

Scouting—A Powerful Tool

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A Presentation for Leaders of Scouting

*Prepared by the
Grand Teton council*

Leaders 2.05

Positive Youth Development

“PYD” is the quality found in Youth Development programs that successfully promote positive outcomes in youth.

They Foster

Resilience
Self Determination
Prosocial Norms
Spirituality
Clear and Positive Identity
Belief in the Future

They Promote

Bonding
Social Competence
Emotional Competence
Cognitive Competence
Moral Competence
Behavioral Competence

They Provide

Recognition for Positive Behavior
Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement

J Youth Adolescence (2014) 43:919-932

The Tufts CAMP Study Study Design

- 1,800 Cub Scouts aged 6-12
- 400 carefully matched non-Scouts from Philadelphia area
- Duration 2½ years, starting in 2012
- Development was measured in 9 key areas

Hopefulness	Cheerfulness
Helpfulness	Kindness
Obedience	Hopeful Future Expectations
Thriftiness	Religious Reverence
Trustworthiness	
- In the beginning, there were **no significant differences** between the two groups.
- By the end however, the differences were **striking**.

Funded by the John Templeton Foundation

Scouting Myths

1. Scouting is broken.
2. Since Scouting doesn't work, it's okay if I do it my own way.

Character Attributes

Changes over 2½ years in Tufts CAMP Study

J Youth Adol (2015) 44:2359-2372

Attribute	Scouts	Non-scouts
Cheerfulness	↑	↓
Helpfulness	↑	↓
Obedience	↑↑↑	→
Kindness	↑↑	→
Hopeful Future Expectations	↑↑	→
Trustworthiness	↑↑	→

Arrows refer to Size of Effect.

Prosocial Priorities

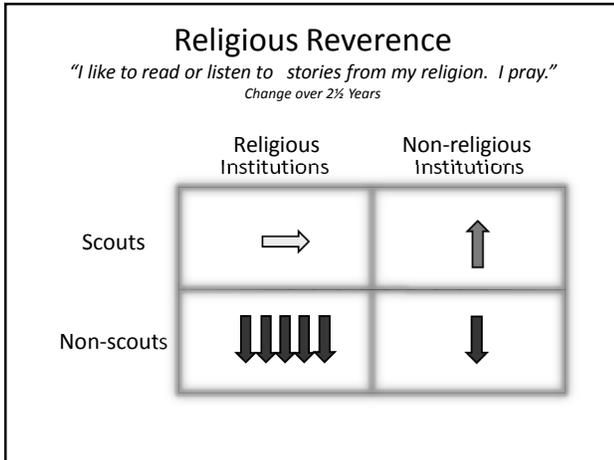
Doing the right thing
Helping others

Non-Prosocial Priorities

Being smart
Being the best
Playing sports

**Scouts were
significantly more likely
than non-Scouts
to embrace
Prosocial
Values**

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Religious Reverence

"Non-scout boys from religious affiliated institutions reported a medium to large degree of decrease in their religious reverence."

J Youth Adol (2015) 44:2359-2372

- Characteristics of Programs with PYD**
Findings from Youth Development Literature
1. Create a Safe Space
 2. Start with "The Big Three"
 3. Follow a Structured Curriculum
 4. Effective Implementation
- Fidelity Quality Consistency*
- J Youth Adol (2015) 44:2359-2372

- The "Big Three" of Youth Development Programs**
- 1 **Positive and sustained adult-youth relationships** 
 - 2 **Life-skill building curriculum** 
 - 3 **Opportunities for youth leadership** 

High Quality Program Matters
Program Implementation and PYD

High quality programs attract more boys, engage them more frequently, and hold onto them longer.

Units with a high quality program are better able to reach even boys who are less-engaged.

