



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

SAM HOUSTON AREA COUNCIL

Launch Your Scouting Adventure!

2019 Sign-Up Night Guide

Pack Tips for Successful Cub Scout & Adult Recruiting

www.shac.org/recruiting

Welcome to Fall Recruiting in the Sam Houston Area Council! Your mission is so very important because everything you do...and the way you do it...has the potential to make a positive impact on the lives of the youth and families in our community. Thank you for your efforts to build tomorrow's leaders by growing Scouting today!

To launch this fun in the very best way, remember that every new Cub Scout who joins in 2019 will receive a free **Estes Model Rocket!** Rockets will be distributed by District Executives upon receipt of completed and paid applications for new youth. When new Cub Scouts and their families attend the pack's Parent Orientation meeting, the pack leaders can make a fun and exciting presentation of rocket kits (without engines, for now) to all the newly-registered Cub Scouts!

All Cub Scouts who register at Sign-Up Night will also receive a special edition **Rocket into Scouting 2019** patch (see below) as an "instant recognition" of becoming a new Cub Scout!





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Sign-Up Night Branding

- 2016 marked the first year of the Sign-Up Night brand (formerly “Rally Night” or “School Night for Scouting”), designed to help volunteers, parents, chartered organizations, staff, and the community-at-large better understand our purpose – coming together to sign new youth up for Cub Scouting!
- Sign-Up Night resources are available to help recruiters successfully invite youth and their families to join, involve them immediately in quality activity, and inspire them to keep Scouting a part of their lives. See www.shac.org/recruiting for the latest resources and ideas.

Key Elements to All Sign-Up Nights

- Pack leaders should choose a Sign-Up Night method – **either Presentation OR Table Rotation method** – and follow the guidelines given in this booklet to make that method a success. Individuals coordinating and speaking on behalf of Scouting should be the most qualified presenters, trained and well prepared. See a video example of each method at: www.shac.org/recruiting
- Sign-Up Nights at each school should be kept to 30-45 minutes. A separate Parent Orientation Meeting should be held within one week following Sign-Up Night to help introduce new families to more information about the pack and its activities.
- Sign-Up Nights at each school should only be held on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday evening, and never the day after a major holiday, such as Labor Day.
- Scout Talks in the school should not be conducted on a Friday, as youth may lose their excitement about Sign-Up Night and Scouting over the weekend.
- Pack leaders should welcome families and be sure they register on the Sign-Up Night Roster to accurately record every parent and youth that attends.
- **Pack leaders should obtain a completed youth application, signed by the parent and unit leader, for every youth who attends Sign-Up Night to ensure all critical contact information is obtained.**
- Each family should submit the prorated registration fee at Sign-Up Night.
- All applications and prorated registration fees must be turned in to the District Executive within 24 hours of the Sign-Up Night or that week’s Thursday turn-in.
- Every family should receive a welcoming phone call from the den leader, Cubmaster, or committee chair within a few days of registration.



Sign-Up Nights held at each school are always more successful because parents & potential Scouts are already familiar with their school!



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2019 Fall Recruitment Timeline

Why have a Timeline? —To better capitalize on promotional efforts, create excitement, and ensure enough time to recruit youth through follow-up efforts, we will have a tight window for all first-round Sign-Up Nights. These must be scheduled on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday evenings during September. **All Sign-Up Nights should occur at the local elementary school whenever possible.**

August

- **Secure** date, time, and location for both first and second Sign-Up Nights
- **Secure** Scout Talks ahead of the first Sign-up Night—day before or the same day as Sign-Up Night
- **Promote** Sign-Up Night
 - Yard signs, posters, Peer-to-Peer cards, flyers, bulletin board announcements, social media, email blasts, personalized invitations to prospective parents, Information table at Open House and Meet-the-Teacher nights, etc.
- **Prepare** Sign-Up Night handouts – Welcome packets with Pack Information sheet, Parent Orientation flyer, youth & adult applications, etc.

September

- Conduct Scout Talks
- Conduct Sign-Up Night
- Submit completed youth applications and prorated registration fees in exchange for rockets
- Conduct Parent Orientation Meeting and present rockets to newly-registered Cub Scouts
- Submit completed adult applications, prorated fees, and training certificates

Late September/Early October

- Promote second Sign-Up Night
 - Yard signs, posters, Peer-to-Peer cards, flyers, bulletin board announcements, social media, email blasts, personalized invitations to prospective parents, etc.



