

Cornhusker Council

Boy Scouts of America



Recruiting Guide Webelos-to-Scout Transition

Troop Edition

A guide for Packs and Troops to transition Webelos to Boy Scouts

<http://www.cornhuskercouncil.org/Council/MembershipRecruitment>

Overview

All youth in the Cornhusker Council should have the opportunity to benefit from Scouting.

The transition from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts is when we lose a large percentage of our membership. An effective Webelos to Scout Transition plan is essential for retaining our current Cub Scouts by moving them into a Boy Scout Troop.

To have an effective plan, we must address the following issues:

- Youth are tired of the Cub Scout program after five years. They do not have an understanding of the Boy Scout program and we need to ensure that they do.
 - Invite the Webelos den to attend at least one troop meeting and one campout during their 5th grade year.
 - Have the Webelos II dens between their 4th grade and 5th grade year take a “field trip” to camp for one day during summer camp to visit a local troop. Have someone from the troop give them a tour of camp.
 - Conduct “Webelos Talks” within the Webelos dens telling them about the fun and exciting things they get to do within the troop. Share the annual troop program plan of outdoor adventure including monthly campouts, canoe trips, backpacking trips, etc.
 - Assign a Den Chief from a troop to each Webelos den. The Den Chief ideally would serve as the “Troop Guide” once this group moves up into the troop.
 - Have monthly “connecting activities” between the pack and troop. Ideas are available in this guidebook.
- Webelos Leaders don’t know anything about the Boy Scout program and are not encouraging their boys to move on. They see it as an end to their volunteer involvement in Scouting. We need to change that misconception.
 - Talk to the Webelos Leader early about the Boy Scout program. Invite them to be an Assistant Scoutmaster within the troop for the New Scout Patrol.
 - Encourage the Webelos Leader go through Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training and Outdoor Leader Skills while still in Cub Scouting.
 - Invite the Webelos Leader and den to participate in troop campouts.
 - Have leaders within the troop help the Webelos leader teach the activity pins.
 - Teach our parents and leaders that Scouting is a continuous program from Cub Scouts through Boy Scouts that will yield greatest benefit for youth if parents and youth persevere.
- More activities competing for time. It is true, but we need to show them why Scouting is worth the stress and how the time can be managed.
 - We do not compete with other youth programs. Our program serves all boys and young men ages 6 through 20 and all young women ages 14 (13 if they have completed 8th grade) through 20. Our youth should participate in soccer, baseball, basketball, swimming, Girl Scouts, 4-H, church youth groups, and similar activities as those activities support our mission of teaching youth to become participating citizens with respect for others and the environment.
 - “Build it and they will come.” A well-planned program filled with outdoor adventure will attract youth. Communicate your troop’s annual program plan to the Webelos and their parents. Invite them to participate in activities. If they see the fun and adventure firsthand, they will pick our program over another.
 - Talk to the parents about the “Values of Scouting.” Scouting teaches leadership, problem solving, communication, ethical decision-making, and more. Share the Harris Study “*The Values of Men and Boys in America*” to show Scouting’s importance over sports and other youth activities.

- Be flexible in attendance requirements. Encourage youth to participate in other programs and know they are always welcome to attend when their other program is done for the year. Offer a “Saturday” van to troop campouts for those who have Friday night commitments.
- Boy Scouting is not seen as “cool” among their friends.
 - Camping, canoeing, rock climbing, rappelling, backpacking, swimming, and sports are cool. Communicate your well-planned annual program plan to the Webelos and their parents. Sell the program!
 - Use peer to peer recruiting. If their friends are in the program and they know it, they are more likely to join.
- They are not asked.
 - Many times a Webelos and his parents are simply not asked to join a troop. Studies show that a boy has to be asked six times to join before he feels invited.
 - Have your New Scout Patrol “mentor” a Webelos II den. Encourage them to finish their activity pins, invite them to troop campouts, and personally invite them to join the Troop.
 - Have last year’s crossovers personally call every member from this years Webelos II den to invite them to join the troop. They will still know many of these boys.
 - Ensure that the parents also know that they are welcome and that the current group of uniformed leaders is not exclusive but counts on their participation and support.

