

**CUB MASTER
“WHY-TO” MANUAL**



Mike Willey
Pack 1036
Gray Owl District
Circle Ten Council

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1. WHAT IS IN THIS AND WHY DO YOU WANT TO READ IT?

1.1. Introduction

Is there something missing from your training? Well there was for me.

I have participated in all the training that was available, attend round table meetings and regularly surf the online web resources for Cub Masters. In short, I overwhelmed myself with information, and everything looked like great stuff for my boys. If I did everything that looked promising, well... the boys would have to drop out of school, I would have to quit my job, and we would all spend the next few years doing nothing but scouting.

Since most of the parents in my Pack would frown on their sons dropping out of school to follow the Pied Piper, I had to make decisions about what to include and what not to include in our program. The data I used to decide what to use in our program included

- What worked and what didn't work for the Cub Master who proceeded me
- Success and horror stories from round table
- What my boys responded to
- What fit my personality
- Gut feel

There is nothing wrong with implementing your program using these as your guidelines, but I also wanted to make sure that my boys get the most out of scouting, so this is my attempt to delve a little deeper into what the boys can learn and how to keep them wanting to come back.

1.2. Organization

This booklet is divided into two primary sections, Organization and Responsibilities and Implementing the Program. In the first section I discuss the Cub Scouting program, in general, and the role of the Cub Master in the program. In the second section, I lay out some of the many important decisions we have to make as Cub Masters and lay out how these decisions effect our boys and our movement.

1.3. How to Use This Booklet

I recognize that although my prose style is entertaining and easy to read, most of you have very little time to sit down and read. If you are looking for specific advice, use the Table of Contents to find the paragraph on your issue, most of these sections stand well on their own.

Present, don't invent



This is sage advice that is given to new trainers in the Scouting program, but I think it is important for those of us implementing the Scouting program to live by this maxim too.

We all have great ideas about what is fun and helpful for boys, but we should keep in mind what has made Scouting the premier youth movement world wide for 100 years. These are the Aims, Purposes and Methods of Scouting.

Although these have been rephrased over the years, they are essentially the same tools that Baden-Powell laid out in the first edition of *Scouting for Boys*.

Be a successful leader by using the tools that are already there.

1.4. Approach

This booklet is written based on my approach to scouting. Scouting has had a profound effect on my life and I passionately believe that it is more than a boy's club. Scouting is a world wide movement with the ultimate goal of developing the leaders of tomorrow. I know of no other organization that does such a thorough and effective job of molding the "whole" boy into a responsible young man. I believe that the keys to this success are:

- Baden-Powell's vision of the key aspects of leadership and honor
- Baden-Powell's model of scouting as a game with a purpose
- The volunteers who have adopted our founder's vision and model as their own

Every now and then you will see a box off to the side of the main text. These are my "soap boxes". My soap boxes are areas where I express opinions on peripheral subjects that I believe are relevant to the discussion at hand. You may find some of these opinions helpful as you try to learn the craft of Cub Mastering.

2. ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All of the material in this section is presented in both New Leader Essentials and Leader Specific Training for Cub Masters and provides the context for the rest of this booklet. Much of this material is taken verbatim from the Cub Scout Leader Book.

2.1. The Why and How of Cub Scouting

It is important to remember that the Aims and Purposes of Cub Scouting are how we interest parents in encouraging and supporting their boys in our program. The Methods are how we deliver the Aims and Purpose to the boys, while they think they are just having a good time!

2.1.1. Aims

The aims of Cub Scouts are precisely the same as the aims of the Scouting Movement as a whole: to Develop Character, Citizenship and Personal Fitness.

2.1.2. Purposes

- Character Development
- Spiritual Growth
- Good Citizenship
- Sportsmanship and Fitness
- Family Understanding
- Respectful Relationships
- Personal Achievement
- Friendly Service
- Fun and Adventure
- Preparation for Boy Scouts

2.1.3. Methods

- Living the Ideals
- Belonging to a Den
- Using Advancement
- Involving Family and Home
- Participating in Activities
- Serving Neighborhood and Community
- Wearing the Uniform
- Making Character Connections

Scouting vs. Organized Sports

Those of us who believe in the Scouting movement must recognize that we are competing for boys with organized sports teams. While organized sports can be beneficial to boys, I believe that when participation in organized sports requires so great a commitment, that boys have time for nothing else, the end result will often be young men who are one dimensional.

The beauty of Scouting is that it develops boys into well rounded, multi-dimensional young men.

When parents tell me that their boys get as much out of sports as they would out of scouting I ask them, "Does the team encourage your boy to have a relationship with God, to be a good citizen, to be a responsible family member, or to serve others? Aren't those pretty good reasons to find time for scouting?"



2.2. The Cub Master

The Cub Master, along with the Committee Chairman, is responsible for providing direction for the entire Pack. In general, the Cub Master is the guiding hand behind the work of other Pack leaders and serves as program adviser to the Pack committee. He or she is a recruiter, supervisor, director, planner, and motivator of other leaders.

Everything that the Cub Master does is aimed at helping the individual boy. Securing strong leaders, planning Den and Pack activities, advising other leaders and adult family members-these are all ways in which the Cub Master affects the kind of Cub Scouting program each boy in the Pack is offered. The Cub Master directly influences the lives of individual boys by keeping in mind that boys can become better through Cub Scouting.

The responsibilities of the Cub Master (taken from the Cub Scout Leader Book) are broken out by topic.

2.2.1. Program Planning

- Plan and help carry out the Cub Scout program in the Pack. This includes leading the monthly Pack meeting, with the help of other leaders.
- Work with the Pack committee on (1) program ideas, (2) selecting and recruiting adult leaders, and (3) establishing a budget plan.
- See that Tiger Cubs, Cub Scouts, and Webelos Scouts receive a quality, year-round program filled with fun and activities that qualify the Dens and Pack for the National Summertime Pack Award.
- Guide Cub Scouts in goodwill and conservation projects.
- Help the Pack committee chair conduct the annual Pack program planning conference and the monthly Pack leaders' meetings.
- Take part in the charter review meeting and annual charter presentation ceremony.

