Chapter 5

SHARED LEADERSHIP

Leadership Requirements ▶ Shared Leadership ▶ The Leadership Team ▶ Keeo Sharing Responsibilities ▶ Administering Colony Needs ▶ Assessing the Leadership Team
LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Beaver leaders are mature persons who have agreed to help promote Scouting’s Mission and Principles. They have a willingness to work harmoniously with five to seven-year-olds and other adults, and are interested in developing their own leadership skills. (Refer to Scouts Canada’s Policies and Procedures for leader/adult to youth ratios for Beaver activities.)

BEAVER LEADER VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION
(This can also be found in Bylaw Policies and Procedures, Section 4000.)

Position: Scouters in a Beaver colony are called Beaver leaders and are members of a leadership team. A colony will have at least two registered Scouters, both of whom are 18 years of age or older. One Scouter will be registered as the contact person.

Accountable to: Group Commissioner

Time Required: 10-12 hours per month for planning and colony meetings, plus one weekend outing every two months. Additional time may be required for training, sharing sessions, Group Committee and Council meetings.

Scope of Position: This position requires working as part of a leadership team conducting colony programs in accordance with guidelines in Beaver program handbooks and By-Law, Policies and Procedures.

Responsibilities:
- Provide children 5-7 years of age with appropriately challenging, weekly meetings. Weekly meetings include all elements of the Beaver program.
- Ensure that the health and safety of all members is maintained continually. This is a primary concern.
- Participate in colony planning meetings. Use program ideas that come from the Beavers themselves.
- Develop close working relations with other members of the team, and share the responsibility of operating the colony with all colony leaders.
- Help carry out the weekly program.
- Support and participate in special meetings and activities, including outings and camping experiences.
- Know and use resource material available, including various handbooks.
- Maintain good relations with parents/guardians, and encourage activities, which involve them.
- Encourage recruitment of members, and help the Group Committee recruit other leaders.
- Maintain good relations with leaders in other Sections and attend Group Council, Group Committee and local Council meetings as required.
- Take training for the position, including regular sharing sessions, special interest and outdoor activity skills.
- Meet specific requirements of the sponsoring body, where applicable.
Atitudes
"Selective recruitment" and "appropriate training" are two key ways to get and keep volunteers who will provide quality program opportunities to the children and youth in Scouting's Sections. New Scouting leaders will have been recruited principally because of their attitudes. Those involved in the recruiting process must be satisfied that the individual is:

Prepared to:
- Accept, and demonstrate personal values compatible with, Scouting's Mission and Principles.
- Subscribe to the Beaver Section's program goals.
- Be comfortable with, enjoy, and care about Beaver-aged children in developmentally appropriate ways.
- Ensure that Beaver-aged children in the colony experience the outdoors on a frequent basis.
- Be accountable for his/her actions.
- Follow Scouting's policies and procedures.

Willing to:
- Acquire the knowledge and skills appropriate to his/her volunteer role in Scouts Canada.
- Work co-operatively with other adults.
- Be open and honest.
- Be objective in evaluations.
- Provide a role model of appropriate adult behaviour.
- Wear the official Scouter uniform.
- Participate in, and support, Scouting's volunteer screening measures.

Scouter's Promise
On my honour,
I promise that I will do my best,
To do my duty to God and the Queen,
To help other people at all times,
And to carry out the spirit of the Scout Law.

Scout Law
A Scout is helpful and trustworthy, kind and cheerful, considerate and clean, and wise in the use of all resources.

Leaders are invested as Scouters during a colony meeting where they confirm the Scouter Promise. (See Meetings and Ceremonies in Chapter 12 for more details.)

SHARED LEADERSHIP

The Beaver concept of shared leadership allows leaders to become models of cooperative behaviour for young children. In concrete terms, it means that all leaders equally share in the successful operation of a Beaver colony. Through your example, you will be demonstrating most of the values you want young Beavers to learn.

An effective team of leaders uses all the concepts of teamwork, shared responsibility, belonging, cooperation, group decision-making, sensitivity towards other's feelings, supportiveness, encouragement, feedback, and compromise. What could be more important than to share with Beavers the spirit of friendship, enthusiasm and good will that is a product of enjoyable teamwork?
THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Scouters in a Beaver colony are called Beaver leaders; they’re members of a leadership team. A colony will have at least two registered Scouters, both of whom are 18 years of age or older. One of these leaders will be registered as the colony contact person. It’s best to have both male and female leaders in your Beaver section – preferably some of them parents of Beavers in the colony. See B.P.&P. Section 3000 “Screening Level Chart” for using parents and resource people in your colony.

You can also supplement the team with a Keeo (a registered Cub), Scouters-in-Training (S.I.T.), ages 16 – 17, and/or Activity Leaders, ages 14 - 15. S.I.T.’s working with the Colony can be included in the Scouter/member ratio provided they have successfully completed the Basic Learning Objectives for Beavers.

