

About Webelos Scouting

Although Webelos Scouts are still part of Cub Scouting, with the same purposes, it is a transitional program. It is moving the boys from a family based program in which the parents approve their work, to a unit leader led program where the Webelos Den leader must approve advancement. It is a transition from the simpler Cub Scouting program and ideals to the more challenging program of Boy Scouting and the more complex ideals of the Scout Oath and Law

Webelos Den Leaders have two objectives:

1. Provide every Webelos Scout the opportunity to earn his Arrow of Light
2. Successfully lead the boys to a positive Boy Scouting experience

Keep in mind that you do not have to do it all yourself. There are plenty of Scouters who are willing to help. In addition, there is a wealth of community resources, publications and teaching aides to help you succeed despite your limited time and lack of background in some areas. Using these people and materials will not only enrich the program for the boys, but increase your enjoyment of it as well.

Understanding Webelos Scouts

As a Webelos leader, this may be your first exposure to dealing with several boys in this age group. You may feel intimidated or even frightened. If you are in either of these groups you are not alone. Many new leaders feel the same way. As nine and ten year olds, a group of boys can be a challenge, but they are also a lot of fun. The Webelos program allows boys of this age group to stretch themselves, be challenged and have fun.

Nine year old boys are very inquisitive by nature and want to be challenged. The program you provide should fill their needs, yet not be so difficult as to discourage them. Exposure to skills does not necessarily mean mastery of skills, just a challenge, a learning experience and fun. Some boys this age have a terrible time with skills. The desire is there, but ability may not be. Remember, any real effort on their part is the challenge and even the reward. At this age a boy needs a compliment for a job done to the best of his ability.

At nine, boys can be unpredictable. One week they love the current activity. The next week the same activity bores them. The key is to keep them busy, and to keep all the boys involved. Have the bored boy show the others or you how he is doing his project or skill. Two-deep leadership is an important factor here. Two adults helping and guiding works well.

The ten year old is generally more mature than he was in his first year in your Den. His self-control is greater. His willingness and ability to lead is better. His strength and self-confidence are higher. The poking, teasing and silliness generally decreases. The unit becomes stronger as a result. As this happens you as their leader should hand over more of the Den responsibilities to the boys. 'Faking roll, collecting dues, deciding which activity pins to work on, Den activities planning. etc. that may have been done with you in their first year should now become the responsibility of the boys.

As you reflect back on the Webelos years, you will find that the boys have undergone a change much greater than you ever imagined possible.

Training Available

Webelos Den leaders and assistants should complete their district's New Leader Essentials, if they haven't already taken it, and the Leader Specific Training for Webelos Leaders. An outdoor skills training, sometimes known as WLOT or OWL training, would also be helpful. They should also attend their district's monthly Roundtables and Council Pow Wow. By participating in these activities you as a leader will be better prepared to offer a quality program to the boys.

Fifth grade Webelos leaders and assistants are encouraged to attend the Boy Scout Leader Training before they start the second year. In this way, the leaders will better understand the Boy Scout program and will be able to adapt their meeting and activities in the final stages of this transitional program.

Program Planning

The Webelos Den does not operate with the recommended monthly themes. Instead, it uses a monthly activity badge focus. Part of each month's activity badge program should include something to do at the Pack meeting. The Webelos Den remains an integral part of the Pack and should have a part in each Pack meeting.

The mission of the Webelos program is to provide activities, which are fun for boys and meet their needs, interests, desires, and contribute to their growth. The goal of the Webelos Den is to hold a boy in the Cub Scout Pack and to graduate him into a troop. That is why the quality of the program is so important.

Involve the boys in program planning. They need to learn leadership, and will surprise you with their ideas. Get them involved in setting a code of discipline for the group.

Leadership is learned and developed. You can become an effective Webelos Leader if you will prepare yourself and take the time to learn. Remember to be flexible in your planning. There is a great deal of satisfaction in helping boys along the way to manhood.

The Two-Year Webelos Program

The Webelos program is structured as a two-year program for 4th and 5th grade boys (Actually, with the second year Webelos bridging into Boy Scouts in the Spring, it's more of a 18-20 month program). While the two-year program is not optional, the way it is administered can be varied to accommodate the circumstances for each Pack. There will be two main ways of running the program. The first is having separate first and second year Dens. The second is to have a Den with a mixture of first and second year boys.

