

Parent Guidelines for Camping with Troop 742

Over the course of your scout's experience with Troop 742 there will come several times where the Troop needs additional adults to participate in a weekend campout. There will always be a minimum of two adults on every campout, and we are required to have at least one female adult along on any campout. Depending on the activity, we may need a higher ratio of adults to youth, such as boating or swimming activities. In some cases, space for camping may be limited. If this is the case, priority will go to Scoutmasters, then registered leaders such as Committee Members, and then parents.

While parents are always welcome at any event, Troop 742 has come up with the following guidelines to help parents/guardians understand both what their role on a campout is, as well as what is expected of them on the campout.

What an adult's role on a campout is:

Troop 742 is a "Scout-led Troop." This means that all meetings and campouts are run by the scouts for the benefit of the scouts, under the broad oversight of adult leaders. Scouting is designed to enable scouts to learn outdoor and lifelong skills, but especially to learn and experience leadership.

An adult's job on a campout is to ensure that the scouts have the opportunity to develop leadership. This is not always an easy thing to do, in fact at times it is downright difficult. It is a well known fact that some scouts take to leadership more readily than others. When a patrol of younger scouts is working at building a campfire in wet weather, and having a few difficulties doing it, it is tough not to just step in and do it for them... especially when the scouts are cold, wet, hungry and grumpy (and your scout is one of them). Doing this may solve an immediate problem, but does no help in the long run. It deprives the youth leaders of the troop an opportunity to both show and develop their leadership skills, as well as undermining their leadership status with the younger scouts. The best solution in a case like this would be to get one of the youth leaders and ask them to check in on that patrol and to help out if necessary. That youth leader will hopefully use her experience to teach the younger scouts how to build the fire in wet conditions.

Scouts BSA teaches leadership. And girls learn leadership by practicing it, not by watching adults lead.

Thus, the adult's role on a campout is that of a supervisory role. Adults are there to provide the transportation to and from the event and to make sure that no one gets hurt. In the event of a safety risk, you are expected to jump in immediately and prevent further harm. When it comes to actual leadership during campouts, that should be handled by the youth.

If an adult goes on a campout, you are an automatic member of our Cat Herder (adult) Patrol. This patrol has several purposes—good food and camaraderie, but more important is providing an example the scout patrols can follow without our telling them what to do (we teach by example).

Since a patrol should camp as a group, we expect the adults to do so also; that way, adults don't tent in or right next to a girl patrol where your mere presence could disrupt the learning process.

What is expected of adults on campouts:

Youth Protection Training - All parents who wish to attend a campout must be YPT trained. We also encourage you to be a registered leader in the troop, and reserve the right to limit registration to Scouters who are registered leaders. You can find out more information about YPT and Adult Training at <https://myscouting.org>.

Health forms are required for adults as well as youth - Please be honest and up front with the trip's leader and make sure that they are aware of any and all medical issues. 5 miles down the trail in the middle of nowhere is a bad time to find out about a medical condition in either a youth or an adult.

Pre-trip requirements apply to adults as well as youth - If we are doing a backpacking shakedown before trip, all adults going on that trip must attend the shakedown as well. While we'd love to take your word for it that you are experienced in backpacking, we'd still like you to come take a refresher on it.

Troop rules apply, not home rules - Just as you expect people to comply with your rules when they are in your house, your scout will be expected to comply with ours, even if they differ from yours, when on a campout with us. If your scout's bedtime is 8:30pm, on a campout she will likely stay up later than that. If your Scout's bedtime is normally 1am on a Saturday night, she will likely be asked to quiet down and go to sleep long before that on a campout. Please support the Troop's rules while you are camping with us.

Follow the campout plan - Many of our campouts and events require adults to drive or accompany the scouts. It is important not to change the agenda, meeting place or time. The Troop 742 Scoutmaster along with the Patrol Leader Council and Troop Committee have carefully planned the campout taking into account a myriad of “moving parts.” Taking a side trip or engaging in an unplanned activity must be avoided unless it is approved by the Scoutmaster.

At no point do you take your Scout to go somewhere else - Scouts only leave the group with the permission of the SPL and the Scoutmaster. You are not your scout's buddy.

Avoid speeding while driving – Remember, you are hauling other people's kids around, drive like you want them to drive if your scout is with them.

Assume your scout will not be riding with you - While it MIGHT happen, don't assume it will, or be upset if it doesn't. The Senior Patrol Leader will divide up the Scouts at the start of a trip into different vehicles. She will focus on keeping a Patrol together, rather than keeping Scouts with their parents. We'd rather have Scouts ride with their buddies than with their parents.

