



Dear Parents and Scouts,

A good Troop does not happen by accident. It takes hard work, commitment and is truly a team effort involving Scouts, Scout Leaders, and Parents. I would like to share with you some thoughts on what's required to have a successful scouting program. I offer this based only on observations as a Scouter for 8 years with some of the best kids I know. On page 2 you will be interested to see the consensus of the boys in an earlier reflection on this subject some time ago. It concludes with how the Leaders deal with behavioral issues as well as our Troop Policy Guide. To that end it would be best if you **read this letter and the Policy Guide with your Scout** so that everyone will know the rules.

Studies at the National level have shown that the most important elements in a successful Troop are:

- 1.) The Patrol Method of Organization
- 2.) Actively involved parents
- 3.) Quality of the outdoor program

A boy's confidence grows through the feeling of accomplishment and self-esteem that comes from advancement, testing new skills and surpassing previous limits, as well as the camaraderie of being with friends. Beyond the Troop, the success of a boy in attaining the rank of Eagle is directly proportional to the involvement of the parents. If it is valued and important to you, it will be to him as well.

It is the responsibility of the Scoutmaster and the Troop committee to insure that the Scouting program is run safely and in accordance with the policies of the BSA. While Scout leaders are trained in youth protection, safe haven, and the aims and methods of running a Scouting program, the area that is often most problematic is dealing with the ever-changing nature of boys as they grow from 11 to 16. Boys change a lifetime in these five years as any parent of a teenager can tell you. The heart of the Scouting program however is unchanging. Live by the Scout Oath and Law, respect for yourself, for others and for the outdoors. The challenge for everyone involved in the program, parents and leaders alike, is to make these meaningful at each stage of the Scouts life. A boy's behavior is largely age related and they are, as they are, in school, sports or at home. In a Scout Troop, we ask them to behave as a Scout. To live the Oath and Law, and to carry that outside Scouting into their everyday life. This is where a parents understanding and support is most needed.

Directly to the issue of behavior, I would like to share the conclusions of the boys themselves during a reflection on the responsibility of Scouts, Leaders, and consequence of "un-Scout like" behavior.

**The responses are those of the Scouts during a group reflection at a Troop meeting.**

1.) Why be a Boy Scout?

- Learn Citizenship
- Survival Skills
- To better yourself
- Face your fears
- Build Values
- Build discipline
- Meet people
- Self esteem
- Have fun

2.) What is the responsibility of the Scoutmaster or other Scout Leaders?

- Provide guidance
- Set an example
- Organization
- Listen to Scouts / ideas
- Learn

3.) What is the job of the Patrol Leader?

- Role of guide
- Be worthy of respect
- Respect others
- Explain consequences
- Work together

4.) What is the responsibility of the Scout?

- Do your best
- Live by the Oath and Law
- Listen to others
- Fun
- Achievement
- Set an example

5.) What are the behaviors you consider un-Scout like?

Bad language  
Taunting  
Fighting  
Really weird stuff.

6.) How would you propose to handle these?

Separation  
Time out  
3 strikes and your out  
Duty punishment  
25-cent solution (call parent)

While the responsibility of the Scoutmaster and other adult leaders is to insure that the program is run safely, in a larger sense their job is to teach and guide boys. Scouting skills, respect and love for the outdoors, and how to work as a team. This is the most rewarding part of the program. This cannot be accomplished however if their time is spent continually as a disciplinarian, very often for the same few boys.

**Troop Leaders will handle un Scout-like behavior in the following manner. This includes, fighting, taunting, inappropriate language or behavior requiring the continual supervision by a Scout leader.**

- **After three verbal warnings the parent will be notified. At that time a parent will be required to attend all Scout events with their Scout and/or the Scout will be suspended from Troop activities for 3 months. They will not advance in rank during this time period, and until Scout spirit is displayed.**
- **For issues, which develop during a campout requiring continual supervision, a parent will be asked to pick up the Scout.**
- **For continued disciplinary problems the Scout will be dismissed from the Troop.**

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Scout

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Parent