



## Patriots' Path Council Den Chief Plan

### Why an emphasis on den chiefs?

We are encouraging a greater use of trained den chiefs because packs, troops, and Scouting will benefit from the use of den chiefs. The den chief can help with both retention of Scouts and leaders as well as with the recruitment of Scouts. The den chief position is a critically important youth leadership position of responsibility for both packs and troops. Serious consideration should be given to the personal characteristics and maturity of individual Scouts before they are assigned as den chiefs. Below are just some of the many benefits as to why the use of den chiefs is so important to all aspects of the Scouting program:

### Cub Scout:

- Learn about Boy Scouting. The Cub Scouts love to hear about the Boy Scout's camping trips and other adventures
- Potential to start den meetings with a trained den chief and provide continuity of program
- Potentially relate better to the den chief because they are closer in age than the adult leader and even older Boy Scouts
- Interacting with Boy Scouts – sometimes from different troops within the same area
- Develop relationship with a Boy Scout:
  - More likely to continue in the pack and more likely to cross over to Boy Scouts

### Den Leaders:

- Gain another set of valuable hands to lead/assist with Cub Scouts in activities, including songs, skits, games, sports, ceremonies, etc.
- Support with any number of activities and skills that promote Cub Scout advancement
- Help with special outings, field trips, and outdoor activities
- Gain access to the den chief's training and knowledge as both currently a Boy Scout and previously as a Cub Scout
- Help with retention and provide for more individualized attention
- Support in creating more of a "Patrol Method" approach with Webelos & Arrow of Light dens
- Foster a link to the troop, which can be a great resource for many things including help with outdoor activities and Arrow of Light requirements

### Den Chiefs:

- Learn leadership and communication skills
- Improved self-confidence and self-worth
- Develop relationship with Cub Scouts and are looked up to by Cub Scouts
- Opportunities to engage in advanced youth leadership trainings (Live with the council and online at <http://www.scouting.org/Training/Youth/DenChiefTraining.aspx>)
- Can earn BSA Den Chief Service Award & the PPC NYLT Den Chief Award
- Exploring new roles within Scouting that require new and/or refined skills
- Earn position of responsibility in troop, thus assisting in rank advancement
- Learn to work cooperatively with adults





### Packs:

- Improves retention. Cub Scouts learn from older boys who stayed in Scouting and are excited about Scouting and their role in it
- Gain another set of valuable hands to lead/assist with Cub Scouts in activities, including songs, skits, games, sports, ceremonies, etc.
- Helps to maintain communications with troop, which is beneficial for boys and leaders
- Help to provide an example to Cub Scouts who will one day return as den chiefs
- In many cases the den chief already knows the adult leaders within the pack and are already comfortable in working with them
- Can be used to assist with recruitment drives and programming

### Troops:

- Cub Scouts in packs that properly utilize den chiefs are more likely to cross over to Boy Scouts through effective Webelos to Scout Transition programming
- Excellent for maintaining a relationship with the pack, which is beneficial for boys and leaders
- Can be used to assist with recruitment drives and programming
- Opportunity to develop leaders (e.g., future troop guides and other leader positions), which will strengthen the youth leadership of the troop

### How are den chiefs solicited, selected, and assigned? Any way you can!!

Here are some suggestions:

- Following the troop elections, den chiefs should be identified based on interest and commitment, and take den chief training
- The Cubmaster creates a list of den leaders, meeting dates, and times for possible den chiefs. The Scoutmaster and Cubmaster work together to discuss the pack's needs for den chiefs for the coming year
- At the beginning of the school year the Scoutmaster, Senior Patrol Leader, and Cubmaster have finalized the assigning of den chiefs with a den and the den chief attends their first den meeting along with an adult leader from the troop. The den chief also attends pack meetings with their den
- Since den chiefs often come from the same pack to which they are later assigned, they usually already have a comfort level with the adult leaders in the pack. Den chiefs may at times also be assigned to a den that contains a parent, guardian, and/or younger sibling(s). Sometimes this works and sometimes it does not. The Scoutmaster, Senior Patrol Leader, and Cubmaster need to allow at least once a month for the monitoring of the den chief by discussing with all parties how the experience is going, if modifications are necessary, and if changes are warranted





## Training

- The Patriots' Path Council promotes the highest levels of training, since this is essential to a successful den chief
- Both the den leader and the den chief should take training to understand the role and responsibility of the den chief
- The Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, Senior Patrol Leader, and any other leaders who oversee or coordinate den chiefs would also benefit from taking this training to understand the process
- Online "fast start" training is available at:  
<http://www.scouting.org/Training/Youth/DenChefTraining.aspx>. Aimed at youth, the training has mazes and quizzes to deliver the message about what makes for a successful den chief
- District training – many of our districts offer den chief training in the summer and early fall
- Council training – at the University of Scouting for Scouts, Cub Scout leaders, and Boy Scout leaders
- Den Chief Handbook – available for purchase at Patriots' Path Council Scout Shops. Packs and/or troops may choose to provide a complimentary copy of this valuable resource to their den chiefs

