

Cub Scout Safety Scenario for April: The Buddy System Breakdown at Camp Minsi

For Cub Scouts (Ages 6–10)

Your Pack is on a **weekend campout at Camp Minsi**. After lunch, the leaders take everyone on a short nature walk along one of the marked trails near the lake. Before starting, the leader reminds everyone: **“Stay with your buddy at all times. Buddies look out for each other.”**

Three Cub Scouts—Alex, Jordan, and Sam—are assigned as a **buddy trio**. As the group walks, Alex and Jordan get excited when they spot a huge fallen tree up ahead. They start running toward it, calling, “Come on, Sam! Hurry!”

Sam tries to keep up but stops when seeing an interesting bug on a rock. When Sam looks up again, Alex and Jordan are gone. The trail curves around a patch of mountain laurel, blocking the view. Sam calls out, but the others don’t hear.

Feeling nervous, Sam decides **not** to stay put. Instead, Sam tries to walk back toward where he/she thinks the Pack is. The trail splits, and Sam chooses the wrong direction. Within minutes, he/she is **lost and scared**, wandering deeper into the woods.

Meanwhile, Alex and Jordan reach the fallen tree and finally notice Sam isn’t with them. Instead of going to get a leader, they say, “Let’s go find him!” They run back down the trail, but they also take the wrong turn at the split. Now **Alex and Jordan are lost too**.

Leaders realize the trio is missing and begin a search. After about **15 minutes**, they find Sam first—crying but unharmed—and then locate Alex and Jordan a short distance away. All three are shaken, but safe.

Alex says, “We didn’t mean to leave Sam. We thought he/she was right behind us.” Jordan adds, “We tried to find him/her, but then we got lost too.”

This becomes a puzzle for the Pack: **What went wrong, and how can we prevent this from happening again?**

Role-Play / Skit: “The Buddy System Detectives — Lost Trio Edition”

Characters

- 3 Cub Scouts (the buddy trio)
- 1 Leader
- 1 “Safety Scout Detective” narrator

Props

- Rope or tape to mark a simple “trail”
- A rock or cone to represent the “bug spot”
- A bush or cardboard cutout to represent the “curve”
- A fork in the trail marked with tape

Skit Outline

Scene 1 — The Exciting Discovery

- Alex and Jordan run ahead.
- Sam stops to look at the “bug.”
- Alex and Jordan disappear around the “curve.”
- Sam looks up, realizes he/she is alone, and becomes scared.

Scene 2 — The Wrong Choices

- Sam tries to walk back and takes the wrong turn.
- Alex and Jordan return, notice Sam is missing, and decide to search on their own.
- They also take the wrong turn and get lost.

Scene 3 — Safety Scout Detective Freezes the Scene

- Detective says: “Let’s solve the mystery! How did all three Cubs get lost?”
- Cubs examine:
 - Running ahead
 - Not checking on their buddy
 - Sam not staying put
 - Alex and Jordan not getting a leader
 - The confusing trail split

Scene 4 — The Safe Way

- Leader explains: “Buddies stay together. If someone is missing, you get an adult. If YOU are lost, you stay put.”

- Cubs practice:
 - Walking together
 - Calling “Buddy check!”
 - Stopping when someone stops
 - Going to a leader if a buddy is missing
 - Staying put if separated

Final Line (all together)

“Buddies stay together—no Cub left behind!”

Leader’s Guide: The Buddy System Breakdown at Camp Minsi

Purpose of This Scenario

This scenario teaches Cub Scouts:

- Why the buddy system is essential
 - How small choices can lead to big safety problems
 - Why running ahead is dangerous
 - What to do if they become lost
 - Why getting an adult is ALWAYS the right choice
 - Why reporting near misses is important
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Key Teaching Points

1. This Could be Considered a Near Miss With Serious Potential

All three Cubs were lost for about 15 minutes. This could have led to:

- Becoming more deeply lost in the woods
- Panic or emotional distress
- Injury while wandering
- A large-scale search effort

This may be a **near-miss incident**. When in doubt, it should be reported to the Council for determination and for data gathering/analysis.

2. Help Cubs Analyze the “Hidden Clues”

Encourage them to think like detectives:

- **Running ahead** — buddies must move at the same pace.
- **Trail curve and split** — visual separation happens quickly.
- **Sam leaving the area** — instead of staying put.
- **Alex and Jordan searching alone** — instead of getting a leader.
- **No communication** — no one said “stop” or “wait.”
- **Excitement and distraction** — safety rules forgotten.

This scenario builds higher-level reasoning by asking Cubs to connect **multiple causes**, not just one mistake.

3. Connect to Scouting America Safety Expectations

Reinforce:

- The buddy system is required for all activities.
 - Buddies must stay within sight and sound of each other.
 - Running ahead is unsafe.
 - If one Cub stops, the whole buddy group stops.
 - If a buddy is missing, **get an adult immediately**.
 - If YOU are lost, **stay put** and wait for help.
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4. Use the Skit to Reinforce Learning

The skit helps Cubs:

- Practice staying with buddies.
- Understand how quickly separation can happen.

- Learn to communicate clearly.
 - Build confidence in speaking up when something feels unsafe.
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5. What Leaders Should Do After a Near Miss

- Talk with the buddy group about what happened.
 - Review the buddy system with the entire Pack.
 - Document and report the near miss.
 - Adjust pacing and supervision on future hikes.
 - Reinforce “stay put if lost” procedures.
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Suggested Leader Discussion Prompts

- “What caused Sam to get separated?”
 - “Why was it unsafe for Sam to try to walk back alone?”
 - “Why was it unsafe for Alex and Jordan to search without an adult?”
 - “How did the trail curve and split make the situation worse?”
 - “What should each Cub have done differently?”
 - “Why is the buddy system so important?”
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Takeaway Message for Cub Scouts

Buddies stay together. If someone is missing, get an adult. If YOU are lost, stay put. When we follow the buddy system and report near misses, we keep every Cub Scout safe.