

# How Cub Scouts Works

There are a lot of terms we use in Cub Scouts ... Dens, Pack, Akela, Tiger, Wolf, Bear, Webelos, Arrow of Light, Blue & Gold, Chartered Organization, District, Council, and many more. Please read on for an explanation of these terms and how they relate to giving your Scout and family a fantastic experience.

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*For a quick reference on the differences between Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, please click [here](#).*

Cub Scouts in the same grade level are grouped together in a **Den**. Usually a den will have 5 to 10 Scouts. As a Den, the Scouts work together to work on their adventures and achievements on their way to earn their [rank badge](#).

- First Grade – Tiger
- Second Grade – Wolf
- Third Grade – Bear
- Fourth Grade – Webelos
- Fifth Grade – Arrow of Light

The adult in charge of the den is the **Den Leader**, and there may be one or more assistant Den Leaders helping. The Den may also have an older Boy Scout helping, this is the **Den Chief**.

Finally, one of the Scouts in the Den will be selected as a peer-leader or **Denner**. This position is usually rotated every couple of meetings so that each Scout gets an opportunity for some leadership training. **Akela** is the term used to describe a Scout's teacher, this can be a scout leader, the parent, or a teacher. This person helps the scout through their requirements, and in many cases can sign their book when the

requirement has been completed.

Dens will usually meet two or three times each month. Each June, as the Scout finishes their grade level, the Scout will automatically move up to the next Den level, regardless of whether or not they have earned their rank badge.

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When all the dens get together, this is called the **Pack**. The Pack usually meets once a month for a regular pack meeting, in our case this is usually the third Wednesday of the month.

The pack will also usually organize one other group activity (a hike, camping, bowling, service project, pinewood derby, etc.) each month. Many of the awards earned by the Scout will be presented at the pack meeting. Two of the Pack's largest events are the **Pinewood Derby** – where Scouts race pinewood cars that they have made, and the **Blue and Gold** dinner – a celebration of scouting and a chance to socialize with other scout families.

The Pack meetings are led by the **Cub Master** and one or more Assistants. Hikes and other activities are usually led or organized by one of the parents of one of our Scouts. If you have an interest area, please let us know, we are always looking for new ideas, and for help organizing our events.

Behind the scenes, there is a Pack Committee, including our **Committee Chair** Person, our Treasurer, and many of our involved parents. Each pack is assigned a **unit commissioner**, a volunteer adult scout leader, but not a member of the pack, who acts as a mentor for the adult leaders and helps to coordinate activities at the district level.

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The way Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts are organized, every unit (a

pack or troop) is sponsored by a **chartered organization**.

These groups are often Churches or other civic groups – ours is the [Lions club of Laytonsville](#). The Pack leadership is selected, appointed, and/or confirmed by the chartered organization. Essentially, the Boy Scouts have franchised the unit to that organization, which essentially owns and is responsible for the unit. The term **key-three** refers to the chartered organization's representative, the pack committee chair, and the Cubmaster working together.

All of the packs and troops within a geographic region are organized into a **district**. The district organizes training opportunities for new (and old) adult leaders, a day camp during the summer, and often some other special activities (our often runs a camporee for the Webelos to participate in, an archery day, and a fishing day). Each district also has a volunteer **district commissioner**, who coordinates the activities of the unit commissioners and a professional **district executive** to keep everything running. There is also a district committee with numerous volunteers coordinating activities and events. The district also sponsors **roundtable** training – a monthly gathering where leaders from many units get together to get training, tips and ideas for running their events and activities. We are in the [Seneca district](#).

The districts in a geographic area are then organized into a council. In our case we are in the [National Capital Area Council](#). Like the districts, the Council also has a **Council Executive**, a council commissioner, and a council committee.

Any breach of the youth protection guidelines or any incident involving the safety of a scout is reported directly to the council executive in addition to the appropriate local authorities. The council operates some council wide events, such as the Pow-wow and University of Scouting training for leaders, and sleep-away summer camps (in our case: [Camp Snyder](#) and the camps at [Goshen Scout Reservation](#)).

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It is important to remember that other than the Council and District executives, everyone involved in your child's scouting experience is a volunteer. In most cases, a parent just like you, that may have had no scouting experience prior to their children joining Scouts.

The Boy Scouts of America have developed great training tools for teaching new leaders what they need to know. These tools include well prepared leader guidebooks, on-line training courses, in-person training days, roundtables, and mentoring. There are also more advanced training courses and activities such as pow-wow, the University of Scouting, Powderhorn, and Wood Badge.

There is almost nothing that can compare to the feeling you will get from the pride your child has in you for being one of their leaders – please join us, help where you can.

And every Scout parent, leader or not, has a responsibility to help us keep all our our children safe. Please take and become familiar with the [on-line course for Youth Protection](#).

This course is mandatory for Pack leaders and members of the Committee, and strongly recommended for all our Scout parents.