

Running a High Energy First Den/Pack Meeting

How to keep new Cub Scouts hooked from Day One!



01 What is National Doing Right Now?

What's National working on?!

02 What Packs Can Do

Make it personal! Make it fun!

03 What is National Going to Do?

Resources and future plans from National

SECTION 01

What is National Up to Right Now?

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1

What's Working

Nationally, Cub Scout retention is down. But there are packs that are doing a great job of welcoming and retaining new families. We surveyed them and followed up with focus groups to find out what's working.

Consistently doing the fundamentals well, quickly, and intentionally:

- Make it Personal
- Make it Fun!
- Make it Easy



SECTION 02

What Packs Can Do

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2

What Packs Can Do

1**Make It Personal**

Create immediate personal connections.

2**Make it Fun**

Deliver early fun and outdoor experiences.

Run simple, fun, activity-based meetings.

3**Make it Easy**

Provide strong early leader support.

Set clear expectations and structure.

Engage parents early with small roles.

Make it Personal

Create immediate personal connections.

- Contact every new family quickly (within 48 hours).
- Assign a single point of contact. We call this person the New Member Coordinator.
- Make families feel known and included right away.
- Provide a pack T-shirt as soon as they join; a neckerchief, hat, handbook, or swag bag can also work.

COMMUNICATION

Whatever channel you use to communicate, keep it simple and keep it consistent. Many packs have found success with group texts.

“Hello (name), we are so glad you are part of our pack. We look forward to seeing you at our next activity (date/time/location).”

“Make it Personal” Resources



Welcome New
Families Brochure



Welcome New
Families Video



Welcome New
Families Ceremony



Team Building
Pack Meeting

Make it Fun

Deliver Early Fun and Outdoor Experiences

Run Simple, Fun, Activity-Based Meetings

- Host one or more fall campouts or major outdoor events.
- Make sure every new family is personally contacted, and supported with borrowing gear if needed.
- Less talk, more activity. Avoid feeling like another class by embedding advancement into games and hands-on activities.
- Meet outdoors when possible! Hikes, outdoor games, cookouts, s'mores, and more.

PLANS, SONGS, AND GAMES

Use the pack meeting and den meeting plans available online to streamline preparation time.

Always have a song or game in your back pocket to fill unexpected gaps.

“Make it Fun” Resources



Outdoor Pack
and Den
Planners



Cub Scout
Camping Video



Fun & Games



Tips & Tricks
Videos



Den Leader
Resources



Pack
Resources



Presentations &
Ceremonies
Archive

Make it Easy

Provide Strong Early Leader Support

Set Clear Expectations and Structure

Engage Parents Early with Small Roles

- Mentors lead the first meeting(s), with new leaders observing.
- Use simple, ready-to-go plans.
- Publish a full-year calendar early with a consistent schedule.
- Communicate clearly using a main channel.
- Use shared leadership, especially in Lion and Tiger dens.
- Use small, specific volunteer roles to engage parents.

MICROVOLUNTEERING

A term used to describe smaller or time-bound roles, which might include:

- Blue and Gold coordinator
- Pinewood Derby chair
- Fundraising chair
- Running a station activity at a den or pack meeting
- Running a game
- ... and more!

“Make it Easy” Resources



Den Host Sign-up Sheets



4-Month Plan



Adult Leader Training



CubChat Live



Family Talent Survey



Scoutbook+ Calendar Guide



Printable Calendar Templates



Getting Parents Involved



Pack Committee Resources



Video: From Parents to Leaders

Resources

1

Welcome Cub Scout Families

[For Parents and Leaders](#)

2

First Year Retention

[What Packs Can Do To Help](#)

3

Volunteer Best Practices

Check out #CubChatLive for a weekly dive into best practices and late-breaking news.

SECTION 03

What is National Going to Do?

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What National is Developing

1

Printed Program Guide

The 4-month plan for small and new packs, is in development as a printed program guide.

4

Improve Scoutbook Usability

Next Scoutbook+ update coming Q1, 2027

2

Updated Leader Training

The Cub Scout Committee and Scouting U are working together to update Cub leader training. They are also updating the Tips & Tricks videos and roundtable modules for on-demand information.

3

ScoutConnect Updates

The latest major update rolled out in August. Working to improve the functionality of online registration tools remains a key priority for the national council.

THANK YOU

We appreciate your work to welcome and keep new families in Scouting!

#ADVENTUREON!

