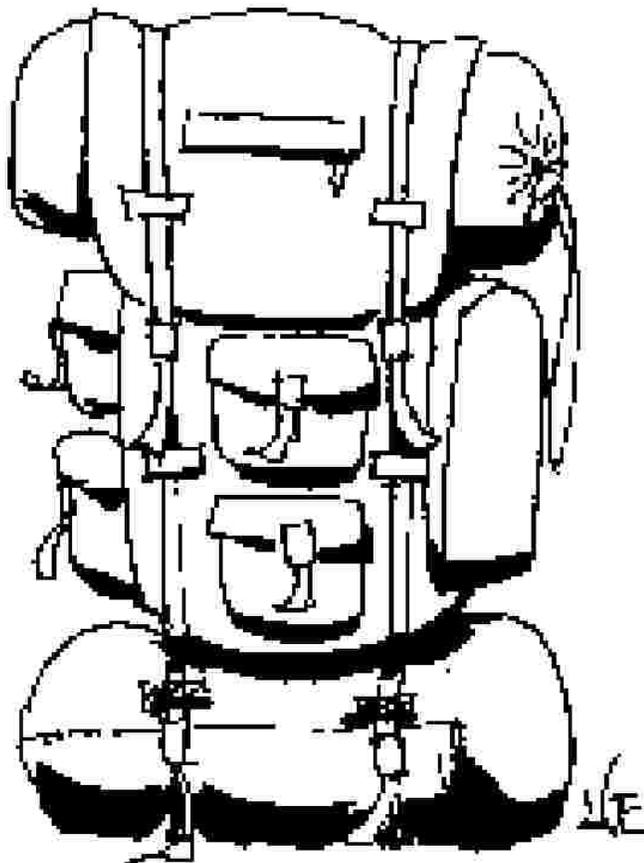


**BOY SCOUT TROOP 5 YONKERS, NY
WESTCHESTER - PUTNAM COUNCIL**

www.troop5yonkers.org
www.wpcbsa.org

**TROOP 5
Parent Guide and Handbook**



General Troop Information

Boy scout Troop 5 of Yonkers, NY holds its weekly Troop meetings at the Bryn Mawr Park Presbyterian Church every Tuesday evening 7:30-9:00 pm. It is part of the Westchester Putnam Council (www.wpbsa.org) in the Mohican District. It is important that scouts arrive to troop meetings a few minutes early. Any boy (and his parent) residing in the Yonkers & surrounding communities ages 11-17 interested in a challenging yet exciting and varied 12 month outdoor scouting program is encouraged to visit our troop meeting at any time. There is a long standing commitment to the city of Yonkers and surrounding communities to see that all boys, and their families, can participate in scouting regardless of any perceived limitations. A profile of our annual program of activities can be seen on page 13.

The Youth Leaders

The Leadership Corps. of the troop are called the Patrol Leaders Council. The senior youth leader is called the senior patrol leader or SPL. The SPL has a monthly planning meeting with required attendance for all the PLC members and this is usually held one Tuesday a month before the regular meeting starts.

The Adult Leaders

The adult leaders of the troop also meet monthly. Adult Leaders are comprised of the Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmasters, and all Committee members. This monthly committee meeting is open to ALL parents.

Training: The registered Adult leaders go through considerable formal training, including a mandatory Youth Protection Guidelines module. Boy Scouts operate under a "2-deep Leadership" (per 10 boys) philosophy.

Forms: Upon joining our troop and/or prior to attending any campout, a scout turns in a 1-page medical form, which is taken to every outing. This information must be reviewed for any changes annually. Other forms are required for other activities, including canoe trips, Camp Read in the summer, etc.

Communication: The troop relies heavily on E-mail and the posting of critical information on our troop website <http://www.troop5yonkers.org>. A contact sheet for all members of troop 5 is provided. A smaller contact sheet with home phone numbers (divided up by patrols) only is provided to each boy, as each boy is expected to communicate with his patrol leader (or Senior Patrol Leader) on a weekly basis. There is a regular procedure that boys follow any time there is a question or a need to communicate. See discussion below on "The Patrol Method". The Scoutmaster is unable to handle directly all incoming calls from +20 youth & their parents, but he strives to always be available to scouting parents in need of assistance.

Chartering Organization: Our scout troop is sponsored by the Bryn Mawr Park Presbyterian Church on 20 Buckingham Road, Yonkers, NY. Eagle Scout Robert Knesnick is the chartering organization's executive officer.

Troop Calendar: Is on a page of our troop's website.

Stuff Scouts Need:

Boy Scout Uniform: Any new scout that joins Troop 5 is required to buy a boy scout handbook, a pair of green epaulets for the shoulder loops of the Class "A" scout shirt, and a Class "B" scout shirt (Tshirt), and the green & tan troop numeral patches "5". Boys are not required currently to wear scout belts, neckerchiefs or hats at this time. Jeans, shorts & sneakers are NOT acceptable for troop meetings. Olive drab or BSA pants and dark shoes are preferred for formal court of honors, public service projects, scout masters conference and board of review. Since so many boys play sports, they are allowed to wear their sport uniform to the troop meeting if they are arriving late from a sporting event. Please also note it is highly encouraged that the boy try to make an effort to bring at least his Class A scout shirt to the meeting when coming from a sporting event.

Class "A" Scout shirts can be purchased at the Scout Shop in Hawthorne (773-1216) See the inside cover of the Boy Scout Handbook for placement of patches.

Class "B" Scout T-shirts, caps and winter fleece pullovers with the Troop 5 Yonkers logo can be ordered from Advancement Chairperson Harold Thela on annual basis.

Boy Scout Handbook: Upon receipt, a boy should write his name on the outside with a black sharpie pen. A scout is required to bring his (and pen & paper) to all troop meetings and campouts. This is a very important regime to follow as the handbook is frequently utilized and advancement activities are recorded in the back of the book.

Camping Gear: See Boy Scout Handbook & "Camping Gear Guide – Thoughts for the Parents of First Year Scouts" on pp.14-16.

Scout Tools: Please do not have your son bring a knife, saw, or ax to any BSA outing until he has fulfilled and completed his totin' chip requirement. This certification grants a scout a right to carry and use wood tools in a safe manner. Also, please remember there are no sheath knives or auto-opening knives allowed in BSA.

Advancement:

The Scouting program has 3 specific objectives, commonly referred to as the "Aims of Scouting": character development, citizenship training and physical & mental fitness. There are 8 methods utilized to achieve these objectives, the combination of these 8 methods is what makes it different from other youth programs. The 8 methods are: Ideals (Scout Oath, Law, and Motto & Slogan), Patrol Method, Outdoor Programs, Advancement, Association with Adults, Personal Growth, Leadership Development, & Uniform.

