

Methods of Invitation Guidebook



Housatonic Council
Boy Scouts of America

Table of Contents - Methods of Invitation Guidebook

Message from the Mayor	3
Dear Scout Leader	4
<u>Methods of Invitation</u>	5-18
1. Wear Your Uniform	5
2. Talk about Scouting with Friends	5
3. Adults Word of Mouth	6
4. Show & Tell	6
5. Pack Information Sheet	7
6. Personalized Invitation or Letter	8
7. Telephone Calls to Families	9
8. School Night for Scouting Flyer	10
9. Display Cases/Bulletin Boards	10
10. School PA or TV--Announcement	11
11. Newsletters and Websites	11
12. Civic Functions	12
13. Visits-Classroom & Sunday School	12
14. Endorsements	14
15. News Releases	14
16. Business Window/Counter Displays	15
17. Yard Signs	15
18. Cub Scout Stickers	15
19. Special Events	16
20. Marquee School, Business, Church	16
21. Pack or Den Website	17
22. Public Announcement	17
23. Conduct a School Night Program	17
24. Follow-Up Join Scouting Night	18
25. Halloween Candy	18
In Conclusion	19

"I don't know the name of the person that recruited me into Scouting, but if I did, I would walk up to them and share my gratitude"



Greetings:

As a youth in Scouting myself, I applaud our community's Cub Scout leaders for dedicating their time and talents to Scouting. More and more we see the real need for youth to be exposed to positive role models and have opportunities to grow in character and skills. The Scouting program teaches our community's young people leadership, character and values, and, most important, makes them feel a sense of belonging.

I agree with Will Rogers when he said the only problem with Scouts is that "there aren't enough of them." I challenge you to spread the word about the Scouting program and the positive influences it has on our children. The following material has been prepared to assist you in inviting new families to join the Scouting program. As you walk through this book I am sure that you will share my excitement about this project as a means to stretch our imaginations on how we can spread the excitement of Cub Scouting. What elementary-aged boy wouldn't want to spend a week at Day Camp with hundreds of other Scouts, or race in the annual Pinewood Derby?

What you do is important for our young people, our communities and our nation. I don't know the name of the person that invited me to join Scouting, but if I did, I would walk up to them and share my gratitude. If that person had not asked me to join, I would have missed out on some of my most exciting childhood memories.

Sincerely,

Mark Laretti
Mayor, City of Shelton

**"As Leaders, you
are the council's
best sales force."**

**"Our goal is to give every
boy the opportunity to join
Cub Scouting."**

Cub Scout Leader,

For over 75 years, the Cub Scout program has been offering the Youth in our communities the fun and adventure they seek. Over 53 million Cub Scouts in the last 75 years have entered into every walk of life, bringing the values of "Do Your Best" into our country's moral fiber.

As leaders, you are Cub Scouting's best sales force. This guidebook has been created to assist leaders by offering a series of quality invitation methods to reach each and every young man in our communities. Our goal is to give every boy the opportunity to join Cub Scouting. This collection of invitation ideas, will help us to ensure that no young man is left out of the fun and excitement of Cub Scouting. Left out of the opportunity to "Do His Best", left out of the opportunity to carve a pinewood derby car, to experience the thrill of attending Cub Scout Day Camp and Strang Scout Reservation, and to build lasting friendships in his den and pack.

We challenge you to use these ideas; to use your imagination and to help us spread the excitement of the Cub Scout program.

Yours In Scouting,

Richard Marano
Council President

Jeff Anderson
Council Commissioner

Kevin Bishop
Scout Executive

The following are ideas that leaders and Scouts can do in preparation for this fall's School Night for Scouting and all year long and in a variety of settings. They may seem obvious but they are easy to do and are great conversation pieces while creating awareness of Cub Scouting in your community.

1. Cub Scouts and Leaders wear your uniform often

Materials Needed: Your uniform!

Timing: Whenever possible ... be creative!

Steps: Wearing the uniform is like a walking billboard, and can grab the attention of youth and adults. The uniform also serves as a conversation piece. Scouts and leaders should wear their uniforms to school, church, the grocery store, library, sporting events, any place you can think of! The uniform (or other scout attire) is a great way to show the presence of Cub Scouts in your community and spread the excitement. Be sure that every member of your pack wears their uniform to school on the day of your School Night for Scouting and to school the days of your pack meetings and den meetings. Remember that the uniform is not complete without the person inside. Be knowledgeable about what all of the patches mean and share the excitement of Scouting.



