



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

SAM HOUSTON AREA COUNCIL

Launch Your Scouting Adventure! **2017 Fall Sign-up Night Campaign** **A Unit Guide for Successful Scout Enrollment**

Every new Cub Scout that joins will receive a free **Estes Model Rocket!** The rockets will be distributed by District Executives upon receipt of completed and paid applications for new youth.

When the new Cub Scout and his family attend the pack's Parent Orientation meeting, the pack leaders can present rockets to the newly-recruited Cub Scouts.

All boys who register at Sign-up Night will also receive a special edition **Launch Your Scouting Adventure** patch!!!





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Sign-up Night Branding

- 2016 marked the first year of the *Sign-up Night* (formerly “Rally Night” or “School Night”) brand, designed to help volunteers, parents, chartered organizations, staff, and the community-at-large gain a sense of ownership and pride in helping to grow local Scouting at all levels.
- Sign-up Night resources will be 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.

Key Elements to All Sign-up Nights

- **Pack leaders should obtain a completed youth application for every youth who comes to Sign-up Night to ensure all critical contact information is captured.**
- Each family should submit the prorated registration fee at Sign-up Night.
- Sign in Roster to capture every parent/youth that attends.
- Individuals coordinating and speaking on behalf of Scouting should be the most qualified presenters. They should be trained and well prepared.
- 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 the unit.
- 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.
- Every completed application must be signed by the parent and the unit leader.
- 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.
- Boy 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.
- Every family receives a welcoming phone call from the den leader, Cubmaster, or committee chair.



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2017 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 Boy 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, Personalize invitation to prospective parents, Information table at Open House, etc.
- Prepare Sign-up Night handouts – Welcome packets with unit information page

September

- Conduct Boy Talk
- Conduct Sign-up Night
- Submit completed youth applications and prorated registration fees in exchange for rockets
- Conduct Parent Orientation Meeting
- 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, etc.

Media Advertising—to further boost our grassroots promotional efforts, we will be purchasing additional targeted ads through social media, television and print to reach our key demographic within this same timeline.



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Preparing New Families

Units 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 unit is prepared, follow these guidelines:

- Have pack's 2017-2018 program calendar prepared along with a pack information sheet ready to distribute to all new families.
- Involve existing parents to create a welcoming environment, where new families can quickly feel connected and learn more about Scouting.
- Host a separate Parent Orientation Meeting within one week of Sign-up Night (see a sample Parent Orientation Agenda below).

Role of Unit Leadership

The recruiting of Scouts and leaders happens at the unit 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 unit 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, when possible, in September 2017.
- Confirm Sign-up Night dates with the District Fall Recruitment Chair or District Executive no later than August 24, 2017.
- 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 to new Scouts during the Parent Orientation Meeting.
- Promote the registration and participation of families at district and council events offered during fall 2017, including rocket launch events.
- Inform new leaders of online and in-person training opportunities.
- Conduct a second-chance recruiting event in late September/early October, following the same steps as before.



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Marketing Your Sign-up Night

(go to www.samhoustonbsa.org/membership 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!

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.

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.

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.

Email Invitations (parent to parent)

Ask the families in your pack to send an email invitation to all of their friends that have Scout-age boys. 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, etc. to update their status to talk about your unit's website and the Sign-up Night, or simply have them go to www.beascout.org or www.samhoustonbsa.org for more details.



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Sample Sign-up Night Agenda

Before the meeting (20-30 minutes)

- Set up tables and chairs
- Welcome Packets — applications, Boy's Life, Parent Brochure, Training Card, etc.
- Rocket Patches
- Pens
- Unit information page

Welcome & introductions (5 minutes)

- Lead the Pledge of Allegiance
- Key Pack Leader introductions

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
- Leadership structure of the Pack

Volunteer Commitments (10 minutes)

- Call one new den up to the front, have each boy say what Scouting activity they are looking forward to the most
- Tell the parents of the den that these boys 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 1st grade, be sure to cover the Tiger Partner 18 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

Youth/Adult Registration (5 minutes)

- Discuss Pack and BSA registration fees, insurance, and Boy's Life option
- Collect all applications and prorated fees, at a minimum

Reminder announcements

- Parent Orientation Meeting – date, time, location, and FUN!!!
- Other key upcoming dates



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Alternative Sign-Up Night Agenda

(recommended for large packs with sufficient leadership and parent involvement)

All Sign-Up Nights are designed to be fast for today's busy parents. The key to making them successful is preplanning. The following is an alternative suggested outline of how to execute an effective Sign-Up.

