



OLD HICKORY COUNCIL, BSA
Family Scouting
Frequently Asked Questions
June 26, 2018

The Old Hickory Council is currently meeting with all chartering partners to encourage discussion of adding girls to their Cub Scout program, and developing recruitment plans for this fall.

We will be admitting girls to the Cub Scouting program on August 1, 2018, and girls to the Scouts BSA program on February 1, 2019. We currently have 30 packs participating.

There will be four “Fall Recruiter Training” sessions this summer to help prepare Cub Scout leaders for this new recruitment which includes discussion on recruiting girls.

Q: What is different about Cub Scouts/Boy Scouts this year?

Starting in 2018, families can choose to sign up their sons and daughters for Cub Scouts, ages 5-10. Chartered partner organizations may choose to establish a new girl pack, establish a pack that consists of girl dens and boy dens or remain an all-boy pack. Cub Scout dens will be single gender — all boys or all girls. Using the same curriculum as the Boy Scouts program, Scouts BSA is scheduled to launch in February 2019, enabling all eligible youth ages 11-17, to earn the Eagle Scout rank. Scouts BSA will be single gender – all girl troops or all boy troops.

Q: Why did the organization decide to make Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts available to girls? Is it because of declining membership?

The BSA’s decision to welcome girls into the Cub Scout program and to offer a program for older girls comes from input we have received from our Scouting families, as well as prospective Scouting families who are:

- Most are dual-earners.
- There are more single-parent households than in previous decades.
- Many underserved communities, including fastest-growing Hispanic and Asian communities, prefer to participate in activities as a family.
- And, all families have less free time. More than one-third of parents feel they spend too little free time with their kids, and millennial parents are desperate to spend more time interacting with their kids.

Q: Is this change a departure from the BSA’s core mission and values?

No. In fact, this aligns with our mission and values in the Scout Oath and Law.

Q: Are all BSA programs now co-ed?

No. The Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts/Scouts BSA programs are not co-ed, it builds on the proven benefits of our single-gender program, while also providing character and leadership opportunities for both boys and girls.

Q: What research did the BSA conduct that informed this decision?

To inform this decision, the Boy Scouts of America conducted extensive research, and also input from thousands of volunteers who participated in the nationwide family listening sessions. The results were overwhelmingly positive, and found that parents not involved with Scouting showed high interest in getting their daughters signed up for programs like Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, with 90 percent expressing interest in a program like Cub Scouts and 87 percent expressing interest in a program like Boy Scouts. The BSA also surveyed young girls and found that 90 percent of girls age 11-18 are interested in joining the BSA's programs.

Q: Is this for all levels of Scouting in all parts of the country?

BSA's programs are offered to youth nationwide and everywhere the BSA serves families. Of course, all of our programs are dependent on quality volunteers. Effective June 11, 2018, parents can choose to sign up their sons and daughters for Cub Scouts (specific date is council dependent). Existing packs may choose to establish a new girl pack, establish a pack that consists of girl dens and boy dens, or remain an all-boy pack. Cub Scout dens will be single gender — all boys or all girls.

Q: What about Boy Scouts program?

Using the same curriculum as the current Boy Scouts program, the organization is also scheduled to launch "Scouts BSA" in February 2019, which will serve boy troops and girl troops, enabling all eligible youth to earn the Eagle Scout rank (Scouts BSA troops will be single gender – all girl or all boy).

Q: Will the organization's name change?

No. The Boy Scouts of America, in name and as an organization, has stood for character development and values-based leadership training for more than 108 years.

Q: How will the BSA respond to parents who don't want coeducational programs?

It is important to note that BSA did not decide to make the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts programs co-ed; instead, the organization has introduced a unique model that builds on the benefits of a single-gender program.

Q: What are you hearing from BSA leaders around the country about this announcement?

Due to early interest, the BSA offered an Early Adopter program that local councils could opt in to, which enabled units that expressed an early interest and capability in welcoming girls to do so starting January 15, 2018. Over 5,000 girls joined Cub Scouts since the Early Adopter program was introduced, and we continue to receive great feedback from packs and families about the opportunity.