Each colony can benefit from having a Keeo as a leadership team member. Chosen by a joint consultative effort between pack, colony and prospective Keeo’s parents, Keeo is a Cub who offers a good role model and serves as a friendly link between the Beaver and Cub sections. This youth also strengthens communications between Beavers and the adult leadership team.

Forest Wisdom: Ratio’s

There are different ratio’s of adults to youth that your colony must maintain depending on the activity (such as conducting a meeting at your regular meeting place or going for an overnight camp). Review these in Bylaw, Policies and Procedures, section 4000 and 10000.
In the story *Friends of the Forest*, Keeo is the biggest beaver in the pond. One day he is covered in a magical light which turns him into a silver beaver. He finds he is able to talk in human language, and the other beavers decide it’s up to Keeo to talk to their human friends on behalf of all beavers.

In your colony, Keeo wears a Cub uniform with a silver scarf that has on its back the Keeo crest – the symbol of the youth’s connection with the Beaver program.

Usually an older Cub, Keeo is part of the leadership team. As such, he or she attends program planning and sharing sessions, and takes an active part in colony meetings.

Keeo is a valuable part of the leadership team for a number of important reasons. Let’s look at those reasons.

- Keeo is closer to the age of your Beavers, and sometimes can see things from their point of view more easily than adult leaders can.
- Sometimes Beavers with problems prefer to talk to Keeo who is an older child and a friend.
- Keeo is a link between the Beaver program and the Cub program.
- Your Keeo can inform Cub leaders about the Beaver program, and Beaver leaders about the Cub program.
- He or she helps introduce Cubbing to the Beavers, and helps make the transition easier for them.
- Keeo participates in the Swimming-up ceremony, and escorts the Beavers up the river to Cubs.
- Keeo is an example of what Beavers can become as they grow into Cubs.

**Training Keeo**

When a Cub becomes a Keeo, it can lead to a really important growth experience. It gives a youth a chance to work with a team of adults in program planning, and to see the results of his or her efforts during the colony meeting. It’s an opportunity for the Cub to make an important contribution to the Scouting Movement, and feel the satisfaction of a job well done.

Once you’ve selected a Keeo, ask one of your leaders to spend time with the Cub so the youth knows all about the Beaver program, specific Keeo duties, the types of crafts, games and songs used in the program, and anything else which might be helpful. Give the Cub a copy of *The Keeo Book*. This is important! It explains Keeo's role, and provides further ideas and guidelines.

Usually, Keeo remains with the colony for one year, but don’t stick to this standard if it doesn’t fit your requirements. The Cub may not work out well, or may find that he or she can’t manage the time because of other activities. You might even find that there’s another Cub who is eager to work as Keeo for part of the year. Make the arrangements flexible enough to suit your circumstances.
Selecting Keeo

If there is a pack in your council, discuss Keeo’s role in the colony with Cub leaders and the Cub’s parents or guardians. Invite the youth to visit one of your meetings to see where Keeo fits in. Cub leaders know their Cubs and will be able to help you find a Keeo with the necessary qualities. Here are some of the qualities to look for; someone who is:

- Warm and friendly and able to get along with Beaver-aged children
- Reliable
- Responsible and able to set a good example
- Able to work and communicate with others
- Mature enough to work as a young leader, rather than as an old Beaver
- Able to gain satisfaction through giving as well as getting
- Capable of helping with activities.

SHARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Beaver leaders pool their knowledge, skills, interests and ideas to develop a program which ensures that every child has a fun-filled personal growth experience in the colony.

This task requires a close working relationship among team members. It’s necessary for each team to work out its own methods of group decision-making, program planning, implementation and evaluation. Keep the following key factors in mind.

- Leaders have a joint and equal responsibility for the colony’s operation.
- Success requires all members to work towards establishing open communication.
- It’s important to hear and encourage ideas of all members at planning meetings.
- It’s important for all members to support a member who is trying leadership in a new activity area.
- The team should rotate duties throughout the year to ensure that all members can learn all functions, including conducting ceremonies; the one exception is the contact person.
- It’s important for all team members to foster a sense of cooperation and mutual acceptance.
ADMINISTERING COLONY NEEDS

A number of tasks need to be done so your colony can run smoothly. With the exception of the contact person, rotate these tasks among your team members during the year. Depending on your team’s particular needs and circumstances, rotate jobs by the week, month or seasonal periods of your program.

You can expand or change somewhat the task areas described below; you may even identify others for your own colony.

Contact Person
Each colony is required to identify a contact person who will provide a communications link for general information and correspondence during a program year. Because it’s necessary to have a consistent address and telephone number for mailing lists, community bulletins, newsletters, etc., this task must be the responsibility of one member of the leadership team. It’s the only job in Beavering you cannot rotate within the year.

Initiator
This job is similar to that of the committee chair. The position involves getting things started in specific areas. Some of the tasks the initiator needs to do include:

- Calling and/or hosting leadership meetings
- Keeping a list of items which need to be discussed
- Reminding members of the task each is expected to do for meetings
- Seeing that leaders accept necessary tasks
- Starting a colony meeting
- Coordinating a segment of the program.

