

With this third issue, let's tackle a difficult topic,

## Parent Support

Scouting is a great vehicle for reinforcing family values and parent-son relationships. Unfortunately, some parents see Scouting as an activity just for their son. Delivering the message that parents have an important role to play in son's advancement often falls on the den leader.

As Cubmaster, you should strongly encourage your den leaders to have parents meetings, starting with one at the beginning of the year. Den leaders need to educate parents as to their role in the advancement process and really involve them in their son's Scouting. According to recent research, parents struggle with ways to spend meaningful time with their children (see [www.kidsday.net](http://www.kidsday.net)). Cub Scouting provides exactly the experiences and tools parents need to make their time with their son meaningful.

### Parent Meeting - What to Cover

Your den leaders should have a program plan for the year. Part of that plan should identify which achievements and activities should be covered at home.

Each rank program has activities that are well suited, and in some cases specifically intended, for home and family. For single faith based units, presenting the faith and God material in the den can work well. For multi-faith and community units, this is best suited for the family.

Tiger : Each achievement has a family activity requirement.

Wolf : Achievements 9 through 12 (Be safe at home and on the street, Family fun, Duty to God, and Making choices)

Bear : Achievements 1 or 2 (God), and 8 through 13 (Family)

Webelos : Fitness, Family Member and Traveler Achievements

Present these to the parents and provide them a suggested schedule for completion.

At the parents meeting, the den leaders should also cover:

- What is the parent's role in Cub Scouting
- How to make Cub Scouting part of family life
- Field trips and other activities planned by the den leader for which s/he needs help
- Other awards that the Scout can work on (Emergency Preparedness, BSA Family award, religious awards, etc.)

Another point to emphasize is not to make advancement "homework" - parents should learn that completing requirements can be a natural result of family life - it just takes being aware of the requirements, so they can sign them when they are completed. This means parents **have to read the book!**

Parents can be a resource for helping present material to the Den. Your den leaders can use the Parent & Family Talent Survey or another questionnaire to find out what kinds of skills and hobbies that their parents have.

### Parent Meeting - How to Organize

Ideally, parents should come to a den meeting and plan to stay for this meeting. An assistant den leader or den chief should organize activities for the Scouts outside or in a different room, while the den leader talks to the parents. In practice, this can be tough to pull off if you are short on assistants.

As Cubmaster, you can make the pack meeting a forum for a parent meeting. You and an assistant or two can organize 15-30 minutes of games while your den leaders hold their parent meetings.

As a last resort, the den leaders can organize the games while you or your Pack Trainer present to the parents.

# Cubmaster Advancement Newsletter

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## Every Family

It is important that these messages reach every family. A successful advancement program will help each boy feel part of the den and pack. Work with your den leaders to identify those parents that are the toughest to reach. Pitch in to make the extra visit or phone call to the family.

The toughest barrier that you will run into will be a language difference. Non-English speaking parents can pose the toughest challenge. Contact your Council office or Scout Shop for the possible availability of translated program books. Seek out people in the community or through your local school system that can help bridge the language gap.

Parent involvement and support can be a tough nut to crack. Good communications and persistence can pay off in having boys stick with Scouting and Scouting stick with boys.

## Newsletters

As you may note, the issue is dated for a month whose time has past. My apologies, for once again, technology troubles took their toll.

If you are interested in getting back-copies of the newsletters or would like electronic versions to share, you can find them at [http://webpages.charter.net/chadc/html/cub\\_scouting.html](http://webpages.charter.net/chadc/html/cub_scouting.html)

Till next month, yours in Scouting,

- Chad Cooper

chadc@charter.net

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