2.2.2. Training

- Know about and use the appropriate and available literature, including Boys' Life and Scouting magazines, Cub Scout Program Helps, and the Webelos Leader Guide.
- Request Den Chiefs for all Dens and, after selection, see that they are trained.
- Guide and support Den Leaders. See that they receive the required training for their positions.

2.2.3. Pack Meetings

- Plan and help carry out the Cub Scout program in the Pack. This includes leading the monthly Pack meeting, with the help of other leaders.
- Request Den Chiefs for all Dens and, after selection, see that they are trained. Recognize the Den Chiefs at Pack meetings.
- Conduct impressive Arrow of Light Award ceremonies.
- Recognize the Den Chiefs at Pack meetings.

2.2.4. Pack Outings

- Conduct an impressive graduation ceremony for Tiger Cubs.
- Help plan and conduct impressive Webelos graduation ceremonies involving parents and guardians, the Scoutmaster, the Webelos Den Chief, the Webelos Den Leader, and the troop junior leaders.

2.2.5. Recruiting and Retention

- Help the Pack committee with a year-round recruitment plan for recruiting boys into Tiger Cubs, Cub Scouting, and Webelos Scouting.
- Recruiting Adults
- Work with the Pack committee on (1) program ideas, (2) selecting and recruiting adult leaders, and (3) establishing a budget plan.
- Maintain good relationships with parents and guardians. Seek their support and include them in activities. Involve male relatives such as uncles and grandfathers so that Cub Scouts will have additional male role models.
- Work as a team with the Pack committee chair to cultivate, educate, and motivate all Pack leaders and parents or guardians in Cub Scouting.

2.2.6. Direction and Leadership

- Conduct a Pack program according to the policies of the BSA.
- See that the Pack program, leaders, and Cub Scouts positively reflect the interests and objectives of the chartered organization and the BSA.
- Guide Cub Scouts in goodwill and conservation projects.
- See that the responsibilities specified for the assistant Cub Master are carried out.
- Encourage high advancement standards from all Cub Scouts.
- Support the policies of the BSA

2.2.7. Advancing Into Scouting

- Help organize Webelos Dens and encourage graduation into a Boy Scout troop.
- Help establish and maintain good relationships with Boy Scout troops.
- Meet with the unit commissioner, Webelos Den Leader, and Scoutmaster to establish plans for the Webelos Scouts' transition to Boy Scouting.
- Help plan and conduct impressive Webelos graduation ceremonies involving parents and guardians, the Scoutmaster, the Webelos Den Chief, the Webelos Den Leader, and the troop junior leaders.
- Help bring families together at joint activities for Webelos Dens (or Packs) and Boy Scout troops.

3. IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM

3.1. Program Planning

Program planning is potentially the most time consuming part of being a Cub Master. The key to making this part of the Cub Master's roll a little easier is delegation. There are two obvious obstacles to delegation.

The first obstacle to delegation is that the potential members of your team often signed up with the idea that "someone" will make my boy a Cub Scout. They have no idea that parent participation is part of the program.

The second obstacle to delegation is more about limitations to your leadership style. Every one of your parents has a boss at work, and they sure as heck don't need another one when they are volunteering to help out.

For these two reasons (and others) I believe that the best methods for Cub Master leadership are to lead by example, and enlist help by building a sense ownership in the Pack.

Leadership Training



There are many training programs available to Cub Scouters. Each of these programs adds a little to your basic knowledge of Scouting and gives you tools to help implement the program. There is only one training program that is specifically designed to help you grow as a leader.

That program is **Wood Badge**. Wood Badge training will give you leadership and communications skills that will help you with leading your boys, your adult volunteers, and will even help you in your day to day work environment. Working your ticket (a key part of the program) will help you lead by example and improve your awareness of what it takes to implement a successful scouting program.

3.1.1. Participating in District / Council Activities

Every Council and District organizes activities to benefit all the units in the area. These activities include training, fund raising, recruiting, and large scale activities for the boys. The activities below are offered by Circle Ten Council and the Gray Owl District, although the specific activities offered in your area may vary, the ideas behind why participation is important translate pretty easily.

In general, your role as Cub Master in these activities is to help promote participation by your boys and adults. In activities that involve the boys in your Pack, the Cub Master's role is provide central leadership for your unit's participation.

3.1.1.1. Leader Training

Leader training is one of the most important aspects of the scouting movement. 2007 marks the 100th anniversary of the world scouting movement. Scouting's success has been largely due to its ability to recruit and train adult leaders in the vision and methods of scouting.

We often say that “Every boy deserves a trained leader.” This is true, but we should also remember that every volunteer deserves adequate training. There is nothing more discouraging than failure. If we want our volunteers to stay with the program, they need training to help them succeed.

It is imperative that the Cub Master lead by example in this area. Reading about how to perform the duties is not enough, face to face, hands on training in the skills of scout leadership is needed too. An additional benefit is that when other parents see and hear how much you gained from training, they are more likely to take advantage of those opportunities too.

3.1.1.2. Round Table

Round Table is a monthly meeting with representatives from all the units in a district. This forum is used to disseminate the latest information on what is going on at the District and Council level. This brings us to the first reason to attend Round Table, to gather information on current district programs.

The often overlooked reason to attend round table is continuing training. Every Round Table offers opportunities to learn from active leaders and to discuss your specific problems and successes with leaders from other units. Round tables generally provide you with great program ideas for the coming months, making planning a lot easier.

It is important to lead by example, by participating in Round Table as often as possible. Encourage the other leaders in your unit to attend by emphasizing the benefits they will receive from coming with you.

3.1.1.3. Popcorn Sales

Every Pack will have to do fund raising of some sort during the year. Some will hold garage sales, or car washes, others will sell something. There is a lot to be learned by our boys in these fund raisers and the Annual BSA Popcorn sales are a great way to do this.

So, why should your Pack participate in Popcorn Sales? What makes this a better fund raiser than selling candy or candles?

