Getting Our Leaders Trained

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We have heard all the excuses why adults cannot attend leader training. I have to do this or do that. I have to be at this practice at this time and at that practice at that time. This paper will show what we have done in our district to aid our leaders in getting trained. We have listened to our customers and have come up with ways to help them out.

Lord Robert Stevenson Baden-Powell stated, "Every Scout deserves a trained leader." The purpose of this paper is to explore different ways to get our leaders trained. In today's hectic world of coming and going and getting kids from one event to another with a quick stop by the local fast-food restaurant along the way to meet with other's in the family so you can switch out which vehicle is going where, the last thing adults want to do is try and figure out how to add something else to their schedule, like Scout training. When I am talking to leaders, both new and old, about training, I get a chuckle when they ask, "Why should we go to training?" My response to that is, "Would you want your kid's teachers to just walk in off the street and start teaching them or would you rather they be trained?" They normally don't know what to say to that one. Plus it gets them to thinking. "When leaders understand the whys and hows of Cub Scouting, they are more effective in their roles. Trained leaders know how to use the available resources to provide and exciting and worthwhile program for the boys. Trained leaders also have confidence in carrying out their roles and responsibilities.

Before we can get our leaders trained, we need to know exactly what they need. Every leader requires Fast Start and New Leader Essentials. Starting soon Youth Protection will also be a required training. Youth Protection may be geared towards adults working directly with the Youth, but I believe any adult leader should be required to take Youth Protection. You never know when a young man will walk up to you at a meeting or on a campout and want to talk to you about something going on at home or school. This training gives you the basics of what to look and listen for and how to notify the appropriate people if the situation deems it necessary. After taking these initial courses the next ones will be determined by what position you hold.

If you're a Cub Scout Den Leader or Assistant Den Leader, then you will need to take Leader Specific training. If you're a Cubmaster or Assistant Cubmaster, the you will need to take Cubmaster Specific Training. Pack Committee members will take Pack Committee Leader Specific training. Each of these trainings is approximately 3 – 4 hours in length. In our district, we realize time is valuable commodity these days, so we have taken and combined all the Den Leader Specific trainings into one course. When an adult comes for Leader Specific they will be trained in Tiger, Bear, Wolf and Webelos Leader training. We found there was a lot of duplicate training with all the courses. We have found the leaders enjoy this much better because they don't have to come back every time they switch positions.

If you're a Boy Scout leader, the next training you will need to take is still Leader Specific Training. If you are a Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmaster, then you will need to take Scoutmaster/Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific and Outdoor Leader Skills. Scoutmaster/Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific training is normally held on a Saturday and will last all day. Outdoor Leader Skills is normally held on a weekend campout. Some districts may do it in a day or day and a half, but we have decided to conduct it for a complete weekend to give the participants more hands-on experience. We have found the leaders may be giving up a weekend, but they enjoy the extra time we spend with them.

If you are a Venturing leader, you will need to take Youth Protection for Venturing. This is different from the regular Youth Protection because of the Crew being co-ed. There are more things to look for and think about with having boys <u>and</u> girls. You will also need to take Venturing Leader Specific training.

If you're more of a "Behind the Scenes" person, then you need to take training geared for someone on the Unit Committee. This could be Pack, Troop or Crew level. Like the rest of the trainings, you will need to start out with Fast Start, New Leader Essentials, Youth Protection and then the specific training geared for your unit. This could be Pack Committee, Troop Committee or Crew Committee. These trainings last about 3 – 4 hours each and basically teach the leaders how to deal with all the paperwork required and how to run the units effectively.

These are just the basic courses for getting leaders trained. Once you have gone through the Basic Leader Courses for your registered position and are considered "Trained", then you have the ability to take many other courses that will enhance your expertise and knowledge of the Scouting program. Major training events that include many of these additional courses are Pow Wow, University of Scouting and, of course, Roundtables. These courses are offered to help the leader further their knowledge of the Scouting program. If you are the adventurous type, then you can take the ultimate training course "Wood Badge". This is the pinnacle of training within the Scouting program. Wood Badge training makes you a better leader and person with courses in leadership and management skills.

