

Manatee Training Program Overview

Training Guidelines for All BSA Adult Participants

I. General Information

You are located in Manatee District (County). It is one of four Districts that make up the Southwest Florida Council (SWFC). The other three districts are Two Rivers, Panther, and Alligator. SWFC is one of approximately 285 Councils that make up the National Council Boy Scouts of America. Each council, in addition to a name, is given a number for Identification purposes on the National website. **Our council, Southwest Florida Council, has been given the number 088.** Just as each council is given an identification number, each individual member of the BSA is also given a number for identification on the National website. Your number can be found on the front centered at the bottom of your membership card.

BSA has a 100-year old policy that all adults that are involved with the delivery of the Scouting program to registered youth must also be registered. Adults may be registered in more than one position based on individual desires, but one, and only one, must be designated as the primary position. Further, BSA policy is that those adults should be properly trained in the delivery of the Scouting program as dictated by their primary position.

BSA recognizes that a trained leader is knowledgeable and more confident in the role being performed. Trained leaders exhibit a knowledge and confidence that is picked up by people around them. Trained leaders impact the quality of program, leader tenure, youth tenure, and a whole lot more. Trained leaders are better prepared to make the Scouting program all it can be!

The BSA training program is conducted on a gradual progressive approach, beginning with basic skills related to individual roles and progressing to increasingly more challenging volunteer role and leadership courses. Early training focuses on basic skills directly related to delivering the Scouting program, while supplemental training goes deeper into the “practical application” and “how to” of both leadership and Scout skills. Advanced courses delve more into the philosophy of Scouting and leadership to support the programs of the Boy Scouts of America.

The Boy Scouts has a policy that registered adults in a unit serve in either a direct or support contact role. **If your primary registered position is Cubmaster, Assistant Cubmaster, Den Leader, Assistant Den Leader, Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, Crew Advisor or Assistant Crew Advisor you are in a direct contact role.** All others at the unit level serve in a support contact role. One of BSA’s greatest concerns is not only that all leaders who work in a direct with youth be trained, but also that all volunteer leaders in the support role be trained.

II. BSA’s Training Philosophy

A Scouter is considered trained for a Scouting position when the prescribed basic courses for the position they are fulfilling are complete. The current set of courses is usually the list that shows up in the membership database and on awards, because they are the ones most Scouters take. However, the BSA has long believed a tenured leader does not need to retake

basic training every time there is a new course. Through supplemental training, roundtables, *Scouting* magazine, and participation in activities, they can stay up-to-date with the current methods and practices of the program.

Training of youth and adult leaders is very important to the success of Scouting. Your adult training begins before you join with Youth Protection Training. The next step is an introduction called Fast Start, which is available in-person or online and is designed to acquaint you with Scouting goals and the youth volunteer organization. Your training continues with specific training for your Scouting position. In-depth supplemental and advanced skills and leadership training devoted to specific areas of the Scouting program follow this. There are several opportunities available in the Manatee District and the Southwest Florida Council for all of this training. Please consult the appropriate annex at the end of this document for a session that is convenient for you.

Of course, no person is ever fully trained. Even the most tenured Scouter can learn something by attending or instructing a course. The Five Levels of the BSA Training Continuum discussed below provide opportunities for a progression of learning for all of us to learn more about program, leadership, and other important skills.

In addition to basic training for all leaders, Scouting has a variety of courses that deal with specific Scouting functions. The courses includes supplemental training opportunities both at the District and Local level for those who need them and, on the Council and National level, advanced training opportunities for those who desire them.

Few leaders can accumulate all the information and ideas possible in a couple hours of training. They should get what they came for, but with the awareness that there is more to learn and that they can find what they are looking for. Leaders and instructors alike should have a clear understanding that leadership training is a process that continues as long as an individual is actively involved in the program.

There are five levels of the training continuum that make up BSA's gradual progressive approach to training. They are joining, orientation, basic, supplemental, and advanced. Each level is designed for a specific purpose, with the first required of all registered leaders, the next two being more role-based orientation training, and the last two being more focused on advanced skills and leadership.