Advancement activities are a series of surmountable challenges that become progressively more difficult and comprehensive in scope. The completion of various levels of progress is referred to as "rank advancement". The various levels & order of rank advancement are: Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life & Eagle. Scouts need to complete a variety of tasks to attain each rank and though common themes run throughout the ranks, the degree of difficulty increases the higher the rank. Scouts can work on different ranks simultaneously, but the ranks must be earned in order.

Please note that the Assistant Scoutmaster for the New Scout patrol can also sign off on all requirements from Scout through First Class. For the requirements of Star, Life & Eagle, only the Advancement Chairman and Scoutmaster are authorized to sign a scout's book.

Although less than 5% of all registered boy scouts ever attain the rank of Eagle, the troop works very hard to get a scout up to the rank of First Class within 18—24 months. A First Class scout is a well rounded individual with a strong working knowledge all the basics of the scouting program. After attaining the rank of First Class, merit badges, service projects and positions of youth leadership within the troop are required to advance further. For the ranks of Star, Life & Eagle, there are 12 different merit badges that are required to be completed (from a universe of 15 total required merit badges). In total, there are over +100 other different elective merit badges that a boy may choose. A boy does not need to attain the rank of First Class to begin working on merit badges, but it is generally advised to do so, as the merit badge requirements are often a bit more advanced.

Advancement happens in four steps: 1) A Scout Learns (often at a troop meeting, an outing, monthly First Class Emphasis-FCE Instruction, or on his own), 2) A Scout is Tested (once he has learned and practiced a skill), 3) A Scout is Reviewed (once all requirements have been completed for a given rank, his work is reviewed by the Scoutmaster and then by a Board of Review, 4) A Scout is Recognized (once he completes a rank, he is recognized immediately and then again in a more formal ceremony called a Court of Honor; which occurs about three times a year).

Thus, the advancement process is VERY different in Boy Scouts than in Cub Scouts. In Boy Scouts, a youth is taught various scouting skills by his fellow scouts and the youth must prove his knowledge and prowess to qualified youth leaders to complete an advancement requirement (not to his parents or den leader as in Cub Scouts). After successfully displaying a mastery of the requirement, the qualified youth (or adult) leader (as noted above) can sign off on completion of that requirement in the boy's *Boy Scout Handbook*. Then, the scout should visit the Advancement Chairman to ensure his troop advancement records are kept up to date in the troop data base on a timely basis.

Parents are strongly encouraged to work with their son on advancement activities so that their boy is prepared to display his skills. However, parents are typically prohibited from signing off in their son's *Boy Scout Handbook* that he has completed a rank requirement.

As mentioned above, the next to last step in advancement is to complete a Scoutmaster's Conference (with the Scoutmaster and a designated Assistant Scoutmaster). The boy also must meet with several committee members in a Board of Review. These meetings are an opportunity to visit with a scout about his scouting experience in the troop, his non-scouting interests and to revisit advancement goals. These meetings are NOT a forum for retesting a scout's skills learned for that level of rank.

Nearly all troop activities, troop meetings, outings, & leadership Instruction sessions are great opportunities for any boy to complete advancement requirements. Finally, there is no set deadline for attaining any of the ranks of advancement, except that one has to attain the rank of Eagle before one reaches their 18th birthday. Still, the troop leaders generally try to ensure that a youth has completed Second Class by the end of their first twelve months and First Class within 18—24 months. ***Thus, the advancement process is VERY different in Boy Scouts than in Cub Scouts. Importantly, there is considerable evidence to show that continual progress in advancement is a key factor in sustaining a boy's interest in scouting.***

Service Projects:

A number of service project opportunities occur throughout the scouting year. A scout's participation is an integral part of the scouting program. Service hours are required for the rank of Second Class, Life, Star and Eagle Scout. Eligible service hours for scouting rank advancement include only official troop activities. However, any troop service project that a boy participates in may be also allowed to be counted toward school service requirements. Many of Troop 5's service project activities are chronicled on the troop's website.

Scout Camp: Troop 5 often participates in a few hours of service project work during the week of summer camp at the Curtis S. Read Scout Reservation in the Adirondacks as well as the occasional outing at nearby Agatha A. Durland Scout Reservation in Putnam County.

Yearend Holidays: Troop 5 participates in the December holiday tree lighting ceremony for the Bryn Mawr Neighborhood on Lockwood Ave at Victory Park.

Eagle Leadership Projects: Scouts always participate in Eagle Projects for Eagle Scout candidates of Troop 5 and are heartily encouraged to assist other friends in other local scout troops. A listing of recent Troop 5 Eagle Projects can be found on the Calendar page of our troop's website.

Other Service Projects: There are a variety of potential service projects that Troop 5 may undertake in any given year. From clearing debris around the Saw Mill River Parkway to improving the storage area for our troop's camping gear at Bryn Mawr Church Hall. Troop 5 always finds an opportunity to serve its community.

It is important that parents help their son document accurately the number of troop service hours, including time and place, their sons accomplishes on a timely basis. Scouts can keep records of their service hours in their *Boy Scout Handbook*. Since Scouts have been known to lose or misplace their *Boy Scout Handbook* it is strongly suggested that parents keep a record a file on your computer.

The Patrol Method (or Boy-Led Method):

Another one of the eight methods utilized to achieve the three main objectives of scouting (character development, citizenship training & personal fitness) is the Patrol Method. The Patrol Method is one of the most important tenets of scouting. This method gives boys an experience in group living and participating in citizenship. It places responsibilities on young shoulders and teaches boys how to accept it and manage it more effectively.

According Lord Robert Baden-Powell the founder of Scouting, the Patrol Method "is the one essential feature in which Scout training differs from that of all other organizations". Why are patrols needed? The answer, according to Baden-Powell, is two-fold. First the patrol is "the character school for the individual," where Scouts learn "subordination of self to the interest of the whole". Second, it's a leadership school for the youth leader, a way to give real responsibility to as many Scouts as possible. In other words, everyone in the patrol typically has a specific job to do: Patrol Leader, Assistant Patrol Leader, Patrol Treasurer, Patrol Grubmaster, and Patrol Quartermaster.

For a patrol to be successful, it must develop its own identity, almost to the point that the members think of themselves as the Eagle Patrol first, and members of Troop 5 second. For this reason, Patrols develop their own names, Patrol Flags, Patrol Yells and each member wears a Patrol patch. Patrols should target a minimum of 10—12 members as nearly every boy is active in at least 2 other organizations besides school (sports, music, church) & a critical mass of 6 is needed on outings.

