

Troop 629 Adult Guide

PURPOSE OF THE BSA: The purpose of the Boy Scouts of America, incorporated on February 8, 1910, and chartered by Congress in 1916, is to provide an educational program for boys and young adults to build character, to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to develop personal fitness. Specifically, the BSA endeavors to develop American citizens who are physically, mentally, and emotionally fit; have a high degree of self-reliance as evidenced in such qualities as initiative, courage, and resourcefulness; have personal values based on religious concepts; have the desire and skills to help others; understand the principles of the American social, economic, and governmental systems; are knowledgeable about and take pride in their American heritage and understand our nation's role in the world; have a keen respect for the basic rights of all people; and are prepared to participate in and give leadership to American society.

AIMS AND METHODS OF THE SCOUTING PROGRAM: The Scouting program has three specific objectives, commonly referred to as the "Aims of Scouting." They are character development, citizenship training, and personal fitness. The methods by which the aims are achieved are listed below in random order to emphasize the equal importance of each.

Ideals: The ideals of Boy Scouting are spelled out in the Scout Oath, the Scout Law, the Scout motto, and the Scout slogan. The Boy Scout measures himself against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and, as he reaches for them, he has some control over what and who he becomes. This is the basis for the Troops discipline policy. Scouts that attend activities are expected to participate at the best level they are capable of doing, follow their scout leaders guidance, not be a disruptive influence on others scouts and use the ideals of scouting to gage their behavior. Scouts who are not actively participating and showing poor scout spirit will not be invited to attend activities and may be asked to be picked up early by the parents at their expense. The Troop is not a baby sitting service and scouts who cannot follow the rules are a liability to themselves as well as others and should/can not be tolerated. Safe and fun activities for all need rules and everyone must support the policies established.

Patrols: The patrol method gives Boy Scouts an experience in group living and participating citizenship. It places responsibility on young shoulders and teaches boys how to accept it. The patrol method allows Scouts to interact in small groups where they can easily relate to each other. These small groups determine troop activities through their elected representatives. The senior patrol leader runs the patrol leaders council, which meets monthly, to plan and organize the upcoming activities.

Outdoor Programs: Boy Scouting is designed to take place outdoors. It is in the outdoor setting that Scouts share responsibilities and learn to live with one another. It is here that the skills and activities practiced at Troop meetings come alive with purpose. Being close to nature helps Boy Scouts gain an appreciation for God's handiwork and humankind's place in it. The outdoors is the laboratory for Boy Scouts to learn ecology and practice conservation of nature's resources.

Advancement: Boy Scouting provides a series of surmountable obstacles and steps in overcoming them through the advancement method. The Boy Scout plans his advancement and progresses at his own pace as he meets each challenge. The Boy Scout is rewarded for each achievement, which helps him gain self-confidence.

The steps in the advancement system help a Boy Scout grow in self-reliance and in the ability to help others. However, advancement is the tool with which scouting uses to teach its aims. It is only one measure of success and not to be construed as success or failure in any scout's total learning experience. Advancement is not focused on specific times for specific ages. If a scout chooses to shoot for Eagle rank he has until his 18th birthday to complete all the requirements on that trail. In the beginning, a scout first advances using older scouts and some adults to learn the basic outdoor skills. The Troop meetings and outings provide opportunities for the scouts to achieve their requirements, but is not the primary reason for those gatherings. As a scout advances, a series of merit badges, based around career fields are offered and some required. These are not envisioned to be done in a school group setting except at summer camps, but rather with an individual expert in the selected field of study at the scout's own pace. Each step normally requires a scout to demonstrate increasing competencies in leadership as well as showing improved scouting spirit, active participation in troop activities and providing service to others. It is the Troop policy that no parent should be involved in any "approval" for advancement of their own son. While parental teaching/assistance is encouraged, the actual certification/approval should be given by another individual. Troop 629 holds boards of review with the adult committee once each month at Mt. Pisgah Church concurrently with the patrol leaders council meeting. A scout must obtain a scout leader conference prior to attending a board of review. The scouts are formally recognized during a Court of Honor gathering with the families at least four times a year. Instant recognition is also attempted for each particular item in a Troop setting.

Personal Growth: As Boy Scouts plan their activities and progress toward their goals, they experience personal growth. The Good Turn concept is a major part of the personal growth method of Boy Scouting. Boys grow as they participate in community service projects and do Good Turns for others. Probably no device is so successful in developing a basis for personal growth as the daily Good Turn. The religious emblems program also is a large part of the personal growth

method. Frequent personal conferences with his Scoutmaster help each Boy Scout to determine his growth toward Scouting's aims.

Leadership Development: The Boy Scout program encourages boys to learn and practice leadership skills. Every Scout has the opportunity to participate in both shared and total leadership situations. Understanding the concepts of leadership helps a boy accept the leadership role of others and guides him toward the citizenship aim of Scouting. In the troop or District, normally once a year, a special Troop Leader Training (TLT) is available to selected scouts and attendance at the council week long National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) is recommended by the scoutmaster. Additionally many troop positions are available to help those scouts fulfill their leadership requirements for advancement towards their Star, Life and Eagle ranks. The scouts elect some key position and others are appointed. It is the desire of the Troop to retain its best youth leaders as long as possible. Generally, the SPL and PL's should be at least graduates of both a TLT and NYLT course as well as meeting the minimum age (13 yrs) and rank (first class) requirements. SPL's should be at least a Star scout. The desire of the Troop is also to have an adult assigned as a mentor for each patrol who can help develop the individual patrol leader as the scoutmaster develops the SPL and PLC.

Uniform: The uniform makes the Boy Scout Troop visible as a force for good and creates a positive youth image in the community. Boy Scouting is an action program, and wearing the uniform is an action that shows each Boy Scout's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting. The uniform gives the Boy Scout identity in a world brotherhood of youth who believe in the same ideals. The uniform is practical attire for Boy Scout activities and provides a way for Boy Scouts to properly wear the badges that show what they have accomplished. Troop 629 supports the full uniform wear policy for all scouting activities, meetings and boards of review. However, taking into account that scouts at this age are growing and going through growth spurts, it is only necessary to invest in as a minimum a scout shirt, a scout belt and a scout "T" shirt. There is no official hat or neckerchief and while pants and or shorts with socks are encouraged they are not necessary. A scout name tag will be provided by the Troop. When a scout goes for his eagle board of review he would then be expected to be in full uniform. The adult leaders are expected to set the example at all activities and should obtain and wear a full uniform as soon as possible.