## An Example Monthly Plan

### *June /July:*

- The senior patrol leader and Scoutmaster (or designee) should identify those Scouts who might best serve as den chiefs, solicit their interest and commitment, and arrange for them to take both the online and live den chief trainings
- The council and/or districts offer live Den Chief Trainings

### *July /August:*

- Den chief designee takes the online den chief training and takes (or at least signs up for) council or district live training
- The council and/or districts offer live Den Chief Trainings

### *August /September:*

- The Scoutmaster and Cubmaster discuss the pack's needs for den chiefs for the coming year
- The Cubmaster encourages den leaders to accept a den chief for their den. Creates a list of den leaders, meeting dates, and times for possible den chiefs. Arranges for den leaders to minimally take the online den chief training and also (where possible) the live training
- The Scoutmaster and Cubmaster finalize the assigning of den chiefs with a den and the den chief attends their first den meeting along with an adult leader from the troop. The den chief should also begin to attend pack meetings with their den
- The council and/or districts offer live Den Chief Trainings
- The den chief begins to regularly attend den planning sessions and meetings, and pack meetings. As advisable, consider sending an adult leader from the troop for the first few meetings





***October /November:***

- The den chief continues to regularly attend den planning sessions and meetings, and pack meetings. As advisable, consider sending an adult leader from the troop for the first few meetings
- The Scoutmaster and Cubmaster (or designees) monitor den chief usage and at least once a month discuss with all parties how the experience is going, if modifications are necessary, and if changes are warranted
- The council and/or districts may offer live Den Chief Trainings, as needed

***November /December:***

- The den chief attends den planning sessions and meetings, and pack meetings. Where necessary, the troop continues sending an adult leader to adjust the den chief to their duties
- The Scoutmaster and Cubmaster (or designees) monitor den chief usage and at least once a month discuss with all parties (senior patrol leader, den leaders, other coordinating leaders, etc.) how the experience is going, if modifications are necessary, and if changes are warranted
- The council and/or districts offer live Den Chief Trainings (including at the University of Scouting)

***December -June:***

- The den chief attends den planning sessions and meetings, and pack meetings
- The Scoutmaster and Cubmaster (or designees) monitor den chief usage and at least once a month discuss with all parties (senior patrol leader, den leaders, other coordinating leaders, etc.) how the experience is going, if modifications are necessary, and if changes are warranted

***February:***

- The pack should recognize den chiefs at the Blue and Gold Dinner or whenever other leaders are recognized
- The den chief participates with the troop in the Crossing Over Ceremony for Webelos to Scout transition

***April/May:***

- Adult leaders in both the troop and pack discuss and complete the form for the Den Chief Service Award

***June:***

- The troop and/or pack recognizes those den chiefs that have earned the Den Chief Service Award
- The Scoutmaster and Cubmaster review how the experience benefited all parties, make necessary modifications/improvements for the coming year, and the cycle begins again ...





## BSA Den Chief Service Award

The den chief is the only Boy Scout youth leadership position of responsibility that is tied to a specific award. Information about this award can be found below and at:

[http://www.scouting.org/jamboree/sitecore/content/Home/Awards\\_Central/DenChief.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/jamboree/sitecore/content/Home/Awards_Central/DenChief.aspx)

## Den Chief Service Award

### Requirements

1. Serve the pack faithfully for one full year.
2. Attend Den Chief Training (if available within year of service)  
OR be trained by the assistant Cubmaster and den leader.
3. Know and understand the purposes of Cub Scouting.
4. Help Cub Scouts achieve the purposes of Cub Scouting.
5. Be the activities assistant in den meetings.
6. Set a good example by attitude and uniforming.
7. Be a friend to the boys in the den.
8. Take part in weekly meetings.
9. Assist the den at the monthly pack program.
10. Meet as needed with the adult members of the den, pack, troop, team, or crew.
11. Complete four of these projects:
  - a. Serve as a staff member of a special Cub Scouting event, such as a Scouting show, bicycle rodeo, etc.
  - b. Serve as a staff member of a Cub Scout day camp or resident camp.
  - c. Advance one rank.
  - d. Assist in recruiting three new Cub Scouts.
  - e. Assist three Cub Scouts to become Webelos Scouts.
  - f. Assist three Webelos Scouts to join a troop.
  - g. Help to plan and carry out a joint pack-troop activity.
  - h. Recommend to your Scoutmaster, Varsity Scout Coach, or Venturing Advisor another Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or Venturer to be a den chief.



Also see the *Den Chief Handbook*, No. 33211 (2012 printing), for detailed requirements.

Other resources:

[http://www.scouting.org/jamboree/sitecore/content/Home/Awards\\_Central/DenChief.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/jamboree/sitecore/content/Home/Awards_Central/DenChief.aspx)

<http://www.scouting.org/Training/Youth/DenChefTraining.aspx>

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