

**Camp Staff**  
**Mental, Emotional, &**  
**Social Health**  
**(MESH)**  
**Training**  
**Facilitator Guide**

## Notes to the Facilitator:

- It is very important that you review all the material in this script.
- While certainly not preferred, it could be read verbatim if that is what you are most comfortable doing. But it would be much better to teach this material using your own voice.
- In the script, you will find instructions to you that are *not* part of the script.
- The instructions will be inside [BRACKETS]. Do not read the [TEXT INSIDE THE BRACKETS]; rather, follow the instructions.
  - For example, if you see [NAME], then that means you insert your name there.
  - If you see [NEXT SLIDE], then that is what you should do.
- As you practice teaching this material, be sure to note how long it takes to teach this unit. If this unit takes longer than the allotted one hour, consider shortening the time by:
  - Removing some of the “Reflection Exercises.”
  - Choosing only one of the four Scenarios to review with the audience. If you have more time, review as many Scenarios as time permits.

# Mental, Emotional, and Social Health (MESH) Training for Camp Staff



Welcome, everyone! And thank you for making this summer camp experience possible for so many Scouts this camp season.

I'm [NAME] and I'm your [POSITION]. This summer, we here at [CAMP NAME] are going to affect so many lives.

We want to help every Scout and staff member have a positive experience. And part of doing that is paying attention to the people around you and by being alert for any behaviors that might mean a Scout isn't having a positive experience. It might be because they have a medical issue, or it might be something to do with their mental, emotional, or social health. Today we will learn about mental, emotional, and social health. We will use what we learn to help those around us at camp this summer. This MESH training is the first-of-its-kind training for all summer camp staff.

Now think about what you have learned as a Scout. What is the Scout motto?

[GIVE THEM A MOMENT TO SHOUT IT BACK THEN CONTINUE THIS SCRIPT.]

It's "Be prepared," right? Part of being prepared as camp staff is recognizing when someone in camp, whether it's a Scout, another camp staff member, or someone else, needs help. It could be because they fell and cut themselves. In this case, the help they need might not be much—maybe just cleaning the wound and applying a bandage.

Or it could be they fell and hurt their leg. We can't decide if they sprained their ankle or broke their foot. But we can tell that they need professional help—more than we can provide, right? We'll do our best to provide them with whatever help we can give them, but we'll also make sure they get the professional help they need. This might start with someone else helping them where they fell, someone notifying [NAME CAMP HEALTH OFFICER] at the health lodge, or maybe even activating the camp's emergency system if we think it is something serious.

And sometimes, the help a Scout or staff member needs isn't because they are physically hurt. It's because they have a Mental, Emotional, or Social Health (MESH) challenge. We'll talk about what MESH means in a few minutes. But before we do that, let's begin with a Safety Moment.

[NEXT SLIDE.]

# Safety Moment



Prepared. For Life.

[BELOW ARE THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOW TO PRESENT THE SAFETY MOMENT. THESE DIRECTIONS ARE FOR YOU AND SHOULD NOT BE READ TO THE CLASS.]

Begin this module with a Safety Moment. This should take only 1-2 minutes.

Use a Safety Moment that is focused on mental health [SEE LIST BELOW].

Suggested Safety Moments are:

- Annual Health and Medical Record Safety Moment
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Depression
- Homesickness
- Medication Use in Scouting
- Psychological First Aid
- Resilience
- Scouting's Barrier to Abuse
- Youth Suicide Prevention

Alternatively, you can use a Safety Moment that is more appropriate for issues at your camp (find more at <https://www.Scouting.org/health-and-safety/safety-moments>).

All important meetings and trainings in BSA begin with a Safety Moment. Today's Safety Moment is [BSA SAFETY MOMENT].

[NEXT SLIDE.]

# How the Outdoors Impacts Health

Physical, Mental, Emotional, and Social Benefits



Prepared. For Life.™

For well over a century, Scouting has used the outdoors and nature as a method for instilling the values of Scouting in our youth.

Baden-Powell and our other founders knew the benefits of the natural world. Common sense also tells us about these benefits. How good does it feel to be at camp when it's a nice day, the sun is shining, and the birds are singing? It feels great, right?

In the past few years, medical science has shown that there are health benefits to being out in nature. For example, did you know that just 15 minutes of sitting in nature helps the body's physical responses to stress? And only 20 minutes of walking in a natural setting can help with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)? Because of these benefits, some doctors are now prescribing time in nature to reduce the risk of both physical and mental ailments.

Summer camp is so important for our Scouts and camp staff. So it's important to provide them a positive experience and encourage them to fully participate.

[NEXT SLIDE.]

# Why This Training?

There are mental health challenges at camp!



Prepared. For Life.™

About half of all Scout-age kids have had a mental health challenge at some point in their lives. Most Scouts have had struggles of some kind—even if it’s just someone making them feel bad on social media or someone being mean at school. Whether the concern is of short duration or a long-term challenge, these are all MESH-related, and these Scouts will need your support.

Think about how you felt the first summer you went to camp for a week. It was different from what you’re used to, right?

Summer camp is a new experience for many Scouts. Compared to what they’re used to at home, things are different here. Staying in a tent for a week is different, the food is different, the daily routines are different, working on merit badges might be hard, and the weather can be not so great. So summer camp clearly is different from a regular day at home. Providing support, especially to anyone facing a MESH challenge, sometimes can make the difference between a difficult camping experience and a positive one.

[NEXT SLIDE.]

# What is a Mental Health Challenge?

*A mental health challenge is when:*

- There is a major change in a person's thinking, feeling, or acting.
- The change interferes with the person's ability to live their life.
- The interference does not go away quickly and lasts longer than typical emotions or reactions would be expected to.



Prepared. For Life.™

So what is a mental health challenge?

*A mental health challenge is when:*

- There is a major change in a person's thinking, feeling, or acting.
- The change interferes with the person's ability to live their life.
- The interference does not go away quickly and lasts longer than typical emotions or reactions would be expected to.

What are some examples of a mental health challenge at summer camp?

[WAIT FOR EXAMPLES. IF NONE COME, YOU CAN SUGGEST “MISSING HOME” OR “NOT LIKING THE CAMP FOOD” OR “SOMEONE AT CAMP PICKING ON ANOTHER SCOUT.”]

[NEXT SLIDE.]

## What Does MESH at Camp Look Like?

### Mental, Emotional, and Social Health (MESH)

- Mental Health - how we think, feel and act, especially when we are experiencing stressors in camp
- Emotional Health - ability to manage and express feelings to Scouts, adult leaders and camp staff
- Social Health - ability to interact and form meaningful relationships with Scouts, adult leaders and fellow staff



Prepared. For Life.™

These mental health challenges are also called “MESH” challenges. MESH stands for Mental Health, Emotional Health, and Social Health.

**Mental Health** is how we think, feel, and act, especially when experiencing stressors.

**Emotional Health** is our ability to manage and express feelings to others.

And **Social Health** is our ability to interact and form meaningful relationships with Scouts, adult leaders, and fellow staff.

MESH includes a wide range of issues, including our emotional health, our ability to form and maintain relationships, and traditional mental health disorders.

Challenges with a person’s mental, emotional, or social health can occur anywhere and at any time. But summer camp can be stressful for Scouts, camp staff, and adult leaders. This can affect the person’s mental health—which could be bad enough to cause a crisis.

So that is why we are doing this training. Part of our camp staff training is learning how to be prepared to help everyone in camp stay healthy—and to be prepared to help when someone is not able to stay healthy. And this includes mental health!

