

IDEAS FOR MARKETING YOUR CUB SCOUT PACK

This guide has been put together as a basis for assisting in youth recruitment in your Cub Scout pack. Information has been divided into categories of methods including, the top Ten List of ideas (all packs should do all of these items), ideas that can be done by families in your pack, ideas that can be done in your school and finally methods that can be implemented in your community. Some of the resources are available through the Northern Star Council. The more ideas used in your recruitment, the more successful results you will have!

Top Ten List

1. Pack Information Sheet

- This is your chance to brag about your pack and have a quick handout ready to distribute.
- Each pack should develop and distribute a Pack Information Sheet that includes meeting times and locations, a pack calendar, list of leaders' contact information, your pack website or www.joincubs.org, and other exciting information about your program.
- Copies of this sheet should be provided to your chartered organization, families in pack and other neighborhood organizations to that they can distribute it to interested families.

2. Organizational Visits/Scheduling

- Before school starts in the fall you should schedule a face-to-face meeting with you're your chartered organization. This important meeting gives you a chance to thank the organization for their support and outline your ideas and requests for your recruitment process.
- Be sure to bring pertinent information regarding the Cub Scout program, a "yearbook" of activities and pack accomplishments. Be prepared to explain the benefits of the program to the organization.
- Discuss how the chartered organization can help with youth recruiting and have your pack visibility increase within the organization (pack display, recruitment event promotion space, allowing flyers to be distributed, etc.)

3. Flyers

- Flyers are provided by the Council office. Work with your district membership committee or district executive to order them well in advance of your recruitment event date. Normally, there are a few versions of the flyer: 8.5x11, 4.25x5.5, and a Scout is Reverent flyer for religious institution use.
- Some information on this flyer is personalized for your pack – date, time, location of your joining event as well as contact information.
- Joining events should be planned as much as possible within the two week period of **September 13-24**. Ideally flyers should be provided to the schools and churches your pack recruits from about a week before your recruiting event. Each boy should receive a flyer. It helps the school if you offer to pre-count groups of flyers for the classes.
- If there is a local Girl Scout troop that serves your area, coordinating your recruitment flyer distribution together will be appreciated by the school.
- Attach a small sheet with distribution directions to each stack of flyers to both aid and thank the classroom teacher/school for distributing the flyers. Ensure they know it is for boys in grades 1 - 5.
- Most schools have a weekly folder for distributing information to families, be aware of when this distribution date is to ensure your flyers are at the school to be inserted on time.
- Some schools & schools districts have been instituting "electronic folders" where information is sent home to parents through email. The Council office is prepared to provide you with a .pdf file version of your pack flyer to support this method of distribution.

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4. Wear Your Uniform

- This is an easy way to get exposure for Cub Scouts, as the uniform serves as a walking billboard and conversation piece.
- Ask all Scouts to wear their uniform on the day of the pack joining event, pack and den meetings and other school events including Back to School Night/Meet the Teacher Events prior to school starting in the fall.
- Leaders should also wear their uniforms to school events.
- Design a pack t-shirt for Scouts to wear to school on a regular basis.

5. School Visits

- School (classroom, lunchroom, school bus, school assembly) visits are a highly effective way to get kids excited about the program.
- This is a great opportunity to share information about your pack and its activities and personally invite them to the pack recruiting event.
- Coordinate your visit with the local Girl Scout troop that serves your school.
- Be sure to bring visual aids, stickers, and display boards.
- This visit can be done up to three days before the event.
- Tell the boys to bring their parents to the joining event to learn about the fun of Scouting!
- Be sure to send a thank you note to the school after your visit.

6. Stickers

- Use the council provided "I want to join Cub Scouts" stickers to remind boys of the recruiting event. Customize the stickers by writing in the joining event information.
- Distribute at Back to School events and other functions.

7. Yard Signs

- Post signs at school, church and other high traffic areas prior to your recruitment event.
- There is white space on the sign for you to write in the date, time and location of your recruiting event.

8. Pack Picture Board

- Sometimes pictures speak louder than words, include contact information on boards.
- Creating these boards would be a great den activity.
- Your pack should create a board full of pictures of your yearly events.
- These boards should be displayed at Back to School Night, recruiting events, school activities and any other places where you will have contact with families.