The activity badges are broken down into recommended 4th and 5th grade levels. Checkout the Cub Scout Program Helps or your Webelos Leader Book to see which badges are recommended for each month of each Webelos year

In general, Dens should work to allow first year boys to concentrate on the Webelos rank and the activity badges necessary to achieve it, while the second year Den should concentrate on the Arrow of Light and moving into Boy Scouting. The Fitness and Citizen activity badges are required for the Webelos rank and Outdoorsman and Readyman are required for Arrow of Light.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is key to a good program and makes your job as a Webelos Den leader more manageable. Take advantage of the special skills and interests that your parents have. Some parents like to camp, some are good at woodworking, some are familiar with nature, or maybe they are engineers or geologists. All of these are important activities within the Webelos program. Ask a parent for help other than transportation or snacks.

Communication is the key to getting parents involved and keeping them there. Provide them with a monthly calendar. Hold an annual or bi-annual parent meeting. They need to be told how the Webelos program is different from the Cub program and how they can be involved. Give them support and encouragement.

Remember to use your Resources and KISMIF!

Turning Your Webelos Into Boy Scouts

1. Start early with your program for the first year boys to get all of them to Arrow of Light (A.O.L.).
2. Do not wait for September to start new Webelos den into active program.
3. Get together during the summer months to do some special activities. The Aquanaut can be completed right away.
4. Pull the den together during the summer by doing small and simple service projects for school, church, or community.
5. While doing regular programs with boys add those requirements for 'joining Boy Scouts'. Get boys into the outdoors as soon as they start the Webelos Program.
6. Do as many activity pins outside as possible. Plan around a patio, yard, Garage, Park, Pool, a business or any other place.
7. Have special Visitors over for den meetings to talk about specific skill activities.
8. Spend sufficient time with each activity pin. Not one week, but two to four weeks.
9. Try to get all the boys in the den to the Webelos badge at the same time. Make it special for them at their recognition pack meeting.
10. Attend the monthly Roundtable meetings and 'Cub Leader Pow-Wow' to get activity pin ideas and help.
11. Once into the program start planning ahead, up to six months, those activities you want to do. Work your program into your schedule, the seasons, the weather, the Boy Scout Troop and sudden changes. Always have a back-up plan.
12. If a leader feels uncomfortable about doing an activity with the boys, get help: do not pass up the opportunity to learn
13. Give boys a sample of the skills, activities, requirements that the Boy Scouts do.

14. Start early to get boys ready for camping. Have a backyard Day Camp or overnigher.
15. Look for Troops in your area that the boys may go to and visit. Go Camping with them. Have skills demonstrations with them.
16. Take boys on meaningful tours and trips (more special than their earlier Cub outings).
17. Now is the time to take boys out for hikes - in neighborhood, park, construction site, open fields.
18. Know what your boys want and give them all they can take. Every Activity Pin if they so desire.
19. Realize that the second year for Webelos is a short one. Know when to graduate them ahead of time.
20. Plan well ahead for the Arrow of Light and get an O.A. (Order of the Arrow) ceremony or other special ceremony scheduled. Contact Troops for help.
21. Be sure to fulfill all the requirements for Arrow of Light and those to get the boys started into Boy Scouts.
22. Get parents involved, even more than before, so they will help carry boys into Boy Scouts.
23. Visit more than one Troop in your area - early. Have parents go along. Also to get a better understanding of the Boy Scout Program.
24. Having a Boy Scout Handbook to work from, refer to, show boys, get ideas from and get them prepared with is a great training aid.
25. Be aware that boys are lost from the Boy Scout Program during the first year if not properly prepared.
26. It is very important that boys experience camping before they join the Boy Scouts to make it more comfortable for them.
27. Remember that a parent must be with a boy on campouts as Webelos, but let the boys live the experience themselves.
28. Having and using a trained 'Den Chief' will add to the program and help leaders, too. The Webelos will enjoy having an older boy there.
29. Use as many assistant leaders and parents as possible to help with any and all hands-on skills activities. A good safety factor, too.
30. Get outside experienced help to give boys the 'Whittling Chit' Requirements and Demonstrations.
31. Boys should start working towards proper uniforming for the Boy Scouts. A proper insignia placement is important.
32. Having a den doodle for the boys is a good tracking and incentive tool to get them all into Boy Scouts.
33. Work with the Webelos at the beginning of their second year, a little at a time, so that they know the Boy Scout Joining Requirements.
34. Have them start working towards the Boy Scout Tenderfoot physical fitness requirements. This is the hardest requirement to fulfill.
35. Get boys started in making out duty rosters and menus for campouts soon. They will have to do these on their own as Boy Scouts.
36. Get all of your boys to Webelos Summer Camp after their first year. This will be their best Outdoor experience as a Webelos den.
37. Games, Skits, Songs, Stories, Competition with each other and a den flag are very important parts of the Webelos Program.
38. Letting the boys pick a patrol name, with a patch, instead of a den number will bring the boys closer to the Boy Scout Program.
39. The most important part of the Webelos Program is having well trained leaders to pass on all those new skills to the Scouts.

