

***PROVIDING A POSITIVE SCOUTING  
EXPERIENCE FOR SCOUTS WITH DISABILITIES***

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. BEHAVIORS	3
III. ATTITUDES	5
IV. OUTCOMES RELATED TO NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES	9
V. UNDERSTANDING ATTITUDES	12
VI. INTERVENTIONS	15
VII. SUMMARY	23
REFERENCES	25
APPENDICES	
Appendix A. Guidelines for Advancement to Eagle Scout Rank for Scouts with Disabilities	26
Appendix B. Application for Alternative Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges	28
Appendix C. Individual Scout Achievement (Advancement) Plan (ISAP)	31

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation was written as an informative guide to assist older Scouts and leaders in providing positive Scouting experiences for Scouts with disabilities. While there are troops composed exclusively of Scouts with disabilities, experience has shown that Scouting works best when these Scouts are mainstreamed—placed in a regular patrol in a regular troop.

The advantages of being in an inclusive troop are:

- The Scout can blend in socially
- They can do the same or similar things typical Scouts do
- Typical Scouts learn from Scouts with disabilities
- Typical Scouts are good role models
- Their presence helps troop members understand and appreciate diversity in people
- They have pride in taking part in typical activities

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Definition of a disability: an individual is considered to have a “disability” if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities—seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, learning, caring for oneself and working.

The experiences of Scouts with disabilities can be positively or negatively influenced by the behaviors and attitudes of Scouts. Scoutmasters can take the lead in assessing the Scout climate in relation to students with disabilities and initiating interventions when appropriate.

Scouts with disabilities are often stigmatized making daily life difficult. Although the Scouting guidelines protect the rights of individuals with disabilities, they cannot always protect them from forms of discrimination and prejudice. Scouts with disabilities often have negative Scouting experiences related to their disability. Scout leaders and youth leadership can help create a more positive Scouting experience. These positive experiences can promote their academic career and personal/social growth.

Scouting is based on principles that include duty to God and country, human dignity, the rights of individuals and recognizing the obligation of all members to develop and use their potential. The emphasis is not on winning as an end result but on the far more demanding task of doing one’s best. A boy should not be compared with other boys in the troop but should be expected to do his best.

By looking at each boy as an individual, each boy can be found to have his own set of abilities. Boys with specifically identified special needs or specifically identified special considerations are no more nor less normal than boys with their own set of abilities. These boys, like all boys, have their own set of strengths, too. By combining this realization with the aims of Scouting- to encourage character development, citizenship training, and personal fitness in boys- we can provide a positive Scouting experience for any boy. Through the Scouting program, we can challenge each Scout to develop and use his potential with support and guidance from other members and leaders.

Every Scout is part of a cooperative group working together with shared responsibilities. This cooperative group, emphasizing individual leadership, makes Scouting work well for Scouts with different abilities. Cooperative learning helps Scouts develop group skills, while shared responsibilities and a shared decision-making process promotes leadership skills in all Scouts.

Scouting is geared to the abiding interests of youth. The fact that Scouting is a worldwide movement, gives breadth and depth to belonging to a Scout group. Scouting is based upon the high ideals and purposes that are necessary to rich living in a social world. Scouting has a strong dedication in service to others and to the community. Scouting permits Scouts with disabilities to work closely with other Scouts working toward common goals and ideals.

## CHAPTER II

### BEHAVIORS TOWARDS SCOUTS WITH DISABILITIES

Just because a Scout possesses a negative attitude toward a Scout with a disability does not necessarily mean that the Scout will act negatively toward a Scout with a disability. However, these negative attitudes lead to bias and discrimination. Negative behaviors and attitudes exhibited by peers can have long lasting effects. The avoidance or rejection of students with disabilities by their peers as well as physical or verbal aggression directed toward them should be viewed as bullying.

Parents should be asked about any behavioral disorder. Troop rules should be discussed with the parents and the Scout. The Scout leader should determine the discipline used to maintain appropriate behavior. The Scout leader should explain disciplinary procedures to the parents. Have rules in writing for parents and youth.

Scouts with disabilities want to participate but generally depend on others to introduce Scouting to them. These boys are just as eager for adventure as other boys and they need challenges to have a satisfying experience. They should be offered the friendship and encouragement they need. Accept them for what they are and what they can contribute just as you would any other boy. Working with Scouts with disabilities might mean adapting the regular program to make it as worthwhile as possible. Find out their abilities as well as their limitations. Plan activities in which all boys can participate. Be enthusiastic about helping Scouts with disabilities. Recognize the special demands that will be made on your patience,



understanding and skill in teaching requirements. Recognize the opportunities and benefits for all Scouts.

Youth with disabilities may have more difficulty adjusting to society. They may sense feelings of pity or rejection by others and they may respond to them by developing feelings of inferiority, becoming more timid or overcompensating and becoming more aggressive.

### CHAPTER III

#### ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCOUTS WITH DISABILITIES

Scouts possess somewhat negative attitudes toward Scouts with disabilities. They view Scouts with disabilities as different from and inferior to individuals without disabilities. These youth with disabilities generally prefer to interact with children without disabilities.

