

How to Recruit Volunteers and Keep Them!

More than 15 percent of boys drop out of Cub Scouting the first 30 days according to a study completed in 2001. Why? One of the leading reasons is that parents and boy's don't get involved in the program quickly. Cub Scouting is a family program, and family involvement within the first 30 days is vital.

So, how do you recruit these family members and keep them excited?

First: Ensure the family members are told specifically how Scouting benefits their son and their family. Be sure you develop a strong program that begins within a couple weeks of the roundup. Remember that parents who attend the Rally already believe in the Scouting Program but they need to be told where they fit in. They need to be told that the meetings are not a "drop off at a meeting and leave" or just "sit back and talk" to other parents program- they must get **involved** in the program. You need to tell parents about the activities you have planned and keep them informed at all times. Engaging parents is all about getting boys and parents **involved**.

Second: Ask parents to serve in a leadership capacity. Don't be afraid to **ask**! You must make "**the ask**" or they won't volunteer. You must individual petition the parents to take a role in your unit. Whether it's a Committee Member or Den Leader, you must be specific when you **ask**. DO NOT just **ask** for a volunteer at a Pack Meeting or Court of Honor- **ask** specifically to a person for a specific position. It's much harder to decline if **asked** to someone's' face! Remind yourself that there are no "one man shows" and you can't do it alone. You must delegate the programs to be successful and for parents to be engaged with their son. Give them a voice by asking them to help develop an activity or assist with a small task that they can succeed in. Participation breeds excitement! Hint- **ask** both parents if they can help because then the approval from the Spouse is immediate. Be sure to present the request in a positive nature- don't be negative at anytime.

Third: Get the new volunteer **trained** as soon as possible. A quality **trained** person is a happy person! **Training** is required for the parent to be successful and for the unit to be successful. As a seasoned leader, it is your responsibility, and that of the District you are in, to ensure **training** takes place. Continue to provide resources for the new leaders (and the seasoned ones) so they feel that you are always concerned about them.

Additional Comments: One of the most important factors in keeping volunteers engaged in Scouting is to be sure they know how important they are and how much they are making a difference in the Scouts. Amid hectic and demanding lifestyles, volunteers need to know that they are truly making an investment of their time in Scouting and that they are heroes to their children and others.