

Roundtable Hot Topic

Welcoming and Engaging Families



When did you start getting involved in Scouting?

It's very likely that you began participating in Scouting with your kids. Mom, dad, grandparents, family members or guardians who come along with their Scouts are often willing to help when asked. There is always room for more adult volunteers and we can always do more to connect with families. Having an intentional plan as a pack, troop, crew, or ship can increase your adult involvement and help deliver a quality program that keeps Scouts and families engaged!

What are some ways we can welcome and connect with new families?

Step one – Connect, Connect, Connect!

From the first join night or crossover, make sure most of your present leadership introduces themselves to the new parents. People are drawn to relationships, and the sooner you can make a connection the better. It only takes one or two people, finding common ground, to really help a new family feel like they are home. Coach your leaders to ask lots of questions. People are always proud and happy to talk about their kids, their jobs, even their favorite things to do. Let them know you care!

Step two – Engage, Engage, Engage!

Almost everyone will agree to help in some small way! Maybe it's bringing snacks to a den meeting, helping hold a sign during an orienteering outing, or helping Scouts tie knots! Every opportunity helps people feel a part of the group, and they feel needed! Little things grow into big things.

Step three – Celebrate, Celebrate, Celebrate!

Recognize how much work was done by parents who volunteered for the den, pack or troop at a pack meeting or court of honor. Large and small contributions by families who help mean that programs and meetings could not have happened without them! Be genuinely appreciative because more volunteers and leaders are always needed!

Most importantly, watch out for the efficiency trap! Sometimes our “machine” is running so well that outsiders can’t see a place to serve. There should always be a spot for someone new! It will help another family become just as engaged as you are!

Last but not least – another great way to really make new adults feel special is to invite them to that really cool, super-amazing meeting that all the “important people” go to for training, networking, collaboration and fun! You guessed it – ROUNDTABLE!

Remember – Every time a new family comes into your meeting place, **CONNECT, ENGAGE, AND CELEBRATE!**