A disabled youth's adjustment to society depends more on the reactions of others to him than on the physical problem itself. This makes it essential for Scouters and other Scouts to accept the youth and his disability with understanding. Sympathy is easy. Almost everyone will be sympathetic toward a youth with disabilities. We should analyze our own feelings about youths with disabilities and then learn by experience in dealing with them what their capabilities and limitations are. In this way we can overcome the common reactions that sometimes cause fear of people with disabilities because they are "different". Some of these reactions among the other youth may occur in troops with one or two disabled youth. The best way to overcome these negative reactions is for the leader to treat Scouts with disabilities like any other Scout. The basic premise of scouting for youth with disabilities is that every boy wants to participate fully and be treated and respected like every other member of the troop. To the fullest extent possible, Scouts with disabilities should be given opportunities to camp, hike and take part in other patrol and troop activities.

Many Scouts with disabilities can accomplish the basic skills of scouting but may require extra time to learn them. Remember, all youth have gifts—they just choose to open them

at different times. Working with these youth will require patience and understanding on the part of troop leaders and other Scouts. A clear and open understanding should exist between the troop leadership and the parents and guardians of the Scout with a disability. Troop leaders should know the limitations of the Scout and be aware of special needs that might arise.

Negative attitudes toward Scouts with disabilities often lead to verbal and physical harassment and bullying that can have long-lasting adverse consequences including poor academic performance and absenteeism. Scoutmasters and leaders can also have negative attitudes about Scouts with disabilities. Their attitudes can affect Scouts self-esteem and achievement in their performance with advancement and merit badges. Interventions designed to improve attitudes about individuals with disabilities are the most effective way to change behavior and reduce harassment and other negative experiences. Disability awareness programs typically inform participants with using situations to simulate what a person with a disability experiences.

Adults can have negative attitudes about youths with disabilities. Their attitudes can also affect, in a discriminatory way, the youth's self-esteem and achievement. A poem entitled "Behavior Labeling" is about adults and youths and how their behaviors are viewed.

## BEHAVIOR LABELING

If an adult is reinforced for behaving appropriately, we call it recognition  
If a child is reinforced for behaving appropriately, we call it bribery.

If an adult laughs, we call it socializing.  
If a child laughs, we call it misbehaving.  
If an adult writes in a book, we call it doodling  
If a child writes in a book, we call it destroying property.

If an adult sticks to something, we call it perseverance.  
If a child sticks to something, we call it stubbornness.

If an adult seeks help, we call it consulting.  
If a child seeks help, we call it whining.

If an adult is not paying attention, we call it preoccupation.  
If a child is not paying attention, we call it distractibility.

If an adult forgets something, we call it absentmindedness.  
If a child forgets something, we call it *retardation or immaturity.*

If an adult tells their side of the story, we call it clarification .  
If a child tells their side of the story, we call it talking back.

If an adult raises their voice in anger, we call it maintaining control.  
If a child raises their voice in anger, we call it a temper tantrum.  
If an adult hits a child, we call it discipline.  
If a child hits a child, we call it fighting.

If an adult behaves in an unusual way, we call them unique.

If a child behaves in an unusual way, we refer them for a Psychological Evaluation!

By: Dixie Fletcher

Thank You Dixie! Perhaps we can all learn something from a viewpoint on the other side of the fence.

## CHAPTER IV

### OUTCOMES RELATED TO NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES

The negative attitudes and actions of others negatively affect the behavior, social relationship, education, employment and health of individuals with disabilities because their self-perceptions are greatly influenced by the attitudes of others. Many Scouts with disabilities can accomplish the basic skills of Scouting but may require extra time to learn them. This opportunity gives Scouts with disabilities exposure to helpful association in a “normal” environment.

Scouting is for all youth, even those that accomplish things differently. Scouting is good for youth with disabilities because they have needs which scouting can help fulfill, and it provides others with the opportunity to learn from their attitudes. Scouting provides physical benefits and teaches all of us “to recognize a crippling condition as normal and in the nature of things.”

The Scouting program offers lots of opportunities to strengthen practical skills. For example, Scouts with disabilities can improve their public speaking skills while giving troop presentations on skills or merit badge topics. They can develop motor skills while learning to tie knots or working on tent set up for camping. Leadership positions in a troop are another excellent way for Scouts with disabilities to learn tolerance and a flexibility of thinking. They come to realize that leading requires motivating others, which helps them understand that multiple viewpoints are valid and should be respected. Troop leadership training can be a great way for Scouts with disabilities to become more aware of what is normal behavior in social

interactions. Scouts with disabilities also can make wonderful den chiefs or troop guides for new Scout patrols. If the Scoutmaster asks the Scout to become an expert in teaching younger Scouts how the program runs, the Scout with disabilities has a chance to show off his knowledge and encourage younger boys. This is a great way to increase self-esteem for individuals who may ordinarily be socially shy and awkward. Scouts with disabilities need a chance to explore different areas of interest. These areas of interest may lead them to a career. Scouting offers such experiences. Many Scouts have explored interests which have later turned into careers or lifelong hobbies. Scouting can provide the mentorship needed for youth with disabilities to grow into successful adults.

Youth with disabilities have their own ways of overcoming barriers and having their needs met. Some withdraw and say they do not care. Some daydream or fail to pay attention, some give up since they see no point in continuing to strive when needs are never met. Youth want a sense of belonging, want to achieve and want to be recognized for their achievement. Every Scout will excel in some areas and not in others. What is important is that they are given the opportunity to try. They are more alike other Scouts than they are unlike them.

Some positives are that Scouts with disabilities may be more likely to learn “normal” behavior. “Normal” Scouts may learn tolerance and acceptance. A greater number of inclusive units are available. Often disabled Scouts are with their peers from mainstreamed school. Negatives may be that leaders may have no training. Scouts and parents may not understand the disabled youth’s presence in the unit. Older or larger disabled Scouts may not “fit

in” with others. Usage and timing of medications may be impractical for participation. Youth with disabilities may have behavioral issues that prevent them from participation.