These courses are all great and will help out any individual who attends, but the issue is getting them to attend and to become a "Trained" leader. Therein lies the problem: Getting leaders to attend training. It seems that no matter what you do, there is always going to be a conflict. The Boy Scouts of America national office has come up with something that may help. They have implemented a program where each and every pack should have a "Unit Trainer". They believe this is such an important position that this individual can now earn a Square Knot to wear on his/her uniform. The main objective and purpose of the Pack Trainer is to ensure each and every one of their leaders is trained. This fulfills National's goal of 100% direct contact leaders trained. When the program first started out, the Pack Trainer was responsible for teaching Fast Start and New Leader Essentials. With the advancement and resources of the internet, these trainings can now be done on-line. All they need to do is steer their leaders to their

laptop or personal computer at home or the office. The majority of the trainings they need can be completed on the computer. The only course they will need to attend is Leader Specific (Tiger, Bear, Wolf and Webelos Den Leaders and Assistant Den Leaders, as well as Cubmaster, Assistant Cubmaster and Committee Chair). These courses are approximately 3 hours in length.

The goal is to get these leaders to the Specific trainings. We have instituted a program in our district to where we are taking the trainings to the leaders. Not only are we doing large group training, but we are also going out into the communities and conducting "community training". This has worked out great. During our first round we had over 125 leaders attend these trainings. We are targeting leaders who may not have gone to our "normal trainings". By doing these "community trainings", we are also targeting adults who may not have the time on Saturdays to attend. We are offering these trainings on a weeknight. We are also looking to boost our Cub Scout Roundtable attendance, so some of these trainings will be conducted on the same night as Roundtable. Our goal is to get them to attend a couple of Roundtables for training and once that is done to keep attending to find out about new and exciting program ideas.

The push is so great to get the Cub Scout leaders trained, that Crossroads of America Council has instituted a program for the "Unit Trainers". The program is "Froggy's 100% Training Award". This program is geared towards getting all direct contact leaders trained. If the Pack Trainer is able to do this, the pack will receive a 100% Trained Leadership Award Streamer and the Pack Trainer will receive a 100% Trained Leadership fleece jacket to wear. Council has decided this program is so important, they have put resources in place to help this program move forward.

While the emphasis currently may be on the Cub Scout side of the house, we can't forget the Boy Scouts or Venturing units. While the importance of getting these leaders trained are just as important as getting Cub Scouts leaders trained, the means and ways to accomplish this, may not be as easy. Getting these leaders trained is a necessity to ensure our older boys (and girls) have a quality program to keep them involved in Scouting. The importance in this arena is having a training team that can get the attendees talking about what opportunities are available for the youth. While starting up a Venturing Crew to help out the older boys and girls, the leaders need to know what interests the youth have. You don't want to start up a high adventure crew if the kids want to sit around and play board games. The leaders need to know what resources are available and where to go to get them.

This brings us to the point of this paper: Getting our leaders trained. Like every other district around the county, we have our issues in trying to get leaders to the trainings. We have done the long-standing schedule of doing major trainings in the spring and fall to help our leaders. But, as with all other things, people's schedules are so busy they can't make it to one of those trainings. I receive calls all the time about when we will be offering our next trainings and what will they be. Leaders say, "I wanted to come to the one last weekend, but my other son had soccer or my daughter had gymnastics." It doesn't matter when we schedule the trainings, there is ALWAYS going

to be some type of conflict. All we can do is steer leaders to the council website to determine if another district has a more compatible training schedule.

