

#ADVENTURE ON!

2024 W.D. Boyce Council Spring Cub Scout Recruiting Guide

*Families can join Cub Scouts
any time of the year!*

No matter the time of year, we should ensure we:

1. Make every family feel welcome.
2. Make joining online easy.
3. Make joining accessible to all eligible kids.



Recruiting: Fall *plus* Spring (Not versus!)

The traditional fall recruiting push is one of those things that's done that way — at least in part — because it's always been done that way. It makes sense, because fall also happens to be the time when kids go back to school and Scouting kicks back into high gear.

But why not *also* recruit new members to your Cub Scout pack in the spring? It doesn't take very much extra work. In fact, it gives us the opportunity to focus on some key sources of new members, gain new adult volunteers AHEAD of the fall, and lay the ground work for new dens.

Back to the Pack!

Your pack likely saw Cub Scouts drift away during the pandemic. And as life began getting back to normal, it was “first things first” for families. Cub Scouts might not have been high on their radar. But “normal” includes fun outdoors, neat activities and being with other kids outside of the school environment.

This is an ideal time to reach out to those families and urge them to come “Back to the Pack!” There's no shame, no stigma and no need to try and “catch up” — just come back, have fun and get back into the groove. In fact, Cub Day Camp could be just the activity to remind them of the excitement and energy they're missing!

There's also no joining fee for returning youth or adults! Registering online, the system will NOT charge a new member joining fee to returning youth or adults.

Your District Executive can send you a list of “lost Cubs” – those Cub Scouts from your pack who dropped during the last few years, but are STILL Cub Scout age. Contact their families, let them know they're welcome and invite them to Cub Day Camp and/or Resident Camp!

Additional Points to Consider:

1) Bring on the Tigers!

Start recruiting prospective Tiger Cub Scouts as they are finishing up Kindergarten. We allow a child to enroll in Cub Scouts as early as June 1 (or thereabouts), the *summer before* they start first grade. That means children who have just completed Kindergarten can go to day camp and participate in all kinds of fun activities with your pack during the summer.

This way, by the time you get to fall, the core of your Tiger den is already in place, and you've already gotten to know the parents, and maybe you've even got an idea of who would make a good Tiger den leader.

Lions cannot participate in Cub Scouts until they start kindergarten, so putting together a Lion den has to wait until fall. But there's no reason why Tigers and other Cub Scouts can't sign on earlier.

2) Ready, Set Launch!

Cub Day Camp is a ready-made "launch" activity that's ideal for busy parents in the summer. And it requires little to no planning on the part of the unit leaders, although you may want to help organize transportation or find adult partners for current Kindergarten-age kids if a parent isn't available.

Don't forget Cub Scout Resident Camp, too! Especially if your pack or a den is already planning on going, this could be the perfect way to pique the interest of older kids and their parents. Do they think they're "too old" for Day Camp? Resident Camp could be just the thing!

3) Reach Beyond School!

Our efforts in the fall are understandably very focused on schools – that's where the kids are every day, and our School Night for Scouting events may well be taking place there as well.

Spring is a great time to reach kids and families in through other means. In particular, you may find churches to be very receptive to flyers and messages that they can pass along to their congregations, especially as families start thinking about summer activities. You can also take the opportunity to tailor your message to emphasize Scouting's attention to reverence and duty to God.

Another group that may be missed in the fall is the homeschool crowd. One way to find this audience is to search for homeschool co-ops in your area. Just Google "homeschool coops near me" for more information at your fingertips!

4) All in the Family!

Is your pack a Family pack (serving ALL kids – not just boys) yet? If not, this would be a great time to make the move and recruit your first girls and their parents into the pack. That way, you're already a family pack when you begin fall recruiting, and you'll immediately have DOUBLE the potential new members.

5) Mix 'em Up!

This past fall we began encouraging mixed-gender dens. ALL kids at this age level can do GREAT together in our program, and it also helps with adult volunteer resources when you're just getting started serving both boys and girls. All YPT guidelines and requirements for two-deep leadership remain in effect, but mixed gender dens can make it easier to offer the Cub Scout program to ALL kids.

How Does this Work with Advancement?

You might have worries about adding new members to a den this late in the Cub Scout season. While the other kids have been working on Adventures for most of the previous school year, new members would, of course, be behind.

This is when it's a good time to remember that advancement is not the aim of the Cub Scout program. The aim is character, personal fitness, leadership development and citizenship. Advancement is just one method of delivering our program – it's not the aim of the program.

Cub Scouts who sign up in the spring can still earn the same insignia that their peers earn during the same timeframe. When it comes to rank advancement, the answer is to simply not worry about it.

If you're concerned about new Cub Scouts feeling left out of a rank advancement ceremony at the end of the school year, focus on what they HAVE accomplished. You can always present them with certificates or ribbons to recognize the work they put in in a short amount of time, which itself may be noteworthy!

What to DO (And what's an NFA?)

While there's no rule against having a School Night for Scouting in the spring in addition to the fall, **consider simply inviting new families to do something fun** with your pack or den this spring. Spring is a great time to bring families out, get them involved in Scouting, get outdoors and have some *fun*.

Note the emphasis here is on "fun!" Think about things friends and families like to do with each other, like swimming, cookouts, short hikes ... basically, anything fun and safe that kids can do (outside, if the weather allows it) with their families. This is what we call a "Normal Friend Activity" – or NFA. It's something that friends might normally do together... and that includes Cub Scouts and their families!

An NFA might be a hike, a picnic, an ice cream party, a service project, a trip to a local sporting event or anything else you can dream up. Most importantly, your Cub Scouts themselves can have fun helping plan the event, because they're probably the best judges of what will appeal to their peers – and what will just seem lame. *Nobody wants to be lame.*

While memories of typical Cub Scout recruiting in the fall conjures up visions of families listening to (and quickly forgetting) a presentation from a Cubmaster they don't really know yet, a casual springtime, relaxed outdoor activity gives prospective Scouts BSA families the opportunity to interact with families who are already part of the troop in a relaxed environment.

Give it a try! And for more information, check out our guide to Normal Friend Activities for Cub Scouts, via the link below.

Much more online...

We could kill a tree by printing all the recruiting information and resources we have to share – but let's NOT!

Instead, head to <https://wdboyce.org/recruiting-resources/>, where you can find the following information AND MORE!

- Normal Friend Activities (NFAs) for Cub Scouts
- Cub Scout Recruiting Resources
- Social Media Resources
- Videos

Questions? Ideas?

We want to hear from you! Contact any of the following:

- Your District Executive (Contact info here: <https://wdboyce.org/staff/>)
- Dan Martin, VP of Membership & Relationships (eagle_scout98@hotmail.com)
- Charlie Zimmerman, Field Director (charlie.zimmerman@scouting.org)