



# The BSA Expands Programs to Welcome Girls from Cub Scouts to Highest Rank of Eagle Scout

*Research reinforces interest expressed by families and girls nationwide as organization looks to offer programs that meet the needs of today's families*

## Serving the Whole Family

BSA's mission 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 Scout Law. Our priority is to bring the benefits of Scouting to more youth while remaining true to our mission. We are excited to announce beginning in the fall of 2018, our **Cub Scouts program** will be open to boy and girls. By welcoming both girls and boys into the program, even more youth will have access to the character development and values-based leadership that Scouting promises and be better prepared for future success.

## Historic Announcement

On October 11, the Boy Scouts of America Board of Directors unanimously approved welcoming girls into its iconic Cub Scout program. They also agreed to begin development of a Scouting program for older girls that will enable them to advance and earn the highest rank of Eagle Scout. The historic decision comes after years of receiving requests from families and girls, the organization evaluated the results of numerous research efforts, gaining input from current members and leaders, as well as parents and girls who've never been involved in Scouting – to understand how to offer families an important additional choice in meeting the character development needs of all their children.

"This decision is true to the BSA's mission and core values outlined in the Scout Oath and Law. The values of Scouting – trustworthy, loyal, helpful, kind, brave and reverent, for example – are important for both young men and women," said Michael Surbaugh, the BSA's Chief Scout Executive. "We believe it is critical to evolve how our programs meet the needs of families interested in positive and lifelong experiences for their children. We strive to bring what our organization does best – developing character and leadership for young people – to as many families and youth as possible as we help shape the next generation of leaders."



Families today are busier and more diverse than ever. Most are dual-earners and there are more single-parent households than ever before [1], making convenient programs that serve the whole family more appealing. Additionally, many groups currently underserved by Scouting, including the Hispanic and Asian communities, prefer to participate in activities as a family. Recent surveys [2] of parents not involved with Scouting showed high interest in getting their daughters signed up for programs like Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, with 90 percent expressing interest in a program like Cub Scouts and 87 percent expressing interest in a program like Boy

Scouts. Education experts also evaluated the curriculum and content and confirmed relevancy of the program for young women.

“The BSA’s record of producing leaders with high character and integrity is amazing” said Randall Stephenson, BSA’s national board chairman. “I’ve seen nothing that develops leadership skills and discipline like this organization. It is time to make these outstanding leadership development programs available to girls.”

### **Program Timeline**

Starting in the 2018 program year, families can choose to sign up their sons and daughters for Cub Scouts. Existing packs may choose to establish a new girl pack, establish a pack that consists of girl dens and boy dens or remain an all-boy pack. Cub Scout dens will be single-gender — all boys or all girls. Using the same curriculum as the Boy Scouts program, the organization will also deliver a program for older girls, which will be announced in 2018 and projected to be available in 2019, that will enable them to earn the Eagle Scout rank. This unique approach allows the organization to maintain the integrity of the single gender model while also meeting the needs of today’s families.

This decision expands the programs that the Boy Scouts of America offers for both boys and girls. Although known for its iconic programs for boys, the BSA has offered co-ed programs since 1971 through Exploring and the Venturing program, which celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018. The STEM Scout pilot program is also available for both boys and girls.

### **Additional Information**

For more information about the expanded opportunities for family Scouting, please visit the [Family Scouting page](#).

**Photo Credit:** Photo shows McKenzie, granddaughter of Mount Baker Council Development Director Michael Hawks. She has been envious of her big brother’s participation in Cub Scouts.