## CHAPTER V

### UNDERSTANDING ATTITUDES

Before a Scout with a disability joins a troop, the Scoutmaster should explain to the members of the troop what they should expect. Explain the disability, the treatment, and any likely reactions that might occur. Stress that the new Scout should be treated like any other new Scout but that troop members should be sensitive to his needs. Experience has shown that a Scout with a disability can have a positive impact on a Scout troop, and the Scouts take great pride in their accomplishments. Troop leaders should know the limitations of the Scout.

The leader's attitude toward a Scout is most important. If the leader shows acceptance, if he shows that he considers the Scout as much a participating member as any other Scout, if he shows he expects the same participation (with some support), then the other members are likely to react similarly. Although the unit leader must set the example and be accepting of a member with a disability and be enthusiastic about helping him, he must, at the same time, fully appreciate the special demands that will be made on his patience, understanding, and skill.

Leaders might possess negative attitudes towards Scouts with disabilities in that they may not have received adequate training regarding those individuals and therefore feel unprepared to provide services to Scouts with disabilities effectively. Most Scout troops do not have leaders who have expertise in working with Scouts with disabilities so a parent may be required to attend troop activities. Be enthusiastic about helping youth with disabilities.

Attitudes are formed at a young age, before children have the ability to make full-informed decisions based on accurate information. Children notice how people are alike and how they are different, including peers with disabilities. And these differences are not considered equal. It is important to recognize that inclusion within scouting plays an important role in modifying community attitudes. New partnerships and enlisting community co-operation in the development of youth with disabilities can be created.

Culturally, scouting contributes to building communities that recognize and value diversity where there is a place for everyone. It is important that the strengths and weaknesses of all potential leaders are considered when interviewing for a leadership position. Remember a disability is not inability.

Behavior problems can stem from: conflicting emotions, learning difficulties, improper coping skills, life patterns and learned behaviors from home. The way a child is treated determines, in part, how he sees life and how he regards himself. The world can be viewed as safe and nurturing, or it can be seen as dangerous and frightening. If a child with a disability can accomplish or achieve, he can see himself as competent. The youth with a disability is much more like other youth than he is different. It is essential that Scout leaders understand this point since most Scouts with disabilities want scouting exactly as it is given to all others.

Youth with disabilities may sense feelings of pity or rejection by others and they may respond to them by: developing feelings of inferiority, becoming more timid or over compensating and becoming more aggressive. "The child with a disability has a right to grow up

in a world which does not set him apart, which does not look at him with scorn or pity or ridicule but which welcomes him exactly as it welcomes every child, which offers him identical privileges and identical responsibilities". (White House Conference on Child Health and Protection).

A disabled youth's adjustment to society depends more on the reactions of others to him than on the physical problem itself. This makes it essential for Scouters and other scouts to accept the youth and his disability with understanding. Sympathy is easy. Almost everyone will be sympathetic toward a physically disabled youth, especially if his disability is obviously crippling. But understanding comes only from information.

We should analyze our own feelings about disabled persons and then learn by experience in dealing with them; what their capabilities and limitations are. In this way, we can overcome the common reactions of pity, morbid curiosity, being over solicitous, and even, in a minority of persons, fear of people with disabilities because they are "different".

## CHAPTER VI

### INTERVENTIONS

Disabilities can sometimes result in experiences of repeated failure and frustration. This cycle of unsuccessful effort can erode self-confidence and result in low self-esteem. Scouting can help raise self-esteem by providing experiences that foster feelings of success and accomplishment. Scout leaders can assist by creating a positive outlook, providing tools and strategies for success, and promoting a caring and supportive environment. These are good principles of communication for all people with disabilities, not just Scouts. (6)

1. Help set realistic goals.
  - Scout leaders and Scouts should share a common set of expectations.
2. Give the Scouts frequent, specific and positive feedback.
  - Do not confuse the Scout (“you are good”) with the behavior (“you did that very well”).
  - Feedback should acknowledge good effort and should address areas of suggested improvement.
3. Accentuate the positive.
  - Focus on strengths to help keep motivation levels high.
  - Boost enthusiasm and pride by capitalizing on special talents and interests; nothing builds self-esteem like success.
4. Remember that frustration is not all bad.

(6) *Scouting with Disabilities Manual, Boy Scouts of America, p. 45-105.*

- Allowing Scouts to experience some frustration can be critical to the learning process. Don't come to the rescue with a "quick fix," but rather provide support and offer to help explore options.
  - It may be hard for a Scout to think of alternative ways to approach task once frustration has set in. Whenever possible, identify possible repair strategies before beginning a task as a way to decrease anxiety and to promote perseverance.
5. Recognize that the group matters.
- Acknowledge a Scout's important status within the scouting unit.
6. Expect that mistakes will happen.
- Help Scouts to appreciate that everyone makes mistakes. It may help to offer examples to decrease feelings of disappointment .
  - Talk about errors and mishaps openly. Try to be objective and to consider the context and setting.
  - Explain that trial and error is a valuable part of the learning process.
7. Help Scouts strive toward independence.
- Try to encourage independence, particularly with regard to self-help skills and activities for daily living.
  - Encourage careful planning, risk taking, and evaluation of consequences. Start with small decisions and provide feedback as an "interested observer.
8. Use good common sense.
- Treat them with respect and dignity

- It's obvious that a Scout in a wheelchair may have problems fulfilling a hiking requirement but it might not be so obvious when it comes to the scout with a learning disability.
- Be understanding--People with disabilities have the same responsibilities and obligations that you have (only they might be harder to meet).
- Be patient--don't hurry; try to match their pace.
- Be natural--don't worry about using words related to the disability
- Speak directly to the person, not to his companion.
- Don't assume the person is sick. Most people with disabilities are healthy.