Responsibilities

Webelos to Scout transition is everyone’s responsibility – Webelos Leaders, Cubmasters, Scoutmasters, Parents, Commissioners and the District Committee. All must work together to ensure that Webelos and their parents know all the great fun and adventure in store for them when they become Boy Scouts. Webelos is not the end of Cub Scouts. The transition from Webelos to Boy Scouts is a normal and expected part of the program. Following are specifically assigned responsibilities to ensure the transition is smooth and effective:

Troop Responsibilities

- Troop Committee Chair appoints a Troop Membership Chair (position description follows) and reports name and contact information to the District Membership Chair.
- Troop Membership Chair with the advice and agreement of the Scoutmaster selects Scouts to serve as den chiefs for each Webelos Scout den and Cub Scout den in Packs associated with your troop. Arrange for Den Chief training.
- Troop serves as a resource for overnight activities. The troop can be of service to provide equipment, leadership, and logistics for Webelos parent-son campouts.
- Troop Membership Chair conducts an orientation in the Bear Cub Scout dens to explain the changing role as boys become Webelos Scouts, and then again as they become Boy Scouts. Explain how being a Webelos Scout will help prepare them for Boy Scouting. Take some Eagle Scouts with you.
- Webelos den/Scout troop campouts should show Webelos Scouts and their parents what to expect when they move into the troop. The troop should cook and camp by patrol, and use skills in which the Webelos Scouts can participate.
- Troop Membership Chair arranges for Webelos dens to visit a troop meeting. This should be planned several weeks in advance.
- Troop Membership Chair provides each Webelos Scout a copy of the troop’s activities for the upcoming year.

- Troop Membership Chair/Scoutmaster works with Webelos den leaders to encourage them to plan to move into the troop with their Webelos Scouts and to serve either as committee members or assistant Scoutmasters.
- Troop Membership Chair arranges to have a Scoutmaster conference for each Webelos II under the guidance of the Scoutmaster or the assistant designated by the Scoutmaster. This conference should cover the meaning of the Scout Oath and Scout Law, the advancement program, troop camping, the patrol method, summer camp, and personal equipment.
- Troop Membership Chair works with the Cubmaster in planning a meaningful crossover ceremony at the pack's blue and gold banquet. Coordinate the ceremony and arrange for each Webelos Scout to receive a troop neckerchief and *Boy Scout Handbook* along with his Arrow of Light Award. Members of the Order of the Arrow may assist in the ceremony.

Timeline

The time-line should be modified to accommodate the Webelos II dens that complete all requirements and are prepared to cross-over to Boy Scouts, some as early as December. The Troop Membership Chair and Pack Membership Chair are responsible to ensure that Scoutmasters, Cubmasters, and Webelos II Leaders are informed of and follow the timeline.

August

- Get names, addresses, emails, and telephone numbers of second year Webelos and parents from the packs from which your troop recruits and track each youth as you move through the year.
- Plan a joint Boy Scout Troop/2nd year Webelos Den camping trip for October.
- Select a Den Chief for each Webelos Den.

Other “connecting” ideas: Boy Scouts assist with Pack School Nights, organizing games for the incoming boys while their parents sign registration forms. Scoutmaster attends Pack Committee meeting to explain how the Den Chief program works and find out how many dens are interested in securing a Den Chief. This gives the Scoutmaster adequate time to recruit Den Chiefs and send them to Den Chief training.

September

- Email a letter of introduction from the Boy Scout troop to second-year Webelos to introduce them to the troop.
- Pack distributes “Questions To Ask When Visiting Troops,” Webelos Troop Visit Checklist,” and “Adult Troop Visit Checklist” to parents and guardians of Webelos II. Forms are at the end of this Recruiting Guide.
- Put second year Webelos on the mailing list to receive the troop newsletter.
- Continue planning the joint camping trip for October.

