

## **Adult contact with Scouts**

### **Guidelines for visitors to troop meetings and campouts**

**MEETINGS:** Your attendance at meetings is appreciated and encouraged. Adult visitors to meetings are asked to attend the presentation by following a patrol around for the meeting. Watch to see what happens. Your presence in itself is a contribution to the program going as well as it can. Ask questions of the leader if you are interested in the topic. In most cases, this in itself enhances the program.

At troop meetings, as well as other troop functions, boys are in charge of the program. Oftentimes a boy will be presenting material or running a contest or game. The troop is structured in such a way that each patrol has its own boy leadership. Therefore, in a perfect scenario, everything would run smoothly. Unfortunately, sometimes there are boys who are disruptive. Wait to see if the boy leader does anything about it. If he does nothing, try sitting beside the boy who you think is causing the problem. If the problems persist, ask the boy leader if he would like you to take the disrupter away. If yes, sit the boy by himself, out of the sight of the other boys or take him to the scoutmaster. What we would like to avoid are negative disciplining, especially if done in a confrontational manner in front of the other boys. A quiet, respectful way of dealing with the situation is best. If it looks like there are problems that are too big to deal with, get the scoutmaster or an assistant.

The only time that adult intervention should circumvent the boy leadership, is if there is a safety issue that the boy leaders are not dealing with immediately. If possible, bring it to the leader's attention for him to deal with. If this is not possible, and it is not possible to get assistance from an assistant scoutmaster, correct the situation if you are able.

**CAMPOUTS:** Adult visitors on campouts should take a similar stance to those at meetings. Stick with other adults who frequent campouts to watch what they do. For the most part, the boys will take care of themselves. We are not there to enforce rules, baby sit or to provide entertainment. Our purpose is to enhance the program by our presence, our positive support of their activities, and by making sure that things are being done in a safe manner.

It is possible that at your first campout or meeting you may feel that you are not doing anything. First and foremost, your presence will encourage better participation. Secondly, the more you observe what goes on, the more helpful you will become. Lastly, boys learn best when they have to do things. By not doing things for them when we could, we show them that we have confidence in their abilities to be independent and mature. Just keep in mind the philosophy of Scouting's founder, Lord Baden-Powell, "never do for a boy, what a boy can do for himself."