

Virtual Scouting Best Practices

All practices are sourced from the virtual training 'Effective Strategies for Remote Productivity'

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Cub Scouts:

- Providing a virtual Scouting Hub
- Share resources for suggested remote cub den activities
- Cyberchip, virtual classrooms, virtual tours, we created a list of electives that can easily be done at home
- sending links to activities they can accomplish from home
- Sharing resources on our social pages and website for how to scout at home with mom and/or dad
- Cyberchip is a big one-challenging many of our packs to have 100 participation in this
- 30-day advancement challenge for those who don't have a plan
- Calling on "lost youth"
- We've put together a Scouting at Home webpage on the council site with all the resources we can find to help kids do scouting by themselves or with family's members. And listed all cub scout adventures that can be done at home. Hopefully this keeps kids engaged.
- Checking in with Pack leaders and making sure they are staying in contact with their Scouts and providing resources for them to continue Scouting at home.
- Virtual field trips using live cams at aquariums, zoos, museums, etc.
- chat room show and tells. Work with parents offline at home then share projects with dens online
- STEM activity demonstrations via video - erupting volcano, making slime, rockets, etc.
- Hour of Code
- <https://www.cpcbsa.org/advancement-academy>
- 30-day challenge for each Den.
- We are developing a functional "virtual" Cub Family Campout.
- Scout Now resources/activity kit for new scouts
- Online program available from our website
- For my remote or low-income Packs, issuing text meeting...where the Den Leaders tell the families what they are to work on and send photos.
- Virtual Adventure Loops
- Sharing of Cub program ideas, like the tongue depressor kazoo.
- what should a Webelos Scout do for his outdoor activity with a troop?

- Placing different ideas in a central location- we have a Scouting At Home page that pulls everything together in one spot for easy access
- our council is doing daily "scouting at Home videos on Facebook with ideas Cub Scouts can do at home
- At-home activities that are family based
- Virtual Pinewood Derby
- Zoom Roundtable
- Providing links and information on cool things out there (cincy zoo, 100 activities, etc.
- Engaging our Den Leader page on activities that can be done from home
- A lot of Packs within my district have been doing weekly virtual Pack and Den meetings. They've encouraged families to get outside and work on rank advancement. The vibe from the unit leaders is very encouraging and positive.
- Scavenger Hunt Mile walk
- virtual scout book training
- Scout challenges and sending activities to parents on what the youth can be doing from home
- virtual show and tell. work at home with parent then present to the group
- We are doing virtual for nova awards
- and some requirements can be done in own yard
- utilize the free virtual tours of museums and zoos
- virtual show and tell. work at home with parent then present to the group
- We are looking at coming up with some STEM activities that the whole family can get involved in, looking at planning a scavenger hunt that will engage the whole community to place things in the yard or the window for cubs to spot
- Using district Facebook page to share ideas/ activities for cubs to do as a pack/ den or individually with their families. And encouraging them to post pictures/ share their experience doing the activities

Scouts BSA & Older Programs

- I am leading the Salesmanship Merit Badge and have 39 Scouts signed up.
- Establish and promote a remote camporee with fireside chats
- We engaged our MBC's and they are holding virtual merit badge courses
- virtual meetings
- Virtual Tours of places for Exploring, Our FD Post coming up with their own video challenge.
- Verifying and entering applications remotely for the 2021 National Jamboree
- Jamboree online and #campathome are gaining traction in my district
- Our council program department has started creating "Scout Skill of the Day" and "Scout Challenge" videos that are being shared across our social media platforms
- Google Classrooms setup to submit rank, merit badge, award requirement evidence as short video, photos, documents for review and not cluttering email inbox
- Following up with volunteers
- virtual unit meetings, PLCs, troop committees
- Lots of virtual troop/crew meetings happening with various online tools - seeing development of unit specific and council virtual merit badge classes to further engage youth
- Use the National Outdoor Award as an individual activity
- One of my Explorer Posts is doing virtual meetings to keep everyone involved and working on their requirements
- offering online MB sessions. promoting online MB opportunities from other councils
- We are having a Virtual Merit Badge Academy.
- For virtual boards of review - schedule a time or date BEFORE the actual board to test everyone's connection and technology status.
- digital campfire on Friday
- we have room for a thousand people at the campfire
- [//www.facebook.com/events/648820819028790/](https://www.facebook.com/events/648820819028790/)
- Online program available from our website
- Paid Facebook ads for virtual merit badges
- advertising something to look forward too. Sign up for Jamboree 2021
- virtual merit badges, educate leaders on how to hold virtual meetings and encourage scouts to continue with PLCs
- encouraging families to provide virtual access to adult leaders for conducting MB reqs completion and Scoutmaster conferences
- Virtual Merit Badge Workshop sponsorships
- Giving donors thank you calls and checking in on them and their families at this time.
- I have a small stack of FOS community pledge cards. I'm calling a few each day to continue to try and raise money.
- We launched our text to give platform. We also just started a phone-a-thon calling past donors.
- Virtual presentations during a pack/troop/crew meeting using a video as part of the campaign that accompanies a presenter.
- Phone calls to Major donors
- Preparing donor prospects lists and letter campaigns, and time for donor research