[NEXT SLIDE.]



## Self-care: Helping Others Also Means Helping Yourself

- Have a good diet
- Stay hydrated
- Sleep
- Rest
- Do something just for you
- Take time off
- Make friends
- Have fun!



You know yourself best! You know what energizes you. Be mindful of yourself. This means that you should check in with yourself every day to make sure you are taking care of yourself.

Also, remember that your friends and colleagues might be struggling with MESH challenges as well. Pay attention to their behaviors and actions—which we’ll talk about in this session. If you see someone who might be having a challenge, be supportive. Remind them of the self-care techniques that we’ll cover in just a minute. More importantly, get them help from camp leadership, if you think that is what is needed.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Have a good diet.** Eat those vegetables! And don’t overdo it on junk food, sugary drinks, and other food choices that you know aren’t good for you.
- **Stay hydrated!** Sometimes, people feel grumpy or have a headache and it’s because they’re dehydrated.
- **Sleep.** It is important to get a good night’s rest. You can’t be at your best if you are exhausted.
- **Rest.** Take a break throughout the day when it’s possible. This doesn’t mean “not working.” You should be relaxing—even if it’s just 5 minutes sitting quietly in the outdoors away from others.
- **Do something just for you.** This should be something that you really like. It could be reading a book, taking a walk in the woods, or just listening to music.
- **Take time off.** You will work hard this summer, so when you do get time off, use that time well. Don’t overschedule yourself, meaning you are just as busy on your off days as on your workdays.
- **Connect with others.** You will remember this summer at camp for the rest of your life. So look around this room—try to make new friends from the people who are here!
- **Have fun!** Camp will be a lot of work, but it should be a lot of fun for you, too.

[NEXT SLIDE.]

# Introduction to the Model:

## *U-S-A*



Prepared. For Life.®

How do we help others?

We'll use the U-S-A model to do this. This simple model will help you remember how to see and respond to possible issues in camp—and to be confident when you are doing so!

There are three steps in the U-S-A model.

- **U** stands for **Understanding** the behaviors to watch for;
- **S** stands for **Speak** to Scouts and provide **Support**; and
- **A** stands for **Act** and **Advocate**.

[NEXT SLIDE.]

# What It is And What it Isn't:

## U-S-A



Prepared. For Life.

U-S-A is a simple model designed to be used at all Scout camps.

It will help you identify specific behaviors that Scouts might exhibit or things they might say that should catch your attention.

It provides tips for how to talk to Scouts in a way that is helpful to them.

- It suggests ways that you can provide help, or first aid, to the person who is having a MESH challenge.

And it helps you recognize situations where a better trained person should be involved. For example, there are times when you need to take someone to the health lodge for assistance or when a Scout needs even more professional help.

But there are things that USA is not:

[EMPHASIZE THESE SENTENCES]

***Remember that this training helps you be better prepared to help someone in camp. BUT it is not your responsibility as camp staff to diagnose mental disorders in others or yourself, or to provide treatment. This may be done only by licensed professionals. Instead, you should offer support and assistance to a Scout experiencing a mental health challenge and recognize when someone with more training needs to step in.***

[NEXT SLIDE.]

# Understand the Behaviors To Watch For: U-S-A



Prepared. For Life.®

This training is about mental health. We talked about what that is a few minutes ago.

To begin to help a Scout or staff member who might be having a MESH-related issue, you first need to understand what their MESH behaviors might look like.

Before we dive in, please remember that MESH issues are very sensitive for many people. So anytime you work with a Scout or other staff member who might be experiencing a MESH issue, remember to keep it confidential. It is viewed as medical information—which means that you should not discuss a MESH situation with anyone who is **not** authorized.

Who is authorized? The camp director [NAME THEM] and the camp health officer [NAME THEM]. They will decide with whom to share this information, such as the unit leader.

[NEXT SLIDE.]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

- You see many of the same Scouts several hours every day, so you are well-positioned to notice changes in these Scouts.
- Recognize that not all challenges in camp are mental health challenges.
- Learn to recognize the differences between typical Scout behavior and behaviors that may be related to MESH concerns, and proactively address them if needed.



Prepared. For Life.™

Let's talk about what these behaviors might look like.

Think about yourself. If you didn't get enough sleep or are hot and sweaty, you might not be the most pleasant person to be around. Keep that in mind when you are around other staff and Scouts. They might have experienced circumstances that caused their behavior to change.

But these feelings probably are temporary. Everyone has behavioral changes if they are having a bad day. You are grumpy about something, then it gets better. These mood changes are brief.

That's true for Scouts and other camp staff, of course. If you see changes in someone and they are more than temporary, be aware there might be a MESH-related concern.

Listen to what the unit leaders have to say. They might see issues as they develop because they are around their Scouts the most. And they should know their Scouts better than you do—they know the Scouts' normal behaviors, their usual routines, abilities, triggers, and chronic conditions.

Before camp began, all Scouts completed the Annual Health & Medical Record (AHMR) just like you did as camp staff. The AHMR includes any medical AND mental health concerns that [CAMP HEALTH OFFICER] and camp staff should be aware of. Unit leaders should have developed a plan beforehand for many medical and MESH concerns. A few examples when a plan should be in place are diabetes, asthma, or a known MESH concern. The plan will help guide care if the Scout experiences a complication or a flare-up while at camp. The [CAMP HEALTH OFFICER] and [CAMP DIRECTOR] should have this information.

Now, let's look at some of the behaviors you might see at camp.

[NEXT SLIDE.]

## Behaviors to Watch for From Scouts and Staff

- Body language



Prepared. For Life.

The first thing to look for is the Scout's body language. What is body language?

[NEXT SLIDE.]

## What is body language?

Body language is how we communicate nonverbally through gestures and movements

Facial Expressions	Hand Gestures	Full Body Gestures
<p>😊 Smile = I'm happy.</p> <p>😞 Frown = I'm not happy.</p> <p>😓 Eyes closed tight = I don't want to see that.</p> <p>😮 Eyes open wide = I'm so surprised.</p> <p>😡 Eyes rolling = I'm annoyed.</p> <p>😞 Wrinkled/furrowed brow = I'm confused/mad.</p>	<p>👍 Thumbs up = Yes, I agree.</p> <p>👏 High-five = Good job!</p> <p>🙏 Crossed fingers = Hope for the best.</p> <p>👊 Fist bump = 'SUP</p>	<p>🙄 Crossed arms = I'm not pleased.</p> <p>🤦 Facepalm = I messed up.</p> <p>🤷 Shoulder shrug = I don't know.</p> <p>👣 Foot tapping = Hurry up.</p>



We've all heard the phrase "body language," but what does it mean?

Body language is how we talk to each other without using words. It's how we use our gestures and movements to help tell someone what you're thinking. You use body language all the time. Think about how much easier it is to understand what someone is saying if they are talking to you in person compared to texting. How often have you sent someone a text or email and they misunderstood you? They might have gotten mad at you for no reason at all, right? Well, part of that is because they couldn't read your body language.

There are three main types of body language: **facial expressions**, **hand gestures**, and **full body gestures**. These tell us a lot about how someone might be feeling or what they might be thinking.

For example, if someone is smiling, it tells us they are happy [POINT TO THE EMOJI ON THE SCREEN AS YOU SAY THIS]; if they are frowning, they might be sad or mad [POINT TO THE EMOJI]. Look at the rest of the different kinds of facial expressions and see how the way our eyes move or our brow looks might indicate our feelings.