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2019 Fall Recruiting Backdating Calendar

Month	Cubmaster	Committee Chair - Unit Committee	New Member Coordinator
40 - 28 Days Prior to Sign-Up Night	Visit with principal/ secretary or person in charge of securing facility for SUN; Pack Sign-up Night planning	Attend Sign-Up Night training and plan publicity with pack leaders and recruit sign up night team	Attend Sign-Up Night training and plan publicity with pack leaders and recruit Sign-Up Night team
27 - 21 Days Prior to Sign-Up Night		Pack Sign-Up Night Training and Pack Sign-Up Night Planning	Pick up Sign-Up Night materials and publicize Sign-Up Night in neighborhood
20 - 14 Days Prior to Sign-Up Night	Publicize in Neighborhoods	Plan a Parent Orientation meeting to be held 3 -7 days after Sign-Up Night	Confirm Sign-Up Night (1st and 2nd) / Schedule Scout Talks
10 - 7 Days Prior to Sign-Up Night	Fliers in folders and signs in yard	Secure location for Parent Orientation	Fliers in folders and signs in yard
1 - 3 Days Prior to Sign-Up Night	Scout Talks and signs at rally location	Confirm Location of Parent Orientation	Scout Talks and signs at Sign-Up Night location
** Sign-Up Night **	Help with Unit Scout Talks	Help with Unit Sign-Up Night	Be visible at the school / Cub Scouts wear uniforms to school / Turn in all applications
3 - 10 Days After Sign-Up Night	Introduce self, assistant CMs and the program calendar at Parent Orientation	Conduct the 'Parent Orientation'	Follow up with families that came to Sign-Up Night but did not sign up
11 - 17 Days After Sign-Up Night	Help with Second Sign-Up Night	Encourage New Leaders to get Trained	Second Sign-Up Night. Turn in applications
By November 2nd	Call and greet all new families / Follow up with Scouts that joined but have not participated	Call and greet all new families / Follow up with Scouts that joined but have not participated	Perform "Start, Stop and Continue" idea sharing for next fall recruiting

Preparing New Families

Packs with an excellent track record of membership development and retention have one thing in common—they are prepared to receive new youth into their program. To ensure your pack is prepared, follow these guidelines:

- Create a short, colorful pack information sheet to distribute to all new families at Sign-Up Night. (see sample at: www.shac.org/recruiting)
- Involve existing parents in creating a welcoming environment, where new families can quickly feel connected and learn more about Scouting. Nationally, the #1 reason given by families who dropped out of Scouting last year was that no one made them feel welcome...they never felt connected. Let's all commit to doing a better job of being helpful, friendly, courteous, and kind!
- Host a separate Parent Orientation Meeting within one week of Sign-Up Night (see a sample Parent Orientation Agenda below) to share more details about the pack's leadership, fall activities, fundraisers, and the 2019-2020 pack calendar. This is also a great opportunity to make a fun presentation of the rocket kits for the new Cub Scouts!



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Role of Unit Leadership

The recruiting of Scouts and leaders happens at the pack level and in the communities where people live, work, and play. While the Sam Houston Area Council and the district membership teams will support each pack in their recruiting efforts, each pack will be responsible for the following:

- Designate a pack Sign-Up Night Coordinator – Person who takes the lead in organizing the Sign-Up Night.
- Commitment to conduct a Sign-Up Night at the local elementary school in September 2019.
- Confirm Sign-Up Night dates with District Fall Recruitment Chair or District Executive by August 23, 2019.
- Display the yard signs in high visibility areas from August through October.
- Turn in all new member applications and prorated fees to the District Executive within 24 hours of Sign-Up Night or at that week's Thursday turn-in.
- Distribute rockets (without engines) to newly-registered Scouts during the Parent Orientation Meeting.
- Promote the registration and participation of families at district and council events offered during the fall, including rocket launch events.
- Inform new leaders of online and in-person training opportunities.
- Conduct a second recruiting event in late September/early October following the same steps as before.

Marketing Your Sign-up Night

(See www.shac.org/recruiting for recruitment resources)

Yard Signs

Display the yard signs in high traffic areas in your neighborhood and near the school(s) where you recruit members.

Flyers/Posters

Put up flyers/posters anywhere—school, daycare centers, community centers, grocery stores, restaurants, bowling alley, etc.

School and Neighborhood Newsletters

Write an article for your school and neighborhood newsletters, spotlighting Scouting and all the activities and good things your unit is doing to make an impact in your local community and at your school...include pictures!



