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Connecticut Yankee Council Cub Scout Recruitment Guide

2023 Scouting Year



Serving the Scouting Communities in Southwest Connecticut

Welcome

Thank you for volunteering as part of your Cub Scout pack. The work you do in your pack will have a lasting impact on the lives of the scouts in your pack. They will learn skills in Cub Scouts that they will take with them throughout the rest of their life.

We have put together this guide to aid you in building a recruitment program that will help you grow your unit. We have surveyed the top recruiting units within our council to allow for their expertise to be used within your unit.

Recruitment is one of the most important parts of a unit's program. Without an effective recruitment program your unit membership in your unit will decrease over time and could potentially threaten your unit's existence. However, with a robust recruitment program will keep your unit healthy and growing and will establish a great jumping off point for the rest of your units program.

This guide covers all of the steps you will need to take in order to have a successful recruitment program. It is our hope that this document will provide you with great ideas and resources that are available to you that you may not have known about. If you still have any questions or recommendations for additions to this document, we would like to hear from you. Our goal is to make the recruitment process and easy and effective as possible

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Recruiting Essentials

We know as a Scout leader your time is valuable. While we go into detail on everything in recruitment, we know that you might not have the time to dive deep on all these topics, we wanted to summarize the most important points for you.

1. The key to have a good recruitment program is to have fun events. We talk in more details about some effective recruitment events in this document including Lego Derbies, Rocket Launches, BMX, Science Experiments, Animal Interactions, raingutter regatta, ice cream and catapults, and cub skills stations. Proper planning of these events will be a great start to your recruitment efforts.
2. Without proper marketing even the best events will not get the traction you are looking for. When marketing your recruitment events you will likely need to make 3-5 contacts with a person before getting them to your event. Market in as many ways as you can: flyers, yard signs, social media, scout to friend, parent to parent. This guide covers in detail how to effectively market your pack.
3. Take advantage of the free resources the council offers to your unit to help your recruitment be successful: programming activities, flyers, social media boosts, yard signs, parade cards.
4. Don't forget to recruit adults. Failing to recruit adults can make it difficult for you to run a great program. There are several strategies you can use to get more adults help depending on your situation such as incrementally asking someone to do a little bit more.
5. Plan ahead in order to make your recruitment efforts most effective. This will allow you to recruit more scouts and give you the best opportunity to earn the free pinewood derby car incentive for your unit.

Effective Recruitment Events

The first step in planning out your recruitment is determining what events you would like to have. This is one of the most important steps because having fun and engaging recruitment activities is the best way to ensure that you get new kids excited about the scouting program.

After surveying the top recruiting units in the council, we have compiled a list of recruitment activities that they have found to be effective in recent year. Having some fun recruitment activities is a sure-fire way to get kids to want to join your pack. Ideally you would have a few different recruitment events during your recruitment season so that those who are on the fence will have more of an opportunity to learn how fun scouting can be.

Lego Derby



The pinewood derby has long been a favorite event for cub scouts, a Lego derby is an event like a Pinewood derby except the cars are constructed from Legos with a custom base that allows the addition of standard pinewood derby wheels. A standard pinewood derby track can be used. Kids can build cars at the event and race against friends. The scouts love it when the cars break apart. The council has invested in several Lego derby setups for use by units. Details on how to use this can be found in the recourses section of this document. You can see more about how a Lego derby works here: <https://www.pinewoodpro.com/lego-derby-car-racing.php>

BMX Day

Kids love riding bikes as much today as they have in the past. If your community has a BMX track, you can partner with them to have the kids learn the basics of BMX riding and get a chance to run through the course. The BMX clubs generally love to help with this because not only is it helping recruit for your pack, but it is also helping recruit for their organization as well.

If you don't have a BMX track, if your town has a good bike trail you can still hold a similar event, and maybe even partner with a local bike club to help. Not only is this a great opportunity to have the kids go on a fun bike ride, but also to learn more about bike safety.