Other “connecting” ideas: Boy Scouts assist with Pack School Nights, organizing games for the incoming boys while their parents sign registration forms.

October

- Conduct the joint camping trip with Webelos II den.
- Webelos leaders go through Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training and Outdoor Leader Skills.
- Send invitations to Webelos to visit troop.

- Discuss with Webelos leaders fund raising opportunities in which Webelos II may participate with the Troop to have funds for camp next summer.
- Encourage Webelos II leaders to begin discussing Boy Scout summer camp with Webelos and parents. Troops should provide printed material for Webelos II leaders to distribute.

Other “connecting” ideas: Boy Scout Troop should plan a Webelos campout and invite the first and second year Webelos. Troop could teach skills needed for a variety of Webelos activity pins, particularly ones that need to be done outside. Troop conducts a campfire with skits & songs.

November

- Attend a Webelos den meeting to teach the Webelos how the Boy Scout troop works.
- Have Den Chiefs attend Den Chief training.

Other “connecting” ideas: Boy Scouts attends the pack meeting to show camp video/pictures and "talk up" summer camp to the Webelos II. The troop gives the Webelos II families the dates the troop will be attending Summer Camp along with the annual troop program plan.

December

- Set a date for Webelos and their parents to visit a Boy Scout Troop meeting in January if they have not already visited.

Other “connecting” activities: Troop Membership Chair or Webelos-To-Scout liaison should attend Pack Committee meeting to introduce themselves to Webelos Leaders. From now until February crossover, the Webelos-To-Scout liaison should work closely with the Den Leaders to assure that all boys will be earning the Arrow of Light and to get Boy Scout applications completed. This person should attend a Den Meeting in January to explain troop operations, answer questions, and establish a good relationship with all Webelos II parents.

January

- All Webelos II's and their parents attend a Boy Scout troop meeting.
- Plan a crossover ceremony for the Blue and Gold Banquet in February.
- Attend a meeting for 1st year Webelos to introduce them to Boy Scouting.
- Accommodate those Packs and Webelos II that wish to cross-over early with an appropriate ceremony.

Other “connecting” ideas: Have some Boy Scouts from the troop attend the Pinewood Derby and act as announcers, interviewing winners and "calling" the races. Encourage interaction between the Boy Scouts and all the Cub Scouts.

February

- Hold the crossover ceremony at the Blue and Gold Banquet.
- Depending on troop policy/preference: form a new Scout patrol for the new Scouts; or complete assignment of new Scouts to existing patrols with specific mentors to help with the transition to Boy Scouts.
- Get new Scouts actively involved with the troop through troop activities.
- Recruit parents of new Scouts to become assistant Scoutmasters or troop committee members.
- Conduct a summer camp orientation for the boys and parents to encourage attendance.

Other “connecting” ideas: Scoutmaster and several Boy Scouts attend the Pack's Blue and Gold Banquet to welcome the Webelos into their new troop. Form an honor guard for the flag ceremony using a mix of graduating Webelos and Boy Scouts for the honor guard. The Boy Scouts should change out the Webelos' shoulder loops and give them their new neckerchiefs, handbooks, etc.

March

- Plan a troop activity for new Scouts to get them involved with their new troop.

- Start training new Scouts for camping, don't forget proper equipment, first aid, and survival skills. Conduct a Scoutcraft competition with prizes. Do a campout tailored to new Scouts needs and to accommodate weather. Don't scare them off by making it difficult or a "Bootcamp" type environment.
- Follow-up with the family by phone and email of every boy that did not crossover into your troop from the packs where your troop recruits. Assure them it is not too late, describe the fun events scheduled, and invite them again.

Other "connecting" ideas: Troop and pack committees should coordinate a service project activities so boys can work as teams and parents of new Scouts can get to know the other parents. Plan a pizza lunch for the whole crowd after the work is done.