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Church/Chartered Organization Bulletins

Work with Chartered Organization leadership (Chartered Organization Representative and Institutional Head) to be sure all play a role in recruiting success. Encourage the chartered organization to publish your announcement in the church bulletin or newsletter the week prior to your Sign-Up Night.

Meet the Teacher Night / School Open House

This is a great time to have a booth set up to show off Scouting and explain what your unit does best. The open house should NOT replace your Sign-Up Night but should be used to encourage people to attend and enroll.

- Booth manned by 2 or 3 excited volunteers, decorated with Pack pics, tent, camping gear
- 30 second sale driving people to the Sign-Up Night
- Collect 5 pieces of contact information on a sign in sheet (provided and downloadable from the website) and hand them a flyer (if allowable)
- Email **same night** to all who signed in welcoming them and inviting them to Sign-Up Night
- Follow up email / call the day before reminding and inviting them to the Sign-Up Night

Peer-to-Peer Cards

Give these cards to your youth so they can distribute them to their friends with the date, time and location of your Sign-Up Night. These cards will be available for Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venturing. Ask your DE!!!

Email Invitations (parent to parent)

Ask the parents in your pack to send an email invitation to all of their friends that have Scout-age youth. People like to join organizations where they know other people. An email message helps them understand their friends are involved, too.

Social Networking

Ask parents who are on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, NextDoor, etc. to update their status to talk about your pack’s website and the Sign-up Night, or simply have them go to www.BeAScout.org for more details.



Families Want to Join Where They Feel Welcome

5 Tips for Making New Families Feel Welcome

1. Be Present

Make sure your Pack is at Meet the Teacher & has a Sign-Up Night.

2. Communicate

Email, Call, Facebook: The more you say hello & welcome, the better.

3. Have Fun

No one wants to be bored. Make your meetings fun & engaging, especially the first meetings they attend!

4. Plug Them In

Getting people involved early in simple tasks will onramp them to future volunteer opportunities.

5. Celebrate Them

Pull them up front, send a notice to the Facebook group, etc. to welcome all new Scouts/families. The more you celebrate them, the more they feel included and get involved.





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Paper Registration vs. Online Registration

Starting in 2017, Online Registration through the BSA Online Registration Portal became a functional and viable alternative to paper registration for units in the field. More and more, families who grew up with fast access to technology are coming into Scouting age; as they do, they lean more onto online resources than on traditional paper applications. Units who adjust with the demand are finding that online registration is quick and easy, but there are some important steps to follow:

CHECK OUT THE ONLINE REGISTRATION GUIDEBOOK FROM THE BSA, AVAILABLE AT:

<https://www.scouting.org/resources/online-registration/>

CLICK ON THE “ONLINE REGISTRATION UNIT GUIDEBOOK” under the “How To” Section of the Page

Tips for Successful use of Paper Applications

- Make sure each family fills out the Sign In sheet as they enter the Sign Up night
- Make sure that each family gets an application packet as they walk in the room
- Ask them to start filling out the application before the presentation begins when using the presentation model, or as soon as they get to the registration table if you are using the table rotation model
- Check the application with them for accuracy & completion before they leave
- Collect fees with the application
- Contact all attendees who did NOT submit an application that evening inviting them to parent orientation and remind them to bring their application
- Get the paper applications to your District Executive ASAP so you can get your rockets!!!!

Tips for Successful use of Online Applications

- Make sure your unit is set up to accept online applications on BEASCOUT.ORG
- Make sure each family fills out the Sign In sheet as they enter the Sign Up night
- Have your Unit’s QR code in posted multiple locations at the sign up night (on the flyer if possible) so it is easy to locate. Prompt attendees to scan the code and go to the site to sign up
 - If you don’t know where to get your QR code, please contact your District Executive
- Remember that the Online system only collects National BSA Registration Fees, not Pack dues
- Contact all attendees who did NOT submit an application online that evening inviting them to parent orientation and remind them to complete their application online
- Provide a copy of the complete online registration roster for your unit to your District Executive who can then provide you rockets for those youth



Invite Them Back! Regardless which method you use to sign Scouts up, make sure your Pack provides each family with an invite to the next meeting (parent orientation)!



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Sample Sign-up Night Agenda – Presentation Method

(Recommended minimum staff: 10 uniformed leaders from the pack, a nearby troop, or the district)

Watch the how-to video at www.shac.org/recruiting

All Sign-Up Nights are designed to be fast-paced for today's busy parents. The presentation method has been used successfully for many years. If using this method, remember that the goal is to sign up new Scouts and adult leaders. Packs are asked to avoid the use of PowerPoint presentations because they tend to include too much information, take too much time, and often cause interested families to leave without signing up because they simply can't stay so long. Instead, new Cub Scouts and parents should be invited back to a Parent Orientation a week later, which gives the pack an opportunity to share more information about their activities and leadership.

