



OA Scoutreach Mentoring

Session Objectives

- **Explain** the purpose of the BSA's Scoutreach Division
- **Demonstrate** the Order of the Arrows Role in Scoutreach through Mentoring
- **Guide** participants to understand the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program
- **Enable** participants to complete the training with the opportunity to promote or participate in OA Scoutreach Mentoring program

Session Length: 50 Minutes

Appendix Resources

- OA Scoutreach Mentoring "Quick Reference Guide"
- PowerPoint presentation

Required Materials

- Laptop with projector display
- Printed handouts
- Flip Chart & Markers
- OA Scoutreach Mentoring DVD

Trainer Preparation

This session is designed to provide conclave participants with background and information on Scoutreach and the Order of the Arrow Scoutreach Mentoring program. The trainer for this session ideally will have served as an OA Scoutreach mentor or will be an individual familiar with the program.





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Session Narrative

Introduction

4 Minutes

Today we will be discussing the BSA's Scoutreach Program and the role the OA has in the Scoutreach Program through Mentoring.

Do you remember your first troop campout? For some of you, it may have been a long time ago! However, as honor campers, I'm sure most of us can look back with fond memories of our first Scout camping experiences: learning how to properly pitch a tent, the importance of protecting yourself from the elements, outdoor cooking, etc.

I'm sure the vast majority of us benefited from having trained and experienced older Scouts in our patrols and troops. We've all taught those same skills to younger Scouts and they, in turn, pass that knowledge to Scouts who come after them. Learning camping skills in a proper manner with mentors and older Scouts to look up to made those trips great adventures and made all of us the honor campers that we are today.

Now imagine if there weren't any experienced older Scouts or leaders on your first camping trip: no one to show you how to properly pitch that tent or start a fire for cooking. No one there to mentor you and to support you with the know-how needed to make camping and the outdoors enjoyable. What kind of Scouting experience would you have had?

Our overall goal in this Session is to help each of you understand the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program and recognition and be able to promote or participate in the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program.

What is Scoutreach?

10 Minutes

The Scoutreach Division gives leadership and emphasis to urban and rural Scouting programs. Scoutreach is the BSA's commitment to making sure that all young people have an opportunity to join Scouting, regardless of their circumstances, neighborhood or ethnic background. Scoutreach's biggest asset in urban and rural neighborhoods is a well-defined program based on values, learning-by-doing, fun and positive role models.

Basically, Scoutreach works to bring Scouting to areas of the country where young people have traditionally not had the opportunity to participate. These are primarily urban areas and rural areas where a strong infrastructure may not exist to support units.

What does it take to support units? That's a good question. Let's take a moment to talk about what makes a strong troop. Think of your own troop or other troops that you are familiar with. What makes it successful? (**seek answers**)

- **Strong Sponsoring Organization**

Every troop is sponsored by some organization that accepts responsibility for organizing a unit. Sponsoring organizations are generally schools, churches or other community groups. They are responsible for selecting leadership and providing a location for the troop to meet





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on a regular basis

- **Capable Adult Leadership**
Few will argue that a successful unit needs strong adult leadership consisting of several individuals who have a Scouting background or have been trained. These adult volunteers are the foundation of any Scout troop.
- **Engaged Troop Committee**
In many instances, a Scout will not be aware of the role or purpose of the troop committee, but the most successful units will have troop committees consisting of unit leadership and/or parents who help with the administrative aspects of operating the troop and participate in building a strong program.
- **Financial Resources**
Operating a troop does require financial resources in order to pay for equipment, program materials, and fees for activities. This is a primary responsibility of the troop committee.
- **Advancement/Program**
Obviously, a great troop emphasizes advancement and builds a program in support of the advancement of all Scouts. A successful troop will have active and informative troop meetings, short-term camping and hiking opportunities and will participate in long-term camping experiences.

These points are all important aspects and they represent the infrastructure required to make a troop successful. As you might imagine, it can be challenging to make these points a reality in many rural or urban areas. It may be difficult to find someone who has the qualifications to be a Scoutmaster or an organization willing to sponsor a troop in an area that traditionally has not had Scouting programs in the past.