You can rotate this initiator role on a weekly, monthly or bi-monthly basis, particularly when it comes to coordinating meetings of the leadership team.

In your program, you can rotate the role on a seasonal or theme basis. For instance, one leader might handle the coordinator’s job for the complete fall program, for a special theme like nature lore, or for all craft nights, sing songs or spiritual development programs.

Apply the role in a number of ways. In fact, you may need more than one initiator. For example, you may have one initiator who calls a leadership meeting, another who gets a colony meeting going, yet another one who takes care of the nature-theme craft activities over a series of meetings.

Record Keeping
This is a very important team task. It’s important to establish efficient record keeping as soon as a colony is formed. The process begins with the annual registration of your group, for which standard forms are available on-line through the Scouts Canada web site www.scouts.ca.

The Colony Annual Record Sheets are a wonderful record keeping resource; they’re available through Scout Shops. To make a leader’s job simpler, Colony Annual Record Sheets contain space for recording colony leader information, names and phone numbers of specialty or resource persons, vital information about the Beavers in your colony, and a record of attendance.
This resource also includes some JUMPSTART planning sheets for recording your planned programs; it has space for reminders about the equipment you’ll need, notices and the timing of activities. It’s very helpful to keep track of your colony programs, noting how Beavers enjoyed various activities. A record like this enables your leadership team to review program areas which should be covered in future plans to ensure a balanced program, or to identify popular games so your Beavers can play them again.

This information will help a new leader fit in with the team and be in tune with the kinds of activities used in the colony. Through good record keeping, Beavers are assured of high quality programming now and into the future.

Whether your team has just taken over a colony or you’ve joined an established leadership team, ask for information about the group’s past activities.

**Resource Recruitment**

You need one leader to look after the colony resource list, and to contact or produce resources when required. If program planning identifies the need for a resource person, place, publication or other material, the leader who happens to hold the resource responsibility at the time makes arrangements to get what is needed, either personally or through the group committee. (The Resources section of Chapter 11 has information to help you identify the kind of help you may need.)

**Home Resources**

Parents or guardians are a very important source of support to a leadership team. Older brothers and sisters are good resource people, too. Well-organized Beaver colonies establish a good rapport with parents immediately; the relationship benefits leaders, parents and children. One of the team’s tasks is to boost parental interest and commitment. Do this by:

- Informing parents about the program
- Writing a short newsletter
- Keeping in touch about coming events
- Asking for feedback about their child’s involvement.

Many colonies encourage parents to take part in colony meetings on a rotating basis. Others draw from a regular pool of special event helpers, telephone message people, bakers and craft specialists. Ask parents about special interests and talents that they might be willing to share. You’ll find it most effective to ask a person to do a specific job. Provide helpers with good instructions, help them to be relaxed and comfortable, and thank them for their help.

**Group and Area Representatives**

Unlike other sections, the Beaver colony doesn’t have one leader in charge of the section who is a member of the group committee, and attends its meeting.

It’s important that the colony is represented at these meetings, because this is where key funding, recruiting and resourcing decisions are made. These decisions affect your colony’s operation. Select a representative to carry the colony’s voice, and participate in the decision-making.

Also, you need a representative to attend Area Scouters’ meetings. Why? This is where your colony’s participation in the wider Scouting picture usually starts. Here you’ll learn about sharing sessions, Scouter’s Clubs and area events. You want your colony to be represented at area gatherings.
Rotate this representative role frequently among team members to give every leader first hand experience at these meetings, and to spread the work load.

**Equipment and Supplies**

Any colony that has existed for a while starts to accumulate quite a bit of equipment and supplies. (See Chapter 4 for the kinds of equipment you need.) Choose one leader to take care of colony equipment for a fixed period of time. You can assign this task for as long as it takes to cover a certain period, theme or outing in the program.

Some of the responsibilities include: repairing equipment, adding new items, keeping an up-to-date inventory list, securing suitable storage (lockers, closet, supply room), and providing equipment and supplies for program activities.

**ASSESSING THE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Working in a collective manner requires mutual support and encouragement mixed with generous amounts of caring, flexibility and openness. Remember the first time it was your turn to do the opening ceremony? How about the first time you led a song?

When team members are learning many new skills, they often find it easier to stay with the simple activities and leave higher profile jobs to more experienced hands. Yet, the essence of cooperative group building is that each member develops his or her abilities.

The next time your leadership team evaluates program events, suggest that you also spend some time sharing ideas about the team itself. Plan this informal discussion when all members have time to relax and reflect. You might like to share thoughts on questions like the following.

- Do all leaders accept responsibility, and participate?
- Do quieter members have a chance to voice their opinions?
- Do we give Keeo a positive role as part of the leadership team?
- Do we use community resource people in our activities?
- Do we involve parents in, or keep them informed of, planned activities?

Why not invite your Service Scouter to your next leader’s get-together? This person can help you explore ways to evaluate and improve both your program and your team’s performance.

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**Notes**

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