One, two, three, four, or even five Patrols, each under its own boy leader, form the Troop. The Patrols are the working units in Scouting, while the Troop organization provides supervision and coordination, and establishes loyalty and opportunities for service. In other words, a Troop is not divided into Patrols. A Troop is the sum total of its Patrols.

There are different types of patrols: the first-year scout patrol, the regular patrol and perhaps a senior patrol. Each has different levels of scouting competency.

The single troop activity that best illustrates the elements of the Patrol Method in action is the monthly campout. Patrols must organize themselves, collect money, plan their meals, who is acquiring the menu items, who is securing needed troop equipment, tent mates and draw up duty rosters that include such tasks as gathering & chopping fire wood, gathering water, cooking, & cleaning dishes.

Unlike a Cub Scouting camping trip, where the parents shop & prepare all the food and the program is not impacted by late arrivals or early departures, on a Boy Scout camping trip every Scout has an important role within his Patrol. The Patrol is led by the Patrol Leader and his Assistant Patrol Leader. Each Scout in the Patrol is assigned duties, in advance of the trip, which are posted on the Patrol's Duty Roster. These responsibilities may include food purchasing, food preparation, cooking, cleanup, water collection, building a fire, etc. Other duties on a camping trip may include packaging and carrying some of the Patrol's camping gear (tents, water jugs, pots, etc.), erecting the campsite, gathering firewood, striking the campsite, packing the Patrol's gear, patrolling the site for litter, etc.

There's plenty of time for fun and games as well, but ALL of these duties are performed by the Scouts themselves. Scouts quickly learn that if they don't do it, it doesn't happen. So, it should be clear how arriving late or leaving early can be disruptive to the equitable functioning of the Patrol. Who is going to take down David's tent, if he has to leave before breakfast on Sunday morning? Who is going to do clean up if the person listed on the Duty Roster for that chore is suddenly gone?

There may be times when a late arrival or an early departure is absolutely necessary in order to participate in an event back home. And we will certainly try to accommodate those special scheduling needs that enable a Scout to participate when there is a conflict (sports, family events, etc.). But please understand that each member of the troop and the Patrols is important, and it is extremely disruptive to the program when people come and go independently. So please, try to keep this to a minimum.

Troop 5 has a long standing commitment to follow the aims of scouting. One of these components is the Patrol Method, as explained already. Please note if a scout shows a "pattern" of late arrivals and early departures on consecutive BSA camping trips he is "at risk" of not receiving credit for camping service time requirements of rank advancement (Tenderfoot, 2nd Class, 1st Class) at the Scoutmaster's discretion. In addition, if the scout holds a "key leadership position" in his patrol he is also in jeopardy of possibly having his leadership position "stripped" from him.

Naturally, as a troop prepares for any type of event, there is a need to confirm the "final" head count. Accordingly, communication follows a chain of command with patrol members calling their patrol leaders, the patrol leaders calling the Sr. Patrol Leader (or Assistant SPL) and the SPL calling the Scoutmaster or other adult event leader. All patrol members are expected to communicate weekly

with each other about the upcoming troop meeting and any other activity. Communication by the boys can take the form of calling on the phone, emailing, text messaging or just visiting with each other during or after school. Generally, boys do not begin to become regular users of email until they reach high school.

The adult leaders act as role models on campouts and form the "Old Goats" Patrol, securing a separate campsite, planning and performing the same tasks as the boy patrols and try to keep their distance from the boys in order to allow their patrols to function as a complete unit.

For more info on first-year scouts adult's role on campouts and general Troop Policies see "Webelos Introduction to Troop 5" & "What Adults Do on Scout Campouts on pages 19-21.

Youth Leadership & Required Training):

A Boy Scout troop is a small democracy. With the Scoutmaster's direction, the boys are formed into patrols, plan the troop's program, and make it a reality. In order for that to happen, a troop relies upon Scouts serving in positions of responsibility. One of the key elements of Scouting that truly distinguishes it from other youth organizations is the development of leadership skills.

The key boy leaders of the troop make up the PLC as noted above, and as noted in the Youth Leader Organization chart(found in BSA handbook). Sr. Patrol Leader & Patrol Leader elections are held annually in May, with re-elections held in early December. There are a variety of other youth leadership positions that are either assigned or appointed.

As noted earlier, monthly planning meetings of the Leadership Corps. are called Patrol Leaders Council (PLC), which is conducted by the Senior Patrol Leader. At these meetings, the Patrol Leaders and the Troop Guides present ideas and feedback from their patrols about the various troop activities (past and future) to improve or fine-tune future troop meetings & events. Once agreed upon by the Leadership Corps., they take their decisions to the rest of the troop members.

Where do the Scoutmaster and the adult committee members fit into this process? In short, as little as possible. The Scoutmaster attends the PLC meetings, but only as a coach or as an information advisor to enhance the program the Leadership Corps. is planning. Additionally, the Assistant Scoutmaster – Program Coordinator ensures that proper advancement goals are carefully planned. Ultimately, the troop committee and the Scoutmaster have veto power over all decisions of the Leadership Corps., but this is rarely utilized & primarily when there is an issue of safety or potential violation of BSA policy.

As a result, parents (and boys) need to realize that **every troop meeting and troop activity will not be perfectly planned**, but that there's a method to the madness. That is, our responsibility as adults is to promote the "process" of Scouting.

What is important for adults to know is:

- Not the food menu on the campout, but that the boys cooked it.
- Not a sharp-looking flag ceremony, but that the boys put it together.
- Not who would make the best patrol leader, but that the boys elect one.
- Not that Johnny learns first aid, but that Billy teaches him.
- Not that we cover all items on a meeting agenda, but that the Senior Patrol Leader is in charge.

Our goal (as parents) is not to get things done, but to create a safe and healthy

environment with the training and resources that the Scouts need, and then let the Scouts do it.

It can be a very messy business, and painful to watch. Meetings where the boy leaders are in charge can be very chaotic. And it can be very tempting for adults to jump in and sort things out, because that is what adults do. But we have to remember that that is the process of Scouting. That is how they learn—even from disorganization and failure. We just have to remember that our business as adults is not the same as the business of the boys. It is up to them to get things done. It is up to us to make sure they have what they need (within the bounds of health and safety), not what they do with it.

Scouting and youth leadership are a journey, not a destination.