The first reason is that Popcorn sales are so clearly identified with scouting. This clear association in the public eye (much like Girl Scout cookies) makes it much easier for the boys to step outside of their immediate families in this fund raising effort.

Another good reason to sell popcorn is that part of the money goes to support your local district and council. This helps provide them with funds to provide camps, recruiting literature, and the full time paid staff that support our programs.

When you implement your popcorn sales program encourage your boys to go outside their immediate families in their sales. When a boy sells popcorn to his Grandmother, he doesn't get the same feeling of accomplishment and pride that he will when he encourages someone outside his family to help support Scouting by purchasing a great product.

Your job a Cub Master is not to run the popcorn sales, or any other fund raising activity. You should help the Pack Committee recruit someone dedicated to this job and provide support for them at organized activities and training sessions for the boys.

3.1.1.4. Scout Show

Most BSA Councils have an annual Scout Show, where local units get together to demonstrate the skills they have learned to each other and the general public. If your Pack participates as an exhibitor in the Scout Show, it gives the boys an opportunity to show off skills that they have learned or share games and activities that they love. This can be a solid way to build self esteem for your boys.

Attending your local scout show can be a way to get your cubs excited about moving up to Boy Scouts. They will get to see demonstrations of many of the really cool things that scouts do.

3.1.1.5. Join Scouting Night

Join Scouting Night (JSN) is the big fall recruitment push for your Council and District. In recent years (2004 – 2006) the number of boys participating in Cub Scouts has declined significantly. There are smarter people than me working on why this is happening and what big things can change to fix it.

On the front lines of scouting, those of us leading units have to do everything we can to make JSN a success. Let's face it, if you don't do a good job recruiting, you won't have any boys to be Cub Master for!

I like splitting the boys off from the meeting with the parents on JSN. I send the boys off with the boys who are already Pack members and boys and men from one of the troops we feed into.

The Promise



The core of the Scouting Movement that makes it different virtually every other youth organization are the principles of duty to God, to Country, and to our Fellow man. If we don't pay attention to these three elements, we are just entertaining the boys, and there are plenty of places they can get entertained in our society.

Every one of the boys in my Pack can recite the Cub Scout promise by the second meeting. But the only way they will DO the Cub Scout promise is if I show them by my example every time we meet that all three of these elements are important, and can all be part of a fun time.

Give parents a reason to bring their boys to every activity. Do (don't just say) the Cub Scout Promise at every activity.

The Boy Scouts will teach the boys the Cub Scout promise and play a game. While that is happening our Committee makes the pitch to the parents about the details of our program and what the real benefits of scouting are.

3.1.1.6. Scouting for Food

I promise ... to help other people. Do you need a better reason to have your Pack participate enthusiastically in Scouting for Food?

I don't believe that any Pack should consider participation in the Scouting for Food program as "optional". Given that your Pack will participate in the program you need to find ways to make it a fun learning experience for the boys.

Whether you are responsible for implementing the Scouting for Food activities, or it will be lead by other Pack leaders, make sure that you address some of these key elements:

- Make it fun for the boys. Have contests and recognition on the spot.
- Make a plan and execute it. If this isn't organized, parents will get frustrated, and if they get frustrated enough, they won't bring their boys back.
- Make sure the boys understand the impact that they are having in the community. If possible, bring them to the place where the food will be distributed (preferably before the Scouting for Food weekends) so that they can see how their work benefits others.

I can do this, I was a Scout



Many of us who were Cub Scouts or Boy Scouts come into our new leadership positions thinking we know about the Scouting program.

Surprise!

Knowing what scouting is all about from a boy's perspective is not the same thing as knowing how to implement it as a leader.

No matter how much you think you already know about Scouting, use the resources that are available to learn more. It isn't enough to just do the things you remember as a boy. Your leaders tailored a fun and effective program for you and now it's your turn to tailor the program for a new generation of boys.


3.1.1.7. University of Scouting / Powwow

Our council has replaced its annual Powwow with the University of Scouting (UoS). This is an all day adult event where Scouters get together to learn more about Scouting. In our district, you have the opportunity to participate in up to six one hour sessions on various topics in scouting (our College of Cub Scouting offers 20-30 different topics).

You have two roles associated with UoS, first to encourage your adult leadership team to attend, and second, to lead by example by participating in the program too.

These classes are taught by folks like you and me, who have been leaders in scouting sharing their experiences so that you and your adult leadership team can learn about things like *Campfire Programs*, *Derbies and Races* and *Getting Parents Involved*. Our district also gives you a CD ROM with all the materials from every class, so that you can even learn from the classes you don't have time to attend.

It is a big commitment to ask your leaders to sacrifice a whole day to attend this awesome training session, but I will tell you that everyone that I know who has participated in UoS has expressed the wish that it could be longer so they could go to more classes.



I don't need anymore training

Think you know it all? Been there, done that, got the T-shirt?

Great, check with your district training chairman, I guarantee he (or she) is looking for enthusiastic, knowledgeable instructors!

If you don't have the time or inclination to teach, ask your Unit Commissioner if they have a new Cub Master that could use a mentor to bounce ideas off of.

3.1.2. Organizing Pack Special Activities

You can't do it all. Remember your primary visible job as Cub Master is to MC Pack events and with the Committee Chairman provide the leadership and direction for the Pack.

To rephrase: recruit other adult leaders to organize the details of these events and provide the leadership to make sure that when they happen they are expressions of the Aims and Purposes of Cub Scouting and rely on the methods of Cub Scouting.

3.1.2.1. Blue and Gold Banquet

The Blue and Gold Banquet should be one of the highlights of your Pack's year. Everyone loves a party! Help the boys understand that this is a birthday party for Cub Scouts, and in a very real way it is a birthday for them too. This is a great time to bring in some Boy Scouts to show and tell about the fun things that are in store for boys who stay with the program.