Keys to Cub Scouts continuing in Boy Scouts

- ✓ Visit troop before moving up from cub scouts
- ✓ Having friends in the Boy Scout troop
- ✓ Going to summer camp the first summer as a boy scout

Webelos To Scout Transition

How The Transition Plan Helps The Boy

Webelos to Boy Scout Transition is one of the most, if not the most important job you have as a Webelos leader. It is your job to guide the boys through the Webelos requirements, their Arrow of Light ceremony, and on to Boy Scouts. Transition to Boy Scouting is not that difficult a task if you plan ahead. Planning is the key.

Many Webelos Scouts will go on into Scouting with no help at all. But at least half of them need to know more about their opportunities for fun and adventure in the Scout troop. That is really the purpose of the Webelos-to-Scout transition plan, to give the Webelos Scout a sampling of the troop program, troop leadership, personal advancement, a training and learning experience and an appreciation of troop organization and relationships.

You, as a Webelos leader, are the means for the boys transition to Boy Scouting. As a leader you supply the road which the boys must travel for successful transition to a Boy Scout Troop. If the road you provide is not well marked the boys will be fearful of what is around the next turn and they may never complete the journey. The boys' transition involves knowledge, understanding, and communication. Through your leadership and teamwork with other pack leaders, and with the Boy Scout Troops in your area you can supply the necessary road map for your Webelos to follow.

Preparing your Webelos to become Boy Scouts actually begins early in the first year of the Webelos program. As Webelos the boys learn about outdoor skills, about more challenging tasks through activity badge requirements, through greater independence and leadership. As second year Webelos your boys should be exposed to Boy Scout Troops in your area. In their second year they should be learning the Boy Scout Oath, Motto, Slogan, Sign, Salute and Handshake. They have been camping as a den and might have gone to a Webelos Long Term Summer Camp. If all this has been done then the transition has begun and the Webelos you lead are ready to visit troop meetings and camp with the Boy Scouts as guests.

The boy's Webelos badge and Arrow of Light Award reach into the requirements bordering on Scouting skills, giving him a view of Scouting advancement. He sees boy leadership at work and senses his own potential as a junior leader.

In short, the boy's desire for troop membership is the result of this gradual change in appetite for troop oriented activities.

You And The Troop Leaders Work Together

When the Webelos-to-Scout transition program is used, Webelos Scouts want to join Boy Scout troops. As a part of this program, Boy Scout leaders give you help and support, participate in the joint meetings and campouts with you, supply a den chief and a troop Webelos resource person, and establish a pack-troop relationship of a permanent basis.

Your unit commissioner can help you make a list of nearby troops, with leaders' names and phone numbers. If a unit commissioner is not available, either the Cubmaster or the Webelos den leader will need to take the initiative to get things going.

If available, the unit commissioner can help bring together the Webelos den leader, Cubmaster and Scoutmaster for their first meeting. If commissioner is not available, call the Scoutmaster and arrange for all to sit down together and to share your mutual needs. It will be a time to get acquainted, define responsibilities, discuss leadership needs and make plans to recruit any needed leaders. Set up a plan for regular communications between key leaders to keep every one interested and informed.

You And The Pack Leaders Work Together

The following responsibilities should be done by den and pack leaders for a smooth transition.

Webelos Den Leader

- Use the parent-talent survey sheets to identify potential activity badge counselors.
- Train the Webelos den chief and help him to register for and attend den chief's training.
- Recognize the Webelos den chief in front of the pack or Webelos den.
- Complete Webelos den leader training as soon as possible.
- Work with the Webelos resource person and Cubmaster to conduct effective graduation ceremonies at the pack meeting.
- Attend roundtables on a regular basis, especially any joint Webelos and Scout leaders' roundtables.

Webelos Den Chief

- Receive training from the Webelos den leader and attend den chief training. Secure a Den Chief Handbook.

- Participate in the yearly Webelos program planning meeting.
- Be familiar with the Webelos badge and Arrow of Light Award requirements in order to assist Webelos Scouts in their advancement.
- Attend all Webelos den meetings and participate in district "Webelos Woods" activities.
- Assist with all pack (or den)/troop activities and participate at pack meetings with Webelos Scouts in skits, stunts, songs, demonstrations, etc.
- Assist with Webelos overnight campouts, showing Webelos Scouts the proper use of troop equipment.
- Secure help from troop junior leaders.
- Assist activity badge counselors at Webelos den meetings as needed.
- Represent the Webelos den to the troop and the Scouts to the Webelos den. Explain the "patrol method" enthusiastically.
- Participate with the pack, Webelos den and troop in joint service projects.

