

## WHY JOIN SCOUTING?

The Boy Scouts of America is one of the nation's largest and most prominent values-based youth development organizations. The BSA provides a program for young people that builds character, trains them in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and develops personal fitness. For over a century, the BSA has helped build the future leaders of this country by combining educational activities and lifelong values with fun. The Boy Scouts of America believes — and, through over a century of experience, knows — that helping youth is a key to building a more conscientious, responsible, and productive society.



### BSA Vision

The Boy Scouts of America will prepare every eligible youth in America to become a responsible, participating citizen and leader who is guided by the Scout Oath and Law.

## SAM HOUSTON AREA COUNCIL DISABILITIES AWARENESS COMMITTEE

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<http://www.samhoustonbsa.org/scouts-with-special-needs>

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## SAM HOUSTON AREA COUNCIL

### DISABILITIES AWARENESS



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**Prepared. For Life.™**

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*“Scouting helps them (Scouts with disabilities) by associating them in a world-wide brotherhood, by giving them something to do and to look forward to, by giving them an opportunity to prove to themselves and to others that they can do things- and difficult things too-for themselves.” — Lord Baden-Powell (“Aids to Scoutmastership”, 1920)*

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Since its founding in 1910, the Boy Scouts of America has included fully participating members with physical, mental, and emotional disabilities. The BSA's policy is to treat members with disabilities as much like other members as possible. It has been traditional however, to make some accommodations in advancement if absolutely necessary. By adapting the environment and/or our instruction methods, most Scouts with disabilities can be successful in Scouting.

The basic premise of Scouting for youth with disabilities is full participation. Youth with disabilities can be treated and respected like every other member of their unit. They want to participate like other youth - and Scouting provides that opportunity.

Examples of disabilities:

Physical  
Hearing  
Cognitive  
Learning  
Emotional  
Autism Spectrum Disorders

## What accommodations can be made for disabilities?

Depending on the needs of the Scout, some Scouts can have the age limit removed, and the program can be adapted to the individual Scout's abilities. Many Scouts only need some extra encouragement and leaders who are flexible and can think creatively so that each Scout can be successful.

Ask about:

- *Registration Beyond the Age of Eligibility*
- *Individual Scout Advancement Plans*
- *Application for Alternative Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges*
- *Guide to Advancement*
- *Scouting for Youth with Disabilities Manual*
- *Guide to Working with Scouts With Special Need and DisABILITIES*
- *Disabilities Awareness Merit Badge Pamphlet*

For more information visit:  
[www.scouting.org/disabilitiesawareness.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/disabilitiesawareness.aspx)

Leaders of Scouts with disabilities report that one of the areas of greatest improvement is social skills. Scouting can help develop life skills, coping skills and character building skills. The Scouting program offers individuals with disabilities an opportunity to tackle small-sized challenges while working with others.



The Sam Houston Area Council Disabilities Awareness Committee actively aligns with Boy Scouts of America's National Disability Awareness Committee. It is the purpose of the committee to help parents and Scouting volunteers to improve their understanding, knowledge, and skills related to including and serving the special needs population.