

AIMS OF SCOUTING

All Programs in Scouting Works Toward the Same Three Aims

- **Character Development** Boy Scouting works toward three aims. One is growth in moral strength and character. We may define this as what the boy is himself: his personal qualities, his values, his outlook.
- **Citizenship** A second aim is participating citizenship. Used broadly, citizenship means the boy's relationship to others. He comes to learn of his obligations to other people, to the society he lives in, to the government that presides over that society.
- **Fitness** A third aim of Boy Scouting is development of physical, mental, and emotional fitness. Fitness includes the body (well-tuned and healthy), the mind (able to think and solve problems), and the emotions (self-control, courage, and self-respect).

Cub Scouts gave you son a good start on the way to developing these qualities, but it is in a Boy Scout Troop where he will complete the job.

METHODS OF BOY SCOUTING

The methods are designed to accomplish the aims. Thus it is important that you know and use the methods of Boy Scouting. Other methods are good, but they may bring different results—results quite different than we are seeking.

- **Ideals** The ideals of Scouting are spelled out in the Scout Oath, Law, motto, and slogan. The Scout measures himself against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and as he reaches for them he has some control over what he becomes. "Show Scout spirit," a requirement for rank advancement, means living up to these ideals.
- **Patrols** The patrol method gives Scouts an experience in group living and participating citizenship. It places a certain amount of responsibility on young shoulders and teaches boys how to accept it. The patrol method allows Scouts to act in small groups where they easily can relate to each other. These small groups determine troop activities through their elected representatives.
- **Outdoors** Boy Scouting is designed to take place outdoors. It is in the outdoors that Scouts share responsibilities and learn to live with each other. It is here that the skills and activities practiced at troop meetings come alive with purpose. Being close to nature helps Scouts gain an appreciation for God's handiwork and humankind's place in it. The outdoors is the laboratory for Scouts to learn ecology and practice conservation of nature's resources.
- **Advancement** Scouting provides a series of surmountable obstacles and steps to overcome them through the advancement method. The Scout plans his advancement and, by participating in the troop program, progresses as he overcomes each challenge. The Scout is rewarded for each achievement, which helps him gain self-confidence. The steps in the advancement system help him grow in self-reliance and the ability to help others.
- **Adult Association** Boys learn from the example set by their adult leaders. Troop leadership may be male or female, and association with adults of high character is encouraged at this stage of a young man's development.
- **Personal Growth** As Scouts plan their activity and progress toward their goals, they experience personal growth. The Good Turn concept is a major part of the personal growth method of Scouting. Boys grow as they participate in community service projects and do Good Turns for others. There probably is no device so successful in developing a basis for personal growth as the daily Good Turn. The religious emblems program is also a large part of the personal growth method. Frequent conferences with his Scoutmaster help each Scout to determine his growth toward Scouting's aims.
- **Leadership Development** Boy Scouting encourages boys to learn and practice leadership skills. Every Scout has the opportunity to participate in both shared and total leadership situations. Understanding the concepts of leadership helps a boy accept the leadership roles of others and guides him toward the citizenship aim of Scouting.
- **Uniform** The uniform makes the Scout troop visible as a force for good and creates a positive youth image in the community. Boy Scouting is an action program, and wearing the uniform is an action that shows each Scout's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting. The uniform gives the Scout identity in a world brotherhood of youth who believe in the same ideals. The uniform is practical attire for Scout activities, and provides a way for Scouts to wear the badges that show what they have accomplished.

PICKING A BOY SCOUT TROOP

When visiting a Boy Scout Troop there are some things that you will want to look for to help identify a well-run troop. All Scout programs should work toward the three aims of Boy Scouting. The methods are designed to accomplish these aims.

Here is a list of items you should look for and examine when you visit a Boy Scout Troop. The Scout program is for Youth from ages 11-18, so your decision is an important one. Talk it over with your Son!

- Troop Meeting run by Youth** - The troop is a real life opportunity for Scouts to learn leadership through participation. It is unfortunately a well kept secret that the Scout program is a leadership training program with the outdoors as a laboratory.
- Patrol Method Used** - The Patrol Method gives Scouts an experience in group living and participating in leadership activities. The patrols determine troop activities through their elected representatives.
- Trained Youth & Adults** - Understanding the concepts of leadership helps each person accept the leadership roles of others and guides them toward the citizenship aim of Scouting.
- Uniformed Youth & Adults** - The uniform makes the Scout troop visible as a group. It shows each Youth and Adult's commitment to the aims of Scouting.
- Troop Meetings Planned by Youth** - Patrol Leaders' Council of the Troop should plan the Troop meetings, campouts and activities. It is an important part of the leadership experience.
- Troop Calendar Planned by Youth** - Ask who planned the calendar. It should be planned by the Patrol Leaders' Council and approved by the Troop Committee.
- Troop Calendar Published** - It needs to be planned and published or it does not exist.
- Troop Roster Published** - Look and see if you find someone you know and then call them. Ask them about the program, leaders and activities.
- Troop Program Explained During Visit** - Each Scout program should plan programs that work towards the three aims of Scouting.
- Dues and Fees Explained** - You should know how the Troop program is financed and what the money you are paying is used for. Find out what the campouts and activities cost.
- Troop Fundraising Assists Youth** - We believe the purpose of fund raising is to help you and your son participate in Scouting. Most of the profits go to items that benefit the Scouts.
- Enthusiasm of Youth & Adults** - If the youth and adults are not excited by their program, why should you join!
- Were you asked to Join** - Not only should you be made to feel welcome at the Troop Meeting.
- How does your Son Feel** - What was your son's impression of the visit? When he joins a program, you also become a part of it.

Scouting is not an abstruse or difficult science: rather it is a jolly game if you take it in the right light. In the same time it is educative, and (like Mercy) it is apt to benefit him that giveth as well as him that receives.

Robert Baden-Powell