1. Joining (Mandatory)

The BSA requires Youth Protection training for all registered volunteers, from Merit Badge Counselors to the National Executive Board members. New volunteers are required to complete Youth Protection Training (YPT) before they can be registered. You may take this training online or attend a scheduled live class presented by a Council approved YPT trainer. To take it on line go to <http://www.MyScouting.org> and follow the on-screen instructions (remember that your Council number is 088). After you have completed that training, submit an Adult Registration form to SWFC Council. Once your application has been approved by National SWFC will send you a Registration card that shows your ID number. At that time you log back into <http://www.MyScouting.org> and establish an account using the member number on your BSA membership card. Keep that card; it is proof that you have taken YPT training. Youth Protection training must be taken every two years. If a volunteer does not meet the BSA's Youth Protection training requirement at the time of recharter, the volunteer will not be reregistered. It is SWFC desire that all

non-registered parents also take the BSA's Youth Protection training.

2. Orientation

Fast Start training is designed to be used immediately when a leader takes on a new Scouting role to get a leader off to a fast start before basic training is available. It is most commonly taken via self-study (DVD or e-learning at <http://www.MyScouting.org>). Fast Start training can also be used as parents' and chartered organization leaders' first exposure to Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, or Venturing. Its purpose is to acquaint families, new leaders, and others with the program of the Boy Scouts of America and to give specific information about the program phase involved. In other words, it gets everyone who enters the Scouting movement at the same starting point.

3. Basic (Position-Specific Role-Based)

All leaders are encouraged to take part in leader position-specific training before they meet with youth to prepare them for the opportunities and responsibilities relating to their leadership positions. In fact, all trip plans filed by the unit require that the two leaders listed on the Tour Plan, as leaders must be Leader trained.

These instructor-led courses are designed to help Scouters learn how to effectively carry out their Scouting roles. In most cases, completing the course will make a Scouter "trained" for the role(s) covered in the course. Leader position specific training is also an opportunity for new leaders to get answers to questions they may have about their roles and about the BSA in general. Training is available for every position at the district, council, and national level. Some of it is conducted in a live classroom environment at district and council, while others are conducted by e learning on the BSA web site.

4. Supplemental

Supplemental training includes a variety of courses given on a district, council, or national basis. Courses are designed to give additional information on targeted areas of the program through a combination of additional knowledge of Scouting in general, additional skills and roles knowledge, and/or beginning advanced leadership skills knowledge. Some of the methods touched upon in basic training are treated in greater depth in supplemental training courses. Some courses are held on a regular basis as a continuing source of information. Supplemental training is also offered in conferences at BSA national training centers and on the BSA website. A supplemental course might teach a specific Scouting skill or idea, enhance leadership skills, or prepare someone to teach others. Supplemental training is intended to enrich the leader's experience. This training is often referred to as Continuing Education.

5. Advanced

Leaders desiring a deeper understanding of the program or seeking additional leadership development will find advanced training highly rewarding. Successful completion of basic training is usually a prerequisite for advanced training. These training courses supplement the roles knowledge and skills learned in the other levels and in general are intended to support experienced leaders who are supporting not only units but potentially the district, council, area, regional, and national levels of the Boy Scouts of America.

III. Knowledge and Skills: Where the Path Begins

Scouting is a very unique youth program and is very different than all other youth programs. It is not a camping club; it is not a sports organization; it is not a before or after

school program; it is not an outward bound or rehab activity; it is not a church program, nor is it a community nonprofit organization which provides camping programs for children. It is simply “a game with a purpose.” The game is for youth, primarily for boys, from the age of seven to eighteen under the supervision of adults. The purpose is the development of *character, citizenship, and personal growth* as spelled out in the Mission statement of the Boy Scouts of America.

Specifically, the BSA endeavors to develop American citizens who are physically, mentally, and emotionally fit; have a high degree of self-reliance as evidenced in such qualities as initiative, courage, and resourcefulness; have personal values based on religious concepts; have the desire and skills to help others; understand the principles of the American social, economic, and governmental systems; are knowledgeable about and take pride in their American heritage and understand our nation’s role in the world; have a keen respect for the basic rights of all people; and are prepared to participate in and give leadership to American society. That makes it an educational program with a stated goal. No other youth program has that as a stated outcome.

Thousands of volunteer leaders, both men and women, are involved in the Scouting program. They serve in a variety of jobs — everything from unit leaders to chairmen of committees, committee members, merit badge counselors, and chartered organization representatives. All serve as role models and mentors. You have chosen to be one of those volunteers. If you are new to Scouting, you are to be congratulated on taking on a very important role in Scouting. If you are a tenured or returning member of BSA welcome back. As a direct contact or supporting contact leader in Scouting, you will impact youth and families in ways few others in your community can.