Rocket Launch

A model, stomp or water rocket has been a long time hit for Cub Scouts. For a water rocket launch you will need a bike pump or air compressor and access to water, as well as a launch kit such as this <https://stratofins.com/products/launchers/>. With this setup you have scouts decorate 2-liter bottles and have them launch high into the air. This setup will allow you to completely reuse the kits from year to year. The decorating of rockets is easy enough that it can be done as part of the event, or a bottle can be launched without any decorations at all.

You can also do a model rocket launch. This will require a launch kit, which can be found at the scout shop or online for not a lot of money. It is important to have a lot of extra batteries when doing this as they tend to deplete quickly. You will then need model rocket kits. If you buy them in bulk you can find Estes wizard rockets for around \$5 each online. You will then need rocket engines as well, which if bought in bulk run about \$2 each, the smallest engines will give you more than enough height. The rocket kits need to be built, we recommend having scouts build them ahead of the event and then have extras on hand already fabricated for any new scouts at the event as it can take a decent amount of time to construct. Have scouts continue to launch their rockets as many times as they want until they either lose their rockets or you run out of engines.

The final way to pull off a rocket launch is with stomp rockets. This is a much more homemade way to pull off a rocket launch. The rockets are made from paper and tape and the launch mechanism is as easy as a piece of PVC pipe, some tubing and a 2-liter bottle. The paper is rolled up around the PVC pipe and taped so that it will keep the needed diameter. Tape is then used to cover one end forming a seal. Scouts can then decorate their rockets. The launch mechanism is a two-liter bottle attached to bike tube with the other end of the bike tube attached to the PVC pipe. The rockets are then slid over the PVC pipe and the Scouts jump on the 2-liter bottle to launch them.

Science Experiments

Parents are interested now more than ever in getting their kids involved in STEM activities. Having a science experiment recruitment event is a great way to cater to this audience. If you have someone in your unit that is into science, there are many fun and easy science experiments that you can do with the kids that will keep them engaged. Some easy science experiments you can do that will give the kids something to take home include making slime, growing crystals, static electricity, egg drop, homemade bouncy ball, make a lava lamp, and many more fun and easy things. If no one in your



unit is well versed in STEM you could also hire a local science entertainer to do a presentation for your pack.

Animal Interaction

There are many places that offer the opportunity for kids to interact with animals, from the everyday to the exotic. This could be done offsite at a local farm, or many places will bring the animals to your event. Either way the kids love finding out more about the animals and being able to touch and pet them. This type of event general does have decent cost to it, but if your unit's budget allows for it this is a great way to recruit more scouts

Ice Cream Social and Catapult Build

Everyone loves ice cream, but there is a way to make your typical ice cream social a bit more exciting. By adding a catapult craft to the mix you can keep the kids more engaged. Building catapults are pretty easy and only require plastic spoons, rubber bands and craft sticks, instructions can be found here: <https://theresjustonemommy.com/simple-craft-stick-catapults/>.

Once they have their catapults complete, have them start making their ice cream sundaes. However, when it comes time to add marshmallows, instead of sprinkling them on top, have them use their catapults to shoot them onto their ice cream, they will get a big kick out of this.

Cub Skills Stations

This is an opportunity to show off all the great things that your pack does. You can set up several stations that show off all the fun things that your pack does throughout the year is a great way to show off your pack. Some ideas for stations could include the pinewood derby, hiking, camping, games, and skits. Whenever possible make these stations have an interactive element to keep the kid's interest.

Rain Gutter Regatta

A rain gutter regatta is a great way to get a craft and a competition in all-in-one go. The boat kits can be picked up from the council office for only \$7 each. Building them only takes about 10 minutes with a minimal number of tools, just a screwdriver and some sandpaper. You will also need a track, which you can make one yourself or purchase an inflatable two lane track from the scout shop for \$25. You will then need straws for the scouts to make the boats move down the track. The kids will have fun going head to head against their friends.

Marketing

Marketing can make or break your recruitment event. Without a proper marketing plan, you should not expect to get a high volume of new scouts at your recruitment events. In order to reach a family, you will need to reach out to them multiple times, 3-5 times on average. Since so many touch points are needed to reach a family, you will need to employ a variety of strategies to reach these families targeting both the youth and their parents. The council offers a lot of free recourses for you in your marketing efforts. Below are some of the top ways that your unit can market its recruitment events.