We all know what a thumbs up, high-five, and crossed fingers mean [POINT TO THE EMOJIS]. These are subtle ways to indicate agreement or a desire for something. Even if you don't say a word but give someone a thumbs up, that person knows what you mean, right?

Turn to the person next to you and without saying anything at all, think about how you would feel if you were assigned a chore in camp that you didn't want to do.

[GIVE THE CAMP STAFF A MOMENT TO DO SO.]

Could your partner guess what you were feeling?

Our bodies show our feelings, whether we are aware of it or not. We all shrug our shoulders when we say, "I don't know," or maybe we tap our foot when we are feeling impatient.

These types of body language are just one of many ways our bodies express feelings and thoughts. Now why is this important? Let's check out the next slide.

[NEXT SLIDE.]

## Why is it important to be mindful of our body language?

- **Be mindful** of your body language. What “message” are you giving to others around you?
- Think about when you are happy. How does your body look?
- Now think about when you’re sad. Do you want those around you to show happy body language? Or sad body language?



Prepared. For Life.™

We discussed the different types of body language: facial, hand, and body. Let’s remember the examples from the previous slide.

As camp staff, it’s important that we are mindful of our own body language. Scouts look to us, and what they see includes OUR body language. You might be in a good mood, but if your body language says differently, then Scouts will read your body language as a negative.

What might our bodies look like when we are happy? We might be smiling, with soft eyes and a relaxed posture. If you’re happy, wouldn’t you want those around you to look the same?

If you were happy and a friend was frowning or crying, how would you feel? How about when you are sad? Do you want someone to help you who looks excited or annoyed? Or do you want someone who looks concerned?

What is the fourth point of the Scout Law?

[WAIT FOR SOMEONE TO SAY IT]

It’s “A Scout is friendly,” right? That doesn’t mean you have to be friends with all the Scouts—but it does mean you need to be friendly when talking to the Scouts and to each other.

Part of talking to someone is your body language. So remember the importance of body language when comforting a Scout who might be in distress. Do not have your arms crossed or a frown on your face. Have a relaxed, welcoming posture to allow for a safe space to be created.

In the next slide, we will discuss what this should look like.

[NEXT SLIDE.]



## What should our body language look like when comforting others in distress?

- Facial Expressions
  - Slight smile
  - Maintain eye contact
  - Relaxed eyes
  - Subtle head nods
- Hand Gestures
  - Hands should be at your side or on your lap
  - Sometimes we want to place our hand on others for comfort (*be sure to have consent before touching someone*)
- Body Gestures
  - Arms uncrossed and at your side
  - If Scout is seated, you should sit. If they are standing, you should stand.
  - Subtle, soft head nods to communicate you are listening
  - Be mindful of personal space but allow for close proximity



Prepared. For Life.®

Remember “A Scout is Friendly.” So it’s important that our body language shows that.

Look at these facial expressions—let me show them.

[DEMONSTRATE THE FOUR BULLET POINTS OF “FACIAL EXPRESSIONS”]

If you have a hard time looking a person in their eyes, you can just look at their eyebrows or their nose. It looks like you’re looking at them, but it’s not scary to do.

Look at the hand gestures—what do they look like?

[DEMONSTRATE THESE TWO BULLET POINTS]

Now let’s do the body gestures.

[DEMONSTRATE THESE FOUR BULLET POINTS]

Now take turns with your partner and talk about anything you want—but practice these facial expressions, hand gestures, and body gestures.

[GIVE THEM 30 SECONDS TO DO SO]

Now switch turns.

[GIVE THEM 30 SECONDS]

How did that feel?

[WAIT FOR CAMP STAFF TO MAKE SUGGESTIONS OR CALL ON SOMEONE IF THEY ARE HESITANT.]

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Body Language Exercise

You are getting ready to head to dinner when you come across a Scout sitting by a tree alone. How should you approach them?

- a) Walk over and sit down near them.
- b) Run over to the Scout and stand there.
- c) Don't approach. Continue walking; you're hungry.



Prepared. For Life.®

Let's practice reading a Scout's body language with this situation.

[READ THE SLIDE. IT IS IN THE SCRIPT BELOW, TOO.]:

*You are getting ready to head to dinner when you come across a Scout sitting by a tree alone.  
How should you approach them?*

*A) Walk over and sit down near to them.*

*B) Run over to the Scout and stand there.*

*C) Don't approach. Continue walking; you're hungry.*

What do you think you should do?

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Body Language Exercise

You are getting ready to head to dinner when you come across a Scout sitting by a tree alone. How should you approach them?

- a) **Walk over and sit down near them.**
- b) Run over to the Scout and stand there.
- c) Don't approach. Continue walking; you're hungry.



Prepared. For Life.™

That's right, the correct answer is A.

We should walk over and sit down near them. Begin by asking, "Is it OK if I sit near you? Do you need help?" You don't need to say much. By simply sitting near them, your body language shows them that you are supportive.

When you do this, remember two things. First, be sure to get their permission to sit near them. Don't just do it and assume it is OK. Second, remember Youth Protection. You should not be alone with a Scout and out of sight of another person.

Now let's look at the kinds of behaviors you might see at camp.

[NEXT SLIDE]

# Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior

MESH-Concerning Behavior



Prepared. For Life.™

Body language is an important cue in understanding how someone is feeling.

But so are other behaviors. Let's look at a few. First, we will look at typical Scout behavior that we might see in camp. We'll then look at something that, while it might overlap with this typical camp behavior, we should take notice of.

As camp staff, you will become increasingly capable of telling the difference between typical Scout behaviors and the behaviors that are more worrisome.

But at first, it'll be a bit tough trying to decide if a Scout's behavior is "normal" for being in camp or if it's something that might be more concerning. So let's go through some examples.

[BE SURE TO GIVE AUDIENCE TIME TO READ EACH OF THESE BEHAVIORS AND RECOGNIZE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "TYPICAL" AND "MESH-CONCERNING."]

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Sadness or anxiety, such as when missing trading post hours or being in a flag ceremony.	



Prepared. For Life.™

[READ THE SLIDE (BELOW)]

*Sadness or anxiety, such as when the Scout misses trading post hour or having to be in a flag ceremony.*

It is very typical for Scouts to be disappointed when things don't go their way or to be nervous sometimes. And of course, these are just a couple of examples. There are other times when a Scout might be disappointed, nervous, or anxious at camp.

In your experience as a Scout or as camp staff, when do you think this kind of behavior might suggest something that is more concerning?

[WAIT FOR SUGGESTIONS. IF NONE COME, JUST GO TO THE NEXT SLIDE.]

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Sadness or anxiety, such as when missing trading post hours or being in a flag ceremony.	<i>Sad feelings lasting more than a few days or continued and irrational worrying attacks.</i>



Prepared. For Life.™

These feelings usually don't last long.

However, if these feelings continue for more than is what is typical, or the Scout's worries and fears don't make sense, then this might be a MESH-concerning behavior.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Sadness or anxiety, such as when missing trading post hours or being in a flag ceremony.	<i>Sad feelings lasting more than a few days or continued and irrational worrying attacks.</i>
Lots of energy and excitement for many activities in the camp program.	