A lot of Packs get hung up on the term "Banquet". I know Packs that set up catered dinners at a local restaurant. Although this is nice, it can also be expensive and intimidating. I recommend that you use the norms in your families for birthday celebrations as a guide to planning your Blue and Gold. Our Pack has had hot dogs, pizza, pot luck dinners, and cake decorating contests as part of various Blue and Gold banquets. We usually use the Cub Scout monthly theme to guide the decorating ideas and program.

3.1.2.2. Pinewood Derby

I don't know how many Packs hold a Pinewood Derby every year, but I am not far off the mark in stating that virtually all of them do. I am not sure what the

allure is for the boys, but it is by golly there! Why should your Pack hold a Pinewood Derby? Lot's of reasons, here are a few:

- Pinewood Derbies are fun!
- Building the car helps the boys develop their fine motor skills.
- Designing a car exercises a boy's imagination and helps develop creativity
- The boys can't build a Pinewood Derby car in a single sitting, this helps teach patience and perseverance.
- The boys will need an adult's help (at least the tigers, wolves and most of the bears) this helps teach that many worthwhile things require help to complete.
- Pinewood Derbies are fun!

3.1.2.3. Service Projects

There are many ideas available for service (or goodwill) projects. Performing service projects that the boys can understand promotes spiritual growth and a spirit for friendly service. Service must be a part of any scouting program.

When you recommend a service project, make sure that it has two critical elements. First, the boys must be able to understand how this activity is helping. Second, it must be fun for the boys. Why? Because if a boy can't understand how his actions are helping, he won't learn how to find new ways to help others. If helping is fun, service to others will become a life long habit.

3.1.2.4. Family Camping

What will the boys in your Pack remember about their time in Cub Scouts when they have children of their own? They might remember a special Pack or Den meeting, they will probably remember the Pinewood Derby, but what they will truly carry with them for the rest of their

Winners and Losers



I know I am going to turn off some of you on this one, but it needs to be said.

Many of the people who we trust our children to have gone way overboard in trying to bolster our boys' self esteem.

You can not be the best at something just because you try hard. Sometimes, even when you do your best, you will fail. This is a fact of life.

I suggest that rather than making sure that every boy "wins" something, find ways to help both the winners and the losers to be gracious. Encourage those who lose to try again and encourage those who win to be humble.

Support your charter organization



When planning your goodwill projects for the year, be sure and plan something that will benefit your charter organization.

If it's a school, offer to do the flag ceremonies for the PTA meetings. If your charter organization is a church, have the boys hand out bulletins on Scout Sunday or clean up the grounds before a special service.

Remember that your charter organization has invested in your Pack, and it is only right that the Pack returns the favor.

lives is the memory of the campouts they went on.

Like the Blue and Gold Banquet, it is easy to go overboard on what Cub Scout camping should be. The essence of Family Camping is to get the whole family outdoors to have a good time. In our Pack, that means that you can camp in a tent, bring your RV, or even rent an air conditioned shelter (these are available at some of our nicer state parks), just come and live in the outdoors for a weekend.

I know that some of you are saying, “air conditioning, that’s not camping!”, but my attitude is that if a family will opt out of camping because they have to sleep in a tent for two nights, then I would rather have them there in an RV or a shelter than not there at all.

Here are some of the elements that our Pack considers essential for a successful family campout.

- At least one meal that includes the entire Pack (our tradition is a Sunday morning pancake breakfast)
- At least one organized activity (don’t forget to have something for the siblings to do)
- At least one campfire program (in case of burn-bans see the appendix on Camp Activity Ideas)
- A Scout’s Own Service (see the appendix on Incorporating the Scout Promise)

3.1.2.5. Scout Sunday / Sabbath

If your Pack is chartered by a religious institution, you should consider attending at least one service, in uniform, and Scout Sunday is a great time to do this. This is not just a courtesy to the church; it is an act of self preservation. The members of the congregation need to see where money is going, and believe me, even if they don’t give your Pack a nickel in cash, the cost of electricity and gas when you have meetings in their facilities is significant.

A pew or two of well behaved young men in those cute uniforms goes a long way when there is a budget crunch to deal with in the next deacon’s meeting.

If your Pack is not sponsored by a church, mosque or synagogue, be sure to have the boys wear their uniforms to church on Scout Sunday. It can be a great recruiting tool.

3.1.2.6. How much is too much (or too little)?

The best way to retain boys is to have a year round program, with at least one activity every month. You should also careful not to overwhelm your group with too many Pack level activities.

Baden-Powell taught us that boys learn best in small groups of 4-8 boys. Encourage your Den Leaders to have at least 3 meetings a month during the school year and at least one, possibly informal, get together of the boys in the Den every month of the summer.

The must haves on my Pack calendar are:

- 2-3 campouts, fall, spring, and summer
- Pinewood derby
- Blue and Gold banquet
- 2-3 goodwill projects, usually one around Thanksgiving or Christmas and Scouting for Food in February
- Scout Show
- Cross Over

Move Blue & Gold?



Before you criticize our Pack for moving our Blue and Gold Banquet to the end of January, instead of during February please answer the following question honestly.

Have you ever celebrated your child's birthday a little before or after the actual date to make sure that more of his friends could attend, or so that you would be able to do it on the weekend?

Try to not get so hung up on doing things by the book that it becomes difficult for many of your boys to participate.

With this Pack schedule we still end up with way to much in February, Blue and Gold, Scout Sunday, Scouting for Food (two weekends), and Pinewood Derby. That amount of activity at the Pack level plus 3 Den meetings generates a lot of complaints. Our committee typically deals with this by shuffling either the Pinewood Derby or Blue and Gold Banquet to the 3rd week in January.

3.2. Training

Make time for training. Support and encourage the other adult leaders in your Pack to get training as well. The best reason I know of to become trained is that it makes your work easier. The best reason I know to encourage your leaders to be trained is that it makes your work easier.

So, how do you support and encourage training? Here are some suggestions.

