Role of the Leader

The Adult Leader Role

What is expected from adult leaders?

The success of any camping experience for a unit or individual member depends upon the efforts of the uniformed leaders. For this reason, Scoutmasters and designated assistants must carry out assigned responsibilities in a professional manner. The first step to successful long-term camping is adequate planning and program preparation before your arrival date. Part of this process requires adult leaders to review planned activities and responsibilities while at camp. Completion of this step will minimize surprise situations, confusion, disappointment, and potential problems.

Successful camping results in a great deal of personal satisfaction for both Scouts and leaders. The following is a synopsis of key activities and responsibilities expected from all adult leaders.

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Leadership

Your first concern should be to make sure you will have adequate. trained adult leadership in camp. Experience has shown that two adult leaders for every eight Scouts attending provides the best camp experience for the Troop and the leaders.

Each unit registering for summer camp requires at least two adult leaders. The unit leader going to camp must be a registered Scouter, at least 21 years of age, and preferably the unit's year-round leader or assistant. Unit leaders are responsible for the good behavior and good practices of their Scouts at all times and are expected to be available to assist their Scouts and camp staff to assure the best camping experience. The second leader must be at least 18 years of age and a registered Scouter. Every leader attending camp must be a registered member of Scouting America.

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Leader Administration Responsibilities

Camp Leadership

All units must always have at least two registered 21-year-old adult leaders in camp. Leaders are expected to set an example for what is expected from all Scouts. If we ourselves cannot live by the Scout Oath and Law, how can the youth be expected to learn our basic core beliefs?

General Discipline

Discipline and conduct of all campers are the responsibility of the unit leader in the camp with the Troop. THIS RESPONSIBILITY CANNOT BE TRANSFERRED TO THE CAMP STAFF. The camp administration is ready and willing to assist at any time with problems that might arise. Camp Counselors are available upon request for counseling. Unit committees should be sure that their leadership is trained and understand their responsibilities while in summer camp.

Our Camp Law

One of the often-told Scoutmaster Minutes deals with how a camp is just like a city. Cities have roads, camps have trails. Cities have homes, camps have tents. Where cities have rules, so do Scout camps. Why mention that in a Leaders Guide? Because it gets right to the philosophy of personal conduct.

You should be aware that each Scout must meet stringent criteria to become a member of our Camp Staff. Besides the interviews and screening process, all our Staff agrees to live by the twelve points of the Scout Law. Many of our Staff members are Eagle Scouts and leaders of your units. With over sixty members on Staff, we bring together for three months out of the year a fine representation of what Scouting is: strong, youthful, meaningful, with interest and excitement. The Staff is here to serve; we commit to live by the Scout Oath and Law. We will work to show the Scouts and Leaders that it is our way, and you can expect this from every staff member.

Scouts and Leaders at Camp are expected to always live the by the Scout Law. It is an effort; but it is practiced, it shows how we can live in a small city together. As a leader, we expect you to instill the Scout Law in your Scouts. Many Scouts learn from the attitude of their Leader- live and demonstrate the Oath and Law & show your Scouts that it does work.

Our camp is guided by the following rules and regulations. All camper, leader, and Staff conduct is judged as to how it measures against these guidelines. At camp, we cannot tolerate and will not permit activities that question the health and safety of all in attendance. Any Scout, leader, parent, guest, or Staff member that violates any of our rules or regulations will be handled by the discretion of the Camp Director in conjunction with all BSA and PA State regulations.

We ask for your cooperation and understanding as adults in helping us maintain high standards of moral and personal behavior. Remember it is our responsibility to provide a Safe and Healthy camp experience.

Equipment Damage

Each unit is responsible for the tents and equipment left for their care. Damage will be assessed before checkout, and the Troop will be billed for any damages for which they are found to be liable for. This has become a serious problem in camp. Please realize when we assess damage caused by your Scouts, it is done to be fair to other units and Scouts that did not cause any damage. Damage to tents will be billed by the inch.

Reporting Child Abuse

Your camp staff has received training to deal with victims of any kind of child abuse. If you suspect that a Scout in camp is a victim, contact the Camp Director immediately. If he is out of camp, contact the Program Director or Health Officer. The Camp Director will notify the Scout Executive.

Alcohol & Drugs

"It is the policy of Scouting America that the use of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances is not permitted at encampments or activities on property owned and/or operated by Scouting America or at any activity involving participation of youth members." Since Camp Conestoga is located within Laurel Hill State Park, all State Laws apply as well.