- Call without making asking for money the main focus. See how they are doing, call leader in unit to see if they will help with ask or know best steps
- Continue to prospect and work community events
- social media campaign reminding them of the importance of Scouting and letting them know Scouting is needed now more than ever
- Start a donor newsletter, update on how Scouting is continuing virtually and how we still need their support to continue our mission
- Research prospects
- Working with staff to reschedule events that were to occur in the next few weeks.
- Doing an FOS Video and PowerPoint to share what scouting is doing. Our council commissioner is shooting, and we are making a soft ask
- Grants
- If events are postponed contacting prospects and trying to get the gift now and invite them to an event later.
- Set up virtual meetings to ensure prepared for camp if/when happening.
- Zoom Roundtable
- virtual meetings - led by youth with adult supervision
- 30-day challenges
- Linking to councils that are doing virtual merit badges, sharing other council resources
- One unit in particular has established a mentor/mentee program where older Scouts check in with younger Scouts
- going ahead and moving AOL to the program to get started with unit and having cross overs later. get them prepared to go to summer camp with troop without that being the first time around the unit
- Use the National Outdoor Award as an individual activity
- One of my Explorer Posts is doing virtual meetings to keep everyone involved and working on their requirements
- working with units on how to do virtual meeting and sharing resource to complete merit badge online
- Our troop is using Zoom and ensuring adult leadership is on call to meet YPT requirements
- Started using Zoom last night with my troop for Philmont crew meetings & next will be the troop meeting. The boys (we don't have any girls) really liked it.
- Virtual campout!
- Packs and Troops, encouraging leaders to look at Awards Central for things their kids could earn while working at home to add to the program
- Encouraging our Posts to use the tools available on Exploring.org and to work on the career achievement award
- Using district Facebook page to share ideas/ activities for Scouts BSA to do, And encouraging them to post pictures/ share their experience doing the activities

Membership

- Invite a friend to a unit virtual meeting
- Focused on planning for Fall 2020, recruiting volunteers to help creating schedule, scheduling Social media adds
- Exploring and STEM Scouts Sales call. Virtual Lunch and learn. DE's inviting anyone who they want to have learn more about the programs. Running it once, recording the presentation so I can send it to others. they are running next week.
- Check ins with previous sales calls and follow up
- New Unit Sales Calls-emails to prospects, phone follow up, virtual meetings offered and digital copies of new chartered organization packets
- Research and Drive arounds in communities/neighborhoods where new units are needed
- Stem Scout Activity resources
- Recruit kids using social media
- Roster ringouts can be done easily through a virtual environment
- Connecting with other Councils.
- Facebook events
- I would work with volunteers and suggest now is the time to join Scouting, because we *do* have so many ideas for at home activities. Might as well get credit for them!
- Use this time to have volunteers direct recruit to their network
- I have packs that are doing remote den meetings to keep scouts engaged. I have one pack that developed a daily challenge related around Cub Scouts and shared with all of the other packs and will offer a patch at the end.
- Facebook geofencing and communication with units so they are expecting these calls
- Virtual Campfire Program
- STEM Nova Virtual Classes using Google Classroom
- putting activity links on the newly created scouting hub
- Virtual nature walks at our properties
- checking with pack AOL den to ensure they bridging to Scout BSA
- calling and emailing unit leaders; asking them to complete their 3/31/20 charters
- Scheduling pack membership plan meetings to prepare for fall recruitment
- Am working to get last of the online recharter completed via phone calls and encouraging them to mail the paperwork in
- Sharing the recordings of Digital meetings to community groups and school groups as a resource for parents. Gives them something to do and introduces scouting to new families. Already gained 1 scout in my own unit
- digital join nights
- Collect videos year-round so you can post/play 1-minute clips
- setting up a group to support the homeschool community to grow that customer base
- Field Staff working with Packs to set up to accept online applications
- Once a unit has established a successful outreaching pattern, to invite (Joining Party) others to join in or rejoin their unit and participate online.
- Paid Facebook advertising

