

2025

Scouts, BSA

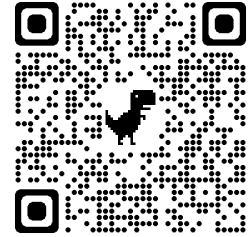
Recruitment Guidebook



THE PLAN

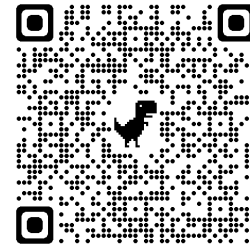
Recruiting a consistent number of Scouts each year ensures that your Troop is sustainable with a strong program for current and future Scouts. With new Scouts also comes new parents that can take on leadership roles in the troop. By having well planned recruitments, you are laying the foundation for a strong Scouting program that will serve your community. This guidebook will walk you through how to make any recruitment you hold a success.

This guidebook is designed to be interactive with our website <https://threefirescouncil.org/scouts-bsa-recruitment/>. You will find many great resources that will help you with recruiting new families.



This Scouts, BSA Recruitment Plan has three key elements:

1. Every troop should plan to hold at least 1 Elementary (5th grade) and 1 Middle School Recruitment in the Spring.
2. Every Troop should coordinate with local packs and have a [Webelos to Scout plan](#).
3. Planned flexibility, allowing your troop to select recruitments and dates that work best for your schools and families while also ensuring you have the resources you need at any time to make those events successful.
4. Direct and consistent communication with prospective families, keeping them engaged year-round so they know they can join at anytime.



UNIT MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

Having a dedicated volunteer that can provide leadership to recruiting and onboarding new families is vital. This volunteer position is called a **Unit Membership Coordinator**.

Position Concept:

A registered member of the Troop committee that leads and promotes recruitment programs and onboards new families so the pack can achieve its membership goals.



Responsibilities:

1. Attend the annual Recruitment Roundtable to get resources and updates on Recruiting.
2. Set a new scout membership goal and work with your district's membership team on plans to achieve it by November 30. **A good goal to consider is having one new Scout patrol every year consisting of at least 6 new and crossed over Scouts.**
3. Build relations with teachers and administrators at local middle school's to ensure your troop has a presence at school functions and can promote the troops recruitment events. Work with other troops that would draw from that school
4. Build relations with your Charter Partner, local packs, and surrounding religious and community institutions so that your troop is being promoted.
5. Coordinate a Webelos to Scout Transition plan with local packs that included an event/open house for Webelos and families to attend.
6. Provide the leadership in planning, organizing, marketing and the execution of your troops New Scout Sign-up events, targeting each school your troops draws from.
7. Coordinate opportunities for your troop to be at community and school events to promote Scouting and generate new leads of prospective families.
8. Build a culture in your troop that is welcoming to all families and where all members are promoters and recruiters.
9. Keep your troop's BeAScout.org pin up-to-date and follow up with online leads and applications.
10. Timely follow up with BeAScout.org leads and applications.
11. Coordinate with the unit committee to ensure there are reasonable funds available in the annual troop budget to support recruiting efforts.

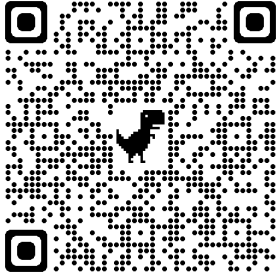


Time Considerations:

- Attend regular unit committee meetings.
- Attend the Annual Recruitment Roundtable in your area.
- Planning and attending your units recruitment events.
- Calling and visiting local institutions to promote Scouting.

STEP ONE: PREPARE

Having a well planned and robust program to is key to attracting new families and retaining current Scouts. [The Ideal Year of Scouting](#) is a great tool to help plan and fund a quality program.

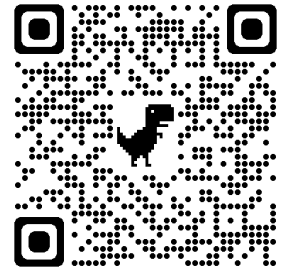


Once the troop program is planned, a complement recruitment plan can be developed. Use the [Troop Recruitment Plan](#) to help you and communicate recruitment dates with the volunteer membership team and professional staff.