Remember, you can't catch a disability.

You can avoid many problems while learning to work with a Scout with disabilities if you can develop and maintain good lines of communication with the parents. Parents are key members of the support team for Scouts with disabilities. Remember that all parents have similar, though often unstated, dreams for their children as they grow up such as living independently, having loving relationships, and finding a good job. Parents of youth with disabilities sometimes have trouble accepting that their child's life will not fulfill their dreams. Unit leaders should know the strengths and support needs of the Scout. Scouting can help the family see that their child is more like other youth than he is different. It can also provide supportive relationships for the parents of Scouts with disabilities.

If the parents are open and willing, set up a joining meeting with them and the Scout if appropriate. Parents can provide valuable information that will help make the Scouting

experience successful for all. Make sure that parents know that their presence may be required at meetings and on outings, at least until the leaders of the unit feel comfortable working with the Scout. Remember to tell parents that volunteer leaders want all youth to have good Scouting experiences but do not have the professional training that school or medical personnel have to handle youth with disabilities. Safety must always be a leader's first priority.

Some parents will be very open about their child. Some consider the disability to be a private matter and others are not willing to acknowledge it even to themselves. It's best to tread into this water carefully. For these parents start the discussion by turning the problem around and making it yours and not the Scout's. For example, "I can't seem to get your child to join the groups. What can you recommend that might help me?" This type of question can draw out the information you need without forcing the parents hand. (1) (2)

Key points for Scouts working with Scouts with disabilities:

- Talk directly to the disabled Scout. Don't talk to others about him or other Scouts in front of him or behind his back.
- Assume the disabled Scout is capable of doing things.
- Realize the disabled Scout has the same needs as others—to be accepted and to feel a part of the group—to have true friends.
- Help the disabled Scout when help is wanted. Offer to help, but if turned down do not take it personally, and be glad he wants to do things himself.
- When help is wanted, do not over help or try to do everything for him. Let him do as much as he can on his own.

- (1) A Guide to Working with Boy Scouts with Disabilities,  
Boy Scouts of America
- (2) A Scoutmaster's Guide 18 to Working with Scouts with  
Disabilities

- Understand some disabled Scouts may take what you say literally. They don't understand when you are "just joking".
- It is OK to get frustrated about things not going as they should. Do not make things worse by acting out yourself. Calm down and talk to the leader about how to handle the situation. If the problem is with the disabled Scout, include the disabled Scout in the conversation and let him also help find the solution.
- Include the youth in every activity by some means or other, even if it means inventing a new way.
- The youth should have opportunities to pass the test for badges as often as possible. It is just as vital to them as to the non-disabled Scout.
- Make and use the Scout with disabilities know ahead of time what is expected. When activities are long or complicated, it may help to write down a list of smaller steps.
- Repeat directions one-on-one when necessary, or assign a more mature buddy to help him get organized.
- Compliment the Scout whenever you find a genuine opportunity.
- Ignore minor inappropriate behavior if it is not dangerous or disruptive.
- Provide frequent breaks and opportunities for Scouts to move around actively but purposefully. It is not helpful to keep Scouts with disabilities so active that they are exhausted.



- When you must redirect a Scout with disabilities:
  - do so in a calm voice and in private unless safety is at risk
  - avoid yelling
  - never publicly humiliate a Scout
  - whenever possible, “sandwich” corrections between two positive comments
- Be aware of early warning signs, such as fidgety behavior, that may indicate the Scout is losing impulse control. When this happens, try a private, nonverbal signal or proximity control (move close to the Scout) to alert him that he needs to focus.
- During active games and transition times, be aware when a Scout with disabilities starts to become more impulsive or aggressive.
- Compliment the Scout whenever you find a genuine opportunity.
- Expect the Scout with disabilities to follow the same rule as other Scouts. Their disability is not an excuse for uncontrolled behavior.
- If it is not possible to intervene proactively and you must impose consequences for out-of-control behavior, use time-out or “cooling off”.
- Offer feedback and redirection in a way that is respectful and that allows the Scout with disabilities to save face. When Scouts with disabilities are treated with respect, they are more likely to respect the authority of the Scout leader.
- Keep cool.

- Don't take challenges personally. Scouts with disabilities want to be successful, but they need support, positive feedback, and clear limits.
- Find out about medical needs and make sure you have what is required to meet those needs or have the parent come along for the outing.
- If you must administer medication, don't tell the Scout that it is "a smart pill" or that it will make him "behave".
- Keeping the Scout active by offering opportunities for purposeful movement, such as leading cheers, performing in skits, assisting with demonstrations, and teaching Scout craft skills to younger Scouts, may improve his ability to focus, raise his self-esteem and benefit the troop as a whole.

To keep Scouts with disabilities as much in the advancement mainstream as possible, some advancement accommodations may be required. While leaders must be enthusiastic about helping Scouts with a disability, they must at the same time recognize the special demands that will be made on their patience, understanding and skill in teaching advancement requirements.

The BSA'S policy has always been to treat members with disabilities and special needs as much like other members as possible but a local council may make some accommodations in advancement requirements if necessary. A Scout with a disability may select an alternate merit badge in lieu of a required merit badge if his disabling condition prohibits the Scout from completing the necessary requirements of a particular required merit badge. This substitute should provide a "similar learning experience".

