

Spring 2013

THE COMMISSIONER

A PUBLICATION FOR COMMISSIONERS AND PROFESSIONALS



www.scouting.org/commissioners

Simple Things a Council or Unit Commissioner Can Do to Increase Cub Scout Retention

1. Make sure every new Cub Scout has a handbook. Promote to all parents the purchase and use of the appropriate Cub Scout handbook—Tiger Cub, Wolf, Bear, or Webelos Scout. The manual will help them gain the most from Cub Scouting for their child.

2. Ensure leaders receive appropriate training. Studies show a trained Cub Scout leader retains Cub Scouts longer. If den leader-specific training is not available before the first den meeting, have the new leader take Fast Start training. It is available on www.MyScouting.org.

3. Encourage all new Cub Scouts to earn the Bobcat rank. Promote earning the Bobcat rank within 60 days of joining and presenting the badge at the first pack meeting.

4. Promote *Boys' Life* magazine. Subscribing and reading *Boys' Life* helps boys experience Scouting even when they are not at a meeting.

5. Emphasize holding the first den meeting within seven days of joining. Quality den meetings are a critical tool for retention. Make sure every Cub Scout and parent knows the date, time, and place of the first den meeting before they leave the joining meeting.

6. Communicate. Promote frequent communications between the pack and parents on a regular basis such as through a monthly newsletter or weekly contact using email, Facebook, or Twitter.

7. Help packs find a den chief for each den. A good den chief serves as a role model for Cub Scouts. They look up to him and follow his lead on how they should act and behave. He serves as the “big brother” to the den.

8. Make sure the unit has a well-planned program. Program planning is one of the most effective tools for retention. The pack must do their program planning for 12 to 18 months in the spring and distribute the plan to parents. Parents want to know what their child will be doing.

9. Establish a summertime pack program. Keeping Cub Scouts active and participating in Scouting over the summer months is an important retention tool. Cub Scouts and families who enjoy a Scouting summer are more likely to stay involved in the fall.

10. Hold orientation for all new Cub Scouts and parents. Successful parent orientation builds loyalty, lessens parent confusion, and reduces the potential of poor participation. Because education leads to retention, all families need to get the right information when they join.

11. Plan for leader succession. Help the pack committee understand the importance of planning in advance who will replace outgoing den leaders and other pack leadership.

Retention is all about fun. Retention begins and ends at the unit level. The den and pack is where the most program happens and where the Cub Scouts are most affected. This means all meetings have to be FUN!



To read this article and more in *The Commissioner* newsletter, go to Scouting.org/commissioners/newsletter, or scan this QR code with your smartphone.

Download a QR reader for your smartphone at scan.mobi.



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

Prepared. For Life.®