



# 2024 RECRUITMENT GUIDEBOOK

**Scouting America**  
Hawkeye Area Council

**SCOUT ME IN™**

# INTRODUCTION TO 2024 FALL MEMBERSHIP RECRUITING

This year's membership goal is clearer than ever: provide every youth and family in our council the opportunity to join the adventure of Scouting. The goal of every unit should be to provide a life-changing program to youth of their communities. In addition, units should strive to have a full den of each grade. While these are the Council wide goals, we urge you to develop additional specific recruiting goals for your unit that are tailored to your unique community, demographics, and needs. We know that the best way to meet those goals is through a strong plan. That plan should be built on the foundation of quality unit programming.

## RECOMMENDED TIMELINE FOR RECRUITMENT

**Year-round:** Participate in community open houses, parades, and other community events where you can promote Scouting and your unit.

**July/August:** Pack Planning Conference (needs to be done ASAP). Plan your Back to the Pack event for your current members.

**July:** Talk to the local schools about their Back-to-School or Meet and Greet events for new students/families and ask for a display/booth at the event to promote the Pack.

**August:** Update your Unit Pin on BeaScout.org (include your Join Scouting Event plan) and identify Back to School Event Needs and Access.

**Mid August:** Back to the Pack Event participation and prepare your key promotion plan.

**August:** Ensure your Pack has an effective display and family information at your local Back to School Events.

**August/September:** Effectively promote and conduct your Join Scouting events – as close to the start of the school year as possible.

**By end of September:** Conduct your New Parent Onboarding event within 10 days of your Join Scouting event.

**First Saturday in October:** Have all your Cub Scouts and families attend Cub Scout Family Camporee at Howard H. Cherry Scout Reservation. New Cub Scouts will receive a 50% discount on their registration fees.

**October Pack Meeting:** Conduct a second Join Scouting Event for those that could not attend your initial event.

**October:** Encourage Scouts and families to participate in Scouting for Food drive as an impressive way to end their first few weeks of Scouting – by giving back to our communities.

## BE VISIBLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

**YEAR-ROUND:** Promote your unit and Scouting's program at the various community events during the year. This includes the following:

- Parades: Everyone loves a parade. Have your Scouts in uniforms and pass out unit flyers to the crowd.
- Community Fair Booth: Make sure to have a unit presence at events with large volumes of family traffic.
- Displays: Libraries are excellent locations for displays
- Church Bulletins: Work with local churches to have displays and inserts for their service bulletins.

## PACK PROGRAM PLANNING

**JULY/AUGUST:** There are many resources available to help you with implementing an amazing year of programming. While logistics can be a barrier to delivering great unit programs, especially when there aren't quite enough volunteers or when most volunteers are new, it doesn't have to be. Develop a strong plan now and set dates on the calendar, with a strong plan you have something to offer new families and know what you need to ask of volunteers.

Providing a year-round, quality Scouting program should be the goal of every Scouting unit. Ideal Year of Scouting helps you develop an annual program plan, a budget to go along with that plan, and a fundraising plan to reach your program goals. The result is a well-managed, well-financed Scouting unit.

Also, please reach out to your unit commissioner for assistance.



## BACK TO THE PACK ACTIVITY

**August:** Each fall, Cub Scout Packs get a "fresh start" as they welcome brand new Scouts through Fall Recruitment. New Cubs join the packs, new dens are formed, and literally new life comes to each Pack.

Somewhere amidst all the hustle and bustle of join events, many returning families do not get contacted to come back and an essential opportunity is missed. As a result, youth are lost along with potential leadership from their parents. The "Back to the Pack" concept is an effort to get all returning Cub Scouts and their parents reengaged before recharter and recruitment begins, filling both dens and leadership vacancies.

In order to make sure that every Scout knows that the new year of Scouting is about to start and that every family is expected to play an active role, it is recommended that each Pack hold a "Back to Pack" event prior to the fall recruitment. With this event, the pack has the opportunity to set a new tone of full family engagement and volunteering.

