

Adults on Outings

Welcome! ... and Please Give the Scouts Some Space

- Welcome to the Troop 19 outdoors program. We are glad to have you. If you haven't camped for a while, or you're not sure whether you want to join us, please be sure to read "Frequently Asked Questions on Camping with Troop 19", page 58.
- Remember Scouting is for Boys--let them do the work, plan the trip, cook the meals, etc. Work as much as possible through the youth leadership. If you take the lead, they will never learn how to do it themselves. It's OK if they don't do it the "right way" or "your way"--they will often learn more by doing it their way. Thus, we try to do everything possible through the youth leaders--but stand ready to support them when necessary.
- Give the Scouts some space. If you are in the middle of everything, you have to deal with everything. It is better to keep your distance and deal only with those issues you wish.
- We emphasize the patrol system. The troop is too large to camp, hike, etc., as one large unit. Also the patrol system is fundamental to Scouting. Thus, all activities are planned around patrols and each patrol should have its own campsite--slightly apart from the others. (But not so far apart that the Scoutmasters cannot keep track of them.)
- Do not smoke in the presence of Scouts.
- Alcohol is never allowed at a Scouting event.
- Dads, Moms and Legal guardians are encouraged to camp with the troop.
- Normally, you will camp with the other adults, in the "adult patrol". In an emergency (e.g. a tent has been damaged or lost), an adult may share a tent with his or her own son. An adult may never sleep in a tent with any Scout except his or her own son.

Safety on Outings

If you believe that you see an item of clear, immediate danger – such as a Scout misusing an ax, saw, or knife - then by all means speak up immediately.

But for lesser risks, please recall that Troop 19 activities are designed to provide new experiences and challenges to Scouts.

- While safety is always a prime objective, our activities by their very nature involve a certain element of risk.
- We want the boys to learn and teach safe procedures themselves. For example, if you think that a safer location could be chosen for the campfire, look for a youth leader – the Senior Patrol Leader, a Patrol Leader, or just pick a tall one. Ask him, “What do you notice about that proposed campfire location? How could the location be improved before they light it?”
- If you are in doubt, please check it out with the Scoutmaster, or with the designated responsible Assistant Scoutmaster for that trip. They have experience in Scouting activities in the outdoors, and know what standards are appropriate for a large number of boys in the context of Scouting.
- “Follow the lead” from the Scoutmasters as to whether a proposed activity is safe and within the guidelines of Scouting.

Set a good example. Parents who either do not know or do not follow the practices of safe Scouting undermine the Scoutmasters’ authority very quickly. Some Scouts are very quick to do as adults do, not as they say. When in doubt, please ask.

Troop policies for health and safety are based in The Guide to Safe Scouting. The troop has a copy in the library for your review. The guide includes information on adult leadership, water safety, camping, substance abuse, emergency preparedness, first aid, fuels and fire prevention, guns and firearms, hazardous sports and activities, inspections, medical information, special precautions, transportation, winter activities, and youth protection and child abuse.

Frequently Asked Questions on Camping with Troop 19

by Sue Beals

Having just returned from another fun Troop 19 campout. I got to thinking about why more people don't volunteer for an opportunity to spend the weekend with their son and experience the Scouting experience first hand. Which then got me to thinking even more that maybe it's because the parents don't know what to expect or have questions about it and don't know whom to ask? With so many new Scouts joining this year. I'd thought I'd put together a short list of FAQ's - or Frequently Asked Questions - that might give people considering volunteering some assistance. If after reading these responses you still have questions about a Scout campout, feel free to give me a call. If I don't know the answer, I'll find someone who does.

Hope to see you some weekend soon!

1. I've never camped before and would not know what to pack.

A. Don't worry, for every campout an equipment list is distributed with the permission slip. All you need to do is follow the list. Also, during the past few weeks the Scouts have been reviewing packing a pack and basic camping skills. Your Scout can assist you with what to bring and more importantly, "what to leave at home"!

2. I don't own a sleeping bag, tent, etc., etc., etc.

A. There are many people in the troop who would lend you a sleeping bag for the weekend, as well as the all important (at least for us "older campers") sleeping pad - (trust me, it makes all the difference in the world!). The troop can supply a tent for you.