BeAScout.org

BeAScout.org is the national database where anyone interested in scouting can go to find out information about all the units in the area. This site includes information about your meeting location, Unit leader name and contact information, unit website and genders the unit serves. The information that is displayed for your unit site can be edited by a key three member (Cubmaster, Committee Chair and Charter Organization Representative). This information can be edited through their account at my.scouting.org under the organization manger tool under your unit.



Unit Website

If your unit has a website it can be a great marketing tool for your unit. By including pictures of some of the fun activities your unit does, a calendar of upcoming events, and information about where and when you meet, you can target those families who are curious about the scouting program.



Scout Talks

Scout talks consist of an adult giving a direct presentation about the pack to the youth in a collective setting. This historically has been done at a school during the day when the school administrator gives the pack a short period of time to give a presentation to kids. If your unit has a good working relationship with the school this is a great option. However, over the years many schools have stopped allowing this practice, but alternative venues could be explored such as local churches, community center or town festival. If your unit cannot get a volunteer to make one of these boy talks the council can also arrange for one of the professionals to perform the presentation in your place.



Flyers



Flyers are possibly the most effective marketing you can do. While a paper flyer is the most effective as a kids will get excited about receiving a well-designed flyer, a digital flyer can be effective as well. Ideally you can partner with your local school to have flyers sent home in students backpacks, but having the school email out a digital flyer is a good alternative. If your school does not allow either of these, then you might talk with local community centers and churches to distribute flyers as well. The BSA has a lot of high-quality photos and pre-built flyers for you to use at the brand center, <https://scouting.webdamdb.com/bp/#/assets>. The council will also design flyers for your recruitment event and/or print flyers for you in any quantity you need.

Social Media

Social media has quickly become a great tool to promote your unit. Your unit can use social media tools such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Tick Tok can all be great ways to get the message of your recruitment event out.

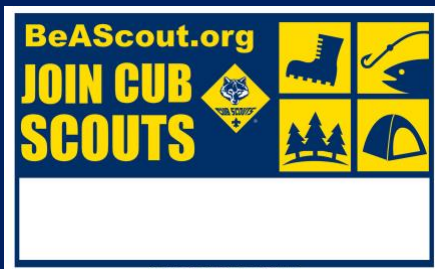


Facebook offers you the best opportunity for social media marketing. Your unit can set up a Facebook page that people can discover on their own. You can also make an event on your unit's page that will allow people to find out about your event more easily. For even more exposure you can boost your event for just a few dollars. This will allow you to pick a target location (centered around your recruitment event) and a demographic (parents of cub scout aged children). An added way to get even more exposure is to work with the council to make them a co-host, if this is done the council will pay to boost your event as well.

Additionally, many schools have parent groups, post information about your event on these groups as they are all your target audience. Most towns also have Mom, Dad and community groups that are also good options to post about your recruitment events.

Yard Signs

Yard signs are a good way to get some passive exposure. The best place to put them are at schools, ideally right next to the parent pickup and drop off area as there will likely be parents sitting idly to look at your sign. However, you might also consider placing them at busy intersections in your town as well.





These signs can be picked up free of charge from the council office. The space for event details is limited, so be brief while making sure the text is big enough to be read from a car. You might also consider adding a QR code to the sign to allow people to use their phones camera app to go to a website for more information, just make sure you tape over the code to keep it waterproof. QR codes can be made free of charge at sites such as <https://www.qr-code-generator.com>

Peer to Peer

Having your Scouts invite their friends to an event is a great way since the new recruits will already have heard how great Cub Scouts is from their friends. Encourage your scouts to all invite at least one friend to the recruitment events. As an incentive scout's who recruit new scouts will earn a recruiter patch and become eligible to attend the council's Extreme Scouting event in June. This event will give them the opportunity to take part in a lot of fun activities such as archery, BB Guns, geocaching, and disc golf.

