

DEN DISCIPLINE

Discipline is essential for any organization to function properly. Proper discipline helps mold, strengthen and perfect a person's character. It is not synonymous with punishment, and, punishment is only a small part of the concept of discipline. Discipline is structure--for boys and leaders alike. A disciplined group of boys with an undisciplined leader can be more detrimental than a group of undisciplined boys with a disciplined leader.

The basic rules of discipline are:

1. **WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?:** Plan ahead, make alternative plans, establish a routine for your meeting. If you do not take charge, the boys will. Insist on attention when you speak, but give the boys attention when they speak.
2. **FOCUS ON BEHAVIOR:** Have activities that accommodate short attention spans, contain the appropriate level of psycho-motor ability and is of interest to the boys.
3. **REWARD VIRTUE:** Reward works better than punishment. Behavior that is rewarded tends to be repeated and will lead to further improvements. Behavior that is never rewarded will disappear.
4. **TOKEN REWARDS:** An object becomes reinforcing if it can be exchanged for other reinforcements. Conduct candles, totem beads, etc.-are examples of token rewards.
5. **DO AS I DO:** Behavior that is rewarded in others tends to be imitated. Remember that boys will do as you do. Wear your uniform, be positive, be polite, and fair, and the boys will imitate you.
6. **TIME OUT:** Behavior that results in removal from a rewarding situation tends to be avoided. The boy who has to sit out or be sent home because~of his behavior, avoids repeating that behavior.
7. **OVER-CORRECTION:** When behavior produces additional work, it will be avoided. The messy boy who has to clean up his mess before playing the game, is not as messy next time. If the leader cleans it up, boys will not learn to accept the consequences of their own behavior.
8. **NOBODY LIKES A PHONY:** A leader's feelings and behavior should be consistent. It is our responsibility to treat all the boys equally. Do not punish the boy for having parents who are uncooperative or antagonistic. If you can't confront the parents about their behavior, then it is unfit to take it out on the child.
9. **REACT QUICKLY:** When the need for discipline arises, stop the activity immediately and remove the boy from the situation.
10. **PUNISH THOSE RESPONSIBLE:** If the group misbehaves, punish the group. If one boy misbehaves, punish him.

DEN RULES

Den rules are established by each individual den leader. Your den rules reflect your personal values and life styles. Some guidelines for establishing your den rules are:

- Discuss all rules between den leaders and den chiefs before announcing them to the boys
- Do not make a rule until you are sure it is a good rule. Bad rules are disruptive and oppressive.
- If it become obvious that a rule is a mistake, it is OK to change it. Be careful that the new rule is one you can live with. Don't become known as a fickle leader.
- All rules and changes in rules should be announced before you begin enforcing them. Send written rules home to parents so they can review them with the boys.
- Follow through with the rules. **BE CONSISTENT!** Exceptions will invalidate your rules.

SAMPLE RULES

1. Obey all the rules.
2. Bring dues weekly.
3. Bring your Cub Scout book to every meeting.
4. Be quiet.
5. Bring supplies when asked.
6. Be seated when asked, and stand when asked.
7. Follow Den Leader's, Assistant Den Leader's and Den Chief's instructions.
8. Don't interrupt when someone else is talking.
9. Wipe feet before entering house.
10. Go straight home after the meeting
11. If disciplined twice during the meeting, the boy is sent home.
12. If a boy misbehaves on an outing, he will be unable to participate in the next outing.

HOW TO AVOID DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS

Here are a few ideas from experienced den leaders on positive things to do to avoid discipline problems:

- Insist on attention when talking.
- Don't shout or yell.
- Teach boys to respond to the Cub Scout sign.
- Have a good pre-opening activity.
- Praise in public, criticize in private.
- Make full use of the advancement program.
- Give boys responsibility.
- Encourage boys to wear uniform.
- Be impartial in dealing with Cub Scouts.
- Be firm in a friendly manner.

DEN CODE OF CONDUCT

Most den leaders find that if their den has a code of conduct to follow, their home, their furniture and their dignity remain intact through their Cub Scout experience. Boys need to know just how far they can push, and the Den Code of Conduct will tell them this.

Each den will want to develop their own code of conduct to fit those special boys. Don't make too many rules or omit any insignificant ones. The rules should be simple, clear, and concise, so they can be understood by the boys. In fact, the boys can help set the rules.

Post the Den code of Conduct in an obvious place in the den meeting room to serve as a reminder

TRAITS OF CUB SCOUTS

All Cub Scout-aged boys have some characteristics in common. They are:

- Has a sense of loyalty
- Likes to win
- Likes to be rewarded
- Does not accept losing well
- Wants a lot of attention
- Likes to struggle and fight
- Is sensitive to criticism
- Likes to touch and feel
- Likes competition
- Is full of energy
- Is very curious
- Likes to boast
- Likes recognition
- Wants to belong
- Dislikes nagging
- Wants approval

A boy should have someone he can look up to, someone he feels comfortable with, and the kind of friends and activities to help him grow from boyhood to manhood. Some boys may join CUB SCOUTING to learn new skills, while others may only be interested in games and fun. The important thing is to get to know each boy as an individual. Find out what makes him TICK, and you will be better able to understand his behavior.