Cubmaster

- Sit down with your unit commissioner, Scoutmaster and Webelos den leader to determine what needs to be done to improve Webelos graduations.
- Assist in planning and conducting stimulating graduation ceremonies, involving parents, the Scoutmaster, the den chief, the Webelos den leader and boy leaders from the troop.
- Conduct Webelos den induction ceremonies and Arrow of Light Award ceremonies.
- Support the Webelos den leader in pack/troop activities.
- Help establish and maintain strong pack/troop relationships.
- Encourage high advancement standards for the Webelos Scouts.
- Include Webelos den participation in pack meeting activities.
- Attend roundtables on a regular basis. Attend any Webelos and Scout leader's roundtables with the Webelos den leader.
- Recognize the den chiefs at the pack meetings.
- Support the year-round Webelos den program.
- Help to recruit activity badge counselors from the pack.

Pack Committee

- Help recruit and support the Webelos den leader(s) and provide resources for the Webelos den.
- Promote Webelos-to-Scout transition through the chartered organizations.
- At each monthly meeting, keep informed of Webelos den progress and needs.
- Help bring families together at joint pack(or den)/troop activities.
- Promote and support strong pack/troop relationships, sharing with the troop committee the need for graduations into the troop.
- Work closely with the unit commissioner in effecting a smooth flow of boys into the troop.

Activity Badge Counselor

- Provide activity badge instruction at the Webelos den meeting.
- Be familiar with the Webelos Scout book in presenting activity badge information and certifying advancement.
- Help recruit other activity badge counselors.
- Lead field trips related to activity badges.
- Provide resources and instruction on selected activity badge.
- Hold to the time schedule for activity badge instruction.

Suggestions For A Successful Transition

- Sign up for and attend your district's next New Leaders Essentials Training that is specific for Boy Scout Leaders. The course is not only for Scoutmasters. Parents, committee members and anyone interested is welcome to attend. This is a great way to get firsthand knowledge of how a troop works. You can then take your knowledge back to your Webelos and get them excited.
- At every opportunity talk about Boy Scouting.
- Take your Webelos camping. Teach them the basics about fire building, knots, camp tasks, cooking, site selection and camp rules.
- Introduce them to service projects.
- Show pride in your uniform.
- Gradually hand over den leadership to the boys. Let them learn what it is like to have the added responsibility.
- In their second year expose the boys to as many Boy Scout Troops as you have time for.

- Create games as a form of learning the Scout oath, law, motto, and slogan. There is nothing like a little competition to spark boys this age.
- If you were a Boy Scout, talk about your adventures and apprehensions. Show the boys some of your old gear or pictures.
- Let the boys talk about their ideas of what Boy Scouting is, their anticipation and their fears.

Overview Of The Boy Scout Program

Like Cub Scouts, a Boy Scout Troop is structured with a chartering organization, a charter representative, a committee, and adult leaders, in the case a Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters. The boys are divided into patrols, rather than dens, and are boy led. The Senior Patrol Leader fills the position of the troop's boy leader.

The chartering organization provides a meeting place and helps the troop in any way it can. The representative acts as liaison between the troop and the sponsor. The committee insures the troop is following BSA policy, helps conduct boards of review for rank advancement, and considers the troop's means of finance.

The Scoutmaster and his/her assistants carry out the program with the boys and have the closest exposure to the troop as a whole.

The Senior Patrol Leader (**SPL**) not the Scoutmaster, conducts the troop meetings. The SPL is an elected position, determined by regularly scheduled elections and voted on by the boys in the troop. The SPL is not picked by the Scoutmaster or the committee. Patrol leaders are also elected by the boys within each patrol. The SPL, his assistants, and the patrol leaders comprise the Patrol Leaders' Council (**PLC**). The PLC meets generally once a month to plan and review the troop's progress. With the assistance of the Scoutmaster the PLC determines the troop's program.

The Patrol Leader conducts the individual patrol meetings with the assistance of an adult Assistant Scoutmaster. The Patrol Leader leads the patrol in planning for campouts, other activities, Scouting skills, games, advancement, etc.

As members of a patrol the boys work as a unit, and individually. As a unit they camp, work on patrol service projects, and carry out troop assignments together. As individuals they work on merit badges, rank advancement and self-improvement.