**Webelos To Scout:**

**The Transition from
Pack to Troop**

**A Guide for**

**Parents and Leaders**

Chisholm Trail District Scouts BSA
serving Plano ISD units

**Do I need to join the troop my Webelos leader joins?**

No. All members of a den need not join the same troop. Nor is there a "designated" troop your child must join. Some packs have a close affiliation with a troop, however it does not mean that you must join that particular unit. **Choose the troop that fits your family best.**

**How can we find troops near us?**

Start with your Webelos Leader, Cubmaster, and Pack alumni. Attend District events such as Webelos Woods and Taste of Scouting. Visit the Scouts BSA and Chisholm Trail District online resources (see back panel).

**How many troops should we visit?**

The Webelos Arrow of Light requires your child to visit at least one Scout Troop and participate in an outdoor event with a troop. However, **we recommend your child visit several**. Every troop has its own traditions, activities, and level of adventure. Getting a broad perspective will help you assess which unit is right for your child. If possible, you and your child should attend an overnight campout as guests of the troop you’re interested in. Contact the troop to set it up.

**How do I contact a troop?**

**The Chisholm Trail District Directory** is part of the set of handouts you received this evening. It lists the contact phone numbers, location, and meeting nights for the troops in the Chisholm Trail District. If you need more information, refer to the back panel for contact info.

All Scout meetings are open to the public, however Scoutmasters like to be prepared. **As a courtesy to the Scoutmaster, troops request you always call one of the contact persons before visiting the troop.**

*During your visit, there are things to ask and observe. There is no "right" answer to these questions. You want a troop where both you and your child will feel comfortable. Don't be afraid to ask lots of questions. They will be proud to tell you about themselves.*

**Dear Webelos Leaders and Parents of Webelos:**

This year your child will be making a decision
that will have an impact on their Scouting career: the choice of which Scout Troop he or she will join. We are providing this guide to help you assist your child as they makes this important decision. It includes brief answers for many of the questions you may have for each troop and
suggests other questions you and your child might want to ask.

# ***Remember: The choice of a troop is a personal decision***

**How many registered Scouts are in the troop? How many registered Leaders?**

While troops will vary in size, there should be a cadre of Leadership appropriate to the number of youth in the troop. Do the youth tend to stick with the program year to year? Does the troop hold a "Quality Unit" award?

**What is the age range of the Scouts? Is the troop currently able to hold the interest of the older as well as younger Scouts?** Younger Scouts traditionally work on their Rank Requirements so they can advance through the Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class Ranks in their first year to 18 months in Scouting. Much of their attention in meetings and on campouts is devoted to their basic Scout skills for these requirements.

**Do they offer (or plan to offer) any "High Adventure" Scouting?**

As the Scouts get into their teens, it is necessary to challenge them in order to hold their interest. Scouting has established "High Adventure" programs for Scouts who are 14 years of age or older. They may begin high level canoeing, rock climbing, or sailing. Troops may travel to Philmont Scout Ranch for rugged mountain backpacking or to a national or international Jamboree or to other high adventure sites.

**Who are the Scout Leaders in the troop? Are the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, and Committee Chair trained?** This is a very important part of your consideration of a troop. A trained leader should know BSA policies on
programs, safety and youth protection. To be considered "Trained". Leaders must have taken training courses offered by the district and council specific to their volunteer
position. For example, all leaders are required to take Youth Protection Training every two years, but the position specific training for a Assistant Scoutmaster differs from that of a committee member.

**What training have they attended and when?**

Trained volunteers are entitled to wear a "Trained" patch on their sleeves. Scouts BSA Position-Specific Training offered in our Council includes:

*Youth Protection* (available online) -- required of all
registered adult leaders, but recommended for all parents

*Scoutmaster/Assistant Scoutmaster* and
*Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills*

*Troop Committee Member*

*Charter Organization Representative*

*Wood Badge* (Highest level of Scout Leader Training) -- recommended for all unit leaders.

**What is a "typical" meeting like?**

Is it "youth led"? Is it upbeat? Are the youth kept busy? Is it fun? Do they show respect to the flag ceremony, to the program, to the adults, to each other? Is good discipline evident within the program?

