



BUILDING FAMILY SCOUTING SUCCESS FOR TROOPS

Go ALL IN!

Both boys and girls deserve Scouting's full commitment and the full opportunity for program engagement and leadership development. Don't invite girls or plan to start a new troop unless you are ready to make Scouting a great experience for every youth who joins. Recruit enough girls to have a strong female troop. Recruit enough boys to have a strong male troop. Work with youth and families to invite their friends and see the momentum grow. Just "dipping your toe" into Family Scouting or "giving it a try" is a recipe for failure.

Be PREPARED

Knowing that each troop must be all-girl or all-boy, consider the advantages of linked troops vs. stand-alone troops. If your charter organization and unit committee plan to oversee both a female and a male troop, the two troops can be "linked" and can meet at the same general location at the same time. They can share resources and some program elements as long as they have separate youth leadership and separate Scoutmasters, conduct separate troop meetings, and plan their own activities (including possible participation in some joint program ventures).

Use the Unit Performance Guide to help you create a new troop with the best possible chance of long-term success. Have trained adult leaders in place before the troop starts to meet. Use the wealth of information on the BSA Family Scouting website. **Follow BSA guidelines!** Be sure that all youth and leaders have updated materials and resources. Remember that the new Scout handbook will have two versions, with the same content but different visuals for male and female troops.

Have a robust plan for recruiting youth and developing youth leadership. Work with local Webelos dens. Consult with Venturing crews and Sea Scout ships to see if they have young women who would serve as den chiefs in nearby packs and/or who might join a new girl troop. Arrange for NYLT and other youth training opportunities.

Be sure that volunteers understand WHY troops are ALL-BOY or ALL-GIRL.

At some age levels (particularly in early middle school and starting high school), boys and girls have quite different typical maturity levels as well as differing interests, physical and verbal skills, and styles of group interaction.

Instead of gaining members by inviting girls to join, countries who went "co-ed" (mixing the genders) lost half of their boys and declined in overall membership after a few years. Analysts think the drop in numbers might be partly because a change in culture no longer gave youth the "roots and wings" Scouting has always provided so wonderfully: that is, neither gender felt the same sense of belonging and acceptance and neither gender felt as comfortable trying new things when groups were co-ed. And co-ed troops did not provide equal opportunities for youth leadership!

The BSA wants youth to have the same great experience Scouting has always given – maybe even better!

Have NEW MEMBER COORDINATORS in each troop.

New Member Coordinators can strengthen Family Scouting by helping to recruit and retain new members and make everyone feel welcome. They can:

- reach families who would otherwise not know about Scouting
- anticipate questions and help families understand troop program and processes
- build a strong sense of belonging among the families in the troop
- encourage volunteerism and help each adult family member be a part of Scouting success.

NMC's make Scouting easier and more fun for everyone (even unit Key 3's). Visit scouting.org/nmc for information.



Be ready for a strong OUTDOOR PROGRAM.

Remember that the most exciting part of the Scouting experience is the outdoor program. Make the troop's outdoor program the best it can be!

COMMUNICATE.

Involve your unit's volunteers, parents, charter partner, and commissioner, as well as your district's membership team. Share ideas, resources, and success stories within your local (linked) units and with other troops. Get the word out and promote Scouting on social media, via school and public displays, and in person! Update BeAScout.