. This will equip you with a theme for weekly meetings and monthly camp outs. A written plan for every weekly meeting based on Troop Program Features or themes you develop on your own will lead to organized meetings.

6. NOTE COUNCIL AND DISTRICT DATES: Review the council and district calendar and mark dates on your program schedule for district and council activities (Camporees, Youth Leader Training, Webelos Woods, Roundtables, etc.).

7. SET MEETING DATES: Review available meeting dates with the Patrol Leaders' Council and committee, and set dates for the coming year. Write troop meeting dates in your planning calendar. Be careful to avoid holidays or school-break dates.

8. SET TROOP ACTIVITY DATES: For special activities your troop will be doing during the year; put them in your program calendar. These may include: weekend campouts and activities, troop fundraisers, Courts of Honor, Snow Base or North Wind Winter Camping, Scout Anniversary Week in February, Friends of Scouting at your Court of Honor, Summertime Activities, Summer Camp at Many Point or Tomahawk, and High Adventure Trips (Philmont, Florida Sea Base, Northern Tier, The Summit, or your own trip).



12 STEPS TO BUILDING AN EXCITING ANNUAL PROGRAM PLAN CONTINUED

9. SCHEDULE YOUR MONTHLY COMMITTEE, PATROL LEADERS' COUNCIL MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATION DEADLINES: Schedule these dates to plan the next month's activities and meetings (i.e. in September you plan for October). A committee meeting and a PLC meeting should be held every month.

10. DEVELOP A BUDGET: Use the worksheet from the Northern Star Scouting Calendar and Resource Guide to plan how to fund your annual program. Scouting provides an exciting fundraising tool: the Popcorn Sale in the fall. Camp, registration fees, materials and activities should all be paid for by the unit budget. Make an activity plan, set a fundraising goal and make sure your families know that if they meet your goal, their Scouting year will be fully paid for. Plan it, Raise it, Spend it! Additional resources and tools are available at www.northernstar.org/journey.

11. COMMUNICATE THE PLAN: Parents and Scouts will more fully participate in meetings and activities if they have a copy of the plan. Make sure that every family receives a copy of the troop calendar.

12. CONDUCT A LEADERSHIP REVIEW: Your Unit Commissioner will be an important resource in helping you evaluate your troop's leadership needs. What are the positions that need to be filled? What is your unit's leader succession plan?



RESOURCES- OPEN HOUSE RECRUITMENT FORM







THANK YOU for all you do for the youth in your Troop! We are excited at the potential of welcoming hundreds of new Scouts into the program this year, and we couldn't do it without YOU!

Your troop can request troop recruitment materials to help you hold a successful recruiting event. We ask troops to hold open houses in addition to welcoming Webelos Scouts. Every troop must have a membership goal in mind and make a commitment to recruit and RETAIN new Scouts by having a complete year-round program.

We hope these materials will help you as you prepare for an effective recruitment event to welcome new youth to the adventure of Scouting! Order your materials today by emailing your Scout Office staff Program Relations Executive, or Scouts BSA Recruitment support staff Terri Swenson at tswenson@northernstar.org

RECRUITMENT MATERIALS ORDER FORM FOR OPEN HOUSES

Date	District	Troop #
Person Placing Order		
Phone		Email:
Information for Flyers:		
Date of Event:		Time:
Location:		
Address		
Contact		Email:
Phone		Materials needed by
Materials Needed Recruitment Fliers High Adventure Surveys Banner- to check out Inflatable Archery Range- to o Youth Applications Adult Leader Applications	check out	Quantity



RESOURCES- RECRUITMENT FLIER



Northern Star Scouting www.NorthernStar.org



RECRUITER

ATTENTION SCOUTS BSA:

2019

Recruit a friend and you and your friend receive a FREE POCKET KNIFE and RECRUITER strip patch!

Scoutmasters, we ask that you hold an open house recruitment opportunity in support of this effort.

Joining youth must be brand new to Scouting; youth crossing over from Cub Scouts are not eligible for this promotion. Knifes, recruiter strip patch and Totin' Chips will be distributed through Scoutmasters who are to obtain parent permission and review safety rules with the Scouts before presenting them with their knife.

All Scouts must be registered by 12/31/19 to receive a knife

Submit this completed form to:				
Northern Star Scouting office, or email to: tswenson@northernstar.org				
Troop number:	District:			
Name of new recruited Scout:				
Name of recruiter:				
Parent of new Scout approval signature:				
Parent of recruiter approval signature:				
Name and email of Scoutmaster to distribute items:				



2019 TROOP GROWTH RECOGNITIONS REQUIREMENTS

- 1. The Scouts BSA troop identifies and recruits an adult to be their New Member Coordinator.
- 2. The New Member Coordinator is trained at one of the following:
 - University of Scouting
 - District Training Course
 - Individual Session with Program Relations Executive
- 3. Participate in at least 5 best practices of recruiting.
- 4. Reach your Troop Recruitment or Bonus Goals.



- Every new Scout to join Scouts BSA will receive a pocket knife.
- Troops that hit their base membership goal by 6/30/19 will receive a \$25 camp credit.*
- Troops that hit their stretch membership goal by 6/30/19 will receive a \$50 camp credit.*
- Each Scout who recruits a friend will receive a RECRUITER patch for their uniform and a chance to win a packable hammock.

*To Many Point or Tomahawk summer camp, North Winds or Snow Base winter programs.

RECRUITMENT GOAL

• Achieve the goal of ______ registered Scouts by June 30, 2019 (new troops have a minimum goal of 10 registered Scouts)

BONUS GOAL

 Achieve the goal of _____ registered Scouts by June 30, 2019 (new troops have a bonus goal of 15 registered Scouts)

BEST PRACTICES IN RECRUITING (MINIMUM OF 5)

- □ Promote joining opportunities with your chartered partner.
- □ The New Member Coordinator ensures that the troop conducts an annual open house.
- □ The troop continues to invite new Scouts to every event throughout the year.
- New Member Coordinator conducts at least one summer time activity/event to promote and recruit new members (this could be at the town festival, parade, corn maze, etc.).
- □ Leverage personal relationships to improve school access and secure a table at lunch time.
- □ Troop helps the school with an open house, parent night, etc.
- □ Troop commits to the Adopt-a-School program and partners with their local school.
- □ Conduct a "Bring a Friend" campaign with your Troop
- Work with your school to post your Troop calendar and recruitment opportunities on the school website/Facebook/social media

Other best local practice

Troop#_____

District_____

Name_____ Email_____





UNIT MEMBERSHIP TEAM INFORMATION

New Member Coordinator:	Email:				
Community Events (i.e. parades, festivals)					
Name:	Email:				
Name:	Email:				
Back to School/Open House					
Name:	Email:				
Name:	Email:				
Bring a Friend Events					
Name:	Email:				
Name:	Email:				
Follow-up with Families that showed interest					
Name:	Email:				



WWW.NORTHERNSTAR.ORG WWW.ADVENTUREISCALLING.ORG

2019