Q: Are BSA programs relevant for girls?

Yes. On average, more than 90 percent of Scouting families and leaders believe the BSA programs are relevant to both boys and girls. What's more, education experts also evaluated the curriculum and content and confirmed that the programs are both relevant and empowering for both young men and young women.

Q: How are the BSA programs different from what girls would experience with Girl Scouts?

BSA programs provide character- and leadership-building experiences that give young people a solid foundation for their futures.

Q: Why are you just now allowing girls into the Boy Scouts?

It is important to underscore that the BSA has provided programming to young women and young men for many years through Sea Scouts, STEM Scouts, Exploring and Venturing.

- STEM Scouts: 45% of participants are girls/young women, 55% are boys/young men
- Exploring: 39% of participants are girls/young women, 61% are boys/young men
- Venturing: 36% of participants are girls/young women, 64% are boys/young men
- Sea Scouts: 40% of participants are girls/young women, 60% are boys/young men

Q: At what age can girls join Scouting?

In 2018, families can choose Cub Scouts for their sons and daughters, starting at age five, up through age 20 in Venturing and Sea Scouts.

Q: How do units respond to girls who want to join BSA programs immediately?

Our council will start accepting girls in Family Cub Scouting starting on August 1.

Q: Will there be new curriculum for girl participants? Will you change the program to accommodate girls?

No. Our existing programs are relevant for young men and women.

Q: How does a boy-only pack that is undecided respond when asked to join by the parent of a girl?

Some packs are not serving girls unless there is sufficient interest. They should use a sign-up sheet at the parent open house to capture the parent's name, email and cell phone contact information. Next they should have a special meeting with other pack leaders within the week, make the decision to move forward, and recruit parents of the girls to become leaders.

Q: What about a boy-only pack that is not interested in serving girls?

If a pack chooses not to serve girls even if there is interest, then they need to be supportive of those families, and share that parent sign-in information with another pack. If there is not a pack serving girls at that school, then that contact information can be given to the District Executive so they can make plans to start a girl-only pack in that community.

Q: Can a unit that cannot meet the five-girl minimum offer the lone Scout program?

Councils will determine the viability of the lone Scout program, just as they do now with boys.

Q: How will BeAScout help identify which units are welcoming girls?

Unit pins have an indicator if the unit is accepting girls. This indicator on the pin will be set through the organization manager settings on "My.Scouting".

Q: Will we have different uniforms for boys and girls?

While the fit and styling may be a bit different, the uniforms will remain fundamentally the same.

Cub Scouting

Q: What about schools that don't have a pack that serves girls?

We encourage all packs to ask parents about their interest in Family Scouting. Schools that don't have packs that serve girls may be represented by other packs or have District Executives start all-girl packs if the community has an interest.

Q: How will packs and dens be structured?

Cub Scout dens will be single gender — all boys or all girls. Cub Scout packs, meanwhile, can include any combination of all-boy or all-girl dens. The choice is left to individual leaders in consultation with their chartered organization.

Q: Should dens for girls and dens for boys meet at the same time and place?

It is up to the chartered organization and the pack or the den to decide meeting times and places.

Q: Can separate boy and girl dens work on the same activity at the same time together?

There is no set rule or guideline on this. If appropriate, this can be treated the same as two dens of the same gender working together. It will be up to the good judgement of leaders to decide what is best for their units.

Q: Can packs share unit numbers? If so, how do we tell them apart?

A: Yes, they can share pack numbers.

Q: What if I only have one or two girls who are interested in joining?

Keep recruiting – have the girls invite their friends. Packs will continue to have the option to combine grade levels to form a den as long as they are working on their respective ranks. For example, if you have two third-grade girls and two fourth-grade girls, you may combine into one single-gender den as long as they are working on their Bear and Webelos, respectively.

Q: Can the Lion badge be worn on the blue Cub Scout uniform?

Yes. The Lion badge can be worn on the blue Cub Scout uniform.