April

- Ensure all new Scouts are planning to attend summer camp. Provide additional briefings and summer camp materials for new Scouts and parents as necessary.
- Ensure new Scouts are working on requirements for Scout and Tenderfoot.
- Attend a meeting of Bear Cub Scouts to introduce them to Boy Scouting.
- Attend a meeting of 1st year Webelos and pick a date with Den Leader for a field trip to summer camp one day during the week you are at camp.
- Sponsor a troop activity for the new Scouts. Camping is why they are there.

Other "connecting" ideas: Troop invites Webelos I (4th graders) to district Camporee or other district event. They can join with the recently crossed-over boys to learn basic Scoutcraft, which will meet Webelos/Arrow of Light requirements for the Webelos and Tenderfoot requirements for new Boy Scouts. If the District Camporee isn't conducive to this, the troop could put on its own campout to teach these skills to the younger boys. Invite any boys who still have not crossed over and use this event as an "Invite a Friend" activity. Be sure to let the younger boys help cook and help tend the campfire.

May

- Work closely with new Scouts and parents during their transition to the Boy Scout troop, ensuring their needs are met and that their move has been natural and fun.
- Work on rank advancement with new Scouts. Ensure new Scouts are well on the way to Tenderfoot before camp.

Other "connecting" ideas: Troop organizes a Webelos activity pin fair, setting up booths for several Webelos Activity pins. These booths would be manned by Boy Scouts and both pack and troop leaders who would teach the skills.

June/July

- Make sure all new Scouts attend summer camp with the troop.
- New Webelos II take a field trip to summer camp for one evening the week you are at camp. Someone from the troop gives them a guided tour of camp.

Sample email of Introduction from Boy Scout Troop to 2nd Year Webelos

Dear _____:

My name is _____ and I am the Senior Patrol Leader for Troop _____. Soon you will cross-over the Cub Scout program into the Boy Scout program. This is an exciting time, many fun adventures are ahead.

As a troop we go camping once per month. This year we are planning to *(use this paragraph to briefly describe your annual program plan. Tell the Webelos what you are doing: canoeing, climbing and rappelling, backpacking, fishing, etc.)*

Our troop meets weekly (*time/date/location*). At these meetings, we have skills instruction time where we work on advancements. Our goal is that you would reach 1st class within a year of joining our troop. We also have time for your patrol to get together to plan for upcoming campouts and time for inter-patrol activities.

This summer, we are planning to attend *list name of camp here on date*. Activities at this camp include canoeing, rowing, swimming, nature programs, sports programs, .22 rifle shooting, archery shooting, and much more.

We are looking forward to having you as part of our troop. To aid in this transition, we would like to invite you, your parents, and your entire den to a campout on October (*date*). Our theme is Athletics and will play softball, volleyball, Frisbee golf, and have a bicycle race. Food and tents will be provided. All you will need to bring is personal gear (clothes, toiletries, sleeping bag/blankets) and your bicycle. We will be meeting at *location* at *time*. Please let your Webelos Leader know by (*date*) if you are able to attend.

Sincerely,

(*Your Name*)

Senior Patrol Leader Troop _____

Sample Email of Introduction from Boy Scout Troop to 2nd Year Webleos Parents

Dear _____:

My name is _____ and I am the Scoutmaster for Troop _____. In February, your son will be able to crossover into our troop. Much fun and adventure awaits him after he “crosses the bridge” into our troop.

You should encourage your son to continue his Scouting journey for the following reasons:

1. Scouting Builds Character – A Scout is “Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.”
2. Scouts are more likely than non-Scouts to value education, the environment and put the needs of others before themselves (According to a poll taken by Harris Interactive).
3. Scouting teaches leadership skills, problem solving skills, communications skills, and team building skills.
4. Scouting opens the door to possible lifelong career and hobby interests. With over 100 merit badges ranging over many different topics, many Scouts explore opportunities that they ordinarily would not have.
5. Scouting teaches youth to “Be Prepared”. Whether it’s for emergencies (1st aid, emergency preparedness), life skills (personal management, family life, communication), taking charge and leading others.
6. Scouting builds confidence. Scouting puts youth in charge of situations and allows them to overcome obstacles and challenges.