Review the New Scout Sign-Up Event Guidebooks at <https://threefirescouncil.org/scouts-bsa-recruitment/>. to find the ones that work best for your Troop and community.

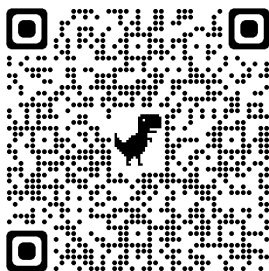
Part of your preparation should be reaching out to teachers, administrations and the parent-teacher groups at the Middle School your Troop draws from. You should also have relationships with the 6th grade teachers and elementary schools. Maintaining positive relationships with these people and groups will help your troop have access to promote Scouting and your sign-up events.

Keep your Troop's BeAScout.org pin up-to-date and turn on the option to accept online applications. The [BeAScout.org](#) website is on all recruitment materials and will be the first thing families see if they are searching Scouting online. This site is how new families can find and join your troop. Prospective parents can reach out with questions and families that have visited your troop can join and pay electronically. However, it only works if your pin is up-to-date. [Click Here](#) for more information on how to manage your troop's BeAScout.org pin.



STEP TWO: IDENTIFY

Successful recruitments happen when families have been personally invited to attend. Promoting your sign-up event is discussed in Step three. Three Fires Council has materials to help you get the word out about your recruitments. [Click Here](#) to view and order all the recruiting resources

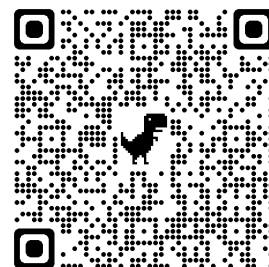


It is important to also build an invite list of families that may want to join Scouting. **Being at community events allows you to engage with families and collect their contact information.** All contacts made should be put into a simple invite list. Direct communication and invitations to this list is the best way to ensure that families will show up and join at your recruitment events. Here are some ways to build an invite list:

- Work with parent/teacher groups to determine the availability of a school roster.
- Participate in school events and have a fun activity kids can do. Collect contact information from parents and add them to your invite list.
- Ask current families and Scouts in your Troop to provide names of other families that might want to join Scouting.
- Work with your Charter Organization to secure a list of families.
- Add leads you have from BeAScout.org.
- Work with your district membership team to get a list of youth who have dropped out of Scouting.
- Review your troop's social media accounts for families that have liked or shared things off your pages but are not members.
- Work with local packs to identify eligible Webelos.

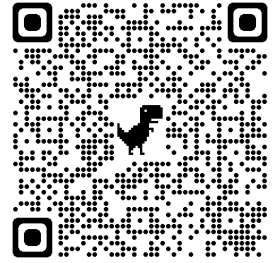
However you create a list it is important that you maintain consistent communication. Your invite list should always be growing. You should always be adding new prospects to the list. Families should only come off the list if they join or say they're not interested.

There are different ways to keep and manage an invite list. It can be through an excel spread sheet or with a free account through an email communication site like MailChimp. [Click Here](#) for more information on how to keep and manage an invite list.



STEP THREE: PROMOTE

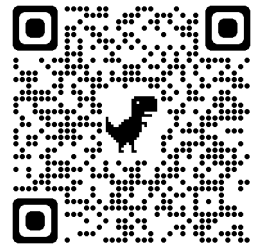
Promoting your recruitment events early and often is key to getting new families to join. In the previous step you should have familiarized yourself with the many promotional materials available to your troop. Use the [Promotional Back Dater](#) to help you plan out the promotion of your recruitment events.



New Scout Sign-Up Event Guidebooks are themed so they can be easily promoted to the community and local school. You can view them all on the <https://threefirescouncil.org/scouts-bsa-recruitment/> website. Make sure that all print and digital promotional communication has the Date, Time and location.

Here are some key steps to make sure your recruitment gets properly promoted.