We encourage you to make this a fun event for the entire family. Suggested activities include: an ice cream social, watermelon feast, pool party, carnival sports, etc. The meeting is designed to make sure that your pack is ready and organized prior to receiving new Scouts and parents the following month.

Check out the Back to Pack resources at the end of this guidebook.



# UPDATE YOUR UNIT BEAScout PIN

**BY AUGUST:** A key step for successful recruitment is to ensure everything is up to date on your BeAScout.org unit pin. The Council's advertising and marketing campaigns will direct families to BeAScout.org to find their local unit and apply. This means that ensuring your information is correct is a critical part of recruiting new scouts and their families to your unit. Updating your pin includes:

- phone and email listed for the unit's membership lightning rod.
- when/where/how often your unit meets
- date/time/location of your unit's Join Scouting Event
- activation of online applications
- correctly listing if your pack is family or gender only.

For a complete guide on how to access and update your pin go to: <https://www.scouting.org/resources/online-registration/>

## ATTEND SCHOOL OR PTA OPEN HOUSE/BACK TO SCHOOL/MEET & GREET

**AUGUST:** Your neighborhood school administration or its PTA/PTO may host a Back to School or Meet and Greet prior to the start of the new school year. An open house or back-to-school event is probably your first chance to meet new families—and impress them with your Pack! Take advantage of this opportunity with a well-organized display table that will attract parents and help you start building a relationship.

Preferably, prior to the end of school in June, get the date of the back-to-school event and confirm your Pack's participation. Before the school event, recruit volunteers to organize and staff the display table and begin to gather materials.

Recommended materials include:

- A quick Scout activity to do at the table.
- Photos or videos of past Pack activities
- Pinewood Derby Cars and Track
- Tables and Chairs if not provided.
- Volunteers
- Pack Contact and Calendar Sheet
- Pack's Join Event Flyer
- Sign-In Sheet
- Youth/Adult Applications
- Pack BeAScout QR code information for online applications
- Pens
- Cub Scout Stickers, bookmarks, wristbands

### What are you going to do with the names?

So now you have a bunch of names on the sheet of paper with phone numbers and email addresses. What now?

Email a copy of the names to Tammy at [Tammy.Erickson@Scouting.org](mailto:Tammy.Erickson@Scouting.org). The Hawkeye Area Council will send out email and textedly reminders to the families that signed up for more information leading up to your recruitment events.

- Divide the list among your Den Leaders/Parent Helpers to make the calls within one week after each event.
- Follow up with another call 2 to 4 days before the sign-up event. Emails and text messages are acceptable.
- Tell them about how their child will get to (insert your activity) at the join event.
- Give the date, time, and location of your join event.
- Ask them to bring \$ for registration.

## RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST

Join Scouting Promotion	No School Access	Limited School Access	Full School Access
Community Social media (Facebook groups, Nextdoor, ect.)	X	X	X
Displays/participation at community events (fairs, Farmers's markets, parades)	X	X	X
Libraries display/events	X	X	X
Church display/events (vacation Bible school, festivals, Sunday school, bulletins)	X	X	X
Scout-crafted Posters and Informational Fliers (at school or community locations)	X	X	X
Cub Scout themed parties (have parents pass out invites to classes)	X	X	X
School Information Table (at school open house, back to school Event, registration days, ext.)		X	X
Kid talks in classrooms			X

# PROMOTION METHODS

## YARD SIGNS

**Materials:** Yard signs with information including Join Event date, time, and location, with a contact person and phone number and Cub Scout logo. These are available at the August membership kickoff or from your district executive.

**Timing:** Post signs prior to the beginning of the school year and all year long.

**Steps:** Be sure to be aware of any regulations regarding yard signs. Post as many signs as possible and at strategic locations within the community including intersections. If a school, church, recreation center or other organization will allow it, post signs there as well.

## CUB SCOUTS AND LEADERS “SPORT” YOUR UNIFORM OFTEN

**Materials:** Your uniform or pack t-shirt!

**Timing:** Whenever possible...be creative.

**Steps:** Wearing a uniform or pack t-shirt is like a walking billboard and can grab the attention of youth and adults. The uniform also serves as a conversation piece. Encourage every member of your pack to wear their uniform or pack t-shirt to school on the day of your Join Event and to school the days of your pack and den meetings. Be knowledgeable about what all the patches mean and share the excitement of Scouting.

