



WHAT SHOULD MIDDLE SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELORS AND MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS KNOW ABOUT BOY SCOUTING?

WHAT IS BOY SCOUTING?

Boy Scouting is the middle- and high school-age Scouting program. A number of the boys in your school are very likely Boy Scouts. Scouts are often identified by their acts of service, outdoor program, uniform, and ideals expressed in the Scout Oath and Law. Millions of young people participate in Scouting, and Scouts are present in every community and around the world. Young people involved in Scouting are drawn from across social classes, and represent every faith, every race, and every ethnic group across the nation.

WHAT DO BOY SCOUTS DO?

The aim of Scouting is to encourage the physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual development of young people so they may play a constructive role in society as responsible citizens and as members of their local and international communities. This aim is achieved through a strong and active program, designed around positive outcomes in personal fitness, character development, participatory citizenship, outdoor skills and appreciation, and leadership, that inspires young people to do their best, to always be prepared, and to lead their adventures for the good of themselves and their community. Boys who complete a rigorous set of requirements that include leadership and community service are recognized as **Eagle Scouts**. Over the history of the Boy Scouts of America, only 4 percent of all youth members have achieved this distinction.

SCOUTING AND SCHOOLS

Scouting activities contribute to the academic development of the children who participate. In the middle school grades, the Boy Scouting program is built on an advancement and recognition system that is largely self-guided and self-directed. Advancement supports youth development in areas of service, outdoor adventure, fitness, and leadership. Boys also have the opportunity to explore other areas of interest such as STEM investigations, the arts, and outings within the community. Some of the specific positive effects documented by researchers include the following:

- Boys who achieve the Eagle Scout Award have been documented to demonstrate more traits of active and engaged citizens than non-Eagle Scouts. These traits carry over into adulthood (Jang, Johnson, and Kim, 2012).
- The time that children spent in structured activities such as Scouting has been correlated with higher academic and conduct grades, constructive peer relations, and positive emotional adjustment (Posner and Lowe, 2008).
- Involvement in activities such as Scouting is correlated with a decrease in delinquency rates (Agnew and Peterson, 1989).
- The time that youth spent in Scouting shows that scout programs help boys develop a sense of themselves as people who are broadly competent, who can work constructively in groups, and who can complete poorly defined tasks. Boys in Scouting also have an increased sense of obligation to the community and its institutions (Kleinfeld and Shinkwin, 1983).
- Youth involved in Scouting are identified as demonstrating higher affective and cognitive regard for learning science content (Jarman, 2005).
- Scouting programs support the growth of developmental assets (Search Institute, 2004).





SCOUTS AS RESOURCES

Young people involved in Scouting develop skills that can be leveraged in support of school and classroom goals. Some that may be of benefit in your school include the following:

- *Social studies:* Grounding in civics and practical citizenship; applied knowledge of community resources
- *Science:* Exploration of many fields of science, engineering, and technology, with a special emphasis on practical and career applications of this knowledge
- *Physical education:* Fitness for life, including nutrition, goal setting, and activities that support participation throughout one's lifetime
- *Skills:* Problem solving
- *Dispositions:* Positive self-concept, solution-oriented, independent problem solver, community service orientation

Your interest and support of your students' participation in Scouting is appreciated.