- Lead by example, take advantage of training opportunities
- Talk it up. Tell parents how great the training is. Explain that you were a tongue tied, 70 pound weakling until you started taking BSA training.
- Put the district training events on your Pack calendar
- Invite your leaders to come to Roundtable with you
- Organize the trained leaders and Den Chiefs to provide child care for those going to training
- Start a Pack library of training and support materials
- Share your Internet scouting bookmarks with your adult leaders (there is a good start in the references section below)
- Set up in-Pack training. If you don't have an in-Pack trainer, get with your District Training Chairman for materials and ideas.

3.2.1. Know Your Tools

As one of the two leaders in charge of overall direction for the Pack, the other adults will look to you for information. The References section at the back of this booklet has a pretty good start on written publications and Internet resources. Don't forget to remind your leaders of the district training opportunities and the value of Round Table for training.

3.2.2. Request and Train Den Chiefs

There are several reasons why you want Den Chiefs for all you Dens.

- The Cubs look up to them and can see how cool it will be to be a Boy Scout
- Den Leaders can get stretched pretty thin at Den meetings. Den Chiefs can help the boys with their crafts, teach scouting skills like knots and lead games
- Den Chiefs can help in the Pack meeting with discipline and leading games

Keep in mind, that although most districts offer Den Chief training, you and your Den Leaders will have to round out that training with practical experience. Take time to observe your new Den Chiefs as they work with the boys and give them pointers out of earshot of the cubs. It is very important that the cubs see you treating your Den Chiefs as leaders.

Not every boy is cut out to be a Den Chief. If you have a boy that doesn't seem to be catching on after you and your Den Leader have worked with him, talk with his Scout Master about your concerns. Ultimately, it is OK to replace a Den Chief if he is not working out.

3.2.3. Guide and Support Den Leaders

In a Cub Scout Pack that is following the best practices of Scouting, the Cub Master only sees his boys 25% of the time. 75% of the time in Cub Scouts is spent in the Den environment. If your Den Leaders are struggling, your Pack will ultimately fail. Some of the things you can do to help include:

- Follow the BSA monthly themes. This not only makes your planning easier, it also helps your Den Leaders decide what to do each week.
- Ask to attend Den meetings occasionally, offer tips and observations after the meeting to the leader.
- Support and encourage training
- Make sure that all your Dens meet regularly. If they don't, find out why and work with your leadership team to fix it.

Training & Retention



I have observed that trained leaders appear to be more confident. When someone is self confident, those around them assume they are also competent.

When a parent has to make a decision about where their child will be spending their after school hours, they will always find time for the programs that encourage good behavior and have competent adult leadership.

3.3. Pack Meetings

This is it, your most visible role as Cub Master, leading the Pack meeting. I have five absolute requirements that seem to work well for our Pack:

1. **Start on time** – Nothing encourages tardiness more than accommodating it by starting late.
2. **Vary the tempo** – Active / Passive / Active / Passive. If you spend too much time in passive activities, the boys will find a way to make them active. If you spend too much time on active activities you will never get them calmed down again!
3. **Let the Tigers set the pace** – These boys have the shortest attention span. If you lose them, the Wolves and Bears won't be far behind!
4. **Send them home happy and tired** – The happy part keeps the boys wanting to come back, the tired part... I have parents in my Pack that tell me they love Pack meeting nights because it is one of the few nights they don't have to fight with their son to get him to sleep.
5. **End on time** – Time is a precious commodity these days, show your Pack families that you value theirs by ending on time.

MC or Ring Master?



A lot of the literature on being a Cub Master refers to the role in Pack Meetings as the MC.

Think for a minute about all the things you might go to that have an MC and ask yourself if your first grader would pay attention at that event for an uninterrupted hour.

That's why I like to think of the Cub Master as a Ring Master instead. I have yet to meet the boy who will get bored with an hour at the circus.

It is the Ring Master's job to keep the show lively and set a pace with little time between acts for attention to wander. Try wearing a crazy hat or costume that goes with the meeting theme, the boys love it!

If that's not your thing, recruit an Assistant Cub Master to help you keep your meetings moving.

3.3.1. Planning a Pack Meeting

Those of you who took physics may remember the Second Law of Thermodynamics which is "Any system will progress towards increasing disorder, unless energy is put into the system". This law was derived by observing boys.

The "energy", in the case of a Pack meeting, is planning. Just like horses can smell fear, boys can tell when you are winging it, and they will try to fill the void with chaos. See the Appendix on The Elements of a Pack Meeting for a generic meeting outline.

3.3.2. KISMIF

Keep It Simple, Make It Fun. It doesn't take much to fill up an hour. I am always amazed when I look at my Pack meeting plans, the outline is seldom more than half a page, and yet we have to keep going at a rocket pace to get it all in. Here is a typical time line for one of our Pack meetings. We generally punctuate transitions between program segments with theme related cheers or applause.

0:00	Opening, Denner Induction Ceremony, Announcements
0:10	Den presentation
0:20	Song
0:25	Theme related game
0:40	Theme related story or audience participation story
0:55	Awards
1:05	Closing

3.3.3. Leading the Pack Meeting With the Help of Other Leaders

Don't try to do it all yourself. One way that I use to get adults that aren't active as leaders involved is to put instructions for theme related cheers and applauses on index cards. As the Pack comes in and is getting settled, I ask random parents to lead the cheers between Pack meeting segments.

In our Pack we have one Den that will be responsible for a 10 minute skit or presentation related to the monthly theme and another Den will be responsible for leading the song. I recruit Assistant Cub Masters and Den Chiefs to help with the games, and I keep the story and advancements for myself.

One of the cool things about being the leader is that you can pick the stuff you like to do and delegate the rest! Just remember, when you delegate, try to give people jobs that you are pretty sure they will enjoy.

3.3.4. Use and Recognize Den Chiefs

During the meeting have your Den Chiefs stay with the boys in their Den. This will greatly improve discipline (assuming your Den Chief is well trained). When you play games, use them to help supervise and coach the boys. This will free up your adult leaders to take care of business items with the other adults in the background of your meeting.

Make sure you recognize your Den Chiefs and report on their performance and improvement to their Scout Master. Putting them in the spot light occasionally will motivate them to continue to stay involved.