In sum, the troop is truly run by the boys. They elect their leaders, make their own rules and design their own calendar of activities. It is the boy's own private club. The Scoutmaster and the adult committee merely make suggestions on how to enhance these plans and look out for the well-being of all members of the troop.

Order of the Arrow:

The Order of the Arrow (OA) is Scouting's National Honor Society and is an important opportunity for every eligible scout. The OA is a separate scouting organization that seeks "to recognize those youth who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Scout Law in their daily lives & to crystallize the scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others". The OA has its own service projects, camping events, high-adventure activities and is meant to be another scouting opportunity for boys as they become older and are yearning for something new & different to do. During the first 3 months of every year, Boy Scout troops are strongly encouraged to seek eligible (OA) candidates through an election process. The OA activities have a long tradition of being a bit secretive in their communications; which is meant to enhance the mystique and mystery of the process of being admitted into the OA. To be an eligible OA election candidate, a youth must be approved by the Scoutmaster and have completed 15 nights of camping (inclusive of cabin camping), in a Boy Scout venue (not family camping) inclusive of 6 consecutive nights of summer/winter camping, during the 2 years prior to the OA election. In addition, the eligible OA candidate must be at least 1st Class in rank.

Adult Leadership & Required Training:

Scout troop are supposed to be run by the youth leaders (as discussed above), but a troop can't operate, legally or practically, without having adults leaders involved. BSA policy requires at least two adults attend every outing, with one having completed Youth Protection Guidelines. And even if they weren't required, a troop couldn't get very far without someone to drive! In truth, **all** Scouter parents have a job to do in the troop—whether its being an assistant Scoutmaster, an officer of the troop committee, hauling boys to camp, bringing refreshments to Courts of Honor, participating in troop meetings or just being involved with their sons' advancement.

Opportunities: Troop 5 is blessed with many very engaged parents. Parents are encouraged to participate in both troop meetings and campouts. And activities are not limited to dads only, as we've had mom's participate in rock climbing, rifle shooting, white water rafting and even summer camp!

In our troop, there is always a need for a volunteer parent to become a registered adult leader. **We strongly encourage all adults to complete an adult registration form when their son joins the troop.** There are several reasons for this. For example, it is our troop's policy that only registered adult

leaders are able to drive scouts (other than their own son) on official troop outings. Otherwise, a parent can only drive their son. The troop's transportation policy also requires us to secure car and car insurance information for each driver. A registered adult leader also enjoys the benefit of the BSA's insurance policy, which is important any time transportation of children for a scout function is involved.

Parents are also strongly encouraged to become **Merit Badge Counselors**. It is best to choose a merit badge in which you have either professional training, have strong work experience or a long-time hobby. Becoming a merit badge counselor is easy, requiring the completion of both an adult application form and a brief merit badge counselor form. Parents should target counseling only 4 or 5 merit badges initially. As an example, if a parent does a lot of work in the computer area, they could become a Computer merit badge counselor. Or if one collects coins or stamps, there are merit badges for these activities. There are over 100 merit badges to choose from.

Adult Training: ***It has been proven repeatedly that the greater number of BSA-trained leaders, the stronger scouting program for the boys.*** Troop 5 has an ongoing goal for 100% of its adult leaders to receive official BSA training. Fortunately, most of the training is fairly short. All registered adult leaders in Troop 5 are required to complete the online **Youth Protection Guidelines** which lasts 20—25 minutes. If a registered adult leader has not completed the Youth Protection Guidelines within 12 months, then the adult in question may be barred from future outings until such training has been completed. In addition to broad-based training modules, there are several specialized training courses, many of which can be completed on-line.

Another resource for adult leaders is the annual **University of Scouting** program sponsored by the Westchester-Putnam Council. This is an enormously beneficial one-day program & adults can sign up for as many of the 45 minute classes as they want. It is a seminar of real-life adult leadership challenges and best practices. Like most conferences, some of the greatest benefit is in the networking opportunities.

Leadership and training go hand in hand. A responsible parent would certainly not put their child on a school bus if the bus driver had not met certain qualifications. ***All Scouts deserve a trained leader!***

Finally, just a word about other **common parental leadership challenges**. As mentioned earlier, parents are not allowed to sign off on their own son's advancement requirements (generally). Parents do not tent with their sons on campouts. Parent leaders should avoid disciplining their son or offering them special favors at troop meetings or campouts. And parents are encouraged to skip an occasional outing to give their son a chance to form his own identity.

Parent Responsibilities:

It is somewhat of a paradox in Scouting that the troop seeks & encourages adult leaders and parents but then tell them not to lead—or at least not to get in the way of youth leaders. This is perhaps one of the biggest challenges to parents—allowing the boys to lead themselves and to make (predictable) mistakes along the way.

Here are some other actions and responsibilities that parents are expected to fulfill as a common courtesy to the rest of the troop and its members.

Punctuality – It is important that your son arrives a few minutes early to all troop meetings. Some of the most important announcements occur during the first five minutes of the troop meeting. If you think you will be late getting your son to the troop meeting, then have your son inform his Patrol Leader ahead of time. If your son's sporting event went on longer than anticipated, then please bring your son directly to

the meeting late and in his sports uniform & try to notify another parent as soon as you think you will not be on time. For camping trips & other activities, it is important that your son arrive at the predetermined time so as to not hold up the whole troop.

Uniforms – Your son should be wearing his Class A scout shirt to every troop meeting. Class A Scout shirts are typically not required for campouts. Instead, Scouts wear their Class B scout shirts. Boy Scout patches should be put on immediately upon joining the troop and, conversely, all Cub Scout patches (except for the Arrow of Light award) should be removed immediately upon joining the troop. Shirt tails should be neatly tucked in the pants. A Court of Honor calls for BSA olive drab slacks, dark shoes and merit badge sashes.

Food – Food is generally not allowed at the Troop meeting (unless it is an annual pot luck dinner). Boys are prohibited from purchasing food from the Bryn Mawr Market (IGA) until after the troop meeting.

Respect – Your son is expected to treat others with respect and to maintain his attentiveness when others are speaking. When the Scout Sign is raised, that is an **immediate** signal that everyone should do the same and to stop talking & whispering immediately.

Inappropriate Behavior - From time to time youthful exuberance will overstep the boundaries of the code of conduct spelled out in the Scout Oath, the Scout Law & MOTTO. Under no circumstances are hazing, harassment, name-calling, bullying, cursing, cheating, stealing, lying, vandalism, fighting or any other form of inappropriate behavior ever allowed in Boy Scouting. If a boy is out of line, it is the responsibility of the Patrol Leader to step aside with that Scout and discuss with him why his behavior is not acceptable. If needed, the adult Patrol Leader Advisor may assist. A second warning results in parents being notified and the patrol of the errant scout being required to be the service patrol (flag duty and cleanup) for 2 weeks. A third warning results in a ban from the next outing and potentially a 2-month delay for the next Scoutmaster's Conference and Board of Review.