Prepared. For Life.®

Scouts are full of energy and so excited about camp, especially when they first get to camp. So they might not always pay attention or might lose focus on what they are doing in the moment.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Sadness or anxiety, such as when missing trading post hours or being in a flag ceremony.	<i>Sad feelings lasting more than a few days or continued and irrational worrying attacks.</i>
Lots of energy and excitement for many activities in the camp program.	<i>Hyperactivity, inactivity, or alternating between, without any apparent reason.</i>



Prepared. For Life.™

But if you notice a Scout whose energy levels seem excessively higher or lower than most Scouts, or if it really seems to go up and down for no obvious reason, this could be a MESH-concerning behavior.

[NEXT SLIDE]



## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Sadness or anxiety, such as when missing trading post hours or being in a flag ceremony.	<i>Sad feelings lasting more than a few days or continued and irrational worrying attacks.</i>
Lots of energy and excitement for many activities in the camp program.	<i>Hyperactivity, inactivity, or alternating between, without any apparent reason.</i>
Staying up past lights out and having trouble waking up on time.	



Prepared. For Life.™

Frequently, Scouts want to stay up late or keep chatting after the lights are out. But they then might not wake up on time.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Sadness or anxiety, such as when missing trading post hours or being in a flag ceremony.	<i>Sad feelings lasting more than a few days or continued and irrational worrying attacks.</i>
Lots of energy and excitement for many activities in the camp program.	<i>Hyperactivity, inactivity, or alternating between, without any apparent reason.</i>
Staying up past lights out and having trouble waking up on time.	<i>Difficulty sleeping, not sleeping at all, excessive fatigue, sleeping too much.</i>



Prepared. For Life.™

But if you learn about a Scout having more serious sleep difficulty over several days—either unable to sleep or sleeping too much—this could be a MESH-concerning behavior.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Sadness or anxiety, such as when missing trading post hours or being in a flag ceremony.	<i>Sad feelings lasting more than a few days, or continued and irrational worrying attacks.</i>
Lots of energy and excitement for many activities in the camp program.	<i>Hyperactivity, inactivity, or alternating between, without any apparent reason</i>
Staying up past lights out and having trouble waking up on time.	<i>Difficulty sleeping, not sleeping at all, excessive fatigue, sleeping too much.</i>
Taking few or no showers, not changing socks or underwear, or bathroom issues.	



Prepared. For Life.®

Let's face it: Scouts at camp get dirty and might go the entire session without showering. They almost need to be told to get clean and stay dry. And, at camp, people have bathroom issues.

But usually, if you remind a Scout to take a shower or go to the bathroom, they might grumble—but they'll do it.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Sadness or anxiety, such as when missing trading post hours or being in a flag ceremony.	<i>Sad feelings lasting more than a few days, or continued and irrational worrying attacks.</i>
Lots of energy and excitement for many activities in the camp program.	<i>Hyperactivity, inactivity, or alternating between, without any apparent reason</i>
Staying up past lights out and having trouble waking up on time.	<i>Difficulty sleeping, not sleeping at all, excessive fatigue, sleeping too much.</i>
Taking few or no showers, not changing socks or underwear, or bathroom issues.	<i>Eating sparingly, skipping meals, binge eating, not drinking enough water, very frequent visits to the bathroom.</i>



Prepared. For Life.®

But if you see a Scout whose lack of hygiene is unsafe and they avoid bathrooms—they go out of their way to avoid taking a shower or going to the bathroom—this could be MESH-concerning behavior.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

### Typical Scout Behavior

Occasionally forgetting the Buddy System and walking off on their own, taking time alone, resting in tent for afternoon.

### MESH-Concerning Behavior



Prepared. For Life.®

As much as we try to remind everyone to follow the Buddy System, it's normal for Scouts to occasionally forget to take their buddy with them.

It's also OK if Scouts need some down time—like resting in their tent during a free afternoon. Of course, they need to let their adult leader know so their buddy can be paired up with another Scout. Remember that two-deep leadership is always in practice.

[NEXT SLIDE]

# Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Occasionally forgetting the Buddy System and walking off on their own, taking time alone, resting in tent for afternoon.	<i>Refusal to use Buddy System, walking off alone for extended periods, refusing to come out of tent.</i>



Prepared. For Life.™

But when a Scout goes out of their way to disregard the Buddy System and is constantly off by themselves or outright won't leave their tent, this might be MESH-concerning behavior.

[NEXT SLIDE]

# Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Occasionally forgetting the Buddy System and walking off on their own, taking time alone, resting in tent for afternoon.	<i>Refusal to use Buddy System, walking off alone for extended periods, refusing to come out of tent.</i>

Occasionally losing temper when things do not go their way.



Prepared. For Life.®

Scouts get stressed, frustrated, even angry at times, in the moment when things aren't going as they would expect. But it then passes, and they go on to other things.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Occasionally forgetting the Buddy System and walking off on their own, taking time alone, resting in tent for afternoon.	<i>Refusal to use Buddy System, walking off alone for extended periods, refusing to come out of tent.</i>
Occasionally losing temper when things do not go their way.	<i>Frequently arguing with adults, breaking rules, displaying aggressive or dangerous behavior.</i>



Prepared. For Life.™

But it's different if a Scout is frequently upset and argumentative. Or if they are being aggressive or dangerous to others. This would be MESH-concerning behavior.

[NEXT SLIDE]



## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Occasionally forgetting the Buddy System and walking off on their own, taking time alone, resting in tent for afternoon.	<i>Refusal to use Buddy System, walking off alone for extended periods, refusing to come out of tent.</i>
Occasionally losing temper when things do not go their way.	<i>Frequently arguing with adults, breaking rules, displaying aggressive or dangerous behavior.</i>
Playful teasing and childishness.	



Prepared. For Life.™

Scouts are often full of joy and laughter. They sometimes tease each other, and it's mostly just playing and in good fun.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Occasionally forgetting the Buddy System and walking off on their own, taking time alone, resting in tent for afternoon.	<i>Refusal to use Buddy System, walking off alone for extended periods, refusing to come out of tent.</i>
Occasionally losing temper when things do not go their way.	<i>Frequently arguing with adults, breaking rules, displaying aggressive or dangerous behavior.</i>
Playful teasing and childishness.	<i>Excessive or insensitive comments to intentionally antagonize and disrupt.</i>



Prepared. For Life.™

But sometimes it can be taken too far. So if someone keeps making insensitive comments or is picking on someone in an intentionally antagonistic or mean way, this might be overly disruptive and signs of MESH-concerning behavior.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Occasionally forgetting the Buddy System and walking off on their own, taking time alone, resting in tent for afternoon.	<i>Refusal to use Buddy System, walking off alone for extended periods, refusing to come out of tent.</i>
Occasionally losing temper when things do not go their way.	<i>Frequently arguing with adults, breaking rules, displaying aggressive or dangerous behavior.</i>
Playful teasing and childishness.	<i>Excessive or insensitive comments to intentionally antagonize and disrupt.</i>
Difficulty learning and practicing the safety protocols for fires, knives, climbing, or using ropes.	



Prepared. For Life.™

In camp, you might see some Scouts who seem to have difficulty learning the safety protocols we have in place for some activities. A few examples include learning how to properly build a fire, safely use a knife, or be safe when using ropes and climbing.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Observing Scout Behaviors and Noticing Changes

Typical Scout Behavior	MESH-Concerning Behavior
Occasionally forgetting the Buddy System and walking off on their own, taking time alone, resting in tent for afternoon.	<i>Refusal to use Buddy System, walking off alone for extended periods, refusing to come out of tent.</i>
Occasionally losing temper when things do not go their way.	<i>Frequently arguing with adults, breaking rules, displaying aggressive or dangerous behavior.</i>
Playful teasing and childishness.	<i>Excessive or insensitive comments to intentionally antagonize and disrupt.</i>
Difficulty learning and practicing the safety protocols for fires, knives, climbing, or using ropes.	<i>Disregarding safety rules for and taking dangerous risks with fires, knives, climbing, or using ropes.</i>



Prepared. For Life.™

But it is different when a Scout intentionally takes risks with fire, knives, rope and while climbing, and shows disregard for safety rules. This is MESH-concerning behavior.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Reflection Exercise

During leatherworking class, you notice a Scout who keeps playing with their knife despite staff warning them not to do something so dangerous. What is your understanding of the Scout's behavior?

