

SCOUT ME INK



**DEN, PACK &
TROOP
DRIVEN
RECRUITMENT
GUIDE**



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®
HEART OF VIRGINIA COUNCIL

Why Hold a Den, Pack, or Troop Recruiting Event?

Recruiting new families into your unit is crucial.

- More families give you more potential adult volunteers and parent helpers, and more hands make the load easier for everyone.
- More youth attending meetings is particularly important for quality programs. Many den games are hard to play with less than 6 Scouts. Troop events and the patrol method are difficult to manage with fewer than 10 to 12 Scouts. Adding new families makes the program that existing families receive even better!
- When Scout dens, Packs, and Troops consistently fail to recruit new families, the lack of new volunteers and Scouts often causes the unit to wither and die, forcing Scout families to join other Scout Packs or Troops that are further away and not part of their child's natural school or neighborhood friend group.
- To keep a Scout group strong and healthy, units must make recruiting new families a part of their program.
- Every fun activity or event is an opportunity to engage new families.
- It is also wise to hold recruiting-focused events throughout the year, but especially in August and September when the new Cub Scout program year is kicking off.



What makes a Den, Pack, or Troop Scout Family Recruiting Event successful?

What is the single most important thing you can do to recruit?

Personal invitations from parents and youth to non-Scouting families!

What is the most important way to keep a Scout?

Great programs!

- The recruiting event needs to be fun!
- It should be built around an activity that families want to attend like a pool party, a cook-out, an outdoor scavenger hunt, etc. Another idea is to invite prospective Scout Families to a den or Troop meeting where a fun activity will hook the new youth into Scouting.
- It is held on a convenient day and time for families.
- It is promoted through word-of-mouth advertising by existing Scout families to their friends who are not in Scouting yet. This can be done anywhere a youth meets with friends, like sports practices, church events, other clubs, neighborhood cookouts, or having a friend to the house to play or do homework.
- It is promoted by the den, Pack, or Troop through social media including Facebook and Nextdoor. Also share to personal pages of unit leaders and older Scouts to spread the word.
- It is promoted using door hangers, flyers, posters, and yard signs that the den or unit places in the neighborhoods they serve, at their charter organization, and with willing local businesses.
- Existing Scouts and Families in the unit have the opportunity to earn incentives for recruiting a friend into the pack and are told about the incentives when they are asked to help promote the event.



What makes a Den, Pack, or Troop Scout Family Recruiting Event successful? (cont'd)

- There is a group of unit volunteers who plan the event and ensure that it is a success. This is a great role for a [New Member Coordinator](#)!
- Information about prospective New Scout Families is collected at the event. Use a sign-in sheet!
- Prospective Scout Families get a printed unit calendar and contact information for key leaders at the event. Include meeting location(s) with dates and times. An alternative to paper applications is using the unit's pin on BeAScout.org; new members can pay on-line as well. Simply use a cell phone or bring a laptop to the event! If you are unfamiliar with using BeAScout.org, you can see a number of tutorials [here](#).
- Prospective Scout Families are asked to join the unit during the event and have the opportunity to complete paperwork and pay fees on-site. An alternative to paper applications is using the unit's pin on BeAScout.org; new members can pay online as well.
- After the event, volunteers from the den, Pack, or Troop follow up with interested families and invite them to the next meeting.
- It is important to capture the names and contact information of the interested youth and their families, whether they apply or not, so that the unit can continue to reach out and encourage the new members to participate at each upcoming meeting and activity!



Promoting Your Event Through Your Existing Scout Families

Ask each of your existing Scout Families to invite 3 of their friends who have non-Scout children to your recruiting event. Den or Troop Leaders explain to their Scouts and Scout Parents at a meeting how to hold these conversations and pass out peer-to-peer recruiting cards to each Scout. Parents and older Scouts should also “share” the recruiting event information on their personal Facebook page, and let their Facebook friends know about their positive experience in Scouting by posting fun stories about recent events and activities.

Promoting Your Event Through Physical Advertising

The Scout Service Center has paper flyers, door hangers, yard signs, posters, and peer-to-peer recruiting cards available for your den, Pack, or Troop to use to tell others about your event.

These materials can be customized to be specific for your recruiting event. The Council is happy to print their custom recruiting tools for you. These materials can be requested through your District Executive.

Promoting Your Event Online

Using the internet and social media to promote your recruiting event is crucial. If you are unfamiliar with using Facebook and Nextdoor to promote an event, take a look at our tutorial available [here](#). For instructions on how to use Facebook, click [here](#). A sample social media post is below.



Family Scavenger Hunt on May 21

Cub Scout Pack 123 is inviting all families with elementary-age children out to participate in a fun & free outdoor scavenger hunt at Three Lakes Park on Saturday, May 21 at 2:00 PM. Please go to Picnic Shelter #1 to sign in, get your Scavenger Hunt List, and instructions. We will meet back up at the picnic shelter at 4:00 PM for prizes and awards.