- Enlist the help of every family currently in your troop to:
 - Put up yard signs, posters and fliers around the community.
 - Use peer-to-peer cards to invite friends to recruitments.
 - Liking and sharing your troop's social media posts and recruitment events.
- Use all methods of communication in your school and Charter Organization to promote your recruitment. This includes:
 - Print fliers sent home and digital fliers in electronic backpacks.
 - Messaging in emails from the principal and parent/teacher groups.
 - Announcements made over the school PA system and on the school marquee.



For more ideas on how to promote and for ways to overcome objections from your school to promoting, [Click Here.](#)



STEP FOUR: SIGN THEM UP

Everything that you have done up to this point has been so that new families are aware of how, when and where to join Scouting. Make sure your recruitment is easy to find with enough signage. Everything about a recruitment should make it so that families can and want to sign up. This can not be overstated. Here are some easy ways to ensure this happens:

- **Make a good first impression.** Make sure new families can find your meeting easily. Ensure families are welcomed when they arrive, and they are given a Joining packet. Have all families sign in and provide their contact information.
- Make sure new families are introduced to troop youth and adult leaders and other new families. Show them that there are families already volunteering and that there are other new families just like them.
- Follow the plan. Every New Scout Sign-up Event is designed around stations. This models many other organizations and sporting recruitments and is what families are familiar with. It is intended to expose new families to current scouting families. This helps as they envision their family in Scouting.

Here are some things to consider and remember for your New Scout Sign-up Night.

- **Don't get stuck in the weeds.** These events should be fun and the time spent explaining Scouting should be short. There will be plenty of time at your parent orientation and other meetings to teach parents all they need to know. As for these sign-up events remember these two things. Have fun and sign them up.
- While the Scout Uniform is a big part of the Program, we discourage it at recruitment events. Research has shown that it can create an "us vs them" with potential new families and it creates a barrier for new families to envision themselves in the program.
- **Don't recruit leaders.** Remember you are trying to sign up Scouts. Leaders should be recruited before the sign-up event or at the parent orientation. Many families will not sign up on the spot because of the pressure of being asked to be a leader.
- Share details on the next meeting with new families. They need and want to know when they can start their adventure.



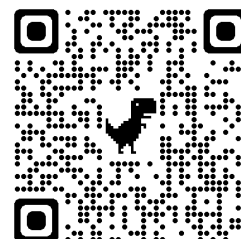
Make sure to review all applications when families turn them in. If there is any incomplete information, have the families fill it in. Doing this will save time and ensure families are registered quickly. Or better yet have them complete online applications.



Regardless of how you run your recruitment, remember this: Most families will come ready to join your troop. They simply need to be asked. Don't let families walk away without asking them to complete the application for their child. For the few families that want to think about it. Encourage them to complete the application anyways. This way they don't lose it or forget about it. Having the completed application will give you all the information you need to stay in contact with the family.

SUBMIT AND APPROVE APPLICATIONS

After families have left the sign-up event review and organize the applications and payments. Applications collected without payment should be kept in a separate. Ensure all applications are signed by the Unit Leader and are filled out completely. Match payments with applications. If payments are made out to your pack please be ready to write a check to Three Fires Council or that appropriate funds are in your unit account at the Scout Store to pay for those applications. [Click here](#) to see the National Registration and Three Fires Council Fee structure.



If families are submitting online applications, have a way for unit leadership to accept them during the sign-up night.

If not given to a district executive or membership team member on the night of your recruitment, the following items should be turned in within 72 hours of your recruitment event:

- All completed youth applications
- All completed adult applications
- Matching payments for all applications being turned in
- A copy of the sign in sheet
- Any recruitment materials that are no longer needed



STEP FIVE: ENGAGE

Send an email or text to all families that attended the sign-up event within 24 hours and call every family within three days. Families will want to hear from you and are excited to start their adventure. Don't wait to welcome them. Ensure they get a personal invite to your next meeting or activity. These welcoming phone can be done to both parents and youth. Your SPL or other senior Scouts can call new youth while leaders call parents. You can not over communicate between a family joining and them attending their first meeting or event. Consider sending new families the following as you communicate with them:

- Access to or copy of the Troop calendar
- Contacts for key leaders
- Invites to join the troops's social media pages
- Invite and instructions to ScoutBook

Don't wait for a new family that has already signed up to show up again. If they do not feel welcomed or invited, they may decide to not come back.