At all times, safety is the overriding responsibility of the adult leaders. If a parent leader witnesses any Scout engaging in activity that might endanger him and/or those around him on an outing, i.e., putting aerosol cans in the fire, that child will be disciplined immediately by the Scoutmaster and/or the Event Leader and may be precluded from attending the next outing. In this instance, a scout's parents will be notified immediately upon return from the campout.

As noted earlier, parents should avoid disciplining their own child during troop meetings and outings. Allow other parents to take that "bad cop" role for your son and you do the same for other parents.

Patrol Meetings – Patrol meetings occur during nearly every troop meeting and can last 20—30 minutes. The patrols break up into their groups and go to different corners and / or rooms of the church. If a patrol must utilize a room, 2 parents must attend with the door remaining open. Adults acting as are expected to help the Patrol Leader maintain discipline during the patrol meeting, guide his Weekend Campout Planning and mentor his overall leadership skills.

Commitment to Activity – There is considerable detailed planning that occurs prior to any outing. Last minute additions/& cancellations create a domino effect of un-welcomed problems. For example, if your son is signed up to go on a campout and cancels at the last minute and he has responsibility for purchasing food for his patrol (Grubmaster) for the campout, what happens to the patrol's food purchasing? Is another boy suddenly without a tent mate? Was the troop counting on the parent for transportation?

More often than not, it is not the boy that has a last minute schedule change, but the parent instead. Parents, if you think you are going to take a surprise trip during the winter break but your son is not aware of the outing and innocently signs up for an outing, then parents must contact the Scoutmaster to prevent misguided planning efforts of the other boys. The troop calendar is a very public document and there is ample opportunity to know of planned troop activities weeks or months in advance.

Packing – Another common problem for Scouts is when parents do the packing for a campout. For many reasons, parents should ONLY assist their son in packing for their first or second campout. I have been on campouts when a young Scout asked to borrow my flashlight because he could not find the one his parents packed in his bag. A parent that persists in packing their son's belongings prior to a campout is counter-productive to teaching Scouts independence. A complete personal camping gear list is posted on the troop website before each outing and commonly found in the BSA handbook .

Again, Scouts must be allowed to make some mistakes—that is often the way they learn best. Chances are, if your son forgot an extra pair of wool socks for an outing, there'll be another pair that he could borrow. Conversely, parents should not allow over-packing either, e.g., insisting your son brings 10 pair of underwear to summer camp—it's doubtful he'll wear more than 3 pair in one week!

Purchasing food – At some point your son will have to buy food for a campout for his patrol. Troop 5 has other guidelines for parents to hand out at that time, but the major message is resist the temptation to purchase more than what is called for. Your son should have a fairly detailed food list with quantities noted that he and his patrol planned and that were reviewed and approved by both the Sr. Patrol Leader and the assigned Adult Patrol Leader Advisor.

A longstanding rule of thumb for determining how much to spend for a 1 or 2-night weekend campout is \$10--\$35/person. Please do not spend more, as it means more food than is necessary has been purchased and will likely need to be discarded. As well, excess food purchasing means excess reimbursements from the troop's treasury. Curb costs by buying store brands and avoiding individually wrapped items. Part of the reason there is a 7-day cutoff for signing up for camping activities is that this allows adequate time for purchasing food. Similarly, a parent and scout should NOT have to go food shopping on the day of a campout departure.

Troop policy mandates that you and/or your son have exactly 7 days after the outing to turn in your grocery store receipt for reimbursement—otherwise consider your purchase of groceries as a tax-free contribution to Troop 5!

Advancement – As mentioned in the Advancement section on page 4, parents are strongly encouraged to work with their son to help him learn the scouting skills necessary to complete advancement requirements. As a rule of thumb, if either parent could spend 15 minutes with their son during the weekend learning or reviewing a single advancement item, so that he could pass it off at the Sunday troop meeting, then chances are the Scout will attain the rank of First Class within only 6 months!

No matter how you look at it, getting a boy through the First Year Scout program successfully can have one of the greatest impacts on a boy's Scout Spirit, advancement and retention. The following statistics on Scout retention speak volumes about the importance of Advancement: Nationwide, about 25% of all boys who join the BSA will leave the program; 51% of all those scouts will not reach Second Class; & nearly 70% will not reach First Class. An estimated 40% of the boys who drop out will do so during their first year in the program; almost 60% will drop within their first two years in the program.

Further, 38% of the 12—14 year olds who drop out of Scouting program do so because their

experiences has been boring, uninteresting, not fun, or too much like school. Analysis done by the BSA consistently shows that a youth who is advancing through the ranks is far more likely to remain in the Scouting program. Achieving First Class quickly goes a long way toward ensuring that a Scout remains a Scout.

Money & Fundraising:

Annual dues for registered youth are about \$30 and include a 12-month subscription to magazine. Annual dues for registered adult leaders are \$16 and this covers the cost of BSA insurance, and many other items. Dues notices are e-mailed in September and payment should be received in the troop treasury by the end of October. Annual operating costs include such items as: advancement patches, pins, cabin and camp reservation fees C.O.H refreshments and other supplies. If a person joins part way through the scouting year, they are charged annual registration fees on a pro-rated basis.

In nearly every instance, any troop activity entails some incremental cost to the scout's family. These **activity fees** include everything from annual scout to adult outdoor training, to rafting to purchasing fleece jackets for the winter to campout fees. Campout fees (typically \$20--\$25) cover the cost of food, camp site fees, any related patch and must be collected prior to departure. In a few cases, some troop activities are free, notably the weekly swims at the Yonkers Ave Pool.

When the troop goes to **summer camp**, it often participates in a few extra-curricular activities that invariably cost families in addition to the basic summer camp fee. Anytime there is an extra-curricular activity, the adult leaders shop for the best possible price for the services rendered, often resulting in a discounted rate given our tax-exempt status.

The troop also undertakes at least one **fundraising** event every year. Additional money is needed to replace worn out camping gear. As well, a growing troop requires a growing inventory of camping gear. Fundraising activities can include the sale of popcorn, holiday wreaths, a bowlo-ree and a UNO's doughraiser .