The key to making any Sign-Up Night successful is advanced planning and preparation, including recruiting a sufficient number of enthusiastic volunteers to help. A model campsite with a tent, camp chairs, fishing poles, etc. should be to one side of the presenter, so everyone clearly sees some Scouting fun while they're there!

Before the meeting (20-30 minutes)

- Set up tables, chairs, and model campsite
- Welcome Packets — youth & adult applications, Pack Information sheet, Parent Orientation flyer, etc.
- Rocket patches
- Pens & checkout materials



Welcome & introductions (5 minutes)

- Lead the Pledge of Allegiance
- Introduce pack leaders

What is Scouting (Basic Version—10 minutes)

- Youth development program that builds character & confidence
- Family-oriented; all members of the Scout's family encouraged to participate when/where possible
- Fun with a purpose—youth will have fun while learning leadership skills
- Briefly describe upcoming pack activities and a recent activity over the summer
- Briefly describe leadership structure of the pack

Families Came to Sign Up! Sign them up and get them out! Resist the urge to flood them with information. Sign Ups should be 30 minutes max, start to finish.

Volunteer Commitments (10 minutes)

- Call one new den up to the front, have each future Scout say what Scouting activity they are looking forward to the most
- Tell the parents of the den that these future Scouts are ready to begin their Scouting journey, so they need coaches, mentors, adults to lead them...we call them Den Leaders
- Ask which parents are committed to help them on their journey and would like to volunteer (for Kindergarten and 1st grade, mention 18 years or older; for girls, one female 21 years or older)
 - Complete Application – have simple recognition for all newly-recruited leaders whose applications and fees are turned in
- Repeat this process for each grade level, if needed



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Youth/Adult Registration (5 minutes)

- Discuss pack and BSA registration fees, insurance, and magazine subscription option
- Refer to Pack Information sheet – mention key upcoming dates
- Emphasize Parent Orientation meeting – date/time/location, rockets handed out, FUN!
- Direct all to Turn-In tables to gather applications & fees, present youth with rocket patch

After the Meeting

- Collect all applications/prorated fees, present youth with patches, answer questions
- Visit with new leaders & parents, encourage Parent Orientation attendance



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Sample Sign-Up Night Agenda – Table Rotation Method

(Recommended minimum staff: 10 uniformed leaders from the pack, a nearby troop, or the district)

Watch the how-to video at www.shac.org/recruiting

All Sign-Up Nights are designed to be fast-paced for today's busy parents. The table rotation method has been used very successfully in recent years. It allows families more flexible timing and it allows the pack to have better one-on-one conversations with new families as they visit the tables. Families sign in at the first table, then they go on a self-paced journey through five stations to learn how Scouting and the pack work. Families who are familiar with Scouting, or who have limited time, may hurry past some tables and go directly to checkout. The diagram below shows the stations and the recommended room setup. A model campsite with a tent, camp chairs, fishing poles, etc. should be in the center of the room so everyone circles some Scouting fun while they're there!

The key to making any Sign-Up Night successful is advanced planning and preparation, including recruiting a sufficient number of enthusiastic volunteers to help.



Sign-Up Night Stations

- **Welcome/Sign In**
- **Station 1:** Who are the Cub Scouts?
- **Station 2:** How Does Scouting Work?
- **Station 3:** Cub Scout Advancement
- **Station 4:** Funding Your Scout Experience
- **Station 5:** Join and Check Out

Families Came to Sign Up! Make sure it is easy for them to sign in & sign up, and ensure there is not a line at the checkout table. Someone at the exit doors should ask if everyone had the chance to sign up!

Welcome/Sign In: This is the first place interested youth and their parents stop. They sign in, while a greeter provides a brief overview of the process.

- Greet each family as they arrive and ask them to sign in.
- Provide each family with a Welcome Packet – youth & adult applications, Pack Information sheet, etc.
- Invite each family to visit the five stations and learn more about Scouting – sign up and checkout is at the final station.

Station 1: Who are the Cub Scouts? Share basic information about the Cub Scouts ... FUN! ... Scouting is “a game with a purpose” ... FUN! ... the big picture of character development, citizenship, and personal fitness ... FUN! ... the timeless values of the Scout Oath & Law ... the uniform ... plus FUN, FUN, and more FUN!