This model features five stations that give parents information about Cub Scouting, get them signed up, and provide everything they need to know, including when the first meeting is, who the leaders are, and more.

Sign-Up Night Stations

- **Station 1:** Welcome/Sign In
- **Station 2:** What We Do
- **Station 3:** Registration Form
- **Station 4:** Check Out (complete applications)
- **Station 5:** Den Leader Q&A

Below is an outline of what happens at each station. **Note:** *Make sure that each station sign is clearly visible to help make sure things go smoothly!*

Station 1: This is the first place potential Cub Scouts and their parents will stop. Here they sign in while the greeter provides a brief overview of the process.

- Greet every family that comes to your station and ask them to sign in. Provide them with the "Welcome to Cub Scouts" brochure
- Tell each family that there are five stations that they will visit to complete the sign-up process and that it will take 20-30 minutes

Materials:

- Station 1 sign and "Welcome" sign
- "Welcome to Cub Scouts" brochure

Station 2: This is where you will share the excitement of Cub Scouting and your pack activities. Introduce the leaders and talk about what makes your pack special. Leave plenty of time and be prepared to answer any questions.

Materials:

- Station 2 sign
- Pack calendar and event fliers
- Handout with meeting times and locations
- Listing of pack and den leaders with contact email and phone numbers.
- Scout Shop Guide to the Uniform
- Boys' Life mini mags



Alternative Sign-Up Night Agenda - continued

Station 3: This is the sign-up station where the station chief helps parents complete the actual application.

- Have BSA Youth Application forms ready to be completed and have pens available.
- Have copies of “What Other Costs Are There?” and give these out.
- Be prepared to answer questions about pack fee payment plans and/or financial assistance.

Materials:

- Station 3 sign
- BSA Youth Applications and pen
- Pack leadership handout

Station 4: Leaders at this station are responsible for final “check out,” including payment.

- Make sure the applications are properly completed.
- Collect the proper fee amount for BSA membership fee and Boys’ Life (if added).
- Forms and payments should be collected, signed by the Cubmaster, and put in the envelope.

Materials:

- Station 4 sign
- Calculator
- Envelope for applications and fees

Station 5: Leaders at this station make sure parents know when and where the first meeting is and answer any other questions parents may have.

- Make an effort to have as many den leaders and assistant den leaders on hand to talk about their dens and give families a chance to get to know them.
- Answer questions about the type of activities their child will be doing.

Materials:

- Station 5 sign

After the Sign-Up Event Is Over

Turn in the applications and money. Unit leaders and the Sign-Up Night coordinator should review and complete applications after event. Applications, and registration fees are to be turned in to the district executive within 24 hours of the event or at the Thursday night turn in.



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)
- Boy's Life Mini Magazines
- Parent Orientation Agenda
- Ceremony and games equipment
- Pens

Opening (5 minutes)

- Lead the Pledge of Allegiance
- Key Pack Leader Introductions

Pack Program/Fundraising (10 minutes)

- Discuss the unit'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 boys to another room for games and activities with proper supervision

Unit Leadership Needs (15 minutes)

- 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 Parade 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 boys 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



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Sample Parent Orientation Meeting Agenda – continued

- For dens that do NOT have a Den Leader:
 - Another Pack leader will need to guide the discussion
 - 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

(go to www.samhoustonbsa.org/membership for recruitment 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
- Khol'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 Unit Information

Other Useful Ideas

- BE A SCOUT!!!
- 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