Pack Introduction Packet

You should also consider putting together a Pack Introduction packet to hand out to families at recruitment events. This packet would be full of all the information they would need to know about. Some of the things that you might want to include are Pack structure (Pack, Dens, Committee), den and pack meeting times and locations, Dues, Adult leaders (emphasis how all leaders are trained), Rank progression, Uniform Requirements, Adult Participation, Pack Activities, Fundraisers, Pack Calendar.

Some examples of these packets that can be used to give you inspiration can be found at

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/12upgFcgQK6qP7Abno5hi3SiWVEgX6xnK/edit?usp=sharing&oid=110382003910951214515&rtpof=true&sd=true> and

https://drive.google.com/file/d/18ZS328VgX9pub1Cdt_PrcduVqMKQngeq/view?usp=sharing

Structure of a Recruitment Night

Your recruitment night should be structured like a pack meeting. The key is to keep the kids engaged the entire time. This will keep their excitement level high and give you a higher chance of signing them up for your pack. Below are the different stages of the meeting that you should consider for your recruitment event.

Sign In

When new families enter your event, they should be greeted by a pack volunteer. A warm welcome will go a long way to build a great first impression on a family. They should be directed to the sign in table where they should sign in. It is recommended that you do a digital sign in sheet, a handwritten one can be hard to read making it hard to reach out to families. This can easily be done for free. Just setup a google form with all of the fields you need. Turn the link into a QR Code and have families use their phones to fill out the sign-up sheet.

Once they finish signing in give the families an information packet. This should include your pack introduction packet, an application, and flyers for upcoming pack events. We suggest putting this all together on a clipboard with a pen. This both makes it easier to hand out and allows families to fill out applications throughout the event so they can be turned in at the end of the night. You might also consider a handout to the new youth to pique their interest, old event patches are great for this.

Gathering Activity

While the parents are getting signed in have an activity available for the kids to do before the event gets kicked off. This activity does not have to be elaborate, just something to keep the kids engaged. Some ideas include a bean bag toss, obstacle course, puzzles. The sky is really the limit, you can find a lot of great gathering activities by searching online.

Youth Talk

At the formal start of your event hold a short talk with the youth, no more than about 5 minutes, the kids will want to get to the activity as soon as possible. Quickly go over all the fun activities your pack does and the pack and den meetings structure.





Main Activity

Spend the majority of your time during the meeting doing the activity. Assign a few volunteers to run the activity to ensure that the kids stay engaged. This should last 30-45 minutes.

Parent Talk

While the youth are busy doing the activity, it is the perfect time to pull the parents of potential new scouts aside for a parents meeting. It is best to do this in a separate room away from the main activity so the parents will be able to hear. It is best for this meeting to be led by the Cubmaster, but another adult would work. Make sure that you introduce all of your den leaders as these will be the adults that they interact with most. At this meeting go over pack structure, events, fundraising, volunteers' leaders and training, costs, and uniform. Field any questions that the parents may have. Be sure to let the parents know the value the program has, not only will it provide great year-round activities and provide life skills, but it also costs much less than about any other activity their kids can get involved with.

At this meeting you may also choose to make an ask for volunteers, but you will need to determine if this is the right time to do this, or if it would be best to do this at a later date.

Be sure not to have this meeting take up the entire activity time, you want the parents to see how much fun their kids are having at your activity.

Closing

When the activity and parent meetings are complete hold a short closing. Ask the kids if they had a lot of fun. Let them know that if they had fun at this event that you have lots of other fun activities throughout the year for them to take part in. Keep this part of the meeting short as well as it will be hard to keep the youth's attention at this point.

Follow Up

A few days after the event send an email to all new families that attended your event thanking them for coming. You will also want to ask them if they have any follow up questions as well as invite them to any upcoming pack or den events.



Recruiting Girls

Girls are still a fairly new part of Cub Scouting, so many units are still trying to figure out the best way to target girls. Over time we will figure out more strategies to bring girls into our packs, but below are some things to consider helping grow the girl population within your pack. Remember that recruitment is a marathon and not a sprint. If you make incremental progress each year in bringing girls into your unit you will find your unit will have a great number of girls in it.