Use a Script



When I conducted my first few Pack meetings, I planned them out in detail then practiced at home until I didn't need to read from a script.

What happened was a surprise to me. I am a good speaker and frequently teach professional seminars, but leading a meeting of boys is a very different animal. It is incredibly easy to get distracted and I found that I missed entire parts of the program that I thought were important.

The way I fixed this is a script. I don't script every word I am going to say, but I do have a complete outline and complete scripts for things that are easy to forget, lists of names, announcements, etc.

I also found that there is an unintended benefit from this. I made myself a small notebook for my scripts and now when I stand up in front and take out the notebook the boys know its time to start and begin settling down even before I put up my scout sign.

3.3.5. Conduct Impressive Ceremonies

Just handing out awards is boring. Make award presentations something special and the boys will want to be a part of it. This is great motivation for the others to advance. I also suggest changing up the advancement ceremonies at every meeting. Doing the same thing every time, no matter how spectacular can still be boring.

Don't be afraid to include a little simple magic in your ceremonies. One that I did had the boys talking about it for days. I had a big pot with dry ice chips in the bottom, and a Tupperware container with the awards in it on top of the ice. I told a story about advancement that was punctuated by pouring cups of colored water into the pot, which of course, caused smoke to billow out. Finally, I called on the Spirit of Akela to bring forth the awards, reached into the pot, surreptitiously removed the lid from the Tupperware and brought forth the awards.

There is one warning on doing magic, practice in front of your spouse or another leader before you try it in front of the boys.

3.4. Pack Outings

The principles of leading a Pack outing are essentially the same as those for conducting a Pack meeting. There are also a few special considerations you should take into account for outings.

- Make a Plan – Have a plan written down. In your plan make sure you account for at least the obvious contingencies, like inclement weather, emergency first aid, and leaders who have to beg off at the last minute.
- Coordinating transportation – Plan on how you are going to get there. If you are going by caravan, have an adult leader responsible for checking in drivers. Every driver should receive a map or directions, and a list of cell phone numbers of the leaders participating in the activity. Each driver should also leave a cell phone number and the names of the adults and boys in their car with the coordinator.
- Be serious about behavior – When boys get into an unfamiliar environment any number of things can happen. Make sure that you have adequate adult leadership, and that you keep a reign on the boys when they are in public places, after all, how they behave will ultimately reflect on all of Scouting.
- Be neat and conservation minded – Our local parks and recreation department tells us that the cleanest week of the year is when our Cub Scout day camp takes place. This is exactly what we want people to think about when they think of Scouts.
- Study and Follow the *Guide to Safe Scouting* – I have heard district leaders emphasize that this is to make sure that our boys are covered by BSA insurance. Although that is a good reason, the great reason is that the guidelines in this book were developed over years of experience with millions of boys. Follow the rules because you don't want one of your boys or adults to get hurt.
- Make Campfires, not Bonfires – Everyone loves to tell stories and sing songs around a campfire, but you don't have to burn your eyebrows off to be fun. In

- general, if the fire would be too big to burn safely in a large home fireplace, you are overdoing it.
- Don't use accelerants to start campfires – Aside from the fact that starter fluid, diesel fuel, kerosene, or whatever can be dangerous, it simply is not necessary. You are a scout leader, if you don't know how to start a fire without using accelerants, get a copy of the Boy Scout Handbook, go out in your back yard and practice in your barbeque pit. (This also makes a fun activity for the boys in a Den meeting, when properly supervised.) Starting a campfire with a single match will impress the boys, their parents, and even YOU!

3.5. Recruiting and Retention

The only way to have a successful scouting program for your son is to ensure that more boys are added to the program every year and that you keep the ones you already have.

3.5.1. Recruiting Year Round

There are plenty of things you can do to recruit year round, and many of these things do not take a big effort. We often forget that boys do not have to join just on Join Scouting Night in the fall. When implementing your recruiting program make sure that you enlist other adults to help. Your job a Cub Master is to provide leadership in this area, while others do the leg work. Here are some year round recruiting ideas to consider:

- Have your boys wear their uniforms to school on Pack meeting days.
- Give the boys an invitation card to invite a friend to come to the next meeting.
- Put announcements (with contact information) about your fun activities in the PTA newsletter.
- If your school has an orientation day or “Porch Party” for new and returning students before school starts, see if your Pack can set up a recruiting table
- If your cross over coincides with the end of the school year, invite graduating kindergarteners to “cross-over” into Cub Scouts.

3.5.2. Recruit Adults

I am assuming that I don't have to tell you why recruiting adults is important. There are a couple of things to remember when recruiting adults.

- When parents show up on JSN don't assume that they are sold on Cub Scouts. Although you should talk about the fun things the boys will do, don't let that be your focus. SELL how Cub Scouting is different than sports and after school programs.
- New parents have no idea what the commitment to a particular job really means. You need to emphasize the help that is available. One technique

that we have used successfully is to recruit assistants first, then recruit Den Leaders after they can see that they, in fact, will have help.

- Tell why you like being a leader, and tell them what you were thinking when you first volunteered to help.

3.5.3. Retention

There are a many things that the Cub Master does that affect retention. Have a great program for every Pack outing and supporting your Den Leaders is a big part of that.

One additional thing you should consider to help with retention is to keep accurate attendance records. Keeping accurate attendance records and reviewing them monthly allows you to get in contact with boys who are missing a lot of activities and find out what is going on.

3.6. Direction and Leadership

The Cub Master is the face of Scouting not just for your unit, but for everyone your unit encounters. Everything you do, especially when you put on your uniform, will be subject to microscopic scrutiny.

3.6.1. Follow the Policies of the BSA

There is really not a decision to be made about following the policies of the BSA. When you submitted your application to serve as an adult volunteer you agreed to subscribe to the precepts of the Declaration of Religious Principle, and abide by the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. They have been included in the Appendix for you to review.

