

At Scout meetings, most Scouts begin or end their meeting reciting the Scout Oath and Law, and the Outdoor Code:

- Scout Oath: On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.
- Scout Law: Trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.
- Outdoor Code: As an American, I will do my best to be clean in my outdoor manners, be careful with fire, be considerate in the outdoors, and to be conservation minded.

Let these words sink in for a moment.

As we're in the middle of our key recruiting and membership growth season, I find myself thinking about why recruiting matters which ultimately brings me to why Scouting matters. When I reflect on the Scout Oath, Law, and Outdoor Code, I'm reminded why Scouting matters.

The mission of the BSA is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law. But that's not really what Scouts themselves think about...

In kindergarten, Scouting starts with the Lion program – an introduction to the Scouting program built around fun activities with mom, dad, or another guardian. As the Cub Scout grows, the program evolves with the Scout by offering more challenges and more independence - introducing outdoor programs, safety and first aid skills, teamwork, and citizenship activities. Of course, the Scout doesn't know this... they're just having fun while working through a whole lot of new experiences. It's awesome!

At the Scouts BSA level, the program continues to build upon these same basic principles while truly focusing on developing incredible leadership, communication, and teamworking skills by giving our youth opportunities to serve as Patrol Leaders, Senior Patrol Leaders, Chaplains Aids, Quartermasters, and in other positions. With Scouts BSA, youth work at their own pace for rank advancement and focus on their own interests through merit badges, but the aims and missions of Scouting hold true.

Helping people at all times; being friendly, courteous and kind; respecting the outdoors: these are timeless principles. We need more people – youth and adults – in our communities leading with these principles. We need more Scouts in our communities!

That's where you come in. Encourage your children and the youth in your unit to bring their friends to the next den/pack/troop/crew/ship activity. When selling popcorn, bring and hand out information about your unit. Wear your uniform or other Scout shirt when traveling to outings and during service projects. Be a champion for Scouting in your neighborhood and be intentional with your actions on building our future communities by recruiting youth *today*.

Think about how much stronger our neighborhoods would be if we had more community and business leaders with the shared values of the Scout Oath and Law, being prepared, and doing a good turn daily. That's a community where I'd like to live and that's a business in which I'd love to work. We all have the massive opportunity and responsibility to make this happen. How are you helping expand Scouting's reach?