

# UNIT PROGRAM PLANNING

## THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL SCOUTING

### WHY AN ANNUAL PLAN?

Planning is the first step to a successful pack, troop, team, crew or post program. "Planning," means that a group of people from your unit "thinks" about general flow, themes and activities before the start of the program year. The two key factors are: 1) involving the right individuals in the planning process (those who will be carrying out the activities) and 2) *holding your annual unit-planning meeting by August 1<sup>st</sup>.*

### HOW TO PLAN

At your Annual Planning Meeting, your key leaders will want to follow these 4 steps:

**1<sup>st</sup> – Consider the specific needs of your unit.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> – Review your resources.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> – Plan your unit's calendar.**

**4<sup>th</sup> – Build a budget based on your unit's calendar.**

### STEP ONE - CONSIDER THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF YOUR UNIT

Using a large piece of newsprint and felt pens (or dry-erase board), your adult committee needs to brainstorm and reach consensus on the following questions:

1) What were the activities we did that we want to repeat? Why? 2) What were some of the mistakes and problems last year that we do not want to repeat? 3) What new themes or activities do we want to incorporate into next year's program? 4) What are the special needs of our unit? Tenure? Advancement? Fundraising? Membership? Parental Help? 5) How can we meet these needs?

### STEP TWO - REVIEW YOUR RESOURCES

Resources come in many forms. Listed below are resources available to every pack, troop, team, crew and post in our council. They are to serve the purpose of helping your unit accomplish the objectives you've established based on your needs. Many "needs" can be met with these resources. A few will require "creative resources search". Resources to consider are: the Program Planning website, Your Unit Commissioner, District Volunteers, Roundtable Meeting, District Volunteer, and District Executive.

### RESOURCES - TEXAS SOUTHWEST COUNCIL UNIT PLANNING CALENDAR

☐ **FALL AND SPRING ROUNDUP:** Your unit's membership chairman, with the assistance of your district executive and district volunteer leaders, recruit boys and adult membership out of the schools, churches and other youth centers in your area.

☐ **TRAINING COURSES:** A variety of high quality training courses are available to your adult leadership during the year. Basic training, for Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Ventures and Explorers is a must for all unit leadership. Additional courses such as University of Scouting, College of Commissioner Science, and Wood Badge will help enhance your skills and improve your unit's program. The Junior Leader Training Conference for Boy Scouts also helps to build leadership in the troop and in the future. Online Training Resources are available from our Council Website [tswcbsa.org](http://tswcbsa.org) and click on Training.

☐ **DISTRICT ROUNDTABLE:** Held once a month, the pack, troop, team and crew leaders in your district gather to discuss the following month's Program Helps, share helpful ideas and plan their unit level activities.

☐ **COUNCIL AND DISTRICT ACTIVITIES:** Note the variety of activities your council and district organizes in support of your unit program: Cub Scout Family Camps, Fun With Son Cub Camps, Mom and Me Cub Camps, Boy Scout Summer Camp, Food Drives, Day Camps, and etc. Check out the Council Calendar.

☐ **CHARTER RENEWAL:** All units must reregister their youth and adult membership by December 15th. Charter renewal workshops are available to assist you with this important annual event.

☐ **FRIENDS OF SCOUTING (FOS):** Kicking off in early December, Friends of Scouting provides the Council with the financial resources to deliver Scouting to more than 5,000 youth. The objective of the Family FOS campaign is to give every family in Scouting the opportunity to make a financial contribution at the level of their interest, commitment, and ability.

☐ **CAMP:** Fall and Spring Cub Camps, Cub Scout Day Camp, and Boy Scout Resident camp provide a yearly highlight for many packs and troops and give youth the outdoor experience of a lifetime.

☐ **COUNCIL AND DISTRICT DINNERS:** Recognize key leaders in units, district and the council. These events help to say thank you to the many supporters of Scouting.

☐ **PROGRAM HELPS:** This resource gives your unit ideas for monthly themes and activities (skills, games, crafts and ceremonies).

☐ **BOYS' LIFE MAGAZINE:** This monthly resource is the best reading you and your Scouts could ask for at an unbeatable price. It supports unit programs in countless ways.

☐ **SCOUTING MAGAZINE:** This publication is filled with resources to develop a successful pack, troop, team, and crew program.

☐ **PEOPLE - YOUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET:** Parents, neighbors, commissioners, district committee and community leadership. Parent surveys are a great tool for additional resources.

### STEP THREE - PLAN YOUR OWN UNIT'S SEPTEMBER TO AUGUST CALENDAR

You've identified needs and reviewed resources to serve as a means to fill those needs. Now, what do you want to do and when? Before completing this last step in the planning process, your group needs to feel comfortable with STEP ONE (the needs of your unit) and STEP TWO (resources available). Planning your calendar will be a natural result of going through these previous steps. Use the Program Planning resources provided at the Program Preview.

### STEP FOUR - BUILD THE UNIT BUDGET

Use the Unit Budgeting tools available on the Council Website [tswcbsa.org](http://tswcbsa.org) under Program Planning. There is a Pack Budget Detail or you can use the "Ideal Year of Scouting" brochure. Plan to sell enough popcorn to cover all the costs in the unit. If your unit sells more, then you can provide additional program benefits. Be sure to SHARE the budget with all leaders, committee members, PARENTS, AND SCOUTS.

### MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED

1. Planning references materials (Council Calendar, Unit Program Helps, Quality Unit Application and Popcorn Sale Promotion and Commitment Card).
2. Calendar of local activities (personal, community, and school calendars).
3. Supplies (poster paper, felt-tip pens, blank paper, pens, and masking tape).
4. The enthusiasm of key leaders, committee members and parents.