

Youth Advocacy and Strategic Relationships Pillar

OUR VISION

The Boy Scouts of America is recognized as an advocate for youth and youth issues. We are known by our members and America's families and communities as a resource for leadership, encouragement, and programs that benefit our country's youth. The strategic relationships of the BSA extend far beyond those with our traditional chartered organizations and keep Scouting relevant and adaptive.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

Objective I: Scouting creates an environment in which councils can succeed by expanding Scouting's role as a leading advocate for youth issues.

Strategies to Achieve the Objective:

- Develop national staff and/or volunteer organizational structure to give leadership to Scouting's youth advocacy initiatives
- Focus our advocating efforts on the following youth issues:
 - Health wellness, and fitness
 - Environmental responsibility
 - Education, leadership and service
 - Strengthening families
- Develop national alliances and events to address specific youth issues
- On every organizational level, work with private, community, and government organizations to advocate for youth

Specific Goals to Achieve Objectives:

1. We have created the national staff position(s) and/or volunteer organization to support the BSA Youth Advocacy efforts. [Dec 2011]
2. We have implemented our youth advocacy focus and are communicating with 10 leading national experts in the youth advocacy field. [Jan 2012]

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3. We have reviewed our existing BSA programs and materials and committed to new plans that are enhanced in support of our youth advocacy themes. [Dec 2013]

Objective II: The BSA is recognized as an advocate for health and fitness for all youth and adults.

Strategies to Achieve the Objective:

- Develop and leverage a “Scouting’s Gift to America” type program as a platform to increase national awareness of the BSA’s programs and effectively position the BSA as an advocate for health and fitness, ultimately contributing to increased awareness and membership growth.
- Incorporate a focus on nutrition, exercise, mental health, youth protection and safety, and the avoidance of tobacco, drug, and alcohol abuse into existing program content, and integrate additional content related to this focus.
- Create contemporary, quantifiable health and fitness requirements for advancement and recognition for both youth and adult volunteers.
- Provide vision, programs, resources, and incentives for each council to become an advocate for health and fitness in their communities.

Specific Goals to Meet the Objective:

1. We have launched a national BSA multi-year health and wellness campaign and program, i.e., *Scouting’s Gift to America*, to bolster active lifestyles, healthy eating, and weight loss for our youth and adult members.* [May 2012]

** The campaign and program are to include guidelines and structures for coordinated national and council-level launches, program and activity support, participant recognition elements, and mechanisms and tools for communicating to the general public the impact of the program by April 30, 2014.*

2. We have established alliances with two-to-three national or international organizations with globally-respected competencies in child development, healthcare, fitness and nutrition. [Dec 2012]
3. We have investigated the inclusion of health and fitness requirements for both youth and adults in unit performance recognition. [Dec 2011]
4. We have revised current advancement requirements to include an ongoing commitment to health and fitness within each Cub Scout and Boy Scout rank. [Jan 2012]

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5. We have provided local councils with a template for offering and operating (at the council's discretion) a five-day *Outdoor Health and Fitness* camp to all youth living within a council's geography as a means of increasing health and fitness amongst youth while showcasing the dynamic and engaging world of Scouting. [Dec 2012]
6. We have revised and augmented five-to-seven key printed and digitalized BSA materials (e.g. Boy Scout handbook, Cub Scout handbook, unit leader training manuals, etc.) as appropriate to include contemporary content in the areas of exercise, drug and alcohol abuse, tobacco, mental health, nutrition, and youth protection and safety. [Dec 2013]

Objective III: The BSA takes a leadership position as an advocate for education, youth leadership, community service, environmental stewardship, and strengthening families.

Strategies to Achieve the Objective:

- Help youth contribute to the success of their families and communities by focusing on leadership skills, citizenship, financial accountability and career development.
- Leverage existing programs, such as **Leave No Trace**, as we grow our environmental awareness.
- Increase efforts to instill a "*service orientation*" in our members with a renewed emphasis on the "Good Turn for America" initiative.
- Establish alliances with other leading organizations in these focus areas and take the lead in advocating Scouting's positions as we support youth.

Specific Goals to Achieve the Objective:

1. We have established alliances with one or two national entities possessing recognized expertise in environmental sciences, including conservation, water quality, waste management, natural resources, soil contamination, and air pollution. [Dec 2012]
2. We have led the effort to establish a national committee, including individuals with professional experience and expertise in these areas who currently are not members of the BSA, as well as appropriate and relevant BSA volunteers and employees, focused on strengthening families and youth development. [May 2013]

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3. We have revised and strengthened various BSA awards and recognition components dealing with this objective area, including Eagle Scout service projects, merit badges, quality recognitions, and possibly creating new awards to increase the focus on these areas. [Dec 2012]
4. We have networked with 25 other leading organizations in these focus areas to share best practices and cooperatively develop joint efforts to accomplish this objective. [Dec 2013]
5. We have served as a catalyst and host for the new *National Youth Summit*, a youth-led conference allowing young people to connect, discuss items of concern, and create plans for real change in their communities. [April 2015]
6. We have developed a process to post individual service projects and their positive impact within communities on the Internet.

Objective IV: Our local councils are positioned to strengthen current relationships with traditional chartered organizations and build relationships with new partners through innovative alliances and youth advocacy.

Strategies to Achieve the Objective:

- Support local council plans for utilizing the full family of Scouting offerings and provide councils with guidelines and tools for reaching out beyond traditional chartered organizations
- Review and revamp, if required, local council volunteer recognition/rewards programs in regards to chartered partner and other relationships
- Study possible new organization, relationship and sponsorship models to grow the number of Scouting units and youth members

Specific Goals to Meet the Objective:

1. We have developed an innovative and adaptable template for local council awards and recognition for those volunteers who positively influence youth participation and impact to youth in our programs, through relationships with our chartered partners, local schools, parent organizations, adult service clubs, etc. [Dec 2012]
2. Each year beginning in 2011, we have recognized local councils that represent best practices in the area of building and sustaining strategic partner relationships. [Dec 2015]
3. We have delivered to our councils a proposal on potential new sponsorship models for Scouting units. [May 2013]

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Objective V: Establish strategic relationships with federal, state and local government agencies focusing on outdoor adventure, workforce preparedness, and health and wellness issues.

Strategies to Achieve the Objective:

- Target key agencies that align well with our aims and goals
- Leverage the experience of the Order of the Arrow National Service Project (*ArrowCorps5*) to create partnerships
- Position the BSA as the premier organization in the country to positively impact America's youth in the areas of outdoor adventure, workforce preparedness, and health and wellness awareness

Specific Goals to Meet the Objective:

1. We have established a collaborative relationship with the Department of Interior to provide a structure and framework for BSA councils to take advantage of service initiatives in their local areas. [May 2012]
2. We have completed a due diligence review of federal and state government departments and agencies and have recommended approximately six organizations which represent the greatest potential for mutual benefit and collaborative opportunities. [Dec 2011]
3. By December 2012, we have formally established three national strategic relationships with government agencies, with the remaining relationships to be formalized one year later. [Dec 2013]
4. We have built a communication plan to share with our local councils and stakeholders the particulars of our new strategic relationships, as well as provide suggestions for how local councils might utilize these new relationships to increase the effectiveness and/or offerings of their local programs. [Dec 2013]
5. We have created a template for clusters of councils to form relationships with state government agencies, and one for individual councils to form relationships with local government agencies.”[Dec 2013]