This policy will be strictly enforced for all those who are present in camp. The Camp Director will contact the proper authorities.

Tobacco and Electronic Cigarettes

The legal age, in the state of Pennsylvania, for the use of tobacco products is twenty-one. You as a leader can prevent the use of tobacco. Inform your Scouts that underage use of tobacco products is unacceptable and will not be tolerated on camp property.

For those adults who are of age to use tobacco products, please do so discreetly***. DO NOT use tobacco products in the presence of Scouts.*** National BSA policy as well as Westmoreland Fayette Council policy prohibits smoking in any buildings, pavilions, or porches of buildings.

Due to our commitment to protecting and promoting the health of Scouts that stay at camp, Eberly Scout Reservation also applies the policies above to any form of electronic cigarette, vape pen, or smoking device. Leaders should inform Scouts that "e-cigs" or "vaping" is unacceptable behavior at camp and will not be tolerated. All individuals aged eighteen or older that wish to use these devices should do so discreetly and out of the sight of campers. **(Our recommended place for use of cigarettes and e-cigarettes is in the main parking lot away from scouts' vision)**

"Remember only you can prevent forest fires."

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Homesickness

In a past edition, the American Camping Association Magazine reported that "Homesickness" is a very real and natural emotion that can occur when anyone leaves familiar surroundings. Adults may be surprised to learn that their joy reaching home after a trip is a form of homesickness.

For first time campers, especially, being away from home may be a totally new experience; no mom or dad to turn to; no refrigerator handy for the midnight raids; no family pet to hug and romp with; and most critical--- NO VIDEO GAME SYSTEMS. Allen Sherman may have poked fun at the classic camp letter years ago, in their song, "Hello Muddah, Hello Faddah," yet the importance of correspondence between home and camp cannot be over-emphasized.

Uniforms

Scouts and leaders are encouraged to wear Scout uniform while in camp. However, it is not a requirement for participation. Why does the Scouts BSA have a uniform? The same reason a football or baseball team has a uniform, or just about any organized group. Why? Because a uniform gives a standard to be met, it promotes group spirit and designates equality from the start among members within the group. At camp, our uniforms do the same. However, we know they are expensive and at camp they can get dirty fast. The official Scout uniform is appropriate at any time during the week at camp. We encourage all Scouts to be in their Class A uniform for the following events.

- Evening Camp Wide Retreat
- Camp Wide Vespers
- Wednesday Parent's Night
- Friday Night Campfire

Class 'A' uniforms are not required for any Sunday activity, morning flag ceremonies, and breakfast.

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Hazing/Bullying

"Older Scouts sometimes feel that the new Scouts should be "initiated" into the Troop with a hazing activity. You should be alert to this desire of older youth and direct their efforts into meaningful programs biased of the Aims and Methods of Scouting. Hazing has no place in Scouting; it is a violation of the Youth Protection Guidelines and will be dealt with in a stern manner.

Forms of hazing include but are not limited to:

1. Secret Rituals.
2. Snipe Hunting.
3. Searches for "Left Hand Smoke Shifter's."
4. Secret Initiations

Standards of Conduct for Scouters

Youth Protection Guidelines for Troops

Eradication of child abuse has been adopted as a national objective by the National Council of Scouting America. Guidelines for children and parents have been published in a booklet entitled "Child Abuse, Let's Talk About It." It has been available within Scouting and to the public. Every adult leader going to camp should read it and go through Child Abuse Training. ALL UNITS IN CAMP MUST HAVE AT LEAST TWO ADULT LEADERS PRESENT AT ALL TIMES.

The concerned assistance of every Scouter is essential to success. The following principles and guidelines are intended to protect Scouts against abuse and Scouters against misinterpretation of their intentions. Anyone who has questions or sees difficulties in compliance with these guidelines should feel free to consult with the Camp Director or the Scout Executive.

Definition of terms: "Scouter" is understood to mean all adults, 18 years of age or older.
"Junior Leaders" is understood to mean youth unit leadership.
"Scouts" are all youth members.

