

TROOP 235

PARENT ORIENTATION

Troop Objectives

1. Troop is boy-run, with adult guidance and supervision.
2. Have FUN – boys and parents.
3. Help boys grow into responsible citizens.
4. Help boys gain skills, knowledge, leadership, confidence, and ethics.
5. Encourage boys to live the scout oath and law.
6. Safety first:
 - a. Trained leaders and scouts following safe practices when swimming, climbing, cooking, using tools, using fire, traveling, sports (including guns).
 - b. Leaders have cell phones and walkie-talkies on outings.
 - c. Practices to protect youth:
 - i. Parents and scout MUST review BSA abuse prevention policy in front of Scout handbook before Scout earns initial "Scout" rank.
 - ii. BSA youth protection training at <https://my.scouting.org/>
 - iii. Two-deep leadership at all events, meetings, and outings.
 - iv. St. Emily requires Archdiocese abuse prevention training for all volunteers who work with youth. Info and registration at www.virtusonline.org
 - v. Permission slips and tour permits always required.
 - vi. Important to turn in permission slips on time, as reservations, tour permits, transportation, food and supplies are all dependent on accurate head counts.
 - vii. Leaders manage medications.

Expectations for scout behavior

1. Courtesy and respect for self, other boys, adults, property, and nature at all times.
2. Rowdy, rude, illegal, or dangerous behavior, including vulgar or intolerant language, is unacceptable. Adults and boy leaders will set and enforce expectations.
3. Scouts are responsible for their own behavior, their gear, the troop's gear, and the property of others. We will enforce proper usage.
4. Unacceptable items include tobacco, drugs, alcohol, pornography, fireworks, and weapons. Depending on the offense, punishment could include being sent home. Note: pocket knives are acceptable, but only when scout is trained and uses them according to strict safety standards.
5. Scouts will have duties at meetings and on outings, which they will be expected to fulfill. These include set up and take down of camp equipment, cleanup, cooking, water and trash duties, and management of gear. "The Stump of Shame"
6. Scouts are expected to show friendship and camaraderie.
7. No electronics on outings (CD players, iPods, video games, radios, TVs).

Expectations of parents

1. Troop is totally dependent on volunteers. Without them, we have no program.
Get involved — Scouting can be a wonderful adventure with your sons.
2. ***Have FUN*** — your sons will only be young once.
3. Troop encourages at least one parent per family to be active.

Variety of roles for you to help out:

1. Outing organizer or chaperone/driver (Chaperone costs paid by the troop).
2. Participant in monthly parents meetings.
3. Troop leader (e.g., assistant scoutmaster, webmaster, fund-raising chair or assistant).
4. Merit badge counselor.
5. Troop committee member for board of review.
6. Online Training for adults is available www.myscouting.scouting.org
7. See ***Troop 235 Adult Leadership*** handout for more details

Essential costs

1. Dues (\$60/year, pro-rated. Membership renewal in November for the coming year).
2. Outings — we strive for affordability. Outing costs cover food, event fees, camping costs, transportation, chaperone expenses).
3. Scout Handbook — a great resource, scout uses as a reference and to track progress.
4. Field uniform (a.k.a Class A, see below)
5. Fundraisers hold down costs, allow us to buy troop gear, pay for chaperones, and subsidize some events. Profit-sharing for boys. Popcorn sale (November), plant sale (March-May)
6. Annual Friends of Scouting drive supports Pathway to Adventure Council (voluntary).

Personal Gear

1. Good quality sleeping bag, pad, and pillow
2. Mess kit, cup/mug, reusable eating utensils (we don't use disposable plates, etc.)
3. Water bottle or canteen
4. Rain poncho or rain suit
5. Flashlight
6. Label everything with first and last name and "Troop 235"

Uniforms

1. Full scout Field uniform (a.k.a Class A) should be worn to Courts of Honor, parades, and summer camp flag ceremonies and fire bowls.
 - Field uniform (a.k.a Class A) is khaki scout pants, belt, and shirt with proper insignia, scout socks, neckerchief and slide.
2. Activity uniform (a.k.a. Class B) is a Troop t-shirt and can be worn to meetings and when traveling.
3. Troop hats are initially provided at no cost by the troop.
4. Scouts should wear comfortable, practical clothing, based on activities and weather.
5. Shoes (gym shoes, hiking boots, water shoes, or dress shoes) should be activity appropriate.

Advancement

1. Any boy, ages 11 to 18, can be a boy scout, regardless of whether he was a cub scout.
2. Boys are encouraged to advance, but advancement is at the scout's own pace. It is not unreasonable for a scout to advance to First Class rank in his first year in the troop.
3. Rank advancement builds confidence and knowledge of scout skills, and encourages boys to stay in the program.
4. Lower ranks (Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class) provide basic learning of skills and knowledge needed to function in troop, in the outdoors, and in the community.
5. Higher ranks (Star, Life, and Eagle) are earned through service, leadership, and merit badges.
6. Skills necessary for rank advancement are taught at meetings, outings, and summer camp by adults and by more experienced scouts.
7. Scoutmaster must sign off on advancement based on demonstrated knowledge and skills.
8. Rank advancement includes a scoutmaster conference (one-on-one).
9. Rank advancement includes a board of review (comprised of two or more parents who are registered with the troop). Board of review is held monthly, usually the 1st meeting of the month.