Full guidelines and explanations are available through the local council and on the application for Alternate Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges, No. 58-730. (Appendix A). A Scout may also request changes in the tenderfoot, second class and first class ranks. The procedures are described in “Boy Scout Requirements, No. 33215A.

The advancement program is so flexible that with guidance, most boys can do the skills. It might take longer for a Scout with disabilities to earn his awards, but he will appreciate them more when he knows that he has made the effort. The standard for every boy is “Has he done his best?” Include parents to help determine what “Best” means for each boy.

The Scout must complete as many of the regular requirements as his ability permits before applying for alternate requirements. The alternate requirements must be as demanding of effort as the regular requirements. The application for alternate Eagle Scout merit badges must be completed prior to qualifying for alternate merit badges. (Appendix B).

The Scouting handbook and policies cannot address each individual, they merely set guidelines. An understanding as to how certain goals can be met can be accomplished with the ISAP (Individualized Scouting Advancement (Achievement) Plan). (Appendix C). The plan forms a “contract” or roadmap that the Scout, his parents and mentors, or other leaders can reference or, if necessary, update.

Especially with Scouts with disabilities and ISAP helps form the support for district and council staff who do not know the particular Scout except by the record of accomplishments. This form is not an official BSA form, but its use is recommended in the Scouting program.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY

Many disabled children live in isolation from the rest of the world. Scouting may be their only recreational activity and their only contact with others of their age.

- Scouting teaches the disabled skills that will help them prepare for life as an adult in our society.
- Scouting is a well thought-out, highly structured program that provides a step-by-step sequence of skills for scouts to master.
- Scouting promises fun, friendship, and adventure, presenting new skills in an exciting and motivating way
- Scouting offers frequent positive recognition, both formally and informally, for accomplishments, advancement, and participation. This can be especially important for the Scout with disabilities whose self-esteem may have suffered from an excess of negative feedback.
- The values of scouting promote an atmosphere where Scouts may feel secure enough to take risks and try new skills without fear of ridicule.
- Scouting fosters the development of leadership skills and social skills through experiences in a supportive environment where Scouts can learn from their successes and failures.
- Scouting provides an extensive variety of activities, experiences, and challenges;

--- The opportunity is there for each Scout to discover his unique strengths and interests.

Scouts with disabilities want a sense of belonging, they want to achieve, and they want to be recognized for their achievement. Scouting for boys with disabilities should not be watered-down Scouting. Rather than lower the standards, more leaders should be recruited to increase the undivided help each Scout with a disability receives as his needs requires. All of the goals and methods of Scouting are oriented toward personal growth.

Every Scout with a disability will excel in some areas and not in others. What is important is that they are given the opportunity to try. They are more alike other Scouts than they are unlike them. Experience confirms that it is not only possible to support youth with disabilities in any unit, but that it is usually not beneficial. This opportunity gives the boy exposure to helpful association.

Scouting provides a wonderful experience for all youth with disabilities and they should be fully included in all activities. In most cases, small adaptations and minimal modifications are all that will be needed to ensure that Scouts have an enjoyable and productive scouting experience.

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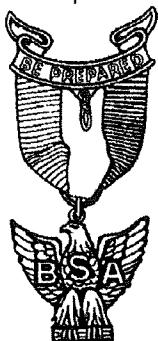
**APPENDIX A**

**Guidelines for Advancement to Eagle Scout**

**Rank for Scouts with Disabilities**

## GUIDELINES FOR ADVANCEMENT TO EAGLE SCOUT RANK FOR SCOUTS WITH DISABILITIES

1. The Eagle Scout rank may be achieved by a Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or qualified\* Venturer (candidate) who has a physical or mental disability by qualifying for alternate merit badges. This does not apply to individual requirements for merit badges. Merit badges are awarded only when all requirements are met as stated.
2. The physical or mental disability must be of a permanent rather than a temporary nature.
3. A clear and concise medical statement must be made by a physician licensed to practice medicine, or a school administrator, concerning the Scout's disability.
4. The candidate must earn as many of the required merit badges as his ability permits before applying for an alternate merit badge.
5. This form, Application for Alternate Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges, must be completed prior to the candidate's qualifying for alternate merit badges.
6. The alternate merit badges chosen must be of such a nature that they are as demanding of effort as the required merit badges.
7. When alternates chosen involve physical activity, they must be approved by the physician.
8. The unit leader and the board of review must explain that to attain the Eagle Scout rank a candidate is expected to do his best in developing himself to the limit of his resources.
9. This application must be approved by the council committee responsible for advancement, utilizing the expertise of professional persons, involved in Scouting for the disabled.
10. The candidate's application for Eagle Scout must be made on the Eagle Scout Rank Application, No. 58-728, with this form and the *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* attached when submitted to the council for his Eagle Scout board of review.



### The Purpose of the Eagle Scout Award

A recipient of the Eagle Scout Award is a Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or qualified\* Venturer who applies the principles of the Scout Oath and Law in his daily life. He has achieved the qualities listed below because of determination and persistence through the advancement program.

- \* Concern for others
- \* Ability to help others through skills he has learned
- \* Ability to live and work cooperatively with others by meeting his responsibility to his patrol and troop
- \* Concern for self by improving his physical fitness to the limits of his physical resources
- \* Capacity for leadership

\* In order for a Venturer to be an Eagle Scout candidate, he must have achieved First Class rank as a Boy Scout or Varsity Scout.