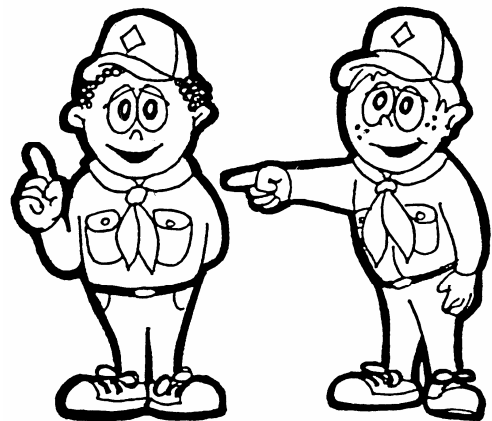
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2. Encourage Cub Scouts to talk about Scouting with their friends

Materials Needed: Experiences and stories that show how and why they enjoy Scouting.

Timing: As often as they can!

Steps: Word of mouth is one of the most powerful and lasting forms of advertising. Kids talking to others about the fun they have is a great way to spread excitement among youth. Use the "recruiter patch" or create your own pack incentive program that rewards your Scouts if they bring a friend to join Cub Scouting.

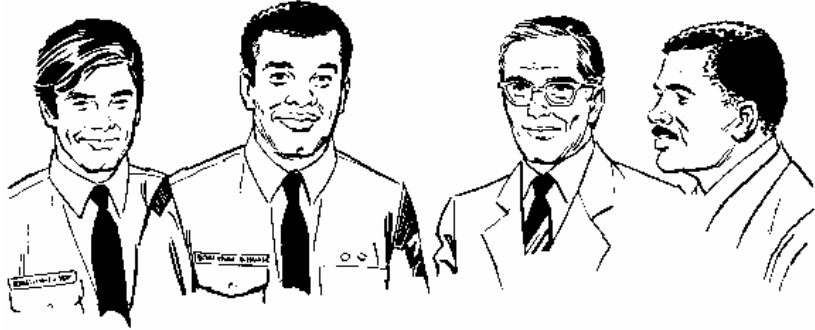


3. Adults should do this too (Word of Mouth)

Materials Needed: Voice, conversation and excitement of Scouting.

Timing: As often as possible.

Steps: Cub Scout families consistently see the value of Scouting in their own lives and by this, they are our best salespeople. Share Scouting's benefits and excitement with other parents. Most families are looking for programs filled with excitement and positive values. Most families are involved in lots of activities including sports and church. Use these forums to interact with parents and share Cub Scout stories.



4. "Show and Tell"



Materials Needed: Photographs, awards, uniform, pinewood derby car and other exciting visuals.

Timing: Before the pack's School Night for Scouting and anytime during the school year.

Steps: Encourage your Cubs to use Cub Scouting as a part of their "Show and Tell" opportunities in school. Peer-to-peer recruitment is very successful and this is a great forum for scouts to share their stories and the excitement of Cub Scouting. Be sure that they are prepared with a story or exciting information. If possible provide stickers or other handouts for the scout to distribute at the conclusion of his presentation.

5. Develop a Pack information Sheet

Materials Needed: Paper, pen or computer, key information on your pack.

Timing: Have sheet prepared to give (email, fax or send) to any interested family at any time (in addition to your Join Scouting Night).

Steps to Deliver: This is your chance to brag about your pack. Include items such as time, date and location of pack meetings, list of upcoming events, Den Leaders and Committee Members' names and phone numbers, and other exciting details about why you are involved, including pictures. Provide your sponsoring organization a copy of the sheet so that they can answer any questions they might receive regarding your pack. Make sure that your pack committee and parents have copies of the sheet to distribute as well.

Pack 123 Information

When Does Pack 123 Meet?

We meet the first Monday of each month at First Lutheran Church, 789 Main Street, at 7:30 p.m. (Dens meet weekly based upon schedules.)

What Activities Go On Throughout the Year?

Pinewood Derby, Day Camp, Field Trips, Crafts, Advancement, Swimming, Bicycle Safety, Basic First Aid, Citizenship Skills, and So Much More!!!