That's where Scoutreach comes in. Scoutreach is committed to bringing Scouting where it currently doesn't exist and has developed a number of strategies to accomplish this task - some of which are listed below:

- **Create awareness of Scoutreach.** In order for Scoutreach to be effective, there must be a strong awareness of the program within the overall Scouting program and local communities.
- **Develop strategic support to ensure that emphasis is funded and pursued in the long term.** In other words, working to ensure that the infrastructure exists for a troop to grow over several years.
- **Develop strategic partnerships with potential chartered organizations in the community.** Identifying organizations in urban and rural areas that could sponsor units
- **Develop stable units.** Scoutreach's success cannot be measured by how many new units are created in rural and urban areas, but more so by how many of these new units exist and provide a quality Scouting program over a period of several years.





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Now that we know a little about Scoutreach its purpose and a part of their strategy, let's talk about where the Order of the Arrow fits.

What is the OA's role?

4 Minutes

The Order of the Arrow is committed to actively supporting Scoutreach programs in local councils in order to extend Scouting. As the Order of the Arrow worked to determine what role they should play in Scoutreach, the answer seemed simple and straightforward.

You'll recall that we talked about a number of qualities of a strong troop and one of the greatest challenges for Scoutreach units is finding qualified Scouts and Scouters to provide a strong outdoor and advancement program.

Well, since the Order of the Arrow consists of honor Scouts with strong camping and outdoor skills, it seemed a natural fit - in relation to Scoutreach what the Order of the Arrow can provide is assistance in the area of advancement and program.

Therefore, the purpose of OA Scoutreach mentoring is to *identify and assist urban and rural Scout troops whose camping and advancement programs are below standard.*

Essentially, the Order of the Arrow **matches** interested Arrowmen with strong camping and outdoor skills with Scoutreach units that need assistance with advancement and are willing to have members of the Order of the Arrow participate.

Trainer Instruction: At this point, you as a trainer have two options: play the OA Scoutreach Mentoring Video or conduct the 'Mentoring' Activity. The OA Scoutreach Mentoring Video is a nine minute fifty two second segment that provides an overview of the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program. The DVD was distributed to all councils and a version is also available on line from the national OA website. You may also want to check with your section leadership who should also have a copy. If you are performing this training session at a conclave site that may not be conducive to video or if you lack equipment or the actual DVD, then perform the 'Mentoring' Activity.

Mentoring Activity (Optional – in lieu of video)

10 Minutes

What is a mentor? What are the qualities of a great mentor? Who are some examples of great mentors?

What I'd like to do right now is split everyone into three groups. We're going to take the time to explore these questions.

Trainer Instructions: Divide the participants into three groups. You can use any method (count off, divide the class in thirds) but you should ensure there is a good mix of youth and adults from different lodges in each group. Give each group a flip chart page and marker so they can record the answers to their brainstorm.

The first group will answer our first question: "What is a Mentor?" The second group will consider "What are the qualities of a great mentor?" The final group will develop a list of great mentors they may know or mentors from history.





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You'll have approximately five minutes to brainstorm and come up with the best answer to your questions. Go ahead and get started.

Trainer Instructions: During discussions, walk around and observe the groups. Provide help or suggestions to keep the conversation flowing. The objective of this exercise is to reconfirm in people's mind what a mentor is and the qualities that he/she should have.

Ok, time is up. I'd like each group to choose a spokesperson to review their group's list of answers.

Trainer Instructions: Give each group's spokesperson a few minutes to review their answers with the entire group of participants. Provide feedback and encouragement. Some possible answers you may want to point to/consider:

Group #1 – What is a mentor?:

- Mentor “wise man (a wise and trusted guide and advisor)”
- A person to look up to
- A person to ask questions of

Group #2 – What are the qualities of a great mentor:

- Knowledge
- Patience
- Understanding
- Sincerity

Group #3 – Examples of great mentors:

- Parents
- Scoutmaster
- Senior Patrol Leader
- Lodge Adviser
- Past lodge officer
- Sports coach
- Teacher

Now that we have an idea of what a mentor is, let's take a closer look into OA Scoutreach Mentoring.

The Lodge's Role

5 Minutes

As we discussed, OA Scoutreach Mentoring is really a **match** of qualified youth or adult Arrowmen to Scout troops in need of assistance. It does not require a huge infrastructure to operate at the lodge level and even small lodges can have an effective OA Scoutreach Mentoring program.