Scouting accomplishes these things through a fun-filled program in an outdoor education classroom. We go camping as a troop once per month. This year we are planning to (*use this paragraph to briefly describe your annual program plan. Tell the Webelos what you are doing: canoeing, climbing and rappelling, backpacking, fishing, etc.*)

Our troop meets weekly (*time/date/location*). At these meetings, we have skills instruction time when we work on advancements. Our goal is that your son would reach 1st class within a year of joining our troop. We also have time for your son’s patrol to get together to plan for upcoming campouts and time for inter-patrol activities.

We hope you and your son will join us on this exciting adventure!

Sincerely

Scoutmaster, Troop _____

Troop Membership Chair

Job Description

(Can be filled by either an Assistant Scoutmaster or member of the Troop Committee)

Position Concept

Membership is a shared concern of all adult leaders. However, the Troop Committee Chair must appoint a qualified individual to serve as the Troop Membership Chair who has the responsibility of coordinating these efforts.

Responsibilities

1. Work with current Scouts to assist them in meeting the “Invite a Friend” requirement for First Class Rank. (This is easily accomplished through coordination with a “My Best Friend is a Scout” recruiting effort)
2. Schedule spring and fall recruiting events for your troop using suggestions found in the Boy Scout Year-Round Recruiting Guide. The spring recruitment is especially effective for fifth graders and as follow-up for any Webelos that did not crossover to the Troop in February.
3. Work with the Webelos dens in your affiliated pack to ensure a high percentage successfully progress to Scouting. Assist the parents of the Webelos in finding an appropriate leadership role in the troop.
4. Recruit and train high quality Den Chiefs for Webelos dens affiliated with your troop.
5. Attend most committee meetings for both the pack and the troop and act as the liaison for the two groups, passing information along so that everybody stays "in the loop." Beginning in November or December, invite the Webelos II Den Leaders to attend the Troop Committee meetings. Attend some of the Webelos II Den meetings to answer questions of youth and parents, take an Eagle Scout or two with you.
6. When planning joint troop/pack activities, take care that the Boy Scouts do not feel like they are babysitting. Keep them in an instructional role.
7. Consider recruiting Webelos crossover “Ceremonial Teams.”

Top Ten - Things to Look For in a Troop

(Enclose with Scoutmaster Letter)

