

# Webelos AOL to Scouts Transition

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Pioneer District, Boy Scouts of America

# Pack = Troop relationships

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- Relationships between Troops and Packs should start before the Webelos year. Ideally, Den Chiefs from Wolf on.
- Troop Scout Participation in Pack activities/meetings.
- Having Scouts at some of the Webelos/AOL den meetings teaching skills. Important to see Scouts in action early to sell the Scouts BSA program.
- One troop doesn't fit all scouts. So checking out a couple troops might be advisable.

# Scouts BSA

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- Webelos/ AOL activities - e.g. Webelos Klondike Trek
- Webelos/AOL is that den leaders running the program and troops selling their program must clearly demonstrate the difference between the Cub and Scouts program
- Encourage all to try Scouts BSA out until June
- Sell the Scouts BSA Program!

# Pack Responsibilities

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- It should be the goal of the Cubmaster and Webelos den leaders to graduate every Webelos Scout into a Scouts BSA troop. The key to accomplishing this is to begin promoting the full Scouting journey when Cub Scouts are still in their Tiger, Wolf, and Bear dens, helping Scouts and their families view Scouting as an ongoing adventure.
- Pack and den leaders can use these tips to help Webelos take the next step and bridge into a Scouts BSA troop:
- Develop a working relationship with the leadership of a Scouts BSA troop or troops in the community. Most troops should have either an assistant Scoutmaster or a committee member assigned to new Scouts. Your unit commissioner can help put you in contact with troop leaders.
- Compare calendars of troop and pack activities to coordinate. Community events can be done together, and planning can help prevent conflicts in use of equipment and facilities.
- Work with troop leaders to secure den chiefs for each Webelos den and Cub Scout den.
- Work with troop leaders to plan and conduct Webelos overnight activities.
- Work with troop leaders to plan visits to troop meetings. Never show up without first calling in advance.
- Invite the Scoutmaster and troop youth leaders to special pack activities. This will help create familiarity and a level of comfort for the Webelos Scouts and their parents as they ease into the troop.
- Plan a meaningful crossover ceremony. Include troop leadership to be present to accept the Webelos Scouts as they graduate.
- Webelos leaders should be strongly encouraged to move into the troop with their Scouts, either as assistant Scoutmasters or troop committee members. This will give them a familiar face at troop meetings and a connecting link.
- If a troop does not exist in your community, discuss with the head of the pack's chartered organization about the possibility of organizing a troop. A graduating Webelos den can form the nucleus of a new troop.

# Troop Responsibilities

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- The transition from a Webelos den to a Scouts BSA troop is an important stage in the Scouting journey, but one of Scouting's greatest challenges is to make the next level of Scouting readily available for youth once they meet the joining requirements.
- It is crucial that Scout leaders do everything they can to make the process as seamless and inviting as possible for Webelos and their parents, including:
- Select Scouts to serve as den chiefs for each Webelos Scout den and Cub Scout den. Arrange for den chief training.
- Serve as a resource for overnight activities. The troop can be of service to provide equipment, leadership, and logistics for Webelos campouts.
- Conduct an orientation in the Bear Cub Scout dens to explain how being a Webelos Scout will help prepare them for joining Scouts BSA.
- Webelos den/Scout troop campouts should show Webelos Scouts and their parents what to expect when they move into the troop. The troop should cook and camp by patrol and use skills that the Webelos Scouts can participate in.
- Arrange for Webelos dens to visit a troop meeting. This should be planned several weeks in advance.
- Provide each Webelos Scout a copy of the troop's activities for the upcoming year.
- Work with Webelos den leaders to encourage them to move into the troop with their Webelos Scouts and to serve either as committee members or assistant Scoutmasters to help create familiarity and a level of comfort for the Webelos Scouts and their parents as they ease into the troop.
- Conduct a Scoutmaster conference under the guidance of the Scoutmaster or the assistant designated by the Scoutmaster. This conference should cover the meaning of the Scout Oath and Law, the advancement program, troop camping, the patrol method, summer camp, and personal equipment.
- Work with the Cubmaster in planning a meaningful crossover ceremony.

# Membership Committee

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- 1. Schedule spring and fall recruiting events for your troop using suggestions found in the Scouts BSA Year-Round Recruiting Guide. The spring recruitment is especially effective for fifth graders and as follow-up for any Webelos that did not crossover to the Troop in February.
- 2. Work with the Webelos dens in your affiliated pack to ensure a high percentage successfully progress to Scouting. Assist the parents of the Webelos in finding an appropriate leadership role in the troop.
- 3. Recruit and train high quality Den Chiefs for Webelos dens affiliated with your troop.
- 4. Attend most committee meetings for both the pack and the troop and act as the liaison for the two groups, passing information along so that everybody stays "in the loop." Beginning in November or December, invite the Arrow of Light Den Leaders to attend the Troop Committee meetings. Attend some of the Arrow of Light Den meetings to answer questions of youth and parents, take an Eagle Scout or two with you.
- 5. When planning joint troop/pack activities, take care that the Scouts BSA Scouts do not feel like they are babysitting. Keep them in an instructional role.
- 6. Consider recruiting Webelos crossover "Ceremonial Teams."