The same time and effort should be made to follow-up with the families that did not sign up at your recruitment event. You should know which families these are based on the sign-in sheet from the recruitment event. Follow up with each family with a phone call. Address any concerns they may have and offer to meet up with them so they can get signed up. Invite them to your next meeting or activity explaining they can come check out the program in action and then sign up.



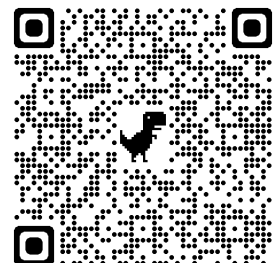
Follow up with each family with a phone call. Address any concerns they may have and offer to meet up with them so they can get signed up. Invite them to your next meeting or activity explaining they can come check out the program in action and then sign up.

Your invite list should also be followed up with after your recruitment event. Invite them to your next troop meeting or activity. Any families that showed up to your recruitment but who do not join should be kept on or added to your invite list.

Hold a Parent Orientation Night within two weeks of your recruitment. This can and should be for all parents of the troop, not just new ones. A parent orientation should go into the business and operational details of the troop. These are things that did not need to be covered in detail during the sign up event. Things that should be covered include:

- Troop budget and fundraises along with fundraising expectations for families. This should include a breakdown in the registration fee so families can see what the money is spent on.
- Troop Youth and Adult leadership and structure. Families should know who does what and how that is important to the Troop program. Ensure to explain how the Troop fosters a youth lead and volunteer guided program.
- District and Council structure including District events, Summer Camp and the Scout Store.
- Leader training and Youth Protection Guidelines.
- A good amount of time should be spent on parent involvement and expectations. This is your chance to build a culture where every parent is helping. Use the Family Talent Survey and the 100 Point Commitment Plan to help you set the right expectation.

[Click here](#) for the Parent Orientation agenda.



STEP SIX: Deliver

The final step is **Deliver the Promise**. It is important that all the fun and adventure that was talked about at the recruitment events is delivered through the pack program. If your program plan is followed and executed families will re-register and your packs retention rate will soar. Here are some things you can do to deliver the promise to your new families that have joined:

- Form a new Scout Patrol and assign a Troop Guide/Assistant Scoutmaster.
- New Scouts earn and are awarded their Scout Badge in their first 30 days.
- There is a fun outdoor activity families can participate in within their first 30 days.
- Prepare new Scouts for Summer Camp and working on their First Class Trail.

Membership recruitment is not an extra thing that needs to happen to get more Scouts to join your pack. It is an essential operation that touches every part of the pack. More youth equals:

- More parents to take on leadership roles
- More Scouts to provide service hours to the community
- More families to sell popcorn and raise funds for the pack
- More fun because everyone is working together to support that pack and ensure our Scouts have life changing experiences



Annual Recruitment Timeline

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

- Set a date for your spring sign-up Events and start planning.
- Contact schools to arrange access for presentations, flies and other communication.
- Contact location packs and Webelos Dens and invite to troop events/open house.

MARCH

- Identify new families to add to your invite list.
- Conduct a peer to peer recruitment campaign.
- Begin promoting your Spring Sign-up Event.

APRIL/MAY

- Communicate with your invite list and invite them to your Spring Sign-up Event.
- Hold a Spring sign-up Event.
- Attend Annual Membership Roundtable to get recruitment materials.

JUNE/JULY

- Set a date for your fall sign-up and start planning
- Attend community events to identify new families. And add them to your invite list.

AUGUST

- Begin promoting your fall sign-up events.
- Attend back to school open house and “Meet the Teacher” events at your local schools.
- Communicate with your invite list and invite them to your Fall Sign-up Events.

SEPTEMBER

- Hold New Scout Sign-Up Events.

OCTOBER

- Hold a Parent Orientation within two weeks of your fall sign-up events.
- Follow up with any families that have not signed up.



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