

# Great, Safe Scouting Adventures – 2013/14



**It starts with Scouts.**

## **Welcome and Orientation Evening for Scouting Parents**

### **Goal of the evening:**

Share some of the best practices for parents to help their kids get the most of their Scouting experience.

### **About Scouts Canada**

Scouts Canada is the country's leading youth organization, offering exciting programs for boys, girls and young adults aged 5 to 26. The mission of Scouts Canada is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to build a better world where people are self-fulfilled and play a constructive, meaningful role in society.

Scouting is based on three broad principles that reflect its fundamental beliefs: Duty to God (defined as the responsibility to adhere to spiritual principles and thus to the beliefs that expresses them), Duty to Others, and Duty to Self. These core values are reflected in programs that are built on healthy and active living, environmental stewardship, leadership development, and community service.

You might be surprised to know that there are over 74,000 youth in Scouting across Canada, as well as over 25,000 volunteers – many of whom are parents of Scouting youth themselves. With every new member, with every camp and every community service project, Scouts Canada works hard to make one simple promise to Canadian youth and their parents:

**For over 105 years, kids in Scouting have been having fun adventures they wouldn't discover elsewhere. Along the way, kids develop into capable, confident, and well-rounded individuals. Scouting is the start of something great. It starts with Scouting.**

## Scouting Lingo

- Briefly describe some of the terminology that parents may hear throughout the evening
  - o Sections, Groups, Areas, Council
  - o Section Scouters, Support Scouters, ...
  - o This structure, and all of the volunteers who work within it, are organized towards delivering a quality Scouting program to your children – or, as we refer to it – a great, safe Scouting experience.

## About Our Group (Talk about your Group, Area and Council)

- Quick history, fun facts, your necker colours, Group crest.
- Talk about your Area and its team and purpose.
- Talk about the Council office and team, and their supportive purpose.
- Talk about some of the exciting things that the Group did last year.

## About Our Group Commissioner (Role & Expectations)

- Provide an essential link between Sections, Groups and Areas.
- Be the conduit for rapid communication and response, providing a direct avenue for servicing and the passage of information in both directions.
- Ensure the delivery of Scouts Canada's programs in accordance with its Mission and Principles, which meet Scouts Canada's Program Standards and are in keeping with the goals and ideals of the Partner/Sponsor.
- Ensure compliance with all Policies and Procedures of Scouts Canada – focus on safety of youth, risk management, leader training and program quality.
- Establish and maintain positive relationships with parents, leaders, Partner/Sponsor, other Commissioners and the community at large.

-Special guests

AC, Sponsors, Council.

-Introduce The Scouters (By Section)

Scouters: Primary responsibility is to deliver the programs as outlined in the Program Standards, and in the section-specific Leaders' Handbook. Scouters work with both the other Scouters in the Sections and the youth to plan programs and share leadership within the program meetings, ensuring the youth are engaged, safe and, most importantly, having FUN! If there are questions or concerns you may have, your main contact is the Section Scouter. If you have any concerns and you are not comfortable talking to a Section Scouter, please speak to the Group Commissioner or Area Commissioner. All our volunteers are screened, have a Police Record Check (PRC) with Voluntary Service Screening, and have taken specific training to work with your child.

This includes: Child & Youth Safety training; accessibility awareness training for people with disabilities, specific Scouting training for the section of their designation. Volunteers have committed to a Code of Conduct. We can ensure we deliver consistent, high quality, repeatable, safe, and fun programs.

Our Scouters work very hard in making sure that your child has the best Scouting experience possible; we need your help so that we can achieve this.

### **Important facts to remember:**

We have straight-forward guidelines and a Code of Conduct that has to be respected:

- o Our Scouters always work in pairs. Back-up is always important with our volunteers. If they are short in support we may need you to help; however, we always have a minimum of two Scouters working with our youth. Scouters will email parents only; if youth are to be emailed, a parent must be copied.
- o Our Scouters will never turn down your help – in fact, they'll encourage it. We've found that many hands make for a more fulfilling experience for both youth and parents. You may be required to complete some safety training depending on your level of involvement, but it's free, online, and would not take more than a few hours to complete.

### **Our Group (Roles & Expectations)**

-Sponsor

-Sections (Have the Section Scouters introduce their sections: first meeting, meeting times, uniform, high level schedule. Explain what makes them different from the other sections (explain the logical incremental learning experience for the youth).