3. What will I eat?

A. The Scouts always cook by patrols. They are responsible for their own meal planning, food shopping, and cooking. Likewise, the adult leaders shop and cook their own food. Sometimes it's the same menu as the Scouts, other times it is very different.

4. I can only cook with a microwave!

A. Sorry, the microwaves have to be left at home. To "leave no trace" on the environment, the Scouts most always cook with either propane gas two-burner camp stoves; or on backpacking trips, fueled backpacking stoves. Cooking kits are provided by the troop as are cooking utensils.

5. Who will cook?

A. There is always an experienced leader along who can show you the ropes of outdoor cooking. You will not starve and whatever food is cooked will

taste like you're in a five star restaurant! If you still are uncomfortable cooking, you can always volunteer for cleanup detail!

6. I haven't camped/backpacked since I was in high school/college and that was so long ago I wouldn't remember how.

A. It was twenty-five years between backpacking trips for me. I can attest first hand that it is "like riding a bike" and you don't forget. After the first hour on the trail or the first day in camp you catch on fast. You will be surprised at the positive advances in the equipment since your last trip. Everything seems to be lighter or more efficiently made.

7. My son never tells me when the trips are until he is walking out the door and never asks me to chaperone.

A. In my experience this is a common occurrence among teenagers. Here are a couple of suggestions for you to find out the information ahead of time and determine which event you might want to chaperone.

1. Attend the last twenty minutes of any Tuesday night Scout meeting. Important announcements are made at this time and up-coming activities are discussed.
2. Attend a troop committee meeting. They are open to all the first Monday of the month at the church
3. Obtain a troop calendar of events. If you do not have access to the troop 19 web site, ask one of the Scout leaders for a copy. The updates throughout the year are posted on the web site and handed out at the parents meetings held during the year.

As for "my son doesn't want me to go" statement - "Don't Believe It!" Look at the weekend as quality bonding time with your teenager. No phones, Nintendo, computers, radios, CD's, or television, makes for some great conversations. You will be surprised at the diversity of subjects discussed in one weekend. You will also learn a very important lesson for yourself. Teenagers are very similar, and yours is more similar than he is different. They all almost always give you a blank stare when asking them a question, and they automatically answer "what" when they actually do hear you! The best thing you will learn from your son after one weekend is what a great kid he really is and he really did appreciate you being there!!

Now some questions for the mothers or women volunteers in the troop.

8. Camping is such a "guy thing" especially with a Boy Scout troop. I will be out of place on a camping trip with the boys and the male leaders.

A. I will admit there could be, and are, some awkward moments, but Scouting is about providing opportunities and determining solutions. I would much rather show the Scouts that women can be as an effective role model in the back woods as they can be in the kitchen, home, or office. It is great to show the Scouts first hand that a woman can put up a tent, start a fire, hike ten miles, or tie a square knot.

9. "But I'll get stuck doing all the cooking or cleaning up and I can stay home and do that!"

A. You won't get stuck with all the cooking or cleaning. The patrol method (even the adult "patrol") relies on teamwork. The job is not done until it's done, no matter who does it. The goal is to work together for the good of all.

"For the ladies only"

The best thing about accompanying the boy Scouts on a camping trip - "No lines in the ladies room!" This past trip, I never once had to wait for a toilet or the shower at the campground. Oh, the little things in life that can give us pleasure!

10. OK, you convinced me I might want to give this a try, how do I get started?

A. GREAT WELCOME!!

Here are some things to get you started:

1. Come to the parent's night in October and get a copy of the calendar of events for the year.
2. Determine which of these events might fit into your busy schedule. You might want to start with one overnight to "get your feet wet". Oops! Wrong cliché - it never rains on a Scout camping trip!
3. Let Greg Anthony know you're interested in chaperoning the event. He can put you in touch with the adult coordinator for the event who can then provide you with more details.
4. Determine what equipment you'll need. The best way to find out if you can borrow someone's equipment would be to email the troop19 distribution list and ask for the equipment you'll need to borrow.

Finally, once you're there-

Relax and Have Fun! Enjoy the outdoors and the conversations. You'll come home with a better appreciation of the Scout program, the outdoors, and best of all, some special memories of you and your son sharing an experience that can never be duplicated.

Good Luck and Happy Camping!

Susan