Tell Me About Cub Scouting

Your Cub Scout is a member of a den. Most dens have six to eight boys and meet once a week. Den meetings are a time for learning new things and having fun. Dens are led by a team of adult volunteers - the den leader and assistant den leader(s). Den leaders are usually parents of boys in the den. Your Cub Scout is also a member of a pack. Most packs have several den and meet once a month. Pack meetings usually follow a suggested theme and are a time for boys to be recognized for their accomplishments during the month, to perform skits and songs they've learned in den meetings and in have fun with the entire family.

Please contact one of the following contacts for entire family. Cubmaster Lisa White 203-555-3456 Committee Chairman Bill Smith 203-555-4321

6. Personalized Letter of Invitation

(Direct mail approach)

Materials: List of all first through fifth grade boys, envelopes, stamps, and Cub Scouting book stationery or cards.

Timing: Work with school officials, PTA, church or sport teams to secure list of names and addresses. Should be mailed or delivered seven to ten days prior to School Night for Scouting.

Steps: Boys love to receive their own mail. All schools post classroom assignment before school starts. Copy the names of the boys then coordinate them with school directories if available. Personalize a letter or card including a description of Cub Scouting, date, time, and location of Join Scouting Night, and contact name and information. If addresses are unavailable, or postage is too costly, seek permission to deliver the personalized invitations to the classrooms. Make sure that cards or letters are individually addressed to each boy.

Tip: If you have access to email addresses email the invitation!



Sample Personalized Letter

September 8, 2005

Dear Sam,

You and your family are invited to a meeting next Wednesday, September 17, 2005 to find out about the fun and excitement of Cub Scouting. Many of your classmates are members of Pack 362. If you like to go on field trips, go hiking, do crafts and have fun - Cub Scouts is the place for you! Meet us in the cafeteria at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call Joe at 203-777-8888.

Sincerely,

Members of Cub Scout Pack 362

7. Telephone Call to Families

Materials: Telephone, list of phone numbers and volunteers.

Timing: Two or three days prior to your Join Scouting Night.

Steps: A telephone call to the parents of a potential Cub Scout is a very effective way to recruit new families. This personal contact works very well. Be prepared to answer questions they might have and share the specific benefits of Cub Scouting. Names and numbers may be obtained by using school, church or other organization directories, telephone book white pages, or the Internet. Be sure to be courteous and identify yourself and what association you might have with them. For example, "Your son is in the same class at school with mine." Due to the high number of phone calls, be sure to split up the list among the leaders in your pack. Below is a sample telephone conversation script.



Sample Telephone Script

"Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling to invite you to our Cub Scout Join Scouting Night on _____ night in the school cafeteria, at _____ P.M. My son _____ is in the same class as your son _____."

Share the following Cub Scout facts:

Cub Scouting is a family program

Cub Scouts reinforces the values of "doing your best"

Educators call Cub Scouting the #1 extra curricular program in America today

The program helps to reinforce the class curriculum

Cub Scouting is fun!

Close the call by saying, "We look forward to seeing you at the meeting. How many from your family do you think will attend?"

8. School Night for Scouting Information Flyer

Materials: Work with your District Executive to order council-provided flyers, or create your own. Be sure to include the date, time, and location of your meeting and contact name and phone and number.

Timing/Steps: Plan your School Night for Scouting within the first few weeks of the school year. Meet with facility contact (principal, Assistant principal, etc) early to get your meeting booked. Order your flyers through your District Executive at 203-734-3329 ext. 303. Before your Scouting Night, deliver flyers to the school (or schools) and any other outlets including churches that do not host packs, seven to ten days prior to the meeting. A second flyer could be distributed the day of your event, just as a friendly reminder! Make sure you have a presence at "Back-to-School Night" (also called Parent/teacher night). Have School night Flyers on hand. Make sure you have some Cub Scouts (in uniform) there with you.

Tip: If you are delivering the flyers to schools, offer to pre-stack groups of flyers for the individual teacher's boxes. This will save time for the office staff and help to ensure their delivery.

9. Display Cases and Bulletin Boards

Materials: Pack calendar with contact names and telephone numbers, photographs, awards, pinewood derby cars, ribbons and any other exciting visuals.

Timing: Promotion of Cub Scouting at the beginning of the school year is very important. This is the time of year when most families decide to join new activities. If possible the display should be maintained year-round and changed monthly.

Steps: Seek permission from the school, church, recreation center or other organization to use the display case. Many schools have such cases near the entrance doors. Have a person from your pack responsible for setting up the display and changing it once a month during the year. Each month should have a monthly theme with catch phrases to attract attention. The display items should go along with the monthly theme. The display should be fun and informative and create a sense of excitement about the Scouting program. If access to display case all year round is not possible, using it in the beginning of the school year would be the best time.

