

# Why Scouting?

For more than 100 years, Scouting programs have instilled in youth the values found in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Today, these values are just as relevant in helping youth grow to their full potential as they were in 1910. Scouting helps youth develop academic skills, self-confidence, ethics, leadership skills, and citizenship skills that influence their adult lives.

The Boy Scouts of America provides youth with programs and activities that allow them to

- Try new things.
- Provide service to others.
- Build self-confidence.
- Reinforce ethical standards.

While various activities and youth groups teach basic skills and promote teamwork, Scouting goes beyond that and encourages youth to achieve a deeper appreciation for service to others in their community.

Scouting provides youth with a sense that they are important as individuals. It is communicated to them that those in the Scouting family care about what happens to them, regardless of whether a game is won or lost.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Scouting promotes activities that lead to personal responsibility and high self-esteem. As a result, when hard decisions have to be made, peer pressure can be resisted and the right choices can be made.

Since 1910, Scouting has helped mold the future leaders of this country by combining educational activities and lifelong values with fun. The Boy Scouts of America believes and, through more than a century of experience, understands that helping youth puts us on a path toward a more conscientious, responsible, and productive society.

Scouting, with programs for young men and women, helps meet these six essential needs of the young people growing up in our society:

- Mentoring
- Lifelong Learning
- Faith Traditions
- Serving Others
- Healthy Living
- Building Character

## Mentoring

Young people need mentors. Positive relationships with adults—community and religious leaders and, of course, parents—provide youth with good role models and have a powerful

impact on their lives. Young people of every age can benefit from constructive, one-on-one interaction with adults beyond their own families. Scouting provides such adult interaction. We have a process that screens, selects, and trains the leaders who can provide that extra attention all young people need to succeed in life.

## **Lifelong Learning**

People need to learn all through their lives. We live in a society that rewards continual acquisition of skills and knowledge. Scouting provides structured settings where young people can learn new skills and develop habits of continual learning that will help them succeed. From its foundation, Scouting has offered a concrete program of discovering, sharing, and applying knowledge and skills.

## **Faith Traditions**

Young people need faith. There is abundant evidence that children benefit from the moral compass provided by religious tradition. We acknowledge that faith can become an important part of a child's identity. Each of the major faiths breeds hope, optimism, compassion, and a belief in a better tomorrow. Scouting encourages each young person to begin a spiritual journey through the practice of his or her faith tradition. One of the key tenets of Scouting is "duty to God." While Scouting does not define religious belief for its members, it has been adopted by and works with youth programs of all major faiths.

## **Serving Others**

Young people need to serve. The level of community service is a good indication of the health of any society. Scouting has, from its inception, been deeply rooted in the concept of doing for others. "Do a Good Turn Daily" is a core Scouting precept. Scouting encourages young people to recognize the needs of others and take action accordingly. Scouting works through neighborhoods, volunteer organizations, and faith-based organizations to help young people appreciate and respond to the needs of others.

## **Healthy Living**

Young people need to be well. To get the most from life, one must be both mentally and physically fit. A commitment to physical wellness has been reflected in Scouting's outdoor programs such as hiking, camping, swimming, climbing, and conservation. First aid, lifesaving, and safety programs are synonymous with Scouting. Our programs today include strong drug abuse awareness and prevention programs emphasizing the value of healthy living habits.

## **Building Character**

Young people need to know to be good and to do good. Few will argue with the importance of teaching values and responsibility to our children – not only right from wrong, but specific,

affirmative values such as fairness, courage, honor, and respect for others. Beginning with the Scout Oath and Scout Law, the Boy Scouts of America program is infused with character-building activities that allow youth to apply abstract principles to daily living situations.

(Source: Boy Scouts of America home page)