- remind leaders to check online applications, since many families are likely to join in order to complete activities at home. this can lead to more engaged parents when meetings resume
- Planning for the Fall signups
- Dropped youth calls
- Calling Den leaders, dropped youth. Yard signs, having taken out places put flyer in their boxes
- Leaving info in Dr. Offices
- conference calls with units struggling with membership creating plans for virtual recruitment and to hit the ground running when we can
- preparing new unit prospect communities
- Doing research on where new units are needed and on the organizations in those areas. Prepare to start making new unit sales calls.
- encouraging new youth to sign up on BeAScout
- Updating beascout and my.scouting leads
- Following up on previously made Chartered Org. Prospects.
- virtual recruitment materials
- I have packs that are doing remote den meetings to keep scouts engaged. I have one pack that developed a daily challenge related around Cub Scouts and shared with all of the other packs and will offer a patch at the end.
- Facebook geofencing and communication with units so they are expecting these calls
- Connect parents to possible Scouting activities they can do with their kids during the time they are sheltering in place
- posting stories on social
- Using Social Media you can sell the BSA program and how it can keep youth busy and engaged while they are out of school.
- With Online den meetings you can geofence folks and recruit them online
- virtual invite a friend campaign
- My units have website presences and send invitations e-mails
- We encourage working requirements daily
- Roster checks
- unit planning and budgeting for upcoming recruitment (Aug-Sept)
- starting a podcast

Volunteer Engagement

- Reminders about online trainings available
- Looking through Parent occupations on youth applications
- Stressing their importance and flexibility
- Goal of 5 calls a day with unit leaders or den leaders just to check in and see what they are working on and how I can help
- Zoom meetings, Facebook (district page), emails and phone calls
- Finalizing training schedule for Fall 2020
- Phone calls - Unit wellness checks
- Virtual Fireside chats with individual units, that they can ask for best practices or for help.
- Online program available from our website to share with youth
- More active with social media posting for our Council and Camp fb pages
- Council created a Scouting at home section on our website and are adding program ideas and best practices there
- Keeping engaged with volunteers via email, phone, and text mesg.
- Checking in to see how volunteers are doing. They appreciate being asked just how they're holding up and if their families are well.
- Checking in with the key 3 every day, sending out daily notes to the whole district committee about what's going on. zoom meetings
- Calls to units to prepare for Fall recruiting plans
- Virtual Roundtables - lead by our commissioners
- Virtual Campfire Program
- Virtual training events
- Online District Meetings
- Remote Key Threes
- Identify who may have some extra time available and get them involved in a project that matters to them.
- Regular communication, providing resources on upcoming events and things to share.
- Key Council members are scheduling "Fireside Chats" where they go on Facebook Live and update what is going on, answer questions that have come up and give an idea of where we are going next
- We launched a virtual camp "Camp Cooped Up!" on our Facebook and Instagram pages and are continuing to issue a daily camp challenge to all of our families to keep them active, engaged and so that we can interact with them while we're all cooped up right now.
- There seems to be an appropriate focus on maintaining contact with units and unit leaders. I think it's also important to maintain telephone contact with our older volunteers (Council and District Committee members) who may not be as "connected."
- Communication, communication, communication

Fundraising

- Sending online link to donate.
- Making calls to key donors or event committee members
- Be sure to thank everyone
- Always ask how they are doing.
- Have a virtual FOS presentation
- Just calling to check in and not ask for anything with donors
- sharing updates with existing donors on #scoutingathome
- Connecting to major donors for postponed events requesting support now
- Working on programs, slide shows, etc. for events so that I am ready when they finally happen.
- Our council is sending FOS letters to everyone whether a presentation has taken place or not. My Family FOS Chair is leery about making calls at this uncertain time because many people may be out of work. Has anyone had any experiences with this?
- Calling and just asking. Have gotten more Yes than No's by just asking them and getting to the point if they need me to.
- Contacting donors with a long history of consistent giving.
- Send letters
- Setting a goal to make X amount of calls per day. I set aside an hour and a half every morning right away to get these done and that helps to know I've done that first even if I get interrupted during the rest of the day
- Sending donor newsletters - keeping them informed of good things
- Organizing the popcorn & nut sale
- Keeping donors engaged with the new virtual scouting world
- Write grants
- Now is the time to write out hand-written thank you notes
- Fillable PDF's for pledge cards and FOS audit sheets. Conducting call nights with email and text message follow up
- FOS solicitation video, we are planning to blast out. Like a Family FOS presentation via YouTube
- IC5 campaigns with assistance from volunteers
- Had an opportunity to be part of a local foundation's COVID response booklet of info out to their constituents- put together a brief text ask, and built a special tile in Scouting Gives to take advantage of it
- Working through our volunteers. and sharing pictures that Scouting is still strong.
- We are using Mobilecause as our platform, which makes online giving easier via email and social media.
- Virtual Merit Badge Workshop sponsorships
- Giving donors thank you calls and checking in on them and their families at this time.
- We launched our text to give platform. We also just started a phone-a-thon calling past donors.
- Preparing donor prospects lists and letter campaigns, and time for donor research
- Social media campaign reminding them of the importance of Scouting and letting them know Scouting is needed now more than ever
- Research prospects