All money, checks and receipts should be forwarded to the current Troop Treasurer (not the Scoutmaster): Joe Forlini (914-325-0061 champagnejoe@aol.com)

**If you need to write a check to the troop, it should be made payable to:
"Boy Scout Troop 5".**

Boy Scout Troop 5 – Yonkers, NY

Westchester – Putnam Council

www.troop5yonkers.org

www.wpcbsa.org

The scouts of Troop 5 keep a busy schedule of fun outings & events.

Over the past several years we have:

Climbed Mt. Stevens at Curtis S. Read Scout Reservation • Rafted the Sacandaga River, Lake Luzerne, Hiked the Bear Mountain State Park, Cold Spring, NY • Hiked a portion of the Appalachian Trail and numerous other trails in Harriman State Park, Harriman, NY • Backpacked along the Bull Hill Trail at West Point Academy, • Held Bike trips from NYC to Yonkers, NY • Ice-Fished at Clear Lake Scout Reservation, Putnam Valley, NY • Camped at Blue Mountain Park for the Centennial Camporee • Hosted Pinewood Derbies For The District and Held Workshops for the Derbies • District Camping Events at clear Lake Scout Camp, Putnam Valley, NY • Participated in the Westchester-Putnam Councils Klondike Derby @ Ft. Smith, Peekskill, NY • Shot .22 caliber rifles under NRA instruction, at Curtis S. Read Scout Reservation • Swim Saturday Nights at the Yonkers Ave Pool

Every Summer we:

Spend a week at Curtis S. Read Scout Reservation in Adirondack Park, Brant Lake, NY

Every Fall we:

Participate in the districts Trekoree Event(camping) and also hold an October camping trip dedicated to Rank Advancement for the troop.

Every Winter we:

Host a chuck wagon style biscuit breakfast on scout Sunday for the troop's chartered organization, Bryn Mawr Park Presbyterian Church.

Every Few Years we attend a

West Point Football game and camp on the property, Participate in Habitat for Humanity Program for the city of Yonkers, Have an Eagle Scout Court of Honor for one of our newly hatched Eagle Scouts.

We have a continuing collaborative effort to earn Merit Badges in:

Camping
Communication
Personal Fitness

Citizenship in the Community,
Family Life
Personal Management

Nation & World
First Aid
Rifle Shooting

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Camping Gear - Thoughts for the Parents of First Year Scouts:

Parents of first year scouts can be overwhelmed at the need to “gear up” for outdoor activities, particularly if their child had limited camping experience in Cub Scouts or did not participate in Cub Scouts. Before you go out and spend +\$400.00 on new camping gear (which is easy to do), we would stress that you keep “absolute need” in balance with “practicality”. For example, your son does not need the latest in hi-tech, high performing clothing & shoes, as he is still growing. Furthermore, the troop has considerable spare equipment (tents, sleeping pads, mess kits, backpacks, etc.)--just ask Assistant Scoutmaster / Equipment Coordinator (currently Steven Thela) or the Scoutmaster (currently Ken Moore). After your child has remained in Boy Scouts for at least one year and appears committed to Scouting, then you might consider purchasing more expensive, optional items (clothing, tents, lightweight backpack stoves, water treatment systems, GPS systems, etc.).

A large part of gear determination is contingent upon the type of seasonal outdoor activity the troop is planning. Clearly, there is no need to pack a swimming suit or mosquito netting for a winter outing. In the *Boy Scout Handbook*, there are packing lists for different seasons . Consequently, prior to each planned outdoor activity, Troop 5 provides a “modified” gear list, suitable to the activity.

Frequently, several camping gear items are often already in your possession. For example, in anticipation of going on a winter campout, one can use a child’s snow skiing or snowboarding clothing instead of purchasing a lot of new expensive clothing. Likewise, in preparing a personal first aid kit, many items can be frequently found in your home medicine cabinet. We advocate using a large black plastic trash bag to cover your backpack in case of rain, instead of purchasing an expensive backpack cover. *Boys’ Life* and/or *Scouting* magazines also frequently have suggestions for cheaper gear alternatives. Some items are available at basic hardware stores, i.e., LED flashlights & batteries as well as the chinatown vendor connection with Joe ForliniHahaha!

Once again, as noted earlier, in this guide please do not have your son bring a knife, saw, or ax on a camping trip, or any other BSA event, unless he has completed his Totin' chip requirement. This is merely a safety precaution as the scout has not fully understood wood tools use and there safety rules. Also please remember that there are no sheath or auto-opening knives allowed in the BSA.

Chapters 8 & 9 of the *Boy Scout Handbook* provide an excellent discussion of hiking and camping gear, with a basic camping gear list in their respective sections. On the next page we have reproduced a basic camping gear list, with page references as needed. Several items toward the bottom are optional.

In terms of gear, just a few things to note: #1) your child does NOT need a backpack immediately. He can use a duffel bag or a sports bag of some type. If you buy a pack, get one that is classified as an “external frame” pack. #2) An old blanket is a suitable alternative to a sleeping bag liner. #3) Most kids have sports related water bottles—these work fine. #4) Sleeping pad—clearly not a required item for a child (most certainly for adults!), but try to avoid an air mattress for winter as these do not insulate against the cold ground. Go for a “closed foam” version. #5) Rain Gear—an absolute MUST. MUST have a hood. Breathable material is synonymous with expensive. #6) Insect repellent—another absolute MUST. Ticks are prevalent in NE; Deet is the best protection. #7) hiking boots—a requirement for nearly all outings, except canoeing. Sneakers do not provide adequate support. #8) small pillow—put existing clothes in a small pillow case can be just as effective.

Outfitters I have used: #1) Campmor (the largest & cheapest nationwide), 2) Coleman gear, clothing, , 3) Amazon, 4),REI, 5), Sierra Trading Post, 6) MooseJaw, 7) EMS, 8) Altrec. All have big websites. Also check out www.hikerdeals.com, an aggregator site that monitors all gear sales on a timely basis.



CAMPING GEAR CHECKLIST
(to be worn, carried or packed)

(Boy Scout Handbook, Ch. 8 & 9, Hiking & Camping)
Basic Camping Gear List

Personal Gear:

- Nalgene water bottle or canteen (filled at home, at least 32 oz., Empty 1 liter soda bottles are ok)
- Backpack (External Frame) OR Duffle Bag
- Sleeping Bag (Mummy style, avoid down-filled, suitable 5 degrees F.) in waterproof stuff sack
- Sleeping Bag Liner (synthetic lining, Mummy style), OR Fleece Blanket
- Fleece Blanket, OR Sleeping Bag Liner
- Ground Cloth (space/emergency blanket works, but not durable)
- Sleeping Pad (Therm-a-Rest brand = air-filled foam, works in all 4 seasons)
- Flashlight or Headlight (w/ 1 set spare batteries)

Personal Toiletry Kit:

toilet paper (biodegradable), toothbrush/paste, comb/b =brush, Purell (small), anti-bacterial wipes, washcloth/Camp soap (biodegradable), hand towel, dental floss, metal mirror (optional).

