

Chapter 19 - Linking With Colony and Troop



Cub leaders have a natural tendency to feel responsible for children between the ages of 8 and 10. Although this is the Cub age range, we also have the opportunity to influence their development before they come to the pack and after they leave our care. We can do it by maintaining close links with the colony and troop.

The Cubs we like so much at age nine were once six, and soon will be 12. They're the same youngsters, and leaders hope they'll receive positive guidance through all their growing up years, not just during the few years they spend in Cubs. If we believe in Scouting, we're glad they had a chance to be Beavers during their very impressionable years, and we are glad they have a chance to be Scouts during the challenging years moving into puberty. We want to encourage them to move from Beavers to Cubs to Scouts and, later, to Venturers. We want to do what we can to ensure they have as happy and productive an experience in the other sections as they do in Cubs.

Is your pack part of a group that has a colony, troop, and perhaps a Venturer company? If it does, maintaining contact between sections is fairly easy because section leaders meet regularly at group committee meetings. Perhaps your group doesn't include all sections, and the closest colony or troop meets many kilometres away. You might decide to work towards getting other sections started after reading this chapter.

Linking Beavers to the Cub Program

Linking a colony with your pack is critically important when encouraging Beavers to move on to Cubs. For the Beaver, a sudden change to the pack environment can create a high level of anxiety in a seven to eight-year-old child who has grown accustomed to colony routines. To guarantee a successful transition from Beavers to Cubs, plan to gradually expose White Tail Beavers to pack activities over the course of the year. In keeping with their age characteristics, consider all White Tail Beavers in a transition time from Beavers to Cubs. Scouts Canada suggests the following linking concepts:

Linking Colony and Pack Leaders

In the beginning of the Scouting year, colony and pack leaders should meet to discuss having White Tail Beavers participate in a series of pack meetings and events. It's essential that you maintain close cooperation between section leaders to create a positive experience for all youth members. Compare and schedule program plans to accommodate both sections. Don't make White Tails wait until the spring before you involve them in the pack. Let them visit a number of times over the course of the year; this will build their comfort level, and familiarity with pack routines and Cub leaders.

Since White Tail Beavers are in a transition from colony to pack, they could participate in four to eight Cub meetings (or more). White Tail Beavers have changing personal development needs; blending the security and familiarity of Beavers with the excitement and challenge of Cubs is a positive step in meeting these needs. How often White Tails go to the pack will depend on the individual children involved, as well as the programs offered in both the colony and pack at certain times of the year. Keep parents informed as much as possible about program changes.



Role of the Beaver Leaders

After making arrangements with Cub leaders, Beaver leaders will spend time meeting with their White Tails to introduce them to the idea of visiting the pack for special activities. Keo can help tell the White Tails what goes on in a pack.

When it's time for White Tails to begin visiting pack meetings, a colony leader should accompany the Beavers. What's the Beaver leader's role? The colony leader provides a friendly adult face to the White Tails, and helps pack leaders manage the extra children. Colony leaders can rotate this job, but it's more desirable to have a colony leader who plans to move up to Cubs the following year. This will provide additional emotional support to White Tail Beavers who plan to swim-up to the pack. Having a Beaver leader involved who plans to move to Cubs establishes a steady contact for both pack leaders and Beaver parents who have questions about White Tails attending Cub meetings. When White Tails are visiting the pack, they should not feel compelled to attend colony meetings also during the same week unless they want to do this.

Role of the Cub Leaders

After making arrangements with the colony, a Cub leader visits the White Tails at a Beaver meeting. Talk to the children about what happens at Cubs, and what activities the pack does. Take time to dispel fears or answer questions the White Tail Beavers may have.

Go over the pack's schedule of activities that White Tails are invited to attend. Include a note home to parents about the pack and meeting details. Find out which Beaver leader will be accompanying the White Tails, and make the necessary introductions.

You may only have time to visit the colony once, but if possible, drop in several times. Depending on the time available to you, choose to do one or more of these activities with the Beavers.

- Take older Beavers aside (perhaps with Keo) to talk to them about Cubs. Show them *The Cub Book*. Ask Keo to describe the badges he or she has earned. Tell the White Tails about a few Cub activities — particularly outdoor activities, and others you think might fire up their imaginations. (If you aren't able to get very involved in the colony, talking to Beavers like this is the most important linking activity.)
- Bring a six or another small group of Cubs with you to present a skit.
- Lead a game. Discuss it with the Beaver leaders first, so you know what kinds of games the Beavers enjoy.
- Ask the Beaver leaders to invite older Beavers' parents to part of the meeting. Talk to them about the Cub program. You can do this with or without the Beavers present. Parents will want to know about slightly different aspects of Cubbing than the Beavers.



