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Connecticut Yankee Council Webelos to Scout Transition Guide for Families

2023 Scouting Year



Serving the Scouting Communities in Southwest Connecticut

Welcome

Hello Cub Scout Families,

Congratulations to your family on approaching the pinnacle of the Cub Scout experience the transition from Cub Scouts to Scouts BSA. This transition can be confusing and maybe even scary if your family has not had this experience before. The goal of the entire membership team is to help you with this transition.

The Scouts BSA program is different from the Cub Scout Program and will offer scouts many more opportunities, giving them experiences and skills that they will remember for a lifetime.

This guide will go through the entire process to give you a complete understanding of this process. If you still have any questions about the process, feel free to reach out to anyone on the membership team and they would be happy to help. Contact information for the team can be found near the end of this document.

Seth Strohecker
Vice President of Membership
Connecticut Yankee Council
Seth.strohecker@gmail.com



What is Webelos to Scout Transition

The Cub Scout Program is designed for youth from Kindergarten through fifth grade. As your child approaches the end of the Cub Scout program that does not mean that this is the end of scouting for your child. In fact, there is a lot more scouting in front of them then behind them.

Upon completion of the Cub Scout program, scouts are eligible to continue in the Scouts BSA program. Every Scouts BSA troop has a different personality, and your family will have the opportunity to visit as many units as you would like to find the unit that works best for your family. While you have been with your den throughout all your scouting career, there is no requirement that all members of the den must cross over to the same Scouts BSA unit, each family must pick the unit that works best for them.

Difference Between Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA

As a Scout grows, the scouting program is designed to grow with them. The Scouts BSA program is structured differently the Cub Scout program to offer the scouts both more responsibility and adventure.

Unit Structure

In Cub Scout, the Pack is the structure for all the scouts in the unit and the scouts are then broken down by age into dens. In Scouts BSA the Troop is the structure for all the scouts in the unit and the scouts are broken down into patrols. Unlike dens, patrols can, but do not need to be, composed of scouts of the same age. However, patrol members will all generally be similar in age.

Leadership

In Cub Scouts the adults provide the primary leadership for the unit. In the Scouts BSA program the primary leaders are the Scouts themselves. While there are adult leaders as well, their role is supporting the youth leaders. There are a variety of leadership roles for the scouts within the unit to allow for your scout to be able to take on a leadership role that matches their current leadership skills. The highest leadership position within the troop is the Sr. Patrol Leader and each patrol is led by a patrol leader.

Advancement

In Cub Scouts, the program is designed for a scout to earn a new rank every year and will only earn the rank specific for their age. The Scouts BSA the rank advancement is self-paced and all scouts will start at the same rank regardless of when they join the program. The Scouts BSA program has 7 ranks: Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle. The Scout Rank is like the Bobcat rank where a scout must learn the basics of the scout program. The tenderfoot through first class ranks are designed to make scouts proficient in outdoor skills. For the Star through Eagle ranks scouts will focus on leadership and service while also earning a variety of merit badge. Merit badge are like mini classes where scouts will focus on a particular topic to grow in skill and knowledge.

Camping

There is a lot more camping in the Scouts BSA program. A troop will generally go on a campout approximately once a month. These campouts will generally last from Friday evening through Sunday morning. The scouts themselves will plan these campouts and prepare their own food with their patrols. Adult leaders will accompany the scouts on these campouts to provide guidance and supervision.

Additionally, during the summer scouts will generally go on a weeklong residence camp. At resident camp, often called summer camp, scouts attend camp along with many other units and get an opportunity to participate in a variety of outdoor activities and work on rank advancement.

Parent Involvement

The goal of the Scouts BSA program is to grow the scouts' skills and leadership abilities, and as part of that it means they will need to become more self-reliant. While this means that there is less of a role a parent needs to play directly with their scout, there is still a need for parents to help with the unit. Parents are not required to camp with their scouts in the Scouts BSA program but are welcome to join in on a campout as long as they are a registered leader in the troop.

Troop Visits

The most important part of the transition process is the unit visit. This is when either your whole den or your family individually will attend a Scouts BSA troop meeting and the scouts will participate in the activities. You should visit several different troops before your family makes the decision on which unit you should join. While it may make sense for your family to coordinate with the other families within your den when determining your choice, since having scouts that are friends are likely to give them a better experience, it should not be the only consideration. You need to consider your families individual schedule and preference when making your choice.