- a) Scouts love knives and this Scout is just being playful.
- b) The Scout is having difficulty learning and practicing the safety protocols for knives.
- c) The Scout is disregarding safety rules and taking dangerous risks with knives.



Prepared. For Life.™

Now let's do another practice exercise.

[READ THE SLIDE, BELOW]

*During leatherworking class, you notice a Scout who keeps playing with their knife despite staff warning them not to do something so dangerous. What is your understanding of the Scout's behavior?*

- A) Scouts love knives and this Scout is just being playful.*
- B) The Scout is having difficulty learning and practicing the safety protocols for knives.*
- C) The Scout is disregarding safety rules and taking dangerous risks with knives.*

What do you think? Which one do you think is the best way to proceed?

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Reflection Exercise

During leatherworking class, you notice a Scout who keeps playing with their knife despite staff warning them not to do something so dangerous. What is your understanding of the Scout's behavior?

- a) Scouts love knives, and this Scout is just being playful.
- b) The Scout is having difficulty learning and practicing the safety protocols for knives.
- c) The Scout is disregarding safety rules and taking dangerous risks with knives. *This is MESH-concerning behavior.*



Prepared. For Life.™

The correct answer is c) *The Scout is disregarding safety rules for and taking dangerous risks with knives, and this is MESH-concerning behavior.*

Why is this the correct answer?

The Scout has been warned but is still purposefully ignoring the safety rules. They are now a potential danger to themselves and to others.

[NEXT SLIDE]

# Speak to Scouts and Support Them: U-S-A



Prepared. For Life.

So far, we've talked about the "U" of the U-S-A response.

You now understand the importance of a person's body language as well as the kinds of behaviors to be watching for.

Next, we'll talk about how to speak with a person who might be having a MESH challenge.

That is the "S" of U-S-A. With "S," you recognize that you should speak to the Scout if it looks like they might be having a MESH-related challenge.

If you see something, do not wait for a Scout to come to you. You are camp staff. It is important that, if you think something is wrong, you act on it.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## How Should I Speak with a Scout?

- **How** we talk is just as important as our body language or what we say.



Prepared. For Life.

So how should you speak to a Scout?

It's important to understand that our body language and **HOW** we speak is just as important as **WHAT** we say.

For example, suppose someone asks you, "How are you doing?" and you shout back "FINE!" with an angry voice.

[WHEN YOU GET TO "FINE," REALLY SHOUT IT BACK TO THE STAFF, WITH AN ANGRY VOICE AND AN ANGRY LOOK.]

[NEXT SLIDE]



## How Should I Speak with a Scout?

- ◎ When speaking with someone who is upset, we should:
  - Ask ***“Do you need help?”***
  - Speak in a calm, caring tone
  - Use the Scout’s preferred name
    - This may be their full name or a nickname
    - Be mindful of their preferred pronouns (he, she, they)



Prepared. For Life.®

We just learned that it is important to be mindful about our body language and how we say what we say. But it is also important to say the right thing.

So when first speaking to someone, don’t ask, “What’s wrong?”

This suggests that something **IS** wrong, and it might upset the person more.

Instead, ask “Do you need help?” or “How can I help you?”

By phrasing it this way, you make it easier for the person to give you a response. You have shown them that you want to help them rather than judge them.

It makes it easier for the distressed person to talk with you and, hopefully, identify a concrete problem and solutions to solve it.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## How Should I Speak with a Scout?

- Be sure to be a good listener
  - Sometimes you just need to listen, to show you are “there” for the Scout



Prepared. For Life.™

When talking to someone, be a good listener.

Try not to ask a lot of questions. Instead spend a lot of time listening to them.

If there is silence, that is OK. If you aren't comfortable with the silence, just let it exist anyway.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## How Should I Speak with a Scout?

- Reflect back and summarize
  - Restate what the Scout said to you. This helps you to understand what the issue is. It also communicates you are listening.



Prepared. For Life.

When you're speaking to someone and you're not sure what they mean, do what is called "reflecting back."

To reflect back, you just summarize what they said. It shows them that you are listening, and it also gives them a chance to correct you if you misheard something.

For example, if a Scout tells you they are feeling sad, you might respond with "It sounds like you are feeling sad."

Remember that HOW you say something is important, too. So when you speak, use a calm, caring tone.

This sounds like a lot to do.

But remember, when you're not sure what to do, just treat others how you would want to be treated.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Reflection Exercise

You come across a Scout who is a short distance away from others and crying. You ask them if they need help. The Scout begins to cry harder and tells you they are not having fun. How might you respond?

- a) "I'm sorry, that sucks."
- b) "It sounds like you are feeling sad."
- c) Say nothing and sit quietly.
- d) "Everyone likes you!"



Prepared. For Life.®

Now let's practice this.

[READ THE SLIDE, BELOW]

*You come across a Scout who is a short distance away from others and crying. You ask them if they need help. The Scout begins to cry harder and tells you they are not having fun. How might you respond?*

- a) *"I'm sorry, that sucks."*
- b) *"It sounds like you are feeling sad."*
- c) *Say nothing and sit quietly.*
- d) *"Everyone likes you!"*

Which of these answers do you think is the most appropriate response?

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Reflection Exercise

You come across a Scout who is a short distance away from others and crying. You ask them if they need help. The Scout begins to cry harder and tells you they are not having fun. How might you respond?

- a) "I'm sorry, that sucks."
- b) **"It sounds like you are feeling sad."**
- c) Say nothing and sit quietly.
- d) "Everyone likes you!"



Prepared. For Life.

That's right, the correct answer is B. You reflected their feelings, so they feel validated.

Option (d) sounds like a good answer, but it might make the Scout feel like they are wrong for feeling sad.

[NEXT SLIDE]

# Advocate and Act: U-S-A



Prepared. For Life.®

So far, we've talked about the "U" and "S" of the U-S-A response.

Remember that with "U," you understand the body language or behaviors that suggest someone is having a MESH challenge.

With "S," you begin to see if you can help the person. So you speak to the person to begin to determine if they are having a MESH challenge.

But how do you decide what to do next? What do you need to do to help the Scout? This is the "A" of U-S-A.

With "A," you help the Scout. That's what Advocate and Act mean.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Advocate & Act: Common MESH Challenges

Missing Home*	Sadness	Bullying/Fighting
Eating Challenges	Nervous/Worried	Sleep Difficulty
Exhaustion	Stomach Complaints	Body Modesty or Image Issues

Use your **U-S-A** training. Is there a medical issue? Look for simple solutions and tips to support the Scout.

\*No longer called “homesickness.”



Prepared. For Life.®

Here are a few examples of issues that Scouts might have at camp. You'll most likely see these challenges this summer.

How do you advocate and act to best support the Scout?