Before the White Tails visit your pack, spend time with the Cubs talking about the upcoming visits. Discuss the importance of making the White Tails feel welcomed, and how the Cubs can look out for the Beavers. Creating a caring big brother or sister attitude in Cubs will foster a warm and friendly meeting atmosphere. If you twin each White Tail with an older Cub it might also help make the Beavers feel secure.

White Tail Beavers Visit the Pack

When the White Tails first arrive, greet them with a special Grand Howl. After teaching the Beavers about the Grand Howl and how to perform it, let them take part in the ceremony.

All children who participate in Cubs should be made to feel part of the group. With brief instruction, any child may participate in the Grand Howl, which serves to create a sense of belonging in the child, and team spirit in the pack.

After pairing the White Tails with a six and/or a Cub, let the Beavers get involved in all pack activities. Play Cub games within the Beavers' capabilities. Remember differences in age and size, and steer away from rough games. Have a craft Beavers and young Cubs can enjoy together while the older Cubs do something else. Reserve part of the meeting to instruct White Tails in Tenderpad requirements. If White Tails have the opportunity to participate in a program that leads to the successful completion of a star or badge, the White Tail Beaver may be given the badge. But, make it clear that the badge or star must be saved and worn on the Cub sash when the Beaver becomes invested as a Cub. Beavers are not to wear Cub badges on the Beaver uniform, nor are Cub badges to be worked on during Beaver meetings.

When leaders follow these guidelines, they preserve the non-competitive emphasis of the colony. At the same time, White Tail Beavers receive the extra program challenge they desire at this age, while they become gradually more familiar with Cubs, and build anticipation to swim-up.

Try to include White Tails in a variety of pack programs throughout the year, such as on outings, camping trips, banquets and other events beyond meetings. Before Beavers swim-up to Cubs, encourage them to complete their Tenderpad requirements. At Swim-up, the White Tails can be invested as Cubs and presented with their Cub epaulets, along with their Cub sash and any previously earned stars or badges sewn on it.

Beaver meetings are generally shorter than Cub meetings, so you might want to dismiss the Beavers early. Make sure their parents know when to pick them up.

Remember that Beavers need to keep moving; they like to try a lot of different activities. You may have to take more time to explain rules or give directions, or help with activities.

If you haven't been able to meet the Beavers' parents in person, send them a letter describing the Cub program and inviting the Beavers to join.

By providing White Tails with a coordinated and gradual exposure to pack activities, the Beavers should eagerly anticipate the move. It will seem like a natural progression in the child's program experience.



Appoint a Keeo

Encourage one of your Cubs to serve as Keeo in the colony. Because Keeo is a member of the Beaver leadership team, select the youth with care. Choose a Cub who:

- Is able to be an older friend of the Beavers and help them in their games and other activities without trying to be boss.
 - Enjoys being a Cub and will arouse the Beavers' interest in Cubbing.
 - Is a responsible person you can count on to do a job.
 - Is articulate, and able to talk freely with both Beavers and leaders.
 - Has enough time to attend Cubs, Beavers, and colony leader planning meetings.
- During the youth's appointment, you will expect the Keeo to attend most pack meetings and outings. Being a Keeo is not a job for just any Cub. Make parents or guardians aware of what you are asking their youngster to do. Consult closely with the Beaver leaders when making a choice. See Chapter 17 for more detail on Keeo.



Preparing Cubs to Go Up to Scouts

Cubs will want to advance to the next section if:

- They know enough about it to reduce their fear of change.
- They are persuaded that the new program will be fun.
- Their friends will be advancing with them.
- Their parents approve of the move.
- They already know, and are friends with, some of the Scouts in the troop.

To satisfy these conditions, bring the Cubs, their friends, and their parents into contact with the Scouts and Scout leaders; let them see for themselves what's in store for them.

Linking Pack and Troop Leaders

The process used for linking colony and pack leaders applies equally to linking pack and troop leaders. At the beginning of the Scouting year, leaders from the pack and troop should meet to determine the best times for having older Cubs visit the troop or participate in troop outings and events. The more opportunity to build familiarity with the troop program in Cubs, the better the chances the Cub will feel at ease in going up to Scouts.

