

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SCOUT CAMPING



### **Not actually about “camping!”**

The purpose of Scout camping is *not* to teach boys to be expert outdoorsmen. Although many discover a tremendous love for the out-of-doors, and may hike, camp and canoe all their adult lives for recreation, this is not the mission of Scout Camping. **Our purpose is to develop good values, leadership, citizenship, and fitness and to prepare them for adulthood.**

### **Yet camping is important in our mission** -- because *boys love it!*

- In the process of learning outdoor skills, boys gain self-esteem (on the journey of becoming a “skilled outdoorsman”).
- In the process of living with a boy-led patrol, planning menus, cooking, doing cleanup, etc., they learn leadership, responsibility, flexibility, compromise, conflict resolution, and more.
- In working on badges at camp, they learn to set goals, to manage their time, to forgo a game to finish requirements, to enjoy learning, and to enjoy the satisfaction of accomplishment. And, for the most part, they get to choose which badges they take!
- Boys love being in a “gang.” Camp gives them an opportunity to live, eat, sleep, work and play together with their Scout “gang” -- doing positive things and cementing friendships that can last a lifetime.
- In camp under caring volunteer adult leaders, boys are nevertheless a bit more free than at home. They get wet, get dirty, and experience adversity. If their tent blows down at 2:00 a.m. on a rainy night, they have to get out and put it up again. They learn by experience and they grow. Ask any adult who has spent a summer (or five) at Boy Scout camp about their camp experiences. They remember it fondly to this day. For the great majority, it was *magic!*

### **Part of a rite of passage to young adulthood**

- Being away from parents, “out on their own” (almost).
- Being genuinely needed as part of a patrol of other boys.
- Sleeping out in nature, self-reliantly.
- Choosing which badges to take for oneself.
- Being accepted in the “gang.”
- Being “strong and brave” through adversity (like dark, rainy, windy nights in a tent).
- Doing new, “adult” things like learning rock climbing or aquatic lifesaving skills.
- Absorbing the values messages from their leaders, as they stare into the magic embers of a campfire, under a canopy of stars.

### **All of these things and more begin to prepare a boy for confident young adulthood.**

If he attends camp for several years, he becomes a teacher and role model for younger boys -- another great self-esteem and positive value builder.

Scout camping is a critically important method that we use in achieving our mission -- to train boys for leadership and citizenship, to instill traditional values, to learn service to others, and to prepare for responsible adulthood.

## Scout Camping Delivers!