The first thing to do is do your best to assist the Scout. Whether it is a MESH challenge or not, part of your role as camp staff is to help the Scout. For example, they might not be sleeping well, or it might be because they're worried about the bears outside their tent. Their stomach might be bothering them because they are constipated, or it might be because they're stressed about something. Whether it's a MESH challenge or not, you help them as much as you can.

How do you do that? You practice U-S-A, using the skills we've covered in this session. You speak to the Scout, such as “How are you doing?” You then listen to the Scout, being sure to reflect back to make sure you heard them correctly. You validate their experiences—this means that you tell them it's OK to feel however they are feeling. You also need to take them at their word—if they say they are sad or have stomach problems or something else, then your role is to try to help them. You do not need to try to figure out why they are having the issue.

As part of all this, you also make sure that their basic needs are met. If they're hungry, give them food. If they're cold or wet, then get them into shelter. In general, help them be more comfortable. Finally, be sure to let the Scout know that they can come to you for support.

These challenges are probably things you are likely to encounter every week in camp. So they'll be common. But how do you respond to things that are more concerning?

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Advocate & Act: MESH Challenges

Scout says they feel (one or more of these):

- Anxious
- Panicky
- Stressed
- Out of control
- Like something bad is going to happen
- Like their heart is racing or pounding

*They may also be breathing fast.*



Prepared. For Life.™

Sometimes a Scout might be having what looks to be a more serious MESH concern. You see this by their behavior or from speaking to them. Here are some of the symptoms that you might see when a Scout is having a MESH challenge.

[READ THE SLIDE, BELOW]

*Scout says they feel (one or more of these):*

- *panicky*
- *anxious*
- *stressed*
- *out of control*
- *like something bad is going to happen*
- *like their heart is racing or pounding*

*They might also be breathing fast.*

When you encounter a Scout who might be in this situation, you can help them with the responses we talked about just now. But another thing you can do is use tactical breathing.

[NEXT SLIDE]



## Mindful Breathing

- Breathe in through your nose for 4 seconds, count 1-2-3-4
- Hold your breath for 4 seconds, count 1-2-3-4
- Breathe out through your mouth for 4 seconds, count 1-2-3-4
- Repeat 2 to 4 times (or 3 to 5 total breaths)



Prepared. For Life.™

Mindful breathing is a technique that can help people calm down. Tactical breathing reverses the natural fight or flight response our bodies experience when we are really nervous, anxious, or scared. So it might help the Scout gain control, manage their anxiety, reduce their stress levels, and help them improve their focus. It might also help the Scout reduce their nervousness and worry. It has been used by first responders, the military, and high-performance athletes.

Once you learn this easy technique, you can use it in your everyday life yourself. It's great for centering yourself as you do something exciting, such as climbing aboard the Summit's zip line, but it's also good for something like focusing on your important math test. You can also walk a Scout through this technique if they are feeling anxious or on edge.

Breathe in through your nose for 4 seconds, counting each second in your mind. Then hold your breath for 4 seconds, again counting to 4 in your mind, and then exhale for 4 seconds mentally counting. Repeat 2 to 4 more times for 3 to 5 breaths total. Doing a couple of these now might help you focus on the rest of this training. So let's practice this now.

[HAVE STAFF PRACTICE THIS TECHNIQUE—THEY FOLLOW YOU AS YOU DEMONSTRATE HOW TO DO IT.]

How did that feel? Maybe a bit different, right? But it will be very useful when you or a Scout is really, really nervous or anxious or stressed.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Advocate & Act: Urgent MESH Challenge

### ● Abuse

- Disclosing - You are told by a Scout they have been abused or are at risk of being abused.
- Witnessing - You see signs of abuse in someone else.
- Someone else reports witnessing abuse to you.

**Remember:** Believe the individual. Reflect back the information to the Scout to make sure you heard it correctly. These situations cannot be ignored and need to be addressed urgently. Contact the Camp Director *immediately!*



Prepared. For Life.®

If a Scout tells you that they have been abused, remember to:

- Don't panic or overreact.
- Don't criticize the youth.
- Don't promise not to tell anyone. You must report the allegation to the camp director (or designee) and Scout executive.
- Do listen actively and follow the no one-on-one contact policy.
- Do respect the youth's privacy. Keep the information confidential and share it only with the camp director, Scout executive, and official agencies.
- Do make sure the youth feels that they are not to blame.

Camp [YOUR CAMP NAME HERE] has developed a plan for staff members to report all cases of suspected abuse. [BRIEFLY STATE YOUR CAMP'S PLAN AND WHEN CAMP STAFF WILL LEARN ABOUT IT IN MORE DETAIL]. The camp director [NAME THEM] and the Scout executive [NAME THEM AND STATE THEIR CONTACT INFORMATION] must be notified immediately.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Advocate & Act: Emergency MESH Challenges

- Threatening others
- Self-harm
- Thoughts of suicide
- Attempted suicide

**Remember:** If you encounter any of these situations, seek immediate assistance and notify the Camp Director and Health Lodge! Stay with the Scout and keep them safe!



Prepared. For Life.®

But what do you do if a Scout comes to you and says that they want to hurt someone? Or they want to hurt themselves? Or they want to die?

These are HURRY CASES and true EMERGENCIES!

You have to respond to these situations very quickly.

First, make sure you will be safe if you help the Scout. Then determine if the Scout has life-threatening injuries, such as they've cut themselves and are bleeding profusely. You start by letting other people who are near you know that you need help. So call out for help but then use your first-aid skills to help the Scout.

[NEXT SLIDE.]

## Advocate & Act: Emergency MESH Challenges

If the Scout does **not** have life-threatening injuries:

- Stay calm
- Call for help
- Stay with the Scout
- Remove dangerous items from around the Scout
- If possible, walk the Scout to the health lodge
- If not possible, ask anyone who is not helping to leave the area
- Respect the Scout's privacy

*Immediately notify the Camp Director and the Camp Health Officer!*



Prepared. For Life.™

Once the Scout is safe, keep them safe.

But it is important that you are also sure to keep yourself safe as well as others, too.

- Stay calm and be supportive of the Scout.
- If needed, call for help.
- Someone needs to stay with the Scout at ALL TIMES. You do this to protect the Scout and others who might be nearby.
- If possible, remove any dangerous things from around them. Examples of these are ropes, lighters, knives, or other tools.
- If you can walk the Scout safely, then take them to the health lodge.
- If you can't walk them to the health lodge, ask others to leave the area, unless they are responding to the emergency. You do not need an audience to see what the issue is.
- Give the Scout as much privacy as you can. But there should be others there to help you. This is for the safety of everyone, including Youth Protection concerns.

Finally, the camp director [NAME THEM] and the camp health officer [NAME THEM] need to be notified right away.

Camp [NAME YOUR CAMP] has emergency procedures and plans in place for many situations. This includes if someone in camp is having a serious MESH challenge.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Camp [Name] MESH Response Plan

- *List The*
- *Components*
- *Of the plan*
- *And tell the*
- *Camp staff*
- *What their responsibilities are*



Prepared. For Life.®

**[YOU MUST CREATE THIS SLIDE FOR USE IN YOUR CAMP TRAINING.]**

YOU MUST DESCRIBE YOUR MESH RESPONSE PLAN. IT SHOULD BE AS DETAILED AS THE OTHER EMERGENCY PROCEDURES YOU HAVE PUT INTO PLACE AS PART OF MEETING NCAP REQUIREMENT AO-805. IF EMERGENCY PROCEDURES ARE TAUGHT IN-DEPTH IN ANOTHER CLASS, YOU SHOULD AT LEAST REVIEW THE MESH RESPONSE PLAN BRIEFLY TO REFRESH THE KNOWLEDGE.

