Scouting—A Powerful Tool

A Presentation for Leaders of Scouting

Prepared by the
Grand Teton Council

Positive Youth Development

“PYD” is the quality found in Youth Development programs that successfully promote positive outcomes in youth.

They Foster | They Promote
-------------|-----------------|
Resilience  | Bonding         |
Self Determination | Social Competence |
Prosocial Norms | Emotional Competence |
Spirituality | Cognitive Competence |
Clear and Positive Identity | Moral Competence |
Belief in the Future | Behavioral Competence |

They Provide
Recognition for Positive Behavior
Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement

The Tufts CAMP Study

Study Design

- 1,800 Cub Scouts aged 6-12
- 400 carefully matched non-Scouts from Philadelphia area
- Duration 2½ years, starting in 2012
- Development was measured in 9 key areas:
  - Hopefulness
  - Helpfulness
  - Obedience
  - Thriftiness
  - Trustworthiness
- In the beginning, there were no significant differences between the two groups.
- By the end however, the differences were striking.

Scouting Myths

1. Scouting is broken.

2. Since Scouting doesn’t work, it’s okay if I do it my own way.

Character Attributes

Changes over 2½ years in Tufts CAMP Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Scouts</th>
<th>Non-scouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheerfulness</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Helpfulness</td>
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<td>Obedience</td>
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<td>Kindness</td>
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<td>Hopeful Future Expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
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Arrows refer to Size of Effect.

Prosocial Priorities

- Doing the right thing
- Helping others

Non-Prosocial Priorities

- Being smart
- Being the best
- Playing sports

Scouts were significantly more likely than non-Scouts to embrace Prosocial Values
Religious Reverence
“Non-scout boys from religious affiliated institutions reported a medium to large degree of decrease in their religious reverence.”

Characteristics of Programs with PYD
"Big Three" of Youth Development Programs
1. Create a Safe Space
2. Start with “The Big Three”
3. Follow a Structured Curriculum
4. Effective Implementation
   Fidelity  Quality  Consistency

High Quality Program Matters
High quality programs attract more boys,
engage them more frequently,
and hold onto them longer.
Units with a high quality program
are better able to reach even
boys who are less-engaged.
More character development in more boys

Regular Attendance Matters
"Big Three" of Youth Development Programs
1. Positive and sustained adult-youth relationships
2. Life-skill building curriculum
3. Opportunities for youth leadership

J Youth Adol (2015) 44:2359-2372
Am J Community Psychol (2016) 57:73-86
Leadership Support is Vital
Program Implementation and PYD
Quote from Tufts Study

“No dimension of activity involvement—intensity, duration or engagement—will be related to program goals when the structure and leadership that supports program curriculum is not readily in place.”

Am J Comm Psychol (2016) 57:73-86

Leadership Support is Vital
Program Implementation and PYD
Quote from Tufts Study

“In a poorly developed program, where the links between program curriculum (i.e. Scouting curriculum) and goals (i.e. leadership direction) are not well defined and validated, even the most engaged participant is unlikely to demonstrate positive change as a result of his involvement.”

Am J Comm Psychol (2016) 57:73-86

Leadership Support is Vital
Program Implementation and PYD
Key Take-Away Messages

• Strong linkage between leadership and the Scouting curriculum is essential to a successful program.
• Without this “even the most engaged participant is unlikely to demonstrate positive change”.
• The program will likely fail the boy, and skeptical leaders will be “proven right” once again.
• However, the reason the program failed is likely not that Scouting failed, but that it was poorly implemented.

What About Sports?

• Over 80% of American youth will at some time have participated in a sports program.
• American youth spend more time in sports programs than any other organized out-of-school activity.

Sports and Youth Development
The Good and the Bad

The Good
• Improve grades in school
• Feel better about themselves
• Show leadership

The Bad
• Increase aggressive behavior
• Reduce ability to see right and wrong
• Increase chances for risky behavior

When kids do nothing but sports, the overall effect on their character development is negative.

What about Sports in Combination with a Good Program like Scouting?

• Kids active in both programs show the highest
  – Positive individual functioning
  – Contribution to family and community.

Scouting and Sports make a great partnership.
Is Participation in Scouting Associated with Prosocial Behavior in Adulthood?

“Eagle Scouts—Merit Beyond the Badge”
Baylor University, Institute for Studies of Religion
Nationwide Telephone Survey
Average Age of Respondent—47 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eagle Scouts</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scouts (Not Eagle)</td>
<td>853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Scouts</td>
<td>1,502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,512</td>
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Comparative Likelihood of Prosocial Behaviors in Eagle Scouts as Adults

- Spiritual goal made and achieved in the past year: Eagles 81%, Scouts 76%, Non-Scouts 90%
- Has held leadership positions in local community: Eagles 76%, Scouts 80%, Non-Scouts 90%
- Has taken a course or class of interest to them in the past year: Eagles 90%, Scouts 81%, Non-Scouts 81%
- Has current certification in CPR: Eagles 76%, Scouts 80%, Non-Scouts 81%

*** p < .001

In Summary

- Scouting leads to the development of multiple positive character attributes.
- Scouting sustains Religious Reverence.
- Scouting is a strong partner with sports in building positive character.
- The positive effect of Scouting persists for decades.
- Scouting requires strong support from leadership to be fully effective.

What Really IS Scouting?

- Scouting is more than just an outdoor activity program, silly songs or merit badges.
- Scouting is a proven and effective program that changes boys' lives, while sustaining Religious Reverence.
- However, Scouting requires strong support from leadership to become fully effective.
- It is that foundation of leader support that gives it the power to touch hearts and change lives.

Two Questions

Ponder
What can I personally do to better support the Scouting program?

Discuss
What steps can we take to make our Scouting program touch the life of every boy?

www.tetonscouts.org

Scouting is a powerful and effective tool for creating change in the lives of boys.

The degree that our boys experience the power and effectiveness that Scouting promises, is therefore up to us—their leaders.