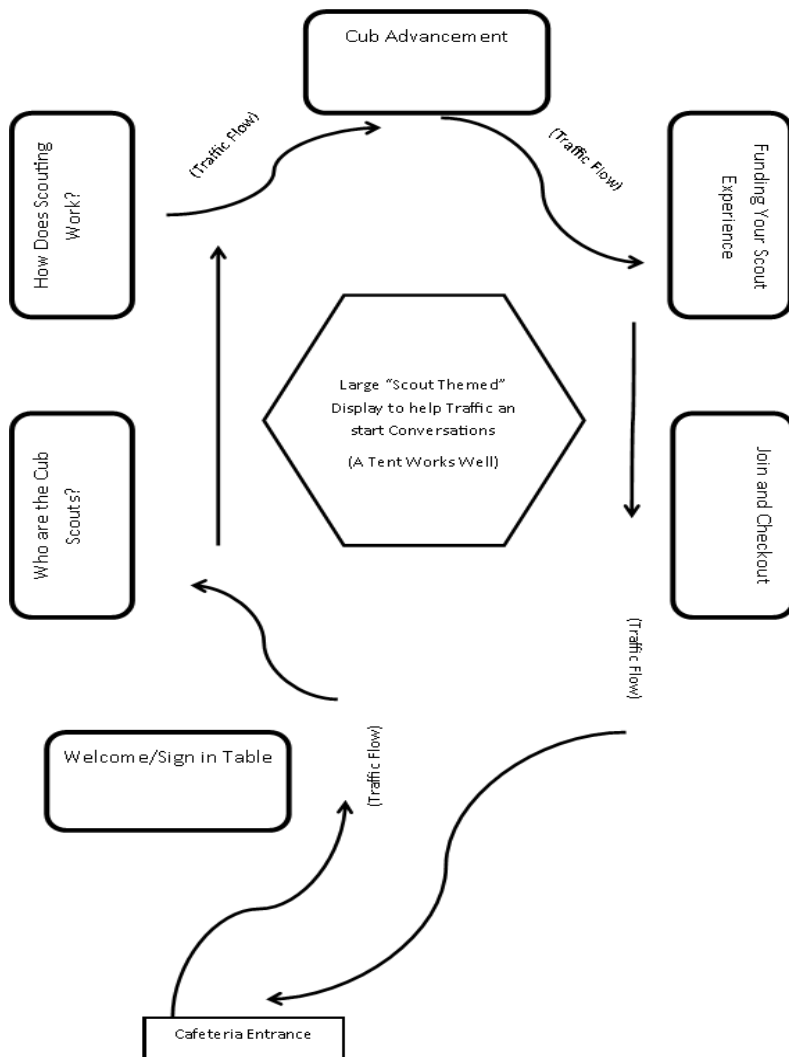
Materials:

- Station 1 tri-panel display
- Scout Shop Guide to the Uniform
- Pack pictures



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Station 2: How Does the Program Work?

This station touches on dens, pack meetings, outside activities, and the importance of volunteers. Start a friendly discussion about all parents helping out wherever they can...everyone is busy, but everyone does something...and reassure that our pack helps new parents get started off well!

Materials:

- Station 2 tri-panel display
- Fun stuff from pack activities...Pinewood Derby Cars, keepsakes from outdoor activities, pictures of youth and parents having loads of fun, camping gadgets youth have made, etc.

Station 3: Advancement. This station touches on the different ranks in Cub Scouts, listing out some of the specific adventures for each rank...mention “age appropriate activities” and all the opportunities for fun. Again, a good opportunity to mention great ways to volunteer...personal hobbies, or just an interest in specific advancement requirements, is the perfect way for a new parent to help their child’s den!

Materials:

- Station 3 tri-panel display
- Rank patches, belts full of adventure loops, patch vest, parent’s ribbon full of parent pins
- Patches from campouts, pack & district activities

Station 4: Funding the Program. This station covers registration and fundraising, giving an opportunity to briefly touch on pack fees and additional expenses. Remember that more financial details, like fundraising specifics, will be covered during Parent Orientation, so focus on the big picture.

Materials:

- Station 4 tri-panel display
- Popcorn tins, fundraiser trophies or other prizes from prior sales
- Program/Camp pictures – show where the money goes!



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- Copies of Scouts' Life Magazine
- Be prepared to briefly answer questions about pack fee payment plans and/or financial assistance.

