

Roundtable Membership Moment

Fall Recruitment

For the past few years, we've stressed that recruitment should be a year-round activity in all units, but the fall is still the most active time for recruitment, especially in Cub Scouts. Planning for fall recruitment should start early—ideally in the spring or early summer.



In preparing for your recruitment activity, the first question to ask is—**what are your goals?** Setting a goal will help you and your whole unit successfully grow. When setting your goal, consider all the Scouts crossing over to the next level, those who will age out, and how much growth you plan for your unit. Once you know your goal, you can start planning your recruitment activities.

How many recruitment activities do you need? It would be great if we could meet all our recruitment needs in one activity, but that rarely happens. The wise choice is to select three or four dates to recruit. It's far better to recruit more youth than you planned than to miss the mark.



Once you've determined your dates and where to hold your activities, don't forget to geofence them. Studies over the past few years have shown a 16% increase in attendance for geofenced activities when compared to recruitment events that were not geofenced.

The ideal recruitment event occurs in the evening or on the weekend at a convenient time for families to attend. It is in a place that's easily accessible with good parking. It has two separate areas that can be used for the adults to learn about Scouting and another area where prospective members can engage in a fun activity with the other unit members.

As far as the adult activity goes, it should be short and sweet. Topics that should be discussed are major calendar events during the year, summertime activities, family-based activities, and most importantly, how much fun their children will have as a member of this unit and Scouting.

The youth activity should be 1/2 hour to 45 minutes of fun—games, races, stomp rockets, rain gutter regatta, or even a small Hot Wheels track and a supply of cars.

At the end of the session, the emphasis should be on getting the contact information for the family, giving them an application (and hopefully having them fill it out right there), and letting them know when the next activity will be.

Finally, it is crucial that somebody, preferably the unit leader, follows up with every family who attends to get their impression of the unit. Most families attending a joining activity attend to join. If they don't you need to find out why and make it right.

Remember, there are plenty of recruitment ideas, suggestions, and materials online at the BSA Membership and Marketing Hub at:

<https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/>.