Siblings

The easiest segment is the siblings of your current scouts. If you make all your activities open to siblings, especially younger siblings, you will find that the girls will naturally want to join.

Friends

Just like with boys, the best referral comes from their friends. Promote to all your scouts to invite their friends to join your unit. This will have a multiplier effect on the number of girls in your unit.

Family Oriented Marketing

Girl will want to see representations of themselves in your pack. When putting together your marketing materials ensure that both boys and girls are shown. Also ensure to emphasis the family friendly nature of the program as well so that the parents will also understand that all of their family has a place in Cub Scouts.

Recruiting Adults

Just as important as recruiting youth for your program is the recruitment of adult leaders. This can be done at the same time as you are recruiting youth, or you can choose to do this after your youth recruitment, this is up to you and what you feel works best for your unit. We again asked our top adult recruiting units for their feedback and their input has been included in this section.

Family Talent Survey

As part of the recruitment night paperwork you might want to consider handing out a family talent survey found here

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/cubscoutmeetingguide/pdf/appendix/34362.pdf>. This can help you identify critical skills from your families and could make a directed ask for a role much easier as you will know where a persons strengths lie.

Timeline Presentation

The timeline is an emotional presentation designed to give your adults a perspective of the relationship between them and their children. The presentation consists of a paper timeline representing the entire life of their child. Over the course of the presentation sections of the timeline are taken away representing the time that has already passed and times in their life that the parent's role is lessened. When the presentation is done the time that is left corresponds to those years of Cub Scouting. The presenter then asks the audience with such a short time that you will be the focal point in your child's life wouldn't you want to make that time as valuable as possible, you can do this by volunteering in Cub Scouts. You can see this presentation in full here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7WGVl5l_3kfMWlsm2RITmpsa1U/view?usp=share_link&resourcekey=0-dTxHxuNQq7vo00rCUcPNsg

Lasting Impact

For this presentation the moderator asks the crowd to think back to their childhood and to think about the adults that had a lasting impact upon them. The moderator then polls the audience for the people they thought of. The responses will tend to be fairly narrow: family members, teachers, coaches and scout leaders. After the polling is over the moderator then asks the audience if they would like the opportunity to leave a lifelong impact on the next generation.



The Slow Play

In this scenario you make a series of asks of an adult. Starting off with small tasks like helping to set up for an event, or picking up some supplies for a meeting. The next ask would be for something a bit larger like leading an activity for the scouts. Once they see that a volunteer position is not as hard as they originally had thought, you then make the ask for them to take on a full leadership position within your unit.

The Hard Sell

This presentation should be used by those units who have had trouble getting volunteers using the other methods. This method can be done one of two ways, but the structure of each is similar. A board will need to be created that lists all the volunteer positions within your pack. Circle those positions that are filled. This will likely only be a small portion of the roles within your unit. Follow up by putting a rectangle around those positions that are needed for your unit to function. Tell the audience that if these roles are not filled then the pack will no longer be allowed to meet. This will generally grab the adult's attention and quickly get people to volunteer.

An alternative method is to have a list of all activities that your pack does. Circle those activities for which you have enough volunteers. One by one ask for volunteers for the remaining activities. If you no one volunteers to help with the activities tell them that we will just have to stop doing this activity and put an X through it. This will also get their attention and will usually result in someone volunteering.

Onboarding Material

The national office has put together some great free materials to help your new adult leaders get started in their roles.

- Lion and Tiger Den Leaders - https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/510-23318-LionTigerDenLdr_WEB.pdf
- Wolf and Bear Den Leaders - https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/510-23918-WolfBearDenLdr_WEB.pdf
- Webelos Den Leader - https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/510-24718WebeloDenLdr_WEB.pdf
- Pack Committee member - https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/510-24018-NewPackCommMem_WEB.pdf

