

WELCOME TO PACK 40



Frequently Asked Questions

Information for Pack 40 Families

Getting Started

Q: What is Cub Scouting all about?

A: Shhh.... Don't tell the boys, but Scouting is really about character and values. To the boys it just looks like fun. Scouting is about helping our sons grow into men we can be proud of. Adults tend to have a really good time too.

The founder of Scouting, Lord Baden Powell, often described Scouting as "a game with a purpose." After nearly a hundred years that is still a pretty good short-hand explanation of the program.

The 10 purposes of Cub Scouting are:

1. Character Development
2. Spiritual Growth
3. Good Citizenship
4. Sportsmanship and Fitness
5. Family Understanding
6. Respectful Relationships
7. Personal Achievement
8. Friendly Service
9. Fun and Adventure
10. Preparation for Boy Scouts

Q: Does Scouting complement the values lessons boys learn at home, place of worship and school?

A: Absolutely. The Scouting program provides an opportunity for boys to grow and develop in ways that complement the lessons being delivered at home, school and church.

Q: At what age can boys join Cub Scouting?

A: Cub Scouting is for boy's first grade through fifth grade. Older boys can join Boy Scouts

Q: Can you only start in Cub Scouts at the start of the school year?

A: You are welcome to join our pack at any time. Most boys do start at the beginning of a school year, but each year we have some boys who decide to join scouting later in the year. We are happy to have you to join us whenever you and your son are ready.

Q: Is it too late for my third grader join scouts? He didn't want to do it when he was in first grade.

A: It is never too late. Boys can join Cub Scouts at any age. Boys will pick up with the program at their age level. We often have boys join after first grade; this is no problem at all.

Q: Can my son join scouts; he plays baseball/soccer/basketball etc.?

A: Yes. Probably most of the boys in Pack 40 also play one or more sports, sing in choir, are involved in school clubs or are active in other church or school activities. We understand that there will be occasional schedule conflicts, this is not a problem.

The Cub Scouting offers many opportunities to make connections with activities your son is already involved with, such as sports, camps, school, church and family vacations. All of these

experiences can be enriched by the connections made through Scouting. Scouting provides a context to make character connections with these activities.

Q: How do we join?

A: Contact the Pack Cubmasters or the Pack Committee Chair for information, check the Contacts page for name, phone number and email address. We will need an application form completed for each boy. Adults who will be serving as den leaders or assistant den leaders will need to complete an adult leader form. Adult leaders are subject to a background check and reference check. We will also need to collect the Pack dues for your son. There are no dues for adults. If the Pack dues would pose a hardship, please contact one of the Cubmasters or the Pack Committee Chair in confidence, we will make it possible for your son to participate in Scouting.

Q: What if I don't know anyone else in my son's school who is in your Pack?

A: We have many boys from a number of public and private schools in our area. It is very likely that there are other boys from your son's school who are already members of our Pack.

Q: What does it cost to join the Pack?

A: We collect Pack dues for the entire year. This helps the Pack pay for events like the campouts, pinewood derby, advancement ceremonies. In addition the Pack provides pays for badges and awards. Families who need assistance with Pack dues or uniforms should speak with one of the Cubmasters or the Pack Committee Chair in confidence. We will make it possible for your son to participate.

Q: Who runs the Scouting program at Pack 40?

A: Parents volunteer their time and talent to make this program happen for our sons. There is no paid staff involved with running Pack 40. All leadership positions in the Pack are held by volunteer parents. All adults are invited to help with running the Pack.

Uniforms

Q: Do the boys need the uniform?

A: Absolutely yes. The uniform really is part of the Cub Scout program, and every boy should have at least a uniform shirt with the proper insignia, the appropriate neckerchief and a neckerchief slide, and scout ball cap.

Scout pants, shorts, socks and many other official uniform items are available but are not necessary. If uniform purchases would be a genuine hardship for your family, please contact one of the Cubmasters or the Pack Committee Chair in confidence. We will make it possible for your son to participate in Scouting.

Q: Do parents really need a uniform too?

A: Parents who have a leadership role, such as den leader should definitely have - and wear - a uniform. As with the boys, a uniform shirt with appropriate insignia will be enough. Other uniform items are up to you.

Q: How do I know what needs to go on the uniform, and where on the uniform?