9. Back to School Night / Meet the Teacher Night

- Your pack is part of the fiber of the school and its families, request permission to have a pack display/information booth at this event.
- Being present at Back to School Night and all other school and chartered partner activities is an important way to raise exposure of your program.
- Set up a table with flyers, a sign-in sheet, Welcome to the Adventures of Cub Scouting booklets, pack picture board and other visuals and handouts.
- Take names of interested families so that you can personally call and remind them of your pack recruitment event.

10. Peer-to-Peer / Families Helping Recruit

- The current families within your pack can be a great resource to help promote any pack recruiting event.
- Ask them to invite friends of their boys who are not currently in Cubs to join.

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Pack Families

The following are ideas that pack leaders can do to engage their families in promoting the pack.

1. Personal Phone Calls/Email Invitation

- Ask each family to brainstorm other families that they could call or email to personally invite to be part of the pack. This could be accomplished at your pack program kick-off/picnic.
- The pack can provide a sample email invitation to join with the Pack Information Sheet to make it easy for parents to send out to families in their neighborhood.

2. Invitation Letter

- This letter is customized from the family for them to send to their friends and acquaintances.
- Include thoughts like the benefits of Scouting and why your family is involved.
- Letter includes meeting and joining information as well as who to contact for more information.

3. Buddy Card

- This card is designed for the Scout to use to recruit his friends. (Available at Scout office).
- The cards should include the recruiting event information and contact information.

4. Promote at Church and Other Affiliations

- Families also have many other affiliations such as church and sports.
- Find out if you have any pack parents that are youth sports coaches.
- Spread the word of Scouting through these affiliations.
- Simple Cub Scouting informational business cards can be handed out. (Available at Scout office).

5. National Night Out

- Typically observed during first the Tuesday of August.
- Many neighborhoods have a block party. Encourage pack parents to set-up a pack display table with information promoting your pack program.

6. Halloween Handout with Candy

- Use Halloween to promote your pack.
- Provide your pack parents a simple small pack info sheet or business card to handout to boys as they stop by pack members homes on Halloween.

School

The following ideas are methods that the pack leadership should do with the school they recruit from. Special attention should be give to developing positive relationships with the school leaders and Parents' Organizations.

1. PTO/PTA Presentation

- At the beginning of each school year, schedule a time to make a brief presentation to your school's parent teacher organization.
- Find out if you have any pack parents that are members or officers of your school's PTO/PTA.
- Share your recruitment plan and annual activities.
- Share an update on your pack, including number of families and accomplishments (service projects, advancements earned, etc.)
- Offer the pack's service for PTA/PTO sponsored events.

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2. Principle Visit

- Similar to the PTO presentation, meeting with the principal will strengthen relationships and your recruitment efforts.
- Share exciting news regarding your pack and upcoming events, including community service projects. Has your pack conducted a service project recently that benefits the school?
- If your pack has limited access within the school to promote your program, discuss with your principle the import role your pack plays as an informal educational partner of the school. Your district executive can be a great resource to help you with this conversation with the principle or other school official, include them in your planning process. Include local Girl Scout troop leaders as appropriate.
- Bring a thank you recognition item to thank the principal for his or her annual support.

3. Volunteer at Back to School Night – Meet the Teacher Night

- Have members of your pack volunteer to help with Back to School Night.
- Assistance could include setting up chairs, greeting families or other duties.
- Be sure to have all families and leaders wear their uniforms.
- Bring your Pack Information Sheet to pass out to families.
- If you are able to have a pack display, ensure you provide your recruiting event information, sign-in form and your pack picture board.

4. Be Involved in School Activities

- In addition to Back to School Night, there are other events such as carnivals and festivals that a pack should be involved with throughout the year.
- The pack's participation will help the school see the pack as a positive resource and an extra supporter of the school.
- Be sure to always be available for Flag Ceremonies throughout the year.

5. Intercom Announcement

- Use the school's public address system or intercom to make announcements regarding the pack and specifically the recruitment event night.
- Make announcements exciting and use as a reminder for all upcoming opportunities to join.
- Should be done before or the day of the joining event.

6. Video Announcement

- Show a Cub Scouting recruitment video during announcements. (Available at Scout office).

7. Personal Letter of Invitation

- Personally invite all families in the school by sending a personal letter or formal invitation.
- Some schools provide school directories to parents. If this is not available work with pack parents to gather names and addresses.
- This should be mailed about a week to 10 days prior to your recruitment event.

