

YOUTH ADVOCACY & STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

STRATEGIC 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 & GOALS

Objective I: By expanding its role as a leading advocate for youth issues, the BSA creates an environment in which councils can succeed.

Strategies to Achieve the Objective:

- Develop a national staff and/or volunteer organizational structure to give leadership to Scouting's youth advocacy initiatives.
- Focus our advocacy efforts on these 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 within the BSA, 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 structure to support our youth advocacy efforts. [December 2011]
2. We have developed working relationships with 10 leading national experts and/or organizations in the youth advocacy field. [January 2012]
3. We have reviewed existing BSA programs and materials and have committed to new plans that enhance support of our youth advocacy themes. [December 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 a “Scouting’s Gift to America” 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.
- Incorporate a focus on nutrition, exercise, mental health, youth protection, and safety into existing program content.
- 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 the communities it serves.

Specific Goals:

1. We have launched a national multiyear health and wellness campaign, “Scouting’s Gift to America,” to promote active lifestyles, healthy eating, and appropriate weight for our youth *and* adult members.* [May 2012]
** The campaign is to include structure and guidelines 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 or three leading organizations that have globally-respected competency in child development, healthcare, fitness, and nutrition. [December 2012]
3. We have revised current advancement requirements and unit performance recognitions to include an ongoing commitment to health and fitness within each Cub Scout and Boy Scout rank. [January 2012]
4. We have provided each council with a template for offering and operating (at the council’s discretion) a five-day outdoor health and fitness camp for *all* youth living within its service area as a means of increasing health and fitness knowledge and participation among young people while showcasing the dynamic and engaging world of Scouting. [December 2012]
5. We have revised and augmented five to seven key printed and digital BSA materials (e.g., the Boy Scout Handbook, Cub Scout Handbooks, and unit leader training manuals) as appropriate to include contemporary content on exercise, drug and alcohol abuse, tobacco, mental health, nutrition, youth protection, and safety. [December 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:

- Strengthen our position as a leading practitioner of informal education and a pivotal partner with formal education.
- Help youth contribute to the success of their families and communities by focusing on leadership skills, citizenship, community service, financial accountability, and career development.
- Showcase and expand existing programs, such as Leave No Trace, as we grow our environmental awareness.
- 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 encouraged units to provide regular service and Good Turns to local elementary, middle, and high schools.* [December 2011]
** Doing so will provide Scouting an opportunity to renew and refresh our relationship with our nation's schools, demonstrating our commitment to support them, rather than merely our use of their facilities and access to youth.*
2. A task force has reported on how we can reposition Scouting with education. [2012]
3. We have established alliances with one or two national entities that have recognized expertise in environmental sciences, including conservation, water quality, waste management, natural resources, soil contamination, and air pollution. [December 2012]
4. We have revised key BSA awards and recognition components, such as Eagle Scout service projects, merit badges, and quality recognitions, to promote and expand Scouting's role in advocating for education, leadership, service, environmental stewardship, and strengthening families. [December 2012]
5. We have networked with 25 other leading organizations in these focus areas to share best practices and develop joint efforts to accomplish these objectives. [December 2013] We have created and launched a communication plan that highlights this network. [April 2015]
6. 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]

Objective IV: 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's offerings and provide councils with guidelines and tools for reaching out beyond traditional chartered organizations to establish new partnerships.

- Review and, if required, revamp local council volunteer recognition and rewards programs related 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:

1. We have developed an innovative and adaptable template for local council awards and recognitions for those volunteers who positively influence participation by and impact on, youth in our programs through relationships with our chartered partners, local schools, parent organizations, adult service clubs, and other groups. [December 2012]
2. Each year beginning in 2011, we have recognized local councils that represent best practices in building *and* sustaining strategic partner relationships. [December 2015]
3. Through effective new sponsorship models and partners, we are organizing more packs, troops, and crews each year. [May 2013]

Objective V: The BSA has established strategic relationships with federal, state, and local government agencies focusing on outdoor adventure, workforce preparedness, and health and wellness.

Strategies to Achieve the Objective:

- 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.
- Target key agencies that align well with our aims.
- Leverage the experience of ArrowCorps⁵, the Order of the Arrow national service project, to create partnerships.

Specific Goals:

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 opportunities 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 that represent the greatest potential for mutual benefit and collaborative opportunities. [December 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. We have built a communication plan to share with local councils the particulars of our new strategic relationships and provide suggestions for how councils might utilize them to increase the effectiveness and/or scope of their programs. [December 2013]