**APPENDIX B**

**Application for Alternative**

**Eagle Scout Rank**

**Merit Badges**

# APPLICATION FOR ALTERNATIVE EAGLE SCOUT RANK MERIT BADGES

The Eagle Scout rank may be achieved by a Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or qualified\* Venturer who has a physical or mental disability by qualifying for alternative merit badges. This does not apply to individual requirements for merit badges. Merit badges are awarded only when all requirements are met as stated. See the *Guide to Advancement*, topic 10.2.2.3, for details.

The physical or mental disability must be of a permanent rather than of a temporary nature (or a disability expected to last more than two years or beyond the 18th birthday). This request must include a written statement from a qualified health-care professional related to the nature of the disability. This person may be a physician, neurologist, psychiatrist, psychologist, etc., or an educational administrator as appropriate.

Before applying, he must earn as many of the Eagle-required merit badges as possible. Any alternatives must present the same challenge and learning level as those they replace. Unless the Scout has been approved for registration beyond the age of eligibility, all merit badges must be completed by the 18th birthday (reference *Guide to Advancement*, topic 10.1.0.1–10.1.0.2).

1. Obtain a clear and concise statement related to the nature of the disability from a qualified health-care professional.
2. The unit leader meets with the candidate and his parent or guardian to determine the alternative merit badges to replace those impeding his progression.
3. The unit leader, parent or guardian, and the Scout (if possible) prepare supporting letters to accompany the application.
4. The district and council advancement committees, in turn, review the proposed alternative merit badges. They may choose to speak with the Scout, his parent or guardian, or unit leader. If the council advancement committee approves, then the candidate may start work on the merit badges.

**Note:** In approving the application, the district and council advancement committees must utilize the expertise of a health-care professional involved with youth who have disabilities.

5. Upon completion of the Eagle Scout rank requirements, using the alternative merit badges, the candidate appears before a board of review. This approved application must be attached to the Eagle Scout Rank Application.
6. Following a successful board of review, the council processes both applications and forwards them to the national Advancement Team. Local council action on alternative merit badges does not require national approval.

## The Purpose of the Eagle Scout Award

A recipient of the Eagle Scout Award is a Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or qualified Venturer or Sea Scout who applies the principles of the Scout Oath and Law in his daily life. He has achieved the qualities below with determination and persistence.

- Capacity for leadership and a concern for others
- Ability to help others through skills he has learned
- Ability to live and work cooperatively with others by meeting his responsibility to his unit
- Concern for self by improving his physical fitness to the limits of his resources

### Possible alternatives for required merit badges\*

CAMPING	COMMUNICATIONS	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS OR LIFESAVING	ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE	PERSONAL FITNESS	SWIMMING, HIKING, OR CYCLING
Backpacking	Cinematography	Fire Safety	Energy	Archery	Archery
Canoeing	Computers	Motorboating	Fish and Wildlife Management	Athletics	Athletics
Cooking	Electronics	Public Health	Forestry	Backpacking	Canoeing
Rowing	Graphic Arts	Radio	Nature	Canoeing	Motorboating
	Journalism	Rowing	Oceanography	Climbing	Rowing
	Photography	Safety	Soil and Water Conservation	Golf	Small-Boat Sailing
	Public Speaking	Traffic Safety	Weather	Horsemanship	Snow Sports
	Radio	Wilderness Survival		Rowing	
	Salesmanship			Skating	
				Water Sports	

\*These possible alternatives are merely suggestions that could provide similar learning experiences. The list is not considered all-inclusive. It is important for unit leaders to use reasonable accommodation and common sense in the application of the alternative merit badge program.

# APPLICATION FOR ALTERNATIVE EAGLE SCOUT RANK MERIT BADGES

To: The District Advancement Committee

\_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_ Council

We are submitting this application in behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ of Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_,  
Name of candidate

chartered to \_\_\_\_\_ and located in \_\_\_\_\_  
Community State

Because of the disability (see the statement below from a qualified health-care professional), we believe that he is physically or mentally unable to complete the requirements for the following merit badge or badges required for the Eagle Scout rank:

Following a personal conference with him and his parent or guardian, I recommend the following alternative merit badge or badges be assigned to him. Please see the attached documentation supporting this recommendation.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Unit leader Unit committee chair

## Parent or Guardian Statement

In view of the medical or administrative statement attached, and following a conference with our unit leader, I approve the alternative Eagle Scout rank merit badges. My/our letter supporting this recommendation is attached, and also one from our Scout (if possible).

An Individualized Education Plan or other documentation is attached (optional).

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or guardian

## Statement From a Qualified Health-Care Professional

As a result of a thorough examination or testing of the above-named Eagle Scout candidate on \_\_\_\_\_,  
Date

I have attached a statement describing the disability, the Scout's capabilities, limitations, and prognosis, and outlined why the merit badges to be replaced cannot be completed.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Title/credentials \_\_\_\_\_

## District Certification

We have reviewed this application for the above-named Eagle Scout candidate, and in review of the medical or administrative statement, and his excellent record in Scouting, we believe he should follow the alternative Eagle Scout rank merit badge method. We recommend to the council advancement committee that the merit badge or badges indicated be assigned to him as alternatives.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
District advancement committee chair or designee

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
District executive

## Council Committee Action\*

We have reviewed the district's recommendations and provide our approval.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Council advancement committee chair or designee

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Scout executive

\*The local council action on the alternative merit badge(s) for the Eagle Scout rank does not require National Council approval.



