



## **Your Role as a Parent**

Cub Scouting encourages closeness to family. The program will give you opportunities to take part in activities with your son that you normally couldn't do. It provides a positive way for parent and son to grow closer together, and encourages you to spend quality time together. In this way, Cub Scouting is a program for the entire family, and your involvement is vital to the program's success.

Some specific things you can do to help your son in Cub Scouting are

1. Work with your son on projects
2. Help your Cub Scout along the advancement trail
3. Participate in monthly pack meetings
4. Attend parent-leader conferences
5. Go on family campouts with your son
6. Provide support for your son's den and pack

The Cub Scout years are developing years for young boys, falling between the dependence of early childhood and the relative independence of early adolescence. As he grows, your son will gain the ability to do more things "on his own," but at this stage of his development, your help is critical.

### **Work with your son on projects**

Boys often start projects at den meetings and finish them at home with the help of a parent. Such projects become the catalyst for parents and boys—often joined by siblings and friends—to interact with each other in an informal, relaxed way.

Because the purpose of projects is to teach a boy new skills, a project will challenge a boy to do tasks that he hasn't currently mastered. It's not uncommon, therefore, for a boy to need help from his family to do some of his projects. In Cub Scouting, boys are not expected to do things entirely on their own. So long as a boy does his best to do as much as he's capable of, it's perfectly acceptable for a parent or sibling to help him with the tasks he's unable to do on his own.

### **Help your son along the advancement trail**

The advancement plan is designed for parents to use to create a learning environment in their home. With the Cub Scout handbooks as a resource, parents and boys work together to do the achievements required for each badge. The advancement plan provides fun for

the boys, gives them a sense of personal achievement as they earn badges, and strengthens family understanding as adult family members work with boys on advancement projects.

While Cub Scouts will learn skills and begin work on projects in their weekly den meetings, the parent remains at the center of the advancement program. As each task is done or each skill is demonstrated, the parent signs the Cub Scout's handbook to record its completion. And when the boy has completed all the requirements to earn an award, the parent presents that award at the next monthly pack meeting.

## **Participate in monthly pack meetings**

The weekly den meetings are for Cub Scouts and their adult leader. The pack meeting is for the entire family of every Cub Scout. At pack meetings, parents see their sons in action with their friends, meet other parents, and join with neighbors in caring and sharing. These types of opportunities are scarce, and pack meetings highlight how Cub Scouting teaches boys cooperation and collaboration.

The pack meeting is also a monthly showcase for all that the boys have worked on in their den meetings. Craft projects are on display, skills are demonstrated, and skits are performed to show the boys' command of the monthly theme. While boys at this age seem to be struggling toward independence, having the approval of their parents and other adults whom they admire remains important to them—so your presence at these meetings is critical to underscore the importance of the lessons your son has learned.

## **Attend parent-leader conferences**

Held at various times throughout the year, parent-leader conferences provide opportunities for you to discuss your son's participation and expectations of den and pack meetings. Such conferences can help your son get the most from his Cub Scouting experience, and they give you the chance to communicate with pack leaders, to share knowledge and gain the awareness needed to work as a team to help your son succeed.

## **Go on family campouts with your son**

Besides being fun, family camping is a chance for quality time together and an enriched family life. This program is a recreational opportunity—it's not on a tight time schedule. Family leadership rests with the adult member(s). This leadership might be yielded from time to time as the family chooses to take part in activities, such as swimming, where specific camp policies must be followed for safety and proper operation.

## **Provide support for your son's den and pack**

It's important to remember that the adult leaders of your son's den and pack are volunteers who give their own time to provide a quality program for your son. While they have been carefully selected and extensively trained for their roles, there are always times when they could use help from parents in the pack.

Pack events such as the pinewood derby, blue and gold banquet, or field days take a lot of effort—more than the monthly meetings. The pack's leaders would likely welcome any help you can give. Likewise, den leaders will be grateful to parents who can lend a hand with field trips and outings. By pitching in as needed, you can show your son the importance of helping others. So be on the lookout for opportunities for you to help the den, the pack, and its leaders.