3.6.2. Ensure the Pack is Perceived in a Positive Light

The most effective way to *lead* the Pack to be perceived in a positive light is to lead by example. Demand high standards from yourself, your adult leaders and your boys. Some of the key points to remember here are:

- When you represent the Pack or lead the Pack wear your uniform
- Make sure that your uniform is neat and the insignia are in the right place
- Enjoy yourself. You can't fake this, but I promise, if you are having a good time, it's contagious

Cub Scouts as a Stick



Last year I had a heart breaking conversation with one of my Dads.

I had called because his son, a very enthusiastic new scout had missed several meetings. When I asked if there was anything we could do to help his son participate, Dad told me that Son was *grounded from Cub Scouts* because of behavior problems at school. I talked to Dad for a long time and tried to convince him that participating in Cub Scouts over time is more likely to help than grounding. By the time the young man got his behavior in check, he didn't want to be a Cub anymore (I suspect because it was used as a punishment).

My problem was that I conveyed this message too late, and now there is a boy who could have benefited from the program who is out of Scouting forever.

Sell the benefits of Cub Scouting early and often to parents and try to help them understand that Cub Scouting works best if it is not used as a punishment.

- Don't litter, and don't tolerate littering from your boys or other leaders.
- Clean up after yourselves, always leave anywhere you Pack has been nicer than it was before you got there
- Always have a plan to keep the boys occupied in case of unexpectedly long waits. Bring some simple props that can be used for games while standing in line.
- Don't lose your cool.
- If you have to smoke, do it where the boys and others can't see you. You might consider your service to Scouting as a good reason to quit.
- Don't drink alcoholic beverages while participating in a scouting activity.

3.6.3. Guide Goodwill and Conservation Projects

The Cub Scout promise includes "... to help other people ...". Your Pack will engage in Goodwill projects and if you do a good job of leadership, there will be other adult leaders organizing these activities. Your responsibility as Cub Master is to participate in Goodwill projects, not just stand back and let others do it.

If you treat the Goodwill projects as important, your boys will to. Be sure and wear a smile. When serving others is fun, it becomes a life long habit. There are a few ideas for Goodwill projects included in the appendix.

3.6.4. Encourage High Advancement Standards

As our boys progress from Tigers through Webelos the standards for advancement become more stringent. This is because their ability to learn and demonstrate the skills are getting stronger. Doing Your Best is a great standard for first graders, but when a boy is working on his Webelos activity badges he needs to demonstrate a reasonable level of proficiency. If we give rank advancement to our boys just because they tried, it will take much of the sense of accomplishment out of the achievement for all the boys.

This doesn't mean to set the standards higher than what is outlined in the badge requirements, every boy should be able to achieve success with effort. Don't add new requirements, our program is designed based on boys current development level. If you have a boy that is an over achiever, once they have all their electives and lots of arrow points, get them started on the Academic and Sports awards.

3.7. Advancing into Scouting

We all want our boys to move on to Boy Scouts. The Cub Master can and should help here. As the leader and public representative of the Pack, it is your role to develop a relationship with local Boy Scout troops.

3.7.1. Help Organize Webelos Dens

Your Webelos Den Leader will be your most challenged adult leader. The Den Leader rather than the parent is now the final sign off on advancements. This along with the more challenging requirements, trying to involve the boys in more challenging outdoor activities and joint activities with troops will stretch your Webelos leaders. Some of the ways to help your Webelos Den leader directly are:

- Attend Webelos Den meetings
- Help teach scouting skills
- Participate in Webelos Den / Troop joint activities
- Give your Webelos boys special assignments in the Pack
 - Have them teach the younger boys how to fold the American flag or perform a flag ceremony
 - Have them teach the younger boys knots or other scout skills
 - Give them special responsibilities at the Pinewood derby, picking up cars at the end of the track or getting the cars picked out for the next heat

3.7.2. Help Establish and Maintain Relationships with Boy Scout Troops

The best reasons for establishing and maintaining relationships with Boy Scout troops are:

- Participating in Boy Scout activities will encourage boys to graduate from Webelos into Boy Scouts
- A good relationship with a Scout troop can provide your Pack with a source of Den Chiefs
- Boys Scouts can participate in your Pack outdoor program to help teach outdoor skills to your boys

3.7.3. Plan and Conduct Impressive Webelos Graduation Ceremonies

This does not mean just conducting impressive ceremonies for boys who earn the Arrow of Light. When a boy crosses over from Cub Scouting to Boy Scouting make it a big deal. This will encourage other boys to do the same. It will also help the boys making that transition understand that moving into Boy Scouts is special. This attitude will help them give a boost into becoming enthusiastic members of their new troop.

3.7.4. Help Plan and Execute Joint Webelos and Boy Scout Troop Activities

Don't leave your Webelos Den leader on his (or her) own when it comes to joint activities with Boy Scout troops. These activities can be a lot of fun, and your Webelos boys will appreciate your participation.

4. APPENDIX

4.1. Elements of a Pack Meeting

There are 7 magic elements for every Pack meeting. Use all the elements to plan your Pack meeting and you can't fail (usually). I like to use theme related applause, cheers and songs to separate the parts of the meeting.

- Before the Meeting – Plan to get the room arranged and any materials, props, or equipment you will need in place and set up before the boys start arriving.
- Gathering – As people start arriving the adults will want to chat and the boys will want to play. Have greeters to direct the adults to where they can pick up announcement sheets or take care of clerical business before the meeting starts. Have an activity planned for the boys that will be supervised by a couple of your adult leaders or your Den Chiefs.
- Opening – Always start your Pack meeting with a distinct opening that clearly demarks the transition from gathering to meeting. This is a good time for announcements, but make them quick or you will lose the boys.
- Program – This is the meat of your meeting, be sure to include the audience as often as possible.
- Recognition – Make time for awards (both boys and leaders) at every meeting. Whether it's a beltloop or a rank badge, boys who have worked since the last Pack meeting on advancement shouldn't have to wait for recognition. Particularly for rank advancement, make the recognition ceremonies a big deal, the boys deserve it, and it encourages others to advance as well.
- Closing – Pace your Pack meeting so that closings are quiet activities. I like to include a Cub Master's minute in my closings. Remember, if you send the boys home wired, the parents will hate Pack meeting nights.
- After the Meeting – Include cleanup as part of your planning. A scout always leaves his [meeting place] better than he found it.