More character development in more boys

- Regular Attendance Matters**
Program Implementation and PYD
Scouts who were more active in Scouting
Scouts who were less active in Scouting
Greater activity in Scouting predicted improvement in multiple areas
- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ❖ Academic success | ❖ Helpfulness |
| ❖ Connection to nature | ❖ Cheerfulness |
| ❖ Thriftiness | ❖ Kindness |
| ❖ Intentional Self Regulation | ❖ Trustworthiness |
| | ❖ Hopeful Future Expectations |
- The greater the exposure to Scouting, the greater the benefit.* Am J Comm Psychol (2016) 57:73-86

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Leadership Support is Vital *Program Implementation and PYD* *Quote from Tufts Study*

“No dimension of activity involvement—intensity, duration or engagement—will be related to program goals when the structure and leadership that supports program curriculum is not readily in place.”

Am J Comm Psychol (2016) 57:73-86

Leadership Support is Vital *Program Implementation and PYD* *Quote from Tufts Study*

“In a poorly developed program, where the links between program curriculum (*i.e. Scouting curriculum*) and goals (*i.e. leadership direction*) are not well defined and validated, even the most engaged participant is unlikely to demonstrate positive change as a result of his involvement.”

Am J Comm Psychol (2016) 57:73-86

Leadership Support is Vital *Program Implementation and PYD* *Key Take-Away Messages*

- Strong linkage between leadership and the Scouting curriculum is essential to a successful program.
- Without this “even the most engaged participant is unlikely to demonstrate positive change”.
- The program will likely fail the boy, and skeptical leaders will be “proven right” once again.
- However, the reason the program failed is likely not that Scouting failed, but that it was poorly implemented.

What About Sports?

- Over 80% of American youth will at some time have participated in a sports program.
- American youth spend more time in sports programs than any other organized out-of-school activity.

Sports and Youth Development *The Good and the Bad*

The Good

- Improve grades in school
- Feel better about themselves
- Show leadership

The Bad

- Increase aggressive behavior
- Reduce ability to see right and wrong
- Increase chances for risky behavior

When kids do nothing but sports, the overall effect on their character development is negative.

What about Sports *in Combination* with a Good Program like Scouting?

- Kids active in both programs show the highest
 - Positive individual functioning
 - Contribution to family and community.

Scouting and Sports make a great partnership.

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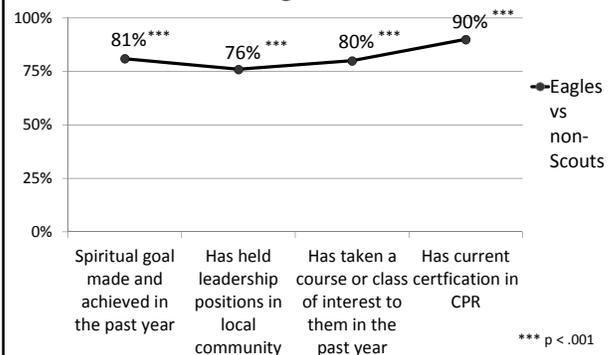
Is Participation in Scouting Associated with Prosocial Behavior in Adulthood?

“Eagle Scouts—Merit Beyond the Badge”

Baylor University, Institute for Studies of Religion
Nationwide Telephone Survey
Average Age of Respondent—47 years

Eagle Scouts	134
Scouts (Not Eagle)	853
Non Scouts	1,502
Total	2,512

Comparative Likelihood of Prosocial Behaviors in Eagle Scouts as Adults



In Summary

- ✓ Scouting leads to the development of multiple positive character attributes.
- ✓ Scouting sustains Religious Reverence.
- ✓ Scouting is a strong partner with sports in building positive character.
- ✓ The positive effect of Scouting persists for decades.
- ✓ Scouting requires strong support from leadership to be fully effective.

What Really IS Scouting?

- Scouting is more than just an outdoor activity program, silly songs or merit badges.
- Scouting is a proven and effective program that changes boys' lives, while sustaining Religious Reverence.
- However, Scouting requires strong support from leadership to become fully effective.
- It is that *foundation of leader support* that gives it the power to touch hearts and change lives.

Scouting is a powerful and effective tool for creating change in the lives of boys.

The degree that our boys experience the power and effectiveness that Scouting promises, is therefore up to us— their leaders.

Two Questions

Ponder

What can I personally do to better support the Scouting program?

Discuss

What steps can we take to make our Scouting program touch the life of every boy?

www.tetonscouts.org