You may not tent or eat with your scout – Scouts tent in a site separate from the adults. In general, adults do not eat or tent with a scout patrol. Our adult Grubmaster will plan our own menu, and adults will cook and eat together as a team.

Many times parents want to share the camping experience with their scout on a Troop event by sleeping together in a tent with her. The Guide for Safe Scouting forbids this practice. Camping is your daughter's chance to bond with other scouts and to build lifelong friendships. We would encourage families that want to camp together to definitely do so...outside of Troop camping trips.

Avoid your scout's camping area – Often times if a Scout's parent is in the immediate area a Scout will naturally defer to the parent. They will just expect the parent to do things for them like putting up tents, getting the fire going, getting the food cooked, wash the dishes, etc. One of the main goals of Scouting is for scouts to learn independence, and having the parent hovering in their campsite discourages that.

Avoid "helping" to carry gear - **Never do anything for a scout that she can do herself.** Your scout is responsible for packing, carrying, and setting up their gear. If they have to make several trips, then that was their choice when they were packing. We strongly discourage adults from going into the campsite during pick up if the scouts are not completely finished taking down and packing up their gear.

Pack separate bags - You have your bag; your scout has theirs. Scouts shouldn't be wandering into the adult's camping area saying "Mom, I need my mess kit from your bag" or "Can I get my rain jacket from the bag?" All of these items should be in the bag they are responsible for, not you.

Be aware that things may not be as clean as you would like them to be - Scouts will not be washing their hands or brushing their teeth as often as you would like, and things will just generally not being as clean or tidy as you would have them be at home. Do not single your child out especially while on the campouts because of this. Also expect that dishes will not be as clean as they are at home. You are not washing the dishes, the scouts are. Keep that in mind.

Avoid disciplining your own scout – This is often times a tough one for parents. Too often parents see their own scout doing something that other scouts are doing, and will only say

something to her about it, neglecting to mention anything to the other scouts. This leads to the Scout wishing that his parent wouldn't come on campouts. Parents sometimes are embarrassed that their scout is behaving in a way that they feel she shouldn't be, even though the Scoutmasters are aware of it and don't feel it is a problem. Please try to avoid singling your scout out for any special criticism while you are along.

Because the BSA is supposed to be youth run if you see something happening that shouldn't be happening, **please report it first to the youth leaders**, such as the Troop SPL. If that fails then please report it to one of the Scoutmasters. They will work with the youth leaders to solve the problem. However if there is imminent danger of a Scout being injured, please put a stop to the activity at once, then inform a Scoutmaster.

You are responsible for all youth - **Remember, while you are on a campout you are one of the staff and as such you are responsible for ALL of the Scouts, not just your scout.** Just as you expect other adults to be responsible for your scout on a campout when you aren't there, you have to be responsible for their scout when you are there.

No firearms – We don't care if you have a permit for it, leave it at home.

No alcohol – Alcohol is completely forbidden at any and all BSA related events.

If you must, please smoke away from youth – Drivers may not smoke while scouts are in the car. Adults who must smoke or chew must do so discretely out of sight of the scouts.

Avoid swearing – While it is sometimes difficult, and the scouts will do everything they can to push your buttons sometimes, please try to avoid it.

Be a good example with electronics - The youth are taught that phones are tools and not toys. They are allowed to use them for activities such as checking weather, taking pictures, taking notes during a training, GPS, maps and compasses, and flashlights. They are not supposed to play games or scroll through social media while at campouts. Please also treat your phone as a tool and not a toy.

Some parents have asked over the years "Why can't I be in the same canoe/raft/car/backpacking group/etc as my Scout?" In addition to the reasons listed above, the problem is that a lot of parents tend to focus on their scout when in a group with them, and not pay as much attention to the rest of the scouts. We need parents to understand that they are there for all the Scouts, not just their own.

An example is after a hike where a parent was in a hiking group with their Scout, everyone was asked for their pictures of the hike. The parent in a group with their own Scout had dozens of pictures of their Scout, but no others. The other parent in that group, whose scout was in a

different hiking group, had dozens of pictures of all the Scouts. The pictures are a good example of what the parents are thinking when their Scouts are around.

Please recognize and understand before coming on a trip with the Troop that we go out of our way to separate the Scouts and their parents into different groups. This is for the good of all the Scouts on a trip, not just yours.

These are just the basics. If you are ever on a campout with the Troop and have any questions about any of this, please feel free to contact one of the Scoutmasters.