4.2. Service Project Ideas

- Scouting for Food
- Canned Food Raffle
- Visit Nursing Homes
- Holiday Packages for Nursing Homes
- Clean up Charter Organization Grounds
- Collect books or clothes for a local shelter
- Make games, puzzles and simple toys for the children's ward of a hospital

4.3. Camp Activity Ideas

It is a great idea for Cub Masters to complete Baloo (Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation) training. You will get many more ideas about how to implement a great family campout from Baloo than I can present here.

- Age appropriate first aid training
- Nature hikes
- Swimming (have certified Safe Swim Defense (SSD) leaders, and follow the SSD guidelines)
- Campfire programs
- Basic map and compass skills
- Observation and identification of the major constellations
- Nature scavenger hunts (particular leaves, kinds of rocks, etc.)
- Don't let a burn ban kill your campfire program. You can still have a great campfire program with a "fake" campfire (there are plenty of plans for these on the Internet). We have bought glow sticks in volume then attached them to a short pole as our campfire.

4.4. Incorporating the Cub Scout Promise into Pack Programs

Make DOING the Cub Scout Promise a part of every Pack meeting.

- Duty to God
 - Start Pack meetings with a short simple prayer
 - Start Pack meals with a scout grace
 - Make a Scout's Own Service part of every campout
 - Encourage your boys to earn their religious emblem and make a big deal about it when they do
- Duty to Country
 - Include a brief flag ceremony in every Pack meeting
 - Fly a flag and have flag ceremonies at campouts and other outdoor activities
 - Never tolerate horse play during flag ceremonies
 - Include a flag retirement as part of a campfire program
- Duty to Others
 - Hold a raffle at Pack meetings for simple toys. Boys purchase raffle tickets with canned goods.
 - Hold 2 or more goodwill projects with your Pack.

4.5. The Scout Promise and Law

As a Cub Scout leader you have agreed to follow the precepts of the Declaration of Religious Principle, the Scout Oath, and the Scout Law. Here they are for easy reference.

4.5.1. The Declaration of Religious Principle

The Boy Scouts of America maintains that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God and, therefore, recognizes the religious element in the training of the member, but it is absolutely nonsectarian in its attitude toward that religious training. Its policy is that the home and organization or group with which the member is connected shall give definite attention to religious life.

4.5.2. The Boys Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.

4.5.3. The Scout Law

A Scout is:

Trustworthy
Loyal
Helpful
Friendly

Courteous
Kind
Obedient
Cheerful

Thrifty
Brave
Clean
Reverent

5. REFERENCES

BSA Books

Cub Scout Leader How-To Book
Guide to Safe Scouting
Ceremonies for Dens and Packs
Cub Scout Leader Book
Cub Scout / Tiger Cub Program Helps (published annually)
New Leader Essentials
Webelos Leader Guide

Here are my favorite internet sources. The ones marked in bold type are the ones I go to most frequently.

<http://www.scouting.org> – BSA official web site, always a good place to start
<http://www.scouting.org/cubscouts/resources> - Good source of official materials for Cub Scouters

<http://www.scoutstuff.org/bsasupply> - We give our boys who participate in the Pack meeting the monthly theme patches. Ordering them from here is the most reliable way I know to make sure we get them in time.

<http://usscouts.org/usscouts/bbugle.asp> - Baloo's Bugle packed with new program ideas every month. This is one of my favorites.

<http://www.scoutingmagazine.org> – If you are a registered scouter you already get the magazine, but if you miss an issue you can grab on online copy here.

<http://www.scoutingthenet.com> – Good source of links to other scouting web sites, separated by category.

<http://www.macscouter.com> – Good source for general scouting materials, Songs, Games, Stories, Ceremonies, etc.

<http://usscouts.org> - Good source for general scouting materials, Songs, Games, Stories, Ceremonies, etc.

<http://www.geocities.com/Yosemite/9152/home.html> – The Virtual Cub Leader's Handbook. Great source when you know you've seen the book with what you are looking for, but you can't remember which one!

<http://www.CubMaster.org> – Pretty good source of Cub Master specific materials.

<http://www.boyslife.org> – Duh!

<http://wtsmith.com/rt.html> - Bill Smith's Unofficial Cub Scout Roundtable. Good source of program ideas, I particularly like his articles on Boy Behavior.

<http://www.boyscouttrail.com> – Currently one of my favorites. This is a site created by a group of scouters when their boys started as Tigers in 2000. Along with a chronicle of the boys progress these folks have amassed and organized a huge amount of information on scouting as they have worked their way through the program with their boys. I can spend hours poking around in here!

<http://www.cubbobwhite.net> – Good source of original material for cub leaders. This site is very easy to navigate. This was created as a Wood Badge ticket item.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

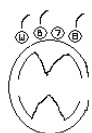
There are a lot of folks that I would like to thank for their help in creating this brochure.

First, thank you to my editors Peggy and Bureeda. Peggy has forgotten more about Cub Scouting than most of us will ever know, many of the successful things we do in our Pack are a direct result of her sage advice at Roundtable. Bureeda has an uncanny ability to make the most boring stuff readable. If you found this easy to read it's because of what I learned from her (the rest is probably my fault).

Special thanks to my wife, Sharon, and my business partners Mike, Sandy, and Kris. The one hour a week I spend on scouting comes directly out of time that used to be their exclusive domain.

This book is part of my Wood Badge ticket, so I have to say thank you to the WB78 Bears, Jim, John, Bill, Steve, Sallie, and Mike and our troop guide Lance. This is the greatest group of scouters on earth. I really got the lucky draw on fellow patrol members. **Bears, everyone else is lunch!**

Finally, thanks to all the boys in Pack 1036, I hope you all make Eagle, I know you all will grow to be fine men!



Mr. Mike

"I used to be a bear, and a good ol' bear too..."