At this visit you should talk with both the scouts and adult leaders to find out as much about the unit as you can. Some things that you might want to consider asking or taking note of during your visit may include:

- Uniform Policy
- Unit Size
- Age range of the Scouts
- Camp Schedule
- Summer Resident Camp Location and week
- Advancement
- Meeting night
- Are the troop meetings being led by the youth
- Other activities the unit does
- Fundraisers
- Fees
- Expectations of parents of the scouts
- Are the scouts having fun

While you should get a good sense of the unit after your meeting, this still might not be enough for you to decide which unit is right for your family. Do not worry, if you need to attend another meeting to be able to make your choice, most troops have no problem with scouts coming to multiple meetings for them to make the right choice.

Bridging and Crossing Over

The Bridging or Cross over ceremony is the final step in the Webelos to Scout Transition process. This is a ceremony where your scout will officially end their time in the Cub Scout Pack and begin their journey in their Scouts BSA Troop. This ceremony is generally a moving ceremony that celebrates the accomplishments in Cub Scouts and encourages them to continue on their Journey to become Eagle Scouts. This ceremony involves both the Cub Scout Pack and Scouts BSA Troop and is generally performed as part of the Blue and Gold Banquet.

Pack Responsibilities

Your den leader should coordinate with the local units for your den to meet with your local troops. The den leader and cubmasters should also answer any questions you may have about the process. Your pack should also coordinate the troops to ensure that they are in attendance for the cross over ceremony. Finally, the pack should plan a cross over ceremony for the Arrow of Light Scouts that will serve as their final meeting as a Cub Scout, this is generally done as part of a Blue and Gold Banquet.

Troop Responsibilities

Invite the Webelos to participate in meetings and activities to get them familiar with the unit and the Scouts BSA program. They should be open to answering any questions your family may have and provide you information on the programming for the upcoming year. The troop should also attend your cross over ceremony to welcome the scouts into the Scouts BSA program.

Family Responsibilities

Your family should visit all the local troops to determine which is the right choice for you. Once you have made your unit selection, you should communicate this choice to both your pack and the troop you plan to join so that they can coordinate the cross over ceremony for the scouts.

Transition Timeline

Below is a timeline of events for the Scouts 5th grade year. Your family and den can start meeting with Scouts BSA Units in your 4th grade year, but a crossover cannot happen until 5th grade.

Month	Activity
August	Den leader begins to coordinate with troops for unit visits.
September	Finalize plans for unit visits
October	Conduct unit visits
November	Continue unit visits
December	Continue unit visits and finalize Troop selection
January	Communicate your selection to the Pack and Troop
February	Conduct Crossover Ceremony Begin Troop meetings
March	
April	Continue Troop meetings, begin working on rank advancement and prepare for Summer Camp
May	Continue Troop meetings, begin working on rank advancement and prepare for Summer Camp
June	Attend Summer Camp
July	

Membership Contacts

If you have any further questions, feel free to contact any of the below council or district member, and they would be happy to assist.

Council Membership Contacts

Name	Position	Email
Seth Strohecker	Vice-President of Membership	Seth.strohecker@gmail.com
Gene Waring	Council Commissioner	ewaring@snet.net

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
Adrian Ruck	District Commissioner	ruckad@me.com
Mark Kennedy	District Executive	mark.kennedy@scouting.org

Quinnipiac Membership Contacts

Name	Position	Email
Joe Ushchak	Vice-Chair of Membership	ushchakj@sbcglobal.net
Bob Scukas	District Commissioner	qddistrictcommissioner@gmail.com
Jonathan Glassman	District Director	jonathan.glassman@scouting.org

Scatacook Membership Contacts

Name	Position	Email
Jacob Cedusky	Vice-Chair of Membership	jcedusky@gmail.com
David Zeh	District Commissioner	dzeh06804@gmail.com
Bill Reynolds	District Director	bill.reynolds@scouting.org
Mayra Torres	District Executive	mayra.torres@scouting.org

Togo West Membership Contacts

Name	Position	Email
Kevin Delaney	District Commissioner	
Eric Brantley	District of Field Service	eric.brantley@scouting.org
Tami Gage	District Executive	tami.gage@scouting.org