A: Check your son's scout handbook or the BSA national web page. The best way is to go to the Scout Shop prepared with your pack number (Pack 40) and ask the folks at the Scout Shop to help you. They will be glad to help you get the right bits and pieces for either your son's uniform or your own.

Q: Where do we get the uniform?

A: The Phoenix area Scout Shops are located at:

Phoenix Scout Shop

2969 N Greenfield Rd

Phoenix, AZ 85016

(602) 224-0778

M-F: 9:00 am - 5:30 pm

Sat: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Mesa Scout Shop

Mesa Riverview Shopping Center

1061 N Dobson Rd Ste 109

Mesa, AZ 85201

(480) 926-0345

Mon-Sat: 10:00 am - 9:00 pm

Closed Sundays

Pack Meetings, Outings & Events

Q: What is the difference between the Pack and a Den?

A: The Pack is the large group - our entire group of more than 40 boys is the Pack. A Den is a small group, typically a group of say 5 to 15 boys who are in the same grade.

Q: What happens at a Pack meeting

A: The Pack meets monthly for an hour and a half. We make a very small number of announcements, sometimes present awards or badges that boys have earned, and most importantly have a program that is fun and educational. We try hard to have the Pack meeting be something the boys will enjoy and learn from.

Q: What happens at a Den meeting?

A: That is really up to the den leaders and the families in that Den. Most dens meet once or perhaps twice a month for an hour or two, often on the weekend or right after school. Den meetings often feature games, craft or construction projects, and work on rank advancement. The families in each Den pitch in on a rotating basis to help with the Den meetings, so that the workload is shared and no one person has too much to do. The den leaders organize and coordinates, all families help out.

Q: Does Pack 40 go camping?

A: Yes, Pack 40 goes camping two times per year, usually in October and April. Cub Scouting is a family activity, and our campouts are for the whole family. For years, the boys have consistently told us that camping is their favorite thing about scouting..

Q: What is Pinewood Derby?

A: The Pack sponsors a Pinewood Derby event each year, usually in March. For Pinewood, boys build a small model race car from a kit that consists of a block of wood and wheels. Pinewood derby car kits are included in your pack dues. Building the Pinewood Derby car is a family activity. Dens often have a pinewood derby car workshop lead by dads who are handy with woodworking tools.

Adults & Scouting

Q: I might be willing to help lead a den for my son, but I've never done this before and don't know where to start.

A: Don't worry, we've all been there. There are lots of resource materials, with ideas on how to run good den meetings. Talk to a Cubmaster or the Pack Committee Chair - we will help you get going. We can put you in contact with someone who recently led a den for that age group, who can serve as a coach or mentor

for you. The most important thing is to involve other parents in the den, with everyone pitching in a little – so that no one is left with too much to do.

Q: Is training available or required?

A: Training is offered on line.

Q: Can I get some help to run my den?

A: Each family is responsible for helping out with den activities. Families take turns assisting with den meetings, providing snacks, helping with the campouts, and other tasks involved in running the den.

Parent Involvement

Q: What do parents do in Cub Scouting?

A: Cub Scouting is a family activity. Boys participate in outings and activities with their parents. Parents go on the campouts with their boys. Boys and their parents work as a team to complete the advancement requirements.

Parents also help their Den and the Pack by volunteering to take on small jobs. In the den, parents take turns helping the den leader with den meetings, or take turns providing snacks or running games. In the Pack, parents help with a variety of small jobs.

Anyone interested in taking on a larger leadership role should talk to the Cubamasters or the Pack Committee Chair. We are always interested in including as many parents as possible in the Pack's leadership team.

Q: Can I just drop my son off at Cub Scout activities and come back later to pick him up?

A: Generally not. Cub Scouting is a family activity. For your son to get the benefit of the Scouting program, you must actively participate with your son. While parents do not have to take an active role in 100% of scouting activities, parents must be actively engaged with their sons.

Parents should plan on working with their sons on meeting the advancement requirements. Parents attend pack meetings with their sons. Parents go camping with their sons. In order for the den and the pack to work well, parents need to volunteer to help out.

BSA safety guidelines for cub scouts generally require boys to participate most in Cub Scout activities with a parent. Cub Scouting is not a drop off activity. Cub Scouting is something you do *with* your son.

Advancement

Q: Is rank advancement required?

