

This FAQ brings together the most common questions and shared best practices from the Scouts BSA Troop Builder Membership Webinar Series. It highlights proven methods that help units recruit new members, retain current Scouts, strengthen youth leadership, and grow a welcoming troop culture.

1. Recruiting Non-Scouts & New Members

This is an ongoing topic that will continue to be explored through future webinars and resources.

- How do we recruit youth who aren't coming from a Cub Pack or are new to Scouting?

A: Reach older youth where they already are—through schools, community groups, sports, or online networks—and invite them to experience adventure, leadership, and belonging. Highlight what makes your troop unique: camping, service, high-adventure treks, STEM, or peer-led teamwork. Encourage Scouts to share their stories and invite friends to campouts or meetings. When talking with families, emphasize benefits beyond the uniform—confidence, leadership, and real-world skills that help teens thrive.

A: Focus on introducing the next level of adventure. Promote Scouts BSA as a youth-led environment that offers growth, leadership, and outdoor fun for teens. Use Scouts to connect with peers through schools, sports, and social networks. Share the wide variety of Scouting America programs—Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Sea Scouts—as flexible pathways for different interests.

- Can prospective Scouts attend an outing to 'try it out'?

A: Yes—if they are Scouts BSA age and the event follows Guide to Safe Scouting guidelines. Collect health forms, apply the buddy system, and ensure trained adult supervision. Treat the event as a membership opportunity, not just a test run.

2. Pack-to-Troop Bridging & Den Chiefs

- What's the best way to strengthen Pack-to-Troop relationships?

A: Strong relationships grow through collaboration and communication between leaders, parents, and youth. Invite troop youth and adults to participate in Cub Scout meetings, outdoor events, and bridging ceremonies. When families see familiar faces and shared experiences, the move from Cub Scouts to Scouts BSA feels natural and exciting. Offer joint service projects, campfires, or skills days, and hold short parent sessions to explain the shift from den-leader-led to youth-led.

- How can Den Chiefs support recruitment and retention?

A: [Den Chiefs](#) are one of the strongest links between Packs and Troops. These trained Scouts BSA youth bring fun, leadership, and mentorship to Cub Scout meetings—from Lions through Arrow of Light. They model confidence and leadership while giving Cub parents a preview of the youth-led Troop experience. Encourage long-term service, train them

through ILST or NYLT, and let them share their favorite troop adventures—it inspires Cub Scouts to continue.

3. Parent & Adult Engagement

- How do we recruit parents as volunteers and keep them engaged?

A: Start with education and connection. Offer brief parent orientation sessions explaining how youth-led Scouting works and where adults can help. Provide clear, limited roles so parents can volunteer comfortably. When they understand the 'why' behind youth leadership, frustration drops and participation rises. Share key resources to help [decrypt Scouting terms](#) and minimize use of acronyms.

- How can we address parent hesitation, especially for camping or girl troops?

A: Reassure parents that Scouting activities follow strict safety standards led by trained, background-checked adults. Encourage families to review the Guide to Safe Scouting and take the Safeguarding Youth Training to learn how Scouting America protects youth. Show real examples—photos, videos, and testimonials—to build confidence and trust.

- Why is it important to meet with parents separately during a visit night?

A: It helps families understand the shift from Cub Scouts to Scouts BSA. While Scouts explore activities, meet with parents to explain the youth-led structure, camping schedule, costs, and communication methods. When parents understand the program design, they're more likely to stay engaged and supportive.

4. Youth Leadership, Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) & Ownership of Membership

- How can we encourage the PLC and youth leaders to take ownership of membership, recruitment, and retention?

A: Make membership part of your PLC's mission. Give them tools—a membership checklist, a 'talking about Scouting' script, and time each month to discuss how they're growing the troop. Encourage Scouts to plan welcoming, high-energy meetings that are easy to bring a friend to. Adults should support but not run these efforts—train them, trust them, and let them lead.

- How do we explain 'youth-led, adult-supported' to parents who think it looks chaotic?