-Group committee (Who is who)

Administrator : Upcoming meetings, talk about group events.

Registrar: Myscouts support, help with registrations, help Scouters with potential new recruits.

Treasurer: Donations, making cheques or payments for events, NOLB

Fundraiser: Popcorn, Scouttrees, Bottle drives

Quartermaster: Gear

## **What to expect from us**

- Our Group website (if you have one). [www.GROUPNAME.ca](http://www.GROUPNAME.ca)
- Tons of info, up-to-date calendars, contact details, event pictures.
- Talk about your social media links also (Twitter handle or FB page)

-Regular emails: do not to be shy to share with us. Emails are sent about upcoming events and to find out your child's attendance. Please let us know if your child can come or not. We don't get sad that they cannot come, but we do get annoyed when we don't hear anything and we are still planning for your child.

-We will try to give you as much support and details that we possibly can: Camp details (location, itinerary), things to bring, etc. If you feel like we missed something, please ask.

## **How to help your child have an incredible Scouting year (some tricks)**

**PARTICIPATE:** As noted earlier – if you want to participate and/or help out, then we'd be delighted to have you. As we do with youth, we treat all parents equally regardless of their ability. We firmly believe that Scouting has much to offer young people as they develop and that taking part is more important than being good at something. The same holds true for parents.

**LEARN:** What we do is all hands-on. Youth who have experienced Scouting's programs are more likely to have success in school, career, and family, and they are more likely to develop strong ethics and healthy relationships with others. For example:

- Youth with five or more years in Scouting are more likely to graduate from high school (98%) than those who never were Scouts (83%).
- Former Scouts are also more likely to be college graduates (40%) than non-Scouts (16%).

**BE PREPARED:** Make sure your child gets the most out of this experience. It's okay to help as a parent, but your child must also learn from these experiences, and in true Scouting fashion, they will learn best by doing.

Example:

For a weekend overnight or camping trip, have youths pack their gear. Younger sections may need a hand, but they should be able to prepare the beginning of a packing list, and they are the ones who should pack their bag. This helps them find their toothbrush at camp a bit easier, and it helps them know how to re-pack it at the end of camp. The same mindset can be applied to working on badge requirements and building Kub Kars.

## Parents

Be supportive; offer to help when you can. Offer to help if one of our Activities seems to interest you. Help with badge work and other projects that kids are working on at home.

Don't let the kids have all the fun! There are some great opportunities to help out at camps, events, with Group Committee, or as a Scouter.

All of our volunteers are trained in our program sections, child and youth safety and with courses to perfect their skills. If you are interested in joining the team, let me know this evening. I can give you more information.

Transportation: Unless organized transportation (like a bus or train) is being planned for the outing or camp, parents are responsible for transporting their youth to and from the event. It's against Scouts Canada policies for a volunteer (including a Scouter) to drive your kids to camp; we have to respect the Two Scouter Rule . To be honest, it's an added burden on the Scouter, who is already volunteering his/her time, so it's easier to have you drive your child. It also makes it easier for you to participate!

Children with special needs: Let us know about any special needs that your child may have: dietary, medical, or learning.

### Marking Scouting even better:

We do try to do our best in creating the greatest possible program. If we have overlooked something, we want you to let us know. Ask questions. If you have concerns, do not hesitate to speak to us about it.

### Great, Safe Scouting Adventures:

- o We talked a lot about the extensive training that our volunteers go through, our safety policies and procedures for Scouting activities, and our Two Scouter Rule. We place great expectations on our Volunteers.
- o If you have any questions about the way things are being done, or thoughts on how they can be improved, please speak with your Section Scouters.
- o If you prefer, you can also contact myself, our Area Commissioner, the Council office, or our National Help Centre: (Scouts Canada) 1-888-855-3336 or [helpcentre@scouts.ca](mailto:helpcentre@scouts.ca)

## **Useful Links**

Group Site:

Council Website:

Area Commissioner email:

National Site:

[www.scouts.ca](http://www.scouts.ca)

[www.myscouts.ca](http://www.myscouts.ca)

Our Child and Youth Safety:

<http://www.scouts.ca/ca/child-and-youth-safety>

Volunteering at Scouts Canada:

<http://www.scouts.ca/ca/volunteer>

Our Help Center

<https://help.scouts.ca>

Event pages:

Popcorn ([www.scouts.ca/popcorn](http://www.scouts.ca/popcorn))

Questions?