8. Phone Calls

- Personally call each family of boys not involved in the pack and offer the opportunity to join.
- Calls should be made at least one week in advance of recruitment event.

9. Display Case

- Display case or bulletin board at school to promote your pack recruitment event.
- Use pictures and other visuals to catch the attention of boys and parents.
- Include a poster with the date, time and location of recruiting event.
- Some schools will allow you to keep it up year-round. If this is possible, update often with upcoming pack activities.

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10. Marquee Signs

- Use the school outdoor marquee to promote your pack recruiting event.
- Speak to your school administrator early to provide information on upcoming events and details regarding your recruiting event.
- If possible, use throughout the year to promote your other events.

11. Follow-Up to Your Recruitment Event

- Be sure to hold a follow-up recruiting event to give families another opportunity to join.
- The first few weeks of school are busy and all interested families may not be able to make the joining event.
- Some families feel that if they miss the first meeting they can no longer join. This gives them a second chance. Make it clear they can join anytime.
- A subsequent pack meeting often is good as follow-up joining event.

Community

The following ideas should be done in the community around your pack. Ensure to coordinate with other packs within your community. It is important that the community knows that the Cub Scouts are alive and well in the neighborhood. These methods reach additional families and provide community support for your pack.

1. Local Newspapers

- Community newspapers are always interested in neighborhood events or clubs and are great about publishing information.
- Find out when their print deadlines are and a point of contact to send your news release.
- Reference the Northern Star Council "Publicizing Your Unit" document and sample press releases / media advisories.

2. Display Boards at Community Events

- Wear your uniform and set up your pack display board (from Top Ten List) at community events such as carnivals, local fair and parades.
- Most communities have a summer or fall festival and these are great ways to increase exposure for your pack.
- If your community has more than one pack, coordinate this effort with them.
- Be sure to have plenty of flyers or other literature on hand to distribute and be prepared to answer questions and tell stories about your pack.

3. Patriot Day Flag Ceremonies

- Many organizations look for color guards throughout the year and especially on Patriot Day, September 11.
- Make a list of events in your community and call organizers early to volunteer to participate.

4. Volunteer for Community Events / Service Projects

- Park clean-ups and 4th of July celebrations are examples of neighborhood events held in most communities.
- Become familiar with these events and have your pack volunteer to assist with set-up, clean up or activities during the event.
- Community service is a cornerstone of the Scouting program and a great way to gain exposure for your pack.

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5. Church Bulletin Inserts

- Work with churches in your area to insert a Scout is Reverent recruitment flyer into the Sunday service bulletins. (Available at Scout office).
- Should include your joining event and contact information.
- If there are families in your pack that attend the church have them help coordinate distribution.

6. Sports Fields/Recreation Centers

- Sports are a major activity for many families in our communities.
- Work with local sports venues to hang banners, posters or to set-up an information table and yard signs at the field or court during games and tournaments to distribute information.

7. Parades

- Parades are a fun activity for the entire family.
- Build a float or march and participate in your community parade.
- Have plenty of information available to distribute to interested families.

8. Trail's End Popcorn/Fundraisers

- Selling popcorn is a wonderful way to reach the community and support your pack.
- For each item sold, handout or attach information regarding your pack.

9. Community Marquees

- Use marquees at churches, recreation centers, neighborhoods or businesses to promote your recruiting event and your pack.
- Contact organizations well in advance to plan the message and timing of your request.
- Be sure to thank the organization for their support.

10. Pack Website

- A pack website can be designed for members of your pack, as well as the community.
- Check with community organizations and your school to see if you can list your pack information on their website or a link to your pack website.
- Include website addresses on all promotional materials. Include www.joincubs.org if you do not have a pack website.

11. Local Libraries

- Work with your local library to hang posters and distribute your pack information sheet.
- Set out Cub Scout bookmarks. (Available at Scout office).
- A pack website can be designed for members of your pack, as well as the community.

Thanks for your efforts...

As Cub Scout leaders you are very important to the success of the program. We applaud and thank you for taking an active interest in your community's young people.

The Northern Star Council, your district membership committee, district executive and unit commissioner are here to support you and your Cub Scout pack.

We hope you have found this information exciting, helpful and that it will spark your imagination. If you have any questions contact the council office at 763-231-7201. Visit www.northernstarbsa.org/JoinScouting/Recruit.aspx for more resources.