A: It's supposed to look different! Scouts learn by leading. Adults are present for safety and coaching, not to run the meeting. Share your troop calendar and structure so families see that the 'organized chaos' is intentional growth.

5. Program, Retention & Older Youth Engagement

- How can we keep older Scouts engaged with busy schedules?

A: Offer meaningful leadership and flexible ways to stay involved. Positions like Scribe or Webmaster can be done remotely, and older youth can mentor younger Scouts or serve as

NYLT staff. For those near Eagle, encourage them to explore Venturing or Sea Scouts to keep their adventure going while also contributing to their home Troop.

- What does a balanced monthly meeting schedule look like?

A: Follow a rhythm that balances advancement and fun: one meeting for gear/menu/camp prep, one or two meetings for skills or rank work, and one fun or themed meeting (games, seasonal party, outdoor challenge). Consistency keeps Scouts engaged and gives visitors a snapshot of a thriving program.

- How do we make retention part of our troop culture?

A: Ask one simple question regularly: 'Are you having fun?' Youth feedback drives retention. Create opportunities for fun, friendship, and leadership at every age. Keep the program fresh—tradition-rich but not tradition-bound.

6. Community Presence & Visibility

- How can we use fundraisers or public events to support recruitment?

A: Every fundraiser is a visibility opportunity. When Scouts are seen leading, helping, or selling confidently, they're promoting Scouting itself. Always have flyers, QR codes, or BeAScout cards ready to share with curious families.

- How can we engage our local community to attract new youth?

A: Be visible where families gather—community fairs, parades, and school events. Show Scouting in action with gear displays, service photos, and videos of outdoor fun. Keep interactions personal and friendly; enthusiasm recruits better than banners.

- What's the best social media platform for youth recruitment?

A: Instagram is the most common social media platform and more effective when managed by trained youth leaders (with adult oversight). Authentic posts showing Scouts having fun perform best. Use #ScoutMeIn and #ScoutsBSA and visit the BSA Brand Center for templates and content ideas: <https://scoutingwire.org/BSA-Brand-Center/>.

7. Communication & Inclusion

- How can we help shy or quiet visiting Scouts feel welcome?

A: Train your youth to look for wallflowers. Assign a friendly Scout to greet each visitor, introduce them to a patrol, and invite them into the activity. Make sure they know when to return and what's coming next—follow-up builds comfort.

- How can we handle families who can't attend our troop's meeting night?

A: Share information on nearby units using BeAScout.org. We're all one Scouting family—helping a youth find any troop keeps them in the movement.

8. Training, Tools & Resources

- How does training impact membership and retention?

A: Trained leaders deliver better programs, and strong programs keep Scouts engaged. Encourage every adult to complete position-specific training and every youth leader to attend ILST and NYLT. A culture of continuous learning builds confident leaders and lasting membership.

- Where can we find official checklists and guides?

A: Visit these official resources:

- Troop Leader Resources: <https://troopleader.scouting.org/troop-planning/troop-self-assessments/>
- [My.Scouting.org](https://my.scouting.org) for training and program updates
- Guide to Safe Scouting: <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/>
- Scouts BSA Membership Page for planning tools and recruitment checklists.

- Is a parent required to attend a recruiting campout with a new youth?

A: No. Only registered, trained adults may attend youth campouts. Follow all Guide to Safe Scouting supervision rules.

9. Troop Operations & Leadership

- What if communication between the troop committee and PLC is weak?

A: Revisit the committee's and PLC's roles together. Review position training, use the Troop Self-Assessment tool, and invite a unit commissioner if needed. Open communication ensures adults support—not override—youth leadership.

Compiled and updated from the Troop Builder Membership Webinar Series: "Stronger Troops, Empowered Youth – Recruiting & Retention That Works." For continued resources and updates, visit Scouts BSA Program Updates: <https://www.scouting.org/program-updates/>, Troop Leader Resources website: <https://troopleader.scouting.org/> and follow the [Scouts BSA Facebook page](#).