The Role of Cub Activity Awards in linking to Scouts

Linking to Scouts actually begins when Cubs work on and earn an Activity Award. The Activity Awards require skills just below the Scout achievement badge requirements; they were specifically designed to do this to prepare Cubs for going up to Scouts. In this way, the Activity Awards serve as "pre-Scout" badges. Cubs are permitted to transfer any earned Activity Awards from the Cub sash to the Scout sash as soon as they move up into Scouts.



Scout Badge

Voyageur Level

- Outdoor Skills



Remove (any or all)

Voyageur Level

- Personal Development



Remove (any or all)

Voyageur Level

- Citizenship



Remove

Voyageur Level

- Leadership



Remove

Cub Badge

- Canadian Camper Award

- Canadian Heritage Trails Award

- Canadian Wilderness Award

- Canadian Arts Award

- Canadian Healthy Living Award

- World Citizen Award

- Canadian Family Care Award

- Emergency Preparedness Award

There's an excellent reason why Cub Awards are carried to the Scout sash. In the past, many Cubs experienced a certain amount of anxiety and disappointment at having to start over with an empty sash in Scouts. When Cubs earn "pre-Scout" badges it helps blend the sections, and promotes stronger interests and security in the Cubs as they move up to Scouts. Upon earning the Voyageur level of the corresponding Scout activity badge, the Cub Activity Award is removed and replaced by the activity badge. The Awards make a very tangible link from Cubs to Scouts, and provide a clear, progressive and integrated learning path for the child to follow.

Troop Scouter Visits the Pack

The Troop Scouter will want to talk to older Cubs and perhaps their parents. The Scouter might bring along a patrol to demonstrate a Scout activity or lead a game for the pack. The Troop Scouter and Scouts could also work with Cubs who are earning Activity Awards.

Older Cubs Visit the Troop

At a troop meeting, the older Cubs will see Scout activities first-hand and have a chance to try some of them. The Scout leaders might help Cubs learn a Scout skill they can use on an outing with the troop, or as it relates to an Activity Award.

Older Cubs Take Part in a Troop Outing

Encourage troop members to take older Cubs on an outing that isn't too challenging but does give them a chance to sample outdoor skills at the Scout level. It may or may not be desirable for a Cub leader to go along. Talk it over with the Scout leaders, and base your decision on the nature of the Cubs involved. Some Activity Awards suggest visiting the troop for activities.

Troop Sends a Letter to Older Cubs' Parents

The troop's letter to parents will be similar to the one you send to Beaver parents. It will describe the troop program and invite the Cubs to join.



Appoint a Kim

Kim is a Scout who serves as a junior leader in the pack, just as Keo serves in the colony. More information on Kim's role appears in the chapter on Leadership and the Team.

When to Advance

In many groups, Beavers move to Cubs and Cubs to Scouts in the spring as regular meetings wind down. That way, the new Cubs and Scouts start in their new sections at the beginning of a new program year in the fall.

Because youth mature at different rates, you may find you have Cubs ready to advance in the middle of the year. Here are tell-tale signs to look for:

- Cubs no longer seem to have as much fun as they once did.
- Some youth complain that the games they once enjoyed are too childish.

If you try to hold these Cubs until the end of the year, they may drop out and never return to Scouting. It's far better to let these youth move up to the next section and start meeting new challenges as soon as they're ready.

Advancing in the middle of the year is not easy for Beavers or Cubs if they're moving up alone. One reason is, they won't have friends to share their apprehensions. All alone, they'll have to fit into an established program where the others know what is happening, but they won't. Your leadership team, the Cub or Beaver, and the leaders of the other section need to work together to make the transition as smooth as possible for these youth.

Coordination between sections is fairly easy when you're members of the same group, but you can do it even if your group doesn't have a colony or troop. Your group committee may have some suggestions. If not, ask the local council office for the name and phone number of the nearest Beaver and Scout leader, and arrange to meet with them.

Section Program Linking

Section Program Linking							
	 BEAVERS			 CUBS			 SCOUTS
Section							
Age Grouping	Brown Tails	Blue Tails	White Tails	1st year	2nd year	3rd year	1st year
Linking Tool	PACK ACTIVITIES			ACTIVITY AWARDS TROOP ACTIVITIES			