GO INTO DETAIL SO THAT THE STAFF KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN AND WHERE THEY HAVE A ROLE. YOU WILL NEED TO DECIDE IF DETAILS TO BE SHARED IN THIS PRESENTATION SHOULD INCLUDE YOUR RESPONSE TEAM PROCEDURES FOR ALL OF THE CAMP STAFF.

THIS SHOULD INCLUDE ALL THE EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS FOR YOUR CAMP, INCLUDING CAMP DIRECTOR, HEALTH LODGE, AND CAMP HEALTH OFFICER THAT CAMP STAFF SHOULD CALL.

**HAVE THE STAFF ENTER THESE NUMBERS INTO THEIR OWN PHONES DURING THIS TRAINING IF THEY HAVEN'T ALREADY DONE SO. IF CELL SERVICE IS UNRELIABLE AT YOUR CAMP, INSTRUCT (OR REMIND) CAMP STAFF OF COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES.]**

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Reflection Exercise

You notice a Scout who refuses to participate in an activity and is sitting alone for most of the day.

You should:

- a) Go to them and ask how you can help.
- b) Offer support and encourage them to get back into the program.
- c) Mention it to the unit leader.
- d) All of the above.



Prepared. For Life.

So where are we now?

We've talked through the "U" and "S" of U-S-A.

And with "A," we talked through how to Advocate and Act when we meet a Scout who is having a MESH challenge. These challenges can range from something relatively mild, such as a stomachache, to something more serious, such as a Scout having a panic attack because of a thunderstorm, to a challenge that is life-threatening.

I then talked through our MESH Response Plan. We [WILL/HAVE] discussed the rest of our camp's emergency response plan on [DAY OR DATE]. And being prepared to respond to a MESH emergency is part of that plan.

So let's now review a situation and decide how to proceed.

*You notice a Scout who refuses to participate in an activity and is sitting alone for most of the day. You:*

- a) *Go to them and ask how you can help.*
- b) *Offer support and then encourage them to get back into the program.*
- c) *Mention it to the unit leader.*
- d) *All of the above.*

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Reflection Exercise

You notice a Scout who refuses to participate in an activity and is sitting alone for most of the day.

You should:

- a) Go to them and ask how you can help.
- b) Offer support and encourage them to get back into the program.
- c) Mention it to the unit leader.
- d) **All of the above.**



Prepared. For Life.™

So how do you proceed?

You should do ALL these things. Doing all these things is you doing your part of U-S-A.

[NEXT SLIDE]

# Scenarios

**U: Understand** the Behaviors to Watch For  
**S: Speak** to Scouts and **Support Them**  
**A: Advocate and Act**



Prepared. For Life.™

We've talked though how to use U-S-A in camp. The goal is that you understand the kinds of behaviors to be on the lookout for. If you see something that suggests a Scout or other staff member might be struggling, you Speak to them and provide Support to them. And if they need assistance that is more than you provide, you Advocate and Act to help them get the help they might need.

But like any skill, you won't really learn how to do this if you don't practice. So this is what we're going to do now.

[ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE FOUR SCENARIOS. PRIOR TO THIS TRAINING SESSION, YOU SHOULD HAVE PICKED ONE OF THEM. YOU WILL SHOW THAT SCENARIO TO THE STAFF AND HAVE THE ENTIRE STAFF WORK ON IT. IDEALLY, YOU SHOULD PRINT OFF THESE SCENARIOS SO THAT THE STAFF CAN REFER BACK TO THEM. BUT IF THAT IS NOT AN OPTION, THEN BE SURE TO KEEP DISPLAYING THE SCENARIO SO THE STAFF CAN REFER TO THE SLIDE.

THEN DISCUSS THE SCENARIO USING THE QUESTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE OF THIS GUIDE.

IF TIME PERMITS, REPEAT THIS EXERCISE WITH ONE MORE SCENARIO, AND IDEALLY AS MANY OF THEM AS YOUR TRAINING SCHEDULE ALLOWS.]

[NEXT SLIDE]



## For each of these scenarios, consider these questions

- ⦿ What MESH issue do you think the Scout described in the above scenario is going through? Provide reasons for your decisions, such as signs, symptoms, and possible causes.
- ⦿ What advice and assistance would you offer the Scout? Explain.
- ⦿ Is this a MESH issue that requires outside assistance with adult leaders or mental health professionals? Give reasons.



Prepared. For Life.®

In a minute, we're going to review a scenario where a Scout might or might not be having a MESH challenge while in camp.

When you review the scenario, think about the questions on the screen. Talk to the people near you to decide how best to proceed.

I'll give you a few minutes to discuss this situation. We'll then come back together as a group to talk through it.

[GO TO THE SCENARIO YOU PREVIOUSLY SELECTED. GIVE THE STAFF TIME TO READ IT.

YOU WILL FIND THE IDEAL ANSWERS AFTER THE SLIDES THAT HAVE THE SCENARIOS.

WHEN YOU ARE REVIEWING THESE ANSWERS WITH THE STAFF, DO **NOT** READ THE SLIDE. IT WILL COME ACROSS AS STIFF.

INSTEAD, BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THESE ANSWERS BEFORE THIS CLASS SESSION, SO YOU CAN HELP GUIDE THE CAMP STAFF TO REACHING THE BEST CONCLUSIONS.]

[NEXT SLIDE]

# Scenarios



Prepared. For Life.®

## Scenario 1

John is a new Scout to the troop. He is slight in stature, quiet, and has trouble making friends. He struggled to keep pace with the other Scouts during hikes and had difficulty with some of the physical aspects of camping. Some of the other Scouts have started to tease him about his perceived shortcomings. One evening, after the campfire, John comes to you in distress—he stated that he can't take the teasing anymore and is severely missing home. He confides to you that this is the first time he has been away from home for any extended period of time, and he is very close to his family.



Prepared. For Life.™

Best answers to the three questions:

1. *What MESH issue do you think the Scout described in the above scenario is going through? Provide reasons for your decision (signs, symptoms, and possible causes).*

Answer: It appears that this Scout likely has homesickness (the new terminology is “missing home”). He is a new Scout; this is his first trip away from home, and he is struggling to adjust to the rigors of camp life. Exacerbating this is the fact that the other Scouts have taken to teasing him. One thing to consider is just because a Scout is smaller in stature, it does not necessarily mean that he can't or isn't able to adjust to the physical demands of camp without proper mentorship and guidance.

2. *What advice and assistance would you give the Scout?*

Answer: This Scout might need reassurance, comfort, an empathic ear, and support by getting both the adult and youth leadership involved to counsel the Scouts who are teasing/bullying to cease that behavior and remind them of their endeavor to follow the Scout Oath and Law. Other interventions to consider include encouraging the Scout to continue the camping routine, staying active with the camping activities or helping them meet other Scouts within the camping setting and/or activities, or suggesting the Scout journal their feelings.

3. *Is this a MESH issue that requires outside assistance from adult leaders or mental health professionals? Give reasons.*

Answer: It depends on the severity of the homesickness (missing home). If the intervention with the other Scouts was not effective or if the Scout starts to engage in unsafe behavior or makes statements of suicide, self-harm, or intent to act on his thoughts, then it might be necessary. Contacting parents/guardians for suggestions could also be considered. Having the Scout contact the parents/guardians directly will most certainly result in a shortened camping event for that Scout. Being prepared for that outcome should be a consideration when adult leadership is discussing solutions. Discuss with parents/guardians that it is their responsibility to arrange safe transportation for their child back home if the Scout/parents choose to leave camp early.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Scenario 2

Kayla is an older Scout. She is very experienced and is the SPL for the troop during the week. Usually calm and reserved, the other Scouts noticed that she has been distracted and not as attentive to the Scouts like she normally is. She confided to one of her buddies that just before the troop set off for camp, her parents informed her that they were getting a divorce.