*End*



# Top 10 things to look for in a Troop

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- 1. **Fun** - It's got to be fun! Most of the activities within the troop have to be understood by the Scout as a fun, friendly, pleasurable, and rewarding experience. If a troop is too strict and regimented the Scout will lose interest.
- 2. **Program** - this is key to a well-run troop. The program has to be planned out by the troop committee with input from the Scouts. This should be done annually and tied to a budget. The program needs to include all the elements of Scouting, weekly troop meetings, monthly outings/events, weekend campouts, and yearly summer camps. The activities have to be new, exciting, and fresh to keep the Scouts interested.
- 3. **Adult Leadership** - All troops should have —Trained adult leadership. Trained leaders are crucial to any well-run troop. The training provides the leader with the knowledge to understand the aims and methods of the Scouting program. The training presents a wealth of advice and resources to run a successful program. When you visit a troop, look for the trained patch on the leader's uniform.



# Top 10 things to look for in a troop

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- 4. **Youth Leadership** - The Scouting program is designed to have the youth elected and appointed into leadership roles. A troop should have periodic elections to fill those positions. In addition, the troop should provide leadership training for those roles. The troop should conduct Junior Leadership Training (JLT) and/or send Scouts to council JLT training. Look for the trained patch on the youth leader's uniform. 10
- 5. **Scout-Run Troop** - the whole philosophy of Scouting is for the Scouts to run the troop. The adult leaders are there to provide guidance, counsel, and support. The weekly meetings, troop campouts, and troop activities should be planned and executed by the Scouts and the junior leaders. The troop should encourage and strive to have its junior leaders run the troop. When observing a troop in action, see if the Scouts are running the program or the adults.

# Top 10 Things to look for in a troop

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- **6. Patrol Method** - A troop should divide its Scouts into patrols of not more than 8. These patrols act like a team within the troop. They will elect a patrol leader and have periodic meetings either at the troop meetings or at a separate time and place. The troop should provide competitive activities at meetings and outings for the patrols to work as a team. This allows them to demonstrate their Scouting skills and plan for camping events or district camp-o-rees. The troop should also have functioning monthly Patrol Leaders Council, which plans the troop activities.
- **7. Meetings** - Weekly troop meetings are pretty much the norm in Scouting. The troop should have a calendar for the year with the dates established for regular meetings.
- **8. Uniform** - the field uniform is an important part of Scouting and should be required in troop functions, like: ceremonies, religious activities, troop dinners, and district & council events. An activity uniform, which usually consists of a scouting T-shirt and Scout shorts or pants, is commonly used for troop/patrol meetings, day activities, and weeklong camps. Troops may define or require uniforms in different variations, but should have some defined requirements and periodic inspections.

# Top 10 Things to look for in a troop

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- 9. **District & Council Involvement** – A troop should have representatives attending monthly district roundtable meetings. The district and council provide a wealth of experience and knowledge to help the troop run a great program. They are a wonderful resource for information on training, activities, advancement, planning, and ideas.
- 10. **Recruiting** – A troop needs to bring in new Scouts. New Scouts provide the older Scouts with opportunities to mentor and teach them what Scouting is all about. It helps them build leadership and charter. The best source for new Scouts is from the Cub Scouts Webelos program. A troop should have established a working relationship with local Cub Scout pack(s) to help bridge graduating Webelos to Scouts BSA.

# Webelos Should ask

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- Is the Troop active? Do they do things I would enjoy?
- 2. What size is the Troop? What size of Troop would I like?
- 3. Are there other boys/girls my age in the Troop?
- 4. Does the Troop go to a summer camp? Which one(s)? Is it important to me where they go?
- 5. Should I / could I go to summer camp?
- 6. Does the Troop participate in any Honor Camper programs (i.e. Order of the Arrow)? Do they matter?
- 7. How often does this Troop do outdoor activities (i.e. camping)?
- 8. Will I have a say in decision making?
- 9. Does the Troop have advanced programs for older Scouts?
- 10. How often does the Troop meet?
- 11. Do I have a good chance of advancing to Eagle with this Troop?
- 12. Will I have fun?

# Parents should ask the Troop

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- What values/skills will my son/daughter learn?
- 2. What are the other adult leaders like?
- 3. Can I participate in leadership if I desire?
- 4. Is this a Scout run Troop? Is that important?
- 5. Where, when, and how often does the Troop meet? Is it convenient for transporting my son/daughter?
- 6. What is the age ratio of the Scouts? Do the older Scouts help the younger Scouts?
- 7. How much will it cost? Camping? Summer camp? Fundraisers?
- 8. How often does the Troop camp? Do I have to camp with them?
- 9. Does the Troop go to a summer camp? Which one(s)? Is it important to me where they go?
- 10. Does the Troop participate in the Order of the Arrow?
- 11. Is the Troop active? Do they do activities my son/daughter would enjoy
- 12. Will my son/daughter be encouraged/able to advance to Eagle in this Troop?
- 13. Can moms/dads participate? Go camping? Go to summer camp?
- 14. Can this Troop provide a quality Scouting experience for my son/daughter and his/her friends?
- 15. What is expected of the parents and family by the Troop? 16. Will we have fun?