## SHOW ‘N TELL

**Materials:** Photographs, awards, uniform, Pinewood Derby cars, Scouting projects, and other exciting visuals.

**Timing:** Before the pack’s Join Event and anytime during the school year.

**Steps:** Encourage youth to use Cub Scouting as a part of their Show and Tell opportunities in school. Peer-to-peer recruitment is successful, and this is a great forum for Scouts

to share their stories and the excitement of Cub Scouting. If possible, provide handouts with pack joining information for the Scouts to distribute at the conclusion of their presentation.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

**Materials:** Social media accounts.

**Timing:** Prior to Join Events and after recruitment events are conducted.

**Steps:** Share information about the Join Event on your personal and unit social media pages and channels. Develop a Pack Information Sheet.

## ENCOURAGE CUB SCOUTS TO INVITE THEIR FRIENDS TO JOIN SCOUTING

**Materials:** Experiences and stories that show they enjoy Scouting.

**Timing:** As often as they can.

**Steps:** Host a “Bring a Friend to Scouting” night when each Scout brings one or more friend(s) to their meeting. Plan an activity that will encourage the friends to come back.

## ASK FOR ACCESS TO SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORMS

**Materials:** Scouting America Digital Assets for fliers

**Timing:** A minimum of two weeks before unit’s Join Event

**Steps:** Contact the school(s) to ask for access to its communications platform to parents. If the school uses Peachjar, the Hawkeye Area Council will create a flier and submit it to the school district for approval. The Council will pay for the Peachjar processing costs. For other types of communication platforms, work with your district executive to coordinate flier posting.

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# TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL JOIN EVENT

People come to the Join Event to sign up. They have already decided to join, so they don’t need a sales pitch. Keep the meeting as brief as possible (less than one hour) and focus on why you’re there. If people want to stay afterwards and ask questions that’s ok but end the formal meeting as quickly as possible.

Leave the complicated details for a later time.

Have a packet for each family that includes the year’s calendar, key leader phone numbers, a page or two of general Cub Scout info, etc. That way they have the key information in writing in case they have to leave early or miss something during the presentation.

Be sure to have adults complete the Join Event Roster when they arrive at the door. After the Join Event, you can contact people who do not sign up for whatever reason.

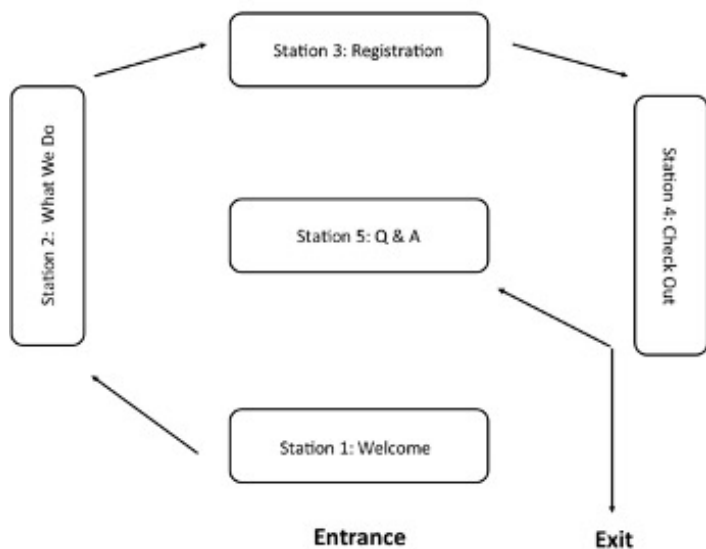
Inform people what they should do next (e.g., buy a Scout uniform, come to the next pack meeting, when den meetings are, upcoming events they can participate in, etc.).

Recruiting den leaders at the Join Event is a delicate process.