Personal First Aid Kit (Boy Scout Handbook, p. 289)

band-aids, antibacterial cream, pain reliever, moleskin, lip balm, sunscreen, anti-diarrhea tablets, INSECT REPELLANT (ticks & mosquitoes, at least 30% DEET preferable) NO AEROSOL CANS.

Clothing: (dress in layers in colder weather, "cotton is rotten")

* Hiking Boots - Waterproofed (preferably ankle high-MUST BE BROKEN IN BEFORE)

* 1 pr hiking socks (wool or synthetic preferred)

* 1 pr of underwear (synthetic long underwear in Winter)

* 1 short sleeved shirt (synthetic preferred)

* 1 long sleeved shirt (synthetic preferred)

* 1 pair pants (synthetic/nylon--sweats are NOT good for day wear; jeans ok)

* 1 fleece pullover or sweatshirt

* 1 Jacket or shell (that fits over your insulation layer)

* Hat or Baseball Cap

Poncho or "waterproof" raincoat W/ HOOD (REQUIRED), breathable material preferred

sleepwear (PJs, shorts, or sweats)

Other footwear (sneakers for campsite)

Warm Hat (wool or synthetic to cover ears) / baseball cap in Summer/Spring

Pr. Gloves (REQUIRED in colder weather)

Swimsuit w/ towel

* = Wear # = Pack

Other Required / Optional:

Boy Scout Handbook (REQUIRED)

Pen & Small Notepad (REQUIRED)

Compass (REQUIRED)

Whistle (REQUIRED)

BSA Mess kit (REQUIRED)

Fork/spoon (REQUIRED)

Large Trash Bag (REQUIRED, to cover backpack in case o in and/or trash).

Rope or Nylon Twine (50 ft.)

Small Pillow

Matches (waterproof or in waterproof container)

Scout Knife (no sheath knives or automatic opening styles); Totin'Chip Card (required)

Duct Tape (can be attached to backpack)

Spare large zip lock freezer bags

Sponge

Sunglasses

Camera

Binoculars

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Weebelos Introduction to Troop 5.

New scout patrols are for scouts just joining the troop and who have not yet entered seventh grade. Although new scouts may join the troop earlier in the year, the new scout patrol is formed in April or as soon as possible after the Crossing Over ceremony. Based upon the number of new scouts, it may later be divided into two or more patrols. Boys joining scouting who are in or beyond seventh grade may be

assigned to a regular patrol or the new scout patrol based on discussions with the Scoutmaster.

New Scout Patrols

We place all our new Scouts in a special New Scout Patrol, led by an experienced senior Scout called the Troop Guide. We also assign an adult Assistant Scoutmaster to work with the Troop Guide as an advisor. At most troop meetings, the Troop Guide plans a program for his new Scouts separate from the regular troop meeting program. Mostly, they will work on basic Scout skills, and work toward Tenderfoot rank. On campouts, the New Scout Patrol camps like any other patrol, with the Troop Guide teaching them the basic skills. Although some things may be taught by an adult, most teaching is done by the Troop Guide and by other senior Scouts he may ask to help out.

New scout patrols stay together for one year and receive help from the Troop Guide, who works with the new scout patrol leader(s). The new scout patrol operates pretty much like a regular patrol but a few things are done differently so scouts will have a chance to do all the jobs in a patrol while working on advancement toward First Class. Each member of the patrol has a job. The jobs are Patrol Leader, Assistant Patrol Leader, Treasurer, Quartermaster, Grubmaster and Cheerleader (optional). In the new scout patrol, these jobs are rotated every month or two so everyone gets to learn all the jobs.

By summer camp, most new Scouts have been in the troop for a few months and have been on a couple of weekend campouts. They may (should) have made new friends, and are getting to know enough about the other Scouts in the troop to know who they most like to do things with. Still, for the next year, the New Scouts stay together as a patrol, until the troop elections the following May. The Troop Guide is a standard BSA youth leadership position. He is an experienced older Scout who volunteers to work with new Scouts to help them get started. In our troop, the Troop Guide is usually at least 1st Class rank, 14-years old and must have been a patrol leader of a regular patrol or a Sr. Patrol

Troop Guides

At that time they have

two choices: they can choose to join one of the regular patrols already in existence, or they can get together with a number of other Scouts and organize a new patrol. In this case, they need to find a qualified First Class (or higher) Scout to be their patrol leader (we don't allow a Scout to be a patrol leader until he has been a Scout for at least a year—if he tries it sooner, he is likely to find this challenging job is just plain miserable).] Leader or an Assistant Sr. Patrol Leader. As well, former Webelos Den Chiefs can be well equipped for this expanded leadership role provided they meet the age (+14 years) and rank requirements (+1st Class). This is a vitally important job, to get our new Scouts started right (remember, nationally, more than half of all new Scouts drop out their first year; in our troop, we have found that if we can keep a new Scout active for the first year, he will likely stay an average of about four years, which is more than double the national average).

Most years, we have enough new Scouts to organize one or two new Scout patrols. Each has separate activities led by a Troop Guide (who may have another older Scout as his assistant Troop Guide). The overall program for our new Scouts is coordinated by an Assistant Scoutmaster, Coordinator of the New Scout Patrol. His job is to make sure the Troop Guides do their job, and to coordinate and evaluate the overall program for our new Scouts. The ASM / Coordinator of the New Scout Patrol typically provides overall leadership for 12 to 18 new Scouts and other senior Scouts who function in Troop Guide or Instructor roles. A Troop Guide can frequently go on to become our Senior Patrol Leader and his experience with the program for new Scouts has prepared him well to lead the entire troop.

Scoutmaster Appointments

The Scoutmaster will appoint **Webelos Den Chiefs** in August to serve for a term of one year and begin with senior Webelos den activities in September. Additionally, den chiefs may be appointed depending upon the need of our sister Cub Scout Packs 338 & 29 and Troop 5's capacity to provide such qualified youth leadership.

In June or around the time of troop youth leadership elections, the Scoutmaster announces the appointment of the new **Troop Guide(s)**, who will serve a one-year term beginning September 1st and continuing through the end of August. He will be required to attend Junior Leadership Training and will spend time initially with both the former Troop Guide and the Scoutmaster to aid in training and development. Each Troop Guide serves one class or patrol of new scouts. The Troop Guide must have previous experience either as a Troop Guide, Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leader or Den Chief.