**Is the troop "youth led"? What is their feeling about youth leadership?**

In Scouting, most troops aim to train their youth for leadership. Each troop has a Senior Patrol Leader, elected by all the youth in the troop who, with their Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, takes the helm for leadership within the troop. The troop will also be organized into Patrols, units of 5 to 8 Scouts who function together, similar to a Cub den. They will have an elected Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader. In a youth led troop, the youth will obviously need more adult assistance in running meetings, etc., but in an established troop with older Scouts, you should see evidence of "youth leading youth," not adults running the program.

**How does the troop organize its patrols?**

Some Troops have patrols that stay constant over time. Some are divided by age, some are age-integrated, some restructure the patrols once or twice a year. Many Troops have a “Trail to First Class” patrol for the new Scouts. Ask the question, and listen to the Troop’s rationale for what they do.

**What is a typical Troop Schedule like?**

Troops schedules vary, but in general most troops meet weekly, camp monthly, and attend week-long summer and winter camps. Ask to get a copy of their yearly program schedule.

**What is their activity program like?**

Look at the yearly schedule to see how often they camp out, and what their focus is. The outdoor program recommends 9-12 campouts per year, including Summer Camp. Do they camp in the winter? Do they participate in the District/Council activities such as the Camporee? Do they offer special activities at meetings? Do they invite speakers on certain topics? With respect to camping, what camping gear do they already have available for use as opposed to what you would have to go out and purchase?

**How do they utilize the Advancement & Merit Badge Program?**

Some troops use the Advancement and Merit Badge Program as the cornerstone of their program. Their campouts and meetings center on helping the boys advance within the
format outlined by Scouts BSA. Some troops focus meetings on merit badge work, while others use troop meetings for other activities, allowing Scouts to work more independently. Clearly both approaches work well, and the youth can be successful using either to advance all the way to Eagle Scout.

**Does the troop attend Summer Camp? What percentage of the troop attended last year? Where do they go? Do they always go to the same camp? How many Leaders attend camp with the Scouts? Are those Leaders trained?**

Summer camp offers a tremendous opportunity for Scouts to experience the fun and excitement of camping while affording the chance to achieve rank advancements and merit badges. Our Council operates four camp properties, all within several hours driving range. It is not necessary that troops attend these camps. Some troops attend every year for one or two weeks, while others go to Scout Camps in other Councils (in state or out) for a change of pace.

**We are looking for a Troop for our daughter, is there anything different that we should consider?**

Girl Troops are independent units with their own program separate from the brother Troop. A good thing to ask is if the Girl Troops have their weekly meetings at the same time/location as the Boy Troops? Do they camp at the same time and do joint activities with their male counterparts or camp on different weekends?

**What are the uniform requirements?**

Most troops require full uniform for all meetings and for District or Council sponsored events. Others require only the uniform shirt. Some have designated uniform meeting days where they only wear the activity shirt, or a specially designed troop t-shirt, You will want to choose a troop that feels the same about the uniform as you and your child. Ask if there is a uniform 'bank' with items available to borrow until you can get the entire uniform, or if there is assistance for purchasing a complete uniform.

**What can a parent expect in terms of fees?**

Fees vary from troop to troop. Most troops have an annual fee, which covers membership and basic materials, including badges and awards. It usually does not include uniform, camping fees, meals, travel or other special activity costs. You'll want to know what additional fees will likely be charged during the course of the year.

**Observe how the youth interact.**

How do they treat the visitors? You'll want to join a troop where your child feels comfortable. Does your child need a group where they already know other youth? If they do not know others initially, does this group seem like they welcome new scouts?

**What can I do to help?**

Troops require lots of adult support to help its Scouts be
successful. We hope you can get involved as your child continues in Scouting. There are many different levels of support you could offer from leadership roles to Troop Committee, helping at campouts, coordinating an event, and more.

**Some questions to ask while visiting a Troop:**

Obviously, there are many other questions you may wish to ask of a troop relative to your child's interests or goals in Scouting. We hope this information gives you a starting point to help you assess the troops you visit. Good luck!

**For more information:**

BSA National web-site

BeAScout.Scouting.org

Chisholm Trail Membership Chair:

Pam Sullivan

Pam.H.Sullivan@gmail.com

:
Michael Lugo

Chisholm Trail District Director

Michael.Lugo@scouting.org

***A note about Transitioning:***

*To ensure that your child’s Arrow of Light records remain on their BSA ID,* ***you MUST re-charter your child’s BSA Registration Dues and Scout’s Life with your Pack before crossing over.*** *A unit Troop may invite a Webelo Scout to submit a transfer application and participate in Troop activities, however please do not plan to officially join a Troop until January.*