1. **Fun** – It's got to be fun! Most of the activities within the troop have to be understood by the Scout as a fun, friendly, pleasurable, and rewarding experience. If a troop is too strict and regimented the Scout will lose interest.
2. **Program** – this is key to a well-run troop. The program has to be planned out by the troop committee with input from the Scouts. This should be done annually and tied to a budget. The program needs to include all the elements of Scouting, weekly troop meetings, monthly outings/events, weekend campouts, and yearly summer camps. The activities have to be new, exciting, and fresh to keep the Scouts interested.
3. **Adult Leadership** – All troops should have “Trained” adult leadership. Trained leaders are crucial to any well-run troop. The training provides the leader with the knowledge to understand the aims and methods of the Scouting program. The training presents a wealth of advice and recourses to run a successful program. When you visit a troop, look for the trained patch on the leader's uniform.
4. **Youth Leadership** – The Scouting program is designed to have the youth elected and appointed into leadership roles. A troop should have periodic elections to fill those positions. In addition, the troop should provide leadership training for those roles. The troop should conduct Junior Leadership Training (JLT) and/or send Scouts to council JLT training. Look for the trained patch on the youth leader's uniform.
5. **Boy-Run Troop** – the whole philosophy of Scouting is for the Scouts to run the troop. The adult leaders are there to provide guidance, counsel, and support. The weekly meetings, troop campouts, and troop activities should be planned and executed by the Scouts and the junior leaders. The troop should encourage and strive to have its junior leaders run the troop. When observing a troop in action, see if the Scouts are running the program or the adults.
6. **Patrol Method** – A troop should divide its Scouts into patrols of not more than 8. These patrols act like a team within the troop. They will elect a patrol leader and have periodic meetings either at the troop meetings or at a separate time and place. The troop should provide competitive activities at meetings and outings for the patrols to work as a team. This allows them to demonstrate their Scouting skills and plan for camping events or district camp-o-rees. The troop should also have functioning monthly Patrol Leaders Council, which plans the troop activities.
7. **Meetings** – Weekly troop meetings are pretty much the norm in Scouting. The troop should have a calendar for the year with the dates established for regular meetings.
8. **Uniform** – the field uniform is an important part of Scouting and should be required in troop functions, like: ceremonies, religious activities, troop dinners, and district & council events. An activity uniform, which usually consists of a scouting T-shirt and Scout shorts or pants, is commonly used for troop/patrol meetings, day activities, and weeklong camps. Troops may define or require uniforms in different variations, but should have some defined requirements and periodic inspections.
9. **District & Council Involvement** - A troop should have representatives attending monthly district roundtable meetings. The district and council provide a wealth of experience and knowledge to help the troop run a great program. They are a wonderful resource for information on training, activities, advancement, planning, and ideas.
10. **Recruiting** - A troop needs to bring in new Scouts. New Scouts provide the older Scouts with opportunities to mentor and teach them what Scouting is all about. It helps them build leadership and charter. The best source for new Scouts is from the Cub Scouts Webelos program. A troop should have established a working relationship with local Cub Scout pack(s) to help bridge graduating Webelos to Boy Scouts.

Values of Men and Boys in America

Louis Harris and Associates have conducted a number of scientific surveys commissioned by the National Council, Boy Scouts of America. The findings show how the Scouting program helps aid in positive youth development. Sharing this information with Webelos II parents will help them see the importance of keeping their children in the Scouting program.

- Boy Scouts with five or more years tenure are more likely than non-Scouts to:
 - Assume a leadership role in clubs or school organizations.
 - Put the needs of others before themselves.
 - Make the most honest, not the easiest, decisions.
 - Value education and the environment.
- Boy Scouts with five or more years tenure are more likely than non-Scouts to have greater future achievement:
 - They are more likely to graduate High School – 98% vs. 83%.
 - They are more likely to graduate College – 40% vs. 16%.
 - They are more likely to earn annual household incomes of \$50,000+ - 33% vs. 17%.
- The Boy Scout program teaches strong personal values and character. Parents cited the following reasons for wanting their sons in the program:
 - To learn moral values – 94%.
 - To learn self-reliance – 95%.
 - To become involved in community service – 90%.
- The Boy Scout program gives a Scout a positive sense of self worth and usefulness.
 - 50% of Scouts indicate setting personal goals of each meeting.
 - 51% of Scouts note that they have to rely on themselves to accomplish goals at the meeting.
 - 78% agree, “Being a Scout makes me feel more confident in myself.”
- The Boy Scout program provides/enhances a caring and nurturing relationship with parents, other adults, and peers. At a typical troop meeting:
 - 58% are encouraged to do their best by a leader/adult.
 - 48% receive verbal encouragement from other Scouts.
 - 65% work together, receiving help from other Scouts.
- The Scouting program enhances a boy’s desire to learn. At a typical meeting:
 - 41% of Scouts teach another Scout.
 - 39% of Scouts learn from another Scout.
 - 53% learn new things.
- Scouting is a productive/creative use of time. Boy Scouts agree that:
 - Scouting has taught me skills I wouldn’t have learned anywhere else – 88%.
 - Scouting will help me get a good job – 85%.
 - Scouting will help me get into college – 83%.
- The Boy Scout program teaches social adeptness. During a typical troop meeting, Scouts:
 - Learn to be a team player – 51%.
 - Democratic decision making – 43%.
 - Planning activities – 41%.
 - Taking responsibility for needed supplies/equipment – 31%.