Remember, these people do not understand (yet) that Scouting is a family activity. To them, signing up for Cub Scouting is no different than signing up for baseball. They assume you already have leaders in place and all they need to do is pay. Gently dissolve them of this notion. It is recommended that you conduct a New Parent Onboarding/Orientation session within 7-10 days of the join event.

Displays are great because they tell the Scouting story without taking time out from your meeting. Pictures and Pinewood Derby cars paint an exciting picture of fun and adventures

## PLAN A SUCCESSFUL JOIN EVENT



## Station 1: Welcome

Greet every family that comes to your station and ask them to sign in.

Provide them with the Pack information sheet.

Offer a brief overview of the process: tell each family that there are five stations that they will visit to complete the sign-up process and that it will take 20-30 minutes.

### Needed Materials:

- Station 1 Sign
- Pack Information Sheet
- Parent Attendance Roster
- Pens

## Station 2: What we do

Share the excitement of Cub Scouting! Offer a brief overview of program offerings and events. Speak to one family or several families at once.

Hand out your Pack's calendar and costs of Scouting.

Station Materials:

- Station 2 sign
- Pack Calendar
- Costs of Scouting page

### Station 3: Registration

Direct parents to your unit's online application and be able to assist with any questions they may have. Families can be directed to your unit's registration via your unit specific QR Code, a direct link or have it open on a provided computer or tablet.

## What does a Join Scouting Night look like?

Join Scouting Nights are best done as a laid back, multi-station open house. This gives families the flexibility to fit it into their schedule and, more importantly, help to alleviate some of the ‘buyer’s pressure’ experienced by prospective families.

Each station should have a specific topic and goal and should encourage families to ask questions when needed.

Current Scouts should wear their Pack t-shirt and bring their families. They should plan on assisting in talking to new and prospective families about upcoming events and their favorite part of being a Cub Scout. Troops are an excellent resource for assisting in leading games, activities, and sharing their Scouting experiences. It is recommended to plan 2-3 games and to set up an activity station with coloring and basic craft supplies for younger prospective Scouts and their siblings to take part in.

*A 2<sup>nd</sup> chance Join Scouting night should be planned for October after your August/September Join Scouting Night has occurred. This can be done separately but is often best done in conjunction with your October Pack meeting.*

Be prepared to answer questions about pack fees and financial assistance.

Materials:

- Station 3 sign
- Pens
- Paper applications and financial assistance forms
- Parent Information/survey QR code sheet
- Optional: computer or tablet with unit QR code available

### Station 4: Checkout

Collect any paper applications and fees.

Give out any unit provided materials, if applicable (handbooks, neckerchiefs, patches, etc.).

Remind parents of the next meeting date, time, and location.

Materials:

- Station 4 sign
- Petty cash
- Optional: unit provided materials

## Station 5: Q & A

Answer questions parents may have about Scouting.

Make sure parents know when and where the first meeting is.

Discuss the Pack communication plan (Facebook, newsletter, mass email system) so families know where to find more information and updates.

Have den leaders and assistant den leaders available to talk about their dens.

Materials:

- Station 5 sign

# NEW PARENT ONBOARDING SESSION

**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER:** Topics to Cover at Orientation – What Is Most Important Now. Plan for the session 7-10 days after joining event.

A parent onboarding after signup is your time not only for discussion about Cub Scouting and how your Pack operates, but also other matters that your team of leaders and parents should consider – even if they are difficult, like outlining the need to fill key open positions and upcoming retirement of key leaders. A possible agenda is:

- Welcome and Introductions – Cubmaster or Committee Chair
- How Our Pack Operates (Share unit calendars and Information Sheets) – Cubmaster
  - How Den and Pack Activities and Meetings work
  - Pack Special Activities/Camping
- The Advancement Program – Advancement Chair or Committee Chair
  - An adult's role in helping their child advance.
  - When advancement achievements are presented
  - Catching up if you must miss a meeting.
- Who pays for Scouting – Treasurer or Committee Chair
  - National Registration Fee, Council Insurance Fee, and Pack Program Fees
  - Where to get a uniform and book
  - Pack fundraisers and available financial aid (Pack and Council Membership Assistance Funds)
- Den Structure and Activities – Cubmaster
  - Provide time for existing den leaders to meet their new members.
  - Maybe a mentor to work with dens forming new or needing to select a den leader. This can be the time to have the "We Need a Den Leader Talk" with parents about Dens, Den Leaders and how your Scouts need more Den Leaders.
  - Confirm that all dens have their first meeting time, date, and location set. Help if they do not.
  - Handout & review requirements for a simple Adventure.
- Other Volunteer Opportunities - Committee Chair
  - Pack Needs and Job Descriptions.
  - Share where to find training.
  - Promote Youth Protection Training generally to all parents.
- Wrapping Up – Cubmaster
  - Review date, time, and location for next pack activity.
  - Make sure everyone has contact information for pack leadership and den leaders.
  - Thank everyone for attending!

Let Parents Plan to Lead and Succeed -- To help let families get a sense of Cub Scouting and how they really can be leaders, maybe let families plan how to work on a simple Adventure as they get started in a new program year.

- To make this happen, see and share pick a simple Adventure Plan you intend to complete in the next month.  
<https://www.scouting.org/programs/cub-scouts/adventures/>
- Walk through the parts of the meeting activity.
- You can take volunteers to lead parts of the activity.

Resources for recruiting volunteers from the new parent groups can be found at <https://hawkeyebsa.org/membership-resources/>  
Advancement rank resources are located in the QR code of each handbook or with this link: <https://www.scouting.org/programs/cub-scouts/adventures/>



# BACK TO THE PACK CONCEPT



## The "Back to Pack" Concept

Each fall, Cub Scout Packs get a “fresh start” as they welcome brand new Scouts through Fall Recruitment. New Cubs join the packs, new dens are formed, and literally new life comes to each Pack.

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In order to make sure that every Scout knows that the new year of Scouting is about to start and that every family is expected to play an active roll, it is recommended that each Pack hold a “Back to Pack” event. With this event, the pack has the opportunity to set a new tone of full family engagement and volunteering.

### Overview

Across the Nation, the best Packs conduct “Back to the Pack” events in the month of July or August. It is important to remember, this is an internal event for existing members. The purpose of the meeting will be to get old members signed up for the upcoming Scouting year, recruit leadership to fill vacancies (whether it be for Cubmaster, Assistant Cubmaster, Den Leader, Committee Member, or the treat provider at a pack meeting), and to share plans for this year's pack activities.

We encourage you to make this a fun event for the entire family. Suggested activities include: an ice cream social, watermelon feast, pool party, carnival sports, etc. The meeting is designed to make sure that your pack is ready and organized prior to receiving new Scouts and parents the following month.

### Promotion

Each Cub Scout Pack should personally contact all members, preferably by telephone, to get a commitment for their attendance. Research has shown many will not continue without being personally contacted. In other words, in their minds, they have only taken a vacation during the summer and are waiting to be contacted about when to start attending the meeting again.

Remember: in June, all Cub Scouts should be contacted about the “Back to the Pack” and encouraged to become active Cub Scouts again for the fall. Be sure to share that parents/guardians are expected to attend as well. A best practice is to send a postcard a couple of weeks prior to the event to all of Pack families.

### Unit Preparation

Cub Scouts leaders are experts at putting on fun activities for youth but for this event, we should make a few special preparations.

- First, have an annual calendar sharing the key activities and events for the Pack this upcoming year.
- Second, know your leadership vacancies and have a leadership chart with blanks showing where every family will have a responsibility, small or large, with the pack.
- Third, be prepared to collect membership dues in a way that is effective and easy for your families.

### Set Up

While some units conduct their Back to Pack with a formal meeting, we recommend you take an informal approach by conducting the activity with 4 tables/stops at the entrance, guiding families to visit each as they arrive. Each of the 3 tables or stops have a very specific purpose with a recommended leader.

- Welcome, meet the Cubmaster, and receive the Pack calendar and a local events sheet.
- Meet the Committee Chair, review the leadership sheet, and sign-up to help.
- Sign-up and Pay Dues, Receive Unit SWAG with the Treasurer or Committee Member