- Doing an FOS Video and PowerPoint to share what scouting is doing. Our council commissioner is shooting and we are making a soft ask
- Give Your Year campaign. Asking a lot of people to give a small amount to support Scouting. Example I earned my eagle in 1984, I'm going to give \$19.84
- Development Directors from our region are getting together virtually to share ideas; also created a google doc folder into which we can drop items we want to share; using time to reach out to donors to check in and update them on our outreach efforts to our Scouts, especially our inner city Scouts where online learning is not being required by the school district
- Connect donors to emerging needs as a result of the changes in the way we are changing lives

Everything Else

- Don't forget YPT Protocol in all YOUTH settings
- Have a secured 2nd date for day camp for later in the summer if first date is cancelled
- Working on projects associated with identifying Eagle Scouts
- Used the time to do some database clean-up!
- Checking clearances for expiration dates and notifying those who are expiring
- Encouraging leaders to take online training courses, update their YPT, teaching volunteers how to navigate some of the tech that is now being used
- Plan 2021 district retreat
- Going down to camp tomorrow to mow grass to get out of the house for a day
- Maintaining a more active social media presence
- Spend time taking Scouting U classes that apply to your job. If YPT is due in 3 months take it now.
- Job specific and technical training
- Working on a Unit service overhaul through the Polaris Project
- Working on projects to identify and congratulate seniors (who let's face it are having a rough time right now with everything on hold) - including scouts who are "lifers" meaning they've been in the program since 1st grade and those who are Eagles. Prepping to send postcards social media posts recognizing how many the council have
- I would take the time for some Professional Development too.
- Also using Facebook Messenger Video has proven to being effective in meeting
- Organized 'Camp in Your Backyard' event
- Weekly goal sheets created on Monday's to keep track of activities throughout the week. Quick daily calls to touch base, update and discuss resources needed by team and keep in touch.
- With the Exploring Program, I have set up multiple career videoconferencing presentations in which I am engaging all the students and schools that I serve. Keeps program going for participants, helps me network with new businesses, and let more TAY learn about our Exploring programs
- Outlook calendar invites is also a great tool for scheduling meetings without having to talk to someone at that particular moment.... It allows them time to respond anytime without having to pick up the phone and it instantly goes in everyone's calendar
- Field team meetings via MS Teams - asked to have this bi-weekly from supervisor
- We use Office 365 and OneDrive to collaborate on our projects. Using Zoom, we can all see the same file and discuss.
- Training leaders on how Scoutbook can be used to complete partial merit badges by connecting them safely to Merit Badge Counselors
- I am a Territory Manager so I am hoping that as scouting continues when our scout shops open again that we will see an increase in advancements purchases to help the organization
- Constant contact emails that go out to all the units with updates on what the council is doing to help with the program
- Virtual Scouting For Food
- Virtual Eagle Boards
- Virtual tours, hikes, and campfires

- Getting caught up on backdating for events. Getting as much prepared for upcoming events as possible.
- Ask what Scouts can do for their community. Maybe it's simply stay home or maybe it's organizing a PPE drive
- Don't ignore communications - even the simplest things are important when folks are isolated
- Service projects, such as video of yourself reading a book to kids for the local library
- Preparing mailing list of graduating high school seniors to encourage them to stay involved as College Reserve Scouts
- We do "State of the Council" presentations in front of our units at blue and golds, courts of honor, etc. (usually). This year we are doing a video of our presentations to share, and also doing Zoom meetings where we will present the info and open it up for Q&A