Station 5: Join and Check Out. Leaders at this station are responsible for final “check out,” including proper completion of applications, payment, and registration of new leaders. Units that use the rotational model recommend multiple tables and extra, experienced leaders at this station to be sure that the flow doesn't back up here.

Materials:

- Station 5 tri-panel display
- Extra youth and adult applications, pens, calculators, clear instructions about payment options
- Electronic gear for online registration, if WiFi available...always have paper, just in case!
- Patches for “instant recognition” for paid and registered new Scouts.
- Make sure all applications are properly completed, including signatures.
- Collect the proper fee amount for BSA membership fee and magazine, if added.
- Forms, signed by Cubmaster, and all payments should be collected and put in envelope for turn in.
- Secure adult volunteers, especially Den Leaders for new dens. Encourage adults to register...can finalize positions at Parent Orientation, if needed.
- Make sure parents know when and where the first meeting is (Parent Orientation) and answer any other questions parents may have.



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Sample Parent Orientation Meeting Agenda

Before the meeting (20-30 minutes)

- Set up table and chairs, as needed
- Roster from Sign-Up Night
- Youth and Adult registration applications (for new families)
- Review Parent Orientation Agenda
- Ceremony and games equipment
- Pens



Families Came to Participate! THIS is where you share all the great things your Pack will do this year...not at Sign-Up Night. Because families have already committed to participate by signing up, they will now find the time to say YES to participation in all of the great activities, including volunteering!

Opening (5 minutes)

- Lead the Pledge of Allegiance
- Introduce pack leaders

Pack Program/Fundraising (10 minutes)

- Discuss the pack's plans for the future, mentioning some of the more exciting activities
- Discuss the upcoming fall events and distribute event registration information
- Impact of Popcorn sale as a fundraiser for the Pack and each family

Dismiss the Cub Scouts to another room for games and activities with proper supervision

Unit Leadership Needs (15 minutes)

- Prepare list of unit leadership opportunities in advance...separate needs by jobs that need to be done every month (like Advancement) or things that get done seasonally (like organizing a campout)
- Using whiteboard, blackboard, or poster board—have list of all open positions in the Pack, with the number of volunteers needed for each position
 - Example: Pinewood Derby 3 adults, Blue & Gold 3 adults, Christmas Party 1 adult, etc.
- Ask for at least one adult from each family to participate in one of the roles until you have adequate leadership
- Discuss adult registration fees and uniforms
- Talk briefly about helping new leaders get started—training requirements, meeting resource guides, etc.
- Simple recognition for all parents who have just volunteered

Den Organization (20 minutes)

- Have the Cub Scouts rejoin the group and sit by grade level
- For dens that already have a Den Leader:
 - The den leader discusses den meeting dates, times and locations
 - Recruit parents to assist with den meetings
- For dens that do NOT have a Den Leader:
 - Another Pack leader will need to guide the discussion



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- Discuss the possible meeting dates, times and locations
- Talk with individual parents to secure den leadership

Reminder Announcements (10 minutes)

- Date, time, and location of the first Pack meeting
- Upcoming training courses
- Fall activity information
- Popcorn sale dates

After the meeting—enjoy fellowship and refreshments



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Additional Recruiting Ideas

(See www.shac.org/recruiting for recruiting resources)

Local Religious Communities

- Sunday Schools from Chartering Organizations
- Church Bulletins
- Charter Partner Sign-Ups

Elementary School Visibility

- School Supply Drive
- Wear Uniform to School on Meeting Days
- Contact PTOs
- School Informational Booklets
- School Newsletters
- School Open Houses
- Meet-the-Teacher Nights
- Post Card Mail-Outs (Lists from School Districts)

Community Advertisement

- Coffee News
- HOA/Subdivision Mail-Outs/Online
- Local Magazines
- Billboards
- Radio News Time

Local Business Storefronts (Youth-Oriented)

- Starbucks
- Kohl's
- Target
- Chick Fil A
- Places Parents Shop for School Supplies
- Bowling/Main Street/etc.

Community Flyers

- Pizza Boxes
- Tax-Free Weekend

Local Parades

- Pass out Popcorn
- Bottled Water with Pack Information

Other Useful Ideas

- www.beascout.org
- Business Cards (Peer-to-Peer)
- Fall Recruitment Sponsor(s)
- Community Engagement Events
- Serve as Color Guard in the Community
- National Night Out
- Yard Signs
- Social Media/Facebook/Twitter
- Pool Parties
- Bike Rodeos
- Pet Rescues