

# A Scouting Primer

## Aims and Methods of the Scouting Program

The Scouting program has three specific **OBJECTIVES**, commonly referred to as the "Aims of Scouting." They are

- (A) *character development*,
- (B) *citizenship training*, and
- (C) *personal fitness*.

The **METHODS** by which the aims are achieved, sometimes termed the "Methods of Scouting," are listed below in random order to emphasize the equal importance of each.

## Ideals

The ideals of Boy Scouting are spelled out in the **Scout Oath**, the **Scout Law**, the **Scout motto**, ("Be Prepared") and the **Scout slogan** ("Do a Good Turn Daily"). The Boy Scout measures himself against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and as he reaches for them, he has some control over what and who he becomes.

## Patrols

The patrol method gives Boy Scouts an experience in group living and participating citizenship. It places responsibility on young shoulders and teaches boys how to accept it. The patrol method allows Scouts to interact in small groups where members can easily relate to each other. These small groups determine troop activities through **elected** representatives.

## Outdoor Programs

Boy Scouting is designed to take place **outdoors**. It is in the outdoor setting that Scouts share responsibilities and learn to live with one another. In the outdoors the skills and activities practiced at troop meetings come alive with purpose. Being close to nature helps Boy Scouts gain an appreciation for the beauty of the world around us. The outdoors is the laboratory in which Boy Scouts learn ecology and practice conservation of nature's resources.

## Advancement

Boy Scouting provides a series of surmountable obstacles and steps in overcoming them through the advancement method. The Boy Scout plans his advancement and **progresses at**

### *The Scout Oath*

**On My Honor, I will do my best, to do my duty to God and my Country, and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times and to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.**

### *The Scout Law*

**A Scout Is: Trustworthy; Loyal; Helpful; Friendly; Courteous; Kind; Obedient, Cheerful; Thrifty; Brave; Clean and Reverent.**

*his own pace as he meets each challenge.* The Boy Scout is rewarded for each achievement, which helps him gain self-confidence. The steps in the advancement system help a Boy Scout grow in *self-reliance* and in the ability to help others.

### **Associations With Adults**

Boys learn a great deal by *watching* how adults conduct themselves. Scout leaders can be *positive role models* for the members of the troop. In many cases a Scoutmaster who is willing to listen to boys, encourage them, and take a sincere interest in them can make a profound difference in their lives.

### **Personal Growth**

As Boy Scouts *plan their activities* and *progress toward their goals*, they experience *personal growth*. The Good Turn concept is a major part of the personal growth method of Boy Scouting. Boys grow as they participate in community service projects and do Good Turns for others. Probably no device is as successful in developing a basis for personal growth as the daily Good Turn. The religious emblems program also is a large part of the personal growth method. Frequent personal conferences with his Scoutmaster help each Boy Scout to determine his growth toward Scouting's aims.

### **Leadership Development**

The Boy Scout program encourages boys to learn and practice leadership skills. Every Boy Scout has the opportunity to participate in both *shared and total leadership situations*. Understanding the concepts of leadership helps a boy *accept the leadership role of others and guides him toward the citizenship aim of Scouting*.

### **Uniform**

The uniform makes the Boy Scout troop visible as a force for good and creates a positive youth image in the community. Boy Scouting is an action program, and wearing the uniform is an action that shows each Boy Scout's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting. The uniform gives the Boy Scout *identity* in a world brotherhood of youth who believe in the same ideals. The uniform is practical attire for Boy Scout activities and provides a way for Boy Scouts to wear the badges that show what they have accomplished.

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There is much more to Scouting than can be covered in this primer. If you have questions, please contact one of our adult leaders. You can also find out about our Troop by surfing our website at <http://www.troop225bsa.org/>