The lodge service committee or a specific OA Scoutreach Mentoring committee is responsible for administering the program. It should be chaired by a youth Arrowman appointed by the lodge chief and an adviser appointed by the lodge adviser. The following is a brief list of the typical responsibilities of the committee:





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- **Identify urban and rural troops whose advancement and camping programs need help** – the committee should turn to the council, district commissioner staffs, the council’s Scoutreach committee and Scoutreach professional for assistance in identifying these units.
- **Develop a master profile of troops that might benefit from the program** – a current and effective database should be created to track the troops that would benefit from OA Scoutreach Mentoring. These units do not necessarily have to be Scoutreach units. Any troop in the council can benefit if they lack the skills to build effective camping program and advancement.
- **Recruit and Develop a master profile of interested Arrowmen** – the committee should also have a database/roster of interested and qualified Arrowmen who would be willing to participate in the program. Recruitment for OA Scoutreach mentors is a year-round and ongoing process. Both youth and adult resources should be recruited.
- **Match units with OA Scoutreach Mentors** – the committee should take the time to understand a unit’s needs before matching mentors to units. Some units may require assistance from more than one Arrowman. It is suggested that several youth and adult Arrowmen be assigned to a unit if possible.
- **Evaluate Progress and Recognize Mentors** – a key responsibility of the committee is to evaluate the progress of the mentor as well as the unit. The committee should facilitate meetings between the unit leaders, unit commissioner and mentor(s) to evaluate the mentor and review accomplishments. As appropriate, the committee should provide suitable recognition.

Should every lodge have an OA Scoutreach Mentoring program in place? The answer is ‘Yes’. A scenario may occur where there are no Scoutreach units that ask for or require assistance. However, it is every lodge’s responsibility to have the infrastructure in place to match interested Arrowmen with Scoutreach units should the need ever arise.

Keep in mind that every lodge should at least have a plan to serve the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program even if there are no interested units in place ready to receive assistance from mentors!

We will discuss the role of the mentor as well as recognition next.

The Mentor’s Responsibilities

5 Minutes

A critical component to the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program is the recruitment of interested and qualified Arrowmen.

Assuming that the committee finds the applicant to have the skills necessary to be an effective mentor, the applicant will then be assigned to work with a specific unit. He should meet with the unit leader and unit commissioner to develop an Action Plan. This Action Plan will establish the objectives of the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program specific to the troop, define the duration of the mentoring relationship and establish success criteria.

The Action Plan will serve to ensure that both the OA mentor and unit leader have the same





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expectations as to the specific role the OA mentor is to take and also serves at the basis for formal evaluation.

Once the Action Plan is complete, the OA Scoutreach mentor(s) can now begin to assist the troop, providing positive role models to its membership and leadership as needed!

Evaluation and Recognition

5 Minutes

Upon successful completion of the Action Plan, mentors must evaluate their progress to determine if they met the objectives of their commitment.

It is extremely important to recognize individuals in a public forum for their participation in the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program. First, recognition acknowledges the commitment of time and energy that the OA Scoutreach mentor has made to his adopted unit. Second, it provides a vehicle for increasing awareness of Scoutreach and the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program.

What Can I Do? – Personal Commitment

5 Minutes

I think we can all agree that the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program is worthwhile and really drives the notion of service and servant leadership home. However, Arrowmen today are busy people and have a lot ‘on their plate’. What do you think are some methods for encouraging Arrowmen to participate in the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program?

Trainer Instructions: Depending on time, you may want to turn this into a group activity. You can divide participants into three groups. The first group would consider “What the lodge can do to encourage Arrowmen to participate?” The second group would discuss “How can the lodge increase awareness of Scoutreach and the OA Scoutreach Mentoring program in their council?” and the third group would discuss ways to increase Scoutreach and OA Scoutreach Mentoring awareness in the council. If time doesn’t permit, you should take the time to review these three questions with the entire group and solicit feedback.

At this moment, take some time to write down your own ‘personal commitment.’ This commitment should describe what you will do to either increase OA Scoutreach Mentoring awareness, work to establish the program in your lodge, or a commitment to actively recruit and or participate as an OA Scoutreach Mentor.

Conclusion/Question and Answers

2 Minutes

Are there any additional questions or points? (*resolve any open questions or points*)

We hope this session has helped to provide a simple, yet comprehensive overview of Scoutreach and OA Scoutreach Mentoring. Whether you decide to participate as an OA Scoutreach mentor or work to establish the program in your lodge, remember the words of Allowat Sakima...

“He alone is worthy to wear the Arrow who will continue faithfully to serve his fellowman.”

Thank you for your attention and participation. I wish you the best throughout your service.