I met with our district executives and we decided to see what we could do to help out the council, district and the units by getting our leaders trained. We decided that the best thing we could do was to get the new Cub Scout leaders to training as soon as possible after they signed up. We took our communities and divided them up into areas and concentrated our Back-to-School night presentations each night on one of those areas (East Fishers, West Carmel, Noblesville, Tipton, etc.). After we conducted these presentations about a week to week and a half later we followed up in those communities with our training team and conducted Den Leader Specific Trainings as well as Pack Committee/Committee Chair training. We advertised these trainings at the kick-off dinner as well as on the district website. We talked up these trainings every opportunity we had. We also sent out weekly emails to the distribution lists so that we could hit as many leaders as possible. Not only did we want to attract the new leaders but any leader who hadn't been trained. In order to do this, we had to beef-up our training staff. Our Cub Scout Training Chair took this challenge and tripled our staff in a short amount of time. We then had to get these trainers up to speed on what they needed to do. Not only did we have that to contend with, but we also found out that the national office was changing the training syllabus for the Cub Scouts. We were able to work with Council and received the fist copy of the syllabus that the office received. Our trainers did what they needed to do to get up-to-speed quickly to present the new format. National took away the videos and went to more of a presentation type format. This allowed more time for talking about different situations.

We scheduled these trainings on weeknights from 6-9. We found this was much more user-friendly for the attendees. We weren't trying to vie for their time on a Saturday nor were we taking more than 3 hours from their family time. We had numerous complaints from the attendees about the way we use to run the trainings. They stated they would rather give up time during the week, then time on the weekend. We listened to our customers and made arrangements to work with them. We also asked them to take the Cub Scout Fast Start, New Leader Essentials and Youth Protection online so that when we completed the Specific Training they would be considered "Trained". If they weren't able to take those trainings prior to the "Specific Training" then we told them all they had to do was get the certificates to their Pack Trainer or they could send them to the District and we would ensure they were updated in the system. During our first round of trainings, we trained over 130 leaders. We were so happy with the results the first time around that we decided to do it a second time and are currently in the process of going back into the communities for the next round of training. We have even extended the offer to packs that if they could get 2 or 3 packs together at one time we would come to them and conduct the training.

We are constantly looking for new ideas and ways to help out the units in order to get their leaders trained. If someone has a new idea, we listen to it and then see if we can make it work. My goal is to get leaders trained while at the same time not "burning out" our trainers. We have done more training during the past 6 months, then we did the past

2 years. This is asking more of our team and also taking away time spent with their families. This is something that is very important to me. I want to see our leaders trained, but not at the expense of the trainers. This is why we have been extremely busy in recruiting new trainers to help out. There is an old saying that people will generally help out, if they are just asked. We are in the asking mode and are getting a great response back from leaders wanting to help out. We are also putting a major push on the units to get Pack Trainers. They are the first person these leaders see and they need to know what is required of them and where to go for resources. I recently conducted a "Pack Trainer Specific" training to help out these individuals. Some knew what was expected of them, but several had no idea what they had to do. They walked out of the meeting that night with a new resolve in wanting to get their leaders trained. We gave them the tools and resources they needed to do their job, and also added a couple of new people to the district team to help out with trainings.

While we may never have the perfect program for getting people trained, we are doing whatever we can to help them out. National has stepped up and made more programs available online and at the district level we have added more trainers and are offering more opportunities for leaders to get trained. It is a known fact that boys will stay in Scouting longer, if the leaders know what they are doing. They can't learn this unless we have programs that teach them what they need to do and where to go for resources. I talk up "BALOO's Bugle" and other sites. I tell the leaders to just type in what they want in a search engine and it will bring back a number of sites to look at. We should work smarter, not harder. Why reinvent the wheel if someone else has already done it. Someone has taken the time and effort to create a wonderful "tracking sheet" for Cub Scout advancement. I tell leaders to find this took and use it. It will make their life so much easier and it tells them exactly where they boy is with their advancement. Trainers won't always have the answer to the participant's questions, but we need to know where to tell them to find the answer or we find it for them and get back to them. The most important thing we can do is provide opportunities for leaders to get trained. They need to take advantage of those opportunities. Sometimes all they need is a little push.