1. Scouters must endeavor to protect Scouts from (1) physical abuse that is understood to mean the sustaining of physical injury as the result of cruel or inhuman treatment or as the result of a malicious act. (2) Sexual abuse, i.e., any act involving sexual molestation or exploitation of a scout by any person who has permanent or temporary care, custody, or responsibility for supervision of Scouts or a Scout. (3) Mental abuse. Consider this the next time we send a young, frightened Scout out on a snipe hunt. Our responsibility to our Scouts is to provide a "safe haven" to foster self-confidence and self-esteem.

2. Adults serving Scouts, especially in camp, whether registered Scouters, parents of a Scout, or other qualified personnel, must understand their responsibilities and the limitations placed on their relationship with Scouts.

3 Scouters and Scouts must sleep in separate tents.

4. Scouters must always shower and change in separate shower stalls.

5. Scouters, Junior Leaders, and other activity leaders must not permit activities involving group nudity or skinny-dipping.

6. Scouters should avoid unnecessary physical contact with Scouts, such as placing hands on legs and patting the derriere of Scouts.

7. Scouters must not tell off-color stories. Scouts and Scouters are clean in mind and body.

8. Scouters should hold conferences with Scouts in open settings where they may be seen (but not heard if discussion is confidential). Avoid rooms with closed doors, closed tents, or other secluded locations.

9. If a Scout complains or comments about an experience he has had with an adult or another youth that may suggest physical abuse or sexual molestation or an invitation to molestation, take them seriously. Remember that the Scout is not likely to articulate their complaint in an adult manner. It may take the form of declining association with a particular leader for no apparent reason or abruptly leaving the unit.

A Scouter who observes another Scouter or Junior Leader relating to a Scout in a manner that is not clearly objectionable, but which might be misconstrued as leading to child abuse, should warn the person so observed to avoid contact that might be misunderstood.

Experience Tells Us

In years past, some of the comments made by unit leaders in the camp evaluations suggested the need for a section talking about "Experience has shown us that…." This is a collection of what experience has taught us regarding Merit Badges, advancements, and general camp procedures.

1. "Summer camp is not a merit badge mill" where you pay a fee and get four merit badges automatically. Instead, "Camp offers merit badges as only one portion of the program."

2. "For any scout to try more than four merit badges in one week is foolish." We suggest a normal maximum of three merit badges per Scout per week. True, some have earned upwards of five or six in one week, but that is the exception. And remember there is more to camp than just merit badges.

3. "The most difficult badges to earn" are those requiring a great deal of physical skills, coordination, stamina, and time. I.e., Astronomy, Environmental Science, Personal Fitness, Shot Gun, and Climbing.

4. Many badges have "pre-requisites" "that should be done at home" and not at camp. Experience shows us that "Camp is not an ideal classroom for written work" and the smart Scout is the one who comes to camp with all the written work done. All pre-requisites are listed in the program section of this manual and should be shared with all Scouts attending camp.

5. "Youth should try something new at camp and get a well-rounded experience." Try a handicraft badge, a nature badge, and an aquatic or Scoutcraft badge combination.

6. "Be proud of your campsite." Your campsite is your home away from home for the week. So, make it comfortable by bringing banners, flags, and items to spruce it up. Also come with ideas to fix it up. But remember that we are Scouts, and we must keep it clean and respect Mother Nature.

7. Do not forget to schedule a rest! That's right. Too often, you do not take the time to sit and enjoy the beauty of Camp Conestoga. "Don't keep such a pace that you miss the trees, the nature, and the clean fresh air." Remember that you only spend one week at camp per year, so enjoy it.

8. "Be spirited." Come to camp with the idea and spirit that helps make the camp come alive. Participate actively with the Staff in songs and cheers.

9. Be flexible. Each week, over two hundred Scouts attend Camp Conestoga and while the Staff is there to meet everyone's needs, it is important to remember that a Scout is friendly, cheerful, and courteous. "We need to practice the Scout law in camp when dealing with others."

10. Communicate. If you have a special need or want to give advice, tell us early, and we will give it our best shot.

11. On the day of your departure, have your unit's transportation arrive no later than 9:00 AM so that you do not have to wait in the parking lot. All Troops must be out of their campsites no later than 10:00 AM.

12. Abide by the rules, just because we do not agree with something we should not do our own thing. At camp, we have rules and regulations in place to provide everyone with a safe and fun experience. If you have a problem with something, deal with it in a professional manner, remember we are Scouts and we do set an example for our younger Scouts.

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One last thing. "We want to make this the best camp in the Region."
If you have any suggestions, we will gladly listen to you, because camp
is only as good as we make it!