You do not need to be in Cub Scouts to participate. Cub Scout 123 meets at First Methodist Church at 987 Generic Road. If you have questions, contact Cubmaster John Doe at john.doe@gmail.com or 804-987-1234.

Tips for Conducting a Fun Cub Event

Suggestions for great recruiting events include:

- Model Pinewood Derby with pre-made cars for prospective Scouts to race.
- Bring-a-Buddy pool party at a neighborhood pool.
- Fishing event at Cub Adventure Camp or Albright Scout Reservation; some local parks also have fishing opportunities.
- Visible community service project with the neighborhood church or classmates.
- Hold a round-robin event at your Charter Organization with different athletic events or a neighborhood park or athletic field.
- Corn hole games with modified rules based on den level; rotate so that each youth plays a round with different cubs
- Modify other games similarly such as croquette, throwing different types of balls at some targets, hopscotch using different configurations for the numbered squares; series of races using traditional relay racing formats (carrying an egg on a spoon, sack race, balance a plastic plate of whipped cream on your head, blowing up a balloon)
- Use simple science experiments such as the mentos-mint-in-a-bottle-of-carbonated-soda and have cubs figure out why it works; here are more ideas: <https://www.billnye.com/home-demos>
- Hike a loop trail with some cubs headed on one direction and the others headed in the opposite direction; remember social distancing. Or hike a trail out and back using staggered start times.



Bring-a-Buddy events
are a great
recruitment tool!

Tips for Conducting a Fun Cub Event (cont'd)



- Take pictures of interesting artifacts, footprints, animals or simply silly antics to share on a zoom den meeting
- Sing songs back and forth with your fellow cubs; call out to each other with shouts of encouragement or pack pride!
- Combine the hike with a service project like collecting trash along the way or with an adventure requirement
- For more information on great day hikes, visit bit.ly/HikingBSA.
- Make bird feeders using items such as toilet paper rolls covered in peanut butter and rolled into seeds; add hangers made of string. Other bird feeders can be made using pine cones, milk cartons, or even toast. See <https://happyhooligans.ca/32-homemade-bird-feeders/>
- Walking tour of Hollywood cemetery or Tredegar Ironworks/Belle Island; have cubs take turns making up a ghost story with each cub adding a new part to the story during the walk
- Ride bikes along a trail or quiet neighborhood; pick a spot for a snack packed by each cub; include some bike safety instructions; if someone doesn't have a bike, they can use a scooter
- Look at your adventures and modify activities to fit social requirements under Covid-19 - any activity is an opportunity to involve potential new members!
- More ideas for fun virtual and in-person events can be found at bit.ly/3s4bzaY

Tips for Conducting a Fun Troop Event

- Open House - stations which would include a fun scout activity such as:
 - building a fire or Dutch oven cooking
 - knots and lashings
 - team building games with Scouts and potential members
 - patrol and committee stations to help the visitors understand and appreciate the Scouting program and organization
 - an informational station with handouts (meeting address with dates and times, leader positions and contact information, a calendar of events) and pictures of past activities (posters or Power Point); and registration materials (paper or computer access to BeAScout.org).
- Camping event - be prepared to share gear and invite parents to join the campout. Make sure that all questions are addressed, and appoint a patrol to adopt the recruit.
- If there is hesitancy about camping overnight (young age or inexperienced), invite the recruit and their family to the day events only. Still engage the new youth into a patrol and have an adult leader host the parents so both will get a first-hand experience of Scouting. Encourage them to stay for the campfire.
- If the Troop is planning a day event for hosting interested youth, here are some ideas:
 - Day Hike
 - Bicycling
 - Rock and wall climbing / lock-in
 - Community service project
- Anything on the Troop calendar can be used as a recruitment event!



Safety During the COVID-19 Pandemic

BSA policy is that units must adhere to the current Virginia state mandates as issued by the state governor. Additionally, units must also adhere to their charter organization policies. Further requirements may be implemented for the safety of the unit's members as agreed upon by the unit leadership, as long as those requirements do not conflict with either the charter organization policies or the state of Virginia mandates.

Incentives

All youth who recruit one of their friends to join earn the “Recruiter” award. Details about the Recruiter award can be seen [here](#). In addition, all youth who recruit a friend will receive an adventure kit that includes a flashlight, glow-in-the dark frisbee, and binoculars (while supplies last).

Units who grow their registered youth membership by 15% from their unit renewal membership totals through a unit-organized recruiting event held by August 31, 2022 that does not include any school-based promotion will receive a council-funded pizza party for their Scouts.

Units who grow their registered youth by 25% will have ice cream sundaes at their pizza party!



After the Event

24 hours after the New Scout Family Recruiting Event is held, interested non-Scout families who attended should receive an email from the den or Troop leader inviting them to the next den or Troop meeting.

This handout is useful for the new families and should include the den, Pack, and Troop number, the location of all unit meetings as well as typical meeting days and times, a unit and den calendar, and a list of contacts including the den, Pack, or Troop leadership. The handout given at the recruiting event should be attached to the follow-up email.