A: It is not exactly *required*, but it really is at the heart of the program. The advancement requirements are simple, and geared to the boy's age. The requirements for Tigers (1st grade) are simpler than those for Webelos (4th grade). Boys who are not participating the advancement program will almost certainly feel left out, when their buddies are all earning awards. The real value of Scouting comes in the advancement requirements that encourage the boys to explore new ideas, challenge themselves, learn new things, and generally have fun.

Dens typically plan some activities around satisfying advancement requirements. Most of the requirements can be done by families at home. Parents and boys work together to complete the requirements. Boys who are not participating in advancement are missing out on a key part of the program.

Q: Who decides if a boy has completed advancement requirements?

A: Cub Scouting is a family activity, and a boy's parents decide if he has done his best and completed the

requirements. Parents sign off on the boy's handbook.

Q: Where do we get the boy's handbooks?

A: The handbook contains the advancement requirements, and each boy needs his own book for his current rank. You can find the at the Scout shops.

Q: When the boys have completed a rank or have earned other awards such as a belt loop, how do we get the badges or awards?

A: The boys advance at a pack event such as a pack meeting or campout. Den leaders are responsible for contacting the Pack Awards Chair, so that the badges can be purchased. Since this requires a special trip to the Scout Shop, please do not wait to the last minute to request badges. The Pack pays for the boy's rank badges and belt loops.

Camping

Q: What equipment will we need for a campout?

A: Before you go spend money on camping equipment, please talk to other families who have been on a campout with us before. You do not need elaborate camping gear. What you really need is:

- Shelter from the weather. A tent of some kind, preferably a tent with a separate rain fly. Expensive tents are not required, inexpensive tents from Academy or Target will work just fine. Also, think carefully before buying a tent larger than your first apartment. Large tents are expensive, and not at all necessary.
- Something to sleep in. Usually a sleeping bag, but there is nothing wrong with rolling up in a comforter or blankets. You will need something under you, such as a foam pad or air mattress.
- For cold weather campouts, plenty of warm clothes. Remember, it feels much colder when you are out in the weather all day.
- Plenty of spare clothes for the boys, since the boys always seem to end up wet or muddy.
- Rain gear, just in case.

Q: Who can come on a campout?

A: Camping is a family activity at Pack 40. The whole family is welcome to come. Our families often bring younger/older siblings.

BSA policy requires two deep leadership for all Cub Scout activities. This means there must be at least one trained / registered adult leader plus one parent who is at least twenty-one years of age with each den on all campouts. This rule also means that boys must be continually supervised by two adults. However, if at all possible each den should have a minimum of **four adults** in attendance at a campout, so that the boys can benefit from two deep leadership at all times, and the parents have some flexibility.

Q: Can boys sleep in a tent together?

A: Yes. A boy may sleep in a tent with just his own parents, or a boy may sleep in a separate tent with only other boys. This national policy means that adults may only sleep in a tent with their own children.

Q: What about parents who smoke?

A: BSA national policy is that there should be no smoking at any Scout event or outing - such as a campout. This is a BSA national, not Pack, policy.

Q: Is it OK for parents to have a glass of wine or a beer with dinner on a campout.

A: Sorry no. Again, BSA national policy is that no one may consume alcohol on any Scouting event or outing, such as a campout. This rule applies to all kinds of alcoholic beverages, and even if the boys are not aware of what you are consuming. Please follow this national policy.

Q: Could we bring our dog? She's really well behaved.

A: While state parks do allow leashed dogs, the Pack's policy is strictly "no pets" on campouts. There are simply too many of us, packed too tightly together. Please leave all pets at home.

Q: What happens at the campouts?

A: Mostly the boys get a chance to be boys, and to explore the outdoors.

On Saturday evening, the Pack has a campfire program where we recognize boys who have advanced in rank, and each den has the opportunity to put on a skit, do a song or tell jokes.

Q: Are there any guidelines for songs & skits for the campfire program?

A: Yes. Songs, skits & jokes should be in good fun and consistent with the values of the Scouting program. Our Pack policy is that bathroom humor or "potty" language are not appropriate. Given the wide age range and spectrum of families, an appropriate rule of thumb is to ask yourself: Would this skit be OK in front of these boys' grandparents? Would it be appropriate in a first grade classroom? If you have any doubts, you should choose another skit.

