

Roundtable Hot Topic

Recruitment, Retention and Membership



The sounds of Scouting activities ring through the air in every season of the year. Laughter, leadership, learning, and growing all mark the path of young people across America as they develop into those who will change the future. The common theme is not the mountains or the woods, not the campfires or the competitions – it's the smiles and personalities themselves, those joyous moments of challenge, breakthrough and success, and it all starts with that amazing word – **YES!**

This is the word that rings in the hearts of both youth and adults across the nation as the flyers come home from school, or the friend invites a buddy to join a group get together at a Scout meeting. The vision and mission of the BSA is to prepare all youth “to make ethical and moral choices.....by instilling in them the Scout Oath and Law.” **ALL YOUTH!** As Scouts and Scouters it is our responsibility to share this amazing program with everyone we know, giving them the opportunity to say YES to a great adventure!

Now is an amazing time to get everyone involved in sharing the adventure of Scouting! Here are some great ideas to get you started!

- Have a presence at school open house nights, meet the teacher nights, PTA meetings, church or community events. Offer to pick up trash, direct traffic, or any other service that might be of value to an organization.

- Business cards with pack or troop information are easy to hand out while folks are in line at events or for students to hand out to their friends. Include a QR code with a link to your unit's website or your Be A Scout Pin!
- Use incentives – Scouts who bring a friend could be entered into a drawing for cool stuff, or they could both receive a patch!
- Host a “Normal Friend Activity”. A NFA is an event that your unit hosts as an opportunity to build relationships with both youth and adults. These events should be focused on fun and not on any of the traditional Scouting activities. It's a safe place for youth to invite their friends to check out the group without worrying about uniforms and ceremonies. This gives an opportunity for a youth to make new friends and for adults to connect together without the pressure of an “ask” to join. What a great way to build relationships!
- **Ask!** According to the membership and marketing team, a survey of parents who never enrolled their children in Scouting revealed that most had either only been asked once or **never at all**. We can change that! Just ask!

Discuss additional ideas that units have, and membership and recruiting ideas they have done in their own units.

Check out the BSA Membership and Marketing Hub for more information.

<https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/>