**APPENDIX C**  
**Individual**  
**Scout Achievement (Advancement) Plan**  
**(ISAP)**



# INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT PLAN

## Why an "Individualized Scouting Advancement Plan"? (ISAP)

Each Scout is different, and brings their individual gifts and challenges to the unit. Each will follow a different path in life. Regardless of their personal physical, mental, or emotional attributes each will give to and take something from Scouting. We can only hope to positively effect those contributions.

An ISAP can be a natural follow up to the all-important entry meeting with the youth and family where the leader has an opportunity to meet and learn about the future Scout and explain how Scouting can be part of the youth's life.

The Scouting handbooks and policies cannot address each individual. They merely set guidelines. So, it is often useful to reach an understanding as to how certain goals can be met. The ISAP forms a "contract" or roadmap, which the Scout, his parents and mentors, or other leaders can reference or, if necessary, update.

Particularly in the case of a Scout with disAbilities, an ISAP helps form the support for District and Council staff who do not know the particular Scout except by the record of accomplishments.

We hope that this form will be of use to you and we are interested in any comments or suggestions that you may have.



# INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT PLAN

The approval of alternate requirements should be discussed with the Scout, parents, and Scout Leader. An agreement is reached and forwarded for council advancement committee approval BEFORE starting to work on the requirement. This is a sample of an "agreement" that can be reached and then forwarded for approval. This is an individualized achievement plan that is non-threatening and non-judgmental. It begins as a basic "contract" which can be used for all Scouts, and is modified by addendum. The idea is that every Scout sees the "contract" as personal so that no segment is singled out.

## INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT PLAN AND CONTRACT for:

Scout Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Troop/Team/Crew/Ship \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_  
Council \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Belief:** Every boy in Scouting is a candidate for the Eagle Award. The only limitations upon achievement of that award should be that boy's individual desire, focus, and perseverance.

**Objective:** To provide a safe haven for personal growth free from adversity such as hazing, disrespectful or threatening behaviors by others, but filled with opportunities and challenges.

**Methodology:** To encourage, and within reasonable guidelines provide, each boy with the opportunity and avenues to achieve his personal goals and chosen level of success. To remove unreasonable and unnecessary barriers, through creative thinking and actions, which may impede a boy in achieving his personal goals. At the same time the plan will not lessen the relative challenges of the Scouting experience to achieve actual personal growth. Addendums to the Contract may be made to define requirements.

**Expectations of Performance:** Each boy is expected to do his best.

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### CONTRACT:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Scoutmaster/Coach/Skipper/Advisor/, promise to do my best to deliver upon the Statement of Belief, Objective, and Methodology expressed above.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Boy Scout, and Eagle Award candidate, promise that on my honor I will do my best in working towards my personal goals.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

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**ADDENDUM TO INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT PLAN for:**

Scout Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Troop/Team/Crew/Ship \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_  
Council \_\_\_\_\_

Addendums are required if it is determined that a Boy Scout has specific health, mental or physical attributes which are of a permanent nature and, for reasons beyond his control, may create an impediment towards achievement of the Eagle Award. The safety of each Scout is part of this consideration. Requirements may be redefined to maintain the challenge but provide an alternative path towards achievement. This Addendum may be amended, in the future, by mutual consent.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Physical or mental disAbilities of a permanent, not temporary, nature allow the development of alternative requirements for advancement and achievement.
2. Any limitations leading to alternative requirements should be supported by a physician's statement, or certification by an educational administrator, based upon a permanent condition.
3. The Scout shall attempt to complete, to the extent possible, the regular requirements before modifications are sought, and any alternative requirements shall be as demanding of effort by the Scout as the regular requirements.
4. Modifications and alternative requirements must receive prior approval by the District and Council Advancement Committee. This Council Committee should record and deliver its decision to the Scout and the Scout leader.
5. Alternate requirements involving physical activity shall have a physician's approval.
6. The unit leader and any board of review must explain to the Scout that he is expected to do his best up to the limits of his resources.

Further reference: Guide To Advancement, BSA No. 33088 (Section 10.0.0.0).

**ADDENDUM TO INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT PLAN for:**

Scout Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

**THE STANDARD REQUIREMENT** (State the ranks and the requirement number)

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**MODIFICATIONS AND ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENT(S)** (Describe in detail the modified alternative requirement)

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**NARRATIVE SUMMARY** (Why this Scout's circumstances make him unable to complete, in the way normally described, the "standard" requirements)

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**HEALTH-CARE PROFESSIONAL STATEMENT:**

As a result of a thorough examination of \_\_\_\_\_  
on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ I find that he has a permanent mental or physical disability, which is accurately described above, and which will inhibit him from completing the requirements as generally stated. However, I find that he can safely complete the requirements as stated as modified above.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Physician licensed to practice medicine)

Physician's Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Office Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attach additional documents if applicable.  
(Use Annual BSA Health Medical Record Form, Parts A, B and C, BSA #680-001)**



**ADDENDUM TO INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT PLAN for:**

Scout Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATIONAL STATEMENT: (if needed)**

As a result of a thorough educational assessment of \_\_\_\_\_  
on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ I find that he has a permanent mental or physical disability, which is  
accurately described above, and which will inhibit him from completing the requirements  
as generally stated. However, I find that he can safely complete the requirements as  
stated as modified above.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Certificated Educational Administrator)  
Educator's Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Educator's Office Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attach additional documents if applicable, e.g. Individualized Education Plan:**

**ADDENDUM TO INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT PLAN for:**

Scout Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

**SCOUT'S STATEMENT:** I, \_\_\_\_\_, Boy Scout, and Eagle Award candidate, promise that on my honor I will do my best in working towards my personal goals. The above requirements are meant to strengthen me so that I can improve my abilities. I will do my best in completing them as written or as modified.