10. School PA or TV Announcement

Materials: Go to your elementary School in person (and in Uniform).

Timing: The week of the School Night for Scouting and through-out the year, especially the day of pack meetings.

Steps: Visit with the school regarding allowing a leader to make a special announcement. Following is a sample announcement.



"All boys are invited to bring their parents and come and learn about Cub Scout Pack #_____ that meets right here at _____. If you like swimming, hiking, field trips and having fun with your friends, Cub scouts is for you! The meeting will start at _____ p.m. in the cafeteria, the place where you eat lunch. Hope to see you there."

11. School, Church Community or Business Newsletters and Websites



Materials: Information or announcement regarding your Cub Scout Pack.

Timing: Anytime throughout the year, especially in the first month of school a week or two prior to your Join Scouting Night.

Steps: Speak with the person in charge of the newsletter to find out how and when to submit an article or announcement. If your school or school district hosts its own web-site, post information there as well. Be sure to begin promoting your School Night for Scouting two weeks prior to the date. Include information that will attract the

viewers attention while also sharing logistical information regarding the pack.

12. School, Church and Civic Functions

Materials: Display table, pack picture board, Cub Scout and Adult Leader applications, sign-in sheets, copies of the pack's yearly program or calendar, Pinewood Derby cars, rockets, pack flag with ribbons earned, flyers with next Join Scouting Night/Pack Meeting information, pack leadership roster.

Timing: Set-up display at all school open houses, Back-to-School nights, meet the teacher night, curriculum nights, carnivals, Parent/Teacher conferences, an other church or civic events.

Steps: Secure permission from the school principal or church pastor prior to the event. Call early to secure the best, most visible location. Set-up the display 45 minutes to one hour prior to the event to ensure completion before the arrival of prospective families. Uniformed leaders and Scouts should staff displays. Leaders should be informed of pack operations to be able to answer questions. Leaders should introduce themselves to prospective families as they arrive and should invite the families to join at that time, or sign them up to receive more information. Make follow-up calls with those families that signed in to invite them to your upcoming School Night for Scouting or pack meeting. These events are great public exposure for your program.



13. Sunday School Classroom and Lunchroom Visits

Materials: Scout uniform, copy of invitation flier, stickers with School Night for Scouting information, Pinewood Derby car or other Scouting visuals.

Timing: The day before or the day of the Join Scouting Night.

Steps: Work with the church or school to arrange these visits. If doing classroom visits, ask for a map or list so that you don't miss any classrooms. Arrive on time and check in at the office. Remember to be polite and let the teacher or pastor introduce you. Ask the teacher for input on where to stand. This time is precious so be sure to keep your speech simple, short, fun, positive, and to the point. Don't forget to stress family participation so that sisters can encourage their younger brothers to join. When you are finished, give each boy a

School Night for Scouting sticker or flyer and then thank the teacher. When visits are complete, check out with the office. Be sure to thank the teachers and the school staff.

Sample Classroom, Lunch Room or Sunday School Presentation:

"Hi guys and girls. How are you doing? My name is _____ and I *am* with the Cub Scouts. As you can see, I have worn my uniform today with all my patches and want to invite you to our Cub Scout meeting tomorrow night at ____ p.m. How many of you have heard of the Cub Scouts? Well, some of you may not have, so I want to ask you if you like to do some of the same things we do in Cub Scouts. Now let me think of some of the things we do ... "

"How many of you like to play sports and games? Wow, did you know you earn awards for playing the sports you play?"

"How many of you like to build things and work on crafts? I even brought my son's Pinewood Derby car to show you one of the things we get to build and then race down a track and get prizes. Our pack also builds model rockets in the summer and we have a big rocket rally where we shoot them off, all at the same time."

"Now let me think of one other thing ... How many of you like to go hiking or camping? Our pack goes hiking and we go to Cub Scout Camp in the summertime. So, you see you are already doing some of the things we do in Cub Scouts."

"Now, what I need you to do is make sure that your mom or dad knows about our meeting which will be tomorrow night at ____ p.m. here at your school. You should have gotten one of these papers (Hold up School Night for Scouting flyer) in your take home folder, so your parents already know about the meeting. But I need you to help them remember. So, I am going to give you one of these stickers that have the time of our meeting, and you can tell your parents when you get home." (Walk around, have all the boys raise their hands, and give each one a sticker. If there are questions, encourage them to come to the meeting and you can answer all their questions.)