Conclusion:

I hope after reading this paper you realize that no matter what the excuse is for not taking training, I have shown the importance of what it means to be "Trained" and there are numerous ways in which this can be accomplished. In today's hectic world we can't use the normal means or what has worked in the past for getting leaders trained. We have to constantly be thinking of new and innovative ways in which to accomplish our end goal. The national office has done marvelous things to help get leaders trained, but we cannot rely solely on what they do. We have to take the resources we have available and make them work for training leaders in our areas. If this means packing up and making a road trip to go to a specific unit, then pack your bags and hit the road. We are losing way too many boys, especially in Cub Scouting. We need to ensure these leaders are trained properly so they can provide the program our boys so richly deserve. By not having "Trained" leaders we are not only hurting the boys, but also the leaders. It doesn't help

having frustrated leaders trying to find things to help them if they don't know where to look. Training provides the resources needed to succeed.

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Webelos Den Leader	Cub Scout Den Leader	Tiger Cub Scout Leader	My Scouting Job
Guesal.			OR PARTICIPATION OF THE PARTIC
Youth Protection	<u>Youth</u> Protection	<u>Youth</u> Protection	Youth Protection
Cub Scout Leader Fast Start	Cub Scout Leader Fast Start	Cub Scout Leader Fast Start	Fast Start
New Leader Essentials	<u>New</u> <u>Leader</u> Essentials	<u>New</u> <u>Leader</u> <u>Essentials</u>	New Leader Essentials
Webelos Leader Specific	Den Leader Specific	Tiger Cub Leader Specific	Job Specific
:	(Trained	(\$Trained)	
Webelos Leader Outdoor	Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation	Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation	Outdoor Skills
Trained Wood Badge	Wood Badge	Wood Badge	Advanced Leader ship Skills

11 year old scout leader (LDS)	Den Chief	Pack Committee	Cubmaster
ASSISTANT OF THE PROPERTY OF T		COMPANY INC.	
Youth Protection	<u>Youth</u> Protection	<u>Youth</u> <u>Protection</u>	Youth Protection
Boy Scout Leader Fast Start		Cub Scout Leader Fast Start	Cub Scout Leader Fast Start
New Leader Essentials	Troop Level Junior Leader Training	New Leader Essentials	<u>New</u> <u>Leader</u> Essentials
LDS 11 year old Scout Leader Specific	<u>Den Chief</u> Training	<u>Pack</u> Committee Specific	<u>Cubmaster</u> <u>Specific</u>
	☆Trained	(Trained	† Trained
Boy Scout Outdoor Leader Skills		Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation	Basic Adult Leader Outdoor Orientation
Firalned Wood Badge	Council Level Junior Leader Training	Wood Badge	Wood Badge

Varsity Team Committee	Varsity Coach	Boy Scout Youth	Troop Committee	Scoutmaster
			TRO QUI	
Youth Protection	Youth Protection		<u>Youth</u> Protection	Youth Protection
Varsity Leader Fast Start	Varsity Leader Fast Start		Boy Scout Leader Fast Start	Boy Scout Leader Fast Start
New Leader Essentials	New Leader Essentials		<u>New</u> <u>Leader</u> <u>Essentials</u>	New Leader Essentials
Varsity Leader Specific	Varsity Leader Specific	LDS Boy Scout Youth Training	Troop Committee Challenge	Scoutmaster Specific
* Trained	*Trained	☆Trained	(Trained	
Powderhorn	Powderhorn		Boy Scout Outdoor Leader Skills	Boy Scout Outdoor Leader Skills
Wood Badge	Wood Badge		Wood Badge	Trained Wood Badge

Unit Commissioner	Venturing Youth	Venturing Crew Committe	Venturing Leader
Youth Protection	Youth Protection	<u>Youth</u> Protection	<u>Youth</u> Protection
Commissioner Fast Start		<u>Venturing</u> <u>Leader Fast</u> <u>Start</u>	Venturing Leader Fast Start
New Leader Essentials		<u>New</u> <u>Leader</u> <u>Essentials</u>	New Leader Essentials
Commissioner Job Specific	LDS Venturing Youth Training	Venturing Leader Specific	Venturing Leader Specific
\$Trained	∲Trained	(\$) Trained	♠ Trained
	Powderhorn	Powderhorn	Powderhorn
Wood Badge	Kodiak	Wood Badge	Wood Badge