We recognize that boys will be boys and they like bathroom humor. But, in keeping with the Scouting program, some things are not appropriate. If you have any questions about whether a skit is appropriate, please talk to one of the Cubmasters or the Pack Committee Chair before you put on the skit. Any feedback after the fact will be given privately to the Den's adult leadership.

Q: How can we help our boys put on a good skit?

A: Keep in mind that it doesn't have to be a skit. Many dens have done songs or told jokes. There are many websites with skit ideas. Just remember to exercise good judgment in choosing a skit for your boys.

Please have your boys practice speaking loudly. If your son is like mine, you have a hard time imagining him speaking too softly. We often have really great skits that the audience cannot hear. This is very, very common. Boys will definitely benefit from practicing the skill of saying their lines loudly enough to be heard by the audience. This is something that requires practice and coaching.

Also, please consider ways to include siblings in the skit. We have had many really great skits that included the sisters and little brothers. They would like to participate too. There is nothing wrong with poking a little good natured fun at cubmasters, den leaders, or other willing adults.

Q: Do BSA publications have any guidelines on skits?

A: Yes, here is some information taken directly from BSA publications.

The Boy Scouts of America emphasizes a positive place in Cub Scouting. Any Cub Scouting activity should take place in a positive atmosphere where boys can feel emotionally secure and find support, not ridicule. Activities should be positive and meaningful and should help support the purpose of the BSA. When making decisions, resolve to follow the high road—"If in doubt, take it out."
BSA publications offer these guidelines for determining appropriate activities include:

- All Cub Scouting activities should reflect the values and ideals of Cub Scouting as outlined by the Cub Scout Promise and Law of the Pack.
- Songs and skits should be positive, build self-confidence and self-esteem, and be age appropriate.
- Name-calling, put-downs, hazing, ridiculing, physical harm, or references to such, are not appropriate.

- References to undergarments, nudity, or bodily functions are not acceptable.
- Derogatory references to ethnic or cultural backgrounds, economic situations, and disabilities are not acceptable.
- Alcohol, drugs, gangs, guns, suicide and other sensitive social issues are not appropriate subjects.
- Wasteful, ill-mannered, or improper use of food, water, or other resources is not appropriate.
- Refrain from "inside jokes" that are exclusionary and have meaning to only part of the audience.
- To encourage citizenship and respect for patriotic ideals, the lyrics to the following patriotic songs should not be changed: "America," "America the Beautiful," "God Bless America," and "The Star-Spangled Banner."

You might want to look at these BSA publications:

Cub Scout Leader Book, 2006, p. 3-1
 Guide to Safe Scouting, 2008, Ch.1 p.2
 Cub Scout Songbook, 2007, p. 1, 2
 Group Meeting Sparklers, 2004 p. 2, 3

Q: Is it OK for us to bring a portable DVD player or a hand held electronic game?

A: We *strongly* encourage you to leave electronics at home for our campouts. The boys should be free to get completely wet and muddy, without having to worry about keeping up with or keeping safe any electronic gadgets. Boys have plenty of chances to play computer games or watch movies at home. Let's make our campouts an electronics free weekend.

Some families like to bring walkie-talkies. These are OK. As always, you will want to make sure the radios have your name on them.

Fundraising

Q: Are there fundraising events?

A: Yes. We try to find events that will take care of our fundraising needs but also be easy to do.

Q: Is fundraising that important?

A: Yes, we use this money to help pay for the Pack's own activities. The funds generated by Popcorn supply a significant part of our annual Pack budget. The Pack relies on this money to keep our pack dues at a reasonable level.

Tips for Tiger Dens (1st Grade)

Q: How about some advice for a brand new Tiger Den Leader?

A: Don't try to do it all yourself. Running a Den is a team sport. Be bold about asking all the parents in your den to help out. When all help out, no one has to do too much. The regular involvement of many parents builds a strong and healthy den.

Q: When do Tigers advance?

A: The Pack awards Tiger rank advancement during the May pack meeting. Tiger dens need to work toward having all boys complete the Tiger rank advancement requirements by the end of April. At least two weeks before the May pack meeting, contact the pack awards chair with a list of the names of the boys from your den who have completed the Tiger rank. The pack provides the rank badges, and the awards chair will pick those up from the Scout Shop. Each den is responsible for contacting the awards chair with the list of their boys who have completed all Tiger requirements.