Prepared. For Life.™

Best answers to these 3 questions:

1. *What MESH issue do you think the Scout described in the above scenario is going through? Provide reasons for your decision (signs, symptoms, and possible causes).*

Answer: Kayla likely is distracted from stressors at home. Even though she is an older Scout and likely not homesick, stressors from home can negatively impact a Scout and therefore affect their ability to attend to the camp experience in the moment. Family stressors, like divorce, can affect each member of the family in profound ways; moreover, children can blame themselves for the divorce even though the reasons for the divorce have very little or nothing to do with them.

2. *What advice and assistance would you give the Scout?*

Answer: This Scout might need reassurance, comfort, an empathic ear, and support by getting the Scout adult leadership involved to provide additional support. You don't necessarily have to give advice unless the Scout asks and you feel comfortable giving advice. Many times, just providing a space for listening might be enough. This support can be provided without disclosing any details of the personal issue that is occurring to the Scout. The Scout might choose to share or not share with others the family issue that is occurring. Be mindful of what decisions the Scout has made and provide support as needed.

3. *Is this a MESH issue that requires outside assistance from adult leaders or mental health professionals? Give reasons.*

Answer: It depends. Intervention from mental health or other professionals might be necessary if the Scout starts to engage in unsafe behavior or makes statements of suicide, self-harm, or intent to act on her thoughts. But remember to keep all information regarding this issue with this Scout confidential with anyone not authorized.

[NEXT SLIDE]

### Scenario 3

Sarah has been in the troop for about two years. Initially, she was intensely interested in advancing and made First Class very quickly. However, during camp, she didn't seem to care about her appearance, nor did she find interest in any of the activities. She looked sullen and her normally outgoing demeanor changed to being isolated and quiet. During camp, she was engaging in careless and risky behavior around the camp to the point that the adult leaders had to talk with her to remind her to be safe around camp with fires, knives, and that she should be a model to the younger Scouts. One evening, when walking back from the campfire, her buddy became alarmed when Sarah started playing with her knife by making cuts on her wrists. She also mentioned to her buddy that no matter what she does, she will never live up to the Scout Law and Oath so she may as well "just end it..."



Prepared. For Life.®

Best answers to these 3 questions:

1. *What MESH issue do you think the Scout described in the above scenario is going through? Provide reasons for your decision (signs, symptoms, and possible causes).*

Answer: Sarah appears to be very sad and might suffer from depression. Since we are not mental health professionals, we cannot make a diagnosis and say she is depressed. That is a medical diagnosis. We can gather the information, share that information with adult leadership and the camp health officer, and support her the best we can. She is very sad; it is interfering with her life, and she needs our help, as well as that of camp leadership and mental health professionals. The signs and symptoms of depression are depressed or irritable mood, loss of interest in activities, low concentration, sleep disturbances (either getting too little or too much sleep), feelings of guilt, change in appetite with possible unintended weight gain or loss, feeling sluggish, or thoughts of suicide. In some cases, the Scout might engage in risky or dangerous behavior with an implicit or explicit intent to harm themselves.

2. *What advice and assistance would you give the Scout?*

Answer: This Scout should not be left alone at any time. Do not be afraid to ask about the Scout's suicidal thinking and intentions but be clear that you will communicate that to other adult leaders and health care providers. Asking the Scout about the thought of suicide will not cause them to attempt suicide. Keep any object that can be used to cause self-harm away from the Scout. Contact the camp director and camp health officer so the Scout can receive care and be evaluated by medical professionals. The unit's adult leadership needs to be contacted, too. It is important to follow the camp's MESH response plan. Also, in the interim, provide comfort to the Scout, offer food and a comfortable place to talk. If the Scout is too cold or too hot, adjust the environment as practical.

3. *Is this a MESH issue that requires outside assistance from adult leaders or mental health professionals? Give reasons.*

Answer: Yes. See #2.

[NEXT SLIDE]

## Scenario 4

Mike has been a Scout who, ever since joining the troop, has struggled to live up to the Scout Law and Oath. He can be aggressive and argumentative. At times, he bullies other Scouts. The other Scouts often are reluctant to be a buddy with Mike. One day, the SPL came to you and was really upset. He said Mike pulled a knife on another Scout, claiming the Scout took a candy bar from him and that Mike wanted the other Scout to pay him back.



Prepared. For Life.

Best answers to these 3 questions:

1. *What MESH issue do you think Mike in the above scenario is going through? Provide reasons for your decision (signs, symptoms, and possible causes).*

Answer: Mike could be depressed, have stress at home or school, or be dealing with chronic low self-esteem for a few reasons that he is attempting to defend against by acting out. Unfortunately, his behavior is disruptive and threatening and undermines the camp experience for the other Scouts.

2. *What advice and assistance would you give Mike?*

Answer: This Scout should have clear limits set for his behavior and given equally clear (and enforceable) consequences for continued disruptive or oppositional behavior. For example, “If you continue to threaten other Scouts, the following consequences will occur: You will not be able to participate in any activity without adult leaders; adult leaders will escort you to activities for a certain time period; or your parents will be contacted and asked to come to camp to take you home.” Remember all activities require a Scout to have a buddy. If that is not possible, then two-deep adult leadership may accompany the youth to the activity. There is no one-on-one contact in Scouting. Again, the consequences are for the behavior and need to be clear and enforceable.

3. *Is this a MESH issue that requires outside assistance from adult leaders or mental health professionals? Give reasons.*

Answer: Yes. Disruptive behavior can quickly become an imminent threat to safety for Mike, you, and the other Scouts. Adult leader involvement early on is important. Camp leadership should be notified. Unfortunately, police may need to be involved, given the seriousness of the behavior. This will be determined by the camp director.

[NEXT SLIDE]

# Conclusion



Let's summarize what we've learned in this session:

We talked through U-S-A and how we can use this method to help us help Scouts who might be struggling with a MESH challenge while in camp.

There are three steps in the U-S-A model.

- U stands for Understanding the Behaviors to Watch For

The behaviors to be watchful of are the Scout's body language as well as behaviors that suggest a MESH challenge.

- S stands for Speak to Scouts and provide Support

You should speak to the Scout with the goal of helping them if it looks like they might be having a MESH-related challenge.

- A stands for Act and Advocate

And with "A," we talked through how to Advocate and Act when we meet a Scout who is having a MESH challenge. These challenges can range from something relatively mild, such as a stomachache, to something more serious, such as a Scout having a panic attack because of a thunderstorm, to something that is potentially life-threatening.

[NEXT SLIDE]

# Questions?



Prepared. For Life.®

What questions do you have?

[WAIT FOR QUESTIONS—DO YOUR BEST TO ANSWER THEM OR FIND THE ANSWERS.]

Great, I hope this session has been helpful. Now as the camp season progresses, do NOT hesitate to contact [CAMP DIRECTOR], [CAMP HEALTH OFFICER], or [LIST ANY OTHER STAFF MEMBERS THAT SHOULD BE CONTACTED] if you see a situation that you have questions about or need more guidance on how to respond to.

Revised 12/2024