\_\_\_\_\_(signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

**PARENTAL STATEMENT:** In view of my son's expressed desire to advance in Scouting, his personal commitment to do his best, and the Scout leaders' commitment to encourage him along that pathway consistent with his abilities, I agree to the requirements as written or modified. If any further modification is deemed warranted, I understand that such can be negotiated.

\_\_\_\_\_(signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

**SCOUT LEADER'S STATEMENT:** I agree with, and support, \_\_\_\_\_ desire to progress in the paths of Scouting. Any program modifications agreed to are viewed as challenging as those expected of any other Scout. My objective will be to provide opportunities for success consistent with health and safety considerations.

\_\_\_\_\_(signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

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**APPROVAL OF THE DISTRICT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE**

The District Advancement Committee approves the above modifications for advancement because of the Scout's permanent physical or mental disabilities.

\_\_\_\_\_(signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

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**APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Council Advancement Committee approves the above modifications for advancement because of the Scout's permanent physical or mental disabilities.

\_\_\_\_\_(signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Notification sent to the Scout/Parents and Scout Leader on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)



# Individualized Scouting Advancement Plan (ISAP): Contract and Addendums

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- ISAP – a non-threatening, non-judgmental, individualized achievement plan
  - a basic "contract" which can be used for all Scouts, and is modified by addendum.
  - The idea is that every Scout sees the "contract" as personal so that no segment is singled out.
- Addendum's are required if it is determined that a Boy Scout has specific, permanent disabilities which create an impediment towards rank achievement and advancement.
  - The safety of each Scout is part of this consideration.
  - Requirements may be redefined to maintain the challenge but provide an alternative path towards achievement.
  - This Addendum may be amended, in the future, by mutual consent.
- The approval of alternate requirements should be discussed and agreed with the Scout, parents, and Scout Leader and forwarded for council advancement committee approval **BEFORE** starting work.

# INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT PLAN AND CONTRACT



Scout Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Troop/Team/Crew/Ship \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_  
Council \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Belief:** Every boy in Scouting is a candidate for the Eagle Award. The only limitations upon achievement of that award should be that boy's individual desire, focus, and perseverance.

**Objective:** To provide a safe haven for personal growth free from adversity such as hazing, disrespectful or threatening behaviors by others, but filled with opportunities and challenges.

**Methodology:** To encourage, and within reasonable guidelines provide, each boy with the opportunity and avenues to achieve his personal goals and chosen level of success. To remove unreasonable and unnecessary barriers, through creative thinking and actions, which may impede a boy in achieving his personal goals. At the same time the Scouting experience will not lessen the challenges necessary to actual personal growth. Addendum's to the Contract may be made to define requirements.

**Expectations of Performance:** Each boy is expected to do his best.

**CONTRACT:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Scoutmaster, promise to do my best to deliver upon the Statement of Belief, Objective, and Methodology expressed above.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Boy Scout, and Eagle Award candidate, promise that on my honor I will do my best in working towards my personal goals.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)



# INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT PLAN AND CONTRACT - Addendums



- Disabilities of a permanent, not temporary, nature allow the development of alternative requirements.
- Supported by a physician's statement, or certification by an educational administrator.
- The Scout shall attempt to complete the regular requirements before modifications are sought.
- Alternative requirements shall be as demanding of effort by the Scout as the regular requirements.
- Modifications and alternative requirements must receive **PRIOR** approval by the Council's Advancement Committee.
- Alternate requirements involving physical activity shall have a physician's approval.
- The unit leader and any board of review must explain to the Scout that he is expected to do his best up to the limits of his resources.

# ADDENDUM TO INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT PLAN



Scout Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

## SCOUTS STATEMENT:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Boy Scout, and Eagle Award candidate, promise that on my honor I will do my best in working towards my personal goals. The following requirements are meant to strengthen me so that I can improve my abilities. I will do my best in completing them as written or as modified.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

## PARENTAL STATEMENT:

In view of my son's expressed desire to advance in Scouting, his personal commitment to do his best, and the Scout leaders' commitment to encourage him along that pathway consistent with his abilities, I agree to the requirements as written or modified. If any further modification is deemed warranted, I understand that such can be negotiated.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

## SCOUT LEADER'S STATEMENT:

I agree with, and support, \_\_\_\_\_ desire to progress in the paths of Scouting. Any program modifications agreed to are viewed as challenging as those expected of any other Scout. My objective will be to provide opportunities for success consistent with health and safety considerations.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

## APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL COMMITTEE

The Council Advancement Committee approves the above modifications for advancement because of the Scout's permanent physical or mental disabilities.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Notification sent to the Scout/Parents and Scout Leader on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

# ADDENDUM TO INDIVIDUAL SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT PLAN - modifications



Scout Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
THE STANDARD REQUIREMENT (State the ranks and the requirement number)

MODIFICATIONS AND ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENT(S) (Describe in detail the modified alternative requirement)

NARRATIVE SUMMARY (Why this Scout's circumstances make him unable to complete, in the way normally described, the "standard" requirements)

### MEDICAL STATEMENT:

As a result of a thorough examination of \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ I find that he has a permanent mental or physical disability, which is accurately described above, and which will inhibit him from completing the requirements as generally stated. However, I find that he can safely complete the requirements as stated as modified below.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Physician licensed to practice medicine)  
Physician's Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Physician's Office Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Attach additional documents if applicable.