Eligibility for "High Adventure" wilderness trips is:

1. First Class rank and above
2. Going into 8* grade (generally age 13 and above)
3. Approval by the Scoutmaster

Merit Badges

1. Merit badges are driven by individual scout's interests. Scouting offers over 120 different merit badges, covering a broad variety of topics (e.g., sciences, citizenship, hobbies, personal skills, sports, academics, and other topics). Scout must demonstrate to counselor the knowledge and skills required by the merit badge book. Badges are needed for higher rank advancement, can help with career exploration, or be just for fun.
2. 17 "Eagle" badges cover critical elements of scout knowledge (e.g., first aid, environmental science, citizenship, personal management, etc.) and are more demanding.
3. Merit badges are taught by a merit badge counselor with interest and expertise in a topic.
4. Counselors must volunteer annually with Pathway to Adventure Council and be approved. Pathway to Adventure Council maintains a current list of approved counselors, which is available via scoutmaster.
5. Parents are encouraged to become a counselor for one or more badges. Merit badges can be earned at troop meetings, outings, summer camp, and Merit Badge University, and through independent study.
6. Merit badge books are available from troop library, public libraries, and Pathway to Adventure Council scout shop.
7. Safe scouting practices (e.g., 2-deep leadership) should be practiced when meeting with a counselor.

New Scout Gear Recommendations for weekend trips:

1. A good full size duffle bag to carry gear
2. Mummy Sleeping Bag rated for 20-30 degrees
3. Sleeping pad. Either foam or self-inflating (NO air beds/ there is not enough space in tents)
4. Mess Kit. Easiest one to get is the aluminum 5 piece set that fold together.
5. Eating utensils there is a knife and fork pocket knife that separate
6. Durable water bottle (e.g. Nalgene)
7. Flashlight
8. Pocket Knife (preferably a Swiss army or a lock back knife not bigger than a 3.5 inch blade, and no fixed blade knives)
9. A good pair of hiking boots that cover the ankles, broken in before a trip
NEW boots = BLISTERS on trips.
10. Old tennis shoes that you don't mind ruining
11. Clothes for the weather

Typical for spring, summer or fall weather

- a. Rain Gear (lightweight is better)
- b. 3 pairs underwear and socks (extra is better)
- c. 2 t-shirts (troop t-shirt is a travel shirt), one long sleeve
- d. A light sweatshirt
- e. 2-3 pairs of pants
- f. Jacket (if needed)
- g. Hats, gloves
- h. It is good practice to pack clothes in I gallon zip lock bags
- i. Note: Extra Clothes is Always ok because wet clothes equals cold!?!?

If you have any questions about brands or where to get please ask

Tips for Working with Scouts with Special Abilities

Tips for Parents:

1. If your Scout has a specific challenge, **let your Scout leader know**. Tell him/her what works well AND what does not help.
2. If your Scout takes medication to help him/her focus at school, it may help him focus better during Scout activities as well. Discuss the issue with your physician. Reconsider "**medication vacation**" during Scout events. It is a personal choice. Consider the outing and the times involved.
3. Make sure your Scout knows that his/her medication is meant to help him/her *focus*, or *help them think with fewer distractions*. Telling a Scout that the medication is to make them "behave" or "be good" can lower child's self-esteem and make them feel like they are bad.
4. Be sure to tell the Scout leader what your Scout's needs are if he/she is going on a day trip, a weekend camping trip, or a week at summer camp. An **informed** Scout leader can do so many things to help each Scout be successful and have fun.
5. Consider getting trained to be a Scout leader yourself.

Tips for Scout Leaders:

1. Try and let any Scout with a disAbility know ahead of time what is expected. When activities are long and more complicated, it may help to write down a list of smaller steps. Picture directions are also a great reminder.
2. Repeat directions one-on-one when necessary, or assign a more mature buddy to help him/her get organized.
3. Compliment a Scout whenever you find a **genuine** opportunity. Be specific. Saying "Great Job" is not understood.
4. Ignore minor inappropriate behavior if it is not dangerous or disruptive.
5. Provide frequent breaks and opportunities for Scouts to move around actively, but **purposefully**. It is NOT helpful to keep Scouts with ADHD, for instance, so active that they become exhausted.

Turning Negatives into Positives

Some helpful hints to eliminate problems before they happen!

1. Inclusion (making someone feel successful and part of the group) rests on your attitude in making it work.
2. Communicate! Communicate! Communicate!
3. Know each individual's limitations. Work around the limitations to ensure success.
4. Don't make quick judgments about people (we usually do...). Before you make a judgment, think of what the behavior might be telling you.
5. Focus on sameness. Determine how to minimize differences.
6. Respect everyone for who he (or she) is. Never be condescending. Don't talk about them in front of them.
7. Include everyone whenever possible.
8. Fair is everyone getting what each individual needs. Fair is not necessarily equal!
9. Use the word "don't" as seldom as possible. When it must be used, always give a "do" alternative.
10. Have written rules. Make them reasonable. Do not bend them. If they are broken, make the punishment fit the crime and the individual.
11. Don't tell someone what he should not be doing. Tell him what he should be doing. Be very specific, and redirect behavior to something positive.
12. Never give a choice if choice is not actually an option.
13. Don't try to control. Instead, work toward transitioning to success while acknowledging that the problem is real.
14. If behavior seems solely to get attention, ignore the behavior but not the individual. Direct the individual to appropriate behavior.
15. Keep expectations high, but give freedom to fail. Without freedom to fail, they will stop trying. Be positive.
16. Give good news (praise) before bad news (correction).

Troop **235** Rules

Obey the Scout Oath and Law

Be respectful

No horseplay

No swearing

No yelling

Let sleeping scouters sleep

No bullying

Ask for permission before you take

Always have a buddy

