

## Friendship

Last Updated Friday, 07 December 2007

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### Highlights:

We dedicate a portion of our meetings, programs, and activities exclusively to fostering friendship

We instill in our Scouts the skill of fostering friendship

There are many opportunities in our Scouts Programs for Scouts to interact and make friends

Our Scout Programs believe in developing strong, responsible relationships. The Scout Programs of Adventure Scouts USA are relationship oriented because relationships enhance the quality of all of our lives. There are many types of relationships, and friendship is one of them.

### We Include Friendship in our Meetings, Programs, and Activities

The Scout Programs of Adventure Scouts USA believe developing the bonds of friendship is so important, we devote part of most of our programs exclusively to it



We use games in each meeting that allow for the development of FUN with a purpose. The friendship portion of team meetings includes games that offer our Scouts the opportunity to develop the skills of fostering friendship and to get to know each other better. For example, our Scouts play the game of Scout Bingo. In Scout Bingo, Scouts make a bingo game board and in each square they write a random fact, such as: "Favorite color is green", or "Has a little brother." Scouts then go around the room interviewing each other trying to fill in as many spaces as possible with a Scout's name. The friendship portion of our team meetings develops the skill of fostering friendship in our Scouts and encourages the development of friendship between our Scouts. The games selected are chosen by Scouts and vary depending upon their interests.

Because our Scouts choose their activities via consensus, they develop an understanding of and respect for each other's opinions. Consensus means that the Scouts discuss the issue until they all agree on what to do. When our Scouts discuss the issue of which weekend activity to participate in, they find ways to accommodate each other. Voting by consensus quickly instills the concept of wanting to get along with others. They develop creative and critical thinking by finding their own ways to reach consensus. If a Scout wants to go a museum and another to a planetarium, our Scouts could suggest finding a museum that also houses a planetarium.



In keeping with our emphasis on democratic theory and choice, during activities, our Scouts discover each other's individual likes and dislikes, each other's favorite foods and aspirations. Two Scouts who vote to play baseball may discover they both want to play professionally when they grow up. A Scout who votes to hold a "Fiesta Night" theme dinner discovers other Scouts with the same tastes. Our Scouts are individuals who choose to come together to form the bonds of friendship, helping and supporting each other.

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Our Scouts learn by doing, by working on their own or with others, while appreciating the opportunity to develop friendships with others. We encourage our Scouts to value the quality rather than the quantity of their friendships.

### Opportunities to Make Friends

Camping trips, movie nights, trips to the zoo, and service projects our Scouts choose to participate in, they have the opportunity to participate with other Scouts with whom they have something in common. Bonds of friendship begun in our Scout Programs reach beyond our Scout Programs into the daily life of our Scouts.

Our Scouts participate in tournaments and develop strategies that encourage the development of friendship and discovery of new interests. We provide an array of indoor and outdoor activities to interest all our Scouts. These activities enable our Scouts to all participate fairly since not everyone is the fastest runner and in some cases might not even like to run. This participation enables the Scouts to have fun while participating in suspense-filled activities. Our Scouts participate in the Friends Through Competition Program, in which Scouts who are skilled at athletics coach those who are less skilled.

Because we are a nondiscriminatory Scout Program, our Scouts also get the chance to meet and forge bonds of friendship with Scouts they may otherwise not have met. Our Scouts broaden their horizons by meeting Scouts from differing families and ethnicities. We encourage our Scouts to share with each other, enabling them to naturally acquire new knowledge. Our Scout Programs offer FUN with a purpose by providing games and activities to our Scouts that encourage personal growth.



We inspire our Scouts to collaborate with other Scouts locally and from elsewhere within our Scout Programs. For example, our Scouts can create Anime, a comic book, a video game, a small business venture or a song. We also encourage our Scouts to share with the other Scouts things that interest them such as books, movies and music.

### How to Be a Good Friend

Our Scouts are good friends because they are responsible and supportive of each other. In order to have a friend, you must first be a friend. Our Scouts volunteer to help each other, such as walking in pairs for safety, or just being there when a friend has a difficulty. We encourage our Scouts to take on the responsibility of being friends and being there for each other.

Friendship is an art not a science and consequently requires sensitivity to the feelings of the other. Friendship typically develops by having interests in common. When interests previously shared evolve or change it is difficult, but not impossible, to maintain the friendship. The Scout Programs of Adventure Scouts USA provide opportunities for shared experiences that permit the friends in our Scouts' life to have things in common, so their friendship group is expanding, not contracting. If our Scouts have friends who are interested in an activity, they are free to be their friends along whether they are Scouts or not.

### Making Friends in the Modern World

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In today's world, increased mobility and reliance on technology move friends further apart. Friendships today are more often based on common interests than on location. Our Scouts may have other Scouts on their team who live right down the street, or all the way across town. We encourage the development of friendships based on commonality of interest - friendships that last through moving, changing, and growing. Opportunities to forge strong friendships are getting rarer and rarer. We provide our Scouts with the opportunity to make friends in a safe, FUN, social setting. Many of our Scouts develop friendships that last a lifetime.

Whether our Scouts are cementing old friendships or forging new ones, our Scout Programs emphasize the importance of strong friendships, and the development of the skill of fostering friendship.