As a leader you will be working with youth members. You can have an important role in helping them grow and develop. In fact, that is the sole purpose of you being in Scouting—assisting them in their development and encouraging them to grow physically, socially, intellectually and emotionally. Youth development is the "reason for being" in Scouting.

Remember, Scouts will develop at their own pace, but there are some characteristics that each age group may share. These characteristics and their implications for you, as a volunteer, will be helpful to consider in planning their activity.

Do you know how young people change as they grow? How will these changes affect you as a Scout leader and the programs you plan for them? Here is where direct contact leaders, support leaders, and parents need to work together.

To understand child development, you don’t have to earn a degree in the subject matter. There are some basic concepts that you can learn that will help you to effectively communicate and work with children of all ages. However, it must be pointed out that you need to understand the Aims and Methods Boy Scouting and how BSA expects you to implement them.

Direct contact leaders are a critical ingredient for quality Packs, Troops, and Crews. The unit program is a direct indicator of the success of an effective Den Leader, Scoutmaster, or Crew Advisor, and research shows that training can enhance the skills of both new and longtime leaders. Though this concept is not new, its significance for Scouting can be seen on an annual basis at rechartering time. A better program brings in new members

and retains current members. More members require more direct and contact leaders; and they in turn require training. It's a continuous circle. That in a nutshell summarizes the importance of training.

The quality of your unit program depends heavily on the knowledge, skill ability, and experience of unit leaders to: 1) relate effectively to young people and understand their needs, 2) develop and execute interesting activities for youth, 3) help young people resolve behavioral problems and issues between themselves and others, 4) interact effectively with parents, school staff, and others, and, 5) effectively communicate the mission, goals, and policies of the unit program. The Boy Scouts of America has training courses that can help with all of these tasks.

Knowledge, skills, and experience are “assets” that you acquire throughout your lifetime. They are especially valuable to you in Scouting because you are shaping the future adult lives of young children. In fact, your level of knowledge and skills could potentially affect whether they will grow up to be productive citizens. Some of you are gifted enough to be productive without additional skill training, while others have acquired some of these skills through life experiences, and others have attended a few basic Scouting courses. Additional training could be beneficial to all of you and serve as an inspiration for others who are lacking skills and knowledge to attend. If that happens, then the youth in your unit will be the beneficiary.

The Boy Scouts of America, the Southwest Florida Council, and especially the Manatee District are blessed with some outstanding trainers who stand ready to assist each of you in training to be successful in fulfilling your role in your Scouting unit. They just need to know who needs what training, when you are available to be trained, and the volume of training that needs to be made available.

So here is your opportunities to get the knowledge and skills you need or desire. If you are new to Scouting or have never been basic trained for the position of responsibility for which you are currently registered, then you need make plans to attend the required training.

- For Cub Scouters use the training road map at Annex A.
- For Boy Scouters and Venturers use the training road map at Annex B
- For Commissioners, District Committee members, Merit Badge Counselors, and Varsity Leaders use the road map at Annex C.

As you follow and attend each level of the training on the road maps listed above, you will also discover information about programs and policies that can help you and others move along the road map in providing a better program for your Scouts.

Starting with Youth Protection and Fast Start training you then attend the Basic training for your primary position. As the title says, it is *Basic training*. The training introduces you to subject matter that you will be responsible for in your program area. Getting the in depth knowledge and techniques to advance your program presentation comes from attending supplementary (or in depth) training in the same skills area. Advanced training in general is intended to support experienced leaders who are supporting not only units, but also potentially all levels of the Boy Scouts of America.

IV. Important Contact Information

- a. Youth Protection on Line <http://www.scouting.org/Training/YouthProtection.aspx>
- b. All on line e learning (you will have to create an account MyScouting.org).
- c. Southwest Florida Training calendar
<http://www.swflcouncilbsa.org/openrosters/Calendar.asp>
- d. Manatee District Training Calendar
<http://www.swflcouncilbsa.org/openrosters/Calendar.asp>
- e. Two Rivers District Training Calendar
<http://www.swflcouncilbsa.org/openrosters/Calendar.asp>
- f. Panther District Training Calendar
<http://www.swflcouncilbsa.org/openrosters/Calendar.asp>
- g. Alligator District Training Calendar
<http://www.swflcouncilbsa.org/openrosters/Calendar.asp>
- h. Manatee District Training Chair Geoff Ashman <mailto:lcplashman@gmail.com>
- i. Manatee Rambler <http://www.manateerambl.com/>