So, don't forget to tell your parents that our Cub Scout meeting is tomorrow night at what time? That's right, ____ p.m. and we will meet in the gymnasium. I hope to see each of you there."

14. Teacher, Principal, Coach or Pastor Endorsements

Materials: A highly influential teacher, member of the PTA, principal, coach or Pastor that has his/her finger on the pulse of the school, church and community



Timing: Teachers, principals, pastors and coaches should begin endorsing Cub Scouts during the first week of school. Statements of support are extremely helpful before, during, and after your Join Scouting Night.

Steps: It is important to educate administrators on the benefits of Cub Scouting to families, the school and community. Identify a teacher, principal, coach or pastor to make a statement of support whether that is through the newsletter, during an assembly or other public forum or at your Join Scouting Night. If you do a personalized letter, use a quote from the individual or have the letter come from them. The endorsement from a trustworthy person is valuable to the success of new family recruitment. Past and present experience with Scouting also adds credibility.

15. News Releases to Local Newspapers and Community Cable Stations

Materials: Creativity, and essential to find out when the paper you are working with is printed and what the deadlines are. An article too soon will be forgotten and an article too late will not be published.

Steps: The first line of the release needs to be a catchy, clear statement. The information needs to be clear and concise. The article should have all pertinent information such as pack number (with their permission). Make the release one page. A call to follow-up is always a good idea. The release can be used to promote your School Night for Scouting or to feature a community service project, award, etc.



16. Business Window/Counter Displays



Materials: Cub Scout poster or brochure with contact name and other pertinent information.

Timing: Year-round, but specifically the weeks prior to your Join Scouting Night.

Steps: Ask local merchants to support Scouting in your area by placing a poster in their windows or placing brochures in their organizations. Work with them closely on how long they will allow the items to be placed and any other requirements they might have. (Be sure to thank them with a package of Trail's End Popcorn).

17. Yard Signs

Materials: Yard signs with information including School Night for Scouting date, time, location, with a contact person and phone number and Cub Scout logo. Print on colorful material. But make sure the lettering is bold enough and large enough to be seen from a car as it drives by.

Timing: Post signs prior to the beginning of the school year and all year-long.

Steps: Be sure to be aware of any regulations regarding yard signs. Identify a person in your pack that lives close to the school or on a high traffic locations within the community including intersections and yards. If a school, church, recreation center or other organization will allow it post signs there too.



18. Cub Scout Stickers

Materials: Cub Scout recruitment stickers including time and date of School Night for Scouting or other event. Stickers can be made from address labels on your home computer.

Timing: Use in the weeks and days prior to your Join Scouting Night, pack meeting or other event.

Steps: Hand out the stickers at your school visits, school open house or any other opportunity where youth will be present.

19. Special Events



Materials: Cub Scout posters, general information, flyers, stickers, sign-in sheets, and Cub Scout and leader applications.

Timing: If you are planning a special event that you will invite families to attend, invitations should be mailed and hung two weeks prior to the event. A personal follow-up as the event nears will also remind the family of your event. Make sure that you start planning the event well before the chosen date so that you have plenty of time to ensure its success.

Steps: Secure a location and date for the special event. Make sure you have a dynamic agenda and activities. If you are inviting families to join, create and distribute the invitation.

Tip: Host a pinewood derby at the shopping mall and invite families from your school and neighborhood to participate. By hosting an event at a public place like a shopping mall, you will reach additional Families. Have some pre-made cars available for "visitors to race (but not keep)". Have kits available for purchase. Other ideas include hosting a booth or activity at community airs, festivals or other events.

20. Community, Church, School or Business Marquee

Materials: Catchy information or message on marquee.

Timing: Throughout but especially promote School Night for Scouting or local event.

Steps: Identify a marquee in high traffic areas, school or other organizations. Speak with the person in charge of the marquee or sign to post your message. Be sure to be clear on the duration of your use and any other requirements. Due to limited space, message as clear as "Join Cub Scouts Here September 15, 7 P.M." will catch people's attention. If a school has a scrolling sign in the lunchroom, messages may also be posted there.



21. Pack Website

Materials: Computer, internet skills, internet provider

Timing: Year-round

Steps: Build a pack or den website including pertinent information regarding your Cub Scout Pack including photographs, program calendar, how to join, and the benefits and excitement of Cub Scouting.