Also in June or around the time of troop leadership elections, the Scoutmaster announces the appointment of new **Instructor(s)**, who will serve a one-year term beginning September 1st and continuing through the end of August. He too will be required to attend Junior Leadership Training and will spend time initially with both former Instructors and the Assistant Sr. Patrol Leader to aid in training and development. Instructors are often helpful assistants to the Troop Guide(s), the Sr. Patrol Leader, the Assistant Sr. Patrol Leader and the Assistant Scoutmaster New Scout Patrol Coordinator. The Instructor(s) needs to have completed the rank of First Class and be at least 13 years old.

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What Adults Do On Scout Campouts.

An Adult "Patrol"

In Troop 5, we call them "Old Goats." The Old Goats are a special "patrol" for uniformed adult leaders and parents who go on troop campouts. Our adult patrol has a great time together, sharing ideas, watching and helping the Scouts as needed. We organized the Old Goat patrol for two reasons:

- To set an example of camping and cooking that the Scout patrols could see and follow (we can tell them a thousand times, but seeing an example and deciding to follow it themselves works better)
- To give inexperienced parents a place to eat and camp, and to give them a place to be near their sons without "meddling" in the boy leadership operation of their sons' patrols.

Here is some information for parents on their first campout with the troop.

Camping is the heart of Boy Scouting, so please take a few minutes to read this. Boy Scouting is absolutely different from Cub Scouting or Webelos! And while parents (and sometimes whole families) often accompany the Scouts on campouts, the Scouts camp with their patrol and not with their parents and family members.

General Troop Policy Summary.

Here is a summary of our troop (and BSA) policies, followed by the reasoning for the policies. There are exceptions, but these policies are in effect on most outings.

Scout Tenting & Meals—Scouts tent with their patrol in a patrol site separate from the other patrols. Patrols plan their own menus, and cook and eat together as a team. In general, adults do not eat or tent with a boy patrol.

Adult Tenting & Meals—Adults tent with the adult patrol in a patrol site separate from the other patrols. We plan our own menu, and cook and eat together as a team. In general, adults do not eat or tent with a boy patrol.

Adult/Boy Tenting—BSA youth protection policies forbid an adult and a boy sharing the same tent. While youth protection policies may not apply to a father/mother and son tenting together, it is troop policy that boys tent with boys and adults with adults. If a parent tents with their son, it has been our experience that the boy will lose out on many opportunities to make decisions and be part of the patrol team! [Yes, you are probably the rare exception, but it wouldn't be fair to the other adults to single you out.]

Smoking/Drinking—Drivers may not smoke while Scouts are in the car. Adults may not smoke or use tobacco products, nor drink alcoholic beverages during a Scout activity. Adults who must smoke or chew must do so discretely out of sight of the Scouts.

Boy Leadership—Adults should not interfere with the functioning of boy leaders, even if they make mistakes (we all learn best from our mistakes). Step in only if it is a matter of immediate safety or if the mistake will be immediately costly. If possible, involve a uniformed adult leader first.

Boy Growth— *Never do anything for a boy that he can do himself!* Let him make decisions without adult interference, and let him make non-costly mistakes.

Adult Training & Resources—The Boy Scouts of America provides an outstanding handbook for adults, and an excellent training course to help us understand the goals of Scouting and how to attain them. The adult manual is called the *Scoutmasters Handbook*, and it's worth your time to read it. The training is called Scout Leader Basic Training, and is offered in our area twice a year. It's also a good

investment of your time. Troop 5 suggests our uniformed adult leaders obtain a copy of the *Scoutmasters Handbook* and strongly urges that they complete Scout Leader Basic Training (New Leaders Essential + Scoutmaster /Assistant Scoutmaster Specific) and / or the Committee Challenge during their first year of office. As noted earlier, Youth Protection training is required. We encourage other adults to follow suit.

Rationale

Boy Scout camping activities center on the patrol, where boys learn teamwork, leadership, and most camping skills. It is important that adults not be in the middle of patrol activities such as site selection, tent pitching, meal preparation, and anything else where boys get to practice decision-making.

A key difference between Boy Scouting and Cub Scouting/Webelos is leadership. Look for the word "leader" in a job title, and you will begin to appreciate the difference. The responsible person for a Cub/Webelos den is the adult Den Leader. The responsible person for a Boy Scout patrol is the boy Patrol Leader.

This isn't token leadership (like a denner). A Patrol Leader has real authority and genuine responsibilities. Much of the success, safety & happiness of six to ten other boys depend directly on him.

Boy Scouting teaches leadership. And boys learn leadership by practicing it, not by watching adults lead.

So what do we adults do, now that we've surrendered so much direct authority to boys? Here are our troop's guidelines on the indirect, advisory role you now enjoy (no kidding, you should enjoy watching your son take progressively more mature and significant responsibilities as he zooms toward adulthood).

As note above, the underlying principle is never do anything for a boy that he can do himself. We allow boys to grow by practicing leadership and by learning from their mistakes. And while Scout skills are an important part of the program, what ultimately matters when our Scouts become adults is not whether they can use a map & compass, but whether they can offer leadership to others in tough situations; and can live by a code that centers on honest, honorable, and ethical behavior.

Boys need to learn to make decisions without adult intervention (except when it's a matter of immediate safety). Boys are in a patrol so they can learn leadership and teamwork without adult interference. Being an adult advisor is a difficult role, especially when we are advising kids (even worse, our own sons).

If a parent goes on a campout, you are an automatic member of our "Old Goat" (adult) patrol. This patrol has several purposes—good food and camaraderie (of course), but more important is providing an example the boy patrols can follow without our telling them what to do (we teach by example). Since a patrol should camp as a group, we expect the "Old Goats" to do so also; that way, adults don't tent in or right next to a boy patrol where your mere presence could disrupt the learning process.

Quite simply, our troop policy requires adults to cook, eat, and tent separately from the Scouts (even parents & sons). We are safely nearby, but not smothering close. Sure, go ahead and visit the

patrol sites (not just your son's), talk to your son (and the other Scouts), ask what's going on or how things are going. But give the guys room to grow while you enjoy the view. Show a Scout how to do something, but don't do it for him. Avoid the temptation to give advice, and don't jump in just to prevent a mistake from happening (unless it's serious). We all learn best from our mistakes. And, above all, let the Patrol Leader lead.

Your job is tough, challenging, and ultimately rewarding, because your son will be a man the day after tomorrow.