

**Boy Scout
Summer Camp—
An Investment in
Youth and Leaders**
A Harris Interactive Study



New Study Reveals Benefits Every Scout Leader Should Know About Summer Camp

What makes an adult choose to become a volunteer leader for the Boy Scouts? Usually, it is found in one of the following reasons:

- To strengthen my relationship with my son
- To help boys have the same positive experience I had as a Scout
- To “give back” to an organization that benefited me in my youth
- To play a role in the learning and character development of young people

Clearly, these admirable goals cannot be accomplished without an investment of time. Adult volunteers who are willing to invest personal time and resources for youth are the backbone of Scouting. However, it may not be clear to all Scout leaders that Boy Scout summer camp offers a unique opportunity for these desired outcomes to be accomplished.



Harris Interactive of New York designed a study on the impact of summer camp in the lives of Boy Scouts, Scout leaders, and parents of Scouts. The researchers concluded that within the typical six days of a Boy Scout summer camp, boys are in an environment that comprehensively provides them with critical elements of healthy youth development. In addition, the study uncovered several positive outcomes of camp among Scout leaders.

Camps are removed from the hustle and bustle world of mass information, media, and technology. This type of “protected environment” provides a significant opportunity for growth among young men. For boys, time seems to take on a different meaning when the day is not filled with television, radio, video games, and visits to malls. For adults, the same holds true when leaders are able to escape constant phone calls, traffic, and demanding work schedules. This is the starting place for change. Scout camp

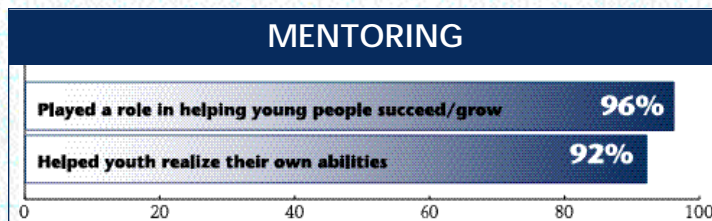




is a unique place to concentrate on the best part of Scouting (outdoor programs) and to live it not just for a weekend, but for a week!

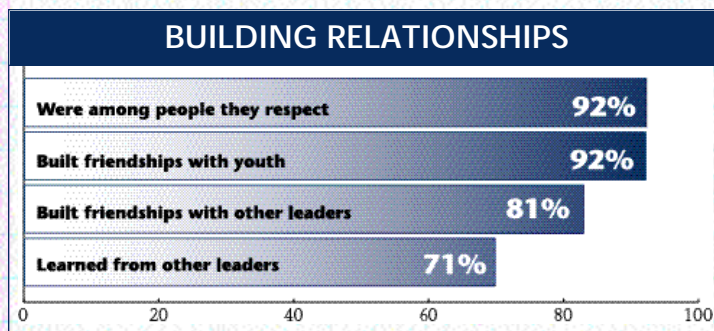
Scout leaders find that summer camp offers more than fun and adventure for Scouts. The leaders themselves set and meet goals.

Among a variety of benefits, almost all Scout leaders leave the week at camp feeling that they helped young people grow and realize their own abilities.





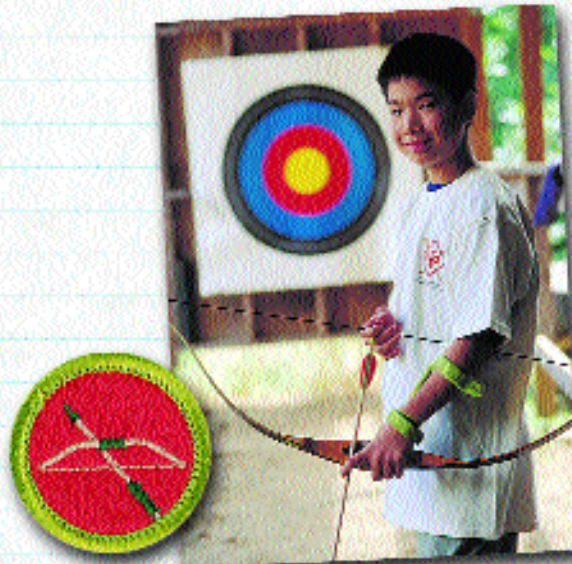
Scout leaders strongly agree the Scout camp week is beneficial for building relationships with Scouts and other volunteer leaders. They agree that they are among people they respect and they make new friends with youth and leaders. Leaders also learn from one another at camp.



Scout camp also provides personal benefits to adult leaders. Beyond the 91 percent who agree that the week was “fun,” majorities of Scout leaders say the experience helped them “feel close to nature” (84 percent) and “reduced their stress” (65 percent).

At camp, boys have time to consider and reflect on their place in life. **Strong personal values and character** are shaped as young boys are encouraged to take a part in decisions that impact others (80 percent), contemplate their relationship with God (69 percent), reflect on personal values (56 percent), and participate in patriotic activities regarding American citizenship (68 percent).

Since its beginning in 1910, the Boy Scouts of America has believed in personal growth through service. At camp, boys gain a **positive sense of self-worth and usefulness** through helping clean up campsites (89 percent), helping clean up after meals (87 percent), and serving food (76 percent).





An important finding is that a majority of boys at camp receive praise from others. Compliments are received from adult leaders (76 percent) and peers (72 percent). Another key finding is that 78 percent of boys indicate that they “accomplished something worthwhile” during camp.

Scout camp is a place where *caring and nurturing relationships* are developed and deepened. Most Scouts (80 percent) make a new friend or become better friends with someone while at camp. In this environment, friendships don’t stop at the peer level. Adult leaders develop respect and trust among Scouts as they mentor skills and share knowledge. A majority of boys (60 percent) mention that they talk with an adult leader for advice during camp.

Learning takes on new meaning at Scout camp!

Summer camp is an outdoor classroom in which boys test themselves. They test their skills, as well as their courage to try new things. Almost 90 percent (86 percent) of Scouts at camp try something they had never tried before. Also, majorities of boys feel challenged (69 percent) and test their mental/thinking abilities (71 percent) while at camp.

Scouts are **productive and creative** at camp. Young boys are motivated by the concept of mastery. When coupled with learning useful life skills, this need results in truly productive outcomes. Almost all Scouts “work with others on a badge or task at camp” (88 percent).

Camps are structured to encourage boys to spend time working and playing **socially** in ways that may seldom happen outside of camp. Majorities of Scouts collaborate with other youth on accomplishments (73 percent), participate in group decision making and activities (64 percent), and help resolve interpersonal conflicts (53 percent).

If you are an adult volunteer for the Boy Scouts, make sure that you and your troop are a part of Scout summer camp. Whether or not you’ve been to camp before, you will find as *91 percent of other Scout leaders have, that Scout camp will meet or exceed your expectations.*

Contact your local council office to get dates and registration information for your area. Experience for yourself how a few days at Scout summer camp can remind you of all the reasons you became a Boy Scout volunteer in the first place.