Recruitment Calendar

Month	Activity
January	Plan Spring Recruitment Events Set annual membership goal
February	Webelos Families visit with Troops Promote eXtreme Scouting to Families
March	Spring Recruitment begins
April	Host a recruitment event Work with Troops on Webelos to Scout Transition plan
May	Ensure all Arrow of Lights have transitioned to a troop Conduct Bring a Buddy Event Determine which scouts are eligible for eXtreme Scouting
June	Planning for Fall Recruitment
July	Annual Planning Conference Unit Roster Review Conduct Leadership Inventory
August	Attend Council Membership Orientation Webelos attend Troop Activity Start Recruitment Events
September	Recruitment Events
October	Recruitment Events Leaders Complete Training
November	Complete Recharter Paperwork
December	Review membership plan and develop updated plan for upcoming year

Council Resources

To ensure a robust recruitment program the council has several resources available for units, all free of charge.

Marketing Materials

The council offers units many resources to help your unit market your recruitment event.

- Event flyers (both paper and digital)
- Yard Signs
- Facebook event boosting
- Recruitment Cards to hand out at Parades and Halloween Trick or Treating

These can be requested via the online form at

https://scouting.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aXLqvQKfZVaNSPI

Additionally, yard signs are available for pickup at the council office or drop off can be arranged with your district Professional.

Program Materials

The council also has many program materials for you to help put on a great recruiting event these include.

- Basecamps – BSA branded popup tent with or without walls
- Lego Pinewood Derby Kit – Kits include track, wheeled baseplates, weighted Lego and assortment of Lego bricks
- Backyard Bass Game – A fun fishing game where the kids can use real fishing poles to catch toy fish
- Inflatable Archery – Includes an inflatable target, bow, foam tip arrow and ball targets. In order to run this event a trained council volunteer or professional must oversee this event. This setup requires access to electricity in order to function
- Inflatable GaGa Pit – Includes inflatable Gaga wall and ball. Access to electricity is required for this to function

To reserve any of these program materials

<https://www.ctyankee.org/membership-basecamp>.

Recruitment Incentives

Individual Incentives

Individual scouts who recruit a new scout will be eligible to receive the recruiter award. This is a patch that can be worn below the right uniform pocket. A scout will also be eligible to attend the eXtreme Scouting event, along with the new scout they recruited. This event is a fun event where scouts will get to take part in many fun outdoor activities such as BB Guns, Archery, disc golf, BMX biking and much more. This event will be held on June 24th at Camp Sequassen. To claim your spot at this event register at the eXtreme Scouting website

<https://www.ctyankee.org/events/extreme-scouting-23/>

Unit Incentives

Any unit who recruits at least 25% of its 2022 year-end membership in the calendar year of 2023 will receive free pinewood derby cars for their unit. The unit will receive one free pinewood derby car for each registered scout at the time you ask for your pinewood derby cars. You may claim your pinewood derby cars at any point once your goal is reached. If your unit does not reach its goal until the end of the year, you will still be able claim your pinewood derby cars in 2024. To claim your pinewood derby talk with you District Executive or Director, contact information in the next section.

Membership Contacts

Council Membership Contacts

Name	Position	Email
Seth Strohecker	Vice-President of Membership	Seth.strohecker@gmail.com
Gene Waring	Council Commissioner	ewaring@snet.net
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Joe Andreo	Assist Scout Executive	joseph.andreo@scouting.org
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Paul Lukas	Teen Program Executive	paul.lukas@scouting.org

Pomperaug Membership Contacts

Name	Position	Email
Elizabeth Beckwith	Vice-Chair of Membership	elizbeckwith@gmail.com
Nathan Schindler	District Commissioner	n.s.schindler@gmail.com
Bill Reynolds	District Director	bill.reynolds@scouting.org

Powahay Membership Contacts

Name	Position	Email
Jim Mitchell	Vice-Chair of Membership	jim@powahay.com
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Mark Kennedy	District Executive	mark.kennedy@scouting.org

Quinnipiac Membership Contacts

Name	Position	Email
Joe Ushchak	Vice-Chair of Membership	ushchakj@sbcglobal.net
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Jonathan Glassman	District Director	jonathan.glassman@scouting.org

Scatacook Membership Contacts

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Mayra Torres	District Executive	mayra.torres@scouting.org

Togo West Membership Contacts

Name	Position	Email
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