Be sure to be aware of and follow the council's Unit Website Policies. Ask school, church and other community organizations with websites to provide a link to your site and to publicize your address.

22. Announcement in church, neighborhood, subdivision, company, city, school district and recreation center newsletters

Materials: Pertinent information regarding your Cub Scout Pack.

Timing: Promote your School Night for Scouting at least a month to two weeks ahead and other pack activities in these newsletters.

Steps: Ask the appropriate person how to get an invitation/story/announcement in each publication. Determine when the deadline for each publication is. Create something that is interesting to read! Make people want to join Scouting! Be sure to thank the organization for it's support.

23. Conduct a Join Scouting Program

Steps:

- a. Meeting MC is site coordinator, if more then one unit
- b. Use Scouts
- c. Use Displays
- d. Consider using a flip-chart as part of the pitch
- e. Keep it fast paced
- f. Get registration forms filled-out and collect registration and Boys Life fees
- g. Turn in registrations and fees
- h. Send thank you notes and recognition certificates to those who helped make recruiting a success

24. Follow-Up Join Scouting Night

Materials: Recruitment flyers with date, time, location with contact person and phone number, and stickers.

Timing: Should be scheduled immediately following the conclusion of the first Join Scouting Night. The actual date of the second School Night for Scouting should be within two to three weeks after the first.

Steps: Be sure to have all families that attend your first School Night for Scouting sign-in with name, address, phone number, boy's name, boy's grade, and boy's age. Prior to your second meeting follow-up with families that attended the original meeting but did not join. Inevitably, there will be families that cannot attend your first scheduled Join Scouting Night. Many families are not aware that they can join Scouting year-round, and think that if they missed the first meeting that they are out of luck. There may also be parents who attended Join Scouting Night, but were indecisive about joining. With the knowledge that there is a good number of youth who still have the interest to join, it is important that a second School Night for Scouting be scheduled. Make sure that the flyers are printed with all the pertinent information, and that the school receives and delivers the flyers. Be sure to have sign-in sheets at all meetings so that follow-up may be made with interested families.



25. Halloween Candy

Materials: Scout uniform, labels with "Join Scouting!" and phone numbers of the council or a member of your pack, markers, mini-chocolate bars, large bowl.

Timing: October 31, afternoon through the evening.

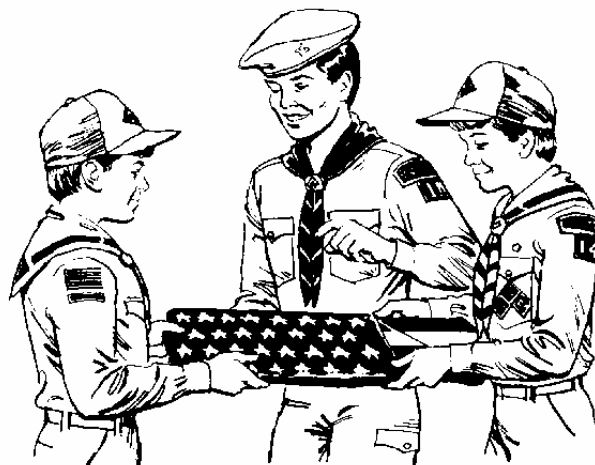
Steps: Purchase several bags of mini-chocolate bars; print out sheets of labels that say "Join Scouting" with phone numbers of your Pack Leaders. Using markers, add a dash of color to the labels, carefully place labels on the candy bars, dress up in your Scouting uniform, and when trick-or-treaters come by, welcome them and give them a Scouting candy with a smile! Preparing the candy could be a fun den activity.

Thanks for your efforts...

As Cub Scout leaders, you are very important to the success of the program. We applaud and thank you for taking an active interest in your community's youth.

The Housatonic Council, your District Executive, your Vice President for Membership, and your Unit Commissioner are here to support you and your Cub Scout Pack. They are available to assist you with all aspects of your pack including recruiting, training, program planning and fundraising.

The Housatonic Council will support the School Night for Scouting efforts of all of our Cub Scout Packs through the possible use of billboards, television, newspaper and radio public service announcements, as well as other effective and efficient means of advertising. If you have an idea, contact of a resource that would help to further these efforts, please contact your District Executive at 203-734-3329 ext. 303.



Remember, in Cub Scout recruitment
"Give Every Boy the Opportunity to Join Cub Scouting."