

## Student Talk Tips

### Be Prepared.

- Confirm the date, time, place, and contact point for the recruitment night.
- Contact the school well in advance to schedule the presentation.
- Confirm the presentation with an email or phone call.
- Create and print copies of your Recruiting Event flier and obtain school principal's permission to distribute.
- Confirm the date the teachers will send fliers home with students.
  - Ideally, fliers will go home the same day as your Student Talk.
  - Provide fliers to the school, sorted with attached instructions to teachers to send home with just boys, just girls or both boys and girls. (Some schools will appreciate you putting the flier packets in each teacher's box—just ask how you can help.)
  - Ask teacher to put a copy of flier up in their room.
- Prepare talking points and practice your presentation.
- Secure necessary props.

### Get Ready.

- Dress in full uniform.
- Arrive at least 30 minutes early.
- Check into the office and receive security badge.
- Set up props.

### Plan Your Pitch. *Schools will allow varying types of access. Structure your presentation to suit the venue:*

- **Single assembly:** *This type presentation can be more challenging, because the group is large and there is limited ability to ask interactive questions. While the method may be less disruptive, it may still require the use of instructional time.)*
  - Make it clear to the school what grades you wish to talk to, so you are only talking to grades and genders you are recruiting. (If this is not possible, make it clear at the beginning who is your audience--boys only, girls only or boys and girls.)
  - Plan to speak for 15-20 minutes. (Settle the time allowance with the school ahead of time.)
  - Use bigger, attention-drawing props and signs so they can be seen by the larger group.
  - Plan interactive questions that can be answered by a show of hands.
  - Take a limited number of questions. (Announce and decide on the number ahead of time.)
  - Stand at the front, but move around to keep students' interest.
- **Room-to-room:** *This presentation style is the preferred option, because you have a smaller, hopefully more focused audience, with ability to ask more interactive questions. (The drawback is that principals may not want to give up instructional time for a Scout presentation.)*
  - Obtain a classroom list with room numbers to ensure you are going to the targeted grades.
  - Make sure you stay within the time allotted for the visits. (Don't outstay your welcome!)
  - Plan to speak in each classroom for three to five minutes talk for each classroom.
  - Use limited props, which can be easily carried from room to room (such as a copy of a flier, Pinewood Derby car, *Cub Scout Handbook* or a Scouting magazine).
  - When you enter, wait to be acknowledged and then finish promptly.

- **Gym (or lunch) time:** *Schools may not wish to allocate classroom instructional time for a Scout presentation, but they may be willing to provide access at lunch or Physical Education (P.E.) time. This method allows the presenter to catch just those students in the targeted audience in the hallway before they enter the loud, noisy cafeteria or gym. Some coaches may desire you to make the presentation after the warm-up, so arrange with the coach how this will work. This may require more presenter time, because the presenter must remain at the school over a longer time period, according to the lunch or P.E. schedule.*

- Plan to speak five minutes or less.
- Set your prop table up in an approved area, perhaps in an open area near the activity space, on a lunch/gym stage or (as a last resort) in a corner of the gym.
- Stay within the agreed-upon time limit.

### The Pitch

- If speaking to a group that also includes non-targeted youth, make it clear at the beginning who is your audience (boys only, girls only or boys and girls).
- Maintain control of the conversation at all time.
  - Do not allow students to talk when you are talking and require their attention.
  - Use the Scout sign, if necessary, and explain its meaning.
  - Do not attempt to talk over student chatter, but wait until they settle down.
- Introduce yourself and the pack.
  - Name of Cubmaster
  - Pack meeting location
- Keep it short, simple and animated.
  - Move around and pick up or point to prop objects.
  - Vary your speaking voice (loud/soft; fast/slow; use pauses for dramatic effect)
  - Make eye contact.
  - Smile.
- Ask questions.
  - Use questions requiring a show of hands or a short answer (“Give me one word...”).
  - Do not, under any circumstances, allow any child to tell a story. (Cut them off, if necessary.)
  - How many of you are already in Cub Scouts or have a friend who is a Cub Scout?
- Sell the product.
  - What are some fun things you get to do in Cub Scouts?
  - Share one or two fun activities your pack has planned for the coming year.
  - Display pictures on a scrolling slideshow (laptop computer), poster or display board.
- Close the sale.
  - Ask “Who thinks they would like to be a Cub Scout?” (Hopefully, every student will raise his or her hand.)
  - Share details for your Recruiting Event activity/meeting. Get them to repeat back to you the date and place.
  - Tell students how to sign up (application, dues, uniform, handbook).
- Remind students to look for the flier in their backpack and show it to their parents.
  - “What is the first thing you are going to say to your parent after school?” (I want to join Cub Scouts.)
  - “Will you sign me up for Cub Scouts?” (Instruct students to show the flier to parents.)
  - **Make sure every student knows that registration fees are not a barrier to joining, that every boy/girl who wants to participate will be allowed to do so. Tell students their parent may talk to the Cubmaster about waiving fees.**
- Take a couple of questions, but stay within the allotted time.
  - Cut off long-winded questions.
  - Refer students to the unit contact on the flier.
- Thank the teacher, office staff and principal for allowing you to speak to the students.